

STAFF REPORT: Financial & Information Services



REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: November 23, 2009
REPORT NO.: FIS.09.66
SUBJECT: Southern Ontario Development Program – Trail Mapping Project
PREPARED BY: Shawn Everitt, Director of Recreation
Rob Potter, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator
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A. Recommendations

THAT Council does receive Staff Report FIS.09.66, “Southern Ontario Development Program –Trail Mapping Project for information purposes; and,

THAT Council endorse an application under the Southern Ontario Development Program for funding to support the development of Trail Mapping and;

FURTHER THAT Council approve funding in the amount of \$10,000 for this Project.

B. Background

Project Purpose

The Blue Mountains has been active in developing a network of recreational trails. There is no Trail Mapping available to trail users. Parks and Trails Staff are nearing completion of the inventory of existing and planned Trails and draft mapping. The objective of this project is to create Interactive Mapping by combining traditional paper mapping with the ability to connect, via the Town’s Web Portal, to Interactive functions that would provide extensive additional information that can’t be adequately included on a paper map.

The total Project Cost is \$35,000 and the town’s Financial Commitment would not exceed \$10,000.

The Program

The Government of Canada has committed \$40 million in 2009 / 2010 to support Southern Ontario’s productivity, innovation, commercialization, community economic development and diversification. The Southern Ontario Development Program (SODP) will provide funding in the following priority areas: economic development, innovation and diversification.

In order to qualify for SODP funds, the organization must be located in Southern Ontario and meet one of the following criteria:

- A commercial enterprise (focus on small and medium sized business with up to 1,000 employees)
- A small business group and/or association
- A non-profit organization whose primary mission is to support economic development (includes colleges, universities, teaching institutions)
- An Aboriginal organization
- A municipality

Eligible projects include activities for expanding production capacity, improving technology or equipment, improving the productivity and competitiveness of your business, accessing new markets, innovation of products or services, commercialization of innovations, and for community-owned tourism facilities.

Eligible costs include business planning/studies, capital investment, operational costs, training, marketing, quality assurance and access to expert advice.

Highlights of the program include:

- Projects that can be started quickly and completed by March 31, 2010 will be favoured. (Multi-year projects may also be considered with a portion of the project costs incurred by March 31, 2010 and a completion date of March 31, 2014)
- Applications will be accepted until December 1, 2009
- If more than one application is submitted by an organization they must be ranked by priority
- Capital projects will receive up to 50% funding and for non-capital projects, up to 75% funding is available.

Project Application – Trails Mapping

The Blue Mountains has been steadily developing a network of recreational trails serving hikers, cyclists and cross-country skiers.

With much of the trails network already in place, it is time to develop an Interactive Mapping program that will assist trail users – many of whom are visitors and unfamiliar with the community – in using the Trails. This mapping will combine a fold-up paper map that would include GPS coordinates that could be accessed through the Town's website (i.e. via Blackberry, Palm Pre, etc) where additional information would be available, such as nearby washrooms, restaurants, and other points of interest or of service to Trail Users.

In the long-term, this project would serve as the model for related mapping projects detailing cultural, heritage, recreational and other local and regional locations of interest.

Funding from the Southern Ontario Development Program would assist in our efforts to initiate and develop this Interactive Mapping Program.

The Blue Mountains application to the Southern Ontario Development Program is for funding assistance toward the costs of designing and publishing Interactive print and digital mapping for the based on trail inventory and mapping that is being completed by Town Staff.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

2. Addressing the Town's municipal infrastructure needs
- 2.1 Identify existing deficiencies in the current municipal infrastructure

D. Environmental Impacts

Environmental Information on website to assist and inform Trail Users re: plant species, fossils, warnings re: potential damage, reminders to use trash/recycling receptacles, etc.

E. Budget Impact

The 2009 budgetary amount of \$10,000 for the MTO Shale Beach Improvements will be used for the Trail Mapping Project.

F. Attached

Respectfully submitted,

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