

April 23, 2020

**Black Lake Property Owners' Association (BLPOA)**  
**Submission to Tay Valley Township**  
**With Respect to the Recreation Master Plan**

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This submission is with respect to the Draft Recreational Master Plan.

The BLPOA commends the involved municipalities for the quality of the draft plan.

The BLPOA recognizes the importance of having a comprehensive recreational plan, not just for Tay Valley Township, but for the surrounding region. Residents will make use of facilities within the larger recreational region. Visitors will be attracted to the larger recreational region as a whole. A recreational plan serves as an inventory of possibilities, allowing better coordination of priorities over time within and across jurisdictions.

The BLPOA also recognizes the importance of attracting visitors to the area, for the business and jobs they can help create. This is an area that benefits from its proximity to the populous and well-off Ottawa-Gatineau region, as a draw for tourism and seasonal owners.

The BLPOA is of the position that the first purpose of the plan is to support the property-tax-paying residents of TVT, whether permanent or seasonal. Recreational activities that attract them are the same ones that will attract others to live in the township, or environs. Attracting tourists to occasionally visit the region, while not unimportant, will do little for the population and the property tax financial base of the township.

The BLPOA is also of the view that the second purpose of any plan is to ensure maintenance of the existing facilities. A concern we have about the capital costs of any *new* facilities is a fear that fiscal restrictions may jeopardize maintenance of *existing* facilities, especially in the fiscal environment likely in the next several years. We think that TVT needs to position itself to weather several upcoming years of tight budgets and strong pressures to prioritize.

The only specific mentions of Black Lake in the plan are the possibility of using an unopened road allowance fronting on the lake, referred to as 'Site 10', for a canoe/kayak launch. It is not clear where 'Site 10' is, but there are only two spots in the vicinity shown on the plan map with such unopened road allowances. One runs alongside Tom's Rock Road, adjacent to 101, 115, 119, 127, 147 Tom's Rock and 505 Black Lake Road. The other is between 551 and 541 Black Lake Road.

The initial, Black Lake owners' responses to the draft plan interpreted 'launch' as 'boat launch' and immediately led to strong concerns about adding vehicular and boat traffic and pollution to the lake. A more careful read of the plan showed that what is proposed is only a launch for canoes or kayaks.

This makes the concerns more for those near that possible launch, where traffic, parking, and garbage concerns would still arise. With canoeists and kayakers only, lake traffic would not be an issue.

Nonetheless, the Directors of the Black Lake Property Owners Association would prefer that this not be done, for several reasons:

1. Tay Valley Township and the broader recreational area already seem well served by “*boat launches, docks and marinas*” at 13 in total and 4 in TVT. In addition, there are excellent facilities at Murphy’s Point Provincial Park.
2. The material in the draft plan and observations of the use of existing sites, do not suggest there is much *actual* demand, let alone high *unmet* demand for canoe/kayak launches.
3. The material in the plan and observations of existing sites suggest that if there is a problem it is lack of funds for maintenance of existing sites.
4. To open either allowance would incur significant (in the context of the TVT recreational budget), up-front costs. Ideally the site would have maintained toilet and garbage facilities, regularly maintained, incurring ongoing maintenance and clean-up costs. These would be excessive relative to any likely metric of limited seasonal use.
5. Naturally, the adjacent private property owners worry about additional traffic and litter and lack of washroom facilities for users, whether few or many. The road allowance is 66 feet wide, which would allow limited scope for vehicle parking and garbage and toilet facilities.
6. The BLPOA is of the view that the capital cost of opening either allowance would be better devoted to something with better all-season use, such as hiking trails, which Black Lake owners would very much appreciate. It may even be best used to support existing facilities.

In summary, the BLPOA commends the plan but would prefer that the references to using ‘Site 10’ as a canoe/kayak launch be dropped from the final plan.

We have yet to have the opportunity to consult widely with owners and members on this but intend to do so once we figure out how to do this in a world of social distancing. This will be added to this submission subsequently but before TVT Council consideration of the plan.

P.S. It is important that I also flag that I and Bill Woodley, also on the board, are owners of properties on Tom’s Rock and so potentially affected by opening the adjacent allowance. This submission has, however, been approved by the overall BLPOA board.

Cliff Halliwell

President, Black Lake Property Owners’ Association (BLPOA)