



# Staff Report

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## Planning & Building Services – Planning Division

**Report To:** COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services  
**Meeting Date:** October 7, 2025  
**Report Number:** PBS.25.080  
**Title:** Request to acquire Town Owned Lands – Bruce Trail Conservancy  
(15th Sideroad)  
**Prepared by:** Shawn Postma, Manager of Community Planning

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report PBS.25.080, entitled “Request to acquire Town Owned Lands – Bruce Trail Conservancy (15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad)”;

AND THAT Council authorize Staff to proceed through the Sale and Disposition of Town Owned Lands policy process to consider the request from the Bruce Trail Conservancy to acquire a portion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad Road Allowance.

### B. Overview

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Requests to acquire Town Owned Lands are required to be considered through the approved Sale and Disposition of Town Owned Lands policy. Council must first pass a resolution to consider the request, and if approved, Staff can proceed to provide Public Notice, hold a Public Meeting, and prepare a recommendation report for Council consideration. If the request is not supported, notice will be provided to the requestor that the lands are not considered available to be acquired.

### C. Background

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Council approved [Policy POL.COR.07.02](#) in January 2008 which sets out the process and requirements when considering a request to acquire public lands from the municipality. The policy is in place to provide accountability and transparency in the municipal decision making process.

The process for the sale of land by Council, subject to the Municipal Act, 2001, requires several structured steps. Initially, Council must declare the land as surplus to the Corporation's needs during a regularly scheduled meeting. They must also obtain at least one appraisal of fair market value, potentially considering public benefits in certain exchanges or transfers. Notification of the proposed sale must be given to the public through a two-week consecutive advertisement in a local newspaper, on the Town's website, and via e-mail to individuals

requesting such notices. Following this, Council has the discretion to choose the method of sale, which could include requesting sealed tenders, hiring real estate professionals, or selecting another suitable method. Additionally, they may decide to adjust the sale price by adding or subtracting any costs incurred during the sale process.

Certain exclusions to the above requirements are outlined in the policy including ability to waive the requirement for an appraisal on certain classes of land, or if the lands are being transferred to another public body.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy is interested in acquiring a portion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad unopened road allowance to secure a portion of the Bruce Trail Optimum Route, and to allow for the construction of a staircase to facilitate routing of the Trail. The purpose is to secure a safer and more pleasant hiking experience for Bruce Trail users while helping to avoid any potential land use conflicts. (See Figure 1)

Currently the Bruce Trail is located on the shoulder of 15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad, Scenic Caves Road and 15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad 'A'. (see redline with black x). The request is to purchase a portion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad to relocate the trail away from existing roads and onto an unopened right-of-way. (see black/white dashed line)



**Figure 1: Request to Acquire Lands (15<sup>th</sup> Sideroad Bruce Trail Conservancy)**

The request to acquire Town Owned Lands has been reviewed by internal departments and external agencies through the pre-consultation process. Comments were received

recommending slight modifications to the lands to be considered to be dedicated to the Bruce Trail Conservancy. The lands shown in Yellow in Figure 1 include the rounding off of the Road Allowance (yellow triangle on the right side) and the retention of the upper plateau lands (box on the left side). The Bruce Trail Conservancy has requested that the yellow box on the left be transferred to them to ensure continuous ownership of the Bruce Trail Optimum Route. In exchange, the Bruce Trail Conservancy is agreeable to permit rights back to the Town to be able to also use the Road Allowance lands for future unknown uses such as a utility corridor should the need arise.

Based on the above, Staff have no further objections or concerns with the proposed request to acquire Town Owned Lands through the Sale and Disposition of Town Lands policy.

Further direction is requested by Council regarding the requirement to complete an appraisal for the lands. An Appraisal can be completed and will consider the value of the lands based on highest and best use. It being noted that a future road is not possible due to the topography of the land. It is also noted that the requirement to waive the appraisal is limited to a local board, school board, conservation authority, and the Crown in right of Ontario or Canada and their agencies.

## **D. Strategic Priorities**

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### **3. Community**

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

### **4. Quality of Life**

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

## **E. Environmental Impacts**

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Environmental Impacts will be minimized through the design and construction of the Bruce Trail Optimum Route and installation of stairs.

## **F. Financial Impacts**

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Costs regarding the transfer of lands would be the responsibility of the Bruce Trail Conservancy. The Sale of Town Owned Lands can be considered through an appraisal can be completed and evaluated through the Public Meeting process, Recommendation Report and decision of Council.

## **G. In Consultation With**

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Tim Murawsky, CBO and Acting Director of Planning and Building Services  
Development Review Committee

## **H. Public Engagement**

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The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. If Council supports the request, a future Notice of Public Meeting will be circulated in the local newspaper and Town Website. Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Shawn Postma, [planning@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:planning@thebluemountains.ca)

## **I. Attached**

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Nil

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Postma  
Manager of Community Planning

For more information, please contact:  
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**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	PBS.25.080 Request to acquire Town Owned Lands - Bruce Trail Conservancy (15th Sideroad).docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Sep 18, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**No Signature - Task assigned to Adam Smith was completed by delegate Tim Murawsky**

**Adam Smith - Sep 18, 2025 - 3:09 PM**