

BGTN

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES • BRUCE-GREY TRAILS NETWORK

Trail Building Tool Kit

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2: ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, STRUCTURES & RELATIONSHIPS



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Roles, Responsibilities, Structures and Relationships

2.1 TRAIL MANAGERS

2.1.1 Roles of Trail Managers

The person, agency or group which holds ownership of the land or is responsible for the land on which the trail lies is considered the trail manager. It may be a municipality, conservation authority, provincial or federal parks department, or local trail organization. Their roles in trail development are extremely important due to the involvement of liability and risk management policies, funding contributions, maintenance responsibilities etc.

2.1.2 Responsibilities of Trail Managers Include

- Consult with the trail community in the development of official plans, risk management, liability and other policies.
- Include insurance coverage for volunteer trail groups who may choose to assist with the maintenance of trails.
- Include the responsibility of trail maintenance in their operations; provide use of maintenance staff and equipment.
- Provide financial and in-kind assistance to trail development.
- Assist with enforcement responsibilities.

A local trail organization may also be a Trail Manager.

2.2 TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS

The type of trail organization needed to plan, develop and or manage a trail, or group of trails will be unique to the trail and the group's purpose with regard to the trail(s). A key consideration when a group of people are interested in trail development and management is to explore what is needed for their specific circumstances and to ensure that they take the time to make it very clear what the role of the organization is, its' specific activities or responsibilities, its structure and its and relationships with other organizations.

The following describes different types of trail organizations that could be established to plan, develop and or manage a trail or group of trails. The Bruce Grey Trail Network's role, responsibilities, structure and relationships are outlined in Appendix I as an illustration of one type of trail organization.

2.2.1 Local Trail Organizations

A local trail organization consists of a group of community members interested in maintaining/building trail(s) in their local community. The scope of the community could be specific to a Town or Township (e.g. the Brockton Trails Group; or it may encompass a number of towns or Townships (e.g. the Owen Sound to Meaford Trail Group). A local group can also represent one or more uses for a particular use on a particular trail.

2.2.2 Key Responsibilities of a Local Trail Group or Organization Could Include

- Focusing on the local community, identify trail interests and needs, and make recommendations for action to a trail landowner or management body (e.g Saugeen Rail Trail, Hanover Community Trails)



- Build local membership in the group
- Obtain broad community support.
- Plan, develop and maintain trails.
- Work with municipalities, adjacent landowners and others in trail development.
- Act as mentors for newly formed trail groups.

Other Key Organizations

There may be number of organizations that exist within a community that would be important for a trail management group or local trail organization to establish a relationship with. These key organizations include the following:

2.2.3 Tourism Affiliated Organizations

Trails bring to the community economic growth by attracting trail users from outlying areas. This in turn generates more business for the tourism industry along with other local businesses. Tourism plays a key role in helping to promote trails and trail use.

2.2.4 Responsibilities

- Make direct annual contributions
- Provide in-kind services
- Allocate staff time to work with trail groups
- Sponsor fundraising events
- Donate significant services and products for fundraising
- Provide cost reductions in their products and services to members of local trail groups.

2.2.5 County and Municipal Governments

These governments contribute to trail development by offering anything from technical support to financial contributions.

2.2.6 Responsibilities

- Secure abandoned rail corridors (for example, Bruce County Rail Trail) for trail and utility purposes
- Consult with the trail community in the development of Official Plan policies to designate trail corridors and encourage setbacks along rivers and valley lands for trails in new developments
- Include insurance coverage for volunteer trail groups
- Include trail maintenance as part of the road superintendents responsibilities for designated sections of County and municipal roads
- Review the need for appropriate on-road cycling facilities during highway development reviews
- Assist the trail organizations financially
- Provide the use of maintenance staff and equipment
- Provide technical assistance
- Include trail information in economic development initiatives
- Facilitate the development of trail use and linkages

2.2.7 Conservation Authorities, Provincial and Federal Government Land Managing Agencies such as National Parks or Parks Canada

Conservation Authorities and Provincial and Federal Parks may offer administration and financial support as well as suggest ideas in areas such as signage and environmental management.



2.2.8 Responsibilities

- Facilitate the development of trail linkages through appropriate conservation lands
- Provide trail staging areas on conservation lands
- Assist with enforcement responsibilities
- Assist with technical support
- Offer maintenance support
- Disseminate information on the work of trail groups and the trail organization
- Assist trail groups in developing interpretive signage, policies

2.2.9 Ontario Trails Council

The Ontario Trails Council is a volunteer based not for profit organization promoting the development, management and use of an integrated recreational trail network throughout Ontario

2.2.10 Responsibilities

- Consult with the trail organization and local trail groups on provincial or policy needs such as insurance and risk management
- Provide information on new trail initiatives, design, construction, risk management standards, funding programs etc.
- Promote trails and trail linkages within Ontario
- Promote safe and responsible use of trails

2.3 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders or key organizations may help with funding, promotions and administration needs or offer experience and cooperation within the trail organization. It would be ideal for each stakeholder to select one or two representatives to attend meetings and speak on behalf of their group.

2.3.1 Possible 'Stakeholders'

Public Health Units

Environmental/Nature Groups

Conservation Authorities

Ministry of Natural Resources

Federal and Provincial Parks

Municipal, County or City representatives/councilors

District Tourism and Recreation Offices

Existing local trail committees/groups

Community members with an interest in trail building, board of director experience

Community business or economic development corporations

Adjacent Landowners

Recommended Reading

Bruce Grey Trails Network Master Plan. Design Brief ESG International, 2000

Trail Builder's Companion. Alberta TrailNet, Alberta Trail Builders' Companion, 2000.

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