



**THE GREAT  
TRAIL**  
MADE BY CANADA



Trans Canada Trail  
Sentier Transcanadien

# Trans Canada Trail

Support and Development Guidelines 2018-2019

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**Mission: We will promote and assist in the development and use of The Great Trail – created by Trans Canada Trail and our partners – by supporting success at the local level in the continued improvement and enhancement of this national network.**

## **1. Guideline objectives**

These guidelines are exclusive to Trans Canada Trail (TCT) and apply to all projects associated with it. TCT's Board, its committees and / or employees may make decisions outside of these guidelines, in exceptional circumstances.

The guidelines intend to:

- Outline the priorities and objectives for supporting and developing The Great Trail, as approved by TCT's Board of Directors.
- Define the Trail Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2018 – 2022.
- Establish and define a standard framework for financially supporting Trail projects including:
  - project selection, planning and implementation processes
  - defining eligibility criteria for projects
  - outlining required documents to be completed and submitted
  - defining the criteria for receiving financial support and eligible expenses
  - submission of reports and other documents, as required

These guidelines will be updated periodically to ensure that they reflect the direction of the Board. TCT's goal is to have its guidelines aligned with provincial, territorial or municipal guidelines, laws, and regulations pertaining to specific activities (such as cycling), and with organizations who manage local Trail sections. This version of the guidelines replaces all those previously issued.

## **2. 2018-2022 Trail Capital Improvement Plan**

The 2018-2022 Trail Capital Improvement Plan is a strategic document that links new Trail projects to the mission and objectives of Trans Canada Trail, as approved by its Board of Directors.

The CIP includes identification and prioritization of selected projects, justification for selection, planned budget, completion dates and related funding.

The format of the CIP facilitates the planning and approval of several potential projects in a single step. It provides a comprehensive overview of priorities, objectives and collaboration between departments and partners. It also allows for efficient management of available funds.

Responsibility for coordination and implementation of the CIP will fall to the Vice-President, Trail Development and Management.

## **2.1. Duration of CIP and calls for new proposals**

Periodically, TCT will issue a call for new proposals. Selected projects will be chosen for financial support each year. Calls for proposals will be launched in August of each year. TCT reserves the right to issue a second call for proposals in certain provinces and territories. Advance notice of the opening date and duration of each call for proposals will be announced through TCT and its partners.

The first round of projects to be included and supported through the CIP will start on April 1, 2018. All projects included in the CIP must be completed by March 31, 2022.

## **3. Objectives, Priorities and Operational Guidelines**

### **3.1. Objectives**

The objectives set out below are TCT's main priorities. These priorities will be reviewed periodically and new objectives may be added, without necessarily being explicitly included in these guidelines.

#### **3.1.1. Enhancing the Trail**

This objective is aimed at the development of projects that will increase and improve the quality and value of The Great Trail and the user's experience. Regular or routine maintenance projects for Trail sections are not eligible for funding.

##### **Examples of projects**

- Feasibility study, engineering or environmental assessment for a project
- Widening of a section of the Trail to accommodate an increased number of users
- Trail amenities (benches, parking lots, etc.)
- Added viewpoints or rest areas for points of interest
- Construction of new Trail sections and the addition of new infrastructure

#### **3.1.2. Conversion of roadways or shared pathways into greenways, and preservation of existing greenways**

This objective is aimed at implementing projects that will convert existing sections of the Trail into greenway or transfer existing Trail section to new greenways. TCT places great value on the preservation of its existing greenways, therefore projects focused on said preservation will be prioritized.

##### **Examples of projects**

- Trail sections that permit summer motorized Trail sections converted to greenways
- Creation of dedicated Trail for non-motorized activities
- New greenway Trail sections replacing existing roadways or interim road routes

- New greenway Trail sections that will run parallel to existing blueway

### **3.1.3. Increase Trail accessibility**

This objective is aimed at implementing projects that will increase and improve access to the Trail for all users.

#### **Examples of projects**

- Addition of Trail accessibility features (e.g. guardrails, level surfaces)
- Trail audit aimed at providing relevant information on the difficulty of the Trail and allow users to respect their limits
- Redevelopment of Trail sections to make them accessible (e.g. more gradual slope)
- Vehicular drop-off points
- Accessible washroom facilities
- Removing barriers to travel and Trail usage (e.g. hardening surfaces, re-routing steep slopes, or replacing stairs)

### **3.1.4. Increase Trail use and promote active transportation**

This objective is aimed at implementing projects that will increase the number of Trail users and allow the development of active transportation within a community. To be eligible for this objective an approved Active Transportation Plan must be in place.

#### **Examples of projects**

- Upgrading Trail standards to accommodate increased uses
- Link the Trail to urban centres or popular amenities, sites and parks
- Link the Trail to schools and commercial hubs

### **3.1.5. Trail-related projects developed and implemented by Indigenous communities**

This objective is geared towards projects that will support Indigenous groups in the development and implementation of infrastructure projects in their communities, linked to The Great Trail.

#### **Examples of projects**

- Trail sections that will facilitate the development of tourism sites and activities
- Development of services near the Trail
- Projects that promote the learning and sharing of the culture and history of the community
- Meeting points and information kiosks

### **3.1.6. The Great Trail - Upgrade**

This objective is to preserve the overall quality and usability of the Trail. Funding applications requesting support for Trail maintenance will not be accepted; however, some project upgrades deemed to be of primary importance and scope could be eligible for a contribution from TCT.

## **3.2. Difference between *Maintenance* and *Upgrade***

It is important for TCT that all stakeholders be aware of and have an adequate understanding of the terms *Maintenance* and *Upgrade*.

### **3.2.1. Trail Maintenance**

Since TCT was founded, maintenance has always been the responsibility of local owners and operators of The Great Trail - a commitment to keep their Trail section safe for users. Therefore, TCT will be upholding its policy that support for maintenance will be the responsibility of the owners and operators of the Trail. Trail maintenance includes the following: pruning, repairing holes, Trail beautification, erosion repair, drainage repairs, updating signage, barriers, fencing, surface repair, and other tasks that are undertaken seasonally for the upkeep of the Trail.

A quality maintenance plan ensures an optimal level of service for users for a period of 5 to 10 years, with quality standards decreasing gradually over the full life expectancy of the Trail (approx. 30 years). A maintenance plan should include a detailed analysis of needs based on usage. For example: a wilderness Trail that has been designed for experienced hikers does not require the same level of maintenance as a family cycling path in an urban environment. A comprehensive maintenance plan, explaining the choices made and the levels of service targeted is paramount in planning a Trail construction project.

### **3.2.2. Trail Upgrade**

After 20 to 30 years of use, certain sections of the Trail cannot maintain the same level of quality as when they first became operational, despite regular and sustained maintenance. Some sections will degrade to the point where they can no longer be considered operational. Further, preferred uses/activities and demographics using specific sections will change over time, necessitating upgrades.

Therefore, TCT will support upgrading sections of The Great Trail, hence the importance of distinguishing between maintenance and upgrades. For a project to be eligible for financial support for upgrades, the section needs to have had proper maintenance in accordance with the intended use of the trail, and, despite proper maintenance, significant financial support is required to ensure future viability of the section. Financial support that extends beyond simple maintenance.

TCT wishes to encourage loyal groups who have worked over the years to maintain their Trail section's infrastructure. Therefore, a group applying for support from TCT for Trail upgrades will have to demonstrate the extent to which they have invested maintenance.

### **3.3. Operational Guidelines**

The operational guidelines for achieving these objectives are set out below and will be reviewed periodically. New priorities may be added, without necessarily being included in these guidelines.

#### **3.3.1. Project financial support**

Projects that meet TCT's objectives may be eligible to receive monetary support. TCT's contribution framework defines the details of the support that can be provided to a project.

#### **3.3.2. Establishing and maintaining strategic partnerships**

Some strategic partnerships will be required to achieve TCT's objectives. TCT has been working, for many years, to establish strong partnerships with provincial and territorial organizations as a means of assuring optimal development of The Great Trail. Partnerships with tourism organizations, Indigenous Communities, transit departments and other groups may be negotiated and implemented by TCT staff.

#### **3.3.3. Emergency support for natural disasters**

TCT wishes to meet the needs of local owners and operators of Trail sections that are impacted by natural disasters (floods, forest fires, etc.). Therefore, TCT will accept requests for support for emergency support throughout the year. These requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the approval of financial support will be dependent on resource availability.

## 4. TCT Contribution Framework

This framework describes the entire process and criteria for selection, financial support, planning, implementation and project management for the CIP.

### 4.1. Eligibility criteria

The eligibility of a project will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- The project is closely linked to the objectives and priorities defined by TCT
- The project complies with *TCT's Greenways: Vision and Core Principles*  
<https://thegreattrail.ca/about-us/greenway-vision/>
- The project is located on or is connected to the existing Great Trail network
- The activities permitted on the Trail do not conflict with TCT's preferred uses
- The project will be carried out within the duration of the CIP
- The submitted project is feasible and well structured
- The distribution of projects at the national level is fairly distributed among all provinces and territories
- The applicant is able to demonstrate that they can obtain all additional financial support required to complete their project
- The project is supported by the community
- The applicant is able to demonstrate that they can ensure maintenance

### 4.2. Financial Support

#### 4.2.1. Financial support for design, planning and studies

TCT may provide financial support for design, planning or engineering (engineering, environmental assessments, etc.) **up to 50%** of the eligible expenses. **Maximum contribution is limited to \$30,000.**

Studies receiving a contribution from TCT must be a precursor to a potential future construction project; however, an approved contribution for design, planning or studies does not guarantee financial support for the construction phase of a project.

#### 4.2.2. Financial support for construction

TCT may provide financial support for the construction of a project **up to 35%** of eligible expenses.

Maximum contribution amounts:

- New trail (without infrastructure) : \$ 30,000 / km
- Railway crossing and culvert (diameter : 900mm and +) : \$ 17,500 / unit
- Major Infrastructure (bridge, retaining wall) : \$ 250,000 / unit
- Parking lot, access point : \$ 25,000 / unit
- Wayfinding signage provided by TCT, installed by the Trail group. It should be noted that other TCT support programs are dedicated exclusively to signage projects and can be utilized by Trail owners and operators

#### 4.2.3. Eligible cash and in-kind contributions

TCT acknowledges the work done by the employees of local groups towards the development of their Trail projects, therefore, TCT will provide financial support for certain expenses incurred by the group. TCT will recognize in-kind contributions at fair market value. To guide applicants, and to be fair and equitable to all groups, the following limits are set:

- **Project manager salary:** actual salary cost related to the supported project, plus contribution and deductions, without benefits, up to \$ 45 / hour
- **Internal technical team salary:** actual salary cost related to the supported project, plus contribution and deductions, without benefits, up to \$ 35 / hour
- **Wage earners / labourer:** actual salary cost related to the supported project, plus contribution and deductions, without benefits, up to \$ 25 / hour
- Travel expenses: max. 50 km / work day - all vehicles combined. Mileage reimbursement rates (cents/km) are set according to the National Joint Council are adjusted every three months. <http://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/index.php?lang=eng&svid=97-33>
- Wages already paid from public funds are not eligible. For example, salary expenditures for project management by a municipality or city, which have already been included in the municipal budget, are not eligible. The same applies to studies, if the city or municipality has a technical service with at least one engineer whose compensation is included in the municipal budget.
- External donations of **equipment, material and supplies** and the lending of equipment are eligible for the calculation of the total cost of the project. Their value must be estimated according to the actual market cost. Therefore, external “in kind” contributions are taken into account when calculating the contribution from TCT.
- Although it is of great value, **volunteer time** is not eligible and cannot be added to the total cost of a project.



### **Example**

For the 123 Trail

- ABC Construction donates:
  - 200 tons of gravel for the construction, fair market value : \$ 4,000.
  - 100 hours of equipment time (Bobcat), fair market value : \$ 7,500.
- 123 Trail group invests:
  - 200 hours - project manager at \$32 per hour = \$6,400.
  - 1000 hours of labourer at \$19 per hour = \$19,000.
  
- Total of the project is **\$36,900**
- Maximum eligible TCT contribution is **\$12,915 (35%)**

#### **4.2.4. Ineligible expenses (cash and in-kind)**

The following is a partial list of expenditures not eligible for financial support.

- Project administration costs
- Administrative salaries (office admin, accounting etc.)
- Volunteer management
- Office expenses (rent, telephone, computers, photocopies, insurance, etc.)
- Financial support application fees
- Lighting
- Paving (exceptions apply e.g. accessibility)
- Playgrounds and parks
- Private land use expenses including rent or taxes
- Land purchase costs
- Financial expenses (interest, bank charges, etc.)
- Unforeseen expenses
- Contingency budget item
- Sales taxes

#### 4.2.5. Maximum amount of financial support

The total contribution will be based on actual project expenditures up to a maximum contribution amount. The total grant may be lower than originally planned if the eligible expenses incurred by the group are less than those detailed in the original budget.

The group must immediately notify TCT, in writing, when it receives additional financial assistance. The cumulative financial assistance - for the costs incurred by the project cannot exceed 100% of the total costs of the project. If the total funding received exceeds the limit, the overpayment must be reimbursed to TCT.

#### 4.2.6. Eligible expenses (cash and in-kind)

##### Eligible expenses for the design, planning and studies

If integrated into a construction project, planning, design and study expenses must be clearly identified and be held to the standards outlined in the table below. A maximum contribution of \$ 30,000 will be provided for all combined phases of a single project.

Type of expenditure	Eligible expenses	Contribution
<b>Studies</b>	Eligible studies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project feasibility study</li> <li>• Trail route planning study</li> <li>• Engineering plans and specifications, documents and tender process</li> <li>• Environmental assessments</li> <li>• Geotechnical studies</li> <li>• Hydraulic studies</li> <li>• Government authorizations</li> <li>• Licenses and permits</li> <li>• Procedures for obtaining land use permits</li> </ul>	<b>Up to 50%, max. of the cost</b> \$ 30,000 for all studies required by a project.
<p><b><u>Example # 1 - TGT Trail (phase 1) - 15 km</u></b></p> <p>A Trail project is being planned. The estimated costs for the required studies are as follows:</p> <p>Trail route planning study = \$ 15,000            Environmental Assessment = \$ 12,500            Plans and specifications = \$ 17,500            TOTAL = \$ 44,500</p> <p>The maximum eligible expense is \$ 44,500. The financial support granted by TCT will be a maximum of \$ 22,250.</p>		

### **Example # 2 – TGT Trail (phase 2) - 15 km**

The Greenway planning has an actual cost of \$ 42,000. TCT provided financial support for the planning of the project with a contribution of \$ 21,000.

The project is now ready to be built; however, during planning, engineers recommended testing the soil conditions at some locations, as rock outcrops are visible. The Trail group includes the estimated cost for the missing study in its application for construction funding:

Geotechnical study = \$ 24,000

TCT financial support for studies (Phase 1) : \$21,000

Requested for studies in phase 2: \$24,000 x 50% = \$12,000

Total : \$33,000

This is larger than the \$30,000 maximum contribution for studies, so the financial support granted by TCT for phase 2 will be a maximum of \$ 9,000.

### **Financial assistance for construction**

Type of expenditure	Eligible expenses	Contribution
Trail construction costs (without infrastructure)	<p>Eligible expenses for Trail construction include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site preparation</li><li>• Laboratory monitoring and testing</li><li>• Rental of equipment necessary for the construction site (office, portable toilets ...)</li><li>• Hours of internal labour paid to carry out the construction project</li><li>• Contractors and subcontractors</li><li>• Rental of heavy equipment</li><li>• Transport and installation of materials (aggregates, drain and small culverts: 900 mm or less, guardrails, fencing and barriers, riprap ...)</li><li>• Purchase and implementation of regulatory and safety signage</li><li>• Benches, signage maps, viewpoints, small rest areas, bike washing stations)</li></ul>	<p>Up to 35% of the cost</p> <p>New trail max. contribution \$30,000 /km</p>
Major Infrastructure	<p>Eligible expenses for Trail construction includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site preparation</li><li>• Laboratory monitoring and testing</li></ul>	<p>Up to 35% of the cost</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase, transport and installation for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stabilization of slopes</li> <li>○ Railway sleepers</li> <li>○ Retaining wall</li> <li>○ Culvert of more than 900 mm</li> <li>○ Walkways</li> <li>○ Bridges (new and refurbished)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>For shared infrastructure (bridges, tunnels, pinch-points) - the costs will have to be proportionally distributed among the users and financed in an equivalent way.</p>	<p>Railway crossing and culvert (diameter : + 900 mm) : max of \$ 17,500 / unit</p> <p>Major Infrastructure (bridge, retaining wall) : max of \$ 250,000 / unit</p>
Signage	<p>Branded Great Trail signage and safety signage will be provided and delivered free of charge by TCT. Trail owners and operators will be responsible for installing signage.</p>	<p>Provide by TCT, installed by Trail group</p>
Access point parking	<p>The construction or expansion of new parking lots.</p>	<p>Up to 35% of the cost Max of \$25,000</p>
Water/Access Point	<p>The construction of a new wharf, loading/unloading area, and Trail connecting the parking lot to the access points</p>	<p>Up to 35% of the cost Max of \$25,000</p>
Urban furniture, accessible item, physical barriers (natural or artificial)	<p>Eligible expenses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benches</li> <li>• garbage bins</li> <li>• fences</li> <li>• barriers</li> <li>• handrails/guardrails</li> <li>• landscaping (physical barriers)</li> <li>• concrete curb / jersey</li> </ul> <p>A maintenance and replacement plan must be provided.</p> <p>To obtain financing for urban furniture, it must be part of a larger project. TCT will not provide support for a project that only includes urban furniture.</p>	<p>Up to 35% of the cost Max of \$10,000</p>

#### 4.2.7. Reporting

Throughout the project, the Recipient must demonstrate good project management through project reports, follow-ups and regular communication with TCT.

The Recipient must demonstrate that it is overseeing the completion of the project in accordance with the approved timetable and budget, and that it has the capability to complete the project according to the terms and conditions provided. The Recipient will be subject to work inspections and validation of financial data, which must be kept up to date throughout the project. A reporting schedule will be provided to the group that must be followed.

A monthly progress report will be required from the Recipient – for the previous month, before the 20 of each month. The report must include the following information:

- Confirmation of the Scope of the Project (an explanation needs to be provided for any changes).
- Confirmation of the project schedule (an explanation needs to be provided for any changes).
- Confirmation of budget (an explanation needs to be provided for any changes).
- The previous month's expenses and total cost to date.
- Any other information or documents required, as per the contribution agreement.
- Supporting documents for expenses may be required.

A final report will be required from the Recipient within 30 days of the completion of the project. The report must include the following information:

- Pictures (before and after the project).
- Proof of insurance with TCT referenced as one of the insured entities **(where applicable)**.
- Signage report, including GIS locations and Trail alignment.
- Description of how TCT's contribution has been or will be recognized.
- The previous month's expenses and total cost to date.
- In the case of a study, the final design, report or any other documents produced during the study.
- Any other information or documents required, as per the contribution agreement.
- Additional supporting documents may be required.
- Maintenance plan

## Contact information

If you have any questions regarding the eligibility of a potential project, please contact one of our provincial/territorial partners:

- **British Columbia:** Trisha Kaplan – [tkaplan@tctrail.ca](mailto:tkaplan@tctrail.ca)
- **Alberta:** Alberta TrailNet – [trailnet@telusplanet.net](mailto:trailnet@telusplanet.net)
- **Saskatchewan:** Kirsten Gabora – [kgabora@tctrail.ca](mailto:kgabora@tctrail.ca)
- **Manitoba:** Trails Manitoba - [executive\\_director@trailsmanitoba.ca](mailto:executive_director@trailsmanitoba.ca)
- **Ontario:** Trans Canada Trail Ontario – [shai@tctrail.ca](mailto:shai@tctrail.ca)
- **Québec:** Conseil québécois STC – [rsenecal@tctrail.ca](mailto:rsenecal@tctrail.ca)
- **New Brunswick:** Sentier NB Trail – [pjorgensen@sentiernbtrail.com](mailto:pjorgensen@sentiernbtrail.com)
- **Nova Scotia:** Nova Scotia Trails – [vanda@novascotiatrails.com](mailto:vanda@novascotiatrails.com)
- **Prince Edward Island:** Michael Goodyear – [mgoodyear@tctrail.ca](mailto:mgoodyear@tctrail.ca)
- **Newfoundland and Labrador:** Michael Goodyear – [mgoodyear@tctrail.ca](mailto:mgoodyear@tctrail.ca)
- **Yukon:** Klondike Snowmobile Association – [klonsnow@gmail.com](mailto:klonsnow@gmail.com)
- **Northwest Territories:** Trisha Kaplan – [tkaplan@tctrail.ca](mailto:tkaplan@tctrail.ca)
- **Nunavut:** Trisha Kaplan – [tkaplan@tctrail.ca](mailto:tkaplan@tctrail.ca)

If you have any general questions about Trans Canada Trail or these guidelines, please send an email to [project@tctrail.ca](mailto:project@tctrail.ca)