

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE JUNE 14, 2011

BAKER'S WOODS MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT WARD 4

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services and the Director of Parks & Forestry Operations, in consultation with the Director of Legal Services Department recommends:

1. That a bylaw be enacted authorizing the Mayor and the Clerk to execute an agreement between the Corporation of the City of Vaughan, the Regional Municipality of York (York Region) and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) for the management of the Baker's Woods.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan, Goal 4, Objective 4.1.9:

- Support outdoor recreation activities that engage citizens and visitors in our natural and green spaces as described in Vaughan' Active Together Master Plan.

Economic Impact

There is an added annual operating impact of \$8,000.00 to the 2012 budget.

Communications Plan

N/A

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to execute an agreement between the Corporations of the City of Vaughan, York Region and TRCA for the management of Baker's Woods.

Background - Analysis and Options

Baker's Woods is a 31 hectare forest, located at the north-west corner of Bathurst Street and Highway 7 beside Sugarbush Heritage Park, shown on Attachment #1. It is one of the only remaining forests of its size in the City of Vaughan, and has been designated as an area of "Natural and Scientific Interest" by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Baker's Woods is jointly owned by the City of Vaughan, York Region and the TRCA. Baker's Woods has been operated on an informal basis by an Operational Committee comprised of forestry staff from all parties. In order to ensure the effective management of the Baker's Woods woodlot, a formal agreement has been prepared. The operational responsibilities have been equally divided as follows:

The City of Vaughan is responsible for the general communications with the public, preparing annual reports, organizing the management team meetings on site and regular maintenance such as; debris pick-up, tree inspections, fences repairs, and woodlot edge management.

The other partners share in the establishment of the management plan and operating work plan with consideration to the human impacts and changing environmental conditions. The TRCA and York Region monitor insects, disease and invasive plant species, as well as wildlife and bird populations. In addition, the TRCA and York Region oversee tree and shrub plantings, while the trail maintenance is shared by all three partners.

Until now, the City of Vaughan's costs have been limited to minor pick-up and grass cutting along the woodlot edge, as well as tree and site inspections. It is anticipated that the execution of the agreement will result in an increase of \$8,000.00 to the operating costs of Baker's Woods. This increase will be included in the Parks and Forestry Operations 2012 operating budget submission. Likewise, TRCA and York Region will also divide capital projects with the City of Vaughan being the treasurer of the funds. These capital funds were secured through 2010 and it is anticipated that capital works will be underway in the fourth quarter of 2011.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the project will provide:

- **STRATEGIC GOAL:**
Service Excellence – Providing service excellence to citizens.
- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**
Pursue Excellence in Service Delivery; and Enhance Community Safety, Health and Wellness – To deliver high quality service and to promote health and wellness through planning and program.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

York Region is an active partner in the Baker's Woods Management Agreement.

Conclusion

The execution of the tri-party agreement is recommended to formally assign the duties and responsibilities for the management of Baker's Woods.

Attachments

1. Location Map

Report prepared by:

Marjie Fraser,
Director of Parks & Forestry Operations Department, Ext. 6137

Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services

Map 1 Baker's Woods Property Location

Lot 11, Concession 2, City of Vaughan, York Region

