

Conservation Advisory Board Meeting Agenda

Thursday February 8, 2024



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

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A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Notice of Meeting Conservation Advisory Board

Thursday, February 8, 2024

4:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held fully electronic via Webex.

The meeting will be live streamed on HCA's You Tube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation

- 1. Welcome
- 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- 3. Approval of Agenda
- 4. Delegations
- 5. Election of Vice-Chair
- 6. Member Briefing

- Wayne Terryberry 7. Chair's Report on Board of Directors Actions

- CA 2328 HCA Shoreline Management Plan
- CA 2329 HCA Floodplain Mapping Projects - Status Update
- 8. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

8.1 Minutes – Conservation Advisory Board (December 14, 2023) – Wayne Terryberry Page 1

9. Business Arising from the Minutes

- Wayne Terryberry
- Wayne Terryberry
- Wayne Terryberry
- Wayne Terryberry

9.1 Follow-up, Advance Day Use Purchase Pilot Program for 2023 – Lindsay Davidson Page 7

10. Staff Reports/Memorandums

- 10.1. Indigenous Interpretive Signage Proposal
 Griffin Moore
 Page 11
- 10.2. Westfield Accession and Deaccession List
- 10.3. Artaban Road and Lower Lions Club Road Parking Areas Matt Hall

11. New Business

12. Next Meeting – Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment

- Rondalyn Brown Page 15
 - Iall Page 17

HAMILTON CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Conservation Advisory Board

MINUTES

December 14, 2023

Minutes of the Conservation Advisory Board meeting held on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

PRESENT:	Wayne Terryberry – in th Elise Copps Lisa DiCesare Haley McRae – Webex Noah Stegman	Tyler Cunningham - Webex Jamie Freeman
	Brad Clark – Ex-Officio Susan Fielding – Ex-Offi	cio
REGRETS:	Natalie Faught, Brian Mc	Hattie, Cortney Oliver
STAFF PRESENT:	•	orreia, Marlene Ferreira, Matt cone, Jaime Tellier, and Nancy
OTHERS:	Media – None	

1. Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the HCA Administrative Bylaw. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

CA 2325 MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare SECONDED BY: Noah Stegman

THAT the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were none.

5. Member Briefing

There was none.

6. Chairman's Report on Board of Directors Actions

The following items were approved by the Board of Directors at the September 7, 2023 meeting.

- CA 2323 Oak Wilt Mapping & Workplan
- CA 2324 HCA Trail Guide Mobile App Project Summary

7. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 7.1. Minutes Conservation Advisory Board (August 10, 2023)
- CA 2326 MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare SECONDED BY: Jamie Freeman

THAT the minutes of the August 10, 2023 Conservation Advisory Board meeting be approved.

CARRIED

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

2

9. Staff Reports/Memorandums

9.1. Ecological & Water Resources Monitoring Programs Overview

Colin Oaks, Lesley McDonell, Jonathan Bastien, and Scott Peck jointly presented the Ecological & Water Resources Monitoring Programs Overview for facilitated input and questions were posed to CAB members to review scope, issues/risks, risk mitigation opportunities, and priorities.

3

<u>Scope</u>

It was suggested that enhanced monitoring may be needed to respond effectively to climate change; this could include a longer timeframe and/or additional monitoring to understand trends and any data gaps.

There was discussion regarding growth of the Ecology program over the past 10 years with staff advising there are a sufficient number of field staff for the current programs. Any additional resources could be used for a staff person to analyse the data.

The potential for expansion of the ecology program to insects, birds, and animal monitoring, as additional indicators of environmental health, was discussed. It was noted it would be beneficial to monitor other taxa, however it would require additional expertise. Technology may be able to assist the program with expanding to other taxa.

There was discussion regarding expanding stream temperature monitoring for aquatic ecology to sites other than on Spencer Creek. The resources required would be the purchase and installation of the equipment and staff time to monitor the results. Additional funding would be required to expand temperature monitoring.

It was suggested that wetlands could also be monitored as part of the Terrestrial monitoring program which would require additional staff resources.

Is there potential to review the various monitoring programs as a wholistic program to aid in the efficient use of staff resources. Staff have begun to coordinate monitoring locations, and distributed monitoring of sites over a three-year cycle.

Issues / Risks

Data analysis and reporting appear to be a limitation of the program. The priority for resource allocation for the program will be to undertake the gap analysis and use any additional resources to fill identified gaps, such as a water quality specialist to analyse water quality data.

Risk Mitigation

The potential for students to assist with alleviating resource constraints was discussed. HCA hires three summer students to assist with field work. Engineering also hires one summer student for water quality monitoring. It was noted a co-op placement would be an asset.

There was also discussion regarding the potential for AI to assist with data analysis and report generation.

Priorities

Suggested priorities included: expanding temperature monitoring, additional data analyses, and an additional water quality monitoring site in the upper watershed to help identify sources of and DNA tracer testing for E.coli.

It was clarified that HCA's current monitoring programs address the changing nature of the environment and human impacts as priority areas.

CA 2327 MOVED BY: Noah Stegman SECONDED BY: Jamie Freeman

THAT the presentation entitled Ecological & Water Resources Monitoring Programs Overview be received.

CARRIED

10. Staff Reports/Memorandums

10.1. HCA Shoreline Management Plan

Mike Stone presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

There was discussion regarding nature-based restoration currently being implemented along Burlington Beach and the potential to learn from that initiative. HCA is aware of the group undertaking that work. They and Conservation Halton would be a resource should HCA consider similar projects.

There was discussion regarding public engagement for the Management Plan. The plan will be posted on HCA's public engagement webpage. It was recommended to promote the opportunity to comment on the plan. HCA's Marketing and Communications staff promote the public engagement page through social media and notification of HCA's members and other distribution lists.

CA 2328 MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare SECONDED BY: Jamie Freeman

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:

5

THAT the Draft Shoreline Management Plan be received as information;

THAT staff be directed to make the Draft Shoreline Management Plan available for public and stakeholder review and comment; and

THAT the final version of the Shoreline Management Plan based on the public input received then be returned to the Board for adoption.

CARRIED

10.2. HCA Floodplain Mapping Projects – Status Update

Jonathan Bastien presented a summary of the report.

CA 2329 MOVED BY: Elise Copps SECONDED BY: Noah Stegman

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the draft flood plain mapping reports and draft flood plain maps be made available for public and stakeholder review and comment; and

THAT the flood plain mapping reports and flood plain maps, based on the public input received, be brought forward for adoption by the Board of Directors.

CARRIED

10.3. Valens Lookout Platform Update

Matt Hall presented a summary of the memorandum and answered the members' questions.

There was discussion regarding the engagement of an external contractor rather than in-house design and construction. HCA has design and construction staff

and completes most work in-house, however this project is considered specialty work, particularly the footings and foundations. HCA staff will be involved in the construction at various stages of the project.

It was clarified that the trail leading up to the new lookout tower will also be brought up to current HCA standards, but not widened beyond existing, before opening.

CA 2330 MOVED BY: Noah Stegman SECONDED BY: Jamie Freeman

THAT the presentation entitled Valens Lookout Platform Update be received.

CARRIED

11. New Business

There was none.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the CAB is scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium.

13. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting was adjourned.

6



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Memorandum

TO:	Conservation Advisory Board (CAB)
FROM:	Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
RECOMMENDED BY:	Scott Fleming, Director of Finance & CSS Sarah Gauden, Marketing Manager
PREPARED BY:	Lindsay Davidson, Assistant Marketing Manager
MEETING DATE:	February 8, 2024
RE:	Advanced Day Pass Update

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

In 2023, CAB and the HCA's Board of Directors approved the staff recommendation to launch the Advanced Day Pass Program in selected major conservation areas. This program aimed to take a significant step forward in enhancing visitor experience and operational efficiency by offering an alternative payment method for customers and the ability to purchase day-use entrance before arriving at the gates. The program launched in the spring of 2023 at four major Conservation Areas: Christie Lake, Valens Lake, Fifty Point, and Westfield Heritage Village.

This memorandum aims to provide CAB with an update on the outcome and success of the 2023 pilot program.

STAFF COMMENTS

The report from 2023 highlighted one of the major concerns identified during the pandemic: increased traffic congestion at the gatehouses during the busy summer season. This issue primarily stemmed from the process required for visitors paying for day-use admission. Upon arrival, visitors had to stop at the gatehouse, convey the number of passengers in the vehicle, and proceed with the payment. This procedure includes pin pad processing for transactions, which could take approximately two to four minutes per vehicle. Such delays, particularly during peak times, often resulted in long lines of waiting vehicles.

Additional time was consumed by gatehouse staff in explaining the option of an annual membership pass to visitors. This extended interaction further contributed to the congestion. The problem was exacerbated in areas with shorter entranceways, where the queue of vehicles sometimes extends onto the main roadway, especially on busy summer days, creating safety concerns and inconvenience.

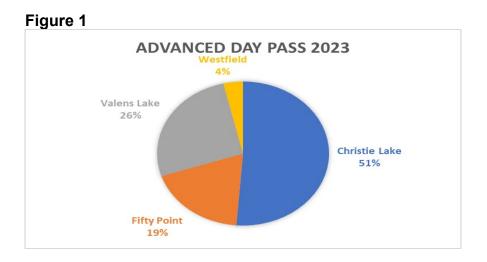
The introduction of the Advanced Day Pass aimed to address these issues by streamlining the entry process. With this system, visitors can pre-purchase their admission for the day. Upon arrival, they can quickly scan their phone or a printed pass to gain entry, a process similar to that provided for annual membership pass holders. This innovation is expected to significantly reduce the time spent at the gatehouse, thereby alleviating traffic congestion, enhancing visitor experience, and making the process more efficient for staff and visitors. The Advanced Day Pass serves as a modern solution to a critical operational challenge, aligning with the needs of many visitors seeking quick and convenient access to natural spaces.

2023 Experience

Following approval, HCA launched the Advanced Day Use Pass Program in four major conservation areas. The selected areas for this initiative included Christie Lake, Valens Lake, Fifty Point, and Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Areas. Each area offers unique natural and cultural experiences, making them popular destinations for visitors.

HCA promoted the Advanced Day Use Pass throughout the summer season by leveraging a comprehensive communication strategy. This strategy involved collaborating with various media partners to target audiences around the four conservation areas. HCA employed a multi-channel approach to ensure widespread awareness, using media releases, social media platforms, and electronic newsletters to inform the public about this new feature.

HCA staff received training on the Advanced Day Use Pass to complement these efforts. This enabled them to inform and encourage customers to take advantage of this offering. The main beneficiaries of this initiative were users of pavilions and group areas. These groups, in particular, found the Advanced Day Use Pass extremely beneficial, likely due to their need for organized space and access planning. The success of this campaign demonstrated HCA's commitment to enhancing visitor experience while promoting sustainable use of conservation spaces. By the end of 2023, more than 1500 purchases had been made on this new platform, which exceeded initial expectations and goals. See Figure 1 below for a breakdown of the purchases by conservation area.



Given its positive reception and effectiveness, HCA will integrate the Advanced Day Use Pass into conservation areas' regular operations. This integration signifies a strategic move to enhance visitor experience and streamline access to conservation spaces.

As we look ahead to 2024, HCA is gearing up for an even more strategic approach to promoting the Advanced Day Pass. The focus will be on targeted campaigns designed to increase the use of the pass in those conservation areas that experience high visitation rates throughout the year and expand the program to other select conservation areas with high visitation levels. This tailored approach suggests a keen understanding of visitor patterns and an opportunity to help manage these popular areas effectively.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- Strategic Priority Area Conservation Area Experience
 - Initiatives Develop visitor and parking management strategies to support conservation areas for sustainable recreation, education and tourism
 - Identify and undertake approaches to increase sales of annual membership passes
 - Identify and act upon revenue generation/cost reduction and investment in visitor services opportunities in our conservation areas

AGENCY COMMENTS

N/A

LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

CAMIS does not charge additional fees to provide an advanced purchase day use pass, and staff time for marketing and communication efforts will be part of the 2024 work plan. Promotional costs can be covered within existing 2024 budget allocations.

CONCLUSIONS

HCA experienced a positive outcome with the 2023 Advanced Day Pass pilot. This success has set a strong foundation for the future of the program and will be integrated into conservation areas' regular operations. The Advanced Day Pass is expected to significantly increase as more customers become aware of its benefits and aligns with offering customers a user-friendly and accessible way to plan their visits to conservation areas.



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Report

TO:	Conservation Advisory Board
FROM:	Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
RECOMMENDED BY:	Scott Fleming, Director of Finance & Central Support Services
PREPARED BY:	Sarah Gauden, Marketing & Communications Manager Griffin Moore, Graphic Design Coordinator
MEETING DATE:	February 8, 2024
RE:	HCA Indigenous Interpretive Panels Project

RECOMMENDATION

THAT The Conservation Advisory Board recommended to the Board of Directors:

THAT the proposed Indigenous Interpretive Panels Project, as outlined in this report, be approved for implementation following the securement of funding.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

HCA staff have identified that Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) recently undertook a project where RBG worked with Indigenous consultants to create an Indigenous Plant Medicine walk on one of their connecting trails. The trail was developed in 2016-2017 in consultation with an Anishinaabe Plant Knowledge specialist, and members of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The RBG trail includes six interpretive panels which focus on plant medicines and how native plants in the area were used daily by those who inhabited the area. After some research, staff identified the potential for a similar project to be completed in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area (DVCA).

The purpose of this report is to obtain CAB endorsement and Board of Director approval for a similar installation in the DVCA. Implementation of the project is subject to securement of funding.

STAFF COMMENT

This project aims to develop five to seven interpretive panels to create an Indigenous Educational tour within the Dundas Valley Conservation Area on the Main Loop. This trail is one of the most popular trails within the HCA and sees significant year round visitor volume and DVCA is also home to the outdoor environmental education program.

Strategically placing these interpretive panels creates an educational presence for the public. Additionally, by placing this project in the Dundas Valley, the panels have the potential to be incorporated into our current outdoor environmental educational program. The Hamilton Conservation Authority offers a variety of outdoor environmental education programs for both elementary and secondary school students. The panels will start around the Bruce Duncan Teaching Garden and, from there, continue to the Main Loop. Refer to Figure 1 below.



Figure 1

Staff intend to develop the panel project on a schedule culminating by end of Spring 2025 with the following project timeline:

PHASE 1 Q1/Q2 2024	PHASE 2 Q3/Q4 2024	PHASE 3 Q1/Q2 2025
Seek endorsement to initiate from CAB and Board of Directors	Confirm Indigenous Consultants/Partners	Finalize signage artwork
Confirm funding	Finalize panel topics and draft content	Signage installation
Convene an internal staff project committee	Return draft panels for CAB review	Official opening to share completed project
Draft reference for Indigenous partner / consultant support		Collect feedback from visitors and the community to inform future initiatives

Table 1: High Level Project Objectives by Phase

While the specific topics for the panels remain pending confirmation, the overarching aim is to offer insights into the broader narratives and teachings prevalent within First Nations within our watershed to share Indigenous knowledge and relationship to the land. HCA will engage with local First Nations, and representatives from educational institutions that focus on Indigenous teachings such as McMaster University in the development and information on the panels. Focus areas may potentially include explanation of the project and partners, medicines, etc.

This project aims to educate the visitors who walk the trails and also, to strengthen Indigenous knowledge and relationships between the HCA and First Nations.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024:

Organizational Excellence

 Initiative: Identify opportunities to engage the community, adjacent landowners and Indigenous Peoples

Conservation Area Experience

• Initiative: Identify and support a more diverse and accessible range of programs for our conservation area users

Education & Environmental Awareness

 Initiative: Enhance and adapt outdoor environmental and cultural education programs with new technology, curriculum and trends

LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A project budget of approximately \$60,000 has been estimated to complete this project. While some costs such as staff time are already accounted within the operating budget, other costs related to sign construction, installation and Indigenous consultation fees will require funding, which is estimated at \$45,000. Staff have initiated outreach with the Hamilton Conservation Foundation in regard to the potential to provide funding as well as the HCA grants officer in regard to potential grants that could be applied to collect funding for the project.

CONCLUSIONS

This project, which involves the creation and installation of interpretive panels focused on Indigenous history and culture, has tremendous potential to enrich the visitor experience in the conservation areas and strengthen the connections between HCA and Indigenous communities. The installation will serve as a means to share the stories, traditions and significance of the land with all visitors.



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Report

TO:	Conservation Advisory Board
FROM:	Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
RECOMMENDED BY:	Gord Costie, Director Conservation Area Services
PREPARED BY:	Rondalyn Brown, Manager, Westfield Heritage Village Peter Lloyd, Collections Officer, Westfield Heritage Village
MEETING DATE:	February 8, 2024
RE:	Westfield Artifact Accessions for 2023

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the Westfield 2023 Artifact Accessions List be accepted as the artifacts to be added to the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area and the Hamilton Conservation Authority collection.

BACKGROUND

Westfield is a living history museum dedicated to the collection, preservation and presentation of objects associated with the cultural and natural history of this area. Westfield maintains an artifact and archival collection consisting of more than 25,000 objects reflecting the social, cultural and material history of the area. The museum is committed to managing this collection according to current professional standards for acquisition, preservation, documentation, research, deaccession and use of the artifact collection.

Objects acquired for the collection will be consistent with the mandate, goals and priorities of the site. Objects collected will normally represent the types of material goods that would have been locally manufactured, routinely available or the product of local activity in Southern Ontario from the period 1790-1925. They must be in a condition suitable for display or research.

STAFF COMMENT

Westfield staff is diligent about adhering to the very important collections management and provincial museum standards to ensure the HCA is managing the artifact collection in a professional manner.

Westfield 2023 Artifact Accessions List

The following items are recommended to be accepted into the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area permanent artifact collection in 2023.

- Wooden cradle, (1840's)
- Wool winder
- Cook book (1906)
- Group of 5 door bells
- Tool box, agricultural
- Writing box, with marquetry
- Plant stand
- Parlor side table
- Table lamp, "Tiffany style"
- Group of 2 brass blow torches
- Whiskey bottle, "Maple Leaf", prohibition era
- Cigar box, wooden, H. Simon Company, Hamilton
- Framed art, colour print, 1910's

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- Strategic Priority Area Conservation Area Experience
 - Initiatives Identify and support a more diverse and accessible range of programs for our conservation area users

AGENCY COMMENTS

Not applicable.

LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

HCA assumes liability and responsibility for the appropriate and professional management of the Westfield Heritage Village artifact collection.

CONCLUSIONS

These measures will help manage the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area artifact collection and will preserve important pieces of local history for the community.



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Report

TO:	Conservation Advisory Board
FROM:	Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
RECOMMENDED & PREPARED BY:	Matthew Hall, Director, Capital Projects & Strategic Services
MEETING DATE:	February 8, 2024
RE:	Artaban Rd. & Lower Lions Club Rd. – Parking Lot Enhancement Project Proposals

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommend to the Board of Directors:

THAT Staff be directed to complete detailed design for the Artaban Rd. Parking Lot Expansion project, as well as the Lower Lion's Club Rd. Parking Lot Addition project; and formally submit Development Permit Applications for both projects to the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

In October 2019, a report titled "HCA Conservation Area – Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review" was presented to the Conservation Advisory Board, to address increasing visitor and parking pressures and identify priority actions to balance both preservation of our natural areas while also providing a positive visitor experience.

All seven recommendations were endorsed by CAB and ultimately approved by the Board of Directors.

The purpose of this report is to recap and provide an update on the seven recommendations and seek direction to complete the detailed design for the Artaban road expansion project as well as the Lower Lions Club road parking lot addition project.

STAFF COMMENT

The seven approved recommendations from the October 2019 staff report are as follows:

Recommendation #1 – HCA staff implement immediate parking enhancement opportunities at Artaban Road, Tiffany Falls, Devil's Punchbowl, Tew Falls and Westfield Heritage Village to optimize number of parking spaces, traffic flow and signage;

Recommendation #2- HCA staff undertake steps to consider expansion of the Artaban road parking lot through a Niagara Escarpment development permit;

Recommendation #3 – HCA staff undertake steps to establish an interim parking lot and trail connection to the Dofasco Trail for the Devil's Punchbowl at the Saltfleet Conservation Area;

Recommendation #4 – HCA staff further examine and explore additional options for safe visitor access to Tiffany Falls;

Recommendation #5 – HCA staff work with various agencies and partners such as City of Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton, Hamilton/Burlington Trails Council etc. to encourage transportation alternatives;

Recommendation #6 – HCA develop a marketing campaign and website enhancements to increase turnover and shorter term stays at areas with limited parking and encourage visitation to less frequented areas and when there is capacity;

Recommendation #7 – HCA staff ensure that the approved 10-year Masterplan Strategy incorporates detailed review of parking at all areas through the Master planning process.

Since this time HCA staff have been working to implement the recommendations listed. Updates to these are provided below:

Recommendation #1:

- Artaban Rd lot Modest alignment enhancements to existing gravelled and grass parking areas completed. Addition of two hardwired barcode capable Pay & Display machines added to expedite payment process for visitors.
- Tiffany Falls lot Lot reconfiguration undertaken in conjunction with City of Hamilton's Wilson St improvement project, which added bike lanes and an electronic crosswalk for safer pedestrian access. Addition of two hardwired barcode capable Pay & Display machines added to expedite payment process for visitors.
- Devil's Punchbowl Lot Modest enhancements to existing gravelled and grass parking areas completed. Road shoulder barriers completed with City of Hamilton

to address excessive on street parking issues. New autogate system installed to facilitate improved visitor access.

- Tew Falls lot Modest enhancements to existing gravelled and grass parking areas completed. New gatehouse and autogate system installed to facilitate improved visitor access.
- Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area New parking area added along Kirkwall Rd. substantially improving site capacity. New gatehouse and autogate system installed to facilitate improved visitor access.

Recommendation #2:

• HCA staff hired a third-party ecological planning firm to conduct work to complete an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) report, which would be required by the Niagara Escarpment Commission to permit development within the Artaban Rd lot area. The results of this report are discussed below under Staff Comment.

Recommendation #3:

 HCA staff completed a temporary trail connection and modest lot improvements on the Saltfleet Conservation Area property, in order to allow it to be officially opened for public use. Following this, the site was closed during construction of the wetlands. With the completion of the wetland project a formal trail connection now exists and is fully open to public users. Further parking enhancements are currently under review by HCA staff.

Recommendation #4:

• HCA staff hired a third-party ecological planning firm to conduct work to complete an EIS report, which would be required by the Niagara Escarpment Commission to permit development within the Lower Lions Club Rd property owned by the HCA. The results of this report are discussed below under Staff Comment.

Recommendation #5:

 HCA staff have actively participated in a variety of external agency and stakeholder groups related to public parking and visitor management for parks and conservation areas. Some of these groups have included the City Waterfall Working group, the Hamilton Burlington Trails Council and the Regional Tourism Office for the Hamilton area.

Recommendation #6:

• This is a program which is actively in progress through the HCA's marketing department. Promotional material encouraging visits to a variety of C.A.'s continues to be an important message being conveyed. The expanded trail system at Westfield is HCA's newest promotion to attract more visitors to this area.

Recommendation #7:

 HCA staff continue to progress with the implementation of the HCA's 10 Year Masterplan Strategy, incorporating parking reviews and considerations from internal HCA staff workshops, outside agency and stakeholder comments, as well as public feedback. Draft Master & Management Plans for the Saltfleet, Devil's Punchbowl, Dofasco Trail as well as the Vinemount & Winona Conservation Areas, are all currently under review by the Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry, the Niagara Escarpment Commission and by our neighbouring Indigenous partners.

The remainder of this report will focus on Recommendation #'s 2 & 4 and the steps HCA staff are looking to take in order to move these items forward.

Artaban Road Parking Lot

This parking lot receives significant visitation, particularly now that Lions Club road has been signed as No Parking with special enforcement area status. Outside of the major core HCA Conservation Areas, it has consistently ranked amongst the highest grossing pay-per-use lots within the HCA's operation. Its popularity is associated with visitation of Sherman Falls which is not owned by HCA but is located adjacent to HCA lands and associated trail system via the Bruce Trail. It is important to note that HCA has continued to work collaboratively with City bylaw enforcement to control and enforce No Parking regulations to address spillover parking on Lions Club Road, as much as reasonably possible.

The HCA's 2019 Visitor and Vehicle Management report recommended the following for this location:

- There is the potential to formally expand the parking lot at Artaban Road adjacent to the existing HCA parking lot. There is additional work to be completed to determine the feasibility of this proposal. This includes:
- •

- i. Completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to determine if it is acceptable according to HCA and City of Hamilton requirements to develop a parking lot on the lands as the majority of the area is designated as an Environmentally Significant Area. This work would take approximately 1-year to complete and would require the services of an outside consultant.
- The subject lands are located within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, within the Protection Area designation and a Development Permit would be required for the development of a parking lot in this area. The above noted EIS would form part of this application.

As a result of this, HCA staff hired third party consulting firm, Aboud & Associates Inc. in Feb. 2021 to begin reviewing this area in detail for the potential of a formal parking area expansion project. This work was completed in March 2022. The following is a list of the recommendations made by the consultants, along with the HCA's intentions on how these will be addressed:

1. Revise the site plan during detailed design, to locate the potential parking expansion and formalization entirely within the Graminoid Meadow and avoid any removal of the existing Significant Woodland.

HCA – This has been achieved with the proposed conceptual design.

2. If tree removals are necessary, minimize tree loss through the completion of a Tree Preservation Plan including the installation of a silt and sediment control barrier consisting of a combination of silt fencing as well as orange construction fencing. This fencing barrier is to be installed at least 1m beyond the dripline of remaining trees wherever possible. Ensure that the location and details pertaining to the tree protection measures are accurately outlined and shown within the Tree Protection Plan and Detailed Site Plan.

HCA – A Tree Protection & Removals Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

a. Any trees proposed for removal should be inspected for bat maternity habitat by a qualified biologist.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

b. Sediment control barrier to be inspected weekly during construction and following a storm event of 25mm of rainfall within 24 hours.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

- 3. Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESC) per the Erosion & Sediment Control Guideline for Urban Construction (TRCA, 2019).
 - Sediment control fencing to be installed as shown on a Detailed Site Plan.
 Installed sediment control fencing is to be inspected to ensure that it is in place and functioning as designed prior to any activities or construction.
 - b. Install amphibian and reptile exclusion fencing surrounding the potential development limit prior to any site works occurring.

HCA – A Sediment Control & Exclusionary Fencing Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

4. ESC measures to be kept in place until construction is completed, and disturbed soils have been vegetated.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

5. The area of construction disturbance shall be kept to a minimum;

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

- 6. Control the access and movement of equipment and people;
 - a. Implement appropriate protocols outlined in the Clean Equipment Protocol for Industry (Halloran et al., 2013);

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

7. Works and equipment storage are to be located as far as possible from the existing natural features as possible;

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

8. Accumulated sediment and debris to be removed before silt fence is removed.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

9. All disturbed areas to be re-vegetated or restored with site appropriate indigenous plants wherever opportunities exist.

HCA – A Landscaping & Restoration Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

10. Install vegetated swales to detain surface runoff and re-direct it away from the currently eroding slope. Drainage from the swales is recommended to be directed to the roadside ditch north of the parking lot area on the east side of Artaban Road.

HCA – A Grading Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

- 11. Time activities to avoid wildlife disturbance during critical life stages:
 - a. Avoid removal of trees and vegetation during the generalized breeding bird nesting period from April 1 to August 31. If removal of vegetation is to occur during the general nesting period, a nest search should be completed by a skilled and experienced Biologist.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

b. Close the parking area to public access during the adult salamander migration period (February – beginning of April). Monitor the parking area for salamander mortality during the juvenile migration period (August) to determine whether additional mitigation measures are necessary.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

c. Due to the study area being within regulated habitat for Jefferson Salamander, MECP should be contacted regarding vegetation removal prior to any works occurring.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

d. If any tree removals are required, MECP communication should also occur regarding bat maternity habitat.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

12. Choose designs and materials that will minimize impacts.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

13. Establish educational signage pertaining to proper trail use and encroachment into the surrounding natural features.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will work to enhance signage within the area postconstruction.

Visitor parking lot turnover and capacity issues have persisted due to the lot's poor configuration, lack of automated gate systems and overall size. Further to this, during times of high visitation the parking area's current configuration does not allow sufficient space for EMS services, should an emergency situation arise. The proposed improvements to this lot would optimize traffic flow, modestly increase the number of parking spaces; as well as allowing fair public access while adding enhanced afterhours security measures with the addition of an automated gate system.

Drawings G01 & G02 in this report highlight the existing and proposed lot configurations for this area.

Tiffany Falls

Tiffany Falls is a highly visited conservation area that is serviced by a small parking lot. Similar to the Artaban Lot, it has consistently ranked amongst the highest grossing payper-use lots within the HCA's operation, outside of the major core HCA Conservation Areas. This lot is heavily constrained physically however and increasing the overall parking area's shape and size is not possible.

During the summer & fall of 2022 the HCA worked closely with the City of Hamilton to incorporate modest parking enhancements to the existing Tiffany Fall's parking lot and

it's surrounding area. Enhancements to the parking area included: paved entry and exit aprons, enhanced signage and line painting, enhanced safety measures such as guardrails and parking curbs, and an optimized parking layout which maximized the spaces available for vehicles.

This work was completed as part of the City's Wilson St. resurfacing project which also added: cycling lanes, lane protection measures, and an automated cross-walk to the Tiffany Fall's area for safe crossing for Bruce Trail and HCA visitors. It is important to note that HCA continues to work collaboratively with City bylaw enforcement to control and enforce no parking regulations with special area enforcement status to address spillover parking along Wilson Street.

The HCA's 2019 Visitor and Vehicle Management report recommended the following for this location:

- 1. (Review the) potential for the development of a new larger parking lot for this site on HCA lands adjacent to Tiffany Falls located north of Wilson Street with frontage on Lower Lions Club Road. There is additional work to be completed to determine the feasibility of this proposal. This includes:
 - i. Completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to determine if it is acceptable according to HCA and City of Hamilton requirements to develop a parking lot on the lands as the majority of the area is designated as an Environmentally Significant Area. This work would take approximately 1-year to complete and would require the services of an outside consultant.
 - The subject lands are located within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, within the Protection Area designation and a Development Permit would be required for the development of a parking lot in this area. The above noted EIS would form part of this application.

As a result of this, HCA staff hired third party consulting firm, Aboud & Associates Inc. in Feb. 2021 to begin reviewing this area in detail for the potential of a formal parking area addition project. This work was completed in March 2022. The following is a list of the recommendations made by the consultants, along with the HCA's intentions on how these will be addressed:

1. Locate the potential parking area within the western meadow community beneath the existing hydro corridor to minimize potential impacts to the Significant Woodland, avoid removal of Significant Wildlife Habitat for Rare and Special Concern species (Monarch) and maintain the candidate snake hibernacula.

HCA – This has been achieved with the proposed conceptual design, with some limitations due to requirements constructing within hydro corridors.

a. Implement a variable buffer, if feasible based on detailed design, to provide an opportunity for restoration and enhancement of the southern portion of the western meadow.

HCA – This has been achieved with the proposed design, the HCA has no intention of building within a larger envelope than what is required to service the site.

- 2. Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESC) per the Erosion & Sediment Control Guideline for Urban Construction (TRCA, 2019).
 - a. Sediment control fencing to be installed as shown on a Detailed Site Plan. Installed sediment control fencing is to be inspected to ensure that it is in place and functioning as designed prior to any activities or construction.

HCA – A Sediment Control Fencing Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

3. Minimize tree loss through the completion of a Tree Preservation Plan including the installation of a silt and sediment control barrier consisting of a combination of silt fencing as well as orange construction fencing. This fencing barrier is to be installed at least 10m beyond the dripline of remaining trees wherever possible. Ensure that the location and details pertaining to the tree protection measures are accurately outlined and shown within the Tree Protection Plan and Detailed Site Plan.

HCA – A Tree Protection & Removals Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

a. Any tree proposed for removal should be inspected for bat maternity habitat by a qualified biologist.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

b. Sediment control barrier to be inspected weekly during construction and following a storm event of 25mm of rainfall within 24 hours.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

4. ESC measures to be kept in place until construction is completed, and disturbed soils have been vegetated.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

5. The area of construction disturbance shall be kept to a minimum;

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

- 6. Control the access and movement of equipment and people;
 - a. Implement appropriate protocols outlined in the Clean Equipment Protocol for Industry (Halloran et al., 2013);
 - b. Equipment is to be limited to a pre-determined construction allowance area and is not to encroach within the adjacent natural communities.

HCA – These are noted and HCA will comply.

7. Works and equipment storage are to be located as far as possible from the existing natural features as possible.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

8. Accumulated sediment and debris to be removed before silt fence is removed.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

9. All disturbed areas to be re-vegetated or restored with site appropriate indigenous plants wherever opportunities exist.

HCA – A Landscaping & Restoration Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

10. Install vegetated swales to detain surface runoff and prevent the formation of eroded gullies. Drainage from the swales is recommended to outlet to the roadside ditch at Lower Lions Club Road.

HCA – A Grading Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

11. If removal of the existing rock pile is proposed, complete studies to determine whether the feature provides significant wildlife habitat in the form of Reptile Hibernaculum.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply. Removal of the rock pile identified on site is not currently proposed.

12. Examine any trees proposed for removal for candidate bat maternity habitat characteristics.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

- 13. Time activities to avoid wildlife disturbance during critical life stages:
 - a. Avoid removal of trees and vegetation during the generalized breeding bird nesting period from April 1 to August 31. If removal of vegetation is to occur during the general nesting period, a nest search should be completed by a skilled and experienced Biologist.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

14. Align required trail connection so tree removals target existing White Ash in poor or dead condition where feasible.

HCA – A Tree Protection & Removals Plan will form part of the HCA's submission to the NEC after detailed design has been completed.

15. Choose designs and materials that will minimize impacts.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will comply.

16. Establish educational signage pertaining to proper trail use, encroachment into the surrounding natural features and the negative effects of feeding and/or approaching wildlife.

HCA – This is noted and HCA will work to enhance signage within the area post-construction.

Again, similar to the Artaban Lot, visitor parking turnover and capacity issues have persisted at Tiffany Falls due to the lot's poor configuration, lack of automated gate systems and overall size. Further to this, during times of high visitation the parking area's current configuration does not allow sufficient space for EMS services, should an emergency situation arise. Wilson St. protected bike lanes add a further element to this area brining together vehicles, pedestrians and bikes in or along the parking area. The proposed additional parking lot along Lower Lion's Club Rd. would act to support the existing Tiffany Falls lot to optimize traffic flow, increase the number of parking spaces available, and spread visitors apart further via a new trail connection to the new Wilson St. cross-walk feature; in addition to allowing fair public access while adding enhanced after-hours security measures with the addition of an automated gate system.

Drawings G03, G04 & G05 in this report highlight the existing and proposed lot configurations for this area.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024:

• Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence

- Initiatives Support the capital development and major maintenance program to enhance our facilities and ensure they are safe, functional and current
- Strategic Priority Area Conservation Area Experience
 - Initiatives Develop visitor and parking management strategies to support conservation areas for sustainable recreation, education and tourism
 - Initiatives Continue to expand installation of automatic gates across our conservation areas

AGENCY COMMENTS

This project's implementation will require continued collaboration with partner agencies such as the City of Hamilton and the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Development Permits for the work proposed with be required from the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) before commencement of work.

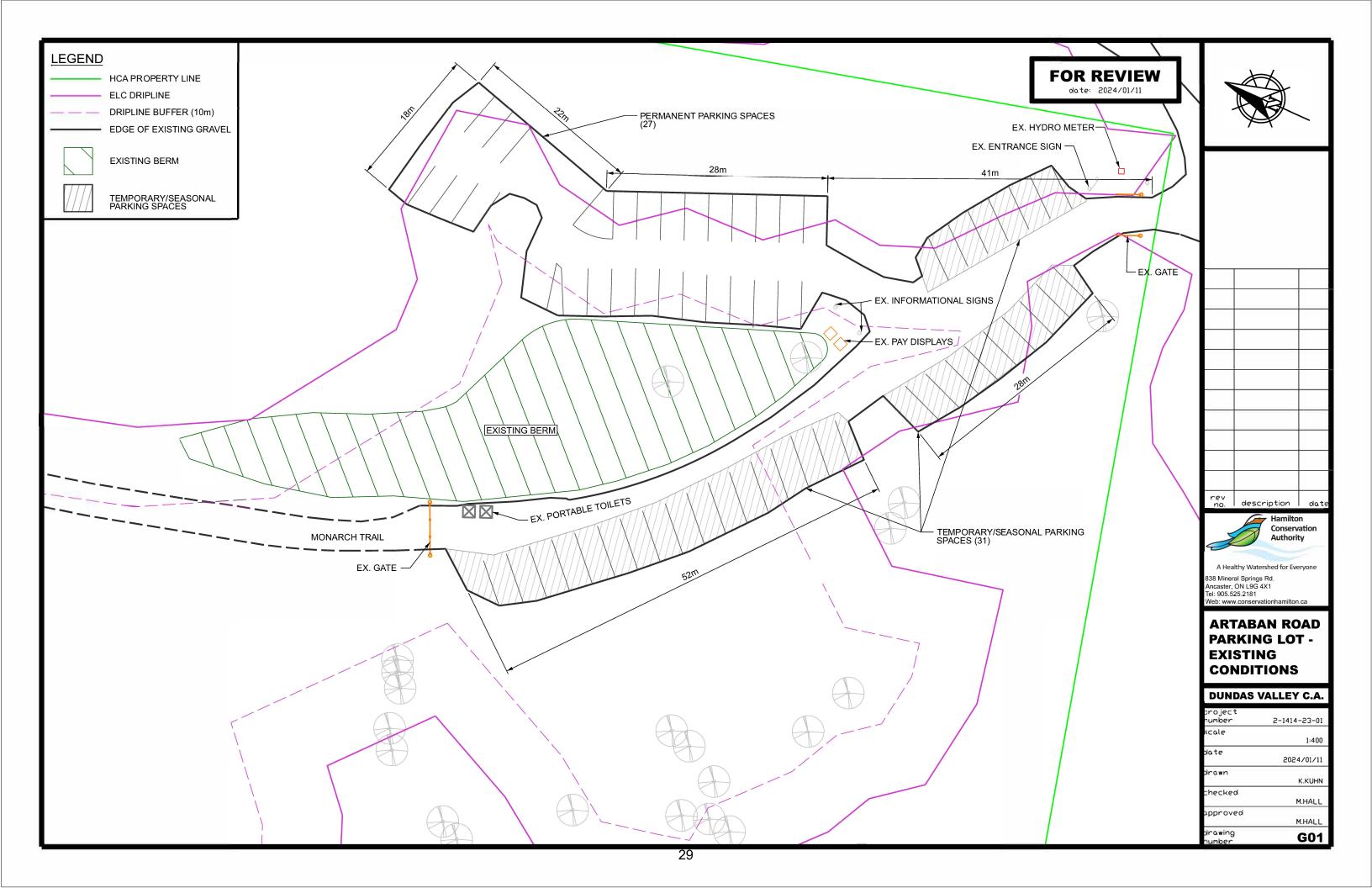
One important note: a public commenting period will be required during the NEC's development permit review process. During this period of time neighbouring landowners adjacent to the project locations will be circulated the details of the development permit application for their own comments and feedback. This process can sometimes lead to project proposal delays or outright dismissals by the NEC.

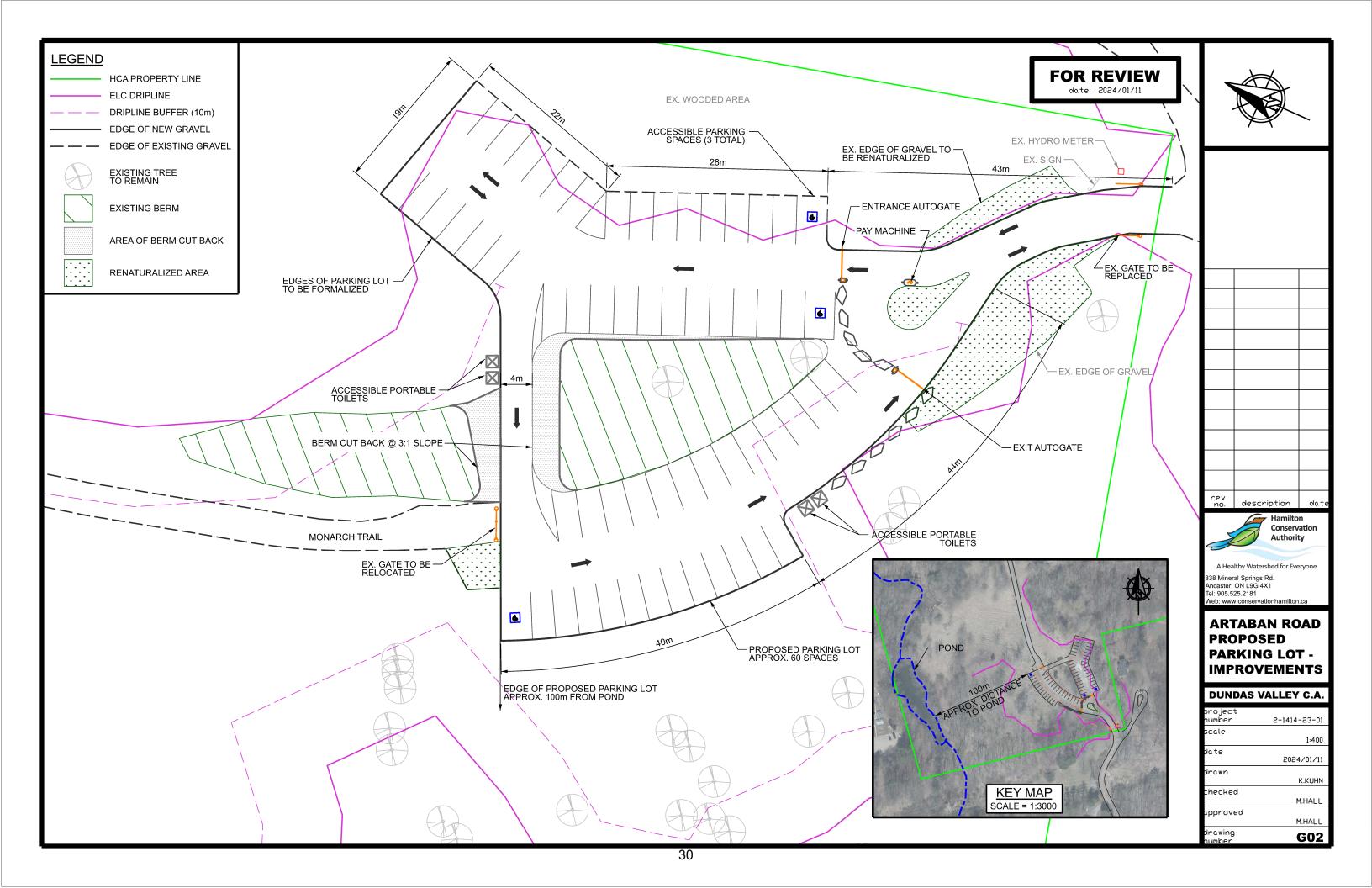
LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

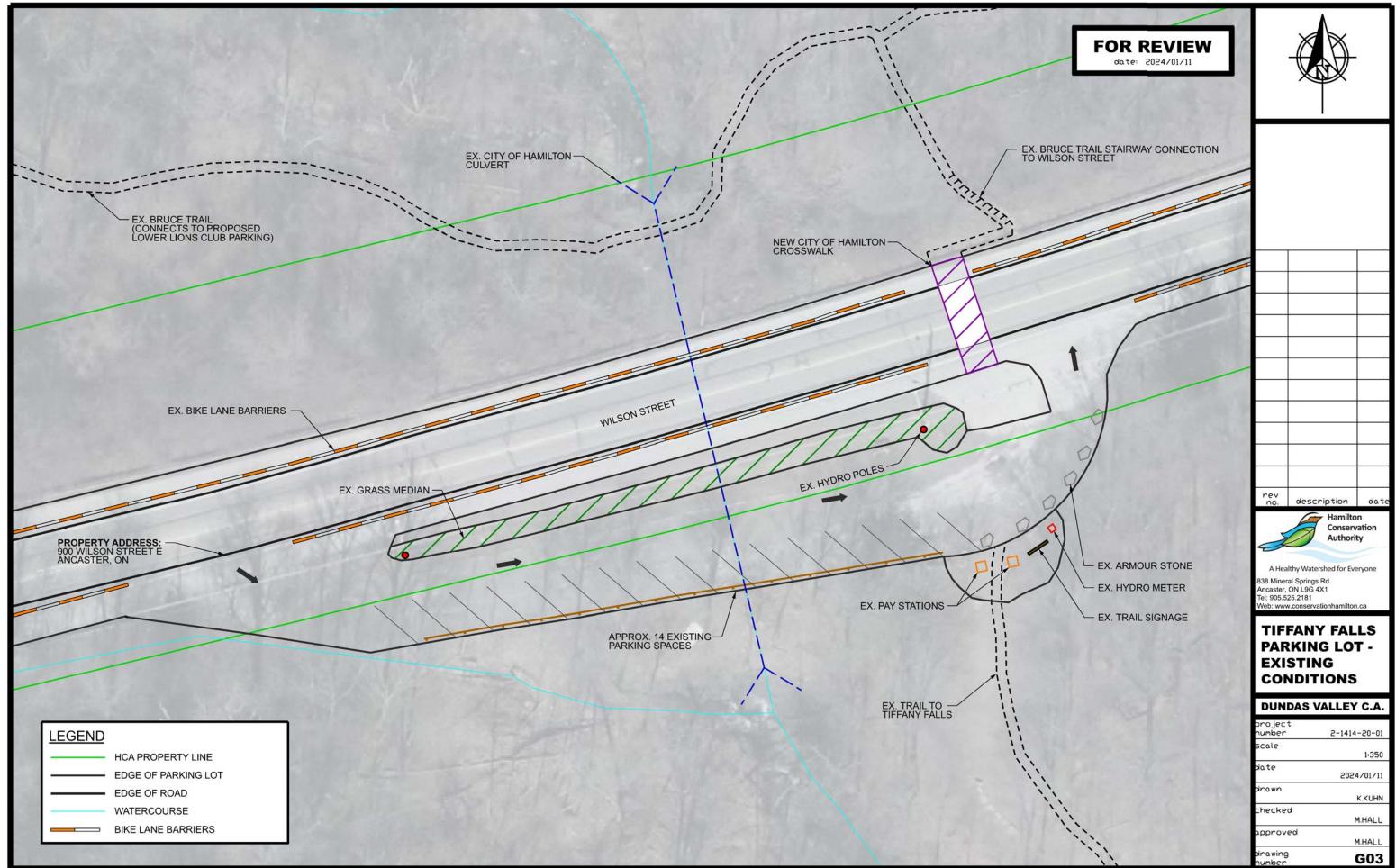
Appropriate monies for construction have been allocated for these parking enhancement projects within the HCA's 2024 Capital Projects budget.

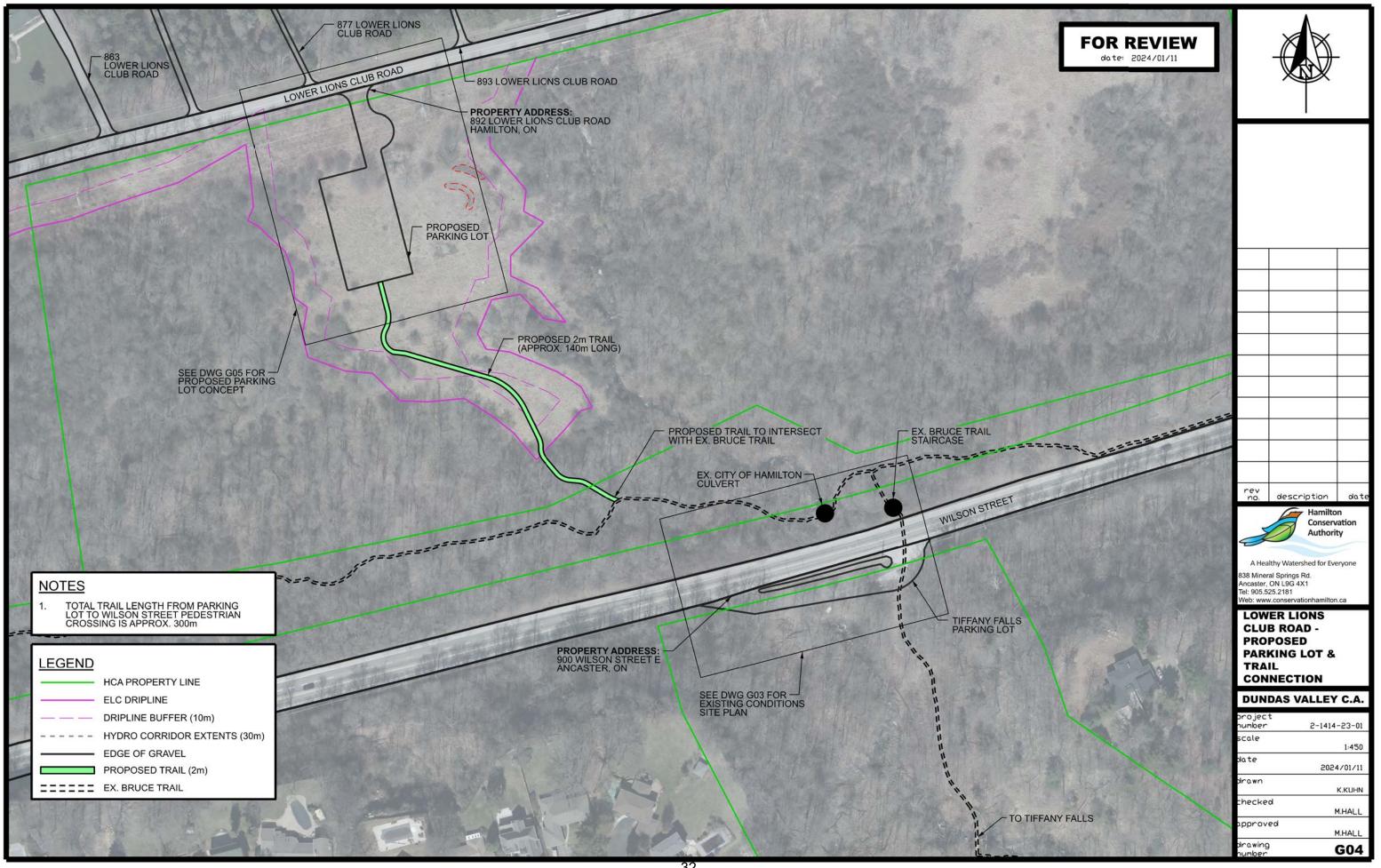
CONCLUSIONS

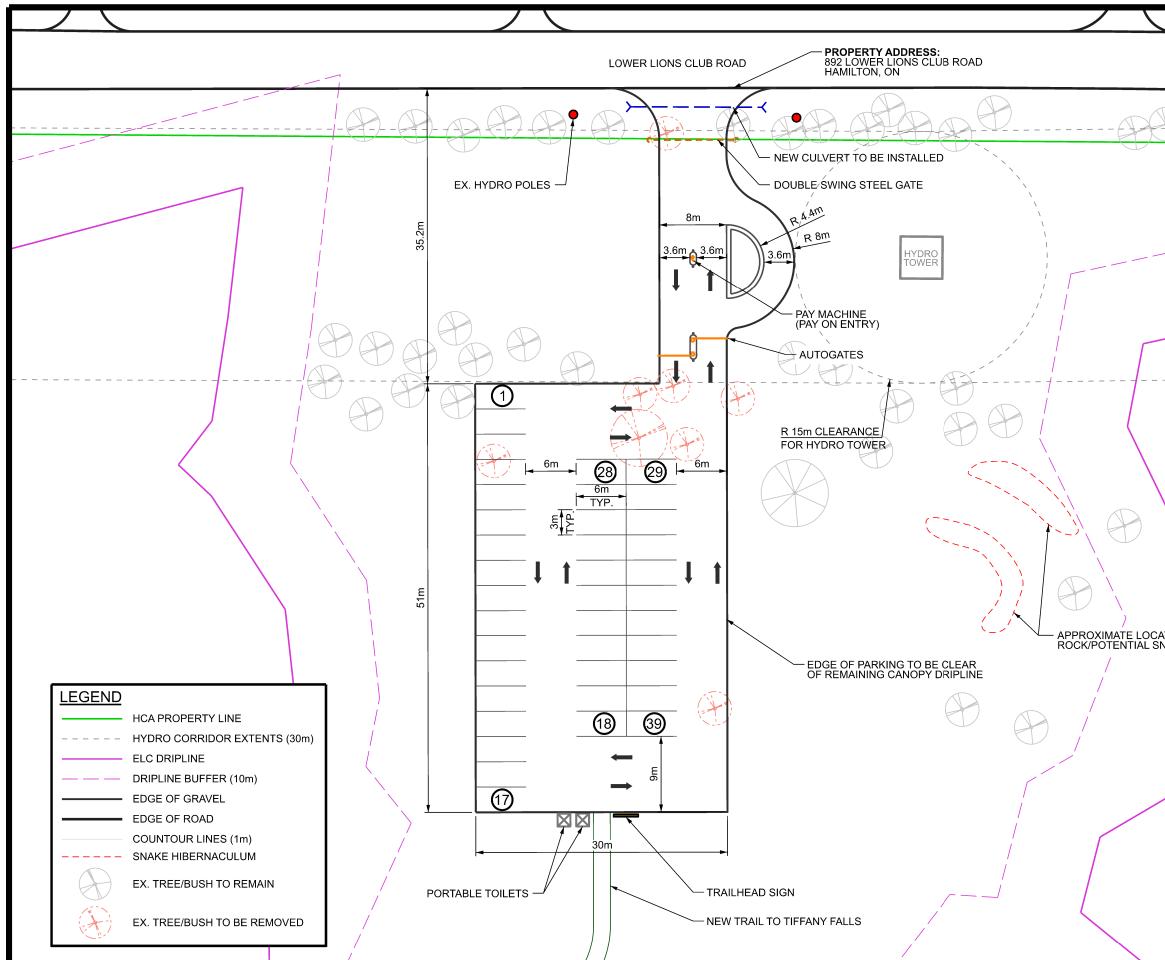
The changes proposed for both the Artaban Parking Lot area and the Tiffany Falls/Lower Lion's Club Rd area, follow through on the recommendations previously endorsed and approved in 2019 by the HCA's Conservation Advisory Board and the Board of Directors. HCA staff have reviewed the concepts proposed in great detail internally and are confident the resulting changes to both locations will yield favourable results from both a public access and area management perspective. HCA staff recommend moving forward with the completion of detailed design packages for both proposed parking improvement projects, along with a final review by the original consulting team Aboud & Associates Inc. to ensure all recommendations have been adequately addressed. A formal Development Permit submission to the NEC would follow in order to continue to move these initiatives forward.











FOR REVIEW date: 2024/01/11	
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	rev no. description date Hamilton Conservation
ATION OF EXPOSED NAKE HIBERNACULUM	A Healthy Watershed for Everyone 838 Mineral Springs Rd. Ancaster, ON L9G 4X1
	Tel: 905.525.2181 Web: www.conservationhamiliton.ca LOWER LIONS CLUB ROAD - PROPOSED PARKING LOT
	CONCEPT DUNDAS VALLEY C.A.
	project humber 2-1414-23-01 scale
	1:450 Nate 2024/01/11
	drawn K.KUHN checked
	M.HALL approved M.HALL
	drawing number G05

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January 22, 2024

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to acknowledge the support of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) for the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) proposal to create a formal parking area off of Lower Lion's Club Road and to make improvements to the existing HCA parking areas on Wilson Street and Artaban Rd.

The BTC is a leading Canadian environmental charity that responsibly connects people to nature and recreational opportunities by way of the iconic 900-km Bruce Trail. For over 60 years the BTC has been stewarding and preserving land within the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere, protecting its ecosystems and natural heritage for the benefit of all.

HCA has been an enthusiastic partner and supporter of the Bruce Trail since its inception and continues to work with the BTC to provide safe public access to the Niagara Escarpment. BTC and HCA staff meet regularly to discuss issues with hiker safety and how to best protect the ecological integrity of the lands where the HCA graciously hosts the Bruce Trail.

The proposed parking improvements will ensure that Bruce Trail hikers have appropriate places to access our trail system in a manner that aligns with our philosophy of 'controlled access' to southern Ontario's most impressive geological feature. The improvements will also be essential in ensuring the safety of trail users and that municipal parking restrictions are adhered to.

The Bruce Trail was, and continues to be, a core component of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). Throughout the NEP there are multiple references to ensuring public access to the Niagara Escarpment via the Bruce Trail, including clause 8 of section 2.2 "General Development Criteria", which states that "Development permitted should be designed and located in such a manner as to provide for or protect access to the Niagara Escarpment, including the Bruce Trail corridor". The BTC recognizes that the HCA proposal will do exactly this and help us fulfill our mandate to provide safe parking for all Bruce Trail users.

The BTC is also prepared to offer an in-kind contribution of staff and volunteer time to help facilitate the implementation of this proposal, as we believe that it will work towards improving our hiker experience while increasing safety for local residents and trail users alike.

Sincerely,

Michael McDonald Chief Executive Officer