



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Zach Prince, Senior Planner
Date: Thursday, November 09, 2023
Subject: **County Trails - Accessibility Review**

1.0 Background

Planning staff noted in our Annual Trail Work plan that staff would review our County trails for Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance and the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual. Staff have reviewed the four (4) trails within the County's responsibility, the Kissing Bridge Trail (KBT), Trestle Bridge Trail, Cottontail Road Trail, and the Wellington Place Trails. Appendix B includes a map indicating the different trails at Wellington Place. The report outlines the areas that staff have reviewed and recommendations regarding trail entrances, trail width/material and road crossings.

2.0 Design Review

Trails Entrances

Kissing Bridge Trail

The Guelph to Goderich (G2G) non-profit has identified the gates along the trail as areas to improve accessibility and access to the trail. The G2G has replaced some gates along the trail and are seeking funding from the Trans Canada Trail and RTO4 to replace more gates along the trail. Staff maintain the Ariss parking area as an accessible entrance for the trail and will help to support the G2G.

Trestle Bridge Trail

Due to the grade changes and existing bridges, not every entrance to the Trestle Bridge Trail is accessible. Beatty Line has the fewest of barriers to park a vehicle and access the Trail. Currently there is no off-street parking area which provides an accessible entrance to the trail. Many trail users park at the commercial parking lot at 725 St Andrew ST W and access the trail informally, an image is included in Appendix A. Staff could evaluate the possibility of recognizing this connection by constructing an accessible path and potentially coming to an agreement for parking from the landowner. If the property redevelops in the future, there may be an opportunity to request an accessible connection to the parking area.

The Township of Centre Wellington has provided a gate detail for their trails including the single gate pictured in Figure 1. The distance between the gate and post is up to 40 cm larger than the existing gates on the County maintained portion of the Trestle Bridge Trail, shown in Appendix A. Additionally, the Township is considering increasing the passable space to 1.5m as a minimum standard (Approximately 2 feet wider than the County's current openings). There are three (3) gates along the Trestle Bridge Trail that could be modified or replaced to increase the passable space. Using the existing Centre Wellington standard would provide the most practical replacement and allow consistency throughout the trail. Staff have estimated the cost to remove and replace the 3 gates to be

\$15,000 (\$5,000) for each gate. Staff can incorporate these costs in the regular maintenance budget for the trails in future years.

Figure 1: Existing Township Gate on Trestle Bridge Trail at Gilkinson Street (Elora)



Cottontail Road Trail

The Cottontail Road trail was constructed in 2015 using the Township's standard at that time, which meets the AODA requirements.

Wellington Place Trails

Except for the Aboyne Trail, which is a wilderness trail and not subject to the same AODA requirements, the access points to the trails at Wellington Place do not have gates or bollards.

Road Crossings

Kissing Bridge Trail

There are three (3) road crossings on County Roads for the KBT. Each crossing has trail crossing signs installed and the daylight triangles are cleared and maintained. There could be an opportunity to improve the crossing at County Road 86 in the Ariss Hamlet where there is an existing walk signal at the lights but no cross walk or shoulder. Staff will consult with the Roads department to determine if improvements can be made to provide a safer pedestrian crossing.

Trestle Bridge Trail

The Township has recently improved the pedestrian crossing at South River Road. This includes a flashing crossing light, line painting and tactile plates. No changes or improvements are proposed for this trail.

Cottontail Road Trail

The trail relies on signage to identify trail crossing locations. The trail includes portions that are on road and off-road grassed sections of the trail. Trail crossings are kept clear of growing grass to maintain sight lines for pedestrians.

Wellington Place Trails

Currently there is work underway to improve the 4 way stop at Charles Allan Way with the Terrace and Museum entrances. This would better connect the Terrace Trail; Museum Trail and a new multi-use trail being constructed to the South of Charles Allan Way.

Trail Materials and Width

The KBT and Trestle Bridge Trails are off road trails completed with stone dust and meet AODA requirements for material and width. Staff add stone dust and regrade the trails, where needed. Improvements could be made to the Trestle Bridge trail to pave the surface to convert the trail to a multi-use pathway with lighting.

Cottontail Road Trail

The Cottontail Road Trail is a combination of on road and off-road portions. A portion of the trail (approximately 3 km) is off road but grass, this was a design change for portions of the trail adjacent to the Agricultural Research Institute (Second Line E). Staff could reevaluate the potential to convert this portion to a gravel trail which may allow for more users of the trail.

Wellington Place Trails

The Terrace Trail was constructed as an accessible trail and generally meets AODA requirements. Currently work is progressing to upgrade the Museum Trail to a 3m wide gravel trail which would better align the trail with the AODA requirements.

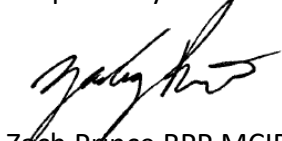
3.0 Conclusion

The County's trails are largely off-road trails that were established prior to the AODA Act (2005). The trails meet many AODA design requirements. Staff have provided recommendations for improvements that can be incorporated with our annual maintenance budget for trails. Staff will continue to monitor and look for opportunities to remove barriers to access County trails where practical.

4.0 Recommendation

That the County Trails Accessibility Review report be received for information; and,
That the County Trails Accessibility Review be forwarded to the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Prince RPP MCIP, Senior Planner

Appendix A: Photos of existing trail conditions

Appendix B: Map of Wellington Place Trails

Appendix A

Informal trail access to 725 St Andrew ST W



Existing gate at Beatty Line (96cm spacing between gate and bollard)



Appendix B

Map of Wellington Place Trails

