



CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Planning Division

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 2, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for Consultation (PED21065(c)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Lauren Vraets (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2634
SUBMITTED BY:	Steve Robichaud Director, Planning and Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That Appendix “A” attached to Report PED21065(c), “Draft Biodiversity Action Plan – March 2023”, be received;
- (b) That Planning and Economic Development staff be authorized to assist the Hamilton Naturalists’ Club and other Biodiversity Action Plan partners to undertake public and stakeholder consultation on the Draft Biodiversity Action Plan attached as Appendix “A” to report PED21065(c);
- (c) That Planning and Economic Development staff be directed to report back to Planning Committee, summarizing the public input together with the final Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan by Q4 of 2023;
- (d) That the Clerk provide written communication to the Ville de Montreal to confirm that the City of Hamilton will become a signatory to The Montreal Pledge – Cities United in Action for Biodiversity.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The term ‘biodiversity’ refers to the variety of life on earth. It includes all living things, such as bacteria, fungi, insects, plants, fish and wildlife, and humans. Biodiversity is the

variety of living organisms that form an interconnected web of life that make up a healthy and resilient environment.

The City of Hamilton has a diversity of habitats across the rural and urban areas, including Dundas Valley, Cootes Paradise, Lake Ontario shoreline, Beverly Swamp, the Niagara Escarpment, Eramosa Karst, Copetown Bog, and Ancaster Prairie. Hamilton's unique geography contributes to the City being a regionally significant area with respect to biodiversity. The City's most recent Natural Areas Inventory in 2014 identified that Hamilton is home to approximately 2,020 species of plants and wildlife, and a high number of native plants (962 species) compared to other nearby municipalities.

At a local and global scale biodiversity is under threat and is in a state of decline. To take action to protect Hamilton's biodiversity, a coordinated approach between local community environmental partners and the City of Hamilton has been initiated. Together, the working group of community partners and City staff have developed a draft Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan.

The development of Hamilton's first Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a coordinated effort to protect, restore, enhance and explore biodiversity in Hamilton. The BAP's vision is "A Hamilton that is resilient to climate change, celebrates nature, and provides a healthy environment for all life". Multiple agencies have contributed to the development of the BAP, including leadership from the Hamilton Naturalists' Club and involvement from the Hamilton and Halton conservation authorities, Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark, Environment Hamilton, Bay Area Restoration Council, and Royal Botanical Gardens. The City of Hamilton is a partner in the BAP, alongside the efforts of these external organizations.

The BAP identifies the major threats to biodiversity as invasive species, habitat loss and fragmentation, climate change, and pollution, provides the Key Priorities for focussing efforts to address threats, and details the actions that are planned to be undertaken by the partner agencies in the next five years.

Seven (7) Key Priorities were identified and serve as high level descriptions of the areas of focus that are required to ensure the long-term health of Hamilton's biodiversity.

The Key Priorities include:

- The need to establish an implementation framework;
- Understanding the baseline state of biodiversity;
- Long-term protection of natural areas and connections;
- Enhancement of public awareness and stewardship opportunities;
- Coordination to address invasive species;

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- Enhancement of local aquatic habitats; and,
- Consideration of biodiversity in all municipal decision making.

Planning and Economic Development (PED) staff are seeking direction to initiate public, stakeholder and Indigenous Nations consultation on the current draft of the BAP, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED21065(c). Public consultation efforts will be shared by the City and the working group partner agencies and planned to take place over the spring and summer months of 2023. A combination of digital and non-digital methods of public engagement are being planned, including an electronic and hard copy survey, in-person events, and virtual public information meetings.

Once consultation is complete, and the necessary revisions to the BAP have been made, PED staff plan to bring a final report back to Council seeking final endorsement of the plan and the City’s actions. The final BAP is anticipated to be complete by Q4 of 2023.

Planning Staff are also recommending that Hamilton sign the Montreal Pledge – Cities United in Action for Biodiversity attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED21065(c). The actions outlined in the Montreal Pledge align with current Official Plan policy and efforts being made through related City initiatives, as well as the draft BAP. A commitment to this pledge will ensure that Hamilton’s actions towards improvements to local biodiversity will align with actions being undertaken by other municipalities from Canada and across the world.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 14

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Consultation on the draft BAP is planned to take place in person and online, as well as through non-digital distribution across the City. Cost incurred for the consultation activities and final document preparation can be accommodated through the existing PED and Planning Division budget.

Staffing: Existing staff from PED as well as staff from the Public Works (PW) Department will continue to move the draft BAP forward to completion, therefore there are no additional staffing costs.

Legal: There are no legal implications with the recommendations of this report.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The development of a Biodiversity Action Plan for Hamilton has been the focus of an ad hoc working group initiated in 2018 with representation from Hamilton’s conservation

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community organizations (Hamilton Naturalists' Club, Environment Hamilton, Bay Area Restoration Council, Royal Botanical Gardens and Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark), Hamilton Conservation Authority and Conservation Halton, and City of Hamilton staff from PED and PW.

The following is a timeline of significant dates related to the Biodiversity Action Plan:

- February 26, 2020 – Through approval of General Issues Committee Report 20-007, Council approves a motion directing City Staff to investigate the feasibility of developing a Biodiversity Action Plan in collaboration with the conservation community.
- April 14, 2021 – Council approves April 7, 2021 GIC Report PED21065 – Feasibility Report for a Biodiversity Action Plan, which recommended:
 - a) Staff from the PED Department and the PW Department, partner with local conservation community organizations (lead group) to undertake a Biodiversity Action Plan
 - b) That Council authorize a one-time financial contribution of:
 - (i) \$20,000 from PED Department / Planning Division, budget (2021 Data Management for Natural Areas Account No. 54378 and Dept. ID Account No. 812020; and,
 - (ii) \$20,000 from the PW Department / Hamilton Water Division Account No. 55916 and Dept. ID Account No. 510360.
 - c) That prior to allocating the funds to lead environmental organization, City staff be authorized to prepare an agreement between the City and the Hamilton Naturalist Club, the lead environmental organization, that will be responsible for hiring the BAP coordinator to provide for the clarification of roles and responsibilities and the regular accounting for municipal funds;
 - d) That City staff report back to Council to present the draft Agreement between the City and the lead environmental organization;
 - e) That the City provide in-kind resources in the form of staff time, previously collected data, mapping, graphic design, online public engagement tools, and printing;
 - f) That Planning Division staff be authorized to provide any required letters of support for Provincial or Federal funding grant applications submitted by

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one or more of the partner environmental organizations to participate in the development of the BAP;

- g) That City staff report back in six months to update the Committee/Council of the progress of the BAP; and,
 - h) That the matter respecting the Feasibility of Developing a Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan, be considered complete and removed from the General Issues Committee's Outstanding Business List.
- June 9, 2021 – Council approves a motion instructing that all staff reports regarding the Biodiversity Action Plan be referred to the Planning Committee.
 - August 13, 2021 – Council approves the August 10, 2021 Planning Committee Report PED21065(a) approving a Municipal Contribution Agreement between the City and the Hamilton Naturalists' Club for a one-time funding contribution towards hiring a project coordinator for the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan.
 - November 24, 2021 – Council approves the November 16, 2021 Planning Committee Information Report PED21065(b), providing a six-month update on the progress of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Since November 2021, the BAP Working Group has met bi-weekly and, through facilitated discussions with the project coordinator/lead writer, have developed a draft vision, identified major biodiversity threats, and developed a draft framework of key priorities for focus. These are outline in the draft BAP attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED21065(c).

In addition to the funding from the City, the Hamilton Naturalists' Club was also able to secure \$22,000 of grant funding for the development of the BAP from Dofasco in spring 2021.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Throughout the development of the draft BAP, City staff in PED and PW have been consulting internally with other City staff divisions, and BAP Working Group partners have conducted their own consultations within their respective organizations.

The list of Actions provided as Appendix "A" to the BAP document list actions that have been identified to be undertaken, and the lead agency responsible. These actions were developed through consultations internal to each organization.

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In December 2021, the BAP Working Group met virtually with the City's Corporate Climate Change Task Force (CCCTF) to review the Key Priorities and get feedback before moving forward with the draft. Representatives from CCCTF provided feedback on the draft Key Priorities, and made suggestions for refinement, including using more specific language, and ensuring the BAP areas of focus align with on-going City-initiatives related to climate change.

Throughout 2022, PW and PED staff on the BAP working group initiated meetings with divisions within the respective departments to determine any actions that may be appropriate for the City to take on. Appropriate actions were added to the list of actions that is provided as Appendix A to the draft BAP.

In March 2022, a preliminary discussion was held with wildlife and stewardship management staff from Six Nations of the Grand River to introduce the BAP working group, and review the work completed to date. A key recommendation from this conversation was to recognize that biodiversity can exist in all spaces throughout the City, even disturbed spaces, and to ensure that we are taking an approach that improves the conditions for biodiversity at the macro and micro scale.

Following the completion of the draft BAP in December 2022, the draft document was circulated across multiple City departments through the PED Sustainable Communities section's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in early 2023. From this circulation, comments were received from staff in Zoning, the Office of Climate Change Initiatives, Natural Heritage Planning. PW staff from Environmental Services and Corporate Facilities and Energy Management provided comments on the list of actions where PW was identified as the lead agency. Some minor changes were made to the draft BAP document, which are reflected in the draft attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED21065(c).

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Policy Review

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international legal instrument to conserve biodiversity worldwide that was initiated at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The CBD has been ratified by 196 nations, including Canada.

The City of Montreal hosted the fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-15) of the CBD in December of 2022. At this meeting, the Kunming-Montreal global biodiversity framework was agreed upon as the strategic plan for the implementation of the UNCBD for the 2022-2030 time period. It responds to the Global Assessment Report of

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Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services issued by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in 2019, which asserts that despite ongoing efforts, biodiversity is in a state of decline worldwide. The IPBES report estimates that around 25% of assessed animal and plant species are threatened, and 1 million species are facing extinction, some within decades, if additional action isn't taken to address the threats to biodiversity loss.

As part of COP-15, the Ville de Montreal and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) created the Montreal Pledge, which invites cities from around the world to commit to working towards 15 concrete actions. The areas of action focus on reducing threats to biodiversity, sharing the benefits of biodiversity, and ensuring biodiversity solutions are considered through governance, management and education. The Montreal Pledge is attached as Appendix "B" to Report PED21065(c). While Hamilton has not signed the Montreal Pledge to date, many of the actions specified in the Montreal Pledge have been included in, or align with, the draft BAP for Hamilton. Significant work on the draft BAP had been completed when the Montreal Pledge was released in late 2022, and further revisions to Hamilton's BAP can look towards the Montreal Pledge to address any action items that may be missing. Staff recommend that the City contact the Ville de Montreal and that Hamilton participate in the Montreal Pledge going forward as part of the future implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy

Created in 2005 by the Ontario Biodiversity Council, Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy (OBS) is intended to guide conservation of biodiversity across the province, across all sectors. The Ontario Biodiversity Council is made up of volunteer representatives from a variety of resource and development sectors, environmental organizations, and academics. While the OBS is instructive respecting actions to protect Ontario's biodiversity, it is not a legislated policy document.

The OBS identifies key threats to biodiversity in the province and sets three clear goals: to incorporate biodiversity into decision making across the province, to protect, restore, and recover Ontario's genetic, species and ecosystem diversity; and, to use biological assets sustainably. The OBS contains a series of targets to measure against over a specified period. The current OBS was revised in 2011 and contains targets to the year 2020. The State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2020 Summary indicates that while there has been progress made on making people aware of biodiversity and its importance, progress has stalled for targets related to enhancing resilience of ecosystems. The OBS is currently being reviewed by the Ontario Biodiversity Council, with targets measured to 2030.

The draft BAP for Hamilton builds on the OBS by providing very specific actions that address the threats to biodiversity in the local context. Should the OBS be revised prior to the release of the final BAP, the BAP Working Group partners will review any updated OBS actions and determine if additional actions are needed for Hamilton in response.

Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020, includes policy respecting biodiversity to ensure that the province's long-term environmental health is considered through land use planning decisions. In all development contexts, the PPS instructs that development and land use patterns conserve biodiversity and consider the ecological benefits provided by nature towards Ontario's long-term prosperity. With respect to natural heritage policies, the PPS instructs that natural features and areas across the province shall be protected for the long term, and that connectivity of diverse natural features should be maintained, restored, or where possible improved. The policies of the PPS are required to be reflected in local Official Plans.

Urban Hamilton Official Plan / Rural Hamilton Official Plan

Within the City of Hamilton, there is a long-standing tradition of protecting natural areas. Historically, through the establishment of Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) within the former Region of Hamilton-Wentworth in the 1990s and through the development of a Natural Heritage System within the City's Official Plans, Hamilton has established a strong policy framework for the identification and protection of natural heritage.

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) and Rural Hamilton Official Plan (RHOP) contain policies and definitions which address the City's Natural Heritage System (NHS). The NHS is comprised of the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System, the Niagara Escarpment, Core Areas, and Linkages. Core Areas are natural features that are considered critical for sustaining local species and providing essential ecological functions. Approximately 36,750 hectares of land is identified as Core Area across the urban and rural areas combined. Linkages are corridors which allow movement of plant and animal species between larger natural areas. Examples of linkages are meadows, hedgerows, and streams.

The RHOP and UHOP outline specific goals with respect to the NHS. These goals are:

- Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological functions;
- Achieve a healthy, functional ecosystem;
- Conserve the natural beauty and distinctive character of Hamilton's landscape;

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- Maintain and enhance the contribution made by the Natural Heritage System to the quality of life of Hamilton's residents;
- Restore and enhance connections, quality and amount of natural habitat;
- Provide opportunities for recreational and tourism uses where they do not impact natural heritage features; and,
- Monitor and periodically assess the condition of Hamilton's natural environment

The development of the BAP aligns with the goals noted in the UHOP and RHOP for the Natural Heritage System.

Related Initiatives

Hamilton Natural Areas Inventory

Monitoring of the NHS across Hamilton has been undertaken through the Natural Areas Inventory (NAI). This comprehensive study was initiated by the Hamilton Naturalists' Club and with the help of other partners has studied plants, animals, mammals, birds, butterflies, fish, amphibians, and reptiles within the City's Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA). The last comprehensive survey was completed between 2011 and 2013. Data collected from these studies is integrated into the Natural Heritage database, which is housed with the Hamilton Conservation Authority. From this inventory, positive and negative trends have been observed.

Positive Trends

- Hamilton has the highest number of native plants (962 species) compared to other municipalities (Toronto, Halton, Peel, York, Durham). This may be a result of the intensive work but is also reflective of the high biodiversity in Hamilton;
- Hamilton has diverse habitats including Dundas Valley, Cootes Paradise, Beverly Swamp, Niagara Escarpment, Eramosa Karst, Copetown Bog, Ancaster Prairie;
- 98 species of damselflies and dragonflies have been identified;
- 6 new bird species have been identified;
- Some species are rebounding, such as the Bald Eagle, as a result of restoration work at Cootes Paradise carried out by RBG; and,
- New species include PawPaw (plant), American Snout (Butterfly), Cherry Gall Azure (Butterfly), Sandhill Crane (bird), Bald Eagle (bird), Common Raven (bird)

Negative Trends

- Reptiles and amphibians have shown a consistent decline across all species;
- Species using meadows and grasslands are declining including birds, butterflies, and other pollinators; and,

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- Of the new plant species observed, 38% were non-native, invasive species.

The process for updating the NAI has been under discussion for some time, and the draft BAP contains action to develop a process for conducting future updates and maintaining the data collected.

Other City of Hamilton Initiatives

The BAP is intended to be coordinated with other environmental initiatives that are currently underway or planned by the City:

- Hamilton's Climate Action Strategy (August 2022) – Developed in response to the City's Climate Change Emergency Declaration in March 2019, the Climate Action Strategy addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Community Energy and Emissions Plan provides a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Hamilton to net-zero by 2050 and includes a goal of planting 50,000 trees per year across the entire City. Natural areas will be impacted by climate change and the Climate Change Impact Adaptation Plan provides supporting actions with respect to managing natural areas susceptible to flooding and erosion, prioritization of lands to acquire to enhance resiliency of natural systems, and development of an Open Space Management Plan. The Office of Climate Change Initiatives has also identified 'Urban Greening' as a 2023 Priority Focus Area; this additional effort to coordinate with relevant City Departments and key community partners to green up heavily urbanized areas through 'depave' projects and other innovative approaches to greening urban streetscapes supports the goals of the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Urban Forest Strategy (in progress) – Intended to apply to all urban trees that are public and privately owned, the Urban Forest Strategy will guide the protection and care of trees to work towards a sustained canopy cover goal. Work is underway to bring the Urban Forest Strategy forward to Council in 2023.
- Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines (in progress) – Council received the draft Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines – Low Density Residential on September 6, 2022. The Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines will be developed as the low, mid-rise and high-rise zoning classifications are created for the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 05-200, and regulations will reflect the proposed standards. Phase 1 of the project focused on low density residential uses, the next phase will expand that work to all residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial uses. The intent of this work is to develop an assessment tool which will be part of the submission requirements for planning applications under the *Planning Act*, and a Green

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Building Standards document that will inform development moving forward in the City of Hamilton.

- Bird Friendly City – In spring of 2022, Hamilton was recognized by Nature Canada as a Bird Friendly City. This important initiative was spearheaded by local environmental advocates, led by Bird Friendly City Hamilton/Burlington. Actions outlined in the BAP that support Hamilton’s Bird Friendly City status include investigation into further protection of natural areas for connectivity, education and awareness programs into how to reduce bird deaths from the outdoor cat population, and consideration of bird friendly standards for development. Through the upcoming consultation for the draft BAP, the working group will investigate options for additional actions to support the City’s status as a Bird Friendly City.
- Ecosystem Services Study (to be initiated) – PED Department staff are investigating the potential for a City-wide ecosystem services study. Report PED23048 summarizes the background information for this type of ecological valuation tool, resources required, and potential outcomes. Once further internal consultation has been completed to define the scope of the study, a future staff report will seek direction to undertake this work.
- Municipal Comprehensive Review for Rural and Natural Heritage (in progress) – Sustainable Communities staff are undertaking a conformity review exercise of the UHOP and RHOP with respect to natural heritage policies and mapping. Policies of the PPS, Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan, and Growth Plan will be reviewed, and conformity updates to the UHOP and RHOP will be brought forward in a draft Official Plan Amendment for consultation in 2024.

Hamilton’s draft Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan for Hamilton is a city-wide, multi-stakeholder initiative to ensure that Hamilton’s natural environment is resilient for future generations. The BAP provides a series of actions related to policy and on-the-ground programs across multiple organizations and strives to provide direction to the public for actions they may want to undertake. The overarching goals of the BAP are:

- **Protect** – protect biodiversity by incorporating best practices to protect natural areas and greenspaces through policy and land management activities;
- **Explore** – encourage exploration and education about biodiversity through partnerships and community science;
- **Connect** – establish connections between partner agencies through policies, processes, data and work programs to streamline efforts that support Hamilton’s biodiversity; and,

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- **Restore** – utilize nature-based stewardship and other initiatives to restore biodiversity resilience throughout Hamilton.

The following is an outline of the BAP’s key components and overall structure:

- Vision statement: “A Hamilton that is resilient to climate change, celebrates nature, and provides a healthy environment for all life.”

The draft vision statement acknowledges that the state of Hamilton’s biodiversity will continually adapt over time, including in the presence of the known implications of climate change. However, if Hamilton’s biodiversity is prioritized, healthy ecosystems can play a role in mitigating the effects of climate change. Celebrating nature is key to prioritizing biodiversity – by building public knowledge of, and appreciation for the unique environment of Hamilton. Finally, a healthy natural environment is essential for all life, not just human life, and the BAP working group wanted to be sure that this was made clear.

- Threats to biodiversity outlined in the draft BAP include:
 - **Invasive Species** – invasive species can outcompete native species for habitat and forage, spread disease, and cause significant damage to isolated areas and broader geographies;
 - **Climate Change** – species are sensitive to changes in average temperatures and their ranges may change to adapt to climate changes, new species may migrate further north, extreme precipitation events can cause damage to terrestrial habitats through erosion while also overwhelming water treatments systems resulting in impact to aquatic environments;
 - **Habitat Loss and Fragmentation** – removal of, or disturbance to habitats through development in the urban and rural areas can contribute to reduced opportunities for species to thrive in a particular area, and species and genetic migration; and,
 - **Pollution** – pollutants in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems from human activities lead to unsuitable conditions for plant, animal and insect species to thrive, and contributes to species decline where environments are toxic.
- 7 Key Priorities to focus actions and efforts over the next five years are included in the draft BAP, and include:
 1. Develop an administrative framework to manage the on-going implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan’s Actions;
 2. Understand the current baseline state of Hamilton’s biodiversity to inform future monitoring and priorities;

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3. Protect natural areas and their functions within Hamilton over the long-term to support diversity and connectivity;
4. Enhance public awareness of the importance of biodiversity and explore opportunities to enhance biodiversity through stewardship;
5. Protect Hamilton's biodiversity by implementing coordinated, city-wide efforts to control, remove, and manage invasive species;
6. Enhance local aquatic habitats through sustainable stormwater management practices and restoration of degraded watercourses, waterbodies and wetlands; and,
7. Ensure impacts on, or improvements to local biodiversity are clearly considered in all municipal decision making related to the development or use of urban and rural lands.

The Working Group's draft Vision, Threats, and Key Priorities provided a strong foundation for categorizing the actions that each contributing partner organization has committed to over the next five years.

Each action listed in BAP is identified with a lead organization who will take responsibility for implementation. With respect to City of Hamilton actions, the implementation of certain actions is already contemplated within existing work programs (i.e. updates to Official Plan policies, on-going City-initiatives) while others may require additional funding to undertake. When the final BAP is complete and a report is brought back to Council, recommendations for funding for any City-led actions will be presented.

BAP Consultation Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan is a City-wide action plan and will be seeking input from all members of the public, stakeholder groups, and Indigenous Nations. City staff and the BAP working group partners are working with staff in the City's Government and Community Relations Division to ensure that the consultation program is robust and reaches a broad audience. Public consultation is planned to occur from May through July 2023. The consultation will focus on the key priorities and actions provided in the BAP, assess baseline public knowledge of biodiversity in Hamilton, and provide opportunity for participants to give additional, open feedback about the plan. Stakeholder consultation and consultation with Indigenous representatives is intended to be more in-depth and focused on the strategic direction of the plan and how it aligns with on-going work programs and community initiatives and perspectives.

The following methods will be used to collect public comments:

- In-person public open house – two locations;
- In-person stakeholder consultation meeting – one workshop with additional follow-up meetings, if needed;

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- In-person or virtual meetings with Indigenous community representatives – number and method of meetings will be determined by initial outreach to representatives;
- Virtual public information meeting – one event to be recorded and made available on Engage Hamilton;
- Online survey through Engage Hamilton (long version – 10 minutes); and,
- Paper survey (short version – two minutes) distributed through libraries, municipal service centres, recreation centres, and conservation authority locations.

To advertise the public engagement for the BAP, the following methods will be used:

- Email to the BAP public email list and stakeholder list;
- Coordinated social media posts from the City as well as BAP working group partners;
- Print advertising in local newspaper;
- Events hosted by BAP working group partners;
- Electronic billboards at City facilities;
- Communication to City Councillors for Ward newsletters; and,
- Update to the City's Biodiversity Action Plan webpage.

Sustainable Communities staff will be reaching out to Six Nations of the Grand River, the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation, Hamilton Regional Indian Centre, and the Haudenosaunee Development Institute to invite engagement on the BAP and determine how they would like to be consulted. Staff and BAP working group partners will work to accommodate the requests.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Council may choose not to receive the draft BAP and not authorize staff to proceed with consultation. This alternative is not recommended as biodiversity loss is an ongoing threat that needs to be managed through multi-agency partnerships like the BAP project.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Engagement and Participation

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Clean and Green

Hamilton is environmentally sustainable with a healthy balance of natural and urban spaces.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report PED21065(c) – Draft Biodiversity Action Plan – April 2023

Appendix “B” to Report PED21065(c) – Montreal Pledge

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