

A stylized illustration of a forest trail. A yellow path winds through a dark teal forest. In the foreground, a family (two adults and a child) walks away from the viewer. Further down the path, a person walks a dog, and another person rides a bicycle. The background is filled with various types of evergreen trees.

City of Whitehorse

Trail Plan



LEES
+
ASSOCIATES

Final Plan

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

509-318 Homer St, Vancouver BC Canada, V6B 2V2 | p: 604.899.3806

51 Wolseley St, Toronto ON Canada, M5T 1A4 | p: 416.645.7033

8 Boswell Crescent, Whitehorse YT Canada, Y1A 4T3 | p: 867.332.3806

info@elac.ca | www.elac.ca

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of this plan was guided by input from the following groups and individuals:

CITY STAFF

Marc Boulerice

Mike Ellis

Daniel Gjini

Landon Kulych

Jeff O'Farrell

Sabine Schweiger

Arbor Webster

Meagan Wilson

FIRST NATIONS

Kwanlin Dūn First Nation

Ta'an Kwäch'än Council

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Alpine Club of Canada – Yukon Section

Active Trails Whitehorse Association

Contagious Mountain Bike Club

Klondike Snowmobile Association

Whitehorse Urban Cycling Coalition

Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club

Whitehorse Walks

Yukon Climbing Access Society

Yukon Orienteering Association

THE CONSULTING TEAM

Heidi Redman, LEES+Associates

Ivy Smith, LEES+Associates

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Trail Plan Background Report

What We Heard Report





Figure 1 City of Whitehorse Trails (Photo: Ben Horowitz)

1. Introduction

The City of Whitehorse trail network is located on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council. The trail network is a highly valued asset of the City's open space system, and an important part of the community's identity. The trail network provides recreational opportunities as well as active transportation connections within the City. Much has evolved since the City's first trail plan in 1997, including major updates in 2007 and 2012, and subsequent neighbourhood trail planning initiatives.

The current trail inventory is estimated to include over 850 km of mapped trails within municipal boundaries (see Appendix A – Existing Trail Network Map). The network includes a full range of trail types from paved trails, double track trails, natural surface single-track trails, old roads and hinterland trails that provide year-round trail experiences for residents and tourists. The network allows trail users a multitude of experiential options that reflect the area's unique wilderness setting and promote the City's natural and cultural heritage.

With one of the most extensive municipal trail systems in North America, Whitehorse citizens highly value the trail network, and are committed to its preservation, use and enjoyment.

This Trail Master Plan update is a critical task to ensure that Whitehorse area trails continue to be developed and managed to the highest standards of user enjoyment and sustainability. The Plan outlines what we have, where we want to go, and how to get there, to ensure a shared vision for the trail network that we can all be proud of.

Benefits of Trails:

Health Benefits – Trails promote physical activity, providing physical and mental health benefits, and reducing risk of disease.

Community Social Benefits – Trail networks connect community and provide locations for local trail focused events.

Environmental Benefits – Trails promote alternative modes of travel like walking and biking as opposed to driving, thereby reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic Benefits – Trails in the City support the local economy through promotion of tourism, connecting the community to local businesses, and increasing property values.

Trends in Trail Use:

Changing Demographics – A projected increase in population in the Yukon may increase the demand for and usage of the trail network and infrastructure.

Tourism – Whitehorse is a popular destination for visitors from across Canada and the world. Adventure tourism is becoming a major draw to Whitehorse and the trail network plays a significant role in supporting trails-based tourism.

Diversifying Users and Activities – Activities such as mountain biking, cycling for recreation, horseback riding, motorized trail use, walking and hiking continue to increase in popularity – highlighting the importance of planning and managing for diverse use of trails. Emerging trail activities such as e-biking also need to be considered when planning for the future.

Accessibility – Providing safe, accessible options for all to walk, cycle or wheel on the trails will be increasingly important to support older adults, families with young children and those with mobility constraints. Ensuring accessible options is not only important for residents but also for visitors.

Access to Nature – There is a growing awareness and concern about climate change, water quality, species decline, and other environmental issues having an effect on peoples' perceptions and behavior. These topics are being incorporated into school curricula and many schools are getting children outdoors to learn.

Climate Change – The north is experiencing climate change effects that contribute to wildfire risk, extreme weather events, and changing weather patterns. Climate change is impacting seasonal trail use and trail maintenance.

Social Isolation – Social isolation is increasing and vulnerable populations are at risk. Trails and related infrastructure can help to bring the community together.

1.1 Purpose and Scope

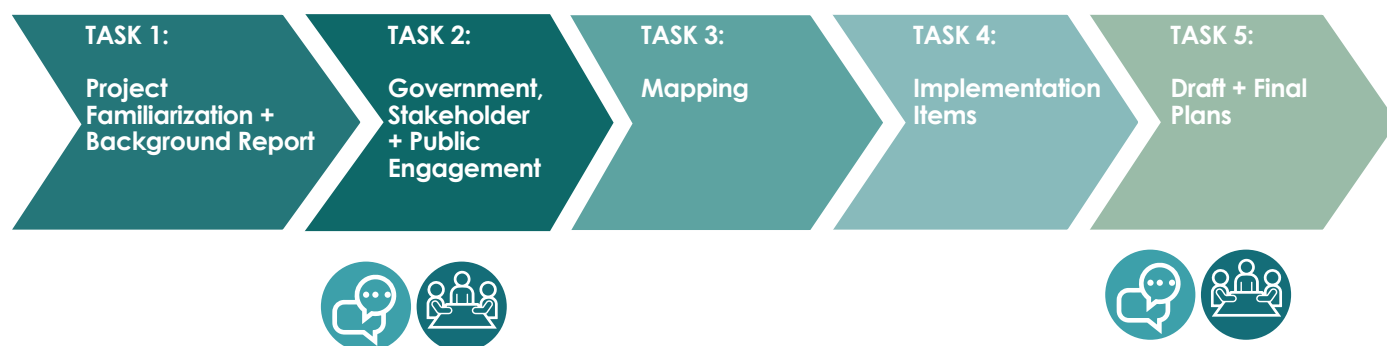
Guided by input from government, First Nations, the public and stakeholders, the purpose of this project was to develop a Trail Plan that directly benefits trail users and the community through a shared vision. As a long-range planning document, the Trail Plan identifies strategic priorities to direct the City in future trails-related initiatives, policies, and actions spanning the next ten years. Although some trails within the network serve both recreation and transportation functions, a comprehensive, long-term vision for active transportation within the City is addressed in the 2018 Bicycle Network Plan, and is outside the scope of this plan.

Key areas addressed in the Trail Plan include:

1. Establish a community vision for the Whitehorse trail network;
2. Build upon and integrate existing policies, bylaws, management plans, memoranda of understanding and safety documents;
3. Conduct a meaningful engagement process with government, First Nations, stakeholders and the public;
4. Identify key issues and opportunities for the existing trail network;
5. Improve connectivity between neighbourhoods and community amenities;
6. Explore opportunities to increase recreational uses and active transportation;
7. Identify opportunities for new trail development and growth;
8. Propose a concept for developing a standardized trail classification and permitted use system;
9. Recommend updates to conflict resolution policies and procedures;
10. Outline strategies for developing an extensive inventory of trails, amenities and wayfinding signage;
11. Mitigate impacts on environmentally sensitive areas through thoughtful planning processes, and
12. Provide a long-term plan containing practical and innovative recommendations that ensures the success of future trail planning and management initiatives.

1.2 How the Plan was Developed

The trail planning process included the following five tasks:



Task 1 – Project Familiarization and Background Report – Task 1 involved confirming project objectives, outcomes, schedule and preparing the community engagement plan. Background data gathered and reviewed during this phase is summarized in the Trail Plan Background Report. The background report includes a summary of benefits and trends in trail use, available trail counts, and a review of relevant policy and planning documents.

Task 2 – Government, Stakeholder and Public Engagement – The first round of engagement included opportunities for feedback from government, First Nations, internal and external stakeholders, and the general public through a public survey and one-on-one interviews. Engagement input is summarized in Section 2.5, and in the What We Heard report.

Task 3 – Mapping – Task 3 involved reviewing and consolidating existing map resources for trails currently adopted into the City's Trail Maintenance Policy. A consolidated map of City Priority Trails was provided under separate cover.

Task 4 – Implementation Items – A key part of the Trail Plan is a series of actions that are within municipal jurisdiction and consistent with the City's existing trails policy framework. Actions are outlined in Section 4. The implementation plan (Section 5) summarizes actions, potential contributors and estimated costs.

Task 5 – Draft and Final Plans – Information compiled during the first four tasks was compiled into a Draft Trail Plan (75%) which was presented to project stakeholders, government, First Nations and the general public for feedback, with a final version presented to Council for adoption as a guiding document.

2. Where Are We Now

2.1 Trail Network Overview

The City of Whitehorse has an extensive and diverse trail network that has evolved over time for the use and enjoyment of both residents and visitors. The network of trails within City of Whitehorse municipal boundaries is estimated to include over 850 km of mapped trails, based on available geographic information system (GIS) data. The trail network is comprised of paved trails, natural surface single and double track trails, hinterland trails and old roads used in all seasons. A description of existing trail types and trail counter data is included in the Trail Plan Background Report.

Appendix A (Existing Trail Network Map) provides an overview of the existing trail network overlaid with key land uses, geographical features and neighbourhoods.

The Whitehorse trail network offers a wide range of trail experiences to a variety of users. The network currently supports a variety of non-motorized and motorized uses. Trail uses, shown in the order of popularity as reported on the Trail Plan public survey, include:

Trail Uses:

- Walking, hiking (97%)
- Mountain biking (63%)
- Dog walking (62%)
- Cycling (56%)

Trail Counter Data

City of Whitehorse trail counter data from the Rotary Centennial Bridge shows the Millennium Trail receives around 100,000 users a year.

-
- Trail running (50%)
 - Cross-country skiing (54%)
 - Birdwatching, wildlife viewing (30%)
 - Fat biking (26%)
 - Snowshoeing (25%)
 - Snowmobiling (19%)
 - All terrain vehicle (ATV) (18%)
 - Dirt biking (9%)
 - Orienteering (8%)
 - Kick-sledding (7%)
 - Skijoring (6%)
 - E-biking, e-scooter (5%)
 - Horseback riding (2%)

2.2 Current Supply

There is not a definitive way to establish whether a community has an adequate supply of trails; it depends on the values, wants and needs of the community. However, metrics include assessments of the amount of trails per capita, comparisons to other communities, and whether residents can easily access trails from their homes. This sections provides a brief analysis and discussion of these metrics.



Figure 1 Trail along the Yukon River

Trails Per Capita

The network of trails within City of Whitehorse municipal boundaries is estimated to include approximately 850 km of mapped trails, based on available GIS data. Review and consolidation of current City of Whitehorse GIS data is ongoing.

Based on this estimate of mapped trails, the City has approximately 33.9 km of trails per 1,000 residents based on population estimates (Statistics Canada, 2016). This provision of trails is higher than the Canadian average which, in 2018, was a median of 0.9 km per 1,000 residents (Yardstick, 2018). The City's provision of trails is similar to that of Whistler, BC (35.6 km per 1,000) a community broadly recognized for its trails and their associated outdoor recreation, tourism and active transportation uses. It should be noted, that many municipalities do not use these types of quantity standards because the amenities and quality of trails play an equal, if not more important, role in meeting community needs. This metric is provided as a reference point for understanding how the City's supply of trails fares relative to national norms.

In the Trail Plan public survey, 84% percent of respondents reported living less than 5 minutes (or 400 metres) from a trail suggesting a reasonable distribution of trails throughout the municipal boundaries.

City Trails

The City is responsible for specific trails within the network that meet established criteria and have been adopted into the City's Trail Maintenance Policy. These trails are maintained to an identified level of service on a priority basis. Priority A (Type I Trails) receive the highest level of maintenance, while Priority D (hinterland trails) are not inspected. Currently, the City maintains the following length of trails:

PRIORITY RATING	LENGTH OF TRAIL
Priority A Trails	19 km
Priority B Trails	59 km
Priority C Trails	155 km
Priority D Trails	0 km
TOTAL	233 km

Table 1 Trail Lengths by Priority Rating

Additional information on the existing trail network is summarized in the Trail Plan Background Report.

2.3 First Nations

The City of Whitehorse trail network is located on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC), for whom trail use is an important part of the traditional way of life. Many trails in the area, such as the Yukon River Trail, were originally First Nations trails and routes. The importance of historic aquatic trails is also acknowledged. First Nation citizens continue to use the area's trails today in a variety of ways.

Both the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council are significant landowners within the City of Whitehorse municipal boundaries.

3.2.1 CURRENT TRAIL USE AND MANAGEMENT

The City of Whitehorse and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation work together through a Memorandum of Understanding for Trail Management and Planning which outlines general management for City-adopted trails located on KDFN Settlement Land parcels. A number of well-used City trails are situated on Settlement Lands providing a significant contribution to the municipal trail network.

With a growing population and increasing participation in outdoor recreation, many informal trails on Settlement Land parcels are seeing increased use. The Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council are actively assessing the impacts of unauthorized trail use and looking at management measures to encourage appropriate use and mitigate cumulative environmental impacts.

As large landowners within the City of Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation will play a key role in future land development. Collaboration between the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the City of Whitehorse regarding trail management and planning activities is integral to ensuring the overall sustainability of the trail network, promoting wildlife, heritage and cultural values, and fostering a cooperative relationship between all trail users and landowners.

First Nations Settlement Lands and Trails

Settlement Lands are owned and managed by Yukon First Nations as identified in each First Nation's Final Agreement. Settlement Lands are protected under land claim legislation to allow a First Nation to oversee their traditional lands to carry out on-the-land activities, protect important harvesting areas and cultural sites and allow for future development. The Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council have Settlement Lands located within Whitehorse and adjacent to the City boundary. There are a number of well used City trails located on Settlement Lands which provide significant community benefit.

2.4 Neighbourhood Trail Planning

3.2.2 TRAIL PLANNING IN EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOODS

Following the 2007 Trail Plan, a neighbourhood trail planning process was implemented to create trail plans on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis. Whitehorse Neighbourhood Trails Task Forces were established to develop recommendations on trail locations, designations, types of use and trail etiquette. Over several years, a significant amount of work and volunteer effort went into the neighbourhood level trail planning processes.

Neighbourhood Trail Plans were completed and approved by Council for the following areas:

- East Yukon River (2013)
- Above the Airport (2014)
- Crestview (2016)
- Porter Creek / Takhini / Whistle Bend / Range Point (2016)

Neighbourhood Trail Plans are outstanding for the following areas:

- Whitehorse South
- Whitehorse North

The City is continuously working to implement the completed neighbourhood level trail plans. Completed Neighbourhood Trail Plan Maps are included in Appendix B. The approved trail plans contribute to the creation of annual work plans for the City trail crew. As a part of this work, the City constructs new trails, conducts trail upgrades, signage and mapping, as well as routine maintenance. Guidance on completion of the remaining neighbourhood trail plans is provided in the Action Plan (page 33).

3.2.3 FUTURE LAND PLANNING AND TRAILS

An important goal will be ensuring the integration of future residential areas into the existing trail network to ensure trail continuity and recreational trail access for new developments. Planning for an interconnected network of active transportation alternatives, including trails, will be critical to create connectivity and ensure that contiguous routes are established between new development areas and the downtown core.



Figure 1 Neighbourhood level trail plans are complete for four areas

2.5 Engagement Highlights

The Trail Plan included two rounds of engagements which received a high level of attention from the public. In total, over 1,520 individuals and organizations provided input to the Trail Plan.

In Task 2, initial Trail Plan engagement was conducted in order to understand the public's needs and demands for trails, and vision for the future. Engagement tools included:

- Online Public Survey available from May 5 – May 26, 2020 (1,415 responses)
- One-on-one interviews with government partners, First Nations, trail user groups, and stakeholders, May 25 – June 11, 2020 (15 interviews)

In Task 5, the Draft Trail Plan was presented for feedback. Engagement tools included:

- Public Online Comment Form available from September 18 – October 9, 2020 (78 responses)
- One-on-one interviews with government, First Nations, trail user groups, and stakeholders, September 28 – October 8, 2020 (8 interviews)

How we reached out:

- A list of internal and external stakeholders with an interest in the project was compiled. A total of 40 organizations (including trail user groups, community interest groups, and community associations) were contacted by email with a copy of the Trail Plan Fact Sheet, an invitation to complete the public survey, and a request to get the word out to their organization's members and others in their networks.
- The City website was used as a primary information sharing tool. During Task 2 it was updated with information about the project objectives and planning process through a project Fact Sheet, and link to the public survey. During the Draft Trail Plan review (Task 5), the website was updated with the draft Background Report, What We Heard, draft Trail Plan, Trail Plan Summary, and link to an online comment form.
- Information was distributed via social media and news releases on the City website.

Government, First Nations and Stakeholder Interviews

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Kwanlin Dün First Nation | • City of Whitehorse Trail Crew Leader |
| • Ta'an Kwäch'än Council | • City of Whitehorse Senior Planner |
| • Contagious Mountain Bike Club | • City of Whitehorse Environmental Coordinator |
| • Klondike Snowmobile Association | • Whitehorse Urban Cycling Coalition |
| • Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club | • Whitehorse Walks |
| • Active Trails Whitehorse Association | • Yukon Climbing Access Society |
| • Alpine Club of Canada – Yukon Section | • Yukon Orienteering Association |
| • ElderActive Recreation Association | |

Trails in Whitehorse: What We Heard

A Sampling of Comments from the public survey:

"Whitehorse has a great trail system and I would like the City to improve information on trails."

"So long as e-bike riders know and follow etiquette and dog owners do the same, I think we can all get along!"

"The off-road trail network is so impressive but the in-town (commuting) network needs some work."

"I would like to see good trail connections between all neighborhoods."

"Trail etiquette at trailheads would be huge."

"Whitehorse trail system is awesome already..world class. Lets keep them that way."

"Keep up the good work. More development of heritage/cultural interpretation, and partnerships with First Nations."

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE PUBLIC SURVEY (MAY 2020):

- The most popular trail activities for survey respondents were walking/hiking (97%), mountain biking (63%) and dog walking (62%).
- The most noted reason for using trails was to exercise (95%).
- Survey respondents were generally satisfied with their trail experiences (92%), trail maintenance (80%), and trail management (65%).
- The most frequent conflicts noted by survey respondents on trails were associated with dog walking activities (12%) and motorized vehicle use on trails (10%).
- "Improving trail connections between neighbourhoods" (57%), "Developing new trails" (46%), and "Improving existing trails" (37%) were top priorities for future improvements to the Whitehorse trail network.
- "Increasing active transportation opportunities," (66%) "improving trail connections between neighbourhoods and community amenities," (63%) and "improving local trail connections" (52%) were top priorities for future trail development in Whitehorse.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE DRAFT PLAN REVIEW (OCT 2020):

- Most respondents (67%) indicated that they either support or strongly support the Draft Trail Plan.
- There were mixed opinions amongst respondents on whether the focus of the plan should be to improve existing trails or expand the trail network.

Other highlights from the online public survey follow in Figure 2. Refer to the What We Heard report for a full summary of engagement results and tools.

2.6 Trail Issues & Opportunities

Through the background review, one-on-one interviews and public survey, a set of key trail issues emerged. These are summarized below under the headings: strengths, issues and concerns, and opportunities.

2.6.1 STRENGTHS

- Trails receive a high level of care and maintenance
- Most residents have access to trails within five minutes from home
- Incredible variety and number of recreational trails
- The City has a dedicated trail crew
- Trails offer access to the City's unique landscapes
- Trails can be used year-round, trails see significant winter trail use

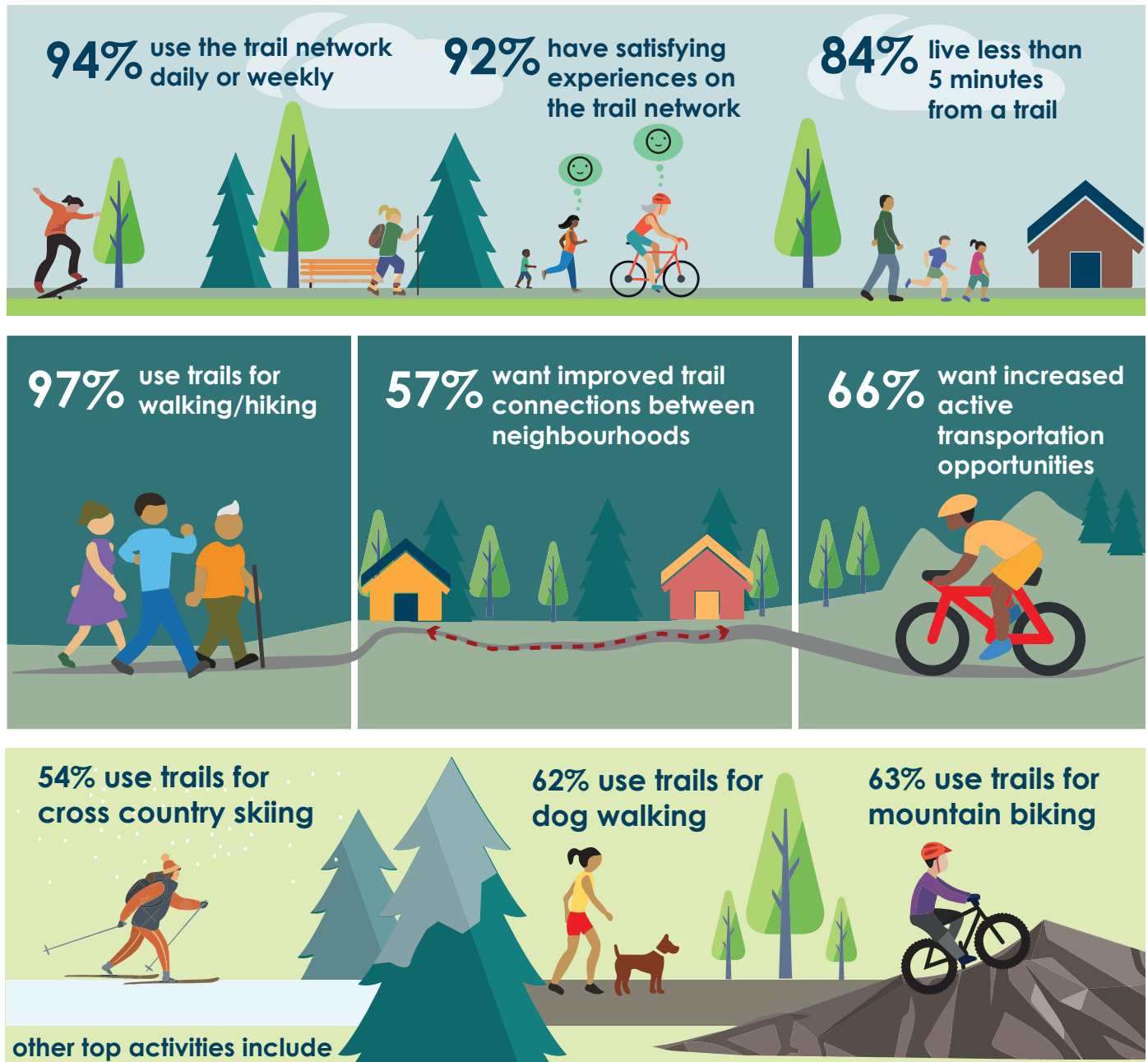
2.6.2 ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- The Type 1 trail network has significant gaps and is inconsistent in its quality
- More education and etiquette is needed around shared use
- Increasing numbers of trail users can result in environmental impacts and conflict on some trails
- The trail development application process could be streamlined
- There is inappropriate trail use occurring on Settlement Lands
- Climate change is impacting seasonal trail use and trail maintenance
- The City has a large trail network with limited resources

2.6.3 OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve connections between neighbourhoods
- Expand heritage and cultural interpretation
- Enhance collaboration with First Nations on trail planning and management
- Recognize and celebrate First Nations traditional trail names and heritage routes
- Incorporate wildlife and heritage values
- Ensure the trail network is integrated with future residential developments
- Identify loop trails that connect points of interest
- Update mapping and information sharing

CITY OF WHITEHORSE TRAIL PLAN



* from Trail Plan online survey May 2020

Figure 2 Highlights from the Trail Plan online public survey, May 2020.



3. Vision & Guiding Principles

3.1 Vision Statement

"Whitehorse will have a diverse, sustainable and accessible trail network valued as a primary community asset. A well-connected, high quality network of trails will contribute to a livable, attractive, sustainable and resilient northern community."

3.2 Guiding Principles

To implement the vision, the actions in this plan are informed by the following guiding principles:

BENEFITS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

The trail network provides a suite of health, social, environmental and economic benefits to our community. A diverse trail network that supports a variety of trail users and activities helps deliver these benefits to both residents and visitors.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL STEWARDSHIP

Trails must reflect environmental sustainability and cultural stewardship. The Trail Plan and subsequent trail planning and management must maintain the integrity of our natural environment, advance the City's commitment to address climate change, and respect cultural and heritage values. Trails provide opportunities to foster understanding and appreciation of the City's unique natural environment, culture and heritage.

TRAILS AS CITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Trails are a vital component of the City's recreational and active transportation infrastructure. The trail network provides quality recreational experiences and a means to enjoy proximity to nature, scenery, viewpoints, and access unique natural or other features. Trails also provide safe and accessible transportation alternatives to connect to key destinations within the City.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Trails are a valuable City resource and should provide an inclusive environment, welcoming users of varying ages and abilities to enjoy the benefits of the trail network.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

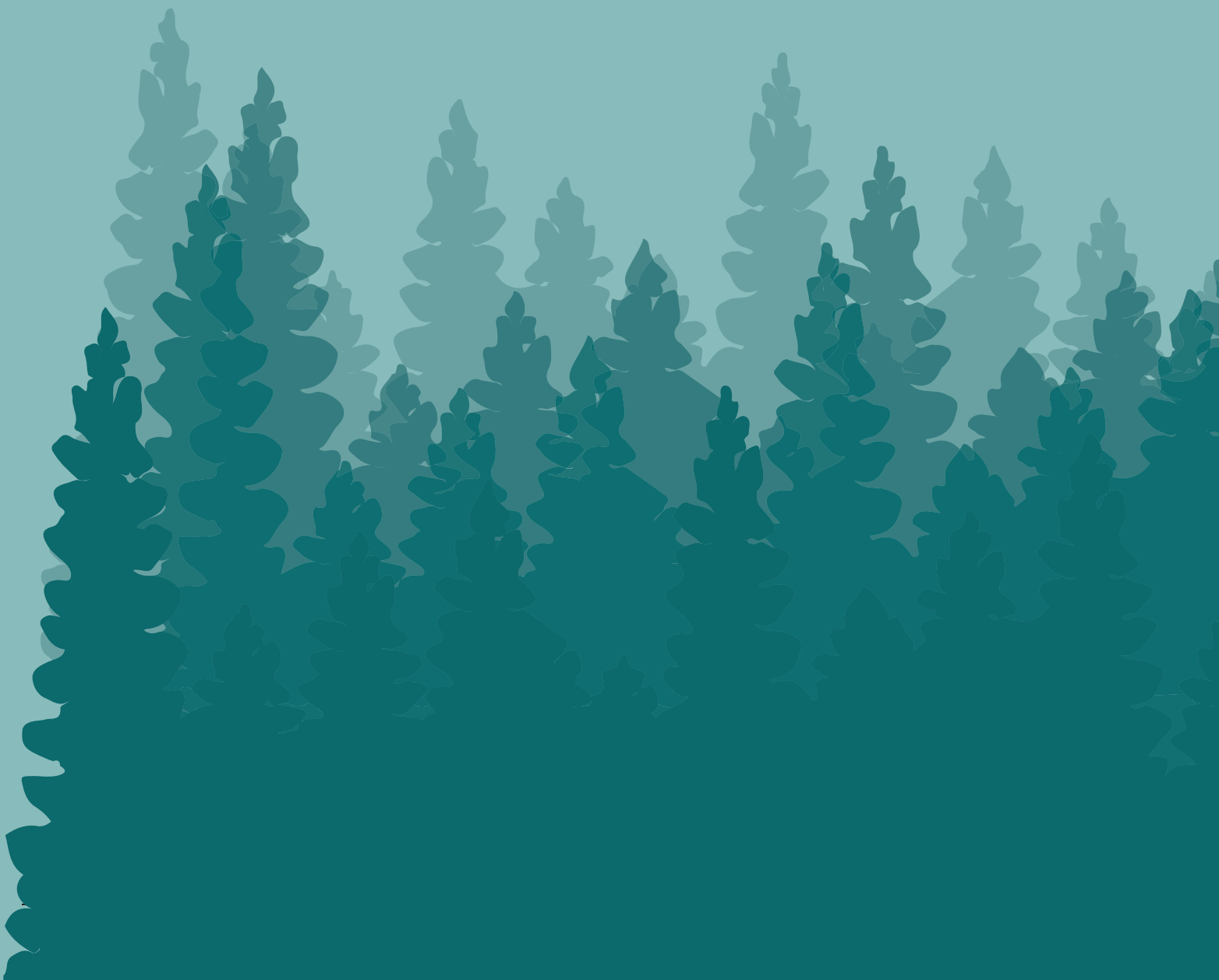
Community involvement, throughout the planning, management, construction and maintenance of trails is important to ensure the long-term success of the trail network and protection of environmental, cultural and heritage values. Continued trail stewardship and volunteer participation is encouraged, complementing City resources and helping to provide high quality trails.

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

A successful trail network requires input from users through a collaborative approach rooted in equality, fairness and diversity. This includes collaboration with other levels of government, First Nations, trail stewards, and trail user groups on trail planning and management.

3.3 Strategic Directions

1. Strategic Direction #1 – Work collaboratively with local First Nations to ensure that the trail network respects its place on their Traditional Territories.
2. Strategic Direction #2 – Maintain levels of service on priority trails through investment in trail maintenance and stewardship.
3. Strategic Direction #3 – Strengthen collaboration with stewards and partners on trail planning and management.
4. Strategic Direction #4 – Develop trail interpretation and experiences that foster appreciation of our community's unique natural and cultural heritage.
5. Strategic Direction #5 – Prioritize investment in existing trails and new trail developments that promote inclusion and access to a well connected, high quality trail network.



4. Action Plan

This section identifies 30 trails-related initiatives and actions to improve the City of Whitehorse trail network over the next 10 years. The recommendations are presented under the following seven themes which emerged through the background review, interviews and public engagements:

Theme 1: Trail Type Classification

Theme 2: Signage and Wayfinding

Theme 3: Education and Etiquette

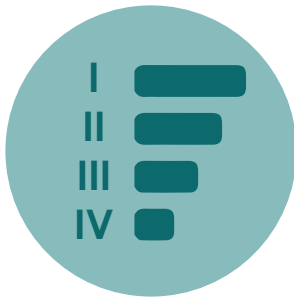
Theme 4: Making Connections

Theme 5: Trail Policies and Bylaws

Theme 6: Management and Maintenance

Theme 7: Stewardship

The recommendations are not presented in order of priority, as many can happen concurrently. The Implementation Plan in section 5 includes a summary of actions, potential contributors and associated cost estimates.



4.1 Theme 1: Trail Type Classification

Action #1: Update relevant policies and bylaws to reflect the Trail Classification system

The City currently uses a trail classification system as described in the Trail Maintenance Policy, which outlines four general trail types (I to IV). Type I Trails function for both recreation and transportation, and receive the highest amount of traffic. Type IV Trails are low impact trails that experience low levels of use.

The trail classifications identify surface type and width, typical use, typical trail features and amenities. These trail types are referred to throughout the actions in this plan.

It is recommended that the City continue use of the existing trail classification system with expanded definitions as outlined in Table 1. Additional trail type guidelines are proposed to ensure consistent trail design treatments based on existing and anticipated uses, and to align with the City of Whitehorse Type 1 Trail Design Guidelines (Draft 2020).

In addition, each segment of a trail type can also be identified with a difficulty rating (Table 2). This allows users, including residents and visitors, to easily assess if a trail is suitable for their skill level and desired experience.

The trail type and rating classification systems are adapted for the City of Whitehorse based on input and experience, and a review of applicable trail standards including Parks Canada, the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), the Whistler Trail Standards and the District of Squamish.

TRAIL DESIGNATIONS

Trails in the City's trail network accommodate a range of uses. In a small municipality with limited resources, multiple use trails can best accommodate the needs of the most users.

Depending on their designation, Type I, II and III trails may be open to only non-motorized uses or allow a mix of non-motorized and motorized uses.

Definitions for terms used in the trail classifications can be found in the Glossary.

Trail Type	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Function	Primary Recreation/ Transportation Trails	Secondary Recreation/ Transportation Trails	Recreation Trails	Hinterland Trails
Description	Double-track	Single-track and double-track	Single-track and double-track	Single-track and double-track
Surface Type	Paved with asphalt or chip seal	Surfaced with compacted aggregates	Unsurfaced	Unsurfaced
Tread Width	3-4 metres	Up to 1 metre (single-track), 2 metres (double-track)	50-70 centimetres (single-track), up to 2 metres (double-track)	30-50 centimetres
Gradient	Max 5% (8% over short distances)	Max 10% (15-20% over short distances)	Max 15% (20-25% over short distances)	n/a
Typical Use	Walking and cycling with limited motorized use	Walking and cycling with limited motorized use	Hiking and mountain biking with limited motorized use	Hiking and mountain biking
Typical Signage	Trailhead and en route signage where appropriate	Trailhead and en route signage where appropriate	Trailhead and en route signage where appropriate	n/a
Typical Markers	Difficulty and distance markers where appropriate	Difficulty and distance markers where appropriate	Difficulty and distance markers where appropriate	n/a
Difficulty Rating	Easiest (white circle)	Easy (green circle)	Ranges from easy (green circle) to most difficult (double black diamond)	Ranges from challenging (blue circle) to most difficult (double black diamond)
Example	Millennium Trail		Birch Loop	Grey Mountain Ridge Trail

Table 2 Trail Type Classifications



	White Circle (Easiest)	Green Circle (Easy)	Blue Square (Challenging)	Black Diamond (Difficult)	Double Black Diamond (Most Difficult)
Definition	Easy, fully accessible trail	Easy, mostly accessible trail	Moderate trail	Advanced trail	Expert trail
Descriptions	Fairly wide and flat	Gentle climbs and easily avoidable obstacles	Some steeper slopes and/or obstacles	Longer, steeper slopes, loose surfaces, more numerous obstacles	Many challenging obstacles, high risk level
Typical Trail Type	I-II	II-III	III-IV	III-IV	III-IV
Recommended Experience	Little or no experience required	Little or no experience required	Some experience recommended	Advanced, expert users	Expert users only

Table 3 Trail Difficulty Ratings

4.2 Theme 2: Signage & Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding are crucial aspects of any trail network as they provide important information to trail users about route options, yield hierarchy, explicitly list rules and etiquette, and add to the safety and enjoyment of the trail experience. A clear and legible signage and wayfinding system helps ensure that residents and visitors use the trail network safely and appropriately. Trail signage is also a low-cost management strategy that can help reduce maintenance requirements over time and mitigate human impact on sensitive natural environments.

A successful signage and wayfinding system will not only transfer vital information to the public. It is also a community and tourism asset and an opportunity to celebrate the City of Whitehorse's spectacular natural setting, unique cultural and heritage resources, and location within the Traditional Territories of Yukon First Nations.

The City has an established signage and wayfinding hierarchy of trailhead kiosks, signposts, en route markers and interpretive signage that has largely consistent design features such as the shape, style and materials. However, signage is not consistently implemented across the trail network. The government, stakeholder and public engagement input highlighted a desire for additional information, wayfinding and interpretive signage, updated mapping, and integration of Indigenous languages and traditional place names reflected in signage and wayfinding.

Action #2: Integrate Indigenous languages and place names into the trail network in partnership with First Nations

Collaborate with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation on opportunities to develop heritage and cultural interpretation and wayfinding trail signage on trails across the City to increase awareness of their Traditional Territories. Prioritize opportunities to reclaim Indigenous place names and integrate Indigenous languages on signage within the trail network, especially within the Yukon River Corridor, while respecting the sensitivity of cultural values. Consider where sites along trails can be enhanced with images and stories where appropriate to support learning



Trail Etiquette:

Use trail etiquette messages that focus on positives - lists of "Don'ts" are condescending and do not encourage good behaviour. Specify "Do's" and focus on a positive trail experience for all.

Map Standards:

Ensure all trail maps include:

- Title,
- Legend,
- North arrow,
- Scale,
- Date,
- Map credits.

and language revitalization. Work with local First Nations to develop interpretive locations and content. These may represent waterfront heritage and cultural sites, former settlement sites and places of displacement. Sites within the trail network of particular significance may include: the area from Kwanlin (Miles Canyon) to Canyon City and the White Horse Rapids (which had First Nation trails and a seasonal fish camp), the Robert Service Campground (traditionally used as a fish camp and village site), and waterfront lands including Whiskey Flats, Shipyards, Moccasin Flats and Sleepy Hollow.

Action #3: Update print and web-based trail maps

Update and add to trail maps and brochures available on the City website, including:

- An updated Motorized Use Trail Map (see Action #19)
- Final Neighbourhood Trail Plan Maps
- Loop trail maps and information
- Age-friendly trail guide
- Information regarding Great Trail (Trans Canada Trail) routes within the City

Update maps after key phases of trail improvements or new trail developments are completed.



Figure 3 Interpretive Signage in English, French and Southern Tutchone on the Tān Tágà Shro Trail at Wolf Creek Campground



Figure 4 Examples of existing trailhead and trail network signage



Figure 5 Trail sign post with Settlement Land information (Photo: CMBC)

Action #4: Implement a trail mapping system

City Priority Trails, as defined in the Trail Maintenance Policy, were consolidated in the City's GIS system as part of the Trail Plan. The intent is to have a consistent and accurate digital mapping system that facilitates management and maintenance tracking.

Trail mapping in GIS should be maintained and expanded, leveraging GIS data where it already exists. The current database of existing trails has been sufficient for assessing the network and developing recommendations, however, the data needs to be verified, consolidated and updated over time as new trails are added to the network. Where possible, make digital GIS files available to the public.

Action #5: Ensure City trail maps show First Nations lands

In collaboration with local First Nations, ensure Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Settlement Land parcels are identified on City trail maps, and in neighbourhood trail planning. This will support efforts to protect and preserve the cultural and environmental integrity of First Nations Settlement Lands.

Action #6: Install signs acknowledging City-adopted trails on Settlement Land

Notify trail users where City-adopted trails cross or lead onto Settlement Land parcel locations and provide acknowledgment of local First Nations through signage.

Action #7: Add interpretive signage that celebrates local heritage, wildlife, geology and environment

Dedicate interpretive routes and points of interest, installing interpretive signage to highlight significant wildlife values, environmental features, geology, and local heritage. Prioritize new interpretive signage along designated loop trails. The development of interpretive plans prior to implementing signage is encouraged.

Action #8: Continue marking of existing trails with signposts and en route markers

Build on the existing trail signage and wayfinding program by continuing to add trailhead kiosks, signposts and en route markers to existing trails within all neighbourhoods to improve trail network accessibility and enjoyment.



4.3 Theme 3: Education & Etiquette

Trail user education informs users of when to yield to other users, the importance of leaving no trace, and the harm that can be caused by activities such as dogs off-leash. It is the first and most effective strategy to promote responsible trail use, and address conflicts that may arise between different users on a trail.

In the Trail Plan public survey, the majority of survey respondents reported that they never or rarely have conflicts on trails.

DOGS AND TRAIL ETIQUETTE

Important Etiquette for People & Dogs on Trails

- Pick-up after your dog. If they poop, you must scoop!
- Keep your dog from disturbing other people and wildlife.
- Keep your dog within sight and under voice control.
- Ensure your pup has a license.
- Carry a leash and restrain your dog when required.

From those respondents indicating they have experienced conflicts, the most frequent reported conflicts on trails were associated with dog walking activities. Off-leash dogs were cited by 39% of respondents on the public survey as negatively impacting their trail experience. Specifically, respondents noted issues with off-leash dogs and dog waste. While this does not necessarily mean that off-leash dogs should be excluded from trails, it does suggest that actions need to be taken to improve trail etiquette and education among all trail users to reduce conflicts.

OTHER USER CONFLICT

Although the majority of trail users responding to the public survey reported having positive trail experiences, user conflicts can arise. User education and communications are the preferred and proactive course of action, rather than formal enforcement programs. Where trail compliance issues arise, targeted education and enforcement campaigns can be undertaken.

Action #9: Consider a “trail code of conduct/etiquette” with trail etiquette and safety information

Numerous jurisdictions have proven that conflicts on trails can be minimized by establishing codes of conduct and common trail etiquette. There are many examples of trail

etiquette guides and tools for the City to build from. Two notable examples include the Bridge River Valley "Trail Etiquette Guide" and the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC's "Trail User's Code of Ethics." Copies are included in Appendix C. Whitehorse-adapted etiquette should be developed in collaboration with trail stewards, First Nations and user groups. Trail code of conduct/etiquette information should be available in trail guides, at special events and on the City website.

To yield concrete results, adoption of a trail code of etiquette should be supported by other key tools:

- Implement trail etiquette signage
- Involve trail stewards and user groups
- Include information on Settlement Lands in collaboration with First Nations
- Clearly designate trail uses
- Enforce regulations where possible
- Provide a phone number for the reporting of trail issues, vandalism or other concerns. This can help reinforce a sense of ownership and responsibility with the trail network.

Action #10: Utilize targeted public educational messaging around responsible trail use

Collaborative initiatives between Bylaw Services, Strategic Communications and Parks could include targeted campaigns such as:

- Leave no Trace education;
- Trail code of conduct/etiquette;
- Information on trail management, including the important role of trail stewards;
- Impacts of off-trail activity and dogs off-leash on wildlife and environmentally sensitive areas;



Figure 6 Examples of Trail Etiquette Signage

- Acknowledgment and educational information regarding stewardship of trails on Settlement Land, in collaboration with First Nations;
- Trail basics – promoting existing trails and accessible loops to new users and preparing them for their first trip, and
- Invasive species impacts, in conjunction with the Yukon Invasive Species “PlayCleanGo” initiative.

Involve local trail user groups, tourism agencies, and other appropriate community organizations in publicity programs. This could include a semi-annual publicity blitz at the beginning of the peak summer and winter recreation seasons, or in hot spot areas that have recurring trail compliance issues.

Action #11: Update and expand trail resources available on the City website

Expand use of the City of Whitehorse website as a portal for trail related information. Ensure the website includes:

- A centralized hub for trail maps, brochures, user group information, and related trail plans, policies, bylaws
- Links to trail related tourist information
- Trail code of conduct/etiquette
- Annual publication of trail counts on the website to highlight the success of key trails

Action #12: Highlight trail initiatives throughout the community

In collaboration with Strategic Communications provide communication updates to highlight trail initiatives throughout the community, such as City Trail Crew projects, approved trail development projects, and other trail related initiatives.



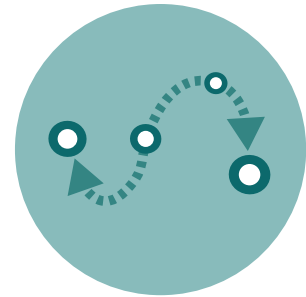
Figure 7 Spring Crocus on Long Lake Ridge Trail



Figure 8 Rotary Centennial Bridge on the Millennium Trail

4.4 Theme 4: Making Connections

This section highlights specific actions to upgrade existing trails, develop new trails, and improve linkages to key destinations. A well-connected trail network will further contribute to the use and enjoyment of trails for recreation, and encourage active transportation alternatives to personal vehicles. Actions in this section are supported, as noted, by other City plans.



TRAILS AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Type I Trails within the Whitehorse trail network serve both recreation uses and active transportation needs. The Riverfront Trail, with its high visual appeal and views, is an example of a trail used for both recreation and transportation purposes. While some key Type 1 Trail linkages are in place, many gaps exist in the active transportation network which are outside the scope of this plan. Where these dual recreation and transportation trail facilities are planned, they should be designed to serve people of all ages and abilities (AAA), as outlined in the City's Bicycle Network Plan and Type I Trail Design Guidelines.

Action #13: Establish Type I Trails connecting all neighbourhoods to downtown

Establish paved Type 1 trail routes connecting all existing neighbourhoods to the downtown core, as identified in the Bicycle Network Plan. Ensure a high standard of comfort, safety and convenience by implementing the Whitehorse Type 1 Trail Design Guidelines through the trail design and development process. Give early consideration to trails in the planning and design of new developments to ensure connections are made with the existing trail network.

Where applicable, expand connections by upgrading existing trail routes. Create attractive facilities by routing trails through green spaces or along the Yukon River where a trail corridor can be accommodated. Ensure safe and accessible connections are provided where Type 1 trails intersect with the on-road network, particularly at highway crossings, intersections, and sidewalks as identified in the Bicycle Network Plan.



Figure 9 The Riverfront Trail is a key link used for both recreation and active transportation

Action #14: Prioritize Type I Trail connections that link key routes in the downtown core

Safe, accessible Type 1 Trail connections should be prioritized at the following locations. These actions are supported by other plans as noted below:

- Establish a continuous Type I Trail along the Lower Escarpment in the downtown core (Downtown South Master Plan 2011, Bicycle Network Plan 2018),
- Construct a new staircase to the escarpment from Downtown South (Downtown South Master Plan 2011, Downtown Plan 2018, Bicycle Network Plan 2018)
- Link the Riverfront Trail with Two Mile Hill (Bicycle Network Plan 2018), and
- Extend the Riverfront Trail from downtown to Marwell, and over the escarpment (Official Community Plan 2010, Marwell Master Plan 2018, Bicycle Network Plan 2018).

Action #15: Create more accessible connections to access Grey Mountain trails within Chadburn Lake Park

Well used connections to access the Grey Mountain trail network within Chadburn Lake Park have difficult, often slippery conditions as a result of steep grades. Trail improvements should be implemented to allow a wide range of users to access the trail networks in these areas in all seasons. Specific locations to consider for improved access include Pee Wee Hill, Crocus Ridge and Heartbreak Hill.

Action #16: Develop and market key trail loops of varying lengths and difficulty connecting to points of interest

Establish a series of 5-6 well-defined primary loop trails of varying distances that link and celebrate points of interest around the City as a way to further implement the Whitehorse brand as a Wilderness City and a destination for outdoor adventures. Work with partners in tourism, local business and trail user groups to establish and market the trail loops with promotional material (online and printed) such as brochures, maps and web products.

The Role of Trails in an Age-Friendly City

- Trails support older adults to age in place by providing opportunities to stay active, enjoy good health, and participate in outdoor recreation;
- Trail provide options to walk, cycle or wheel to destinations, supporting older adults to remain independent in their communities;
- People of all ages and abilities benefit from accessible and age-friendly trails and green spaces, and
- The community benefits from the increased participation of older adults in community life.

In some cases, existing trails can be enhanced with signage, mapping and access improvements to create well-defined short, medium, and long-distance options that would appeal to a range of users such as walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, ultra runners, and others. Include accessible and age-friendly options. Create themes for each loop and incorporate new interpretive signage, focused trail improvements and signage as needed. Other loop opportunities would require new trail development.

The loops could change as new trails are developed over time. Suggested loop trails to consider include: Kwanlin (Miles Canyon) to Canyon City and along the Yukon River Corridor in collaboration with First Nations, Paddy's Pond / Ice Lake, Rock Gardens, Logan/Arnell wetlands, Crocus Ridge/Long Lake/Magnusson, Airport Loop, and loop options from the Dream Trail.

Action #17: Support an upgrade of the Dirt n' Soul Mountain Bike Park to support skills development

The Dirt n' Soul Mountain Bike Park skills park located in the Mount McIntyre Recreation Area requires upgrading to provide effective learning and skills progression for a range of ages and abilities. In particular, the pump track and structures require modernization.



Figure 11 Kwanlin (Miles Canyon) is a potential area for well-defined trail loops in collaboration with First Nations to identify opportunities for interpretation of traditional trails and cultural use of the area

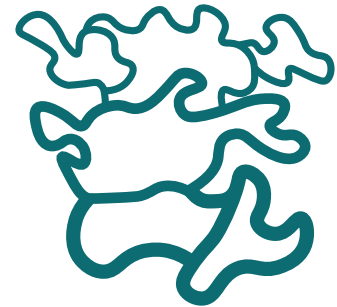


Figure 10 Example of a Stacked Loop Trail

Trails and Tourism

Adventure tourism is a major draw to Whitehorse and visitors are looking for outdoor activities when visiting.

Hiking, community walking tours, visiting a historic site or park, and wildlife viewing were among the **top ten activities** for Yukon visitors in the 2017-18 Yukon Bureau of Statistics Visitors Exit Survey.

All of these activities depend on an **accessible, well-connected trail network**.

Action #18: Create optional routes on difficult trail sections

Optional trail routes or “bypass trails” on difficult trail sections can improve access and trail experiences for users of a range of ages and abilities, offer an opportunity for trail users to progress their skills, and help to mitigate trail degradation on trail sections susceptible to erosion.

Action #19: Support “out and away” trails for motorized use

Improve mapping of “out and away trails,” in conjunction with trail user groups. Designate motorized “out and away” trails, where this use can be supported, and where it improves access to urban/rural interface trails or creates loops or connections that would minimize conflict between motorized and non-motorized uses.

Update the motorized trail use map (2015) to reflect completed Neighbourhood Trail Plans and improve legibility with a legend, north arrow, scale, trail names and labels. At the same time incorporate basic information related to seasonal trail use, and safe and respectful riding.

Action #20: Consider options for a paved recreational loop trail on the west side of the City

The popularity of the Millennium Trail, demonstrated both through trail counts and responses to the public survey, highlights the demand for scenic Type 1 trails for recreation. A destination loop trail on the west side of the City would provide an accessible recreational asset to neighbourhoods above the escarpment.



Figure 12 Snowmobiling on the Copper Trail/Trans Canada Trail, Whitehorse (Credit: Snoriders)

Action #21: Continue to implement best management practices for trails in environmentally sensitive areas

Trail planning, development and management in environmentally sensitive areas should follow best management practices to reduce human impacts on these areas. For example, elevated structures such as viewing platforms or decks provide an opportunity to establish trail viewpoints in wetlands, while limiting physical intrusion into the wetland area.

Best management practices include:

- The number and magnitude of trails within an environmentally sensitive area will be minimized, in accordance with objectives and policies outlined in the City's Official Community Plan;
- The primary reason for trail development in environmentally sensitive areas is to direct intensive activities away from sensitive natural areas while providing passive recreation opportunities and promoting ecological awareness;
- The development of trails and structures will be contingent upon the environmental sensitivity of the area, and
- Areas of interest for trail development that coincide with known or potential archaeological sites will include early involvement with First Nations.

Additional information on best practices is included in Appendix D.

Action #22: Complete remaining neighbourhood level trail plans

"Improving local / neighbourhood trail connections" was among the top three priorities for future development identified the Trail Plan public survey (May 2020), suggesting that outstanding neighbourhood trail plans be completed for inclusion in the existing City trail network.

Instead of task forces, the City should consider a more inclusive public consultation process, that includes charrette style public workshops as part of the planning process. Neighbourhood level trail planning processes should include early engagement with First Nations.

Building on work done to date, the neighbourhood trail planning workshops should focus on identifying and prioritizing neighbourhood trail needs, with particular focus on: trail locations and designations, linkages to new areas such as new subdivisions and residential areas, on-the-ground trail improvements and enhancements, and signage.



4.5 Theme 5: Trail Policies and Bylaws

The City's bylaws and policies authorize use, construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails on municipal and/or Crown lands within the City of Whitehorse boundary. The following actions recommend updates to build upon existing policies and bylaws related to trails, and ensure they are integrated.

Action #23: Update the Trail Development Application process

Update the Trail Development Application process by establishing intake deadlines for new trail development applications to streamline the review and approval process:

- Establish clear application intake deadlines, such as: August 15th, November 15th, February 15th and May 15th

Amend the Trail Proposal Form to include:

- A section for the applicant to demonstrate previous trail building experience, such as participation in trail building workshops, or volunteering.

Action #24: Update Definitions in the Trail Maintenance Policy

- Remove reference to the exclusion of motorized use on "single-track trails" to be consistent with other policies and bylaws.

Action #25: Update relevant policies and bylaws to legitimize the use of e-bikes and other e-mobility devices on trails

An emerging trail activity is the use of e-bikes and other electric mobility devices such as e-scooters and e-skateboards. In particular, there is increasing interest in e-biking on trails. In the public survey, 57% of respondents indicated they support the use of e-bikes on trails where cycling is already permitted. Engagement

Trails and Electric Mobility Devices

E-bikes are bicycles with an integrated motor that assists the rider when pedaling (pedal assist). They can reach various speeds and have varying degrees of assistance depending on the type of bike.

E-mobility devices are other electric devices used for getting around. Examples include: hoverboards, Segways, e-skateboards, e-scooters, etc

E-bikes allow more people of varying ages and abilities to recreate outdoors and use trails.

E-bike technology continues to advance and evolve.

E-bikes are in Whitehorse and their use is increasing within the City and across North America.

feedback indicated support for the use of e-bikes on trails as a means of recreating as well as commuting to key destinations within the City. Legitimizing the use of e-mobility devices will contribute to achieving the guiding principles of “Benefits for our community,” “Environmental stewardship,” and “Equitable access.” To plan for increased interest in and use of e-mobility devices, the City should:

- Work with relevant departments to assess how e-bike usage can be integrated into current policies and bylaws.
- Co-ordinate an educational campaign regarding e-bike use, etiquette and safety.

4.6 Theme 6: Management & Maintenance

Overall, the majority of public survey respondents indicated they are frequently or always satisfied with the management (65%) and maintenance (80%) of the Whitehorse trails. The quality of the maintenance on the trails is largely due to the leadership of the Department of Parks and Community Development, the City Trail Crew, and efforts of the trail stewards and partners. Specific recommendations to augment existing management and maintenance efforts are summarized in this section.



Action #26: Establish a Memorandum of Understanding on Trail Management and Planning with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council

Establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Trail Management and Planning with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, similar to the MOU in place with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. This will help to clarify trail management and planning, as well as consistent messaging and education around appropriate use of trails on TKC settlement lands.



Figure 13 Boardwalk at south end of Paddy's Pond completed by the City Trail Crew (Photo: Hillcrest Community Association)

Action #27: Increase collaboration with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation through implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Trail Management and Planning

Implement the Memorandum of Understanding on Trail Management and Planning with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation with a priority on:

- Standardizing reporting formats and timing, including annual trails reporting to optimize their value as management tools for First Nations land stewards, and
- Installation of signage notifying trail users of City-adopted trails on Settlement Lands in collaboration with the KDFN (see Action #5).

Action #28: Establish winter maintenance priorities for paved Type I Trails

Establish winter maintenance priorities to ensure continuous, all-season connectivity to key destinations such as schools, community centres and recreational facilities.



Figure 14 Cross Country Ski Trails at Mt McIntyre (Photo: Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club)

4.7 Theme 7: Stewardship

Actions under this theme include opportunities to engage with volunteers and foster increased stewardship of the trail network.

Action #29: Continue to provide recognition and support to trail stewards

Continue to strengthen partnerships with trail stewards and provide support through recognition of volunteer efforts, support for the delivery of programming, educational workshops and events, and funding towards trail maintenance activities.

Action #30: Expand the trail stewardship concept by implementing programs such as Adopt-a-Trail

The City of Whitehorse has placed a high priority on the importance of the trail network by creating a Projects & Trails Coordinator position and a dedicated Trail Crew. Nonetheless, management of the City's extensive trail network means the City must rely on volunteer efforts and its partnership agreements with trail stewards. As the City continues to grow in population, and demands on the trail network continue to increase, the City would benefit from increased trail stewardships programs such as Adopt-a-Trail. Through an Adopt-a-Trail program, community associations, service organizations, youth groups, or groups of individuals can adopt a section of trail, or an entire trail and perform selected duties, such as litter clean up, or minor clearing of brush, for a period of time.



Figure 15 CMBC Trail Maintenance Bootcamp (Photo: CMBC)



5. Plan Implementation

5.1 Action Summary and Cost Estimates

The following tables summarize the recommended actions and identify potential contributors.

Cost estimates are provided in Appendix E. These 'Class' D estimates provide an estimation suitable for budget planning purposes. A number of the proposed actions can be undertaken by existing staff with existing resources. Others are pending the availability of external funding or some form of partnership model. Some projects could be capital requests.

More detailed cost estimates will be required during planning, design and prior to construction of specific trail actions. Some actions will require detailed design including engineering services, while other trail upgrades can likely be achieved using typical cross sections.

The implementation plan should be reviewed annually to respond to changes, ensure integration with other City plans, and take advantage of potential funding and partnership opportunities.

Theme 1: Trail Type Classification		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
1	Update relevant policies and bylaws to reflect the Trail Classification system	

Table 4 Trail Type Classification Actions

Theme 2: Signage and Wayfinding		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
2	Integrate Indigenous languages and place names into the trail network in partnership with First Nations	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
3	Update print and web-based trail maps	ElderActive, Contagious Mountain Bike Club, Klondike Snowmobile Association
4	Implement a trail mapping system	
5	Ensure City trail maps show First Nations lands	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
6	Install signs acknowledging City-adopted trails on Settlement Lands	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
7	Add interpretive signage that celebrates local heritage, wildlife, geology and environment	Yukon Conservation Society, Yukon Invasive Species Council
8	Continue marking of existing trails with sign posts and en route markers	

Table 5 Signage and Wayfinding Actions

Theme 3: Education and Etiquette		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
9	Consider a "trail code of conduct/etiquette" with trail etiquette and safety information	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Trail Stewards, trail user groups, Yukon Conservation Society
10	Utilize targeted public educational messaging around responsible trail use	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
11	Update and expand trail resources available on the City website	
12	Highlight trail initiatives throughout the community	Trail Stewards, trail user groups, Community Associations

Table 6 Education and Etiquette Actions

Theme 4: Making Connections		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
13	Establish Type I Trails connecting all neighbourhoods to downtown	
14	Prioritize Type I Trail connections that link key routes in the downtown core	
15	Create more accessible connections to access Grey Mountain trails within Chadburn Lake Park	
16	Develop and market key trail loops of varying lengths and difficulty connecting to points of interest	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Tourism and Culture (YG), Local Businesses, Yukon Conservation Society
17	Support an upgrade of the Dirt n' Soul Mountain Bike Park to support skills development	Contagious Mountain Bike Club
18	Create optional trail routes on difficult trail sections	
19	Support "out and away" trails for motorized use	Klondike Snowmobile Association
20	Consider options for a paved recreational loop trail on the west side of the City	Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club
21	Continue to implement best management practices for trails in environmentally sensitive areas	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
22	Complete remaining neighbourhood level trail plans	Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Community Associations, trail user groups

Table 7 Making Connections Actions

Theme 5: Trail Policies and Bylaws		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
23	Update the Trail Development Application process	
24	Update Definitions in the Trail Maintenance Policy	
25	Update relevant policies and bylaws to legitimize the use of e-bikes and other e-mobility devices on trails	

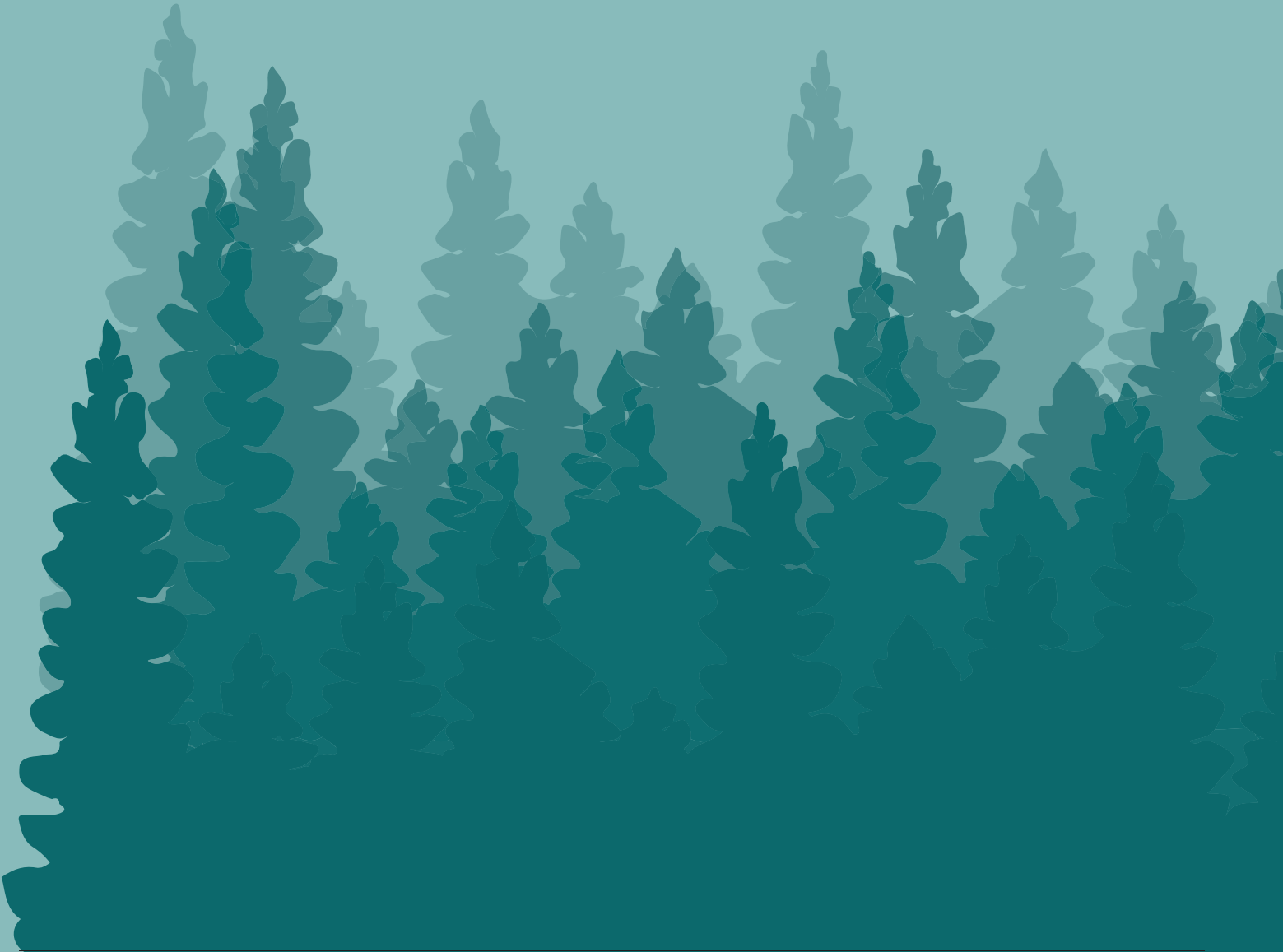
Table 8 Trail Policies and Bylaws Actions

Theme 6: Management and Maintenance		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
26	Establish a Memorandum of Understanding on Trail Maintenance and Planning with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council	Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
27	Increase collaboration with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation through implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Trail Maintenance and Planning	Kwanlin Dün First Nation
28	Establish winter maintenance priorities for paved Type I Trails	

Table 9 Management and Maintenance Actions

Theme 7: Stewardship		
#	Action	Potential Contributors
29	Continue to provide recognition and support to Trail Stewards	Contagious Mountain Bike Club, Klondike Snowmobile Association
30	Expand the trail stewardship concept by implementing programs such as Adopt-a-Trail	Community Associations, Service Organizations, Youth Groups

Table 10 Stewardship Actions



Glossary

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Any form of human-powered travel, such as walking, cycling, skateboarding, cross-country skiing and more. Walking and cycling are among the most popular and can be combined with other modes, such as public transit.

CITY TRAIL

Any trail designated in the City's priority trail inventory in accordance with the City's Trail Maintenance Policy.

DOUBLE-TRACK TRAIL

A trail where users generally travel single file but have the ability to pass each other while travelling in the opposing or same direction. The tread width of a double-track trail is generally 150 to 200 cm but can be wider if the surface is paved.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Areas with low tolerance to human disturbance where slight alterations would result in functional or structural changes to the ecosystem unit with potentially negative impacts on wildlife or visual aesthetics.

GRADE

The slope of the land, expressed as a ratio of vertical to horizontal, which occurs along a particular section of trail.

MOTORIZED MULTIPLE USE TRAIL

Trails designed and designated by the City to be used by both non-motorized and motorized users including snowmobilers.

NON-MOTORIZED MULTIPLE USE TRAIL

Trails to be used by a variety of non-motorized users.

SETTLEMENT LAND

Lands owned and managed by Yukon First Nations as identified in each First Nation's Final Agreement.

SINGLE-TRACK TRAIL

A trail where users must travel in single file. The tread width of a single-track trail is generally 30 to 70 cm wide but can be as wide as 100 cm.

SLOPE

Change in elevation along the length of a trail.

TRAIL NETWORK

A system of linked or interconnecting trails.

TRAIL STEWARD

An organization or individual that formally takes on responsibility for the care and maintenance of a particular City trail. A trail steward is generally a volunteer organization whose stewardship is authorized through a Memorandum of Understanding.

TRAILHEAD

An access point to a trail or trail network that can be accompanied by various public amenities, such as parking, kiosks, signs, maps, etc.

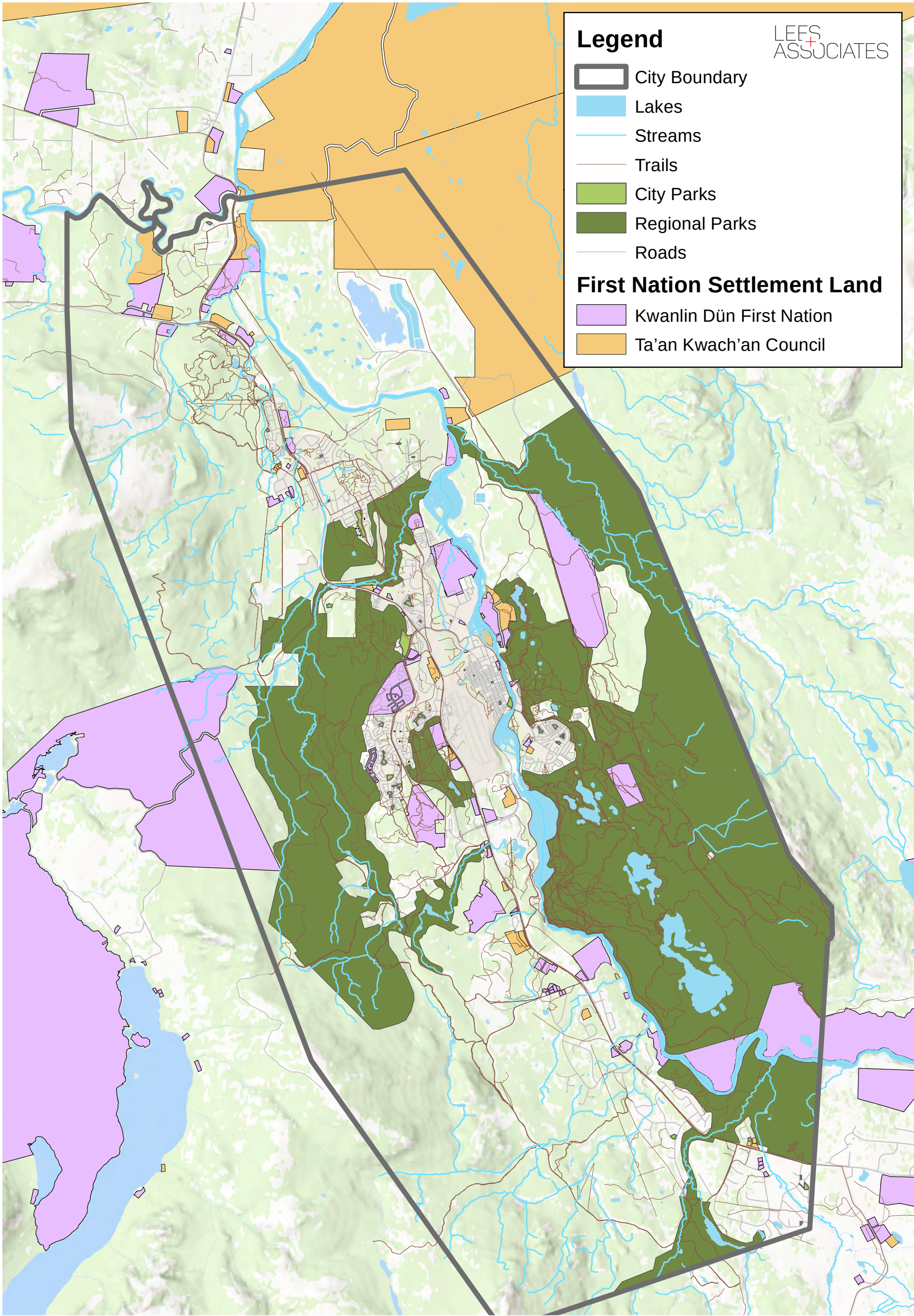
Appendices

Appendices Contents:

- Appendix A | Existing Trail Network Map
- Appendix B | Neighbourhood Trail Plan Maps
- Appendix C | Sample Trail Etiquette Guides
- Appendix D | Best Management Practices for ESAs
- Appendix E | Cost Estimates

Appendix A: Existing Trail Network Map





Legend

- City Boundary
- Lakes
- Streams
- Trails
- City Parks
- Regional Parks
- Roads

First Nation Settlement Land

- Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Ta'an Kwach'an Council

WHITEHORSE EXISTING TRAIL MAP

WHITEHORSE TRAIL PLAN

0 1.25 2.5 5 Km

1:100,000



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, increment P Corp., NPS, NRCan, Ordnance Survey, OpenStreetMap contributors, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, QS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

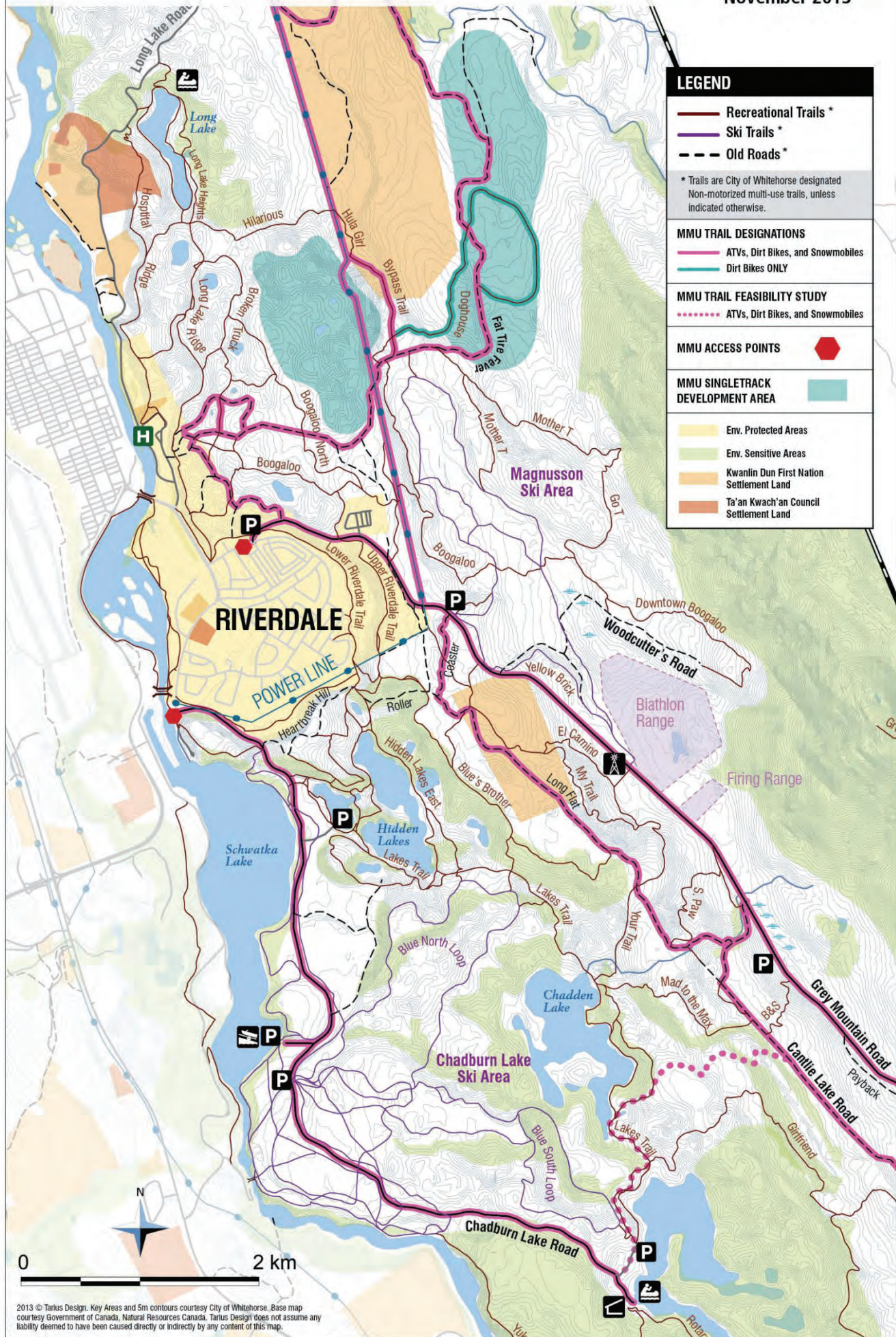
Appendix B: Neighbourhood Trail Plan Maps



East Yukon River Motorized Multi-Use (MMU) Trail Plan Map

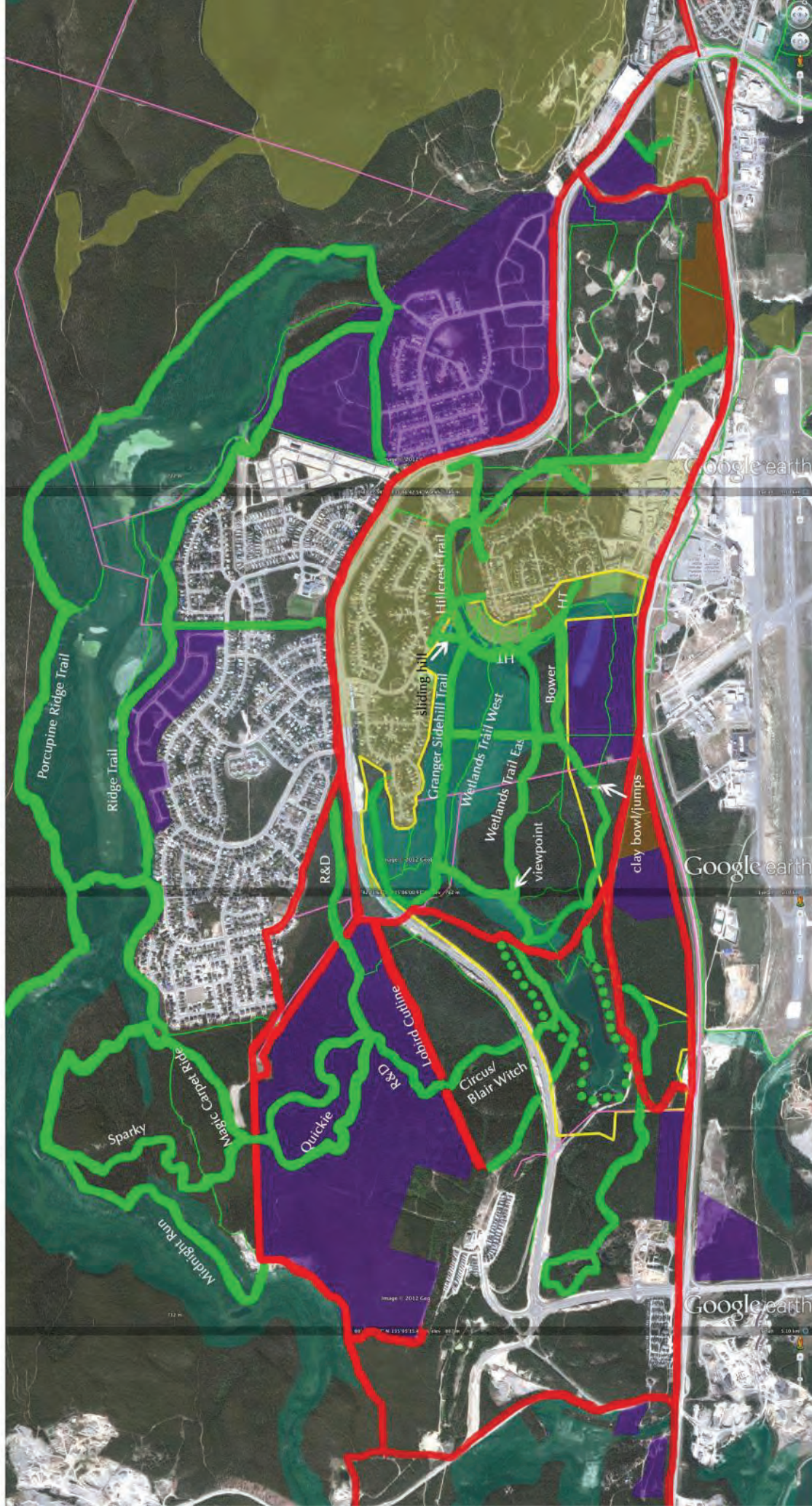
MAP: EYR02

November 2013



Above the Airport (ATA) Trail Plan Map – 2013

**Please note that this map is conceptual; a final map will be produced once implementation is complete.



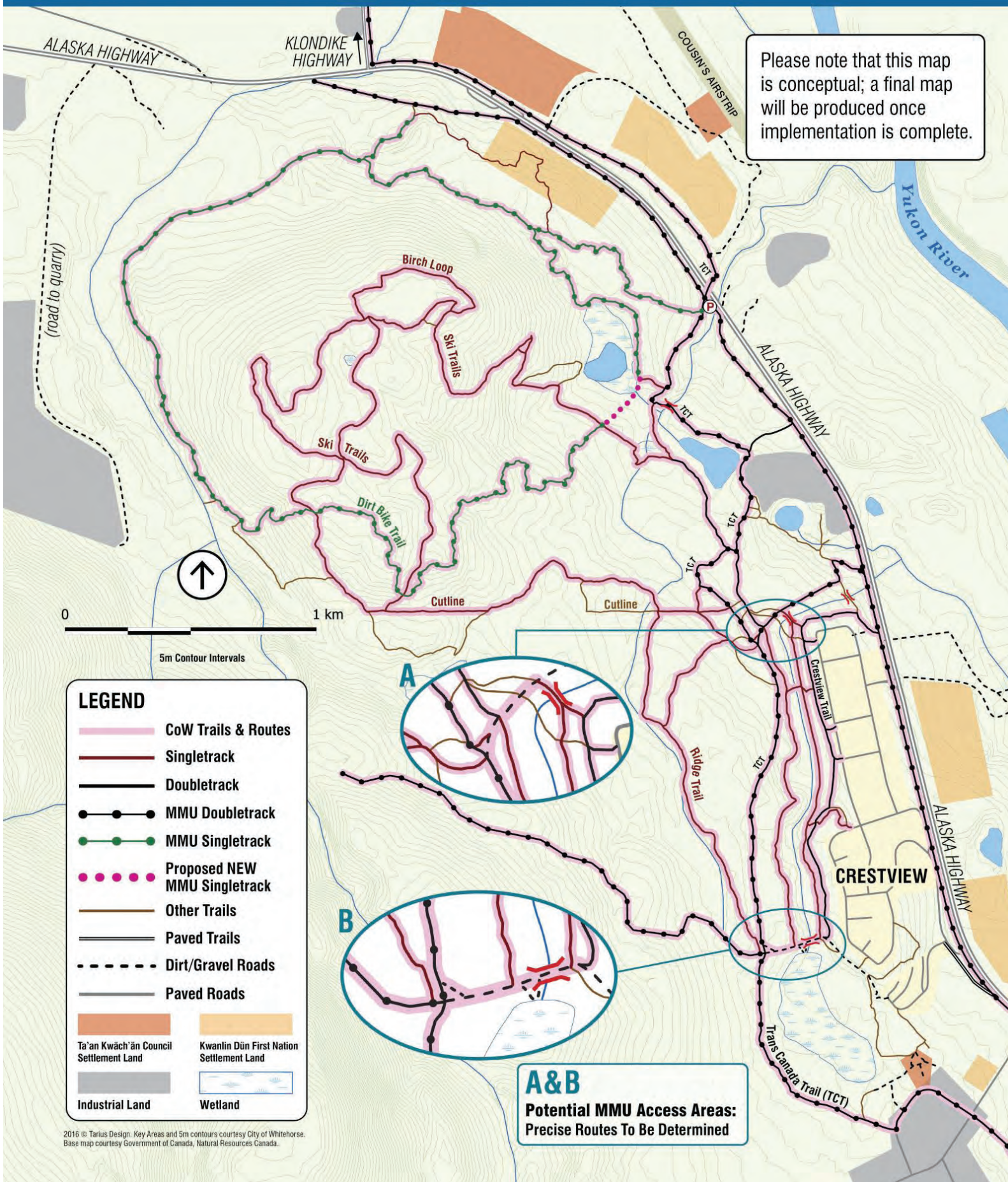
LEGEND (block shading): KDFN land (dark blue) TKN land (light blue) Protected Areas (dark green) Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ATV Bylaw) (light green)
 (lines): proposed motorized multi-use (City) trail (red line) proposed non-motorized (City) trail (green line) minor (non-City) trail/route (thin green line)
 proposed Paddy's Pond/Ice Lake park boundaries (2010 OCP) (yellow line) powerlines (pink line) new trails (dotted green line)

Thank you to Peter Long of whitehorsewalks.com for mapping assistance!

Crestview Trail Plan Map

March 2016

Please note that this map is conceptual; a final map will be produced once implementation is complete.

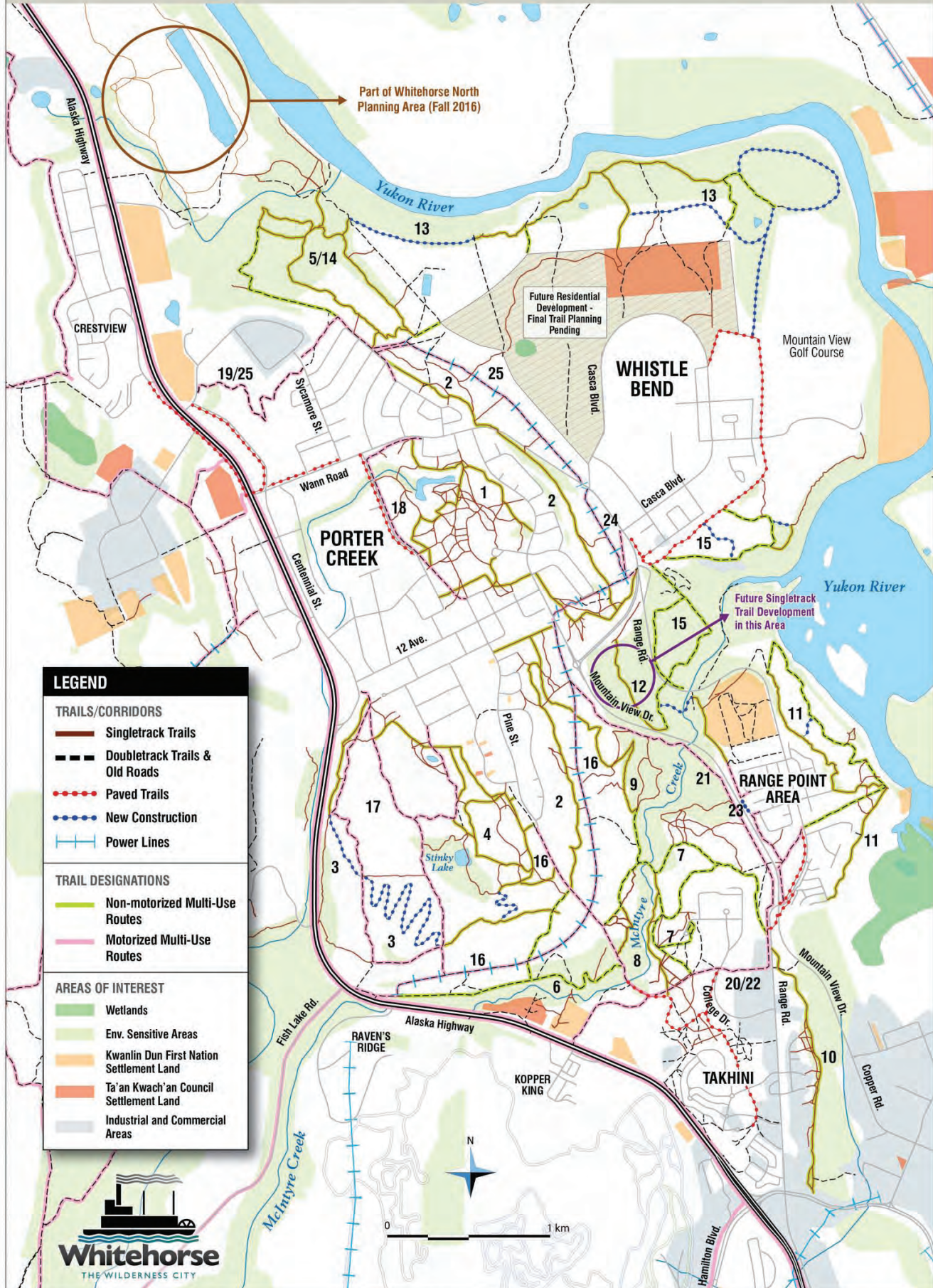


City of Whitehorse Trail Plan - June 2016

DRAFT

PORTER CREEK • TAKHINI • WHISTLE BEND • RANGE POINT

Including Key Areas: First Nation Settlement Lands, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas



Appendix C: Sample Trail Etiquette Guides

Bridge River Valley “Trail Etiquette Guide”:

<https://bridgerivervalleytrails.ca/trail-etiquette>

Outdoor Recreation Council of BC’s “Trail User’s Code of Ethics”:

<https://www.orcbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Trail-Users-Code-of-Ethics.pdf>



TRAIL ETIQUETTE

Rules of the Trail



- * Cyclists yield to Hikers and Horses
- * Hikers yield to Horses
- * Motorized vehicles yield to all other users

General Etiquette

Respect: It's simple. If you offer respect, you're more likely to receive it. Most friction on the trail can be avoided with this simple rule.

Communication: Part of the respect. Let people know you're there, before you surprise them. This doesn't mean be loud and obnoxious on the trail, simply don't startle people. A smile and "Hello" go a long way.

Use Open Trails: Respect trail and road closures — ask a land manager for clarification if you are uncertain about the status of a trail. Do not trespass on private land. Obtain permits or other authorization as required.

Leave No Trace: Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you.

- * Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage than dry ones. When the trail is soft, consider other riding options.
- * Stay on existing trails. Don't cut switchbacks.
- * Ride, don't slide.
- * Pack out at least as much as you pack in.

Travel responsibly and in control: Inattention for even a moment could put yourself and others at risk. Bicycles and motorized machines should obey all speed regulations and recommendations, and ride within your limits. Walk in single file when traffic or trail dictates.

Yield Appropriately: Do your utmost to let your fellow trail users know you're coming — a friendly greeting or bell ring are good methods. Try to anticipate other trail users as you go around corners. Follow the rules in the sign above. In general, strive to make each pass a safe and courteous one. Common sense will go a long way.

Never Scare Animals: Animals are easily startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement or a loud noise. Give animals enough room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses, use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife are serious offenses.

Smile!: Sounds too simple, but you're out on a trail to have fun, so take a moment when you meet someone to smile and say "Hi". Out on the trail, if things go badly, it helps to have friends.

Avoid Spreading Seeds: Help keep weeds out of our forests. Noxious weeds threaten our healthy ecosystems and livelihoods. Stay on trail, drive on designated roads, use weed seed free hay, check your socks, boots, bikes, ATV's or horse tails for hitchhikers when you get back to the trailhead. Let's keep our forests free of invasives.

Be Informed: It's YOUR responsibility to be "in the know." Questions about where to ride, trail closures, outdoor ethics and local regulations are important to know before you head out on the trails. Contact your local land manager if you are unsure about what you can and can't do in a given area.

Give Back: Trails don't maintain themselves. Get involved with your local trail club and help out on trail days. Pack a folding saw and trim back the branches you have to duck or climb over.

Safety

- * Know your equipment, your ability and the area in which you are riding and prepare accordingly.
- * Strive to be self-sufficient: keep your equipment in good repair and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions.
- * Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Rules based on IMBA standards.

[Mountain Bikers](#)

[Dirt Bikers](#)

[All Terrain Vehicles](#)

[Horse Back Riders](#)

[Hikers/Runners](#)

[Trail Use with Dogs](#)

[Snowmobiles](#)

[XC Skiing](#)

[Fat Bikes](#)

[BC Parks Etiquette](#)

[Range Animal Etiquette](#)

...

Horse Riders and Pack Horses

Training

- Well trained horses are essential for trouble free trail riding.

Meeting other trail users

- Steady your mount and exchange greetings.
- Give clear advice to the other parties to tell them how you would like them to act based on the type of trail user and the width and nature of the trail.
- Warn other trail users of hazards or difficult areas ahead.



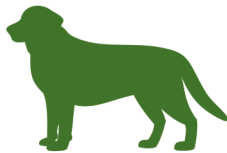
When to travel

- Avoid using trails when they are wet and muddy to avoid damage.

Dog Owners

Restraint

- Dogs on trails should be trained to obey verbal and non-verbal commands.
- Owners should carry a leash to restrain their dogs when required and obey the regulations for the trails they are using.
- When off-leash dogs should remain within sight of the owners at all times.



Behaviour

- Dog owners must realize that many people are uncomfortable when approached by a dog.
- Owners must ensure that dogs do not disturb wildlife near the trail.

Respect the Land and the Environment

Preparation

- Check with local land managers or agencies ahead of time for trail conditions or closures.



On the trail

- Stay on established trails and don't cause trail braiding or carve out short-cuts on switchbacks.
- Respect private property and "No Trespassing" signs.
- Use existing bridges and structures to cross streams and don't make new ones.
- Remember wetlands are very sensitive and so should be avoided.
- Respect wildlife.

Overall

- If you pack it in — pack it out!
- Use appropriate sanitary procedures at least 100 metres away from rivers, streams or lakes (see *Back Country Sanitation*, a brochure of the Outdoor Recreation Council).

To order more copies of this brochure, contact:

Outdoor Recreation Council
of British Columbia
1101 – 207 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6B 1H7

E-mail: outdoorrec@orc.bc.ca
Website: www.orcbc.ca



The Trail User's Code of Ethics

How to minimize your impact on the environment and other trail users

1. Common Sense

2. Communication

3. Courtesy

Whether they are hikers, mountain bikers, horse riders or quad riders, trail users are increasingly sharing trails. And with the increased use of trails there is an increasing level of public concern for the environment in which they travel.

Dangers can exist when different types of user share the same trails. If all trail users are prepared for encounters with other types of user and if they tread lightly, they will help to reduce trail conflicts and environmental damage. In that way they will make everyone's time outdoors safer and more enjoyable.



Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia



Trail Ethics

The Three C's: Common Sense, Communication & Courtesy

1 Common Sense: Common sense begins with planning your trip and continues when you encounter others on the trail. Although a trail user's protocol normally calls for the most mobile person to yield the right of way, it is important to assess the situation and use common sense to decide who can get out of the way most easily. Cyclists need to realize that equestrians and hikers may not hear them approaching so they should be prepared to make themselves heard. Hikers should give way to cyclists climbing a steep hill.

2 Communication: A friendly word of greeting for equestrians by hikers and cyclists reassures their horses and alerts them to your presence. By chatting with other trail users you can warn them of dangers or adverse conditions on the trail ahead. You can also tell them about interesting or attractive natural features ahead. If you are leading a large group on a narrow trail it is a good idea to let others know so they can take appropriate action. Peer group policing is everyone's responsibility and if you see someone acting irresponsibly in the back country you should warn them of the potential consequences of their actions.

3 Courtesy: Above all, **treat all other trail users with respect and courtesy.** Trail conflicts can occur when people forget the golden rule! Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself!

Hikers

Stay on the trail

- Whenever possible use existing trails to avoid trail braiding and other damage to the adjacent habitat.
- Avoid leaving traces such as rock piles or marked trees.

In the alpine

- Groups crossing meadows should spread out to avoid carving out unnecessary trails.
- Walk on rocks or snow as much as possible to avoid damaging vegetation.
- Alpine vegetation is delicate and takes a long time to grow again when damaged.

Meeting horse riders or pack horses

- Exchange greetings with the riders or stockmen to calm the horses.
- Be prepared to step off the trail on the lower side if possible to make way for the horses.
- Keep at least two to three metres clear of the horses so they can pass.
- Face the horses to hide your backpack which could spook a horse.

Mountain Bikers

Anticipate

- Expect to encounter other trail users and be ready for them especially on blind curves.
- Slow down in good time to avoid sudden encounters with equestrians or hikers.

Meeting horse riders or pack horses

- When you meet horses stop, get off your bike, take off your helmet and exchange greetings



with the riders so the horses can see you are a human.

- Be prepared to get off the trail on the lower side to let horses past because horses are less likely to be spooked by something below their eye level.
- Keep a distance of three metres or more between you and the horses.

On the trail

- Stay on designated trails to avoid damage to the environment.
- Avoid using trails when conditions are wet and muddy to prevent erosion and channelling of rainwater.
- Avoid sliding round curves which can destroy the tread of the trail.

Quad Riders

Speed

- Keep your speed below 20 k.p.h. when travelling within 30 metres of a non-motorized trail user.
- Do not spin your tires to avoid damage to the trail.
- Avoid creating dust and noise when passing other trail users.

Meeting other trail users

- Yield the right of way to horses, bikers and hikers.
- When approaching horses stop your vehicle, remove your helmet and exchange greetings with the riders or stockmen so the horses can see you are a human being.
- When travelling downhill give way to others going uphill.
- When travelling in a group avoid blocking the trail.



Appendix D:

Best Management

Practices for Trails

in ESAs



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR TRAILS IN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

1. The number and magnitude of trails within an environmentally sensitive area will be minimized, in accordance with objectives and policies outlined in the Official Community Plan;
2. Areas of interest for trail development that coincide with known or potential archaeological sites will include early involvement with First Nations;
3. Tree cutting or vegetation clearing that would result in fragmentation of habitat, or the loss of high value wildlife trees or culturally modified trees shall be avoided;
4. The size and number of necessary structures shall be minimized;
5. Access points will be limited and controlled to minimize disturbance;
6. Restoration and/or site design solutions shall rely on environmentally sensitive approaches to trail design to achieve maximum protection with a minimum of maintenance;
7. Adequate signage is recommended at access points to identify the area as an environmentally sensitive area and to inform users of their responsibilities, code of conduct and of restrictions of use;
8. Off-trail use will be discouraged through signage and barriers where appropriate, and augmented by education;
9. Users have a responsibility to follow codes of behaviour/use, trail code of conduct practices to minimize user conflicts, adherence to relevant bylaws and permitted activities (e.g., dogs on leash) as developed by the City of Whitehorse and reinforced by educational signage.

Appendix E: Cost Estimates



Class 'D' Cost Estimates		
Action #	Description	Cost
	THEME 1: TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS	
1	Update relevant policies and bylaws to reflect the Trail Types classification system	Staff Costs
	THEME 2: SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING	
2	Integrate Indigenous languages and place names into the trail network	\$10,000
3	Update print and web-based trail maps	\$15,000
4	Implement a trail mapping system	\$40,000
5	Ensure City trail maps show First Nations lands	Staff Costs
6	Install signs acknowledging City-adopted trail on Settlement Land	\$5,000
7	Add interpretive signage to celebrate local heritage, wildlife, geology & environment	\$8,000
8	Continue marking of existing trails with signposts and en route markers	\$30,000
	THEME 3: EDUCATION & ETIQUETTE	
9	Consider a "trail code of conduct/etiquette" with trail etiquette and safety information	\$3,500
10	Utilize targeted public educational messaging around responsible trail use	Staff Costs
11	Update and expand trail resources available on the City website	Staff Costs
12	Highlight trail initiatives throughout the community	Staff Costs
	THEME 4: MAKING CONNECTIONS	
13	Establish Type I Trails connecting all neighbourhoods to downtown	Staff Costs
14	Prioritize Type I Trail connections that link key routes in the downtown core	Staff Costs
15	Create more accessible connections to access Grey Mountain trails	\$25,000
16	Develop and market key trail loops of varying lengths and difficulty	\$175,000
17	Support an upgrade of the Dirt n' Soul Mountain Bike Park	\$200,000
18	Create optional routes on difficult trail sections	Staff Costs
19	Support "out and away" trails for motorized use	Staff Costs
20	Consider options for a paved recreational loop trail on the west side of the City	Staff Costs
21	Implement best management practices for trails in environmentally sensitive areas	Staff Costs
22	Complete remaining neighbourhood level trail plans	\$20,000
	THEME 5: TRAIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
23	Update the Trail Development Application process	Staff Costs
24	Update Definitions in the Trail Maintenance Policy	Staff Costs
25	Update relevant policies and bylaws to legitimize the use of e-bikes on trails	Staff Costs
	THEME 6: MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE	
26, 27	Foster increased collaboration with KDFN & TKC through implementation of Trail MOUs	\$5,000
28	Establish winter maintenance priorities for Type I Trails	Staff Costs*
	THEME 7: STEWARDSHIP	
29	Continue to provide recognition and support to Trail Stewards	\$20,000
30	Expand the trail stewardship concept by implementing programs such as Adopt-a-Trail	Staff Costs
	Sub-Total:	\$556,500.00
	Contingency Allowance (25%):	\$139,125.00
	Total:	\$695,625.00

*Potential forced growth