

Section I – Items for Board of Directors Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors
Friday, October 25, 2024 Meeting

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Director, Legislative and Property Services

RE: **DISPOSITION TO THE MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT,
CONSERVATION AND PARKS FOR CREATION OF
UXBRIDGE URBAN PROVINCIAL PARK**
Request from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and
Parks for Conveyance of Toronto and Region Conservation
Authority-owned Lands Required for the creation of Uxbridge
Urban Provincial Park, Township of Uxbridge, Regional
Municipality of Durham, Duffins Creek Watershed (CFN 71328)

KEY ISSUE

Receipt of a request from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for conveyance of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) owned lands located in the Township of Uxbridge, Regional Municipality of Durham, required for the creation of the Uxbridge Urban Provincial Park (UUPP), Duffins Creek Watershed (CFN 71328).

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS TRCA is in receipt of a request from MECP for the conveyance of TRCA-owned lands located in the Township of Uxbridge, Regional Municipality of Durham, required for the creation of UUPP, Duffins Creek watershed;

AND WHEREAS it is in the best interest of TRCA in furthering its objectives as set out in Section 20 of the Conservation Authorities Act to cooperate with MECP in this instance;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT 39 parcels of TRCA-owned land containing 1545.66 hectares (3819.41 acres), more or less, of vacant land that will contribute to the expansion of the UUPP park boundary, as identified in Attachment #2 and Attachment #3, in the Township of Uxbridge, Regional Municipality of Durham, be conveyed to the MECP, subject to the following conditions;

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THAT land transferred to the MECP must achieve a net ecological and community benefit, including additional investment and sustained maintenance by the Provincial government as part of the UUPP;

THAT consideration be the nominal sum of \$2.00 and that all legal, survey and other costs to be paid by MECP;

THAT the MECP is to fully indemnify TRCA from any and all claims from injuries, damages or costs of any nature resulting in any way, either directly or indirectly, from this conveyance;

THAT MECP accept any additional reasonable terms and conditions as deemed appropriate by TRCA staff or its solicitor;

THAT should the Region of Durham or the Township of Uxbridge request lands and/or easement for municipal infrastructure projects, TRCA work to fulfill such requests subject to MECP concurrence;

AND THAT said conveyance is exempt from public consultation with the exception that notification to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is required 90 days prior to the disposition in accordance with the requirements of Section 21 (2) of the Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 27, as amended;

AND FURTHER THAT authorized TRCA officials be directed to take the necessary action to finalize the transaction, including obtaining any necessary approvals and the signing and execution of documents.

BACKGROUND

MECP has requested conveyance of TRCA-owned lands located in the Township of Uxbridge, Regional Municipality of Durham, required for the creation of UUPP, Duffins Creek Watershed.

At Board of Directors Meeting #8/23 held on October 20, 2023, Resolution #A169/23 was approved. This resolution directed staff to liaise with MECP staff regarding the UUPP. Further to RES #A169/23, since this direction was received, TRCA Property and Conservation Lands staff liaised with MECP, Parks Canada, Region of Durham, and Township of Uxbridge during several land assembly meetings to ensure consensus on the appropriate lands to be included in the creation of the UUPP.

RATIONALE

As of July 1, 2024, UUPP is Ontario's newest year-round day use provincial park to be established under the [Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006](#).

At the request of MECP and in consultation with municipal officials, TRCA is evaluating the opportunity to contribute to the boundary expansion of Ontario's first urban Provincial Park. TRCA and other levels of government currently have land holdings adjacent to or nearby the existing UUPP boundary which are ecologically important and which, if knit together to combine ownership and/or management, will leave a significant legacy in Ontario's Provincial Park system.

The various parcels of lands, operated as a Provincial Park with sufficient tax supported funds for operations and management, would provide and support ecological and trail connectivity, environmental education, and natural stewardship objectives. Being identified as part of a Provincial Park boundary under the [Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act](#) will better protect these landholdings in the context of large-scale growth and development pressures facing the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding regions.

The park boundary expansion of the UUPP with TRCA lands in the Township of Uxbridge has the ability to sustain and increase the amount of ecologically important habitat that is placed into permanent conservation protection under the [Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act](#) as well as provide trail and green space corridors and linkages across the local area which are critical to support fragile ecosystems and wildlife. The expansion also enables opportunities to connect trails and recreation systems across York, Durham, and Peel Regions, including Oak Ridges Moraine and river valley portions of the Greenbelt from the Trent River to the Niagara Escarpment, and north into the Kawartha and Haliburton area. The expansion will also compliment efforts of Parks Canada to connect the Rouge National Urban Park to important ecological and trail systems including those outlined for Durham Region in the TRCA Board of Directors endorsed Trail Strategy for the Greater Toronto Region. An expansion of the UUPP park boundary also provides a variety of sustainable and appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and park visitors and supports local tourism and regional economic growth.

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Transfer of the TRCA lands will also alleviate operating pressures on TRCA, as all property and land management will become the responsibility of the MECP once the lands are conveyed to the Province.

Consistent with the previous TRCA conveyances to and from the Province, TRCA may be requested to grant certain easements or nominal conveyance for infrastructure to municipalities prior to transfer of lands to MECP. Municipal parties may also identify several road improvements (road widening, daylight triangles, turning radius) which may be required in respect of municipal roads and other infrastructure within the vicinity of lands that may be conveyed. Prior to disposal of the parcels, the lands will be circulated internally through TRCA staff as well as externally with our Durham Region and Township of Uxbridge municipal partners to obtain any pertinent information and comments to inform the proposed transfer of lands.

Once all Board of Directors approvals, circulations, Ministerial notifications, and any other due diligence required by MECP has been completed, TRCA will be able to convey the lands as per the recommendations above and enable the expansion of the UUPP park boundary.

Relationship to TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following Pillars and Outcomes set forth in TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan:

Pillar 1 Environmental Protection and Hazard Management:

1.2 Leadership in greenspace conservation

Pillar 1 Environmental Protection and Hazard Management:

1.3 Maintain healthy and resilient watershed ecosystems in the face of a changing climate

Pillar 3 Community Prosperity:

3.1 Connect communities to nature and greenspace

FINANCIAL DETAILS

MECP will be responsible for all survey, legal and other costs associated with the completion of any land transfers.

Report prepared by: Brandon Hester, Senior Property Agent

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Date: September 3, 2024

Attachments: 3

Attachment 1: Correspondence from Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks

Attachment 2: Sketch illustrating the location of the subject lands

Attachment 3: Orthophoto illustrating the location of the subject lands