



The Corporation of the Township of King Notice of Motion

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 26, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Schaefer

Seconded by: Councillor Asselstine

Subject: **Member Motion from Councillor Schaefer Re Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities**

Whereas the Province has posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) “Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario’s conservation authorities” (ERO No. 025 1257), which would consolidate Ontario’s 36 conservation authorities into seven (7) regional conservation authorities, with the stated aims of improving consistency, modernizing service delivery, and freeing up resources for front line work; and

Whereas Conservation Authorities in Ontario are respected agencies and seen as a model across Canada with their unique structure determined by watersheds; and

Whereas the proposed consolidation is intended by the Province to reduce administrative duplication, standardize practices, and enhance flood risk management and permitting consistency across larger regions; and

Whereas the Township of King is presently served by two (2) Conservation Authorities, being the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA); and

Whereas under the proposed consolidation the Township of King would still be served by two (2) Conservation Authorities being the Central Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority and the Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority; and

Whereas the Lake Simcoe watershed includes parts of the Township of King and is governed by the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008 and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP)—a comprehensive, watershed based, legislated plan that relies on specialized local expertise and implementation to protect and restore the ecological health of Lake Simcoe and its tributaries; and

Whereas the Province’s proposed consolidation risks diminishing locally responsive, watershed based decision making, which partner organizations and sector bodies have cautioned could undermine accountability, service continuity, and the effectiveness of natural hazard management, unless significant safeguards are built into governance, funding, and transition arrangements; and

Whereas even under a regional model aiming to reduce the number of authorities per municipality, King Township would continue to be served by two (2) conservation authorities, meaning the transition appears to offer limited benefit locally and may introduce delays and erode access to local, specialized knowledge critical for watershed planning, permitting, and LSPP implementation;

Now therefore be it resolved that:

1. The Council for the Township of King opposes the proposed consolidation of Conservation Authorities and fails to see benefits to the Township of this initiative for the following reasons:
 - a. The proposed consolidation generates concerns regarding the potential loss of local knowledge, risks to watershed-based planning and permitting, and limited demonstrable benefits to King Township.
 - b. The potential reduction or elimination of local representation on the newly reconstituted Conservation Authority Boards would reduce proportional representation (population and watershed area) that ensures smaller municipalities like King have voting influence and municipal appointment authority to select representatives with expertise in planning, environmental management and local knowledge contributing to positive decision-making for the Township of King.
 - c. The anticipated negative impacts on the need to maintain and prioritize specialized TRCA and LSRCA knowledge and expertise to make informed watershed-based decisions, including robust support for the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan's objectives, monitoring, and enforcement.
2. The Township of King strongly encourages the province, prior to taking any further action to implement the proposed consolidation, to engage in meaningful discourse with representatives of all impacted stakeholders, including Conservation Ontario, member municipalities, conservation authorities, development sector, and Indigenous communities with regard to the following objectives:
 - a. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities to prevent any service gaps in permitting and planning, and explicitly confirm how watershed plans, sub-watershed plans, and the LSPP in particular, will be maintained, applied, and enforced under a regional structure.
 - b. Preparing transition plans that mitigate service and regulatory risks before implementing any changes.
 - c. Providing for service-level protections that ensure local offices and staff presence are maintained within each sub-watershed/upper-tier municipality, and appropriate local representation is maintained, to preserve local knowledge and ensure timely, accessible service for residents, landowners, and municipal partners.

- d. Ensuring that data integration be a precondition of any transition, with the establishment of a coordinated data consolidation and standards framework so that hydrologic, natural hazard, and planning data are consistent across municipalities and usable at both regional and local scales.
 - e. Implementing transparent, consultative budgeting, including joint budget sessions with member municipalities, online publication of detailed budgets and project updates with clear levy explanations, and provision of multi-year financial outlooks to support local capital planning.
 - f. Providing fair and equitable transition funding and cost-sharing, including provincial funding for transition costs and providing fair and equitable long term funding formulae that does not disadvantage smaller municipalities, and preserves existing municipal-CA MOUs, to avoid service disruption.
 - g. Encouraging consistency without sacrificing local performance, by supporting province-wide shared tools and back-office efficiencies only where they demonstrably improve front-line service, while retaining local boards or decision-making authority to safeguard watershed-specific accountability.
 - h. Promoting strengthened community relationships, directing that any new model must continue and enhance on the ground stewardship programs (tree planting, workshops, flood preparedness), and deploy user friendly online portals for permits, mapping and education to improve transparency and convenience.
3. That a copy of this resolution be circulated to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, local MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Conservation Ontario, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), and all York Region municipalities.