

Strategic Priority Committee

# Healthy Environment and Community

Natural Areas and Heritage

# Healthy Environment and Community Committee



## NATURAL AREAS AND HERITAGE

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NATURAL AREAS AND HERITAGE		
Initiative	Project Lead	May 2025 Update
Complete the Parkland Acquisition Study to identify next steps in acquiring parkland	CSE – Parks	No update. Integrating work with Official Plan Review.
Complete Master Plan for the Glen Lawson Lands to create a final plan and strategy for public access	CSE – Parks	Project Charter at Council May 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2025 for approval. Multi-year project commencing as outlined in report.
Complete Fairy Lake Water Quality Study and implementation Strategy [Mayor Priority]	CSE – Parks	Fairy Lake Water Quality Study implementation strategy approved at Council May 5 <sup>th</sup> . Ongoing implementation of plan to continue as outlined in report.
Complete an update to the 2004 Hungry Hollow Management Plan	CSE – Parks	Project on Hold due to staffing constraints (no Landscape Architect) and other priority files. Outcomes may be linked to ongoing Environment and Climate Studies related to natural areas and open spaces.
Advance Implementation of the Credit River Trail Strategy	CSE – Parks	Project is on hold.
Enhance the Management and Operations for the Town's Natural Assets and Open Space Areas	CSE – Environment (TPW – Support)	1) Green Infrastructure Asset Management Plan – work ongoing. Public survey completed. 2) Invasive Species Management Plan – RFP issued. Successful funding application for round goby awareness event (Mayor's Fishing Derby) at Fairy Lake. 3) Biodiversity Study project ongoing
Protect and Enhance the Town's Tree Canopy	CSE – Environment (TPW support)	Growing Canada's Community Canopies Grant being finalized with FCM, pending formal announcement. Recruitment of Tree Planting Technician is ongoing. Tree Voucher program has been launched.
Achieve and Maintain Bird Friendly Community Designation	CSE -Environment	Bird Decals Pilot ongoing. Bird naming campaign continues (round 1 survey closed) and Bird related engagement materials have been completed. Note: this is a community led project with collaboration by the Town.
Continue to partner with Conservation Authorities and support implementation of programs such as SNAP (Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan) [To be combined with Fairy Lake Water Quality Study]	CSE – Environment/ Parks	Acton and Fairy Lake SNAP to be commenced by CVC in coordination with Fairy Lake Implementation per May 5 <sup>th</sup> Council Report/Presentation. Ongoing coordination with CVC on next steps for Hungry Hollow SNAP. Additional Resources will be required depending on final scope of Acton and Fairy Lake SNAP.
Complete Bill 23 Heritage Strategy	PLAN – Heritage	Staff continues to research and evaluate properties and bring them forward to Council for potential designation under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> . This work is ongoing, however the Cultural Heritage Assistant who has been assisting for the past year has finished the contract with the Town which will reduce the current output level.
Implement Cultural Heritage Strategy	PLAN - Heritage	No update, ongoing.



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Complete the Parkland Acquisition Study to identify next steps in acquiring parkland
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
Completion of the (underway) Parkland Acquisition Study to identify next steps in acquiring parkland to address an existing and projected shortfall, and to meet Town OP Standards. Study has been ongoing and will be restarted now that Provincial changes have largely settled and will be aligned with the Official Plan Review. Staff are continuing to participate in the overall studies impacting the Parkland Acquisition work through 2025.	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	Project is ongoing, but dependent on other key Town initiatives (OP Review and Agricultural Area Policies). Project is a Mid-Long Term horizon for any actual acquisition.
<b>Funding</b>	Capital Budget for consulting for study is already approved Project 8500-22-2202 \$45,000 and available as needed. Strategy implementation will require a funding strategy to secure needed parkland. 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: n/a
<b>Staffing</b>	No staff are dedicated to the completion and implementation of the Parkland Acquisition Study. The project is currently led by the Director of Parks, Community Development and Environment with additional cross-departmental input when required. Consultants are retained when needed. Significant competing project priorities will impact Parkland Acquisition Strategy completion.
<b>Linkages</b>	Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan, Long Range Financial Plan, Official Plan Review, Current/Future Secondary Plans
<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limited financial capacity</li> <li>- Town is unable to acquire sufficient parkland</li> <li>- deterioration of existing parkland due to increased level/intensity of use</li> <li>- inadequate facilities for outdoor sports programs and groups</li> <li>- Inadequate staff resources to complete and implement the Parkland Acquisition Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Land Acquisition Methodology and Targets</li> <li>- Standards for parkland incorporated into Official Plan and other policy documents</li> <li>- Financial Needs incorporated into Long Range Financial Plan</li> <li>- Implementable plan in place to address existing and anticipated parkland shortages</li> </ul>

Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	RP-2019-0013 November 11, 2024 Council Workshop on Parkland Acquisition Strategy
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Parkland Acquisition Study Phase 1
<b>Capital Project:</b>	8500-08-2001 Property Acquisition Parks 8500-22-2202 Parkland Acquisition Phase 2



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Complete Master Plan for the Glen Lawson Lands to create a final plan and strategy for public access
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
Completion of a Master Plan for the Glen Lawson Lands, including public consultation, and environmental review to create a final plan and strategy for the public access that addresses the former landfill, and any mitigation requirements.	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
February 2025: Clarification requested on public access (none allowed) and request that recognition of Dolly Varden, and potential interpretive information on former landfill be considered.	
<b>Timing</b>	Start of multi-year project was delayed. Staff are preparing a Council Report (Q1 2025) to outline the Project Charter and project approach for Council approval.
<b>Funding</b>	Capital Budget approved in amount of \$75,000 in 2024 Future Management Outcomes and Recommendations are not captured in the Capital Forecast. 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Landscape Architect not included in 2025 Budget.
<b>Staffing</b>	Staff time is being allocated as part of 2025 Work Program. Due to staff vacancies and workload, the start of this project was delayed. Overall progress may be delayed due to staff capacity.
<b>Linkages</b>	Active Transportation Master Plan Recreation Parks Strategic Plan Parkland Acquisition Strategy Bruce Trail Strategy Guelph Radial Trail Downtown Acton Study (planning) Acton Quarry After-Use Plans Invasive Species Strategy Green Infrastructure Management Plan Tree Canopy Projects/Initiatives Town Owned Properties (Churchill Road)
<b>Risks</b>	-limits of land use with respect to permits and former landfill, environmental restricted areas (i.e. wetlands) -lack of funding for implementation -Public expectations on types of uses -NEC limitations -Enforcement for unauthorized uses

<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Master Plan of Proposed features and uses</li> <li>- Proposed trail network</li> <li>- opportunities for community stewardship</li> <li>- opportunities for nature interpretation &amp; education</li> <li>- Cost Estimates and Implementation Strategy</li> </ul>
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#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	Confidential Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RP-2017-0018</li> <li>• RP-2019-0014</li> <li>• RP-2020-0011</li> <li>• RP-2021-0008</li> </ul> Acton Quarry After Use Plans/Agreements
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	n/a
<b>Capital Project:</b>	Glen Lawson Lands Master Plan 8500-22-2301 Glen Lawson Lands Env Assess 8500-22-1802



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Complete Fairy Lake Water Quality Study and Implementation Strategy [Mayor Priority]
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
Complete the Fairy Lake Water Quality Study (FLWQS) and implementation Strategy to operationalize Council's and the public's priorities, including planning for a future Prospect Park/Fairy Lake Recreational Master Plan. The original FLWQS is nearing completion, but is being integrated into the Mayor's Priority Black Creek Advisory Group work prior to bringing it to Council for final approval.	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
February 2025: Concern about timing and further delays due to increased coordination (BCAG, CVC/Region Proposal).	
<b>Timing</b>	<p>Water Quality Study is complete and final recommendations are being prepared for Council approval.</p> <p>Due to the coordination with the Mayor's Black Creek Advisory Group and the funding proposal for Black Creek Subwatershed Study implementation, as submitted by CVC to Halton Region, Staff have continued to work with the Black Creek Advisory Committee, Ward Councillors and the Staff Technical Group and intend to bring the final implementation Approach for Council approval Late Q1 or early Q2.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>Phase 1 implementation Capital Budget of \$50,000 already approved for 2024. Will be allocated as part of Final Strategy. Future amounts of \$50,000 (2025) and \$32,000 (2026) subject to Council approval. Phase 2 of \$50,000 funding is unfunded in Staff Recommended 2025 Budget. Current forecast amounts will not be sufficient to implement all recommended actions. Additional Management Actions have not been costed and will require additional funding. Some future Trails at Fairy Lake are identified in the Capital Forecast.</p> <p>2025 FUNDING UPDATE: No additional funds approved in 2025 Budget.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>No dedicated staff is available to manage the project's ongoing multi-year implementation. Thus far, the development of the study was led by the Director of Parks, Community Development &amp; Environment. However, the study was largely completed by an external consultant with input from a cross departmental/agency team. The transition to implementation will require additional staff resources. Staff time for capital projects will be allocated as part of annual work programs subject to Council approval of future capital budgets.</p>



<b>Linkages</b>	Active Transportation Master Plan Invasive Species Strategy Green Infrastructure Management Plan Stormwater Master Plan Tree Canopy Projects/Initiatives Recreation & Parks Strategic Plan Region of Halton WWTP/WTP Initiatives
<b>Risks</b>	- inadequate resources to implement recommendations - recreational use and ecological goal conflicts - degradation of Fairy Lake Water Quality and associated impacts to wildlife, ecology and recreation
<b>Outcomes</b>	- final recommended management approach for Fairy Lake - Implementation strategy and projects referred to Black Creek Advisory Group

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	RP-2021-0003 RP-2023-010 MEM-CSE-2024-006
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Previous water Quality Study (2009) 2020 Water Quality Study Update <a href="https://letstalkhaltonhills.ca/fairy-lake">https://letstalkhaltonhills.ca/fairy-lake</a>
<b>Capital Project:</b>	8500-11-1603 Fairy Lake Water Quality Study Implementation 8500-10-2001 Fairy Lake Water Quality Monitoring (complete) 8500-10-2101 Fairy Lake Water Quality CVC Partnership (complete) Fairy Lake Retaining Walls (TPW) 8500-10-2101 Fairy Lake Water Quality – CVC Partnership (complete)



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Complete an update to the 2004 Hungry Hollow Management Plan
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
Completion of an update to the 2004 Hungry Hollow Management Plan to address future priorities, recreational use, ecological impacts/priorities and potential management and operational approaches.	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
February 2025: Council happy to see project included.	
<b>Timing</b>	Multi-year Project commencement may be delayed past Q1 due to higher-than-expected volume of development applications, and limited staff resources . Project is still expected to commence in 2025 but start may be further delayed due to staff capacity.
<b>Funding</b>	Capital Budget approved in amount of \$75,000 in 2024 Future Management Outcomes and Recommendations are not captured in the Capital Forecast. 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Landscape Architect not included in 2025 Budget
<b>Staffing</b>	Staff time is being allocated as part of 2025 Work Program. Due to staff vacancies and workload, the start of this project was delayed. Project commencement may be delayed due to staff capacity.
<b>Linkages</b>	Active Transportation Master Plan Invasive Species Strategy Green Infrastructure Management Plan Stormwater Master Plan Tree Canopy Projects/Initiatives Recreation & Parks Strategic Plan CVC's Centre for Biodiversity / SNAP
<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study reveals higher than expected impacts of recreational use</li> <li>- Community recreation expectations not achievable without impacting natural functions</li> <li>- More significant degradation of natural areas (not related to recreational use)</li> <li>- Affordability of Management approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Updated Management or Operational Recommendations</li> <li>- Recommendations for Recreational Use</li> </ul>

**Implementation Support:**

<b>Council Report:</b>	R-2004-0016
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Hungry Hollow Management Plan 2004
<b>Capital Project:</b>	Hungry Hollow Management Plan Update 8500-22-2401



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Increase public access to parks, natural areas and green spaces

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Advance Implementation of the Credit River Trail Strategy
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
Implementation of the Credit Valley Trail Strategy (CVC Lead) through projects where the alignment of the proposed trail route is on Town Properties. Includes incremental steps to advance strategy and also support CVC where possible on overall implementation. Currently, sections of the Credit Valley Trail in Halton Hills include the McNab Park trail along the Credit River, and the Upper Canada College Partnership Trail, as well as sections of the Credit Valley Footpath (Bruce Trail).	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	This project is a long term project to be implemented with CVC over time. Some relevant portions are identified in future capital forecasts. UCC Trail Phase 1 completed a section of the CVT.
<b>Funding</b>	There is no specific Town funding currently approved. Project 8500-24-0105 UCC Trail Phase 2 is unfunded in 2025 Staff Recommended Budget due to funding constraints. Larger scale future projects have not been costed or included in the forecast. The funding for this trail is part of the Credit Valley Foundation's Fundraising efforts. Feasibility/technical details are required to advance funding or fundraising for major features or land acquisition/agreements. 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Feasibility Study for Credit River Crossing (Project 8500-24-0105 UCC Trail Phase 2) was not funded in 2025 Capital Budget so no further work will occur until funding is approved (2026 Request).
<b>Staffing</b>	Staff currently participate on multiple subcommittees of the CVT implementation strategy. Staffing for specific capital projects would be put in place as part of annual work programs (subject to budget approval).
<b>Linkages</b>	Active Transportation Master Plan Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan Bruce Trail Strategy Barber Mill & Barber Dynamo properties Norval & Glen Williams Secondary Plans
<b>Risks</b>	Lack of capital funding Inadequate staff resources Property Ownership constraints Technical Feasibility not determined Trail is not implemented in Town of Halton Hills

<b>Outcomes</b>	Regional Trail System (partnership with CVC) Indigenous Partnerships Truth and Reconciliation Program goals Trail Nodes/Features at Town Parks
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#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	Council Presentation August 28, 2017. Council involvement as part of CVC's Credit Valley Trail Committee or as CVC Board member.
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	CVC's CVT Strategy - endorsed by CVC Board and Municipal Partners Letter <a href="https://creditvalleytrail.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Credit-Valley-Trail-Strategy.pdf">https://creditvalleytrail.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Credit-Valley-Trail-Strategy.pdf</a>
<b>Capital Project:</b>	none approved



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Protect and enhance biodiversity, the river valley watershed, and Niagara Escarpment landforms

**Supporting Action,  
Project or Initiative:**

Enhance the Management and Operations for the Town's Natural Assets and Open Space Areas

**Lead Department:**

Community Services

**Division:**

Parks, Community Development & Environment

**Description and Status Summary**

This program is focused on various projects related to the Town's Natural Environment, Open Spaces, and Natural Assets, and is focused on building knowledge of how these areas will benefit and be impacted from improved management and identify impacts of inaction. This includes the development and implementation of the Green Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (GIAMP), including implementation of continuous improvement actions, developing/updating and implementing associated management and operational plans such as: Natural Environment Action Plan (incl. biodiversity) and Invasive Species Management Plan, Hungry Hollow Management Plan, etc.

**Committee Review****Timing**

Key deliverables underway include:

- 1) Develop Green Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (GIAMP) – in progress – expected completion Q4 2025/Q1 2026. Work is ongoing.
- 2) Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) – Background technical report Q4 2024; if approved, ISMP to begin ~Q1 2025 and finish in 2026. RFQ to be released Q1. Staff have also applied for additional external funding to enhance/support invasive species management - waiting for funding decisions.
- 3) Natural Environment Action Plan (NEAP) – background technical studies to begin in 2025. Biodiversity Project has commenced.
- 4) Implementation of all plans – 2026+

**Funding**

- 1) GIAMP Inventory/Assessment activities are funded; remaining GIAMP development activities requested in 2025 budget.
  - 2) Funding for the ISMP is requested in 2025 capital budget to develop plan. Intend to apply for additional funding grant.
  - 3) Technical studies for the NEAP are funded through existing capital.
  - 4) Implementation of all plans will use existing resources and additional resources needed will be requested in future budgets (2026+)
- 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: GIAMP & ISMP funding approved in 2025 budget.

**Staffing**

Existing staff time is allocated in 2025 for all projects identified. Additional staffing requirements TBD after plans are developed

<b>Linkages</b>	<p>This program and the initiatives above are closely linked to many other items including: Corporate Asset Management Plan/Policy, Asset Management Information System, Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Low Carbon Transition Strategy, natural/enhanced asset operational plans such as Hungry Hollow Management Plan, Natural Environment Action Plan, Invasive Species Management Plan, Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Fairy Lake Water Quality Study, Black Creek Subwatershed Study (BCSWS), Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, the Privately Owned Tree Management Strategy, Town By-Laws, and the Official Plan.</p> <p>A high level of cross departmental coordination is required to advance the projects and initiatives within this program.</p>
<b>Risks</b>	<p>There are a variety of risks that cover a range of themes including compliance, funding, knowledge gaps, costs, biodiversity, public services, public perception, ecosystem services, and staff workload, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Non-compliance with provincial legislation.</li> <li>2. Missed funding opportunities.</li> <li>3. Lack of knowledge about services provided by green infrastructure/natural assets.</li> <li>4. Inability to set targets for natural assets due to unknown current levels.</li> <li>5. Higher costs for landowners and the Town to address various issues.</li> <li>6. Reduced species diversity and increased monocultures of invasive species.</li> <li>7. Reduced recreational services and public enjoyment of spaces.</li> <li>8. Negative public pressure and increased volume of complaints.</li> <li>9. Reduction of ecosystem services leading to higher costs for alternatives.</li> <li>10. Inadequate staff resources</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Meet legislated requirements, data-driven financial planning, better understanding of levels of service, targets and metrics identified, gaps identified, informed operational practices</li> <li>2) Protection of natural assets, informed management decisions, data-driven budget development, more effective use of resources – prioritized management</li> <li>3) Protection and enhancement of natural/enhanced assets, targets and metrics established, actions prioritized, informed management/operational practices</li> </ol>

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	Memorandum No. CSE-2024-008 Memorandum No. CSE-2024-007
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Asset Management Policy Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Low Carbon Transition Strategy
<b>Capital Project:</b>	<p>1801-10-2402 - Natural Asset Management Plan (2024/25 Inventory/Valuation work);</p> <p>1801- 22-2502 Natural Assets Management Plan (2025 Plan remaining work)</p> <p>1801-22-0104 - Tree Canopy Management (2024 Technical Study);</p> <p>1801-22-2503 Invasive Species Management Plan (2025 Plan/Prioritization Tool)</p> <p>7300-10-1902 - CC adv. Strategy (Biodiversity Study);</p> <p>1410-22-0101 - Low Carbon Transition Strat. Implementation (Natural Environment Technical/Background Study)</p>



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Protect and enhance biodiversity, the river valley watershed, and Niagara Escarpment landforms

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Protect and Enhance the Town's Tree Canopy
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
<p>This initiative is a joint effort by Community Services (Parks , Community Development &amp; Environment) and Transportation and Public Works, as well as other departments for some specific items. The program and projects are intended to increase or preserve the Town's Tree Canopy, both public and private and highlights the Town's level of support and desire to protect and enhance the tree canopy.</p> <p>This initiative includes the implementation of the Privately Owned Tree Management Strategy (POTMS)/Tree Canopy Management Program and Park and Street Tree Management. Key initiatives for 2025-26 include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Reporting on implementation of POTMS and seeking Council direction on Phase 3 actions (ie. Explore Tree Protection by-law).</li><li>2) Implementing the Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC) Funded Tree Planting Project (pending funding approval) to plant 2600 trees on Town-owned land over 2 years</li><li>3) Continued implementation of the POTMS Phase 1 &amp; 2 actions</li><li>4) Street and Park Tree planting recommendations</li></ol>	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
February 2025: Comments noted increased interest in private tree protection through GO Station Secondary Plan Steering Committee / Public Consultation. Future staff report to address.	
<b>Timing</b>	Ongoing. Report to council in 2025; GCCC project runs 2025-2027.
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding for tree planting is requested annually as part of capital budget</li><li>• POTMS project funding is requested project by project and/or integrated as a component of other programs (ie. Tree Canopy Management, Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) Implementation, community engagement/environmental stewardship) - need to convert one time funding to permanent for ongoing work past 2025</li><li>• Limited Forestry Operations funding is provided through Public Works staffing focused on street and park trees.</li></ul> <p>2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Associated budgets were approved for 2025.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Existing staffing is sufficient for basic level of engagement/public outreach work</li><li>• If GCCC funding application is approved, a P/T Tree project coordinator is 100% funded through that grant and is needed to deliver the project</li><li>• Transportation and Public Works staff have recently reorganized staffing to create a small forestry/horticulture/open space operations team. However, this change only clarified roles and increased focus on forestry, without any additional resources or service level changes. Additional staffing would be required to implement a full forestry operations team.</li><li>• Additional staffing required to implement POTMS Phase 3 actions.</li></ul>



<b>Linkages</b>	Green Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, CCAP, Low Carbon Transition Strategy, natural/enhanced asset operational plans (e.g. Hungry Hollow Management Plan), Natural Environment Action Plan, Invasive Species Management Plan, Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan, Fairy Lake Water Quality Study, Black Creek Subwatershed Study (BCSWS), Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan
<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decline in tree canopy cover</li> <li>• Reduction in biodiversity and habitat</li> <li>• Reduction in ecosystem services provided by trees (stormwater quality and quantity management, flood and extreme heat mitigation, air pollution removal, carbon storage, recreation, shade/UV protection, health benefits, aesthetics, etc.)</li> <li>• Failing to meet resident service expectations</li> <li>• Invasive species, resources, tree removals, Region's role change – by-law and Regional forests, weather/climate change (ie. ice storms, flooding, extreme heat, droughts)</li> <li>• Potential conflict between resident expectations, infrastructure, development and safety (i.e., sight lines, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained or increased canopy cover; canopy cover in critical areas (e.g. more urban, high heat island, vulnerable communities)</li> </ul>

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	ADMIN-2022-0003 Memorandum No. CSE-2024-008 Memorandum No. CSE-2024-007
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privately-Owned Tree Management Strategy</li> <li>• Low Carbon Transition Strategy</li> <li>• Climate Change Adaptation Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Project:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7300-10-1901 - Climate Change Action Implementation</li> <li>• 1801-22-0104 Tree Canopy Management</li> <li>• 8500-11-0115 Parks Tree Planting (Various Locations)</li> <li>• 6500-11-1517 Tree Planting &amp; Replacement</li> <li>• Community Engagement - Environmental Stewardship (One-Time) 25-31</li> </ul>



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Protect and enhance biodiversity, the river valley watershed, and Niagara Escarpment landforms

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Achieve and Maintain Bird Friendly Community Designation
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
<p>This initiative aims to enhance the Town's environment to support bird populations and biodiversity by working towards the Town achieving and maintaining a Bird Friendly designation. This program designates municipalities that meet or exceed standards in reducing threats to birds, protecting and restoring natural habitats, and increasing climate resiliency.</p> <p>It includes actions to maintain or advance bird friendly designation and implement additional actions that deliver on existing programs/plans/strategies and/or as directed by Council. Current activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pilot bird decals and bird strike tracking to reduce bird collision at Town facilities.</li> <li>2) Campaign to name a Town bird (Library leading in partnership with Environment).</li> <li>3) Engage the community and raise awareness around the role of birds in a healthy biodiverse ecosystem and actions they can take to support birds.</li> <li>4) Report to Council/Council committees on designation progress and opportunities to advance designation.</li> </ol> <p>The Town received entry level Bird Friendly Designation in 2022 and is close to achieving the next level designation.</p>	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<p>A number of initiatives are planned for 2024 (Pilot bird decals and tracking) and 2025 (Town bird campaign). Community engagement is ongoing as part of environmental engagement program. Reporting to Council is planned for late 2025 to provide a status update and/or any future funding required.</p> <p>In Q1 2025, Bird decals installed at Action Public Library Branch and monitoring activities currently being piloted at the Acton branch and Gellert Community Centre. Campaign to name a Town Bird project in support of Bird Friendly Halton Hills has launched (Feb 17th). Development of bird-related engagement materials to support Outreach Events are in progress and will be completed in Q1.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>Initial work for the Pilot project is funded. However, funding would be required for implementation at other facilities. No funding is required for the campaign for a Town bird. Basic community engagement will be funded through one time budget requests (2024-2025) through Community Engagement - Environmental Stewardship (One-Time) –however need to convert one time funding to permanent for ongoing work past 2025.</p> <p>Additional actions will require resources.</p> <p>2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Associated budget was approved for 2025 to support this initiative.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>Existing staff – Environment, Facilities, Library.</p> <p>Additional actions directed as a result of Council/Committee report will likely require further resources.</p>
<b>Linkages</b>	Natural Environment Action Plan (forthcoming), Town By-laws, Official Plan

<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced biodiversity</li> <li>• Increasing bird window strikes</li> <li>• Increased public concern over visible bird fatalities – especially at Town facilities</li> <li>• Lack of support for local organizations – reputational risks</li> <li>• Reduced ecosystem services</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced Recognition as a Bird Friendly Community</li> <li>• Less window bird strikes at Town facilities</li> <li>• Increased awareness and community action in support of biodiversity</li> <li>• Public perception and visitor experience at Town facilities related to birds and the natural environment is improved</li> </ul>

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	Council Resolution May 8, 2023
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	N/A
<b>Capital Project:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-time operating Environmental Stewardship (One-Time) 25-31</li> </ul>



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Preserve built and natural heritage features of our communities

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Continue to partner with Conservation Authorities and support implementation of programs such as Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (SNAP) programs.
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Community Services
<b>Division:</b>	Parks, Community Development & Environment
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
<p>This project includes ongoing support for and implementation of the existing SNAP project (Hungry Hollow) as well as potential for future SNAP projects, if approved by Council. SNAPs are developed in partnership with CVC for key natural areas within existing populated areas that would benefit from a focused strategy and community based approach to enhancements.</p> <p>Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans (SNAP) are comprehensive initiatives aimed at enhancing the environmental, social, and economic resilience of the neighbourhood. They focus on stewardship of natural areas, public realm enhancements, sustainable actions on private properties, and robust community engagement. The Hungry Hollow SNAP plan includes 28 recommended actions organized under five place-based goals and involves collaboration between various stakeholders, including Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), the Town of Halton Hills, Halton Region, and local residents. Residents and local stakeholders were actively engaged in the development of the action plan, ensuring it meets local needs while supporting important environmental objectives. Overall, SNAP programs address environmental sustainability and foster community cohesion and resilience.</p>	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<p>The Hungry Hollow SNAP is well established, has been ongoing for a number of years (since 2020). Community engagement and activities are expected to continue for at least another year. Due to unfunded capital projects for 2025 and beyond, this project is currently on hold, in terms of the Town's implementation of infrastructure-related improvements.</p> <p>Current (approved) capital projects will be completed in 2025.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>Staff involvement is funded through annual operating budgets.</p> <p>2025 SNAP Capital Budget for Parks is unfunded in the Staff Recommended Budget and Mayor's Budget. There is one additional parks capital project in 2026 that is also not funded in the Budget Forecast.</p> <p>Currently unfunded capital projects would need to be approved for this project to continue.</p> <p>2025 FUNDING UPDATE: Future Capital works associated with SNAP are paused since they were not approved as part of the final 2025 Budget.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>Through a cross-departmental approach, Town staff level of involvement is limited to assisting with coordination and communications and participating in various implementation committees– as CVC is the project lead. Staffing for capital project implementation is allocated as part of the annual work program subject to Council budget approvals.</p> <p>Staff will continue to provide input to the SNAP Sub-Committees as part of their regular work programs/committee membership. Future SNAP (i.e. Fairy Lake) will be determined as work programs and approaches are refined dependent on availability of staff resources.</p>

<b>Linkages</b>	Active Transportation Master Plan Invasive Species Strategy Green Infrastructure Management Plan Stormwater Master Plan Tree Canopy Projects/Initiatives Recreation & Parks Strategic Plan CVC's Centre for Biodiversity
<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Town's capital projects are unfunded, limiting implementation.</li> <li>- Implementation of community priorities is not completed</li> <li>- Community involvement and engagement in the SNAP area declines</li> <li>- Environmental degradation increases</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing Community Engagement (153 events and 3,637 participants since 2020)</li> <li>- Minor Park capital improvements (21 community projects to date)</li> <li>- Partnership with CVC</li> <li>- Improvements to natural areas (6110 trees planted, 277 actions on private property, 1.2ha of planted areas, 4.99 hectares of invasives removed since 2020).</li> </ul>

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	PLS-2018-0071 ADMIN-2020-0036
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Hungry Hollow SNAP Final Report
<b>Capital Project:</b>	8500-11-0119 SNAP Implementation Parks



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Preserve built and natural heritage features of our communities

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Complete Bill 23 Heritage Strategy
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Planning & Development
<b>Division:</b>	Planning Policy
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
<p>Bill 23 Heritage Strategy was developed to respond to legislative changes to the Ontario Heritage Act, which will result in removal of listed properties from the Heritage Register, now by January 1, 2027 (due to revisions to the timeline through Bill 200). Staff have pivoted to focus significantly on individual property research and evaluation and have superceded original estimates in the number of properties to be designated. Council has designated over 50 properties under the Ontario Heritage Act through this strategy and staff continues to review the over 700 listed properties on the Heritage Register. Staff will continue to review and evaluate properties through to January 1, 2027 and then review the Bill 23 Heritage Strategy at that time.</p>	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<p>This has been ongoing since Council's adoption in March 2023, and will continue as planned until January 1, 2027, at which time the strategy will be revisited moving forward.</p> <p>Work is ongoing.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>The Bill 23 Heritage Strategy has been implemented by staff without additional budget impacts since early 2023. However, the strategy has impacted the ability of staff to order designation plaques for each property owner as the existing budget is below what is required. As a result, production of these plaques will be delayed strategically. Additional designations have also created new pressure on the Heritage Property Grant Program; staff have requested an additional \$15,000 in the 2025 budget to respond to this need and will revisit the financial asks on this program for 2026 and beyond. Additional funding to support heritage preservation is available for eligible properties through the Community Improvement Plan (CIP).</p> <p>2025 FUNDING UPDATE: 2025 Budget Request was approved.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>Staff time is being allocated as part of 2025 Work Program. The Bill 23 Heritage Strategy has resulted in a significant workload for existing staff. Additional staffing resources would increase the number of potential designations under the Ontario Heritage Act.</p>
<b>Linkages</b>	<p>Cultural Heritage Strategy Official Plan Update Secondary Plans (New/Updates) Community Improvement Plan (CIP)</p>

<b>Risks</b>	This project is an essential foundation as required by Provincial planning legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources as well as the identification, protection and management of cultural heritage landscapes. Without designation, on January 1, 2027, listed properties will be removed from the Heritage Register and be at risk for demolition. Staff will lose the ability to comment on development applications for previously listed properties and to designate those properties in a development application due to legislative changes through Bill 23.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Since the implementation of the Bill 23 Heritage Strategy, approximately 50 properties have been recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Heritage Halton Hills has also recommended the removal of 130 non-priority properties from the Heritage Register, and continues to review staff's Research & Evaluation Reports for properties recommended for designation.

**Implementation Support:**

<b>Council Report:</b>	PD-2023-010, PD-2024-049, and PD-2024-081
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Bill 23 Heritage Strategy
<b>Capital Project:</b>	



## Natural Areas and Heritage

### Preserve built and natural heritage features of our communities

<b>Supporting Action, Project or Initiative:</b>	Implement Cultural Heritage Strategy
<b>Lead Department:</b>	Planning & Development
<b>Division:</b>	Planning Policy
<b>Description and Status Summary</b>	
<p>The Capital Forecast includes funding for a Community Consultation Strategy for Historic Context Statements in 2026, as well as a Cultural Resource Vulnerability Assessment and Strategy in 2026. An update to the Cultural Heritage Strategy is projected for 2032.</p> <p>Now that the Cultural Heritage Strategy has been completed, this project will outline and define the Implementation Strategy to achieve the recommendations gradually over time. The recommendations will be implemented primarily at the staff level, with consultant assistance identified to date for Cultural Heritage Context Statements &amp; Vulnerability Assessment &amp; Strategy (identified in Capital Forecast). Staff have been making progress with several of the recommendations identified in the Cultural Heritage Strategy, including the development of a program for Historic Context Statements (5.1.1), establishing a process for heritage evaluation (5.2.2), engaging an individual to research listed properties (5.2.3), developing an inventory of character areas of significance (5.3.1), establishing farmstead-specific criteria (5.4.2.1), undertaking the first steps in evaluating historic schoolhouses for designation (5.4.4.1), and revising the Heritage Halton Hills webpage for clarity (5.5.3).</p>	
<b>Committee Review</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	The Cultural Heritage Strategy (CHS) was adopted in September 2023; staff have begun implementing several recommendations within the CHS, including Historic Context Statements, individual property evaluation, farmstead criteria, and historic community institutions. Future recommendations will continue to be implemented in conjunction with the Bill 23 Heritage Strategy. Work is ongoing.
<b>Funding</b>	This work is ongoing at the staff level, however will result in future needs assessments relating to various recommendations., including in particular Climate Change, Indigenous Engagement, and Cultural Economic Development 2025 FUNDING UPDATE: 2025 Budget request was approved.
<b>Staffing</b>	Staff time is being allocated as part of 2025 Work Program.
<b>Linkages</b>	Bill 23 Heritage Strategy Official Plan Update Secondary Plans (New/Updates) Cultural Master Plan Economic Development and Tourism Strategy



<b>Risks</b>	Without implementation of the Cultural Heritage Strategy, which includes 32 recommendations to direct the heritage program, significant character areas and individual properties will not be evaluated to identify their value and opportunities for long-term conservation. The CHS recommends staff also look at Indigenous engagement, farmsteads, climate change strategies, historic community institutions, and economic development, as well as specific program-related recommendations to improve how the public is served.
<b>Outcomes</b>	The Cultural Heritage Strategy has provided direction for staff to implement several recommendations regarding the Town's heritage program, including looking at character areas, individual properties, policies, and Indigenous relations.

#### Implementation Support:

<b>Council Report:</b>	PD-2021-0032, PD-2023-054
<b>Approved Strategy:</b>	Halton Hills Cultural Heritage Strategy: Planning for Heritage in an Evolving Landscape ("Cultural Heritage Strategy")
<b>Capital Project:</b>	7100-22-2101