Chelsea Community Trail: SCT Vision 2.0

• In March 2015 the Board of Sentiers Chelsea Trails asked Chelsea Council to explore the feasibility of converting the winter rail corridor trail into a 4 season, non-motorized, multi-purpose trail.

• To contribute to the community conversation the SCT Board has compiled an expanded vision of trail design shaped by the experience of similar projects and concerns raised by Chelsea residents and trail users.
SCT Envisions:

• A rustic community trail which serves Chelsea residents by connecting nine Chelsea neighbourhoods and offering safe access to active living for Chelsea residents of all ages.

• A link to heritage by connecting the community to its history.

• An ecological trail footprint which minimizes disruption to nature and trail neighbours.
Key Design Principles

• A non-motorized multi use trail suitable for 4 season use, from chemin Loretta to Morrison Quarry.

• Reflect natural setting using wood for signage, and hedges or wood fences to delineate trail where required.

• Concentrate parking, trailhead facilities and signage in a few key access points.

• Develop strict design standards for all signage to ensure non obtrusive, consistent and tasteful look and feel.

• Develop and communicate a code of conduct for shared trail use that respects the rights and identifies responsibilities of all users.

• Focus on “lost villages” to reinforce historical links and remind visitors to respect neighbours’ property and privacy.
Implementation Principles

• Build a win-win plan that focuses on the vision of a healthy, active and outdoor-focused community for all ages.

• Use an approach which seeks as much community consensus as possible.

• Balance the interests of existing trailside property owners with those of potential trail users.

• Build a volunteer base for trail maintenance, support and development to maximize community involvement and reduce costs.
A Phased Approach

• Use the design charette process as a first step in a phased approach to design and implementation.

• Plan an evaluation in two years time to review and assess usage, adjust and improve infrastructure and operation.

• A phased approach to implementation would, for example, limit the scale of any new parking and maximize efficient use of existing parking areas.

• Record trail use with counters and measure parking use in summer and winter as a basis for developing Phase II adjustments.
Emphasize Multi-Purpose Use

Encourage multi-purpose use:

- walking, jogging, low speed cycling, skiing
- dog-friendly with dogs on trail & under control at all times
- cyclists must control speed (max 15 km/hr) and always yield to others
- non-motorized use only
Safety

• Choose trail surface material and compaction to control cycling speeds

• Install removable control barriers and stop signs at municipal road crossings at approximately 15 locations listed in Appendix A.

• Place small stop signs at private road crossings (and drive ways where needed) at approximately 14 locations listed in Appendix B.
Safety

• Install pedestrian crossing lights and pavement markers at the key crossing on Route 105 junction with the corridor. As Route 105 is an MTQ-maintained artery the MTQ should support and fund this work.

• Install wooden guard rails for sections of high, steep embankments leading to water, for example:
  • across from Ben’s Towing
  • by two ponds in Cascades
Principal Access Points/Parking

- Identify key municipal parking areas along the corridor for public access:
  - Farm Point (Community Centre; Sports Field)
  - Ch. Kirk’s Ferry
  - CLSC
  - Ch. Hudson
- Look for opportunities to use existing space more efficiently to avoid overbuilding parking areas. Measure use on a two year trial as a basis for review.
- Consult neighbours with draft parking plans to manage parking and address local traffic issues.
- Review/enhance no parking signage on municipal roads and ensure constant clear passage for emergency vehicles and other local traffic.
- Limit roadside parking on municipal roads to one side of the road, where permitted.
- Explore possibility of using municipal land adjacent to the GRYC parking lot.
Trailhead Facilities

- A portable toilet at each main, north south trail access/parking location, discretely placed with a barrier of trees or natural settings. Evaluate use in first two year phase to assess need for continuing expenditures.

- Animal-proof garbage and re-cycling containers on municipal space at all designated parking locations.

- Garbage bins at selective municipal roads.
Trailhead Signage

• Trail map with distances
• Code of Conduct and Courtesy:
  • Cyclists must limit speed and yield to all other trail users
  • Dogs must remain on trail and under control at all times.
  • Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up – Scoop the Poop
  • No littering - carry out what you bring in
  • Non-motorized use only
  • Respect adjacent private properties: noise, trespassing
  • Contact information for emergencies /maintenance
• Recognition and thanks to trail sponsors and supporting organizations
Mitigation Measures for Trail Neighbours

1. Signage at both ends of each residential ‘village’ to promote heritage and encourage respectful behaviour:
   - Farm Point
   - Cascades
   - Burnett
   - Larrimac
   - Tenaga
   - Kirks Ferry
   - Glen Eagle

Example:

   *Cascades Village Quiet Zone*
   - Please speak quietly and respect private property
   - Dogs must remain on trail and under your control at all times
Mitigation Measures for Trail Neighbours

2. Provide options to delineate trail where there is a lack of natural barriers between trail and private property:
   • wooden fencing or hedges
   • establish criteria and assess each case on its own merits, in consultation with property owners
Mitigation Measures for Trail Neighbours

3. Respect prior usage
   • Respect existing uses of the corridor that are longstanding and pose no
     impediment to trail operation and use, i.e. gardens, fruit trees, hedges,
     stairs, boat racks, etc.
   • Confine work as much as possible to the footprint of the finished trail.

4. GVHS /SCT historical panels
   • Modestly expand the historic panels project with the Gatineau Valley
     Historical Society to highlight our shared history. Add to the 22 panels now
     existing to cover new areas.
   • Ensure that panels are strategically located a respectful distance from
     adjacent residences to avoid creating intrusive gathering points for trail
     users.
   • Consider creating viewing areas in scenic locations, equipped with
     benches.
Explore Opportunities for River Access for Trail Users

Recognizing the limited access Chelsea residents have to the river, the trail vision may be able to provide public, non-motorized river access point(s) to respond to demand and reduce unauthorized use of existing docks or beach areas by trail users.

Possible options:

1. The area near Chelsea Park has potential as a river access point:
   • Double-wide trail corridor on shore east of Chelsea Park, near the former sand pit
   • Accessible by both trail users and emergency vehicles
   • Few nearby residences

2. Farm Point dock close to the new recreation field and facilities.
External Funding

• SCT supports efforts to seek external funding for the conversion of the Community Trail to reduce costs for the residents of Chelsea while helping to realize the full potential of this public asset for our community.

• Funding sources should be compatible with the vision of a local, multi-purpose community trail focused primarily on meeting the needs of our community and respecting the potential impact of the trail on residents along the corridor.

• Funding tied to activities incompatible with this vision, specifically those requiring trail investment and development for expanded tourism or motorized activities, should be avoided.
Removable control barriers at municipal road crossings

Appendix A

Ch Saint Clement
Ch de la riviere
Ch Ramsay
Ch Kirk’s Ferry
Ch Hudson
Ch Fleury
Ch Wallace
Ch Welka
Ch Burnett
Ch Des Artisans
Ch Wright
Ch Loretta
Ch Gleneagle
Ch Church
Ch Mill
Install stop signs at private road crossings

Ch de la Carrière
Ch Cora-Rose
Ch Winnisic
Ch Carnochan
Ch Davidson
Ch Dompierre/Ch Maxwell
Ch David
Ch Troop
Ch Old Sawmill
Ch Larrimac
Ch Prof Burt
Ch Selwyn
Ch Station
Ch Peter’s Point
Summary

• Much research, environmental and engineering work and community discussion has taken place over the past two years regarding the Chelsea Community Trail along the railway corridor.

• The Board of Directors of Sentiers Chelsea Trails has used this information as the basis for its vision, and its contribution to the discussion and planning of the Community Trail.

• We offer our views as a board of volunteers wishing to promote active transportation within the Chelsea community, respecting that others may have alternative opinions and suggestions.