



**Meeting Date: August 16, 2023**

**Submitted by: Michael Di Lullo, CAO**

**Report No: CAO-24-2023**

**Subject: Adoption of Memorandum of Understanding for Programs and Services with Conservation Authorities**

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**Recommendation:**

THAT Report CAO-24-2023, re: Adoption of Memorandum of Understanding for Programs and Services with Conservation Authorities be received;

AND THAT the Memorandum of Understanding Agreements appended to Report CAO-24-2023 be approved.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to bring forward Agreements for approval between each of the five conservation authorities that are located in Middlesex Centre in accordance with changes that were made to the Conservation Authorities Act related to the identification of programs and services.

**Background:**

In 2021 and 2022, Council received briefing reports related to amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act. In accordance with Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from *COVID-19 Act* (Budget Measures), 2020, changes were made to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the *Planning Act*.

Each of the five conservation authorities created a transition plan identifying programs and services which were classified into various categories and done in accordance under Ontario Regulation 687/21.

The purpose of the transition plan is to detail the process/timelines of the following requirements:

- Category 1
  - Changes to the budgeting and levy process based on mandatory programs and services provided by section 21.1 of the Act
- Category 2
  - Determine delivery of municipal programs and services provided under section 21.1.1 of the Act
- Category 3
  - Determine delivery of other programs and services outside the scope/mandate of the conservation authority provided under section 21.1.2 of the Act

This Regulation also enables municipalities and the conservation authorities time (January 1, 2024) to determine what programs and services are most appropriate for role-clarity and other reasons such as budgetary planning and solidify into a Memorandum of Understanding.

### **Analysis:**

The creation of a transition plan was the first step in identifying the programs and services that classified which were mandatory and those that are optional (or over and above the general levy for service).

The next step was to develop a Memorandum of Understanding and Middlesex Centre has worked cooperatively with each of the five Conservation Authorities to draft an Agreement that would satisfy the requirements of the Conservation Authorities Act.

Each of the five agreements appended to this report have been drafted that outlines the categories noted above so that the programs and services that are over and above the general levy are outlined and approved. This may change from one year to the next and the MOU enables for those discussions to take place.

### **Financial Implications:**

N/A – Middlesex Centre will dialogue with each Conservation Authority on an annual basis to evaluate the delivery of programs and will budget accordingly through the annual budget process to accommodate any deviation from the services noted in each of the respective MOUs.

**Strategic Plan:**

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Middlesex Centre has five different Conservation Authorities within the geographic boundary, it is important to work with our community partners as indicated in Objective 5.4 of our Strategic Plan so that there is efficient delivery of service and programs for residents.

**Attachments:**

Appendix 1 – Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

Appendix 2 – Kettle Creek Conservation Authority

Appendix 3 – Lower Thames Conservation Authority

Appendix 4 – St. Clair Conservation Authority

Appendix 5 – Upper Thames Conservation Authority