



## City of Hamilton

# GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE ADDENDUM

**Meeting #:** 22-019  
**Date:** November 21, 2022  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Council Chambers  
Hamilton City Hall  
71 Main Street West

Stephanie Paparella, Legislative Coordinator (905) 546-2424 ext. 3993

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### Pages

#### 4. DELEGATION REQUESTS

##### 4.1. Respecting the 2023 Budget

*f.	Kojo Damptey, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (Just Recovery Coalition) (in person)	3
*g.	Karl Andrus, Hamilton Community Benefits Network (virtually)	4
*h.	Ian Borsuk, Environment Hamilton (Virtually)	49
*i.	Christine Seketa (in person)	50
*j.	Medora Uppal, YWCA Hamilton (in person)	53
*k.	Jessica Bonilla-Damptey, Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area) (in person)	54

#### \*6. COMMUNICATIONS

*6.1.	Correspondence from the United Way Halton-Hamilton (as members of the Just Recovery Coalition), respecting the existing policy recommendations provided in the Just Recovery Policy Paper 2021	59
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Recommendation: Be received.

- \*6.2. Correspondence from the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, respecting the 2023 City of Hamilton Budgeting Process and 2022 Municipal Election Priorities 61

Recommendation: Be received.

- \*6.3. 14 For Progress respecting the 2023 Budget 78

Recommendation: Be received.

**\*7. MOTIONS**

Submitted on Mon, 11/14/2022 - 15:24

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee

General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?

In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?

No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information

Kojo Dampety

Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

Preferred Pronoun

he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request

Delegating on Public Budget Day (Nov 21st) as part of the Just Recovery Coalition

Will you be requesting funds from the City?

No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?

Yes

Submitted on Tue, 11/15/2022 - 19:36

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee  
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?  
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?  
No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information  
Karl Andrus  
Hamilton Community Benefits Network (HCBN)

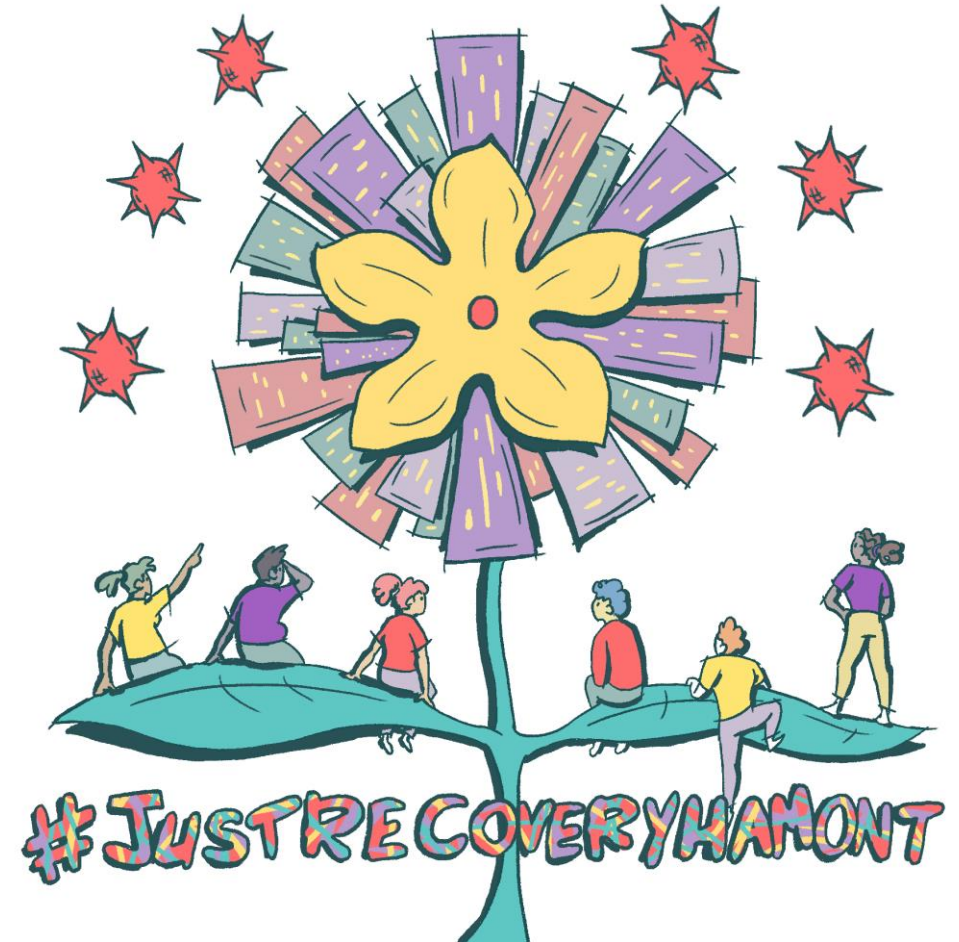
Reason(s) for delegation request  
To speak to the 2023 budget process

Will you be requesting funds from the City?  
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?  
No

# Just Recovery Hamilton Coalition

- Came together in Nov 2020 amid the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Advocate for Municipal Budget
- Seeks to breakdown silos between organizations
- Found many common areas of intersection in our works

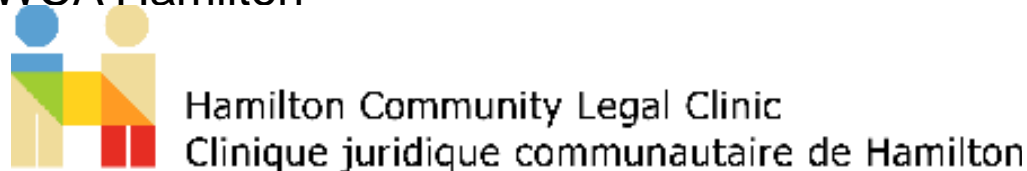


# Just Recovery Hamilton Coalition



Working with HCCI, helped build the Coalition of 11 local Not-For-Profits.

- ACORN Hamilton
- Disability Justice Network of Ontario
- Environment Hamilton
- Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
- Hamilton Community Benefits Network
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
- Hamilton District Labour Council
- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
- Sexual Assault Centre for Hamilton and Area
- Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
- Speqtrum
- United Way Halton & Hamilton
- YWCA Hamilton



# Just Recovery Document

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## Executive Summary

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Surge of Unemployment

Disparate Impacts

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Labour Force

Child Care

Addressing Violence

Access to Menstrual Products

## Mobility Justice

## Disability Justice

Emergency response people with disabilities

Accessing temporary and permanent housing

Addressing Violence against People with Disabilities

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## A JUST RECOVERY FOR HAMILTON

Municipal Policy, Investment and Opportunities for a more equitable COVID-19 recovery in 2021





# Just Recovery Document

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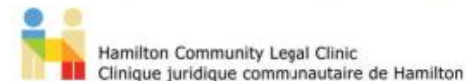


## A JUST RECOVERY FOR HAMILTON

Municipal Policy, Investment and Opportunities for a more equitable COVID-19 recovery in 2021



**Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction**





HAMILTON REGION

# Hate crimes, affordable housing, universal basic income: Community coalition asks local federal candidates about ‘just recovery’ strategies

Community organization coalition videos pose questions to federal leaders about a ‘just recovery’ in Hamilton

## ‘On the brink of collapse’: Just Recovery Hamilton coalition pushes for equity in city budget deliberations

A year on, Just Recovery Hamilton recommendations for an equitable pandemic recovery still need addressing, say community organizations

HAMILTON REGION

## Just Recovery Hamilton coalition implores city to adopt equity recommendations ahead of budget deliberations

Less than 20 per cent of the group’s 150 recommendations for a just pandemic recovery have been heeded



By **Sebastian Bron** Spectator Reporter  
Wed., Feb. 2, 2022 | timer 1 min. read

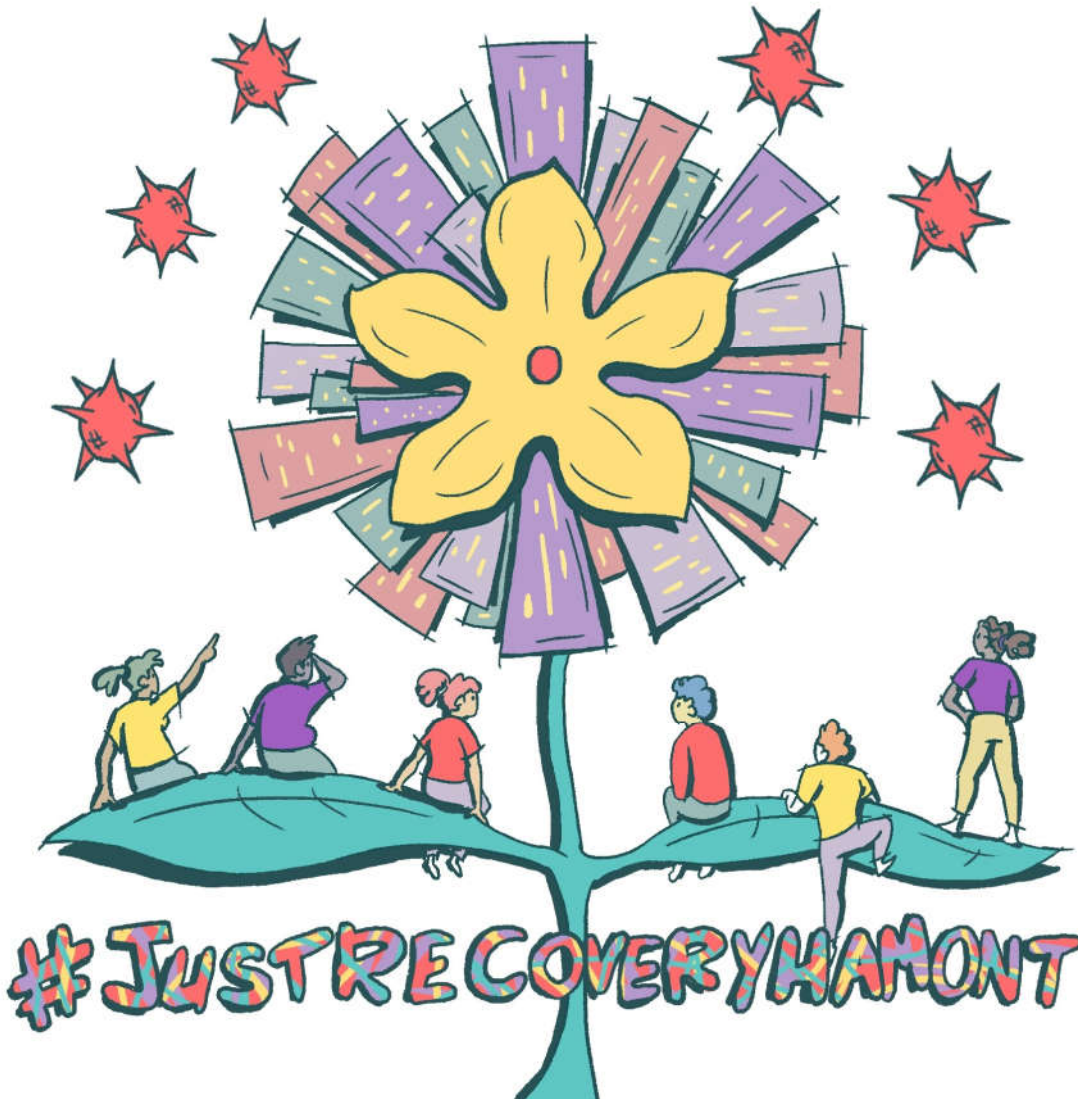
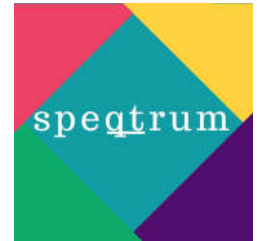
Hamilton

## Non-profits call for robust response to needs of most vulnerable ahead of budget



‘This is an unprecedented time and we need to see an unprecedented response,’ advocate says

[Desmond Brown](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jan 15, 2021 2:20 PM ET | Last Updated: January 15, 2021



# A JUST RECOVERY FOR HAMILTON

Municipal Policy, Investment and Opportunities for a more equitable COVID-19 recovery in 2021



**Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction**



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## Land Acknowledgement

We are grateful to be residing on the traditional lands of the **Huron-Wendat**, the **Anishnabeg**, the **Chippewa**, the **Haudenosaunee**, and most recently the **Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation**.



The Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt

This land is governed by the **Dish with One Spoon Wampum**. This is a historical pre-contact wampum, a part of the Great Peace of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and was an agreement with the Anishnabeg to protect and be stewards of the land and to share its resources. The Bowl, which was originally represented by the beaver tail, represents the lands of the Great Lakes Basin, including all of its water, plants, animals, and various peoples. Through the Great Peace, all of the Haudenosaunee weapons were buried under the Tree of Peace. The wampum invites us to intentionally put down weapons, harsh words, or uncaring hearts and so come to the bowl with a spoon, and other tools with no sharp edges, to feed ourselves and others. The Dish with One Spoon wampum says we must take care of the land and ensure that there is always food left in the bowl for future generations.



The Two Row Wampum Belt

Another important wampum that covers this territory is the **Two Row Wampum**, which was made between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Dutch. The Two Rows represent the distinct nations of the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch. Each row runs in parallel to the other, but never crossing paths. The Two Row Wampum signified that the two distinct nations could continue their cultures and traditions alongside each other, without forcing either nation to be assimilated by the other.

Both of these wampums tell us that Indigenous peoples on this land were committed to peace with other nations and to honour each other's identity and self-determination.

We further acknowledge that the land on which Hamilton was settled is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. It is important for us to honour this truth and acknowledge the ongoing genocide of Indigenous peoples in Canada. We gather today on stolen land and at the displacement of Indigenous peoples.

Living on this territory makes all people in Hamilton treaty peoples, those who come as settlers, or immigrants of this generation or earlier generations, as well as those brought involuntarily as a result of the TransAtlantic Slave Trade and Imperialism. As we write here today, we live in the contradictions of being treaty peoples in the mists of broken treaties and persistent inaction and idling. We commit to searching for the right words, thoughts, hearts and actions to align ourselves with Indigenous rights and self-determination.

## Executive Summary

This report addresses COVID-19 recovery with a focus on communities within the city that have experienced the disproportionate negative impacts of the pandemic and addresses what it will mean to create a Just Recovery for Hamilton. By highlighting identified needs, disparities and gaps in opportunity, the report has identified opportunities for change. The recommendations that follow can allow for a new direction for the city of Hamilton as we deliberate on how city funds should be allocated to benefit members of our community. The recommendations that follow are a result of the experiences of the non-profit organizations participating and as such, we recognize that it is not a comprehensive account of all issues facing our city and its residents. Ongoing consultation with the community will further strengthen our city's recovery, therefore, this should not be considered an exhaustive collection of recommendations, but rather serves as a resource to help the ongoing discussion of elements required for a Just Recovery in Hamilton.

There were considerable financial constraints on City finances long before Covid-19, as community needs have consistently outpaced funding to adequately address the social and health issues facing our residents. These issues are outlined here to help form a basis of understanding and to help explore recovery solutions. In this light, the positive work and policy development that has occurred in Hamilton over the years, by City of Hamilton staff and councillors, has not gone unnoticed.

A few of these noted successes include:

- Hamilton became the first municipality in Canada to license and restrict the growth of predatory payday lenders, protecting borrowers while clamping down on an exploitative industry.
- In 2017, significant local funds were allocated to the repair of Hamilton's social housing stock. When provincial or federal governments have left Hamiltonians behind through cuts to critical programs, City Council has often looked to ways to bolster.
- Hamilton has worked to make public transit more accessible to working people through the Low Income and Seniors Transit Passes
- 300 social housing units were put back into circulation following extensive repairs by the City in 2020
- Increased investment in cycle and green infrastructure

COVID-19 has clearly demonstrated that our issues of physical health, mental health, poverty, race, gender, disability, workforce conditions, sexual orientation, housing, privilege and status, childcare and social support systems are all connected to the well being and health of our citizens, environment and economy. This includes our relationship to the land as it pertains to Indigenous rights and the environment. Our collective success in recovery requires that our solutions be fully integrated. This paper explores a Just Recovery for Hamilton in nine key themes. They are Investing in Women, Mobility Justice, Disability Justice, Housing as a Human Right, Tackling Systemic Racism, Investing in decent jobs, decent wages and our local economy, Focus on Inclusive City Building, Investing in Green Infrastructure and Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities

This report outlines recommendations of what a Just Recovery could mean for Hamilton if we could do just that. And while the report is directed to Hamilton City Council, we appreciate that:

There are areas of responsibility that are outside of the scope of the city and which lie with provincial or federal governments.

City funds are not limitless and budgets are increasingly strained, in part, as a result of the pandemic.

Still, we recognize the collective responsibility of the City of Hamilton, local business, community, service providers and residents to work together and continue to advocate for the necessary changes and additional funding from other levels of government to not only recover from COVID-19 but to build a better, healthier and more equitable community.

This report outlines numerous recommendations of what a Just Recovery could mean for Hamilton if we could do just that.



## Introduction



Demolition of Firestone Tire plant in Hamilton, Ontario – Source Construct Connect

### City in Crisis

Hamilton is a city with a deep working-class industrial history. The decline of the manufacturing sector over two decades have combined with external economic challenges to create a community where some residents thrive while many others live in abject poverty, experience social exclusion and are fearful for their safety.

It is a tale of two cities: the staggering difference between the federal riding of Hamilton Centre, third poorest in the country, with a median income of \$43,717; and Flamborough-Glanbrook, at 34th richest with a median income of \$99,355, shown in 2016 Census data, brings this picture of income inequality into focus. The steady loss of good-paying blue-collar jobs has only amplified the contrast in between areas of the city. Life expectancy mirrors the income inequality in the city, with an appalling difference of six years in life expectancy between the aforementioned ridings.

Hamilton has seen a massive influx of capital investment and over \$1 billion a year in new development permits, concentrated mostly in the downtown core. Cranes tower over the city for the first time in more than 30 years. Construction and development are booming. Yet income inequality, child poverty rates, higher mortality rates in some downtown neighbourhoods, displacement, and renovictions are escalating. It is in these same lower city neighbourhoods where vulnerable residents are exposed to some of the highest air pollution levels in the province, and where people struggle most with extreme weather caused by the climate crisis.

Those with lived experience on Ontario Works (OW), the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), the retired poor on Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), and those living on the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Disability Benefit have long known the struggle of living on inadequate income and substandard supports in Hamilton. Their situation continues to worsen.

Wages across the city continue to not keep pace with increases in costs, especially rent. Although Hamilton's pre-COVID-19 unemployment rates are lower than the country as a whole, those statistics belie an unfortunate reality, a growing number of those jobs are precarious, non-union, low wage, and temporary leaving more and more residents of the City of Hamilton behind. A full 31% of jobs in Hamilton were precarious, higher than the GHTA average. A study released by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives published July 18, 2019, called *Unaccommodating: Housing Rental Wage in Canada*, shows to afford a one-bedroom apartment in Hamilton making minimum wage (\$14/h) one would have to work 54h a week, or 65 hours for a two-bedroom. You need \$18.99/h for that same one-bedroom to work only 40 hours a week, and \$22.78/h for the two-bedroom. Rents continue to skyrocket: the average rent in the downtown core and the Mountain has risen 40 % in 8 years. Tenants of all kinds face increasing displacement and renoviction pressure from landlords to capitalize on the new higher market rates, pushing them into an already unaffordable market. 45% of tenants in the city are already living in unaffordable housing.



Hamilton, like Canada as a whole, faces the additional pressure of an aging population's requirements for services. Those with disabilities suffer more deeply the effects of inequality. In 2017, Statistics Canada reported that persons with disabilities make up 27.7% of the total population of the Hamilton CMA. This is much higher than the national average. Current data has not yet been processed as to how that disability density is disturbed, however in 2006, Hamilton had the largest density of people with disabilities per capita in Ontario.

Hamilton's long struggle with systemic racism and undercurrents of hate found itself further challenged as far-right extremists found fertile ground to gather. Hamilton Pride 2018 and 2019 both faced violent attacks. Hamilton made national news as the so-called "Yellow-Vest" anti-immigration extremists clashed with counter protesters in front of City Hall. Statistics Canada reported in 2019, "Hamilton has the highest rate of police-reported hate crimes in Canada — almost three times more than Toronto. "

For decades, activists living with the effects of these deep systemic issues have rallied, protested, and raised the flag to anyone who would listen.



### Surge of Unemployment

Amid this already challenging social and economic picture came the first wave of the Global COVID-19 pandemic. A state of emergency was declared by Premier Doug Ford on March 17, 2020. That same day Mayor Fred Eisenberger exercised the authority granted by the province declaring "... an emergency in the City of Hamilton under section 4 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990 (EMCPA) concurrent with this order."

The first wave brought a series of lockdown measures to arrest the spread of the pandemic. Non-essential businesses, daycares, schools, government offices were shuttered. Huge changes to our way of life began, in an instant, as the city struggled to keep cases and deaths low. The pandemic increased food costs, exacerbating the long-standing issue of food security for many Hamiltonians including families, precariously housed or employed single persons, and individuals requiring special diets. Foodbanks, even before the pandemic, are rarely able to provide more than three days of food. Foodbanks struggled to create the logistics to deliver to high risk individuals, seniors and those with disabilities.

Travel quickly became very difficult for disabled people, as the City of Hamilton instituted a protocol requiring people in wheelchairs to have a support person to take public transportation. Many people with disabilities and seniors found themselves isolated during the pandemic from family, friends and the support services they depended on.

Essential service workers who did not face unemployment found additional challenges as the city's public transit system undertook drastic restrictions of levels of service. Workers were often faced with the tough choice of choosing a taxi or rideshare they could not afford, leaving hours earlier, or risking the questionable choice of public transit for individuals who have health conditions that make them an at-risk group for COVID-19.

Between February and June of 2020, almost 60,000 residents in the Hamilton CMA (which includes Burlington and Grimsby) lost employment. The Hamilton regional unemployment rate used by the Employment Insurance was 13.1 % as of December 4<sup>th</sup>. The SPRC reports “The unemployment rate is higher than it has been in at least the last 20 years”. The SPRC further reports, “The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, with the largest impacts on younger workers, women, and part-time workers. Racialization status is not included in labour force data, but other data sources indicate racialized workers are also facing the harshest effects of the employment impacts of COVID-19. People with disabilities across Canada struggle with accessing employment, either because of discrimination or because the workforce, in general, is ableist and not built for everyone. More than that, we have constructed society to be a place where one’s value comes from their ability to produce. The Second Wave of the pandemic has led to a new series of shutdowns and restrictions and even further economic impacts, coupled with lessening income support from the federal Government. Reporting on the Second Wave is only just now underway but early data points to an even bleaker outlook for the health, employment and social picture in the City.

### Disparate Impacts

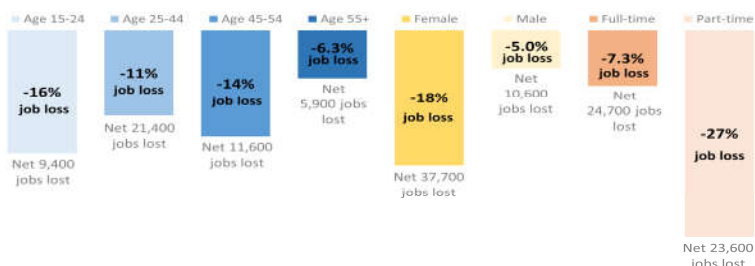


Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre – Source Globe and Mail

In the Hamilton CMA between February and July 2020, workers aged 15-24, women, and part-time workers have been hardest hit by job loss (see Chart 2). Workers aged 15-24 saw a 16% decrease in employment, while part-time workers experienced a 27% decrease and women experienced a 17.6% decrease in work in the February-July period. Compared to other demographic/employment categories, these decreases are significant and demonstrate the precarious employment of these groups. The local data on employment impacts presented in this report reflects provincial and national trends. In communities across Canada, COVID-19 has disproportionately affected certain groups and has magnified inequalities in the labour market. As the Canadian Labour Congress states in a recent report, “low-wage service workers—particularly women, young workers, workers of colour, and vulnerable workers in precarious forms of employment—disproportionately suffered layoffs and loss of hours of work.” The Ontario Nonprofit Network has also released findings that economic losses have fallen heavily on women, particularly women experiencing other intersecting inequalities, such as racialization, poverty, newcomer status, and more and called for building gender equality into recovery strategies.

#### Metropolitan Area (CMA), February-July 2020 (Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey)

Chart 2, Percent change in employment and total jobs lost by age group, gender, and full/part-time status, Hamilton Census



Research is also pointing to amplified impacts of COVID-19 for those who have struggled with chronic exposure to air pollution. This means that lower city residents in some of Hamilton’s most vulnerable neighbourhoods face a greater risk of amplified impacts from COVID-19 because of the air they must breathe.

David Lepofsky, the chair of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Alliance, has expressed huge concern about a vacuum that exists in Ontario’s triage policy for COVID-19. Those with disabilities faced barriers to care and medical discrimination before the pandemic. With hospitals becoming overwhelmed there is great concern by activists and those with disabilities about who decides what sort of access will be given to scarce, life-saving treatments when hospitals become overwhelmed. Lepofsky points out “the danger of the vacuum is that if triage does take place, individual doctors will apply their individual discretion and that could force or lead a doctor to [discriminate based on their own systemic biases]”.

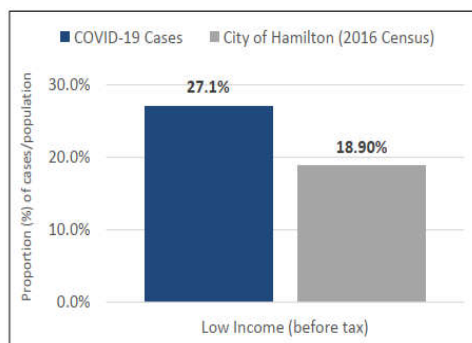
As of the publishing of this paper Hamilton’s current case count was around 7,300 with the disease tragically taking the lives of 196 residents. We are just now learning that even those who recover, may face long term health impacts. Between March 1, 2020 and August 14, 2020, the city of Hamilton reports that just under 1,000 residents had COVID-19. Public Health gathered social determinants of health (SDOH) data from 630 people that contracted the virus. They reported to council the following Findings:

**“Our data suggests that racialized populations, health care workers and people living with low-income are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in Hamilton. We also found that males and seniors are more likely to be hospitalized and die from COVID-19.**

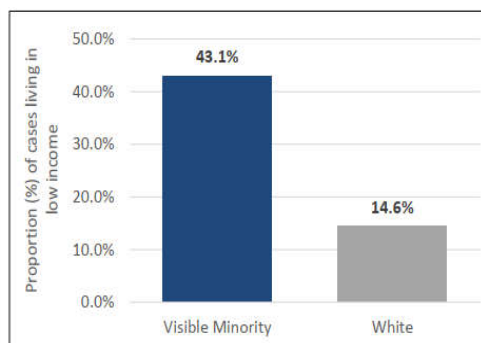
**These findings are not unique to Hamilton. Toronto Public Health also found that people in the lowest income group have the highest rate of COVID-19 and that there is a higher case and hospitalization rate for racialized communities. Similar trends have been shown in Waterloo Region3 and in the City of Ottawa.**

**The COVID-19 pandemic is magnifying the impact of the SDOH and the inequities that have long existed in communities. For example, we know that people living with low incomes have difficulty affording basic resources (e.g. food, paying bills). During a pandemic, difficult choices between needed supplies (e.g. hand sanitizer, masks) and basic resources is exacerbated.”**

The same report also noted cases of COVID-19 are much more likely to live in low-income households compared to Hamilton’s Population. The report highlighted the pandemic reality that visible minority COVID-19 cases were three times more likely to live in low-income households compared to white cases.



**Figure 4.** Proportion (%) of COVID-19 cases living in low income households, City of Hamilton, Mar 1 – Aug 31, 2020.



**Figure 5.** Proportion (%) of white and visible minority COVID-19 cases living in low income households, City of Hamilton, Mar 1 – Aug 31, 2020.

The internet, smartphones and computers -- tools that many of us are using to offset the loneliness and other effects of this pandemic -- are unavailable to many lowest income neighbours. Only around 80% of people in Hamilton have access to the internet, and those in the lowest income brackets are among the majority of individuals without internet access. Among those without internet or a computer, vital access through libraries and other institutions has been severely limited, and at times cut off completely. At a time when connections to friends, family, community and social services are most needed, community members struggling with fixed low incomes do not have access to the internet, smartphones and computers.

Renewed lockdown measures in the second wave are leaving many throughout the city feeling isolated. Those facing isolation, especially in long-term care homes, retirement homes, and residential care facilities struggle most under the COVID-19 pandemic burden.

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed increased pressure on residents already squeezed, neglected and ignored by both the federal and provincial governments. Those on fixed income of social assistance, OAS and GIS saw little support from the provincial and federal governments. Their income has been stretched to breaking by the demands of the pandemic.

The Landlord Tenant Board (LTB) has received over 400 applications for evictions for non-payment of rent in Hamilton alone. Across the province more than 7000 have been issued. As federal support programs such as Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) and Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) wind down, the employment picture continues to look bleak and future evictions can be expected. Growing number of tent encampments are springing up across the city. Hamilton's often hidden housing crisis is now visible in many parks, wooded areas and lots across the city. Intersectional understandings of COVID-19 impacts demonstrate that different social factors work together to "compound inequalities



Ferguson Street Encampment Site

COVID-19 impacts demonstrate that different social factors work together to "compound inequalities and mediate experiences of marginalization," explains the YWCA Toronto report "An Intersectional Approach to COVID She-covey." As the City of Hamilton looks towards a post COVID world, we must not return to the status quo. It is no longer enough to talk about accessibility, we need to discuss social, racial and disability justice—the ways in which all institutions leave people behind on the basis of disability, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and the myriad of challenges amplified by the pandemic. We don't need a "New Normal;" we need to make substantive changes that will improve the lives of Hamilton residents, especially those bearing the highest costs of the pandemic.

**The #JustRecoveryHamOnt coalition are suggesting nine themes with over a hundred recommendations to chart a path forward. These themes are:**

- **Investing in Women**
- **Mobility Justice**
- **Housing as a Human Right**
- **Tackling Systemic Racism**
- **Investing**
- **Investing in decent jobs, decent wages, & our local economy**
- **Focusing on Inclusive City Building**
- **Investing in Green Infrastructure**
- **Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities** Investing in Women



The global COVID-19 pandemic has had clear impacts on our collective physical and mental health and the division of gendered labour within the home and within our society; child and family responsibilities; our safety at home; and many other aspects of our daily lives. At the onset of the pandemic, economists and policy analysts warned that Canadian women would pay a heavier price than men during the pandemic-induced recession and that, without swift action, decades of advances in women's labour-force participation would recede. As women adjusted to an ever-changing world, all levels of government have failed to adequately prevent a decrease in women's engagement with the labour force, failed to sustain benefits and protections for frontline workers, failed to ensure safe and affordable childcare options, and failed to strengthen the capacity for the sectors that address violence against women and shelter women experiencing homelessness and/or fleeing from violence.

The impact of COVID-19 has been massively gendered. Women, specifically women of colour, make up the majority of frontline essential workers in occupations known as the 5Cs: caring, cashiering, catering, cleaning and clerical functions. These women are putting their bodies at risk to maintain the health and safety of our communities working in roles including personal support workers, grocery store workers, nurses, midwives, and long-term care workers. Women constitute 90% of Canadian nurses, 75% of respiratory therapists, and 90% of personal support workers in long-term care and nursing homes (Statistics Canada, 2020). Women were also overrepresented in the figures of who were furloughed or laid off during the earliest months of the pandemic; women represented 70% of all job losses in Canada and, unlike men, were unable to access employment as readily following the first wave of the pandemic.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, demands to support survivors of sexual assault continue. Crisis line calls have increased. Many survivors of violence are impacted by a lack of adequate income supports, safe and fair workplaces, and access to affordable basic services like child care, transportation, digital access and eldercare. In one year, Ontario sexual assault centres took over 48,000 Crisis Line calls, supported over 16,000 individual survivors of sexual violence, and provided 3000 prevention education workshops to youth and others in the community.

Since 2014, sexual assault centres across Ontario have seen a significant influx of new referrals, crisis line calls and intake for counselling services. Awareness of sexual violence is increasing — a significant and positive achievement. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, more survivors of gender-based violence were reaching out for support than ever before. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many community-based sexual assault centres in Ontario have been helping support-seekers with little or no income to access basic practical supports, such as providing grocery store and food vouchers.



While shelters for women and children experiencing violence provide a critical – and often life-saving – service in our communities, many were at their limit in resources and shelter space well before the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is important to recognize that for a recovery plan to truly succeed, it must prioritize equity -- which includes focusing on the detrimental impacts COVID-19 has had on communities oppressed by their gender and/or sexuality. The recovery plan must acknowledge the disproportionate impacts COVID-19 has had on Black, Indigenous, People of colour, and must intentionally position these communities at the center of its planning and relief delivery plans. The recovery plan must find ways to support all types of households, and ensure that no member of the household is left behind including single mothers, women who had to leave the workforce, persons on social assistance or disability based social assistance, and women working in the 5C professions (caring, cashiering, catering, cleaning and clerical functions).

In order to realize a Just Recovery for women, the City of Hamilton must:

#### **Urgent COVID Response**

- 1. Ensure intersectional gender analysis (GBA+) is conducted, by women and non-binary people, on all forthcoming pandemic policies not only for understanding differential impacts, but also for designing policies.**
- 2. Establish a Gender Advisory Council that provides guidance to the municipal government on pandemic policies.**

#### **Continual Response**

- 3. Implement the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls for Justice in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Report.**
- 4. Ensure that Indigenous peoples and especially women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities, and that they gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.**
- 5. Provide adequate, stable, equitable, and ongoing funding for Indigenous-centered and community-based health and wellness services that are accessible and culturally appropriate, and meet the health and wellness needs of Indigenous communities, especially women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.**
- 6. Tracking the success and status of Hamilton women, including employment, leadership makeup, workforce participation, other vital statistics, childcare spaces, and childcare needs.**

#### **Labour Force**

##### **Urgent COVID Response**

- 7. Invest in programs that focus on retraining and professional development across sectors for women who have experienced job loss through EI. For people who are not eligible for EI, create other pathways to financially support re-skilling and re-training, with greater incentives for workers in care-economy based sectors such as childcare and elder care.**

#### **Child Care**

##### **Urgent COVID Response**

- 8. Expand the supply of available, affordable municipal daycare spots.**
- 9. Keep the Child Care Affordability Plan and increase the \$10 subsidy to reduce the cost of child care for families.**

## Addressing Violence

### Urgent COVID Response

10. Increase funding to, and work collaboratively with service providers to address the capacity issues existing in, shelters for women and non-binary persons experiencing homelessness and shelters for persons fleeing violence.
11. Increase financial investment for community organizations tackling violence against women.
12. Increase financial investment for local sexual assault centres.
13. Increase shelter spaces for single women and women with children.

### Continual Response

14. Increase municipal investment in affordable housing specifically for women.
15. Provide annual funding to the Woman Abuse Working Group (WAWG).
16. Provide annual funding to the Hamilton Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition (HAHTC).
17. Provide annual funding to the Sisters in Spirit Committee of Hamilton (SIS).
18. Provide annual funding to the Sex Workers' Action Program Hamilton (SWAP).
19. Schedule biannual meetings with the WAWG, HAHTC, SIS, SWAP to receive information about the current realities for agencies serving women & survivors of gender-based violence.

## Access to Menstrual Products

### Urgent COVID Response

20. Funding for menstrual products for community organizations to provide to community members.
21. Make free menstrual products available at all city-owned washrooms.



YWCA Hamilton Walk a Mile in Her Shoes 2019



## Mobility Justice



The City of Hamilton must ramp up planning efforts and investments to realize mobility justice for all Hamiltonians. Some residents are privileged to have their own transportation, and the means to afford delivery or pickup services. The pandemic has widened the gap, exposing the differences between residents with full mobility and those who do not have that advantage. The pandemic underscores the urgent need for increased investment in active transportation infrastructure and public transit services. Too often, those who depend on our public transportation services are excluded from conversation about those services. Those must be included in the planning and design considerations of future transportation infrastructure and public transit services; this would ensure the utmost adherence to the Access to Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The needs of those with mobility challenges must also be considered in all city decision-making around outdoor spaces including city sidewalks, walkways, paths and bus shelters. For example, the use of sidewalks and pedestrian spaces to accommodate restaurant expansion due to COVID-19 public health restrictions, had the unintended result of creating mobility barriers for persons with disabilities. Ultimately, mobility justice could also mean shifting our public transit services to a no-fare system. Commitments to these key elements will support mobility justice, while at the same time, making low or no carbon transportation options more attractive to the degree that significant modal shifts away from private automobile use are facilitated. Transportation is one of the largest sources of community-generated greenhouse gas emissions in our city.

In order to realize a Just Recovery for all, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

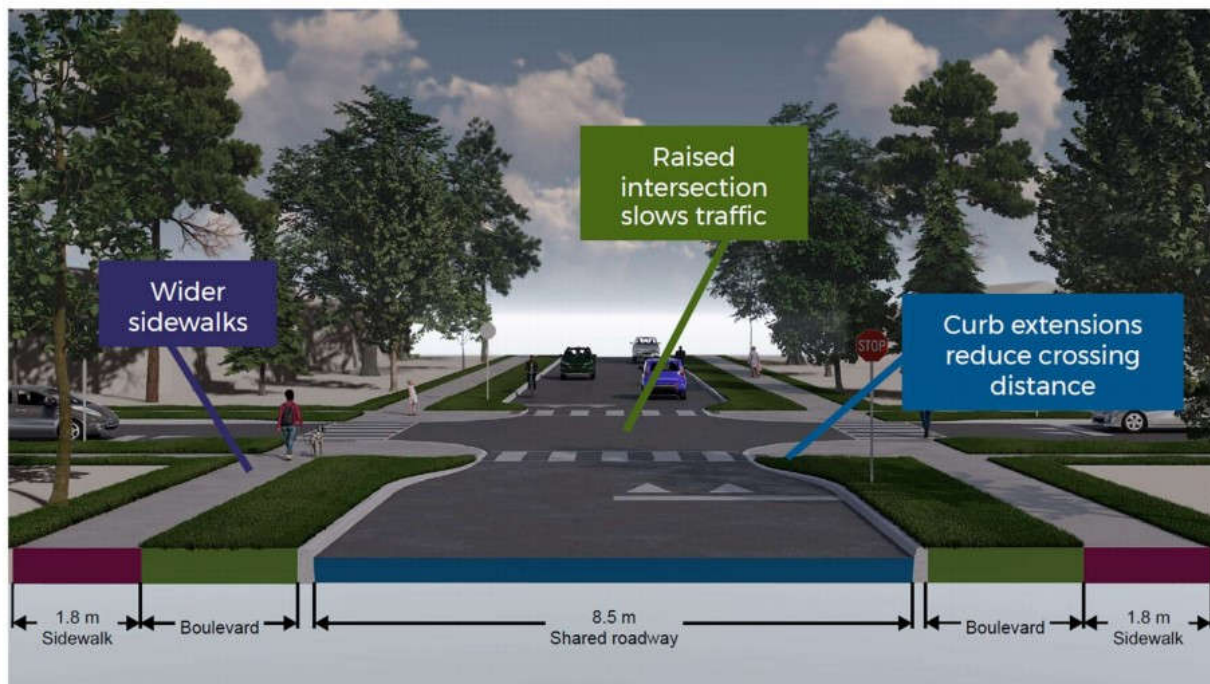
- 22. Commit to full funding of the 10-year transit strategy - including fast-tracking implementation of express bus service on the L, S & T lines of the BLAST Network - to provide frequent, reliable public transit across the city.**
- 23. Commit to the immediate establishment of bus lanes on Express Transit Routes (the B and A-Line), to offer more frequent and reliable service.**
- 24. Pursue higher order transit service along key corridors, starting with the shovel-ready east-west King Street LRT corridor from Eastgate Square to McMaster University.**
- 25. Commit to freezing public transit fares during the COVID-19 recovery.**

26. Consider creation of temporary cycle and pedestrian paths on existing roads with movable construction barriers.
27. Implement a universal sidewalk snow removal program in 2021 to ensure equal sidewalk access for all during winter months.

#### Continual Response

28. Consider alternative modes of payment for public transit for marginalized communities and service users of community organizations, in ways that do not differentiate them from other public transit users.
29. Implement and expand the cycling network set out in the Cycling Master Plan – including separated cycle track systems – to make cycling a viable and safe option for Hamiltonians.
30. Commit to making the investments required to fast track the electrification of our transit fleet including DARTS service vehicles.
31. Consider working with local school boards to implement a universe transit pass system for all students, similar to the programs used by McMaster and Mohawk college.
32. Commit to providing municipal funding for Hamilton’s Bike Share system - an integral part of our public transportation network.
33. Increase public investment in enhanced streetscapes (complete, friendly streets) to encourage pedestrian mobility and support Hamiltonians across the entire spectrum of mobility abilities.
34. Work with other levels of government to create a fare free public transit system in Hamilton.

#### DESIGN CONCEPT (20 m ROW)



Design Concept (20M Right-of-Way) Source City of Hamilton

## Disability Justice



People with disabilities in Hamilton struggle with accessing employment, either because of discrimination or because the workforce, in general, is ableist and not built for everyone. More than that, we have constructed society to be a place where one's value comes from their ability to produce. This has doomed many disabled people, who cannot work, to lives of poverty, and isolation in long-term care homes and residential care facilities. It is no longer enough to talk about accessibility as compliance. Policy discussions need to be centered around disability justice—the ways in which all institutions leave people behind on the basis of disability; ramps alone do not equal equality.

### Emergency response people with disabilities

People with disabilities, reliant on social assistance, face high rates of food insecurity. In addition, when the City of Hamilton shut down due to the pandemic, many immunocompromised people who already struggle with accessing food were unable to leave their homes to purchase groceries, access services and food bank services without significant risk to their health. Those concerns remain especially important as HSR service has removed social distancing restrictions on HSR buses and new more transmissible variants of the COVID-19 virus begin to be detected in Ontario. As cases continue to soar and the Ontario government considers more stringent COVID-19 emergency protocols, the City must engage with the disabled community to ensure adequate accommodation for access to essential services, food and quality of life requirements.

In order to realize a justice recovery for people with disabilities, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

35. **Develop a framework and policy around disability justice and accessibility to inform pandemic decision-making , ensuring disabled people are not an afterthought.**
36. **Write to the Ontario Government in support of the Ontario Human Rights Commission request for a clarification on the critical care triage policy.**
37. **Develop an emergency HSR plan in collaboration with the Amalgamated Transit Union and people with disabilities.**

## Accessing temporary and permanent housing

People with disabilities have difficulty securing housing options that are both accessible and affordable. Many units that are affordable are not suitable for people with physical disabilities, causing distressing and dangerous living situations. Without a basic livable income for disabled people who cannot work, many cannot afford rent on social assistance wages, leaving them the most likely to experience evictions. This leaves many disabled people in situations that are unsafe, either indoors or outdoors. Not all of the shelter spaces are accessible for people in wheelchairs -- for example, some shelters, like Mary's Place require clients to climb stairs to access their upstairs rooms.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed problems in the city's shelter systems. The current system is not working for many people who are sleeping rough, and more work is required to either get them directly into permanent housing with appropriate supports or accommodate them in a shelter/motel that is low-barrier and high-support enough to meet their needs. Without this the cycle of high turnover from shelters to parks may continue. The system, especially with additional COVID-19 pressures, struggles to accommodate an unhoused person with visible or invisible disabilities (such as substance abuse, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, etc.). When an unhoused resident moves from a park to a shelter, and they break property as a result of a disability related episode, or they interact poorly with other unhoused residents, or do not follow up with services due to disabilities, they can be barred from support in shelters.

Lastly, substance abuse is a complex issue, and many disabled people self-medicate to cope with disability related symptoms. Our current pandemic related responses tends to not account for disabilities in these ways, and proper responses that are catered toward specific disabilities are needed. The collaborative system being run by the City of Hamilton, the shelters, and the hotels lack the resources to invest in understanding where the disruptions are coming from. Without addressing this, disabled people will continue to end up in parks and tents.

In order to realize a justice recovery for people with disabilities, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

- 38. Secure accessible temporary housing options specifically for people with disabilities immediately. These options should include harm reduction services and be rooted in a disability justice framework.**
- 39. Advocate with the province for rent relief support specific for people on social assistance.**

### Continual Response

- 40. Assess how many accessible, temporary indoor housing options are available to unhoused people in Hamilton who cannot use stairs and/or have other physical disabilities.**
- 41. Create and maintain a list of accessible housing units existing in Hamilton, making it easier for disabled people to move in when needed.**
- 42. Incentivize the creation of more accessible housing units to coincide with the number of disabled people in our communities.**

## Addressing Violence against People with Disabilities

People with disabilities are two times more likely than anyone else to experience violence or hate crime on the basis of disability, according to reports from the Disabled Women's Network of Canada. Women with disabilities are more likely to experience physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse. According to Statistics Canada, 83 percent of women with disabilities are likely to be sexually assaulted at least once in their lifetime. Many people with various disabilities are also incarcerated, due to the intersections of policing and poverty.

In order to care for people with disabilities, the City of Hamilton must:



## Urgent COVID Response

43. **Work with community groups to track violence being experienced by disabled people in Hamilton.**
44. **Ensure that services for women with disabilities experiencing violence are accessible, and make accessible shelter spaces searchable online. p**
45. **Track how many disabled people are immunocompromised in Barton Jail to understand the scope and have that influence their vaccine roll out plans. This can be done through a letter from the Board of Public Health and the Chief Medical Officer.**

## General access in Hamilton



Self Serve Presto Card Reload Machine – Source Metrolinx

The City of Hamilton must be cautious in this digitization of services fast-tracked by the pandemic to ensure that disabled people are not left behind. This means understanding the limitations of phasing out bus tickets, and understanding that not everyone is able to access the internet when releasing information about public health and safety. The province has set a deadline for accessibility by 2025. With three years to go, the City of Hamilton must invest in local accessibility to make this a reality. For this to become a reality, the City of Hamilton must:

## Urgent COVID Response

46. **Provide American Sign Language (ASL) services and captioning locally by as many services as possible under the provision of the City of Hamilton. This includes all announcements made by the City of Hamilton that are to be communicated to the public.**
47. **Provide the ability to load and buy PRESTO cards at every transit terminal, recreation and community centre, sports facilities and every other publicly accessible, city-owned facility processing payments from the public.**
48. **Work with disability organizations to confirm Web accessibility of all city Websites**
49. **Create an accessibility checklist that is given to future landlords explaining the history of people with disabilities in Hamilton, and how to best serve renters with disabilities locally.**

## Housing as a Human Right

The Ontario Human Rights Commission reports “Adequate housing is essential to one’s sense of dignity, safety, inclusion and ability to contribute to the fabric of our neighbourhoods and societies.... Without appropriate housing, it is often not possible to get and keep employment, to recover from mental illness or other disabilities, to integrate into the community, to escape physical or emotional violence or to keep custody of children.” It is essential to the preservation of the dignity and health of residents of Hamilton. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the already untenable housing crisis in the city. Every effort must be made to increase the stock of real affordable housing in the city and to utilize creative municipal bylaws and bold policy to protect tenants from being displaced from affordable housing.



### Tenant Vulnerability

Vulnerable Hamilton tenants now face both a housing crisis and a public health pandemic. Low- and moderate-income families have been most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Since March, the pressures on Hamilton’s market of affordable housing has increased dramatically. This contrasts the United Nations declaration that “... shelter, a space to sleep in your own bed, with your own roof, a place where your person and possessions are safe is a human right.” The Hamilton experience of predatory developers and landlords, as they continue to force long term tenants from their homes, increases the already critical housing crisis. Property owners can exacerbate illegal practices to worsen neglect of properties and buildings using COVID-19 to justify failing to do repairs and maintenance.

In order to realize dignified housing for all, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

50. **Prioritize healthy homes during COVID-19 and beyond, including resuming building inspections, enforcement of all property standards, and the implementation of all COVID-19 health and safety measures as recommended by Public Health.**
51. **Urge the province to resume a moratorium on evictions for the duration of the pandemic.**
52. **Allow Hamilton's Medical Officer of Health to use her legal authority and responsibility to order the suspension or restriction of enforcement of residential eviction orders – a measure urgently needed to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and the threat that it poses to health.**
53. **Use all of the city's regulatory powers to protect tenants from predatory renovation practices and save Hamilton's affordable housing stock.**

## Continual Response

54. **Make a deeper municipal capital budget investment in housing first placements to end homelessness.**
55. **Pass Inclusionary Zoning bylaws on Transit Oriented Development corridors (TODs) to facilitate additional affordable housing.**
56. **Change regulations on parking requirements to afford developers of not-for-profit homes more flexibility and cost savings.**
57. **Continue to advocate for construction of public affordable housing from other levels of government (provincial and federal), with marked increases in targeted funding to Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+ and housing for women.**
58. **Look to examples from other municipalities and pass a landlord licensing by-law with strong enforcement penalties.**
59. **Take a proactive approach when it comes to informing tenants of their rights and provide resources for tenant groups to respond to Above Guideline Increases and threats of displacement.**
60. **Commit to ensuring all persons eligible to vote have access to a voter registration card and are enumerated on municipal voting roles.**

## Protecting Vulnerable Hamiltonians from Extreme Heat

The climate is changing. Hamilton has experienced record-setting high temperatures and increasing heat advisories. People living in poverty or experiencing social exclusion are hit hardest and suffer most from extreme temperatures. Seniors, persons with disabilities, and particularly those without adequate housing or living rough on the streets will be most at risk. Tenants living in multi-residential apartment buildings and in rooming houses in Hamilton are at particular risk of the effects of extreme heat.

Many high-rise apartment buildings are heat traps: concrete multi-story complexes heat up during the day and often take hours to cool down – offering little relief for those without air conditioning. Because of age and disrepair, rooming houses and residential care homes, often considered the most modest form of rental accommodation, are also particularly vulnerable. While a landlord is responsible for providing heat to a residential dwelling at a minimum of 21 C between Sept. 15 and June 1 of each year, there's no obligation to keep temperatures below a certain threshold in summer.

To address this major issue the city of Hamilton should:

### Urgent COVID Response

61. **Coordinate with landlords, tenants and community organizations to develop a vital services bylaw for cooling of rental units during summer months and advocate with the provincial government for changes to provincial legislation to require landlords to install adequate cooling systems in residential units.**

## Long-Term Care Homes

There are a number of long-term care homes in Hamilton that have had COVID-19 outbreaks, which is where many seniors are sent to live when they experience the intersection of disability through aging. Many people in long term care homes would live at home with families if medical supports that are required were affordable.

In order to protect residents at Long Term Care Homes, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

62. **Meet with all long-term care homes in Hamilton to receive an update on the impacts of COVID-19 on people with disabilities in these homes.**



- 63. Advocate to the province for more oversight of Long-Term Care homes given outbreaks across the country.**
- 64. Develop a COVID-19 vaccine plan that prioritizes access for people with disabilities in long-term care Homes.**

#### Continual Response

- 65. The City of Hamilton should invest in the development of multigenerational, accessible home options for seniors.**

#### Residential Care Facilities



Emerald Lodge - Image Source Google Maps

Residential care facilities (RCFs) are home to more than 900 of Hamilton's most vulnerable adults. Unlike long-term care facilities or retirement homes, which typically house seniors and are under provincial jurisdiction, RCFs are overseen by the City. RCFs provide shelter and meals for younger adults in what is supposed to be a safe environment. They represent a critical form, and often the only housing available in Hamilton for people with mental health challenges, physical and developmental disabilities.

The people who live in these homes are tenants under Ontario law. Unfortunately, standards at the homes vary considerably as they are privately run, for-profit entities. The deplorable situation at Emerald Lodge in 2020 in which tenants were mistreated, and in some cases abused, and then evacuated, must never be repeated. The City of Hamilton must commit appropriate funding in Budget 2021/22 to a proactive policy to protect RCF tenants, keep them safe and healthy in their homes.

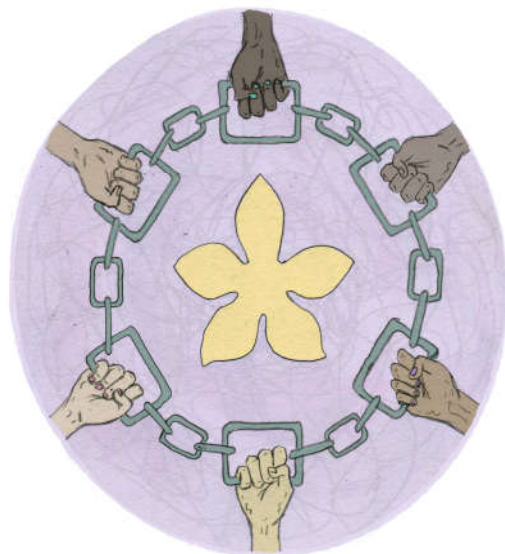
#### Urgent COVID Response

- 66. Ensure RCF tenants, who live in vulnerable congregate living settings are a high-priority for distribution of COVID-19 vaccines - through mobile outreach at their homes.**
- 67. Work with the Residential Care Facility Tenants Coalition on an RCF tenant engagement project to reduce social isolation and enhance community participation and active living for RCF tenants.**

#### Continual Response

- 68. Permanently fund the RCF Liaison pilot project and adequately staff the office to ensure proactive outreach to RCF tenants, community advocates and families. can commence**

## Tackling Systemic Racism



Given the majority of Hamilton's population are settlers to Turtle Island, particularly the traditional lands of the **Huron-Wendat**, the **Anishnabeg**, the **Chippewa**, the **Haudenosaunee**, and most recently the **Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation**, it is important to understand how the creation of this country's policies and laws are informed by racist views, attitudes, and actions. Hamilton is not immune to racial injustice. In fact there was a period where members of the KKK openly marched on James Street. Historical racist views, attitudes, and actions have seeped into all aspects of society including but not limited to Policing, Health-Care, Education, Justice System, and all levels of Government.

According to Stats Canada, prior to the pandemic, in 2019 Hamilton had the highest number of hate crimes per capita in Canada. Members of the Black community, various religious communities (particularly Jewish and Muslim communities), and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community were and continue to be on the receiving end of hate in Hamilton. The global pandemic has exacerbated the many barriers and inequities Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities face in Hamilton. This was evident in the Hamilton Public Health COVID-19 report that suggested that racialized populations, health care workers, and people living with low-income are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

In order to eliminate systemic racial barriers, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

69. **Commit a portion of the city's operational and capital budget to the Urban Indigenous Strategy.**
70. **Provide funding to the Sisters In Spirit Committee of Hamilton and commit to the 231 Calls for Justice from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Final Report.**
71. **Develop a framework with local police services, community partners, education institutions, and residents to dismantle barriers for Indigenous women and girls to feel safe and equality within the city.**
72. **Commit to funding for specific under-resourced racialized communities to meet their own social, educational, health, cultural, and civic needs and development.**
73. **The City of Hamilton should restructure the membership of the Board of Public Health to include members of the public from the following equity seeking groups; women, people with (in)visible disabilities, Indigenous peoples, low-income communities, Black and Racialized communities.**
74. **The City of Hamilton needs to commit to an Anti-Oppression/Anti-Racism Fund that supports anti-racism work done by community organizations.**

## Investing in decent jobs, decent wages, & our local economy



### Social Procurement

COVID-19's economic effects have been devastating, especially for small businesses in the service sector, restaurants, small retail stores and other businesses. As one of the largest employers, with almost 9000 employed, an annual budget of almost \$1 billion, and \$16 billion worth of hard infrastructure assets, the City of Hamilton is in a strong position to take a lead on a Just Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Social procurement is the achievement of strategic social, economic and workforce development goals using an organization's process of purchasing goods and services. Through its procurement and purchasing structure, the city is in a position to effect broad social, economic and workforce development changes.

In order to attain a Just Recovery in social procurement, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 75. Inspect every contractor and supplier of the city to guarantee their COVID-19 compliance.**
- 76. Reinforce masking and social distancing requirements within city staff and subcontractors.**
- 77. Pass a motion to the Police Service Board to make mask compliance of provincial guidelines part of the operational process.**

#### Continual Response

- 78. Implement a social procurement policy based on the experiences of other Ontario and Canadian municipalities. Locally, Toronto has had social procurement policy in place since 2014.**
- 79. Promote Workforce Development opportunities for Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, people with disabilities and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities.**
- 80. Promote Supply Chain Diversity in its vendor partners.**
- 81. Implement a buy local policy where possible in procurement.**
- 82. Apply a climate lens to all potential RPQ and RPFs.**

## Community Benefits Agreements

Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) can be used by the city of Hamilton to create commitments between developers, the city and coalitions of community organizations. These agreements allow for innovative and creative ways to address a broad range of community needs with safeguards to ensure that affected residents share in the benefits of major developments. CBAs have been used successfully across North America to make real change in the environmental and economic lives of residents. COVID-19 presents an opportunity for CBAs to be used to redress many of the challenges facing the city in a post pandemic recovery.

In order for residents of Hamilton to benefit from major developments, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

- 83. Pass the terms of reference for the Community Benefits Protocol Advisory Committee - HSC19066 removing it from the Outstanding Business List Item, letting the committee meet with city staff to discuss how CBAs might be used in COVID-19 recovery**
- 84. Insist on living wages clauses being negotiated on large scale projects.**
- 85. Institute mandatory sick benefits on any RFP/RFQ during and post COVID-19.**

### Continual Response

- 86. Implement a Community Benefits Framework based on the experiences of other cities in North America to provide employment training and placement in union trades positions in large scale infrastructure projects.**
- 87. Wherever possible, integrate green building and green infrastructure requirements into CBAs to create green jobs and contribute to long term resilience of the urban built form.**
- 88. Use CBAs to help residents secure more affordable and purpose-built rental units from developers.**
- 89. Partner with education institutions and local employment agencies to afford more access to professional, administrative and technical jobs for COVID-19 affected groups.**
- 90. Partner with developers to include public art a component of all developments. Even small investments in art can transform communities and provide employment.**
- 91. Use Community Benefits to increase resident engagement and participation in the growth and changing city reconnecting us all to our city in a post COVID-19 Just Recovery.**
- 92. Continue to encourage through CBAs local developers to buy local, and exercise social procurement to give and extra support for women and marginalized lead businesses through improved economic development opportunities.**

## Deep Energy Retrofits & Green Jobs

Buildings are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions in Hamilton. There is an urgent need to ensure new builds are carbon neutral and to invest dollars to ensure existing homes, public buildings, and IC&I sector buildings undergo deep energy retrofits to ensure that these structures are made climate-resilient for the future. Both of these transitions open the door to huge local opportunities for green economic growth and green jobs creation. Deep energy retrofits also make all forms of housing more affordable and more comfortable in both extreme heat and extreme cold, helping Hamilton's most vulnerable community members to cope with a changing climate.

In order to center climate justice into a Just Recovery, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

- 93. Proceed with plans to create a Home Energy Retrofit Opportunity or 'HERO' program immediately, offering low-interest loans to homeowners to enable greenhouse gas emission reductions via energy retrofits of existing housing stock.**

- 94. Quickly complete the Community Energy Plan and ensure that the municipal financial commitments are made to realize full implementation of the plan.**

#### Continual Response

- 95. Lead the way with efforts to undertake deep energy retrofits of existing non-residential building stock in the city by retrofitting its own building stock and mandating and/or supporting others to do the same.**
- 96. Lead efforts to ensure all new building stock - including any new city buildings - is carbon neutral.**
- 97. Support relevant trades and trainers of the trades to provide training for local tradespeople in order to ensure that the skilled workforce exists to make deep energy retrofits in both the residential, public, and IC&I sector.**

#### Paid Sick Days

The official recommendation from Medical Officers of Health is “If you are sick, stay home.” Many workers in Hamilton are stuck having no choice but to go to work sick, risking their health and that of co-workers. Ontario’s current employment laws do not protect workers when they fall ill. Many workers cannot afford even a single day without pay, while others face punishment and termination for not working when ill. The City of Hamilton cannot mandate paid sick days; it can, however, lead by example, and work with other anchor institutions to set a bar for employment that will sustain those in a post COVID-19 world.

In order to keep residents safe and financially secure, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 98. Provide paid sick days to all employees, provide a leadership role to encourage through Hamilton Anchor Institute Leadership (HAIL) other large employers to provide paid sick days.**

#### Continual Response

- 99. Include requirements for paid sick days in all RFP/RPQ procurement and from subcontractors.**

#### Living Wage Policy

Covid-19 demonstrated -without a doubt- how critical front-line workers are for our health and the economy. Unfortunately, in Hamilton, too many workers struggle with low wages, precarious hours and no benefits.

Living Wage are calculated on what it costs for workers to meet monthly costs and participate in the community.

In its 2020 budget, city council took the important step of bringing many additional municipal workers up to the local living wage rate of \$16.45/hr. This commitment to living wage sends an important signal to municipalities across the province as well as to local employers and organizations that Hamilton cares about its employees and their wellbeing.

The City of Hamilton should continue this important work by:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 100. Signing the Ontario Living Wage Network declaration certifying that the City of Hamilton is a Living Wage organization and develop a plan to lift remaining City of Hamilton employees to the Hamilton Living Wage rate.**
- 101. Develop a municipal procurement policy that incorporates living wages and incentivizes contractors doing business with the City to pay their employees a living wage.**
- 102. Through Hamilton Anchor Institute Leadership (HAIL), work with other large employers in Hamilton to encourage living wages are paid at all of Hamilton's large institutions.**
- 103.**

## Continual Response

- 104. Through the Economic Development Department, implement a new Living Wage policy that actively encourages new employers relocating to Hamilton to pay their employees at least Hamilton's living wage rate.**

## Investing in the Arts

The arts are one of the sectors hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Shutdowns and restrictions of gatherings have taken a heavy toll on the performing arts, while lower disposable income has caused spending on the arts to wane. The closure of music and theatre venues and the cancellation of many events and festivals has further contributed to the precariousness of those working in the arts.

The city should lead a fulsome discussion around support for the arts with those in the community to ensure that this important aspect of COVID-19 is addressed. The organizations involved have limited knowledge in the arts fields, but felt this important aspect of COVID-19 recovery must be discussed. Commissioning public art could become a core focus of our efforts in Hamilton in building a Just Recovery, as it has the ability to spur not only artistic production and community engagement but also skilled trades and fabrication employment. The points below are recommendations for a starting point for the city to discuss this very important aspect of a Just Recovery. In order to support the art and creative sector, the City of Hamilton should:

## Urgent COVID Response

- 105. Begin extensive engagement with members of the Arts community and Arts organizations to prioritize their needs and requirements.**
- 106. Re-establish a Cultural Plan Roundtable with clear objectives and resources.**
- 107. Work with artists and arts organizations to steam-line, and make the SEAT process barrier-free. Create a fund to ensure all local events have free access to GAMEDAY insurance.**
- 108. Encourage the use of visual arts and performance arts in community spaces and public parks.**
- 109. Reinvest in expanding opportunities for concerts, performing arts, music and festivals.**
- 110. Choose to increase spending on the arts with projects prioritizing, people of colour, women, Indigenous communities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.**
- 111. Provide Resources to the Hamilton Music Strategy and the Hamilton Music Advisory Team.**

## Continual Response

- 112. The creation of a separate Cultural Enrichment Fund to establish a dedicated funding stream for BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, and other equity-seeking artists and cultural producers.**
- 113. The city should fully fund the Cultural Enrichment Fund so it grows each year to meet industry growth and cost of living increases in Hamilton.**
- 114. Create a designated fund either CEF, the Hamilton Future Fund or a combination of Ward Funding to support capital investments in cultural spaces from a wide range of cultural producing partners.**



## Focusing on Inclusive City Building



### Addressing Food Insecurity

No conversation on inclusive city building can begin without acknowledging the massive issues of food insecurity that many residents of the city of Hamilton faced before the pandemic. This insecurity has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Food Prices are increasing dramatically. The challenges mentioned throughout this paper, have caused the effects of food insecurity to be felt across the city. Food Banks struggling before the crisis struggled to keep up with growing demands. Community agencies, volunteers, caremongering groups and local residents have all stepped in to do what they can to address this crisis. As a worldwide issue it is acknowledged there is no easy fix. However additional support must be provided to offset this massive challenge, we ask the City of Hamilton to:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 115. Make available, working with local community garden groups, the Hamilton Victory Gardens, organizations and residents as much city public land as possible for urban farming.**
- 116. Make budgetary funds available for the construction of additional community garden spaces**
- 117. Wave all insurance, water, and associated fees for all Community Gardens.**
- 118. Continue to increase emergency funding to Hamilton Foodshare, and other organizations providing frontline food assistance.**
- 119. Expand programs, working with community organizations, and food banks to deliver directly to disabled people and seniors for free.**
- 120. As the Pandemic is a Public Health crisis, grant the Special Diet Allowance to all Hamilton OW and ODSP recipients.**

### High Speed Internet Access for All

COVID-19 has revealed the need for reliable high-speed internet for all residents of Hamilton. The requirements for reliable and steady access to the internet has proven to be a must for many working remotely, connecting with friends, family and accessing critical services during the pandemic. Too many in the city of Hamilton do not have access to this required connection. Those living in rural areas where service restrictions prevent decent connection, those who face economic challenges to affording access, those sleeping rough, all cannot access this critical service.



Solving this issue cannot be done by the City of Hamilton alone. The City has also made great accommodations in extending Wi-Fi access on buses, around libraries and city property. The free internet services in Gage Park are a model for equitable access in the city.

To help Hamilton residents access this critical service the City of Hamilton should:

#### **Urgent COVID Response**

- 121.** Expand free Wi-Fi services in public parks and spaces across the city.
- 122.** Advertise with visible signage areas where residents might connect to City Wi-Fi services

#### **Continual Response**

- 123.** Develop a City-Wide strategy for free Wi-Fi in the most dense areas of the city.
- 124.** Develop and implement a costing plan for high-speed rural access, in cooperation with the private sector and other levels of government.

#### **Accessible Outdoor Spaces**

Changing lockdown conditions through the first and second wave of the pandemic have closed most traditional gathering and congregating spaces throughout the city. Recreation centres, gyms, athletic arenas, religious institutions, and other gathering spots have all faced challenges and closures. The city's parks and trails have become an invaluable place for exercise, escape and play for many in the city. These public assets have provided invaluable spaces for residents of multi-dwelling structures who may not have access to a backyard or outdoor space. We hope the city will continue its support and expansion of our public outdoor spaces and we ask the City of Hamilton to consider:

#### **Urgent COVID Response**

- 125.** **Advanced and ongoing snow removal from all public parks, paths, trails and walkways, including the sidewalks around them. Making keeping these spaces clear and accessible top priority.**
- 126.** **Find areas of the city which could be temporarily transformed into public spaces, including city-owned parking lots, side streets, alleyways.**
- 127.** **Make Hamilton Conservation Authority spaces free to Hamilton residents.**
- 128.** **Expand transit service to outdoor spaces.**
- 129.** **When it's safe to do so, encourage small park performances, educational programming, music concerts etc.**
- 130.** **Continue excellent work on outdoor restaurant and patios for business support, but with more awareness of the effect these business accommodations might have on the mobility needs of residents.**
- 131.** **Consider laxing permits and business requirements for outdoor sales, bazaars, markets especially for small craft makers, artists, etc.**

#### **Green Development/ Building Standard:**

Green Development Standards (GDSs) set out municipal requirements and incentives designed to ensure that community development/redevelopment happens in a climate and environmentally friendly manner. Municipal GDSs typically include both mandatory and incentivized standards. They can cover a wide range of elements including: amenities and infrastructure to support active transportation and public transportation; building energy efficiency requirements; public and private property landscaping/greening requirements such as street tree plantings, landscaping with native pollinator plants; incentivizing green roof installations; and creating bioswales to manage stormwater. Many Ontario municipalities have developed or are developing GDSs, but Hamilton has yet to do so.

The elements of a GDS bring important benefits, to realise those benefits, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 132. Create a Green Development Standard that sets out both mandatory and incentivized green development requirements.**

#### Continual Response

- 133. Continue to add both mandatory and incentivized requirements to a Hamilton Green Development Standard over time.**

#### Publicly Accessible (Gender-neutral) Washrooms

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century large cities across the world undertook large scale construction of publicly accessible washrooms. One such washroom, the Gore Park Downtown Washrooms was voted in 1981, ...” Canada’s best public washrooms” by Today Magazine. A few years later they were shuttered, as were many across the city. This removed from generations of residents the ability to “go without paying.” The limited supply of publicly accessible washrooms do not provide 24-hour access. Even those who can afford to pay to use toilet facilities encounter challenges of accessibility, lack of changing stations, and gendered washrooms.

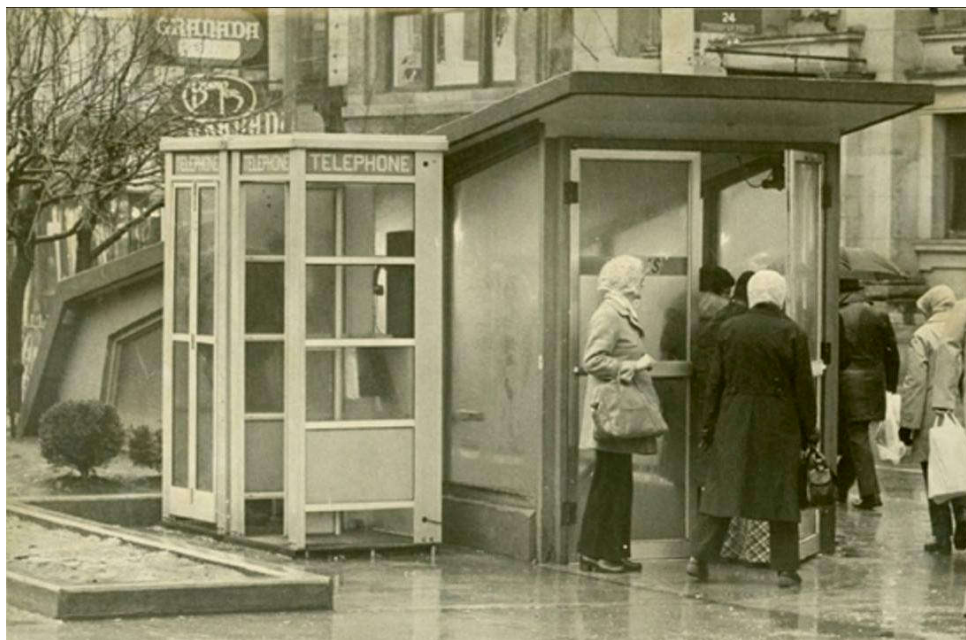
To build a city where any and everyone has access to gender-neutral washrooms, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID Response

- 134. Advertise all city-owned restrooms across the city, including posting signage and providing maps.**

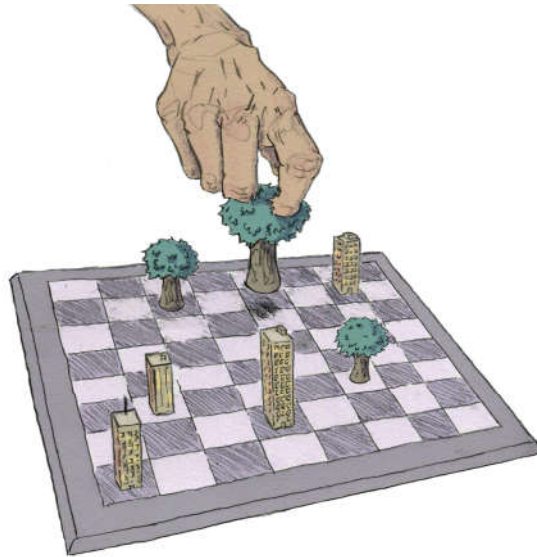
#### Continual Response

- 135. The City of Hamilton should construct and maintain and staff accessible public washrooms.**  
**136. The City of Hamilton should encourage private developers of large-scale projects to create accessible, gender-neutral publicly available free washrooms.**



Entrance to Gore Park Washrooms – Source Hamilton Spectator

## Investing in Green Infrastructure, Policy, and Public Access



### Greening the City

Trees and plants contribute significantly to fighting the climate crisis by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub> and emitting oxygen. Trees also combat the urban heat island effect, providing cooling relief from extreme summer heat – including physical shading from exposure to UV rays. Trees and plants help to filter the air, reducing levels of fine, respirable particulate in a neighbourhood, as well as ‘slowing the flow’ of stormwater, helping to mitigate flooding impacts from extreme storm events. Finally, trees provide important habitat for native species of mammals and insects, and they provide healing benefits to humans too. All of this points to the essential need for green infrastructure in the city - whether it be in urban parks and natural areas or along our commercial and residential streets.

To incorporate climate justice into a Just Recovery, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

137. **Complete and begin implementation of the Urban Forest Strategy. This strategy must include an ambitious commitment to increasing Hamilton’s ‘Urban Forest Canopy Cover’ with a goal of 45% canopy cover equitably distributed across the municipality’s urban area, and the development and subsequent implementation of a Private Tree By-Law to ensure Hamilton’s urban forest is protected into the future.**
138. **Commit to ensuring that all Hamiltonians have ready access to quality greenspace, regardless of where they live in the city.**
139. **Continue to help with the community effort to create and implement a Biodiversity Strategy. The development and implementation of such a strategy can help to reinforce the objectives proposed above regarding the urban forest and access to quality park space.**

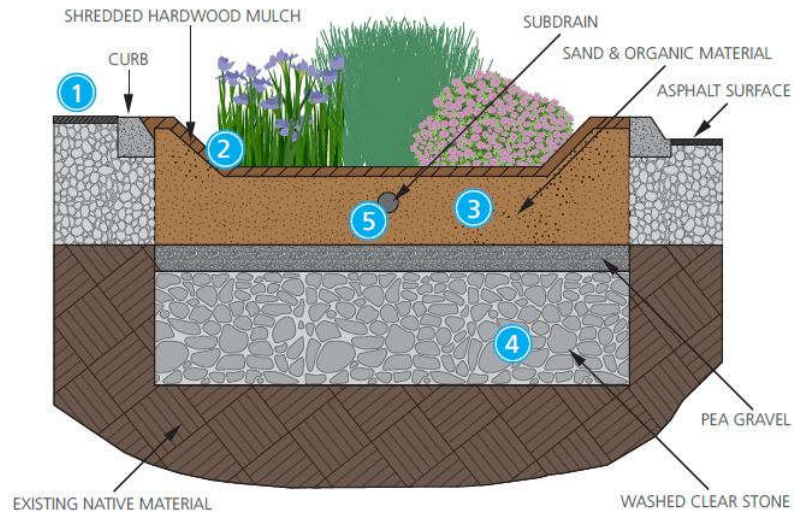


Image courtesy of the City of Hamilton – Creator John Fernandes

### Fair Fees for Stormwater & Green Infrastructure

A ‘stormwater fee’ is an essential tool for generating the necessary revenue to develop climate resilient stormwater infrastructure – including green infrastructure like native trees, green roofs, and planted with native vegetation. The fees must be fair in the sense that the greatest contributors to the problem should pay the most. A stormwater fee program should include incentives so that property owners – whether IC&I or private residential – are encouraged to take positive actions for stormwater management on their properties and be rewarded for these actions with a reduction in their stormwater fee. Better stormwater management will help to mitigate flooding and other problem impacts that stormwater flows cause - including reducing the impacts of combined sewer overflows that can contribute to contamination of local water bodies. Right now, the city does not have a dedicated fee for stormwater management despite the fact that stormwater flows are a major issue that is inflicting growing and serious impacts on the city’s built and natural environment.

To incorporate climates justice into a Just Recovery, the City of Hamilton must:

#### Urgent COVID response

- 140. Develop and implement a stormwater fee program that includes incentives for stormwater mitigation by private property owners.**

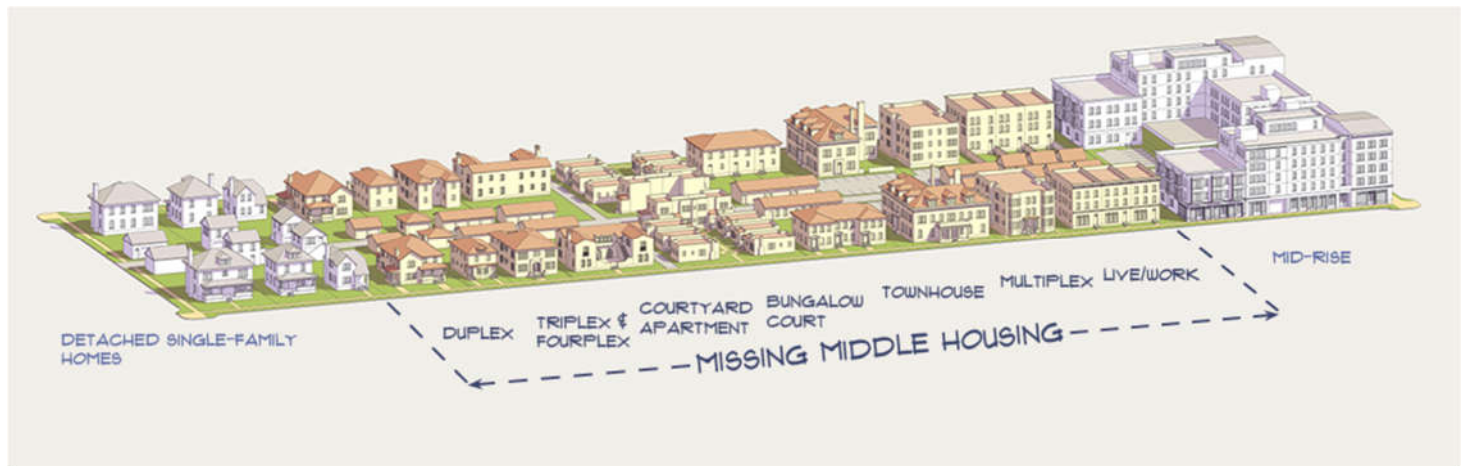
### Growing a Climate Resilient, Inclusive Urban Hamilton

Urban Hamilton is growing and this growth needs to be accommodated in a manner that is sustainable, climate-resilient and, above all, inclusive. Municipalities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe must abide by policy requirements set out in the provincial plan “A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.” That plan sets out provincial population and jobs growth projections specific to Hamilton to the year 2051 and the city must plan to accommodate that growth. The result, given such a long provincial planning horizon, is increased pressure on the municipality to expand urban Hamilton into rural areas. Urban sprawl comes with huge social and climate costs: it gobbles up prime agricultural land and rural natural areas, impacting food security and making the city less resilient to extreme weather events by removing natural areas that help to moderate these impacts; it creates more car dependent neighbourhoods in a city that has not yet provided solid transit services to existing neighbourhoods within the urban boundary; and outward expansion simply does not pay for itself – it is subsidized by other Hamilton taxpayers. Finally, urban sprawl does not result, as the current provincial government likes to suggest, in an increase in affordable housing options. Rather, committing to make more efficient use of land within the urban boundary to accommodate future growth opens the door to opportunities to build more complete neighbourhoods, including increasing the availability of social/geared to income/affordable rental options for Hamiltonians.

To grow a climate resilient and inclusive Hamilton, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

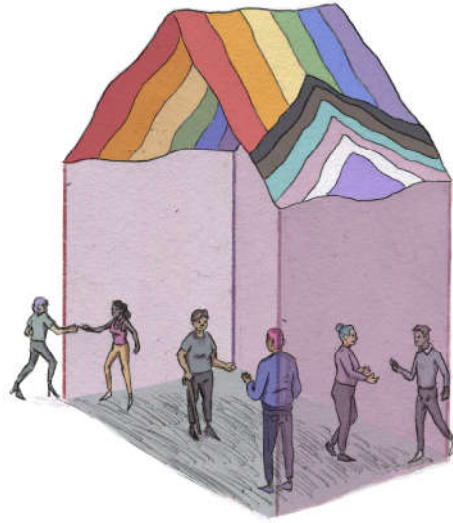
141. Commit to a firm urban boundary in order to build a sustainable, climate resilient, inclusive urban Hamilton.
142. Prioritize greyfield development opportunities within the urban boundary and along major arterial roads—with top priority placed on greyfield properties located along proposed higher order transit lines (e.g. Eastgate Square and surrounding area).
143. Commit to piloting programs to incentivize homeowners who establish Secondary Dwelling Units to offer these units at below market rents as a way to increase the availability of below market rental units across the municipality.
144. Continue to retrofit existing and build new social housing that meets low/no carbon standards – including passive house – to ensure that public housing is climate resilient and offers comfortable accommodation to tenants in extreme heat and cold.
145. Promote gentle density/missing middle development in neighbourhoods across urban Hamilton. This development might take the form of laneway housing or other ‘second dwelling units’ on residential properties across the city. It might also involve infill development that includes 3,4,5 storey apartments with commercial/retail at street level along major arterial roads like Upper James. Establishing missing middle housing helps to make better and more frequent transit service through these neighbourhoods viable. It also supports the business case for more neighbourhood amenities like grocery stores and banks.
146. Commit to ensuring that social housing/ geared to income/ affordable housing is provided along higher order transit lines – within walking distance of higher order transit stations.



Missing Middle Housing types, image via Opticos Design



## Supporting 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities



Members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community face a myriad of challenges, highlighted in a recent report by McMaster University, The AIDS Network and Hamilton community researchers who identify as Two-Spirit and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer entitled “Mapping the Void.” The report concluded that members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community do not have adequate access to health services, housing, peer-to-peer support, social services, and social spaces. In the absence of these services, members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities are forced to leave the city in order to meet their needs. The absence of these services creates a City where not all members of society are able to live with dignity.

The second challenge for members of the 2SLGBTQQIA + community is targeted hate, discrimination, racism and social exclusion. Hamilton has a history of discriminating against members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community former Mayor Bob Morrow refused to proclaim Hamilton’s first Gay Pride Day in 1991. More recently alt-right protesters, anti-2SLGBTQQIA protesters, Yellow-vesters and religious extremists disrupted Pride celebrations and attacked residents of Hamilton attending Pride. An independent review by Scott Bergman of the events that transpired noted that “the Hamilton Police Service’s inadequate preparation for Pride 2019 resulted in a failure to protect the public and Pride attendees during the event.” The review went on to list 38 recommendations for the Hamilton Police Service Board and Hamilton Police Services.

COVID-19 is seeing xenophobia, the predominance of hate crimes and hate related groups organizing on the rise. The need for a safe gathering space for 2SLGBTQQIA+ community members -- similar to Toronto's Rexdale community hub, or the Church Street 519 community centre -- cannot be understated. For members of the 2SLGBTQQIA + community to realize a safe, caring, and just community, the City of Hamilton must:

### Urgent COVID Response

- 147. Prioritize the procurement or creation of an accessible Community Hub for diverse communities in the city near major transit routes.**
- 148. Provide funding for or increase access to mental health services that specifically reach 2SLGBTQQIA+ youth, seniors and adults with disabilities.**
- 149. Provide hotel rooms for unsheltered women and victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and sex trafficking, 2SLGBTQQIA+ youth and others who are not able to access safe spaces when shelters are full.**
- 150. Fund and increase financial support for 2SLGBTQQIA+ specific community programs and organizations reducing isolation and providing peer support and connection.**

## Conclusion

The pre-COVID-19 Hamilton was a society in which residents thrived while many others lived in abject poverty, experienced social exclusion and were fearful for their safety. That was the “Normal”. The recommendations in this policy paper are a starting point for a broader conversation about a Just Recovery in Hamilton as we look forward to a post COVID-19 future.

Although shaped by the perspectives of the organizations involved in the Just Recovery Hamilton coalition, it is limited in scope and prospective to the not-for-profit organizations involved. We know many voices, thoughts and needs have not been fully expressed in this document. We hope it will serve as a starting point for the public, city staff and council to consider ways in which the city can be transformed for the better by the pandemic experience. We will continue those conversations, hoping to engage with as many other organizations and residents across the city as possible. A Just Recovery for Hamilton cannot be solved by a few organizations alone. It will require dauntless continued collaboration, conversation and connection.

Many of the specific recommendations are possible with simple policy changes. Some require deeper financial investment. Others will require participation from higher levels of government. Others still need broader partnerships and involvement from the private sector. We recognize the constraints on municipal funding, especially with the requirements for ongoing emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic will continue to challenge the city for the foreseeable future.

Discussions about COVID-19 recovery will extend well past the 2021 budget. In order to move the city forward, bold ideas and solutions will be required. . The city must be courageous in its consideration of expanding the investment it makes into its residents of this city, particularly its most vulnerable.

Monetary considerations alone cannot dictate how the city responds to these extraordinary times. Throughout its history, Hamilton has tackled other major crises, from the previous pandemic in 1918/19, to the Great Depression and the struggle against fascism during the Second World War. From each of those major incidents the city, through the resilience of its residents, to bold leadership from its governments, and investment in city building, the city became better, stronger, and more resilient. The challenge in responding to this crisis will be making sure that the growth and investment is equitable, sustainable, and includes voices not often considered as stakeholders.

Hamilton should not return to the status quo; the city does not need a “New Normal”. In order to truly recover from the pandemic, it needs to build on its strengths, firmly acknowledge deeply rooted systemic issues, and look to be audacious in its exploration of a Just Recovery, both in the coming months and well into the future. We cannot meet the deep inequality and hidden challenges the current pandemic has exposed with fear and austerity.

We can, and must, build back better!

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Submitted on Wed, 11/16/2022 - 13:47

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee  
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?  
Virtually

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?  
No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information  
Ian Borsuk  
Environment Hamilton

Preferred Pronoun  
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request  
I am registering to speak to the November 21st GIC to speak to the 2023 budget.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?  
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?  
No

Submitted on Thu, 11/17/2022 - 09:39

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee  
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?  
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?  
No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information  
Christine Seketa

Preferred Pronoun  
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request  
Delegate on Vision Zero and public and roadway safety

Will you be requesting funds from the City?  
Yes

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?  
No

**From:** Christine Seketa  
**Sent:** Friday, November 18, 2022 11:43 AM  
**To:** Paparella, Stephanie <Stephanie.Paparella@hamilton.ca>  
**Subject:** Hamilton 2023 Budget Delegation and Letter of Submission

## **2023 City of Hamilton Budget (Submission From 14 For Progress)**

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

Congratulations on your election win and inauguration. We look forward to working with you to ensure Hamilton is one of the best cities in Canada. As you start public deliberations on the 2023 budget, on behalf of Ward 14 constituents, we would like to highlight four items that are of significant concern for ward residents. We want to bring these issues forward during the budget deliberation to ensure they are prioritized in your discussions and decisions.

1. **Affordable Housing** - The housing crunch in Hamilton is affecting a wide section of residents, a number in search of transitional housing, social housing, rent-geared-to-income housing, “affordable” market rent housing, market rental housing, and home ownership. We would like to see more money invested in City Housing to renovate empty units in Ward 14 and across our City. As the discussion of urban sprawl persists, we encourage Council to be financially prudent in maximizing revenue from multi-residential buildings within the urban boundary instead of sprawling into our Greenbelt.
  
2. **Park Enhancements** - The parks in Ward 14 need continued nurturing; for example, Gilkson Park and the path through Mountview Park needs new lights so children and families can access the park and basketball courts at night. Carpenter Park needs new water fountains, and for larger parks such as Shawanigan residents are requesting more animation and public use such as community gardens and farmers markets.
  
3. **Street Safety Enhancements** – For families, like mine, seniors, and parents, street safety is a major concern. There have been some installations of speed cushions in the Gilkson neighbourhood on Garrow Drive and Cranbrook; however, there are more neighbourhood streets that need safety enhancements.  
  
 We want Council to fund the recommendations in the 2021 Complete Streets Review this term.
  
4. **After-School Programs on the Mountain** - On the West Mountain, there are minimal after-school programs that support children, youth, and young adults. As such, families, youth, and young adults have to travel downtown to access supports such as aftercare, employment support and homework support.



5. **Bike Lanes** - As a resident of Ward 14, we are seeking more active transportation modes to connect with other parts of the City and within the Ward. Of particular interest to us are protected bike lanes on Scenic Road, Bendemere, and Limeridge Road West, and a protected intersection at the corner of Upper Paradise and Mohawk Rd to ensure Ward 14 residents are safe.

Thank you for your time, and we hope to see budgetary commitments made to these issues in your February 2023 meeting, as we will be back to address Council on these crucial issues.

Sincerely,  
Christine Seketa

Submitted on Fri, 11/18/2022 - 08:15

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee  
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?  
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?  
No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information  
Medora Uppal  
YWCA Hamilton  
75 MacNab St S  
Hamilton , Ontario . L8P 3C1  
[muppal@ywcahamilton.org](mailto:muppal@ywcahamilton.org)  
9057199133

Preferred Pronoun  
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request  
Budget Delegation

Will you be requesting funds from the City?  
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?  
No

Submitted on Fri, 11/18/2022 - 11:58

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

## Committee Requested

Committee  
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?  
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?  
No

## Requestor Information

Requestor Information  
Jessica Bonilla-Dampney  
Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area)  
75 MacNab St. S  
Hamilton, Ontario. L8P 3C1  
[jessica@sacha.ca](mailto:jessica@sacha.ca)  
9055254573

Preferred Pronoun  
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request  
Delegation regarding the City Budget focusing on SACHA and VAW groups in the City of Hamilton.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?  
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?  
No

## Sexual violence in our community – The City of Hamilton

Prepared by Jessica Bonilla-Dampney, Director

Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area) – SACHA

Presented to the City of Hamilton Emergency and Community Services Committee – September 22, 2022; City of Hamilton General Issues Committee (Budget) – November 21, 2022

### Some facts:

- 1 in 3 women experience sexual assault in their lifetime.
- 1 in 6 men experience sexual assault in their lifetime.
- Trans-individuals (trans women and trans men) are at higher risk of sexual violence<sup>1</sup>. Existing societal attitudes justify, tolerate, normalize and minimize sexual violence against women, girls<sup>2</sup>, as well as trans and non-binary persons<sup>3</sup>.
- Sexual crimes are by far the most common offence against girls<sup>4</sup>. For boys, being under 12 years old heightens their vulnerability to being targeted for sexual offences<sup>5</sup>.
- Indigenous and people of color in Canada are at increased risk of violence: for example, a Canadian national inquiry found that Indigenous women and girls are 16 times more likely to be killed or to disappear than white women<sup>6</sup>.

Crime statistics, however, only reflect a small minority of the GBV that occurs. Most sexual violence cases do not engage the criminal justice system<sup>7</sup>. This means that the prevalence of sexual violence in Ontario is in fact much higher than the numbers shown here.

### History of our services and increasing resource challenge

- SACHA has been operating in the region since 1975.
- Since that time, we have provided many years of prevention education, advocacy and support for survivors in the region.
- During this time, the number of survivors wanting to access the crisis counselling and long term counselling programs has increased:
  - In 2019, SACHA's waitlist for counselling reached an all time high of 11 months for counselling services
  - Currently (November 2022) SACHA's waitlist for counselling sits at 5 months
  - As we return to in person services, the demand counselling services will grow
- Budget pressures have meant the number of FTE staff providing crisis and counselling support at our centre has shrunk, instead of increasing to meet rising needs.
- Our centre supports survivors of recent sexual violence, as well as survivors of historical sexual violence: for example, child sexual abuse, or adult sexual assault that occurred many weeks, months or years before.
- In the gender based violence sector, under resourced agencies like ours must compete for project-based funding, spending scarce resources to repeatedly write grants, rather than having basic costs of operation increases to our base budgets.

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<sup>1</sup> Factor & Rothblum, (2007).

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. *Understanding and addressing violence against women*. Online: [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/77433/1/WHO\\_RHR\\_12.35\\_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/77433/1/WHO_RHR_12.35_eng.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> TransPulse Ontario

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Released on February 25, 2013. *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*. p. 15

<sup>5</sup> Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006, Statistics Canada

<sup>6</sup> National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). Report released June 2019. Online: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>

<sup>7</sup> Patel, A. October 30, 2014. for Huffington Post Canada. 460,000 Sexual Assaults In Canada Every Year: YWCA Canada. Online: [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada\\_n\\_6074994.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada_n_6074994.html)

- Training and recruiting staff is difficult in our sector, with highly specialized skills and low wages and benefits relative to other mental health funded positions.

### **No increased funding from provincial government again this year despite increased service demand from pandemic**

- Awareness of sexual violence is increasing—a significant and positive achievement. More and more, survivors of violence are reaching out for support. Since 2014, sexual assault centres across Ontario have seen a significant influx of new referrals, crisis line calls and intake for counselling services.
- Most existing Ontario sexual assault centres have been operating in Ontario since the 1990s. During this time, the number of survivors accessing crisis counselling and long term counselling or therapy programs has multiplied—in some regions by up to 4 times<sup>8</sup>; yet funding has simply not kept pace.
- Instead, Ontario sexual assault centres have seen cuts, (5% 1995) nominal increases (2004-2005, an annualized 5% increase to re-instate the previous government's cutback; 3% 2007-2008) and some small increases connected to provincial action plans (2011, 2015) that were not always continued.
- In 2018, the then-Ontario government announced an approximately 30% increase to the sexual violence sector in Ontario. The 2018 announcement would have realized a significant increase for Ontario's community-based sexual assault centres. Despite this commitment, under the current provincial government, the [funding increase never became reality](#).
- In its 2021 budget, Ontario allocated some positive investments to address gender-based violence. The budget also saw some investment in victim services – 2.1 million over 3 years to improve victim and new sexual assault services in three underserved Ontario locations
- Of these dollars, however, none find their way directly to Ontario's existing sexual assault centres such as SACHA.

### **Legal barriers to sexual assault are not getting better**

- In September 2019, Statistics Canada released its findings of *Incident-based crime statistics*<sup>9</sup> in Canada. These statistics – aligning with our experiences – reveal that sexual assault in Ontario rose from 7,434 police-reported incidences in 2016 and 8,782 in 2017 to 10,634 in 2018 — a year over year increase of almost 19%. The *Incident-based crime statistics* draws on data<sup>10</sup> on police reported crimes.
- As many sexual violence survivors choose not to engage the criminal justice system<sup>11</sup>, this means that the prevalence of sexual violence in Ontario is in fact far higher.
- The majority of all reported sexual assault cases are simply not resolved through the criminal justice system. According to Canadian research<sup>12</sup>, 33 out of every 1,000 sexual assault cases are reported to the police, and just 29 are actually recorded as a crime. These numbers speak volumes about how many are not held accountable, as well as why survivors may be afraid to report.

<sup>8</sup> Provided by Muskoka Parry Sound Sexual Assault Services in December 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. *Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories and Census Metropolitan Areas*. Data release - July 22, 2019. Online:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.16&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.16>

<sup>10</sup> The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), in co-operation with the policing community, collects police-reported crime statistics through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR). The UCR Survey was designed to measure the incidence of crime in Canadian society and its characteristics. See [this link](#) for more information on the data collected in the survey.

<sup>11</sup> Patel, A. October 30, 2014. for Huffington Post Canada. 460,000 Sexual Assaults In Canada Every Year: YWCA Canada. Online: [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada\\_n\\_6074994.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada_n_6074994.html)

<sup>12</sup> Patel, A. October 30, 2014. for Huffington Post Canada. 460,000 Sexual Assaults In Canada Every Year: YWCA Canada. Online: [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada\\_n\\_6074994.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/30/sexual-assault-canada_n_6074994.html)

- At present, police services in our region receive reports from a minority of survivors we work with, year over year. We know that nationally only 6% or less report sexual violence to police.
- Our centre has always provided support to survivors of sexual violence who are reporting to the police, as well as those who choose *not to report* (or who do not see their case proceed through the system). In this, our centre is seeing far many more sexual violence cases than is apparent to the local criminal justice system in our region, or apparent to the public.
- We encourage municipalities to consult with gender based violence agencies regarding community wellness and safety planning, not simply with police, for these reasons.

### Impact of the pandemic

- The economic fallout from business closures, job loss and other impacts can also lead to increased risk for intimate partner violence, risky coping strategies including survival sex, and increased risk of sexual exploitation and abuse<sup>13</sup>.
- Crisis events such as pandemics tend to worsen pre-existing social and economic vulnerabilities. Racialized communities, those living in poverty “and other groups that have traditionally been marginalized, tend to be harmed by a disaster more” than others<sup>14</sup>.
- The Learning Network on Violence Against Women notes that “recommended public health measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 such as social/physical distancing and the closure of non-essential services may increase exposure to violence (e.g. intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child maltreatment), in addition to changing the landscape of support-seeking”<sup>15</sup>.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for SACHA’s Crisis Support Program. At the onset of the pandemic the telephone support line saw a dramatic increase in calls from April 2020 to September 2020. As the pandemic has continued, so have the calls for support, along with an increased frequency of calls and the length of calls for support. We have seen a 29% increase in calls.
- SACHA expanded our support services to include a WebChat & Text Service. Which has meant greater accessibility and an increase to the ways through which survivors of sexual violence and their allies can receive support and information from SACHA. This expansion of services has come without increased funding.

### Further information and reading

Ontario Sexual Assault Centres and funding:

- For past work of efforts to ensure financial stability of the sector see:  
<https://sexualassaultsupport.ca/tag/survivorscantwait/>
- <https://sexualassaultsupport.ca/ontario-budget-2021-and-gender-based-violence-spending-ontario-coalition-of-rape-crisis-centres-ocrcc-responds/>

Gender-based violence and sexual violence in Canada:

- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.16&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.16> (Ontario)
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00017-eng.htm>

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<sup>13</sup> Global Protection Cluster GBV Protection and Response and Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Last updated: 6 April 2020. *Identifying & Mitigating Gender-based Violence Risks within the COVID-19 Response*. Online: <https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Interagency-GBV-risk-mitigation-and-Covid-tipsheet.pdf>: 10.

<sup>14</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2015. Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters. Online: [https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201511/1297700\\_GBV\\_in\\_Disasters\\_EN\\_LR2.pdf](https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201511/1297700_GBV_in_Disasters_EN_LR2.pdf): 16

<sup>15</sup> The Learning Network on Violence Against Women. *Resources on Gender-Based Violence and the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Online: <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/Resources%20on%20Gender-Based%20Violence%20and%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic.html>





## POLICING & JUSTICE

Police DV/IPV calls	12,548
Police DV/IPV reports	6,883
Police DV charges	5,969
Police reported SV	678
Police reported human trafficking	8

## CRISIS & HELPLINES

Shelter crisis/helpline calls (IH, NWC, IHOH, GS)	8,512
Crisis Text (IH)	186
Crisis Web Convos (IH)	150
SA crisis/helpline calls	2,036
Indigenous DV & SV crisis calls (NWC)	2,632
Families using Supervised Parenting Services due to DV (YWCA)	86%

## HOMELESSNESS

Women experiencing homelessness and accessing Transitional Housing or Drop in Support	196
Women accessing homeless/precariously housed supports	1,205
Female head of household families actively experiencing homelessness	132

## SAFETY & SUPPORTS

Women, children in shelter (IHOH, NWC, IH, GS)	603
Women new referrals for counselling & VAW services (Efray, SACHA, CFS, GS)	939
DV/SV/VAW reports to VAW agency (Efray, NWC, YWCA, Willow's Place, SADVCC, GS, IHOH)	2,008
VAW agency counselling sessions (Efray, SACHA, CFS, SADVCC, GS)	4,961
Additional hours worked by unpaid volunteers (Efray, SACHA, Willow)	12,325

## GAPS/BARRIERS

- 2,383 women could not access shelter due to shortage of beds. (NWC, IH)
- Significant gap for marginalized women experiencing VAW and homelessness.
- 14 families waitlist for service or increased services from Supervised Parenting Services.
- Access to services was limited in many ways by Covid-19. This affected the number of women helped and the collection of these stats.

## WAWG MEMBERSHIP & PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

- The AIDS Network
- Catholic Children's Aid Society
- Catholic Family Services\* (CFC)
- Centre de Santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
- Compass Community Health
- Elizabeth Fry Society Southern Ontario Region\* (EFRY)
- Equity and Inclusion Office, McMaster University
- Good Shepherd Women's Services\* (GS)
- Hamilton Health Sciences Sexual Assault/ Domestic Violence Care Centre\* (SADVCC)
- Hamilton Police Services - Domestic Violence Unit\*
- Hamilton Police Services - Victim Services\*

- Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
- Indigenous Victim Services
- Interval House of Hamilton\* (IHOH)
- Ministry of the Attorney General, Victim Witness Assistance Program
- Mission Services, Inasmuch House\* (Inasmuch)
- Native Women's Centre\* (NWC)
- Sexual Assault Centre - Hamilton & Area\* (SACHA)
- Supervised Access Program (SAP)
- Willow's Place\* (WP)
- YWCA Hamilton\* (YWCA)

\*= contributed to this snapshot

DV = Domestic Violence  
SV = Sexual Violence  
VAW = Violence Against Women

*Measuring the success & strength by the health and wellbeing of all citizens*

November 17, 2022



Dear Mayor Horwath and Members of General Issues Committee,

Re: 2023 Municipal Budget Call for Action

Thank you for the opportunity to engage with you, and voice our support to base the 2023 Municipal Budget on progress toward equitable change in Hamilton.

As members of the Just Recovery Coalition, United Way Halton & Hamilton (UWHH) encourages you to consider the existing policy recommendations provided in the Just Recovery Policy Paper 2021, and to remain apprised of the ensuing update of the Just Recovery Policy Paper. The Just Recovery Coalition aligns with our advocacy work and with our efforts in convening stakeholders to ignite action and ensure that everyone can thrive. Our support of thousands of individuals across Hamilton is only possible with community groups coming together, and the inclusion of elected officials like yourselves in the efforts.

As a city full of ambitious leaders, Labour workers and advocates, artists, and educators, we must ensure the support of the full spectrum of our community by creating and maintaining a city that is physically, financially, and socially accessible. The City of Hamilton is already doing this in many ways, and has an important opportunity to do even more. Within the budget deliberation process, we request that you, creatively and thoughtfully, centre equity and marginalized neighbours.

Such actions and commitments include:

- Becoming a certified Living Wage employer for all employees
- Adopting and encouraging Decent Work standards in community
- Increasing the City Enrichment Fund to support financially-strained community services
- Considering accessibility via snow removal services and infrastructure investments
- Supporting short and medium-term housing solutions.

Building a budget anchored in equity represents an important moment for the City. It is the opportunity to increase social good in our community. An equity-based budget will see that community members are better supported in their needs rather than forced towards desperation and distress. This is a key shift that will result in decreased down-stream costs for city-run health systems, less financial pressure on law enforcement efforts, among others. While we know that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over, the ripple or shadow effects are rearing their heads in full force.

The reality is, we are anticipating even more people needing support— especially to cope with difficulties securing basic needs. The social and economic impacts of rising inflation rates and cost of living is transforming our community and individual lives, and people who were already experiencing inequities, including poverty, homelessness and social isolation, are being disproportionately impacted by the crisis. Marginalized people require even more supports during this time. Their needs, along with the challenges of those pushed into crisis for the first time, require our attention now.



Inflation and economic instability, as well as ongoing mental health impacts, are at all-time highs, especially for those already marginalized or previously experiencing these hardships. It is therefore imperative, at every level, to support those most vulnerable in our budgets and community efforts. This act reinforces the standards of living that Hamilton has always advocated for.

As recently elected representatives, your time is now, to support the budgetary changes we all need to see in our community. We look forward to working alongside Council as your commitment to your constituents is demonstrated.

Thank you for this opportunity to delegate and connect, and we will stay in touch over our support of community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Park".

Brad Park  
President & CEO  
United Way Halton & Hamilton

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawna Mutton".

Shawna Mutton  
Vice President, Community Impact  
United Way Halton & Hamilton



**November 18, 2022**

**Re: 2022 City of Hamilton Municipal Budgeting Process**

Dear Members of the General Issues Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide pre-budgetary comments as you begin deliberations on the 2023 City of Hamilton municipal budgeting process.

As President and CEO of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, one of Hamilton's oldest institutions at 177 years old, I have the privilege of speaking for our 1,000+ members that employ over 75,000 people in our community.

Throughout the past several years, the Chamber has been a lifeline for local businesses hosting over 50 webinars on pandemic response related subjects, conducting advocacy to all three levels of government based on the feedback of our members, and partnering with the City to operate the Hamilton COVID Concierge for Business support service, which has provided direct, one-on-one support to hundreds of Hamilton-area businesses.

Throughout 2022, public health circumstances have evolved into a more familiar and stable pattern that has allowed businesses to return to normal operations in nearly all sectors of our economy. With the return to workplaces and regular patterns of work, many businesses are keen to refocus on doing what they do best, and to best understand how to advocate for their interests, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce undertook a membership consultation during Summer 2022.

**2022 Hamilton Chamber of Commerce Municipal Election Priorities**

Based on the feedback received through our membership consultation, we generated the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce's 2022 Municipal Election Priorities and distributed among all candidates during the election period. This document serves as an advocacy blueprint for our organization and membership that we will continue to advance over this Term of City Council to ensure that Hamilton is *Ready for Business*.

Our members have indicated several supportive actions that the new City Council ought to implement to ensure the short- and long-term success and viability of our diverse, local economy. The Chamber has compiled our findings into seven priority areas based on the feedback we received. These seven priority areas are: Leadership; Vision; Labour; Investment; Housing & Affordability; Transportation; and Climate Change. Contained within each are a suite of recommendations and supportive actions that will help to achieve Hamilton's economic goals and bolster its business community.



We have attached the Chamber's 2022 Municipal Election Priorities to this correspondence for ease of access, but will also detail a few key considerations for Council's attention.

## **Leadership & Vision**

Hamilton businesses, particularly small enterprises, have been saddled with a debt load that is threatening their survival. They want to see municipal leaders who will shape policies that support conditions for recovery, growth and investment. Mayor and Council need to be cognizant that, if the city isn't giving businesses value for their tax dollar, then they might take their business elsewhere.

Our members face increasing business taxes while receiving less services for their tax dollars. Paired with the rising cost of living and the impacts of inflation on our supply chain, our City must deliver more value for its local business taxpayer. This is the sentiment that our members have expressed, and it continues to create a stigma that deters new investment in our City.

Our members repeatedly communicate that economic growth continues to be bogged down by red tape at City Hall. Excessive regulation and unnecessary bureaucracy result in increased costs and administrative burdens on Hamilton's business community. Our members have reported they continue to have issues with timeliness around approvals of building permits, as well as the absence of a self-service tool to check on the status of building permits.

While Hamilton has seen improvements related to development fees, more work is required to make the municipality a more desirable place to operate a business rather than our neighbouring communities. Businesses eyeing Hamilton have identified development fees as one of several roadblocks to setting up shop here. Combined with the levels of bureaucracy at City Hall, it often leaves businesses looking at other GTHA communities in which to invest.

## **Labour & Investment**

Hamilton's business community also continues to have trouble in attracting and retaining talent. In fact, this is one of the most significant barriers to growth. The Mayor and Council need to attract the next generation of workers and entrepreneurs by making Hamilton a destination for jobseekers to live in and work in.

People in their 20s and 30s have different needs than people in their 50s and 60s, and it's that thinking that must drive forward thinking decisions at City Hall. The Mayor and Council must build community infrastructure that speaks to the generation they want to attract. Businesses need a diverse mix of staff to train along with experienced people to ensure the knowledge gap is filled. Council ought to work with the business community



and support the work of Economic Development to attract the next generation of talent to our community.

We must also collectively advocate for improvements to the immigration process as well as the recognition of international credentials to upper levels of government to respond to the chronic labour shortages we are currently experiencing. Hamilton must prioritize actions that the municipality can take to ensure a continuous supply of local quality labour. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce believes City Council needs to continue its efforts in marketing the city as a welcoming community, and ensuring Hamilton is a place where entrepreneurs want to live, work and play.

### **Transportation**

Transportation needs across our City remain a major issue and need to be addressed and prioritized by the incoming Mayor and Council. We need to look at ways to improve our public transportation and transit network to benefit all residents of Hamilton. Public transportation to many places in the former municipalities is insufficient, and while improvements have been made, more work needs to be done to address frequency, schedules and routes to these areas of Hamilton.

Moreover, we must ensure that our major employment nodes and centres are receiving sufficient transit services to facilitate employee commuting to their places of work. Effective and reliable public transportation is as much of a public service as it is an economic driver that enables employers to recruit and retain talent. For many, the decision to live and work in a community is tied closely to their ability to get around, and namely, to and from their places of work.

Our public transportation infrastructure remains notably insufficient in many parts of Hamilton, particularly on those routes with heavy commercial vehicle traffic. The incoming Mayor and Council must work with our local business community to ensure priority roadway investments are being proactively made to protect the integrity of our existing road infrastructure and to plan our future network demands.

### **Housing & Affordability**

Ontario is in the midst of a housing crisis. Housing prices and rental prices continue to soar, and Hamilton is not immune to it. As of July 2022, the average price of a home in Ontario was \$831,473. Here in Hamilton, the average price of homes sold in July 2022 was \$793,062, a nearly 2% year over year increase. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association rent prices are skyrocketing, too, leaving many people having to choose between putting food on the table or heating their home.

The decision to work in a community is often largely tied to the ability to live in that community. In order to preserve our ability to attract and retain talent in Hamilton, we





must prioritize housing development of all types. We need more multi-unit residential developments and must ensure that we are building housing for people in all stages of their lives.

Hamilton will be facing significant change to its current approach to housing development approvals as we need to more than double the pace at which we are currently building housing to keep up with forecasted demand. The decision to focus future housing development through intensification will create opportunities and challenges that this Council must be prepared to address.

Moreover, inflation is creating significant hardships for many in our community, including our businesses. The impacts of the rising costs on materials, energy, rent, labour, transport, and debt servicing are taking a significant toll on many local businesses. These costs are reflected in the costs of goods and services we all rely on, and Hamilton City Council must champion policies and actions from upper levels of government to help address the deleterious impacts of rising inflation on our community and its economy.

### **Climate Change**

As one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions in the entire province, Hamilton's economy is subject to undergo significant transformation. As our traditional sectors decarbonize and we continue to attract new investment from clean tech and green economy entrepreneurs from around the world, the next Council must ensure it is actively working towards the advancement of the private-sector's climate-related goals.

The city is already on track to support and advance Hamilton's economic transition, but we must ensure we keep our foot on the battery-powered "gas pedal" to collectively secure Hamilton's fair share of public and private investment dollars that will enable our economy to thrive and potentially lead Ontario's transitional economy.

Our industrial bayfront holds incredible decarbonization potential, and the Hamilton Chamber is committed to pursuing investment and technological adoption to assist with the challenge at hand. Council must share this same desire to transition our economy to clean up our airways and waterways while preserving significant economic activity and employment for Hamiltonians.

### **Conclusion**

Once again, thank you to the General Issues Committee for the opportunity to provide comments today.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce looks forward to the conversations in the months ahead as the municipality plans financially for 2023. In light of the lingering impacts of



the pandemic, these budgetary decisions are more important than ever as we balance fiscal responsibility with progressive and ambitious policy making to improve our community for all Hamilton residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GD". The letters are stylized and connected, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the "D".

Greg Dunnett  
President & CEO  
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

# HAMILTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTION PRIORITIES



On behalf of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, I would like to present our 2022 Municipal Election Priorities for you and your campaign's consideration. Our organization thanks and commends you for your participation in the democratic process and for seeking to represent Hamilton and our community interests at City Hall.

As the new President & CEO of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, I have the privilege of speaking for our 1,000+ members that employ over 75,000 people in our community. Our business community is looking to our new Mayor and Council to strengthen our local economy through forward thinking leadership and visionary policy development. The recommendations herein support the continuous improvement of our City and will set the foundation for economic growth.

After two and a half years in a global pandemic, the City of Hamilton finds itself at an economic crossroads. The pandemic has altered nearly every aspect of our business community and has forced all business to rethink how they operate day-to-day to keep their staff and their organization safe. While the uncertainty caused due to COVID-19 remains, our city leadership needs to adapt and evolve to the new business landscape and to chart a course for economic growth in our community.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce is asking candidates in this municipal election, **"If elected, how will you work to advance our local economy and ensure that City Hall is Ready for Business?"**

As the October 24, 2022, Municipal Election draws near, businesses in this city want to know what municipal leaders will do to support their individual post-pandemic recovery as well as create an environment that is conducive to new investment, talent attraction, and opportunity creation. Hamilton and its business community is looking for an economic resurgence, and it needs visionary leadership from City Council to help it achieve that goal.

Our next municipal government will face tough decisions and will need to prioritize actions that support Hamilton businesses in accessing the capital, markets, and talent they need to grow. Council must have leaders who are willing to work in tandem with local businesses of all sizes and all sectors of our diverse economy. These leaders must have a vision and a plan to move our business community forward. Our shared prosperity depends on a strong business community that can innovate, attract new talent and capital, and even expand into new markets.

Over the course of August 2022, the Hamilton Chamber conducted membership consultations to hear from our members about the most pressing issues they face in doing business in Hamilton. This feedback has been outlined into seven **Ready for Business** priorities that the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce would like to bring to your campaign's attention. In sharing these priorities, we hope that you will find them helpful in your discussions with members of our local business community and beyond over the course of the campaign.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with you and would welcome the opportunity to set up a conversation to discuss our **Ready for Business** priorities on behalf of our membership further.

Thank you for your candidacy and your participation in the 2022 Municipal Election. We wish you well on your campaign.

Sincerely,



Greg Dunnett  
President & CEO





# overview

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce is proud to present our 2022 Municipal Election Priorities for you and your campaign's consideration. These priorities have been determined by the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and its membership as critical considerations for all candidates participating in this year's municipal election. Moreover, these priorities serve as a blueprint document for the incoming Mayor and Members of Council to orient themselves with issues and concerns material to Hamilton's business community.

Following a three-week consultation period with our membership during August 2022, the Chamber has compiled our findings into seven priority areas based on the feedback we received. These seven priority areas are: Leadership; Vision; Labour; Investment; Housing & Affordability; Transportation; and Climate Change. Contained within each are a suite of recommendations and supportive actions that will help to achieve Hamilton's economic goals and bolster its business community.

Municipal Election consultations were conducted on a voluntary basis in small groups moderated by Hamilton Chamber of Commerce staff. Members were also invited to submit written comments as part of the consultation. Our members have indicated several supportive actions that the incoming Mayor and Members of Council ought to implement to ensure the short- and long-term success and viability of our diverse, local economy.

We submit these recommendations herein for your consideration.

# LEADERSHIP

Many chamber members have expressed concern over the perceived divisiveness around the council table. They believe it is incumbent upon the new Mayor and Council to be a unified front who are working together for the benefit of the City. Business owners in Hamilton are collaborative, hardworking and innovative. They believe their elected representatives should be the same.

It is time for our elected officials to consider working with and investing in our local businesses to put less financial strain on the municipality. Hamilton businesses, particularly small enterprises, have been saddled with a debt load that is threatening their survival. They want to see municipal leaders who will shape policies that support conditions for recovery, growth and investment.

Mayor and Council need to have a better understanding that, if the city isn't giving businesses value for their tax dollar, then they might just take their business elsewhere. Many businesses are concerned about the municipal services they receive like garbage/recycling collection, poor road maintenance, and inadequate snow removal, and believe the Mayor and Council need to revisit bylaws governing these services.

## SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- **While addressing the variety of municipal issues that come across the City Council table, elected officials need to also bear in mind that they are also the primary stewards of Hamilton's economy.** Hamilton needs to continue to attract and embrace new sectors of our local economy, while championing our legacy industries.
- **The Mayor and Members of Council must act to address the common perception that City Hall is unresponsive.** Hamilton businesses frequently express frustration with their experiences working with the City. These concerns including timelines not being adhered to as well as ineffective communication with stakeholders, creating the impression that their concerns are not valid. Where timelines and deadlines are missed, additional costs have been incurred by applicants. The incoming City Council needs to prioritize communications that are proactive on updates and timelines.
- **Concerns have been shared from the business community about the professional conduct around the City Council table.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must restore professional decorum as well as improve the treatment of city staff and residents. When City Council is perceived to be a threatening and intimidating place, it does not bode well for trust in government nor does it support a ready for business mindset.
- **Main street businesses, industrial and other commercial partners all agree that Hamilton needs to prioritize the development of walkable neighbourhoods and complete streets.** The labour force of the future will be largely identified by its demand for communities that they can live, work, and play in. It's time for a move away from car centric city design, while still maintaining efficient through ways for commercial driving.
- **The incoming Mayor and Members of Council need to recognize that Hamilton is the only urban alternative to Toronto in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area.** We are not a suburb, but rather, we are a big city that people come from all over the world to live, work and play in. It's time for our municipal government to leverage and champion this quality of our community.



## VISION

Our members face increasing business taxes while receiving less services for their tax dollars. Paired with the rising cost of living and the impacts of inflation on our supply chain, our City must deliver more value for its local business taxpayer. This is the sentiment that our members have expressed, and it continues to create a stigma that deters new investment in our City.

Our members continue to mention that economic growth continues to be bogged down by red tape at City Hall. Excessive regulation and unnecessary bureaucracy result in increased costs and administrative burdens on Hamilton's business community. Our members have reported they continue to have issues with timeliness around approvals of building permits, as well as the absence of a self-service tool to check the status of building permits.

The Chamber is committed to working with the business community and city staff to identify and reduce red tape at the municipal level, with support from all of council. The Mayor and Council need to target the removal of unnecessary bureaucracy and ensure a more streamlined process for current and future entrepreneurs.

### SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- **Hamilton City Council needs to conduct itself in a business friendly manner and recognize that our local economy's resilience and strength over the past few years has demonstrated their long-term commitment to this community.** The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every business in our community and right now is not the time to increase tax burdens on commercial operators.
- **There exists a need for the incoming Mayor and Members of Council to review the Hamilton Business Centres core mandate and offerings.** Though it has become increasingly simple for entrepreneurs to set up new ventures thanks to digital technologies and social media platforms, there still exists a need for core business start-up services. The City of Hamilton must continue to offer and improve these services, while also recognizing a growing need to establish dedicated programs and networks to support entrepreneurship efforts by equity-seeking groups, including the BIPOC community and women in Hamilton.
- **Many new businesses and entrepreneurs indicated a general lack of information for new businesses looking to access capital.** The City of Hamilton should look to address this shortcoming and ensure that it provides guidance to those entrepreneurs and small business owners seeking access to grants, loans, or other financial mechanisms to help grow their operations.
- **Chamber members have indicated challenges with the permitting process at City Hall, that negatively impacts their desire to move to or grow and expand their operations in Hamilton.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must prioritize investments into the Planning and Economic Development Department to hire more staff, adhere to provincially mandated timelines, and to communicate in a timely manner with applicants. This is imperative to facilitate investment in our community and demonstrates an open for business ethos.

# LABOUR

Hamilton's business community continues to have trouble in attracting and retaining talent. In fact, it continues to be one of the most significant barriers to growth. The Mayor and Council need to attract the next generation of workers and entrepreneurs by making Hamilton a destination for jobseekers to live in and work in.

People in their 20s and 30s have different needs than people in their 50s and 60s, and it's that thinking that must drive forward thinking decisions at City Hall. The Mayor and Council must build community infrastructure that speaks to the generation they want to attract. Businesses need a diverse mix of staff to train along with experienced people to ensure the knowledge gap is filled.

The next Mayor and Council need to work with the business community and support the work of Economic Development to attract the next generation of talent to our community. We must advocate for improvements to the immigration process as well as the recognition of international credentials to upper levels of government to respond to the chronic labour shortages we are currently experiencing. Hamilton must prioritize actions that the municipality can take to ensure a continuous supply of local quality labour.

## SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- We know that Hamilton's economy continues to evolve and is recognized as one of the most diversified economies in the country. This evolution brings with it a host of new challenges and desires from employers and their employees on a municipality.** Some common challenges and opportunities identified by members of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce include staff want to live, work, and play in Hamilton; staff do not want to invest in personal vehicles, but rather, desire robust transit connectivity; interested in hybrid working environments where some time is spent in-person; attracting young people to stay in Hamilton after graduation. These should be top of mind for the incoming Mayor and Members of Council in their economic development planning.
- Currently, hiring and retention is a big challenge for nearly all sectors of our economy, at this time. Several factors are to blame including the pandemic and its impacts on labour and immigration, however, we do know that there are some things the municipality can do to help.** Firstly, cost of living can be a major barrier for attracting labourers to Hamilton, and City Council must be cognisant of this. Secondly, transit connectivity is a critical piece of recruitment and retention strategies for businesses. We must prioritize investments into transit networks that service our employment nodes. And lastly, City Council must actively champion the recognition of international credentials and uncorking the tap on Canada's immigration system to bring in the new talent we need to keep our economy growing.
- Attracting and retaining new talent to Hamilton is of critical importance, as we know about the volume of pending retirements as our population ages. By prioritizing the attraction of new talent to Hamilton, we can avoid the potential challenges associated with a skills gap when a large portion of our labour force and knowledge base retires.** To minimize the impacts of a rapidly aging workforce, the incoming Mayor and Members of Council need to work to attract more people to Hamilton as well as provide them adequate with options to live.
- Hamilton Chamber members have expressed the need to get our labour force back to work. They cannot hire or retain staff by offering a great compensation package alone.** While government supports were essential to assist businesses through the height of the pandemic, this period has passed and we must re-think how funding supports operate to permit employers to invest in themselves, creating new economic opportunities, rather than going directly to employees.

- **There is a common desire among Hamilton-area businesses to pay a living wage, but in addition to labour costs, the price of everything – from materials, to energy, to infrastructure – has also increased dramatically. Businesses are faced with difficult choices right now in a balancing act between keeping the lights on, growing their operations, and retaining their staff.** City Council must work in collaboration with businesses to help keep their fixed costs low and allow them to free up additional capital to pay their staff a living wage.
- **Hamilton based businesses want to provide decent work, ethical employment, and good workplaces with supports for employees, however, they do not all have the capacity for the human resources investments this may require.** As an alternative, the City of Hamilton and upper levels of government ought to work together to develop a modernized suite of human resources policies that employers can readily adopt. Some of these may include draft policies on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health Supports, as well as Hybrid & Flexible Work Arrangements.

## INVESTMENT

While Hamilton has seen improvements in the area of development fees, more work is required to make the municipality a more desirable place to operate a business rather than our neighbouring communities.

Businesses eyeing Hamilton have identified development fees as one of a number of roadblocks to setting up shop here. Combined with the levels of bureaucracy at City Hall, it often leaves businesses looking at other GTHA communities in which to invest. For those businesses that do choose Hamilton, they are challenged by annual tax increases above the rate of inflation, while simultaneously seeing services provided continue to decline. Chamber members and businesses are happy to pay their fair share, but they don't want to pay more than that.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce believes City Council needs to continue its efforts in marketing the city as a welcoming community, and ensuring Hamilton is a place where entrepreneurs want to live, work and play.

### SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- **The Hamilton B-Line LRT is the single largest investment in the history of the City of Hamilton. However, businesses remain concerned about the transition period between where we currently sit and when the LRT is operating across the lower City.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must prioritize the mitigation of construction impacts, not limited to, notifying affected businesses of road closure, communicating alternative transportation routes, and ensuring sufficient public transit connectivity remains intact during the construction period. Moreover, the costs of maintaining and building new infrastructure only continue to climb. Hamiltonians and its business owners are seeking clarity on how the LRT will operate and what its costs to the average residential and commercial ratepayer will look like.
- **Hamilton Chamber of Commerce members frequently iterated that commercial rent rates are too high, and that local businesses cannot take any more rate hikes at this time.** Main street businesses matter, and the incoming Mayor and Members of Council must work to help them thrive. With increasing financial demands on businesses in the form of rising energy bills, labour costs, and supply chain snarls, commercial taxation rates must remain low as our economy continues to get back on track from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **The pandemic significantly shifted how many businesses operate, with employees adopting remote and hybrid working options. A negative impact of this trend is the impact on real estate and the tax collections the City of Hamilton receives from those property owners or tenants.** It is anticipated that this shift to hybrid work will be permanent in many sectors of the economy, and it is important for the City of Hamilton, the incoming Mayor and Members of Council to facilitate the development of new and innovative working spaces. These may include coworking spaces and other smaller properties as well as piloting short-term leases to support “pop-up” spaces for small business owners. These are creative solutions that will ensure the City can maintain a stable commercial tax rate and create new opportunities for economic activity.
- **A common concern raised by Hamilton Chamber of Commerce Members spoke to how the City of Hamilton conducts its procurement processes.** For many, they find it next to impossible to be a successful applicant for a City procurement and are equally dismayed when they find out that the successful applicant is not even a Hamilton-based enterprise. While there is merit to securing the lowest bid, it is only a “win” if the quality of work, product or service is up to standard. Moreover, if the work on a previous contract has been poor, that applicant should be barred from participation. The incoming Mayor and Members of Council ought to review the City of Hamilton procurement policies to provide more opportunities for local contractors to secure contracts with the City. Let’s hire local and celebrate local success.
- **As Hamilton’s industrial business community grapples with the need to significantly decarbonize their operations, it will be critical for the incoming Mayor and Members of Council to work in partnership with industry to secure investment from upper levels of government, as well as to attract clean tech employers that will contribute to reduce our community’s emissions profile and preserve good paying jobs.** The City of Hamilton must be seen as a municipality that is easy to work with and one that enables investment to advance our long-term environmental and economic interests.
- **We already know that Hamilton attracts international businesses that want to grow and invest here. Hamilton is recognized as a federal foreign trade zone due to our multi-modal goods movement infrastructure with immediate access to road, rail, sea and air transport.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must capitalize on this designation. City Council needs to help those businesses already here expand and grow their local footprint and continue to attract new investment. Businesses looking to move operations to Hamilton need certainty that the city will be helpful and collaborative.

## HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY

Ontario is in the midst of a housing crisis. Housing prices and rental prices continue to soar, and Hamilton is not immune to it. As of July 2022, the average price of a home in Ontario was \$831,473. Here in Hamilton, the average price of homes sold in July 2022 was \$793,062, a nearly 2% year over year increase. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association rent prices are skyrocketing, too, leaving many people having to choose between putting food on the table or heating their home. The decision to work in a community is often largely tied to the ability to live in that community. In order to preserve our ability to attract and retain talent in Hamilton, we must prioritize housing development of all types.

Hamilton will be facing significant change to its current approach to housing development approvals as we need to more than double the pace at which we are currently building housing to keep up with forecasted demand. The decision to keep the urban boundary firm and focus future housing development through intensification will create opportunities and challenges that the incoming Mayor and Council must be prepared to address. We need more multi-unit residential developments and must ensure that we are building housing of all types for people in all stages of their lives.

The Mayor and Council must continue efforts to increase Hamilton's complement of affordable homes in our community. Having affordable housing will help everyone in the City, from the homeless to senior citizens. Having affordable housing options will also attract new people to the City and create opportunity for more to participate in Hamilton's economy.

Moreover, inflation is creating significant hardships for many in our community, including our businesses. The impacts of the rising costs on materials, energy, rent, labour, transport, and debt servicing are taking a significant toll on many local businesses. These costs are reflected in the costs of goods and services we all rely on, and Hamilton City Council must champion policies and actions from upper levels of government to help address the deleterious impacts of rising inflation on our community and its economy.

### **SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:**

- **The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must recognize the increasing cost of housing in Hamilton for homeowners and renters alike and must act collaboratively to facilitate the development of new housing units of all types.** City Hall also needs to study the impacts of exclusionary zoning and its inhibitory effects on our ability to build new housing units. This is critical not only for those residents who already live in Hamilton, but to attract new people to Hamilton. We need attainable and affordable housing built now to unlock the immediate economic benefits gained during construction, as well as the significant long-term benefits of Hamilton becoming a more complete and livable community.
- **Hamilton Chamber of Commerce members unanimously expressed that the affordability of housing is a major barrier to their ability to attract and retain talent.** Businesses are having major challenges with finding sufficient labour, and in many instances are hearing from applicants that the cost of housing is too high in Hamilton, forcing them to live in other nearby communities. This in turn creates a transportation barrier for many, and results in labour being driven out of our community because we do not have enough housing units available to meet demand. Our ability to attract talent relies on our ability to accommodate housing demand. If people don't see themselves living here, it's a talent recruitment and retention hit.
- **Hamilton is renowned for our creative sector and its significant contributions to our local economy; however, it is increasingly difficult for creatives to afford to live and work in Hamilton.** The lack of available studios and other creative spaces to rent creates fierce competition for limited spots. The incoming Mayor and Members of Council need to actively work to continue to revitalize Hamilton's creative sector, especially following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Hamilton Chamber of Commerce members expressed concerned about ever-increasing development charges levied on new residential and commercial developments.** While changes are forthcoming to how community benefit charges are allocated, loudly we heard from our membership that it is imperative to keep these additional charges low. Moreover, the City needs to effectively communicate how and where these funds are utilized. The incoming Mayor and Members of Council need to assess how development charges reserve funds are structured and allocated in a productive manner.
- **With the decision to keep the urban boundary firm, the incoming Mayor and Members of Council will need to explore creative ways to intensify our community and provide more housing units year over year to sustain our population growth.** There exists a number of opportunities to potentially convert commercial properties and city land that is underutilized into housing uses. While this is one option, there is also merit in the idea to explore business incentives to reactivate underutilized commercial properties, whether they be within an existing Business Improvement Area or not. Programs such as these provide an opportunity to transform these properties into effective use spaces that can generate additional tax revenue for the City of Hamilton.

# TRANSPORTATION

Transportation needs across our City remain a major issue and need to be addressed and prioritized by the incoming Mayor and Council. We need to look at ways to improve our public transportation and transit network to benefit all residents of Hamilton. Public transportation to many places in the former municipalities is insufficient, and while improvements have been made, more work needs to be done to address frequency, schedules and routes to these areas of Hamilton.

Moreover, we must ensure that our major employment nodes and centres are receiving sufficient transit services to facilitate employee commuting to their places of work. Effective and reliable public transportation is as much of a public service as it is an economic driver that enables employers to recruit and retain talent. For many, the decision to live and work in a community is tied closely to their ability to get around, and namely, to and from their places of work.

Our public transportation infrastructure remains notably insufficient in many parts of Hamilton, particularly on those routes with heavy commercial vehicle traffic. The incoming Mayor and Council must work with our local business community to ensure priority roadway investments are being proactively made to protect the integrity of our existing road infrastructure and to plan our future network demands.

## SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- **The City of Hamilton needs to significantly overhaul its current approach to infrastructure management and maintenance.** Hamilton has some of the worst streets in the province of Ontario, and the incoming Mayor and Members of Council need to take proactive planning steps to ensure the long-term viability and function of our critical infrastructure, including roadways, watermains and sewers. With significant economic and population growth on the horizon, these critical pieces of infrastructure are required to support the growth of our community and economy.
- **Hamilton Chamber of Commerce members are committed to achieving the community goal of Vision Zero.** There is a recognition that roadway usage continues to evolve, and we must continue to strive for a harmony between road users in a way that complements each of their respective needs. Our industrial bayfront requires the use of trucks and other large vehicles, but this should not compromise the safety of all other roadway users. The incoming Mayor and Council need to continue to monitor and evaluate road design best practices to maintain the safety of our residents, and still preserve the flow of goods and services through Hamilton.
- **The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce has long supported the B-Line LRT and strongly believe that this project remains the largest economic development investment in our community's history.** Hamilton needs a Mayor and Council who believe in the transformative reality that this project will bring to our community and that will support its advancement. We need to maintain provincial and federal funding to bring this \$3.4 billion investment in our community to fruition. With that said, significant work lies ahead, including concerns about ballooning construction costs, long-term operating and maintenance expenses, and the length of the construction period. It's going to require an all of community approach to deliver this project and realize its economic spinoff benefits, and it requires supportive leadership at City Hall.
- **Throughout our consultation with members, the Hamilton Chamber heard that access to reliable transit and transportation options are among the largest barrier to workplace recruitment and retention.** Investments in our transit system need to be understood as an investment in our community's economic potential. Residents need a variety of affordable options to get to work, and moreover, accessible options. It is long overdue that Hamilton City Council review how the HSR is currently funded, and the incoming Mayor and Members of Council must be prepared for a serious conversation about area rating for transit. It is costing local businesses more money every day to hire new staff since residents do not have options to get to work.



- **Transportation efficiency through Hamilton matters as commute times are directly related to job performance.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must keep this perspective in mind when considering transit and transportation plan. This presents a wholistic approach to recruiting and retaining talent by demonstrating to Hamiltonians and prospective Hamiltonians that they can easily live and work in Hamilton.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

As one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions in the entire province, Hamilton's economy is subject to undergo significant transformation. As our traditional sectors decarbonize and we continue to attract new investment from clean tech and green economy entrepreneurs from around the world, the next Council must ensure it is actively working towards the advancement of the private-sector's climate-related goals.

The city is already on track to support and advance Hamilton's economic transition, but we must ensure we keep our foot on the battery-powered "gas pedal" to collectively secure Hamilton's fair share of public and private investment dollars that will enable our economy to thrive and potentially lead Ontario's transitional economy.

Our industrial bayfront holds incredible decarbonization potential, and the Hamilton Chamber is committed to pursuing investment and technological adoption to assist with the challenge at hand. The incoming Mayor and Council must share this same desire to transition our economy to clean up our airways and waterways while preserving significant economic activity and employment for Hamiltonians.

### SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS:

- **The incoming Mayor and Members of Council must dedicate funding and commit actions to advance the recommendations of the Community Energy & Emissions Plan.** This strategy is the culmination of hundreds of community stakeholders' feedback to reduce our community's emissions profile in a coordinated effort. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and its members actively engaged in this process and believe that it guides a critical path to net-zero.
- **Hamilton's industrial bayfront is home to an abundance of residual energy that is currently underutilized, oftentimes being released into our atmosphere. There exist opportunities to capture and utilize this residual heat from our manufacturers that can significantly reduce Hamilton's overall emissions while supplying energy to alternate users.** The incoming Mayor and Members of Council ought to advance these initiatives at the local level, while also championing investment from upper levels of government to support.
- **We know that Hamilton's economy is among the largest emitters in the province, and decarbonization support services will be critical to assist in our local economic transition.** There exists an opportunity to invest in and establish a clean energy hub in Hamilton that would work directly on-site at our local manufacturing partners. A local hub would perfectly serve our businesses who need access to guidance and expertise on reducing their carbon footprint. The incoming City Council must continue this path and prioritize efforts towards securing this type of clean tech investment.
- **As energy costs continue to rise for commercial and residential users, the uptick in microgrid energy solutions and building retrofits is expected to increase over the next decade.** Buildings account for a significant portion of Hamilton's emissions and retrofitting them will be essential to achieve our goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. Governments of all levels are going to have to assist commercial and residential energy users with incentives to retrofit, particularly as the initial capital investment can be large. In doing so, government is both actively supporting energy users as well as businesses who provide these types of services.

# conclusion

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce believes that by committing to addressing these issues, the incoming Mayor and Council will be equipped to support and advance Hamilton's economic development. The Chamber and its nearly 1000 members strongly encourage all municipal candidates to address these business concerns in their respective election campaigns, and, if elected, to make them a priority.

- **LEADERSHIP**
- **VISION**
- **LABOUR**
- **INVESTMENT**
- **HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY**
- **TRANSPORTATION**
- **CLIMATE CHANGE**

## ABOUT

For 177 years, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce has been facilitating connections and collective action to strengthen the economic engine of our community.

Comprising many of the great leaders in Hamilton's history over the years, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce has harnessed the collective ambition of its thousands of members to play a leading role in Hamilton becoming an important and leading Canadian city during the 20th century.

Like the City of Hamilton itself, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce is undergoing a tremendous transformation. We are an ambitious organization that strives to meet the various needs of our small business members while also providing city-building leadership to renew Hamilton.

The contents of this priorities document were developed in partnership with the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce membership as we collectively consulted on what matters to them to ensure that Hamilton City Council is **Ready for Business**.

**2023 City of Hamilton Budget (Submission From 14 For Progress)**

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

Congratulations on your election win and inauguration last week. We look forward to working with you to ensure Hamilton is one of the best cities in Canada. As you start public deliberations on the 2023 budget, we, the undersigned residents of Ward 14, would like to highlight four items that are of significant concern for residents of our Ward. We want to bring these issues forward during the budget deliberation to ensure they are prioritized in your discussions and decisions.

1. **Affordable Housing** - The housing crunch in Hamilton is affecting a wide section of residents, a number in search of transitional housing, social housing, rent-geared-to-income housing, “affordable” market rent housing, market rental housing, and home ownership. We would like to see more money invested in City Housing to renovate empty units in Ward 14 and across our City. As the discussion of urban sprawl persists, we encourage Council to be financially prudent in maximizing revenue from multi-residential buildings within the urban boundary instead of sprawling into our Greenbelt.
2. **Park Enhancements** - The parks in Ward 14 need continued nurturing; for example, Gilkson Park needs new lights so children and families can access the park at night. Carpenter Park needs new water fountains, and for larger parks such as Mountview and Shawanigan residents are requesting more animation and public use such as community gardens, farmers markets etc.
3. **Street Safety Enhancements** - For families, seniors, and parents, street safety is a major concern. There have been some installations of speed bumps/humps in the Gilkson neighbourhood on Garrow Drive and Cranbrook; however, there are more neighbourhood streets that need safety enhancements. We would like Council to fund the recommendations in the 2021 Complete Streets Review this term.
4. **After-School Programs on the Mountain** - On the West Mountain, there are minimal after-school programs that support children, youth, and young adults. As such, families, youth, and young adults have to travel downtown to access supports such as aftercare, employment support, homework support etc.
5. **Bike Lanes** - As residents of Ward 14, we are seeking more active transportation modes to connect with other parts of the City and within the Ward. Of particular interest to us are protected bike lanes on Scenic Road, Bendemere, and Limeridge Road West, and a protected intersection at the corner of Upper Paradise and Mohawk Rd to ensure Ward 14 residents are safe.

Thank you for your time, and we hope to see budgetary commitments made to these issues in your February 2023 meeting, as we will be back to address Council on these crucial issues.

Signed,

Corinne Piech	Arijana Palme	Victoria Galea	Susie Heenan
Tej Sandhu	Amanda Veglia	Paul Huffman	Monia Almas
Andrea Sandhu	Brian Bradley	Bernice Mcrae	Kojo Dampety