

**Meeting Date:** August 8, 2023  
**Department:** Community Services  
**Report No.:** CS-2023-20  
**Submitted by:** Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community Services  
**Approved by:** William Dakin – Director of IT/Finance-Treasurer-Acting CAO

**SUBJECT:** Small Land Purchase – Trail

---

**RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive report CS-2023-20 for information; and further THAT: Council directs staff to include option 3 in the 2024 Engineering and Public Works Capital Budget Program.**

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

**BACKGROUND:**

Staff became aware of a situation regarding the trail area that comes off Victoria St. into Alexandra Park. This specific section (see image below) of the trail has a small portion that cuts across a corner of private property. The owners of the property have indicated that they no longer want people cutting across their property and they have erected private property signage and blocked the trail with brush.



This trail section has existed well before my tenure with the Municipality and access has always been allowed, but recently the property has changed hands. Staff was able to work with the landowner to allow public access across this small portion of the property while the Municipality resolves the issue.

**COMMENTS:**

The landowner is prepared to sell the land to the Municipality provided the Municipality pays for legal fees, survey and erects a fence.

Approximate square footage of purchase



Approximate placing and length of fencing



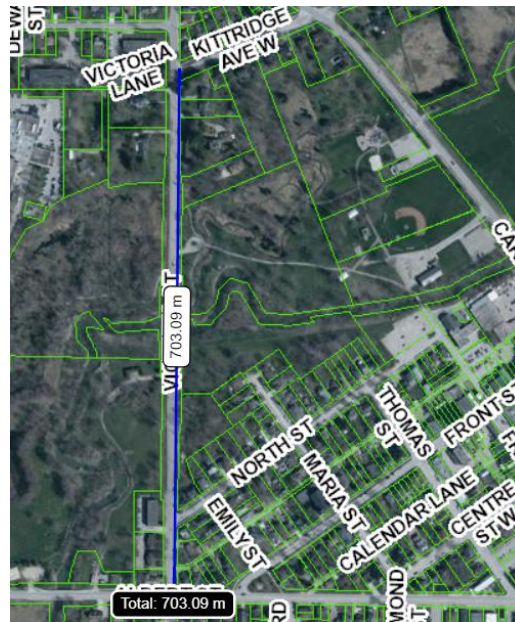
While reviewing the purchase of land, staff also referenced the Recreational Trails Master Plan (RTMP) and reviewed alternatives that could help satisfy the RTMP.

Staff would like to ensure that access to the trail is maintained; however, it is important that safety be considered. This trail empties out onto Victoria St., which is a County road with no pedestrian infrastructure. This particular roadway sees an average of 3457 vehicles per day based on the

County road counts from 2021 see link <https://www.middlesex.ca/sites/default/files/TRAFFIC%20COUNTS%20SPREADSHEET%202021.pdf>. This is similar to the volume of traffic that Head St. sees on a daily basis.

The RTMP identifies Victoria St. as having an Urban Multi-Use Trail (UMUT) as an alternative to sidewalk infrastructure. Staff appreciate the desire for this; however, to accomplish this UMUT the estimated cost would exceed \$500,000.00 for just this section of trail. A sidewalk can be an alternative to the UMUT, provide continued access to the trail within Alexandra Park, and is significantly less expensive. The sidewalk would extend for approximately 700m from Kittridge St. to Albert St. (see image below)

Distance of Proposed New Sidewalk



Keeping in mind the importance of the RTMP, trail access, pedestrian safety, and cost, staff provide the following options to Council:

#### Options

1. Do nothing. The expected result of this would be that the landowner would block access forcing the trail users/pedestrians to walk further down Victoria to the laneway entrance to Alexandra Park without any pedestrian infrastructure at this current time.
2. Purchase the land, conduct the survey, and install the fence for an approximate cost of \$13,000.00 to \$15,000.00
3. Install a sidewalk from Kittridge St. to Albert St. (700m) at an approximate cost of \$100,000.00. This would include all work needed to establish the sidewalk including labour, concrete, tree removal, granular, design, survey layout, and restoration.

**CONSULTATION:**

Jake Straus, Director of Engineering and Public Works

Darren Dowding, Supervisor of Parks and Recreational Facilities

Jennifer Huff, Director of Building and Planning

Chris Traini, County Engineer

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Refer to the 2024 Engineering and Public Works Capital Budget Program

**ATTACHMENTS:**