

Future Roles and Responsibilities of Community Trails Associations with respect to Active Transportation Facilities

- Administrative Order Development Project -

**Item No. 9.1.1.
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting**

December 16, 2019

Agenda and Today's Objective

Agenda

- Project Origin
- Background: Facts, current stakeholders' roles and responsibilities
- Project Objectives
- Stakeholders Engagement Sessions to date
- Next Steps
- Accessibility Considerations

Today's Objective:

- Present our project plan and receive feedback to help staff identify opportunities to support the AO development
- Consider next steps on making multi-use pathways in HRM more accessible.

Origin

Regional Council Meeting on January 15, 2019 approved the report [14.3.1 Future Roles and Responsibilities of Community Trails Associations with Respect to Active Transportation Facilities \[PDF\]](#) in which the Transportation Standing Committee motioned that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to:

- Continue Municipal funding support for volunteer community associations who plan, build, maintain and promote active transportation facilities in the municipality;
- Develop an Administrative Order for Regional Council's consideration that updates roles and responsibilities and establishes a Municipal grant/contribution program to support the work of such associations; and
- Consult with community associations, the provincial government, the Halifax Regional Trails Association, HRM officials and other stakeholders in the development of this proposed Administrative Order on key issues as outlined in the discussion section of the August 10, 2018 staff report.

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

(1) Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA)

- **Represent communities' interests:** unified framework for its members to meet responsibilities related to HRM funding programs
- **Funding screening:** sub-committees conduct peer review and evaluation of funding proposals and make recommendations to HRM
- **Advocacy and Communications:** represented in the HRM's Active Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Provincial Government's Inter-Governmental Committee on Trails through its membership in the Nova Scotia Trails Federation.
- **Collaboration.** HRTA is a forum for its members to report achievements, challenges, identify potential opportunities and share best practices.

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

(2) HRTA Trails Associations

“Operators”

- bound to legal agreements with the land owner; responsibilities: planning (routing options selection, community engagement, resource development), construction, maintenance/ operations, and recapitalization; fundraising, and insurance
- built 119km of trails since 1999, mostly on provincial land;
- reported \$12MIL funding from other sources since 1999

Background: HRTA' s Trail Associations

“Operators”



Musquodoboit Trail
- Built and maintained by
Musquodoboit Trailways Association

- Atlantic View Trails Association
- Beechville, Timberlea, Lakeside Trail Association
- Carrolls Corner Community Centre
- Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association
- Friends of First Lake
- Musquodoboit Trailways Association
- Sackville Lakes Parks and Trails Association
- Sackville River Association
- St. Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trail Association
- Shubie Watershed Environmental Protection Society
- Shore Active Transportation Association.

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

(2) HRTA Trails Associations

“Supporters”

- have mostly a planning and advocacy role; some have trail warden patrols, maintain trailheads/signage and do some maintenance as directed by licence agreement with HRM; lack of clear roles and responsibilities has been a source of frustration for these groups
- initiated project development for 23KM built by HRM, mostly on HRM land

Background: HRTA' s Trail Associations “Supporters”



Chain of Lakes Trail

- Built by HRM with support from Chain of Lakes Trail Association
- Currently maintained by HRM

- Chain of Lakes Trail Association
- Halifax North West Trails Association
- Halifax Urban Greenway Association
- McIntosh Run Watershed Association
- Porters Lake & Myra Rd Heritage Society
- Preston Area Trails Association
- Cole Harbour Parks and Trails
- Sackville Rivers Association
- Penhorn Lake Area Trail Association

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

(3) Halifax Regional Municipality

- **Provision of Funding:** Capital/ Re-Capitalization and Maintenance Funding Programs;
- **Establish Regional Active Transportation Plans:** AT Priorities Plan and IMP determines project eligibility
- **Planning and coordinator staff support community association “operators” -led projects** (co- planning and funding coordination)
- **Full project management for community association “supporters” initiated projects:** TPW staff lead and deliver planning, conducting preliminary and detailed design and overseeing construction; groups are engaged during the planning stages
- **Maintenance and operation of AT facilities:** Operations staff maintain most of the multi-use pathways where trail groups have a “supporters” role

Background: Roles and Responsibilities

(4) Nova Scotia Provincial Government

- **Letter of Authority Process Administration:** transfers responsibility for planning, construction, maintenance and operations to volunteer community associations; determine future uses and administration of the facility if a community group were to disband or relinquish its LOA
- **Guarantor of insurance deductible for community-operated facilities:** \$1,000,000 deductible requested for coverage by the insurance provider for all community associations who are members of the Nova Scotia Trails Federation (NSTF)- all HRTA members are included
- **Funding support for AT facilities:** Trail Maintenance: \$1,000 base plus \$100/KM for those on an LOA and “Off-Highway Vehicle” infrastructure fund for “shared-use” trails. Capital funding: Recreational Trail Expansion Program 33% - up to \$150K; Trails Engineering Assistance Grant Program for structures; and Connect2.
- **Enforcement** with provincial wardens and conservation officers

Administrative Order Development Objectives (1)

- **Update the administrative model and authority for HRM funding for community association projects**
 - Formalize this legacy grant funding program and align with current plans and priorities
 - Direct staff on the required administrative steps to prioritize funding for AT Facilities identified in the current policy
 - Develop a contribution grant funding program model which allows staff to make decisions by evaluating applicant community groups and their proposals based on set criteria;
 - Consider whether non-HRTA member groups could be eligible to receive the Grants
- **Consider four streams of funding to support capital, re-capitalization, maintenance, promotion and education**

Administrative Order Development Objectives(2)

- Provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of community associations who do not have agreements to build, maintain and operate facilities
- Manage risks and opportunities related to community associations' sustainability
- Confirm the inter-jurisdictional roles and responsibilities between HRM and the Province

Administrative Order Development Objectives(3)

- Clarify Maintenance and Operations costs and responsibilities for HRM
- Determine a clear direction on HRM funding for facilities permitting Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)
- Respond to the request for an HRM funding program to support the construction and ongoing maintenance of recreational trails.
- Other issues as determined during stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholders engagement to date

- **Internal Stakeholders meetings:** Legal, Insurance and Risk Management and Finance (Community Grants) staff; Parks and Recreation;
- **HRTA and member Trail Associations surveys**
- **External stakeholders meetings and presentations with** the Province of Nova Scotia- Interdepartmental Committee on Trails (ICT) members, Nova Scotia Trails Federation, ATVANS and other OHV Clubs, ATAC, Accessibility Advisory Committee
- **Other jurisdictions:** conversations with **Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition**; other conversations to be scheduled;
- **Surveys sent to AT groups of interest such as:** Halifax Cycling Coalition, Walk'n Roll, Ecology Action Centre, Bicycle Nova Scotia

Administrative Order Development

Next Steps

- December 2019: Finalize stakeholder engagement sessions
- Nov 2019 – Jan 2020: Develop requirements summary to inform the AO
- Dec - Feb 2020: Develop AO in partnership with Legal
- Dec - Feb 2020: Develop Recommendation Report
- Feb 20, 2020: Present AO and Recommendation Report to ATAC
- May 28, 2020: Present AO and Recommendation Report to TSC
- June 16, 2020: Present AO and Recommendation Report to the Regional Council
- June – Sept 2020: Transition as per new AO
- Sept 2020 and ongoing: Implementation of the new AO

Some accessibility considerations

- Many AT facilities have accessibility advantages (slope, surface, trail heads, benches);
- No current methodology to establish and communicate whether or not a facility is “accessible”.
- Report to Council will suggest future action items – focus on accessibility could be one of these. For example:
 - Grants criteria could encourage projects to improve accessibility;
 - Establish thresholds/methodology for accessibility designation;
 - Education, outreach and promotion to help residents access facilities (e.g. support Blind Sports NS group rides)

Thank you

Questions/ Suggestions?

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