

Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



To Accessibility Advisory Committee
Date Tuesday, June 18, 2024
Subject **Guelph Junction Railway Multi-Use Trail from Woolwich Street To Woodlawn Road.**

Recommendation

1. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee support the preliminary design of the Guelph Junction Railway Multi-Use Trail from Woolwich Street to Woodlawn Road.
-

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

To consult the Accessibility Advisory Committee on the design of the Guelph Junction Railway Multi-Use Trail project as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Key Findings

The City of Guelph is planning a new multiuse trail within the Guelph Junction Railway (GJR) corridor, connecting Woolwich Street to Woodlawn Road. The proposed trail will be approximately three metres wide and one kilometre in length and to be designed to the City's [primary trail standards](#).

The trail meets the facility-specific requirements for Outdoor Recreational Facilities outlined in section 4.5.2 of Guelph's FADM and related sections, specifically:

- A 3.0m wide asphalt surface provides an ideal material for walking or wheeling;
- The longitudinal slope of the trail does not exceed 4 per cent;
- The cross slope of the trail does not exceed 2 per cent;
- Rest stations composed of accessible benches on concrete pads are located at each trail entrance (at Woolwich Street and Woodlawn Road) and every 150m ± 50 m along the trail (Past AAC Motion), with one exception;
- Detectible warning plates will be installed on either side of the cemetery road that intersects with the trail; and
- Wayfinding signs will be installed later and will follow the style and accessibility standards determined through the City's upcoming wayfinding strategy.

Construction is planned to begin in 2025 pending budget approval.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The GJR Trail project is supported by the 'City Building' pillar of Guelph's Strategic Plan. Creating a new multi-use trail is a supporting key action of the 'Grow and care for our community spaces and places' objective and the 'Attract more people to our parks and programs by making them easier to access and enjoy' initiative.

Financial Implications

The project is being funded from the City-wide Trail Enhancements capital account number PK0125.

Report

Design of a new multi-use trail

The City of Guelph is planning a new multiuse trail within the Guelph Junction Railway (GJR) corridor, connecting Woolwich Street to Woodlawn Road. The proposed trail will be approximately three metres wide and one kilometre in length and to be designed to the City's [primary trail standards](#). Construction is planned to begin in 2025 pending budget approval.

This new trail is important to our citywide trail network because it connects to two regional trail systems: the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) and the Guelph to Goderich Rail Trail (G2G). An important part of this project is providing an accessible connection into Woodlawn Memorial Park—the beginning of the City's TCT Route.

The trail will run along the northeast of the GJR rail line within the GJR property. Beginning at Woodlawn Rd., the trail will connect to the existing sidewalk and run alongside the north property line shared with Woodlawn Memorial Park (cemetery). A connection will be constructed into the cemetery road network and the beginning of the TCT route. It will continue in the GJR corridor behind the businesses on Woolwich Street, including the Beer Store, Tim Hortons, and other commercial plazas. It will connect with the newly installed multi-use path on Woolwich St., constructed as part of the Speedvale Ave. and Woolwich St. intersection improvement project.

For the entire length of the trail, a 1.4m guard rail is proposed between the railway and trail. Fencing or railings are also required on the retaining wall where heights exceed 600mm. The fence between the GJR property and the cemetery will be removed to provide a better sense of safety for trail users. If the fence were to remain in place along the cemetery, the newly required safety rail, between the trail and railway, would create a 500m corridor without a secondary exit route, creating a situation with perceived and actual safety concerns for users.

Proposed trail slopes

The trail's longitudinal slope is less than 4% for the entire 1-kilometre trail. It also has a less than 2% cross slope. Beginning at Woodlawn Rd, the trail slope rises at a comfortable 0.87% to 1.75% for approximately 100m, then stays relatively flat (about 0.5% slopes) for approximately 200m, then slopes down at a maximum of 3.97% following the existing topography for approximately 150m. The remainder of the alignment remains relatively stable (less than 2% slope) except for a small 40 m long hill with a maximum slope of 3.10%. Nearing Woolwich St., the trail rises gently to meet the existing sidewalk.

A 150m-long retaining wall is required along the north side of the proposed trail to provide smooth and gentle trail experience and help meet accessibility slope requirements. This is proposed in the middle of the trail, located close to the south corner of the cemetery. Finally, a 100m-long barrier curb is required along the north side of the proposed trail to protect those using the trail, as this barrier curb

will inhibit cars from the neighbouring asphalt parking lot from encroaching on the trail.

Proposed rest stations

Rest stations are proposed at the entrance to the trail at Woodlawn Rd. and Woolwich St. They are also provided every 150m ± 50 m along the trail with one exception—a rest station would be needed close to the proposed retaining wall around the halfway point of the trail. With the setback requirements from the railway, existing trees and proposed retaining wall, it is difficult to accommodate a rest station in this location. Staff are working with the cemetery to try and accommodate a rest station within the cemetery in this location. Rest stations have been strategically located at trail entrances as well as the top of the longest slope.

Wayfinding and signs

The City of Guelph has started an Active Transportation Wayfinding Strategy that is anticipated to be completed after the construction of this trail project. The trail design will provide spaces for future signs to be installed once the Wayfinding Strategy is completed. Interpretative signs will be included to provide information about the history of the cemetery and the TCT route.

Financial Implications

The project is being funded from the City-wide Trail Enhancements capital account number PK0125.

Consultations

The GJR Trail project was recommended as part of the Guelph Trail Master Plan which had significant community consultation. A public notification of the project showing the proposed design will be completed in parallel with AAC consultation in June 2024.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Presentation_Guelph Junction Railway Multi Use Trail

Departmental Approval

Tiffany Hanna, Park Planner

Mallory Lemon, Manager of Park and Trail Development

Report Author

Tiffany Hanna, Park Planner