

BGTN

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES • BRUCE-GREY TRAILS NETWORK

Trail Building Tool Kit

LAST UPDATED JULY 2003

7: TRAIL FUNDING



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Trail Funding

This section is intended as a resource for both regional and local trail groups. It reviews sources of funding then provides a listing of specific organizations that provide funding that can be used for trail planning and development. It is premised on a division of labour between the regional Bruce Grey Trails Network and the local trail groups or regional membership-based clubs (eg. snowmobile or ATV clubs.) BGTN wants to complement and support, rather than compete with local trail-building activities and their sources of funds.

7.1 CORE ACTIVITIES FOR BGTN

Table I (page 20) outlines the current understanding of what local trail groups do and what BGTN's core activities are. The core activities of BGTN include:

- Facilitate and coordinate local groups to develop 5 priority connecting trails: Bruce County Rail Trail (CN Rail Line); Grey County CP Rail Line; Meaford to Owen Sound; Lake Huron Shoreline Trail; and Owen Sound to Tobermory
- Provide marketing and promotion of trails across Grey Bruce
- Promote sound trail management policies and practices
- Effectively communicate with Network partners (public and private sector) to promote recreational, health, economic and environmental benefits of trails
- Develop partnerships and membership to sustain regional trail activities

7.2 CORE ACTIVITIES FOR LOCAL TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS AND REGIONAL CLUBS

Most local trail organizations have formed to provide opportunities to enjoy trails within a community. Most trails are for non-motorized uses and provide a high quality experience. Regional clubs such as snowmobile and ATV clubs are affiliated with a provincial organization and operate over larger territories, mostly providing single use or compatible use trails for their sport.

- Provide local or community-based opportunities for recreational trail activities usually based on single use or compatible uses for high quality experience
- Promote local trails
- Provide insurance coverage for volunteers and trail users
- Develop partnerships, membership to sustain local trail organization and local trails
- Provide linkages to connecting trails



7.3 TABLE 1

	BRUCE-GREY TRAILS NETWORK	LOCAL TRAIL ORGANIZATION	POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDNG
Organizational/ Legal Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated non-for-profit charitable organization • Lead for regional trail development (5 priority connecting trails) • Regional promotion & marketing/communication • Promote sound policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be incorporated, municipal committee or organized group • Provide local recreational trails usually based on single use or compatible uses for high quality experience • Promote local trails • Provide insurance coverage for volunteers and trail users • Develop partnerships, membership to sustain local trail organization and local trails • Provide linkages to connecting trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRDC – Job Creation, Local Labour Market Partnerships • OMAF – RED Program • CARCIOMTR – Recreation Development Fund
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carries directors liability insurance and initially 3rd party liability insurance for BGTN volunteers working on trail • Will work with MC over time to obtain insurance as trail managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local groups have insurance coverage through municipality or OTC or provincial organization (eg. snowmobile clubs) or their own 	
Communication with Adjacent Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Landowners' Committee to respond to corridor management issues, use, trail condition, weeds, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to local management issues, use, trail condition, weeds, etc. • Snowmobile club obtains permission for trails 	
Trail Planning Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for use on connecting trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local uses set by local groups on their trails 	
Trail Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend protocols for fencing, signage, bridges, trail bed, Trail nodes, etc. • Engage Landscape Architect for design detail as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead for developing & implementing protocols for trail bed, signage, staging areas, etc. on local trails • Implement design details for staging areas, etc. 	
Trail Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and coordinate development of 5 priority connecting trails: Bruce County Rail Trail, Grey County CP Line, Meaford to Owen Sound, Lake Huron Shoreline, Owen Sound to Tobermory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead for undertaking trail work through local groups 	Capital funding from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Clubs • Municipal Funding • In Kind Donations • Trillium Foundation

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7.3 TABLE 1 CONTINUED

	BRUCE-GREY TRAILS NETWORK	LOCAL TRAIL ORGANIZATION	POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING
Trail Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Risk Management Committee for all trails – develop policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain local trails • Implement Risk Management policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating funding from annual budget
Revenue Generation/ Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core funding from senior level government, counties, membership, corporate support • Development funding for corridor proposals for connecting trails, bridges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core funding from municipality, membership • Development funding from local businesses, in-kind donations, service groups for local initiatives 	
Promotion & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of trails across Bruce & Grey • Provide workshops on trail issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local trail promotion • Interpretive programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Unit • Service Clubs • Environmental Foundations

7.4 CURRENT SOURCES OF FUNDING

BGTN is entering Year II of a 2-year commitment by the Trillium Foundation to provide organizational support. Within the last year, BGTN has also finished up a Job Creation program with HRDC to provide a trails assistant. BGTN received \$17,000 in County and lower tier municipal funding, but this is likely to drop. BGTN has met several of its objectives in creating by-laws and governance policies, negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with Bruce County for the development of a recreational trail corridor on the abandoned CN rail line. Reprinted and distributed a very successful guide to trails across Bruce & Grey Counties, established a trail of the week feature in local newspapers, and issued semi-annual newsletters and an annual report to keep all partners up to date on regional trail activities. See Table 2 on page 23.

7.5 FUTURE SOURCES OF FUNDING

BGTN has identified a priority to establish a business plan to sustain the network beyond September 2003. As an initial step, some consideration of potential funding sources was to be included in a backgrounder to the funding toolbox. These include: development funding from senior level government, possible corporate sponsors, and advocacy with local politicians to develop sustainable partnership, and development of a membership structure. At the same time, it is important to secure operational funding for another 2-year period. The planning process and determination of use on the Bruce County Rail Trail has taken much longer than anticipated, although BGTN now has a template and experience in assisting Grey County in the development of the CP Line.

7.6 DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

BGTN will seek another term of “development funding” in order to extend its work with the CN and CP rail lines and to assist in transition into a sustainable regional organization. As governments typically do not fund ongoing initiatives, it is necessary to be quite focused on how the next 2 years builds on and is different from the previous 2 years from a funder’s standpoint. A few options include:



- Working with CP line in Grey County
- Working with Regional Tourism Marketing Partners (RTMP) and tourist operators to maximize economic benefits from the trail
- Working with rural community to maximize potential educational/interpretive value and economic benefits to rural areas
- Developing a series of “toolkits” to assist all trail groups with best practices for trail construction, maintenance/patrolling, fundraising, risk management/insurance

7.7 SPONSORSHIP & FUNDRAISING

BGTN can identify national, regional and local businesses and organizations that would benefit from association with the regional trails and approach them for sponsorship. It is important to have a plan for what the sponsor is buying, or more importantly what BGTN has to sell. This could include sections of trail or parts of a bridge for the connecting trails, appearance on BGTN’s promotional material, or newsletters, endorsement of services by BGTN to its members. BGTN is a charitable organization and should have a clear understanding of what activities/donations it can issue tax receipts for. Establishment of an annual trail event that could be a fundraiser is a definite possibility, eg. A triathlon-like event that involves running, biking and canoeing could be partnered with outdoor adventure operators. Partnerships with other groups that could sponsor an event to raise money for connecting link trail development and maintenance eg. Cycling club, ATV, etc. It is important for BGTN to understand how local trail groups raise money and not to compete with these sources.

7.8 MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

Upper tier municipal governments and some lower tier municipalities have traditionally supported BGTN. BGTN takes the position that where an active local trail group exists, municipal support should be directed to the local group. If a local group doesn’t exist, BGTN may solicit a municipality for support of a connecting trail or the regional trails effort. County governments will be approached for some support to assist BGTN in establishing the 5 priority connecting trails and in expanding health, recreational and economic benefits of trails to the respective counties and their residents. BGTN could consider a fee for service approach in providing some of these services based on its experience and track record to date. An initial approach might be to partner with the counties in obtaining 2 years of development funding, with each county contributing to the project and receiving back some of the benefits, with an expectation to review the county support after the 2 year project and look at sustainable support as part of the business plan for BGTN.

7.9 MEMBERSHIP

Developing a membership structure is again a case of having something to sell. Most trail organizations base membership on support for a trail(s), ie. Funds are used to support trail construction, promotion and maintenance. This could be a “Friends of the Trail” membership, either as an individual or family. A second tier of membership could be businesses that benefit from and support trail development as “associate members.” Finally, local trail groups and organizations could be voting members, and would select representatives that might attend board meetings, and form the trails board. As the connecting links are established BGTN could implement a membership structure.

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