



Bruce Trail CONSERVANCY

December 13, 2024

Town of Halton Hills
1 Halton Hills Drive
Halton Hills, ON
L7G 5G2

Attention: Niloo Hodjati, Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment - Town of Halton Hills

RE: Consent to sever and conserve land as a lot addition from PT LT 24, CON 6 ESQ , AS IN 556599; (12815 5th Line)

We respectfully submit this Planning Justification Report in support of a consent application to sever land for conservation purposes and to secure a section of the Bruce Trail Optimum Route corridor.

Proposed Development

The subject land comprises $\pm$ 12.0 hectares (29.7 acres) located on Fifth Line north of the village of Limehouse. The property is designated Escarpment Natural and Escarpment Protection in the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP).

Gordan and Danica Djuricic are the owners of the subject land. The purpose and effect of our application is to support the severance of vacant land that the owner is selling to the BTC to conserve it for the Bruce Trail corridor. The severed lands will be a lot addition to BTC's adjacent Maple Ridge Nature Reserve (ARN: 24150700060240100000). The subject property is improved with a house towards the front of the property.

The proposed severance is as follows:

- **Conservation Lot to be severed and conveyed to BTC:** $\pm$ 8.4 hectares (20.0 acres) to be preserved and protected as part of the Bruce Trail conservation corridor. Approximately 365 metres of Bruce Trail Optimum Route crosses this part of the property, thereby securing public access to the Niagara Escarpment and protecting and enhancing habitat for species at risk.
- **Lot to be retained by owners:** $\pm$ 3.6 hectares (8.9 acres) developed with a house, with no change in use proposed as part of this application.

This proposal ensures we maintain the existing community and open landscape character of the Escarpment, as well as preserve existing natural heritage, agricultural and hydrologic features and functions as well as the Bruce Trail corridor.

The proposed severance requires approval of a consent application by the Town's Committee of Adjustment.

Niagara Escarpment Plan

This application is consistent with the Lot Creation policies under of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), including policies under Parts 1.3.4 and 2.4.12 that permit a severance for conservation and Bruce Trail purposes, which is also consistent with policies under Part 3 (Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System). BTC is a recognized *public body* within the NEP and is able to sever land for conservation and Bruce Trail purposes. In this instance, approximately 365 metres of Bruce Trail Optimum Route will be secured.

Planning staff at the NEC have confirmed that a development permit is not required for this proposed severance.

Region of Halton and Town of Halton Hills Official Plan

The subject lands are designated as part of the Regional Natural Heritage System in the Regional Official Plan. They are designated the same as the NEP in the Halton Hills Official Plan (Escarpment Natural and Escarpment Protection). This proposal is consistent with the Municipality's goals to protect important natural attributes like the Bruce Trail and Niagara Escarpment (s. A1), which is a key underlying principle of the Official Plan.

The Official Plan also encourages the development of trails in the Town (B.1.2.7) specifically on public land or trail developed as part of the Bruce Trail.

Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-Law

Similar to the Official Plan, the lands share the same designation under the Zoning By-Law as they do in the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The Bruce Trail is a permitted use in all NEP designations.

The Town of Halton Hills have approved a number of conservation severances in the past for this area. Examples include; File D10CON09.006-H (Brown), File B10CON18.003H (Kerbel), File B10CON18.010H (Robertson).

Request for Waiver of Consent Fees

The Bruce Trail Conservancy would respectfully request that the Town waive the consent fees for this application. The BTC is a charitable organization providing an overwhelming public good, as well as support to the Halton Hills trail system in advancing the objective of healthy and active communities. The costs the BTC will incur to secure the Trail in a permanently protected, publicly-accessible corridor on this property will almost exceed the land costs. We understand there is a process to follow for this kind of request and look forward to following that process.

Background

The Bruce Trail is Canada's oldest and longest footpath. It was founded in the early 1960s as a way of raising awareness for the need to protect the Niagara Escarpment. Today, the Bruce Trail stretches 895 kilometres from Queenston on the Niagara River to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. Including side trails, it is more than 1,300 kilometres long, and it is recognized as one of Canada's premier natural recreational opportunities and one of the world's great hiking trails. It forms an integral part of the Southern Ontario landscape, allowing people to explore the beautiful Niagara Escarpment, and become more aware of the need for its preservation.

Over the past 50 years, the Bruce Trail and the work of the Bruce Trail Conservancy has brought about expansive and lasting benefits for the people of Ontario. The Bruce Trail Conservancy has been responsible for conserving more than 16,000 acres and to date has secured 72 percent of the Bruce Trail's Optimum Route. The work continues, however, to secure the remaining links within the NEPOSS consisting of over 163 parks and open spaces, the majority of which are connected by the Bruce Trail. Preserving this property will add a further 8.4 hectares to NEPOSS and secure 365 metres of Bruce Trail Optimum Route.

We thank you for your consideration of this matter and look forward to hearing from you soon. You can reach me at joel.swagerman@brucetrail.org should you have any questions or require any further information.

Best regards,



Joel Swagerman, MCIP, RPP
Land Securement Planner
Bruce Trail Conservancy