

WEST BRAGG CREEK TRAIL – TRANSCANADA TRAIL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The West Bragg Creek Trail has been planned and anticipated by the community of Bragg Creek for almost 10 years, when it was first defined in the Bragg Creek Area Structure Plan and approved by the community in 2004. The West Bragg Trail is also fully supported by the County of Rocky View and incorporated into their Parks and Open Space master plan.

This project is recognized as a critical link for the TransCanada Trail (TCT) to provide access between the communities of Calgary, Cochrane, Redwood, Bragg Creek and onto Canmore and Banff (see figure 1). There currently is a gap between West Bragg Creek Kananaskis, where the TCT ends, and the trail that exists from the Hamlet of Bragg Creek to Redwood. This proposed project is significant because it contributes to filling the gap between Kananaskis and Calgary.

The West Bragg Creek Trail project requires the construction of 7.5 km of trail connecting the Hamlet of Bragg Creek to Kananaskis Country. The plan is to construct this trail in 3 phases prior to 2017, the 150th anniversary of Canada and target completion date for the TransCanada Trail. Each phase is approximately 2.3 km in length and costing approximately \$400,000/phase. The majority of the West Bragg Trail is to be constructed within the road right of way, making land issues minimal (see figures 2 & 3).

Financial commitments have been provided by TransCanada Trail, The Province of Alberta, the County of Rocky view, The Calgary Foundation, The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA) and generous Donors. Bragg Creek is known as the Gateway to Kananaskis and Trail head community. This project reinforces that community spirit, providing a wonderful amenity, which will benefit the health and welfare of Albertans, local economies, tourism and recreation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2004 the West Bragg Creek Trail is conceptualized in the Bragg Creek Area Structure Plan and approved by the community.
- In 2006, The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association raised \$15,000 (through a grant from PetroCanada) and contracted 02 Design, from Calgary, to carry out an evaluation and to design a conceptual route for a trail from the Hamlet of Bragg Creek, along Township Road 232 to Kananaskis.
- In 2010 GBCTA encouraged and supported the County of Rocky View in their completion of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan, which illustrated and discussed the West Bragg Creek Road alignment.
- Numerous meetings were held between the GBCTA and the County of Rocky View to complete the pathway alignment, which has large portions within the

road right of way of Township Road 232. The County of Rocky View has completed changes to its policies so as to accommodate this trail within its road right of ways.

- In 2012 the GBCTA raised the necessary funds to pay for the \$36,000 engineering design of the trail. Detailed alignment drawings for the pathway have been completed and a summary of right of way pinch points defined. Some landowners have donated land while other small portions of land were acquired by Rocky View County.
- Alberta Transportation has constructed the sidewalk additions to two bridges along Township Road 232 to accommodate the West Bragg Creek Trail.
- The County of Rocky View installed traffic barriers along the edge of the road at points where the proposed trail is close to the road.
- Prior to trail construction over \$151,000 has been spent on design, engineering and road/bridge modifications for this project.
- Phase 1 has been successfully completed (summer 2015) with construction funding from TCT (\$125,000), Province of Alberta – CFEP (\$125,000), Rocky View County (\$60,000) and GBCTA (\$97,000).
- Phase 2 and 3 have funding support from TCT (\$217,089 committed), The Calgary Foundation (\$25,000), Rocky View County (\$50,000 committed and \$50,000 pending), GBCTA (\$41,000 committed).

3 TRAIL EXPERIENCE

The TransCanada Trail currently exists between Canmore and the West Bragg Creek Road Parking lot in Kananaskis. The proposed pathway will extend the TCT to the Hamlet of Bragg Creek, where it can then proceed East to Redwood Meadows and Calgary. Intended users are walking/hiking, joggers, cyclists (slow recreational, not higher speed road bikes), cross country skiers, snowshoers and the occasional horseback rider. There are no out of the ordinary challenges to trail development or maintenance.

4 CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY

The proposed pathway will be traversing an area very rich in natural beauty. It will provide access and connectivity to the Bragg Creek Provincial Park, Kananaskis Country and a number of protected natural areas. Construction of the trail will be mainly in a road right of way, so as to not disturb the surrounding areas.

5 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The community of Bragg Creek has incorporated this proposed pathway into their community-planning document, The Greater Bragg Creek Area Structure Plan. The County of Rocky View has incorporated this proposed pathway into their Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan. The Greater Bragg Creek Trails association with its membership base will be the Local Trail Operator. The Bragg

Creek Chamber of Commerce and Community Association have indicated that they support the project. Many residents in the area have been asking for years when this trail will be built.

6 BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

There are numerous economic and social benefits:

- Bragg Creek / Kananaskis is the recreational playground for the growing city of Calgary. Many Albertans from visit this area for mountain biking, hiking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing and horseback riding.
- Bragg Creek's logo is 'The Gateway to Kananaskis'. The local businesses of Bragg Creek rely extensively on tourism. Having a national venue such as the TCT is anticipated to draw people to our community to take advantage of our many shops and restaurants.
- Tremendous tourist opportunity to create a world-class hike between the communities of Bragg Creek and Canmore, with defined B&B's, small lodges and camping providing accommodation.
- Many Albertans are very active outdoor enthusiasts. They currently walk, jog, cycle etc. in the West Bragg Creek area. The addition of a pathway will encourage many more people to take advantage of the outdoors and pursue a healthier lifestyle.
- This pathway will tremendously improve the experience and safety of many of the outdoor activities in the area.
- 10 subdivisions and many scattered houses are along this route; the proposed pathway will connect all of these communities to the Hamlet of Bragg Creek and allow people an alternative to commute without always relying on a car.

7 OPERATION & MAINTENANCE

The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA) will operate and maintain the trail. An Operating and Maintenance Agreement has been executed between the GBCTA and the County of Rocky View. The GBCTA has a standard trail risk management policy, which will apply to this pathway.

The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association (GBCTA) is a purely volunteer group of Bragg Creek residents that are working hard to design, build and maintain trails and pathways for the benefit of residents and visitors of Bragg Creek. The GBCTA came into existence in 2004, as a result of the Rocky View County's Greater Bragg Creek Area Structure Plan (ASP). In 2007, community volunteers who were grooming and track-setting the trails in the West Bragg Creek (Kananaskis Country) Recreational Area came under the umbrella of the GBCTA. This combination of activities maximizes the natural synergies and makes the GBCTA an integral part of the Bragg Creek Community.

Today the GBCTA have very many households, which provide support towards pathway development and help with ongoing activities. The GBCTA is a

registered society with charitable status. Check out GBCTA PROJECTS and EVENTS on our website: braggcreektrails.org

Figure 1

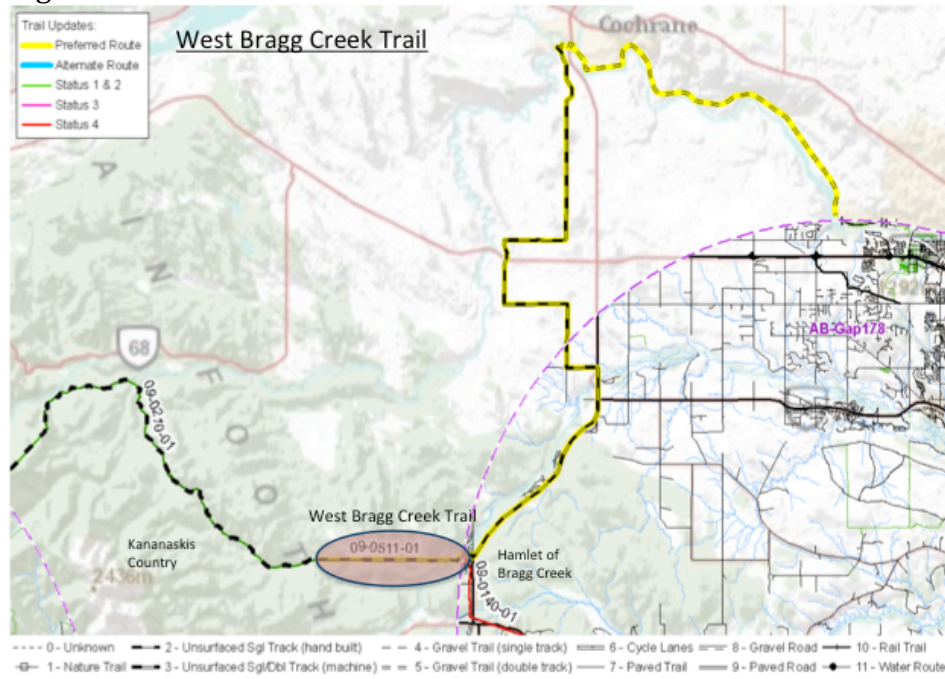


Figure 2

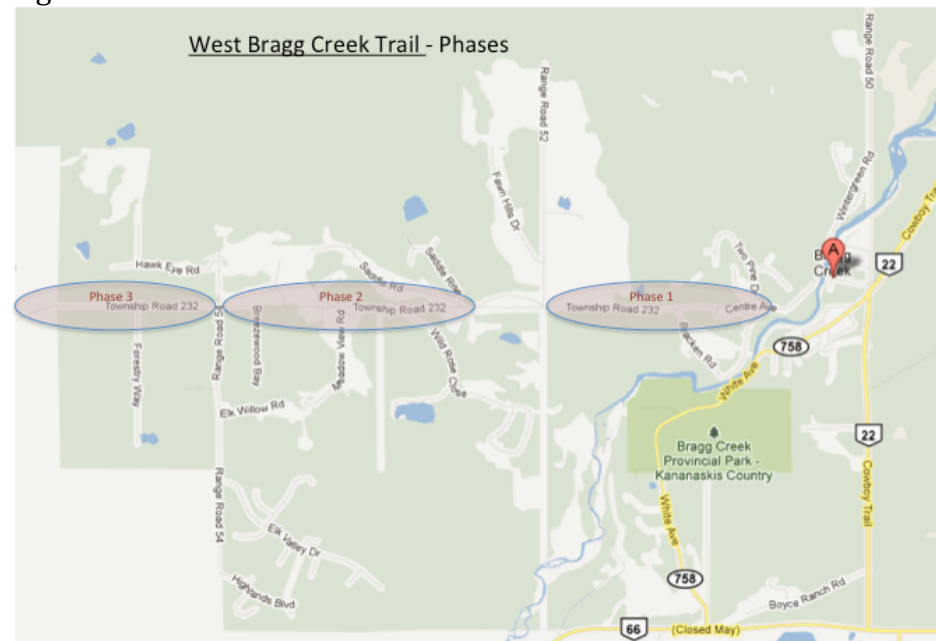


Figure 3

