

# Grand River Conservation Authority

**Report number:** GM-06-22-59

**Date:** June 24, 2022

**To:** Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

**Subject:** Township of Woolwich – Maintenance Agreement

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority enter into a maintenance agreement with the Township of Woolwich to permit municipal use of Grand River Conservation Authority lands for recreational activities.

## **Summary:**

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) owns approximately 19,400 hectares (48,000 acres) of land within the watershed. Approximately 1,400 acres of urban parkland is owned by the GRCA but maintained by watershed municipalities, typically as part of their portfolio of parklands. This municipal/GRCA relationship is often formalized through a maintenance agreement that identifies the role and responsibility of both parties.

The GRCA and the Township of Woolwich entered into maintenance agreement in 2000. GRCA has been collaborating with the Township to revise the maintenance agreement to encompass all GRCA properties currently or proposed to be utilized by the Township.

## **Report:**

The GRCA owns 19,400 hectares (48,000 acres) of land within the watershed. Approximately 1,400 acres of urban parkland is owned by the GRCA but maintained by watershed municipalities, typically as part of their portfolio of parklands. Many of these passive parcels were acquired for flood control purposes. In other cases, land was acquired at the request of the municipality prior to 1996 when the GRCA had access to provincial grants for land acquisition.

The GRCA has approximately 23 maintenance agreements with municipal partners governing the use and maintenance of these properties. Many of these agreements have terms of thirty to fifty years, however, a number of these agreements have expired and several more are on the cusp of expiring or are in need of updating. The majority of GRCA lands subject to these agreements have remained as passive parkland, however, some have become more actively used municipal parks and developed with sports fields and extensive trail systems.

The GRCA and the Township of Woolwich entered into maintenance agreement in 2000 for one property. The GRCA has been collaborating with the Township to revise the maintenance agreement to encompass all GRCA properties currently or proposed to be utilized by the Township, approximately 54 acres in total. Negotiations for this agreement began specifically to update the agreement for the Mill Race lands in St. Jacobs shown in Figure 1; however these discussions have since expanded to include Floradale Park as shown in Figure 2 and two passive properties on Middlebrook Road as shown in Figures 3 and 4.

Floradale Park has historically been maintained by the Township and is included in the revised agreement to formalize maintenance responsibilities. Two properties on Middlebrook Road are included due to the presence of an existing trail system. The trail is known as the Grand Valley

trail and is currently maintained by the Grand Valley Trail Association (GVTA). The Township has been working with the GVTA to incorporate the Grand Valley trail within the Walter Bean trail system. The revised maintenance agreement with the Township will facilitate this partnership.

The revised maintenance agreement would grant the Township exclusive recreational use of GRCA lands which are subject to the agreement for a five year term, which will automatically renew for a further five year term unless the agreement is terminated.

Listed below is a high level summary of the Township's obligations under the proposed agreement:

- responsibility for a portion of the taxes, assessments, charges and rates;
- to assume responsibility for maintenance, cleanliness and general appearance of the lands;
- unless authorized by GRCA, not to permit any use other than those that are in keeping with outdoor recreation;
- to indemnify GRCA from all liabilities associated with the recreational use and maintenance of GRCA's lands

### **Financial Implications:**

Not applicable

### **Other Department Considerations:**

None

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Figure 1 – Mill Race lands

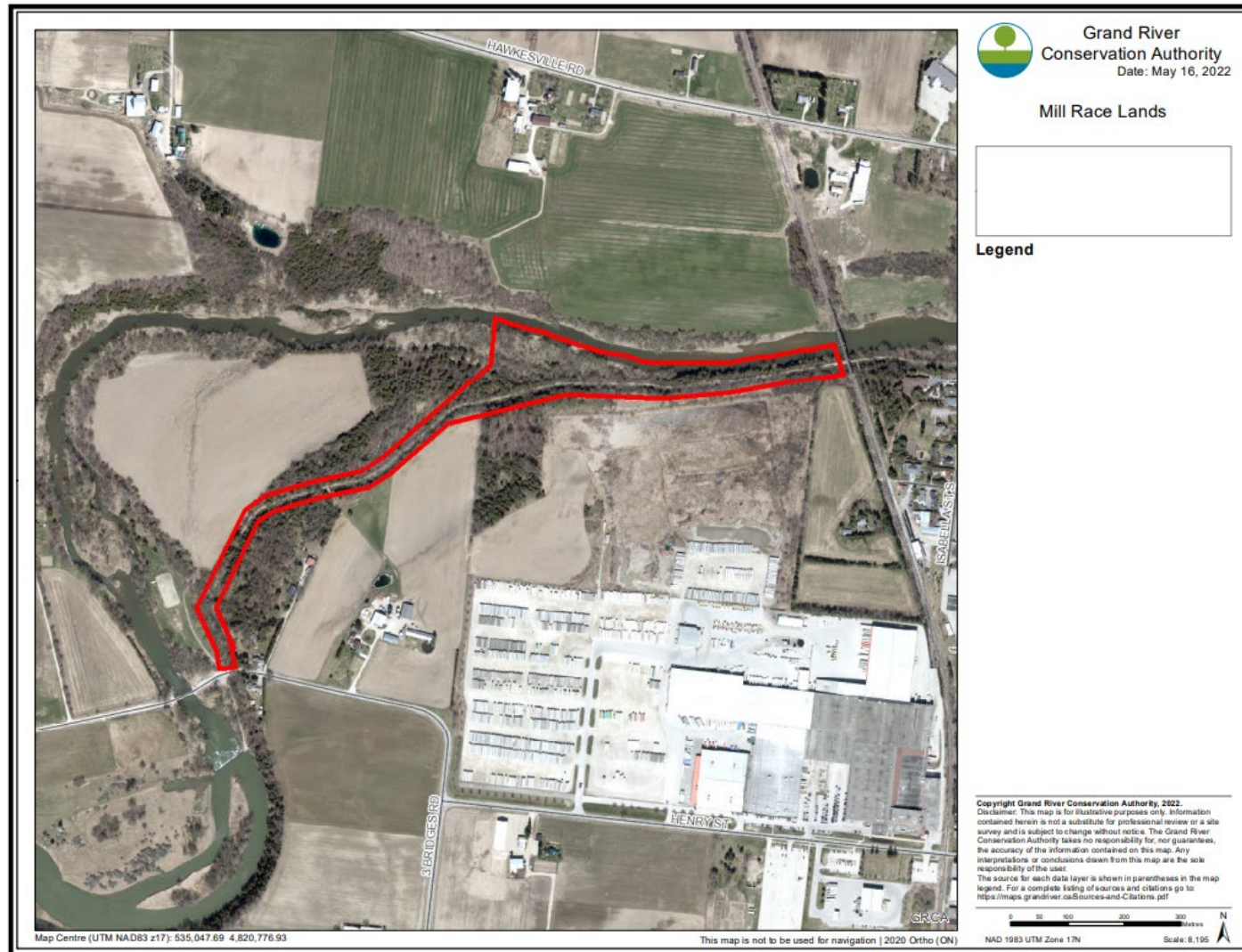
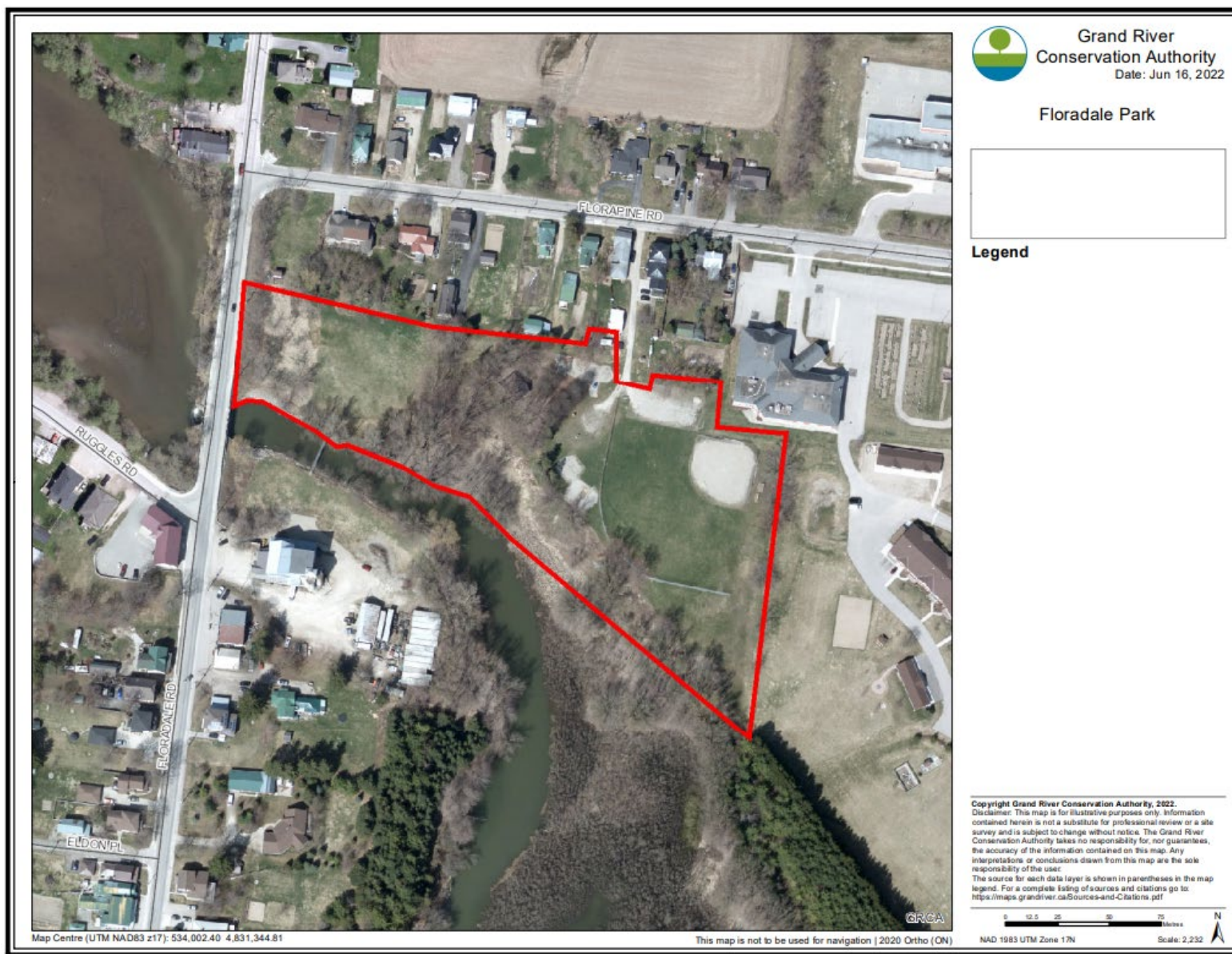


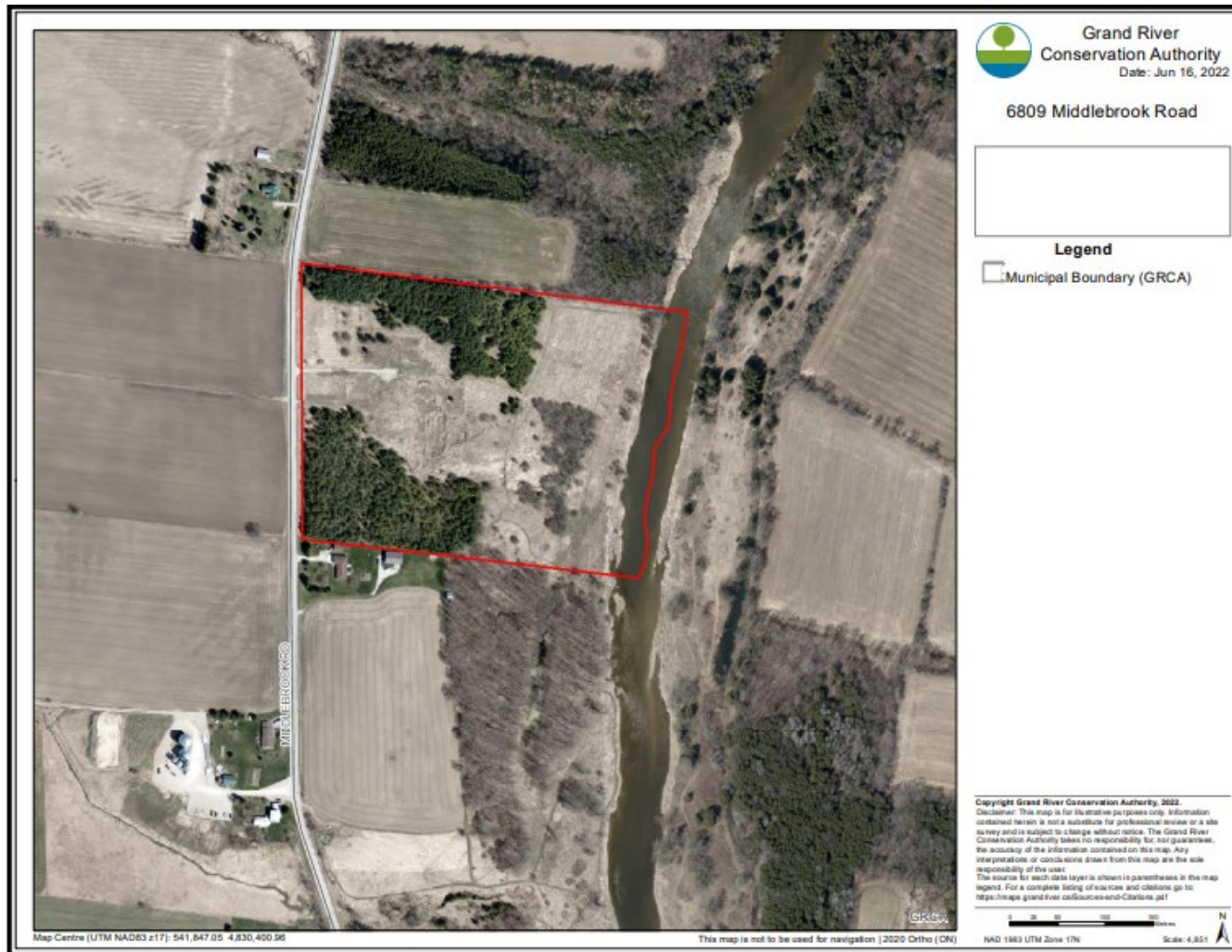
Figure 2 - Floradale Park





### Figure 3 – Middlebrook Road Property

6809 Middlebrook Road



**Figure 4 – Middlebrook Road**  
In the vicinity of 6667 Middlebrook Road

