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# Trails Master Plan

August 2022



Portugal Cove  
St. Philip's

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# Acknowledgments

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## ***With Special Thanks To***

Residents of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Chamber of Commerce

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Advisory Committee on the Environment

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Heritage Committee

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Tourism Working Group

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Inclusion Committee

Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Hiking and Walking Club

East Coast Trail Association

Avalon Mountain Bike Association

Scouts Canada

Recreational ATV users

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# Introduction

“ *A sustainable and complete community, offering residents and visitors access to connected and safe neighbourhoods, natural open spaces, agricultural lands and soaring coastlines. A vibrant heritage combined with increased economic opportunities create a preferred place for people to live and grow, to be close to work, to pursue recreation, to invest and to visit.* ”

- Our Vision

Since amalgamating in 1992, the Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's has maintained a steadfast commitment to preserving its natural environment, strong sense of place, and rural quality of life. To further this position and to ensure the community remains a desirable place in which to live, work, and play well into the future, the Town has committed to providing high-quality recreation infrastructure and community services for its residents. This is evident in the significant investment already made in public facilities such as Rainbow Gully and Voisey's Brook Parks.

The community's trails are another of its strongest assets and provide residents and visitors with access to picturesque landscapes and outstanding nature-based and outdoor experiences. As such, the Town has identified expansion and development of its trail network as a priority. A planned and thoughtful approach to trail development is needed, however, to ensure that the desire to enjoy the community's incredible landscapes is carefully balanced with the need to protect them. We must avoid doing anything that inadvertently takes away from the very qualities we love about these spaces and ensure that they remain protected and enjoyable for future generations.

The purpose of this plan will be to develop a road map or guiding document for the future development, improvement, and enhancement of the trail network in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's over time. It also provides a framework for future investment in the trail network by ensuring that funding is allocated where most beneficial to the community and its residents. And, perhaps most importantly, it defines a vision for trail development that protects and enhances the cherished cultural landscapes of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's well into the future.

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# Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are a set of strategic statements that summarize the focus and desired outcomes for the project. They represent the fundamental things that must be kept top of mind moving forward and become the yardstick upon which recommendations are based and projects are prioritized. The following guiding principles have been developed for this Trails Master Plan:



## ***Improve connectivity and access to local destinations and surrounding communities.***

- Map important destinations within the community and determine where new trail routes can be developed to facilitate safe access;
- Consider trail routes that connect to existing trails in neighbouring communities;
- Identify connectivity gaps in the community, and ensure that the new trail network serves those areas and contributes to closing those gaps.



## ***Protect the natural environment and the community's rural sense of character.***

- Use the Town's mapping data to inform trail routes such that sensitive landscapes including steep slopes, wetlands, and water bodies are preserved;
- Provide formal routes that encourage users to stick to the trail, therefore protecting the surrounding natural environment;
- Within the trail network, provide access to existing natural features and destinations.



## ***Create a trail network that provides year-round recreation opportunities for different user groups.***

- Based on community feedback, priority user groups should include walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, skiers, and snowshoers. ATV and snowmobile routes should be included in the plan, but should not be prioritized as highly as the other user groups;
- For hikers and walkers, prioritize trails that help fulfill Guiding Principle #1 (above) - community feedback made it clear that new destination trails (like the East Coast Trail) should not be the priority;

- For mountain bikers, focus on the development of a destination trail system that can serve the entire region;
- Incorporate shared-use trails where possible;
- Consider signage to improve trail accessibility and use in the winter months when the trail route may not be clearly visible.



***Prioritize sustainability.***

- Follow trail design best practices and standards to ensure trails are built to a high quality, are inclusive, and sustainable;
- Consider trail maintenance and longevity during the trail planning process;
- Consider financial resources when prioritizing trail developments.

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# Planning Process

The development of this Master Plan included several project stages as follows.

## ***Information Gathering & Background Review***

This phase represents the foundational work necessary to guide future project phases and included assembling community mapping; reviewing current municipal planning documents; performing desktop trail analyses; field work; and reviewing emerging trends and best practices in trail development.

## ***Community Engagement***

This phase included engagement sessions with key informants, trail users, and residents of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's to gain an understanding of opportunities and challenges that existed with the current trail network. Due to the ongoing pandemic, all engagement sessions were completed online.

## ***Development of Recommendations***

Strongly informed by the findings of the previous phases, this project phase included development of specific strategies and action plans that will allow the community to achieve its trail development goals over time.

## ***Submission of Final Report to Council***

This final stage included the compiling and presenting of all information in a report to be used as an essential planning tool by Council and Town Staff.





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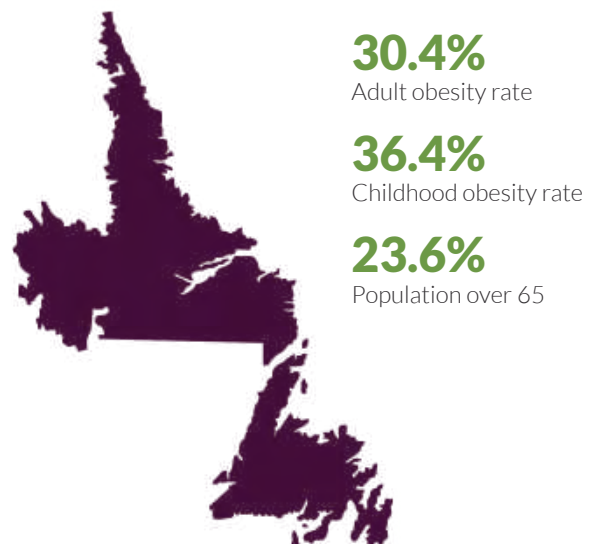
# Understanding the Context

## The Need for Trails

The rationale for investing in trails is well-researched and documented. Ample evidence exists that suggests developing trails promotes a healthy, active lifestyle and has been shown to provide a number of social, health, environmental, and economic benefits, which are summarized in this section. According to recent research, perhaps no other province stands to gain as much from these numerous benefits as Newfoundland and Labrador.

Statistics Canada data (2018) has suggested that Newfoundland and Labrador's rates of adult obesity (30.4%) and childhood obesity (36.4%) are both higher than the national average. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, 1 in 3 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are considered obese. This trend is significant and alarming as obesity has been shown to contribute to several serious health risks and weight-related diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, as well as increase the burden on the healthcare system. Further, obesity has been linked with psychological and performance disorders such as anxiety and depression. Research suggests there may be several reasons for this trend, however most agree that an increase in sedentary lifestyles and simultaneous decrease in physical activity have been contributing factors. Obesity, however, is a preventable disease and one of the most effective ways to reduce obesity rates is through increasing physical activity. Trails promote active living by providing flexible, enjoyable recreation opportunities that allow users to participate at their own pace and skill level.

Newfoundland and Labrador has also been noted as having the country's oldest and most rapidly-aging population. As of 2021, 23.6% of the provincial population was over the age of 65, and this is expected to continue to grow in the coming years. This trend requires a shift in the way we think about developing age-friendly communities that accommodate a safe, healthy, and independent lifestyle. People are living longer and are seeking ways to maintain their health. Further, people are preferring to age in place, meaning they are staying longer in their communities. Studies



have shown that a significant factor for healthy aging is an active lifestyle. Trail access provides a low-cost, easily-accessible opportunity for seniors to exercise regularly, maintain independence and mobility, and reduce feelings of isolation or depression through socializing with other members of the community.

### **Benefits of Trails**

Trails are a vital part of a community. These are important public spaces where residents and visitors gather, socialize, and recreate. When designed and implemented thoughtfully, trails become an extension of the community itself, highlighting values such as personal and economic health and well-being and creating a distinct sense of place. Trails encourage and enable an active lifestyle by providing opportunities to increase physical activity, offsetting some of the alarming trends previously discussed. They encourage alternative methods of transportation, such as walking, jogging, and cycling, which contribute to improvements in physical and mental health and less wear and tear on infrastructure like roads. The many environmental benefits of trails include carbon reduction, stormwater retention, air and water pollution reduction, and increased environmental awareness and stewardship.



#### **Social Benefits**

- Trails provide users with the opportunity to connect with other trail users in their community, fostering social interactions and relationships;
- Due to their low cost and low barrier to entry, trails are socially equitable and accessible to all members of a community;
- Trails can tie together several parts of a community, encouraging residents to explore and increasing awareness of a community's amenities, services, and attractions;
- Trails can showcase a community's natural and cultural character and history;
- Trails adjacent to residential areas often become sources of pride for a community;
- Trail stewardship encourages resident ownership and can provide a sense of place attachment;
- Trails can help to increase the overall appeal, quality of life, and identity of a community.



### **Health & Well-Being Benefits**

- Trails promote a healthy and active lifestyle by providing access to recreational opportunities such as walking, jogging, or cycling;
- Active living has been shown to significantly reduce mental and physical health issues such as obesity, stress, and depression, while positively increasing feelings of well-being, satisfaction, and morale;
- Trails allow users to exercise at their own pace and comfort level.



### **Environmental Benefits**

- Trails that connect with parks, open spaces, and environmentally sensitive areas increase exposure to nature and promote environmental awareness and stewardship;
- As part of a larger green space network, trail corridors can provide valuable ecosystem services such as carbon capture, heat island mitigation, rainwater infiltration, and increasing habitat and biodiversity;
- Trails can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging alternative modes of transportation such as walking and cycling.



### **Economic Benefits**

- Residential properties with convenient access to trails and open spaces have been shown to be more desirable in the housing market which can lead to increased property values;
- Higher property values can lead to increased tax revenues for a municipality;
- Trails can help to improve the overall appeal of a community to visitors which can lead to increased tourism. When connected to cultural or natural community assets, trails themselves can become a tourism attraction and lead to increased tourism-based economic activity;
- By encouraging active living, trails can lead to indirect savings on healthcare services;
- Studies have shown that trail users are likely to spend money adjacent to trails if the option is there;

- Businesses that set up adjacent to trails or provide access to trail connections can experience increased economic activity;
- Trails provide meaningful recreational opportunities which may lead to decreased instances of vandalism, loitering, or other illicit activity;
- There is evidence that trails will play an important role in helping revive the tourism industry post-pandemic.

## Planning Context

To gain an understanding of the existing municipal and regulatory environment, trail planning work that has already been completed, and to ensure the Trails Master Plan remains aligned with previous goals and objectives related to trail development, several previous planning documents and studies were reviewed.

### **Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Municipal Plan (2014-2024)**



The Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Municipal Plan establishes guidelines and policies for managing future growth and development of the Town by providing a land use strategy for the ten year period 2014 to 2024. It outlines Council's policies for overall land use development, for provision of community amenities, and for watershed and environmental protection, with the primary intent being to encourage and to work towards a healthy, safe, economically prosperous, and a more complete and sustainable community.

Priorities for trail development identified within the Municipal Plan include:

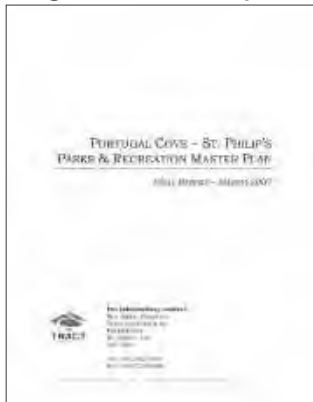
- **Policy GLU-12:** Council supports the development of the East Coast Trail as delineated on the Generalized Future Land Use Map and shall encourage landowners along the proposed route to cooperate in facilitating the trail's development.
- **Policy GLU-13:** Within the constraints of municipal resources, Council shall work with trail proponents, residents, and landowners to develop the East Coast Trail through the town.

- **Policy GLU-14:** Council may encourage, and sometimes shall require, lands to be set aside from active development in order to protect, maintain, or improve an environmental resource or sensitive natural feature. These lands may be used for uses such as woodlands, fields, walking trails, and passive recreational facilities, but shall not include structures such as buildings, tennis courts, parking lots, or other impervious land uses.
- **Development Scheme Area #3: Carew Drive/Old Cart Road:** Integration of watercourse from Western Pond into community design; and, Connection to trail system on Greyman's Beard Hill and Princess Lookout.
- **Development Scheme Area #4: Neary's Pond/Western Round Pond:** Public access to Neary's Pond and Western Round Pond shorelines; Connections to trail system on Beachy Cove Hill, Greyman's Beard Hill and Princess Mountain Lookout; and, Site design that is sensitive to steep slopes.
- **Development Scheme Area #8: St. Thomas Line:** Public access to the coastline and integration with the East Coast Trail; and, Site design that is sensitive to steep slopes and scenic coastal views.
- **Development Scheme Area #9: Tucker's Hill:** Public access to the coastline and integration with the East Coast Trail; and, Site design that is sensitive to steep slopes and scenic coastal views.
- **Policy TC-3:** Council shall pursue the development of appropriate recreational facilities such as parkland and trails near the Bell Island Ferry Terminal, on the south side of Portugal Cove, north of the small craft harbour in St. Philip's, and along the coastline.
- **Policy TC-8:** Council shall pursue a program of identifying and preserving traditional walking trails and hiking trails in the Traditional Community designation. Particular attention will be paid to preserving public access to beaches and shoreline areas.
- **Policy ROS-1:** Council shall encourage uses such as parklands, sports fields, playgrounds, trail systems, and conservation initiatives as primary permitted uses.
- **Policy ROS-3:** It shall be a policy of Council to explore the development of a linear park system for Portugal Cove-St. Philip's to accommodate a range of recreational activities such as hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, rock climbing, canoeing, and photographic tours. Facilities such as rest areas, picnic areas and interpretation signage are envisioned to be included. The trail system will incorporate

a series of linear spaces parallel to the shorelines of Broad Cove River, Main River, and Beachy Cove River, as well as incorporating the trails for the expanded Voisey’s Brook Park. The linear system will also facilitate walking trails to scenic viewpoints and seek to expand and enhance pedestrian mobility opportunities within the historical communities of Portugal Cove and St. Philip’s. Many traditional local trails and pathways will be connected to the linear park system.

- **Policy ROS-4:** Council shall support opportunities to integrate the linear park system with the East Coast Trail as much as possible.
- **Policy ROS-5:** Council will encourage local residents, landowners and private developers to cooperate with trail developers by facilitating access through and adjacent to private properties.
- **Policy ROS-6:** Within the constraints of municipal resources, it shall be a policy of Council to assist and facilitate trail development.
- **Policy ROS-7:** Where possible, Council will encourage a buffer on either side of an inland trail in order to provide a right-of-way that is appropriate to its context within the community.
- **Policy PW-3:** Council shall additionally refer all proposed land and resource discretionary uses for antenna, forestry, passive recreational uses such as hiking trails, and any other development activity, proposed to be located within the designated watershed areas to the Department of Environment and Conservation for prior approval.

### **Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2007)**



The purpose of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan is to provide long-range parks and recreation planning guidelines, prepare conceptual plans for park infrastructure and identify recreation programming priorities, and to clearly articulate recreation development strategies for the Town, keeping in mind annual funding available for such services and facilities.

Priorities for trail development identified within the Parks & Recreation Master Plan include:

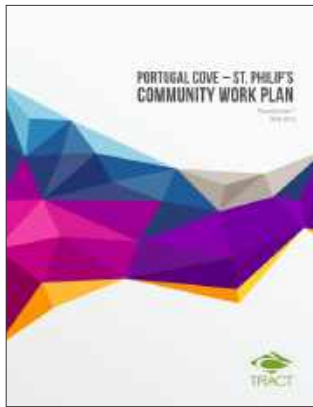
- The “most important” outdoor facilities were neighbourhood playgrounds (87%), walking trails (82%), and Town park (79%).
- Considering both indoor and outdoor facilities, the highest rated amenities were walking trails (49%), a swimming pool (37%), and a multipurpose facility (30%).
- There are numerous informal walking trails, and trails for ATVs and snowmobiles. These need to be refined, formalized, signed, and connected to recreation facilities.
- Integrating parks and open spaces with new residential developments is very important to maintain the character of the community.
- Enshrining access to linear parks systems and trails, particularly along the coastline and ponds, is critical.
- Generally parks and open spaces are located on the perimeter of the community. Integrate these spaces better throughout.
- A series of linked trails should be developed to connect major parks and recreation facilities. Generally speaking, multi-purpose trails for snowmobiles and ATVs should be developed along the community’s southeast boundary. A bicycle trail link is proposed as a connection between the community and the Beachy Cove Edu-Rec Centre. The East Coast Trail is proposed as the predominant coastal hiking trail with links to most facilities. Specific trails loops and courses for BMX and mountain bikes, etc. are proposed for the northern section of the community and link to the Adventure Centre.
- A series of localized walking and bicycle trails should be developed to link to the community-wide trail system. The Town should make better use of its abundance of ponds. The riparian corridor around each pond in the town’s developed areas should be secured and walking trails around select ponds constructed. Trail gateways and staging areas would be developed at neighbourhood parks and play areas. The trail system would be developed as a component of all new residential developments and would be systematically integrated and expanded as the community grows.
- **Rainbow Gully:** Creating an internal footpath system in the park and more pedestrian access points by developing: an internal pathway system and a pathway connection to Rotary Sunshine Park; an asphalt trail linking to the river and recreation facilities; a “Trouters’ Loop” connecting the three ponds south and east of the site; a trail to the northwest that follows the brook to St. Philip’s Marina; trail links to existing

and proposed residential areas.

- **Voisey's Brook Park:** Develop a looped / internal pathway system around the park including: an internal walkway system with fitness stations; a paved link to the children's playground.
- **Greyman's Beard:** This high point of land overlooking the community is a key site for trail development. Recommended improvements include creating a view point including a formal lookout and an on-site park services building. The lookout would connect via trail to a series of lookouts on the neighbouring hills. These lookouts would in turn link into the trails around Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church.
- **St. Philip's Anglican Church:** Creating a trailhead and trail linking church grounds to the marina via a looped trail that takes in a lookout near the pump house at West Point South.
- **Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church:** Developing the site as a trail staging area for walkers accessing Greyman's Beard Lookout and creating connecting walks to residential neighborhoods, especially to the ferry terminal via the roadway through the older part of Portugal Cove. This development would support the existing B&B operators, restaurants at the terminal site and encourage visitors to go to the proposed Gateway facility.
- **Neary's Pond Swimming Area:** Trail development linking to existing and proposed trails and lookouts to Beachy Cove Hill and Greyman's Beard. The trails would be used for hiking and cycling.
- **Blast Hole Pond:** An "Outdoor Adventure Centre" is proposed for an area near Blast Hole Pond. The facility would be developed to support adventure and extreme sport enthusiasts, with a focus on youth programs. It would cater to hikers, mountain and BMX bikers, cross-county skiers, and fishing. It would be linked via a bicycle trail to the Beachy Cove Edu-Rec Centre, Voisey's Brook Park, Rotary Sunshine Park and the Rainbow Gully Recreation Complex. It would also be linked to the East Coast Trail. The opportunity exists to develop the centre to accommodate corporate retreats and rentals for special events.



### **Portugal Cove-St. Philip's PlaceBuilder Community Work Plan (2015)**



The Council of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's embarked on PlaceBuilder in 2014 to create a planning and development tool that would carry the town into the long term. This resulted in a planned strategy for sustainable community building, growth management, economic development, the promotion and preservation of heritage or environmentally sensitive areas, and community engagement with a goal of long-term sustainability of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's.

Priorities for trail development identified within the PlaceBuilder Community Work Plan include:

- Create a Community Multi-use Trail Network Master Plan that outlines a development programme for community trails designed for active transportation. A 64 km multi-use trail forms the major spine of this proposed trail and will integrate the trail system existing at Voisey's Brook Park. The trail system will be three meters-wide where possible, and will allow for multiple uses, catering to the different demographics and desires in the community.
- Preserve environmentally sensitive lands such as Blast Hole Pond and Voisey's Brook Park and others as identified.
- Ensure that potential developments are approved and permitted by provincial departments with legislative authority to control development.
- Position the East Coast Trail as a community hub and provide amenities such as parking, information kiosk with public washroom, and canteen or convenience store.
- Re-establish the historical trail link between Portugal Cove and St. Philip's, and provide interpretation of the historical significance. Connect this historical trail to Greyman's Beard, Beachy Cove Hill and Brock Head to create day use hikes that can result in increased need for accommodations and meals.
- Blast Hole Pond is proposed as a soft adventure centre for a variety of low impact developments that take advantage of the terrain, coastline and natural resources in this area of the Town. The area can

easily become the focus of outdoor recreation for the community, and beyond. The site is designated as a Provincial Habitat Conservation Area. Care has been taken to ensure developments are low impact, and that most of the mountain bike trails are located outside this designated area. Central to the proposed developments is a state-of-the-art fully equipped mountain biking facility. This will require a significant investment but has the potential to position the Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's as the go to place in Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada for Mountain Biking. The design concept for the facility provides opportunities for youth to experience mountain biking and other nature-based activities such as hiking, canoeing, trout fishing (the area has three licensed Rainbow Trout Ponds), remote camping and bird watching. Winter opportunities exist for ice fishing, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

- A water-based recreation facility at Miller's Pond should be considered to support the Town's offering of water based recreation programs. Like Blast Hole Pond, this habitat offers wildlife interpretation with a focus on bird watching and wetland interpretation. The site can also be used as a hub for the proposed multi-use recreation trail network for the Town that links to Blast Hole Pond.
- Existing trails at Neary's Pond should be linked to Greyman's Beard, Beachy Cove Hill and St. Philip's Marina, allowing the area to become a hub for multi-purpose trail development.

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# Community Engagement

Engagement is a critical step in the planning process, as information gathered through engagement is used to inform decision-making and shape the direction of the project. Several engagement methods were used in the development of this Master Plan. Due to the ongoing pandemic, all sessions were completed online.

## Stakeholder Meetings

Several community groups were identified as having important information or special interest in trail development in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's. In February and March of 2022, meetings with representatives of each of the following groups occurred:

- Town Council;
- Town Staff;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Chamber of Commerce;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Advisory Committee on the Environment;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Heritage Committee;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Tourism Working Group;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Inclusion Committee;
- Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Hiking and Walking Club;
- East Coast Trail Association;
- Avalon Mountain Bike Association;
- Scouts Canada;
- Recreational ATV riders.

## Community Open House

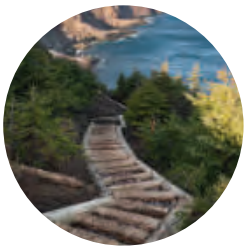
COVID-19 remained prevalent at the time of this project, so in-person engagement activities were not possible. On the evening of March 15, 2022, a virtual open house occurred via the Zoom Webinars platform. The session was free and open to all members of the public. Twenty-eight individuals attended the session which consisted of a presentation and interactive tools that allowed participants to provide feedback.

## Online Survey

Survey Monkey was used to develop and launch an online survey to collect further public input. The survey was open for approximately two weeks and had 40 participants, 92% of whom were residents. In total, 417 responses to the survey questions were received.

## Key Themes

Several key themes emerged across all engagement activities. These are not direct excerpts of the feedback received but rather key ideas that came up time and again, representing the most likely priorities among all stakeholder groups.



### **Trail Diversity**

- The trail network should be diverse and provide opportunities for different user groups to experience purpose-built trails.



### **Accessibility & Inclusion**

- The trail network must be as accessible, inclusive, and welcoming as possible.
- Trails should provide equitable opportunities for all users regardless of age, background, or ability.



### **Amenities**

- Trails should provide basic infrastructure such as benches, waste receptacles, trailheads, lookouts, etc. that are aimed at improving the user experience.



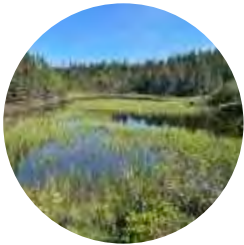
### ***Maintenance***

- Trails must be upkept and remain within the Town's capacity to maintain in the future.



### ***Four Season Use***

- The trail network must be considered a year-round amenity and wherever possible provide different uses as the season change.



### ***Protecting the Environment***

- There are many natural areas within the community that are not only beautiful, but contribute to the town's rural character and sense of place. Trails should be respectful and sensitive of these landscapes.



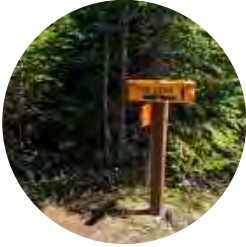
### ***Trails as a Transportation Network***

- Trails are not just recreation infrastructure, but should also function as a valuable part of the community's active transportation network.



### ***Celebrating Heritage***

- The trail network should connect the community's important cultural and historic destinations.



### ***Signage & Wayfinding***

- As the trail network grows, it will be important to ensure that trail users can easily find and navigate the trails.

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# Trail Inventory & Analysis

## Existing Trail Analysis

The objective of the trail inventory and assessment is to form a snapshot of the trail network and its current condition, to confirm mapping accuracy and location of existing trails, as well as to identify places of significance, character-defining elements, and opportunities and challenges for future development.

During the community engagement phase, the design team was made aware of many locations within the town that held potential for trail development. Some of these areas had existing footpaths or wood cutting paths, and some were untouched wilderness. These locations were visited over a span of three days to determine their potential and priority level for development.

When visiting these locations, the design team focused on the following existing conditions:

- Vegetation including variety, density, and ground cover;
- Topography including any low spots or challenging slopes;
- Natural features including ponds, brooks, rivers, wetlands, and rock formations;
- Built features such as bridges or noteworthy structures;
- Infrastructure including roads and power lines;
- Signs of existing wildlife;
- Views of water bodies and other picturesque landscapes;
- Intersections of transport systems including roads and other trails;
- Access points such as entry points or secondary access points.

In many cases, the design team followed the potential trails until they became inaccessible due to wet conditions, dense vegetation, or steep slopes. Feedback from the community engagement and the Town's mapping resources were used to assess parts of the trail network that were not easily accessible due to time and accessibility constraints. The Town's mapping included detailed information such as aerial imagery, property information (private versus Crown), 1m contours, water bodies and protection buffers, roads, and points of interest. This information was very valuable for analyzing inaccessible trails.

## **Key Findings in the Field**

### ***Trail Conditions***

The trails that were analyzed included a mix of existing developed trails, existing footpaths that have upgrade opportunities, and trails that are fully undeveloped. A majority of the trails that are highly desired by residents are undeveloped at this time. This means that a significant investment will be required by the Town to develop these trails to meet their full potential and create a connective trail network.

### ***Connectivity Challenges***

It became evident during the field work and the desktop analysis that land ownership presents challenges in developing a connected trail network. Many north-south connections through the community are infeasible due to large areas of private property. Many of the highly desired trails are feasible using Crown and Town-owned land, as well as the river and pond protection buffers. However, Crown land availability is limited, so the road systems will likely have to be used to help make connections. The community engagement findings outlined that many residents don't feel comfortable walking on the existing roads due to narrow shoulders, so recommendations will be included to help improve the pedestrian experience on roads that are required as a part of the connective trail system.

### ***Preservation of PCSP's Natural Character***

It is evident that residents value the town's natural and rural character and that they wish to see the trail system celebrate this aspect of the town. When visiting the numerous trails, it was evident that these locations will indeed celebrate the town's special natural landscape. There was a great mix of serene wooded trails, trails along ridges with great ocean views, and peaceful walks next to ponds and rivers.