

Disposition of Land Request: Summary Fact Sheet

- The Ferguson Forest Centre Corporation (the FFCC or Corporation) is a not for profit, volunteer-governed social enterprise.
- The Ferguson Tree Nursery (FTN, or the Nursery) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ferguson Forest Centre Corporation.
 - > The Nursery operates on 120 hectares (300 acres) of land leased from Municipality of North Grenville.
 - > Eastern Ontario's largest supplier of high-quality tree seedlings and nursery stock, growing approximately 2,000,000 native and non-invasive naturalized trees and woody shrubs annually, produced from local seed sources.
 - > Employs local residents as well as additional seasonal workers (18 employees and 5-7 temporary workers).
- The Ferguson Forest Centre encompasses the entirety of the area on which the Ferguson Tree Nursery operates, as well as the area for which the Ferguson Forest Centre Corporation has responsibility to operate and maintain in partnership with various organizations.
 - > Total area of the Centre is approximately 445 hectares (1100 acres) and includes 22 kilometres of marked, public trails; a dog park; an arboretum; a toboggan hill; a kayak/canoe launch; picnic shelter and park; an 18-hole disc-golf course; the North Grenville Giving Garden; a winter trail; and nursery greenhouses, fields and infrastructure.
- The Corporation is requesting that the Municipality of North Grenville sell a specific, limited parcel of under-utilized land that is not optimum for agricultural purposes, and that monies from the sale be invested into the Nursery, and by extension, into the Centre.
 - > The parcel of land is 5.3 hectares (13 acres) of vacant non-prime agricultural land (classes 4 and 5 as per the Canada Land Inventory)
 - > Fronts the northern side of County Road 43 between St. Michaels Catholic High School and Anniversary Road.
 - > Located with the current urban boundary and infrastructure/utility service area.
 - > Would require significant investment to augment the soil for continued agricultural use. Historically, ongoing investment has been required to make this land viable for the Nursery's use.
 - > Subject lands selected as they are in excess of the requirement for the Nursery's needs and are not currently part of any regular recreational / community space or function.
 - If sold as mixed residential/commercial use, would maximize return while providing an opportunity to address community needs, such as affordable, accessible housing along a route that will have active transportation options following completion of roadwork.
- The Corporation is making this request to ensure a sustainable growing operation and community recreational space into the future. Through lease agreements with the Municipality of North Grenville, the cost of the initial investment in the land has been more than repaid.

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- > To continue to operate effectively and to be competitive, the Nursery must expand and modernize its operations.
- > The Nursery has traditionally operated as a small farm. To be effective and competitive in the current business environment, the Nursery, and by extension the Corporation, now needs to accelerate the transition to operate in a different way, requiring capital investment in excess of \$2,000,000 over a number of years to remain a viable enterprise.
- > The current Nursery leadership, under the oversight and direction of the Corporation, have made numerous positive changes to how the Nursery operates and how the Centre is managed with the resources currently available, however technology and engineering solutions are required to address current challenges.
 - Challenges include aging infrastructure, labour market challenges and wholly unique and unanticipated operational conditions.
- Traditional financial institutions are not an option for the Corporation. As a non-profit community social enterprise that does not own land assets, and with existing equipment, buildings and infrastructure that have depreciated, borrowing through this mechanism would not be approved.
- The monies would be used to increase operational capacity and to modernize infrastructure. This investment will enhance the Nursery's competitiveness through improved product quality, making this the nursery of choice for large customers; and through increased production and sales, thereby ensuring sustainability into the future. The Corporation has undertaken capital planning to identify areas that need investment, and the timing of that investment. This includes updating buildings, equipment, and infrastructure.
 - > Funds available beyond the Nursery's capital needs will be utilized to enhance the public spaces within the Centre for enjoyment of the community.
 - > For greater than 20 years, the Corporation has demonstrated to the community that it is an organization that will work for benefit of the community, and for the environment, over the long term. This money will ensure that the Corporation can continue to do so.
- Without investment the Corporation and Nursery will continue to operate to the best of their ability, however, these organizations will be compelled to operate in a diminished and increasingly precarious capacity in the short term. In the longer term, it may mean ceasing operations.
 - > The Nursery's ability to compete for business will remain limited. While the Nursery's revenue is limited, the amount of investment into community recreational spaces will also remain limited.
- The Ferguson Forest Centre Corporation will commit to annually reporting and detailing to the Municipality of North Grenville how the funds have been used towards the intended purposes. Council has a seat on the Board of Directors of the Corporation, attending regular meetings and holding voting privileges. The lease agreement between the Municipality and Corporation allows the Municipality to access the Corporation's audited financial statements.