

## **Call for Proposals: Developing a Business Case for Projects in the Greenbelt Conservation Authority Collaborative Restoration and Enhancement Program**

### **Introduction**

Ontario's Greenbelt is more than 2 million acres of permanently protected land. It extends as far north as Tobermory and stretches 325 kilometres from Rice Lake in Northumberland County to the Niagara River. The Greenbelt is at the heart of the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), one of the fastest growing regions in North America, the population here is expected to increase to more than 13.5 million people by 2041. The Greenbelt protects important agricultural land and sensitive environmental features. The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation operates independently from the government to coordinate and fund activities that bolster the richness of life in the Greenbelt.

In 2018, the Greenbelt Golden Horseshoe Conservation Authorities Collaborative (GGH CAC) officially formed in order to, among other things, improve the health of the regional natural heritage system. The Collaborative has identified over 100 ecological restoration and enhancement projects throughout Ontario's Greenbelt. Collectively these projects will significantly augment the health of the regional natural heritage system and increase the provision of ecological goods and services (EGS) to communities in and around the Greenbelt. A major priority for the partnership is raising funds to implement the projects over as short a time frame as possible.

The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation is seeking expertise to work with the GGH CAC to develop business cases for 2-5 of these projects to support fund-raising efforts. This call for proposals aims to highlight the sound economic rationale for investing in ecological enhancement projects, and demonstrate to potential funders that this type of work provides excellent value for money.

The audience for this study is potential funders, decision makers and the public. Potential funders includes all levels of government, businesses, foundations, users and beneficiaries of enhanced EGS, local communities etc.

The project deliverables will also provide a template for other restoration projects that are part of the overall Greenbelt Enhancement Action Plan program.

### **Scope of Work**

1. Identify an appropriate methodology required for the business case / economic analysis, including the ability to provide a breakdown of costs and benefits over 20 and 50 years. Applicants should make clear how many enhancement projects are to be assessed in their proposal.
2. Conduct a cost/benefit assessment for each selected project. Applicants should consider the following three scenarios:
  - a. Do nothing – no additional work done to prevent deterioration in the physical environment, resulting in reduced provision of ecological goods and services, exacerbated flood risks etc.

- b. Maintain current state – cost of maintaining static state of environmental quality
- c. Undertake enhancement projects – cost of undertaking the proposed enhancement works

Scenarios are to include as a minimum:

Costs of Enhancement Projects: will be quantified using best available data and project designs provided to consultants by the project team. The following examples of costs should be considered but are not limited to: land securement, property acquisition, management, salaries, operating costs, capital expenditure, loss of economic activity (e.g. land use conversion from farmland to wetland).

Benefits resulting from completed Enhancement Projects: will be quantitative and qualitative. The following examples of benefits should be considered but are not limited to: protection of property (including new development opportunities resulting from reduced flood risk), nature based recreation and tourism, extractive uses, support for biodiversity and species at risk, pollination services, climate regulation, support for human health, infrastructure services and avoided costs.

Assessment of benefits will also include the following:

- Evaluation of the increased value of ecological goods and services, and avoided costs resulting from the completed projects
  - The project team will work with consultants to develop models to estimate baseline and future values,
  - Predictive models can be based on similar locations within Southern Ontario
  - Predictive models will need to factor in appropriate time horizons (i.e. 20 and 50 years post project completion)
- Identify government agencies, communities, property owners, economic sectors that will benefit from the additional ecological goods and services flowing from the completed projects
- Consideration of values over a 20 and 50 year time horizon
- Fieldwork to collect new data **is not** within the scope of this study

### 3. Evaluation of Potential Funding Options for undertaking Enhancement Projects Based on Cost Benefit Analysis

The consultant will work with the project team to consider a wide range of potential funding options based on the cost benefit analysis and understanding the flow of services from the enhanced project site, such as:

- a. Beneficiaries: service fees, rates, permits
- b. Economic development opportunities: tourism and recreation, municipal rates, voluntary offset protocols
- c. Equity and Distribution: Projects may offer an opportunity to address equity issues. For example, recovery and clean-up capacity following weather

- related emergencies can vary widely for different socio-economic groups. In addition, lower income neighbourhoods often do not have the same level of access to green spaces as more affluent neighbourhoods. There can be costs associated with these inequalities that could be considered in this study.
- d. Avoided costs: infrastructure, lost revenue, health benefits, disaster recovery (extreme weather events) etc.
  - e. Co-benefits contributing to various policy goals, e.g. species at risk, wetland restoration, 18% Federal land securement goal, pollinator health action plan, etc.

### **Deliverables**

1. Study Framework, Methodology, and Work Plan (detailed project timeline with touchstone meetings, milestones and project completion dates).
2. Ecological goods and services valuation of existing sites projected over 20 and 50 year time horizons
3. Ecological goods and services valuation of models for the enhanced sites over 20 and 50 year time horizons
4. Implementation and maintenance cost estimates over 20 and 50 years
5. Cost benefit analysis for three scenarios for each project (i.e. Scope of Work # 2 a, b, c)
6. Financing options assessment (i.e. Scope of Work # 3)

### **Project Descriptions**

A brief description of the projects that are to be considered for this work is provided below. The Foundation estimates up to three of these projects can be included in the overall study, given the timeframe and budget allocated for this work. Applicants should therefore provide a cost break down for the number of projects they intend to include in their final proposal. Project #1, Halton, river re-naturalization must be included. Full documentation for each of the projects is available on request to all potential applicants

1. Halton: river re-naturalization in urban centre. The project will remove concrete channel and restore the valley to a vegetated state, providing new recreational access, improving biodiversity and reducing downstream flood risk
2. Brocklands (900 acres): re-naturalizing areas (agricultural land), restoring wetland and creating greater connectivity to local Natural Heritage Features and the regional Natural Heritage System. Construction of boardwalks to allow public access.
3. Lake Scugog: dredging, wetland creation and re-naturalization of features in the downtown core of Port Perry to address algae blooms and water quality
4. Hamilton: restoration of wetlands on land currently used for agricultural production. The land is too wet for profitable farming. Boardwalks will be constructed for public access. The work will contribute to downstream flood management.
5. Dam mitigation along various rivers: remediation of the impact of blocked rivers for migratory fish. This work will increase fish numbers in important river systems.

**Project management**

The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation will manage the project and will be the point of contact for applicants. A steering group of Conservation Authority and Greenbelt Foundation staff will evaluate proposals and provide project oversight.

**Project Timeline**

The project will commence in Fall 2018 and be completed in 2019.

**Project Budget**

Proposals under \$80,000 (including tax) will be accepted.

**Proposal Requirements**

Proposals should include the following:

- CV for the consultant (and any other team members), that clearly outlines their qualifications relevant to this assignment;
- Up to 3 references relevant to this assignment;
- A description of your understanding of the assignment, the proposed approach, and methodology to implement the scope of work;
- A draft project timeline with touchstone meetings, milestone and project completion dates.
- Two writing samples; ideally reports, articles or published papers on similar topics
- A time/task breakdown by project team member (if more than one consultant); and
- A proposed budget including reimbursable expenses as applicable

The *Friends of 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:

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Proposals must be received by email no later than 4pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018.