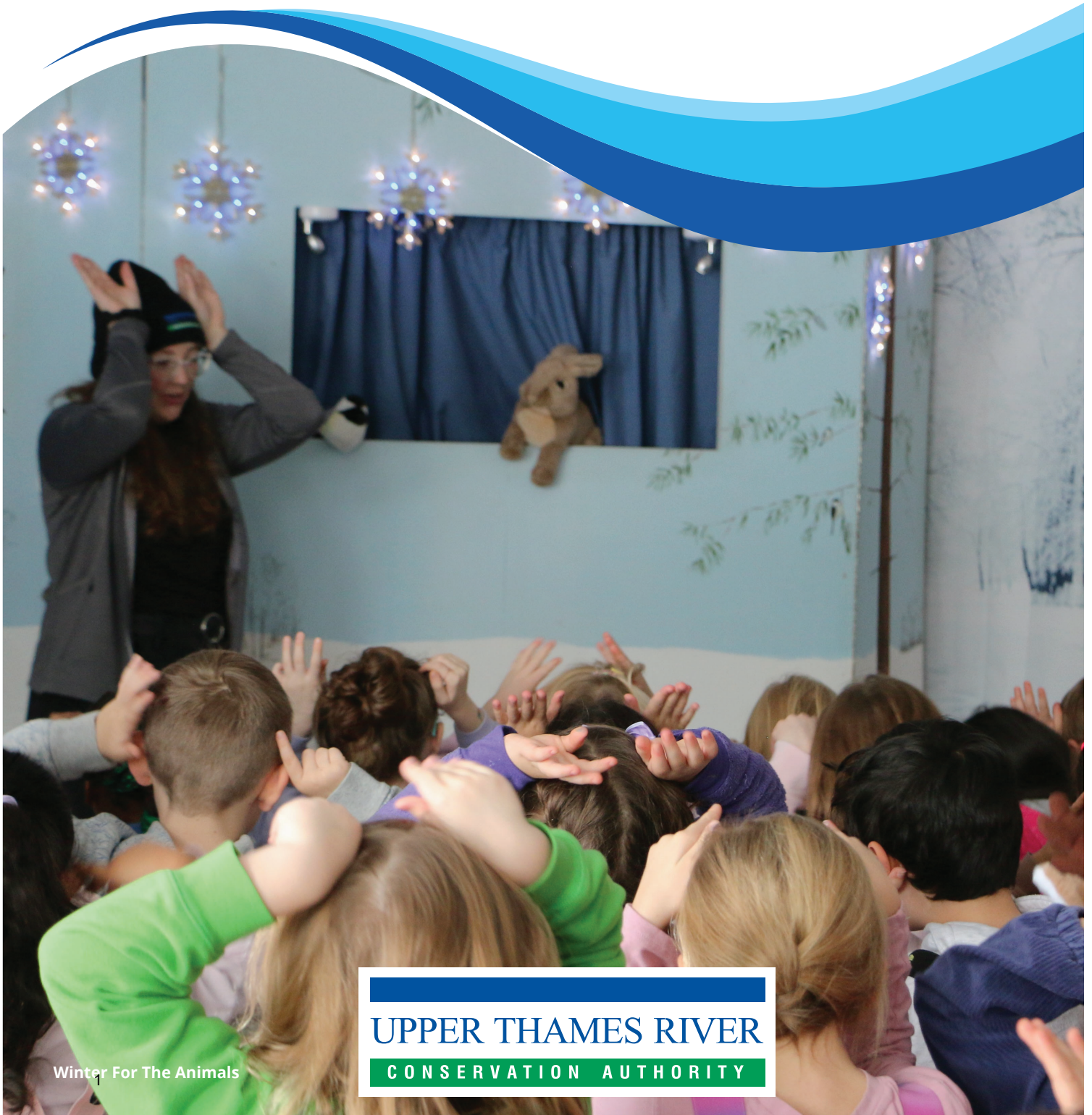


Board of Directors

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority



UPPER THAMES RIVER
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda – January 2026

Date: January 27, 2026

Time: 9:30am

Place: Watershed Conservation Centre Board Room, Fanshawe Conservation Area –
1424 Clarke Road, London, ON

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

2. Modifications to the Agenda

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

4. Presentations/Delegations

5. Administrative Business

5.1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: December 16, 2025

5.2. Business Arising from Minutes

5.3. Correspondence

6. Reports – For Consideration

6.1. Discussion on Formalizing the General Manager's Performance Appraisal Process – BoD-26-01-01

6.2. Proposed Implementation Plan for Service Delivery Review Recommendations – BoD- BoD-26-01-02

6.3. Planning and Permitting Fee Schedules – BoD-26-01-03

7. Reports – In Camera

7.1. Security of UTRCA Property – BoD-26-01-04

7.2. Pending Disposition of Land Update – BoD-26-01-05

7.3. Litigation Affecting the UTRCA – Statements of Claim Summary – BoD-26-01-06

8. Reports – For Information

- 8.1. Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report – BoD-26-01-07
- 8.2. Administrative Review Officers (ARO) Discretionary Policy Decisions Quarterly Report – BoD-26-01-08
- 8.3. Project Status Update – BoD-26-01-09
- 8.4. Responses and Communications – Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities – BoD-26-01-10
- 8.5. 2026 Draft Budget Municipal Feedback – BoD-26-01-11
- 8.6. [Thames River Current January Edition](#)

9. Reports – Committee Updates

- 9.1. Finance and Audit Committee
- 9.2. Hearing Committee

10. Elections

- I. Chair
- II. Vice-Chair
- III. Hearing Committee (two or three positions)
- IV. Finance and Audit Committee (one to three positions)
- V. Source Protection Striking Committee/Committee Liaison (one position)

11. Notices of Motion

12. Chair’s Comments

13. Member's Comments

14. General Manager's Comments

15. Adjournment

Tracy Annett, General Manager

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Teresa Hollingsworth, Manager, Community and Corporate Services
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-01
Agenda #: 6.1
Subject: Discussion on Formalizing the General Manager's Performance Appraisal Process

Proposed Motion

THAT the board engage an external consultant to support the following functions:

- administering a formal 360-degree survey process, including staff, board members, and select external partners;
- administering a self-evaluation of the General Manager;
- compiling, analyzing, anonymizing, and summarizing all results into a clear, actionable report;
- presenting the findings to the board in closed session;
- assisting with the creation of a professional development work plan for the General Manager.

Background

Submitted by Skylar Franke on November 28, 2025 in compliance with UTRCA By-Law C.14 Notice of Motion

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to recommend that we formalize and strengthen the performance appraisal process for our General Manager that ensures a consistent process. As a board, one of our core responsibilities is to provide effective governance and clear accountability for the leadership of the organization. Establishing a structured and repeatable process will help us fulfill this duty while supporting the General Manager's success and development.

To that end, I propose that the board discuss various ways to improve the performance appraisal process, including but not limited to the following;

Consideration of an External Consultant for Annual 360 Reviews

To enhance the quality, neutrality, and administrative ease of the process, I recommend that the board engage an external consultant to support the following functions:

- administering a formal 360-degree survey process, including staff, board members, and select external partners;
- administering a self-evaluation of the General Manager;

- compiling, analyzing, anonymizing, and summarizing all results into a clear, actionable report;
- presenting the findings to the board in closed session;
- assisting with the creation a professional development work plan for the General Manager.

Effective feedback supports professional growth and ensures there is clear communication between the board and General Manager. I look forward to discussing this proposal further at an upcoming meeting and welcome any questions or feedback from board members.

Sincerely, Skylar Franke

Staff Recommendation

This motion is supported by staff and aligns with Human Resources best practices. Key benefits include:

- **Increased objectivity:** An external consultant is removed from internal reporting relationships and personal dynamics, which encourages more candid feedback from participants
- **Specialized expertise:** An experienced consultant brings proven tools and methodologies and can benchmark results against similar roles and industry standards
- **Confidentiality and credibility:** A neutral third party enhances trust in the process, manages sensitive information appropriately, and reduces the potential for bias
- **More effective feedback and outcomes:** Leading to clearer insights and stronger professional development planning

Projected Cost

The cost would be anticipated between \$1,000 and \$5,000, depending on the vendor and specific services required.

Recommended by:

Jennifer Williams, Human Resources Coordinator

Teresa Hollingsworth, Manager, Community and Corporate Services

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Date: January 27, 2025
File Number: BoD-26-01-02
Agenda #: 6.2
Subject: Proposed Implementation Plan for Service Delivery Review Recommendations

Recommendation

THAT the Board of Directors approves the Proposed 2026 Phase 1 Implementation Plan for the Service Delivery Review Recommendations.

Background

With the Final Report and Recommendations for the Planning and Permitting Service Delivery Review received, staff have developed a plan for the implementation of the review recommendations. Implementation will be phased with Phase 1 focusing on the highest priority items to be implemented in 2026. The table below provides the details and proposed timing planned for Phase 1 implementation. It should be noted that implementation timing may be influenced by changes proposed by the Province.

Implementation Action	Associated Recommendation	Performance Indicator	Timing
Establish MOU that defines agency roles and responsibilities with the City of London.	Coordinate with Member Municipalities	Finalized MOU	Initiate MOU discussion – Q1. Finalized MOU by year-end.
Reduce duplication on technical reviews.	Coordinate with Member Municipalities	Finalized MOU	To be clarified and defined in MOU. Finalized MOU by year-end.
Establish regular touchpoints with member municipalities.	Coordinate with Member Municipalities	Communications Plan	Initiate discussions on timing and frequency with member municipalities in Q1-Q2. Document in communications plan by year-end.
Define risk levels and necessary review actions for	Implement a risk-based decision framework.	Finalized Framework	Consult with neighbouring CA's for already established

Implementation Action	Associated Recommendation	Performance Indicator	Timing
development applications, implement triage system based on risks			framework tools (Q1-Q2). Framework completed by year-end.
Triage application priority for planning applications at intake	Accelerate the planning process	Documented in internal process guide.	Q1-Q2
Define formal review cycles for planning applications and set average time to process applications	Accelerate the planning process	To be outlined in MOU	MOU to be finalized by year end.
Pool all workloads	Accelerate the planning process	Documented in internal process guide.	Some workload pooling has already been established. Further consideration of staff structure and geographic assignments to be defined by year end.
Provide staff with coaching on customer service.	Promote a culture shift to be more solutions oriented	Complete training	Management to explore training options Q1-Q2. Training to be completed by year-end.
Understand Lean and how it can improve service offerings	Implement a continuous improvement program	Complete training	To be considered as part of customer service training with training completed by year-end.
Decide what metrics to track and release a comprehensive annual report.	Create service standards and metrics and Inform relevant groups of changes to relevant information.	Comprehensive annual report	Establish metrics Q1-Q2 Develop comprehensive report Q3-Q4 with public release in Q1 of 2027.
Create an external communications plan, redesign the website and strengthen information management	Inform relevant groups of changes to relevant information.	Communications Plan and website redesign completed.	Completed by year end.

Summary

The Phase 1 implementation plan for 2026 is ambitious and addresses implementation actions for 7 of the 9 key recommendations identified in the Service Delivery Review Final Report. Of the remaining two recommendations, one has already been fully implemented (create a protocol for the EPR Unit's use of floodplain mapping) and the other has been paused while we await further direction from the province on the consolidation of conservation authorities in Ontario and the intention to create a province-wide permitting platform (Implement Suitable Technology). Staff will provide update reports on implementation progress to the UTRCA Board of Directors quarterly through 2026.

Recommended by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-03
Agenda #: 6.3
Subject: Planning and Permitting Fee Schedules

Recommendation

THAT the proposed revisions to the Planning and Permitting Fee Schedules be approved by the UTRCA Board of Directors for implementation beginning February 1, 2026.

Background

UTRCA's Environmental Planning and Regulations Unit typically updates the fee schedules every year to keep pace with cost-of-living and other initiatives, to ensure consistency with the recovery targets identified in our Fees Policy, and to maintain a sustainable revenue source and high level of service. However, Planning and Regulations fees have remained unchanged since 2022 due to Provincial direction.

A direction from the Minister of the Environment, received December 12, 2024, stated the following:

"I am writing with regard to conservation authority fees for the 2025 calendar year. Pursuant to my authority under subsection 21.3 (1) of the Conservation Authorities Act, I am issuing a new Direction, attached to this letter as Attachment A, that extends the previous Directions that were in place for the 2023 and 2024 calendar years. The purpose of this Direction, which is effective from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, is to require a conservation authority not to change the amount of the fee it charges or the manner in which it determines the fee for any program or service related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related proposals or land use planning policies, or for permits issued by conservation authorities."

Since it had been anticipated that Provincial direction freezing Planning and Regulatory fees would be extended through 2026, no changes to UTRCA planning, permitting or technical review fees were included in UTRCA's annual review of the fees policy and schedules presented to the Board of Directors at the December 2025 meeting (BoD-12-25-87). Board discussion during the December meeting identified the need for continued advocacy work around lifting the fee freeze. Although, a direction letter from

the Province continuing the fee freeze had been expected, to date, UTRCA has received no direction from the Province on fees for 2026.

While it is possible that Provincial direction may still be received, through discussion with Conservation Ontario, we understand that the majority of Conservation Authorities in Ontario, have already, or will soon be, updating their planning and permitting fees in the absence of any such direction. Fee increases approved, or being proposed, by other conservation authorities generally reflect a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) ranging from 2-8% depending on whether a compounded COLA was considered for each of the three years that fees have been frozen for.

Due to the freeze on fees over the past three years, the UTRCA is not achieving the 50% cost recovery as outlined in our fees policy, and staff believe that a more comprehensive review of fees to reflect service delivery standards and achieve the policy target is necessary. This review will require time to consider categorization, complexity, cost recovery of direct and indirect costs, comparisons with other conservation authority fees, and will require a public process to ensure transparency for any proposed changes to fees. Ultimately, fee revenue for UTRCA's planning and regulations department would need to increase by over \$500,000 to achieve the 50% cost recovery target outlined in our fees policy. Planning and regulations fee revenue budgeted for 2026 is \$710,000.

As an interim measure, a cost-of-living adjustment of 5% is being proposed to be applied for all planning, permitting, and technical review fees for implementation beginning February 1st, with one exception included in the permitting fee schedule for development application permits (described below). The proposed fee changes are provided in the attached fee schedules, and fees have been rounded to the nearest \$10 in most cases for simplicity.

There is a significant difference in the costs between current development application permits for routine development (\$265) and a minor development (\$1,160). Staff have found that there are certain development applications being reviewed, such as those for a utility shed or small addition that do not meet the routine criteria, but the time required for review does not warrant the cost of a minor development permit. We are therefore proposing splitting minor development applications into two categories: minor (low risk) which would have a permit application fee of \$800, and a minor (low to moderate risk) which would have a permit application fee of \$1,250 (the previous \$1,160 with a 5% COLA).

Summary

The fee increases proposed reflect minor increases to account for inflation associated with program delivery over the past 3 consecutive years of fee freezes. The proposed increases are consistent with the UTRCA's fees policy.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager

Prepared by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Joe Gordon, Regulations Coordinator

Attachments:

Planning and Regulations Fee Schedules

Schedule 1: Planning and Regulations Fees

Includes Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Section 28 Permit Fees, Plan Review Fees, Technical Review Fees, and other fees.

1a. UTRCA Section 28 Permit Fees

Category	Type	2025 Fee	Proposed 2026 Fee
Pre-consultation	Presubmission-consultation with the applicant regarding application requirements	No Charge	No Charge
Change or Interfere with Wetlands and Watercourses	Routine - No engineering drawings required	\$555.00	\$580
	Minor - Engineering drawings required	\$1,160.00	\$1,250
	Major - Involves comprehensive review by various technical staff	\$1,590.00	\$1,670
Development Applications	Routine - Limited review, minor in nature location, or impact (decks, patios, etc.)	\$265.00	\$280
	Minor – Low Risk, Limited review, small-scale (utility/storage sheds, small additions, etc.)	**NEW**	\$800
	Minor - Small scale (less than 500 square feet), and/or consistent with policy Low to Moderate risk, standard review, medium scale (detached garage, workshop, etc.)	\$1,160.00	\$1,250
	Major - Medium scale, primary structures (greater than 500 square feet) and/or consistent with policy	\$1,590.00	\$1,670
Linear Utility Corridor	Routine - May include linear utility crossings adjacent to watercourses and wetlands	\$1,160.00	\$1,250
	Minor - May include linear utility corridors where a watercourse or wetland	\$1,590.00	\$1,670

Category	Type	2025 Fee	Proposed 2026 Fee
	crossing is proposed		
	Major - May include linear utility corridors where multiple watercourse or wetland crossings are proposed	\$6,360.00	\$6,680
Municipal Drain Review	Routine - Limited review, minor in nature	\$290.00	\$300
	Minor - Review of engineer's report and/or within regulated wetland limits	\$900.00	\$945
	Major - Requires multiple site visits, and/or detailed review of engineering reports, and/or within regulated wetland limits	\$1,590.00	\$1,670
Municipal Project Review	Routine - Does not require any technical reports or analysis (may include bridge or culvert repairs)	\$1,160.00	\$1,250
	Minor - Requires technical reports or analysis to support application (may include minor bridge or culvert replacements)	\$1,590.00	\$1,670
	Major - Works that cover large geographic areas such as multiple road culvert or bridge replacements	\$5,300.00	\$5,565
Complex Applications	Large scale development proposal and/or inconsistent with policy (e.g., multi-lot development, large scale municipal project, golf course, renewable energy project, etc.)	\$6,360.00	\$6,680
	Large Fill - Volumes > 1000 m ³	\$6,360.00 Plus \$0.50/m ³ fill	\$6,680
	Aggregate Resources Act - Above water table	\$6,360.00	\$6,680
	Aggregate Resources Act - Below water table	\$11,130.00	\$11,700

Category	Type	2025 Fee	Proposed 2026 Fee
Environmental Assessments	Standard	\$1,160.00	\$1,225
	Intermediate	\$5,300.00	\$5,565
	Full/Comprehensive	\$10,600.00	\$11,200
Hearing Request	Streamlined Hearing	\$850.00	\$900
	Full Hearing – Intermediate	\$1,270.00	\$1,350
	Full Hearing – Major	\$5,300.00	\$5,565
Clearance	Verification Letter (Hazards or Areas of Interference)	\$265.00	\$280
Extensions	Minor application revisions and minor permit revisions and/or extensions	\$140.00	\$150
Violation (work commenced prior to approval)	First occurrence Second and subsequent occurrences Note: Applications will only be accepted retroactively where works undertaken meet UTRCA board approved policies or where works are proposed that are intended to bring a project into compliance with said policies.	100% surcharge (cost recovery) 200% surcharge	100% surcharge (cost recovery) 200% surcharge
Minister's Zoning Order (MZO)	Permit associated with Minister's Zoning Order (MZO)	100% surcharge of permit fee (cost recovery)	100% surcharge of permit fee (cost recovery)

Definitions:

Routine - Routine permit applications are activities that are documented through another approval process or are determined to have limited impacts on the control of flooding, erosion, or unstable soil or bedrock.

Minor - Permit applications for development projects could be considered minor in nature due to project size, level of risk, location, and/or other factors. These projects have minor impacts on the control of flooding, erosion, or unstable soil or bedrock. Based on the proximity of the project to the hazard, minor permit applications are reviewed by UTRCA staff and generally require standard recommendations or conditions. Minor permit applications could be those

involving, for example, minor fill, minor development, and minor site alteration where there is a high degree of certainty that issues associated with natural hazards are minimal.

Major - Major applications for Section 28 permits require significant UTRCA staff involvement. They could be highly complex projects, for example, large subdivisions requiring technical review supported by comprehensive analysis, or smaller scale site specific applications that require complex technical reviews. The proposals may involve developments with significant natural hazards or multiple approval process requirements. Generally, these would include Plans of Subdivision and Condominium, large Site Plan Control applications, and major infrastructure development. Major applications could also include those where works have been undertaken or are in the process of being undertaken, without prior approval from the UTRCA, and those where works have been undertaken that do not comply with UTRCA Section 28 policies and restoration/remediation measures are required.

Large renewable energy projects are defined as:

- a. Class 3 solar facilities with a nameplate capacity greater than 10 kW.
- b. Class 3, 4 or 5 wind facilities equal to or greater than 50 kW.
- c. Any waterpower project involving construction of a new dam or retrofit of an existing dam.
- d. Any bio-fuel project (anaerobic digestion, biofuel, biogas, or thermal treatment facility) that would not fall under our general categories for buildings or building additions as outlined in the table above.

Large scale municipal projects – Projects that have generally come forward following a Class Environmental Assessment (EA), where input from the UTRCA has been solicited and the need for Section 28 approval has been acknowledged. UTRCA costs are related to multiple technical report reviews, preparation of correspondence, attendance at pre-consultation meetings, and site inspections. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge additional fees for significant technical report review.

Large fill projects involve proposals for fill movement which exceed 1000 m³. Smaller fill projects will be covered under other categories of the fee schedule.

General Notes for All Permit Fees:

1. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge technical report review fees over and above the permit fees for projects that require a detailed technical report or reports covering one or more issues.
2. Applications that fall under more than one category will be charged at the highest rate.
3. Costs associated with legal review for agreements required for permits issued under a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) shall be paid by the applicant.
4. For EAs undertaken by private proponents (i.e., non-municipal EAs), standard, intermediate, and full/comprehensive categories are distinguished by the anticipated amount of staff time required for review. For the purposes of the fee schedule, intermediate will be defined as projects with estimated cumulative staff review time required of greater than 15 hours and major will be defined as projects with estimated cumulative staff review time required of greater than 30 hours. The UTRCA reserves the

right to charge additional fees if peer review requirements warrant additional cost-recovery.

5. For Municipal Drain applications where only a scoped review of the engineer's report is undertaken, the lesser fee may be charged.
6. Projects carried out by the UTRCA or under the supervision of the UTRCA Clean Water Program may be exempt from this fee schedule.
7. The applicant is responsible for undertaking required reports/studies required for the application to be deemed complete. Fees determined through the pre-submission consultation process are approximate only and based on the fee schedules in place and information available at the time of consultation. The final fee may change at the time of application submission if the technical review requirements have changed due to the availability of new information or if the fee schedule has changed subsequent to the date of consultation.
8. Fees charged are for administration purposes and are non-refundable. Permit applications will be closed if information/studies have been required by the UTRCA have not been received from the applicant within two years.
9. Where an application exceeds one year to process due to other approval processes (e.g. site plan, etc...), it may remain active for a period of two years, if there are no major revisions. Where major revisions are required, a new permit application and fee will be required.
10. Any dispute of fee calculations that cannot be resolved through consultation with UTRCA's Manager of Environmental Planning and Regulations and/or UTRCA's Regulation Coordinator, the applicant may request review by the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer or the UTRCA Board of Directors in accordance with UTRCA Fees Policy.

Please contact UTRCA Regulations staff at 519-451-2800 to arrange a pre-consultation discussion prior to submission, or email regulationsinquiry@thamesriver.ca

1b. UTRCA Plan Review Fees

Application Review	Type	2025 Fee	Proposed 2026 Fee
Formal Pre-consultation	Fee will apply when a formal pre-consultation has been completed. This fee will be deducted from subsequent review fees once a formal application is submitted.	\$320.00	\$320
Official Plan Amendment (OPA)	Comprehensive reviews and housekeeping amendments initiated by Municipality	No charge	No charge
Official Plan Amendment	Minor/Routine	\$580.00	\$610
	Major - Large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$1,590.00	\$1,670
Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA)	Comprehensive ZBA initiated by Municipality	No charge	No charge
	Minor/Routine	\$580.00	\$610
	Major - Large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$1,380.00	\$1,450
Consent	Minor/Routine	\$425.00	\$450
	Major - Large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$850.00	\$890
Minor Variance	Minor/Routine	\$265.00	\$280
	Major - Large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$1,325.00	\$1,390
Site Plan	Minor/Routine	\$580.00	\$610
	Intermediate - Intermediate scale requiring scoped technical studies	\$1,325.00	\$1,390
	Major - Large scale, complex features, requiring technical studies	\$3,200.00	\$3,360
Draft Plan of Subdivision or Condo	-	\$170 per lot/unit to a maximum of \$14,300.00	\$180 to a max of \$15,015
Processing Fee	-	\$265.00	\$280

General Notes for all Application Fees

1. Fees are only collected for applications where natural hazard features affect the property.

2. The UTRCA reserves the right to waive the application fee or reduce the fee on a case-by-case basis.
3. Major applications include complex natural hazard issues involving multiple meetings and peer reviews to be completed by the UTRCA and/or other qualified professionals. The UTRCA reserves the right to determine what is considered to be a major application on a case-by-case basis.
4. Fees for multiple applications made for the same parcel within one year will be discounted as follows:
 - First application: full fee per lot/application,
 - Additional applications: 50% of the lesser of the application fee per lot/application.
5. A processing fee can be charged in the following cases:
 - Provision of an extension letter,
 - Provision of a letter for a Draft Plan of Condominium for those proposals that are limited to conversion of existing buildings with no new construction or as long as the design complies with criteria established through a previous circulation (e.g., Subdivision or Site Plan).
 - Other relevant reviews.
6. Where an exception to a permit may be granted through the *Planning Act*, the review fee will be doubled.

1c. UTRCA Technical Review Fees (to support Section 28 and Plan Review Services)

Technical Review	2025 Fee	Proposed 2026 Fee
Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) (Minor) – Limited assessment, adjacent to feature	\$795.00	\$830
EIS (Scoped) – Scoped assessment, adjacent to or within feature	\$1,270.00	\$1,330
EIS (Comprehensive)	\$2,330.00	\$2,450
Stormwater Management (SWM) Studies – Preliminary	\$1,270.00	\$1,330
SWM Studies – Detailed Design	\$2,330.00	\$2,450
Sediment and Erosion Control (SEC) Plan – Minor/Routine	No charge	No charge
SEC Plan/Report – Intermediate	\$265.00	\$280
SEC Plan/Report – Major	\$530.00	\$560
Geotechnical or Slope Stability Assessment – Scoped Report	\$795.00	\$830
Geotechnical or Slope Stability Assessment – Full Report (1 lot)	\$1,270.00	\$1,330
Geotechnical or Slope Stability Assessment – Full Report (multiple lots)	\$1,700.00	\$1,790
Hydrogeology Assessments	\$1,700.00	\$1,790
Other Technical Report	\$1,270.00	\$1,330
Technical Expert Peer Review - External (Instance where there is a need for an outside Technical Expert)	\$555.00 + TBD Technical Review	\$580 + TBD Technical Review

General Notes for Technical Review Fees

1. It is required that the proponent pre-consult with the UTRCA and the municipality prior to preparation and submission of a detailed technical report.
2. For the purpose of this fee schedule, Scoped Studies are generally recommended in situations where the nature of the natural hazard is well documented, similar development has been previously proposed, modelled and analyzed, impacts are not anticipated due to the location or nature of a proposed development, and mitigation options have been developed.
3. For the purpose of this fee schedule, Comprehensive Studies are generally recommended in situations that are more complex, where information is lacking, or where the risk or significance of the impact is high.
4. The fees for technical report review include one comprehensive report review and one revised report review. The UTRCA reserves the right to charge a processing fee or additional technical report fees for additional reviews.

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Joe Gordon, Regulations Coordinator
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-07
Agenda #: 8.1
Subject: Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report

Recommendation

THAT the Board of Directors receive the Section 28 Status Report for information.

Background

The attached tables are provided to the Board as a summary of staff activity related to Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits. Table 2 covers staff activities and information for permits issued during the months of November and December 2025.

Summary of 2025 Permit Activity To-Date (Jan - December):

- **228 permit numbers** have been assigned with **184 of those permits issued**.
- **14** permits have been issued in 2025 where the application was submitted in 2024.
- **Nine (9)** Hydro One Standard Compliance Permits have been issued.
- **23** Permit Extensions or Amendments have been issued.
- **317** Site Clearances for regulated properties where proposed development was reviewed and determined not to require a Section 28 Permit.

TOTAL Permits In-Progress:

There are currently **29 total permits in progress** where additional information is still required prior to processing the permit application. One (1) permit application number has been closed due to the applicant's withdrawal. There are four (4) permits-in-progress remaining from 2024. Two of those permits-in-progress are within the City of London.

The following table provides information on ALL permit in-progress in a tally format
Table 1: Permit In-Progress Tracker

YEAR	PERMIT #'S ASSIGNED	MORE INFORMATION REQUIRED	PERMIT ISSUED	HEARING DECISION	INACTIVE* (CLOSED)
2025	228	25	184	0	1
Permits in Progress (Prior Year Submission):					Prior Years
2024	219	4	188	4	23

The **attached Table 2** provides further details of those permits issued in November and December 2025 and demonstrates compliance with processing timelines required by O. Reg. 41/24 unless otherwise stated.

Recommended by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Prepared by:

Joe Gordon, Regulations Coordinator
 Jessica Schnaithmann, Land Use Regulations Officer
 Mike Funk, Land Use Regulations Officer
 Cari Ramsey, Land Use Regulations Officer
 Dave Griffin, Land Use Regulations Officer
 Richard Brewer, Land Use Regulations Assistant
 Carly Sing-Judge, Land Use Regulations Assistant

Section 28 Status Report – Summary of Applications for 2025
Ontario Regulation 41/24

Table 2
Reporting Period: November - December 2025
[Client Service Standards for Conservation Authority Plan and Permit Review \(CO, Dec 2019\)](#)

Permit #	Municipality	Location	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Response Notice	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
P123-25	London	84 Bessemer Road	Development	Major	Light Industrial Building	24-Oct-2025	7-Nov-2025	7-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	YES	Gordon
P194-25	Woodstock	224 Springbank Ave S (Brick Ponds Wetlands)	Municipal Project	Routine	Trail Expansion	29-Oct-2025	3-Nov-2025	7-Nov-2025	7-Nov-2025	YES	Griffin
P195-25	Ingersoll	Oxford Road 9 (Ingersoll Rd S to 700m West of Oakwood St)	Complex	Major	Urbanization of ~1400m of Oxford County Road 9 including W, WW, SWM and SWM outfalls, replacment of bridges/culverts and easement connection on UTRCA owned land.	3-Nov-2025	5-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	26-Nov-2025	YES	Winfield
P196-25	Perth East	Lot 31,32, Con 3 (Line 36)	Municipal Drain	minor	Drain Realignment	3-Jul-2025	16-Jul-2025	21-Oct-2025	7-Nov-2025	YES	Brewer
P200-25	Zorra	Oxford Road 119 (43.055545, - 80.990973)	Municipal Project	Routine	Rehabilitation of the 3m diam CSP – spray-applied liner	26-Sep-2025	10-Oct-2025	24-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	YES	Brewer

Permit #	Municipality	Location	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Response Notice	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
P203-25	London	Forest Hill Park (City-owned lands, west of 701-727 Rollingacres Place)	Municipal Project	Routine	Berm construction to redirect external surface flows	20-Nov-2025	20-Nov-2025	25-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	YES	Funk
P204-25	Perth South	Perth Road 163, 200m North of line 8 – Burnett Drain	Municipal Project	Routine	Replacement of existing culvert – same size	5-Nov-2025	10-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	YES	Brewer
P207-25	St Marys	Queen Street West (Bolton Municipal Drain)	Municipal Project	Routine	Bridge Replacement	7-Nov-2025	18-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	YES	Winfield
P210-25	London	1225 Adelaide St N - North London Athletic Fields	Development	Routine	Playground installation	25-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	YES	Funk
P211-25	Perth East	Rohfrietsch Drain - Lots 23 & 24, Con 1	Municipal Drain	Minor	Drain improvements	29-May-2025	30-May-2025	28-Nov-2025	28-Nov-2025	YES	Brewer
P205-25	West Perth	230 Ontario Rd	Development	Major	Townhouse Condominium Development	13-Nov-2025	21-Nov-2025	10-Dec-2025	10-Dec-2025	YES	Griffin
P208-25	London	North of Clarke Road and Veterans	Linear Utility Corridor	Minor	Pole Relocation	20-Nov-2025	25-Nov-2025	25-Nov-2025	4-Dec-2025	YES	Sing-Judge
P209-25	London	Queen's Avenue Bridge at the North Thames River and Harris Park Gate	Municipal Project	Minor	Queen's Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation and Shoreline Reconstruction	27-Nov-2025	27-Nov-2025	9-Dec-2025	12-Dec-2025	YES	Funk

Permit #	Municipality	Location	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Response Notice	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
P212-25	West Perth	5712 Line 26, Campbell-Hussel Municipal Drain, Lots 17- 18, Con 6	Municipal Drain	Minor	Drain Improvements incl. Enclosure 160m open ditch w 450mm dia. Concrete tile & installation of additional 259m of concrete tile for Line 26 crossing	11-Nov-2025	11-Nov-2025	3-Dec-2025	11-Dec-2025	YES	Brewer
P214-25	London	46 Essex Street	Development	Major	Proposed Fourplex	3-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	YES	Funk
P215-25	London	Corner of Windermere Road and Doon Drive	Linear Utility Corridor	Minor	Utility Rehabilitation	26-Nov-2025	3-Dec-2025	5-Dec-2025	9-Dec-2025	YES	Sing-Judge
P219-25	West Perth	Br.A of the Smith Drain	Municipal Drain	Routine	Drain Maintenance DART - Within wetland	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2025	YES	Brewer
P220-25	West Perth	2749 pert rd 163, Cook Municipal Drain, Lots 23, Mitchell Rd West Side	Municipal Drain	Minor	Drain Improvements	6-Oct-2025	14-Oct-2025	9-Dec-2025	9-Dec-2025	YES	Brewer
P222-25	West Perth	Twelfth Concession Drain	Municipal Drain	Minor	Channel relocation	3-Sep-2025	10-Sep-2025	11-Dec-2025	17-Dec-2025	YES	Brewer
P224-25	London	3840 Deer Trail (Lot 4)	Development	Major	Proposed Single Family Dwelling, includes Installation of Armourstone Retaining Walls and SM Infrastructure	3-Nov-2025	24-Nov-2025	19-Dec-2025	19-Dec-2025	YES	Schnaithmann
P225-25	London	74 Scotchmere Crescent	Development	Routine	Proposed Garage addition	17-Dec-2025	17-Dec-2025	19-Dec-2025	19-Dec-2025	YES	Sing-Judge

Permit #	Municipality	Location	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Response Notice	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
P228-25	London	39 Carfrae Street	Development	Routine	Proposed porch, rear addition and detached accessory structure	18-Dec-2025	19-Dec-2025	22-Dec-2025	22-Dec-2025	YES	Funk

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-08
Agenda #: 8.2
Subject: Administrative Review Officers (ARO) Discretionary Policy Decisions – Quarterly Report

Recommendation

THAT the Board of Directors receive the ARO Quarterly Report for information.

Background

At the November 2024 Full Authority meeting the Board of Directors carried a motion to authorize the Administrative Review Officers (ARO), being the General Manager and the Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations, to exercise discretionary decision-making regarding certain policies within the Environmental Planning Policy Manual (revised 2017), on an interim basis and that this discretionary decision-making be limited to wetland management policies and certain floodplain management policies relating to dry access requirements.

Additional authorization for consideration of floodplain freeboard areas was included in the policies for ARO discretionary decision-making at the February 2025 Full Authority meeting.

As part of the Board authorizations, staff were directed to report back to the Board on a quarterly basis summarizing the instances and outcomes associated with the ARO use of interim authority.

A combined total of 18 development applications were endorsed by the ARO's and previously reported to the Board in March, August, and October of 2025. There have been no additional applications for this quarter considered by ARO for development relying upon safe access, wetland removal and compensation/off-setting, or within the floodplain freeboard area.

Outcomes

The discretionary ARO decisions to date have provided the necessary support and guidance for staff to work collaboratively with the associated municipality and proactively advance appropriate development applications through the municipal planning process.

These ARO decisions to date have supported staff's position on proposed development where through satisfactory technical studies have demonstrated that the provincial minimum standards have been met and/or impacts of development upon the control of natural hazards are minor or negligible. The discretionary policy decisions provide the necessary certainty to staff that a Section 28 Permit can be issued at the staff level after completion of the planning approval process.

This interim process has eliminated the prior challenges for staff providing regulatory and advisory comments on planning and development applications that are generally supported by staff and the municipality but has been complicated by existing UTRCA prohibitive policies with no flexibility for consideration of support based on the site-specific considerations and technical aspects.

This process has also reduced the necessity of scheduling hearings for the sole purpose of addressing non-compliance with policy where staff is supportive of the development and where the requirements of provincial policy and the Section 28 regulation have ultimately been met.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager / Secretary Treasurer (ARO)

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations (ARO)

Prepared by:

Jenna Allain, Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations

Joe Gordon, Regulations Coordinator

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-09
Agenda #: 8.3
Subject: Project Status Updates

Recommendation

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Background

To assist the Board with previously discussed items the following status updates are provided. This report is updated and included at each meeting to identify project timelines and expected future reports.

Discussion

The table below provides progress and estimated timelines associated with significant UTRCA projects and items identified by the Board of Directors requesting reports. As the Strategic Plan is completed, work-plans deliverables will also be incorporated into the tables below.

Report Back Items	Planned report or update	Project lead(s)	Status
City of London 2026 Budget Request	September 2025	Tracy & Christine	Complete – Draft initial response in April with additional updates to be provided through 2026 budget development, regular updates to be provided. July 9 th – staff met with City of London Finance staff to share UTRCA budget process. August – Board requested the impacts to City of London Levy. Report provided in September.
Green Leaders Participating Schools	April 2025	Karlee and Brad	Complete – Requested details on Schools participating in Green Leaders Program. Details are provided and included as part of Community Engagement and Events update. Green Leaders event will be held on June 3 rd with several members participating.

Report Back Items	Planned report or update	Project lead(s)	Status
Hazard Mapping Consultation	Early 2026	Jenna & Erin	In progress - Hazard Mapping Consultation Thames River in the City of London Report was provided at September Meeting and Presentation in October 2024. Status update provided in April, and August, notification occurred in October, for consideration in December. Postponed to early 2026
Land Options (March 2025, June 2025)	As required	Brent & Tracy	In progress - As requested at the October meeting, report provided March 2025 with a report on options for parcels identified in closed session. Reports to follow as necessary.
Administrative Review / Interim Policies (March 2025)	January 2026	Jenna	In progress - Administrative Review Quarterly updates Jan-Mar Q1 Apr-June Q2 Jul-Sept Q3 Oct-Dec Q4 Reports to be provided in January, April, August, and October.
Implementation of Blackline Consulting Recommendations	January 2026	Jenna	In progress – Implementation Progress Quarterly updates Jan-Mar Q1 Apr-June Q2 Jul-Sept Q3 Oct-Dec Q4 Reports to be provided in January, April, August, and October.
Fee Schedule Review for Planning & Regulations	January 2026	Jenna	In Progress - Report back on Fees Freeze. Future reports will be provided if Ministers' direction is received.
Planning and Regulations Policy Updates (March 2024, September 2024, June 2025, November 2025)	March 2026	Jenna	In progress - Release of new S28 Regulations on Friday February 16th, effective April 1, 2024. May 2024 - Technical Checklists and S28 Compliance Procedures November 2025 - Transition Policies for Hazard Mapping. Staff will continue to develop policies and procedures, and undertake consultation with municipalities, partners, and development groups, etc.

Report Back Items	Planned report or update	Project lead(s)	Status
Children's Safety Village (June 2023, February 2024)	April	Teresa & Brent	Complete – Update provided at the April 2025 meeting. Future updates to be included with Day Use Plans.
Retention Policy	February	Tracy & Michelle	Overdue – updated retention policy to be prepared based on a collaborative CA draft. The CA draft has been legally reviewed. Aligning retention policies with integration of Microsoft 365 (file structure, naming conventions, etc.) Currently migrating from GroupWise to Outlook and Microsoft 365. FOI requests have delayed work on the policy.
Cyber Security	January 2026	Tracy Christine Chris	Overdue - Report to F&A – Staff to prepare a report on the current state of cyber security for the organization and any recommendations to improve to be presented to the Finance and Audit Committee at the April meeting, in-camera. Directed staff for future updates. Report to the Board to follow. Information Management/Technology efforts have been focused on migration to Microsoft 365 and the tools for enhanced security. Annual updates are to follow.
Hydro Plant (November 2025)	March 2026	Chris	In Progress – Hydro Plan update was provided to the Board in October 2024. Further investigation to confirm the sizing of power conditioners has been undertaken. Order fulfillment took some time; however, scheduling of installation has been confirmed (and rescheduled). Future updates are planned for the Spring of 2026.
Security for BOD access to agendas	February 2026	Chris	In progress - Options to ensure secure access to agenda packages for Board Members. Staff are meeting with other CA clerks and other Agencies to understand options to utilize M365 tools to distribute Agendas, Minutes and Closed Session items.
UTRCA Asset Management Plan	As required	Brent & Christine	In progress - Groups of Assets e.g., Natural Hazard Infrastructure, Fleet, Facilities etc. Regular progress reports expected. (Note* suggested to add graphics similar

Report Back Items	Planned report or update	Project lead(s)	Status
			to those used by the City of London in their asset management plans to identify overall condition of asset) Asset Management Policy – Approved January 2024, Updated in May 2025 regular updates to be provided as asset classes are undertaken.
Land Tenant Program Update (Last update provided November 2024, June 2025)	As required	Brent	In progress – Ongoing status of land tenant program, in-camera. Report provided. Update provided in October. Verbal in-camera update in November and report in June. Future updates as required.
Phosphorus Reduction Program	June	Tatianna	Complete - Staff to provide a future update report on program uptake.
Human Resources Report	January 2026	Jennifer	In progress - Provide UTRCA's Organizational Chart and report on staff vacancies.

Definitions

Progress	Timeline
Not started	indicate project initiation date
In progress	anticipate completion date
Complete	date completed
Overdue	expected completion date and reasons for the delay
On Hold	other circumstances

Summary

The summary provided is intended to help track items requesting report updates to the Board and project updates. It is noted that items may be shifted to accommodate the number of agenda items, staff workload, and board meeting schedules.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-10
Agenda #: 8.4
Subject: Responses and Communications - Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities

Recommendation

To provide the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) Board of Directors with an overview of responses received by the UTRCA and across the province related to Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) 025-1257: *Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities.*

Background

The UTRCA provided information on the provincial proposal directly to member municipalities and other watershed partners, as well as posting information online for the public:

- Developed municipal fact sheet and provided it to member municipalities with an example of a municipal resolution,
- Developed fact sheet for other interest-holders and emailed it to partners,
- Developed web page (<https://thamesriver.on.ca/ca-changes/>) with resources:
 - Municipal factsheet – Conservation Authorities Consolidation,
 - Partners factsheet – Conservation Authorities Consolidation,
 - UTRCA Board of Directors Motion regarding Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities (November 25, 2025),
 - Board report – Provincial Announcements: Bill 68 and ERO Posting (November 25, 2025),
 - Board report – Comments on Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Provincial Conservation Authorities, ERO #025-1257 (December 16, 2025),
- Provided information through 16 posts on UTRCA social media:
 - Total number of Facebook views: 143,716,
 - Total number of Instagram views: 18,527.

The UTRCA General Manager also joined other Lake Erie region General Managers at a meeting organized by local First Nations.

Responses and Submissions

Municipal Responses

As directed by the Board, the UTRCA provided member municipalities with the UTRCA Board's resolution and an example of a municipal resolution highlighting concerns with

ERO 025-1257. Table 1 summarizes the UTRCA municipalities' responses, noting those that passed a resolution expressing concerns with the Province's proposal.

Table 1. Summary of UTRCA municipality responses

Member Municipalities and Counties	Action Taken
Oxford County	Resolution passed December 10 and staff prepared comments for the ERO.
South-West Oxford	December 2 directed staff to write a letter expressing concerns regarding the proposed amalgamation of the 36 Conservation Authorities in the Province of Ontario.
Norwich	No resolution.
Ingersoll	Resolution passed December 8.
Zorra	Resolution passed December 17.
Woodstock	Resolution passed December 11.
East-Zorra Tavistock	Resolution passed December 17.
Blandford-Blenheim	Resolutions (UTRCA and GRCA) passed December 17.
Perth County	Resolution passed December 11.
West Perth	Resolution passed December 1.
Perth South	Resolution not considered at meeting December 16.
Perth East	Discussed resolution at meeting December 16 but motion to send resolution was not carried.
Stratford	Did not have a second council meeting in December to consider. Resolution passed January 12 (after ERO deadline).
St. Marys	Considered on January 13 but did not support the resolution. Liked the idea of having consistency across the province and will wait for more information regarding the proposed regulations to determine any action.
South Huron	Resolutions passed December 15 supporting Kingsville resolution and then ABCA and UTRCA-specific resolutions.
Middlesex County	Requested staff to submit comments to the ERO in December.
Middlesex Centre	Resolution passed December 17 and ERO comments submitted.
Thames Centre	Resolution passed December 8.
Lucan Biddulph	Resolution passed December 16.
London	Resolution not supported December 16. Mayor Morgan had a neutral position and committed to meet with UTRCA area mayors affected by the consolidation to discuss impacts. Meeting with mayors on January 16.

Conservation Ontario (CO) is tracking submissions from municipalities across Ontario, based on information conservation authorities are providing to CO (Table 2).

Table 2. Conservation Ontario summary of responses from municipalities as of January 15, 2026

Municipality	File Type	Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?
Township of Adjala-Tosorontio	Resolution	No
Township of Alfred and Plantagenet	Resolution	No
Township of Amaranth	Resolution	No
Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Resolution	No
Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh	Resolution	No
Township of Augusta	Resolution	No
City of Belleville	Resolution	No
Township of Blandford-Blenheim	Resolution	No
Town of the Blue Mountains	Resolution	No
Municipality of Bluewater	Resolution	No
City of Brampton	Letter	No
Municipality of Brighton	Resolution	No
City of Brantford	Resolution	No
Municipality of Casselman	Resolution	No
Municipality of Central Elgin	Resolution	No
Township of Central Frontenac	Resolution	No
Municipality of Centre Hastings	Resolution	No
Municipality of Chatham-Kent	Resolution	No
Township of Chatsworth	Resolution	No
City of Clarence-Rockland	Resolution	No
Town of Cobourg	Resolution	No
Town of Collingwood	Resolution	No
Township of Conmee	Resolution	No
Township of Cramahe	Resolution	No
Town of Deseronto	Resolution	No
Township of Dorion	Resolution	No
Township of Drummond/ North Elmsley	Resolution	No
Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich	Resolution	No
Township of East-Zorra Tavistock	Resolution	No
Town of Edwardsburgh Cardinal	Resolution	No
County of Essex	Resolution	No
Town of Essex	Resolution	No
Township of Georgian Bluffs	Resolution	No
Town of Goderich	Letter	No
Town of Grand Valley	Resolution	No
City of Greater Sudbury	Resolution	No

Municipality	File Type	Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?
County of Grey	Resolution	No
Municipality of Grey Highlands	Resolution	No
City of Guelph	Resolution	No
Haldimand County	Resolution	No
Halton Region	Letter	Neutral
City of Hamilton	Resolution	No
Township of Hamilton	Resolution	No
Township of Huron East	Resolution	No
Town of Ingersoll	Resolution	No
City of Kawartha Lakes	Resolution	No
City of Kingston	Resolution	No
Town of Kingsville	Resolution	No
Municipality of Lakeshore	Letter	No
Town of Lasalle	Resolution	No
Municipality of Leamington	Resolution	No
City of London	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Lucan-Biddulph	Resolution	No
Township of Malahide	Resolution	No
Municipality of Meaford	Resolution	No
Township of Melancthon	Resolution	No
County of Middlesex	Resolution	No
Municipality of Middlesex Centre	Resolution	No
City of Mississauga	Letter	No
Town of Mono	Resolution, letter	No
Township of Mulmur	Resolution	No
The Nation Municipality	Resolution	No
Municipality of Neebing	Resolution	No
Region of Niagara	Resolution	No
Township of North Dundas	Resolution	No
Township of North Frontenac	Resolution	No
Township of North Glengarry	Resolution	No
Municipality of North Grenville	Resolution	No
Township of Norwich	No resolution	--
Town of Oakville	Letter	No
Township of O'Connor	Resolution	No
Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge	Resolution	No
Township of Oro-Medonte	Resolution	Partial
City of Ottawa	Resolution	No
City of Owen Sound	Resolution	No
County of Oxford	Resolution	No

Municipality	File Type	Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?
Region of Peel	Report	No
County of Perth	Resolution	No
Town of Perth	Resolution	No
Township of Perth East	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Perth South	Resolution not considered	--
Town of Petrolia	Letter	Yes
Municipality of Port Hope	Resolution	No
Town of Plympton-Wyoming	Resolution	No
United Counties of Prescott Russell	Resolution	No
Township of Rideau Lakes	Resolution	No
Township of Russell	Resolution	No
City of Sault Ste. Marie	Resolution	No
Township of Scugog	Resolution	No
Municipality of Shuniah	Resolution	No
Town of Smiths Falls	Resolution	No
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	Resolution	No
Municipality of South Dundas	Resolution	No
Township of South Frontenac	Resolution	No
Municipality of South Huron	Resolution	No
Township of South Stormont	Resolution	No
Township of South-West Oxford	Resolution	No
Town of St. Marys	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Southgate	Resolution	No
Township of Southwold	Resolution	No
Township of Stirling-Rawdon	Resolution	No
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Resolution	No
City of Stratford (after ERO deadline)	Resolution	No
Township of Tay	Resolution	No
Township of Tay Valley	Resolution	No
Town of Tecumseh	Resolution	No
Municipality of Thames Centre	Resolution	No
Township of Tyendinaga	Resolution	No
City of Thunder Bay	Resolution	No
City of Timmins	Resolution	No
Township of Tudor and Cashel	Resolution	No
Municipality of Tweed	Resolution	No
Municipality of West Perth	Resolution	No
Village of Westport	Resolution	No
City of Windsor	Resolution	No

Municipality	File Type	Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?
City of Woodstock	Resolution	No
Township of Zorra	Resolution	No

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) submitted four recommendations to the Province on the proposal. AMO urged the Province to:

- Maintain and prioritize local governance, expertise, and decision making in CA consolidation,
- Fund transition costs to mitigate service delivery impacts,
- Restore a 50-50 municipal funding partnership that reflects increased provincial authority over CA operations, and potentially its fees, and
- Establish an implementation working group to develop options that would deliver on the province’s consolidation objectives while protecting local decision making and municipal fiscal sustainability.

The [AMO submission is available on-line](#). A joint letter from AMO and Conservation Ontario to Minister McCarthy is attached to this report.

Other Responses and Submissions

At the December 12, 2025, regional meeting for CAs and municipalities it was reported by provincial staff that more than 2,500 responses had been received to date. Until the Province reviews, approves, and posts the comments submitted to the ERO, it is not possible to accurately report on the quantity and tone of the public responses.

Many organizations submitted comments to the ERO expressing general support of the Province’s objectives but opposition to the proposed large-scale consolidations that would undermine local conservation delivery of programs and services. The [Ontario Federation of Agriculture’s submission](#) supports consistent standards and approaches but raises concerns that the proposed seven large regional CAs are too geographically expansive to reflect local watershed and agricultural realities. Other examples include:

- [Wildlife Conservation Society of Canada submission](#),
- [Canadian Environmental Law Association submission](#),
- [Ontario Nature submission](#) on behalf of 94 environmental organizations,
- [Ontario Society of Professional Engineers submission](#)
- [A joint letter from 74 former CA/Ministry staff](#),
- The Ontario Mutual Insurance Association submission (attached).

Summary

Although the ERO posting is closed, the UTRCA continues to receive questions and comments from watershed residents. Municipal communications are ongoing; the UTRCA Chair and Vice Chair attended a meeting arranged by Mayor Morgan for Mayors and Wardens on January 16. Given the volume of feedback and the consistent messages from CAs and municipalities, the hope is that further consultation and engagement will take place during the legislative break. Future reports will be provided to the Board as updates are available.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager

Prepared by:

Teresa Hollingsworth, Manager Community and Corporate Services
Eleanor Heagy, Coordinator, Marketing and Communications

Attachments:

- Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Conservation Ontario Joint Response to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks,
- Ontario Mutual Insurance Association submission.

Sent by email to: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

December 24, 2025

The Honourable Todd McCarthy
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
5th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3

Subject: Recommendations for Successful Conservation Authority Transformation

Dear Minister McCarthy,

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Conservation Ontario are writing to provide joint feedback on ERO 025-1257 – Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities (CAs) complementing our respective and separate ERO submissions.

We support the goals of this proposal. Accelerating local approvals helps protect Ontario's economy amid global uncertainty. Faster, more predictable approvals, that maintain environmental protections and prioritize frontline conservation can unlock the new infrastructure and development required for a growing, competitive province.

Municipal and local partnership is key to CA success. The success of the CA model is local: expertise, governance, community trust, and partnerships. If regionalization results in structures that cover too large a geographic area, we risk losing what makes CAs effective:

- **Loss of local expertise:** Watershed-based CAs have extensive on-the-ground expertise and understanding of unique environmental conditions, enabling timely and effective decision-making on local development, and real-time responsiveness during storms and emergencies.
- **Loss of effective municipal oversight:** Municipal accountability and oversight help CAs effectively balance watershed management and community growth.
- **Loss of strong local relationships:** Key stakeholders (such as municipalities, Indigenous communities, businesses, the agricultural community, watershed residents, and other partners) provide funding, donations, and build public trust.

Over 100 municipalities have passed or are considering resolutions urging the Province to move forward by working together with municipalities and CAs to achieve provincial objectives while preserving local governance, accountability, and expertise.

AMO and CO propose a right-sized, simplified regional model that:

- is grounded in science-based watershed boundaries
- maintains strong municipal involvement and oversight
- preserves local relationships and community trust
- balances the need to stay connected at the community level with the needs of certainty, predictability, and consistency of service delivery standards for permitting and approvals
- avoids unnecessary complexity by allowing lands, major agreements (including employment), reserve funds etc. to remain within existing corporations

To achieve this, AMO and CO recommend that the Province:

1. Work together with an implementation working group (including AMO, Conservation Ontario and select CAs, municipal, developers, and Indigenous representatives) to jointly develop practical solutions, including:
 - service standards, permitting faster and standardized approvals
 - governance and boundary design
 - funding models, allocations, and reserve structures
 - shared “back office” efficiencies and,
 - clear transition planning including: service continuity; points of contact; permitting continuity measures; board and staff communications; and staff retention measures.
2. Commit to a clear implementation timeline and transition plan supported by the implementation working group to position transformation for success. This will ensure continuity of service certainty for all stakeholders.
3. Share comprehensive financial, operational, and governance impact analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.
4. Restore a 50-50 municipal-provincial funding partnership for CAs, reflecting expanded Provincial role in CA operations while ensuring affordability and long-term stability.

All stakeholders, including the development industry, benefit from certainty. This approach minimizes the risk of multiple significant changes occurring at the same time, limits disruption to program delivery, and creates conditions for better outcomes and buy-in.

Ministry McCarthy, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and look forward to discussing these concerns with you. Please contact Karen Nesbitt, Director of Policy and Government Relations at AMO (knesbitt@amo.on.ca), to arrange a meeting at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Robin Jones
AMO President
Mayor of the Village of Westport



Dave Barton
Chair, Conservation Ontario
Vice-Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Mayor, Township of Uxbridge

cc: The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Sarah Harrison, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

December 16, 2025

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
5th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3
minister.mecp@ontario.ca

To Whom it May Concern:

On October 31, 2025, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks announced plans to create a provincial board-governed agency, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to provide leadership, governance, and strategic direction to Ontario's Conservation Authorities.

We understand that the Ministry has requested input on the potential implications of these proposed changes.

I am writing on behalf of the Ontario Mutual Insurance Association (OMIA). We are the trade association representing 34 farm mutuals operating across Ontario. Our members are property-casualty insurers organized and incorporated as mutuals under Ontario statute. Our policies are written and issued in Ontario and almost all the properties insured under our policies lie within the boundaries of established Conservation Authorities.

Our members underwrite farm, home, automobile, and commercial insurance policies. Each of our mutuals is over 100 years old, with the oldest having been established in the 1850s. Our companies are predominantly located in small towns and cities across the province. Each of our members' policyholders is a fully participating mutual member. The boards of directors of our mutuals are composed of policyholders and all policyholders are eligible to vote at annual general meetings and participate in any refunds granted from surplus.

As small insurers who operate solely in Ontario, we have a long history of cooperation with Conservation Authorities. With the advent of more extreme and volatile weather patterns flood damage has become the priority peril for all insurers in Ontario. As largely rural and localized insurers we are particularly vulnerable to these events and have come to rely on sound watershed management and close cooperation on planning and resilience with local Conservation Authorities.

In reviewing the rationale for creating regional conservation authorities and creating a Provincial oversight body we believe there are several significant risks that could have a negative impact on our mutuals and our policyholders who are directly exposed to weather and flooding perils.

We believe it is imperative that local watershed knowledge is maintained and strengthened. We believe that regionalization efforts can often result in increased costs related to administrative oversight without resulting efficiencies. At the same time, the timeliness and responsiveness of front-line services and the effective local delivery of programs are lost. We believe that Conservation Authorities in Ontario currently have significant on-the-ground expertise, combined with long-standing relationships with municipalities and Indigenous communities. We also believe that the real-time responsiveness of local Conservation Authorities during storms and emergencies is critical to responding to sudden weather events.

A critical success factor in Ontario's long-term land-use planning and resilience strategies stems from the close tie between municipal governance and conservation authority governance. We believe this could be significantly undermined, perhaps in unintended ways, by the creation of a provincial oversight body that creates larger regions that will not be responsive to local issues and will miss many of the nuances associated with local watershed management.

We also believe that the agricultural sector and rural communities are particularly vulnerable to regionalization and the potential to have shortsighted land-use planning and development override long-term resilience and flood control.

To the degree that improvements can be made to the existing system, both in terms of modernization and improved use of technology, we support those efforts. However, we strongly believe that local governance and attention to communities at the local level within watersheds is paramount to helping us as member-based mutual insurance companies manage our risk as insurers and in enabling us to continue to provide affordable coverage in the face of significantly changing weather events.

We strongly urge the Ministry to reconsider this regionalization initiative until a more thorough study is done on how it will enhance or detract from the current model. We believe this is especially important given that funding for conservation authorities is largely generated at the municipal and individual conservation authority level, as opposed to provincially.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John L. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "T".

John L. Taylor BBA, FCIP, FCLA, CHRL
President

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: January 27, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-01-11
Agenda #: 8.5
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Municipal Feedback

Recommendation

That the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Background

The UTRCA 2026 Draft Budget was circulated to member municipalities for comment on November 7, 2025. An invitation was included with the circulation offering for staff to attend individual council meetings with a presentation and/or to answer budget questions. This report provides a summary of municipal input received to date. The Board is asked to review these comments in detail in preparation for final budget approval at February's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Any additional comments received between now and February's AGM will be shared as part of the February Board agenda. Staff have provided council presentations to the following Municipalities:

Town of St. Marys – Budget Committee November 18th
City of Stratford – Finance and Labour Relations Committee November 27th
Township of Perth South – Council, December 2nd
Municipality of West Perth – Council, January 12th

Discussion

The presentations to councils highlighted that the increase was needed to balance the budget for mandatory programs and services. Apportionment is determined by the Modified Current Value Assessment, as provided by the province. Municipalities that have special benefitting structures may see additional costs if capital projects are proposed. As well, specific actions undertaken in partnership with the UTRCA in each municipality were highlighted. Overall, clarifications were provided on the budget or questions related to specific programs with few outstanding concerns.

Summary

Any additional comments regarding the Draft 2026 budget will be included for the Boards consideration at the Annual General Meeting. If your member municipality wishes to receive a presentation on the UTRCA's Draft 2026 Budget, please contact the General Manager to arrange.

Prepared by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager, Secretary-Treasurer