



Presentation to Planning Committee - June 18, 2024

Report PED21065(d) / PW24040

# Thanks and Recognition of Those Involved

- Partner organizations
- City staff from across various departments
- Community members who shared their excitement and expertise
- External local environmental organizations
- Six Nations of the Grand River Wildlife and Stewardship staff
- Council for their on-going support and commitment to this project and related natural heritage projects
- Hamilton's natural gifts that we are committed to respecting and protecting



# Presentation Overview

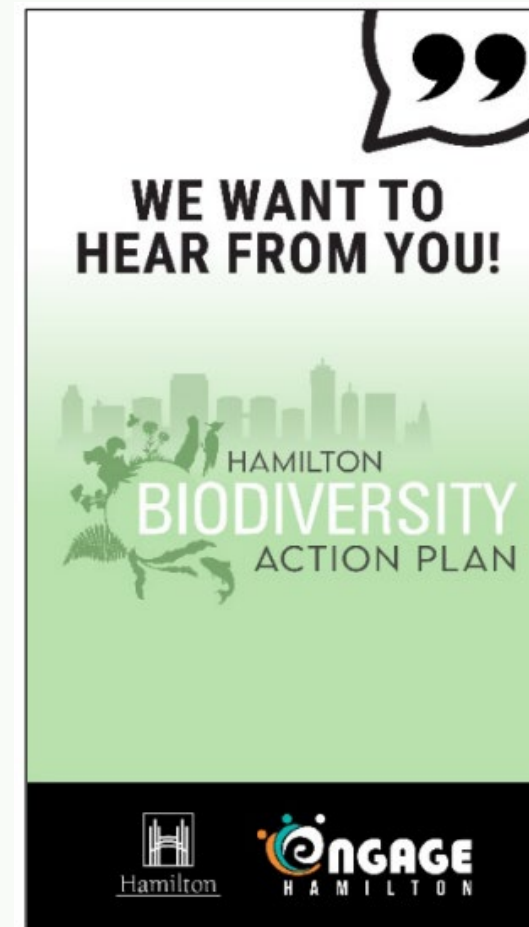
- Brief History of the Biodiversity Action Plan
- Draft Biodiversity Action Plan Consultation Review
- Final Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan
  - Updates from the Draft
  - A Discussion of Targets
  - A Discussion of Governance
  - Sample of City of Hamilton Actions
- Recommendations from Public Works Department and Planning and Economic Development Department

# History of the BAP Development

Timeframe	Outcome
2018	Ad hoc biodiversity working group with representatives from Hamilton's Conservation Organizations established
February 2020	Staff directed to investigate the feasibility of developing a BAP in collaboration with the Conservation Community
April 2021	Staff from the PED Department and the PW Department, partner with local conservation community organizations (lead group) to undertake a Biodiversity Action Plan
May 2023	Draft BAP received by council, and staff directed to engage with the public on the Draft BAP document
To present	Engagement, document review and editing to finalize BAP document, internal budget discussion.

# Biodiversity Action Plan & Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Consultation

- **Public Consultation** – Engage Hamilton webpage, Virtual Information Meeting, In-person Open Houses, Open Streets 2023, other sessions offered by partners
- **External Organization Consultation** – facilitated workshop hosted by Hamilton Naturalists' Club, questionnaire about the draft plan and reflection on threats and key priorities
- **Indigenous Community Consultation** – outreach to representatives of local Indigenous communities, Six Nations of the Grand River Wildlife and Stewardship Office commented on the draft plan and met with BAP working group on several occasions
- **Internal City Staff Consultation** – actions review with Depts



# Biodiversity Action Plan Consultation – What we heard

- **Public** - ways to get involved, concern for future generations, habitat loss and impacts for climate change mitigation, impacts of development, consideration of Indigenous knowledge
- **External Agencies** – instability of political climate, firm policies for protection, funding for implementation, landowner education, coordinated data collection for tracking
- **Indigenous Consultation** – Six Nations Wildlife and Stewardship staff: best management practices and long-term monitoring needed, values-based worldview that recognizes interconnectedness, education on invasives as a key threat to local species
- **Internal City Staff** – coordination, action resourcing



BAP at Open Streets 2023

# Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Consultation – What we heard

- Public Open Houses – Consideration of targets for Hamilton
  - Restoration of degraded terrestrial/aquatic ecosystems
  - Conservation and management of terrestrial/aquatic ecosystems
  - Managing invasive alien species
  - Monitoring of impacts from industry
- Public responses from Engage Hamilton
  - Identify key areas of focus to improve degraded ecosystems
  - Define the standards for effective conservation
  - Educate about invasive species broadly
  - Administrative infrastructure for long-term implementation of BAP
  - Decision makers need accurate information



BAP Open House at Gage Park

# Final Biodiversity Action Plan Document





# Final Biodiversity Action Plan Document



## Goals, Key Priorities and Actions

The following **goals**, **key priorities** and **actions** have been identified as strategic areas of focus to address local threats and protect biodiversity in Hamilton.

### Goals

The **goals** are the overarching themes of the document that have guided the development of the BAP and its **key priorities**. The goals are:

- **Protect** biodiversity by incorporating best practices to protect natural areas and greenspaces in policy, guidelines and land management plans and by identifying funding strategies that support the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- **Explore**, educate and exchange information about biodiversity through partnerships, community science and outreach.
- **Connect** partner policies, processes, data and workflows to streamline efforts to support biodiversity in Hamilton.
- **Restore** biodiversity across Hamilton by implementing nature-based stewardship activities on public and private land.

Trail through forest. PHOTO Hamilton Naturalists' Club

# Final Biodiversity Action Plan Document



## Key Priority 4: Education and Stewardship

### OBJECTIVE

Enhance public awareness of the importance of biodiversity and engage them in stewardship actions through partner agencies.



Goal	Action	Timeframe	Leading Partner(s)	Supporting Partner(s)
 Protect	<b>4.1</b> Include consideration of biodiversity in the evaluation of submissions for the City of Hamilton's Urban Design and Architecture Awards.	Mid-term (1-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Hamilton (Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division)</li> </ul>	
 Explore	<b>4.2</b> Develop a community science program to educate and engage residents in collecting information about Hamilton's biodiversity and to learn more about previously inventoried areas.	Mid-term (1-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAP Coordinator to facilitate</li> <li>Bay Area Restoration Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Venture</li> <li>Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority</li> </ul>
	<b>4.3</b> Encourage increased use of natural burial in City of Hamilton cemeteries that will consider biodiversity through landscape design, species selection and maintenance approach.	Mid-term (1-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Hamilton (Public Works - Environmental Services - Parks and Cemeteries)</li> </ul>	
	<b>4.4</b> Develop tools that will support biodiversity friendly plantings on cemetery properties by cemetery patrons.	Mid-term (1-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Hamilton (Public Works - Environmental Services - Parks and Cemeteries)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority</li> </ul>
	<b>4.5</b> Investigate opportunities with the local school boards to determine existing activities to manage invasive plants and enhance biodiversity, as well as opportunities for additional activities including curriculum components.	Long-term (3-5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAP Coordinator</li> <li>Bay Area Restoration Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority</li> </ul>

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# Final Biodiversity Action Plan Document



Installing interpretive signage. PHOTO Hamilton Naturalists' Club

## What Can You Do?

Whether you live, work, or play in Hamilton, everyone has a role to play in achieving the four main Goals of the BAP.

This section of the BAP focuses on actions that individuals, community groups and organizations can take to have a positive impact on Hamilton's biodiversity. The list of actions in this section is not meant to be prescriptive or static, and community-level actions should respond to the unique circumstances, geographies and local contexts.

Over time, it is expected that individual and community actions will need to evolve, and the BAP partner organizations are committed to supporting community level actions. For coordination on additional actions, or to see how you and your community can be supported in implementing your own actions, contacting the BAP partner organizations is encouraged.

### Did You Know?

An incentive program to help residents manage stormwater on their property is the NATURhoods rebate program administered by Green Venture. The program helps residents manage stormwater on their property by slowing it down so that it soaks into the ground instead of running over the surface into the stormwater system. Additional benefits include beautification of your property, a built-in pollinator garden, shade and a place to gather, and flood protection. For more information visit [greenventure.ca/naturhoods](https://greenventure.ca/naturhoods)

# Consideration of Biodiversity Targets in the Biodiversity Action Plan

- Targets for conservation of lands were identified often (30x30 target)
- Collaborative review with other BAP partners determined that targets need to be considered with updated supporting data
- Municipal Protected Areas Project (MPAP) by Ontario Nature to determine what City lands can count towards federal 30% target
- Natural Areas Inventory (NAI) work with City, HNC and HCA to update existing data and assist in understanding the local state of biodiversity
- Consideration of findings of NAI and MPAP through Rural and Natural Heritage Official Plan Policy Review exercise

# Governance Model Development

- BAP Coordinator
  - This role is needed for long term implementation of the plan
  - Leadership to all partner organizations
  - Coordinated communication with the public
  - Role has not been solidified at any partner organization at this point and City staff will help bridge this gap until role is secured and agreements in place
- BAP Governance Model
  - Key Priority to establish governance model in short term
  - Potential Management Committee and Steering Committee
  - Whole of community approach with representation on Steering Committee
  - City staff assisting in facilitating conversations between agencies to develop agreement for implementation of governance framework

# City of Hamilton Actions at a Glance

## Policy and regulation-related actions

- Wildlife corridors review through natural heritage policy review
- Existing by-law review (Yard Maintenance By-law, Parks By-law)
- State of the Environment Report based on Natural Areas Inventory

## Operational actions

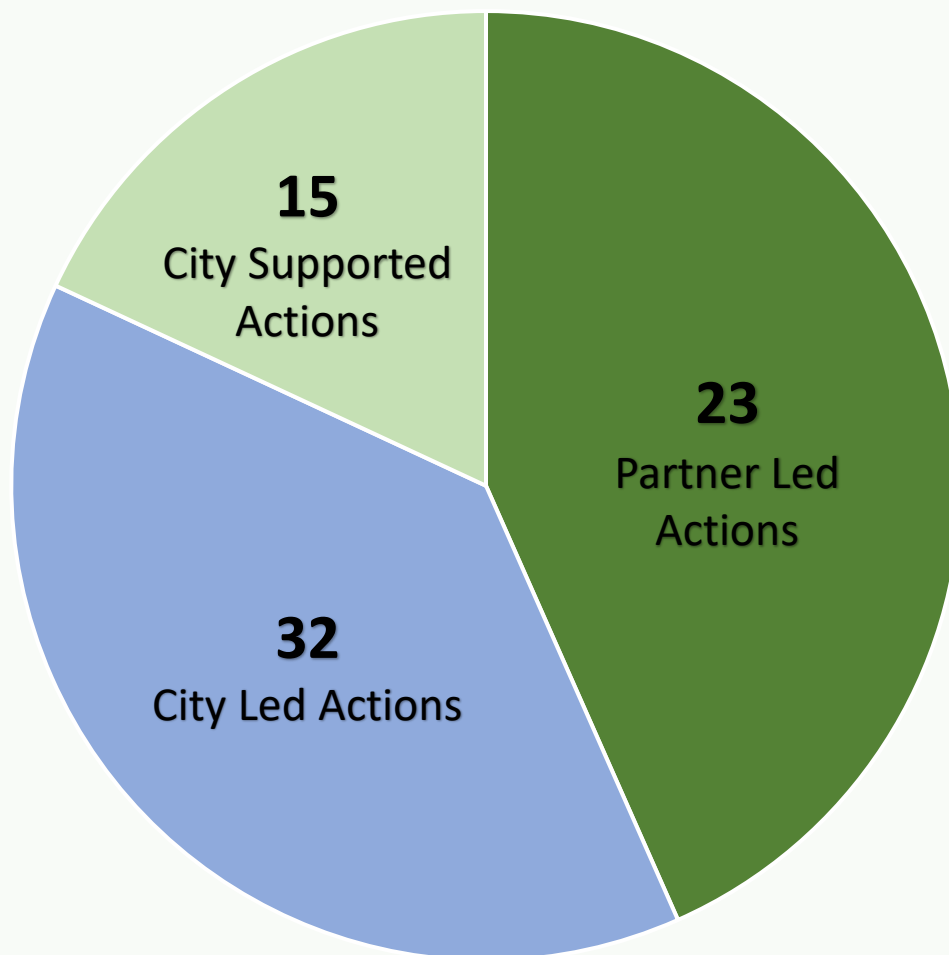
- Expansion of Adopt-a-Park to include natural open spaces and invasive species management
- Consideration of biodiversity in all City projects and studies
- Maintenance procedures and practices for biodiversity at stormwater management ponds

## New work programs

- Open Space Management Plan
- Ecosystem Services Study



# City of Hamilton Actions at a Glance



# Public Works Department Recommendations

- All divisions were consulted to determine actions that aligned with the goals and key priorities of the BAP
- Public Works also reviewed all actions of the BAP to determine opportunity to act as a supporting partner.
- All actions led or supported by Public Works are outlined in Appendix D – Public Works Resourcing Plan
- Where the action does not overlap with an existing work program, resourcing will be required as outlined in Appendix D
- 4 FTE positions will be required to set up a framework and initiate new actions of the BAP.



# Planning and Economic Development Department Recommendations

- Departmental resources have been considered in the commitment to being a lead or supporting partner on actions outlined in the Biodiversity Action Plan – outlined in Appendix C
- Recognition that to effectively implement the actions outlined in the plan and to support the work of other partners, Planning Division needs increase staff capacity – 1 FTE request through 2025 budget
- Targets for natural areas and conservation to be considered through Rural and Natural Heritage Official Plan review
- Planning Division staff to temporarily assist in coordinating governance model development with partner agencies

# Cross-Departmental Recommendations

- That the Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan be approved as the guiding document for the City of Hamilton actions to improve biodiversity across the City
- That the Consultation Summary Report be received
- That all future staff reports related to the Biodiversity Action Plan be referred to the General Issues Committee
- That staff from the Planning and Economic Development Dept. and Public Works Dept. coordinate an annual Communication Update regarding the status of the City's actions outlined in the Biodiversity Action Plan

# Conclusion

- Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan is commitment across organizations to protect, restore, connect and explore Hamilton's biodiversity
- Not a static plan, and will be revisited in 5 years
- A celebration of collaboration!



# Thank You



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# Recommendations – PED21065(d)/PW24040

- a) That the “Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan”, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED21065(d)/PW24040, be approved as the guiding document for City of Hamilton actions to improve biodiversity across all communities in the City;
- b) That the Consultation Summary Report, attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED21065(d)/PW24040, be received;
- c) That the Planning and Economic Development Department Biodiversity Action Plan Resourcing Plan, attached as Appendix “C” to Report PED21065(d)/PW24040, be received, and that implementation of actions requiring financial resources be referred to future departmental budget requests, as necessary in accordance with the anticipated timeframes for initiation;
- d) That the Planning Division staff complement be increased by 1 Full Time Equivalent position to support the implementation of actions outlined in the Planning and Economic Department Biodiversity Action Plan Resourcing Plan, attached as Appendix “C” to PED21065(d)/PW24040, as well as other natural heritage policy related special projects, and that financial requirements associated with this new position be referred to the 2025 budget process;
- e) That the Public Works Department Biodiversity Action Plan Resourcing Plan, attached as Appendix “D” to PED21065(d)/PW24040, be received, and that implementation of actions requiring financial resources be referred to future departmental budget requests, as necessary in accordance with the anticipated timeframes for initiation;
- f) That the Public Works Department staff complement be increased by 4 Full Time Equivalent positions to support actions outlined in the Public Works Department Biodiversity Action Plan Resourcing Plan, attached as Appendix “D” to PED21065(d)/PW24040, for a total annual cost of \$560,000.00, to be referred to the 2025 budget process;
- g) That Planning and Economic Development Department staff consider the findings of the Municipal Protected Areas Project and the Natural Areas Inventory Update in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and Rural Hamilton Official Plan through future Official Plan Amendments;
- h) That Planning and Economic Development Department staff be authorized to undertake an interim role to assist in coordinating the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan until such a time that the Full Time Equivalent position in the Planning Division referred to in Recommendation (d) is created, and that financial resources in the amount of up to \$30,000.00 be allocated from the Planning Division, Sustainable Communities Section’s existing Official Plan Review capital budget to support the administrative, communication and consultation expenses;
- i) That all future staff reports related to the Biodiversity Action Plan be referred to the General Issues Committee;
- j) That staff from the Planning and Economic Development Department and the Public Works Department be directed to coordinate an annual Communication Update to Council regarding the status of the City’s actions outlined in the Biodiversity Action Plan.