

## Council Presentation of June 22, 2021

**Introduction:** Good evening! My name is Keith Lay. I live in Porter Creek and I am here for Active Trails Whitehorse Association concerning the Draft Whitehorse South Trail Plan.

Apparently, councillors have the Draft package before you and the trail map is on screen.

Please refer to the map legend. The legend uses a bold red line to indicate “*Existing (not proposed) Motorized Multi-Use Trails*” in Whitehorse South. Yet, as we do not have a council approved trail plan for the area, one wonders how and when they became *designated* as MMU trails. That information should be made available to the public and to councillors.

In the legend we find reference to the terms Motorized Multi-Use (MMU) trails and Non-Motorized Trails. (The latter should actually read Non-Motorized ***Multiple Use*** Trails.)

No definition is given for either of these terms, and as we have a newly adopted (Dec. 2020) Trail Plan one would have expected the *current* (and different) definitions would have been provided, as survey question responses will be based on the public’s correct understanding of these terms.

The legend makes reference to motorized and non-motorized trails. The assumption that most citizens would make is that motorized trails are *motorized*, while non-motorized trails are *not* motorized.

Reference to the new Trail Plan *Glossary* would confirm that their assumption about non-motorized trails is correct. Here the term is defined as “Trails to be used by a variety of non-motorized users.” There is no indication that such trails would be open to motorized use.

Citizens will then proceed to fill out the survey confident in their belief that such trails are excluded from motorized use year round.

But, as councillors should know by now, “no” does not necessarily mean “no” when it comes to non-motorized trails in the City of Whitehorse.

In order for trails to be truly non-motorized in summer *and* in winter they have to be added to the *Excluded Trails* section of the Snowmobile Bylaw, a section that currently contains an *impressive* total of *three truly non-motorized* trails. To make trails *truly* non-motorized the Snowmobile Bylaw has to be amended, which is a costly, time-consuming, and (quite frankly) needless action.

Apparently, it is *not the intent* of administration to ask council to do this, and as a result, snowmobile use will be allowed on non-motorized trails in Whitehorse South. As this was not made clear in the survey information, responses to five of the seven survey questions are compromised.

If this trail plan is approved in its current form, *every trail* in Whitehorse South (except those in ESAs) will actually be a MMU trail, as defined in the 2020 Trail Plan: Trails “designed and designated by the City to be used by both non-motorized and motorized users including snowmobiles.” This will not result in an equitable or sustainable trail network for Whitehorse South.

No reasons are given in the survey for any of the proposed motorized or non-motorized designations, or for the future *Singletrack* trails in McIntyre Regional Park, despite the fact that members of the Whitehorse South Trail Task Force were encouraged to comment on the draft trail plan’s proposed designations, *and* were told their comments would be made available to people participating in the current process.<sup>1</sup>

If citizens are to make informed decisions about these proposals, this information should have been provided in the survey. Now the value of the responses is questionable.

Action #22 of the 2020 Trail Plan, recommends the City consider using “charrette style public workshops as part of the planning process” for the two remaining neighbourhood trail plans, in order to ensure a more inclusive public engagement process, than that provided by the former trail task force procedure. (Reference p. 33 of 2020 Trail Plan) Yet, this recommendation has not been adopted.

The trail map does not indicate the location of “out and away” trails in Whitehorse South, despite Action #19 of the Trail Plan, which recommended the designation and mapping of such trails.

As the survey has been out for 12 of its 17-day life, it is too late to address the concerns we have mentioned. We respectfully request that it be withdrawn and charrette style consultation be commenced at an appropriate time.

Finally, we ask City Council to direct administration to take immediate steps to amend the Snowmobile Bylaw to reflect the *intent* of our new 2020 Trail Plan as to the true meaning of a non-motorized multiple use trail, and in doing so end the constant confusion associated with the term, provide for a more equitable trail system, reduce the degradation of so-called non-motorized multiple use trails, and

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<sup>1</sup> (As an example, several delegates opposed the proposed MMU designation for the Dawson Road trail based upon environmental concerns, but this information has not been made available for people participating in the survey.)

uphold a community's right to the quiet enjoyment of both its residential property, and its local trails and greenbelts.

Thank you,

Keith Lay (Active Trails Whitehorse Association)

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