

London Plan - ESA Conservation Master Plan Policies and AODA Requirements for Trail Systems

- **Section 15.3.8 Official Plan, and, Policy 1421 [London Plan](#)**, “City Council may request the preparation of **conservation master plans** for environmentally significant areas and other natural heritage areas. Conservation master plans may be adopted by Council, and will function as guideline documents for the purposes of providing direction on the management of these areas.”
- **Policy 1422_3 London Plan** “The identification of **management zones based on ecological sensitivity**, including descriptions of recreational uses and opportunities for eco-tourism to be provided if applicable, and details of access permitted to and within the area, including formalized pathways and **trail systems**.”
- The **Conservation Master Plan process is the “trigger” for Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) compliance** requirements for the *trail system* including the **requirement for consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee of Council**



BACKGROUND

CONSERVATION MASTER PLAN PROCESS

PHASE 1: Community Engagement and Participation ✓
Life Science Inventory and Evaluation ✓
Boundary Delineation ✓
Application of Management Zones & Review of Existing Trails ✓
Identifying Management Issues ✓

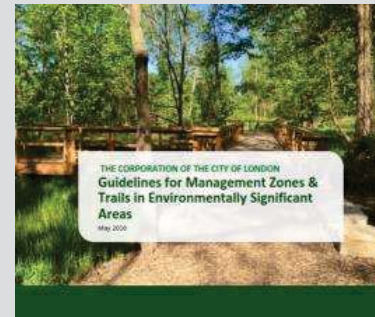
PHASE 2: Community Engagement and Participation ✓
Goals, Objectives, Recommendations ✓
Ecological Protection, Enhancement & Restoration ✓
Trail Planning & Design Process ✓
Priorities for Implementation ✓
Final Conservation Master Plan ✓



Goal of the Conservation Master Plan

To develop a comprehensive multi-year [CMP](#) that presents recommendations for achieving long-term ecological integrity and protection of the ESA through the implementation of an **environmental management strategy**.

The proposed Sustainable Trail Concept Plan complies with the Council approved [Guidelines](#) for Management Zones and Trails in ESAs (2016) (*Guidelines*) written with input from ACCAC for providing enhanced accessibility and protection of ESA ecosystems consistent with AODA requirements.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

By law, you must make recreational trails accessible if you are:

- a private or non-profit organization with 1+ employee(s) or a public sector organization; and
- building **new** public recreational trails and planning to maintain them or making major changes to existing ones and planning to maintain them
- **The Design of Public Spaces Standard (Ontario Reg. 191/11) (“the Standard”)** there can be exceptional conditions where the need to provide accessible trails may need to be balanced with other legitimate concerns:
 - Exceptions where making the trail accessible would have a negative effect on water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values
 - In such instances, **the City is expected to meet the requirements of the Standard to the greatest extent possible.**



References to AODA in Guidelines

Section 2.1: Policy for Trail Planning and Design

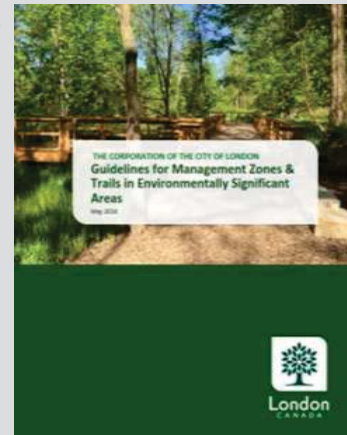
- Enjoyable, safe, accessible trails for recreation appropriate in an ESA and learning environment will be permitted in accordance with recognized accessibility legislation (such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), best practices and the above principles [outlined in Guidelines].

Section 2.3: Policy for Trail Planning and Design

- Trails to permit access for persons with disabilities, consistent with these guiding principles and AODA requirements, will be provided where this can be achieved while protecting the ecological integrity and ecosystem health of the ESA.

Section 7.1 : Design and Construction: Trails

- Design and Maintenance Standards: Where the trail is deemed accessible, the trail in its entirety shall meet AODA recreational trail surface requirements for both firmness and stability.



Environmental Management Strategy: Trail Management Plan

Utility Overlay

- Due to ongoing access requirements associated with the approximately 5.5 km of underground and aboveground utility infrastructure (hydro corridor, sewers & forcemain) located within the MVHF ESA (south), a Utility Overlay consisting of a 4 m wide corridor was established following the Guidelines.
- Where maintenance access is required, trails are generally located along the same route to minimize impacts to the surrounding ESA. **These trails are to be designed to be compliant with the AODA, where exceptions do not apply, so that trails can accommodate persons with disabilities wherever possible.**

Photo: Example of muddy/wet Level 1 trail over sewer alignment / Utility Overlay south of Glenridge Drive, east side of ESA, near Access 10



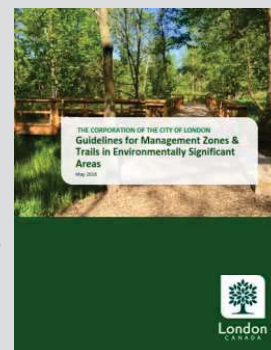
Existing Sewer Manhole



Environmental Management Strategy: Trail Management Plan

Nature Reserve (NR) Management Zone

- **Level 1 trails** (e.g. natural earth surface, wood chips, boardwalk, corduroy logs, stepping stones) Structures (e.g. boardwalks, bridges, stairways) may be permitted in NR Zones to reduce impacts to significant ecological features and increase the sustainability of the trail system in the ESA. **These are also areas where exceptions to making trails accessible would apply as such activities may have a negative effect on water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values.**



Natural Environment (NE) Management Zone

- **Level 1 and Level 2 trails** may be located in NE Zones where it can be demonstrated that the trail will not result in negative impact to the adjacent ecological features and functions of the ESA. **Trails that comply with the Guidelines in NE zones can/must be made accessible as per AODA. Especially when Utility Overlay is present.**



ACCAC Involvement in Medway ESA Conservation Master Plan Process

- **August 24, 2017** - first draft of CMP presented at ACCAC meeting for review and comments
- **October 23, 2017** - revised CMP and responses to ACCAC's comments presented at ACCAC (Memo responses to ACCAC comments in Appendix D of CMP)
- **November 16, 2017** - meeting with Chair of ACCAC (and two ACCAC members) re trail plan and accessibility
- **January 9, 2018** - Letter from Chair of ACCAC outlining stance on current plan and 3 proposed enhancements to the trail plan (included in Appendix D of CMP)
- **March 2017** - *CMP now includes all ACCAC's proposed changes to trail plan*
- **ACCAC representative was part of Local Advisory Committee throughout CMP process (6 meetings minutes in Appendix B)**

Note – Consultation with ACCAC is required under AODA



Revised Medway Conservation Master Plan (October 2017)

“The Accessibility Advisory Committee recognizes some enhancements to accessibility were included in the proposal [October 2017 CMP].

ACCAC is in support of the following proposed changes:

- **Bridge at crossing A and Level 2 trail from A5 to A10** – as these enhancements will provide an accessible path through the northern most portion of the valley, connecting the Ambleside community to the Medway Valley North Accessible path system... ✓
- **Level 3 trail from A1 to A4** – as this enhancement will create an accessible connection of Medway Valley North, as well as those areas served by the proposed A5 to A10 route ✓
- **Trail surface improvements (such as those near A11 and A12)** being completed to AODA standards ✓
- **2 closed level 2 trail loops beginning at A19 and A14** - as these provide a limited degree of trail/nature experience, however noting this provides no route options, and limit path of travel to one route with a single entrance/egress point.” ✓



Medway Conservation Master Plan (March 2018)

“Accessibility Advisory Committee Proposed Enhancements

The Accessibility Advisory Committee proposes 3 additional enhancements [to the October 2017 CMP] which would significantly improve accessibility within Medway Valley South while posing no risk to the environment.

- **Upgrade the trail from A11 to the Medway creek at point D**, noting this trail runs primarily along a utility overlay ✓
- **Install a Bridge at crossing D** ✓
- **Extension of the boardwalk at A18** noting significant erosion exists, resulting in muddy surfacing and trail-widening (by those attempting to avoid the mud).” ✓



✓ *Indicates included in March 2018 [Conservation Master Plan](#)*



What might an Accessible Linkage at look like at A & D?

- Bridge south of Sunningdale Road West in MVHF ESA







Trail Management - Accessibility and Wayfinding

In response to ACCAC comments - new AODA compliant signage is proposed in CMP at all access points to include a map and identifies:

- The length of trail
- The type of surface of which the trail is constructed
- The average and minimum trail width
- The average and maximum running and cross slope
- The location of amenities, where provided

Accessible Trail Information

- Kiosk north to Saunders Pond viewpoint (0.1km)
- Kiosk east to Saunders Cabin (0.2km)
- Saunders Cabin east to trail fork (0.2km)
- Kiosk south to Dearness (0.4km)

Tread Width	Running Slope	Cross Slope	Trail Surface
			
Avg. 200cm or 6.5ft (min. 190cm or 6ft)	Avg. 2% (max. 5%)	Avg. 2% (max. 3%)	Asphalt, granular & boardwalk

Accessible Amenities:

-  Bench
-  Viewpoint
-  Parking
-  W.E. Saunders Cabin Site

Example of Existing Accessible AODA Signage at Westminster Ponds ESA – Tourism Building



Next Steps

March 16, 2018	Final Medway VHF ESA (South) Conservation Master Plan (CMP) on City website
March 21, 2018	Presentation to ACCAC for CMP endorsement
April 16, 2018 (Not to be heard before 5pm)	Presentation to Planning and Environment Committee of Council (PEC) – Delegation / ACCAC chair to speak at PEC

