



# **Semiahmoo Trail Design Guidelines**

The following guidelines were reviewed and accepted by the Heritage Advisory Commission on March 9, 2004 and accepted by Council on March 22, 2004, to form the basis for assessing the impact and setting requirements to achieve a proper interface and future expansion of the historic Semiahmoo Trail from the Nicomekl River at Elgin to 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Surrey

For more information, please contact the City of Surrey  
Planning and Development Department

March 2009  
Amended



## **SEMIAHMOO TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS**

June 2004

### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of establishing Design Standards for the Semiahmoo Trail is to ensure coordinated development of the public Trail, and to provide guidelines for developments abutting the Trail in order to protect the heritage value and character of this important public amenity.

### ***DESIGN STANDARDS***

#### **Development of the Public Trail**

- The applicant will be responsible to: dedicate additional lands fronting his development as needed (up to a minimum 20 m Trail width) to complete the Semiahmoo Trail; and to improve the Trail fronting the development site in accordance with the Design Standards.
- The applicant is required to provide a monetary contribution to cover the costs of landscaping and walkway development along the public Trail right of way (Schedule 2). This contribution will be identified by the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department, typically based on an assessment of the total amount of Trail area being improved.
- The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department will complete the walkway construction and landscaping along the trail in accordance with the adopted standards and the Heritage Designation By-law governing the Trail (Schedule 2).

#### **Development Standards on Private Land Abutting the Semiahmoo Trail**

- Buildings or Structures should be sited no closer than 10 m (33 feet) from the Semiahmoo Trail Right of Way (Schedule 1).
- Direct Vehicular Access to the Semiahmoo Trail is not permitted to new developments. In cases where existing dwellings have driveway access, these accesses shall be removed and alternative access provided as part of the review and approval of development proposals, subdivision applications and building permit applications along Semiahmoo Trail.

- Registration of a Section 219 Restrictive Covenant is required to establish a Landscape Buffer and prohibit construction (including fencing except in accordance with the fencing guidelines identified in this policy) within the 10 m (33 foot) Buffer fronting the Trail (Schedule 1). At-grade patios or decks are permitted to encroach on the 10 m Landscape Buffer area to a maximum of 0.6 m (2 feet) provided no impact on tree retention results from these encroachments.
- The landscaping plan for the Landscape Buffer will be established either on the Building Scheme for any single-family residential lots abutting the Trail, or as part of the Development Permit for multi-family projects fronting the Trail.
- Prior to the issuance of a permit for tree removal, building or any other development on a property abutting the Semiahmoo Trail, the applicant shall place temporary signage facing the Trail to identify that construction traffic is not to use the Semiahmoo Trail, to the satisfaction of the General Manager, Planning & Development.
- Where tree removal is required to provide for development, prior to obtaining a Tree Cutting Permit, the applicant is required to install tree protection barriers around the entire 10-metre wide landscape buffer area, to the satisfaction of the General Manager, Planning & Development.
- Prior to obtaining a Building Permit for any construction of buildings, the applicant is to complete the installation of landscaping and split-rail fencing within the 10-metre wide landscape buffer area along the Semiahmoo Trail to the satisfaction of the General Manager, Planning & Development.
- Applicants will be responsible to complete Arborist assessments by qualified professionals to address tree preservation, augmentation, and re-planting, and prepare a landscaping plan, which includes fencing details, for the Landscape Buffer area, in general accordance with the landscaping standards and guidelines identified by the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department (Schedule 2).
- Securities for the required Landscape Buffer (including securities for fencing as discussed below) will be required to be posted as part of the completion of the Landscape Buffer Restrictive Covenant prior to final approval of the development.
- Design Guidelines for new single-family dwellings and Development Permits for multi-family developments along the Trail shall ensure the preservation of the unique natural and heritage character of the Trail. This shall include a review of building heights and topographical considerations, to ensure minimal building massing impact along the Trail.
- Projects along the Semiahmoo Trail shall conform to CPTED requirements adopted in the Surrey Official Community Plan (OCP). CPTED principles shall be implemented in such a manner as to not compromise the natural and cultural heritage values and character of Semiahmoo Trail.

### **Fencing along the Trail**

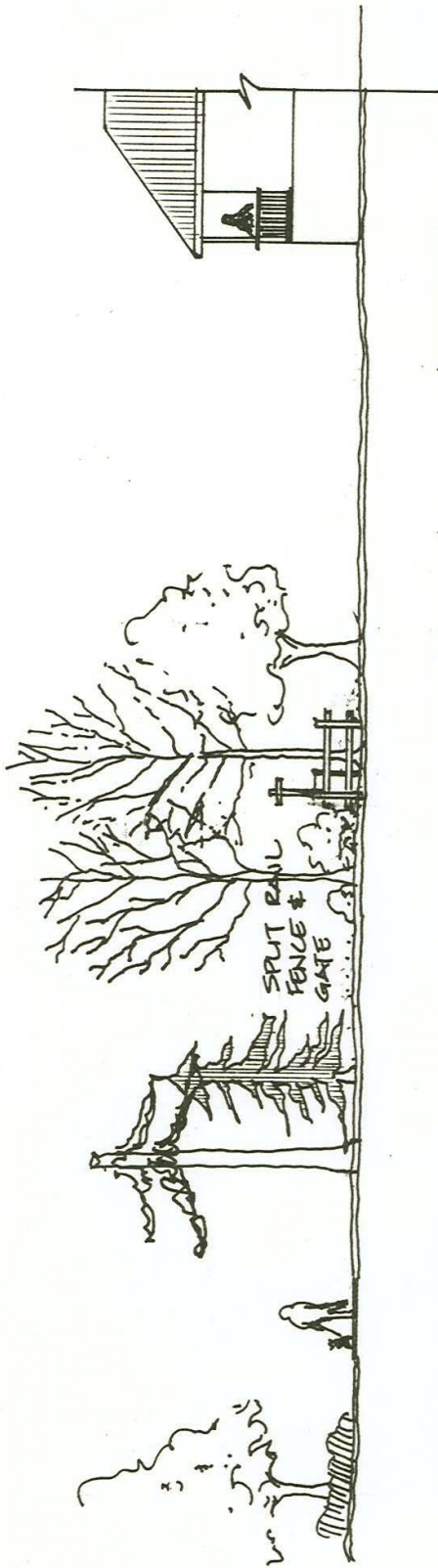
- The applicant will be responsible for erecting fencing on private property fronting the trail within the Buffer area prior to the issuance of a building permit for construction of any buildings, in accordance with the adopted standards (Schedule 3). Generally, this involves the installation of a maximum 1.2 m (4 foot) high wooden split-rail fence.
- Additional fencing on private property would be permitted only if it is located outside of the 10 m (33 foot) Buffer, and provided that such fencing is transparent and is no higher than 1.2 m (4 feet). Solid fences are not permitted on any portion of private property fronting the Trail. Coated chain link or like fences within the 10 m (33 foot) Buffer are not permitted.
- Common pedestrian access to Semiahmoo Trail from adjacent lands may be provided by switchbacks in the split rail fence. Where gates are provided, they are to be incorporated into switchbacks to reduce the visual impact on the trail. Rather than access to individual lots or units, one to two common pedestrian/gate accesses to the trail for each development are encouraged to address the CPTED recommendations in the Official Community Plan.

### ***PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION***

- All development applications abutting the Semiahmoo Trail shall comply with the Semiahmoo Trail Design Standards. The Design Standards will be implemented by Council as part of a Rezoning or Development Permit application, or by the Approving Officer as part of a Subdivision approval.
- The Semiahmoo Trail Design Standards have been endorsed by the Surrey Heritage Advisory Commission (SHAC) and are to be used in conjunction with the Heritage Designation By-law for the Semiahmoo Trail.
- Development applications that comply with the Design Standards will be submitted to the SHAC for information only, and will not require formal review by the SHAC.
- All development applications abutting the Semiahmoo Trail shall be referred to the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department for information and comment.

SCHEDULE 1 TYPICAL STANDARDS FOR THE SEMIAHMOO TRAIL AND DEVELOPMENT ON ADJACENT LOTS

10m RESTRICTIVE COVENANT AREA

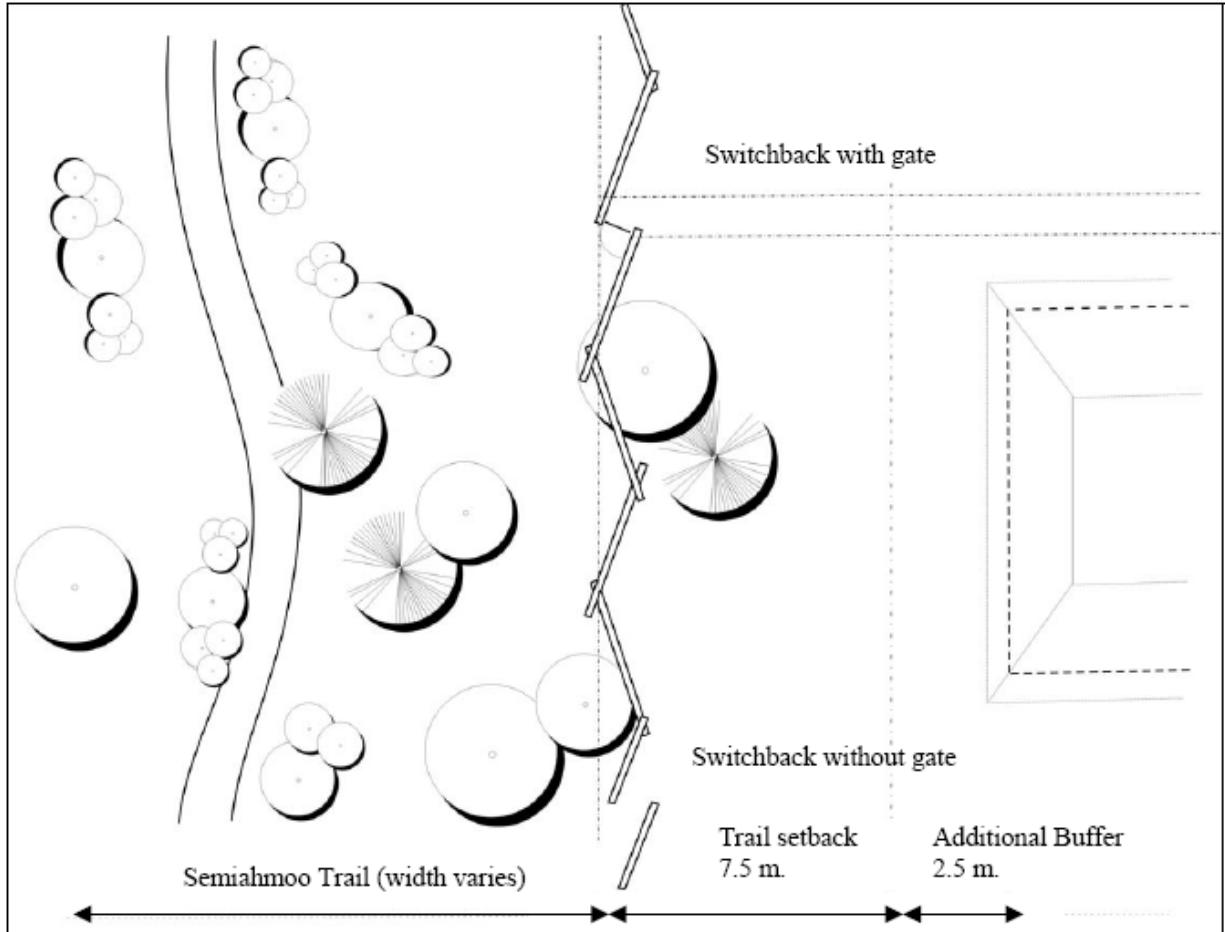


SEMIAHMOO TRAIL  
LANDSCAPE BUFFER WIDTH VARIES  
RES'D REAR YARD  
SETBACK 7.5m  
ADDITIONAL BUFFER  
2.5m

TYPICAL CROSS SECTION RESIDENTIAL INTERFACE WITH SEMIAHMOO TRAIL

### Schedule 1 (Figure 2)

## Split Rail Fence Design Standards, including Gated and Un-gated Switchbacks



## Schedule 2

### Parks Standards and Guidelines for Landscape Buffer Planting

The following information is a description of the Semiahmoo trail as it relates to private property. All parkland landscaping shall be designed and installed by The City of Surrey Parks Recreation and Culture Department.

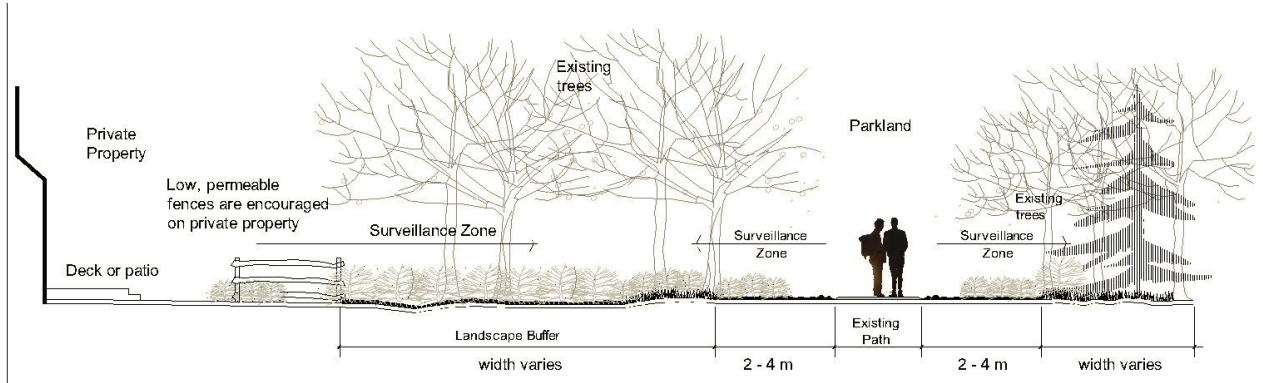
Landscaping should consider principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental design as outlined in the OCP, provided that the character defining elements of the natural, cultural and historical values of Semiahmoo Trail is not compromised. Sight lines and views from private properties to the trail are required where feasible. (See Figure 1).

Landscaping on private property should emphasize native plants and may also include flowering and fruiting shrub species that provide wildlife habitat and aesthetic appeal. New landscaping should reflect and complement existing trail conditions.

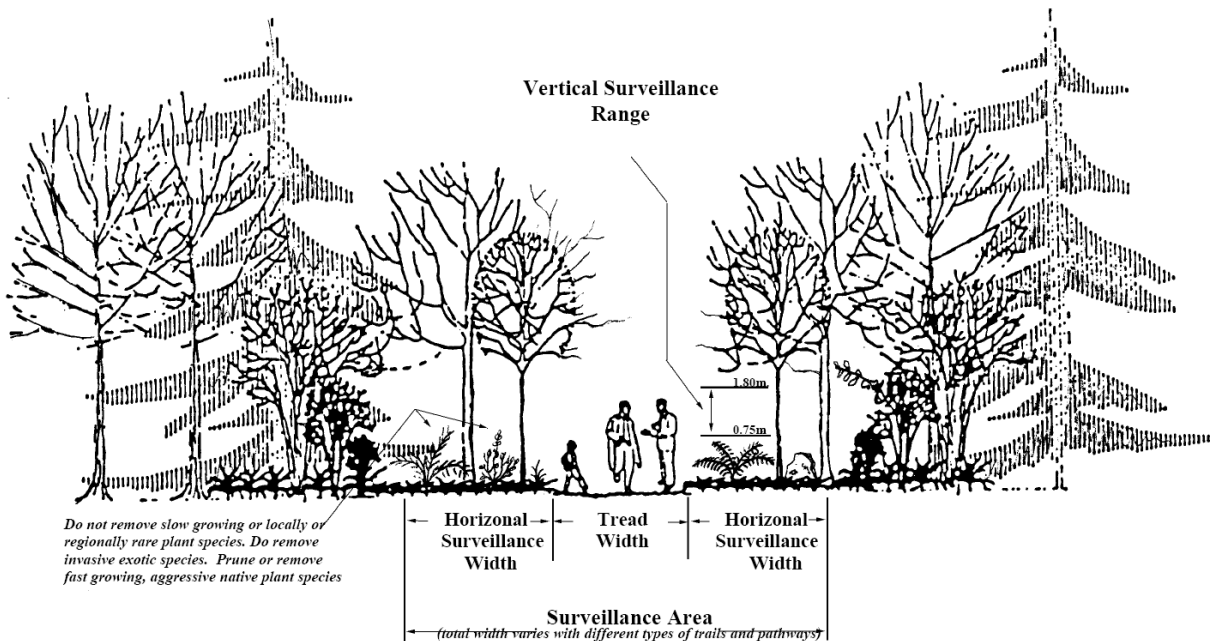
The following plants are commonly found along the Semiahmoo Trail:

COMMON NAME	LATIN NAME
<b>TREES</b>	
Douglas Fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
Grand Fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>
Western Hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>
Western Red Cedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>
Bigleaf Maple	<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>
Red Alder	<i>Alnus rubra</i>
Pacific Dogwood	<i>Cornus nuttallii</i>
<b>SHRUBS</b>	
Vine maple	<i>Acer circinatum</i>
Cascara	<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>
Redosier Dogwood	<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>
Thimbleberry	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>
Salmonberry	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
Red Huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>
Indian Plum	<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>
Common Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
Dull Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia nervosa</i>
Red flowering currant	<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>
<b>OTHER</b>	
Sword Fern	<i>Polystichum munitum</i>
Bracken Fern	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Bunchberry	<i>Cornus</i>

## Schedule 2 (Figure 1) – Semiahmoo Trail – Typical Conditions

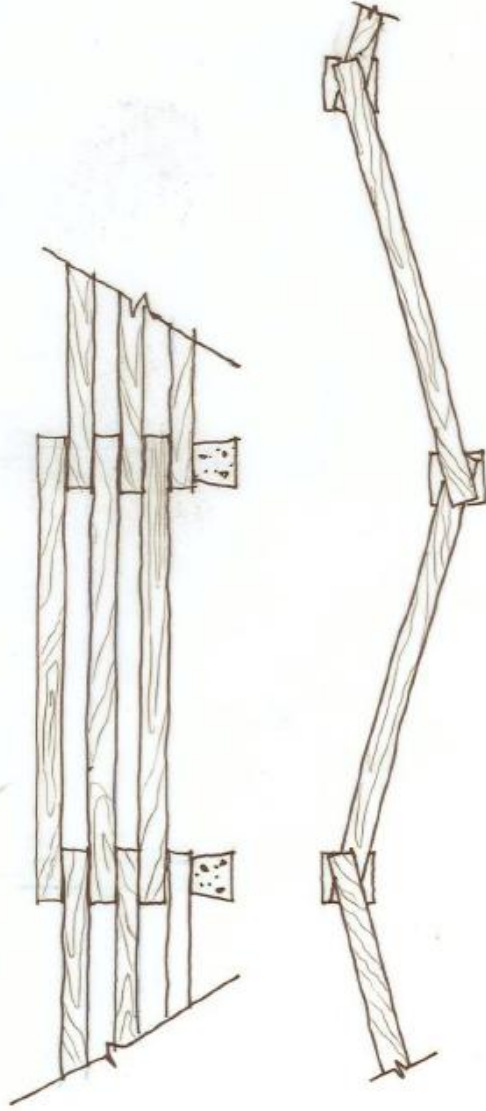


## Natural Areas Trails and Pathways Surveillance Areas and Overhead Vegetation Clearances





SCHEDULE 3 FENCING DETAILS



TYPICAL SPLIT RAIL FENCE

## Attachments

### Background

In 1978, a portion of the Semiahmoo Trail through the treed portion of Sunnyside Cemetery became the first property in Surrey to be given heritage designation by Council. The heritage significance of this and other trails through Surrey was recognized in the City's Official Community Plan adopted in 1986 that contained Policy 34, that "old trails be preserved upon subdivision and incorporated into linear recreation networks".

Accordingly, Semiahmoo Trail has been gradually extended, expanded and preserved primarily through having land dedicated for park purposes by adjacent development. In 1991, Council approved the emerging standard being voluntarily provided by developers to all development sites abutting Semiahmoo Trail. The standard involved: split rail fences, a minimum 20-meter wide trail corridor and special setbacks. In 1994, Council approved the long-term objective of eliminating vehicular traffic in the segment of Semiahmoo Trail between 28 and 32 Avenues. Additional refinements to the standards were applied, including: requiring alternative vehicle access to lots fronting the corridor, increased minimum lot size for lots along the corridor, allowing common pedestrian access using switchbacks and greater attention to personal safety in design and landscaping of the Semiahmoo Trail corridor.

In 2004, Council adopted a new by-law that extended heritage designation of Semiahmoo Trail to include properties obtained by the City through two decades of development, from the Nicomekl River to 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In the same year, Council approved this policy bringing together and streamlining the standards developed over the years for the design and landscaping of the Semiahmoo Trail corridor as well as for development sites along the corridor.

### Excerpt from Council Minutes

#### *Regular Council – Public Hearing Minutes*

Council Chamber City Hall  
14245 – 56 Avenue Surrey, B.C.  
**MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2004**  
Time: 7:00 p.m.

#### **D. BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS**

#### **2. Special Surrey Heritage Advisory Commission - March 9, 2004**

(b) The recommendations of these minutes were considered and dealt with as follows:

#### **Semiahmoo Trail Design Guidelines**

It was

Moved by Councillor Higginbotham  
Seconded by Councillor Villeneuve  
That the Semiahmoo Trail Design Guidelines be  
accepted.

RES.R04-705

Carried

## **Statement of Significance**

(Prepared with the Assistance of Donald Luxton and Associates)

Received by Council on January 24, 2005

### **Semiahmoo Trail**

#### **Description of Historic Place**

Semiahmoo Trail is a late nineteenth century historic trail/wagon road, today consisting of linear parks and City streets. It runs from the Nicomekl River, south to 20th Avenue, through forested, rural and developed areas of the Semiahmoo Peninsula. The 1872 trail passed from the border with the United States, at Blaine, Washington (then named Semiahmoo), through Surrey to where it joined the Yale Wagon Road (now Old Yale Road), south of Hjorth Road (now 104 Avenue) in Whalley. The portions that most closely follow the original alignment include the stretch in South Surrey, north of 24 Avenue to the Nicomekl River crossing at Elgin, then continuing northward in the agricultural area on the present day alignment of the King George Highway (including an un-constructed portion east of the flyover) and up Woodward Hill on what is now 144A Street, south of Highway No. 10 in the Panorama Ridge Area.

#### **Heritage Value of Historic Place**

The Semiahmoo Trail is valued as an early and important transportation route through Surrey, demonstrating how pioneers settled and travelled in Surrey from a very early period. The Semiahmoo Trail began as a series of pioneer trails between the Fraser River in the north and the United States border at Blaine, Washington in the south.

The Trail is significant as a representation of the different modes of transportation used by Surrey pioneers and the difficulty of local travel and historic trail-building in the area. Known as the "Semiahmoo Trail" or the "Semiahmoo Wagon Road", this trail was used as early as 1858. Blaine, Washington, at the time was known as Semiahmoo. The British Columbia provincial government widened the trail in 1872 to accommodate wagons as part of a network of roads to formalize a route between Blaine, Washington and Fort Langley. The Semiahmoo Trail name dates to this period.

Today, the Semiahmoo Trail is valued as a linear park and recreational trail in South Surrey. It has remained largely unpaved and provides residents with a quiet and peaceful place to walk and interact with wildlife. Semiahmoo Trail was the first property protected by a Heritage Designation By-law in the City of Surrey. The heritage designation demonstrates the commitment of the City of Surrey in recognizing and preserving its natural heritage.

#### **Character-Defining Elements**

Key elements, that define the heritage character of the Semiahmoo Trail, include its:

- unpaved walking and biking trail, still largely a graded trail;
- natural, green corridor that provides habitat to a variety of indigenous plants, trees and fauna;
- sense of enclosure provided by the plant and tree material along the trail; and
- natural setting.