



Possibility grows here.

Greenbelt Foundation

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## **Request for Proposals**

### **Large Parks Planning in the Greater Golden Horseshoe: A Needs and Opportunity Analysis**

#### **Background**

Nature that is close to home is important for increasing the number of people getting out to experience it. As the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) population increases, the pressure on existing parks increases and can be detrimental for nature and the user experience. According to the 2012 Canada Nature Survey, 73% of nature-based recreation is near home (ie. within 20 km). Large parks play an especially important role in providing opportunities to have a more complex nature experience that is accessible for many residents of the GGH. Urban areas also have many smaller parks and networks of green spaces that enhance residents' quality of life. However, typically these do not provide the same level of benefits as large parks.

As identified in the 2019 State of Large Parks Report, there is a need for more parkland in the GGH. Overall parkland area has not kept up with population growth within the region. This has led to park and trail overuse, challenges in managing use of parks and lack of park access, as well as increased demand for active uses, such as sports fields, within natural spaces. As communities grow it is critical that sufficient lands be set aside for establishing new or expanded parks for the overall well-being of community residents. There are several mechanisms through which publicly accessible natural lands/parks are created, including through municipal parkland dedications, federal and provincial park establishments, and easements for trails and land trusts.

There is evidence that new approaches to parkland dedication are needed, ones that are consistent with increased density development. The challenges in providing new, large parks for urban communities are particularly difficult.

#### **Purpose**

This project supports the provincial priority of increasing the number of people getting into nature. It will identify approaches or models for a more regional approach to planning for parks at different scales and for different uses. Findings will be widely shared with governments and other stakeholders.

Project activities will include:

- Identifying areas of need and opportunity for large park (>50 hectares) creation / dedication in the GGH to meet the needs of an increasing population.
- Reviewing the state of provincial and municipal greenspace, and parkland creation policies and programs.
- Making recommendations of how large parks and other greenspace can be enhanced in the short and long term through planning, policies, and funding mechanisms.

The results of this project will be used with provincial and municipal partners to inform long-term planning for large parks in the region, and by the Greenbelt Foundation to inform our future grant making. For example, does the GGH need a regional parks strategy?

### **Scope of Work**

Research will be completed to address the following questions:

- Where are the areas of highest need for new, large park creation in the GGH?
  - Factors to consider include current parkland distribution, current and projected population growth , existing parkland capacity, travel times for communities of disadvantage (e.g., identified through census tract data).
- What is the state of large park planning in the GGH, and do existing plans align with the areas of highest need?
  - This will involve a review of:
    - Municipal capital programs and master plans in the areas with the highest need for new, large parks.
    - Conservation authority land securement plans in the areas with the highest need for new, large parks.
    - Relevant provincial policies and plans.
- How do municipalities and the province plan and finance new large parks, and how does that compare with approaches elsewhere?
  - This will include a scan of other city regions to identify successful approaches.
- Other research activities may be proposed by applicants.



## **Project Timeline**

The project should be completed by **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**.

## **Proposal Requirements**

Proposals should include the following:

- A description of your understanding of the assignment and the proposed approach;
- A proposed project timeline with key decisions, touchstone meetings, milestones and project completion dates;
- CV for the consultant (and any other team members) that clearly outlines their qualifications relevant to this assignment;
- Three examples of similar projects completed;
- Three references relevant to this assignment;
- A time/task breakdown by project team member (if more than one consultant); and,
- A proposed budget.

The Greenbelt Foundation reserves the right to choose any or none of the vendors responding to this request for proposals.

Any questions and completed proposals should be directed to:

Thomas Bowers  
Senior Manager Research and Policy  
Greenbelt Foundation  
[tbowers@greenbelt.ca](mailto:tbowers@greenbelt.ca)

**Proposals must be received by email no later than April 21st, 2021.**

