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# Recreation Trails

## MASTER PLAN

August 21, 2012





# OWEN SOUND RECREATION TRAILS MASTER PLAN

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# OWEN SOUND RECREATION TRAILS MASTER PLAN

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## Introduction

The City of Owen Sound has produced this Draft Master Plan to provide a guiding document to steer all works and policy related to “trails” within the City of Owen Sound. Trails are a popular recreational venue among the general public and visitors to the City. The benefit of trail systems has become a major focus of municipalities across Canada. The benefits of trails within a built environment are endless. Trails provide recreational, Active Transportation and numerous Tourism opportunities. Owen Sound possesses a large network of trails as noted in this Plan. Managing these trails and providing the user with the utmost in available trail resources is a major component to this Plan. Future trail additions within the City of Owen Sound are numerous. Potential to create and promote Owen Sound as a recognized “trails destination” is a reasonable goal as laid out in sections of this Plan.

## **SECTION 1 Owen Sound's Natural, Cultural, and Built Heritage**

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Formerly known as the Village of Sydenham, the City of Owen Sound has a rich cultural history and an incredible stock of built and natural heritage features. Owen Sound is the largest urban centre in Grey and Bruce Counties, and is located on the shores of Georgian Bay in the aptly named Owen's sound. The City is bisected by the beautiful Sydenham River, and is bordered on its southeast and southwest limits by the Niagara Escarpment. The City's Downtown is centrally located at the mouth of the Sydenham River, with an abundance of shopping, business, and tourist destinations.

The City's character is defined largely by its cultural and built heritage. Owen Sound currently has a heritage program that includes an Interpretive Plaque Program, a growing Heritage Register including approximately 150 properties. There are 29 properties within the City that are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The City has been home to a number of celebrated artists, veterans, and activists.

As a whole, the City boasts an abundance of green space and a significant forest cover. With a sizeable store of open space, the City places a continued focus on outdoor recreation and nature appreciation. Harrison Park, sized at an incredible 40 hectares, is among the City's most prized open spaces. Harrison Park accommodates numerous trails, four-season recreational activities, a fully-serviced campground, and much more.

The existing trails network within the City is also counted as a tremendous recreational asset. The trails network capitalizes on the City's green and open spaces, creating opportunities for active transportation, recreation, and to encourage community cohesion.

### **1.1 Demographics**

The current population of the City of Owen Sound is approximately 22,000 – a figure which is expected to grow to 22,467 in 2016 and 24,038 in 2031. These figures are primarily composed of young (15-24) and mature (40-54) adults. As noted, Owen Sound is the largest urban centre in Grey and Bruce Counties meaning that the resident and surrounding populations depends heavily on jobs, services, housing, and commerce provided in the City. The median individual income for Owen Sound is \$35,746 compared to a \$53,626 provincial median. Approximately 34 percent of Owen Sound residents have a college diploma or university degree/certificate, compared to 43 percent in Ontario as a whole.

According to the Grey Bruce Health Unit, nearly 62 percent of Grey-Bruce residents are overweight or obese (2012 health profile, Stats Can). This rate is considerably higher than national and provincial rates. Nearly half of Grey-Bruce residents are reportedly inactive, and more than 1 in 4 students spend three or more hours in front of the television, computer, or cell phone. The City of Owen Sound works in partnership with the Grey Bruce Health Unit to work to protect and improve the health of

residents and to pursue the tenets of a healthy community. The creation of, and commitment to a Trails Network and Master Plan is working toward these goals.

The primary purpose of creating a new Trails Master Plan is to encourage and facilitate trail use for alternative transportation and recreation within the City. By working to reduce vehicle dependence and promote fitness and healthy lifestyle goals for residents, the City is able to pursue its healthy communities objectives.

Promoting trail creation, maintenance, and use through this plan has varied positive implications, in terms of citizen health, the environment, accessibility, tourism, fostering community pride, and creating an overall sense of place. Through this Plan, the City's trail network is to be embedded as an important component of the City's public infrastructure.

### 2.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Trails Master Plan is designed to uphold and further implement the tenets of the City's Strategic Plan, Official Plan, Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy, Recreation, Parks, and Facilities Master Plan (2007), and Victoria Park Master Plan (2011) and the Kelso Beach Master Plan (2010). Some of the applicable policies of the Strategic Plan and the Official Plan are summarized in the RTMP Appendix.

Trails are a key strategic initiative for the City of Owen Sound. This statement is supported by the Official Plan, the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan as well as other Master Plans and initiatives.



In 2010, the City received funding from the Healthy Communities Fund, which is a Provincial program funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (formerly known as the Ministry of Health Promotion). This grant partially funded the City's 'Safe Trails Network Project'. The program funds facilitated the employment of a Trails Project Coordinator, a new position in the Community Services Department.

The Recreational Trails Master Plan (RTMP) is a culmination of 3 major phases of the Safe Trails Network Project. All phases have been a joint endeavour, with input from various City Divisions, including Planning, Parks and Open Space, and Tourism.

The three phase process can be summarized as follows:

### **3.1 PHASE 1: INVENTORY**

- All City trails were GPS located on foot by the Trails Coordinator;
- All trail infrastructure (e.g., benches, signage, lighting) was GPS located and summarized;
- Areas for future trail works were located;
- All trail data was digitized using AutoCAD;
- Raw data maps for trail locations were created.

### **3.2 PHASE 2: PLANNING**

- The City held two Open Houses to gather feedback for trail mapping and for ideas to include in RTMP document;
- The Trails Coordinator updated the Parks and Recreation Committee at four separate meetings;
- Viable options for future trail segments were assessed;
- Appropriate locations for trail signage was assessed;
- Multiple stakeholder meetings were held concerning trails and healthy communities in conjunction with the Grey Bruce Health Unit;

- Creation of a draft Recreation Trails Master Plan;
- The particulars of the Harrison Park Pilot Signage Project were outlined;

### **3.3 PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION AND PROMOTION**

- Creation and release of a formal Trails Map showing the entire existing Network;
- Planning and Implementation of the Harrison Park Trails Signage Pilot Project;
- Newspaper and television segments released to promote the Trails Project;
- Creation of a new trails map brochure;
- Master Plan (RTMP) completion.

**Active Transportation:** *Using non-motorized, physical activity to travel to a destination.*

**Destination Trails:** *This trail type usually serves the travelling public to reach destinations within or between the built up areas of the City.*

**Development Applications:** *Include, but are not limited to draft plans of subdivisions/condominiums and site plans.*

**Erosion:** *The loss of land due to human or environmental processes, such as rainfall.*

**Fall line trails:** *A fall line trail is a trail that travels straight or relatively straight down a slope, and as a result, is susceptible to washout from water runoff. (see Figure 1)*

**Goat Path:** *A trail-like section of worn terrain that is not recognized as an 'official' city trail. These types of paths indicate where natural pedestrian movement occurs across tracts of lands.*

**GPS:** *Global Positioning System. Used to geodetically map trails and to execute ground-truthing exercises.*

**Grade:** *The slope across the width of a trail tread. (see Figure 10)*

**GSCA:** *Grey Sauble Conservation Authority*

**Hazard Land:** *Means property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to the naturally occurring processes or characterises. Hazard lands include steep slopes and the riparian areas of rivers and lakes.*

**Tread:** *The most travelled portion of the trail.*

**Healthy Communities Fund:** *The Provincial Government Grant that funded the Owen Sound Safe Trails Network project.*

**IMBA:** *International Mountain Bike Association. This organization provides a world-wide gold-standard for multi-use trail building.*

**Leisure Trails:** *This trail type usually provides users with a primarily recreational or leisure experience. Leisure trails are often in 'loop' formations or located in rural, wooded or undeveloped parts of the City.*

**Neighbourhood Connecting Links:** *This trail type is usually a small formal trail segment that joins one subdivision or neighbourhood to another.*

**Sustainable Trail Design:** *Design of a natural (hard earth) trail which conforms to the terrain and is capable of handling its intended use with minimal maintenance.*

**Track, Single:** *A trail with a tread no wider than approximately 0.9 metres. (see Figure 10)*

**Track, Double:** *A trail with a tread that is wider than approximately 0.9 metres.*

### 5.1 PRIORITIES

As outlined in Section 3, the purpose of this Plan is varied. The implementation of this Plan is intended to positively impact citizen health, our environment, accessibility, tourism, our sense of community pride, and the creation of an overall sense of place. The RTMP map now forms a schedule in the City's updated Official Plan.

This Plan is intended to guide the ongoing execution of the City's Trails Program, and to ensure the lasting physical functionality of the network in accordance with Section 5. Main priorities to establishing the goals in this plan are as follows in Section 5.1:

- 5.1.1 Connectivity, accessibility, a high standard of design, and functionality should be a consideration in all trail development and maintenance.
- 5.1.2 New and existing trails should cater to people of all abilities, strengths, and adventure levels equally where possible.
- 5.1.3 The Recreation & Parks Advisory Committee shall be the primary City body to consider issues relating to and monitoring the progress of the Trails Program and this Plan.
- 5.1.4 Consultation should be undertaken with the Chief Building Official to ensure trail accessibility standards are in accordance with regulations of the Ontario Building Code.
- 5.1.5 The Recreation Trails Network shall be considered a component of the City's existing physical infrastructure.
- 5.1.6 On an ongoing basis, the City shall monitor and evaluate the trails that can suitably be upgraded to meet the accessibility and design standards of this Plan and be considered in the budget planning cycle.
- 5.1.7 Connectivity between new and existing trails should be established and maintained within the Trails Network and with the City's Transportation system to provide links across the municipality.

## 5.2 SECURING NEW TRAIL CORRIDORS

The City should maximize opportunities to acquire trail corridors. Holding City trails in its ownership or formal management will ensure proper ongoing maintenance and will help avoid misuse. Partnerships with private land owners become a valid alternative to secure lands. The City currently works to acquire hazard lands in accordance with the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law. This practice may also be used to acquire trail corridors where appropriate.

Tools for acquisition may include: Donation or conveyance; through the Planning Act at time of development or creation; purchase or trade; expropriation; easements; and parkland dedication. Policies exist in the City's Official Plan that supports this direction.

## 5.3 PARTNERSHIPS

In many cases, trails within the City of Owen Sound are on lands owned by other groups or organizations such as: The Bruce Trail Organization, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the County of Grey. Partnerships should be encouraged and maximized to provide a well planned and connected trail corridor.

Partners Include:

- a) The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority is a major organization with vested interest in our local Trails Network. The GSCA maintains trails on conservation lands adjacent to and within the City. The trails of Inglis Falls and the Pottawatomi Trails, for example are directly linked to City maintained trails. The relationship between the GSCA and the City is an important one. (see Figure 11.1 – Inventory Map)
- b) The County of Grey is also an important partner in the Trails Program. Portions of the CP/CN rail lines are under the jurisdiction of the County, and contain the Tom Thomson and Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail corridors. These trails are important on a regional basis, and are very popular leisure trail routes with connections to other city trails. These trails bring valuable regional traffic into the City. (see Figure 11.1)
- c) The Bruce Trail is also an important regional trail that links to the City's Network. This major trail route, known as the Sydenham Section of the Bruce Trail runs directly through the south-east portion of the City. Within the City, the Bruce Trail is open to bike use where trail topography allows, including the Fitness Trail, Mile Drive, and the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail. The Bruce Trail is an integral component of the City's Trail Network. This trail provides excellent scenic hiking opportunities and provides a diverse set of trail bases appealing to many user groups. (see Figure 11.1 – Inventory Map)
- d) The City's partnerships with the GSCA, the County, and other trail groups are key to the implementation of the goals of this Plan. Each of these players should strive to mutually promote the trails in and around Owen Sound as a means of drawing a wider user base.

- e) Relationships between internal City Departments are also integral to maintaining a diverse and well-used trail system. The Operations Department (Engineering Services, Works), the Community Services Department (Planning, Recreation, Parks & Open Space), and the Economic Development and Tourism Department all have a role to play in maintaining, planning, implementing and promoting the Trails Program. Lines of communication must be open internally between these departments in order to for the City to provide the best trails system possible.
- f) Relationships with volunteer groups and public member groups are also of paramount importance. Bike groups, running groups, hikers, birdwatchers, snowmobile users, and local schools all have vested interest in the City's trail system. Facilitating communication and encouraging feedback from these parties is imperative for the City to provide trail systems that are truly useful to the public. Groups such as the Tom Thomson Trail Group have done a significant amount of positive trail development work within the City.
- g) The City should continue to provide an online feedback form, and to provide contact information on all trail signage. This allows trail users to provide feedback on the conditions of the trails throughout the City, and also on the Trails Program overall.
- h) The City shall establish and nurture relationships with private landowners and public bodies, whose lands contain or are adjacent to trail corridors.
- i) All City Departments shall work internally, with developers, and with private land owners to embrace and uphold the tenets of this Plan.

## **5.4 ESTABLISHING TRAILS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Where the City has the opportunity to review development plans, consideration should be given to implementing the RTMP as part of this process. Policy as to how this process is implemented is as follows:

- 5.4.1 The RTMP is to be considered and implemented where possible when development proposals are assessed by staff, or when the City of Owen Sound is acquiring or divesting lands.
- 5.4.2 When assessing a development proposal, the site should be examined for:
  - Potential for new connectivity within the existing Trails Network;
  - Potential for trail connectivity to the City's other transportation infrastructure; and
  - Potential for development of new trails or missing links.



West View Trail/Parkview, 1<sup>st</sup> Street East/5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East

- 5.4.3 Wherever possible, a pre-development site visit should be undertaken and any existing pedestrian paths (Goat Paths) should be recorded with GPS.
- 5.4.4 Staff comments on development proposals should contemplate the policies of this Plan, and should discuss findings based on Section 5.4.1.
- 5.4.5 Goat paths identified through site visits should be formalized where possible to ensure pedestrian linkages are maintained and enhanced. The Trail Standards in Section 6 should be used and new routes should be situated as close to the original path location as possible.
- 5.4.6 The development of a site must consider natural pedestrian movement and trail placement.
- 5.4.7 Existing trails, new trail opportunities, and linkages are also to be examined for opportunities to serve as wildlife corridors.

## **5.5 MEMORIAL TREES & TRAILS PROGRAM**

- 5.5.1 Sections of trail may be dedicated to certain persons in memoriam, as part of the Greenwood Cemetery Donations and Gifts Program. The naming or renaming of any trail segments shall be at the discretion of the Recreation & Parks Committee.
- 5.5.2 Trees may be planted along trail corridors in memoriam, as part of the Greenwood Cemetery Donations and Gifts Program.

## **5.6 MAXIMIZING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

Funding is available from the Federal and Provincial governments, normally in the form of one and two year grant programs. Examples include: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Job Creation Program), Skills Link Canada Program, Ministry of Natural Resources Communities Fish and Wildlife Involvement Program, Ontario Municipal Tourism Recreational and Development Fund, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

- 5.6.1 Every opportunity should be captured to obtain grant monies from upper-tier governments to fund the Recreation Trails Program, in terms of staffing, capital, and ongoing maintenance. A government Grant package provided the funds to jumpstart the original Safe Trails Network Project and facilitated this Plan
- 5.6.2 Private and Public organizations also provide avenues for funding. Given the regional interest and support of trails initiatives, organizations and businesses throughout the region hold an interest in the success of local Networks, and may be willing to invest funds or lands in the City's Program. Prime examples of private funding opportunities include: Friends of TD Environmental Fund, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Shell Environmental Fund, Molson's Local Heroes, and Ducks Unlimited.

Many of these funding programs require some capital investment by the recipient. A minimal contribution from the City can go a long way in securing important funding for viable trails projects.

- 5.6.3 The City shall investigate and undertake applications to fund important trail building, planning and marketing projects.

## **5.7 MANAGING RISK**

The Bruce Trails Network defines risk management as the process used to minimize the adverse effect of accidents. Risk management procedures are practiced and are considered a top priority for the City. This means making concerted efforts to reduce trails hazards, reduce lawsuits and claims, and to make trails as safe as possible for all user groups.



Risk management covers an extensive area, including insurance, safety precautions, education, and trail inspections. With a proper Risk Management Plan in place, a trail organization/manager can most effectively create a safe trail program, which includes by following and practicing modern trail design standards, installing proper signage, and regulating maintenance on the trails before any trail related injuries occur.

The County of Grey has a Risk Management Policy for trail signage as it pertains to local Rail Trails. This policy includes 911 signage over set distances of trail. Currently, the City follows a similar system, with 911 signage located at popular recreation sites (parks) and trail heads. This policy should be expanded to include all major trailheads throughout the City.

- 5.7.1 The City shall develop and implement appropriate Risk Management policies including: trail signage, trail standards, trail risks and conditions.

Throughout Owen Sound, a large number of paved “urban” trails are lighted with lamp posts. The GPS inventory of all City trails included the logging of lamp posts, trail head staging areas and amenities such as benches, gates and garbage cans. Currently, the majority of downtown trail links include adequate lighting. Future trails, and those lacking proper lighting (as indicated in the GPS inventory) should include some sort of lighting. Well lit staging areas provide a sense of safety for trail users during low light hours. Many trail users enjoy running the various downtown urban links such as the Harbour Walkway and the Rail Trail links. The issue of installing power services arises when discussing the future implementation of lamp posts on some trail systems throughout the City, as many links are away from utilities and may not lend themselves to this upgrade.

### 6.1 TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

When this Master Plan was created, the trails within the City fell within a range of functionality. It is a primary goal of this plan to ensure that trails are designed for all levels of ability. Difficulty ratings are counter to the intent of this Plan, and will not be used. New and existing trails within the City are to be made accessible as possible considering topography and trail location/purpose.

#### 6.1.1 Base Material Types

All City of Owen Sound trails can be broken down into groups based on the base material of the trail. Throughout the City, trails range from gravel and stone dust bases, to hard earth (packed dirt), soft earth (loose soil/grass), as well as asphalt and concrete. Each trail base has its merits, and each requires specific inputs for construction and maintenance.

- Hard earth trails are the most economical to maintain and design, but are susceptible to erosion and require a high amount of wear to establish. These designs when constructed properly; hold up to prolonged use and wear well.



*This is an example of a “Hard Earth” single track trail in Bruce County. Designed with hand tools for a very low cost, this trail provides the MOST SUSTAINABLE type of trail available. This section of trail is constructed along property contours with a 5% outslope across the trail grade. This trail was constructed in 2002 and has required minimal maintenance.*

- Stone dust trails are aesthetically pleasing, and are moderate in terms of maintenance and design costs and requirements. When used in high use areas, this trail base can provide some sustainability.

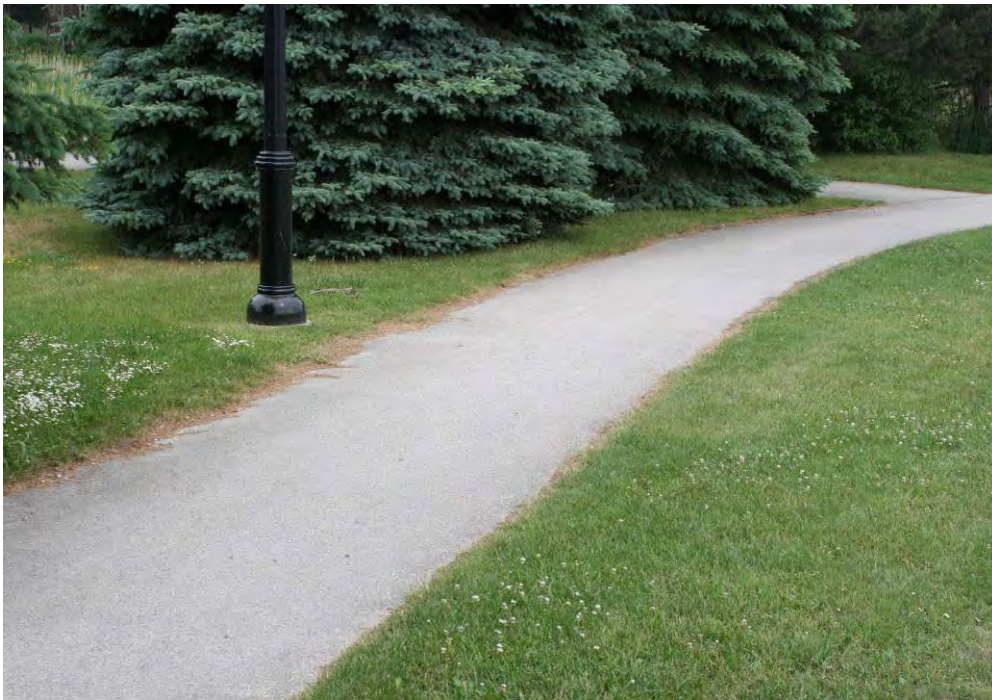


*This photo represents one of the most popular trail routes in Owen Sound. This stone dust section of the Freedom trail in Harrison Park is an example of a multi-use surface for trail design. This material is an adequate trail base in areas with low erosion risk.*

- Concrete and asphalt trails are more costly and intensive to create, but boast strength and longevity to wear.



*This photo is a prime example of a concrete trail. Concrete trails are somewhat uncommon in Owen Sound aside from sidewalk routes. This trail is located just north of 10<sup>th</sup> street West.*



*Example of a paved trail in Owen Sound. This section of trail is located near Kelso Beach. Paved sections of trail can accommodate a very large user base. Paved trails are common in urban centers and offer the ability to provide fully accessible trail usage.*

The location of each trail and its original topography dictates the best base material. In some instances, certain trails throughout the City could be redesigned to accommodate a different trail base. There are two trails within the City that have stone dust bases and are considered ‘fall line trails’. A fall line trail is a trail that travels straight or relatively straight down a slope, and as a result, is susceptible to washout from water runoff. Trail base erosion, applying to bases such as stone dust, compromises trail functionality and safety. The objective of this section is to improve design standards in future trail planning and trail redevelopment.

Accessible trails require flat surfaces made from packed stone dust, asphalt or concrete.

### **6.1.2. Ideal Base-Type Applications:**

**Concrete:** primarily used in sidewalk extensions and connecting pedestrian links; more expensive base material option; this material is not optimal for a trail base in areas not associated with roads/sidewalks; durable and will withstand vehicular traffic; accessible base material (Figure 12.5)

**Asphalt:** ideal for even, small grades of accessible trails; facilitates easy snow removal; durable and will withstand vehicular traffic; optimally smooth base for many trail user groups (bikes, strollers, etc.); more expensive base material option; accessible base material (Figure 12.4)

**Stone dust:** provides a relatively smooth trail base; ideal on level surfaces without threat of ‘cross trail’ water run-off; more inexpensive base material alternative; requires some ongoing maintenance; accessible base material (Figure 12.6)

**Gravel:** coarse trail base ideal for areas of high usage and suitable for areas that are subject to cross trail run-off; requires ongoing maintenance; not ideal for some user groups (bikes, strollers, etc.)

**Hard earth:** ideal in forest settings producing minimal environmental impact; ideal for terracing trails along topographic changes; can provide an adequately smooth trail base; inexpensive to construct and maintain

**Soft earth:** usually wood chips or loam based; ideal in grassed settings (parks); suitable for lower use trails; an option when asphalt applications are not available or in environmentally sensitive areas

**Boardwalk:** implemented in areas of particular interest or environmentally sensitive areas, especially with standing water or boggy topography



*Weaver's Creek Boardwalk in Harrison Park*

### **6.1.3 Trail Transportation Types**

#### **6.1.3.1 Non-Motorized Usage**

The majority of trails within the City are intended and designed for active transportation use. The most frequent forms of usage are: walking, hiking, running, biking, skiing and snowshoeing. Horseback riding is also permitted on select trails, including the Tom Thomson Trail. Non-motorized usage supports the maintenance of high quality trails in the long-term, and requires significantly less cost in terms of trail construction and monitoring.

Primary winter usage trails, for skiing and snowshoeing are focused within Harrison Park. The 'Fitness Trail', the 'Weaver's Creek' trail, and the 'Freedom Trail' see the largest participation in winter months from winter sport users. There are very few existing trails that do not support winter usage. This Plan is supportive of non-motorized winter trail usage throughout the City to facilitate a four-season trail Network. Winter usage is subject to several variables, including: snow conditions, snow quantity, and grooming schedules. Currently, the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail, the Tom Thomson Trail, the Mile Drive Trail, and Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) routes are groomed for regular winter use. Regular winter grooming would support the increased use of trails for skiing and snowshoeing.

The use of bikes as a non-motorized option for trail use is also encouraged. Many of the City's existing trails currently accommodate regular bike use. Popular trails in the City of Owen Sound for bike use are: Kelso Beach Network, Harbour Walkway, Tom Thomson Trail, Harrison Park trail Networks and the West Side Rail Trail. Restrictions have been implemented to reduce the risk of injury on steep-grade trails, which follow a definite fall line. The paved catwalk routes connecting the upper East and West Sides of the City with the Downtown currently prohibit the use of bikes by regulatory By-law. Signs have been erected at the head of these routes to warn users.

### **6.1.3.2 Motorized Usage**

City trails are primarily designated for active, non-motorized transportation and recreation. There are few sections of trail within the City that permit motorized vehicles, such as snowmobiles as per City By-Laws.

The Tom Thomson Trail route permits snowmobile use during the winter months on the former CN rail line extending from the Bayshore Community Centre Parking lot to outside of City limits. The Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail permits snowmobile access into the on the West Side. This trail follows the former rail bed from the location of Ben Allen to a destination at Georgian Shores Marina. Within Harrison Park, there is snowmobile access at the very southern limit of the park. An OFSC trail crosses the bridge at the south end of the campground and exits onto Conservation Authority lands.

Currently, there are no By-laws permitting ATVs on trail routes within the City and the Streets Bylaw does not permit ATV use on City roads within the City of Owen Sound.

### **6.1.4 Policies**

- 6.1.4.1 The City of Owen Sound should continue to ban ATV use on the current trails systems within the City.
- 6.1.4.2 The City should explore the possibilities of implementing future trails that could accommodate ATV use.
- 6.1.4.3 Where possible, trails should be constructed using a stone dust or hard earth base, which is economical, durable, and low maintenance.
- 6.1.4.4 Accessible trails should be constructed of asphalt or concrete where possible.
- 6.1.4.5 Fall line trails should be avoided. Where fall line trails are unavoidable, they should be constructed using a trail base and design standard that will mitigate or prevent erosion issues.
- 6.1.4.6 Trails shall be designed, maintained, and promoted for four-season use where possible.
- 6.1.4.7 Bike use shall be encouraged on the City's Trails Network, but shall be prohibited on fall line trails where steep slopes present a significant risk of user injury.

6.1.4.8 That the City and its partners in Trail development work toward a winter grooming schedule for all major routes within the City.

6.1.4.9 Motorized vehicles shall generally be prohibited on new and existing trails. Any trails permitting motorized vehicle usage (i.e. snowmobiles), shall be specifically designed to accommodate such uses.

## 6.2 MAJOR TRAIL USES

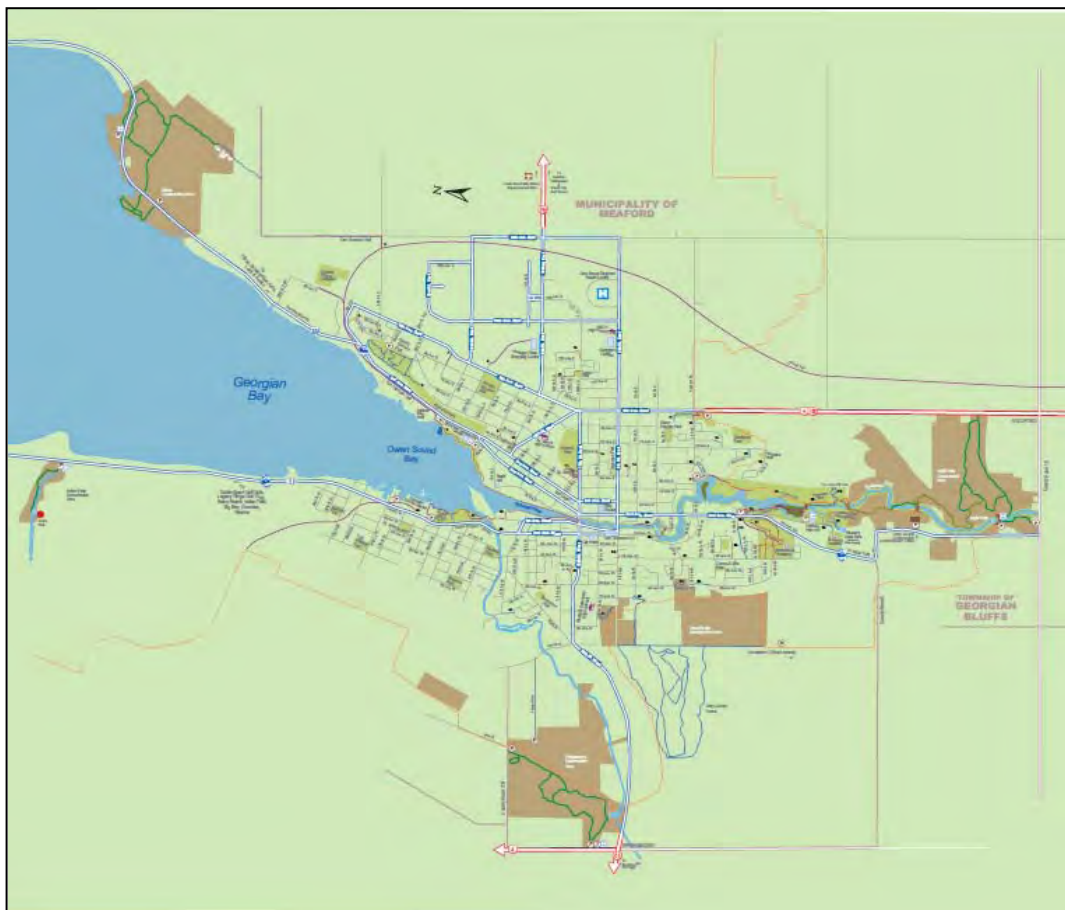
A comprehensive view of the City's existing Recreation Trails Network can be found in Schedule 'A'. The City's Trails Network is made up of four trail types:

### 6.2.1 Leisure Trails:

This trail type usually provides users with a primarily recreational or leisure experience, rather than facilitating travel to a specific destination. Recreation Trails are often in 'loop' formations or located in rural, wooded or undeveloped parts of the City. The trails of Harrison Park and the Tom Thomson Trail are primary examples of recreation trails in the City. These trails are discussed in more detail below. (see Figure 11.1 – Inventory Map)

#### Figure 11.1 - Inventory Map

This map coincides with Inventory Table (11.2)





### **6.2.2 Neighbourhood Connecting Links:**

This trail type is usually a small formal trail segment that joins one subdivision or neighbourhood to another. Neighbourhood residents rely on these paths to provide quick and easy access to adjacent commercial and residential areas, public parks, schools, public transportation routes, and other trail segments. Paved catwalks, which usually connect dead end streets to other neighbourhood, are prime examples of a connecting link.

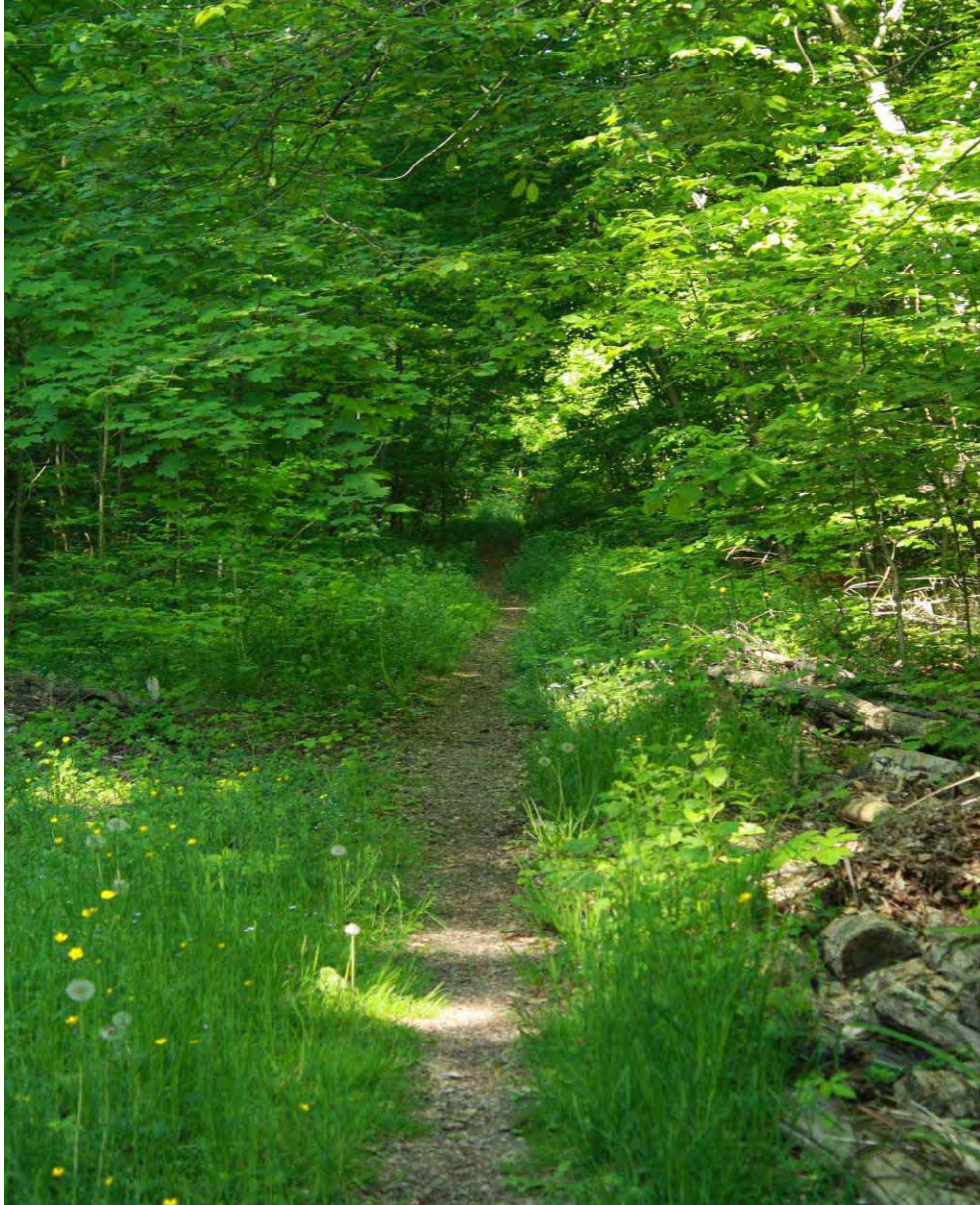
### **6.2.3 Destination Trails:**

This trail type usually serves the travelling public to reach destinations within or between the built up areas of the City. These trails can also double as recreational trails, but often function to get users from point 'A' to point 'B' without the use of a motor vehicle. The Harbour Walkway and the Cemetery 'Nine Bends' trail are two examples of destination trails in the City. (see Figure 11.1 – Inventory Map)

### **6.2.4 Goat Path:**

This trail type is a trail-like section of worn terrain that is not recognized as an 'official' city trail. These types of paths indicate where natural pedestrian movement occurs across tracts of lands. Goat paths are an excellent indication of where future trails should be located, and are often found down the slopes of the escarpment and between established neighbourhoods. (see Figure 1)

**Figure 1**



*Trail Route from 4<sup>th</sup> Ave West to 1<sup>st</sup> Street West across from Harrison Park. This trail enters the downtown region. This trail is a prime example of a “fall line” trail. Mass amounts of dirt and trail base material erodes down the trail and deposits at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> West. This is an area for immediate trail remediation.*

## **6.3 PRIMARY CITY TRAIL ROUTES**

### **6.3.1 Harrison Park Trails**

The trail system within Harrison Park forms a vital part of the overall Trails Network within the City. The most prominent trails for leisure use can be found in Harrison Park, which boasts over

5.0 km of trail alone. The Park contains the Mile Drive Trail, Freedom Trail, Fitness Trail, and many secondary routes. The Park’s diversity of trails is a major attraction for residents and visitors alike. The park is a four-season recreational hub, consisting of an outdoor skating rink, tennis and basketball courts, and playgrounds. The trails within the park include paved routes, stone dust bases, gravel trails, a boardwalk at Weaver’s Creek, and hard earth hiking trails, such as the loop off the Mile Drive. Harrison Park also provides users with connectivity to the Bruce Trail route running through Owen Sound. This segment of the Bruce Trail meets the park via the Parkview Erosion Trail and extends through the park and onto Conservation Authority land at the southern boundary of the Park (see Figure 11.2, 12.2, 12.6 and 13)



Harrison Park Trail Map

### 6.3.2 Tom Thomson Trail & Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail

The Tom Thomson Trail route is another popular and important part of the larger Trail Network. Constructed using a stone dust base, the Tom Thomson Trail is popular with walkers, runners and bikers. This regional trail is built upon a section of the former CP rail line in partnership with the City. The Tom Thomson trailhead is located at the north end of the Bayshore Community Centre parking lot. The trail extends outside the City limits, to the hamlet of Leith, and on to the neighbouring Municipality of Meaford. (see Figure 12.1)

The Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail is considered a ‘sister’ trail to the Tom Thomson Trail, and can be found on the west side of the City. The Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail begins near Kelso Beach at the Georgian Shores Marina and extends northwest out of the City into the Township of Georgian Bluffs. This trail also has a stone dust base and is used similarly to the Tom Thomson Trail. These two trails are vital pieces of the Owen Sound Trails Network and are each destination trail routes along the City’s harbour front.



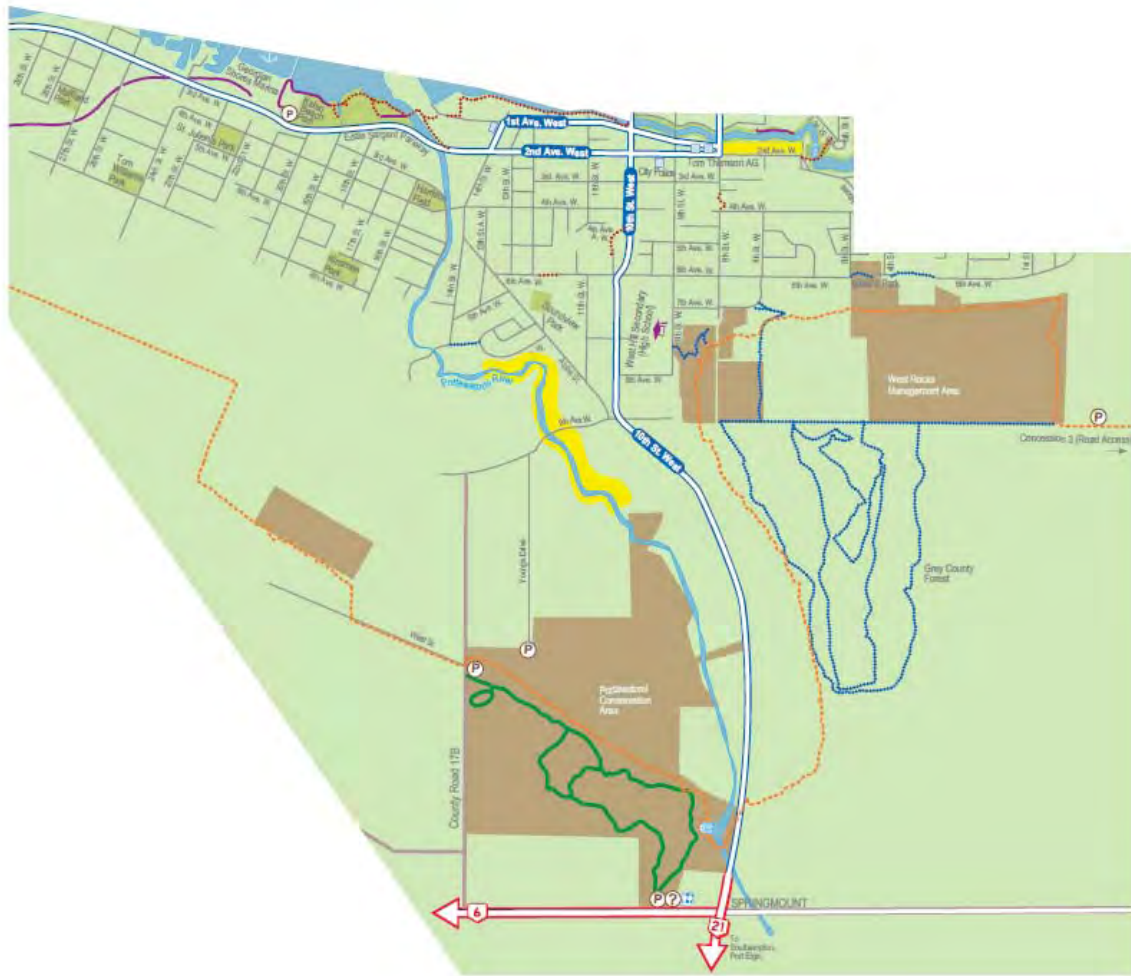
Figure 12.1 – Tom Thomson Trail – Yellow shaded areas denotes future trail work zone

### 6.3.3 Kelso Beach Park

Kelso Beach Park is also considered a major trail hub within the City. The Park itself has an array of paved and stone dust trails, which provide users with a quiet setting and pleasing sights of the inner harbour. The Park provides connectivity to the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail, which adjoins the park at its north end. Trail users can pick up the Harbour Walkway at the walking bridge on the Pottawatomi River. Kelso draws large crowds of tourists each year with many special events, such as Summer Folk, Ribfest, and the Salmon Derby (see Figure 11.1 and 12.3).

### 6.3.4 The Harbour Walkway

The Harbour Walkway is an important component of both the Tom Thomson Trail and the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail as this trail connects these routes. This section of trail along the harbour is very popular during the summer months. This route is also the follows the primary Sydenham River crossing at the 10<sup>th</sup> Street bridge (see Figure 11.1 and 12.3).



**Figure 12.3 – Yellow shaded areas denote future trail work zones**

## 6.4 FUTURE TRAILS

There is wealth of opportunity for future trail development within the City. The City’s dynamic geography, with its rivers and escarpment slopes, lends itself to unique trail design opportunities. The City has an abundance of park and forest land, much of which can be used for future trail building. The future trails indicated below are prime candidates for integration into the Network, but do not reflect all of the future trail possibilities within the City.

### 6.4.1 Harrison Park

There are several former trail routes in Harrison Park that have not been maintained historically and as a result, have become naturalized. These former routes are logical options for ‘new’ trail creation – or re-creation, as the case may be. With a setting in the forested portions of the east and west sides of the Park, hard earth trail bases are physically suitable, environmentally sensitive, and are very cost effective. Hard earth trails are excellent for a wide range of users, including biking, walking, and jogging.

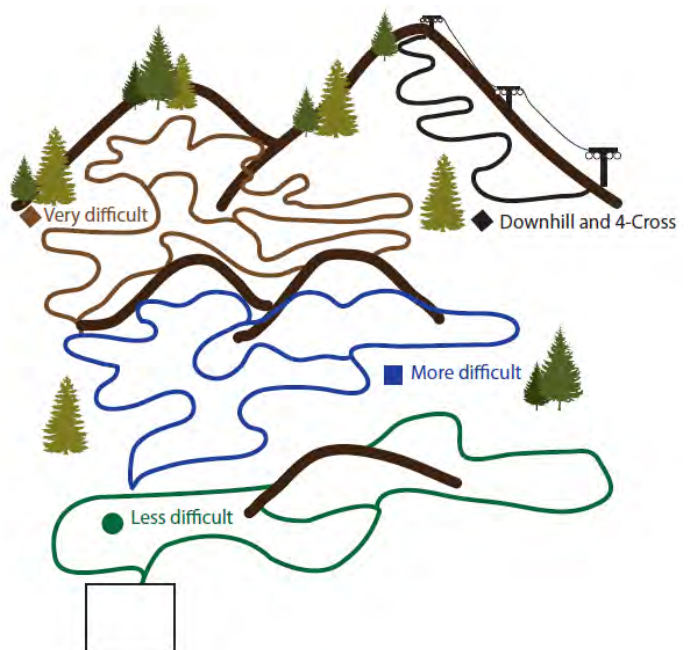
These future trails may be augmented to increase functionality and user safety. Hard earth tracts running along the east side of the Sydenham River could transition into boardwalk paths to mitigate erosion issues along the river. Stone armouring could be added in places on new terraced trails along the steep slope of the Park's east side to prevent erosion issues and to mitigate seasonal maintenance. Areas within the Park with poor soil drainage can accommodate crusher run or stone dust topping to provide added trail traction and stability.

There are also options to provide a trail link across from Greenwood Cemetery descending into the Park near the current Seniors Centre. This proposed trail could be lengthened to take advantage of the natural terrain and create a loop that would provide users with a continuous leisure route on the western edge of the Park. This trail could accommodate hikers, walkers, snowshoe users, and mountain bikers. If designed in accordance with the design standards of this Plan, there will be minimal impact to the natural habitat of the area.

On the eastern edge of the park, the 'Ski Hill' area and east of the 'Fitness Trail' are partially densely wooded with some open meadow areas. There are multiple possibilities for the addition of new loops to provide users with an entirely new leisure trail system. Currently, this area is not being used for any recreational purpose. Any proposed trail for this area would likely have a hard earth base and have minimal natural impacts.

There have been ongoing discussions about the possibility of paving the popular 'Fitness Trail'. This stretch of stone dust trail is a perfect candidate for an asphalt base. This section of trail is very well used on a regular basis. If paved, this trail would provide a hardtop loop in and out of Harrison Park, and would accommodate an increased number of user groups, including those with accessible trail needs. Currently, there is not a complete paved loop extending out from Harrison Park on the east side of the Sydenham River. The assessment of the cost to pave this 3.0 km long trail with asphalt was \$90,000 in 2011. This cost would also pave a portion of the 'Freedom Trail' on the west side of the Park, as well as the 'Ski Hill' parking lot stretch which would complete the loop of paved trail.

If time allows in the summer of 2012, the City should look into the construction of a single track, hard earth loop along either east or west side of Harrison Park. This trail would be built the standards of this Plan and act as 'pilot project trail', which would become an added route to the current trail system of the Park. The City could judge the popularity and feedback from this project to fully understand the merits of such trail designs. (see Figure 12.2 – New Trail Development Areas – South and Figure 7-9)



#### **6.4.2 Stoney Orchard**

The 12 hectare area on the upper east side of the City is known as Stoney Orchard is a prime location for future trail development and promotion. This tract of currently contains a mixed woodland. These lands are relatively flat, and goat paths are already established through the area. Stoney Park is in close proximity to two public schools and is adjacent to several residential neighbourhoods of low and medium density, including an Owen Sound Municipal Non-Profit Housing development. There is significant opportunity to add to the existing destination trail routes running throughout this site.

Some simple pruning, tree removal, and minor trail tread work would further establish the trails that exist in the Stoney Orchard area. Stone dust applications could be carried out on a select number of trails to make them fully accessible. There is an existing parking area that serves this area. Establishing future stone dust links through McArthur Park would conveniently adjoin the Stoney Orchard trail system to the Bayshore Community Centre and the Regional Recreation Center. (see Figure 12.1 – New Trail Development Areas – NE).

#### **6.4.3 McArthur Park**

McArthur Park, is located above the escarpment slope along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East is another area where trail development would increase the usage of this scenic park. McArthur Park is a long, narrow strip of grassed open space delineated to the west by a steep rock face. McArthur Park adjoins Stoney Orchard Park, which is to the north. There is great opportunity to add a stone dust trail through this Park to link the Orchard property trails. The creation of a stone dust trail will provide a direct destination trail link between these two currently underused recreational areas. Both parks provide a picturesque view of the City's harbour. (see Figure 12.1)

#### **6.4.4 Mill Dam**

The west side of the Sydenham River bank, from 8<sup>th</sup> Street West to the parking lot at the Mill Dam is a former City trail that has become degraded over time. In the early 1990's, a hard earth trail was located along the west bank of the river. This trail was a primary route travelled by anglers frequenting the river banks in the fall and spring seasons. There are options to investigate the redevelopment of this former trail. Multiple trees/deadfalls will need to be removed from the path and some minor stonework would be required. This trail was once popular with a large number of tourists who fished the Sydenham River. Renewal of this trail will benefit Owen Sounder's, tourists, and anglers alike. (see Figure 12.3)

#### **6.4.5 Kelso Beach**

The border of Kelso Beach on the west side of the harbour also presents an opportunity for future trail construction. The north bank of the Pottawatomi River from the Eddy Sargent Bridge to the lakeshore is an ideal location for a single tract stone dust or paved trail. The construction of a paved or stone dust trail will provide access to the river bank in this area.

This area is susceptible to the growth of phragmites, which is an invasive plant that has colonized much of the inner harbour. Currently, the stands of phragmites prohibit any recreational use in this area, but the City has begun to take steps to control this plant through planned vegetation burns and regular mowing. Successes in the control of this invasive wetland grass will permit the uninhibited use of these areas once again.

At one time, there was hard earth trail that paralleled the rivers edge in this location. This trail would link with other Kelso Beach trails and form another important leisure loop in the system. This portion of the inner harbour is also popular with anglers in spring and late fall. This trail system has been discussed and was proposed in the Kelso Beach Park Master Plan. Future works at Kelso should follow guidelines listed in the Kelso Beach Park Master Plan.

## **6.5 FUTURE TRAIL REMEDIATION PROJECTS**

The maintenance of all existing City trails should be prioritized. Ongoing maintenance efforts will ensure the success and continued use of the Trails Network. The trails that compose the Network are generally in good condition. There are two areas of the Network that currently require remediation to once again accommodate regular public use and to mitigate safety hazards presented by poor trail conditions.

The 'Fitness Trail', which is located on the eastern edge of Harrison Park, incorporates a number of secondary feeder trails into the larger Network. Over the past decade, two of these secondary trails have become severely degraded due to erosion.

- 6.5.1 The trail which extends down the escarpment from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue 'A' East to the entrance of the Fitness Trail off of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue East requires repair. Figure 4)



**Figure 4**



*This picture represents one of the 2 major feeder trails which connect the Upper East Side with the Fitness Trail in Harrison Park. This route in the photo extends up the escarpment and connects to 5<sup>th</sup> Ave A East. This site will be under construction in late summer of 2012 to repair a catch basin and sub drain issue near the Eastern Trail head off of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave A. Plans for re-directing the trail route are in the works. As seen in the “tread base”, this trail is a classic fall line route and requires attention.*

- 6.5.2 The feeder trail from Parkview Crescent to the Fitness Trail north of the Parkview Erosion Trail is also in need of restoration. This trail is currently deemed closed. Future investigations into a “re-route” should be considered. (Figure 2)

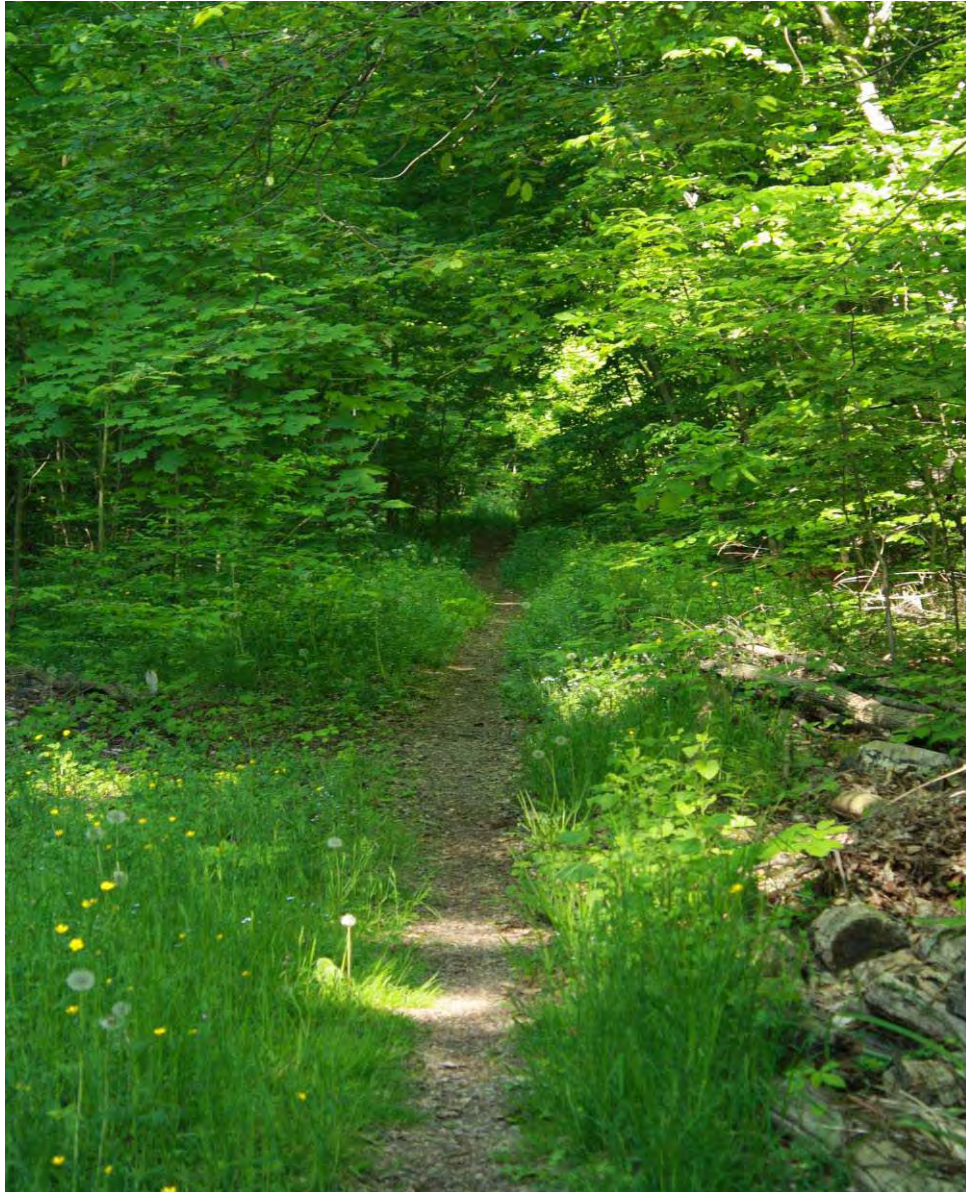
**Figure 2**



*This trail route is known as the “Park View Crescent” trail. This route is located nearly directly across from the Park View Erosion Trail. This route has been deemed “closed” as it encounters some serious erosion issues as it drops into the Fitness Trail along the eastern boarder of Harrison Park. This trail is a prime candidate for remediation works. This is another prime example of “unsustainable trail development” and a “fall line trail”.*

- 6.5.3 The trail located just north of Harrison Park at 1<sup>st</sup> Street West extending up to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West is currently in poor condition. This trail was originally designed as a fall line trail, which causes issues in maintaining the integrity of the trail base material. Future trail work on this original design would mitigate the noted issues. (Figure 1)

**Figure 1**



*Trail Route from 4<sup>th</sup> Ave West to 1<sup>st</sup> Street West across from Harrison Park. This trail enters the downtown region. This trail is a prime example of a “fall line” trail. Mass amounts of dirt and trail base material erodes down the trail and deposits at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> West. This is an area for immediate trail remediation.*

### 7.1 LOCATING TRAILS

There should be a devoted effort and an in-depth investigation of City lands that can accommodate future trail construction or of trail segments that require redevelopment. The use of GPS technology should be used to provide an up-to-date inventory of areas which are suitable for trail development. Available options for new trails exist throughout the City in its open spaces, parkland, hazard lands, residential neighbourhoods, and also its commercial and industrial areas. The latest Trail Inventory provides insight to where links are currently missing in the City's trail network.

The creation and maintenance of destination trails that serve the Downtown and harbour front, local schools, commercial nodes, high density residential neighbourhoods, and parks should be prioritized.

Trails should be located so as to capitalize on important views and vistas within the City. City trails should be used as a tool to provide public access to the City's Waterfront. Trails should also be placed to provide public access to the City's collection of important natural and cultural heritage features.

Options for trail development and revitalization are fully open to assessment. The City owns, maintains and/or manages vast amounts of green space and hazard lands suitable for public use. A significant proportion of the hazard lands in the City could be designated for future trail development. Placement of trails on hazard lands should be subject to approval from the City and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority to ensure that slope stability or other topographical characteristics are considered. Similarly, approval of the Niagara Escarpment Commission is required for placement of trails within their jurisdiction. Many of the forested ravines and slopes within the City can accommodate properly designed single tract trails with minimal impact. Steps must be taken to minimize the possibility of erosion issues that commonly plague hazard land areas and trail corridors. Bench cut, single tract trail designs and avoidance of fall line trail design will alleviate erosion issues along slopes in many instances. Trails along shorelines, watercourses, and wetlands are encouraged, but must be designed and placed with care. Boardwalks allow trail users to traverse sensitive areas with minimal impact.

### 7.2 NEW TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS

There are three specific items that must be addressed in considering the creation of new trails or in redeveloping existing trails:

- *What are the social benefits and impacts surrounding the creation of this trail?*
- *What are the economic benefits or impacts surrounding the creation of this trail?*
- *What are the environmental impacts of creating this trail?*

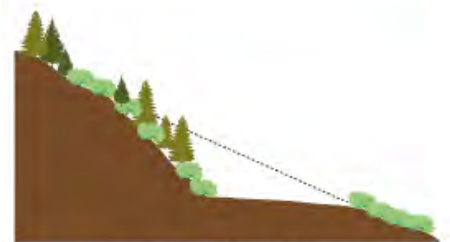
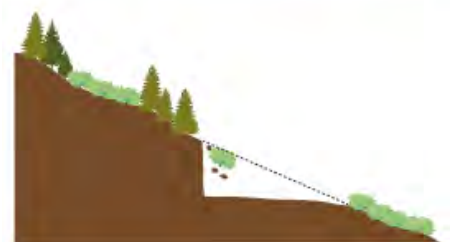
### 7.2.1 General Design Guidelines

- Trails should be designed and situated so as to avoid users straying off paths onto private property, restricted areas, or onto sensitive lands.
- The visual impact of buildings should be minimized in a natural environment.
- Establishing sightlines and views of natural scenery or heritage buildings should be maximized.
- Steps should be taken to fill all permits required to construct new trails.
- Risk management protocols should be considered for future trails.
- 911 and wayfinding signage should be incorporated into new trail routes of considerable size, located away from current trail routes.
- Interpretative and educational facilities or hubs should be provided for trail users.
- The possibility of watercourse disturbance or pollution should be mitigated.
- Trails should be built to support all weather conditions with minimal construction and maintenance costs.
- Road safety must be prioritized on sections of trail that may meet or cross City streets.
- A minimum vertical clearance of 2.0 metres should be maintained for the comfort of users.

### 7.2.2 Trail Base Standards

- Hard Earth trail bases should have minimum widths of 20 cm to 40 cm. Areas designed to accommodate equestrian uses should be widened to a 60 cm minimum.
- Gradients across trail bases should be 5% (hard earth), or as close as possible, to provide adequate precipitation runoff to prevent fall line erosion. Bases for stonedust, pavement or concrete trails should not exceed 3% grades.
- Stone dust trail bases should not exceed widths of 3.0 meters, except to accommodate two-way traffic for wheelchairs and strollers.
- Additional steps can be taken to augment basic tracts with features such as:
  - Stone armoring in areas that require firming of the trail base;
  - Stone dust and crusher run applications where added traction is required.
- Boardwalk features can be added to any trail that has

#### Full Bench Construction



5% Tread Base Slope

soil drainage issues or standing water.

- Trail paving should only be completed as a final option when pavement applications are necessary to construct or enhance a trail because of the existing topography or intended user base.
- Hard and soft earth bases are most desirable to the majority of trail users, and have a lesser impact on the natural environment.
- Paved trails should have minimum widths of 3.0 meters to accommodate two-way traffic for strollers, wheelchairs, rollerblades users, and bikes.
- Investigations into future trail locations, desired uses and topography should be the major factor when considering trail bases (paved, hard earth, etc.).

### **7.2.3 Accessibility**

- Fully accessible trails should be clearly marked in promotional material and on trailhead signage.
- Minimum trail widths for one-way traffic must be 1.2 metres.
- Minimum vertical clearance height for accessible trails must be 2.0 metres.
- Accessible trails should be free of obstructions during all fair-weather months of the year.
- Accessible trails should have a maximum grade of 3% across the bases.
- Fully accessible trails should be constructed from concrete, stone dust, or asphalt.

## **7.3 ASSESSMENT & MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Success of the City's Trails Program relies on the ongoing condition appraisal and maintenance of the each trail corridor. Each trail segment must be assessed, at least on an annual basis, to ensure that safety standards and trail condition standards are being upheld. A regular inspection and maintenance schedule will help prevent major repair projects, due to erosion or overgrowth of vegetation, over the long term.

### **7.3.1 Trail Assessment & Maintenance Protocols:**

- All trails within the City must be inspected at least on an annual basis. Photographs and written records must summarize the condition of each trail corridor during assessments, which is intended to inform the list of City Trail Maintenance Priorities (Sec. 7.4).
- Harrison Park, Kelso Beach Park, the Harbour Walkway, and the portions of the Tom Thomson Trail and the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail that lie within the City should be prioritized for maintenance as major trail systems within the larger Network.
- Small and large scale shrub and tree trimming along trail corridors shall take place in spring to the satisfaction of the Manager of Parks and Open Space or the City's Arborist.

- Trails should be brushed back in treed areas so vegetation does not interfere with bikes or normal pedestrian usage. Unruly growth of branches and bushes pose a safety hazard for trail users and require simple ongoing maintenance.
- Public feedback must be encouraged with respect to trail conditions. Responses to maintenance grievances must be carried out in a timely manner. The City of Owen Sound website has a public comment option to list issues with the current trail system.
- All trail routes with stone dust and gravel bases should undergo regular grading during the late spring and summer. Grading will help ensure that run off does not erode trail bases. This maintenance will also ensure that trail bases are free of pot holes and are smooth for ease of use.
- Tripping hazards must be minimized by maintaining trail bases, especially hard and soft earth trails. Many trails in the City have bases which are susceptible to exposed tree roots. These pose a risk to trail walkers, runners, and bike users. Minor creepers can be snipped with shears in the spring. Root wads or heavily exposed roots can be shaved down with the use of a Pulaski tool, without any major impact on the tree itself. This maintenance can be completed during annual trail assessments.
- Many popular City trails are also used throughout the winter. The City maintains some paved routes during the winter season. Emphasis should be placed on the winter maintenance of routes that are used by students. The Harbour Walkway would also benefit from regular snow removal and winter maintenance.
- Boardwalks, such as the one at Weaver's Creek, should also be routinely inspected and maintained. Loose nails and screws should be replaced as needed.
- Steps should be taken to remove or control noxious weeds/plants along City trail routes. Poison Ivy and Hogweed are common along some popular trail routes. Permitted spraying or removal would be adequate.
- When trails are severely degraded due to weather, soil conditions or extreme circumstances, the City should post trails as CLOSED until further notice.

With the completion of a RTMP, it becomes fundamentally important that the City strive to maintain a Trails Program which oversees the policies and priorities listed in this document. Surveys and past Plans show the need to maintain and enhance the City's Trail networks. Whether funding for such programs are allocated through City of Owen Sound budgets, or through external funding avenues the demand still remains. Below is an outline for a 5yr priority plan in terms of trail projects with the City of Owen Sound. Note: As of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012, two City of Owen Sound Parks staff have been trained in "Sustainable Single Track Trail Design".

### 8.1 CONTINUE OWEN SOUND SAFE TRAILS NETWORK PROJECT

- Continue with a Trails Program Coordinator who can set up work plans, oversee project completions, and undertake works noted below. With a position devoted to trails and greenspace recreational opportunities, the objectives in this plan will move along quickly with expertise guidance. Having a staff position (albeit contract or full time) for an individual with specific skill sets in Trail building, Trail Planning + design, promotion and project implementation would be very valuable to the City of Owen Sound.

**Cost:** Wages for Coordinator. Roughly \$35,000 annually. This money can be internal or external of the City via funding projects and grant programs. This position could be structured under the division of Parks and Open Space Division and deal further with greenspace management, trail maintenance and outdoor recreation projects.

**Timeline:** 2 to 5yrs of project coordination pending desired goals in this priority plan.

### 8.2 RECLAMATION/REMEDICATION OF EXISTING CITY OF OWEN SOUND TRAILS WHICH ARE IN POOR CONDITION

- Feeder links within Harrison Park (Parkview Crescent Trail) require erosion control, rerouting, and clearing.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West extension trail requires immediate erosion works, and trail stabilization.
- Minor tread work to a multitude of hard earth trails located within Harrison Park.

**Cost:** Minimal. Man power and hand tools with the option for further design projects which may require aggregate applications (stonedust).

**Timeline:** Spring to Fall in one season. Should be completed within the 1<sup>st</sup> year of capital works. Work could begin in 2012.



### 8.3 NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION – STONEY ORCHARD PARK (EAST SIDE OWEN SOUND)

- This large parcel of former development and forest land already includes a network of single track trails. Investigations into the current system would reveal the possibility for current trail re-routing and further development of the trail system. Former “dump piles” of aggregate are located on the property which would provide a base material for technical trail design and aesthetic works. A stone dust perimeter trail could be created to provide access for ALL USERS including those who are using wheelchairs. Implementing trail works on this property would provide the Upper East Side of Owen Sound with a forest recreation destination at a minimal cost. Trail signage would be required with a similar Kiosk structure erected and interpretive nature signage which would provide local school groups with an educational destination in terms of natural environments. This property provides the City of Owen Sound with a unique and valuable destination for an entire system of recreational trails.

**Cost:** Staff wages for a maximum of 3 individuals or JCP (Job Creation Program Funding) + materials and tools. Roughly \$5000 in capital works (includes signage).

**Timeline:** Depending on extent of project, minor works could be completed in 1 month. Major design and build works could encompass an entire summer and fall season.

### 8.4 NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION – HARRISON PARK

- Inventory, plan and build Single Track style trails on both East and West sides of Harrison Park. Multiple single track loops can be easily accommodated on both areas of Harrison Park forest land. Single Track style trails will provide a “tourism” attraction for mountain bike enthusiasts, while providing various recreational trail options for City users. The park encompasses a large area of forest land which would lend itself to sustainable, non-intrusive trail design. These single track trails would provide MULTI-USE routes through the park. (see 12.2/9.0)

**Cost:** Wages for 2 trail builders (1 being the Coordinator) + hand tools + usage of City Arborist for 1 summer season. Trail builders can be provided through internal seasonal staff in Parks and Recreation or through an external grant program.

**Timeline:** 1 summer season would provide the time to design and construct roughly 3km of trail. Subsequent seasonal work would provide the park with up to 5km of varied single track trail routes through large forest plots in the park.

Pilot Project could begin in 2012

## 8.5 NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION – TIMBER MCARTHUR PARK

- Providing a trail link between Stoney Orchard Park and Timber McArthur Park along the Eastside escarpment would better link the Bayshore and Regional Recreation Centre to attractive trail destinations. A simple stonedust trail from the southern end of McArthur Park to the edge of the Stoney Orchard Property would provide a direct link from major City destinations, a paved catwalk and the Bayshore. This project would aide in “completing” missing links in trail systems. (see 12.1)

**Cost:** Parks Staff time + stonedust material of 3m wide x 700 meters long.

**Timeline:** 2 weeks to complete project provided the manpower and materials.

## 8.6 CITY WIDE TRAIL SIGNAGE PROJECT

- Use the success of the Harrison Park Pilot Signage Project and follow a similar format throughout the City. Determine what routes and destinations require signage. Location signs similar to the Park Pilot Project would be ideal. The creation of 2 to 3 more overall City Trail Maps and Kiosks would also accommodate the need for signage. Ideal locations for new Kiosks would include: Harbour Walkway near Bayshore, Kelso Beach, and the new Regional Recreation Centre. (see Figure 11.1 – Trail Inventory Map).
- The City should also implement new 911 signage in areas which are currently lacking these signs (Stoney Orchard, Harbour Walkway)

**Cost:** approx. \$7000 to \$10,000

**Timeline:** 1 spring to fall season (map design and printing require 4 months) to complete.

This project should be undertaken within the 1<sup>st</sup> 2yrs of works. 2013 would be an adequate start date.

## 8.7 NEW TRAIL CONSTRUCTION – MILL DAM TO 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET WEST

- The western river bank of the Sydenham between the Mill Dam and 8<sup>th</sup> street bridge was at one time, a hard earth fisherman’s trail. The stretch could use some work to once again establish this trail link. The obvious benefits would be accommodations to anglers and providing a scenic trail along the banks of the river.

**Cost:** Wages for 2 trail workers + hours for City Arborist+ bank stabilization materials (rock, logs, etc)

**Timeline:** Late summer project to coincide with MNR and GSCA permitting. Job would be completed within a month. 2014

## 8.8 TRAIL PAVING WORKS – HARRISON PARK

- Currently the trail system in Harrison Park does not include a paved route which enters and exits the park. In order to fully accommodate a wide range of trail users (wheelchairs, street bikes, pedestrians with strollers) an ideal system would incorporate a paved route on both the east and west side of the Park. Investigations and job quotes have been compiled for this project. Pavement would top the Fitness trail on the east side of the Sydenham River to the Ski Hill parking lot. A paved topping would be applied to the Freedom trail as well completing a totally paved link in and out of the park. This project requires a substantial amount of capital works; however the benefits of such a complete trail system would be a massive addition to city trail infrastructure.

**Cost:** Quote from 2 local contractors put the total project price between \$90,000 and \$120,000.

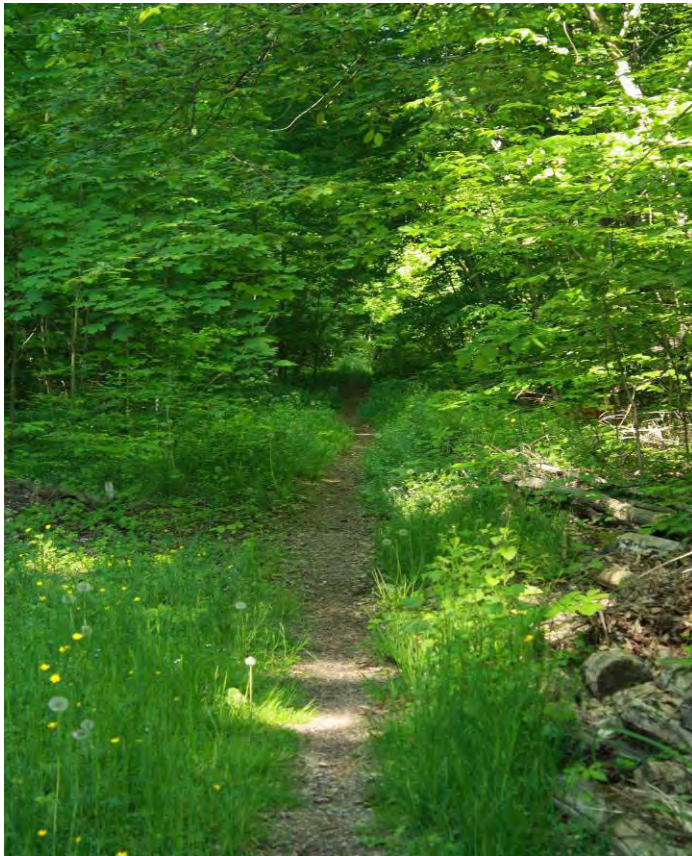
**Timeline:** 1 week

## 8.9 JOB CREATION PROGRAM/SKILLS LINK PROJECT – FUNDS FOR TRAIL DESIGN

- Acquiring external funding for trail building projects should become an immediate priority for the City. Through Job Creation Programming and the Federal Skills Link program, monies can be secured to employ staff which would focus on the design and creation of new trails. Neighbouring county and municipal offices have undertaken such projects with much success. This option would provide the City with “designated” trail workers to aide in the priority projects listed above. These workers would be under the guidance and supervision of the Trails Project Coordinator and Parks and Open Spaces Division. The cost to the City for these programs is minor. Many funding projects require the applicant to supply or match a certain % of the requested funds. All avenues for applicable funding should be explored. This task can be taken under the direction of the Trails Project Coordinator.

**Cost:** Fund matching

**Timeline:** Continuous and ongoing



**Figure 1**

Trail Route from 4<sup>th</sup> Ave West to 1<sup>st</sup> Street West across from Harrison Park. This trail enters the downtown region. This trail is a prime example of a “fall line” trail. Mass amounts of dirt and trail base material erodes down the trail and deposits at the end of 1<sup>st</sup> West. This is an area for immediate trail remediation.



**Figure 2**

This trail route is known as the “Park View Crescent” trail. This route is located nearly directly across from the Park View Erosion Trail. This route has been deemed “closed” as it encounters some serious erosion issues as it drops into the Fitness Trail along the eastern boarder of Harrison Park. This trail is a prime candidate for remediation works. This is another prime example of “unsustainable trail development” and a “fall line trail”.



**Figure 3**

In terms of “future” trail work, this site is a prime candidate for a new route. This area is a large parcel of Hazard Land located along the banks of the Pottawatomoni River, North of Alpha Street. The rolling terrain and heavily wooded buffer zone presents an opportunity for a scenic recreation trail. Design, as noted in the RTMP body, would accommodate a “sustainable single track trail”.



**Figure 4**

This picture represents one of the 2 major feeder trails which connect the Upper East Side with the Fitness Trail in Harrison Park. This route in the photo extends up the escarpment and connects to 5<sup>th</sup> Ave A East. This site will be under construction in late summer of 2012 to repair a catch basin and sub drain issue near the Eastern Trail head off of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave A. Plans for re-directing the trail route

are in the works. As seen in the “tread base”, this trail is a classic fall line route and requires attention.



**Figure 5**

East of the Fitness Trail in Harrison Park provides a large wooded area south of the Ski Hill. This forest area, with a rolling terrain is a prime candidate area for IMBA single Track trails.



**Figure 6**

West of the Fitness Trail along the banks of the Sydenham is an ideal area to add another single tract trail. This could possibly incorporate a boardwalk feature in seasonally wet areas. This trail would parallel the Fitness Trail, yet take into account the natural sights and features along the banks of the river.



**Figure 7**

The west side of Harrison Park provides a multitude of future trail building opportunities. This photo shows the forested hillside behind the Seniors Center. This area once had a plethora of single tract trail routes which have been taken back by the forest. This area could accommodate multiple single tract LOOP routes.



**Figure 8**

The Western edge of Harrison Park, across from Greenwood Cemetery is another prime example of forest land which would accommodate single tract hard earth trails. The natural topography of this land lends itself to the design of these trails. Creating a sustainable trail on these contours is an easy task in comparison to building trails on level grades.



Figure 9

Along the Harrison Park entrance road (West Side) are multiple “former” trail access points. This area is a prime location for a trailhead and staging area for any single tract hard earth routes.



Figure 10

This photo is a representation of Sustainable Trail Development. This parcel of single track trail has a crushed stone topping. The trail follows a forest contour and incorporates a 5% slope across the “tread”. This prevents water from eroding the trail surface and promotes precipitation to “sheet” down and across the trail. This trail is located in Bruce County.



**Figure 11.1 - Inventory Map**

This map coincides with Inventory Table (11.2)





**Figure 11.2 – Inventory Table**

<b>TRAIL</b>	<b>Distance (Km)</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Benches</b>	<b>Lighted</b>	<b>Comments</b>
# 25 Mile Drive	.5	Stone dust	Easy	Yes	No	No	Needs resurfacing in future
# 3 Orchard Park	3km	Dirt	Easy	Yes	No	No	Hidden asset for forest trails. Extension to Timber McArthur in future
# 24 Fitness Trail	1.2km	Stone dust	Easy	Yes	Yes	No	Possible extensions + paving
# 45 Eddie Sargeant	.2	Pavement	Easy	Yes	No	Yes	
# 2 Harbour Walkway	3km	Pavement and stone dust	Easy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Future snow removal
# 27 Weaver’s Creek	.2	Stone dust and boardwalk	Easy	Yes	Yes	No	Waterfall tour site
# 28 St. Mary’s Cemetery	.3	Dirt	Mod	Yes	No	No	Less used route
# 29 Freedom Trail in Park	.9km	Pavement and stone dust	Easy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Popular route in park
# 26 Top of the Hill loop	1km	Dirt	Mod	Yes	No	No	Side loop to Mile Drive
# 23 Parkview Erosion Trail	.4km	Stone dust	Easy	Yes	No	No	New trail link to park
# 20 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave E to Fitness Trail	.4	Dirt	Diff	Yes	No	No	Closed/Future Repairs
# 30 9 Bends	.6km	Pavement	Easy	Yes	No	No	Popular connector to Harrison Park
# 32 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave W to 1 <sup>st</sup> St W	.6	Multi	Mod	No	No	No	Poor conditions due to erosion
# 35 Mill Dam	.2	Pavement	Easy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Downtown crossing location
# 47 Kelso beach trails	1.5	Pavement and Stone dust	Easy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Popular trails starting point
#1 Tom Thomson/CP Rail Line # 6	4km +	Stonedust	Easy	Yes	Yes	No	Starting at Bayshore and follows rail line. TTT leaves Railbed at 26 <sup>th</sup> street E

TRAIL	Distance (Km)	Surface	Rating	Parking	Benches	Lighted	Comments
# 44 14 <sup>th</sup> Street W footpath	.1`	Grass	Mod	No	No	Yes	Residential connector/steep grade
# 42 10 <sup>th</sup> Street A W walk	.3	Concrete	Easy	No	No	Yes	Sidewalk route bypasses 10 <sup>th</sup> street W hill
# 43 Old Hospital Trail	.2	Pavement	Easy	No	No	Yes	Residential Connector
# 41 West Rocks Access Trail	.5	Rock and hard earth	Mod	Yes	No	No	Steep grade rugged trail opposite West Hill. Entrance to West Rocks
# 40 7 <sup>th</sup> Ave West/Merkel	.4	Gravel and hard earth	Mod	No	No	No	Access to West Rocks Popular snowshoe and ski route, access to Bruce Trail
# 39/38 Black's Park Trails	.5 total	Hard earth	Easy	No	No	No	School route/future development
# 37 5 <sup>th</sup> St. W to 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave W	.08km	Pavement	Easy	No	No	Yes	Residential route
# 36 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave W to 8 <sup>th</sup> St W	.2km	Pavement	Mod	No	No	Yes	Residential route to downtown. Steep grade
Sydenham Walking Path West Side	.2	Stonedust	Easy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Opposite library, fisherman's trail
# 34 Family Y trail East Side	.3	Stone dust	Easy	Yes	Yes	No	Fisherman's trail along Sydenham
# 9 MacArthur Park	.1	Pavement	Easy	No	No	Yes	Paved link to 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave E below hill
# 10 St. Mary's Paved link	.2	Pavement	Easy	No	No	Yes	Paved path at St. Mary's Church
# 11 Regional Recreation Centre Stairs	.2	Stairs	Mod	Yes	No	Yes	Steep stair linking Recreation Centre to St. Georges Ball Park
# 12 Taylor Park Paved Route	.2	Pavement	Easy	Yes	No	Yes	Paved link from Parkette to new 10 <sup>th</sup> St extension. School route
# 13 14 <sup>th</sup> Ave E to 10 <sup>th</sup> St extension	.2	Pavement	Easy	No	No	Yes	New connecting route to 10 <sup>th</sup> St extension and OSCVI
# 8 Heritage Place Trail	.4	Stone Dust	Easy	Yes	No	No	Trail connects the mall to residential area of 9 <sup>th</sup> Ave E
# 17/18 Tower Trails	.6	Stone Dust and Hard	Easy	Yes	Yes	No	Route to Centennial tower and Bruce Trail

TRAIL	Distance (Km)	Surface	Rating	Parking	Benches	Lighted	Comments
		Earth					Link. Landmark area
Parkview Crescent Trail	.4	Hard earth	Diff	No	No	No	Eroded and dangerous route to the fitness trail from Parkview Crescent

**Figure 12.1 – New Trail Development Areas – NE Owen Sound**

Stoney Orchard Park, McArthur Park and the Victoria Park trail development areas are highlighted.



### Figure 12.2 – New Trail Development Areas – South

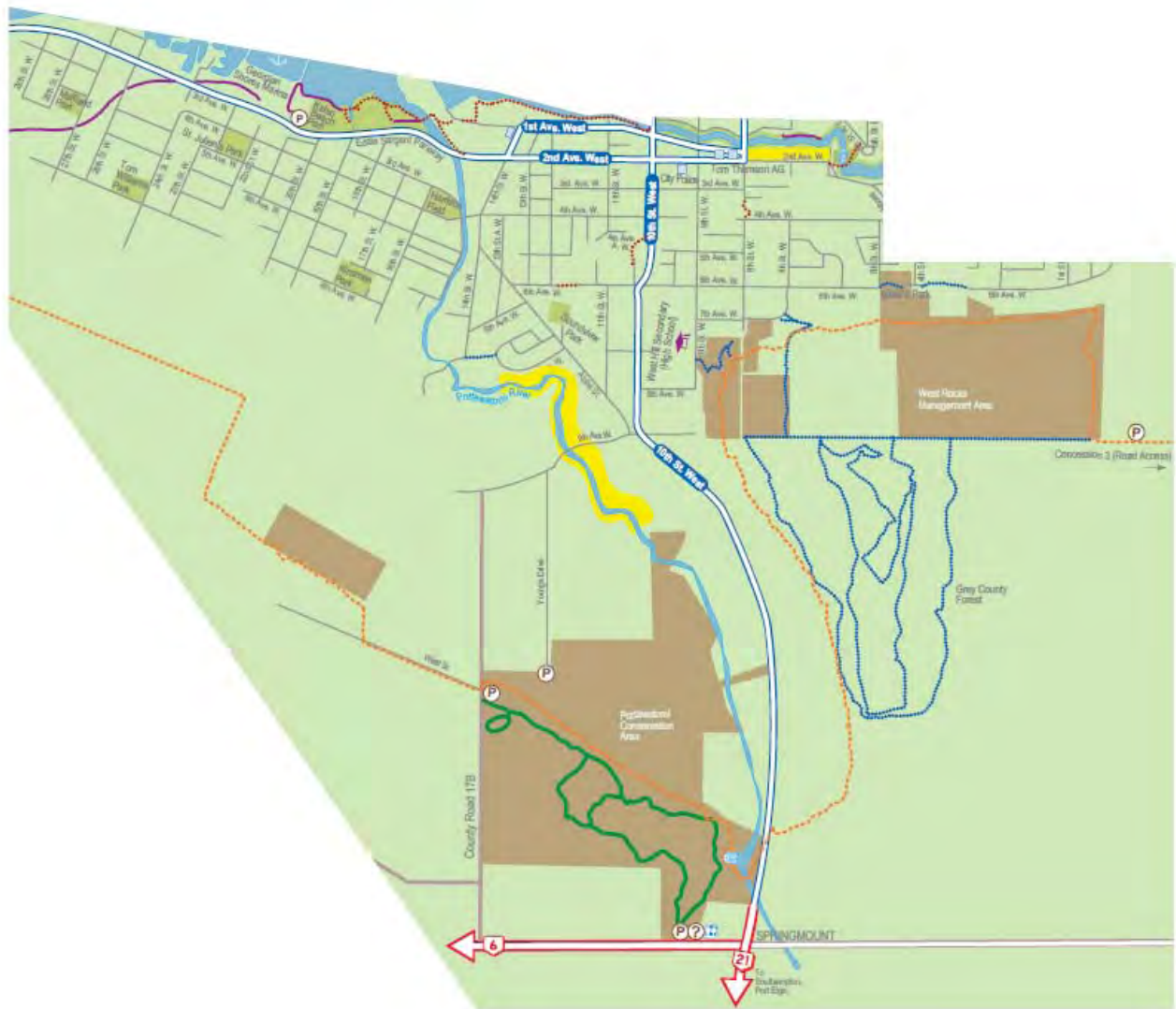
The west and east slopes within Harrison Park are highlighted for new trail development. These areas within the Park are the most accommodating for Sustainable Single Track trail design.



**Figure 12.3 – New Trail Development Areas – West**

Areas within “Hazard Land” along riverbanks in the City accommodate Sustainable Single Track Trail Design.

**Figure 12.3 – Yellow shaded areas denote future trail work zones**







**Figure 12.4**

Example of a paved trail in Owen Sound. This section of trail is located near Kelso Beach. Paved sections of trail can accommodate a very large user base. Paved trails are common in urban centers and offer the ability to provide fully accessible trail usage.



**Figure 12.5**

This photo is a prime example of a concrete trail. Concrete trails are somewhat uncommon in Owen Sound aside from sidewalk routes. This trail is located just north of 10<sup>th</sup> street West.



**Figure 12.6**

This photo represents one of the most popular trail routes in Owen Sound. This stone dust section of the Freedom trail is an example of a multi-use surface for trail design. This material is an adequate trail base in areas with low erosion risk.



**Figure 12.7**

This is an example of a “Hard Earth” single track trail in Bruce County. Designed with hand tools for a very low cost, this trail provides the MOST SUSTAINABLE type of trail available. This section of trail is constructed along property contours with a 5% outslope across the trail grade. This trail was constructed in 2002 and has required minimal maintenance.



**Figure 12.8**

Another example of a single track trail design. This hard earth trail uses grades of 5% across the tread to promote water drainage and maintain a sustainable design.

**Figure 13 – Harrison Park Trail System**



# Appendix 1

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## Policy from Section 2 in body of Plan...

### Owen Sound Strategic Plan (2008)

- The City should consider the needs of persons with disabilities and ensure maximum integrated accessibility for all citizens.
- The City should recognize the economic opportunities presented by maintaining and enhancing the City's infrastructure.
- The City should ensure that its planning documents are updated to reflect good planning policies.
- The City should give a high priority to the implementation of the City Trails Master Plan and support the Counties of Grey and Bruce, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and other partners in the development of a competitive regional trail network.
- The City should maximize the potential of its natural attractions to create a major tourist destination.
- The City should promote the objectives of 'healthy communities' through program and facility development.
- The City should play an advocacy role identifying and promoting health needs in the community.

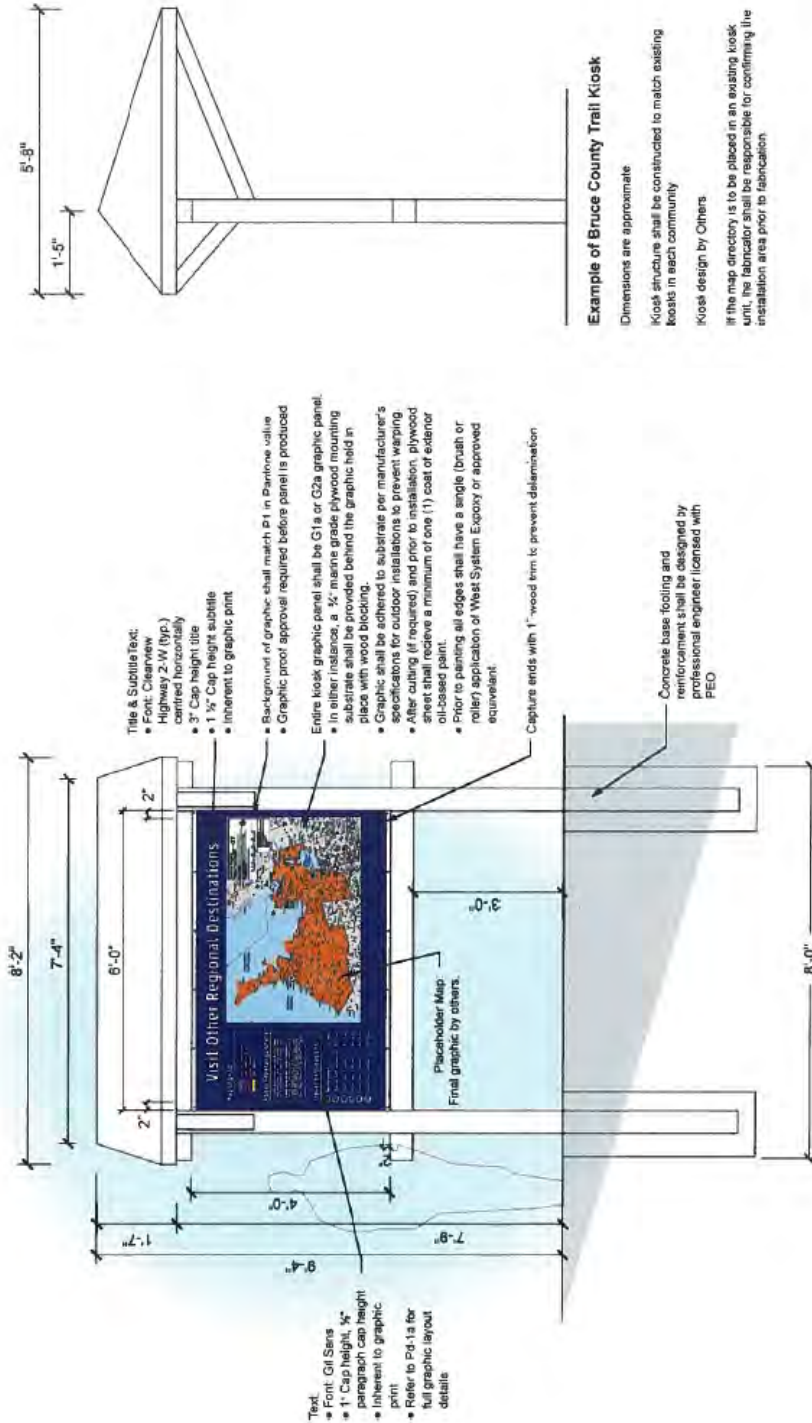
### Owen Sound Official Plan (2006)

- Sec. 3.1.2.5 Promote, protect and maintain the City's natural linkages, including trails.
- Sec. 3.1.2.13 Encourage transportation and land use planning decisions based on environmental and economic sustainability.
- Sec 3.3.2.1 Promote a healthy, active City and a high standard of healthcare for its residents and visitors.
- Sec. 3.4.2.4 Achieve a highly integrated system of recreational areas and trails, and recreation programs throughout the City, particularly within the Downtown, harbour areas, and escarpment parks.
- Sec. 6.1.1.7 The preservation and reuse of abandoned rail corridors shall continue to be encouraged and the pedestrian paths existing on abandoned rail corridors shall be maintained.
- Sec. 6.1.5.1 Pedestrian links and bicycle trails may be located on public road allowances, parks, City or government owned lands and rights-of-way acquired over or through privately held lands as indicated on Schedule 'D' - Trails. Consideration should be given to providing connections between pedestrian links/bicycle trails and residential streets and areas of open space, schools and public transit facilities.
- Sec. 6.1.5.3 Accessibility for all people shall be considered in the design of pedestrian links and trails in accordance with the City's Accessibility Plan.

- Sec. 6.1.5.4 The City shall work towards providing pedestrian and bicycle trails separated from the roadway on existing and proposed roads, on abandoned rail corridors and within parks and open spaces as appropriate. The City shall provide for the development of continuous trail systems along the waterfront and along the Sydenham River to the inner and outer Harbour to ensure public access.
- Sec. 6.1.5.5 The City, through a bylaw, may control direct snowmobile/ATV/ equestrian access to specified city access points. Access points shall be identified, encouraged and regularly reviewed.
- Sec. 7.3.2.1 The City shall, in partnership with a variety of organizations, adopt a healthy living strategy incorporating, among other matters, improved fitness, activity, nutrition, health and well-being of all residents.

# Appendix 2

## Design Plans for Trail Head Kiosk



### Example of Bruce County Trail Kiosk

Dimensions are approximate

Kiosk structure shall be constructed to match existing kiosks in each community

Kiosk design by Others

If the map directory is to be placed in an existing kiosk unit, the fabricator shall be responsible for confirming the installation area prior to fabrication

Page 7-2.1

Project: P4.13 Rural Pedestrian RTO 7 Map Directory  
 Date: July, 2011  
 Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"  
 Status: FINAL DOCUMENT

Tourism Wayfinding Signage, Regional Tourism Organization 7

form: media  
 1500 Lake Dunwoody, NE 57407 402-444-4447 402-445-3331  
 402-444-4447 402-445-3331  
 402-444-4447 402-445-3331

### **REFERENCES:**

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