

Dear Members of Hamilton's City Council,

As you debate and discuss Hamilton's Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) would you please consider adding another item to the plan, i.e. the preservation of all existing wetlands.

Well over 60% of Hamilton's wetlands have already been destroyed. These numbers are startling and staggering and surely prove that wetlands must be given a high priority in Hamilton's CEEP draft plan if we are to adapt and mitigate the current climate crisis.

Could I suggest, please, a moratorium on the destruction of wetlands. Currently, destruction occurs in many forms:

- Paving over wetlands and replacing them with non-permeable surfaces
- Surrounding them with commercial or residential buildings resulting in degradation
- Replacing them with storm water management ponds (off-setting)
- Re-locating them (an impossibility; it takes 60 years for a wetland to form naturally)

Let's take this critical opportunity to identify all the wetlands and put them on a City map. There must be many, especially on Hamilton mountain, which are unknown. Each one needs to be assessed and evaluated.

Please consider the situation in Upper Stoney Creek where the HCA has purchased 72 hectares of wetland and are in the process of restoring it. Why? Because the wetland prevents flooding in Lower Stoney Creek.

This is a perfect example of how everything is connected and works together, as the City Councilors are all connected and must work together for the health and well-being of all the citizens.

I live in Dundas, the Valley Town, with streams and creeks flowing everywhere. It is a wonderful place to call home, but I am worried about the severe weather events which we know are coming, e.g. the Hundred Years Storm. Currently, the wetlands are doing an adequate job of limiting flooding, albeit there are some exceptions.

Please consider how much worse the situation will be if there are fewer functioning wetlands and longer, more intense storms than we have ever known. Meteorologists have already declared that they need to create another category for hurricanes, Category 6, because the current categories do not accurately describe the violence or ferocity of the hurricanes expected to evolve due to climate change.

The current wetlands and natural features provide protection for all of us as they help to mitigate the damage from flooding, soil erosion, and mudslides. They also increase carbon sequestration, decrease urban heat island effects, enhance biodiversity, improve water quality and provide public recreational opportunities and local jobs

Thank you for your time. You have been outstanding in listening to the needs of your citizenry, e.g. Stop Sprawl, Limit the Urban Boundary. You have set a high standard for other municipalities to follow. They are watching and will follow as you retain existing wetlands to mitigate the damage from severe weather events and adapt to the realities of today.

Thank you,  
Marie Covert, [REDACTED]