



## **Board of Directors Meeting**

### **Addendum**

**Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

**This meeting will be held by WebEx videoconference.**

**The meeting can be viewed live on HCA's You Tube Channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>**

#### **8. Business Arising from the Minutes**

8.1. Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project

# Report

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**MEETING DATE:** October 7, 2021

**RE:** Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**THAT staff be directed to enter into Contribution Agreements and any other ancillary agreements with the City of Hamilton and the Heritage Green Community Trust, necessary to facilitate the granting and management of funds from each entity, for the purpose of funding construction of the first wetland for the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project.**

## BACKGROUND

Funding from Heritage Green Community Trust, City of Hamilton, and other donors allowed HCA to acquire the initial lands of what would become its newest conservation area in over a decade, and starting the process for a large-scale, multi-year, restoration project to rehabilitate, create, and protect wetlands on the east Hamilton escarpment. The initial lands were unveiled to the public in 2015 and the area officially named Saltfleet Conservation Area in 2017 and recently opened to the public October 2, 2021.

An environmental assessment completed in 2018 confirmed that this project could help reduce flood and erosion risks in Stoney Creek below the Niagara Escarpment through wetland creation and restoration. By creating a network of large urban wetlands, there is potential to hold back 592,500 cubic metres of water (or the equivalent to 237 Olympic-sized swimming pools). Once completed, this will be a significant wetland area within the HCA watershed and will greatly reduce flooding and erosion risks in the lower part of the city.

Following the completion of the environmental assessment, design plans for first wetland area has been completed; in addition, an archeological survey and clearances

and agency approvals are now in place or are nearing completion, bringing the project to the wetland construction phase for the first wetland.

It is anticipated that the construction of the first wetland will begin in early 2022 and the award of the tender brought to the Board at the December 2021 meeting.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

The estimated cost for the construction of the first wetland is \$3 million and funding for the wetland is being explored.

A small HCA staff team made presentation to the Heritage Green Community Trust last week to make a funding request to be the lead donor to the project. The Trusts Board of Directors enthusiastically received our presentation and subsequently Councillor Brad Clark, who is a member of the Board, advanced our request for \$2 million in wetland construction funding and also noted asking the Municipality to cover the balance of the cost. The funding source both for the Heritage Green Community Trust and the City of Hamilton is a tipping fee from the former Terrapure landfill on the East Mountain. These funds must be utilized for community initiatives in the general precinct of the landfill.

Similar to when funding was received in 2014 for land acquisition, the HCA Board of Directors endorsed a motion to enter into Contribution Agreements with the City of Hamilton and the Heritage Green Community Trust and staff are once again bringing forward such a recommendation to fund construction of the first wetland.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative supports all 5 of the strategic priority areas in the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- Organizational Excellence
- Water Management
- Natural Heritage Conservation
- Conservation Area Experience
- Education and Environmental Awareness

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is important to note that the funding request for the \$3 million comes from sources outside of HCA base funding and none from taxpayer levy.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The creation and construction of the first wetland for Saltfleet is an important step in this project and sets and stage for the creation of additional wetlands, land acquisition and will contribute directly to creating solutions to address flooding and erosion in Hamilton, as well as protect and enhance natural spaces for the benefits of the watershed and provide recreational opportunities for the public.