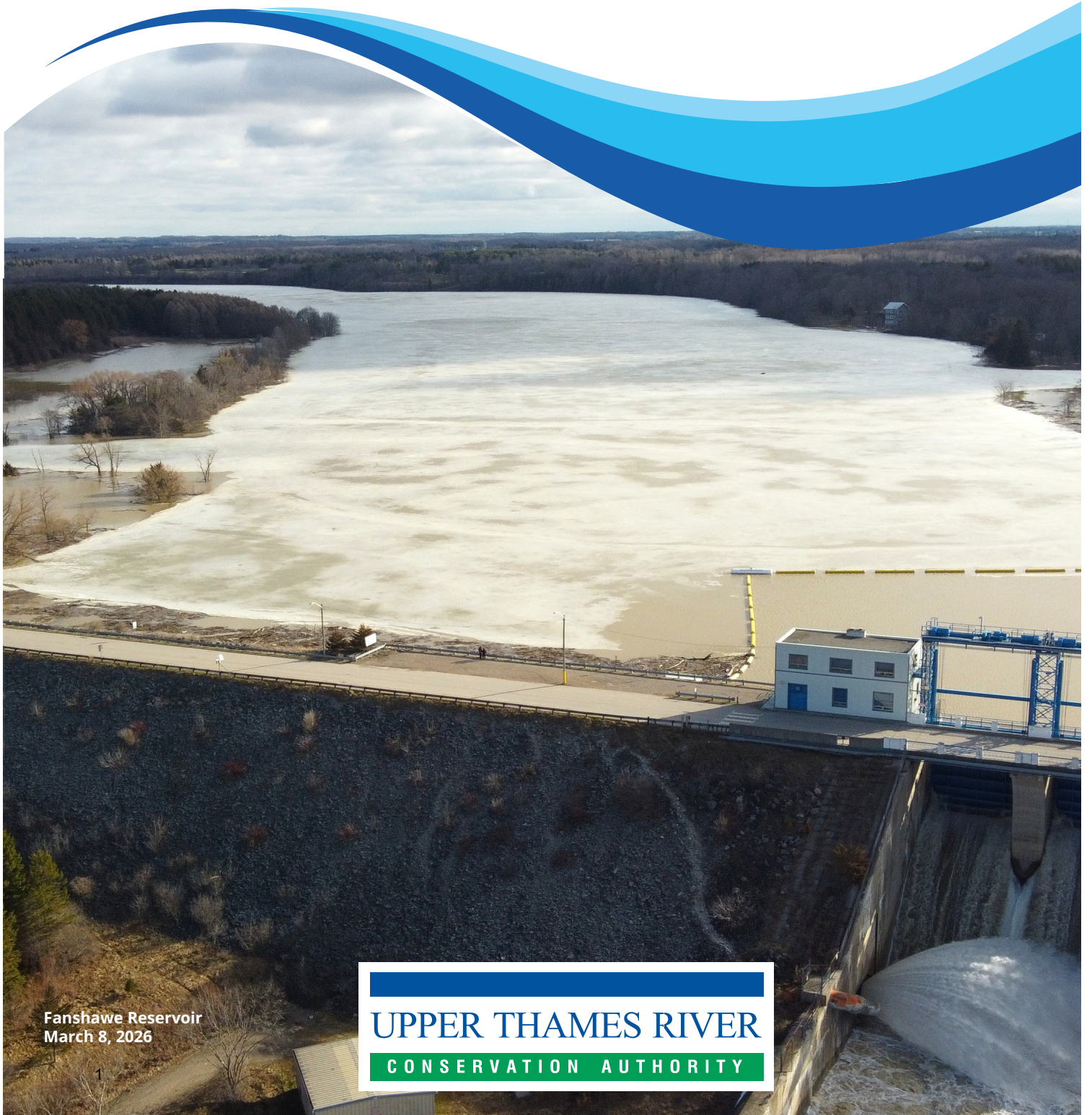


Board of Directors

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority



Fanshawe Reservoir
March 8, 2026

UPPER THAMES RIVER
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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

Date: March 24, 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: February 24, 2026
- 5.2. Business Arising from Minutes
- 5.3. Correspondence
 - 5.3.1. Minister's Direction on Fee Changes

6. Reports – For Consideration

- 6.1. 2026 Board Meeting Schedule Proposed Amendments BoD-26-03-24

7. Reports – In Camera

8. Reports – For Information

- 8.1. Update and Decision on the Provincial Proposal to Consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into Regional Conservation Authorities – BoD-26-03-19
- 8.2. Asset Management Update – BoD-26-03-20

- 8.3. Health and Safety Annual Summary – BoD-26-03-21
- 8.4. Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report – BoD-26-03-22
- 8.5. Project Status Update – BoD-26-03-23
- 8.6. [Thames River Current March Edition](#)

9. Reports – Committee Updates

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

10. Notices of Motion

11. Chair’s Comments

12. Member’s Comments

13. General Manager’s Comments

14. Adjournment

Tracy Annett, General Manager



357-2026-736

March 10, 2026

TO: Conservation authorities as listed in Appendix A to the Attachment A
"Minister's Direction Issued Pursuant to Section 21.3 of the *Conservation
Authorities Act*"

SUBJECT: Minister's direction for conservation authorities regarding fee changes
associated with planning, development, and permitting fees

I am writing with regards to conservation authority planning, development and permitting fees. 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. This Direction is consistent with the Directions that were previously in place for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 calendar years.

The purpose of this Direction, which is effective from March 10, 2026, to February 28, 2027, 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. This Direction is intended to support less costly approvals in order to help increase housing supply and affordability in Ontario.

This Direction applies to the conservation authorities listed in Appendix A, who are encouraged to make the Direction publicly available on the Governance section of their websites.

If you have any questions regarding this Direction, please contact the ministry at ca.office@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Minister’s Direction Issued Pursuant to Section 21.3 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*
(this “Direction”)**

WHEREAS section 21.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* permits a conservation authority to charge a fee for a program or service if the program or service is included in the Minister’s list of classes of programs and services in respect of which a conservation authority may charge a fee;

AND WHEREAS subsections 21.2 (6) and 21.2 (7) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provide that a conservation authority shall adopt a written fee policy that includes a fee schedule listing the programs and services that it provides in respect of which it charges a fee, and the amount of the fee charged for each program or service or the manner in which the fee is determined (a “**Fee Schedule**”);

AND WHEREAS subsection 21.2 (10) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provides that a conservation authority may make a change to the list of fees set out in the fee schedule or to the amount of any fee or the manner in which a fee is determined, provided the authority shall give notice of the proposed change to the public in a manner it considers appropriate;

AND WHEREAS section 21.3 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provides the Minister with the authority to give a written direction to an authority directing it not to change the amount of any fee it charges under subsection 21.2 (10), in respect of a program or service set out in the list referred to in subsection 21.2 (2), for the period specified in the direction;

NOW THEREFORE pursuant to the authority of the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks under section 21.3, the conservation authorities set out under Appendix “A” of this Direction (the “**conservation authorities**” or each, a “**conservation authority**”) are hereby directed as follows:

Fee Changes Prohibition

1. Commencing on the Effective Date and for the duration of the Term of this Direction, a conservation authority is prohibited from making a change under subsection 21.2 (10) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* to the amount of any fee or the manner in which a fee is determined in its fee schedule if such a change would have the effect of changing the fee amount for the programs and services described in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Direction.

Program and Service Fees Impacted

2. This Direction applies to any fee set out in the Fee Schedule of a conservation authority, including without limitation fees for any mandatory program or service (Category 1), municipal program or service (Category 2), or conservation authority recommended program or service (Category 3) related to reviewing and commenting on planning and

Attachment A

development related proposals, applications, or land use planning policies, or for conservation authority permitting.

3. For greater certainty, this Direction applies to any fees in respect of the following programs or services provided under the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation ([O. Reg. 686/21](#)):
 - a. Section 6: programs and services related to reviewing applications and proposals under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, *Drainage Act*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, and the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*, for the purpose of commenting on the risks related to natural hazards arising from the proposal,
 - b. Section 7: programs and services related to ensuring that decisions under the *Planning Act* are consistent with the natural hazards policies in the policy statements issued under section 3 of the *Planning Act* and are in conformance with any natural hazard policies included in a provincial plan as defined in section 1 of that Act,
 - c. Section 8: programs and services related to conservation authority duties, functions, and responsibilities to administer and enforce section 28 and its regulations, section 28.0.1, and section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*,
 - d. Paragraph 4 of subsection 13 (3): programs and services related to reviewing and commenting on any proposal made under another Act for the purpose of determining whether the proposal relates to a significant drinking water threat or may impact any drinking water sources protected by a source protection plan, and
 - e. Subparagraph 4 iv of section 15: programs and services related to reviewing and commenting on proposals made under other Acts for the purpose of determining the proposal's impact on the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the Lake Simcoe watershed.

Application

4. This Direction, applies to all conservation authorities in Ontario, listed in Appendix "A" to this Direction.
5. For greater certainty, this Direction also applies to the conservation authorities listed in Appendix "A" to this Direction when such conservation authorities are meeting as a source protection authority under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

Effective Date and Term

6. This Direction is effective from March 10, 2026 (the "**Effective Date**").
7. The term of this Direction is the period from the Effective Date to February 28, 2027 (the "**Term**").

Attachment A

Amendments

8. This Direction may be amended in writing from time to time at the sole discretion of the Minister.

**HIS MAJESTY THE KING IN RIGHT OF ONTARIO
as represented by the
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
March 10, 2026

APPENDIX A

LIST OF CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES TO WHICH THE DIRECTION APPLIES

Ausable Bayfield CA

R.R. #3
71108 Morrison Line
Exeter ON N0M 1S5
Davin Heinbuck
dheinbuck@abca.on.ca

Cataraqui Region CA

Box 160
1641 Perth Road
Glenburnie ON K0H 1S0
David Ellingwood
dellingwood@crca.ca

Catfish Creek CA

R.R. #5
8079 Springwater Road
Aylmer ON N5H 2R4
Dusty Underhill
generalmanager@catfishcreek.ca

Central Lake Ontario CA

100 Whiting Avenue
Oshawa ON L1H 3T3
Chris Darling
cdarling@cloca.com

Credit Valley CA

1255 Old Derry Rd
Mississauga ON L5N 6R4
Terri LeRoux
terri.leroux@cvc.ca

Crowe Valley CA

Box 416
70 Hughes Lane
Marmora ON K0K 2M0
Janette Loveys Smith
janette.smith@crowevalley.com

Essex Region CA

Suite 311
360 Fairview Ave West
Essex ON N8M 1Y6
Tim Byrne
tbyrne@erca.org

Ganaraska Region CA

Box 328
2216 County Road 28
Port Hope ON L1A 3V8
Linda Laliberte
llaliberte@grca.on.ca

Grand River CA

Box 729
400 Clyde Road
Cambridge ON N1R 5W6
Samantha Lawson
slawson@grandriver.ca

Grey Sauble CA

R.R. #4
237897 Inglis Falls Road
Owen Sound ON N4K 5N6
Tim Lanthier
t.lanthier@greysauble.on.ca

Halton Region CA

2596 Britannia Road West
Burlington ON L7P 0G3
Chandra Sharma
csharma@hrca.on.ca

Hamilton Region CA

P.O. Box 81067
838 Mineral Springs Road
Ancaster ON L9G 4X1
Lisa Burnside
lisa.burnside@conservationhamilton.ca

Kawartha Region CA

277 Kenrei (Park) Road
Lindsay ON K9V 4R1
Mark Majchrowski
mmajchrowski@kawarthaconservation.com

Kettle Creek CA

R.R. #8
44015 Ferguson Line
St. Thomas ON N5P 3T3
Elizabeth VanHooren
elizabeth@kettlecreekconservation.on.ca

Lake Simcoe Region CA

Box 282
120 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket ON L3Y 3W3
Rob Baldwin
r.baldwin@lsrca.on.ca

Lakehead Region CA

Box 10427
130 Conservation Road
Thunder Bay ON P7B 6T8
Tammy Cook
tammy@lakeheadca.com

Long Point Region CA

4 Elm Street
Tillsonburg ON N4G 0C4
Judy Maxwell
jmaxwell@lprca.on.ca

Lower Thames Valley CA

100 Thames Street
Chatham ON N7L 2Y8
Mark Peacock
mark.peacock@ltvca.ca

Lower Trent Region CA

R.R. #1
714 Murray Street
Trenton ON K8V 5P4
Rhonda Bateman
rhonda.bateman@lrc.on.ca

Maitland Valley CA

Box 127
1093 Marietta Street
Wroxeter ON N0G 2X0
Phil Beard
pbeard@mvca.on.ca

Mattagami Region CA

100 Lakeshore Road
Timmins ON P4N 8R5
David Vallier
david.vallier@timmins.ca

Mississippi Valley CA

10970 Highway 7
Carleton Place ON K7C 3P1

Sally McIntyre
smcintyre@mvc.on.ca

Niagara Peninsula CA

250 Thorold Road West, 3rd Floor
Welland ON L3C 3W2
Leilani Lee-Yates
llee-yates@npca.ca

Nickel District CA

199 Larch St
Suite 401
Sudbury ON P3E 5P9
Carl Jorgensen
carl.jorgensen@conservationsudbury.ca

North Bay-Mattawa CA

15 Janey Avenue
North Bay ON P1C 1N1
Liza Vandermeer
liza.vandermeer@nbmca.ca

Nottawasaga Valley CA

8195 Line 8
Utopia ON L0M 1T0
Jennifer Vincent
jvincent@nvca.on.ca

Otonabee Region CA

250 Milroy Drive
Peterborough ON K9H 7M9
Janette Loveys Smith
jsmith@otonabeeconservation.com

Quinte Region CA

R.R. #2
2061 Old Highway #2
Belleville ON K8N 4Z2
Brad McNevin
bmcnevin@quinteconservation.ca

Raisin Region CA

PO Box 429
18045 County Road 2
Cornwall ON K6H 5T2
Alison MacDonald
alison.macdonald@rrca.on.ca

Rideau Valley CA

Box 599
3889 Rideau Valley Dr.
Manotick ON K4M 1A5
Sommer Casgrain-Robertson
sommer.casgrain-robertson@rvca.ca

Saugeen Valley CA

R.R. #1
1078 Bruce Road #12, Box #150
Formosa ON N0G 1W0
Erik Downing
e.downing@svca.on.ca

Sault Ste. Marie Region CA

1100 Fifth Line East
Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 6J8
Corrina Barrett
cbarrett@ssmrca.ca

South Nation River CA

38 Victoria Street
P.O. Box 29
Finch ON K0C 1K0
Carl Bickerdike
cbickerdike@nation.on.ca

St. Clair Region CA

205 Mill Pond Crescent
Strathroy ON N7G 3P9
Ken Phillips
kphillips@scrca.on.ca

Toronto and Region CA

101 Exchange Avenue
Vaughan ON L4K 5R6
John MacKenzie
john.mackenzie@trca.ca

Upper Thames River CA

1424 Clarke Road
London ON N5V 5B9
Tracey Annett
annettt@thamesriver.on.ca

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-24
Agenda #: 6.1
Subject: 2026 Board Meeting Schedule Proposed Amendments

Recommendation

That the Board amends the 2026 Meeting Schedule to add a second meeting in April on April 14th, 2026;
AND that the Board moves the previously scheduled September 22nd, 2026 meeting to October 6th, 2026.

Background

The Board of Directors approved the 2026 meeting schedule at the November 25, 2025 meeting. Additional items requiring timely consideration now need to be scheduled in April, and the meetings in the fall need to be adjusted to allow decisions in advance of the Municipal elections.

Board of Directors Meeting Schedule Amendments

Staff are recommending an additional Board meeting on April 14th due to two closed session items requiring direction from the board prior to the Board meeting scheduled for April 28th.

Staff are recommending that the Board move the meeting scheduled for September 22nd to October 6th to allow staff additional time to finalize the 2027 budget while balancing planned vacation schedules. If October 6th is not feasible for Board members, staff propose October 20th as an alternate date for consideration.

Committee Meeting Schedule Update

Please note, an additional meeting of the Hearing Committee has been called and set for April 20th, 2026 at 1:00pm. This addition has been reflected in the attached amended 2026 UTRCA Board of Directors and Committee Meeting.

Summary

These adjustments to meeting dates have considered municipal meeting times currently posted. Feedback from the members on a preferred meeting date is appreciated.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager

Prepared by:

Michelle Viglianti, Administrative Assistant

Attachment:

- 2026 Board of Directors and Committee Revised Meeting Schedule

2026 UTRCA Board of Directors and Committee Meeting Schedule – Amended March 24, 2026

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, February 24, 2026 – Annual General Meeting, 9:30am – In Person
Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 9:30am
Tuesday, October 6, 9:30am
Tuesday, November 3, 2026, 9:30am

Finance and Audit Committee – Pending final approval by Committee

April 28, 2026, following the Board Meeting
September 22, 2026, following the Board Meeting

Hearing Committee

January 27, 2026, following the Board Meeting
April 20, 2026, 1:00pm
May 26, 2026, following the Board Meeting
August 25, 2026, following the Board Meeting
November 3, 2026, following the Board Meeting

The 2026 UTRCA Board of Directors meeting schedule was amended by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors on March 24, 2026.

All meetings will be held using a hybrid model, giving the members the option of attending in person, or virtually over Zoom. Municipal partners and members of the public are welcome to attend in person at 1424 Clarke Road, Fanshawe Conservation Area in the Watershed Conservation Centre or watch the [livestream on the UTRCA website](#).

Please note that if additional Committee meetings are required, they will be scheduled at the call of the Committee Chair, following the policies set out in the UTRCA Administrative By-Laws and the Hearing Guidelines.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the undersigned.

Michelle Viglianti,
Administrative Assistant
vigliantim@thamesriver.ca
519-451-2800 x222

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-19
Agenda #: 8.1
Subject: Update and Decision on the Provincial Proposal to Consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into Regional Conservation Authorities

Recommendation

That the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Background

Background: In November 2025, the province introduced Bill 68, Plan to Protect Ontario Act which includes Schedule 3 amending the Conservation Authorities Act to establish a Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) and posted an [ERO notice](#) proposing the regional consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs into 7 regional conservation authorities. At that time, it was proposed that UTRCA be consolidated with 8 conservation authorities.

Update

On March 10, 2026, the Ontario government posted a decision on the Environmental Bill of Rights that a decision has been made on the proposed consolidation. The decision indicates that the consolidation boundaries have been refined and are now final (refer to the attachment). Section 6 of the attachment illustrates the new boundaries. Most notably, the mapping now shows UTRCA consolidating with the:

- Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA)
- St. Clari Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA)
- Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA)

On the same day, Minister McCarthy provided the attached letter to the Conservation Authority Chairs.

This spring, the government plans to introduce amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act (CAA) that, if passed, will set out the consolidation of Ontario's CAs as described in the attachment. In addition to the municipalities within UTRCA's watershed jurisdiction, this new consolidation jurisdiction is included in the table below. (Current UTRCA participating municipalities are shown in **bold**). The seven (7) Counties within the Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority represent thirty-nine (39) lower tier / area municipalities.

Upper Tier – 7 Counties*	Single Tier – 6 Municipalities
Essex (7 municipalities) Lambton (11 municipalities) Elgin (3 municipalities) Huron (1 UTRCA municipality) Middlesex (7 municipalities including 3 in UTRCA) Oxford (7 UTRCA municipalities) Perth (3 UTRCA municipalities)	Chatham-Kent (Municipality) London (City) Pelee (Township) Stratford (City) St. Marys (Town) Windsor (City)

NOTE: *represent 39 lower-tier municipalities

The rationale for the refinements and adjustments include consolidating areas with distinct geography, balancing differing priorities, and better alignment with source water protection regions. The notice also references that the ministry plans to propose amendment to the CAA that would:

- Enable the Minister to issue directions re: budget and apportionment for 2027 CA budgets;
- Set out the method for determining BOD composition (ERO notes that BOD composition will be streamlined – between 15 and 20 members with population-based representation);
- Remove certain current governance requirements (70% of appointed members are elected officials and rotating requirements for Chair / VC);
- Allow for Chair/VC to be appointed for 2-yr terms, and up to a maximum of 8 years total served; and,
- Require certain knowledge and experience be considered by municipalities when appointing members to the CA who do not sit on municipal council.

The province has also provided the following information:

- Transition to the consolidations will occur throughout 2026 and will have an effective date of early 2027.
- Transition committees for each regional CA will be established. Each predecessor CA will appoint one municipally elected member and its CAO as members of the transition committee.
- The Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency will appoint a Project Executive to each transition committee and who would become the inaugural CAO for the CA for up to 24 months.
- Local Watershed Councils would be established to ensure watershed management continues to be informed by local knowledge and input.

Next Steps:

In the coming weeks and months, the Ontario government plans to:

- Propose further amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act (CAA) that, if passed, sets out the provincially led amalgamation of the 36 existing conservation authorities to create 9 regional CAs, including transitional governance and activities to be coordinated by the OPCA . (March/April)

- Provide technical briefings to provide further information on the next steps in the planned transition process. (March/April)
- Engage with CAs, municipalities, Indigenous communities and other interested partners to provide updates about the government's plans and consolidation (March April).
- Support the OPCA to coordinate transition planning for consolidation to take effect early 2027 (May 2026-Feb 2027)
- Continue to implement transitions plans (Feb 2027 – onwards).

Summary

At times of change and uncertainty, UTRCA will remain focused on continuing the high quality work we do while preparing for upcoming discussions. During this period, staff will:

- Ensure no disruption in UTRCA's work to protect public safety and environmental health. We remain committed to safeguarding the watershed at the local level.
- Continue to work collaboratively with our municipal partners throughout the transition period and beyond.
- Review and communicate any future changes announced by the Province.
- Maintain business as usual across all UTRCA watershed protection and environmental services, including conservation areas and trails, drinking water source protection, watershed monitoring, watershed management, stewardship programs, agricultural extension services, education programs, and partnership initiatives.

While the announcement is not what we advocated for, we will continue to work constructively with the Province, our peers at ERCA, LTVCA, and SCRCA, Conservation Ontario, and our municipal partners.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer

Attachment:

Improving Ontario's Conservation Authorities MECP CA presentation
Correspondence dated March 10, 2026 from Minister McCarthy to CA Chairs.

TECHNICAL BRIEFING

Improving Ontario's Conservation Authority System



**PROTECT
ONTARIO**

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

March 10, 2026

Ontario 

Table of Contents

1 Overview: Ontario's conservation authority system

2 The need for action; Actions to date

3 Why consolidation

4 Guiding principles

5 Our plan

6 Regional CA boundaries

7 Regional CA governance

8 Transition process

9 Next steps

10 Summary

1. Overview: Ontario's conservation authority system

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) administers the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) and is responsible for overseeing Ontario's 36 existing conservation authorities (CAs).

CAs play a vital role in **watershed management** and protecting communities from **natural hazards** like floods. They also deliver programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, and management of natural resources.

CAs issue **permits** to builders, municipalities, and property owners for development activities such as housing developments and installation of sewage systems in areas affected by risks of natural hazards such as floodplains, shorelines, river and stream valleys, and wetlands. Permitting helps to ensure that development does not happen in unsafe areas and that it does not worsen the impacts of flooding or erosion in surrounding areas.

What is a watershed?

A watershed is an area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall into a common outlet, such as a lake, bay or river.

2. The need for action

The Ontario government is taking action to protect Ontario's economy, workers, and communities by making the province the best place in the G7 to invest, create jobs, and do business. To achieve this, the government is making investments to build local infrastructure and taking action to bring more consistency and transparency to the cost and timelines of building homes.

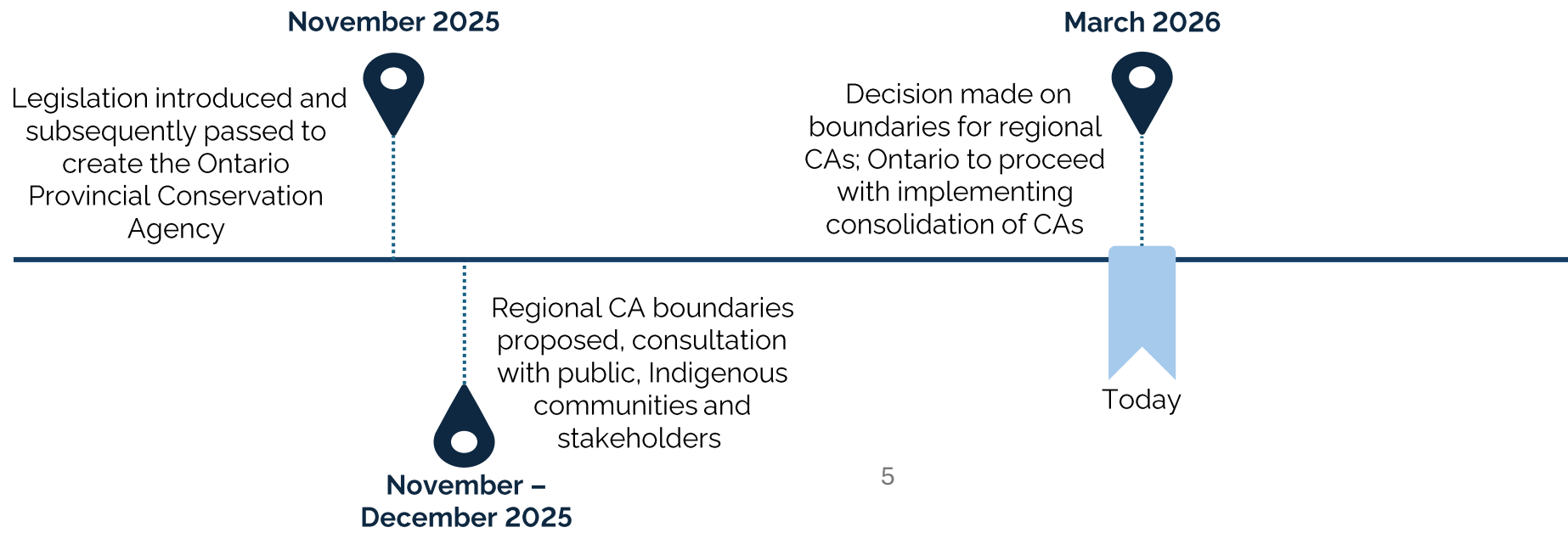
CAs are independent, local public sector organizations with significant variation in capacity, governance, transparency, and reliance on municipal funding. Over time, this has created a fragmented system with inconsistent standards and timelines.

Key challenges under the current framework that this proposal seeks to address include:

- **A patchwork of standards, service delivery:** Each CA has different policies, customer service standards, fees, processes and staffing, and technical capacity leading to unpredictable and inconsistent turnaround times for approvals across all CAs. This can result in uncertainty and delays for builders, landowners, and farmers seeking permits.
- **Outdated and fragmented data systems:** Lack of resources has led to discrepancies in the tools and technology that CAs use, leading to varying types and quality of technology and data management. This can compromise effective provincewide flood risk management and evidence-based decision making.
- **Administrative duplication:** Under the current framework, municipalities are forced to fund duplicate corporate functions (e.g., procurement, communications), diverting costs away from front-line conservation and service delivery.
- **Need for more accountability and transparency:** Lack of transparent asset management and inconsistent performance monitoring and reporting.

2. Actions to date

- Ontario is making progress on its commitment to enhance the effectiveness of conservation authorities, creating more consistency and modern standards and ensuring CAs remain strong, effective and ready to meet today's challenges. Since announcing our plan in fall 2025, we have passed legislation to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to provide centralized leadership and oversight of regional CAs, including coordinating a smooth and organized consolidation and key initiatives to improve the CA system, and we consulted extensively on the proposed regional CA boundaries.
- Consultations included virtual sessions with CAs, municipalities, stakeholders, and Indigenous communities, and regional workshops with CA and municipal leadership led by the Chief Conservation Executive and the Minister. More than 500 people participated, and 14,000+ comments were submitted on the proposed boundaries. We listened and used this feedback to strengthen the plan.
- The government is now moving forward with a framework for the regional consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs into 9 optimized regional CAs that would deliver more consistent, more efficient, and more cost-effective outcomes for the communities that they serve. In the coming weeks, the government plans to introduce amendments to the CAA that would set out and enable the framework for consolidation of Ontario's CAs.



3. Why consolidation

Under the current system, more than half of all municipalities in areas served by CAs fall within the jurisdiction of two or more CAs, resulting in unnecessary duplication that diverts resources from front line conservation work and service delivery. Individual CAs have significant disparities in size and resources, with some lacking access to the latest tools and technology that support flood risk management and evidence-based decision making.

Consolidation would enable more consistent service delivery and more efficient resource and information sharing, making CAs more responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

What these changes would mean:

- More resources for front-line services
- Improved flood management and erosion prevention
- Strong environmental protections maintained
- Faster permit approvals
- Modern service delivery
- Consistent standards and use of modern technology

What's not changing:

- Where CAs operate (areas currently served by CAs will continue to be served by CAs)
- The programs and services CAs provide, including the responsibility for source water protection, natural hazard and watershed management
- CA management of their lands and trails, providing access to green spaces, recreation and education programs
- Where and how CAs receive funding
- CA relationships with municipalities, developers, landowners
- Each CA being an independent, municipally-governed organization

4. Guiding principles

- The following principles informed the actions the province is taking to improve CAs, in addition to feedback heard during consultation:
 - **Retain local influence** – ensure local knowledge, expertise and interests inform the watershed management and conservation work of CAs
 - **Maintain CA watershed-based jurisdictions** – align with natural hydrological boundaries to support flood/water management. Align with drinking water source protection regions
 - **Reduce administrative overlap and duplication** – streamline requirements and processes for municipalities and conservation authorities
 - **Strengthen CA capacity** – improve and standardize the level of expertise and resources across CAs. Seek to balance the needs and interests of urban, rural, northern and southern watersheds
 - **Continuity of services** – minimize disruptions to CA operations and staffing, ensuring uninterrupted delivery of key programs such as permits, watershed management and trails and recreation for public use
 - **Improve customer service** – enhance consistency and clarity in process and timelines

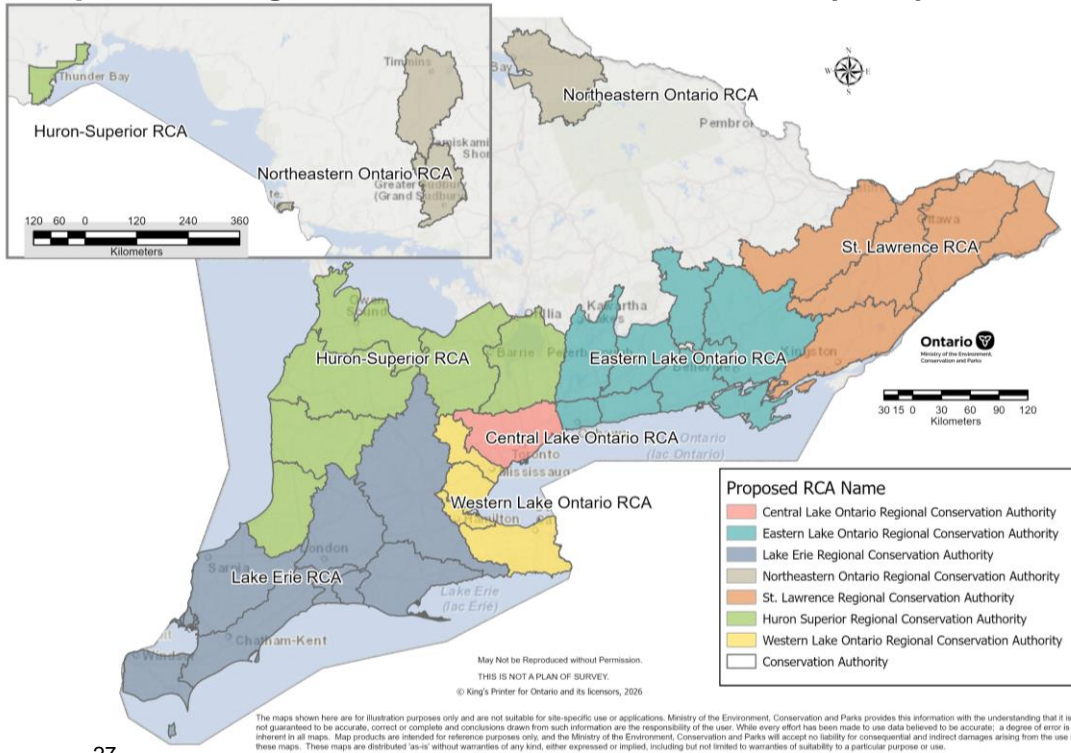
5. Our plan: Improving Ontario's CA system

- The government plans to introduce amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) that would set out the consolidation of Ontario's CAs in accordance with the framework described in this presentation.
- The plan is for CA consolidation to take effect early 2027, allowing for transition planning to occur throughout 2026. Over time, OPCA will further transform Ontario's CA system, including by developing a single digital permitting platform to provide a faster, more predictable approvals process and improved customer service
- To support regional CAs throughout the transition, the province is providing annual funding to OPCA in the amount of \$3 million, beginning in 2026. This funding will be used by OPCA to support regional CAs as needed during transition. Post-transition, this annual funding will support OPCA to help regional CAs achieve improvements and program standards set by OPCA.

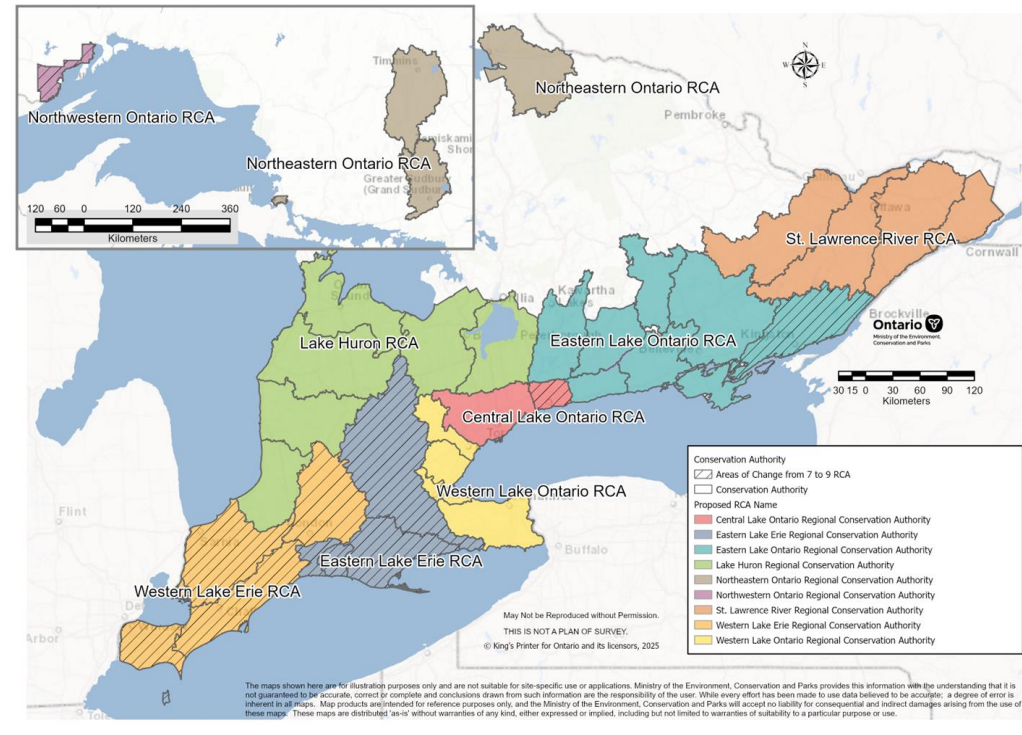
6. Regional CA boundaries

- The regional CA boundaries have been adjusted and refined (from 7 to 9). The feedback received during consultation directly informed the adjustments made to the final regional CA boundaries, which have been optimized to:
 - Accommodate areas with distinct geographies and development contexts
 - Balance differing priorities across rural, urban and northern areas
 - Better align with watersheds and with source protection regions

Proposed 7 Regional Conservation Authorities (RCA)



Final Optimized 9 Regional Conservation Authorities (RCA)



6. Regional CA boundaries: current corresponding CAs

Proposed Regional CAs	List of predecessor (i.e., existing) CAs being consolidated	
Central Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Lake Ontario CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toronto and Region CA
Eastern Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catfish Creek CA Grand River CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kettle Creek CA Long Point Region CA
Eastern Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cataraqui Region CA Crowe Valley CA Ganaraska Region CA Kawartha Region CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower Trent RegionCA Otonabee Region CA Quinte Region CA
Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ausable Bayfield CA Grey Sauble CA Lake Simcoe Region CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maitland Valley CA Nottawasaga Valley CA Saugeen Valley CA
Northeastern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mattagami Region CA Nickel District CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Bay Mattawa CA Sault Ste. Marie Region CA
Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lakehead Region CA 	
St. Lawrence River Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mississippi Valley CA Raisin Region CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rideau Valley CA South Nation River CA
Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essex Region CA Lower Thames Valley CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Clair Region CA Upper Thames River CA
Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit Valley CA Halton Region CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamilton Region CA Niagara Peninsula CA

7. Regional CA Governance

- Consistent with previous commitments and feedback heard, regional CAs will continue to be municipally governed organizations.
- Under our plan, participating municipalities that are responsible for appointing members (i.e. “the board”) and for paying CA levies would be at the upper-tier (i.e., regional municipalities and counties) and single-tier levels (e.g. cities, towns etc.) This change would mean that lower-tier municipalities (e.g. towns and townships, etc.) within a county would no longer be participating municipalities, as is currently the case where there is a county as the upper-tier municipality.
- Rules for how members are to be selected would be set out in regulation based on each participating municipality's percentage of the population in the regional CA's jurisdiction . Small municipalities are ensured representation by requiring that each participating municipality appoint at least one member. Rules for the number of members may also include:
 - Capping the total number of members on a CA board.
 - Limiting any one municipality's number of members (e.g., to 5) to ensure balanced representation.
- Following the municipal elections on October 26, 2026, newly-elected upper tier municipal councils would select the first members (i.e., “board”) for the new regional CAs prior to the targeted amalgamation date.

7. Regional CA Governance: CAs and municipalities

Regional consolidation of CAs would result in a reduction in the number of municipalities that belong to multiple CAs. This would empower Ontario's CAs in delivering more consistent, more efficient, and more cost-effective outcomes for the communities they serve.

	Current State Regions, single-tier, lower-tier	Consolidated Regions, counties, single-tier	% Change
Number of CAs	36	9	75.0%
Municipalities part of 1 CA	126	57	54.8%
Municipalities part of ≥ 2 CAs	60	16	73.3%
Municipalities part of ≥ 3 CAs	19	4	78.9%
Municipalities part of ≥ 4 CAs	3	1	66.7%
Municipalities part of ≥ 5 CAs	2	0	100%

- Note: Municipalities and associated numbers represent 'participating municipalities' for CAs both in the current state and once consolidated. There is no change in the total number of municipalities that are within a CA's jurisdiction.

7. Regional CA Governance: Watershed Councils

Watershed Councils

- In response to feedback that emphasized the need for regional CAs to continue to rely on the deep local expertise, knowledge, and relationships built, the province plans to mandate that regional CAs create one or more local Watershed Councils to ensure watershed management continues to be informed by local knowledge and input.
- Watershed Councils would assist the CA in identifying local priorities for programs and services to ensure that local interests are considered as part the board's decision-making process.
- Specific requirements for membership composition of Watershed Councils may be set out in regulation (e.g., Indigenous representatives to enable considering Indigenous knowledge, as well as agriculture and development representation to consider other local watershed perspectives),

8. Transition process

Statutory Amalgamation

- With the proposed statutory amalgamation that would create the regional CAs, on the transition date, the former CAs would be amalgamated creating the regional CA ,and legal continuation is provided for:
 - All assets and liabilities of the predecessor CAs
 - All rights and obligations of the predecessor CAs
 - All partnerships, agreements and funding obligations of the predecessor CAs
 - Employees of the predecessor CAs (all rights, duties and liabilities)
 - Permit applications made before the transition date
 - Any hearings underway or hearing requests
- In other words, after the consolidation date, the new Regional CAs would replace the former CAs as legal entities. This approach is intended to avoid disruptions to existing partnerships and agreements with municipalities, Indigenous communities, or others.
- The amalgamation of the predecessor CAs in the new regional CAs would be governed by the *Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act*, which sets out a clear, structured and neutral framework for dealing with labour relations issues following restructuring of public sector organizations (e.g. the need to rationalize bargaining units).



8. Transition process

To ensure service continuity and limit disruptions, and as informed by consultation feedback, under our plan OPCA will coordinate consolidation by establishing a transition committee and providing resources, tools and guidance to support transition efforts for each regional CA being consolidated.

Transition committees

- Transition committees for each regional CA would prepare for the amalgamation of the predecessor CAs into the new regional CA. Each predecessor CA will appoint one municipally elected member and its CAO or GM (or an alternate if they are not available) to the Transition Committee.
- OPCA will appoint a Project Executive to chair each Transition Committee and who would become the inaugural Chief Administrative Officer of the regional CA for up to 24 months.
- Committees would be dissolved following regional consolidation.

Transition plans

- With guidance from OPCA—including a transition playbook with templates and best practices—Transition Committees would develop and implement transition plans to guide each new regional CA through an orderly, step-by-step integration of its predecessor CAs across key functions such as HR, finance, assets, and IT.

8. Transition process

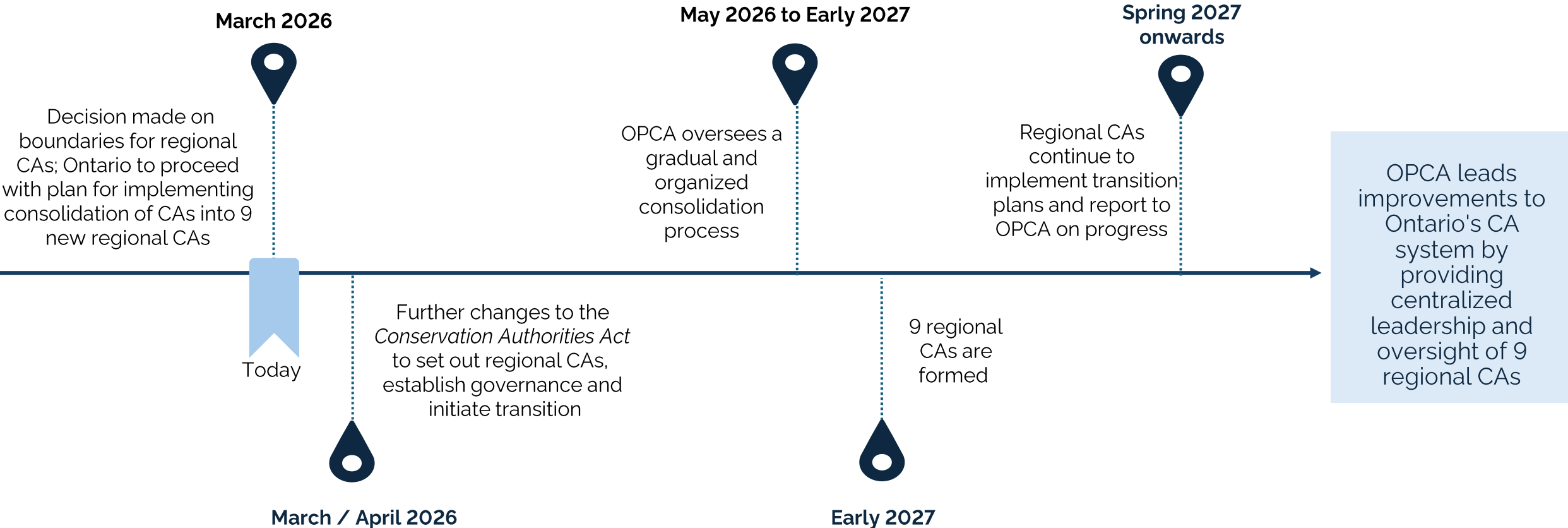
Temporary guardrails

- Our plan includes that temporary guardrails would be applied to extraordinary financial, asset, or employment decisions to mitigate risk and ensure a stable transition to the new regional structure and mitigate risk
- The Minister would be enabled to issue temporary directions to support an orderly CA consolidation. This is not intended to disrupt regular CA business and operations.
- For example, this power could be used to temporarily halt activities such as major land dispositions, significant procurements or material changes to management or organizational structures without review and authorization by the Agency or the Transition Committee.

2027 CA Budgets

- The minister would also be able to issue directions to manage the 2027 budget process for the 36 predecessor CAs, which could be used to provide clarity around timelines (e.g., direct that CA budgeting be completed by December 31, 2026 and levies be issued to the current participating municipalities).

8. Transition process: Timeline



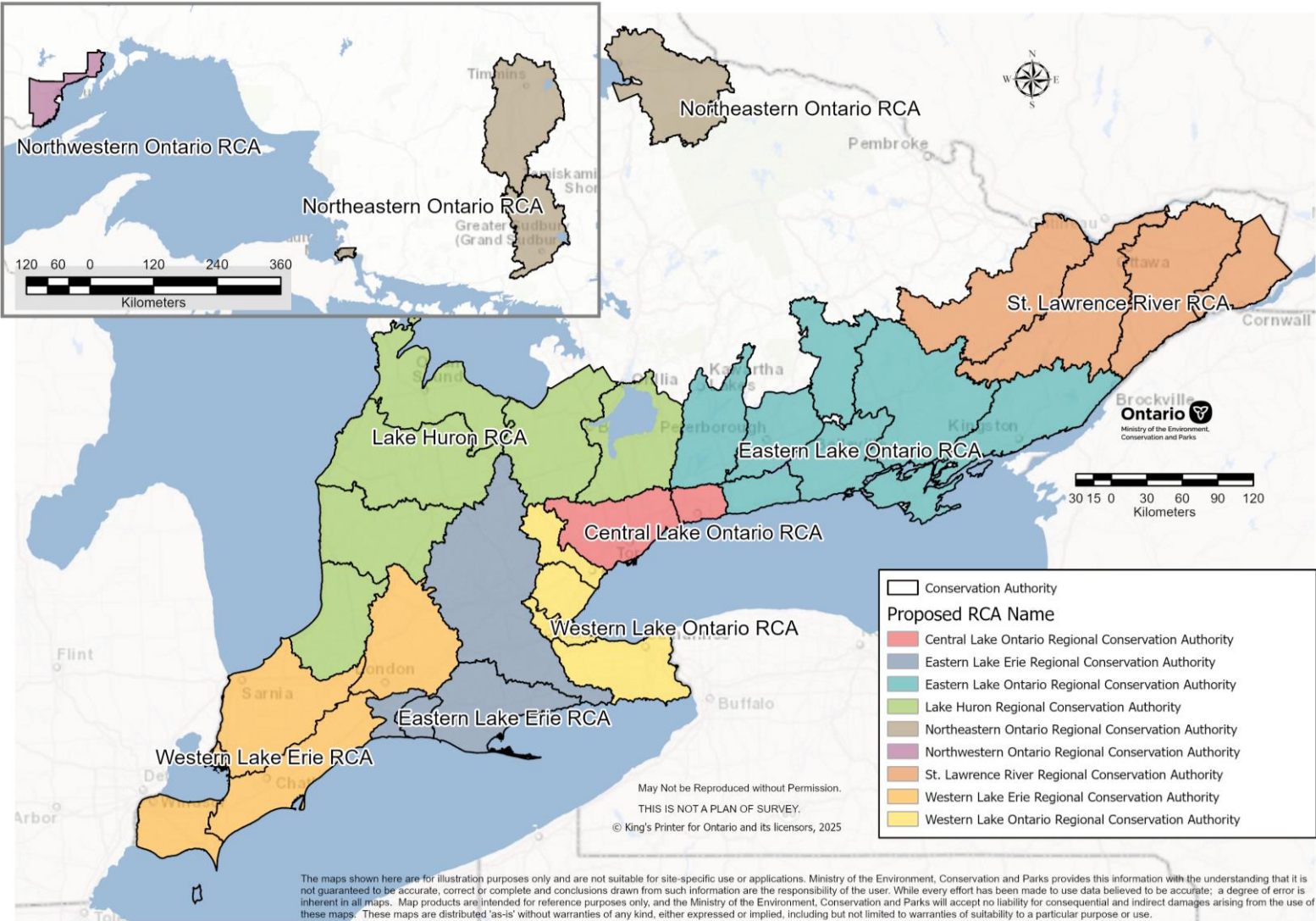
9. Next Steps

- In the coming weeks and months, the provincial government plans to:
 - Propose further amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) that, if passed, sets out the provincially led amalgamation of the 36 existing conservation authorities to create 9 regional CAs, including transitional governance and activities to be coordinated by the OPCA .
 - Invite you to technical briefings to provide further information on the next steps in the planned transition process.
 - Engage with CAs, municipalities, Indigenous communities and other interested partners to provide updates about the government's plans and consolidation.
 - Support the OPCA to coordinate transition planning for consolidation to take effect early 2027, with minimal disruptions/interruptions to CAs' services and staffing.
- The Office of the Chief Conservation Executive would lead CA transition activities as OPCA becomes fully operational. For questions regarding the plans for consolidation, please contact CCEO@ontario.ca.
- If you have questions about the planned legislative amendments and day-to-day CA business, please reach out to MECP staff via ca.office@ontario.ca.

10. Summary

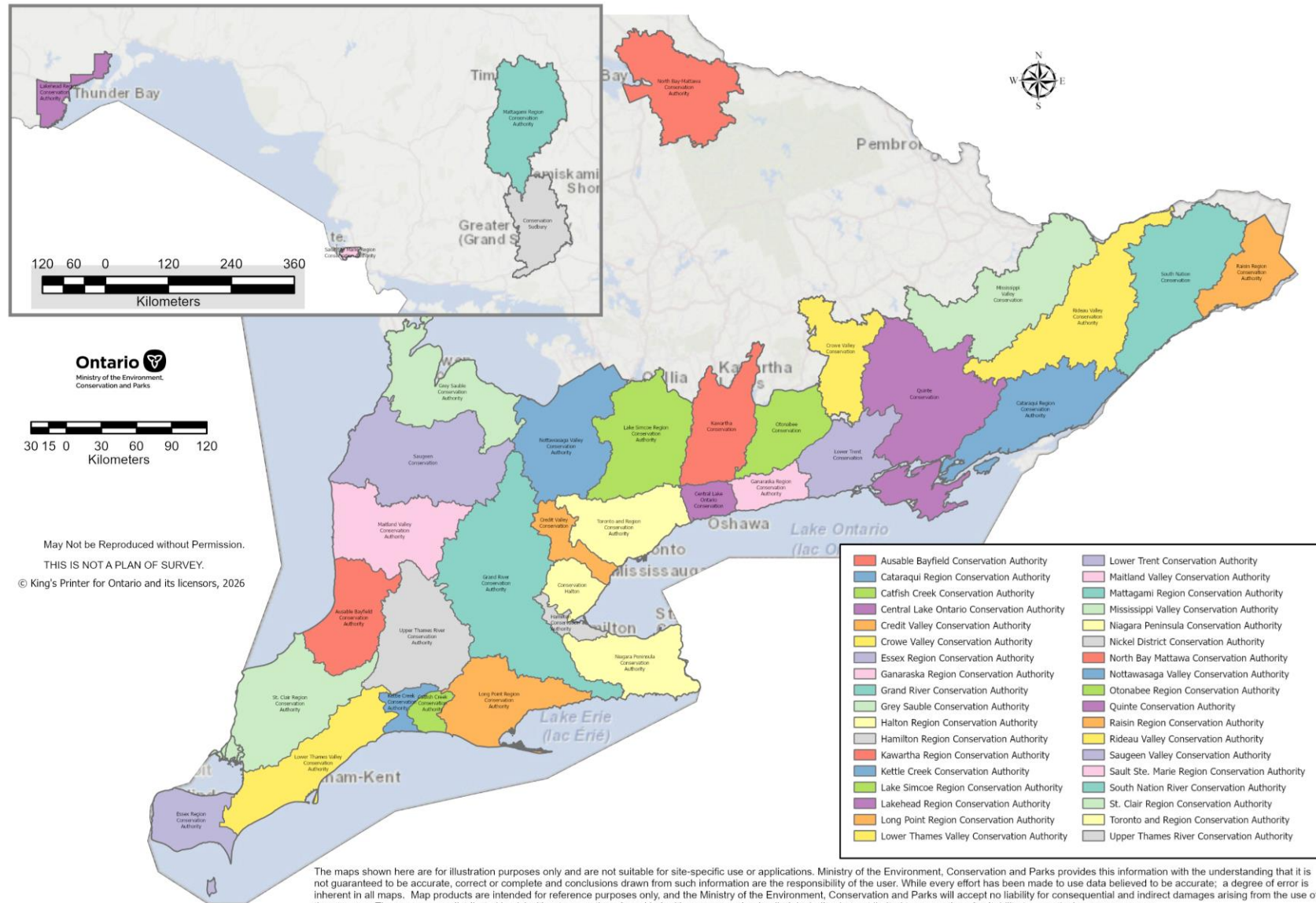
- Ontario's current CA system is fragmented, with inconsistent standards and timelines across 36 individual CAs that can slow down development approvals and risks hampering CAs' abilities to protect their communities from floods and other natural hazards.
- Since announcing our plan in fall 2025, we have consulted extensively. We listened and used this feedback to strengthen our plan, and we are now ready to move forward with plans to introduce amendments to the CAA that would set out and enable the consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs to create 9 consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs to create 9 new regional CAs, targeted to take effect in early 2027.
- With centralized leadership and independent oversight of CAs by the new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, Ontario's CA system will provide streamlined, consistent, and improved service delivery without any reduction in environmental standards. These changes will better position CAs to support needed housing and infrastructure projects more efficiently while continuing to protect communities from flooding and other natural hazards, fulfilling provincially mandated programs such as drinking water source protection under the *Clean Water Act*, and managing CA-owned lands and recreational trails so that Ontarians have access to local natural areas and outdoor activities.

Appendix: Boundaries for Ontario's 9 new regional CAs*



*Plan is for this to take effect in early 2027, subject to amendments being proposed to the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Appendix: Ontario's Current 36 CAs



Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks

Ministère de l'Environnement,
de la Protection de la nature et des
Parcs



Office of the Minister

Bureau du ministre

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
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357-2026-754

March 10, 2026

Dear Chairs:

I am writing to provide an update as we move into the next phase of improving Ontario's conservation authority system. This spring, the government intends to introduce legislative amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) that, if passed, would implement this next phase.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the consultation process. We listened closely, and the feedback we received directly shaped and strengthened our plan. Based on the feedback, we adjusted the planned regional boundaries—from the originally proposed boundaries that would have created seven regional conservation authorities—and optimized to boundaries that create nine new regional conservation authorities. These planned boundaries would accommodate areas with distinct geographies and development contexts, better balance differing priorities across rural, urban and northern areas and improve alignment with watersheds and with source protection regions.

We are also building in clear mechanisms to ensure local knowledge continues to guide decision-making. The plan is for the newly created regional CAs to create one or more Watershed Councils to ensure watershed planning is guided by local insights. Regional CAs will continue to operate as independent public bodies with municipally appointed boards that maintain strong local representation and oversight.

The planned consolidation to regional conservation authorities is targeted to occur in early 2027 and is designed to strengthen the system—not weaken it—by increasing consistency, modernizing standards, and providing better tools and resources to support the frontline work your teams deliver every day. Under this plan, regional conservation authorities will continue to rely on the deep local expertise, knowledge, and relationships that your staff bring to their communities. Those who know the watershed best will remain central to delivering local programs and on-the-ground support, helping to ensure decisions reflect the unique environmental priorities of each area.

...2

This plan to transition to regional conservation authorities marks the beginning of a renewed relationship—one that builds on local strengths while establishing greater consistency and shared capacity across the province. As part of this plan, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) will lead a gradual, carefully managed transition to ensure stability and continuity. Services, programs, and permitting will continue uninterrupted as planning for transition progresses toward early 2027. There will be no cuts to front line jobs. Protecting local service delivery is a guiding principle of this planned transition, and communities will continue to work with the same local teams at conservation authorities they rely on today.

To ensure a smooth and organized transition, the province is providing \$3 million in annual funding, to be administered by OPCA. These resources are planned to be used by OPCA to support conservation authorities throughout the transition period and, in the longer term, will enable regional conservation authorities to achieve program improvements.

Your leadership is vital as we begin this new chapter. I encourage you to share this message with your staff to provide reassurance that their work, expertise, and community relationships remain at the heart of Ontario's conservation system. In the coming weeks, you will be invited to technical briefings to provide further information on the next steps in the planned transition process.

For questions regarding the planned consolidation and the transition process, please contact CCEO@ontario.ca. If you have questions about the planned legislative amendments or day-to-day CA business, please reach out to MECP staff at ca.office@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment. We look forward to working with you over the next year to make important improvements to Ontario's conservation authority system.

Sincerely,



Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: Hassaan Basit, Chief Conservation Executive, MECP
Chloe Stuart, Assistant Deputy Minister, Land and Water Division, MECP

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Mike Knox, Asset Management Specialist
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-20
Agenda #: 8.2
Subject: Asset Management Update

Recommendation

That the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Background

Program Overview

The Asset Management (AM) Program continues to advance as a foundational initiative, supporting UTRCA's long-term stewardship of its assets. The program is focused on strengthening decision-making, improving transparency, and ensuring that assets are managed consistently with UTRCA's strategic priorities, while balancing risk and legislative responsibilities. Over the coming year, emphasis will remain on implementation, integration, and organizational alignment to ensure the AM program delivers practical value across the organization.

Asset Management Software Implementation

A significant milestone for the program is the implementation of asset management software. PSD Citywide software has been operating in a test environment while we populate it with our asset inventory. It is expected to be live by the end of March, 2026. This phase represents a transition from planning and configuration over the last 4 months to deployment. The software enables staff to consistently capture asset data in a centralized platform while incorporating elements of asset life cycle, such as degree of use and replacement considerations. Three training sessions have now been completed. Staff will continue to input asset information needed to support evidence-based planning.

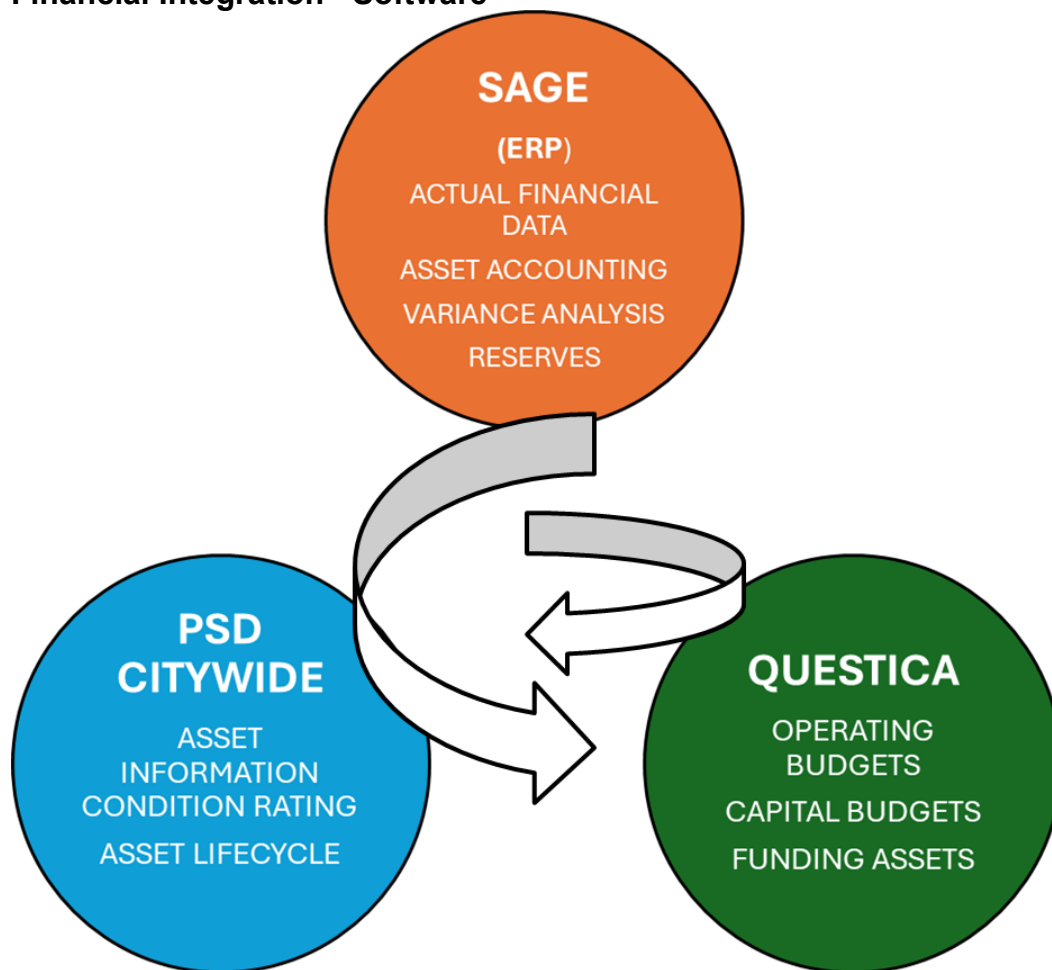
The table below provides an overview of UTRCA's asset categories, showing the status of inventory completeness and lifecycle reporting. While categories such as Vehicles and Equipment are largely documented and actively maintained, other areas, including Infrastructure, Information Technologies and Green Infrastructure remain in development or early stages. Staff will continue to prioritize resources to accelerate data collection and condition assessments for these assets to support informed decision making and long-term asset management planning. Looking ahead in 2026, the UTRCA plans to finalize inventory and condition assessments for all categories this fall.

UTRCA Asset Category	Inventory Status	Lifecycle Reporting
Vehicles	Completed	Inventory complete. Lifecycle reporting is in its early stages, with ongoing updates.
Equipment	Completed	Inventory complete. Lifecycle reporting is in its early stages, with ongoing updates.
Buildings	Ongoing	Majority of inventory collected. Condition rating and replacement value data are required.
Natural Hazards Infrastructure	Ongoing	Majority of inventory collected. Condition rating and replacement value data are being collected as part of Sections 3 (Asset Inventory and Description) and 4 (Asset Condition) of the UTRCA Natural Hazards Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.
Land Improvements	Ongoing	Majority of inventory collected. Condition rating and replacement value data are required.
Information Technologies	In progress	Inventory data and setup are in the early stages. Condition rating and replacement value data are required.
Infrastructure	In progress	Inventory data is in the early development phase. Lifecycle data is under development and incomplete.
Green Infrastructure	To be Initiated	Early data gathering and inventory review, with development input from other Conservation Authorities, to guide consistent approach.

Financial Integration

A further key step in the program roll-out is integration with our financial systems. Sage - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is our primary financial software, or the software “of record”. The costs of assets which may be bought or built originate in Sage therefore processes need to be developed to ensure that those assets are then captured in PSD Citywide on an ongoing basis. Sage, Questica and PSD Citywide are intended to be operated such that each informs the other so that a more complete picture of the organization, its plans, activities and asset operations, can be understood. For example, each fleet vehicle now has three codes referenced in all three systems. This integration will be developed through 2026 and in time, will improve the organization’s ability to forecast funding needs, evaluate trade-offs, and demonstrate the long-term financial implications of capital investments. This in turn will strengthen reporting to management and the Board by linking asset performance, risk, and cost in a more clear and consistent manner.

Financial Integration - Software



Sage (ERP): Actual costs and budgets for variance analysis.

PSD Citywide: Asset information, lifecycle, replacement and forecast costs.

Questica: Capital budgets for approvals.

Summary - Looking Ahead

As the asset management program continues to evolve, efforts will focus on strengthening connections between day-to-day decisions, operations, and planning processes. Like many organizations at this stage of asset management maturity, the UTRCA continues to address gaps in asset data and varying levels of consistency in current practices.

Asset Management represents both a technical and cultural shift for the organization. Addressing these gaps will be an incremental process as asset management principles are progressively embedded through improved systems, processes, and staff adoption. Over the coming year, the program will transition from development toward integration and practical use. With software implementation nearing completion, efforts will continue to focus on financial alignment and organizational integration to embed asset management into regular business practices.

These efforts will strengthen UTRCA's ability to manage assets responsibly, support strategic objectives, and provide confidence to all interest holders that assets are being managed in a sustainable, transparent, and consistent manner.

Recommended by:

Mike Knox, Asset Management Specialist

Christine Saracino, Supervisor, Finance and Accounting

Teresa Hollingsworth, Manager, Community and Corporate Services

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Kailee Davis, Health and Safety Specialist
Jennifer Williams, Human Resources Coordinator
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-21
Agenda #: 8.3
Subject: Annual Health and Safety Update - 2025

Recommendation

THAT the Board receives the following report for information.

Background

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and healthy workplace at all levels of its operation, to a standard which meets or exceeds the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and all other applicable regulations and legislations. Safety is everyone's responsibility, and all workplace parties share a commitment to working collaboratively towards the identification and resolution of health and safety concerns within the UTRCA. Utilizing knowledge, training, and experience to assess each situation is critical to achieving health and safety success. Through strong leadership and ongoing commitment, The UTRCA Management Team fosters a safety culture that supports the prevention of accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses, ensuring that the UTRCA remains a physically and psychologically safe workplace for everyone.

In 2025, the UTRCA participated in the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Health and Safety Excellence Program (HSEP). Participation in the HSEP for a second time has enabled the UTRCA to further improve our Health and Safety Program through the development of four new policies, along with supporting procedures, addressing Contractor Management, Health and Safety Communication, Incident Investigation and Analysis, and Hazard Reporting. The year-long enrollment in the HSEP will conclude in June 2026 and will have further reinforced the UTRCA's commitment to continuous improvement in health and safety practices across the organization. In addition to strengthening UTRCA's health and safety practices, successful completion of the program will result in a financial rebate from the WSIB, received upon program completion.

Annually, the Board of Directors receives an update on the UTRCA Health and Safety Program including incident reporting, milestones, and objectives for the upcoming year.

Injury Statistics

Body Area of Injury	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Head and Face (Including Eyes and Teeth)	7	3	5	1	3
Eyes *	-	5	3	2	4
Chest and Abdomen **	2	-	-	-	-
Back (Upper and Lower)	3	3	5	5	5
Neck and Shoulders ***	1	-	-	-	-
Arms (Including Wrists)	5	2	7	8	4
Hands (Including Fingers)	11	19	8	9	8
Legs (Including Ankles)	7	6	5	4	3
Feet (Including Toes)	1	1	-	1	1
Multiple Body Parts	7	1	-	-	1
Other	-	-	5	-	-
Total Reports Submitted	44	40	38	30	29

* Eyes were separated from Head and Face in the years prior to 2025.

** Chest and Abdomen were included with Back in the years prior to 2025.

*** Neck and Shoulders were included with Arms in the years prior to 2025.

Injury Type	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Harmful Substance / Environmental	2	3	3	1	2
Struck, Caught, Pinched, Rubbed ****	10	24	14	13	7
Cuts, Lacerations, and Punctures	5	-	-	-	-
Slips, Trips, and Falls	11	1	3	4	2
Natural / Biological (e.g., bites, stings)	13	9	9	6	12
Sprains and Strains	3	1	5	6	6
Mental Health / Psychological	-	-	2	-	-
Other	-	2	2	-	-
Total	44	40	38	30	29

**** Cuts and Punctures were included with Struck, Caught, Pinched, and Rubbed in the years prior to 2025.

While the total number of reports was slightly up in 2025 compared to 2024, our headcount was also increased, resulting in an overall incident rate that remained relatively consistent from year to year (0.26/full-time equivalent in 2024 versus 0.27/full-time equivalent in 2025). Additionally, the majority of incidents were minor in severity, with fewer incidents requiring medical attention, treatment, or time off.

Seasonal employees make up two thirds of our overall injuries; this shows the importance of appropriate training, supervision, and support for our new and often young staff who make up the bulk of the seasonal positions. Statistics show that new and young workers are three times more likely to be injured in the first month of working. For 2026, the Park Orientation Days for our seasonal staff at FCA, PCA, and WCA have been revised to place more emphasis on the actual hazards that are commonly encountered in the Parks, and the various control measures that are in place.

Lost Time Claims

Lost time injuries occur when an employee misses work due to a workplace injury. A claim must be initiated with the WSIB if an employee:

- seeks medical attention from a registered healthcare provider after a workplace incident,
- misses any time from work (except for the day of injury) due to a workplace incident, or
- is completing modified work duties for longer than seven days due to a workplace incident.

Annual Summary	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
WSIB Claims Approved for Lost Time *****	1	3	4	1	3

***** There was a total of 8 WSIB Claims in 2025. 5 were approved for Health Care only (workers did not experience lost time) and 2 were denied.

The approved lost time claim resulted in only one day of lost time. This claim was due to an employee injuring their foot and subsequent medical documentation indicating that they could not stand or walk for a week while the injury healed. Given that this is a large part of their position, the employee was unsure if they should come in for their shift. The employee's supervisor required one day to compile a list of safe and suitable job duties that could be completed while seated. These duties were offered to the employee, which allowed the employee to return to work the very next day and complete seated tasks for the remainder of the week.

A key milestone that took place in 2025 was Introduction to WSIB Training for Supervisors and Managers. Training was held in-person, with 27 Supervisors in attendance. The presentation was recorded and posted on the internal HR and HS Communications Site for staff to review if they were unable to attend or refer back to in future situations. The training addressed the WSIB process in detail, particularly focusing on the roles of the Supervisor and the importance of offering modified work duties. With increased understanding, Supervisors can plan for modified work and offer safe and suitable duties to injured employees at the first report of injury, to avoid future lost time claims due to procedural confusion or uncertainty over the next steps.

Ministry of Labour Visits

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development (MLITSD) performed two proactive visits in February 2025. The first visit to the Watershed Conservation Centre (WCC) resulted in four orders. The orders and compliance details were as follows:

- Workers have the right to be informed of the results of an investigation and any corrective action. UTRCA's Violence and Harassment Policy language was revised to make it clearer how results would be communicated at the time of the inspection.
- The employer must obtain an SDS from the supplier for every hazardous product in the workplace. The SDS for Checkers Toilet Bowl Cleaner was obtained, and a copy was provided to the Inspector at the time of the inspection.
- Workers exposed to the potential hazard of eye injury must wear eye protection. Appropriate eye protection was placed in the cleaner's closet to ensure access at the time of the inspection.

- Emergency equipment is required at any location where staff are working with or could be exposed to hazardous chemicals. Additional eyewash facilities were installed in the chemical storage closet.

The second visit to the Fleet Management Mechanic's Bay resulted in five orders. The orders and compliance details were as follows:

- A work rest for a grinding wheel shall have a maximum clearance of 3mm. This was adjusted and completed for the Miller's Falls Grinder and the DeWalt Bench Grinder at the time of the inspection.
- An Inspector may request and examine inspection records. The February 2025 inspection records for the two Rotary Lifts and the October 2024 inspection records for the one Lodestar Red Crane were found and provided to the Inspector.

Joint Health and Safety Committee Structure

In the fall of 2024, the three Joint Health and Safety Committees evaluated the committee structure's effectiveness. The current committees agreed that it would be beneficial to consider a Multi-workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee (MJHSC) designation to allow for more fulsome discussions about hazards in the workplace, rather than each committee meeting independently and missing out on the benefit from the perspective of others who have similar hazards in their location.

As part of the application process to the MLITSD, a MJHSC Terms of Reference was developed and approved in December 2024 by the three committees. The application was submitted to the MLITSD in January 2025, and has undergone several reviews, leading to revisions in July and November 2025. Most recently, additional revisions were made in January 2026 and the application was resubmitted. We are now continuing to await further feedback, or final approval to operate as an MJHSC.

Goals for the UTRCA Health and Safety Program in 2026

- Complete the Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle for the four HSEP topics
- Receive Multi-workplace JHSC designation
- Finish writing, obtain approvals, and launch several new policies
 - Vehicle and Equipment Training
 - Personal Protective Equipment
 - Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration
 - Critical Incident Stress Management
 - Volunteers
- Finish writing, obtain approvals, and launch several new Standard Operating Procedures
 - Road Work and Traffic Control (Book 7)
 - Mini Excavator
 - Drone Usage
 - Medical Emergency Response Plans
 - WCC Access Systems
 - Electric UTVs
 - And Many More!

Summary

The UTRCA continues to demonstrate its commitment to a strong health and safety culture through ongoing program development, participation in the WSIB HSEP, proactive training and supervision, monitoring of incident trends, and collaboration with workplace committees and regulatory bodies. Health and safety is a shared responsibility across all levels of the organization, and continued attention to health and safety initiatives will help to ensure that the UTRCA remains a physically and psychologically safe workplace, so that staff are able to continue delivering all of UTRCA's essential programs and services throughout the watershed.

Recommended by:

Kailee Davis, Health and Safety Specialist

Jennifer Williams, Coordinator, Human Resources

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Joe Gordon, Regulations Coordinator
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-22
Agenda #: 8.4
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 the months of January and February 2026.

Summary of 2026 Permit Activity To-Date (Jan - Feb):

- **32 permit numbers** have been assigned with **13 of those permits issued**.
- **Twelve (12)** permits have been issued in 2026 where the application was submitted in 2024.
- **Two (2)** Hydro One Standard Compliance Permits have been issued.
- **One (1)** Permit Extensions or Amendments have been issued.
- **42** 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 **2 total permits in progress in 2026** where additional information is still required prior to processing the permit application. There are twelve (12) permits-in-progress from 2025 and one (1) from 2024 (ie. *195-24. Hearing scheduled for April 20, 2026*). 64% of those permits-in-progress are within the City of London. Two (2) permit numbers previously reported in annual reports have been canceled due to inactivity where the application was subsequently withdrawn or where no application form and/or applicable fee have been received.

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)
2026	32	2	13	0	0
Permits in Progress (Prior Year Submission):					Prior Years
2025	234	12	219	1	2

The attached Table 2 provides further details of those permits issued in January and February of 2026 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 Assistant
 Richard Brewer, Land Use Regulations Assistant
 Carly Sing-Judge, Land Use Regulations Assistant

Section 28 Status Report – Summary of Applications for 2026
Ontario Regulation 41/24

Table 2
Reporting Period: January and February 2026
[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
P162-25	Woodstock	Zorra Lot 1 Con 10 (11th Line)	Development	Minor	Slope Rehabilitation	21-Aug-2025	11-Sep-2025	24-Sep-2025	16-Jan-2026	NO	Griffin
P184-25	Perth South	3900 Perth Line 20	Development	Routine	Equipment Storage Shed	10-Oct-2025	16-Oct-2025	15-Jan-2026	22-Jan-2026	YES	Griffin
P198-25	London	Highbury Avenue South (South Thames River to Hwy 401)	Municipal Project	Minor	Road rehabilitation and culvert replacements	6-Oct-2025	13-Nov-2025	7-Jan-2026	8-Jan-2026	YES	Funk
P199-25	Woodstock	Easement through Part of Lots 3 & 4, Concession 11	Municipal Project	Routine	Sanitary Trunk Sewer Replacement	10-Nov-2025	19-Nov-2025	24-Dec-2025	7-Jan-2026	YES	Griffin
P213-25	Woodstock	Dundas Street (from CPKC Railway to Mill Street)	Development	Minor	Roadway Reconstruction & Associated Improvements	25-Nov-2025	3-Dec-2025	5-Jan-2026	7-Jan-2026	YES	Griffin
P218-25	Ingersoll	25 Canterbury St - Memorial Park	Municipal Project	Minor	Retaining Wall Rehabilitation	1-Dec-2025	10-Dec-2025	16-Jan-2026	16-Jan-2026	YES	Griffin
P227-25	London	874-876 Commissioners Road East	Development	Major	4-storey apartment building with associated surface parking	8-Dec-2025	19-Dec-2025	23-Jan-2026	23-Jan-2026	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
P1-26	London	11 Charles Street	Development	Major	Proposed single family dwelling rebuild	17-Dec-2025	7-Jan-2026	8-Jan-2026	9-Jan-2026	YES	Sing-Judge
P2-26	London	13 Charles Street	Development	Major	Proposed single family dwelling rebuild	17-Dec-2025	7-Jan-2026	8-Jan-2026	9-Jan-2026	YES	Sing-Judge
P4-26	Zorra	3 sites - 37th Line, Embro (Undercrossing Embro Creek & North Branch Creeks)	Linear Utility Corridor	Minor	Installation of fiber optic cable along 37th Line ROW at 3 sites crossing watercourses	22-Dec-2025	6-Jan-2026	20-Jan-2026	26-Jan-2026	YES	Brewer
P5-26	London	3593 White Oak Road	Development	Minor	Proposed Billboard Sign	11-Jan-2026	12-Jan-2026	13-Jan-2026	19-Jan-2026	YES	Funk
P9-26	London	26 Kensington Avenue	Development	Major	Renovation and Addition in the West London potential SPA	9-Jan-2026	14-Jan-2026	14-Jan-2026	16-Jan-2026	YES	Sing-Judge
P10-26	London	Jalna Boulevard at Attwood Drain	Linear Utility Corridor	Minor	Fibre Optic Installation	12-Jan-2026	15-Jan-2026	20-Jan-2026	23-Jan-2026	YES	Sing-Judge
P13-26	London	33 St. Patrick Street - West London potential SPA	Development	Minor	Renovation and Addition	13-Jan-2026	21-Jan-2026	21-Jan-2026	22-Jan-2026	YES	Sing-Judge
A14-26	London	95 Towerline Place	Development	Minor	Renovation and Addition	20-Jan-2026	22-Jan-2026	22-Jan-2026	26-Jan-2026	YES	Funk
P189-25	Perth South	Wildwood CA - 3995 Line 9	Development	Minor	Wildwood Dam Safety Boom	18-Sep-2025	22-Sep-2025	10-Feb-2026	12-Feb-2026	YES	Griffin
P217-25	West Perth	161 Huron Road	Development	Major	Storage Building & SWM Outlet	3-Dec-2025	5-Dec-2025	2-Feb-2026	2-Feb-2026	YES	Griffin
P6-26	London	4 Aspen Place	Development	Major	Replacement single family dwelling	9-Jan-2026	12-Jan-2026	30-Jan-2026	10-Feb-2026	YES	Funk
P7-26	Woodstock	62 Finch Avenue	Development	Routine	C-12 SWMF Cleanout	9-Jan-2026	13-Jan-2026	30-Jan-2026	10-Feb-2026	YES	Funk
P8-26	Perth East	Perth County Rd	Municipal Project	Minor	Replacement of Structure	5-Jan-2026	13-Jan-2026	29-Jan-2026	5-Feb-2026	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
		107, 0.6km North of Line 33, spanning Shakespeare Award Drain			107030. A 3.6m by 3m by 32m, concrete box culvert						
P12-26	West Perth	216 Ontario Road	Development	Minor	Replacement Shed	14-Jan-2026	21-Jan-2026	28-Jan-2026	2-Feb-2026	YES	Griffin
P17-26	London	520 Riverside Drive (Riverside Boat Launch Park)	Municipal Project	Routine	Boat Ramp and Park Redesign	5-Feb-2026	17-Feb-2026	17-Feb-2026	24-Feb-2026	YES	Funk

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Tracy Annett, General Manager
Date: March 24, 2026
File Number: BoD-26-03-23
Agenda #: 8.5
Subject: Progress Status Updates

Recommendation

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Background

To provide the Board with updates on previously discussed items and progress toward the UTRCA’s 2025–2030 Strategic Plan goals.

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
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.
Fee Schedule Review for Planning & Regulations	January 2026	Jenna	Complete - Report back on Fees Freeze. Future reports will be provided if Ministers' direction is received that allows fees to increase.
Planning and Regulations Policy Updates (March 2024,	April 2026	Jenna	In progress - Staff 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
September 2024, June 2025, November 2025)			
Retention Policy	May 2026	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. Staff will be consulting with the other Conservation Authorities within the Western Lake Erie Region.
Cyber Security	January 2026	Tracy Christine Chris	Complete - 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)	April 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	April 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.
Human Resources Report	January 2026	Jennifer	Complete - Provide UTRCA's Organizational Chart and report on staff vacancies.

Additional items requiring quarterly or routine updates for the Board are provided in the table below.

Quarterly or Routine Report Back Items	Project lead(s)	Status
Land Options (March 2025, June 2025)	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)	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	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.
UTRCA Asset Management Plan	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 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)	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.

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