



## Community Services *Staff Report*

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REPORT NO: CS-2024-02

TO: Council

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

PREPARED BY: Geoff Dubrick, Manager of Parks & Facilities  
Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

REVIEWED BY: Sharon Chambers, CAO

DATE: January 29, 2024

SUBJECT: Trail Maintenance Agreement with the Region of Waterloo

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### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report CS-2024-02, Trail Maintenance Agreement with the Region of Waterloo be received for information; and

THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute a Trail Maintenance Agreement with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo for Baden Hills Regional Forest and Walker Woods Regional Forest.

### SUMMARY:

This report recommends entering into an agreement with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo for the provision of a trail maintenance agreement encompassing Baden Hills and Walker Woods Regional Forests in the Township of Wilmot.

### BACKGROUND:

#### **Walker Woods Regional Forest & Trail System**

Walker Woods Regional Forest is approximately 10.6 hectares and is located on Walker Road, south of Hwy 7/8. This parcel of land was donated to the Region of Waterloo in 1993 with intent that the Sugar Maple Forest be managed and maintained as an old growth forest. The Woodlot is partially owned by the Township (Schedule B) with the larger portion owned by the Region of Waterloo. Walker Woods Regional Forest has a naturally cleared trail system with newly added boardwalks that help cross small watercourses throughout the Sugar Maple Forest.

Located in New Hamburg, Walker Woods Regional Forest offers over two (2) kilometers of hiking trails that wind through a mature hardwood forest. The trail is inspected by both the Region of Waterloo and Township. The Region currently performs maintenance on this property.

### **Baden Hills Regional Forest & Trail System**

Baden Hills Regional Forest is approximately 8.9 hectares and is located on Sandhills Road, Baden. This parcel of land was acquired by the Region of Waterloo in 1984 and is renowned for being some of the largest Kames in Southern Ontario. A donation from Schout Corporation built an accessible stone dust trail and parking area in 2020. The trail system at this location provides one (1) kilometer of accessible trails looping through fields and forest, and up to two (2) kilometers of more moderate to difficult hiking to the Summit where spectacular views of Baden and surrounding farmland await. In partnership with the Region of Waterloo, this trail opened in the Fall of 2020.

### **REPORT:**

No formal trail maintenance agreement is in place for Walker Woods or Baden Hills. The Region and Township have been collaborating together for an agreeable terms of reference that provides a formal maintenance agreement for these two properties.

### **Agreeable Terms of Reference**

The Township has worked with the Region of Waterloo for an agreeable terms of reference for a trails maintenance agreement. This includes:

- Five (5) year term with provisions for automatic renewal.
- Township will conduct inspections of the trails for hazards and notify the Region for maintenance and repair.
- The Township will promote the forest trails as part of the Wilmot Trails system.
- The Region will conduct trail inspections and maintenance including tree removal, major trail rebuilds and repairs including Township property (Walker Woods).
- The Region will undertake forest management activities.
- The Region to provide trail signage.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The information contained within this report align with the Strategic Plan goals of:

- Quality of Life through Health & Wellbeing
- Environmental Protection through Agriculture & Greenspace
- Responsible Governance through Fiscal Responsibility

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Township continues to provide ongoing trail inspections for Baden Hills and Walker Woods as part of the overall Wilmot Trail system. Financial matters for all operating repair and replacement within Baden Hills and Walker Woods are assumed with the Region.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

1. Schedule A
2. Schedule B