

LOWER TRENT TRAIL

History

The history of the trail is an integral part of the history of the river and its settlements. Settlements spring up along the Trent River after the American Revolution; many of these supported farmers living in Sidway Township. It was a long way for the farmers in the northern end of the township to get their produce to market and roads were notoriously poor. In addition there was a thriving lumber industry and the Trent River was a natural route for rafting timber. Since the Trent River between Glen Ross and Trent Port was not the most hospitable of rivers, both the lumber industry and farmers were looking for either the seven sets of rapids between Glen Ross and Trent Port to be tamed or for a railway to be built. Eventually both were built. The railway opened to traffic north of Trenton Junction in 1884 with the Trent Canal being completed much later in 1920.

The rail history of the area is fraught with failed attempts and bankruptcies. Although the Grand Trunk Railway, connecting Montreal and Toronto opened in 1856 and went through Trenton Junction, it would take several years before private interests completed building rail links northward into the settlements of the Grand Trunk Railway line. There were charters issued and contractors hired to build railroads throughout Hastings County. Many of these endeavors failed. It was the citizens of Prince Edward County who jump-started the railway building process. Looking for a connection to the Grand Trunk line at Trenton Junction, they formed the Prince Edward County Railway Company. A link to Trenton Junction was built. As with many railway projects during this time, financial problems occurred. In 1881 the line was sold to a group of Ohio financiers that renamed it the Central Ontario Railway Company (C.O.R.). In 1883 the company embarked on an expansion plan that included a railway from Trenton Junction to Coe Hill with a station in Frankford. It opened for traffic

in 1884. In 1909 the Canadian Northern Railway purchased the C.O.R. property. It came under the ownership of the Canadian National Railway in 1923 and operated as such until abandoned in 1992. CN removed the rails in the late 1980's and sold sections of the 17 kilometres between the 401 and Glen Ross to several private companies and to Sidway Township. The Province of Ontario acquired the remainder (71%) in 1998. The property is currently in the hands of the Ontario Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal and was designated as a non-motorized recreational trail in 1999.

A group of local community minded citizens, Friends of the Trail Inc., formed a not-for-profit organization in 2005 to fulfill the requirements of the government study. Friends of the Trail Inc., has entered into an agreement with the Ontario Government to provide management for the development and maintenance of the Lower Trent Trail. We look forward to many years of enjoying the heritage and natural beauty of our community as together we build the Lower Trent Trail.

Managed and Developed by:

Friends of the Trail Inc.

Our Vision

The Lower Trent Trail will be an accessible asset which allows for preservation, enhancement and presentation of the natural environment while providing the public with a year-round multi-use, non-motorized recreational trail. Efforts will be made to conserve the corridor's diverse natural features and processes by minimizing human influences including intrusive signage, amenities and parking facilities. The trail will be developed to preserve and beautify the natural environment for the benefit of both wildlife and human populations. It will offer opportunities for public education and understanding of the natural, cultural and historic heritage. It will link rural and urban communities socially and economically. The trail will provide opportunities for outdoor physical activity and will also be a place for respite from a busy and hectic world; a place for people to slow down for contemplation and meditation.



Lower Trent Trail (Ownership status)

- Public ownership
- Private ownership, no current access for public
- Partnership, shared public access
- Proposed connections and sub-loops
- Municipal road crossing

Existing Related Trail Features

- Jack Lange Memorial Walkway
- Roads
- Water

Proposed Related Trail Features

- Municipal or private trail
- Access and Parking Areas



Ministry of Natural Resources

