



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

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REPORT #: OPS-25-003 **COMMITTEE DATE:** 2025-02-11
REPORT TO: COTW-General **DUE IN COUNCIL:** 2025-02-25
SUBJECT: Property Acquisition – Heritage Trail from Line 9 to York Road

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 Council APPROVES the acquisition of a section of the Heritage Trail (Line 9 to York Road) from the Niagara Region at a nominal fee; and
- 1.2 Council AUTHORIZE Staff to take all the necessary action to give effect hereto.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Heritage Trail Committee aims to create a 10km multi-use pathway from Old Town to Queenston and St. Davids, repurposing the Erie and Ontario Railway corridor.
- The Town owns the trail from John Street to Line 9 Road, while the Niagara Region owns the section from Line 9 Road to York Road, including the parking lot.
- Since 2017, Town and Regional staff have discussed transferring ownership of the trail section from Line 9 Road to York Road to the Town.
- The Niagara Region is willing to transfer the property, requiring municipal approval, a completed reference plan, and Regional Council approval.
- The total cost of the transfer is recommended to be funded by the Operating budget.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council's approval to enter into an Agreement of Purchase and Sale with the Niagara Region for the section of the Heritage Trail from Line 9 Road to York Road.

4. BACKGROUND

The goal of the Heritage Trail Committee is to develop a multi-use pathway connecting Old Town to Queenston and St. Davids. This pathway is an adaptive reuse of the original Erie and Ontario Railway corridor, spanning over 10 kilometres.

In the early stages of the project, it was determined that the Town has full ownership of the Heritage Trail from John Street to Line 9 Road (see **Appendix I** – Phases 1 to 4). The portion of the trail from Line 9 Road to York Road, including the parking lot (see **Appendix I** – Phase 1 to 4), is owned by the Niagara Region.

Since 2017, there have been multiple discussions between Town and Regional staff regarding the potential transfer of ownership to the Town. However, some staff members from both

organizations have since transitioned to other positions or are no longer with their respective organizations. This report has been prepared to formalize the property transfer process.

At the meeting of the October 29, 2025 Council meeting, Council approved funding and supported completing the construction of the Heritage Trail Phase 2 between Line 2 and Line 3.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

Town staff and Regional staff continued the discussion about acquiring the property. Regional staff confirmed that they are willing to transfer property ownership to the Town.

The steps required for the transfer from the Niagara Region are:

1. Municipal approval of the acquisition
2. Completed reference plan

Once steps one and two are completed, the Niagara Region - Real Estate Division will bring a report to Regional Council recommending approval of the transfer.

The Niagara Region is willing to transfer all of the required lands, including the trail lands and parking lot from Line 9 Road to York Road, subject to the reservation or transfer of any required interests for utilities, services, reserves or widening.

While construction of this section of the trail is in the future, it would enable the Heritage Trail Committee to complete its goal of rehabilitating the entire 10km of trail. The Heritage Trail Committee is excited to see this property transition to the Town and it be available for rehabilitation.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

1. Vibrant & Complete Community

Priority

- 3.3 Infrastructure

Action

- 1.3 a) Strategies & Masterplans

7. OPTIONS

- 7.1 **Option 1:** Council approves the Agreement to Purchase and Sale between the Niagara Region and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. **(Recommended)**
- 7.2 **Option 2:** Council doesn't approve the Agreement to Purchase and Sale between the Niagara Region and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the trail rehabilitation stops at Line 9 Road. *(Not Recommended)*

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This project requires some funding to be processed. The following chart is the breakdown of costs associated with the transfer:

Item	Cost
Land transfer	\$1.00
Reference Plan	\$3,155.00
Total	\$3,156.00

Town staff recommend funding this expense through the Heritage Trail Cost Centre (Operating Budget) under Committee Support. The Treasurer has confirmed that there is funding to cover this expense in the Operating budget.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

While there are no environmental implications with this report, completing the Heritage Trail under Town ownership allows the municipality to look at environmental enhancements along the trail (i.e. tree plantings).

10. COMMUNICATIONS

The Town will advise the Niagara Region of the approval to move forward with the land transfer.

11. CONCLUSION

Staff recommend that Council approve the Agreement of Purchase and Sale for the trail property from Line 9 Road to York Road and authorize the Lord Mayor and Clerk to sign the agreement and corresponding By-law.

Acquiring this property will enable the connection of 10 kilometres of rehabilitated trail from Old Town to Queenston and St. Davids.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

CS-18-009 – Upper Canada Heritage Trail Committee – May 7, 2018

13. APPENDICES

- Appendix I – Heritage Trail – Phase 1 to 4

Respectfully submitted:

Prepared by:



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Recommended by:



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Submitted by:



**Bruce Zvaniga
Chief Administrative Officer (Interim)**