

## Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: July 14, 2025

Subject: Tara Rotary Club Request for Trail Work

Report from: Carly Steinhoff, Park, Facilities and Recreation Manager

Scott McLeod, Public Works Manager

Attachments: Appendix A – Trail Photos

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### **Recommendation**

Be It Resolved that Council receive Report REC-2025-13 - Tara Rotary Club Request for Trail Work;

AND supports Option One, as outlined within this report;

AND FURTHER directs staff to include a Municipal Trail Master Plan as a 2026 Budget item for Council consideration.

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### **Background**

On June 23, 2025, the Tara Rotary Club made a delegation to Council requesting a partnership between the Club and the Municipality to complete work on an unopened road allowance between Park Road and the rail trail in Tara. The Club has requested that the Club be permitted to gravel the approximately 200m road allowance and that Council support this project financially.

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### **Analysis**

Staff have been discussing three (3) potential options regarding the Club's request including their financial and operational implications to the Municipality:

#### **Option One**

The first option is to maintain the existing road allowance as is and revisit this project during the 2026 Budget discussions. This road allowance currently consists

of a grass path that runs from Park Road to the rail trail (refer to photos in Appendix A). The rail trail itself is also a grass surface.

A neighbouring resident currently maintains this grass path and has expressed willingness to continue doing so. If the resident chooses to discontinue this practice, municipal staff will assess whether this section can be incorporated into the Municipality's regular maintenance operations.

This option is favourable, as it presents no immediate financial or operational impacts for the Municipality. As recommended in the Recreation Master Plan, the Municipality should undertake a comprehensive Trails Master Plan. If Council elects to move forward with such a plan, the inclusion of this section in the broader municipal trail network will be considered.

To support this initiative, staff will include a budget item for the Trails Master Plan in the proposed 2026 Capital Budget.

### **Option Two**

The second option involves implementing the Rotary Club's proposed trail enhancement. This would include the installation of stone dust over filter cloth, compacted in place on native soil. The Rotary Club obtained a quote of \$5,250.00 plus HST, covering all materials, labour, and equipment required for the project.

Annual maintenance is anticipated for this type of surface. Key requirements include:

- A one-inch lift of gravel approximately every four years
- Routine weed control along the trail
- Grass cutting beside the trail is not included in this estimate

The projected annual maintenance cost is approximately \$300.00.

### **Option Three**

This option would involve removing the topsoil from the trail and applying 12 inches of Granular B gravel, followed by a 4-inch layer of quarry gravel on top. This construction method is expected to suppress weed and grass growth for several years, reducing the need for routine vegetation control.

Staff obtained a quote of \$8,400.00 plus HST, which includes all materials, labour, and equipment. Annual maintenance costs are projected at approximately \$300.00, with no anticipated need for additional gravel applications or weed spraying during the initial years. The cost of cutting grass beside the trail is not included in this estimate.

Currently, this path is not recognized as an official municipal trail. However, if gravel is applied, staff believe this would represent a formal commitment by the Municipality to recognize and maintain it as part of the official trail network. This

would necessitate ongoing staff responsibilities in terms of maintenance, promotion, and servicing.

Staff recommend that prior to any trail upgrades, a community consultation and/or formal assessment be undertaken to evaluate potential implications and public interest.

While staff support Option One due to its alignment with the proposed Trail Master Plan, should Council decide to move forward with the Rotary Club's request, staff are inclined to support Option Three, given its reduced maintenance and operational costs in the short term.

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### **Link to Strategic/Master Plan**

#### 6.1 Protecting Infrastructure, Recreation and Natural Assets

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### **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy**

At this time, the full financial implications of the proposed trail project remain uncertain. Should Council approve Option One, there would be no financial or operational impacts to the Municipality.

The initial request from the Rotary Club proposed a cost-sharing arrangement for Option Two, wherein the Municipality would contribute 50% of the total cost. If Council supports this approach, the Municipal contribution would amount to \$2,625.00 plus HST.

### **Additional Consideration: Land Survey Requirement**

Staff also recommend that a licensed land surveyor be retained to verify the precise location of the unopened road allowance. This precaution is necessary to ensure that any proposed enhancements do not encroach on adjacent private properties. A quote would need to be obtained for the survey work before proceeding with any physical improvements to the trail corridor.

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Approved by: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer