Maplewood in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area

Past History and Future Options

April 2012
Maplewood - Past, Present and Future Options

1.0 Introduction

Maplewood (previously known as the Resource Management Centre) is a rental hall facility owned by the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA). It is located at 917 and 921 Artaban Road within Town of Ancaster and in the Dundas Valley. See Figures No. 1 through 5 attached.

Due to the age of the facility it will require major upgrades to meet current standards for any proposed use. The facility has impacts on the HCA budget and the adjacent environment.

This report outlines the history of the facility and explores options for its future including related costs and benefits.

2.0 Past History

2.1 Dundas Lions Club Summer Camp 1918 - 1948

Some limited information in HCA files indicates that this property was originally developed as a summer camp by the Lions Club in about 1918. It was owned by the Club for about 30 years until 1948. The property had no water or electrical services at that time. There is no information regarding structures on the property during that time period.

2.2 Camp Artaban 1948 - 1969

The Anglican Diocese purchased this property in June 1948. It further developed the camp under the direction of Padre Holmes who named it Camp Artaban and operated it until 1969. (Artaban is the name of a legendary 4th Magi, who never arrived in Bethlehem due his numerous stops to aid misfortunate persons along his journey).

Apparently electrical service was provided to the property during this period. Water service was still via a well and a septic tile bed was installed sometime during this period.

At some time during the period of operation the Anglican Church purchased the adjacent property, now known as Canterbury Hills. Canterbury Hills continues to operate as a retreat/training centre owned by the Anglican Church.

2.3 Resource Management Centre 1969 - 1993

The HCA purchased Camp Artaban on February 18, 1968. The purchase included property of 32.53 acres on Lot 46, Concession 1. The total purchase price was $30,000 at that time.
At the time of the acquisition, the HCA agreed to a special request from the Anglican Church and Camp Artaban founder. The ashes of Padre Holmes and Mrs. Holmes were interred under a stone at the on site chapel on September 22, 1991.

The buildings on the property at the time of the purchase were listed as follows:

a) Large frame dining and assembly hall with attached kitchen and partial basement for storage
b) Concrete Block Ablutions (washroom) building
c) Frame hospital building
d) Outside Chapel
e) Ten (10) Sleeping Cabins
f) Two (2) Frame Sheds

Pictures of the assembly hall at the time of the purchase
In 1969, a private contractor (Beatty Hall) estimated the replacement value for the Assembly Hall at $29,000.

The HCA renamed the facility the Resource Management Centre (RMC) and began to undertake a number of improvements and program implementation.

### 2.3.1 Caretakers Residence

In 1970 the HCA constructed a pre-fabricated 2 bedroom caretaker’s residence in close proximity to the dining hall. This person was responsible for the building and property upkeep in this vicinity. The building is still in existence and is currently used as a rental residence.

The first caretaker in the residence was Borge Gormer, 1971-1974; followed by Ian Day, then Marg Jolly. The residence was closed for a period of time and then Paul Wright was the last caretaker from 1989 to 1994. The position was eliminated after that year and it has been used as a rental residence since that time.
2.3.2 Assembly Hall Renovation/Enhancements 1973/74

In 1973/74 the HCA jacked up the assembly hall in order to construct a full walkout basement under it. A porch/patio was also constructed along east and south perimeter. The design and construction was by HCA staff (see Figure attached).

![Image of assembly hall renovation](image.png)

This renovation added 2690 square feet to the building (doubling it in size to a total of 5,380 square feet. The porch added an additional external area of 830 square feet.

2.3.3 Assembly Hall Renovation/Enhancement 1985

A further addition to the rear of the assembly hall was designed and constructed in 1985. This 1,200 square foot addition provided office space for the HCA Community Relation staff and improved the kitchen area for the hall. It is no longer used for offices.

2.3.4 Water Service 1985

When the HCA purchased the property, the water service on the property was from a well. This proved to be inadequate for the demands on the facility.

In 1982, the HCA requested that the City of Hamilton extend a water main to the facility. The City of Hamilton did not agree to the request.

In 1985, the HCA proceeded to design and construct a water main from the existing city water main on Sulphur Springs Road cross country to the RMC and also supplied two other private property owners along the route. The project consisted of over 2370 metres of pipe at a cost of about $70,000. (The private property owners served paid a portion of
the costs and are on separate metres.) The water service provides sufficient flows for the facility but does not provide fire protection.

2.3.5 Road Access

One of the most significant issues with this site is the access road. This is a gravel road 935 metres (3070 ft) long with very steep slopes and winding curves. It has roadside ditches for drainage. Rain, snow, frost and traffic constantly degraded the road due to the topography and road surface.

The HCA noted that it spent the following amounts maintaining the road:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Cost (2012$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>$4,884</td>
<td>$26,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>$7,160</td>
<td>$35,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$1,116</td>
<td>$  5,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1981, a school bus company refused to bring students into the RMC due to the dangerous and poor condition of the road. The HCA reconstructed about a 70 m length of the road to reduce the grades from 15% to 10% and improved some ditches and culverts as shown in the photo below.

The road continued to require annual maintenance and improvements. In 1986 a preliminary estimate for surfacing the road with asphalt and improving the ditches with sod and/or asphalt linings totalled $145,500. This project did not proceed due to costs and fears the asphalt would not have a long life span due to the slopes, drainage, traffic loading and frost regime.

In 1992 further ditch improvements were made, including the installation of 3 ditch inlets at a budgeted cost $7,500.
It is estimated that due to erosive forces this road deposits on the order of 65 cubic metres (10 tandem loads) of gravel/sand/dust into the local drainage courses causing an unknown environmental impact.

2.3.6 Outdoor Cabins

The cabins (10) existing at the time of the property purchase were small (10 ft x 10ft) unheated shelters for overnight camping. Eventually most of these deteriorated to a point where all but one was removed in 1989/90.

2.3.7 Outdoor Education 1970 – 1993

The Resource Management Centre was the base for the majority of the HCA outdoor education program.

Students attending the RMC during this period totalled 167,921. The peak attendance year was 1976 when 9761 student attended programs.

![RMC Outdoor Education Program](image)

The outdoor education at RMC ended in 1993 due to severe provincial funding cutbacks. The HCA was forced to virtually eliminate outdoor education in addition to numerous other programs.
Eventually an outdoor education program was re-established. The current plan has it centred at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre for the next 10 years.

2.4 Resource Management Centre Closure 1994 to 1995

Due to funding cut-backs the HCA mothballed all these facilities and called for proposals for a private tenant to utilize these facilities.

2.5 Discovery Centre – Nature Retreat/Yoga Centre for Personal Growth 1995-1998

Following a proposal call by the HCA in 1994, the Discovery Centre proposal was received and accepted by the HCA. This provided for a lease (pending NEC approval) for a 50 person day use facility within the existing buildings.

In 1996, the HCA applied to the NEC (see Figure 2 for Niagara Escarpment Plan designations) for an amendment to the 1976 Dundas Master Plan to include the approval of a Yoga Centre. As there were no objections, including from the Town of Ancaster, the NEC approved the amendment in late 1996. (The development zones within the Dundas Valley would include the RMC, Merrick Field Centre, Dundas Valley Trail Centre and the Main Administration Offices).

As a result a 5 year lease was finalized with the Discovery Centre with the provision for two 5 year extensions.

In late 1997, the Discovery Centre approached the HCA with a new business plan for the facility. It proposed an expansion or new area of 8,000 square feet with provision for overnight facilities for up to 30 guests at an estimated capital cost of $2.5 million dollars. The HCA noted that the applicant would need a new permit approval for from the NEC and the change to the Town of Ancaster Official Plan.

In April 1998 the NEC issued a permit for the new proposal, subject to the appeal period. However local resident appealed the NEC decision. A concerted opposition effort lead by local residents resulted in the HCA withdrawing their support for the proposal. As a result, by mutual consent the Discovery Centre lease and activity ended at the end of 1998.

2.6 Tapley Binet Private School 1999-2000

In response to a proposal call by the HCA in November 1998, this private school proposed to re-locate from the Town of Ancaster to the RMC. The lease for the existing facility which the school was using was about to expire in June 1999 and they wished to grow from 40 to 140 students and 15 teachers.

The HCA board approved this school proposal. In February 1999, the HCA approved a 5 year lease for Tapley Binet.

In May of 1999 the Town of Ancaster staff provided information that an Official Plan Amendment would be required for the school operation as well as a change of use permit. The
Planning department did not object to the use but cited the need for information regarding water supply, septic tile system and impact on the open space/ESA as a condition for their recommendation.

In January 2000 the NEC approved a permit application subject to the same conditions cited by the Ancaster Planning staff. In particular, they would only approve occupancy by 70 students until such time that septic tile system capacity was confirmed or improved.

The public again appealed this NEC permit decision. The opposition, lead by local citizens appeared at Ancaster Council to state their opposition to the OPA and NEC permit.

On March 20, 2000 Ancaster Council, passed a motion denying the Official Plan Amendment. The HCA Board decided not to appeal the decision to the Ontario Municipal Board and the proposal from Tapley Binet came to an end.

2.7  Maplewood - HCA Rental Operations 2003-2011 (see Figure 3 for Site Plan)

In 2002 the HCA decided to rebrand the RMC as “Maplewood”, a rental facility for meeting, banquets and wedding. It invested $25,776 in renovations/major maintenance and began to operate it in 2003. All marketing, sales and hall maintenance was by HCA staff with food services provided by private catering.

For several years, 2007 through 2010 the lower classroom was rented to the public school board for one small class of up to 10 special needs children. This generated up to $9,000 annually in revenues.

2.8  Financial Results 2003 - 2011

The net revenues from the Maplewood operation have been marginal at best as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$73,168.46</td>
<td>$73,059.40</td>
<td>$43,015.64</td>
<td>$66,327.81</td>
<td>$60,464.34</td>
<td>$74,738.81</td>
<td>$59,522.48</td>
<td>$75,755.48</td>
<td>$67,937.36</td>
<td>$593,989.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>$72,716.75</td>
<td>$56,145.12</td>
<td>$43,823.03</td>
<td>$56,028.51</td>
<td>$57,252.65</td>
<td>$56,981.56</td>
<td>$66,817.38</td>
<td>$59,195.51</td>
<td>$51,228.71</td>
<td>$520,189.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net</td>
<td>$451.71</td>
<td>$16,914.28</td>
<td>(807.39)</td>
<td>$10,299.30</td>
<td>$3,211.69</td>
<td>$17,757.25</td>
<td>(7,294.90)</td>
<td>$16,559.97</td>
<td>$16,708.65</td>
<td>$73,800.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noted that some of the expenses charged to this account support HCA wages and equipment. For 2011 the expenses for HCA wages totalled $12,975 (25% of total expenses) and for HCA fleet rentals $8,596 (17% of total expenses). Over the entire 2003 to 2011 period HCA wages totalled $129,034 (25% of the total expenses) and for HCA fleet rentals $63,036 (12% of the total expenses).

The above noted expenses do not include property taxes which are about $2,500 in 2012.
Major maintenance for the facility over the last five years as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49,151</td>
<td>32,900</td>
<td>25,874</td>
<td>16,322</td>
<td>3,143</td>
<td>127,390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evident from a review of the numbers above that this facility is losing money in the short and long terms.

3.0 Present Conditions

3.1 Residential Rental Building

The existing residential building is in good condition. It requires an annual average of $500 in repairs. It is currently vacant as the last tenant departed at the end of December 2011.

3.2 Maplewood Hall

The hall has been rented for meeting, banquets and weddings with a maximum attendance of 110 persons. As of January 2012, the existing hall is not been rented due to concerns with the existing sewage system and a review of the future potential uses of this facility/property. There are multiple issues relating to the building which require attention or upgrading as follows (a Table of these costs are shown in Section 5.2 on page 17).

3.2.1 Water Supply

The city water supply is adequate for the current needs although there are some concerns with a fluctuating pressure regime. In order to meet a new Hamilton by-law requirement a backflow prevention valve(s) will be required to be installed. The preliminary estimated cost for this is $1,500.

3.2.2 Sewage

Sewage for the residential building and Maplewood Hall is handled by a septic tile bed east of the main parking lot. HCA staff retained a consultant to undertake a study of the tile bed and determine its condition and capacity.

The tile bed was constructed in the early 1970’s, and is physically in good condition but is located in some marginal soils for this type of a sewage treatment system. It has a total tile length of only 436 metres but in order to meet the building code, it needs a total length of 1500 metres for a convetional tile bed – a deficit of 1064 metres. If a tertiary mechanical system was installed the total length of tile bed required would be 1050 metres – a deficit of 614 metres.

Assuming a tertiary system is used, the expansion would require an area of about 30 metres by 21 metres. This is problematic as the existing tile bed is surrounded by forest which would need to be removed and terrain which would require fill to level. The clearing of the forest would involve +/- 35 mature trees – mainly Sugar maples and
Norway maples (an invasive species). Fill required would average about 1 metre in depth and total volume of about 1,200 m$^3$.

It is not desirable to expand the tile bed in its current location due to negative environmental impacts as previously mentioned.

The establishment of a new septic system and tile bed at a new location is estimated at $473,000. This is due to steep terrain in the area of the building (see Figure 4). The closest area for the system is about 600 metres away. This would require the construction of a pumping station and 50 mm diameter force main. The preliminary cost for this would be about $342,000. A tile bed would be required at the end of the forcemain so the total project cost would be about $473,000. This proposal would be subject to obtaining all necessary permits.

3.2.3 Electrical Services

The existing overhead hydro-electric service provides sufficient capacity for the existing facility. It was constructed/upgraded sometime in the 1970’s when the caretaker’s residence was built. It is likely some upgrades and repairs will be required to the 40 year old hardware components over the next 10 to 20 years.

Because the line runs through a heavily forested area, tree clearing is required about every 5 to 6 years. Due to restricted access for vehicles in this area, the costs for tree clearing is in the range of $25,000.

3.2.4 Heating System

The existing heating system consists of an electric boiler installed in 1973/74 as part of the RMC renovation. This 40 year old low efficiency system will likely require upgrading in the near future as its useful lifespan comes to an end. An allowance of $10,000 is assumed for replacement.

3.2.5 Air Conditioning System

The current system consists of four (4) independent Typhoon ductless split systems which are over 25 years old and due for replacement. The replacement project has been put on hold until a determination on the future of this facility has been made. The estimated replacement cost for all four units is $18,000.

3.2.6 Windows

The 9 windows in the main building date from the 1974 renovation project. These are low efficiency slider type windows which should be replaced to take advantage of any upgrades to the heating/cooling system efficiencies. The estimated replacement cost for these 9 windows is $13,500.
3.2.7 Flooring

The main hall flooring dates from 2002 and is need of replacement due to wear and tear from rental activities. The gross floor area in the hall is about 220 square feet. Replacement cost is estimated at $14,500.

3.2.8 Roofing/Ceiling

The existing roof consists of asphalt shingles installed in 2002 and in good condition. Replacement will be required in about 15 years (2027).

Recently, when the hall is rented at capacity under certain weather conditions, it has been noted that condensation is forming on the inside ceiling. This is likely due to a lack of insulation and air circulation. If left unaddressed mould may become a problem. Interior renovations would impact the aesthetics of the open truss beams/cathedral ceiling. An exterior renovation would be preferred although an effective design is unknown at this time. An allowance of about $30,000 is estimated to address this issue.

3.2.9 Accessibility

The HCA constructed a concrete walkway and wooden ramp in 2002. This allows wheelchairs to access the porch at the upper hall level and enter a through a set of doors. A person would require assistance to navigate the entire route and doors.

A uni-sex handicap washroom is located on the hall level.

The accessibility access met the applicable building code at the time of construction. It may not meet the latest code or City of Hamilton desirable guidelines document.

3.2.10 Parking

The maximum occupancy of the hall is 110 persons. Assuming there are six staff on site for catering etc., then the desirable number of parking stalls is about 70. Due to the hilly terrain the parking lot adjacent to the hall only has a capacity of about 28 cars. Therefore another parking lot was constructed about 100 metres from the building at an elevation about 15 m lower than the building. This lot has capacity for about 32 cars. Any additional parking spaces would be extremely expensive due to extensive grading required to level an area and would have impacts on the adjacent natural environment.

A related issue is the service entrance which does not have an adjacent parking space forcing deliveries and caterers to either navigate the concrete walkway with their vehicle or carry materials into the building from the parking lot about 15 m from the building.
3.2.11 Access Road

The access road continues to be a maintenance issue due to steep grades and erosion of the road surface and ditches. It is estimated in the average year, HCA staff place 5 truck loads of gravel on it and spread and compact it at a cost of about $2,800.

The road also requires sanding and snow removal early in the day so as to allow the tenant in the residential house safe access/egress. Slippery situation can also arise during evening rentals requiring HCA to provide after-hours road clearing/sanding to allow users safe passage in and out of the facility. During these situations stress is placed on staff/equipment resources increasing annual operating costs. It is estimated that, in an average year, the costs for regular snow removal and sanding is about $6,840.

It is estimated that over the last 30 years there have been about 7 reported accidents on this road involving private vehicles and about 5 accidents involving HCA vehicles. Some of the HCA accidents involved the vehicle snowplowing/sanding. There have been no personal injuries reported in these vehicle accidents.

Upgrading the 935 m long road with asphalt and improved ditches would cost approximately $500,000.

4.0 Additional Information

4.1 Dundas Valley Master Plan

The Dundas Valley master plan was originally approved in 1976 and amended in October 1996. The area around the buildings is designated as a development zone and this designation was approved by the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Uses such as the existing rental facility are permitted in this area.

4.2 Environmental Characteristics (see Figure 5)

The Dundas Valley has been recognized as an ecologically significant area as follows

- a nodal park within the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve, recognized by UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Program
- A Carolinian Site, one of approximately 40 in Southern Ontario, recognized by the Province of Ontario
- An environmentally significant area fulfilling all six of the designation criteria, recognized by the City of Hamilton

The area around Maplewood is mostly forest and is recognized by Ontario as a provincial Area of Natural of Scientific Interest (ANSI) called Sulphur Creek. HCA owned old fields and orchards in the area are being allowed to revert to forest however Maplewood occupies a gap in the forest cover.
Within one (1) kilometre of Maplewood there is a potential for some significant species of flora and fauna.

Significant plants include 3 rare species within 300 metres of Maplewood include:

- broad beech fern
- American chestnut
- tulip tree

Four (4) significant nesting birds’ species make the local area a candidate “Important Bird Area” under an international program of the same name includes:

- Louisana waterthrush
- Hooded warbler
- Cerulean warbler
- Acadian Flycatcher

Regionally significant bird species which have good nesting habitat in the area include:

- sharp-shinned hawk
- Cooper’s hawk
- broad-winged hawk
- red-bellied woodpecker
- black-throated green warbler

Excellent habitat exists in the area for Jefferson’s salamander, pickerel frog and northern ringneck snake, regionally significant species of amphibians and reptiles.

Good habitat exists for the provincially significant southern flying squirrel, an uncommon mammal in the Dundas Valley.

### 4.2.1 Species at Risk

As part of the Dundas Valley, Maplewood falls within Jefferson salamander habitat. Specifically Spring creek pond, which is located near the building, as such falls within the 1km protected habitat for Jefferson salamander. Eastern Flowering Dogwood surveys were completed in 2011, the species was recorded near Maplewood, east of the parking lot, adjacent to trail (see map attached, area highlighted in blue).

DUND-14 (Dundas Valley CA) species at risk list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acadian Flycatcher</th>
<th>Eastern Milk snake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American chestnut</td>
<td>Ginseng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Beech Fern</td>
<td>Golden Winged Warbler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut</td>
<td>Hooded Warbler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.2 Ecological Land Classification (ELC Areas)

There are four main vegetation communities surrounding Maplewood, which include:

- Dry – Fresh Sugar Maple-Oak Deciduous Forest Type
- Fresh-Moist Sugar Maple Hemlock Mixed Forest Type
- Fresh-Moist Black Walnut Lowland Deciduous Forest Type
- Hawthorn Deciduous Shrub Thicket Type

4.3 Niagara Escarpment Commission

The area around the building is designated by the NEC as “Protection Area”. The wooded and ravine areas in the area are designated by the NEC “Natural Area” – an area that severely restricts any development. See Figure No.2 for approximate limits of these areas.

4.4 Official Plan and Zoning

The Town of Ancaster Official Plan designates the Maplewood area as Open Space and Conservation. The Town of Ancaster Zoning By-Law zones the lands as Public Open Space “O2”. The permitted uses as per the Official Plan and Zoning would be conservation and open space uses. Amendments to both plans would be required to facilitate any type of residential/commercial development. The Ancaster Official Plan and Zoning By-Law are still in force. The proposed City of Hamilton Official Plan and Zoning By-law does not make any substantial changes to the permitted uses in this area.

4.5 Dundas Valley ESA

Maplewood is located within the Dundas Valley ESA (DUND-14), as well as significant woodland through the City of Hamilton Official Plan, as it meets all criteria (adjacent to watercourse, interior forest habitat, species at risk etc...). The actual Maplewood site is not an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) but the adjacent lands are within the ANSI designation. An environmental impact statement is required for any development on the subject lands.

5. Options

5.1 Do Nothing & Maintain Current Operations

This is not an option as none of the maintenance and upgrades to meet regulatory standards would be in place. The facility would also continue to negatively impact the environment, the HCA budget (i.e. road upgrade and clearing costs due to tenant as well as taxes) and continue to fall into greater disrepair.
5.2 **HCA Upgrades Facility and Operates as Rental Facility**

This option has the HCA investing in the necessary upgrades and continuing to operate the facility as rental hall for meetings, wedding etc.

Capital/Major maintenance upgrades required for the facility are estimated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upgrade</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water System</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating System</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewage System</td>
<td>$473,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Conditioning System</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window Replacement</td>
<td>$13,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooring Replacement</td>
<td>$14,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof (Prelim. Est)</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Est. Cap/MM Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$560,500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the best net profit of 3 out of the last 6 years, which approximates $17 K, the simple payback is over 30 years. Profit would have to quadruple to bring it under 8 years which is not likely.

Extra-ordinary average annual operational costs would continue to include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree Clearing of Electrical Line</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Grading</td>
<td>$2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow Plowing/Sanding</td>
<td>$6,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Est. Annual Extra Op. Costs</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above noted capital/major maintenance amount does not include potential costs for road and ditch stabilization at $500,000.

5.3 **Proposal Call for Private Operator**

Any proposal call for a private operator would require disclosure of all the issues contained in this report and a requirement to upgrade at least those items which are necessary to meet regulatory standards. Based on past history and existing planning and environmental policies established in various plans (e.g. Niagara Escarpment Plan, Official Plan) any proposal would face opposition.

5.4 **All Buildings Demolished and Area Naturalized**

This option would involve the HCA undertaking the following work at the following preliminary estimated costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demolition of buildings and topsoil and seed area</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow access road into 3 m wide trail with stabilized surface</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$138,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some ongoing maintenance costs would be expected to maintain the new 935 m long trail due to the steep grades but these would be minimized by using a soil stabilizer to harden the trail surface.

This option would also indicate that the Hamilton Conservation Authority is leading by example in restoration efforts in Dundas Valley. Specifically demolition would:

- Enhance a natural habitat and increase internal forest cover for the benefit of wildlife
- Eliminate erosion from road and increase previous area to benefit surface and groundwater resources and the flora and fauna which depend on those resources
- Remove manmade noise and light which benefits bird behaviour and the overall natural functioning of all wildlife
- Allow for public education to show successional growth as a demonstration area
- Create more natural area to be enjoyed and appreciated by trail users in the community
- Allow rare and endangered species to thrive and grow in a more secluded natural area
- Provide more opportunities for wildlife research

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the information presented on this report, it is recommended that the Maplewood Facility be demolished and the area naturalized for the following reasons:

1. The Maplewood facility is in need of $560,500 revenue for immediate upgrades due to its age and requirements to meet regulatory standards.

2. Due to its location on the end of steep winding gravel road with limited water service and on-site sewage system and no access to natural gas, the facilities annual operation and maintenance costs are high.

3. The return on investment if the required upgrades are implemented will be low or non-existent. This will negatively impact the HCA budget and will also limit the attractiveness of the facility to a private operator.

4. Previous attempts to change the facility to another more financially stable operation under a private operator have met with substantial public opposition resulting in the withdrawal or denial of the changes.

5. The location of the facility is in the midst of one of the great natural assets in Hamilton, namely the Dundas Valley. Continued use of this facility means continued negative impact of the surrounding natural heritage area including but not limited to, silting of the Sulphur Creek, adverse effects on flora and fauna due to road maintenance and use.
FIGURE NO. 6
RMC - MAPLEWOOD AREA
VEGETATION & ENVIRONMENTAL ZONES