

Report PDR-AAC-33-16

To: Chair Burley and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
From: Sarah Morrison, Intermediate Planner
Meeting Date: September 16, 2016
Subject: Increasing Accessibility on the St. Vincent Trail
Status:

Recommendation(s)

THAT Report PDR-AAC-33-16 regarding increasing the accessibility of the St. Vincent Trail be received;

AND THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee support staff proceeding with the development of more accessible features on the St. Vincent Trail.

Background

Staff presented a potential opportunity for upgrading the accessibility of a trail on the St. Vincent Forest Tract to the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) on June 24, 2015. At that time AAC members indicated support to move forward with the project.

The St. Vincent Forest is located just east of the Town of Meaford and offers sweeping views of Georgian Bay. The St. Vincent Forest was selected for a trail revitalization accessibility project largely due to the flat terrain and opportunities for inclusive access for recreation and scenic views. The trail is also accessed from a regionally accessible trail system known as the Georgian Trail.

The St. Vincent trail redevelopment plan is unchanged from 2015 and will include:

- minimum clear width (1 m) and height (2.1 m) specifications;
- have a firm and stable surface; - packed stone dust
- meet restrictions on the size of surface openings (must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm), and orient elongated openings perpendicular to the direction of travel;

- meet specifications on edge protection (50 mm) when located beside water or a drop-off, except where a protective barrier already exists;
- provide minimum clear width at its opening (0.85 m to 1 m), regardless of entrance design (e.g., gate, bollard, etc.); and
- meet trail head signage requirements as outlined in the Standard Providing clear signage can help users decide how best to enjoy the trail experience according to their needs and abilities.
- The trail head must have signage containing information about the physical characteristics of the trail [s. 80.9(1)8], including:
 - length of trail;
 - type of surface of which the trail is constructed;
 - average and minimum trail width;
 - average and maximum running slope and cross slope; and
 - location of amenities, where provided.

In 2015 staff applied for funding through the Canada 150 grant and were unsuccessful. A resubmission for this project was made in 2016; to date staff have not received notification of awards granted.

Staff are requesting continued support and additional feedback on the proposed plans. Comment on the items below will assist with finalizing the project details:

- slope of the trails;
- need for, and location of, ramps on the trail; and
- need for, location and design of:
 - rest areas;
 - passing areas;
 - viewing areas;
 - amenities on the trail; and
 - any other relevant accessibility feature

There are other factors that staff will also be investigating, related to this project including, parking access for the Georgian Trail, destination signage, distances and facilities available.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

As mentioned, funding has been applied for through the Canada 150 grant program. To date notification has not been received as to whether or not the County has been

successful in obtaining that funding. There are funds available in the 2016 budget should the grant application not be successful.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Corporate Strategic Plan goal 3.6 – Continue to use good forestry practices in managing County-owned forests, while supporting an appropriate range of recreational opportunities.

Corporate Strategic Plan goal 5.2 – Collaborate with the public, stakeholders, and other governments to improve delivery of County services.

Corporate Strategic Plan goal 6.7 – Ensure that County services and programs are inclusive, accessible, and reflective of the diversity of the population.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sarah Morrison
Intermediate Planner

Director Sign Off: *Randy Scherzer*