

# Municipal Protected Areas Project: Hamilton Pilot

## *Potential Plan of Action (DRAFT)*

**Note:** All plans and proposals outlined in this plan are subject to change based on feedback from partners involved in the project and the evolution of the needs and objectives initiative over time.

## Objectives

1. Confirm participation in the initiative and build awareness and support for the initiative among City of Hamilton staff and elected officials.
2. Build public awareness, pride and support for protected areas and biodiversity conservation in the City of Hamilton (e.g., by highlighting “good news stories”), including broader recognition of the city as a leader in biodiversity conservation.
3. Seek and support opportunities for the City of Hamilton (and relevant partners/other local leaders within the city) to contribute lands to the 30 by 30 target.
4. Explore opportunities to strengthen city policies and procedures around natural land management and biodiversity conservation to produce meaningful positive outcomes for nature.
5. Meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities to advance Indigenous-led conservation and the implementation of Hamilton’s Urban Indigenous Strategy.
6. Hold the City of Hamilton up as an outstanding example of local leadership in biodiversity conservation and celebrate project accomplishments.

## Year 1 (June 2023 to March 2024) – Potential Activities

1. Meetings among representatives of Ontario Nature, the City of Hamilton (staff and elected officials), the Hamilton Naturalists Club, Hamilton Conservation Authority and other interested parties, to discuss the project and identify opportunities for synergy (e.g., pool expertise and resources, undertake joint initiatives, meet shared objectives).
2. Ontario Nature to share relevant resources with partners (e.g., completed best practices guide to municipal protected area policies).
3. Ontario Nature to collaborate with City of Hamilton communications staff to prepare and promote a press release (and short article in ON Nature magazine, if interested), celebrating the city’s endorsement of the Montreal Pledge.
4. Ontario Nature to conduct an initial “easy win” batch assessment of City of Hamilton properties expected to be able to contribute to the national target to protect 30 percent of land and water by 2030 (the 30 by 30 target).
  - Ontario Nature to collaborate with City of Hamilton communications staff to promote and celebrate any sites that successfully count towards the 30 by 30 target.
5. Identify ways that Ontario Nature could support implementation of the 15 actions under the Montreal Pledge.
6. Explore appropriate approaches to engage Indigenous communities, if they are interested, and determine a path forward (potentially in manner that advances implementation of Hamilton’s Urban Indigenous Strategy).
7. Further explore and capitalize upon opportunities to promote and celebrate the City of Hamilton’s commitments to and good work on the conservation of biodiversity.

- E.g., collaborating with communications staff at Environment and Climate Change Canada where opportunities arise from the national project, celebrating the release of the city's Biodiversity Action Plan
8. Explore the interest of McMaster University in having their forest assessed for potential contribution to the 30 by 30 target.
  9. Ontario Nature could provide input on existing and draft municipal policies and management strategies relevant to natural areas management and biodiversity conservation, as deemed appropriate and helpful.
    - E.g., reviewing current City of Hamilton laws, policies and management plans/strategies through the lens of contributing to the 30 by 30 target

### Year 2 (April 2024 to March 2025) – Potential Activities

1. Where interest is expressed, meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities and seek to understand how the project could serve to advance Indigenous-led conservation and implementation of Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy.
2. Ontario Nature and partners continue to collaborate on the promotion of good news stories related to the city's implementation of the Montreal Pledge and participation in this project.
3. Ontario Nature and partners could collaborate (as appropriate) on addressing policy gaps through the lens of contributing to the 30 by 30 and other biodiversity targets.
4. Ontario Nature and partners could collaborate to identify additional properties (possibly but not necessarily owned by the City of Hamilton) that could be assessed and submitted to count towards the 30 by 30 target.

### Year 3 (April 2025 to March 2026) – Potential Activities

1. Create and broadly share a "full picture" case study of the City of Hamilton's contributions to the 30 by 30 target and other biodiversity conservation initiatives. Utilize diverse channels to promote this story (e.g., combination of press releases, blogs and magazine articles, social media, presentations).
2. Ontario Nature and partners could continue to collaborate on assessments and policy updates.