



P.O. Box 89052
HAMILTON, ONTARIO L8S 4R5

February 4, 2026

Mayor and Members of Council
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5
clerk@hamilton.ca

Re: 2026 Budget Discussion

Dear Mayor Horwath and Members of Council,

On behalf of the Hamilton Naturalists' Club (HNC), I would like to express our support for the environmental initiatives that this Council has endorsed and that are critical in the City's work to increase climate resiliency and to protect and restore biodiversity. These programs that include the Office of Climate Change Initiatives and cycling infrastructure, are tiny, but critically important parts of the budget that, if anything, should be expanded. They need to be a core part of the City's budget as they are working to make Hamilton more resilient to the climate and biodiversity crises while making the city a better place to live. HNC urges Council to not reduce the funding to any of Hamilton's environmental initiatives.

The Hamilton Naturalists' Club is a charitable-led organization with nearly 400 members dedicated to the study, appreciation, and conservation of nature. Established in 1919, the HNC has a 107-year history of land acquisition and stewardship. Since acquiring our first sanctuary in 1961, the HNC has protected and stewarded ecologically significant natural areas across the region. HNC works with diverse communities across Hamilton to protect, restore, and enhance local ecosystems while promoting equitable access to nature and environmental education. Through habitat restoration, youth engagement, volunteer stewardship, and public programming, the HNC serves residents of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic circumstances, fostering healthy ecosystems and resilient communities.

I am providing a few examples of where the City's environmental initiatives have directly benefitted biodiversity. Through the Office of Climate Change Initiatives, HNC was able to permanently protect an additional 50 acres of provincially significant wetland in the Hayesland Swamp with support from the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund. In addition, HNC has worked with the Forestry Department to help administer the distribution of 5,000 native trees through the annual Free Tree Giveaway. And thanks to support from the Office of Climate Change Initiatives, HNC will be working with the Forestry Department to implement the private tree planting pilot program. This exciting new program will work with residents in areas with low

Hamilton Naturalists' Club is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study, appreciation and conservation of our wild plants and animals.

tree canopy to plant trees in their yards. The environmental and community benefits of these initiatives are enormous.

These initiatives are examples of the vital environmental programs run by the city to address the interrelated crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. A healthy environment is key to the long-term sustainability and well-being of Hamilton and can provide enormous environmental, social and economic benefits. HNC supports the expansion or maintenance of these programs and urges Council to not make any budget reductions to these programs that are fundamental to making Hamilton a good place to live.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Baker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jen Baker
General Manager