









Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan Annual Update 2025 – Planning and Economic Development Department Action Items


The following table provides a status update of all the actions in Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan led or supported by the City of Hamilton's Planning and Economic Development Department as of April 2025. The Planning and Economic Development Department is the leading partner on 12 actions and a supporting partner on 15 actions. The Divisions of the Planning and Economic Development Department that have actions in the Biodiversity Action Plan are the Planning Division, the Office of Climate Change Initiatives, Growth Management, and Licensing and By-law Services.



Leading Partner Actions


Action	Timeframe	Division	Status Update
Key Priority 2: Evaluation and Monitoring			
2.1 Prepare a State of Environment report to track and report the City's progress towards achieving the City's natural heritage protection goals. The basis of this report would be the Natural Areas Inventory.	1 – 3 years	Planning Division	 Pending An update to the Natural Area's Inventory is currently on the Departmental workplan. Planning Division staff will prepare a report on the Natural Areas Inventory results which are expected to be released in 2027.
2.3 Develop a process for updating and maintaining the Natural Areas Inventory database.	0 – 1 year	Planning Division	 In Progress Planning Division staff to contribute to this work plan as a component of the Natural Areas Inventory workplan. The Hamilton Conservation Authority is currently updating the database and collecting data for the Natural Area's Inventory.

Action	Timeframe	Division	Status Update
Key Priority 3: Long-term Protection and Connection			
3.1 Investigate, identify and prioritize wildlife corridors particularly where roads bisect Core Areas identified within the Natural Heritage System and respond by investigating appropriate best management practices and tools.	3 – 5 years	Planning Division	 Pending This forms part of the review of the Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plan Natural Heritage policies (Action 3.3) which is on the Departmental workplan. This project is anticipated to begin in 2025 and will form part of a comprehensive review of the City's Official Plans.
3.3 Review the Natural Heritage policies of the Rural and Urban Hamilton Official Plans and investigate options for amendments to strengthen protection of biodiversity in both rural and urban contexts.	1 - 3 years	Planning Division	 Pending The review of the Official Plan Natural Heritage policies is on the Departmental workplan. This project is anticipated to begin in 2025 and will form part of a comprehensive review of the City's Official Plans.
3.4 Develop a Conservation Organization Working Group comprised of the City of Hamilton and conservation organizations to determine and understand acquisition priorities, assist in the evaluation of applications, and to further communicate the availability of the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund.	1 – 3 years	Planning Division and Office of Climate Change Initiatives	 Pending The Natural Areas Acquisition Fund is a \$50,000 City fund to support conservation organizations in acquiring lands. The Working Group has not yet been established. At the time of this report, two applications for the Natural Areas Acquisition Funding have been received and were evaluated by Staff based on established criteria and implementation guidelines. Legal Services staff is working on agreements associated with these applications.


Action	Timeframe	Division	Status Update
Key Priority 4: Education and Stewardship			
4.1 Include consideration of biodiversity in the evaluation of submissions for the City of Hamilton's Urban Design and Architecture Awards.	1 – 3 years	Planning Division	 Pending The Planning Division will be developing criteria for the Urban Design and Architectural Awards process as it relates to Biodiversity Action Plan goals. This criterion will be implemented as part of the 2027 Urban Design and Architectural Awards.
4.6 Provide education and awareness programs to reduce bird deaths from outdoor cat populations.	1 – 3 years	Licensing and By-law Services	 In Progress Licensing and By-law Services currently deliver education and multi-agency collaborative work on reducing bird deaths from outdoor cat populations.
Key Priority 6: Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement			
6.2 Develop City-wide Low Impact Development Guidelines and consider landscape-based stormwater infiltration techniques for enhancement of on-site local biodiversity in accordance with area-specific environmental reviews and sub-watershed study recommendations.	0 - 1 year	Growth Management	 Complete The Green Standards and Guidelines came into effect on January 1, 2025.




Action	Timeframe	Division	Status Update
Key Priority 7: Local Decision-making			
7.2 City-wide Green Building Standards to be implemented through review of development applications.	0 – 1 year	Planning Division	 In Progress <p>The Green Building Standards were endorsed by Planning Committee on October 1, 2024. Staff were directed to develop an Implementation Plan and to engage with the Climate Change Action Committee on the energy carbon performance metrics of the Green Building Standards and report back with the results of consultation and any adjustments to the Green Building Standards that are required.</p> <p>PED24114(a) - Green Building Standards Enhanced Engagement and Recommendations was received by Planning Committee on April 29, 2025. PED25117 - Green Building Standards Implementation Plan was presented to the General Issues Committee on April 30, 2025. On May 7, 2025, Council referred Reports PED24114(a), PED25117, and Report PED25105 - Growing a Resilient and Environmentally Sustainable Hamilton Community Improvement Plan (City Wide) back to staff for further review based on public submissions, including cost analysis, with direction to report back to a special General Issues Committee in Q4 2025.</p> <p>Bill 17, <i>Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025</i> was introduced by the Province on May 12, 2025, and proposes to limit complete application requirements respecting sun/shadow,</p>




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			wind, urban design and lighting. A staff report respecting Bill 17 is forthcoming and will include staff level comments on the proposed changes including the potential impacts of these changes on the future implementation of the Green Building Standards.
7.5 Consider the Biodiversity Action Plan when initiating City projects and studies, looking for opportunities for mitigation of key threats to local biodiversity.	1 – 3 years	Planning Division	 In Progress <p>Staff note that consideration of biodiversity has been incorporated into several projects led by Planning and Economic Development including Green Building Standards and the final Framework for Processing and Evaluating Urban Boundary Expansion applications.</p>
7.8 Initiate a City-wide Ecosystem Services Study to better understand the valuable benefits provided by natural assets in both rural and urban areas of Hamilton.	1 – 3 years	Planning Division	 Pending <p>The preparation of an ecological services valuation methodology is on the existing workplan. This methodology could be applied city-wide for development review, asset management and the evaluation of urban boundary expansion applications. More detailed information on this workplan is contained within Report PED24109(c).</p> <p>Planning and Economic Development have considered or are considering the value of ecological services in recent projects including the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan update and Framework for Processing and</p>




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			Evaluating Urban Boundary Expansion applications.
7.10 Review and revise the Yard Maintenance By-law to clarify regulations related to naturalized areas of private yards.	1 – 3 years	Licensing and By-law Enforcement	 In Progress Licensing and By-law Services staff are targeting to bring a report to Planning Committee in Q3 of 2025 with respect to a review of the Yard Maintenance By-law, to clarify regulations related to naturalized areas.




Supporting Partner Actions



Action	Timeframe	Leading Partner	Supporting Division	Status Update
Key Priority 1: Administration and Governance				
1.1 Identify long-term funding strategies to implement the BAP for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment to improve biodiversity.	0 – 1 year	BAP Steering Committee	Planning Division	 In Progress An implementation agreement is being prepared in collaboration with BAP partner organizations. Planning and Economic Development staff continually monitor and investigate funding opportunities, including from upper levels of government, to implement BAP actions.

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1.2. Establish a BAP Coordinator position within a partner agency to support the BAP partners in implementing the BAP actions and public communications.	0 – 1 year	BAP Steering Committee	Planning Division	 In Progress <p>The full-time position within the Planning and Economic Development Department approved as part of the 2025 Operating Budget will support the creation of a funding model and the scoping of the coordinator role in conjunction with the Steering Committee. The position has been approved and will be posted and filled in Q3 2025.</p>
1.3 Formalize and continue the BAP partnership to ensure coordinated actions and ongoing communication between all partner organizations.	0 – 1 year	BAP Steering Committee	Planning Division	 In Progress <p>A partnership agreement to assist with internal communications across various City departments is underway. In the meantime, Staff from the Planning Division attend regular meetings with BAP partners to coordinate actions and share updates.</p>
Key Priority 2: Evaluation and Monitoring				
2.1 Prepare a State of Environment report to track and report the City's progress towards achieving the City's natural heritage protection goals. The basis of this report would be the Natural Areas Inventory.	1 - 3 years	Planning Division	Office of Climate Change Initiatives	 Pending <p>See detailed update above under Action 2.1.</p>

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2.2 Centralize and standardize the collection and sharing of biodiversity data.	1 - 3 years	BAP Steering Committee	Planning Division	 In Progress Planning Division staff will assist with any data or related policies as part of this action. A Microsoft form is currently being used for all partners to report updates on their respective actions.
2.4 Develop a Report Card to be completed by Biodiversity Action Plan partners to report on Actions and to assist in writing future progress reports.	1 – 3 years	BAP Coordinator	Planning Division	 Pending The Report Card has not been developed and will be led by the BAP Coordinator. A Microsoft form is currently being used for all partners to report updates on their respective actions.
2.5 Organize an annual biodiversity workshop to discuss monitoring, results, ongoing and future projects and collaborations related to the BAP, and to share progress on the BAP actions with the public.	1 – 3 years	BAP Coordinator	Planning Division and Office of Climate Change Initiatives	 Pending PED's role is to assist in organizing workshop logistics. The annual biodiversity workshop has not been organized at the time of writing this report.

Action	Timeframe	Leading Partner	Supporting Division	Status Update
Key Priority 3: Evaluation and Monitoring				
3.2 Review existing inventories of protected lands to identify additional key areas (e.g. alvars, Niagara Escarpment, water quality improvement areas, wildlife corridors) that should part of an overall land securement strategy.	3 – 5 years	Hamilton Naturalists' Club	Planning Division	 In Progress The Hamilton Naturalist's Club has reported this action is underway.
3.5 Review the findings of the Natural Areas Inventories to determine which species at risk depend on City of Hamilton owned lands and develop a plan to undertake recovery and protection activities.	3 – 5 years	City of Hamilton (Public Works Environmental Services – Parks and Cemeteries)	Planning Division	 Pending See update in Appendix A. As a supporting partner Planning Division staff will review the results of the Natural Areas Inventory and apply appropriate designations and identifications to city owned lands to protect species, as required.
3.6 Identify options to enhance the function of existing greenspaces to increase connectivity (e.g. actively managing existing woodland areas for biodiversity, increasing buffer areas, restoring/ creating new habitat connection).	1 – 3 years	BAP Steering Committee	Planning Division	 Pending Planning Division staff will consider options for connections of greenspaces through ongoing review of official plan mapping, and secondary plan review and development.

Action	Timeframe	Leading Partner	Supporting Division	Status Update
Key Priority 4: Education and Stewardship				
4.9 Target outreach and education to landowners who have property boundaries adjacent to natural areas.	1 – 3 years	BAP Coordinator	Planning Division	 Pending Planning Division staff can assist in providing natural heritage system policy descriptions and zoning information to the BAP Coordinator that may be helpful to provide to property owners.
4.12 Establish a working group to develop and implement a communications plan to raise awareness about biodiversity in Hamilton and the role everyone has to play in protecting and celebrating it. Undertake a public survey to determine if biodiversity understanding has changed in this first five-year BAP.	1 – 3 years	BAP Coordinator	Planning Division	 In Progress A communications plan is currently being developed in collaboration with BAP partner organizations. Based on the communications plan, the City's Communication and Community Engagement Division will be creating a range of BAP branding and marketing materials for the BAP that partner organizations can use in promotion of events.
Key Priority 5: Coordinated Invasive Species Management				
5.4 Strengthen working group of local organizations and agencies undertaking invasive species management in Hamilton to share data and expertise and to collaborate on management initiatives and maximize resources, where possible.	0 - 1 year	Hamilton Conservation Authority (Terrestrial Ecology)	Planning Division	 In Progress The Hamilton Conservation Authority has reported this action is still underway.

Action	Timeframe	Leading Partner	Supporting Division	Status Update
Key Priority 7: Local Decision-making				
7.3 Perform an initial review of Parks By-law for areas for improvement from a biodiversity perspective to ensure remnant forest habitats are zoned consistently.	1 – 3 years	City of Hamilton (Public Works Environmental Services - Parks and Cemeteries)	Planning Division	 In Progress See Appendix A. Planning Division staff will provide required policy and zoning information for any properties that have been identified by Public Works.
7.9 Develop a procedure for undertaking wildlife sweeps ahead of new developments.	3 – 5 years	Hamilton Naturalists' Club	Planning Division	 Pending Planning Division staff will work with the Hamilton Naturalists' Club to determine how a procedure may be developed.