



# **Budget & Administration Committee Meeting Agenda**

Monday June 23, 2025



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## **Budget & Administration Committee Meeting**

**June 23, 2025, at time 4:00 P.M.**

**This will be a fully virtual meeting using the WebEx platform.**

**All meetings can be viewed live on HCA's You Tube Channel:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>**

- 1. Welcome** – Susan Fielding
- 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Delegations**
- 5. Consent Items**
  - 5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – May 15, 2025 Page 1
- 6. Business Arising from the Minutes**
- 7. Staff Reports/Memorandums**

Reports for recommendation

  - 7.1 Legislative Minimum Wage Increase to HCA Casual Wage Rates – Marlene Ferreira Page 7
  - 7.2 Fleet Management Policy and Decarbonization Guideline – Jaime Tellier Page 11
  - 7.3 Year 2 Strategic Plan Initiatives – Lisa Burnside Page 31
  - 7.4 Amendment to the Purchasing Policy – Authorized Purchasing Limits – Scott Fleming Page 37

7.5 HCA Fee Development Framework

– Scott Fleming

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Memorandums to be received

7.6 Asset Disposition

– Scott Fleming

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**8. New Business**

**9. In-Camera Items**

**10. Next Meeting – Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.**

**11. Adjournment**



# Hamilton Conservation Authority

## Minutes

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### Budget & Administration Committee

**May 15, 2025**

Minutes of the Budget & Administration Committee meeting held on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., fully virtual on Webex, and livestreamed on YouTube.

**Present:** Susan Fielding, in the Chair  
Brad Clark  
Lisa DiCesare  
Maureen Wilson

**Regrets:** Alex Wilson

**Staff Present:** Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Marlene Ferreira, Scott Fleming, Liam Fletcher, Brandon Good, Matt Hall, Amanda Martin, Scott Peck, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, and Sandra Winninger

**Others Present:** None

#### 1. Welcome

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

#### 2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

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

#### 3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

**BA 2510**

**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson**

**SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**CARRIED**

**4. Delegations**

There were none.

**5. Consent Items**

The following consent items were adopted:

5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – March 25, 2025

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

**7. Staff Reports/Memoranda**

Memorandums to be received

7.1. 2025 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financials – Operating

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the memorandum and answered members' questions.

**BA 2511**

**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson**

**SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

**THAT the Memorandum entitled HCA 1<sup>st</sup> Q Financial Results – Operating be received**

**CARRIED**

Lisa DiCesare arrived

**7.2. 2025 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financial Results – Capital and Major Maintenance**

Matt Hall provided a summary of the memorandum and answered members' questions. In response to a question posed by Councillor Wilson, the second quarters' capital financial results will include additional information related to capital reinvestment of assets.

**BA 2512****MOVED BY: Brad Clark****SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

**THAT the Memorandum entitled 2025 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financial Results – Capital and Major Maintenance be received**

**CARRIED****7.3. HCA 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Vendor Report**

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the memorandum and answered members' questions.

**BA 2513****MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare****SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

**THAT the Memorandum entitled HCA 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Vendor Report be received**

**CARRIED****7.4. HCA Rental house Information Update**

Matt Hall provided a summary of the memorandum and answered members' questions. Staff confirmed that two rental homes are currently vacant and will undergo internal assessment before being considered for return to tenancy, in accordance with the Board-approved rental policy.

**BA 2514****MOVED BY: Brad Clark****SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

**THAT the Memorandum entitled HCA Rental House Information Update be received**

**CARRIED**



**7.5 2025 General Insurance Renewal**

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the memorandum and answered members' questions. Staff confirmed that the reduction in some premiums did not come at the expense of a reduction in coverage.

**BA 2515****MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson****SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

**THAT the Memorandum entitled 2025 General Insurance Renewal be received**

**CARRIED****Reports for Recommendation****7.6. Canadian Supplies and Suppliers**

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the report and answered members' questions.

**BA 2516****MOVED BY: Brad Clark****SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors;**

**THAT staff be directed to amend the HCA Purchasing Policy to add a clause indicating preference for Canadian-owned vendors and sourcing Canadian materials and supplies.**

**CARRIED****8. New Business**

There was none.

**9. In-Camera Items for Matters of Law, Personnel and Property**

There was none.

**10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee will be held on Thursday, June 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

**11. Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

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**Report to:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed & Prepared By:** Marlene Ferreira, Director, Human Resources and Wellness Services

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** Legislative Minimum Wage Increase to HCA Casual Wage Rates

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT** the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

**THAT** the revised Casual/Seasonal wage grids for Hamilton Conservation Authority and Confederation Beach Park, Lakeland Pool and Wild Waterworks be approved, which provides for the following:

- a) The provincially mandated minimum wage rate of \$17.60, effective October 1, 2025, be applied to Level 1, Step 1 positions; and
- b) An additional increase be applied to Level 1, Step 2 positions as outlined in this report for the 2026 hiring year to maintain step progression for returning students.

**Executive Summary:**

The Ontario government has announced that minimum wage rates will increase on October 1, 2025, based on the Ontario Consumer Price Index. The general minimum wage will rise by \$0.40 to \$17.60 per hour. In accordance with provincial legislation, HCA must update the affected wage category accordingly.

To remain compliant, staff recommend increasing Level 1, Step 1 of the Casual/Seasonal Wage Grids to match the new minimum wage of \$17.60 per hour. In addition, to maintain internal equity, ensure meaningful pay progression and value the contributions of

returning staff, it is recommended that Level 1, Step 2 be increased by nine cents, resulting in a new hourly wage of \$18.05 per hour.

This adjustment recognizes the benefit of returning seasonal staff who require less training and bring prior experience, which contributes to smoother operations. These updates align with the findings from the 2025 market review of casual/seasonal wages and help address retaining qualified summer staff across all departments.

### **Staff Comment / Discussion:**

Casual and seasonal staff, particularly student general labourers, play an important role in supporting our operations from May to September, with some working until late October.

HCA has Casual/Seasonal Wage Grids for seasonal staff hired to assist our owned and managed operations. Each year, HCA hires approximately 235 casual/seasonal staff across various departments, including Wild Waterworks and Lakeland Pool, distributed as follows:

Area	Number of casual staff
HCA conservation areas	80
Confederation Beach Park non wave pool	20
Confederation Beach Park Wild Waterworks	135

Approximately 45% (105 positions) of these roles fall under Level 1, Step 1 of the Casual/Seasonal Wage Grids. The incoming minimum wage of \$17.60 per hour exceeds the current Level 1, Step 1 rate of \$17.45 per hour, necessitating an adjustment.

To maintain the integrity of the recently reviewed Casual/Seasonal Wage Grids and ensure alignment with market standards, the following changes are proposed:

- Level 1, Step 1: Increase to \$17.60/hour (to comply with legislation)
- Level 1, Step 2: Increase from \$17.45/hour to \$18.05/hour

These changes will:

- Ensure compliance with provincial wage legislation
- Preserve our competitiveness relative to other local employers
- Support recruitment and retention efforts for essential seasonal positions
- Promote internal equity between new and returning staff
- Recognize and incentivize returning staff, who offer operational value through reduced training needs and prior job knowledge

**Strategic Plan Linkage:**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area** – Promote employee training, engagement, well-being, diversity, and inclusivity to strengthen our organizational resilience and ensure employees are equipped with the necessary skills to address emerging needs.

**Agency Comments:**

None

**Legal / Financial Implications:**

The estimated financial impact of the proposed wage grid changes to comply with minimum wage for Level 1, Step 1 and the increase for Level 1, Step 2, is projected to increase casual staffing expenses by approximately \$15,000 in 2026.

As Confederation Beach Park and Wild Waterworks is owned by the City of Hamilton, staffing costs for are budgeted separately by the City and are not included in HCA's budget. It is anticipated that the financial impact will meet and exceed that of HCA given the higher volume of hiring. Staff will advise of the 2026 impact at its next City of Hamilton PMRT meeting.

**Related Reports and Appendices:**

None



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**Report to:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed By:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy CAO/Director, Watershed Management Services

**Prepared By:** Jaime Tellier, Senior Manager, Central Support Services  
Allison Morgan, Climate Change Coordinator

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** Fleet Management Policy and Decarbonization Guideline

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors,**

**THAT the Fleet Management Policy and Fleet Decarbonization Guideline, dated May 2025, as appended to this report, be approved.**

**Executive Summary:**

A Fleet Management Policy has been developed to formalize Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) fleet management practices for inventory management, regulatory compliance, safety standards, risk management, and financial sustainability.

An accompanying Fleet Decarbonization Guideline is also being introduced to help to reduce HCA's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with its fleet vehicles and equipment.

The aim of the Fleet Decarbonization Guideline is for **27%** of HCA passenger vehicles to be fuelled by alternative fuels by 2029. Further, by 2034, **47%** of the passenger vehicles can be replaced by alternatively fuelled vehicles. In total, all eligible vehicles that can be replaced with alternative fuels, are scheduled to be by **2034**, resulting in a reduction of up to **72%** or **133 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** of annual Green House

Gas (GHG) gasoline emissions.

The Fleet Decarbonization Guideline is one of the priorities of HCA's 2023 Corporate Climate Change Strategy. The transition to alternatively fuelled vehicles and maintenance equipment will reduce our gasoline and diesel usage, reduce our carbon footprint and promote environmentally friendly operations.

### **Staff Comment / Discussion:**

#### Fleet Management Policy

HCA operates a diverse fleet of vehicles and equipment that support a wide range of activities across the organization. As a vital central support service, the fleet program plays a key role in the organization's operations. It has traditionally been overseen by a Fleet Coordinator/Lead Mechanic, along with a dedicated Mechanic and Administrative Assistant. These staff members are responsible for maintaining the vehicle and equipment inventory, ensuring compliance with regulations, upholding safety standards, and implementing a comprehensive training program for employees. To formalize these practices, the Fleet Management Policy has been established, outlining the responsibilities of Fleet staff and providing direction for all employees who utilize HCA vehicles and equipment (**Appendix A**).

The Fleet Management Policy also contains a renewal strategy that employs a lifecycle management approach to the replacement of fleet vehicles. This includes a structured phasing plan to replace vehicles based on a 10 year/200,000km/10,000 hours cycle. This approach ensures sustainable costing to replace aging vehicles and transition to more efficient vehicles, while maximizing the value and utility of our current fleet.

HCA uses an interdepartmental chargeback accounting system to generate revenue for the ongoing maintenance and renewal of its fleet. These costs and rates are accounted for using customized rate formulas that consider administrative, operating, maintenance and repair costs. The formulas also ensure an annual reserve investment fee will be collected to facilitate the future replacement of vehicles and equipment.

#### Fleet Decarbonization Guideline

The "Towards a Net-Zero Future: Hamilton Conservation Authority's Corporate Climate Change Strategy", dated 2023, is the guiding document for HCA's climate change mitigation and adaptation actions. To contribute to achieving the objectives of the strategy, staff have developed the Fleet Decarbonization Guideline to encourage the purchase of alternatively fuelled vehicles and equipment to reduce GHG emissions from HCA's operations (**Appendix B**). Alternatively fuelled vehicles include Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV), Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV), and Plug-in Hybrids (PHEV). The guideline is intended to be implemented in conjunction with the Fleet Management Policy.



HCA owns forty-five (45) passenger vehicles, with twenty-one (21) of those being eligible for replacement with alternatively fuelled vehicles. Through the lifecycle management and structured phasing plan, as set out in the Fleet Management Policy, HCA is positioned to replace 27% of its passenger vehicles with alternatively fuelled vehicles by 2029. Further, by 2034, 47% of the passenger vehicles would be replaced by alternatively fuelled vehicles.

Due to specific operational requirements (e.g. plowing, towing, load capacity, etc.), there are currently no comparable alternatively fuelled vehicles on the market to replace the remaining 24 vehicles. All eligible vehicles that can be replaced with alternative fuel sources are scheduled to be replaced by 2034, resulting in a reduction of up to 72% or 133 tCO<sub>2</sub>e of annual Green House Gas (GHG) gasoline emissions.

There are emerging technologies that are not currently viable options or not available in Canada, that may become popular in the future. Staff will continue to investigate new technology as it relates to our corporate fleet and as such the Fleet Decarbonization Guideline is intended to serve as a living document.

The highest contributing source to HCA's overall GHG emissions is gasoline and diesel usage from fleet vehicles and equipment. The goals presented in the guideline are a step toward reducing our GHG emissions and achieving the ultimate goal of achieving net zero emissions.

### **Strategic Plan Linkage:**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
  - Build upon the initial investments and initiatives in the Corporate Climate Change Strategy to reduce our carbon footprint.

### **Agency Comments:**

Not applicable.

### **Legal / Financial Implications:**

Budget requirements for the replacement and purchasing of new fleet vehicles and equipment have been considered. HCA's Fleet Management Policy (Appendix A) and associated procedures contain funding and accounting provisions to annually collect

and reserve a fixed amount of funds per vehicle/piece of equipment. This will ensure a sustainable funding source for future fleet vehicle acquisitions and replacements.

In addition, 10% of the proceeds from the sales of all HCA Membership Passes are set aside to assist with funding HCA climate change initiatives. Should additional funds be required, this initiative can also support purchasing alternatively fuelled vehicles / equipment.

**Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix A – Fleet Management Policy, May 2025

Appendix B - Fleet Decarbonization Guideline, May 2025

# Appendix A



## Hamilton Conservation Authority Fleet Management Policy

May, 2025

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# Hamilton Conservation Authority Fleet Management Policy

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Fleet Management Policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for the acquisition, utilization, maintenance, and disposal of vehicles and equipment within Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) fleet, and to ensure the efficient and safe operation of vehicles and equipment while minimizing costs and environmental impact.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all vehicles and large equipment (\$2,500 in value or above) owned or leased by HCA (passenger, light commercial, and heavy equipment) and used for official business purposes. It encompasses all employees, contractors, and authorized users who operate these vehicles.

## 3. Responsibilities

Senior Management: The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, ensuring compliance, and providing necessary resources for fleet operations.

Fleet Coordinator: Responsible for coordination of the fleet management program including coordinating vehicle assignments, scheduling vehicle inspections, maintenance/repair and replacements, and development and implementation of training to ensure that all vehicles comply with safety regulations and that drivers adhere to safe driving practices.

Mechanical Personnel: Trained maintenance personnel will conduct regular inspections, servicing, and repairs of fleet vehicles to ensure optimal performance and safety.

Fleet Administrative Support: Designated personnel will serve as fleet administrative support staff are responsible for coordinating vehicle bookings and record-keeping.

Drivers: Drivers are responsible for completing circle checks, operating vehicles safely, adhering to traffic laws, and reporting any accidents, damages, or maintenance issues promptly.

## 4. Authorized Drivers

Any employee using an HCA Fleet Vehicle must be an authorized driver. Only authorized drivers are insured under HCA's insurance policy. Departments shall not permit the operation of HCA vehicles by unauthorized personnel.

Authorized drivers must possess a valid driver's license appropriate for the class of vehicle they operate and must complete mandatory training provided by the Fleet Coordinator. Authorized drivers must also submit a driver's abstract to Human Resources at the commencement of their employment with HCA, and every three years thereafter, to be retained in their personnel file. All driver information is

## Hamilton Conservation Authority Fleet Management Policy

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confidential and stored in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

The Director of Finance and Central Support Services, or their designate, will review the driver's abstract according to criteria predetermined by HCA's insurance providers and determine if the applicant is eligible to be placed onto HCA's insurance.

The Director of Finance and Central Support Services, or their designate, will maintain a list of authorized drivers to be provided to HCA's insurance provider annually.

Any authorized driver who has had a driver's license non-renewed, suspended or revoked must notify their supervisor immediately and discontinue further operation of HCA vehicles. No one may drive an HCA vehicle with an expired or suspended driver's license. Knowingly driving an HCA vehicle with a suspended or revoked license is grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

Authorized drivers may have their driving privileges suspended if it is determined they have operated the vehicle unsafely or carelessly or at the discretion of the Director of Finance and Central Support Services.

### 5. Vehicle Utilization / Driver's Responsibilities

- Vehicles and equipment must only be used for official business purposes, authorized by HCA.
- The driver or operator must have a valid Class G driver's license and a clear driver's abstract.
- Unauthorized personnel are strictly prohibited from operating HCA vehicles and equipment.
- Supervisory staff are responsible for ensuring that employees are properly trained in the safe operation of vehicles and equipment.
- The driver or operator is responsible for payment of any fines resulting from traffic violations or parking infractions. HCA is not responsible for any fines.
- The driver or operator must report all accidents, injuries, damages, or traffic violations to their immediate supervisor.
- Operate and care for HCA vehicles in a safe, efficient and professional manner at all times.
- Seat belts must be worn by all occupants while the vehicle is in motion.
- Comply with all laws, regulations and posted signs at all times. The driver or operator shall not operate handheld devices while operating an HCA vehicle or equipment.
- Conduct pre-trip inspections of all vehicles prior to operation to identify any issues and ensure the area surrounding the vehicle is obstruction free.

- Keep vehicles in clean condition.
- Carpooling and trip optimization should be encouraged to maximize vehicle utilization and reduce fuel consumption.

### 6. Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR)

HCA owns commercial vehicles. Commercial vehicle operators in Ontario must have a valid Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR) certificate and include a copy in the vehicle at all times. The CVOR is to be renewed on an annual basis in January. The renewal process is managed by the Fleet Coordinator.

### 7. Vehicle Safety Inspections

Vehicles owned or leased by HCA must be inspected prior to the first vehicle movement of the day by an authorized driver. If the vehicle is driven by multiple drivers throughout the day, the vehicle circle check must be completed each time the vehicle has a new driver.

Any issues should be reported to the Fleet Coordinator immediately. Arrangement for the inspection/repair of the vehicle must be made by the Fleet Coordinator. If there are any safety concerns, the vehicle should not be operated until a thorough inspection is completed by fleet maintenance personnel.

If vehicles are not deemed safe for operation, they must be taken out of service and not returned until fully repaired.

### 8. Accident Reporting

In the event of an accident or vehicle damage, drivers must immediately notify emergency services (if necessary), law enforcement (if the accident involves another vehicle, on or off HCA property), and their immediate supervisor.

A detailed incident/accident report must be filed with the Fleet Coordinator, Health and Safety Coordinator, and Director of Finance and Central Support Services, within 24 hours of the incident.

### 9. Fleet Renewal

HCA employs a lifecycle management approach to the replacement of fleet vehicles. This includes a structured phasing plan to replace vehicles based on a 10 year/200,000km/10,000 hours cycle, the anticipated life expectancy of most HCA owned vehicles. Specialty vehicles and equipment (2500 series and above) are evaluated on a case by case basis. This approach ensures sustainable costing to replace

## Hamilton Conservation Authority Fleet Management Policy

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aging vehicles and transition to more efficient vehicles, while maximizing the value and utility of our current fleet.

### A. Funding and Accounting

HCA uses an interdepartmental chargeback system to generate revenue for the ongoing maintenance and renewal of its fleet, taking into consideration insurance, licensing, fuel consumption, acquisition, and maintenance and repair costs. Fees are applied to departments, which results in intra-company revenues that are re-invested into the fleet management program.

Fleet operations costs are calculated using customized annual rate formulas for different vehicle categories based on purchase price and estimated fleet maintenance costs over ten years. Vehicle categories are based on those that have similar maintenance and repair costs. Parts, labour and frequency of repair or maintenance are included in the estimated costs.

Interdepartmental chargeback rates are also calculated using customized annual rate formulas for different vehicle categories based on purchase price, estimated usage rates (per week and per kms), and a predetermined fixed value to be set aside into a reserve for future vehicle purchases, also distributed over 10 years.

### B. Vehicle Acquisition

All HCA vehicles must be purchased or leased in accordance with HCA's Purchasing Policy.

All vehicle acquisitions must be approved by the Director of Finance and Central Support Services or Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), in accordance with authorized purchasing limits in the Purchasing Policy.

Vehicles will be replaced when they reach 10 years of age, 200,000 KM, or 10,000 hours, whichever is arrived at first, unless at the discretion of the Fleet Coordinator and in consultation with the Director of Finance and Central Support Services, should a vehicle's condition warrant early disposal or extending its prescribed lifespan.

HCA's Fleet & Equipment Decarbonization Guidelines, May 2025, will be considered at the time of all new vehicle acquisitions. **See Appendix A.** The Climate Change Coordinator will be consulted as needed to assess the environmental impacts of fleet purchases and additional fleet considerations as they arise. The Climate Change Coordinator will monitor and document progress toward achieving goals related to percentages of new/replacement fleet vehicles fueled by alternative fuels, by target dates.

### C. Vehicle Maintenance

Regular maintenance schedules must be established for each vehicle, including routine inspections, oil changes, tire rotations, and other necessary servicing.

Maintenance records must be accurately documented and maintained for each vehicle.

### D. Vehicle Disposal

Vehicles that are no longer cost-effective to maintain or operate should be disposed of in accordance with HCA's Purchasing Policy.

Disposal methods may include sale, auction, or trade-in, depending on the condition and value of the vehicle, to obtain fair market value.

Proceeds from vehicle disposal should be reinvested into the fleet for replacement or upgrades.

## 10. Compliance and Review

The Director of Finance and Central Support Services, in consultation with the Fleet Coordinator, will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and ensure compliance. Compliance with this policy will be periodically audited by the Fleet Coordinator. Any violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.

HCA reserves the right to modify or amend this policy at any time, as deemed necessary.

## 11. Conclusion

Adherence to this Vehicle Fleet Management Policy supports the safe, efficient, and cost-effective operation of HCA's fleet. By following these guidelines, we aim to minimize risks, optimize resource utilization, and promote environmental sustainability.



# Appendix B



## Hamilton Conservation Authority Fleet & Equipment Decarbonization Guideline

May 2025

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## 1. Guideline

The intent of this guideline is to provide a framework that will help decarbonize Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA's) vehicle and equipment fleet.

## 2. Purpose

This document outlines HCA's goals and objectives to reduce the organization's overall *greenhouse gas* (GHG) emissions associated with both vehicles and equipment, while maintaining considerations for HCA operations.

## 3. Scope

These guidelines apply to all conservation areas and the purchase of all vehicles and equipment to be operated by HCA employees.

## 4. Management of Guidelines

Acquisition of HCA fleet vehicles and equipment are done in consultation with senior staff, who are required to comply with the terms of these guidelines.

## 5. Goals

HCA will aim to have **27%** of its *passenger vehicles* fuelled by *alternative fuels* by 2029. Further, by 2034, **47%** of HCA's passenger vehicles would be replaced with alternatively fuelled vehicles. Preferred alternative fuel vehicles include *Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV)*, *Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV)* and *Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV)*.

HCA currently has 45 passenger vehicles in its fleet, including two (2) Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) and three (3) Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV). By 2029, an additional seven (7) vehicles will be eligible for replacement with alternatively fuelled vehicles (BEV or HEV). An additional nine (9) vehicles will be eligible for replacement with alternatively fuelled (BEV or HEV) vehicles by 2034.

Of the above 16 vehicles eligible for replacement, six (6) must be replaced with HEV's due to operational requirements for towing and snow removal. The remaining 10 vehicles are eligible to be replaced with any type of alternative fuel vehicles, subject to performance and operational requirements.

In total, all vehicles in HCA's fleet that can be replaced with alternative fuels, without impacting operations, are scheduled to be by **2034**. For the remaining passenger vehicles in the fleet, there are currently no equivalent vehicles of these types that are fuelled by alternative sources, and they are necessary for operational requirements.

If all 12 vehicles are replaced with BEV models, and the remaining nine (9) vehicles are replaced with HEV models, the transition will result in a **53% or 98 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** reduction of our annual GHG gasoline emissions and a **19% or 35 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** reduction of our annual GHG gasoline emissions, respectively. In total, the decarbonization of these 21 passenger fleet vehicles will result in a reduction of **72% or 133 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** of annual GHG gasoline emissions.<sup>1</sup>

The above targets are approximated as all scheduled vehicle replacements are subject to adjustment based on vehicle condition, at the discretion of the Lead Mechanic/Fleet Coordinator.

It is the intention of HCA to move toward the transition of *medium and heavy-duty vehicles* and *off-highway equipment* to alternative fuel sources, where possible.

## 6. Funding

HCA's Fleet Management Policy and associated procedures contain funding and accounting provisions to annually collect and reserve a fixed amount of funds per vehicle/piece of equipment. Thus, ensuring a sustainable funding source for future vehicle replacements and acquisitions.

In addition, 10% of the proceeds from the sales of all HCA Membership Passes are set aside to assist with funding HCA climate change initiatives. Funding from this initiative can also be used to support the purchase of alternatively fuelled vehicles, should additional funds be required.

## 7. Responsibilities

### 7.1. Fleet Coordinator

- a. Support the decarbonization of HCA's fleet through the procurement of BEVs, HEVs, PHEVs, and alternative fuels as outlined in this document;
- b. Ensure these guidelines are followed when procuring HCA fleet vehicles and equipment;
- c. Oversee and maintain HCA's *corporate fleet* across HCA facilities; and
- d. Coordinate with department directors and HCA staff to ensure all required electric vehicle/equipment supplies are available and used appropriately.

### 7.2. Director of Finance and Central Support Services

- a. Support in the procurement of alternatively fuelled fleet vehicles and equipment in terms of finances for HCA; and
- b. Ensure adequate funds are available for future vehicle/equipment replacements and acquisitions through the funding sources mentioned above.

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<sup>1</sup>Fuel efficiency is determined by the type of vehicle and average km travelled per year. The analysis includes assumed variables such as impacts of driving behaviours on fuel efficiency (e.g. speed, number of starts and stops).

### 7.3. Climate Change Coordinator

- a. Monitor and document progress toward achieving goals related to percentages of new/replacement fleet vehicles fuelled by alternative sources by target dates; and
- b. Assist the Fleet Coordinator with research and options for alternatively fuelled fleet vehicles that have lower GHG emissions as required.

### 7.4. Conservation Area Superintendents/Managers & Department Directors

- a. Ensure that equipment procured for their conservation area (CA) or department complies with these guidelines; and
- b. Coordinate with Conservation Area Superintendents/Managers, Department Directors, and the Fleet Coordinator as required to aid in HCA's fleet decarbonization goals.

## 8. Procedure

### 8.1. HCA Vehicle Fleet

Once an eligible fleet vehicle reaches the end of its lifecycle, the vehicle replacement should comply with these guidelines, and an alternatively fuelled vehicle (HEV, BEV, PHEV) should be prioritized. Fleet vehicles include all passenger, medium-duty, and heavy-duty vehicles.

Appropriate infrastructure should be installed and available at the required location for alternatively fuelled vehicles prior to purchase.

If there are no available new alternatively fuelled vehicles available that meet HCA's requirements, the Fleet Coordinator shall investigate aftermarket vehicles where possible and financially practical, based upon budget requirements. All aftermarket purchases should still fall within the original manufacturer's service and repair warranty.

If available, alternatively fuelled vehicles should be selected over *Internal Combustion Engine (ICE)* vehicles, as long as they do not impact business as usual operations.

When there are no alternatively fuelled vehicles available, the Fleet Coordinator shall determine an appropriate replacement that emits the least amount of GHG emissions.

### 8.2. HCA Off-Highway Equipment

During the procurement process of new and replacement off-highway equipment, preference should be given to equipment operating by energy efficient power sources, with electrical and alternative fuel sources being the first option.

Off-highway equipment includes, but is not limited to, handheld maintenance equipment, lawnmowers, tractors, boats, and all other equipment.

### 8.3. Rentals

Where rental vehicles or equipment is procured by HCA staff, preference should be given to alternative fuel sources (e.g. HEV, BEV, PHEV). Internal combustion vehicles should not be procured unless it is the only option available, or as a result of budget constraints.

HCA staff should ensure that all rental vehicles and equipment is sized appropriately for the intended task, to keep the associated fuel use to a minimum.

### 8.4. Emerging Technology

As the corporate fleet transitions to low emission options, as outlined in this document, there are emerging technologies that are being used to fuel all forms of transportation. While some of these technologies are not current viable options for HCA operational requirements or not yet available in Canada, there is the potential for certain low emission solutions to become popular in the future. Examples of other alternative fuel sources and technology include *biofuel* and hydrogen (e.g. *Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle* (FCEV) and *green hydrogen*).

HCA staff should continue to investigate emerging technologies as they relate to our corporate fleet and update this document as required.

## 9. Amendments

HCA reserves the right to review and amend these guidelines as required.

## 10. Appendices

### Appendix A – Definitions

**Alternative Fuel:** fuel that powers a system other than gasoline and diesel, including but not limited to hybrid electric, plug-in hybrid electric, battery electric, hydrogen, and biofuels.

**Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV):** a vehicle that is powered by a rechargeable battery that runs off stored electricity, with no other propulsion source.

**Biodiesel:** fuel source that is produced from oil or fat using transesterification. Biodiesel can be blended to make B5-B99, with B100 being its pure form.

**Biofuel:** a fuel produced directly from biomass (e.g., bioethanol, biodiesel).

**Corporate Fleet:** assets owned by the HCA including but not limited to motor vehicles, equipment used for landscaping, agriculture, construction, and marine vessels, which are managed by the fleet coordinator and used by HCA staff.

**Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV):** a vehicle that converts compressed hydrogen gas into electricity, which is used to power an electric motor.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG):** gas that traps heat near the Earth's surface creating a warming effect. The most common GHG's include water vapour (H<sub>2</sub>O), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>).

**Green Hydrogen:** hydrogen generated by renewable energy sources (e.g., wind, solar). Green hydrogen has virtually no carbon emissions.

**Heavy Duty Vehicle (HDV):** a vehicle that has a gross weight greater than 8,845 kgs.

**Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV):** a vehicle powered by both an internal combustion engine system and an electric propulsion system.

**Internal Combustion Engine (ICE):** an engine that uses the heat and pressure created by burning fuel (e.g., petroleum-based gasoline) to power the engine, which transforms chemical energy into kinetic energy.

**Medium Duty Vehicle (MDV):** a vehicle that has a gross weight between 3,856 kgs – 8,845 kgs.

**Off-highway Fleet:** assets that are not suitable for roadway/highway use including construction and maintenance vehicles/equipment, and handheld maintenance equipment, of which are managed and used by HCA staff.

**Passenger Vehicle:** A motor vehicle used to primarily carry people and is intended to be driven on highways and streets.

**Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV):** an electric vehicle that has both a rechargeable battery that is powered by electricity and an internal combustion engine. The battery is charged through plugging the vehicle into a charging station.

## Appendix B – Fleet Classifications

**Table 1.** HCA fleet classifications.

<b>Fleet Classification</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples within HCA's Fleet</b>
Passenger vehicles	A motor vehicle used to primarily carry people and is intended to be driven on highways and streets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SUV</li><li>• Pick-up truck</li><li>• Van</li></ul>
Medium-duty vehicles	A vehicle that has a gross weight between 3,856 kgs – 8,845 kgs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Single cab mini dump</li><li>• Crew cab mini dump</li><li>• Cube van</li><li>• Single cab chipper truck</li></ul>
Heavy-duty vehicles	A vehicle that has a gross weight greater than 8,845 kgs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Single cab mini dump</li><li>• Septic pumper</li><li>• Dump truck</li><li>• Cube truck</li></ul>
Off-highway fleet	Assets that are not suitable for roadway/highway use including construction and maintenance vehicles/equipment, and handheld maintenance equipment, of which are managed and used by HCA staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tractor</li><li>• Lawn mower</li><li>• Brush cutter</li><li>• Boat trailer</li><li>• Snowplow</li></ul>



## Appendix C – Fuel Sources

**Table 2.** Fuel source types and their associated use.

<b>Fuel Source</b>	<b>Fleet Use</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Electricity	Used for all battery-operated vehicles and equipment. Includes plug-in hybrid vehicles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEV</li> <li>• PHEV</li> <li>• Lawn maintenance equipment (hedge trimmer, lawn mower, etc.)</li> </ul>
Diesel blended biofuel (Biodiesel)	Used to power vehicles and equipment that traditionally run on diesel. Available in B5-B99. *most tanks can run on B5 without retrofits*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diesel powered vehicles</li> <li>• Tractors</li> <li>• Maintenance equipment</li> </ul>
Ethanol blended biofuel (Bioethanol)	Used to power vehicles and equipment that traditionally run on gasoline. Available in E5-E99. *most tanks can run on E5 without retrofits*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal combustion engine vehicles</li> </ul>
Hydrogen	Used to fuel hydrogen vehicles (including heavy duty-vehicles and equipment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hydrogen vehicles</li> <li>• Heavy-duty trucks</li> </ul>
Gasoline	Used for passenger/motor vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passenger vehicles</li> </ul>
Diesel	Used to fuel a variety of different vehicle classifications, and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passenger vehicles</li> <li>• Maintenance equipment</li> <li>• Tractors</li> <li>• Medium-duty vehicles</li> <li>• Heavy-duty vehicles</li> </ul>

## Appendix D – Replacement Schedule

Generally, **two (2)** vehicles a year are scheduled to be replaced. The replacement schedule for HCA's fleet vehicles is a structured phasing plan based on a 10 year/200,000km/10,000 hours cycle, the anticipated life expectancy of most HCA owed vehicles.

The vehicle replacement schedule is subject to change. At the discretion of the Fleet Coordinator, vehicles may need to be replaced earlier or remain in the fleet longer than predicted.

**Report to:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed By:** Scott Peck, Deputy CAO/Director, Watershed Management Services  
Scott Fleming, Director, Finance and Central Support Services  
Matt Hall, Director of Capital Projects & Strategic Services  
Gord Costie, Director of Conservation Area Services  
Marlene Ferreira, Director of Human Resources & Wellness

**Prepared By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** Year 2 Strategic Plan Initiatives

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors;**

**THAT this report be received for information; and further,**

**THAT the Year 2 initiatives identified in the report that support all four priority areas in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan be approved and incorporated into 2026 and future year budgeting.**

**Executive Summary:**

This report presents the proposed Year 2 initiatives under the HCA 2025–2029 Strategic Plan for approval. A total of 14 initiatives have been identified across the Plan's four strategic priority areas: Water Resources Management, Organizational Excellence, Natural Heritage, and Connecting People to Nature. These initiatives reflect a combination of ongoing program delivery, strategic advancements, and foundational work critical to long-term outcomes.

Year 2 initiatives are being brought forward now to allow departments to begin integrating them into 2026 workplans and to ensure alignment with the budget development cycle. This timing also allows staff to begin shaping a future approach to multi-year budgeting, reflecting the longer-term nature of Strategic Plan implementation.

### Staff Comment / Discussion:

The 2025–2029 Strategic Plan identifies four key priority areas that guide organizational direction. The Year 2 initiatives continue building momentum toward achieving the Strategic Plan outcomes, with targeted actions that reflect each area’s focus. Several continue the work of Year 1 initiatives where program, service and system reviews are underway with resulting priority recommendations forthcoming through the Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board.

### Water Resources Management



Focused on safeguarding the health of the watershed and protecting people and property from natural hazards.

1. **Complete updated floodplain mapping for Tiffany, Ancaster, Spring, and Sulphur Creeks** to improve flood risk identification and inform land use planning.

*2026 Budget: Up to \$150,000 from reserves, other funding sources or the capital budget. Allocations for additional updated floodplain mapping will also be required in subsequent years.*

2. **Implement priority system enhancements** to improve connectivity and reliability of streamflow, precipitation, and snowpack monitoring network, based on the recommendations that will be forthcoming from the 2025 system review.

*2026 Budget: TBD; may be funded through operational/capital budgets or reserves and funding may also be required in subsequent years.*

3. **Use the results of the 2025 riparian buffer analysis** to prioritize and implement private land restoration projects in collaboration with landowners.

*2026 Budget: Projects will be built into operational budget / department workplans and supported by grants/external funding.*

## Organizational Excellence



Focused on our organizational resources to ensure efficient and responsive operations are available to meet the needs of the future.

4. **Launch a values-based recognition program** to reinforce corporate values, foster a culture of appreciation and celebrate staff contributions.

*2026 Budget: Built into HR operational workplan; in-house development and delivery (rather than consultants).*

5. **Implement key initiatives from the forthcoming Digital Transformation Plan** to provide operational efficiencies and advance information management practices.

*2026 Budget: Key initiatives that have already been brought forward to the Senior Leadership Team include digitization of critical records, development of a GIS-based field data collection system, and investigation of enterprise Resource planning (ERP) solutions. IT/Records reserve to support some consultant costs, and continuation of contract support related to records management will be required. Some aspects will be built into various departmental workplans with time spent exploring and learning about available solutions and building data collection systems in house. Allocations for additional funding from a variety of sources will also be required in subsequent years.*

6. **Advance Asset Management Strategy by initiating Phase 2** to complete land improvement planning.

*2026 Budget: Continuation of internal staff secondment; future consideration for permanent position in future budget years given the ongoing nature of asset management.*

## Natural Heritage



Focused on the management and conservation of natural areas, which include the forests, wetlands, meadows, and watercourses within the watershed.

7. **Continue targeted outreach to landowners in priority areas** with the aim of securing at least one new property for conservation.

*2026 Budget: Dependent on available lands, utilization of land reserve and successful funding strategy.*

8. **Promote progress and public awareness of the Saltfleet Wetland Restoration Program** while advancing design and funding for the third wetland.

*2026 Budget: Built into staff workplans; Foundation and grant support for any*

*promotional materials e.g. interpretive signage. Staff will work collaboratively with the Foundation on the next external funding requests for the third wetland.*

9. **Begin priority monitoring and restoration actions** based on the forthcoming 2025 comprehensive monitoring and restoration plan to guide enhancements of natural areas.

*2026 Budget: TBD subject to completion of 2025 comprehensive and restoration plan recommendations. May be funded through operational/capital budgets, Foundation and grant support; funding will also be required in subsequent years.*

10. **Develop a framework to integrate existing data sets for monitoring, invasive species, and stewardship data systems** to support identification and visualization of priority restoration areas.

*2026 Budget: Staff time built into workplans for enhancement projects; grant and funding opportunities will be sought where appropriate; new contract position for system integration and succession planning will be required estimated at \$80,000 annually which will extend into future budget years.*

## Connecting People to Nature



Focused on the conservation of HCA lands and connecting communities to natural areas.

11. **Implement forthcoming 2025 Access and Amenities Review recommendations** to improve visitor accessibility and inclusivity across conservation areas.
12. **Implement forthcoming 2025 Conservation Areas Program Review visitor engagement recommendations** to enrich visitor experiences.  
*2026 Budget: Built into workplans; summer student funding to be pursued.*
13. **Support Completion of existing master/management plans and Advance planning work** for the Dundas Valley Study Area.  
*2026 Budget: Estimated \$150,000 from capital budget with additional funding required in future budget years until all areas completed*
14. **Support the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator to review existing and upcoming projects** and identify new opportunities and outreach efforts  
*.2026 Budget: No new costs; initiative integrated into existing workplan.*

## Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative supports all aspects of the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029.

## **Agency Comments:**

N/A

## **Legal / Financial Implications:**

The Year 2 initiatives include a mix of operational and capital requirements. In most cases, staff time will be incorporated into departmental workplans, and external funding from grants and the Hamilton Conservation Foundation will be pursued where appropriate. Key financial highlights include:

- **Capital Requirements:** Potentially \$300,000 across major initiatives including floodplain mapping and master/management planning.
- **Staffing Needs:** An \$80,000 annual cost for a new contract staff position to support data system integration and succession planning and continuation of existing staff secondment to support progress on asset management.
- **Technology Investments:** Costs related to the implementation of the Digital Transformation Plan, partially supported by IT/Records reserves and upgrades to the monitoring network supported by sources TBD once the review is finalized.
- **Land Acquisition:** Use of land reserve and successful funding strategies.

These estimates will help inform 2026 budget planning and support effective alignment with strategic priorities.

## **Related Reports and Appendices:**

Final HCA Strategic Plan Report approval June 2024

2025 Operating and Capital Budget Report approval October 2025

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**Report to:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed and Prepared By:** Scott Fleming, Director, Finance and Central Support Services

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** Amendment to the Purchasing Policy – Authorized Purchasing Limits

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors;**

**That the Purchasing Policy be amended to update the authorized purchasing limits, as outlined in Appendix A, to reflect the inclusion of the newly introduced Senior Manager role. Specifically, it is recommended that:**

- **Senior Managers be granted authorized signing authority up to \$35,000**
- **Directors have their signing authority increased to \$70,000.**

**Executive Summary:**

An administrative update to the Purchasing Policy has been identified following the introduction of the Senior Manager role within each division as part of this year's organizational restructuring. The current policy does not reflect this new role in its authorization hierarchy, resulting in a gap between Superintendent/Managers and Directors.

To align the policy with the updated structure and clarify levels of signing authority, staff are recommending amendments that reflect the operational responsibilities and oversight now assigned to Senior Managers and Directors.

**Staff Comment / Discussion:**

The current Purchasing Policy outlines authorized purchasing limits for all levels of

staff but does not recognize the newly established Senior Manager role. This creates an operational gap, as key purchasing decisions aligned with the scope of Senior Managers must currently be escalated to Directors for approval, which can impact efficiency.

To address this, staff propose that:

- Senior Managers, who now have oversight of significant divisional functions, be authorized to approve purchases up to \$35,000, providing them with a level of autonomy consistent with their responsibilities.
- Directors, given their broader oversight and expanded managerial duties, have their purchasing authority increased from \$50,000 to \$70,000.

This administrative update supports a more streamlined and responsive operational model. The proposed purchasing limits better reflect the organization's internal structure and will support more efficient procurement processes. Appendix A provides a summary of the revised authorization levels.

Staff recommend that the Budget and Administration Committee endorse this amendment and forward it to the Board of Directors for approval.

#### **Strategic Plan Linkage:**

The initiative supports Organizational Excellence in HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029 which focuses on our organizational resources to ensure efficient and responsive operations to meet the needs of the future.

#### **Agency Comments:**

N/A

#### **Legal / Financial Implications:**

There are no financial or legal implications associated with this amendment.

#### **Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix A – HCA Authorized Purchasing Limits

## APPENDIX A – HCA Authorized Purchasing Limits

All amounts stated on this schedule are before the addition of applicable taxes.

All amounts stated on this schedule are the maximum for the various levels. However, should the direct higher manager feel a lower amount is more suitable for an individual, that is at the discretion of the higher-up.

<u>Employee Position</u>	<u>\$ Limit</u>
Approved credit card holder	\$ 1,500
Supervisor	\$ 5,000
Manager / Superintendent	\$ 10,000
Senior Manager	\$ 35,000
Director	\$ 70,000
CAO	<\$ 100,000
HCA Board of Directors, through motion *	\$ 100,000

\* If necessary the approval can be secured by a majority vote completed by either telephone or electronic poll.

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**Report to:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed By:** Scott Fleming, Director, Finance and Central Support Services

**Prepared By:** Jaime Tellier, Senior Manager, Central Support Services  
Liam Fletcher, Senior Manager, Conservation Areas - East  
Brandon Good, Senior Manager, Conservation Areas - West  
Sarah Gauden, Manager, Marketing & Communications  
Lindsay Davidson, Assistant Manager, Marketing & Communications

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** HCA Fee Development Framework

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors;**

**THAT the document entitled HCA Fee Development Framework be approved; and further**

**THAT HCA's 2026 Fee Guide be developed following the principles, objectives and methodologies as outlined in the framework.**

**Executive Summary:**

The Board of Directors provided staff direction to report in advance of the 2026 budget year on the principles, objectives and methodologies used to inform the next fee structure.

Staff have developed a Fee Development Framework that establishes the principles behind HCA's collection of fees to be: Accessible, Responsible, Transparent, Strategic, and Sustainable. These ensure that HCA can achieve sustainable self-generated revenue, attract and retain customers, ensure customer satisfaction, and adhere to our values and priorities. The framework

also outlines the methodologies HCA's uses to develop fees.

Staff are seeking approval to adopt the attached Fee Development Framework and for its use in the development of the 2026 Fee Guide.

#### **Staff Comment / Discussion:**

At the September 4, 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors, a resolution was passed requesting staff report in advance of the 2026 budget year on the principles, objectives and methodologies used to inform the next fee structure, with a comparison to neighbouring Conservation Authorities.

The Conservation Authorities Act provides the authority to establish fees and prescribes how they may be collected. In accordance with the legislation, HCA has an existing Fee Policy that establishes how the fees are developed and reviewed (**Appendix B**).

With regard for the Fee Policy, staff formed a working group to capture and document the guiding philosophies and strategy behind HCA's collection of fees. Staff also documented existing practices and considerations for determining fees, including comparators with neighbouring Conservation Authorities and other similar organizations.

The working group found that HCA's approach to fee collection can be attributed to five core principles – **Accessible, Responsible, Transparent, Strategic, and Sustainable**. The intent is to achieve sustainable self-generated revenue, attract and retain customers, ensure customer satisfaction, and align with HCA's values and priorities.

The principles, objectives and methodologies for the development of HCA's fees are outlined in the HCA Fee Development Framework (**Appendix A**).

#### **Strategic Plan Linkage:**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

#### **Agency Comments:**

N/A

**Legal / Financial Implications:**

HCA's Fee Development Framework documents consistent methodologies that provide a reliable basis for projecting revenues which informs and supports the development of HCA's annual budgets.

**Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix A – HCA Fee Development Framework

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## 1. Introduction

At its meeting on September 4, 2024, the Board of Directors passed the following resolution:

***THAT HCA staff be requested to report in advance of the 2026 budget year on the methodology, principles, and objectives used to inform the next fee structure with a comparison to neighbouring CAs.***

This Fee Development Framework provides a structured and consistent approach to establishing, reviewing, and updating fees in alignment with HCA's Fee Policy. It ensures that fee-setting practices are transparent, equitable, and financially responsible, supporting the recovery of service costs while considering affordability and public value. The framework serves as a practical guide for staff to apply policy principles in the development and management of fees across all applicable programs and services.

## 2. Principles

HCA's approach to developing a fee structure is grounded in a set of core principles designed to ensure that it is equitable, effective, and aligned with our mission. Our guiding principles - **Accessible, Responsible, Transparent, Strategic, and Sustainable** - provide the framework for decision-making and implementation. By adhering to these principles, we aim to create a fee system that is inclusive and affordable, ethically sound, accountable to our municipal funding partners and the public, aligned with broader goals, and financially viable over the long term.

## 3. Objectives

The primary objective of our fee strategy is to establish a balanced and future-focused approach to revenue generation that supports long-term organizational health and community impact. This strategy is designed to achieve the following key goals:

- **Sustainable Self-Generated Revenue:** Ensure a stable and predictable revenue stream through **measured growth** and strategic **re-investment** to support cost recovery and continuous improvement.
- **Customer Attraction and Retention:** Design fees that are competitive and compelling to attract new users while fostering **loyalty** among existing customers through consistent value and engagement.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Enhance the overall customer experience by creating a sense of **reward** and **contribution**, reinforcing the value they receive and the role they play in supporting the vision and mission of HCA and sustaining our Conservation Areas.

- **Value-Aligned:** Align fee structures with our organizational values and service priorities, ensuring that pricing reflects both the quality and the broader impact of the offerings.

Through these objectives, the fee strategy supports a model that is financially responsible, community-oriented, and aligned with long-term strategic goals.

## 4. Fee Policy

HCA has a fee policy, as required under Section 21.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act. The legislation provides HCA with the authority to establish fees, as prescribed, or as determined where no fee for a program or service is prescribed. The policy establishes the process by which HCA's fees will be developed and reviewed. The policy acknowledges consideration for cost recovery for certain services, the fees of neighbouring Conservation Authorities, the nature and level of fees charged by local municipalities for related services and in some cases, the value of similar services provided by local agencies or the private sector. The policy also includes mechanisms for exemptions and reconsiderations fees.

The policy directs:

- a) fees need to be set with regard to legislative requirements, and be based on a user-pay philosophy
- b) fee increases should include an inflationary component
- c) fees for service should not exceed the fully burdened costs of delivering the services
- d) refunds of fees may carry an administrative cost/penalty
- e) fee schedules are to be reviewed annually
- f) fee schedules will be approved on an annual basis for use in developing the
- g) budget for the following year

## 5. Fee Review and Calculation Methodologies

HCA fees are reviewed annually, with consideration for current market comparators and inflation rates. This ensures pricing remains fair, competitive, and aligns with industry standards.

### 5.1. Comparators

For the purposes of HCA's annual market analyses, the following organizations are used as comparators to HCA for pricing for comparable programs and services:

#### Conservation Area Admissions and Programs and Services

- Conservation Halton

- Credit Valley Conservation
- Grand River Conservation Authority
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

#### Camping

- Grand River Conservation Authority
- Ontario Parks

#### Membership Pass Program

- Conservation Halton
- Credit Valley Conservation
- Grand River Conservation Authority
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
- Royal Botanical Gardens

## **5.2. Conservation Areas**

HCA regularly reviews our fee structure to ensure that our fees are practical, competitive, sustainable, and support accessibility and affordability to our Conservation Areas. This includes but is not limited to pavilion rentals, photography permits, camping fees, day-use admission, user agreement fees, and film location permits.

### **Methodology**

#### **1. Internal Review:**

The costs of staffing, maintenance, infrastructure, and environmental stewardship are considered to support both quality service and long-term sustainability. Events and activities should, at a minimum, cover the staffing and operational costs.

#### **2. Harmonize Fees:**

Harmonize fees across HCA Conservation Areas where possible to avoid significant inconsistencies. This supports a more transparent, and consistent experience for HCA users.

#### **3. Affordability and Access:**

Maintain affordability for users to ensure that services remain accessible to individuals and families of all income levels.

#### **4. Comparative Analysis:**

Compare current fees to those of neighboring Conservation Authorities, Ontario Parks, municipalities, private organizations, or like-service providers to ensure competitiveness within the region.

#### **5. Responsible Incremental Adjustments:**

Apply small, manageable fee increases regularly to avoid the need for sudden, large

adjustments that can negatively impact users. Round increases to manageable amounts to avoid confusing or inconsistent pricing (e.g., rounding to the nearest \$0.25 or \$1.00).

**6. Visitor Feedback:**

Feedback from the public, including social media input and direct communication, helps us gauge how fees are perceived and where adjustments may be warranted.

**7. Inflation and Cost Recovery:**

Adjust fees with consideration for inflation and the rising cost of service delivery to maintain service quality and financial sustainability.

**8. Dynamic Promotional Pricing:**

Employ dynamic pricing tools to optimize uptake in programs and services; disperse visitation, actively engage with our audience, and reward members with discounts.

**9. Transparency and Communication:**

Clearly communicate any fee changes and the rationale behind them to stakeholders, membership holders and users as appropriate.

Using a balanced and informed approach, we strive to keep fees defensible, purposeful, and supportive of visitor needs and conservation goals.

### **5.3. HCA Membership Pass Program**

HCA's membership pass structure is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains reasonable, competitive, and reflects the overall value provided across our conservation areas. The evaluation process includes:

#### **Methodology**

- **Comparative Benchmarking:** We review membership and access models from other Conservation Authorities and similar organizations to stay consistent with regional trends and visitor expectations.
- **Public Feedback:** We listen carefully to comments, messages, surveys, and social media input from our visitors. This includes positive feedback and concerns, particularly around the pass's cost and its perceived value.
- **Operational Costs and Additional Fees:** Factors such as Spencer Gorge and Westfield Heritage Village reservation fees are considered. These fees help manage visitor numbers, preserve sensitive areas, and support overall operations. HCA continues to consider how service-related costs, such as reservation software and transaction fees, are addressed within overall pricing strategies.

In the past, HCA's membership pass included a number of additional perks and discounts. We are investigating reintroducing these value-added offerings. We are also investigating new amenities, site improvements, seasonal events, and enhanced programming. These

improvements are designed to increase the overall experience for all visitors and provide exclusive benefits to passholders, including discounts and access to special activities.

We aim to ensure the membership pass remains a valuable way to enjoy our conservation areas more often, with more to see, do, and experience.

#### 5.3.1. Expanding Access Through Partnerships and Inclusive Pricing

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve accessibility and enhance community engagement, we are exploring new ways to make our conservation areas more inclusive and financially accessible. This includes:

- **Bulk Pass and Partnership Sales:** We will develop discounted pricing for bulk purchases of 25 or more passes, aimed at local employers and organizations such as Hamilton Health Sciences and the City of Hamilton.
- **Community Support Pricing:** We will explore dedicated rates for community organizations that serve persons with disabilities and individuals or families with low incomes.
- **Accessible Admission:** As part of our amenities and access planning, we are committed to offering free admission to support persons accompanying visitors with disabilities and exploring options for discounted day admission for persons with disabilities.

These initiatives align with our broader goals of reducing barriers, increasing participation, and ensuring that everyone can experience the benefits of nature and conservation.

#### 5.3.2. Price Elasticity Analysis

The price elasticity of demand (PED) measures how sensitive the quantity demanded of a good or service is to changes in its price. Stated differently, it shows how much the amount of a product people want to buy changes when the price goes up or down; thereby assisting in deciding if you should charge more for your product (and sell a smaller quantity) or decrease your price but increase the demand. It is calculated by dividing the percentage change in quantity demanded by the percentage change in price.

HCA will consider PED analyses in the annual pricing for membership passes. HCA membership passes are likely to be price elastic as it is a service-based model without inventory limits, however the general principles can still guide pricing decisions and gauge demand shifts.

### **5.4. Watershed Management Services**

HCA's municipal plan review and permitting programs fees are established based on Board of Directors approved cost recovery targets of 100% for municipal planning application reviews, and 80% for HCA regulatory approvals, including permit applications and letters of permission.

HCA's current fees are based on a comprehensive market analysis completed by an external consultants. The fees are internally reviewed on an annual basis. The timing for future comprehensive external reviews will be considered as required based on existing legislation, application volumes, staff complement and budgetary requirements.

## Memorandum

**Memorandum To:** Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for  
Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**Reviewed &  
Prepared By:** Scott Fleming, Director of Finance & Central Support Services

**Meeting Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** 2024 Asset Disposition

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## Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of assets that were disposed of by HCA during the 2024 calendar year. The disposal process complied with HCA's Purchasing Policy, ensuring assets were either sold, recycled, or discarded appropriately based on their condition, functionality, and potential value. The report includes details on the type, reason for disposal, and financial outcome of each asset transaction. In total, 21 assets were disposed of, resulting in net gain of \$2, 024.

Asset Description	Initial Value	Cumulative Amortization	Net Book Value	Proceeds	Net Gain (Loss)	Where Disposed
<b>Equipment Pool</b>						
Chainsaw Unit 799	\$ 803.94	\$ 602.95	\$ 200.99	\$ -	(201)	Recycled
Christie Rental Boats	2,695	943	1,751	-	(1,751)	Recycled
Christie Rental Boats Kayak	4,524	4,524	-	-	-	Recycled
Christie Tew Falls Pay & Display Station	10,504	10,504	-	-	-	Recycled
Christie Webster Falls Pay & Display Station	10,287	10,287	-	-	-	Recycled
Dundas Valley Old Ancaster Pay & Display Station	9,347	9,347	-	-	-	Recycled
Dundas Valley Tiffany Falls Pay & Display Station	9,347	9,347	-	-	-	Recycled
Dundas Valley Workshop Lot Pay & Display Station	9,349	9,349	-	-	-	Recycled
East Mountain Eramosa Karst Pay & Display Station	9,347	9,347	-	-	-	Recycled
G.P.S. Survey Equipment	31,750	31,750	-	-	-	Recycled
Mower - Self Propelled Unit 004	629	472	157	-	(157)	Recycled
Pressure Washer 6.5hp 2900 psi Unit 696	900	900	-	-	-	Recycled
Pressure Washer Unit 697	2,000	2,000	-	35	35	Sold
<b>Fleet</b>						
Tri Deck Rotary Mower Unit 104	9,037	9,037	-	1,656	1,656	Sold
Tri Deck Rotary Mower Unit 105	10,260	10,260	-	1,961	1,961	Sold
Tractor CW Buzz Saw 40hp Unit 311	2,379	2,379	-	-	-	Recycled
Van for Electrician 4480lb Unit 430	27,387	27,387	-	804	804	Sold
Trailer 5 Ton Farm Wagon Unit 510	3,262	3,262	-	514	514	Sold
Trailer 5 Ton Farm Wagon Unit 513	3,262	3,262	-	392	392	Sold
2000 Pick Up 1/2 Ton 4480lb Unit 440	3,630	3,505	125	1,152	1,028	Sold
<b>Land Management</b>						
Dundas Valley Head Office Entrance Gate	3,640	1,383	2,257	-	(2,257)	Recycled
	<b>\$ 164,340</b>	<b>\$ 159,850</b>	<b>\$ 4,491</b>	<b>\$ 6,515</b>	<b>\$ 2,024</b>	