

Kinden,

The draft final report says 'Trail planning for the Ear Lake area is under the purview of the City's Whitehorse South planning process; there has been no trail planning for RSW.' And it goes on to speak of the RSW area...

Motorized use is a divisive issue in Whitehorse, but public response to the idea of MMU trails in the RSW study area is notably more supportive than that received for such trails in other areas. RSW poses an opportunity to site singletrack (narrow) MMU trails with comparatively little disturbance and cultivate stewardship and responsible etiquette in a user group that has felt marginalized in recent years.

I believe that walking is a basic human activity, common to both sexes and all ages. I try to encourage more people to walk through identifying and creating 'destination' walks, loop walking trails; advocating for proper trail signage, more accessible and safe trails, particularly through switchbacks and trail repair; and encouraging walking groups. With no common walking group, nor any specific walking-focussed city department, I count on city staff reading submissions and recognizing the wide needs of walkers.

When plans are done by the city there's sometimes missed opportunities for capturing a broader story.

Demand-based input doesn't generally tell all the story. (See Parks and Recreation Master Plan quote below.) Often city processes include contacting 'stakeholders' to get the baseline story for the background report. For some studies, stakeholders include the larger sport- or activity-based groups, various city departments and selected neighbourhood community associations. For others such as this RSW study, stakeholders were more 'land' based groups and organizations. From this input, a background document and initial survey start the public input phase.

In the RSW background report, no community associations were contacted. And while the Whitehorse South trail planning is referenced, it was at a stage where the bigger picture was barely discussed. The process got hung up on neighbourhoods with motorized trail issues. In effect, little time was spent looking at the north end of the planning area (Macrae, Miles Canyon, Ear Lake and Airport Bowl lands) — clearly an area unfamiliar to most people. As I showed in my RSW submission, the RSW study area is actually more relevant to city centre neighbourhoods: Riverdale, Downtown, above-the-airport. (This was reflected in the 'what we heard' document where only 11% of respondents were from the south end of town.)

The problem with this demand-based approach is benefits-based input has little opportunity to be part of the background picture that the general public is given for their input. Walking often doesn't make it into background reports and nor into any initial survey looking for simple feedback. To help make up for this, I try, as an individual (See Trail Plan quote below), to respond to city processes from the point of view of a walker, often with significant thought and presentation. While I accept that my ideas on walking are not accepted by everyone, I do count on transparency of process that my input is shared in what any what we heard.

I have to say it's discouraging. I gave input (2 documents: a 7 page pdf and 10 map pdf) to the Robert Service Way Planning process. I received no acknowledgement of receipt of my submission, nor do I see important aspects reflected in 'what we heard' and 'draft study results'. Perhaps it could be included as an appendix, as a broader walking vision of the area? My expectation is certainly not that my vision of a strong walking community is accepted by everyone, however it would be nice to feel my input is at least looked at and presented as valid input.

Looking at the 'what we heard' document, it seems to be mostly people responding to the survey. No acknowledgement is made of written submissions and issues presented by these submissions. People are asked prepared questions such as if they desire "1-2 marked loop trails (89%)." What's missing is that the RSW area is part of where people walk presently and, with some trail work, much more intensive use would happen. Loops through the area using both sides of the river are very obvious and will be fundamental to both City Centre recreation and any tourism aspirations we have that include Miles Canyon.

The Hepburn Tramway, as per my submission, landed in Robert Service Campground. Yet RSW documentation totally ignores its possibilities.

This RSW publication is said to be a background document to inform the coming OCP process. I'll try again during the OCP process to get a walking vision of this area.

From the 2007 Trail Plan

From the City-wide viewpoint, key recommendations of this Plan and indeed the very format of the written document put the emphasis on grass-roots involvement of **individuals** and groups of all ages.

From the 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan....

4.1 Philosophy - The Benefits-Based Approach

Traditionally communities have used a demand-based model to govern their investment in parks and recreation facilities and programs. Recreation interests and needs were fairly basic and predictable and usually sport activity driven. If there were sufficient interest in a new activity, the council of the day would build a facility to accommodate the demand. Over the past 20 years a number of trends have emerged that suggest this approach is unsustainable. First public recreation interests are changing rapidly. People have broader interests and want more choices available. Multiplexes for example meet that criterion because they offer choice allowing families with different interests to participate in their activity of choice within the same building.

There are also more structural population changes occurring with more diversity

in the cultural ethnicity of communities and changes in traditional family structure. Communities are also recognizing that they can no longer afford numerous single purpose facilities or effectively meet all resident recreation needs. The demand-based model is also a reactive approach with an inherent bias towards numbers of participants rather than the quality of the experience. The benefits-based approach to the provision of parks, recreation and leisure services evolved from the recognition that the demand-based approach was not sustainable. The benefit-based approach evolved from the concept that recreation is an integral part of personal and community wellness. It takes a more holistic approach premised on the concept that through the provision of recreation and leisure services, there are both direct and indirect benefits that accrue to the community as a whole as well as to the users of the services themselves. In the same manner, a well-maintained road system benefits both the individuals using the road and the community as a whole by providing access to goods, markets, etc, that ensure a healthy economy. The provision of municipal recreational services can be justified in the same way because there are individual health and community wellness benefits that are consistent with the fundamental goals of municipal governance.

The benefits-based approach is by nature broader, more inclusive and adaptable to change. It is still responsive to community driven and personal recreation needs but places more focus on deriving long-term health and wellness outcomes that flow from a more holistic approach.

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