

**Full Authority**  
**20 September 2018**  
**Agenda Item: 15**

**North Hastings Non-Motorized Trail Development**

*Background*

The North Hastings Economic Development Committee originally applied for a Trillium grant to proceed with investigating trail planning in the geographical area of North Hastings in 2017. The application was successful and allowed the development of the North Hastings Non-Motorized Trail Committee (NHNMTC). Patrick Connor, C.E.O. of Ontario Trails Council was also hired to guide the committee and prepare plans for bringing together conceptual plans of what the trail development could become in the not too distant future.

As plans were developed, it became apparent there was significant support from the community, municipalities and local businesses to proceed. The opportunity to promote the area through a trail network became a viable option. With significant environmental land holdings in North Hastings with trail networks and features already developed, the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority was invited to participate on the NHNMTC.

Recently, Carey McMaster, Organization Development Professional from TRAICON was invited to make a proposal to the Committee to move forward with the organization and planning to take the initial concepts and ideas to fruition.

Proposed next steps were developed during the summer and included the following:

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS - NORTH HASTINGS NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

- 1) Define vision - "To be the indispensable 'go to' organization for trails in North Hastings"
- 2) Mission - "To promote the management, use, conservation and development of trails and trail-based activities in North Hastings."
- 3) Mandates:
  - a) To promote partnerships with user groups and other stakeholders.
  - b) To educate the public on the health, economic and tourism benefits of North Hastings Trails.
  - c) To promote trail events on North Hastings Trails.
  - d) To provide educational documents to the public on North Hastings Trails.
  - e) To develop communication and marketing strategies for North Hastings Trails.

- f) To facilitate recreational club development for user activity such that the user groups understand the nature of North Hastings Trails and which are the safest or best to use for those activities.
  - g) To seek funds in support of operational needs.
  - h) To hold trail education sessions on topics of interest to the trail community of North Hastings.
  - i) To develop, as resources allow, the North Hastings Trail Network and the individual trails and trail activity opportunities as they arise.
- 4) Develop coordinated marketing approaches, for maps, apps and websites:
- 5) Secure a club development strategy. Patrick has a document he will forward to the group.
- 6) Complete database inventory
  - a) Share links for data additions by NHNMMC Members. (Pending)
  - b) Show BatchGeo map samples of existing layers, this will provide content to #4 (Pending)
  - c) Concurrently, Complete final edits of NHNMMP, and:
    - i) Develop OTF 2nd stage grant for completion of trail development plan
    - ii) Co-ordinate/Integrate Scenic Routes with Trails for enhanced “Packages”
    - iii) Price out trail completion plan as part of OTF submission for 16 existing trails
    - iv) Secure funds for ground truthing of development areas
    - v) Coordinate Central, South - ALL of Hastings Trail strategy
    - vi) Use OTF funds to develop business plan
    - vii) Incorporate
    - viii) Secure facilitation funding for 1.5 staffs for 18 months
    - ix) Facilitate a FAM tour of NH products for travel agencies
    - x) Integrate Townships and Community Centres as Outdoor Recreational Hubs in support of Trail Use and Experience Promotion and Tracking
    - xi) Develop a Friends of NH PP Committee - for Egan, St. Peter and Silent Lake Parks
    - xii) Other?

Recommendations from the Executive Committee (which had been meeting over the summer) included meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September with the NHNMTC and municipal and county representatives to present next steps forward.

The result of this meeting essentially identified a need to create a pilot project and once this has been successfully implemented, expand it to include all of the pertinent identified trail properties.

Included in this pilot project is the McGeachie Conservation Area. It was identified as one of three properties which has the least amount of work required to be completed to

bring it to a standard acceptable for the North Hastings Trail Network. A Trillium Foundation Grant application is currently being submitted to enhance or improve trail heads, possibly install washroom facilities, garbage facilities, brochures, mapping, website changes and etc. All of the improvements are being made to promote a North Hastings Trail “brand” and be consistent among the three properties. However, I emphasized at the meeting earlier this month that our conservation identity needs to remain and not overshadowed by the new brand. In essence, the branding must work hand in hand.

As well, participation in the pilot project will require the signing of an MOU. It should be a straightforward MOU, however, it may need to be vetted by our solicitor.

The grant application to make the improvements may be in the range of \$75,000 - \$100,000. As of yet, I have not received confirmation of the total amount.

The importance of the CVCA participating in this pilot project is significant. The North Hastings trail initiative is to help promote the region as a destination, which will assist with economic development/assistance in the area. The McGeachie Conservation Area, as a targeted pilot project area will benefit from any initial improvements and possibly maintenance issues in the future. This in turn will assist the CVCA as the partnership develops and grows with the success of the North Hastings Trail Network. Working together on a project of this size and significance to the region is an opportunity to promote the mandate of the CVCA.

Board Information