



## Community engagement: Phase 3

This is our third opportunity to hear your feedback on the [Guelph Trail Master Plan \(GTMP\) update](#). We'll use your previous feedback to ask questions that dig a little deeper and validate what we heard.

We continue to engage early in the process, and in this stage we want to:

- Receive feedback on the draft trail classification table and trail maps
- Prioritize future trails for construction
- Receive feedback on the draft Trans Canada Trail (TCT) route investigation findings

Please share your thoughts by participating in our discussion forum and check out the 'trail map' tab on the main page. This input will be a component of what feeds into the draft plan, focusing on mapping our network, and understanding the way in which we classify trails and prioritize their implementation.

## Information we use to develop the final plan

Community feedback is just one element we are using to develop the final GTMP. We are also considering:

- Alignment with other plans and strategies (e.g. [Community Plan](#), [Strategic Plan](#))
- Overall community benefit
- Environmental sustainability
- Future trends and population changes
- Technical considerations and operating impacts
- Financial sustainability

Your input will play a role in the development of the draft master plan to be presented to Council in late spring 2021.

## How we prioritize when trails get built

We gather feedback from you to help assess your wants and needs - this is one part of determining which trails should be built first.

We also look at a wide range of information to analyse which trails get built in the short-term, medium-term, or long-term. Some factors are based on data, others are about understanding other factors like construction opportunities. For example, if a trail improves safety, helps people get places in a better way and it also one the community wants, it may be built first. We also consider:

- How the trail connects people and destinations
- If the trail is in an area of high need or in an area where there are no trails
- How the trail supports areas of growth, changing standards or new community needs
- If the trails support safe routes to schools or other destinations



- If the trail is used to protect or manage the natural environment
- If the trail makes an impact on a wide range of users or will be used frequently
- If there a community desire to build the trail
- If the route is technically feasible and there is land available
- If the trail is supported by other City projects or initiatives

## Next steps

With your feedback we will develop a draft master plan. The draft master plan will apply the new trail classification system to the map, update design guidelines, outline visions and goals and identify priorities.

Sign up to receive updates and participate at [haveyoursay.guelph.ca](https://haveyoursay.guelph.ca).

## About the Guelph Trail Master Plan update

The Guelph Trail Master Plan (GTMP) update guides how we plan, design, fund, build, and maintain our trail system. We are updating the GTMP to recognize changing needs as well as new approaches, standards, and City practices and policies.

This update is an opportunity to make sure the plan continues to reflect and work for our city. We will do this by

- updating data and trail mapping to reflect the growth of the network;
- identifying new trail opportunities and opportunities to connect existing trails to make our system more complete;
- updating trail guidelines to match best practices and new legislation;
- aligning trail practices with related City plans and guides;
- receiving community feedback on the trail network;
- setting goals, actions and recommendations about trail use and promotion; and by
- identifying priorities for investment.

Ultimately, we will provide an updated, Council-endorsed master plan that will assist our City and its residents, developers and community groups with decision making for our trails.

## Why are we updating the Guelph Trail Master Plan?

- The master plan requires an update every five years – the master plan was last reviewed in 2010 with an update to the trail network map.
- Legislation, best practices and our own trail policies have changed since the master plan was created.
- Our trail network data needs to be updated to include trails that have been designed and built since the last update.
- We have received requests for revised trail alignments, which require investigation and community engagement.

## Will the Guelph Trail Master Plan (GTMP) update determine the exact routes of future trails?

While the project will improve the accuracy of Guelph's existing trail network data and review trail routing issues, the updated GTMP will be a citywide master planning tool. It will contain a conceptual (approximate) level of mapping for future trails, but detailed studies must occur to ensure trails do not negatively impact nature and existing infrastructure in the area. Separate studies and construction drawings are needed to determine the precise locations of future trails and their infrastructure designs.

## About the Trans Canada Trail route investigation

A three-kilometre gap exists in the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) route between the city of Guelph and Guelph-Eramosa Township. The alignment would connect the multi-use path along Woodlawn Road to Guelph to the Kissing Bridge Trail, which intersects Wellington Road 39 (Silvercreek Parkway) connecting Guelph to a network of trails across Ontario.

The connection has a complicated history of property ownership, environmental, technical and financial challenges. There is a desire to connect the gap through an off-road route using existing rail and hydro corridors instead of an on-road route. The connections require a partnership between the city of Guelph, Guelph-Eramosa Township, Wellington County, other approval agencies and various trail non-profit groups.

Findings of the route investigation can be found on the [Guelph Trail Master Plan](#) webpage.

## Why master planning is important

**Trails are an important asset in Guelph. Master plans develop guidelines to plan, design, build, and maintain them.**

In the last 15 years, we have seen a growing demand for trails in Guelph. We know that trails are important for our communities. Trails can function to help an individual get from point A to point B and are important to connectivity, but many are also purely recreational and keep our community healthy. Some trails allow us to travel through forests, beside rivers, or around other areas of natural beauty and are an opportunity to experience nature. Other trails may pass through neighbourhoods, helping to unite communities. They act as meeting places, where people from a variety of backgrounds can interact. Trails can also attract tourists and encourage people to spend money in different areas of our city, helping to build a strong economy. This plan encompasses the broad range trail types and uses around Guelph.

Master planning is a process of looking into the future to identify where priorities and opportunities are for investment and growth. It allows for a process that facilitates decision-making about trails that reflects the goals of the entire community. The document is also a guide and provides direction on key questions, such as how to:





- plan, design, and implement trails per best practices and legislation and in a way that is integrated with other city plans;
- secure land and trail planning through land development;
- fund trails;
- operate and maintain the network; and
- promote and communicate about the network.

## What this plan doesn't do

**Active transportation facilities in the right-of-way:** Active transportation facilities such as cycle tracks, bicycle lanes, and multi-use paths that are within the road right-of-way play a role in the planning of the trail network by working to fill in gaps in connectivity and serving as access to trails. However, they are planned outside of this process through the [Active Transportation Master Plan \(ATN\)](#), the [Cycling Master Plan](#), and [Transportation Master Plan](#). These facilities should inform trail planning, but are planned and managed independently of the trail system and are not a part of this plan update.

**Trails outside of city boundaries:** Trails adjacent to Guelph's boundaries, or those that run through Guelph (e.g. the Great Trail) are important to planning and establishing broader connectivity, but are not planned or subject to processes/guidelines in the GTMP.

**Guidelines for third-party trails:** These are trails that are part of the overall network but are maintained by third parties, for instance, trails on University of Guelph property.

**Secondary plan areas:** Trails in secondary plans are planned through the secondary planning processes (e.g. in the Guelph Innovation District) and not through the GTMP.

## The difference between the Guelph Trail Master Plan (GTMP) and the Active Transportation Network (ATN) study

The Active Transportation Network (ATN) study (2017) focuses on upgrading a portion of the existing trails to improve commuter trips for active forms of transportation such as walking, running, cycling and inline skating. In contrast, the GTMP update project will review our entire network of existing and planned trails outside of the road rights-of-way and provide guidelines regarding all aspects of the trail-related work. Some trails are part of the ATN, but only those that are outside of the road right-of-way. One of the main objectives of the GTMP update is to coordinate it with the ATN so that the two plans complement each other.

## Previous community engagement

Community engagement on the Guelph Trail Master Plan started in October 2017 to inform the community about the update, outline the schedule and the key themes we were focussing on for the life of the project. Residents helped us to:

- review the vision and guiding principles of the current Guelph Trail Master Plan;





- provide feedback on the project base map;
- share their thoughts, opinions and concerns about the existing trail network; and
- Help us with initial stages of the Trans Canada Trail route selection study.

From this engagement, we gained insights about our audience: who uses our trails, what are their demographics, what they think of our current trails and where they want us to go with trail design in the future.

## Community engagement: Phase 1

The first round of community engagement for Guelph Trail Master Plan took place in fall 2017, which included events and online surveys. The purpose of this engagement was to inform you of the project, the study schedule, and the key themes of the trail plan. We asked questions about the existing trail hierarchy, what the vision for the master plan should be, and how trails are used in Guelph.

For more information please read the [Phase 1 engagement summary](#).

## Community engagement: Phase 2

Our phase two engagement activities validated what we heard in our first round of listening for both the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) and the Guelph Trail Master Plan (GTMP). Engagement for the GTMP was merged with the PRMP to make it easier to provide feedback on trails, parks and recreation together. The original GTMP work plan did not include a second phase of engagement but was added as we aligned the engagement for both projects. We focused on understanding key themes better to help establish community priorities. We asked new questions that dug a little deeper and touched on some of the themes that were top of mind.

For more information please read the [Phase 2 engagement summary](#).

