

May 22, 2009

CFN 42397

Ms. Kimberley Kitteringham
Town Clerk, Town of Markham
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, Ontario
L3R 9W3

Dear Ms. Kitteringham,

Re: Trail Surface Standards Report and Request for Representatives to participate on the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Trail Guidelines Advisory Committee.

This letter is being sent along with a recent Trail Surface Standards Report that went to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Board Meeting #3-09, held on Friday, April 24, 2009. At this meeting the Authority approved Resolution #A54/09:

"THAT the report on Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and municipal trail surface standards in the Toronto region be circulated to the municipalities in TRCA's jurisdiction."

We are also requesting that our municipal partners appoint a Councillor and staff representative to participate on our Trail Guidelines Advisory Committee. The purpose for the committee is to provide input and direction towards the update of the original TRCA Trail Planning and Design Guidelines Manual that was completed in 1992.

For your information, we will be completing the trail guidelines update in two phases. The first phase will be a scoping process that we will start in June of this year and it will last until the end of 2009. At this time, we anticipate 3 meetings with the Advisory Committee (June, September and November) to complete the first phase. The second phase of the project will include additional research and report writing. This phase should last approximately 1 year and we anticipate meeting 5 times during the course of 2010 to discuss and finalize the report.

As additional background information, we have experienced an increase in public interest in green space trails over the last number of years. Trails represent an important part of healthy living, recreation and smart transportation in our communities. The TRCA created a Trail Planning and Design Guidelines Manual in 1992, which has been referenced extensively by municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area. This manual is now in need of an update in order to address new information on natural heritage protection, trail sustainability and trail accessibility. After receiving the TRCA staff report

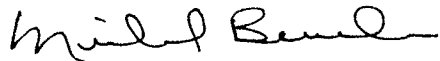


on Municipal Trail Surfacing Standards (attached), the Authority Board requested that the TRCA trail guidelines update be completed as soon as possible.

The TRCA appreciates that the new Trail Guidelines document will be used as a tool for many municipalities, and that each area has unique priorities and challenges. For these reasons, we would like your input as we move forward with the project. Therefore, we request that one municipal staff person and a municipal Councillor be appointed to represent your municipality on our project Advisory Committee.

Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions or require additional information. To confirm your staff and Councillor representative on the TRCA Trail Guidelines Advisory Committee, please contact Lesli Rynyk, Conservation Lands Administrative Coordinator, Phone: 416-661-6600 ext. 5579, Email: lrnyk@trca.on.ca or mail to 5 Shoreham Drive, Downsview, ON, M3N 1S4.

Yours truly,



Mike Bender, B.L.A., OALA
Manager, Conservation Lands
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Phone: 416-661-6600 ext. 5287
Email: mbender@trca.on.ca

Attach. TRCA Trail Surface Standards Report

cc: Jim Dillane, TRCA
Ron Dewell, TRCA
Kathy Stranks, TRCA

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Meeting #2/09, April 17, 2009

Item 9.1

FROM: James W. Dillane, Director, Finance and Business Services

RE: STANDARDS FOR TRAIL SURFACES

KEY ISSUE

Report on Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and municipal trail surface standards in the Toronto region.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report on Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and municipal trail standards in the Toronto region be received.

BACKGROUND

TRCA's Executive Committee requested a report on Toronto region municipal trail surfacing standards for informational purposes. The following report is a compilation of the trail surfacing guidelines across the region. The TRCA trail construction guidelines are included because of the municipalities that reference TRCA guidelines as their standard.

TRCA Trail Guidelines

The development of trails on TRCA-owned lands is guided by TRCA's *Trail Standards and Design Guidelines: A Handbook for an Inter-Regional Trail System in the Greater Toronto Area* (1992).

Table 1 provides a summary of trail design and construction criteria included within TRCA's *Trail Standards and Design Guidelines*.

Table 1: Trail Design and Construction Criteria Summary, TRCA

	Hiking	Walking	Skiing	Equestrian	Bicycle or Combined Walking/ Bicycle (rural/ low-use)	Combined Walking/ Bicycle (urban/ high-use)
Surface Type	native with spot hardening	Native hardened or paved	Native/ cleared flush	Native with spot hardening	Stone fines	Asphalt
Desirable Grade	0-10 %	0-3 %	0-10 %	0-10 %	0-5 %	0-3 %
Maximum Sustained Grade	15 %	5 %	15 %	15 %	7-8 %	6 %
Minimum Clearing Width	1 m	2.5 m	2.5 m	2.5 m	4 m	7 m
Minimum Clearing Height	2.5 m	3 m	3.5 m	3.5 m	3 m	3 m
Trail Lengths (+ refer to no real maximum)	min 1 km max 10 km	no min max 2 km	min 5 km max 15 km+	min 5 km max 30 km+	min 2 km max 10 km+	min 2 km max 10 km
Tread Width	0.5 m	1.5 m	2.5 m	2.5 m	3 m	3 m

Municipal Trail Surfacing Guidelines

Most of the municipalities in the Toronto region have informal trail construction guidelines. Surfacing is most often determined by projected use and trail location and is decided formally on a case by case basis. The following document outlines some local and regional municipal surfacing guidelines and illustrates the factors involved in trail construction choices for some of the municipalities in the Toronto region. The focus is largely on the local municipalities, and is not exhaustive.

City of Pickering

The City of Pickering does not have any approved standards for trail surfacing. Any trails that are to be heavily traveled as multi-purpose trails are typically 3.0m wide asphalt surfaces. In Pickering parks where the trails are less traveled, stone screenings on a gravel base are used. The City of Pickering has also considered using wood chips on some of the minor trail systems through wooded areas, where accessibility is not as much of a concern (Arnold Mostert, City of Pickering).

Town of Ajax

Ajax trail surfacing specifications are subject to trail use and location. "Trail Corridors" which connect the subdivisions and aid transportation, are paved. Bark mulch or stone screenings are used in natural or environmentally sensitive areas (Town of Ajax; Parks Services, 2009). Currently, Ajax is trying to promote "Trails as Active Transportation" and will therefore be looking to create more paved trails. Nothing is specified about the nature of the paving materials.