

**APPENDIX VI
KEY ISSUES SUMMARY & SOLUTIONS**

GROUP 1 - DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES - Summary

**TRAILS MASTER PLAN
FOCUS GROUP SESSION
MARCH 13, 1997, 1 - 4 P.M.**

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- shared - Elk Island, Blackfoot, Ministik, City of Edmonton, City of Fort Saskatchewan
- seasonal use
- use of community policing
- user pay/user develops as trail becomes more specialized
- equal access by rural and urban residents
- accessibility by different users such as handicap, emergency crews, youth, seniors
- partnerships

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

COMPATIBILITY

- between users
- between the residents and users
- between the users, the County and the private sector to support development of amenities (i.e. resource information, signage, trail heads, rentals, food service)
- between the County and tourists
- between the County and potential businesses and residents

Issue #2

ROLE OF STRATHCONA COUNTY

- determining how to deal with the lack of a snowmobile bylaw
- role of the County relative to the role/responsibility of the specialized user
- role of the County relative to the role of and onus upon the private landowner re: liability of trail development and use
- role of the County relative to funding

Issue #3

ACCESS AND SECURITY

- misuse and illegal use of trails
- access between urban and rural components of the trail
- liability and agreement requirements necessary to work with private landowners

GROUP 2 - EQUESTRIAN INDIVIDUALS - Summary

TRAILS MASTER PLAN FOCUS GROUP SESSION MARCH 15, 1997, 9 A.M. TO 12 NOON

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- learn from other experiences - Blackfalds, Calgary
- look at tourism opportunities - bed and breakfasts
- licensing of horses with dollars going to trails
- consider the seasonality of equestrian use

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

ACCESS AND SECURITY

- understand current land use, public and private
- link to existing and proposed trails and facilities
- identify steering committee to work with equestrian users to work with these issues
- identify what is in it for private landowners
- consider the seasonality of equestrian use

Issue #2

COMPATABILITY

- consider the seasonality of equestrian use
- hikers as compatible users
- non-motorized/low speed users
- producing brochures for trail users
- being aware of safety elements

Issue #3

RESOURCING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- role for County in spear heading
- understanding economic spin-offs and seeking County, business, recreation support
- volunteer plan
- identify and communicate where less development is OK

GROUP 3 - EQUESTRIAN GROUPS - Summary

TRAILS MASTER PLAN FOCUS GROUP SESSION MARCH 13, 1997, 1 - 4 P.M.

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- trailer parking areas
- able to ride two abreast at least part of the time
- also wide enough for driving and sleighs
- adjacent to paved trails for other users
- outhouse facilities with hitching posts along the trails
- wide and safe bridges where needed (12 feet wide)
- ideal surface, i.e. sand/dirt and well compacted
- inventory of existing trails
- involvement and clarity, re: youth needs
- identification re: novice horse or rider, i.e. yellow ribbon

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue # 1

ACCESS AND SECURITY

- seek land use approvals from public and private owners
- inventory of existing trails
- identification of desired locations
- communicate economic impact and sensitizing to horse usage, horse investment, horse population
- balanced with needs of the automobile

Issue # 2

EDUCATION AND SAFETY

- understand existing bylaws
- create new rules, regulations, bylaws as needed
- educate re: trail etiquette, both horse and non-horse riders
- phones in parking lot, rider in group with cell phone a requirement
- inventory of clinicians to help with education

Issue # 3

BALANCING ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- nesting areas
- wet conditions
- seasonal impacts

**GROUP 4 - ADJACENT COMMUNITIES/
URBAN COMMUNITY - Summary**

**TRAILS MASTER PLAN
FOCUS GROUP SESSION
MARCH 19, 1997, 9 A.M. TO 12 NOON**

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- scenic/re-naturalized landscape
- links to other communities, features, commercial facilities, i.e. wine/food bars
- urban - feeders to snowmobile and equestrian trails
- staging sites for snowmobilers adjacent to urban
- dedications from people's estates - signs

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

RESOURCING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- develop a plan to determine alignment/linkages of trail system - early on in process
- user fees
- stickers to use trails
- license fees (Ontario model)
- controlled access
- self-policing
- barter - trading services
- maximize linkage to regional trail groups
- dedications from people's estates - signs
- deal with liability - protection for municipality and private landowner

Issue #2

REDUCING NOISE POLLUTION

- self-policing and enforcement- can user groups enforce themselves
- signage
- information stop check

**GROUP 5 - COMMERCIAL, TOURISM/RECREATION
AND ENVIRONMENT - Summary**

**TRAILS MASTER PLAN
FOCUS GROUP SESSION
MARCH 22, 1997, 9:00 A.M. TO NOON**

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- link private campgrounds/bed and breakfasts with trail systems
- environmentally friendly/acceptable
- long term agreements with private landowners for access
- privately funded and maintained
- wheelchair access to part of trails/special parking area, etc., access to nature
- snow machine and horses (seasonal)
- involve developers in solutions, continue to show/design trails as part of acreage development
- research Ontario/Quebec - \$150 per season for snowmobilers

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

BALANCING ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS

- develop only where necessary, pave only where necessary
- control access to sensitive areas - refer to Habitat Sensitive Areas Plan
- carry it in, carry it out

Issue #2

DEVELOPING A MASTER PLAN

- consider do we need more trails first?
- understand users and their needs/know potential users and future use
- demographic information - age/income/tourism
- don't rush the planning, take time to discuss, clarify, comment on initial plans
- know usage of existing trails, peak usage - times and areas
- educate media and users

Issue #3

RESOURCING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- user pay
- involve developers in solutions, continue to show/design trails as part of acreage development
- consider trails as tourist attractions - birding, snowmobile
- consider infrastructure needed to promote tourism - look at Tourism Master Plan - investment in tourism/destination
- County develop trail heads
- business partnership and sponsorship
- snowmobile licensing and gas tax identified and used for development/ maintenance

GROUP 6 - SNOWMOBILES/OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES - Summary

TRAILS MASTER PLAN FOCUS GROUP SESSION APRIL 5, 1997, 9:00 A.M. - NOON

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- not just need to connect with other systems, need to “go” somewhere - inter-connected, ability to have a destination
- ability to connect with other clubs
- tourism opportunity for winter months
- need access to services, food/gas, like a truck route with access from home to trails
- engineered, groomed, marked
- winter recreation focus, sharing opportunity is greater in summer
- learn from other communities regarding snowmobile facilities - Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

CHANGE IN MUNICIPAL BYLAWS ALLOWING CREATION OF TRAILS DEVELOPED TO ESTABLISHED STANDARDS

- create momentum by positive responsible snowmobiler users to communicate with community and councillors
- create program for community monitoring and policing based on other models
- education regarding other successful or turnaround situations in other communities (i.e. Lac St. Anne/Bonneyville)
- positive examples from other like-sized communities
- facility development/access critical - need to provide these to amenities to attract users
- ability to fine misuse/non-registration
- educating community and Council regarding number of people in County involved and the economic impact

Issue #2

RESOURCING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- grass drags and other fund raising
- involve community at large in developing marketing plan - telling the story
- role/responsibility for snowmobilers and County in putting marketing plan together
- snowmobilers need to demonstrate their readiness
- link to tourism and attractions
- should embrace Provincial tourism initiatives and funding when available

**GROUP 7 - WALKERS, BICYCLISTS AND
CROSS-COUNTRY SKIERS - Summary**

**TRAILS MASTER PLAN
FOCUS GROUP SESSION
APRIL 9, 1997, 7:00 - 10:00 P.M.**

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- natural areas/farmland/varying terrain
- linkages and loops or “connectors” to Edmonton, Elk Island National Park, Fort Saskatchewan, Beaumont, Strathcona Wilderness Centre, Cooking Lake Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area
- loop - mountain bike (2 to 5 hours ideal, 20 to 150 km)
- multi-seasons: cross country skiing - high maintenance/segregated in winter share in summer - dog sledding is a compatible use
- design for trail users: beginner, intermediate, expert
- all trail users provided with opportunities to enjoy North Saskatchewan River
- well advertized where and what for
- should have some wheelchair access
- look to other municipalities, countries, etc. where these issues have successfully been dealt with
- move trail to allow for re-growth of trail
- formation of community user advisory groups

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS

- look to other municipalities, countries, etc. where these issues have successfully been dealt with
- New Zealand model - identify specific needs of each user group
- accident and risk liability assessment conducted prior to design and during
- develop trail rating system
- liability signage incorporated into design

Issue #2

BALANCING ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- move trail to allow for re-growth of trail
- limit number of users on trails
- limit trails to specific uses
- respecting the needs of wildlife (bird hatching)
- formation of community user advisory groups

GROUP 8 - COUNTY COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE TEAM - Summary

TRAILS MASTER PLAN FOCUS GROUP MEETING APRIL 10, 1997, 1:30 - 3:30 P.M.

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- concern about trail systems re: security, isolation, safety
- rest spots - i.e. picnic benches, phone, washrooms
- more than one - a series
- partnership public/private partnerships (community participation)
- external linkages - regional and national

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

RESOURCING TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- sharing cost with private and non-profit groups in both capital and on-going
- donation of land
- tolls/user fees
- low maintenance design
- seek Federal and Provincial funds/grants
- sponsorship
- private investment destination - commercial and non-profit
- increased role for user groups

Issue #2

COMPATIBILITY

- education regarding trail etiquette
- educating regarding service expectation, i.e. littering, mapping
- trail use compatible with the interests of adjacent residents
- address access and noise issues
- methods of policing
- designated use by area
- local stewardship
- maximizing use of public right-of-way and public land

GROUP 9 - UTILITIES/INFRASTRUCTURE - Summary

TRAILS MASTER PLAN FOCUS GROUP SESSION APRIL 15, 1997, 9 A.M. - 12 NOON

KEY IDEAS AND LEARNINGS FROM INITIAL WORKSHOP

- easements only acquired for purpose of line, authority for surface use still part of landowner - permission would be required
- urban and rural easements are different, in the rural situation the right-of-way usually appears the same as adjacent land use, usually farmed; while in the urban situations, people are walking over pipelines currently
- landowners seem to like the least impact possible
- liability would be a concern - utilities agree to take care of surface - liability would be landowner and utility
- synchronize trail development with other municipalities
- potential on restricted development already in place - corridors along river
- cross-agreements (and others) re: liability of impacts on land use would need to be addressed, include utilities and land uses
- snowmobile use - drives frost deeper into ground - may be a concern for water pipelines
- snowmobile/dirt bike/ATV/horses - trenching and erosion concerns
- long-term trail plan needed to designated and keep specific areas (buffer zones) available for development (especially river corridor)
- utilities can help identify inventory

KEY ISSUES REQUIRING PRIMARY FOCUS DURING NEXT STEPS

Issue #1

ACCESS AND SECURITY

- cross-agreements re: liability of impacts on land use would need to be addressed, include utilities and land uses
- follow rules outlined in Canadian and Provincial policy (AB4)
- farmer can only use land as agreed with utilities (i.e. farming okay, building a trail or a barn is not)
- putting material on top to spread weight load out to ensure pipeline is not dented, walking is okay
- communication/education of trails users would be critical
- snowmobile use - drives frost deeper into ground - may be a concern for water pipelines
- snowmobile/dirt bike/ATV/horses - trenching and erosion concerns
- noise adjacent to plant site, noise a concern of adjacent citizens with plants alone
- municipalities need to lead enforcement and monitoring whether by volunteers or other (utilities fly pipelines regularly)
- long-term trail plan needed to designated and keep specific areas (buffer zones)
- utilities want to be a good corporate citizen, they need safety, security, issues need to be addressed

ACCESS AND SECURITY (continued)

- 1-1/2 x 1% of gross profit back to community - possible \$ to facilitate trail development - generally environmentally focused funding
- utilities can help identify inventory
- fiscal plan should designate percent of \$ to match other \$s available - remember tax base contribution integrate with the Municipal Development Plan

STRATHCONA COUNTY
TRAILS MASTER PLAN
ISSUES SUMMARY MATRIX

	Department Representatives (Group 1)	Equestrian Individuals (Group 2)	Equestrian Groups (Group 3)	Adjacent and Urban Communities (Group 4)	Commercial, Tourism/ Recreation and Environment (Group 5)	Snowmobiles/ Off-Highway Vehicles (Group 6)	Walking, Bicycling/ Cross-Country Skiing (Group 7)	County Council and Executive Team (Group 8)	Utilities/ Infrastructure (Group 9)
Compatibility of trail users	●	●						●	
Role of Strathcona County	●								
Access and security	●	●	●	☺		☺		☺	●
Resourcing development and maintenance	☺	●		●	●	●	☺	●	☺
Education and safety	☺	☺	●	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Balancing environmental concerns	☺	☺	●	☺	●		●	☺	
Reducing noise pollution				●		☺			
Developing a Master Plan		☺	☺	☺	●				☺
Change bylaws re: snowmobilers						●			
Trail design standards			☺				●		

- Primary issue of this focus group
- ☺ Secondary issue of this focus group

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