

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 23 48-95-0003
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 23 March 1999

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Planning and Development Approvals Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET **COMPLETING THE TRANS CANADA TRAIL IN OTTAWA-CARLETON**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1. Registering with the Trans Canada Trail Foundation that part of the Carleton Place Subdivision rail corridor in RMOC ownership as part of the Trans Canada Trail with the proviso that this use will not preclude its future role as a transportation and utility corridor;**
- 2. Delegation to the Commissioner of Planning and Development Approvals the authority to finalise and sign a Memorandum of Understanding, on behalf of the Region, with Ontario Trails Council for the use, development and management of that part of the Carleton Place Subdivision rail corridor, in RMOC ownership, as part of the Trans Canada Trail.**

BACKGROUND

Communities across Canada are working together to build the Trans Canada Trail -- a 15,000-kilometre multi-use recreational trail from coast to coast, linking all provinces and territories. When completed, it will be the longest trail of its kind in the world. Conceived in 1992 to celebrate Canada's 125th anniversary, this project is well underway, with major segments across Canada scheduled for completion by the year 2000 in celebration of the Millennium. Ottawa 2000 has endorsed bringing the Trans Canada Trail to Ottawa-Carleton as one of the projects for the region's millennium celebrations. With its mandate to co-ordinate millennium projects, Ottawa 2000 formed the ByWays of Ottawa-Carleton Committee. This committee brings together community groups and various levels of government to complete the missing pieces of the Trans Canada Trail in Ottawa-Carleton and to seek opportunities to link our communities to the Trail.

A list of the initial members of the ByWays / Trans Canada Trail Committee is attached as Annex A.

The planning, design and construction of the Trail across Canada is co-ordinated by the Trans Canada Trail Foundation, and their provincial representative, the Ontario Trails Council. Their objective is to work with municipalities and local organisations to find safe off-road trail routes – preferably in their own corridor. The Foundation has identified five core users to share the trail: walkers, cyclists, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and equestrian riders. While the objective is to have all users be able to use the trail, some may not be able to use the trail due to its conditions and context.

In 1997, The Trans Canada Trail Foundation approached the Region of Ottawa-Carleton and the National Capital Commission requesting that key existing pathways and publicly-owned corridors be registered and used as part of the Trans Canada Trail. The Region's abandoned rail corridor between Bells Corners and Carleton Place was identified as a link between the Trail already registered in the urban area and the emerging trail network to the west of Ottawa-Carleton between Carleton Place and beyond to Central Ontario.

This preferred route was based on the extensive network of existing pathways and public open spaces, and on routes identified in the *1994 Integrated Network of Recreational Pathways for the National Capital Region*. This study was produced by the NCC in partnership with regional municipalities and area municipalities on the Ontario and Quebec sides of the Ottawa River.

So far, the National Capital Commission has registered over 76 kilometres of pathway, as part of the Trans Canada Trail -- including over 26 kilometres on the Ontario-side of the Capital Region. Of that, 5 kilometres remains unbuilt through rough terrain in the Greenbelt, from Watts Creek to Bells Corners. The NCC plans to complete this portion of the trail in 1999/2000. The Trans Canada Trail Foundation asked the Region of Ottawa-Carleton to register the abandoned rail corridor from Bells Corners, through Kanata and Stittsville, to Carleton Place. Ten kilometres of this corridor between Bells Corners and Stittsville has already been improved with stone dust -- leaving 21 kilometres from Stittsville to Carleton Place to be upgraded. The final seven kilometres of Trail on the corridor which extends through Lanark County, would be developed in partnership with Lanark County through the ByWays Committee.

In its 1997 study for the twinning of Hwy 7, from Hwy 417 to Carleton Place, the Ministry of Transportation for Ontario (MTO) recommended the portion of the abandoned rail corridor in Lanark County be used as a service road. The report determined that there was sufficient ROW width for a township road and a separate recreational pathway corridor which could accommodate the Trans Canada Trail. The report was presented to Transportation Committee on June 18, 1997.

The Trans Canada Trail passes through the western half of the Region and crosses to Hull Québec. Municipal and community partners are investigating recreational pathways to the south and east of Ottawa-Carleton, to link these suburban and rural communities to the Trans Canada Trail.

A Map of the Trans Canada Trail in Ottawa-Carleton is attached as Annex B.

DISCUSSION

Policy context

Regional policy encourages the development of recreational pathways and allows for the development of these pathways, such as the Trans Canada Trail, as an interim use, on its abandoned rail corridors.

Through its Official Plan, Council recognises the value of recreational pathways in a green and open setting as an important means to enhance continuity of open space experiences and natural environmental functions, and to link tourism recreation and cultural heritage destinations in the urban and rural areas. While the abandoned rail corridor owned by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton is reserved for future rapid transit opportunities, regional policy allows interim uses such as a recreational pathway. The existing pathway between Bells Corners and Stittsville was completed under this provision in 1997.

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton supports the Trans Canada Trail in its 1997 Official Plan. Policy 9, Section 6.8 Recreational Pathways, states: “When reviewing and approving development proposals or providing infrastructure, support the continuity of the Trans-Canada Trail and the Rideau Trail.” The Carleton Place Subdivision corridor is also identified as a Recreational Pathway on Schedules I and J in the Regional Official Plan.

The opportunity for interim recreational uses is addressed in Policy 6, Section 9.9 Right-of-Way Protection in the 1997 Official Plan which states that:

“Use all surplus abandoned rail rights-of -way acquired by the RMOC for transportation facilities, utility corridors, outdoor recreation, parks and open space. For such rights-of-way which the RMOC acquires, recreational and agricultural uses shall be considered interim and will only be permitted where the use is compatible with the use of such rights-of-way as future transportation and utility corridors. Use as a transportation or utility corridor will always have priority over any interim use. ”

The range of uses outlined in the above policy was clarified in a report to Council in March 12, 1997, which stated:

“Recreational uses, such as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, horse back riding, sleigh rides, cycling, hiking, and any other recreational use be considered, provided:

- a) The use is not a permanent one;
- b) The applicant is agreeable to terminate on short or appropriate notice; and
- c) The use is not in conflict with other uses.”

The abandoned Carleton Place Subdivision rail corridor is reserved for long term transportation and utility opportunities which are not identified within the planning horizon of the recently

approved 1997 Regional Official Plan. As a result there is potentially many years of interim use as a multi-use recreational trail. In the future, when the transportation and utility options are being considered for the corridor, the compatibility of the trail with those future uses can be assessed. If necessary, alternative alignments for the Trans Canada Trail can be investigated at that time. Any agreement for the use of the abandoned rail corridor to be used as part of the Trans Canada Trail would include a termination clause.

Implementation

There are many examples of “rails to trails” conversion projects across Canada, many of which have been registered as part of the Trans Canada Trail. On October 11, 1995, Council approved a report for the construction of a pathway in its abandoned rail corridor between Robertson and Eagleson Roads. By 1997, the Region and Goulbourn graded and stone dust paved over 10 kilometre of the corridor between Bells Corners and Stittsville. An engineering study by Morrison Hershfield demonstrated that, in the future, a recreational pathway and a rapid transit facility could both be accommodated in the same corridor.

The remaining 21 kilometres of abandoned rail corridor, between Stittsville and Carleton Place, can be made accessible by the Summer of 2000 in time for the inauguration of the Trans Canada Trail here in the Capital. The rails and ties have been removed and the existing gravel railway bed is an excellent and cost-effective foundation on which to build a trail. Initially the existing rough gravel base in the corridor may be difficult to travel over for all but the most dauntless walkers and cyclists. But over the next few years, the Byways Committee will work with municipal partners to make the Trail accessible to as full a range of potential users as possible. In the meantime, potential users such as cross-country skiers, snowmobilers and equestrian riders could use the trail sooner. Securing this final section in the Capital Region is an important and symbolic component in the development of the Trans Canada Trail across Canada.

The Byways Committee enables the various trail building partners to work together, pool resources and effectively implement and maintain the Trail. An implementation plan will be prepared by the various trail-building partners on the Byways Committee for the development of Trans Canada Trail. It will identify the scope of participation and the financial implications for each of the partners, including the Region. For example, the Region presently carries out periodic maintenance and property standard work in its corridor which could be co-ordinated with Trail construction by community partners. These include such things as: replacing broken culverts, fence repair and access control. While the Region would continue its on-going basic property maintenance and operations of the corridor, the Trail improvements, such as trail signs and rest stops, and their maintenance would be shared among the sponsoring partners. The partners include the Goulbourn Township, Lanark County, and the Town of Carleton Place, as well as service and community groups such as snowmobile, cycling and walking clubs. In other areas of the province, an “adopt-a-trail” program is one way community volunteers contribute to trail maintenance.

Registering the corridor as part of the Trans Canada Trail does not affect land ownership, or Regional policy. (An draft of the Trans Canada Trail registration form is enclosed as Annex C). The Region as property owner retains all rights including the right to approve the type of uses and

the quality of the construction on its land. Operation and maintenance of the Trans Canada Trail is addressed locally, by each community based on its own circumstances. Issues regarding operation and maintenance of the trail are usually addressed in a detailed Memorandum of Understanding after initial registration of the trail as part of the Trans Canada Trail. The Region retains the right to terminate the MOU allowing the corridor to be used as part of the Trans Canada Trail. A summary of the Trans Canada Trail Memorandum of understanding is attached as Annex D.

Next Steps

Upon approval of this report staff would continue their support of Ottawa 2000's ByWays Committee. The next steps to be taken by the Region include:

- “registering” the corridor with the Trans Canada Trail Foundation;
- working with agency and community partners to determine the most appropriate mix of the Trans Canada Trail core users for various segments of the Trail on Regional property (walkers, cyclists, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and equestrian riders)
- working with agency and community partners to clarify operational and maintenance roles and responsibilities;
- the Commissioner of Planning and Development finalising and signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ontario Trails Council and local partners, in keeping with regional policy and addressing the issues discussed in this report;
- assisting the ByWays Committee with further public consultation;
- reviewing and advising on the design and construction of the pathway, and its related elements on Regional property;
- providing technical expertise related to pathway design and construction to the committee;
- contributing to the investigation of future pathway links to neighbourhoods and communities and to the east and south of the region.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The abandoned Carleton Place Subdivision rail corridor is identified as a Recreational Pathway on Schedules I and J in the Region's 1997 Official Plan, and was included in the public consultation on the Official Plan.

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton was asked early in the process to be among the diverse community and agency partners committed to seeing this project through. There are many others who can contribute at key stages. Through informal working sessions, the ByWays Committee has consulted with representatives of potential user groups and with area municipalities. Business associations in the urban and rural area, as well as adjacent land owners will be advised through public open house facilitated by the ByWays Committee. This will enable the committee to address concerns about adverse impacts, find opportunities to co-ordinate the Trail with community trails and destinations, and capitalise on tourism opportunities.

The Trans Canada Trail is a well publicised national initiative. Community support for the Trans Canada Trail is evident in the lists of names housed in the two sponsorship pavilions erected this past summer.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Once an implementation plan has been prepared, any Regional expenses in the development of the Trans Canada Trail in the abandoned rail corridor will be taken out of the Rail Corridor Acquisition Budget (Project No. 912 - 19907). This would primarily include on-going maintenance and property improvements such as: access control, drainage and culvert repair, vegetation management, periodic inspection and trash removal. To ensure that the Trail, constructed on Regional property, is built to a durable, cost effective standard, the Region will provide in-house professional expertise or secure consulting advice on trail design. These expenditures will be charged to the same account.

CONCLUSION

By participating in the construction of the Trans Canada Trail, the Region can contribute to a successful community-based, nation-wide initiative; successfully launch a long standing Regional objective, and contribute to the accessibility of open space and to tourism opportunities in the rural area.

*Approved by L. Shallal
for N. Tunnacliffe*

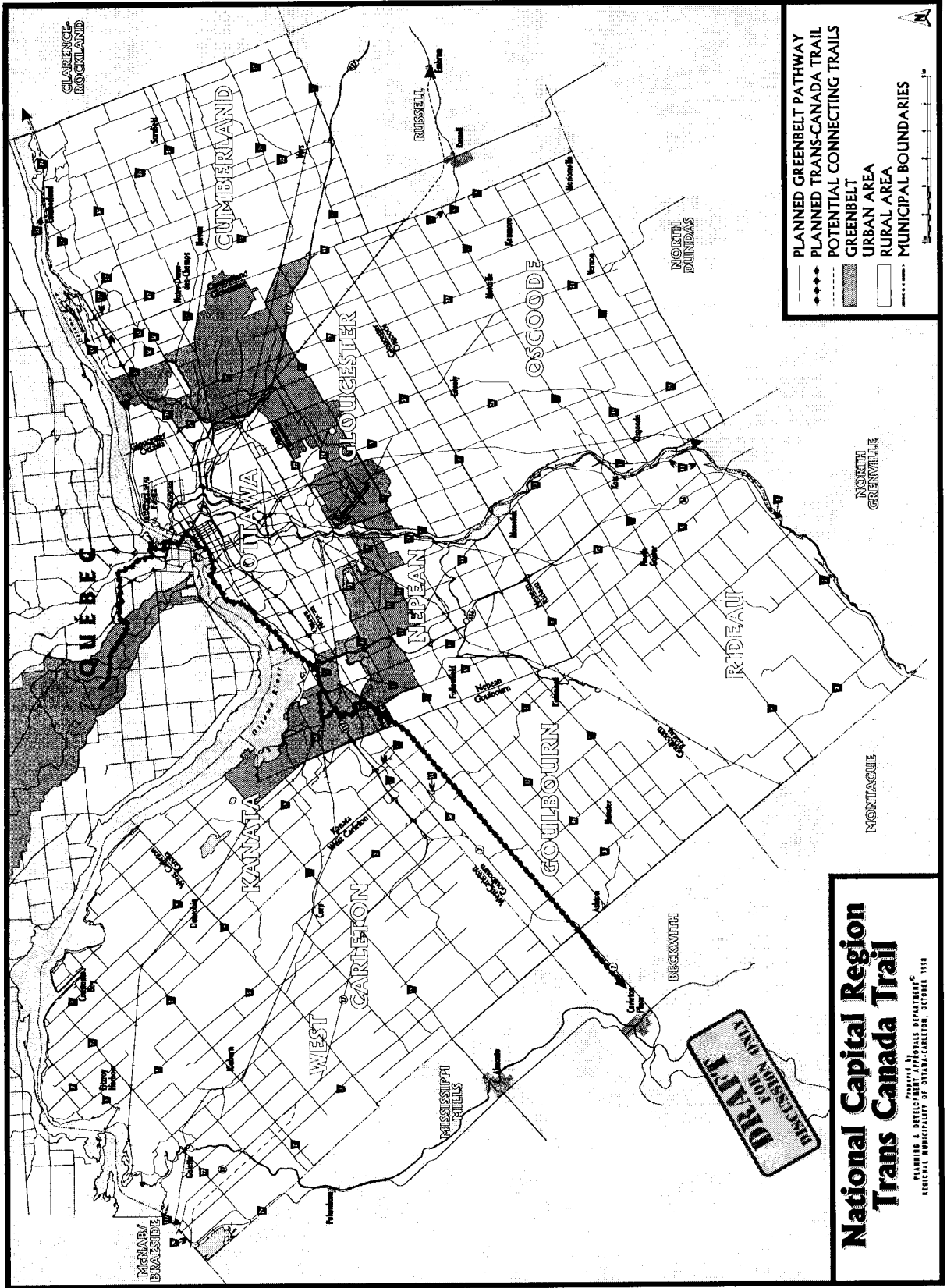
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Attach. (3)

BYWAYS OF OTTAWA-CARLETON COMMITTEE MEMBERS (INTERIM)

Name	Title	Company/ Group / Association
Chris Bradshaw	Consultant	OttawaWalk & Bradshaw Communi-Ties
Christine Broughton	Product Development Officer	Ottawa Tourism & Convention Authority
Jean Charbonneau	Portfolio Officer	Urban Lands & Transportation Division National Capital Commission
Tony Chernushenko	Local Trail Council Contact	Trans Canada Trail -- Ontario
John Edwards	Councillor, Mississippi Mills	Lanark County Trails Committee
Nelson Edwards	Landscape Architect	Planning & Development Approvals Department Region of Ottawa-Carleton
Stephen Lyon	Planning Engineer	Planning & Development Approvals Department Region of Ottawa-Carleton
Diane Matichuk	Recreation Planner / Landscape Architect	Community Development Department City of Gloucester
Ron Maybury		Rideau Trail Association
Anne Robinson	Consultant	Anne Robinson & Associates
Gershon Rother	Portfolio Manager, Greenbelt	Environment & Land Management Branch National Capital Commission
Pamela Sweet	Director, Policy & Infrastructure Planning Division	Planning & Development Approvals Department Region of Ottawa-Carleton
Sally Switzer	Deputy Planning Director	Goulbourn Township
Christopher Tyson	Chair	Lanark County Community Development & Planning Committee
Manon Valin	Community Representative	Regional Cycling Advisory Group

ANNEX B



**National Capital Region
Trans Canada Trail**

Prepared by
PLANNING SERVICES
A DIVISION OF
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-GLOUCESTER, 2008

DRAFT
FOR DISCUSSION

(DRAFT) Trans Canada Trail Registry (DRAFT)

Registration Date:	Registered by: Region of Ottawa-Carleton		
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Province/Territory:	Ontario		
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Name of Trail:	Carleton Place Subdivision Rail Corridor		
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Location:	from Bells Corners in the City of Nepean to the Town of Carleton Place, Lanark County		
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Nearest City/Community:	Nepean, Kanata,	Length of Trail:	31 Kms (approximately)
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Trail Activities:	(Check those activities trail accommodates)		
Hiking/walking	<u> X </u>	Cycling	<u> X </u>
Horseback riding	<u> X* </u>	Cross-country skiing	<u> X </u>
Snowmobiling	<u> X* </u>		
Others (specify)	* Note: appropriateness and extent of snowmobiling and horseback riding East of Main Street Stittsville to be determined		
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Name of Trail Owner:	Region of Ottawa-Carleton		
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Address:	111 Lisgar Street	City/Province:	Ottawa, ON
Postal Code:	K2P 2L7	Tel:	(613) 560-2058
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Name of Trail Operator:			
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Address:			City/Province:
Postal Code:			Tel:
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Historical/Natural/Cultural Features:	(former rail corridor, historical route etc.)		
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Former rail corridor owned by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton; Links to National Capital Commission Trails in the Greenbelt; Links urban communities including: Bells Corners, Kanata and Stittsville; Passes through rural areas of Goulbourn Township & Lanark County			
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Other Trail Information:	(facilities, access, food and lodging, degree of difficulty, condition of trail, safety regulations etc.)		
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Approximately 10 Kms of the trail linking urban communities has been paved with stone dust. The remaining 21 Kms is the existing rough gravel rail bed. Some improvement to the existing gravel base, safety, regulatory signs and improvements are needed - especially at Rural Road Crossings. Rough surface may initially limit range of walkers and cyclists until future improvements can be done. The abandoned Rail Corridor in Regional ownership was acquired as a potential Transportation and Utility Corridor. Registration of this Corridor as part of the Trans Canada Trail shall not preclude its primary use as a Transportation and Utility Corridor.			
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Complete and Mail, Fax or E-Mail to:	Bryan Howard/Ontario Trails Canada c/o Niagara Escarpment Commission 3 rd Floor, 232 Guelph Street Georgetown, ON L7G 4B1		
Verification: (for office use only)	Phone (905) 453-2468 Ext. 230; Fax (905) 873-7452		

SUMMARY OF TRANS CANADA TRAIL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Introduction

The Ontario Trails Council is coordinating the Trans Canada Trail route through Ontario, and seeks to work with municipalities and local organizations to lead the development of the trail through their communities. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared by the OTC to establish a formal arrangement with these local organizations. It represents the intentions of the organizations and is a precondition to OTC fundraising and other support. **However, the MOU is not binding on either organization.**

Contents of the MOU

Over its five-year term, the MOU sets out mutual expectations between the OTC and local organizations concerning the following:

- identification of trail routes and uses, including efforts to accommodate core uses
- proper legal arrangements for public access and use of the trail
- design, construction and operation of the trail, along with associated guideline, inspection and reporting arrangements
- OTC fund-raising assistance, including funds from the Trans Canada Trail Foundation
- acknowledgement of and protection efforts for identified features along the trail
- conditions under which the MOU may be cancelled by either organization.

Importance of the MOU

Signing the Memorandum of Understanding makes a five-year commitment between the OTC and the local organization. While it is not legally binding and can be cancelled if necessary, this “written handshake” is intended to be the basis of a long-term relationship to support the trail.

The MOU helps the local organization be clear about what it must do to be part of the national Trans Canada Trail network, and also ensures that it will have fund-raising support from OTC and the Trans Canada Trail Foundation. Through the MOU, the OTC will know that it has a strong local partner that is committed to help develop the trail. This will help OTC determine where it can best invest its resources and thus achieve the collective vision of a national trail across the country.

For more information about the Trans Canada Trail, the Ontario Trails Council or this Memorandum of Understanding, please contact Bryan Howard at: (905) 877-5191 ext. 230