

STAFF REPORT

To: Council

From: Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation & Parks

Approved by: Warren MacLeod, Chief Administrative Officer

Date: September 23, 2026

Subject: Roseway River Trail Off Highway Vehicle Options

Origin

It was requested by Council to provide options for off highway vehicle use on the Roseway River Trail. Also, correspondence dated June 18, 2026, from the Woodland Multi-Use Trail Association requested the Municipality to change the Letter of Authority from multi-use to authorized shared multi-use.

Recommendation

For information purposes and decision making.

Background

The Municipality has a letter of authority (LOA) with the Department of Natural Resources & Renewal (DNRR) to operate and maintain the Roseway River Trail. The trail is approximately 700m long and is designated for pedestrians and cycling but not off highway vehicles (OHVs). It has two bridges, a bailey bridge (142 feet) and a small trail bridge (26 feet), both located at the eastern end of the trail. The bailey bridge is about 15 years old, the trail bridge is over 100 years old. The trail connects to the Town of Shelburne rail trail at its eastern end and to the undeveloped rail trail at its southern end, at Islands Park Road. The undeveloped trail is managed by the Department of Natural Resources & Renewal (DNRR) and does not have any OHV restrictions and travels through Hartz Point to Birchtown.

There are now numerous road trails in place in the Shelburne area that are intended to connect the trail system from Queen's County to Barrington. The Town of Shelburne road trail enables OHVs to travel through the town on their main roads and connect to trails in the Municipality at both the east and west ends. However, on the west end, the Town road trail connects to the Roseway River Trail, which does not allow OHVs so there is a gap in connectivity. As a result, riders are either travelling on the trail or on sections of roads that are not designated as road trails (McGill Point Lane to Islands Park Road).

Discussion

On August 27th DesignPoint Engineering & Surveying Ltd. completed a condition assessment and structural evaluation (load rating) of the Roseway River Trail Bridge and the Tom Tigney Trail Bridge. The assessment was developed to establish the existing bridges conditions and to evaluate the bridges suitability for public use including pedestrian, bicycle, and off highway vehicle traffic.

A draft report for the Roseway River Trail Bridge was available at the time of this report being prepared and the following is a summary of the findings and recommendations.

The Roseway River Trail Bridge is considered to be in poor overall condition, with significant deterioration affecting the primary steel members and lateral load-resisting system. The condition is to the point that the bracing system cannot be relied upon to provide effective lateral restraint or transfer wind-induced lateral forces through the superstructure.

It may be feasible to restore the bridge to meet the applicable loading requirements through rehabilitation of the existing superstructure but that would require significant expenditure while retaining the existing steel girders, which exhibit extensive deterioration and have an extremely limited remaining service life. Given the overall condition of the superstructure, investment in rehabilitation is not considered an effective solution. Accordingly, replacement of the bridge in its entirety, including both the superstructure and substructure, is recommended as the preferred approach.

As a result of the above, DesignPoint recommends that until required replacement works (or rehabilitation) are completed, the bridge be closed to public use.

The state of the Tom Tigney Trail Bridge is being noted below because there are two bridges that are both at the end of their lifespans requiring rehabilitation or replacement and their importance within the trail system and connectivity must be considered.

The Tom Tigney Trail Bridge is a two-span steel bridge with one pier, 38.4 meters (126 feet) in length and over 100 years old. It is open to pedestrians, cyclists and OHVs. The results of the Tom Tigney Bridge were not available at the time of this report being prepared, however, DesignPoint indicated that their preliminary findings are similar to the Roseway River Trail Bridge, with the bridge requiring significant rehabilitation or replacement., it was indicated by DesignPoint that they are continuing to explore high-level rehabilitation and strengthening options to determine whether a practical interim solution can be identified while funds can be allocated, with closure considered as a last resort. This information should be available in the final report.

The Tom Tigney Trail Bridge is a critical connection point in the trail system. Located in the Sable River Area it is a shared multi-use trail for pedestrians, bicycles and OHVs. Similar to the Jordan River Trail Bridge, there is no alternate route for users so if it were to close it would create another gap in trail connectivity both locally and regionally.

The Roseway River Trail is impacted by all of this in several ways. If the bridge were to be closed to all users (pedestrians and OHVs) until it can be replaced, the options are limited for connectivity between the Town trails (pedestrian trail and road trail) and trails in the Municipality. Both the bailey bridge and the trail bridge are in the same section, and both are required to get over the river. With the main road right beside the trail and bridges, the two bridges can be bypassed. However, this would be more practical for OHVs than for pedestrians.

Unlike the Tom Tigney Bridge, the Roseway River Trail Bridge does have an alternate route. Off highway vehicles could bypass the bridges and the entire trail by going around them on a road trail. A proposed road trail could continue from the Town road trail at McGill Point Lane then across the road bridge onto Island's Park Road to where the Roseway River Trail ends and connects with the DNRR rail bed. This would provide an authorized link to a legal connection for OHVs.

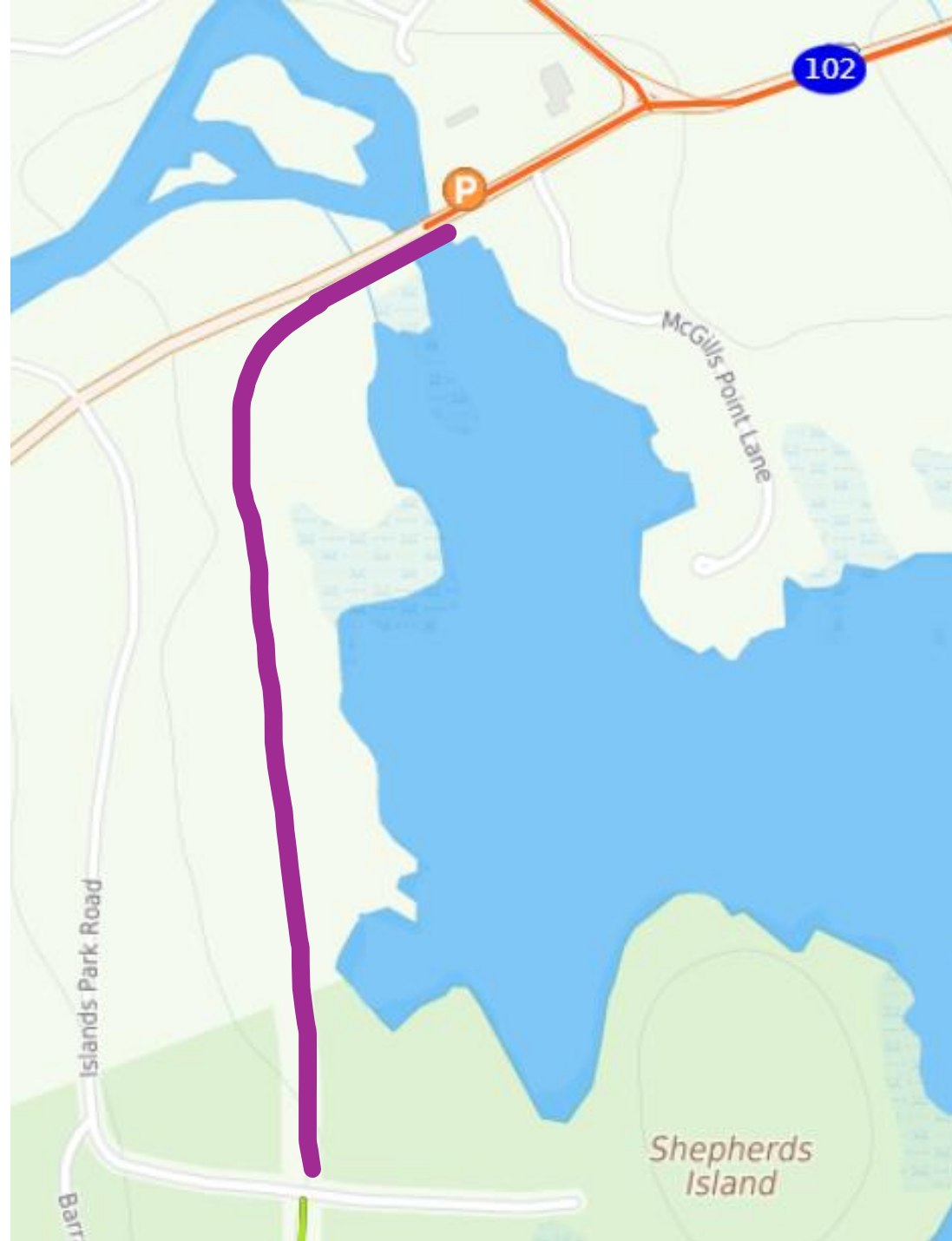
For pedestrians to connect from the Town trail to the Roseway River Trail they would have to leave the Town trail at McGill Point Lane and take the main road across the road bridge then enter the driveway just past the trail bridge and connect to the trail at that point. With no sidewalk or walking lane on the road and bridge it would not be ideal or safe for pedestrians to walk into a high traffic area and then enter an active driveway. With no safe connection point the trail would not be accessible to and from the Town. Any trail user crossing the trail bridge or taking the alternate route on the road would be at their own risk and discretion, it would not be direction provided by the Municipality. Access to the trail would simply start after the bridges and continue to Islands Park Road. It would not be ideal, but it is the only option for the time being that ensures user safety.

Regarding the letter of authority (LOA) for the Roseway River Trail, were the trail bridge closed it would not be useful to pursue changing the LOA to allow OHVs as there would be no legal access to the trail. An alternate route that will provide legal connectivity can be accomplished with a road trail.

The status of the Roseway River Trail bridge raises the question should the Municipality continue to hold the LOA for the trail. The Municipality currently has three trail bridges, which are all part of LOAs, that require replacement at substantial costs. The Jordan River Trail Bridge replacement project is currently underway at over \$3,000,000. As per the last engineering inspection completed in the fall of 2024, the Tom Tigney Bridge rehabilitation is estimated at a cost of \$2,000,000 and the Roseway River Trail Bridge at \$800,000-\$1,200,000. The Municipality is responsible for two other bridges, including the Sable River Footbridge and the Roseway River Trail Bailey Bridge. Neither of those bridges need any immediate or short-term repairs.

The Tom Tigney Trail Bridge is almost identical to the Jordan River Trail Bridge project and is one that is crucial for trail connectivity, especially for OHVs. Unlike the Roseway River Trail Bridge it does not have an alternate route. Hypothetically, if the LOA for Roseway River Trail was terminated the Municipality would no longer be responsible for the two bridges on the trail and the operation and maintenance of the trail section from the Town to Islands Park Road. This responsibility would transfer back to DNRR. Instead of two costly bridge projects, this would allow the Municipality to allocate resources toward the Tom Tigney Bridge due to its location and importance within the trail system.

There will be more forthcoming information related to the conditions of the Roseway River Trail Bridge and the Tom Tigney Trail Bridge once the final reports for the condition review and evaluation assessments are received.



Roseway River Trail

Roseway River Trail Bridge



Roseway River Bailey Bridge



Embankment	Approach
	
West end typical	East

Approach	Barriers
	
West	Typical

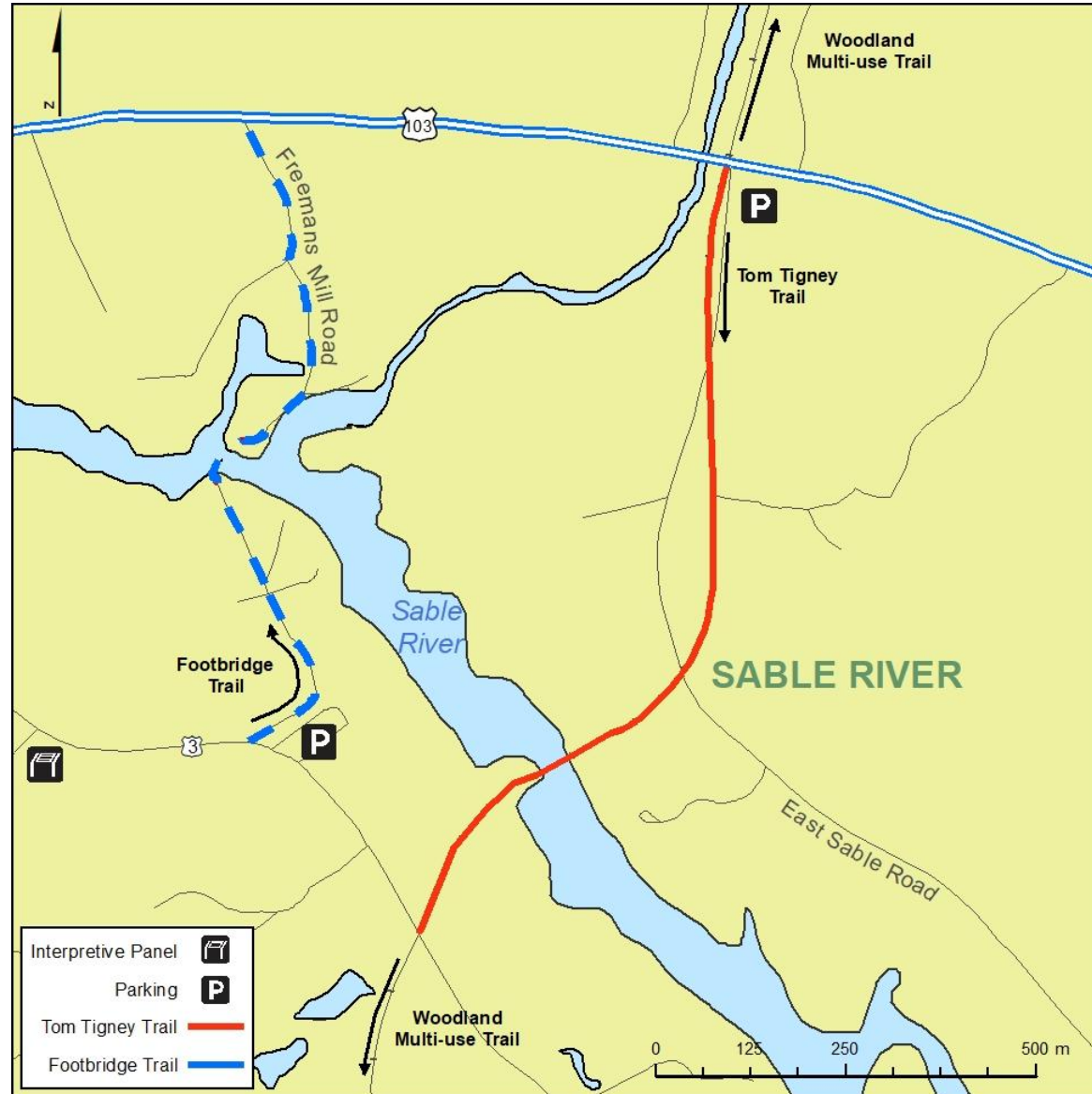
Beams/MLE's	Beams/MLE's
 A photograph showing a yellow measuring tape held against the top flange of a steel beam. The tape indicates a width of approximately 11 inches. The flange surface is rusty and shows some surface cracking.	 A photograph showing a yellow measuring tape held against the top flange of a steel beam. The tape indicates a width of approximately 12 inches. The flange surface is heavily corroded, with large areas of dark, pitted material exposed.
Typical flange width	Severe corrosion of flange

Beams/MLE's	Beams/MLE's
 A photograph showing the interior of a steel beam web. The web is dark and shows numerous small, circular perforations or holes, which are typical of corrosion or insect damage.	 A photograph showing a close-up of a steel stiffener. The stiffener is heavily corroded, with significant pitting and surface degradation. The surrounding concrete is also visible and appears to be in poor condition.
Web perforations (typical throughout)	Stiffener condition

Bracing	Bracing
	
Gusset plate condition	Typical brace condition

Abutments	Abutments
	
East abutment	West abutment









Road Trail



Roseway River Trail

Road Trail



