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# Trails to become a destination in Hastings County




**Feb. 19, 2019**

By Kristena Schutt-Moore

The new board, Hastings Destination Trails Inc. is looking for new members. They held their membership drive meeting at the Bancroft North Hastings Heritage Museum on Monday, Feb. 11.

The plan for the trails started with North Hastings Economic Development Committee as the parent umbrella for the first trails grant, a $42,900 seed grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to create the non-motorized master plan. From there, a trails subcommittee was formed to manage the project. With its job of creating the master plan completed, the NHEDC created a steering committee to put the boots on the ground to work to make the non-motorized trail plan a reality.

That steering committee has now become the Hastings Destination Trails Inc. and they are hoping to get started working on the trails this year. But to do that they will need both board members and volunteers.

The HDT Inc. has applied for a capital grant from OTF to refurbish 18 kilometres of trails in the next year. These trails include the Bird's Creek trail in the Municipality of Hastings Highlands, McGeachie in Limerick Township and Nellie Lunn in Wollaston Township.

The vision for the HDT Inc. is to create sustainable, crafted, signature trail experiences that connect to the human spirit. All the trails will be non-motorized. This mean that activities that require a motor will not be allowed on the trails system. These trails will be designed for activities such as dog walking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, biking and others that require ?muscle-power? to enjoy.

The HDT Inc.'s mission will be to promote the use and conservation of trails in Hastings County as a way to stimulate tourism and economic growth in the area.

?Trails can do a lot for a community,? says HDT Inc. chair Cathy Trimble, ?They can improve quality of life and health by getting people out and moving and financially by creating economic growth in the area and a rise in property values.?

While the plan is to start with the three trails in North Hastings, the HDT Inc. plans to eventually develop, refurbish and maintain trails throughout Hastings County to bring them to signatureship status. To do this they hope to create partnerships and build on several aspects including, investment attraction, trail management, product development, workforce development, and marketing education.

To start the board plans to have 10 meetings per year and is looking for 12 board members who are willing to give three years of commitment.

?We don't just need board members, we are also looking for volunteers.? Trimble explained. The HDT Inc. is hoping to have people who are interested in a variety of activities from online promotion to maintenance of the trails and the creation of information kiosks and other structures.

The HDT Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that hopes to become a social enterprise overtime. This will ensure that over time all

funds raised can be turned back into the organization and the trails.
Those interested in being a board member or a volunteer are welcome to email Hastings Destination Trails Inc. at hastingstrails@gmail.com.