

## Community Trails Strategy vision positions Welland as a leader in connected and active communities

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**Welland, ON** – Focusing on active and connected communities, the City of Welland's new Community Trails Strategy (CTS) provides a blueprint for expanding cycling, walking, and recreational trail networks over the next 20 years.

The CTS guides the City in improving and enhancing active transportation and trail infrastructure and recommends programming and design approaches to increase community trails. In addition, the City is applying for the Federal Government's Active Transportation Fund and seeks other funding opportunities to offset the costs to implement the strategy.

"This strategy will pay dividends for our community for a very long time," said Rob Axiak, director of community services. "Establishing a direction for our trail networks by focusing on being an active community, Welland continues to make itself a desirable place to live, work, play, and invest."

Aligning with existing trail and active transportation supportive policies and plans from various levels of government, the CTS complies with current guidelines, enhancing Welland's features and existing assets. This year, snow removal on Merritt Island and the Stop 19 Trail made the trails accessible throughout the winter and was received with fanfare by the community.

Some key goals of the CTS are to:

- Enhance connectivity between trail networks, sidewalks, and on-road cycling routes to create an integrated, connected system of trails and active transportation infrastructure.
- Refine existing plans, particularly the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, to develop an implementation strategy, project phasing, and cost estimates.
- Connect residents and visitors alike to Welland's Trails and natural heritage to provide more opportunities for recreation, transportation, and access to amenities.
- Enhance Welland's position as the Trails Centre of Niagara Region, bringing new tourism and economic development opportunities to the city.

The CTS is an exciting opportunity for the City and a top priority for the community services department as it continues to support and enhance the community's health and wellbeing of the community.

To view the CTS, when uploaded, visit: <https://www.welland.ca/CanalTrails/Trails.asp>.

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