



STAFF REPORT

Title: Intermunicipal Trails Master Plan

Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

Executive Summary:

As an extension of the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework, the City and the M.D. of Bonnyville have been working on an Intermunicipal Trails Master Plan (ITMP) to examine opportunities to enhance recreational trail connections between the City and the M.D. as well as enhancing trails within the region.

The ITMP was presented to Council at its regular meeting on July 11, 2023 and was referred to the Corporate Priorities Committee for further discussion and recommendation.

Background:

The City and the M.D. of Bonnyville engaged RC Strategies to develop an Intermunicipal Trails Master Plan that is intended to guide non-motorized and motorized trail development and policy in the M.D. and City over the next 5-10 years to better serve residents and visitors.

To gather information, a survey was conducted between July 7 to August 31, 2022; 246 survey responses were received (59% of respondents were from the City, 23% from the MD, and 6% from elsewhere). What residents are looking for:

1. Connection (local & long-distance)
2. Quality of Experience
3. Quality of Life
4. Safety & Security
5. Sustainability
6. Respectful planning & use
7. Efficient Implementation & Activation
8. Collaboration & Partnerships

A full review of the feedback from the public engagement is included in the attached What We Heard report.

Based on the survey and a first-hand examination of various trails in the region, six primary strategies were identified:



1. Harmonize trail foundations – promote collaboration between the City and M.D. as well as trail users. Consider aligning bylaws and policies regarding the use and management of trails.
2. Address sustainability issues – manage risks that affect the long-term viability of the trails system and the safety of trail users.
3. Develop a connected and diversified trail network – work towards better connections between trails, communities and regional amenities.
4. Enhance user experiences – Improve trail conditions, connections and amenities to provide the best possible trail experience for users.
5. Manage use and impacts – steps to attempt to mitigate the negative effects of trail use that affect trail quality, visitor concerns, and impact vegetation and wildlife.
6. Animate and activate community – steps to attract more trail visitors by improving visitor services and wayfinding.

12 priority connections, between the City and MD were identified, including connecting to Cold Lake Provincial Park, Kinosoo Ridge, and rural subdivisions. A high-level estimate of cost was provided for 7 of the connections between the City and MD that were identified as the highest priority. These cost estimates are included in Appendix C of the Plan.

At Council's July 11, 2023 Council meeting it was resolved (Resolution No. CRM20230711.1009) that Council refer the Intermunicipal Trails Master Plan to the September 19, 2023 Corporate Priorities Committee meeting for further review and recommendation for acceptance. Administration is requesting Council's discussion and feedback on the proposed Intermunicipal Trails Plan in order for Administration to finalize and prepare the plan for the adoption of the plan.

Alternatives:

For Discussion and Feedback

Recommended Action:

For Discussion and Feedback

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer