

Conservation Authorities

2025–2028 Business Plan
and 2025 Budget

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Executive Summary

Mission: Conservation Authorities (CAs) play a vital role in protecting the many aspects of Peel's natural environment, focusing on protecting and managing water resources, wetlands and forests, sharing conservation information, providing local and regional recreational opportunities, preserving natural heritage features and addressing climate change risks within Peel. These outcomes are provided primarily through **3 Conservation Authorities (CAs)**, namely, Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and Conservation Halton (CH).

Services We Provide

- Protecting the many aspects of Peel's natural environment by applying a watershed approach to manage the natural resources and natural hazards in various jurisdictions.
- TRCA and CVC's jurisdictions cover the majority of Peel Region (97.7 per cent) and CH watershed covers a smaller jurisdiction (1.1 per cent). All three CAs are responsible for delivery of mandatory services that include protecting communities from natural hazards, source water protection, management of CA lands, and other required services.
- In addition, CAs deliver important Non-Mandatory Projects and Services that are municipally requested and required by the Region, these include:
 - Restoration on private and public lands, trail design and construction, environmental studies.
 - Addressing climate change risks, providing services, events, and environmental programs for various audiences including schools, businesses, and residents.
- Both conservation authorities also own significant and well-used parks and greenspaces throughout Peel Region, which are funded through admission fees, user fees, and the Region of Peel budget (through the tax levy).
- It should be noted that Provincial funding over the years to support the CAs is negligible.

Interesting Facts About This Service to be updated

Both CVC and TRCA:

- Continue a funding partnership with Peel Region that dates back 50 years.
- Operate and maintain 6 dams, 3 dikes, 3 flood control channels in Peel.
- Own 5,710 hectares of CA land.

- Own 243 km of CA managed trails.
- Operate 28 groundwater monitoring sites (24 provincial network sites).
- Operate Real-time monitoring gauge network for:
 - 28 streamflow stations.
 - 7 climate stations.
 - 13 rainfall stations in Peel.
- On track to meet 2024 target of 148,000 trees and shrubs planted through restoration programs.
- On track to deliver 450 stewardship events engaging 10,500 people.
- Managed the development of Jim Tovey Lakeview Conservation Authority in partnership with the Region. This is a waterfront parkland between Marie Curtis Park and Lakefront Promenade in the City of Mississauga. The new Park is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2025 and fully operational by 2026, the 26-hectare park features natural meadows, new beach, coastal forest, coastal wetlands and estuarine habitat and island habitat for shorebirds.

Highlights of the Business Plan

- Under the new *Conservation Authorities (CA) Act*, non-mandatory programs and services (P&S) that the Region requires continue to be funded by means of memoranda of understanding (MOU). These agreements were signed with each CA in December 2023 for the initial duration of 1 year (until December 31, 2024) in keeping with the previous *Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution)*, which was subsequently repealed by the introduction of Bill 185. The existing MOUs are in the process of being revised to extend their effective period making it consistent with the term of the existing Council (i.e. December 31, 2026).
- Impact of Bill 23 and changing Regulations 687/21, 686/21, 404/22.

Table 1. Budget Summary

(in \$ thousands)	2025	2026	2027	2028
Credit Valley Conservation Authority	29,109	31,292	32,230	33,197
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	21,166	21,724	22,323	22,945
Conservation Halton	559	583	604	629
Total Net Expenditure	50,834	53,599	55,157	56,771
Total Utility Rate Funding	(16,028)	(16,028)	(16,028)	(16,028)
Total Net Tax Expenditure	\$34,805	\$37,570	\$39,129	\$40,743

Note: May not add up due to rounding.

Core Services

Vision, Mission, Goals of Service and Service Delivery Model

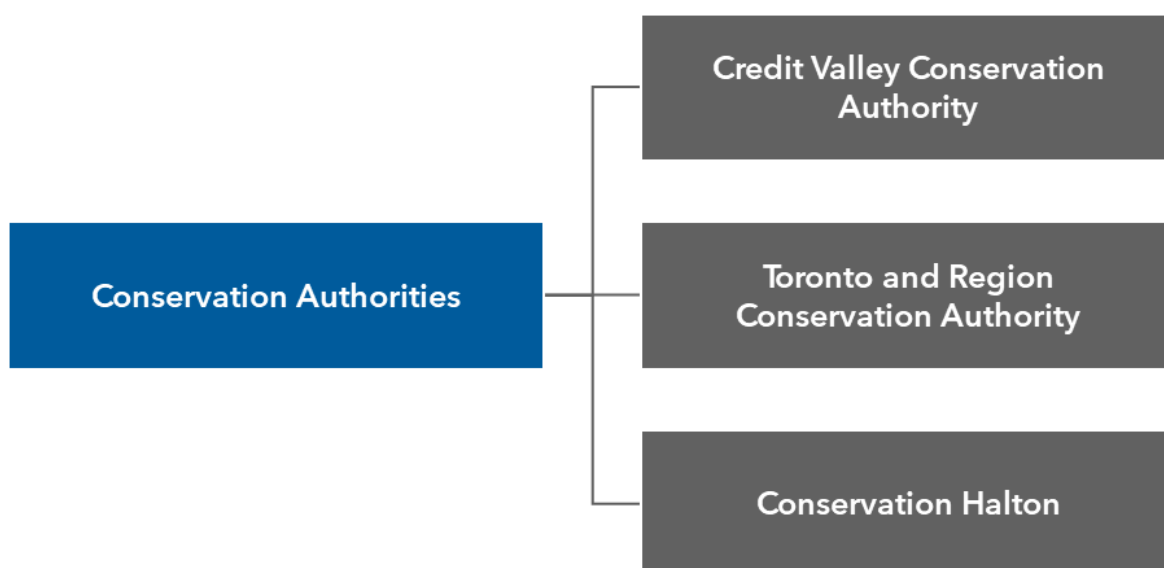
Mission

Conservation Authorities (CAs) play a vital role in protecting the many aspects of Peel's natural environment, focusing on protecting and managing water resources, wetlands and forests, sharing conservation information, providing local and regional recreational opportunities, preserving natural heritage features and addressing climate change risks within Peel. These outcomes are provided primarily through **3 Conservation Authorities (CAs)**, namely, Conservation Halton (CH), Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

Goals of Service

1. Protecting Peel's natural environment.
2. Focusing on protecting and managing water resources, wetlands and forests.
3. Identifying natural hazard risks to citizens in Peel Region.
4. Sharing conservation information and education initiatives.
5. Delivering Programs and Services that align with Regional priorities.
6. Providing local and regional recreational opportunities.
7. Preserving natural heritage features.
8. Prioritize work on key program deliverables to achieve climate change mitigation and adaptation.
9. Providing extremely high value projects and services, at a relatively low cost of funding to the Region.

Service Delivery Model



Each of the conservation authorities are governed by their own respective boards. Each conservation authority board approves the budget that is submitted for approval by Regional Council. Member(s) of Regional Council serve on the boards of all three of these conservation authorities.

Representation on the board is based on population of the municipality (upper tier) and by member municipality agreement.

- 6 Regional Councillors serve on the 12-member CVC Board.
- 5 Regional Councillors on the 30-member TRCA Board.
- 2 Regional Councillors serve on the 20-member CH Board.

The following pages consolidate the budget request submitted for Regional Council consideration.

Proposed Operating Budget

This part of the Business Plan sets out the financial resources required to deliver the proposed 2025–2028 Business Plan. Information is provided by total expenditures submitted by each of the conservation authorities and revenue from Regional non-property tax sources. The costs to maintain existing service levels and operationalize prior decisions are identified in the base budget changes separately from proposed changes. The net cost for the service in 2024 was \$33.0 million and the proposed budget for 2025 is \$34.8 million.

Net Expenditures: \$34.8 million (**Total Expenditures:** \$50.8 million)

Description (in \$ thousands)	2023 Actuals	2024 Approved Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	\$ Change Over 2024	% Change Over 2024
CVC Operating (General Levy)	9,840	10,061	10,547	486	4.8%
CVC Capital Projects (Special Levy)	16,842	17,716	18,562	846	4.8%
TRCA Operating (General Levy)	2,105	2,168	2,113	(55)	(2.5%)
TRCA Capital Projects (Special Levy)	18,049	18,530	19,053	523	2.8%
CH Operating (General Levy)	509	538	552	14	2.7%
CH Capital Projects (Special Levy)	18	7	7	–	–
Total Expenditures	47,364	49,019	50,834	1,814	3.7%
Utility Rate (Water/ Wastewater) Funding	(16,028)	(16,028)	(16,028)	–	–
Total Revenues	(16,028)	(16,028)	(16,028)	–	–
Total Net Expenditure	\$31,336	\$32,991	\$34,805	\$1,814	5.5%

Note: May not add up due to rounding.

2025 Operating Budget Pressures

Service (in \$ thousands)	Total Expenditures	Total Revenue ¹	Net Cost 2025 vs 2024	
2024 Revised Cost of Service	\$49,019	\$16,028	\$32,991	%
Cost of Living/Inflation²				
Labour Costs/Goods and Services, etc.				
CVC	719	–	719	
TRCA	(55)	–	(55)	
CH	20	–	20	
Capital (Special Levy)				
CVC				
Watershed	119	–	119	
Climate Change	335	–	335	
Infrastructure	392	–	392	
TRCA				
Watershed	815	–	815	
Climate Change	(423)	–	(423)	
Infrastructure	131	–	131	
CH				
Watershed	–	–	–	
Climate Change	–	–	–	
Infrastructure	–	–	–	
Cost Containment³				
CVC – Efficiencies Identified from Operational Cost Reviews	(233)	–	(233)	
CH – Shift in Apportionment	(6)		(6)	
Base Budget Changes Subtotal	1,814	–	1,814	
Service Level Demand	–	–	–	
Total 2025 Budget Change	1,814	–	1,814	
2025 Proposed Budget	\$50,834	\$16,028	\$34,805	5.5%

Note: may not add up due to rounding.

Operating Budget Pressure Notes

¹Revenue:

- Conservation Authorities are responsible for the protection of the watersheds that sustain the aquifers and the lake which supply the water necessary to provide water and wastewater to the Region of Peel. Revenue of \$16.028 million is provided from the Region of Peel's utility rate programs (water/wastewater) for services provided in the support of clean potable water.

²Cost of Living/Inflation:

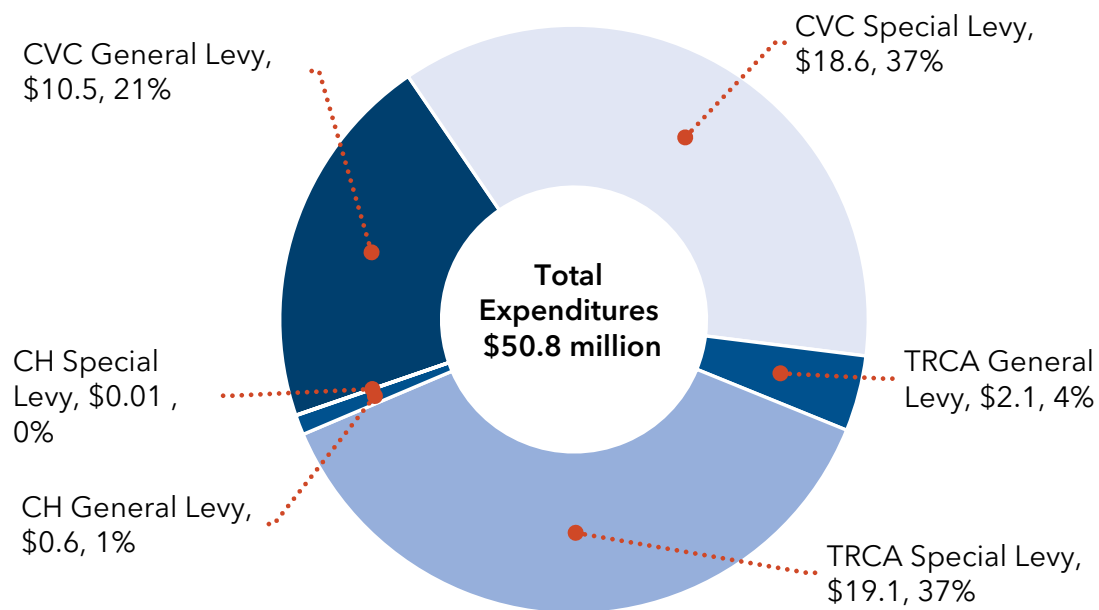
- The cost-of-living increase is driven by Labour costs, and other general inflationary pressures in Goods and services.

³Cost Containment:

- CVC cost increases mitigated by restructuring and program efficiencies which resulted in a reduction in contractual services and materials and supplies across various programs totaling about \$233,000.
- CH decrease in Peel apportionment (4.6278 per cent in 2024 vs 4.58 per cent in 2025) resulted in \$5,800 cost reduction

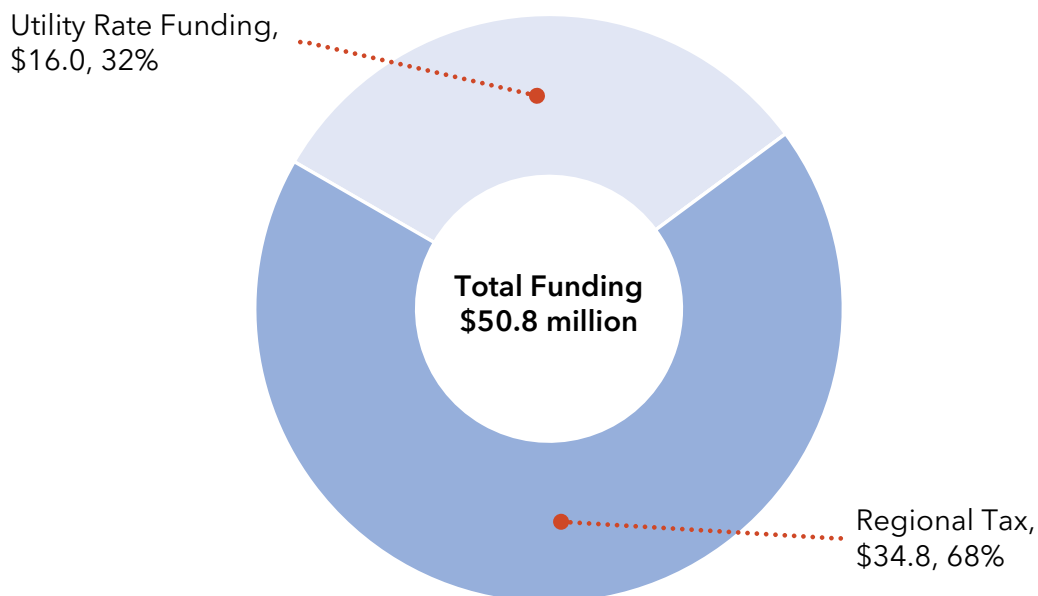
2025 Total Expenditures and Funding Source

Figure 1. 2025 Total Expenditures (in \$ millions)



Note: May not add up due to rounding.

Figure 2. 2025 Total Funding Sources (in \$ millions)



Note: May not add up due to rounding.

2025 Budget Risks

The Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution), 2023 was passed on June 8, 2023, to dissolve the Region of Peel effective January 1, 2025. On April 10, 2024, the provincial government introduced Bill 185, *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024*. The Act received Royal assent on June 6, 2024. Bill 185 repealed the provisions that legislated the dissolution of the Region of Peel. This change has served to:

- Maintain Board composition at the CAs, such that the Region continues as the participating municipality with oversight for the budget process, with continued regional responsibility in identifying non-mandatory CA Programs and Services (P&S) required by the Region.
- The provincial government had enacted changes through two pieces of legislation; Bill 109 *More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022*, and Bill 23 *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*. Some anticipated Implications of Bill 23 remain and affect CA budgets including the following:
 - Municipalities are barred from entering into voluntary agreements with CAs for review and comment on development applications, and plan review related to Natural Heritage. CA review has served to apply a technical and watershed-based lens and expertise to prevent impacts of natural hazards, to guide decision making at a reasonable cost. This downloads the responsibility and cost of potentially hiring additional staff expertise onto municipalities, which have long relied on the CA local watershed science expertise to guide decision making.
 - Proposal to freeze CA development fees, which is based on cost recovery will likely create deficits. Some CAs have built their 2025 Planning and Regulation fees budget under the assumption that the 2024 fee freeze will be lifted.
- The introduction of Bill 185, *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024*, has addressed some concerns related to Development charge collection, however, does not address the fee freeze. Expected impacts will likely materialize through out the course of 2025 and beyond.

2026–2028 Operating Forecast

Table 2. Budget (in \$ thousands)

	2024	2025	
CVC Operating (General Levy)	10,061	10,547	4.8%
CVC Capital Projects (Special Levy)	17,716	18,562	4.8%
TRCA Operating (General Levy)	2,168	2,113	(2.5%)
TRCA Capital Projects (Special Levy)	18,530	19,053	2.8%
CH Operating (General Levy)	538	552	2.7%
CH Capital Projects (Special Levy)	7	7	4.4%
Total Expenditure	49,019	50,834	3.7%
Utility Rate (Water/Wastewater) Funding	(16,028)	(16,028)	–
Net Tax Expenditure	\$32,991	\$34,805	5.5%

Note: May not add up due to rounding.

Table 3. Forecast (in \$ thousands)

	2026		2027		2028	
CVC Operating (General Levy)	12,025	14.0% ¹	12,352	2.7%	12,689	2.7%
CVC Capital Projects (Special Levy)	19,267	3.8%	19,878	3.2%	20,509	3.2%
TRCA Operating (General Levy)	2,166	2.5%	2,220	2.5%	2,276	2.5%
TRCA Capital Projects (Special Levy)	19,558	2.7%	20,103	2.8%	20,669	2.8%
CH Operating (General Levy)	573	3.7%	586	2.3%	609	3.8%
CH Capital Projects (Special Levy)	10	47.1%	18	74.7%	20	12.4%
Total Expenditure	53,599	5.44%	55,157	2.91%	56,771	2.93%
Utility Rate (Water/Wastewater) Funding	(16,028)	–	(16,028)	–	(16,028)	–
Net Tax Expenditure	\$37,570	7.9%	\$39,129	4.2%	\$40,743	4.1%

Note: May not add up due to rounding.

¹ A 14 per cent or \$1 million increase is forecasted in 2026 for CVC to include operational costs associated with the opening of the Jim Tovey Lakeview Conservation Authority Park.

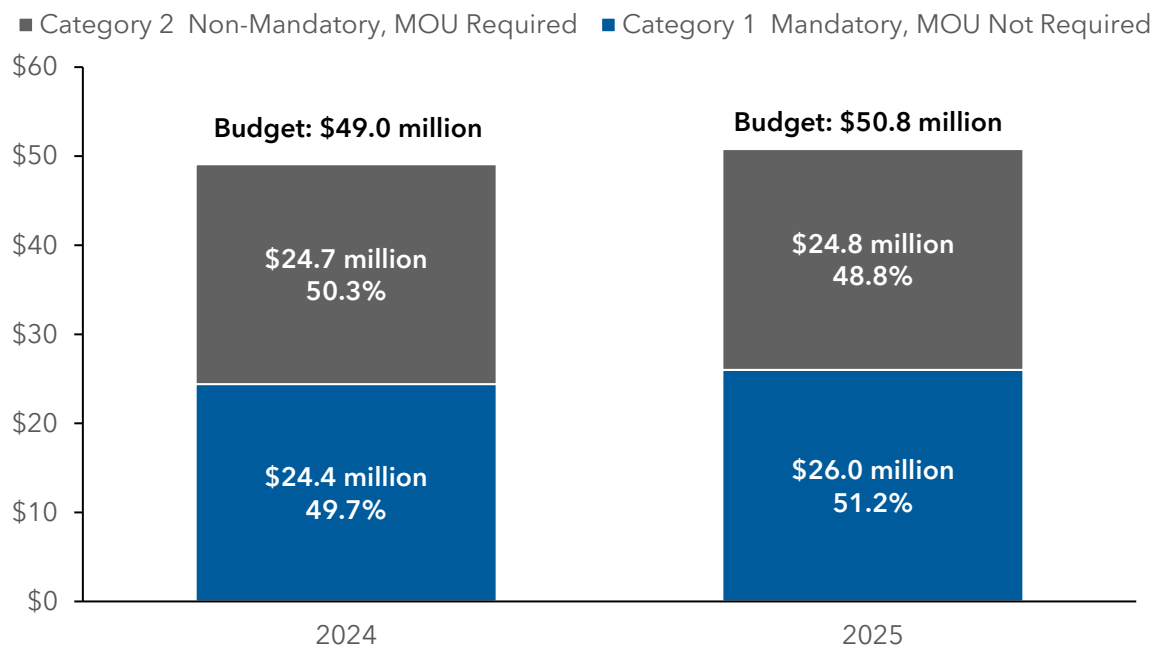
Legislated Changes

New Regulations were enacted under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, which continue the new framework for the CA Budget processes into the proposed 2025 Budget. Regulations have required Peel's P&S to be categorized in accordance with descriptions found in the Regulations and cross referenced to appropriate sections of the *Conservation Authority Act*.

New Ontario Regulations (686/21, 687/21, 404/22) introduced January 1, 2024, continue the requirement that the CAs identify their P&S to be classified into three categories as:

- **Category 1.** Mandatory P&S defined in Regulation are compulsory requirements based on the regulations (No agreement required).
- **Category 2.** Non-Mandatory/Municipally requested. Funding the P&S is discretionary and requires an MOU or agreement to be entered into between Region of Peel and the CA.
 - As shown in the chart below, for Peel 2025 proposed Budget, 48.8 per cent (or \$24.8 million) of the total \$50.8 million Budget require MOU/Agreements.
- **Category 3.** Other P&S that the CA determines advisable (Agreement required); none were identified in the 2025 proposed Budget.

Figure 3. CA 2025 Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Classifications



Note: May not add up due to rounding.

Conservation Authority – Categories Effective January 1, 2025

Table 4. Conservation Authority – Categories (in \$ thousands)

	2024 Approved Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	\$ Change over 2024	% Change over 2024
CH Operating Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$516	\$531	\$15	2.9%
CH Operating Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	\$22	\$21	(\$1)	(2.3%)
CH Capital Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$7	\$7	\$0.3	4.4%
CH Capital Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	–	–	–	–
Conservation Halton (CH)	\$545	\$559	\$15	2.7%
TRCA Operating Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$2,168	\$2,113	(\$55)	(2.5%)
TRCA Operating Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	–	–	–	–
TRCA Capital Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$6,152	\$6,740	\$588	9.6%
TRCA Capital Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	\$12,378	\$12,313	(\$65)	(0.5%)
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)	\$20,698	\$21,166	\$468	2.3%
CVC Operating Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$8,117	\$8,544	\$426	5.3%
CVC Operating Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	\$1,943	\$2,003	\$60	3.1%
CVC Capital Levy – Category 1 Mandatory	\$7,390	\$8,115	\$724	9.8%
CVC Capital Levy – Category 2 Non-Mandatory	\$10,326	\$10,447	\$122	1.2%
Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)	\$27,777	\$29,109	\$1,332	4.8%
Total CA Levy Increase	\$49,019	\$50,834	\$1,814	3.7%
Utility Rate	\$16,028	\$16,028	–	0.0%
Net Expenditures	\$32,991	\$34,805	\$1,814	5.5%

Note: May not add up due to rounding.