



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Kevin Okimi, Director of Parks, Community Development and Environment

DATE: September 20, 2024

MEMO NO.: CSE-2024-006

SUBJECT: Fairy Lake Water Quality Study Update

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Council with an update on the status of the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study and anticipated next steps.

BACKGROUND:

Council received the final [Fairy Lake Water Quality Study Update 2021-2022](#) at the October 30, 2023 [Council meeting](#), and directed staff to undertake public and stakeholder consultation on the management recommendations included in the [report](#).

Subsequently, the [Town's Strategic Plan](#) was approved which includes a focus on Natural Areas and Heritage, and includes implementing actions related to Fairy Lake.

In April 2024, the [Town's Strategic Plan Implementation Framework and Mayor's Priorities](#) were approved by Council, including the establishment of the Black Creek Advisory Group (a Mayor's Priority initiative) with its key priority being to advance implementation of the Black Creek Subwatershed Study in partnership with Halton Region and Credit Valley Conservation. Fairy Lake is located within the latter subwatershed. Work of the Black Creek Advisory Group will also include a focus on Fairy Lake from a water quality, environmental and recreational perspective.

COMMENTS:

Since October 2023, a significant amount of work has occurred to finalize the recommendations of the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study. From January to March 2024, a public survey was conducted on the Town's Let's Talk Halton Hills webpage, and a very successful and well attended open house was held. While the final results of this consultation will be discussed in more detail as part of a future Council report, the

survey results are included in Appendix A. A petition regarding the naturalization of portions of Rotary Park was also received, which will be detailed further in the future Council report.

Based in part on the results of the community survey, as well as further review and discussion, staff are reviewing the management recommendations from the 2021-2022 Water Quality Study. Thus far, four general categories or themes, with associated actions, have been identified as well as the recommended implementation approach for each type of project (with further details to be included in the future staff report):

1. **Watershed Wide Actions:** Projects/Actions that will benefit the overall Black Creek Watershed. *Examples:* Rural Landowner Outreach Program, Invasive Species Removal Program; *Implementation:* Refer to the Black Creek Advisory Group for prioritization and implementation – Committee to identify priorities and potential funding mechanisms/partnerships.
2. **Overall Policies and Programs:** Town-wide policies and programs in need of review in order to support and advance environmental stewardship activities in the Black Creek Watershed. *Example:* Fertilizer Ban, Green Development Standard Updates. *Implementation:* Refer to the Black Creek Advisory Group for prioritization and implementation - Committee to identify priorities and potential funding mechanisms/partnerships.
3. **Fairy Lake Initiatives:** Localized actions with the primary benefit being to Fairy Lake and/or Prospect Park. *Examples:* Increased beach maintenance, increased waterfowl management. *Implementation:* To be funded through existing Town budgets and/or new funding to be referred to Budget Committee for its consideration for 2025 and beyond.
4. **Recreational Focused Actions:** Actions not related to water quality specifically, that were raised as part of community consultation (i.e., trails, fishing, boating amenities). *Examples:* New fishing docks/access points, new recreational trails. *Implementation:* Refer to the future Fairy Lake and Prospect Park Master Plan subcommittee of the Black Creek Advisory Group or the Active Transportation Master Plan, as appropriate.

By taking the above approach to the implementation of the recommendations, the Town will be able to take moderate localized actions to improve the water quality and recreational use of Fairy Lake. The larger more comprehensive projects and policies can be prioritized, budgeted and supported through a broader review by the Black Creek Advisory Group, with the potential for cross-agency collaboration and/or implementation (e.g., with Credit Valley Conservation).

Detailed recommendations will be brought to Council for review and final approval at a future date, subject to further input and review by the Project Technical Committee and in coordination with the Black Creek Advisory Group. No specific actions from the study are being advanced until Council considers the final implementation report recommendations.

The complete recommendations can be reviewed in the final [Fairy Lake Water Quality Study Update: 2021-2022](#).

Due to the linkages to the new Strategic Plan and the Mayor's Black Creek Advisory Group, Fairy Lake Water Quality Study implementation also needs to be coordinated with the Healthy Environment and Communities Strategic Priority Committee as well as the Black Creek Advisory Group. As a next step, an update will be provided to both committees prior to presenting the next report to Council.

Since the last update to Council, a considerable amount of work has also taken place in order to explore collaborative funding and partnership opportunities with Credit Valley Conservation and Halton Region. The result of this potential opportunity may affect implementation timelines, recommendations and their scope. Pending the outcome of this opportunity and consultation with the Mayor's Black Creek Advisory Group, further details will be included in the final Fairy Lake Water Quality Study Implementation report to Council.

An additional key milestone reached has been the launch of the Mayor's Black Creek Advisory Group. With Terms of Reference approved, the committee held its initial meeting on July 23, 2024. The purpose of the meeting was:

- To provide an overview of the Black Creek Advisory Group – Project Charter.
- To provide the Black Creek Advisory Group with an overview of the history and activities related to the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study and the Black Creek Subwatershed Study.
- To review a pending joint proposal for funding from CVC to Halton Region, in order to gather feedback from the Advisory Group so that the proposal can be finalized.

Future Advisory Group meetings and associated agendas are being planned.

In addition to the work to finalize the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study, staff also attended an onsite walk with Councillors Somerville and Albano to identify additional/ supplementary issues and opportunities in the park and those related to Fairy Lake. The suite of potential actions is related to water quality monitoring and improvements, park and beach operations, park use and programming, trails and recreational opportunities, infrastructure maintenance, heritage, signage and interpretive opportunities, and community communication. Staff are reviewing the potential actions and will report back to Council where appropriate, recognizing that some actions may potentially be integrated into existing workplans whereas others may have budget impacts.

CONCLUSION:

Significant progress continues to be made in advancing the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study and the consideration of implementing actions.

The final implementation report will be developed by staff in coordination with the Mayor's Black Creek Advisory Group. Final recommendations will be brought to Council

at a later date, following a final review by the project's Technical Committee and coordination with the Black Creek Advisory Group and the Healthy Environment and Communities Strategic Priority Committee.

Reviewed and approved by,

Damian Szybalski, Commissioner of Community Services

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer