



October 4, 2024

Submitted online and via email to mkitchen@grandriver.ca

Megan Kitchen
Land Management Analyst
Grand River Conservation Authority
400 Clyde Road, PO Box 729
Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

RE: City of Guelph submission on the draft Conservation Areas Strategy

Dear Ms. Kitchen,

The City of Guelph ("City") appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) draft Conservation Areas Strategy that has been circulated for consultation. City comments have been provided based on input received from various departments, and staff would be happy to discuss further or provide any clarification that may be warranted. The attached comments have been submitted through the online survey, and they are appended here, along with additional commentary for City-specific context, for information purposes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Krista Walkey". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Krista Walkey, MCIP, RPP
General Manager, Planning and Building Services
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
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Re: City of Guelph submission on GRCA draft Conservation Areas Strategy

1. What best described you? (choose all that apply)

I am a Grand River watershed resident

(The City of Guelph is one of GRCA’s area municipalities)

2. Do you have a Grand River Conservation Areas Membership?

No

3. How often to you visit GRCA properties?

Daily to a couple times each week

(City staff visit GRCA properties on an as-needed basis to complete City work or to manage GRCA-owned lands per management agreements)

4. What type of GRCA properties do you visit?

Grand River Conservation Areas

(City staff also visit other GRCA-owned properties that are not officially Conservation Areas)

5. What are the three sites that you visit the most?

Preservation Park / Hanlon Creek Conservation Area

Niska Lands / Crane Park

GRCA-owned lands along Speed River at Victoria Road

6. The GRCA’s Conservation Areas Strategy has identified 5 objectives to guide management of GRCA lands. To what extent do you support the objectives?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral
Manage GRCA landholdings in compliance with relevant Federal, Provincial and Municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines.	X				
Consider watershed health and resilience when making land management decisions.	X				
Provide sustainable outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and connections with the natural environment.	X				

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Enhance community partnerships on GRCA properties.	X				
Manage GRCA landholdings in a strategic, fiscally responsible, and sustainable way.	X				

7. Out of the 5 objectives, what is the most important in your opinion?

Consider watershed health and resilience when making land management decisions.

Enhance community partnerships on GRCA properties.

Manage GRCA landholdings in compliance with relevant Federal, Provincial and Municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines.

Manage GRCA landholdings in a strategic, fiscally responsible, and sustainable way.

Provide sustainable outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and connections with the natural environment.

(In the opinion of City staff, "Consider watershed health and resilience when making land management decisions" and "Enhance community partnerships on GRCA properties" are the most important and of equal importance.)

8. Do you have any additional comments on the Strategy objectives?

No

9. Do you have any additional comments related to the Conservation Areas Strategy?

The City of Guelph is very supportive of the draft Conservation Areas Strategy and notes the alignment of the draft strategy with the City's Strategic Plan, Official Plan and Natural Heritage Action Plan. Many of the draft strategy's listed "Outcomes", "Future Direction" and "Actions" align with:

- the "Environment" theme of Guelph's Strategic Plan,
- the "watershed planning to manage growth and infrastructure", "natural heritage and biodiversity conservation", "resilience and restoration planning", and "fostering community support, raising awareness and engagement" actions identified in the City's Natural Heritage Action Plan, and
- the strategic goals, objectives and policies of Guelph's Official Plan.