



TOWN OF
HALTON HILLS
Working Together Working for You!

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Jennifer Spence

DATE: July 28, 2025

MEMO NO.: CSE-2025-006

SUBJECT: 2025 Climate Change Investment Fund Allocations

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide Council with an overview of the 2025 Climate Change Investment Fund (CCIF) allocations.

Going forward, in light of recent Council-approved updates to the Community Grant Program, the “Climate Change Investment Fund” will be known as the “Environmental Stewardship” projects funding stream and be integrated into the broader Community Grant Program.

BACKGROUND:

The CCIF supports community organizations that undertake projects in Halton Hills aligning with Council’s Strategic Plan, especially the Vision of Halton Hills as a “nature-rich” community, and Council’s priority areas of Natural Areas and Heritage; Infrastructure and Asset Management, and Safe and Welcoming Community.

To maximize and leverage community and volunteer capacity and engagement, the Fund provides micro-grants (up to \$2,500 per project) to eligible projects that support volunteer driven projects. Funding covers expenses such as purchasing plants, trees, signage, supplies educational materials, hosting environmental workshops, and/or honorariums for guest speakers.

Projects funded through the CCIF support community engagement, connect residents with nature, enhance natural assets, and promote opportunities to bring people together to contribute to environmental stewardship and community environmental goals.

The CCIF, formerly the Community Sustainability Investment Fund (2014-2020), has provided \$108,625 in funding to almost 90 community projects since it was first offered. This modest funding has leveraged additional cash and in-kind contributions of \$904,138.50. In other words, each \$1 awarded by the Town has translated into about \$8.00, or an 800% increase. Throughout its history, the CCIF program has been very successful and has generated widespread positive benefits throughout Halton Hills.

Applications are evaluated based on transparent criteria including:

- Alignment with Council's Strategic Plan and other approved plans;
- Engagement of volunteers and residents to participate in the project; and
- Provision of broader community benefits.

CCIF applications go through the following process:

- Submissions are reviewed for eligibility and confirmed that duplicate funding has not been granted through other Town programs;
- Projects are scored by Town staff individually and scores are aggregated;
- Town staff review and discuss scores together and determine funding allocations;
- Projects recommended for funding are approved by the Commissioner of Community Services under delegated authority;
- Grant recipients are informed of their allocated funding through a formal letter, as well as the conditions of the funding - including the completion of the project within 14 months and submitting a final report to Town staff; and
- Overview of funded applications is provided to Council via a Memorandum.

COMMENTS:

The 2025 CCIF application in-take opened on February 28 and closed on May 8, 2025. The program was promoted across all Town communication channels with additional support through online advertisements. It was promoted at three community events and via email to over 140 community volunteer organizations. Potential applicants were encouraged to discuss their project with staff prior to submitting their application.

Seven applications were received, evaluated and approved to receive funding. However, one applicant withdrew before funds were awarded. The remaining six projects were awarded to receive funding totaling \$12,625.00 (Table 1). Supporting these projects leverages community investment (additional cash and in-kind contributions) of \$29,138.50. This includes other external grant funding, donations, and volunteer time that the community group has secured for their project. The approved funding recommendations are within the designated \$15,000 capital budget.

These volunteer-driven projects include environmental educational workshops, native tree, shrub and vegetable plantings, pollinator habitats, new communication material and tools to support community environmental projects. More details on each project are included in Table 1, below.

Table 1: 2025 Funded Projects

Group Name and Description of Project	Total Project Value	CCIF Funding Total
Trees for Halton Hills and Pickleball Association – Phase 2 of the Emmerson Park project of planting five caliper trees and shrubs to increase the urban tree canopy, and wind and shade protection.	\$3,317.50	\$2,500.00
Halton Environmental Network – Developing a mini-food forest within the Acton Community Garden to grow food within a hierarchy of food-producing trees, bushes, ground cover planting stock, and hosting workshops to provide hands on learning of the mini-food forest.	\$5,020.00	\$2,500.00
Halton Hills Climate Action – To host two professionally-led workshops discussing the effects of climate change, sharing ideas and promoting climate programs, and learning about actions to build a resilient community.	\$5,000.00	\$2,500.00
Halton Hills Nature – To develop a strategic communication outreach plan for environmental audiences by creating a shared environmental online hub for local groups, to increase social media posts to enhance attendance, to co-create toolkits, templates and content calendar to guide future outreach thus amplifying visibility of local environmental events, organizations, and volunteer opportunities.	\$5,920.00	\$1,500.00
Trees for Halton Hills - To plant three caliper trees with new signage to identify the trees in the Arboretum.	\$2,056.00	\$1,425.00
Bird Friendly Halton Hills – To create three to five new habitat enhancement sites in consultation with Town staff, purchase soil and pots for giveaways, supplies for workshops with the Halton Hills Public Library (upcycled apparel, 3D-printed items, educational crafts, etc.), create and distribute informational cards, and upcycled items created and distributed to raise awareness of the new Official	\$7,825.00	\$2,200.00

Town Bird, develop a new Bird Friendly Halton Hills logo.		
Total	\$29,138.50	\$12,625.00

As part of regular continuous improvement, going forward, the CCIF program is integrating with the Community Grant Program in 2026. This will create program delivery efficiencies and improved customer experience. Subject to Council Budget approval, the CCIF will become a distinct funding stream in the Community Grant Program, and be renamed as “Environmental Stewardship” projects, as outlined in Report No [CSE-2025-025](#).

CONCLUSION:

The Town's CCIF supports and leverages community projects that support Council's Strategic Plan and environmental goals and priorities. These projects aim to enhance local environmental health and promote collaboration, community engagement and environmental stewardship to support a higher quality of life in Halton Hills.

Reviewed and approved by,

Michelle Bourdeau, Manager of Environment & Climate

Kevin Okimi, Director of Parks, Community Development & Environment

Damian Szybalski, Commissioner of Community Services

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer