



TOWNSHIP OF *Uxbridge*

MASTER TRAILS AND CONSERVATION PLAN

June 2005

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1. **BASIS**

The Township of Uxbridge, as stated in its vision statement, is “A Rural Ontario Treasure”. A “vibrant, caring community that will protect and enhance: i) the beauty and tranquillity of its rural setting through managed growth; ii) the local natural environment...”

In keeping with this vision, the Township has long been committed to the on-going preservation and enhancement of the natural environment and has undertaken a number of initiatives in that regard including:

- i) working closely with its residents, Town trail and conservation groups including “Uxbridge Naturally”¹, and other agencies to develop a system of trails;
- ii) acquiring itself, or working with other public agencies to acquire, environmental areas and lands providing trail opportunities, linkages and passive recreation opportunities, to ensure that they are properly protected and managed;
- iii) carefully managing growth, including defending its planning policies at the Ontario Municipal Board against applications for major expansion of its urban (e.g. Gan Eden) and hamlet (e.g. Coppins Corners) boundaries; and,
- iv) encouraging private land stewardship.

The work, to date, has been largely focused on the ongoing protection and enhancement of the natural heritage system located on the Oak Ridges Moraine, but the intent is to extend this approach over the entire Township.

The Township’s proactive role in the creation of a trails system and the protection and enhancement, and in some cases acquisition, of environmental areas, including areas with recreational potential, is in keeping with the policies of both the Township and Region of Durham Official Plan. In particular, the Secondary Plans for the Uxbridge Urban Area and the Hamlets of Goodwood and Coppins Corners provide specific direction with respect to the creation of a trail system, while a key direction in the Regional Plan is the establishment of a continuous system of open space. Both the Regional and Township Official Plan permit the acquisition of land to implement their respective Plans.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Greenbelt Plan also strongly support the creation of trail systems and the protection of the natural heritage system. The southern portion of the Township is located in the Oak Ridges Moraine, and the entire municipality forms part of the Greenbelt and is subject to the policies of the Greenbelt Plan.

Further, the Trans Canada and Oak Ridges Moraine Trails run through the Township. There are also significant lands owned by the Federal, Provincial and Regional governments, as well as other public agencies such as the Conservation Authorities in the Township which form a good basis for the

¹Note: Uxbridge Naturally was established in 2002. It was formed to protect the natural heritage of the Township. On June 3, 2004 Council passed a resolution which indicated their support for the concept and plans presented by the group.

Township's work.

In keeping with the policy framework at the local, Regional and Provincial levels, and as a basis for the development of a comprehensive approach to the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, Township Council in June 2004 directed that a conservation master plan be prepared. The Master Trails and Conservation Plan is intended to make recommendations on the establishment of a comprehensive trail system, and an acquisition strategy for the purposes of the development of a trail system and for other general conservation and passive recreation purposes. In accordance with Council's direction, the following sets out the vision, goals and directions of the Township of Uxbridge Master Trails and Conservation Plan.

2. VISION

The protection and enhancement of the Township of Uxbridge's natural heritage system through the enhancement of the existing recreational trail system so that it will ultimately link together the Uxbridge Urban Area, the Township's hamlets, key natural heritage areas, significant areas of public land, and other important areas, and the protection of lands for conservation and passive recreation purposes.

3. GOALS

- i) To work with the Federal Government, the Province, the Regional Municipality of Durham, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, the Oak Ridges Moraine Trust, other public agencies, trails and conservation groups including Uxbridge Naturally, and local residents to expand the existing trail system to create a linked trail system which extends throughout the Township of Uxbridge and connects with adjacent communities in support of the goals of the Township and Regional Official Plans, and the Greenbelt Plan, as well as the objectives of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.
- ii) To work with the Federal Government, the Province, Region, the Conservation Authorities, Oak Ridges Moraine Trust, other public agencies and Township residents to acquire lands required for the development of the linked trail system and a network of lands for conservation and passive recreation purposes, and to protect lands for other conservation and passive recreation purposes, in support of the goals and designations of the Township and Regional Official Plans, and the Greenbelt Plan, as well as the objectives and designations of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

4. TRAIL SYSTEM

4.1 Trail System

Maps 1, 2 and 3 to the Master Trails and Conservation Plan identify existing trails. The Maps also illustrate in a conceptual manner proposed trails, potential trail routes and potential future off-road trail connections. It is the intent of the Township to work toward the implementation of this system in accordance with the directions outlined in Sections 4.2 through 4.3 below.

The existing trail system includes:

- i) part of the Trans-Canada Trail;
- ii) part of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail;
- iii) Toronto Region Conservation Authority Trails;
- iv) Durham Region Forest Trails;
- v) Township of Uxbridge Trails; and,
- vi) unopened road allowances.

Potential future trails are identified on Maps 1 to 3 attached to this Plan. The designations on these maps are intended to be conceptual and changes can be made to their location, or additional trails may be developed, without amending this Plan. Future trails include:

- i) Proposed Trails - These are trails for which specific plans have been developed and which are in the process of being implemented.
- ii) Potential Trail Routes - Potential trail routes are trail routes for which some planning has been undertaken, but the route for which could still be considerably modified.
- iii) Potential Future off- Road Trail Connections - These routes identify generalized potential future connections for which no specific planning has been undertaken. These potential connections primarily identify areas which should be connected, rather than a specific route which would be used to connect them.

4.2 National/Regional Trails

The Township will work with the Trans Canada Trail Committee and the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Association to explore approaches to optimizing the existing trail routes of the Trans Canada and Oak Ridge Moraine Trails . In particular, the Township will work to explore options for:

- i) the development of off-road routes;
- ii) trail loops; and,
- iii) connecting these trail networks with each other and with key natural heritage areas and significant areas of public land, as well as to the Uxbridge Urban Area and the hamlets in the Township.

4.3 Conservation Authority Trails

The Township will work with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority to explore approaches to optimizing existing and future trail routes developed by the Authorities. In particular, the Township will work to explore options for:

- i) connecting these trail networks with the national, regional and local trail systems; and,
- ii) ensuring that future trails are planned and developed in a manner which is supportive of the Township's comprehensive trail system.

4.4 Township Trails

The Township will work with trails and conservation groups including Uxbridge Naturally, and Township residents to create a network of linked trails within the municipality which links together the Uxbridge Urban Area, the hamlet areas, other areas of significance to the community, key natural heritage areas (while protecting sensitive features), and unopened road allowances. Wherever possible, trails will be located off-road.

4.5 Trail System Development

The Township has limited financial resources. Therefore, they will develop partnerships with trails groups, including Uxbridge Naturally, and Township residents, as well as other levels of government and public agencies, to develop the trail system in a manner which will minimize costs. Ideally this will involve the actual acquisition of land for the trails system, however, where this is not possible easements for the trail system will be acquired.

Where the Township has determined that acquisition of lands for the trail system by the Township is necessary, in order to provide a required connection, the Township will seek alternative mechanisms to compensate landowners for their lands, such as the use of charitable donation receipts and land exchanges. Where the trail follows a route through land which is subject to an application for development, the Township will require dedication of the lands for the trail as a condition of development approval.

5. LANDS FOR CONSERVATION AND PASSIVE RECREATION PURPOSES

5.1 Acquisition

The Township Official Plan, the Regional Official Plan, the Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, despite differences in terminology, all identify in their policies the need to protect and enhance a linked system of environmental features in Uxbridge. This system is termed a “natural heritage system” in the Greenbelt Plan.

In most cases, given the limitations on development in the Township outside the Urban and hamlet areas, designation and zoning of lands in the natural heritage system, together with such regulations as tree cutting and site alteration by-laws, should be sufficient to protect them. However, in some circumstances additional protection may be required or lands may be required for passive recreation purposes.

The need for additional protection may occur where a development is proposed or because of concerns with way the lands are being managed. In particular, lands which include particularly significant key natural heritage or hydrologic features may be candidates for protection to ensure that these features are properly managed. The Township will determine which lands are candidates for additional protection having regard for Provincial, Regional and Township planning policy and all available information concerning the site.

The Township has limited financial resources. Therefore, they will develop partnerships with conservation groups, including Uxbridge Naturally, and Township residents, as well as other levels of government and public agencies, to determine how best to protect such lands or acquire lands for passive recreation uses in a manner which will minimize costs. Ideally this will involve the actual acquisition of the land to protect it or to make it available for passive recreation uses. However, where this is not possible options may be considered including placing a conservation easement on the lands or acquisition by another public body such as the Province or the Region.

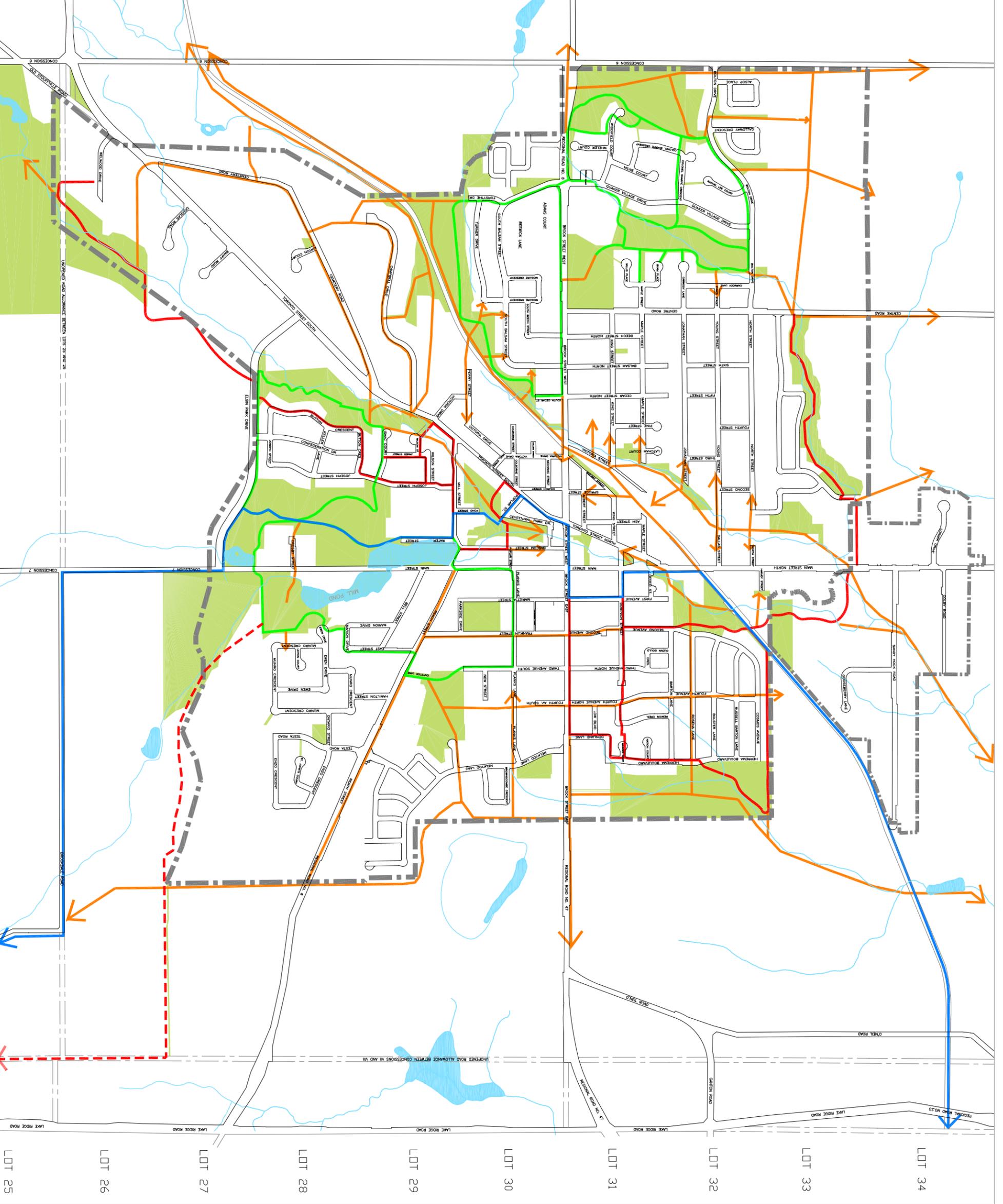
Where the Township has determined that acquisition is required, the Township will seek alternative mechanisms to compensate landowners for their lands, such as the use of charitable donation receipts and land exchanges. Where such lands are subject to an application for development, the Township will require dedication of the lands as a condition of development approval.

5.2 Enhancement

In addition to the protection of lands in the natural heritage system, the Township recognizes that there is a need to work toward the enhancement of the lands in the system. The Township will work with the Province, the Region and the Conservation Authority to develop stewardship programs for lands in the natural heritage system to encourage their enhancement.

MAP 2 UXBRIDGE URBAN AREA TRAIL PLAN

- 1. Existing Trails**
 - Trans-Canada Trail
 - Town Of Uxbridge Trail
- 2. Future Trails**
 - Proposed Town Trail
 - - - Potential Trail Route
 - Potential Future Trail Connection
- 3. Trail Destinations**
 - Urban Boundary
 - - - Hamlet Boundary
 - Park and Open Space



MAP 3 HAMLET OF GOODWOOD TRAIL PLAN

- 1. Existing Trails
 -  Hamlet of Goodwood Trail
- 2. Future Trails
 -  Potential Future Trail Connection
 -  Potential Future Trail Railway Crossing
- 3. Trail Destinations
 -  Hamlet Boundary
 -  Park and Open Space

