

Fwd: Fw: Change of name of trails map in Official Community Plan in 2006: equestrian -> multi-purpose

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**Sent:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 at 11:42:16 a.m. PST

**Subject:** Re: Change of name of trails map in Official Community Plan in 2006: equestrian -> multi-purpose

Thanks, Lisa and Christine for the clarifications.

I'm just wondering if the community-at-large was specifically made aware of the name change of the [trails map](#) in the OCP in 2006 and, more importantly, what it actually meant. Were Maple Ridge residents made aware of the agreements between the City and the Haney Horsemen and what it meant for future trail development in Maple Ridge? Did people understand that the multi-purpose map was still just an equestrian trails map, but apart from the name, nothing else really changed? Other uses would be merely "respected" on the equestrian trails (**but not necessarily accommodated!**). And for future trail development/improvements, the City would continue to focus primarily on the needs and wants of the equestrian community.

Thanks to the long-time relationship, the City has always continued to work very closely with the equestrian community to build more equestrian trails and improve existing ones. There are not many off-road trails in **Maple Ridge** that can be used for AAA cycling (cycling for All Ages and Abilities). There are many trails that have water crossings without bridges, and as a pedestrian or person on a bike, you may be "respected" on those trails, but the fact is: you simply can't use them. Trails that are in places rocky and steep are also not suitable for a leisurely bike ride, i.e. for any person cycling other than fit and able mountain bikers.

From the 2010 Parks Plan:

*There are some trail types in the agreement with the Haney Horsemen. In MR, trails were originally all called equestrian trails. Now multiple uses are respected. Some of the trails are along road corridors, and others are not. The typical standard in rural areas is an equestrian trail behind (on the property side of) the sidewalk.*

With all due respect to the equestrian community, who have worked hard to build an extensive trails network in our community over the past half century or more, I think this is really the problem: the City has no plan for a real "multi-purpose" trails network. In other communities, walking and AAA cycling are the primary uses when they refer to "multi-purpose" trails, which serve a large segment of the population. The [Metro Vancouver Greenways Plan](#) consists of greenways that are primarily for walking and cycling, and, where possible, for other uses. In Maple Ridge it's the other way around: the primary use is equestrian. So even on [Metro's Greenway network in Maple Ridge](#) (which the City has agreed on), there are trails that are interrupted by water crossings (a total of 5 - see text highlighted in blue in the linked assessment document), or that are in places too steep and rocky or otherwise inaccessible for people of All Ages and Abilities on bikes and for people walking who are perhaps less able and fit.

Maple Ridge is a fast growing community. A small but active and vocal minority of Maple Ridge residents ride horses, while many - about 66% of the population - would like to bike, or bike more, **whether** for recreation or for transportation (according to TransLink's regional cycling strategy [Cycling for Everyone](#) - page 20). The needs of the latter should be accommodated as well.

When two of our HUB Committee members (including myself) met with Chad Neufeld in Fall of 2020, he told us he envisioned a more inclusive trails network than what we presently have, which we thought was **very encouraging**. It's super disappointing to now find that, despite our [detailed feedback](#), the final draft of the new Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan only contains strategies for equestrian and mountain biking trails, while there is no strategy listed to also start building more inclusive trails to better accommodate AAA cycling and rolling.

Would it be possible to get a copy of the OCP issues report? I'm just curious if the need to not only "respect" but also **accommodate** more uses than just equestrian - i.e. a more inclusive multi-purpose trails network - was at all flagged for discussion back in 2006.

Since a "multi-purpose" trails network map is included in the OCP, wouldn't it make sense to also include an active transportation (AT) map, that includes off-road, **true multi-purpose** recreational trails and trail connections? Over the past 20 years, we've seen segments of the cycling network significantly degraded due to more car and truck traffic and speeding. Having an AT map included in the OCP is important, so that over time we don't see lines simply disappear from the cycling map, and it would also help highlight those important trail connections. Same considerations as were used for the equestrian trails map at the time. Trail standards would need to be amended to ensure AAA cycling and rolling, as well as pedestrian use by those who are less fit and able, are better accommodated.

With the addition of an AT map to the OCP, the "multi-purpose" trails map in the OCP can be renamed again, to accurately reflect what it really is: an equestrian trails map.

Thanks,

Jackie Chow  
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