



February 4, 2026

To: **Conservation Halton**  
Planning and Regulations  
2596 Britannia Road West  
Burlington, ON L7P 0G3

From: **West End Home Builders' Association**  
1112 Rymal Road East  
Hamilton, Ontario L8W 3N7

### **WE HBA Response: Conservation Halton Fee Schedule**

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Ms. McCormack,

The West End Home Builders' Association ("WE HBA") is the voice of the land development, new housing and professional renovation industries in Hamilton, Burlington, and Grimsby. WE HBA represents 300 member companies made up of all disciplines involved in land development and residential construction. In the Hamilton CMA in 2024, residential construction contributed over \$4.6 billion in investment value and provided over 21,000 jobs paying about \$1.6 billion in wages. These jobs and investments now stand in grave jeopardy as the residential construction industry across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area plunges into the most severe downturns in decades.

On behalf of the WE HBA, thank you for your January 19, 2026 correspondence outlining Conservation Halton's proposed 2026 Planning and Permit Application Review Fees. WE HBA appreciates Conservation Halton's decision to pursue a measured, inflationary approach for the 2026 fee schedule. Given the uncertainty associated with the Province's proposed consolidation of Conservation Authorities and the potential for broader changes to overall fee structures, this approach provides welcome predictability for landowners and development proponents during an already challenging economic period.

We also wish to acknowledge the recent provincial freeze on conservation authority fees, and recognize the restraint shown over the past two years. In this context, WE HBA is supportive of the proposed 2% fee increase for 2026 as a reasonable and pragmatic adjustment that balances cost recovery needs with affordability considerations for the development industry.

We further appreciate and support the three key rationales outlined in your letter for maintaining this approach in 2026. First, we agree that a modest, interim increase appropriately minimizes disruption and uncertainty while the Province considers potential consolidation and any resulting need for a broader re-evaluation of fee structures. Second, WE HBA recognizes Conservation Halton's ongoing efforts to streamline planning and permitting processes and adapt to legislative and regulatory changes, and agrees that an updated fee review reflecting these efficiencies would be appropriate should consolidation not proceed as anticipated. Third, we strongly support the recognition of current economic and market uncertainty, and the need to avoid compounding cost pressures on landowners and builders at a time when increasing housing supply remains a shared provincial priority.



More broadly, WE HBA values the positive and constructive working relationship we have with Conservation Halton. Our members and the broader development community appreciate the tangible progress made in recent years to improve process efficiency, accountability, and transparency, as well as Conservation Halton's efforts to engage more regularly and meaningfully with the development sector.

We look forward to continuing our collaborative work with Conservation Halton in 2026 on matters of mutual interest, and appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of acknowledgement in advance of your Board's consideration of the proposed fee schedule.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

**Mike Collins-Williams, MCIP, RPP**  
Chief Executive Officer  
West End Home Builders' Association