

# **VROOM + ASSOCIATES**

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From: Paige Vroom (Vroom+Associates)

Date: 2025 12 23

**SUBJECT: ACORN VALLEY, DORCHESTER ON – RESPONSE TO PEER REVIEW COMMENTS**

On behalf of Doug Tarry Ltd., we have reviewed the comments from the UTRCA, Stantec, and Municipality of Thames Center (dated October 3, 2025) of our Scoped Environmental Impact Study (dated June, 2025).

We appreciate reviewers' thorough review and constructive comments. In response, we have prepared the attached comment–response matrix which outlines:

1. Each comment related to our EIS;
2. Our response and clarifications;
3. Any revisions or commitments to additional work, monitoring, or consultation.

It is our professional opinion that, with the noted clarifications and mitigation commitments, the proposed development will not result in negative impacts to significant natural heritage features or ecological functions, in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and the Official Plans of the Municipality of Thames Center.

We trust that this provides sufficient clarification. Please do not hesitate to contact us should further detail be required.

No.	Reviewer / Source	Comment (Summary)	EIS Section Reference / Figure	Proposed Response / Action
1	<b>UTRCA (Sept 29, 2025)</b>	EIS did not adequately review impacts of proposed development within and adjacent to wetlands, particularly along the Christie Drive extension and the proposed trail network.	Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.3	EIS updated to provide a detailed assessment of wetland-adjacent impacts associated with Christie Drive and the proposed trail network. Trail impacts are assessed by location (north, west, south), with mitigation emphasizing avoidance of wetland interiors, minimized disturbance widths, use of boardwalks or raised tread where required, and defined trail surfaces to reduce erosion and vegetation trampling. Christie Drive impacts and mitigation are addressed separately in Section 4.2.3.
2	<b>UTRCA (Appendix C – Technical Comment)</b>	Clarify the extent of wetland boundaries used and confirm whether boundaries were field-verified by an ELC-qualified ecologist.	Section 2.4	Wetland boundaries were determined through soil sampling (Oakfield tube) and vegetation analysis conducted by an ELC-certified ecologist (Paul O'Hara) in coordination with Vroom + Associates. The delineated boundaries were reviewed and confirmed on-site with UTRCA Ecologist Tara Tchir in May 2020 and represent the agreed-upon wetland extent based on OWES criteria.
3	<b>UTRCA (Appendix C –</b>	Assess Christie Drive construction impacts on adjacent slopes and hydrology to the	Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3	Expanded hydrologic and abiotic impact assessment added for Christie Drive, including evaluation of shallow soil moisture continuity, potential interception of lateral interflow, salt spray effects,

	<b>Technical Comment)</b>	Tamarack Swamp and Rath-Harris Drain corridor.		and construction-phase disturbance. Mitigation measures to maintain lateral flow, limit wicking, and protect wetland function are provided.
<b>4</b>	<b>UTRCA (Appendix C – Technical Comment)</b>	Confirm and justify setbacks and buffers from wetlands and hazard lands, including Christie Drive and servicing crossings.	Sections 2.4, 4.2.2, 4.2.3	Wetland sensitivity and drivers clarified. Buffers and setbacks are confirmed based on feature sensitivity, regulatory context, and findings from the Hydrogeological Assessment. Christie Drive and servicing crossings are assessed with feature-specific mitigation rather than reliance on setback alone.
<b>5</b>	<b>UTRCA (Plan Review Comment #9)</b>	Preferred Sanitary Alignment 1 avoids the Rath-Harris Drain wetland; Alignment 2 crosses valley and regulated wetland and should be avoided where possible.	Appendix 5; Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3	Avoidance is identified as the preferred approach. Where crossing is required, impacts are assessed through a dedicated Servicing Letter of Opinion (Vroom + Associates, 2025), appended as Appendix 5. With trenchless installation and recommended mitigation measures, no long-term loss of wetland function is anticipated.
<b>6</b>	<b>Stantec SWM Comment #4</b>	SWM Report notes minor increases in flow to the Tamarack Swamp; EIS should discuss expected impacts of these increases.	Section 4.2.2; Tables 8 & 19	Hydrologic modelling results are incorporated into the EIS. Minor increases in 2–5 year storm events and slight decreases in larger storms are interpreted in the context of absolute flow magnitude, wetland sensitivity, and groundwater support. Changes are concluded to fall within acceptable tolerance ranges with no anticipated impact on wetland hydroperiod or function.
<b>7</b>	<b>UTRCA (General Comment #7)</b>	Future works within 30 m of wetlands may trigger a Feature-Based Water Balance Assessment; encourage inclusion	Sections 2.4, 4.2.2	Feature-based water balance assessment requirements are clarified and scoped specifically to the Tamarack Swamp, consistent with the Hydrogeological Assessment. Buffer inclusion within

		of buffers within Open Space blocks.		Open Space blocks is acknowledged and supported as part of detailed design.
<b>8</b>	<b>County / UTRCA Integrated Review</b>	Clarify trail locations within regulated areas and identify whether boardwalk design will be required.	Section 4.3	Proposed trail alignments reviewed using the updated plan. The EIS clarifies where trails abut or traverse regulated areas and identifies circumstances where boardwalks or raised tread would be required based on soil moisture and wetland conditions.
<b>9</b>	<b>UTRCA (Advisory Comment #6)</b>	UTRCA review of Christie Drive limited to wetland jurisdiction; hydrogeology and geotechnical matters to be addressed by others — ensure coordination.	Sections 2.4, 4.2.2, 4.2.3	EIS scope clarified to address wetland and natural heritage implications only. Hydrogeological and geotechnical matters are coordinated with the Functional Servicing Report, Stormwater Management Report, and Hydrogeological Assessment prepared by others.
<b>10</b>	<b>UTRCA (Appendix C – New Crossing Comment)</b>	If sanitary crossing through SWT3 proceeds, provide mitigation and restoration plan.	Appendix 5; Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3	Sanitary crossing impacts assessed in a dedicated Servicing Letter of Opinion (Vroom + Associates, 2025), appended as Appendix 5. Recommended trenchless construction, restoration measures, and monitoring are provided, and no long-term loss of wetland function is anticipated.