



City of Hamilton

GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE (BUDGET) REVISED

Meeting #: GIC-B 25-001
Date: January 20, 2025
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Council Chambers
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West

Angela McRae, Legislative Coordinator (905) 546-2424 ext. 5987

	Pages
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES	
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA	
(Added Items, if applicable, will be noted with *)	
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
5.1 November 28, 2024	4
6. DELEGATIONS	
6.1 Delegations respecting the 2025 Budget, from the following individuals:	
a. Mike Collins-Williams, West End Home Builders' Association (In-Person)	12
*b. Lee Fairbanks, One Million Trees in the City (In-Person)	13
<i>Presentation material added.</i>	
c. Jen Baker, Hamilton Naturalists Club (In-Person)	57
d. Greg Dunnett, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce (In-Person)	58

e.	Tony Voitowicz (In-Person)	59
*f.	Maya Hobbs, Vice-President (Education), McMaster Students Union (In-Person)	60
*g.	Karl Andrus, Hamilton Community Benefits Network (In-Person)	61
*h.	Katherine Boothe, McMaster University (In-Person)	63
*i.	Scott Avery (In-Person)	64
*j.	Evan Eubene (In-Person)	65
*k.	Michael Fedchak, ACORN Hamilton (In-Person)	66
*l.	Hojay Byfield, ACORN Hamilton (In-Person)	67

6.2 Written Delegations respecting the 2025 Budget, from the following individuals:

Recommendation: Be received.

a.	Mike Chiarelli	68
b.	Adam McCron	73
c.	Steven Cedrone	74
d.	Laurie Cedrone	75
*e.	Hafeez Hussain	77
*f.	Joshhua Weresch	79
*g.	Christine Le	81
*h.	Yulian Pavlyuk	82
*i.	Emily Goodman	83
*j.	Karl Schaefer	85
*k.	Maria Michael	86
*l.	Susan Daw	88

*m.	Alexander Fishman and Monika Yazdanian	89
*n.	ACORN Hamilton, Canadian Environmental Law Association Environment Hamilton and the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic	90

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION
8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION
9. MOTIONS
10. NOTICES OF MOTION
11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL
12. ADJOURNMENT



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(WATER, WASTEWATER, AND
STORMWATER RATE BUDGET)
MINUTES 24-019(b)**

9:30 a.m.

November 28, 2024

Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

Present: Mayor A. Horwath
Councillor M. Wilson (Budget Chair)
Councillors J. Beattie (Virtually), C. Cassar, J.P. Danko, M. Francis (Virtually),
T. Hwang, T. Jackson, C. Kroetsch, T. McMeekin, N. Nann (Virtually),
E. Pauls (Virtually), M. Spadafora (Virtually), M. Tadeson, and A. Wilson

Absent: Councillor B. Clark - Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. 2025 Preliminary Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Budget (FCS24055) (City Wide) - REVISED (Item 5.1)

(Kroetsch/Hwang)

That the General Issues Committee (Budget) considered the following respecting the 2025 Preliminary Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Budget (FCS24055) (City Wide) - REVISED:

- (a) That the metered water consumption charges for average residential properties (meters < 25mm in size) in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the following rates, effective January 1, 2025:

Monthly Water Consumption (m3)	Rate (\$/m3)
0 – 10	1.17
> 10	2.34

- (b) That the metered water consumption charge for commercial, industrial, institutional and larger residential properties (meters = >25mm in size) in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the rate of \$2.34 per cubic metre, effective January 1, 2025;

- (c) That daily water fixed charges for all properties in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the following rates, effective January 1, 2025:

Meter Size	Daily Water Rate
15 mm	\$0.53
16 mm	\$0.53
20 mm	\$0.53
21 mm	\$0.53
25 mm	\$1.33
38 mm	\$2.65
50 mm	\$4.24
75 mm	\$8.48
100 mm	\$13.25
150 mm	\$26.50
200 mm	\$42.40
250 mm	\$60.95
300 mm	\$90.10

- (d) That the wastewater / storm treatment charges for average residential properties (meters < 25mm in size) in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the following rates, effective January 1, 2025:

Monthly Water Consumption (m3)	Rate (\$/m3)
0 – 10	1.19
> 10	2.37

- (e) That the wastewater / storm treatment charge for all commercial, industrial, institutional and larger residential properties (meters = >25mm in size) in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the rate of \$2.37 per cubic metre, effective January 1, 2025;
- (f) That daily wastewater / storm fixed charges for all properties in the City of Hamilton be imposed at the following rates, effective January 1, 2025:

Meter Size	Daily Wastewater / Storm Rate
15 mm	\$0.57
16 mm	\$0.57
20 mm	\$0.57
21 mm	\$0.57

Meter Size	Daily Wastewater /
25 mm	\$1.43
38 mm	\$2.85
50 mm	\$4.56
75 mm	\$9.12
100 mm	\$14.25
150 mm	\$28.50
200 mm	\$45.60
250 mm	\$65.55
300 mm	\$96.90

- (g) That the residential non-metered annual water rate be imposed at the flat rate of \$854.10 per annum, effective January 1, 2025;
- (h) That the residential non-metered annual wastewater / storm rate be imposed at the flat rate of \$865.05 per annum, effective January 1, 2025;
- (i) That the residential combined non-metered annual water and wastewater / storm rate be imposed at the flat rate of \$1,719.15 per annum, effective January 1, 2025;
- (j) That the Private Fire Line rates be imposed at the following rates, effective January 1, 2025:

Connection Size		Monthly Rate
mm	inches	
25	1	\$5.08
38	1.5	\$11.67
50	2	\$20.30
75	3	\$45.68
100	4	\$81.20
150	6	\$182.70
200	8	\$324.80
250	10	\$324.80
300	12	\$324.80

- (k) That the 2025 Water, Wastewater and Storm Proposed User Fees and Charges be imposed as per Appendix "G" to Report FCS24055, effective January 1, 2025;
- (l) That the 2025 Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Operating Budget in the amount of \$327,779,491 is as per Appendix "A" to Report FCS24055;

- (m) That the long-term financing plan for the Water, Wastewater and Stormwater programs and related rate increases required to meet sustainable financing is as identified in the 2025 Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Operating Budget forecast 2026-2034 (Appendix "A" to Report FCS24055) be approved, in principle;
- (n) That the 2025 Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Capital Budget and Financing Plan in the amount of \$314,899,750 is as per Appendices "K", "N", "Q" and "S" to Report FCS24055;
- (o) That the 2026-2034 Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Capital Budget forecast and financing plan is as per Appendix "I" to Report FCS24055);
- (p) That the 2025 Rate Supported Staffing Summary, inclusive of the proposed Business Cases, is as per Appendix "F" to Report FCS24055;
- (q) That three additional Full-Time Equivalents that are not included in Appendix "F" to Report FCS24055 be included in the Preliminary 2025 Tax Supported Budget with a net-zero cost;
- (r) That the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, be authorized and directed to negotiate and confirm the terms for the placement and issuance of all debenture issue(s), and / or private placement debenture issue(s), in either a public or private market and / or bank loan agreements and debenture issue(s) and / or variable interest rate bank loan agreements and debenture issue(s), in an amount not to exceed \$101,904,316 Canadian currency as attached in Appendices "K", "N" and "Q" to Report FCS24055, which includes \$51,925,440 in Rate Supported municipal debt and \$49,978,876 Rate Supported Development Charges municipal debt;
- (s) That the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, is authorized and directed to engage the services of all required professionals to secure the terms and issuance of the debenture issue(s) described in this report including, but not limited to, external legal counsel and fiscal agents;
- (t) That the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, is authorized and directed, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, to enter into and / or execute, all agreements and necessary ancillary documents to secure the terms and issuance of the debenture issue(s) described in Report FCS24055, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;

- (u) That staff is authorized and directed to prepare all necessary By-Law(s), for the purpose of authorizing debenture issue(s) described in Report FCS24055; and

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 8 to 6, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Yes	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
No	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
No	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
No	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
No	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
No	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
No	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Absent	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

2. Stormwater Residential Fee (Generated From Item 5.1)

(Danko/Cassar)

- (a) That staff report to General Issues Committee in Q1 2025 with an analysis summarizing the factors contributing to the 2026 forecast change in the stormwater fee to \$270.10 per annum; and,
- (b) That staff identify any options that would further support the forecast stormwater management investments to realize a largely revenue neutral transition to a stormwater fee structure.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 10 to 4, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Yes	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
No	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
No	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
No	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark

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Yes	-	Ward 10	Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11	Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12	Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13	Councillor Alex Wilson
Absent	-	Ward 14	Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

FOR INFORMATION:

(a) APPROVAL OF AGENDA (Item 1)

The Committee Clerk advised of the following changes to the agenda:

4. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

4.1 Budget Process Changes (CC24003)

5. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

5.1 2025 Preliminary Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rate Supported Budget (FCS24055) (City Wide) - REVISED

(Kroetsch/Cassar)

That the agenda for the November 28, 2024 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as amended.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 0, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Absent	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
Yes	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Absent	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

(c) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Item 4)

(i) November 22, 2024 (Item 4.1)

(Hwang/Jackson)

That the minutes of the November 22, 2024 General Issues Committee (Budget), be approved, as presented.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 0, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Absent	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
Yes	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Absent	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

(d) COMMUNICATION ITEMS (Item 4)

(i) Budget Process Changes (CC24003) (Added Item 4.1)

(Danko/A. Wilson)

That CC24003 respecting Budget Process Changes, be received.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 0, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Absent	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
Yes	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson

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Yes	-	Ward 7	Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9	Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10	Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11	Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12	Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13	Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14	Councillor Mike Spadafora
Absent	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

(e) ADJOURNMENT (Item 10)

(Hwang/Kroetsch)

That there being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) be adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 14 to 0, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
Yes	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
Yes	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Absent	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Absent	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator
Office of the City Clerk

Submitted on Fri, 12/13/2024 - 10:04

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
Mike Collins-Williams
West End Home Builders' Association
1112 Rymal Rd E
Hamilton, Other. L8W 3N7
mikecw@westendhba.ca

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
Delegation regarding the Hamilton Budget 2025.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Tue, 12/10/2024 - 09:22

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
Public Works 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
Lee Fairbanks

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
To recommend savings and efficiencies within the Public Works Budget as it applies to
Parks and Forestry

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

**Plant
One Million Trees in the City
in 5 Years**

And Save \$135 Million

Lee Fairbanks - January 20, 2025

WE

are all in this together

We all breathe the same air

WE

**all live in the same
climate**

Climate Change

is not a “ward-specific concern.”

It is a “city-wide concern”

**Staff or Council or The Public?
Who Makes the Decisions?**

City Staff / Council / Public

On Climate Change, Public Works staff respond to direct instruction from Council, not the public, not individual Councillors

“If there was direction from Council to turn this property (park) into a forest we would implement that direction.”

Cynthia Graham, Director of Public Works and Environmental Services

HOW BAD IS OUR AIR?

186 premature deaths each year

395 respiratory hospital admissions

322 cardiovascular hospital admissions

SENES Consulting, www.cleanairhamilton.ca

2023

11 Homicides

14 Vehicle fatalities

**Of the 600,000 people in Hamilton
19,800 will die from air pollution**

42,000 respiratory hospital admissions

34,000 cardiovascular hospital admissions

700 deaths from Covid

2020 - 2023

thespec.com

Hamilton's Community Health Status Report 2024

Hamilton's Air Quality was at moderate risk or above 14.5% of the time compared to the average of 6.8% across Ontario

**Sulphur dioxide levels exceeded the
Ambient Air Quality Criteria (AAQC)
criteria for acute health effects**

**Fine particulate matter
exceeded the recommended provincial
Ambient Air Quality Criteria
for acute health effects**

**Sulphur Dioxide exceeded the
Ambient Air Quality Criteria
169 times, the highest
number in Ontario**

Hamilton's Community Health Report Status Report 2024

**Hamilton and Windsor
were the only two cities
in the province that recorded
fine particulate matter
above safe levels**

**The number of Hamiltonians
living with asthma is 80,416**

**Hamilton has the
WORST AIR
IN ONTARIO**

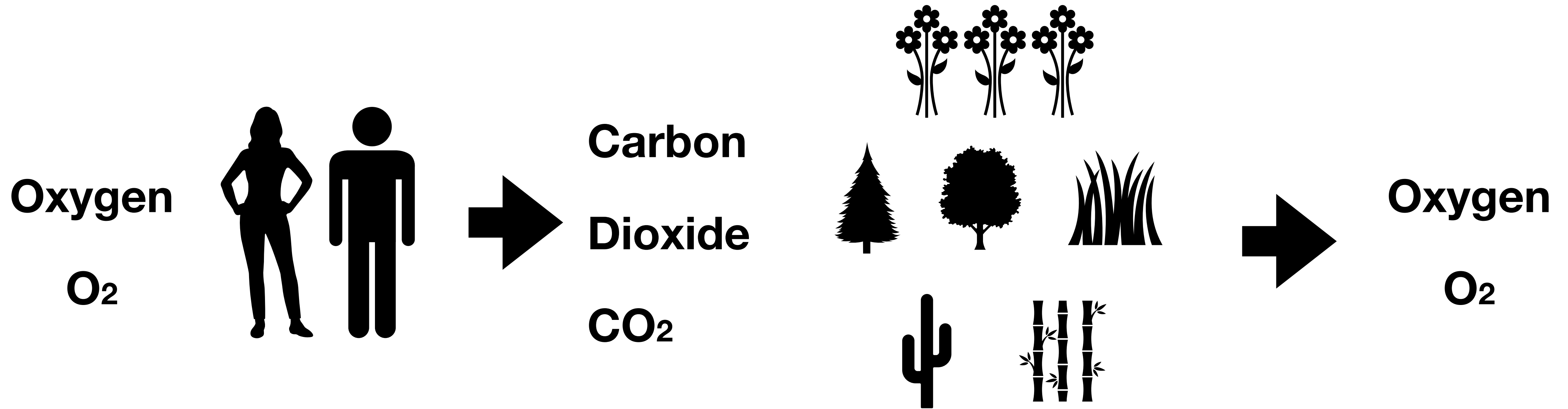
Economic cost

The Ontario Medical Association estimates the cost of air pollution to the economy of Hamilton to be around

\$1 Billion Annually

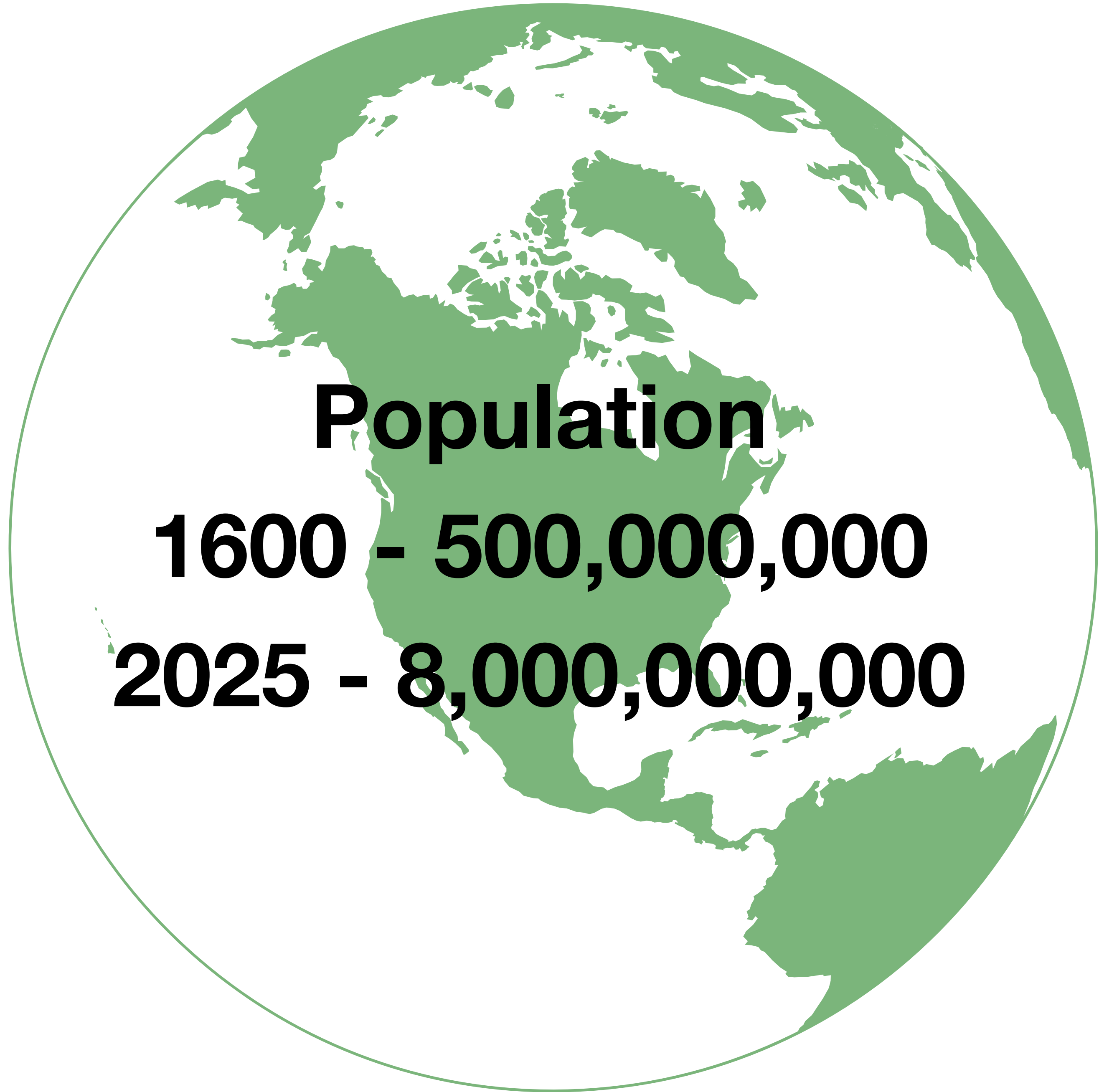
cleanairhamilton.ca

Nature provided a balance for 3,000,000 years



WE are out of Balance







**One-Third
of Forest
LOST**

Solution: Air Pollution Removal by Urban Forests

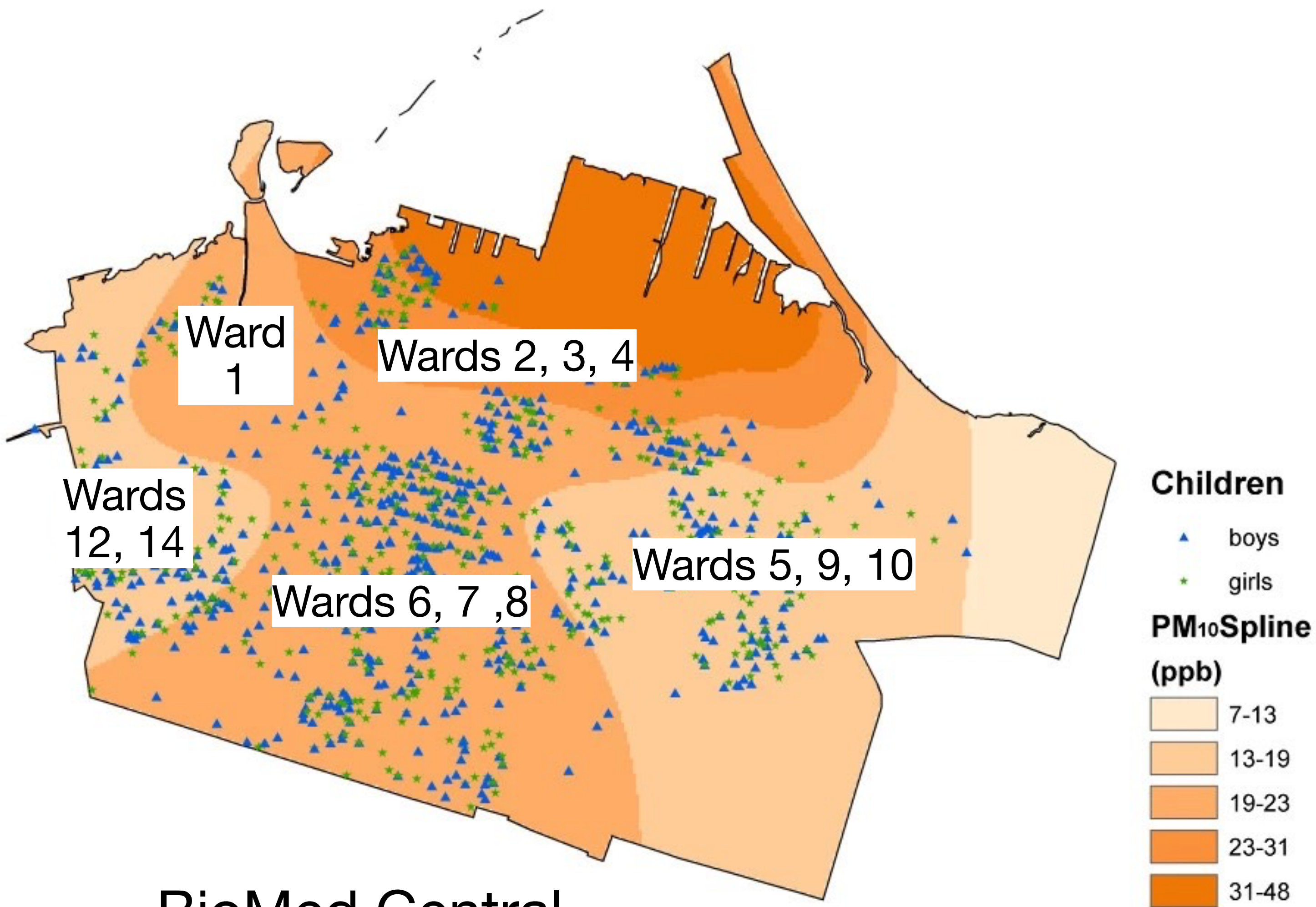
**Urban forests can remove tons of ozone,
gaseous air pollution, and particulate matter each year**

US National Park Service

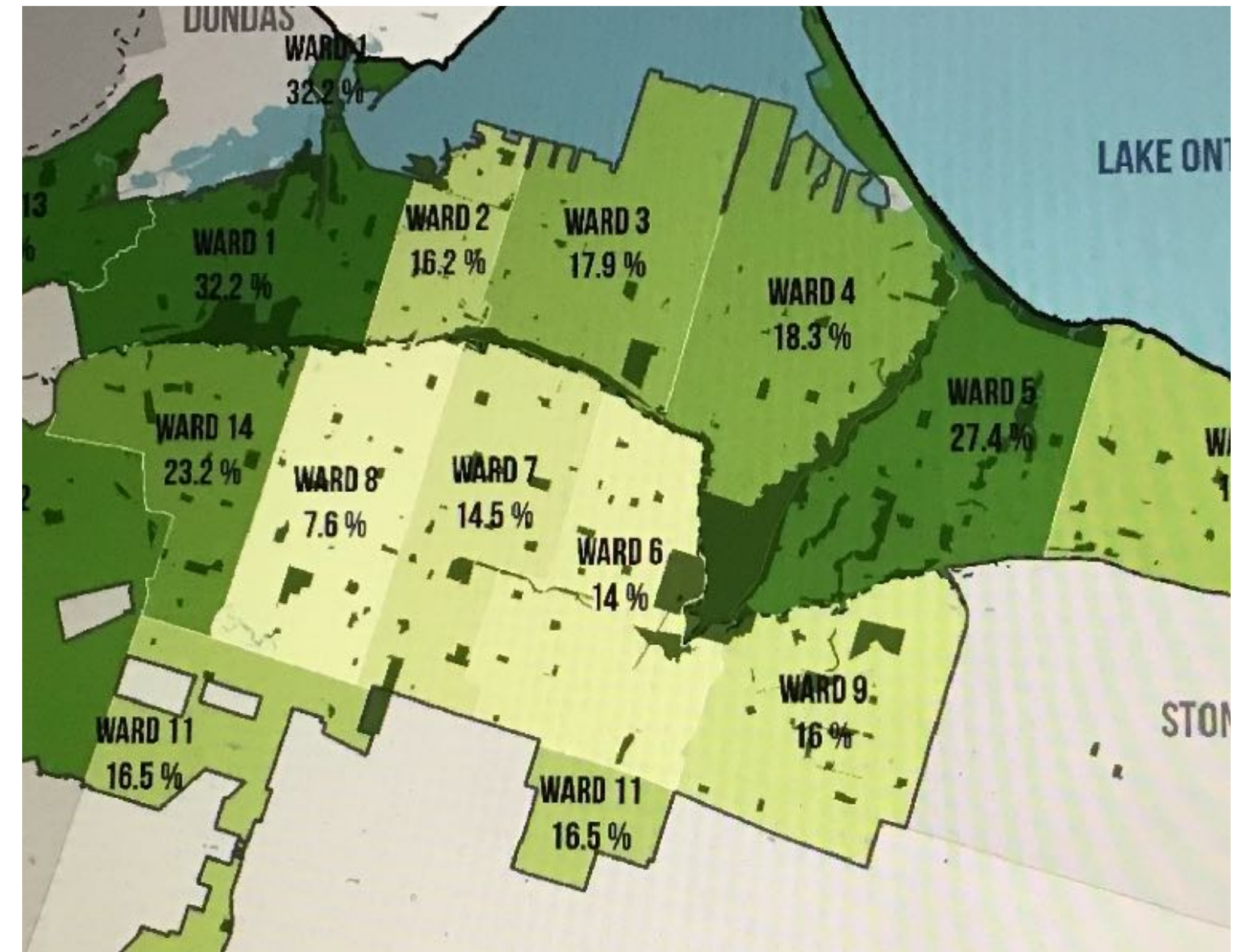
WWE

Need More Vegetation

Hamilton inhalable particles map reflects Tree Coverage



BioMed Central <https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/>



Tree Coverage is Not Equitable to all Taxpayers

Council and Staff have Laid the Foundation

- 1. Climate Change Emergency - city-wide concern**
- 2. Urban Canopy Study - city-wide concern**
- 3. Biodiversity Action Plan - city-wide concern**

Now We Need A City-Wide Action Plan

How Does Hamilton's Canopy Compare?

Halifax 43%

Sudbury 32.6%

Ottawa 31%

Toronto 28%

Vancouver 23%

Montreal 23%

Hamilton 20%

Winnipeg 17%

**Council Approved a Goal
of 40% Canopy in Hamilton**

How Did Sudbury Do It?

Sudbury at 32.6%

Planted 10 Million Trees in 44 Years

227,000 Per Year

(Hamilton currently plants 20,000 per year)

How Can WE Do It?

Current Plan

20,000 Trees per year

X 50 years

= 1,000,000 Trees

COST = \$150 Million

New Plan

200,000 Trees per year

X 5 years

= 1,000,000 Trees

COST = \$15 Million

Which Do You Choose?

Four Key Budget Areas

- 1. Reduction in mowing**
- 2. Plant trees in Parks instead of Roadsides**
- 3. Plant in a Biodiversity Habitat**
- 4. Horticulture Staff redeployment**

1. Reduction in mowing



A reduction of 50% will reduce emissions equal to removing 5,000 cars from the streets

***Source:
Ministry of the Environment-Canada***

**Mow According to Usage
and Growing Season
Reduce GHG & costs by 25%**

**Planting Trees in clusters
instead of individually can
reduce mowing
GHG & costs by 25%**



2. Plant Trees in Parks instead of Roadsides

**100% of Street Trees
will have to be replaced
EVERY 25 YEARS**



Plant Smaller Trees in Natural Habitat in Parks



Can plant 20 small trees in same time as 1 Street Tree

Buy 20 Small Trees for the same price as One Street Tree

**10,000 Street Trees
@ \$200 each
= \$2,000,000**

**200,000 small trees
@ \$10 each =
\$2,000,000**



3. Plant in a Biodiversity Habitat

**Trees grow 10X faster
in a Biodiverse Habitat
and reseed themselves
to create
a Sustainable Canopy
for generations to come**



Concept Drawing by Paul O'Hara, Blue Oak Native Landscapes & Heather Schibli, Dougan & Associates

4. Horticulture Staff redeployment

**Staff grew 273,000 annuals in 2021, mostly for
348 Floral Traffic Islands and
669 Hanging Baskets**

**If Staff grew 273,000 trees instead of flowers
WE would not need to buy ANY trees**

**City Tree budget is
\$3 million/year**

Redeploy Mowing & Horticulture staff to tree planting

Thousands of acres available in our parks





Space for 1,000,000 Trees



WWE

**were elected to represent every single person
who calls Hamilton home**

Cameron Kroetsch, January 11, 2025

Submitted on Mon, 01/06/2025 - 08:55

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
Jen Baker
Hamilton Naturalists Club

land@hamiltonnature.org

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
Hello, I'd like to share my thoughts on the budget with the General Issues Committee.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Mon, 01/06/2025 - 13:27

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

Greg Dunnett

Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

120 King Street West, Plaza Level

Hamilton, Ontario. L8P 4V2

G.Dunnett@HamiltonChamber.ca

905-522-1151 X 229

Preferred Pronoun

he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request

Public Delegation for the 2025 City Budget

GIC January 20, 2025

Will you be requesting funds from the City?

No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?

No

Submitted on Thu, 01/09/2025 - 14:09

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
Tony Woitowicz
Resident

Reason(s) for delegation request
2025 City budget

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Tue, 12/03/2024 - 13:28

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
Maya Hobbs, Vice-President (Education)
McMaster Students Union (MSU)
1280 Main St. W.
Room #201 McMaster University Student Centre
Hamilton, ON. L8S 4S4
vped@msu.mcmaster.ca
905-525-9140 ext. 24017

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
Budget delegation to GIC on January 20, 2025

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

From: City of Hamilton <hello@hamilton.ca>

Sent: January 15, 2025 2:50 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Webform submission from: Request to Speak to a Committee of Council

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Submitted on Wed, 01/15/2025 - 14:49

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



Preferred Pronoun

he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request

To speak to the 2025 budget on budget deligation day regarding capital investment in affordable housing.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?

No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?

Yes

Submitted on Wed, 01/15/2025 - 21:52

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
Katherine Boothe
McMaster University

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
To speak to Council about spending priorities, particularly as they relate to housing and homelessness in our city.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Wed, 01/15/2025 - 16:45

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
Scott Avery

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
To directly request Mayor Horwath to reconsider introducing a new land transfer tax and look to lower the proposed property tax rate increase of almost 7% as the cost of living due to inflation is making living in the city impossible.

As a home owner in Hamilton who is trying to start a family in this city my wages aren't increasing so I'd like to know how does Mayor Horwath suggest I keep paying more money year over year in taxes.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Fri, 01/17/2025 - 10:32

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
Evan Ubene

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
Budget suggestions

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Fri, 01/17/2025 - 11:32

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
Michael Fedchak
ACORN Hamilton

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
In person delegation for city budget process. Delegating alongside Hojay Byfield

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Fri, 01/17/2025 - 11:29

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
Hojay Byfield
ACORN Hamilton

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
in person delegation for budget process - will be delegating with Michael Fedchak

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Input to 2025 Budget (and beyond) and Property Taxes (Revised Dec 1/24)

Introduction

I write to you as a long time Hamilton resident, born and bred in Hamilton, a senior, and a retired citizen having worked in transportation planning & economics for 7 years (federal government), having operated a small business in Hamilton for 5 years, and then having spent over 25 years in the field of education as a teacher and school principal.

Once again, I am writing to advocate for fiscal prudence, living within our means, greater scrutiny of taxpayer spending, and foremost, the long term lowering of average property taxes/ municipal fees to at least the provincial median.

I believe that the city can deliver the essential services most people need and want within existing and even modestly lower tax levels. Respectfully, if the mindset is to put ratepayers first, to limit future tax increases to the lesser of inflation or real income growth, to acknowledge that your constituents pay among the highest taxes in the province and country & need a break - then the work can be done to adjust our overall tax levels downward over time to the provincial median – and at more affordable levels. You owe it to the majority of Hamiltonians. Affordability and cost of living is the quintessential issue for most families, and property taxes in Hamilton are a major driver of inflation and higher cost of living. This spend and tax cycle is unsustainable and cannot continue.

Recommendations Regarding Property Tax Directions:

- Freeze or lower property taxes in year one, and begin signaling future tax increases to all departments at the lesser of either forecast inflation or forecast growth in average household income (after taxes). Directing departments on what spending levels they have to work with is what the federal and provincial levels of government do --- what many businesses do --- and somehow, people adjust and manage to deliver the essentials.
- From experience, I have worked in both the federal government and education sectors where we had to work with frozen budgets, some budget cuts, and no salary increases for consecutive years. We managed to continue to provide excellent service and even do better. Municipal governments, on the other hand, constantly dig into ratepayer's pockets rather than learn how to manage operations within a strict budget.
- In order to provide relief to ratepayers, many of whom are struggling with rising costs, and in order to show good faith in the area of fiscal responsibility, the city should lower average property taxes to at least the provincial median over a 4 to 7 year period.
- Restrict future tax increases to the lesser of forecast inflation or real growth in average household income. All of the above can be done simultaneously. This last recommendation would be a worse case scenario as Hamiltonians seriously need a downward re-set of property taxes.

Rationale/ Background:

- As reported in The Spectator in July 9, 2024, a **2023 Municipal Audit conducted by BMA Management Consultants** comparing 130 municipalities in Ontario found that Hamilton has among the highest tax burdens in the region
- When combining property taxes and municipal water rates, the audit reported that **Hamilton has the second highest rates in Ontario** relative to average household income (only Oshawa is higher). (Source: TheSpec, July 9 2024)
- According to a recent annual survey by *Zoocasa (a major national real estate firm)* surveying 25 cities across Canada, **Hamilton has the 6th highest property taxes in the country**, higher than 19 other cities.
- In 2023, for a property assessed at \$500 000, a ratepayer in the City of Burlington pays **\$2500.00 LESS** in property taxes **annually** than residents in the City of Hamilton. The same discrepancy exists with most of our neighbouring cities in Halton, Mississauga & Toronto. (Source: Zoocasa Survey)
- In the past 2 years, Hamilton has had among the highest property tax increases of the cities surveyed, an average of 7.3% per annum (Source: Zoocasa) compared to the national median of 4.9%.
- Cities that **LOWERED** taxes during this 2 year period - Montreal, Calgary, Halifax, Regina and Saint John.
- Hamilton tax hikes over the past 2 years have been nearly **DOUBLE** the rate of inflation & real growth in average household income which was approximately 7% (Stats Canada). For 2024, the projected inflation rate was 3% (it now stands at approximately 2% annualized), but property tax increases were approved at a 5.8% **average** (and that was done by dipping into city reserves!). In our neighbourhood, many households have seen tax hikes in the 7% to 8 % range!
- This is so unfair as there is a disconnect and virtually no correlation between the assessed values, true market value, and more importantly, income levels in these households. As you must be aware, retired folks are living on a lot less income than they earned while employed. Council should protect citizens vulnerable to such a money grab. And yet, there is virtually no concern for this growing and important constituency who have worked hard, made sacrifices and have paid their dues over the past 30 to 40 years, plus!
- On a personal note, my after tax pension income over the past two years increased by approximately \$300. My property tax bill over this time increased by approximately \$1000 ! Yes, you read that correctly. This is completely unacceptable.

- As you must know, property taxes are regressive in nature, hurting retired folks, people on fixed incomes, seniors and families who purchased homes years ago, seeing property values increase higher than relative incomes & most importantly, NOT reflecting ability to pay.
- Property taxes in general fail the test of fairness in our city. They are predicated on the assumption that the bigger and /or more valuable the house, the richer the owner, and therefore more of the tax burden should be borne. But ability to pay is more closely correlated to income not wealth. And wealth often has nothing to do with income. A pensioner living in the same house for decades may have relative wealth on paper, but very little in the way of disposable income. Who on council is voicing the concerns of this large and growing constituency?
- Further, the supposed value of one's home bears little relationship to the value of services consumed. We know that there are large discrepancies in property taxes between some Mountain wards like Ward 8 and other areas of the city where similar homes at similar market values pay widely different & often lower amounts. Again – not fair.
- These points are intended to bring awareness and perspective to the plight of beleaguered taxpayers who are losing ground, facing greater financial challenges and experiencing a lower standard of living all due to property tax increases well above acceptable levels. The silent majority must be heard and respected.

Suggestions on How to Accomplish Property Tax Reductions:

Therefore, I respectfully submit the following suggestions to provide a semblance of fiscal discipline and help the vast majority of your constituents – I repeat, the majority --- the ones who should be at the forefront of your decision making, rather than the well organized squeaky wheel and special interests who represent a tiny fraction of the populace (I 've heard the expression “tyranny of the minority” and, regrettably, it appears to apply in Hamilton).

-a 4 to 7 year plan should be devised to adjust property taxes in Hamilton downward to at least the provincial average (in 2023, out of 32 municipalities surveyed by Zoocasa, Hamilton ranked 22 highest out of 32 cities surveyed for property taxes – 32 being the most expensive city, 16 the median, and most of Halton , Peel, Toronto at the lower end) – and this is of course property taxes alone, not accounting for the additional burden of municipal water fees.

- future tax increases should be lower than the lesser of the forecast rate of inflation and/or real growth in average household incomes

-the impact on ratepayers and tax levels must always be at the forefront of budget / spending deliberations --- if we can't afford it --- pause until we can

- a Property Tax Reduction Committee should be invoked to investigate ways and means of reducing property taxes
- in this respect, Council and all department heads actively look for areas in the budget to trim, pause, or eliminate each year.

- As is the practice in senior levels of government and business, Council should provide direction to city departments with a multi year spending forecast : Given that the property taxes are among the highest in the country and province, I would suggest Council direct departments to prepare budgets at a modest level below 0 %, at 0 % , and, as a worse case scenario, at a level under forecast inflation/average household income growth.

- the current practice of having departments submit their budgets with no guidelines or direction and having no regard to current tax levels, ability to pay nor the best interests of ratepayers is bizarre and fiscally irresponsible in my opinion. (I call it like I see it).

- an impartial Municipal Auditor General/Budget Control Office be created in the City (to be paid by money in the current budget & through savings found by such office) with the goal of optimizing value for money, conducting program evaluation & audits, lowering property tax levels over time to at least the provincial median & protecting taxpayers from future tax increases that exceed the lesser of forecast inflation or forecast growth in average household after tax income. ***This office would be the primary advocate for ratepayers with the goal of lowering property taxes, & have authority over the budget process.***

- This would be money well worth investing – a municipal auditor general office that reports to the mayor and council --- whose objective would be to find efficiencies, evaluate all programs/initiatives with a cost/benefit lens, and advocating for ratepayers. It's long overdue.

- implement a hiring freeze and a comprehensive review of all positions – reduce staff through attrition where feasible; only absolute essential positions should be staffed with internal preferences given

- no new spending initiatives after a budget is passed – any new spending must be offset from another area in the budget , therefore, the person proposing new spending must also offer a tangible commensurate saving (not wishful thinking of possible savings)

- although a factor, the tired argument of attributing tax increases to provincial downloading loses credibility when you return to the fact that Hamilton taxpayers pay far more than comparable cities who also face similar circumstances & when little effort is done to curb spending and drive efficiencies.

In this respect, rather than attribute a certain percent of a future tax increase to provincial downloading, the city, in the face of its citizens facing a huge tax burden, should be communicating possible service cuts attributable to provincial downloading. I think some of you may be surprised how many spending areas can be reduced, cut or paused without the majority of the population noticing any changes to their lives. Think about this for a few minutes --- and now, think some more because it is very doable.

- adjust all services relative to demand cycles (across times of year, day, week) ---for library, recreation centers, transit and ensure user fees provide adequate levels of cost recovery – establish reasonable performance metrics comparable to cities with lower tax levels, i.e. seek to lower subsidies over time.

- Hamilton Police Services, who I have great respect for, accounts for a disproportionate part of the overall budget – and I know it’s not politically popular – but somehow, this spending center should be scaled back modestly over time --- fiscal prudence and excellence in management can achieve this and deliver the necessary levels of service in essential areas. If one never tries, one will never know. You owe it to taxpayers.

- Aggressively lobby senior levels of government for leading the charge and fully funding areas that are deemed broader societal issues. Hold them accountable to the public in areas where they are making a contribution and where they are falling short. Municipalities are not equipped, designed nor resourced to handle broader socio-economic issues. Beware of the financial slippery slope and bottomless pit for ratepayers that will only worsen over time and never resolve the fundamental underlying problems. Trying to solve historical societal issues on the backs of municipal ratepayers is ill advised and a fool’s errand. National government support, direction and funding through the broader income tax system is what generally works in countries (many in Europe for example) that have made in-roads here.

Conclusion:

In closing, I respectfully submit that most Hamilton ratepayers pay excessive property taxes and municipal fees relative to most cities in Ontario and Canada, and especially relative to average household incomes. Growth in disposable income is not enabling most families to keep pace with such municipal taxes/fees. Living in Hamilton is becoming less and less viable for many.

Virtually nothing has been done to control spending, pause non essential spending nor give taxpayers priority. When little is done to direct greater efficiencies, to conduct rigorous audits on behalf of taxpayers, to cut back or pause discretionary spending, to actually have a plan to reduce taxes over time to at least the provincial median - when so much money is spent in areas that benefit the few – when pausing expenditures in these areas would not affect essential services the vast majority want and need, when some departments receive budget approvals carte blanche- no vetting at all - it is unacceptable to raise taxes.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael P. Chiarelli, BA Hons, MA(Public Administration), B. Ed.

Ward 8 Resident, City of Hamilton

From: Adam McCron
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 1:04 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: 2025 Budget Comments

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Good Afternoon,

My name is Adam McCron and I have been a citizen of Hamilton for the past 12 years.

I understand that taxes need to increase to further enhance the services we receive, however, the constant hikes year after year have done nothing to enhance the roads, homelessness and the overall perception of the Hamilton that makes us all proud.

I had family visit over the past year and every single family member cannot believe that a city of this size has roads that are crumbling and in such disrepair as ours. I do not know what the roads were like before I moved here 12 years ago, but I cannot imagine they were in such a state.

If a tax hike is warranted, I believe that a restructuring of the budget allocation is gravely needed. Priority number one needs to be the roads - we can pull funds from other areas in the city that are not pressing and can wait (i.e. flowers in a roadside planter). This is evidenced by the fact Hamilton was voted as having 3 of the worst roads in Ontario - 1 would be quite a feat, but 3? A feat unheard of. The roads are not lasting - meaning the structure of them and the material being used is inadequate. I would rather pay more now for more robust/longer lasting roads and maintain them as time goes by.

Please strongly consider re-hauling the allocation for the 2025 budget and make roads priority number one.

Thank you for your time,

Adam McCron

From: Steven Cedrone
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 1:25 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Re: 2025 Budget Comments

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Hello,

I would like to add my comments regarding the 2025 Budget.

I'm a person with a disability who can't work due to severe chronic pain. I'm bed ridden most of the day.

I'm barely getting by on my disability income.

Every penny counts in my budget and it seems with recent inflation and cost of living skyrocketing recently that those pennies are no longer in my pocket.

I'm having to access a food bank quite regularly just to keep myself fed, and I'm skipping meals to save on costs just so I can keep a roof over my head.

My house is the last thing I own because I have completely depleted my savings, have sold basically all the things I could out of my home and have sold my vehicle.

It seems that Hamilton thinks that tax payers have unlimited amounts of money and the taxes keep going up and up year after year but nothing seems to improve other than pay increases for city council.

I think the same way I have had to find ways to cut costs and find efficiencies and skip necessities that the city should look inward upon itself to find a way not to increase taxes at all.

There is a lot of waste going on in the city, as there is with all levels of government and I would ask that you clean house first of this waste and mismanagement and find the savings you need to leave taxes unchanged.

I shouldn't have to sell my home and eat at a food bank because our city has become so unaffordable to live in.

In 12 years my taxes have almost doubled. That is unacceptable.

Please think about residents like me before you tax us into poverty.

Thank you,

Steven Cedrone

From: Laurie Cedrone
Sent: January 11, 2025 11:15 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Taxes

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing to you today to add my comments regarding the cities proposed budget for 2025.

I'm a senior on a single fixed income. I have worked hard all my life and lived below my means so that I might have a secure retirement.

Despite working hard and saving what I could, I find my savings quickly depleting with the high cost of living, inflation and because my property tax bill keeps rising faster than inflation along side every other bill I pay.

It seems that very little regard is given to raising taxes within our city year after year. I could understand if we saw perfectly repaired roads, extremely pro-active clearing of snow, and other services / infrastructure repair that was proof of why an increase was warranted.

We do not see this in Hamilton. We see roads and infrastructure that continues to get worse year after year but the taxes keep going up higher than the rate of inflation.

It would seem to me that we need to rein in spending to at least the rate of inflation and perhaps look for savings within the city budget to allow for a below inflation increase.

I can think of over a dozen ways the city isn't spending tax payers money efficiently and another dozen ways where the city isn't providing excellent value for our tax dollars.

I would ask that instead of your proposed increase you go back and re-examine things like the lack of road repair and the waste in a lot of areas that isn't required. Like hiring a poet for the city as one example.

Having lived in Mississauga for decades before moving to Hamilton 20 years ago, I can tell you that is a city that has their priorities in order and that not only manages tax payer dollars with the utmost care, but it is also a city that is on their "A" game when it comes to infrastructure repair and maintenance of things like their roads.

They don't spend on their roads every 5 years for poor quality asphalt that falls apart and then requires repaving or patching. They spend on quality asphalt that can endure the test of time and lasts for decades so that they can focus their efforts on other areas.

They are also proactive in their snow clearing efforts and have their team of public works folks out before a storm hits, during the storm and after the storm to make sure road-ways remain clear long before and after the storm is over. Something Hamilton does a really poor job at.

And they do all of this on a budget that has never been more than the regular rate of inflation and often times less than inflation.

Please remember all the folks who are counting their pennies like seniors or people with disabilities. We don't have endless cash reserves to fund un-necessary increases.

You need to tighten your belts like I have had to.

Thank you for taking the time to review my comments,

Laurie Cedrone

From: Hafeez Hussain [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2025 11:10 PM
To: McRae, Angela <Angela.McRae@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca
Cc: Green, Magda <Magda.Green@hamilton.ca>; Trennum, Matthew <Matthew.Trennum@hamilton.ca>
Subject: General Issues Committee (Budget) - Written Submission Request

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Good Morning Angela,

I would like to submit a written delegation to the budget committee for the upcoming General Issues Committee on January 20th.

Please find below my submission. Please advise when it will be added to the agenda. Thank you

My name is Hafeez Hussain and our family we're owners of a property in the City of Hamilton. I would like to share my experience and to let this GIC committee know that the value of money is still not there for the residents of the City of Hamilton. This Municipality continues to spend, spend, spend, and is not transparent to what the residents and taxpayers are saying. It has been a year since the City has appointed a new City Manager and our family has asked staff for what the value of money we get from our property tax roll, we got no answers. In addition, I have asked the City several times why isn't Fraud and Waste at the centre of ensuring that every dollar of taxpayers dollars are being used appropriately and with oversight.

Last year I wrote to the council about what is going to direct the Community Services department on Fraud and Waste with the Auditor General, nothing happens. This council continues to ask for an increase for the ratepayers, however doesn't allocate dollars to internal audit or the Auditor General to recover more funds for the residents to spend on programs. I've also asked what the value of taxpayers dollars we paid for in 2024, no response.

I am addressing the following issues again for council to consider for the budget for 2025:

- a) **Value for Money Audits** - Allocate more dollars for the Office of the Auditor General to appoint more resources to conduct more value for money audits and find more savings.
- b) **Dedicated Fraud and Waste Unit** - Implement a dedicated unit in the city that takes Fraud and Waste Seriously by reviewing procurement, staff FTE, and resident funding request (i.e. grants, support programs, public support) and have a mandate to find \$X in savings from Fraud and Waste. Invest more resources in the Office of the Auditor General.
- c) **Quarterly Reporting to the Public on Where our Dollars being spent** - Have a quarterly report showing where dollars are being spent and have KPI attached to those dollars.

d) **Reduce Council Size for 2026 Municipal Election** - Conduct a Study to have a review of the number of Wards in this Municipality. Since 2001, when this City became a single-tier Municipality, A municipality of this size should not have 15 wards and 15 councillors. Mississauga has 800k residents and 11 wards and 11 councillors, why does Hamilton have 15 when it is a Single-Tier Municipality of 560k residents with no upper-tier municipal responsibilities? There are other single-tier Municipalities that have a population more than the City of Hamilton and have 5 Wards and 5 Councillors. Align Municipal Wards with Federal/Provincial zones. This will save dollars and have the council be more accountable to the residents.

e) **Automate the FOI Request Process @ City Clerk Office** - Invest in Technology and Automation with the City Clerk Office - Digitization needs to be a main focus of the City Clerk Office and the Freedom of Information Request - In 2025, there needs to be investment in automating and requesting FOI online and paying for FOI online without mailing or coming into a Municipal Service Centre and pay for it.

Unless the City and this council invest dollars in finding fraud and waste dollars and conducting value for money audits, the taxpayers for the City are not seeing what we are getting out of the tax roll. Are we seeing progress in investment and growth in this City? This is the question that the residents have for this Budget Committee.

Thank you
Hafeez Hussain

From: Joshua Weresch [REDACTED] >
Sent: January 13, 2025 11:40 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Public delegation on 2025 budget: written submission

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

To the city's clerk:

Hope this finds you well.

Below, please find a written submission to the general issues committee about the 2025 budget. I'm submitting this as a public delegation, the deadline for which is 1200 on Friday, January 17, 2025. Please include it as publicly-available correspondence on the committee's agenda of Monday, January 20th.

Thanks very much.

Regards,

Joshua Weresch
[REDACTED]

To the members of the General Issues Committee of Hamilton, Ontario's Council:

Hope this finds you well. I write as a life-long resident in Hamilton, a home-owning taxpayer living here with my wife and 4 children. This is my written submission as a public delegation on the 2025 budget.

The written delegations (Items 6.2a, b, c, and d) constellate around a similar theme, that of rising property taxes and their mis-spending. I cannot add anything new to them, in that regard. Taxes are too high and they are indeed being mis-spent. The reasons, however, for their increase and the ways they're being mis-spent may differ between fellow delegates and me.

The mayor's memorandum of 13 January 2025 is clear: Hamilton Police Services has received a \$17.3m increase to the tax-payers' net tax levy, whereas all other external Boards and Agencies, including the city's Enrichment Fund, have received only \$3.5m. Policing services,

the most expensive item on the municipal tax bill, received quintuple the amount of all other boards, agencies, and the Enrichment Fund. For this reason, alone, I ask that you reject this budget, as Council cannot amend the Policing Services' portion of the budget. Tax-payers simply cannot afford the increasing costs of policing services, nor has policing services ever kept this city safe nor served it well: both safety and compassionate service grow solely from a caring, person-centred politic of mutual aid and trust, not from policing services' surveillance, harassment, and mongering of fear.

Thank you for your time and attention in these regards. Again, as the budget cannot be amended in these regards, it must be rejected. I look forward to your considered actions as members of the general issues committee, heeding tax-paying citizens.

Respectfully,

Joshua Weresch, Ward 8



From: Christine Le [REDACTED]
Sent: January 14, 2025 12:21 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Statement regarding Property Tax Increase

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Hamilton, I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed 6.3% property tax hike in the 2025 budget. While I understand the importance of maintaining and improving public services, I must highlight a shared sentiment among many residents: the noticeable lack of tangible improvements in key areas such as road maintenance, library services, and police or crime regulation.

Over the past few years, Hamiltonians have witnessed tax increases, yet the day-to-day impact on the quality of life for residents remains underwhelming. Roads in many areas are in disrepair, public libraries are struggling to modernize and meet community needs, and issues related to crime and public safety persist. These are critical areas that directly affect residents' lives and should reflect the investments made through increased taxes.

I urge the city to provide clear and transparent communication about how the proposed tax increase will address these specific concerns. Residents need assurance that their hard-earned money will be allocated toward measurable and impactful improvements. Additionally, I recommend that the city explore alternative cost-saving measures or revenue-generating strategies to ease the burden on taxpayers without compromising essential services.

Hamilton is a thriving city with immense potential, but its growth must be accompanied by meaningful and visible enhancements in public services. I respectfully request that the council take these concerns into consideration and work toward a balanced solution that prioritizes the needs of residents.

Sincerely,

Christine Le
[REDACTED]

From: Yulian Pavlyuk [REDACTED]
Sent: January 14, 2025 11:14 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Property tax increase

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

You guys have lost the plot.

From: Emily Goodman [REDACTED]
Sent: January 14, 2025 1:49 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Public Delegation

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Hello,

I am writing to have my statement given during the general issues committee meeting on Jan 20th. I unfortunately am not able to attend but would like my statement to be read in front of the committee.

My statement is as follows:

Greetings to the committee. My name is Emily, and I am a resident of Ward 7. I am writing to speak with you all concerning the property tax increase that has been announced for this year. I don't think that it should come as a surprise that myself, and other members of the community that I have spoken with, take issue with an increase of this size (6.3%). The issue is two-fold:

1. Hamiltonians are facing an affordability crisis, as are many Canadians. With many Hamiltonians living below the poverty line, and one in four families living on less than \$40,000 per year, many families are scrimping, saving and cutting back to make ends meet. Food bank use is at a record high. With the ever-increasing cost of living and inflation, every increase matters. Increasing property taxes above the rate of inflation, which is projected to be less than 2% in 2025, feels unfair. I work as a public employee, where cost of the living wage adjustments usually amount to less than what inflation is calculated to be. I know that an increase of this size, year over year, will prove to be challenging for many families and seniors in Hamilton - especially when compounded by inflation in other essential goods and services.
2. There are concerns with the city's ability at properly managing funds. Crime and homelessness are both on the rise despite the increase in property taxes of 5.8% last year. People do not feel safe to use the parks that their taxes are funding. People are smoking/injecting drugs out in the open. Parks are left covered with filth, feces, drugs and general waste. Encampment fires have become a common occurrence, which puts the safety of the homes within proximity in jeopardy. Car theft is up. People are having their Christmas decorations and patio furniture stolen off their lawns and porches regularly. Hamilton has some of the worst streets in Ontario, as evidenced by appearing twice on CAA's Worst Roads in Ontario "Winners". When parks and services are in such a state, it makes people skeptical of how funds are being appropriated, especially when people are having a hard time financially.

I have hope in what Hamilton can be. If I didn't, I wouldn't have moved here 10 years ago and bought a house here in the past year. I came to Hamilton from Kitchener as a McMaster student and now work serving my community as a nurse at the bedside. I had no intention to stay but grew to find myself at home in Hamilton. Despite Hamilton's flaws, I enjoy living here and am glad to have purchased a home here. I love the diversity in the community, the festivals and exhibits, the nature, the vibe - Hamilton has a lot to offer. As a young woman looking to start a family, I want the very best for Hamilton. I want all members of the community, including my future children, to be able to use our public parks. I want to live in a city where there is a code of conduct that is abided by, and where unlawful activity is prosecuted. I want to live in a city where people get the help that they need and are not left to freeze in tents in the park. I feel like people wouldn't object so much to the property tax increases if they didn't feel like they were living in a city in decline.

I hope that the funds that are being collected through our property taxes go towards meaningful changes to our city's problems.

Thank you for your time.

From: Karl Schaefer [REDACTED]
Sent: January 14, 2025 8:38 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca; Ward 13 <ward13@hamilton.ca>; Office of the Mayor
<Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Input on 2025 Budget

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Can we please ensure that any budget increase is sustainable for Hamilton citizens. Any increase in taxes should be at or below the current rate of inflation, unless you are keen to further inflict economic hardship for a growing component of your population.

Inflation is now around 2%, so let's make sure any increase in taxes does not exceed this rate or there will be a growing contingent of people needing shelter space.

As you are well aware, inflation has been much higher in the recent past (around 5-6% in 2024 as an example) and property taxes went up a commensurate 5.8% last year.

Let's not bankrupt the rate base please. A 2% increase is all we can currently afford - let's ensure any increase does not exceed this rate.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide input.
Karl Schaefer
Dundas, Ontario

From: Maria Michael [REDACTED]
Sent: January 15, 2025 1:27 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Re: Property Tax Increase

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Hi Angela,

Thank you for confirming and thank you for your help, please see below my revised statement:

Dear Hamilton Municipality,

My husband and myself moved to Hamilton as we fell in love with the city. We fell in love with the water falls, the trails, with how the city would put on Supercrawl, the wonderful local shops and just the overall happiness of everyone in the city.

Of course, things have drastically changed through COVID, the increase in the cost of living and overall, the impact on mental health. We have been seeing our favorite local shops have to close, people are smiling less and greeting each other less on the streets and people are even being forced to live on the streets. It's been heart wrenching however we want to see our Hamilton succeed.

But now we are just watching our peers struggle and decisions about our lives being made for us. We are in our late 20s and expected that if we did the right things, go to school, get married, get a house.. then we would be able to live our dream of being parents. However, that's not the case, our decision has been made for us to remain child free due to the rapidly increasing costs of everything. My husband and I make a combined 110k annually and we are living so frugally. We don't buy clothes, we don't eat out (not even at local places anymore), we use coupons and strictly shop sales.

We bought a small home, the cheapest we could find. However, our property tax went up almost \$200 and now with the new proposal, it may go up to almost \$300.

I don't know how we can continue to afford everything, our wage isn't going up this quickly, if at all and now we are starting to come to terms that the world has decided for us to not have kids and it's devastating. Everything is continuously increasing.

Our own peers who have children are struggling to make ends meet as well. We have friends, with two young kids, one of which is special needs, being unable to find affordable rent. All their excess funds has been going to his treatment, including medications, tests, various specialists. They lost their home because of a previous rent increase that was

above the guidelines. The kids and their father are stuck separated as they navigate living accommodations with friends and families. Families are being pulled apart while trying to navigate being able to afford living. They are unable to find places with affordable rent and don't want to leave Hamilton because all of his doctors are here.

We are concerned. The 6.3% increase in property tax will bring in revenue to the city and undoubtedly be helpful, however it will take away even more from people who are barely scraping by. We are barely holding on and we are losing out on what we dreamed of having despite doing everything we were supposed to. We are tired of seeing our friends struggle with landlords who continuously up the rent above guidelines because landlords are saying they can't afford not to because of a tax increase or whatever else comes up.

Please reconsider this increase at this time, we are doing everything we can just to survive and we are watching our friends with children struggle. We did everything right, we went to school, worked hard, we are trying to look for bigger and better opportunities but this just isn't happening with the current state of Canada.

I say all this to reiterate that this property tax increase at this time, so close to the last one, will be detrimental for so many people. Both renters and home owners, but especially renters. Please reconsider the amount or push it back 2 years, even just one more year, to give everyone an opportunity to recover.

Thank you,

Maria

From: dawsusan3 [REDACTED]
Sent: January 15, 2025 11:09 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Proposed property tax increase

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Hello,

The proposed property tax increase in Hamilton to 6.3% is unacceptable. Hamiltonians already pay too much property tax. I have observed very little in improved services with these tax increases.

Residents are already struggling financially. It is disheartening to see our elected officials ignoring this fact.

Regards,

Susan Daw

From: SM Yazdanian

Sent: Friday, January 17, 2025 9:29 AM

To: McRae, Angela <Angela.McRae@hamilton.ca>; Alex Fishman

Subject: Re: Delegation Request - Pre-Recorded Delegation - January 20th Budget Meeting

Audit, Finance and Administration Committee

City of Hamilton

71 Main Street West

Hamilton, ON

L8P 4Y5

Dear Members of the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee,

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed 6.3% property tax increase for the City of Hamilton in the 2025 budget. As small business owners living in Hamilton, my wife and I are already facing significant financial pressures due to rising costs of living, inflation, and increases in service fees. The proposed tax hike will exacerbate these burdens and make it even more difficult to keep our business running and maintain our household.

Unlike many public-sector employees in Hamilton, the compensation of small business owners like myself is not indexed to inflation. Our income is directly tied to our business' performance, and the ongoing increases in costs, such as the substantial price hikes from Canada Post, are already taking a significant toll on our operations. The addition of this large property tax increase would be a devastating blow to our ability to keep our business sustainable, work with local contractors and suppliers, and contribute to the city's economy.

We understand that municipalities require revenue to fund public services and infrastructure, but the proposed tax increase comes at a time when residents and businesses alike are already stretched thin. The rising costs of goods and services, coupled with the financial uncertainties of operating a small business, make it clear that an increase of this magnitude is simply unaffordable for many.

I urge you to reconsider this proposed tax increase and find alternative methods to address the city's financial needs without further burdening residents and small business owners. Our community's growth and well-being rely on a balanced approach that supports both individuals and businesses. A more equitable solution is essential to ensure Hamilton remains a thriving and competitive city.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I trust that you will consider the impacts of this decision on the many individuals and small businesses that make up the fabric of this city. We look forward to your response and hope for a more reasonable approach to the upcoming budget.

Sincerely,

Alexander Fishman

Monika Yazdanian



January 20th 2025

Written Correspondence from ACORN Hamilton. Canadian Environmental Law Association Environment Hamilton and the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic - Budget Delegations 2025

In May 2023 our coalition of community and environmental groups urged the city to develop and implement an Adequate Temperature By-law to introduce mandatory maximum indoor temperatures for apartment buildings to protect tenants from indoor extreme heat. Extreme heat indoors can have very serious health consequences for people who can't cool down because of excessive heat in their apartments. After the 2021 heat dome in British Columbia caused the deaths of 619 people, the Chief Coroner of British Columbia highlighted that the primary cause of death was exposure to extreme heat indoors of over 26 degrees Celsius throughout the heat event. While many Canadians are familiar with the need for heat in our homes in the winter, we are now facing a situation where climate change has made mechanical cooling in homes to deal with extreme heat necessary too.

The impacts of climate change are disproportionately impacting certain populations in Hamilton. Extreme heat is a particular risk for seniors, children and infants, individuals with chronic illnesses, and those with mobility challenges. Tenants who rent are also more vulnerable to extreme heat events as an inability to control the temperature within their own units can create dangerously hot environments that can severely impact their day to day, as well as their lives. Studies from around the world on the impacts of extreme heat on human health have shown the negative cognitive impacts extreme heat imposes as well as the multitude of physiological health effects, with the most severe being life threatening.

After delegations from community and environmental organizations, Council unanimously passed a motion directing staff to get to work on local policy to protect tenants from extreme heat, including how to implement an Adequate Temperature By-Law.

Fast forward to now in 2025, while Council approved interim measures for the 2024 summer (special bus tickets, expansion of the AC benefit program), tenants are still waiting for a maximum heat bylaw.

As Hamilton continues to experience more frequent and lengthier extreme heat events due to climate change there is a danger to residents if indoor temperatures are not controlled. The implementation of an Adequate Temperature By-Law that would set a maximum temperature of 26 degrees Celsius in all rental units is of the utmost importance. It will save lives.

In December 2024, City of Toronto staff recommended to Toronto Council that the city implement a max heat bylaw with an implementation framework report to be published by the fourth quarter of 2025. This is a significant step ahead of where the City of Hamilton currently is with regards to its own efforts.

Our coalition is urging the City of Hamilton to adopt the following for the 2025 budget:

- Free transit during extreme heat alerts
- Continue funding of the expansion of the AC benefit program and better advertising of the availability of free AC for eligible tenants
- Develop and implement a maximum heat bylaw for summer 2025

The health and basic comfort of Hamiltonians across our city rely on this.