

MEMORANDUM

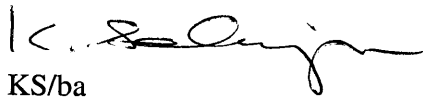
TO: Chair and Members of the Transportation and Works Committee

FROM: Kees Schipper, Commissioner of Transportation and Works

DATE: December 19, 2003

RE: **Greening Strategy – Regional Securement Criteria**

Please be advised that the attached report entitled 'Greening Strategy, Regional Securement Criteria' will be reviewed at the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting on January 7, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. The report is jointly prepared by the Planning and Development Services and Transportation and Works Departments and is forwarded for your information.



KS/ba

Attachment (1)

Copy to: B. Fisch, Regional Chair
M. Garrett, Chief Administrative Officer
B. Tuckey, Commissioner, Planning and Development Services
B. Harrison, Director, Roads Transportation
I. Buchanan, Regional Forester

P06/2004/Jan.7/Securement Criteria Memo to TWC.doc

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

Planning and Economic Development Committee

January 7, 2004

Report of the

Commissioner of Planning and Development Services
and

Commissioner of Transportation and Works

GREENING STRATEGY - REGIONAL SECUREMENT CRITERIA

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council endorse the York Regional Securement Criteria (*Attachment 1*) as the basis for evaluating Regional securement opportunities.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with the recommended York Region Securement Criteria for review and endorsement as a basis for evaluating Regional securement opportunities. The revised criteria have been developed based on the Council directed consultation and circulation initiated in April 2003.

3. BACKGROUND

York Region Council committed itself to ensuring that our natural heritage systems would be available for future generations through the adoption of the Greening Strategy in 2001. The Strategy provides a context for policy decisions that affect natural heritage systems and focuses on co-ordinating Regional, agency and private sector efforts to improve our environment.

As part of the comprehensive Greening Strategy, Regional Council adopted the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy - A Legacy for Our Future in May 2001. This Strategy establishes the principle of protection of significant properties through stewardship, management donations of land or conservation easements to augment the Regional Greenlands system. York Region, by its adoption of the Securement Strategy and an annual funding commitment took on a leadership role in securement issues

In April of 2003, Regional Council received the draft Regional Securement Criteria and directed staff to circulate the criteria. The report was sent to all area municipal CAOs, councils, Conservation Authorities and other government and non-government agencies operating in York Region. This circulation review and dialogue has been completed over

the past few months. The Securement Working Group and the Internal Evaluation Team were also involved in an operational review of the draft criteria.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The objective of the Regional Securement Criteria is to clearly establish Regional priorities and criteria for strategic securement activities including land acquisition throughout York Region. Stakeholders and other agencies may have complementary securement priorities and interests. It is essential to stress the Regional perspective when setting our securement priorities.

4.1 Circulation Comments

Overall, the response to the circulation of the draft Regional securement criteria was supportive and positive. The Region was commended for developing a cohesive strategy for land securement and for taking a leadership role in co-ordinating a Regional Land Securement Working Group. The Region's continued efforts in providing information, advice and technical support on land securement issues were noted. Stakeholders were supportive of the ongoing partnerships between the Region and local municipalities, public and private agencies.

It was noted several times that the greatest benefit of developing the land securement criteria has been the involvement of the various groups and agencies (representing a range of objectives and priorities for land securement) in the Working Group discussions. It was also suggested that application of a weighting system for Regional criteria might be the best means of evaluating opportunities and identifying the value of specific securement initiatives to the Region.

A number of additional comments, suggestions and issues were also raised including:

- need for the criteria to focus more consideration of the importance of water quality and protecting watershed basins
- ensuring that the criteria does not diminish opportunities to secure land in urban municipalities
- the importance of establishing permanent annual funding
- consideration of increased funding for securement
- consideration of the financial implications inherent in the loss of tax generation where land is transferred from private ownership to public ownership
- continued and greater emphasis on the more vulnerable linkage areas between core areas
- encourage the consideration of north south linkages as well as the east west linkages on and off the Oak Ridges Moraine
- reiteration of the importance of the Regional Greenlands System as a means of identifying areas that should be Regional priorities
- more co-ordination between various governments and government agencies to maximize use of public funds
- improve definitions and diagrams for key Regional Securement criteria

- revisions to the evaluation form to better reflect a Regional focus, eliminate duplication and do a more complete review of the full range of opportunities some properties offer
- clarifying Region's role in context of other agencies' interest.

The Criteria reflect revisions as a result of these comments and consultations. The criteria were also revised to demonstrate a clearer understanding of the Regional securement interests and the science or long term natural heritage benefit upon which that interest is based.

The Regional Securement Criteria and Evaluation form (*Attachment 1*) has benefited by the greater review of stakeholders. Several valid issues were raised and the revisions reflect this input. The result is better-articulated Regional Securement Criteria and Property Evaluation form.

4.2 Next Steps

The next steps with the Regional Securement Criteria include

- Council adoption of the Regional Securement Criteria.
- Securement Working Group: Continuation in co-ordinating securement activities with area municipalities and agencies.
- Internal Evaluation Team: Continuation to refine and review regional securement opportunities.
- Staff should continue to pursue innovative partnerships and other funding and stewardship opportunities.

4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026

The York Region Securement Criteria supports several Vision 2026 statements:

"In 2026, York residents continue to value and embrace the Region's unique natural heritage (land, air, water) and cultural heritage (sites and buildings important to our history, faiths and cultures)."

"In 2026, York Region will have grown at a pace that supports healthy communities, economic vitality, sustainable natural environment and effective human services."

The securement criteria further strengthen the Region's commitment to the natural environment and therefore Vision 2026.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The York Region 2003 budget contained the allocation to the Greening land securement reserve. Remaining 2003 reserves for this purpose will be carried forward into the 2004 fiscal year. Innovative implementation of securement will be necessary to leverage these funds and maximize the legacy impact for Region residents.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipalities are important partners in the York Region Greening Strategy and its Greenlands Property Securement Strategy. Local municipalities were consulted and revisions made to the criteria as a result of the discussions. Staff from local municipalities are also members of the Securement Working Group.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In order to create a long term vision and natural heritage legacy for York Region, it is important to establish a process and criteria to guide the Region's actions. Green infrastructure must be approached strategically in order to identify and focus on a Regional system. The approach proposed in the Regional Securement Criteria and Evaluation Form builds on the direction from the Greening Strategy and the foundation of Regional and Provincial work including the Regional Official Plan, Greening Strategy, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Securement Strategy, the Regional Forest Management Plan and the Rouge North Management Plan.

It is recommended that Regional Council adopt this report and the attached revised York Region Securement Criteria (*Attachment 1*) as the basis for evaluating Regional securement opportunities.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Prepared by:

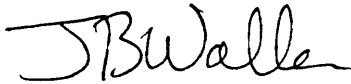


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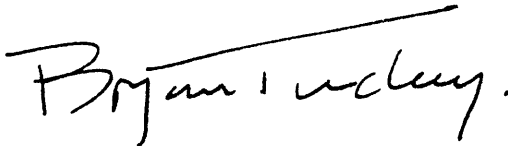


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Michael R. Garrett
Chief Administrative Officer

December 10, 2003

Attachment 1- York Region Securement Criteria
dp/ib/sm

P07 - LRSP\Planning Committee\2004\January 2004\Greening Strategy Reg. Securement.doc
Version 4 - 2003-11-20

Attachment 1
Council Report Attachment

York Region
Securement
Criteria



DRAFT

York Region Securement Criteria

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Summary Points

Key Elements of the Approach

1. Create a Long Term Vision - A Green Infrastructure for York Region - Natural Heritage Legacy
2. Build on the foundation of the Regional Official Plan, ORMCP, Greening Strategy, Securement Strategy, Regional Forest Management Plan and the Rouge North Management Plan to provide for the Regional natural heritage system
3. Approach is strategic
4. Focus on the Regional Natural Heritage System and landscapes

Criteria

A) Connecting Greenlands Core Areas

- i) North south linkages, or
- ii) East west linkages

B) Strengthen existing green nodes

- i) Protecting core natural heritage features and functions and/or
- ii) Forest Rehabilitation

Implementation

- Co-ordination with the area municipalities, Conservation Authorities, and other key stakeholders through York Region's Securement Working Group.
- Focus on land at reasonable prices, (non-development prices wherever possible).
- Innovative Implementation - Partnerships, taxation, leverage funding, split receipts, education, stewardship, etc.
- Internal Evaluation Team (IET) to scope, evaluate and define the Regional interest in potential opportunities.

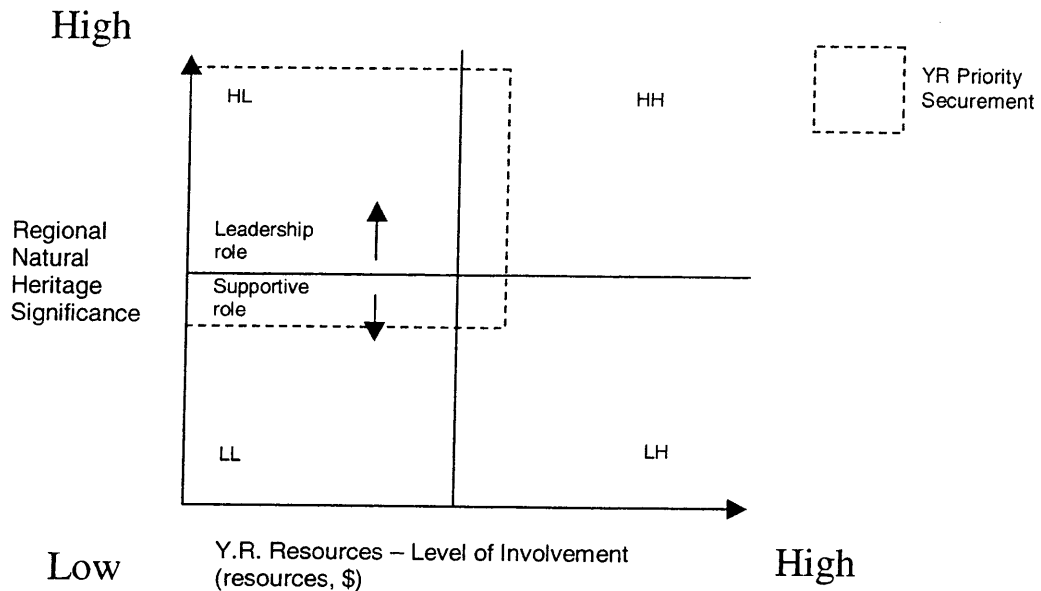
1. Overview

The purpose of this document is to establish a process and criteria for the evaluation of land for potential securement through the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy - A Legacy for Our Future. The report also recognizes the role of an Internal Evaluation Team (IET) to implement the criteria and make recommendations to Senior Management, Committee and Regional Council on decisions relative to major funding requests for land purchase.

There is a need to clearly define Regional priorities and criteria for strategic securement activities including stewardship and land acquisition. This supports the creation of a long term vision for a healthy natural heritage system in York Region. The system has two purposes - preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, and as a resource for recreational opportunities. A number of Regional policies are instructive in creating this vision for the Regional Municipality of York. These policies include the Regional Official Plan's Greenlands System, the Greening Strategy, the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy, and the Regional Forest Management Plan. Regional policies support and compliment other legislation or policy initiatives including the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and Plan, and the Rouge North Management Plan.

This report outlines the context in which Regional securement decisions are made as well as specific criteria against which applications are evaluated. In some areas there may be overlapping priorities and interests with other organizations. However, the components of the Regional Natural Heritage System which strengthen, connect or enhance it are the intended focus of the Regional Greenlands Securement Strategy (as articulated in these criteria). This document also identifies Regional roles and responsibilities for land securement, possible securement partnerships and securement initiatives led by others.

This document introduces a **Regional Priority Matrix** (Figure 1). This matrix graphically depicts how a subject property meets the Regional securement interests. Regional priority will be based on how it meets the securement criteria. Further, the Regional Priority Matrix will direct the amount of Regional resources that are used towards its securement.

Figure 1 - Regional Priority Matrix

2. Natural Heritage Legacy - A Green Infrastructure for York Region

In creating a natural heritage vision or legacy, we need understand what system we want in place for present and future generations. Planning and ecological time frames necessitate looking ahead 20, 50, 100-years and beyond. This long-term vision will help set priorities for the strategic deployment of limited resources.

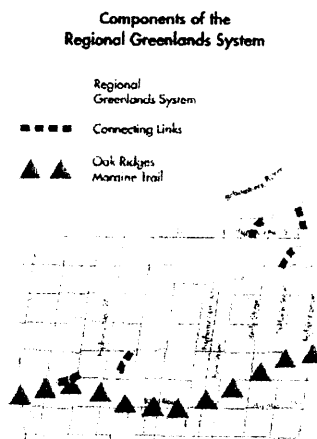
Natural heritage systems are made up of core conservation lands and waters linked by natural corridors and restored connections. They are identified as landscape networks for the conservation of ecosystem functions including biological diversity, natural processes, and viable populations of indigenous species. These networks will also offer opportunities for linked trail systems and potential public access.

The Regional Official Plan Greenlands System, Greening Strategy, Greenlands Property Securement Strategy, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and Plan provide the foundation for the Regional natural heritage system.

It is essential to stress the regional perspective when setting securement priorities. Clearly the Region can not create a natural heritage vision or legacy alone. Working closely with partners in both the public and private sectors will be the key to success.

3. Regional Official Plan - Regional Perspective

The Regional Municipality of York was one of the first regions in Ontario to identify and protect a Regional Greenlands System in its Regional Official Plan. The Greenlands System represents a linked, sustainable, natural heritage system. It includes core natural heritage features and linkages, including wetlands, woodlands, areas of natural and scientific interest, environmentally sensitive areas, watercourses and systems, valley lands and critical fish and wildlife habitat. The Plan also identifies potential corridors and linkages between these green areas that, if protected, will strengthen the Greenlands System.



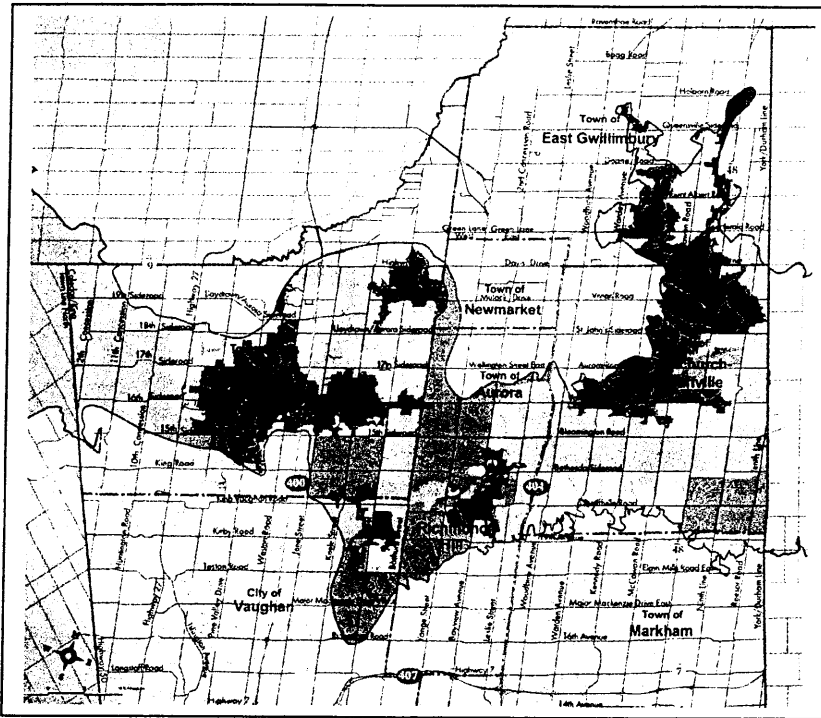
The Regional Plan also identified a long-term target of 25% forest cover for the Region.

4. Oak Ridges Moraine

The Oak Ridges Moraine is one of southern Ontario's, and York Region's, most significant landforms. Located north of and parallel to Lake Ontario, the Moraine in York Region divides the watersheds draining south into Lake Ontario from those draining north into Lake Simcoe. The Moraine shapes the present and future form and structure of the Greater Toronto Region. The Moraine's ecological and hydrogeological features and functions are critical to the Region's continuing environmental, social and economic health.

Through the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001 and the accompanying Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), the Province has identified a system of large Natural Core Areas connected by Natural Linkage Areas. The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan offers a policy framework to protect these specific valued areas and features on the Moraine. The Natural Core Areas are predominately forested complexes, and have a high degree of policy protection. The Natural Linkage Areas have a high degree of policy protection but are not predominately forested at present.

The ORMCP does not permit the removal of land from these designations. Neither the Act nor the Plan however can require public access onto privately held lands. The importance of providing linked trail systems and public access is a key consideration for our Regional securement interests.

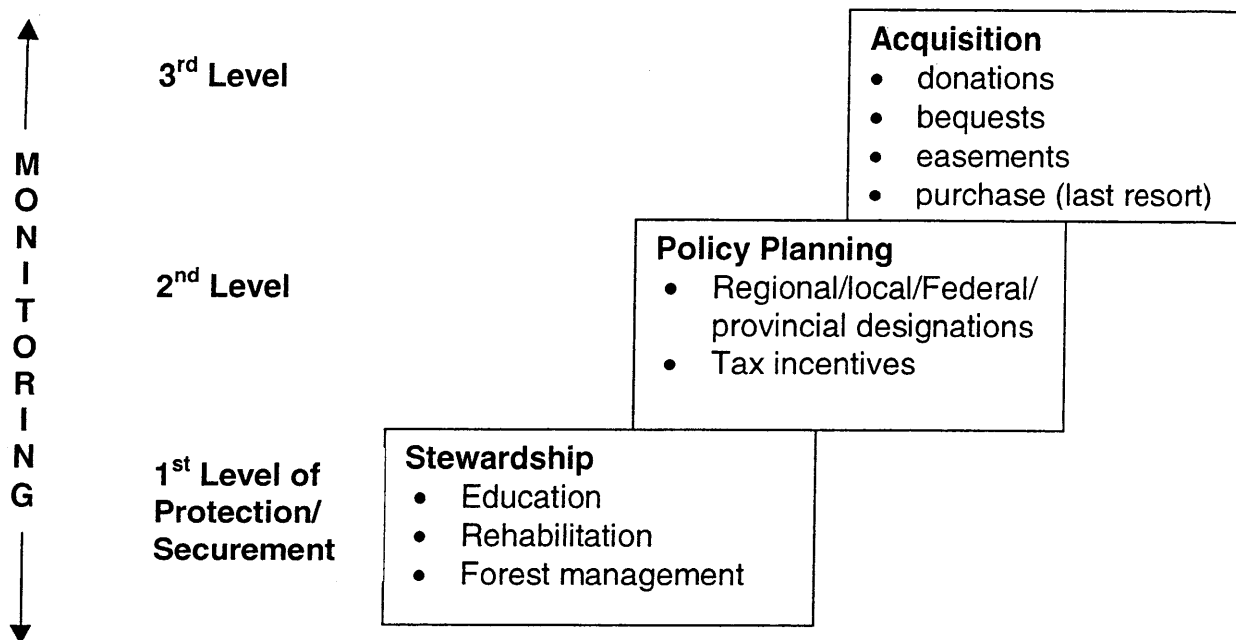


Oak Ridges Moraine
Conservation Plan Land
Use Designations

5. Securement Strategy: A Legacy for Our Future

As an implementation tool for the Regional Greening Strategy, York Regional Council adopted the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy - A Legacy for Our Future (April 2001). This Strategy established clear comprehensive direction to secure a healthy natural heritage system within the Region. Under the umbrella of the Region's Greening Strategy (adopted May 2001) and the Regional Official Plan, the Securement Strategy committed to provide annual dedicated funding of \$1.4 Million to assist with land acquisition and securement initiatives.

The Securement Strategy uses a hierarchy of securement tools:



It is important to acknowledge that the challenge of protecting natural heritage systems and conserving biological diversity is too comprehensive and inclusive to be met on public lands alone. The Regional Official Plan (ROP), as well as many municipal official plans, recognizes that it is not feasible to purchase all the lands required within the identified Greenlands Systems. The emphasis must be on policy protection, stewardship and education, while acquisition by bequest, donation or easement options should also be pursued. Fee simple acquisition or purchase is a final option. Outright purchase of key parcels of land would be very selective and utilized only when all other avenues are exhausted.

There are significant benefits of securement partnerships. These partnerships present leverage-funding opportunities, or approaches that allow the Region to contribute seed funding. These partnerships also facilitate improved securement services in that the Region can direct landowners with properties not a high priority for Regional Securement to other agencies or organizations.

6. Need for Securement Criteria - Key Elements of the Approach

There is a need for a strategic approach to protection and enhancement of a healthy natural heritage system. A clear long-term vision will enable us to protect major elements of the system, restore key areas, and identify and protect corridors and connecting links. Ideally the vision will build on the framework of the Region's existing strategic direction including the Regional Official Plan Greenlands System, the Greening Strategy, the hierarchy of tools in the Regional

Securement Strategy, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Regional Forest Management Plan. Ultimately the focus of the Region's program will be on a Regional System.

Considerations:

- Land values in the Region vary greatly with development land currently costing up to \$740,000 per hectare (~\$300,000 per acre), while agricultural or rural land is approximately \$10,000 per hectare (~\$4,000 per acre), at 2002 prices.
- If the focus of securement criteria were the acquisition (fee simple purchase) of lands that are threatened by development, the cost per hectare would be high. As such, the potential area acquired would be low. Rural land with its lower cost per hectare would result in a much larger number of acres acquired for the same money. For example, for the price of 10 hectares of development land, approximately 500 hectares of significant natural heritage or rural land could be acquired.
- Criteria will help direct the expenditure of Regional Securement money so as to maximize the benefit to the Greenlands System and future generations.
- It's important to identify strategic links and where the gaps exist in the natural heritage system. East-west linkages, and north-south linkages across the moraine are often overlooked.
- The Region's Strategy should focus on building core areas, restoring key connecting links, and include a consideration of trail loops from a Regional perspective.
- Securement opportunities may increase over time. Regional Council may wish to support these opportunities with additional resources, as long as the cost benefit is rationalized.
- This strategic approach will help protect and enhance the Regional Greenlands System and secure a comprehensive green infrastructure for present and future generations.

7. Securement Criteria for York Region

The Region's approach to securement and acquisition establishes the framework for prioritizing property securement across York Region. There are certain broad principles that direct the implementation of the Securement Strategy. There is recognition that the Region's approach to securement must be opportunistic, adaptive and flexible:

a) Principles

1. All securement tools available to the Region, as outlined in the Region's Securement Strategy, should be considered. Specifically, including the potential for policy, stewardship and/or education as protection measures. Factors to consider include:
 - Is land acquisition the only option for protecting this land?
 - Are there environmental stewardship, educational or partnership options that can be used to protect this land?
 - How does the parcel fit into the other priorities of the Region?
 - Have all other avenues of stewardship or securement been exhausted?
 - The Region must pursue donations, bequests, easements, etc as much as possible. Fee simple acquisition is recognized as a last resort.
2. The principle of acquiring land at less than development prices produces a high greenlands cost benefit. It must be recognized however that other valuable opportunities may arise. In an urban setting the land prices are likely to be more expensive and key opportunities should not be overlooked on price alone.

b) Securement Criteria

Regional securement criteria must be strategic and visionary. The Region has 4 criteria which place the emphasis on a healthy greenlands system for future generations. At the same time, the Regional criteria focus on lands not generally covered by the criteria of other securement groups and agencies.

A) CONNECTING GREENLANDS CORE AREAS

A healthy Greenlands system is a connected system. Within the current landscape, some functions occur between habitat nodes through rural and agricultural lands. Looking into the future, the landscape between existing habitat patches may not be in a form that is conducive to the continuation of these functions. As such, providing connections between green areas by identifying and protecting corridors and links across and throughout the Region is of paramount importance to a Regional Securement Strategy. Additionally, connecting existing core areas can result in enhancements to the system.

i) North/south Linkages

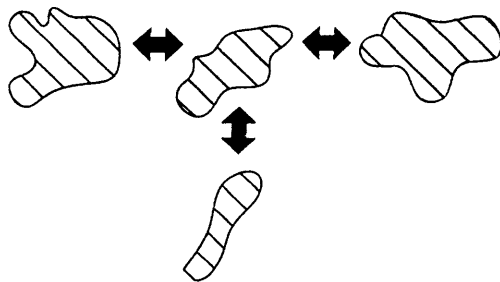
The focus of this criterion is to ensure that north south connections are complete within the future natural heritage system. Specific areas that need to be addressed are connecting south flowing river systems with north flowing

river systems across the Oak Ridges Moraine. The focus of these north south connections will be along major river system including, for example, connecting the Rouge Valley North area to the Black River and Holland River systems.

ii) East/west Linkages

The focus of this criterion is to strengthen connections between our major watersheds on and off of the Oak Ridges Moraine, and across the Lake Simcoe shoreline and low lands. These linkages should be strategically targeted where features are in close proximity thereby facilitating their connection.

Connectivity criterion can be demonstrated graphically as follows:



B) Strengthen Existing Green Nodes

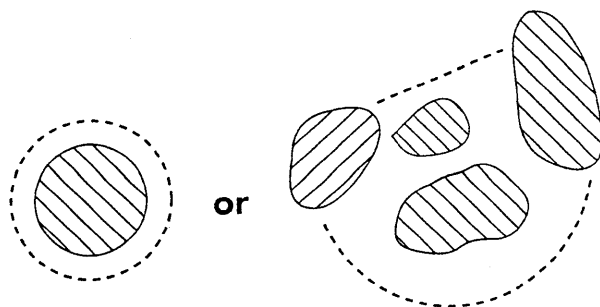
The Regional Greenlands System currently has some significant habitat patches. These patches, which should generally be big enough to support area sensitive wildlife species (or have the potential to), will become increasingly stressed as the landscape changes over time. Opportunities to strengthen these existing nodes should be considered a Regional priority. There are two means by which to strengthen existing green nodes as articulated in the following criteria.

i) Protecting Core Natural Heritage Features and Functions

In order to protect a healthy natural heritage system, core areas benefit substantially through complexing and buffering. Specifically, areas around the perimeter of an existing node whose protection and/or rehabilitation would improve the function of the node meet this criterion (buffering). Additionally, areas between natural habitat patches meet this criterion (complexing).

Hydrologic (water) functions also benefit significantly from buffering. This includes the protection of recharge and discharge features, including well head protection areas.

This criterion can be demonstrated graphically as follows:

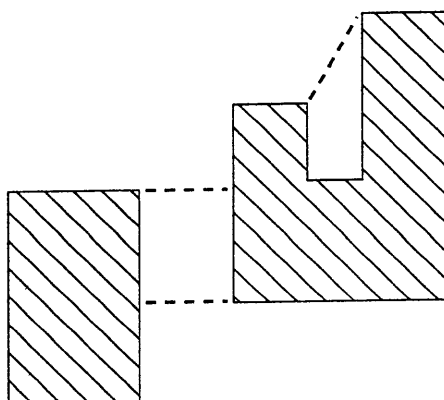


ii) Forest Rehabilitation

York Region has an objective to increase forest cover to 25%. Increasing forest cover adjacent to existing woodlots significantly enhances the Regional Natural Heritage System. The intent of this criterion is to increase forest interior habitat and reduce edge effects on both private and public property through forest massing across the Region.

The York Regional Forest is a significant amenity available to all Regional residents. Through this criterion, efforts will also be made to mass the York Regional Forest by protecting land adjacent to existing forest tracts. This scenario is also one where a higher level of Regional Resources may be warranted in the interest in getting full Regional title and management of the land for the purposes of expanding the Regional Forest amenity for future generations.

This criterion can be demonstrated graphically as follows:



c) Regional Priority Matrix

This document identifies Regional Criteria and introduces a **Regional Priority Matrix** (Figure 1). York Region will take the lead, or support the initiatives of other organizations for properties that are a high priority for Regional involvement when assessed against the Regional Criteria and **Regional Priority Matrix**. The Region will work cooperatively with our partners to direct potential securement opportunities that are not Regional Priorities to seek other means of ensuring their protection, with another agency taking the lead.

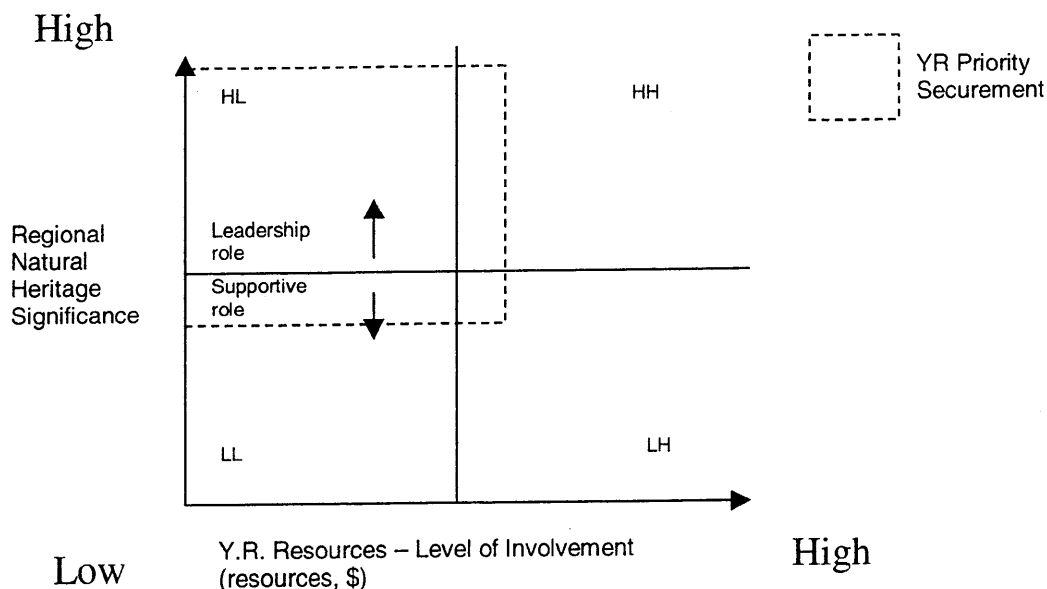
The amount of Regional resources to be used in securing a parcel should be related to how it meets the Region's natural heritage priorities. In all instances, opportunities to secure parcels with minimal resources required should be pursued. This can be achieved by maximizing the use of stewardship, education, conservation easement donation, land donation and land bequests. However, in some instances, fee simple purchase, with or without partners, may be warranted. The Region should only take a leadership role in acquisitions where Regional Natural Heritage priority is high. The following are some example scenarios which help to demonstrate the Region's role:

Scenario one - A property that ranks high in terms of natural heritage values (existing or potential) is available for donation. The Region would likely seek to take a leadership role in its acquisition. This property would then fall in the HL (high - York Region Natural Heritage priority and low level of York Region resources).

Scenario two - A local municipality or environmental group may identify a key property or area by their criteria, that is of less importance in the Region's priorities. This property might then fall in the LL quarter of the Priority Schematic. The Region therefore may choose not to support it or to support it in a minor way with fewer resources e.g. technical support.

Scenario three - A parcel is available for purchase immediately adjacent to the Regional forest and ranks high for its natural heritage significance. Purchase price to the Region could be significantly reduced with partners however, in the event that partnerships would not allow for full Regional title and management, the Region may choose to invest a greater level of resources to protect the opportunity to mass the York Regional Forest. In this instance the property may fall into the HH quadrant yet be deemed appropriate as an acquisition priority.

The following Regional Priority matrix helps identify how Regional involvement in property securement should be prioritized.

Figure 1 - Regional Priority Matrix

8. Partnerships

It is important to recognize that partners bring different strengths to securement. Each partner has unique perspective, focus, contacts and experience that ultimately translate to a broader range of securement opportunities across the Region. For example, the contacts of one organization may compliment the management experience of another.

Different organizations also present unique leverage and seed funding opportunities along with their differing focuses and priorities. These priorities may lend themselves to joint interest for some properties and divergent interests on others.

The Region has in place a Securement Working Group that provides an opportunity for area municipal, agency and other key stakeholders to network and discuss priorities. This is an important forum for sharing approaches and avoiding duplication of efforts and resource utilization. The Group also has opportunities to share information, advice and technical support.

9. Other Considerations

There are a number of considerations related to property securement. They are discussed briefly here and require further consideration on a case by case basis as they relate to specific future securement activities.

a) Costs of Managing Land

The initial costs associated with land acquisition include such things as appraisals, legal fees, survey costs, baseline monitoring and possibly acquisition funds. Once property has been acquired, ongoing costs continue through the development of management plans, fencing, signage, insurance, property taxes and long term operational costs, property maintenance and monitoring. There are also financial implications related to a property's loss of ability to generate tax assessment for municipalities should the lands become publicly owned.

Security and policing costs must also be considered. If the property is to be publicly accessible there will be additional maintenance costs including trail maintenance, hazard tree inspection/removal, and rehabilitation.

In the interest of proactively considering these costs, the Evaluation Form for Property Securement, discussed later in this report, has been designed to factor into the equation these costs prior to their securement.

b) Access

Public access is usually preferable except in unique cases where extremely sensitive environmental features and functions exist. Public access onto private lands, however, can only occur with owners permission (eg. written permission or through management agreements on conservation easements). Much of the Greenlands System in York Region is in private ownership and therefore public access is not guaranteed.

For trail purposes or for water access (i.e. Lake Simcoe) it would be likely that the acquisition of key connecting pieces or easements may be required. In all instances existing access opportunities in the public domain should be maintained or improved wherever possible (i.e. closed road allowances).

c) Co-ordinating Stakeholders

There are many agencies and organizations involved in securement of natural heritage features or systems throughout York Region. A sample list includes:

- Conservation Authorities (LSRCA, TRCA)
- Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Area municipalities
- Ducks Unlimited
- Ontario Heritage Foundation

Each partner has their own strengths that come from unique perspectives, however, there is always the possibility of overlap and the potential for duplication of activities. Through the Securement Working Group, all stakeholders will work to minimize duplication of effort and maximize the use of resources.

In the implementation section of this document, the securement focus of other agencies and stakeholders is presented.

d) How to Balance Recreational Uses and Ecological Protection

The Region's natural heritage systems are made up of core conservation lands and waters linked by natural corridors and restored connections. These will provide linked trail and looped trail opportunities. At the same time this natural heritage system has areas with sensitive species and that would be better served by not being publicly accessible. A careful balance of public access and protection is required. These matters should be comprehensively addressed through sound management planning for natural areas.

e) Role of the Province and Other Levels of Government

As with other agencies, the Province has a variety of interests related to the protection of the natural environment. The Province is responsible for legislation including; the Public Lands Act, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, the Aggregate Resources Act, and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and Plan. The Province has a key role in environmental protection, protection of water resources, and the protection of individual property rights. These wide-ranging Provincial responsibilities may have relevance to Regional securement interests and will therefore require careful co-ordination.

The Province also has a role in providing resources including funding to help protect large intermunicipal natural heritage systems.

The Region should encourage all levels of government, or its agencies, selling property with environmental significance to transfer lands to other levels of government for nominal costs in the interest of their long term protection. Such co-ordination between various governments and government agencies should lead to consistent management approaches and the opportunity for increased protection of public green space.

10. Implementation of the Criteria

a) Agency Coordination

It is the intent of York Region to strategically focus on connecting key core areas and linkages. Opportunities to coordinate with stakeholders internally and externally (area municipalities, Conservation Authorities and others) throughout the Region will be very important. Innovative implementation will be a key to maximizing acquisition activities. The Securement Working Group is one means of undertaking coordination.

The Internal Evaluation Team (IET) for Securement Initiatives will utilize the Securement Working Group forum to bring properties that are not priorities for

Regional securement leadership to the attention of other securement partners. Generally, properties will be directed to the following agencies or interest groups based on their areas of focus for securement activities:

Valley and Stream Corridors

- Conservation Authorities

Significant Terrestrial Natural Heritage Features off the Oak Ridges Moraine (ANSIs, ESAs, Wetlands, Woodlands)

- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Provincial Government
- Conservation Authorities
- Ontario Heritage Foundation
- Area Municipalities

Significant Terrestrial Natural Heritage Features on the ORM

- All of the above
- Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust

Wetlands

- All of the above
- Ducks Unlimited

b) Internal Evaluation Team (IET) for Securement Initiatives

Implementation of the criteria to make the vision happen includes scoping and review by an Internal Evaluation Team. This team is interdepartmental with representatives from Property Services, Planning and Development Services, Transportation and Works (Natural Heritage and Forestry Services), Legal and Finance. The IET will review potential acquisitions to undertake and evaluation and assessment. They summarize information and prepare recommendations for the Senior Management Team Review.

c) Property Evaluation Form

A Property Evaluation Form is appended to this document. This form helps quantify the natural heritage value of properties **to the Region**, as articulated through these criteria.

d) Implementation Steps

Step 1: Potential Securement Property brought to Regional staff attention.

These properties may have been actively pursued by the Region because of their value to the Regional Greenlands System for future generations, or by other stakeholders, partners, or land owners/agents directly.

Step 2: Assessment of Property

Through the Internal Evaluation Team, the Property Evaluation Form is completed by Regional staff and assessed against the Regional Securement Criteria and Priority Matrix. Information considered includes:

- Review other protection/securement options
- Property and owner identification information
- Natural Functions and attributes
- Value and opportunity to the Region
- Property value and cost of securement

Step 3: Coordinate Securement Options

- The IET will consider whether the Region should take a lead on securement, participate in securement under the lead of another group, or not be involved in securement
- The Securement Working Group will be consulted as necessary to aid in the coordination of securement activity across the Region to prevent duplication of effort and maximize use of resources.

Step 4: Review by Senior Management**Step 5: Report to Committee and Council for major decisions****Step 6: Internal Evaluation Team to define York Region management responsibilities**

- If required

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

In order to create a long term vision and natural heritage legacy for York Region it is important to establish a process to guide the Region's actions in pursuit of this goal. The protection and enhancement of our Green Infrastructure must be approached strategically in order to identify and focus on a Regional system. The approach will build on the foundation of such Regional and Provincial work as the Regional Official Plan, Greening Strategy, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, Securement Strategy and the Regional Forest Management Plan.

This document sets out a process and criteria for the evaluation of potential securement consistent with the Regional Greening Strategy and Greenlands Property Securement Strategy.

Appendix 1 Internal Evaluation Team – Property Evaluation Information *Draft*

Property Description

Property Location	
Size	
Legal Description	
Buildings present	
Special Conditions of Access	
Owner Contact Information Mailing Address Phone Fax Email	

Additionally Property Information

Such information as: • ORM designation • Market value of property (cost/acre) • Other options • Trails • Hazards (natural or other) • Source Documents • Map(s) attached

Appendix 2 Internal Evaluation Team – Feature Attributes Checklist (Draft)

Stage 1 - Value of Property from a Natural Heritage Perspective

i) Natural Environment Features

Attributes of Property	Attributes Checklist Yes/No/Not Available	Comments
Part of the Regional Greenlands System		
Habitat of Endangered, Threatened, Rare and Vulnerable Species		
Provincially Significant Wetlands		
ANSI (Earth & Life Sciences)		
ESA (Environmentally Significant Area)		
Water bodies including water courses and lakes, significant valley land and riparian areas		
Area identified as hydrogeologically sensitive lands (ORM or aquifer vulnerability groundwater source protection area mapping)		
Significant Wildlife or Fish Habitat		
Significant Woodlands (.5 acre woodlot or ORM mapping)		
Areas with significant current or potential value for enhancement through restoration, remediation, management or geographic proximity to other ecologically significant properties		
Area may enhance ecological function by buffering core areas identified as ecologically sensitive		
Natural link or corridor between ecologically sensitive land		
Areas used for long-term scientific study or baseline and benchmark monitoring of biodiversity		
Natural Environment Features Totals	/13	

ii) Human/Cultural Heritage Features

Attributes	Attributes Checklist Yes/No/Not Available	Comments
Property with significant Historical/Archaeological Significance		
Aboriginal Heritage Significance		
Human/Cultural Heritage Features Total	/2	

iii) Passive Recreation Opportunities

Attributes	Attributes Checklist Yes/No/Not Available	Comments
Passive recreation opportunity/trail potential	/2	
Opportunity to connect Regional Trail Systems	/2	
Accessible to Regional Residents	/2	
Passive Recreation Opportunities Total	/6	

iv) External Influences

Attributes	Attributes Checklist Yes/No/Not Available	Comments
Not protected by Municipal/Regional/Provincial Policies	/1	
Land at risk of being developed	/1	
Property has easy access	/1	
Adjacent to existing publicly owned green space	/1	
External Influences Total	/4	

Stage 1 Totals

	Attributes totals	Comments
Stage 1 - Value of Property from a Natural Heritage Perspective		
Natural Environment	/13	
Human/Cultural Heritage	/2	
Passive Recreation Opportunities	/6	
External Influences	/4	
TOTAL	/25	

Stage 2 - Value/Opportunity to Region

Criteria	Attributes Checklist	Comments
Consistency with Regional Securement Criteria		
1) Connecting Greenland Core Areas	/20	
1a) North south linkage OR		
1b) East West linkage		
2) Strengthen Existing Green Nodes		
2a) Protecting Core Natural Heritage Features and Functions, AND/OR	/10	
2b) Forest Rehabilitation	/10	
Acquisition Opportunity		
• Landowner wishes to give/donate	/5	
• Landowner willing to negotiate	/5	
• Available for non-development prices	/5	
• Partners available for purchase &/or maintenance	/5	
Future operational, maintenance & management costs	/15	Scale of 1-15 (high costs - low costs)
TOTAL	/75	

Summary Totals	
Stage 1 – Value of Property from a Natural Heritage Perspective	/25
Stage 2 – Value/Opportunity to the Region	/75
Grand Total	/100

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