



Hamilton Waterfront Trust

Connecting You to the Water's Edge

Hamilton Waterfront Trust to be Dissolved and Assets Turned Over to the City March 31, 2025

Over the course of 2025, the Trust will dissolve and enter into a transfer agreement to turn its assets and programming over to the City of Hamilton.

For over 20 years, the Hamilton Waterfront Trust has led land development and community programming down at the water's edge as an independent organization at an arm's length from the City. The City and the Trust have a management agreement in place outlining the services the Trust must provide and how projects are managed.

Projects including the Hamilton Beach Trail and Waterfront Trail extension, Lakeland Centre, Windermere Basin, and All Our Relations were managed by the Trust and turned over to the City upon their completion. They are now a vital part of the infrastructure that connects communities across the waterfront and have been well used and loved by many.

The Trust has also provided access to the Hamilton Waterfront Outdoor Rink, led harbour tours on the Hamiltonian Tour Boat and the Waterfront Trolley, and coordinated popular music and entertainment programming down at the waterfront for tourists and residents alike.

Most recently, the Trust has managed projects on Piers 5 and 7, which will be wrapping up soon. The management of these projects has been a significant source of the Trust's current income and without that income the Trust risks future financial instability.

The Trust has faced a number of challenges related to its finances over the years. The City has had to step in, from time to time, to provide funding to the Trust to cover its losses. These ongoing financial crises created confusion, mistrust, and a lack of public confidence.

When the new Board was appointed in 2022, it immediately began to address these issues. In May 2023, the Trust hired a new Executive Director, Christian Wiley, who led staff to transform the Trust's operations, finances, and programming to ensure its sustainability in the short term while the Board considered its options.

Though the Trust is in a better financial position than it was previously, it is still not able to maintain future operations without continued financial support from the City.

As a result, last year, the Board made the difficult decision to notify the City of its intention to dissolve the Trust and hand both its assets and programming responsibilities over to the City of Hamilton to ensure their sustainability.

During this time, the Trust will continue to communicate transparently with the public and will focus on continuing to deliver its programs and services with as few interruptions as possible.

Residents can expect to continue to experience the same quality programming at the waterfront they have come to enjoy including skates at the outdoor rink throughout the year, tours on the Hamiltonian, and rides on the trolley with an ice cream cone.

The Trust will also be releasing its audited financial statements shortly after its upcoming Board meeting on May 27 and the City will be providing more information about its plans in the coming months.

The Trust will do everything it can to support the City to make waterfront operations more financially stable, to improve and expand current programming offerings, and to explore opportunities to make our waterfront even better.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank our dedicated staff for all they have done to steward these assets and prepare the Trust to be handed over to the City. As we wind up the Trust, we'll keep everyone in the community informed about how we plan to mark the Trust's impact on Hamilton and its history.



Cameron Kroetsch
Chair, Board of Trustees
Hamilton Waterfront Trust