

GDA Fall Newsletter October 2023

Greenbelt: There's been hardly a day in the past few months that the Greenbelt has not been in local and even national news. After immense public pressure, damning reports from the Auditor General and the Integrity Commissioner, Premier Ford announced his intention to reverse the changes his government made to the Greenbelt late last year. An active RCMP investigation continues. There are calls for the Auditor General and the Integrity Commissioner to investigate further.



We anticipate legislation to reverse the changes will be introduced October 16. We are especially interested in the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve. By far the largest of the Greenbelt carveouts, this special agricultural area had additional protections which were also removed late last year. GDA played a central role in ensuring easements to keep these lands protected permanently for agriculture were put in place in the late 1990's and we'll be watching to ensure that they are replaced. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, GDA retained legal counsel earlier this year. We have been meeting regularly with our lawyer and thankfully to date it has not been necessary to act. We have learned much about patience!

It is important to remember that even after the Greenbelt lands are returned to protection, there's a lot yet to be put right. Curtailing the role of conservation authorities in the approval process, exploiting the use of minister's zoning orders to override and ignore local land use plans, and significantly expanded municipal boundaries against the advice of local planners are all of concern. Our work is cut out for us. The press, the opposition parties and many local interest groups have been doing a good job of keeping this issue on the front burner, in delving deeper and there has been an extraordinary level of cooperation amongst all groups.

New Provincial Urban Park: We are thrilled to be a part of the planning committee for the new urban provincial park which has been proposed for Uxbridge. GDA is centrally involved in this effort, and many meetings have taken place since the announcement of the Park this past April.

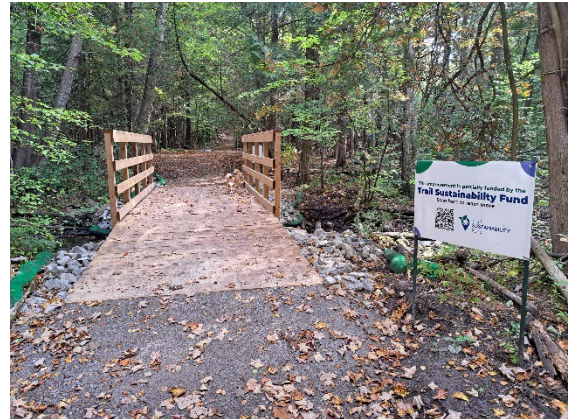
You are invited to join Ontario Parks and partners at a public Open House on Monday October 23 from 4pm to 7:30 pm at Uxbridge Secondary School, 127 Planks Lane Uxbridge to learn more about the proposal, our partner organizations and how to provide your comments. This is a drop-in event.

You can follow updates about the Park on this page:

[Proposal to create Uxbridge Urban Provincial Park | ontario.ca](#)

The information flyer for this event is attached at the end of the newsletter. Please feel free to distribute it among friends, family and neighbours.

Paid Parking Project: GDA sits on the Uxbridge Township committee which oversees the spending of funds raised by parking fees charged in the trail areas south of the Town of Uxbridge. Input was requested about possible projects. We suggested that the bridge across East Duffins Creek should be reconstructed and offered to put matching funds towards this project.



The bridge has now been completed, just in time for the Fall colours and it is worth a visit. Park at the Three Rocks parking lot (1120 Concession 7 Uxbridge), step over the south-facing stile and follow the wide, gently rolling and shaded trail straight west about 1 km to get to the bridge. If you find yourself walking up a steep hill you've taken the wrong entrance! Continue walking west to the next concession if you have the energy – it's a favourite walk of many GDA members.

Trail volunteers: Sincere thanks to all of you who've stepped up in recent months to make sure the trails remain in good shape. Shawn, Rob, Randal, and Tom, special thanks! We have one more mow to complete so we can have the trails ready for winter.

We have one final project for 2023: an improvement to the trail entrance at the Towers Parking lot (the towers have since been removed) located at 2990 Concession 7, Uxbridge. Currently the trail entrance faces the 7th Concession, which forces trail users to step onto the road briefly to enter or exit the trail network. We hope to move the entrance around the corner so that users can enter the trail network more safely from the parking lot. This will involve first clearing an area of buckthorn saplings using our new Extractigators (an amazing hand tool), followed by construction of a simple step-over. Work will take place over several Thursdays, please get in touch with Rob Ferguson if you are interested in helping: robertdouglasferguson@gmail.com, 905-985-0637

Save the date: Our 2023 Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday November 18 at 10 am at the Pine Grove Church on Concession 7. You can choose to tune-in via Zoom from your home, or in-person. The formal part of our meeting will take about 30 minutes. Please join us!

We will send out a Zoom link, agenda, financial statements and 2022/23 minutes in the coming weeks. This year we will be adopting a new by-law to meet the requirements of the Ontario Not for Profit Corporations Act. You can read more about this topic here: [Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act \(ONCA\) - Ontario Nonprofit Network \(theonnc.ca\)](#). We'll send a copy of that out at the same time.

Membership Renewal: Thanks to all of you who have renewed your memberships, and a reminder to others to do so. Memberships are \$25/year payable by cheque or via e-transfer to Info@greendurham.ca. Your membership helps us stay in touch with you, and lets others know there is a significant group of citizens which share a common vision for this special area. You are welcome to attend the AGM regardless of membership status, but only members who have paid in 2023 may vote.



OPEN HOUSE

Proposal to create Uxbridge Urban Provincial Park



Ontario is exploring the creation of the province's first urban provincial park in the Township of Uxbridge.

You are invited to join Ontario Parks and partners at a public Open House to learn more about the proposal, our partner organizations and how to provide your comments. This is a drop-in event.

Date: Monday October 23, 2023

Time: 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Uxbridge Secondary School Cafeteria, 127 Planks Lane, Uxbridge, ON

For more information visit:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/proposal-create-uxbridge-urban-provincial-park>



This is an accessible facility. Needing transportation? Visit [Durham Region Transit](#) for information on Route 905 and the On-Demand Services. Please plan ahead.

Participating Partners:



If you are interested in learning more or would like to be placed on our consultation mailing list, please contact Kendra Couling, A/Sr. Park Planner at planning.sez@ontario.ca or 705-313-6491