



City of Hamilton
GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Meeting #: 25-003
Date: February 26, 2025
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Council Chambers
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West

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

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 February 5, 2025
 - 5.2 General Issues Committee (Budget)
 - a. January 23, 2025
 - b. January 28, 2025
 - c. January 29, 2025
 - d. January 30, 2025
 - e. January 31, 2025

f. February 7, 2025

6. DELEGATIONS

- 6.1 Jodi Formosi, respecting public theft and safety concerns that are ongoing (In-Person)
- 6.2 Tim Potocic, Supercrawl Productions and Sonic Unyon Records, respecting an update on Supercrawl's and Because Beer Craft Beer Festival's audience data and economic impact, and speaking to City support (In-Person)
- 6.3 Delegations respecting Motions regarding the GFL Stone Creek Landfill, from the following individuals:
 - a. Tenysha Graham (In-Person)

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 HSC23029(a)
2023 Access to Housing Centralized Waitlist Update (City Wide)
- 7.2 HSC23016(a)
2023 Social Housing Annual Update (City Wide)
Please refer to Item 11.2 for Confidential Appendix "C" to this Report.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 8.1 PED25050
Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206 King Street West, Hamilton (Ward 2)
- 8.2 HSC25020 (To Be Distributed)
Encampment Response - Provincial Funding (City Wide)
- 8.3 CM23025(b)
Volunteer Advisory Committee Review (City Wide)
This Item includes a presentation.

8.4 HSC25003 (To Be Distributed)

Service Manager Consent for Victoria Park Community Homes Inc. Redevelopment of 525 Stonechurch Road East (Ward 7)

8.5 FCS25015 (To Be Distributed)

Strengthening Local Procurement and Resilience Amid U.S. Tariff Threats (City Wide)

8.6 PED25083 (To Be Distributed)

Coordinated Encampment Response Post-protocol (City Wide)

9. MOTIONS

9.1 Tackling Barriers to Building More Affordable and Supportive Housing

9.2 Explore Area Rating or Tax Relief for Residents Within 3km of the GFL Landfill

- a. Correspondence respecting the GFL Stoney Creek Landfill motions, from the following individuals:

- a. Paul Supers
- b. Sharon Moran
- c. O'Neil Graham
- d. Carol Sebben
- e. Jumana Dajani
- f. Izabela Wozniak
- g. Chris Mitton
- h. Michele Bertothy
- i. Kathie Faraway
- j. Raymond Mattar
- k. Dana Kennedy
- l. Sabrina Davidson

- m. Ray Menard
- n. Krista Clarke
- o. Navdeep Sandhar
- p. Tatyana Graham

- 9.3 Section 447.1 Against GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility
- 9.4 Flamborough Women's Resource Centre / Interval House
- 9.5 Inflation Rate for 2026
- 9.6 Identifying Areas for Improvement, Efficiency and Effectiveness
- 9.7 Feasibility of the Relocation and Adaptive Re-use of the Marr-Phillipo House

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

11. PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

11.1 Closed Session Minutes - February 5, 2025

Pursuant to Section 9.3, Sub-Sections (c) and (k) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2), Sub-sections (c) and (k) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land for City purposes or a local board; and, a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City or a local board.

11.2 Confidential Appendix "C" to HSC23016(a) - 2023 Social Housing Annual Update

Pursuant to Section 9.3, sub-section (b) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2) sub-section (b) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including City or local board employees.

Please see Item 7.2 for Report HSC23016(a) - 2023 Social Housing Annual Update.

11.3 PED25010

Relocation of Hamilton Police Service Marine Unit (Wards 2 and 5)

Pursuant to Section 9.3, Sub-Sections (c), (g) and (k) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2), Sub-sections (c) and (k) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land for City purposes or a local board; a matter in respect of which Council or a Committee may hold a closed meeting under an Act other than the *Municipal Act, 2001*; and, a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City or a local board.

11.4 CM24004(c)

Confidential Memo - Additional information to Report Cybersecurity Incident Impact Update (CM24004(b))

Pursuant to Section 9.3, Sub-Section (k) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2), Sub-section (k) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City or a local board.

11.5 CM24004(b)

Cyber Incident Impact Update (City Wide)

Pursuant to Section 9.3, Sub-Sections (f) and (k) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2), Sub-sections (f) and (k) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose; and a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City or a local board.

(This item was DEFERRED from the January 15, 2025 General Issues Committee meeting.)

11.6 LS25001 (To Be Distributed)

Aggregate Resource Tax Legal Update (City Wide)

12. ADJOURNMENT



GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE MINUTES - GIC 25-002

9:30 a.m.

February 5, 2025

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

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

Absent: Councillor J.P. Danko – Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor C. Cassar called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Beattie/Jackson)

That the agenda for the February 5, 2025 General Issues Committee meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1 January 15, 2025

(McMeekin/Beattie)

That the minutes of the January 15, 2025 General Issues Committee, be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED

6. DELEGATIONS

6.1 Rob Zeidler, The Cotton Factory; and Dave Santi, Dean of Mohawk College School of Climate Action, respecting support of PIVOT TECH 2024 and announcement of PIVOT TECH 2025 (In-Person)

Rob Zeidler, The Cotton Factory; and Dave Santi, Dean of Mohawk College School of Climate Action, addressed the Committee respecting support of PIVOT TECH 2024 and announcement of PIVOT TECH 2025.

(M. Wilson/Kroetsch)

That the delegation from Rob Zeidler, The Cotton Factory; and Dave Santi, Dean of Mohawk College School of Climate Action, respecting support of PIVOT TECH 2024 and announcement of PIVOT TECH 2025, be received.

CARRIED

6.2 John Gerrard, Hamilton Burlington SPCA, respecting Item 11.3 - Report PED20074(b) - Animal Services Facility Report (City Wide) (In-Person)

John Gerrard, Hamilton Burlington SPCA, addressed the Committee, respecting Item 11.3 - Report PED20074(b), Animal Services Facility Report (City Wide).

(Jackson/McMeekin)

That the delegation from John Gerrard, Hamilton Burlington SPCA, respecting Item 11.3 - Report PED20074(b) - Animal Services Facility Report (City Wide), be received.

CARRIED

6.3 Jodi Formosi, respecting public theft and safety concerns that are ongoing (In-Person)

At the request of Councillor Jackson, Jodi Formosi's delegation will be heard at a future General Issues Committee meeting.

6.4 Delegations respecting Item 9.1 - Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) Community, from the following individuals:

The following delegates addressed the Committee respecting Item 9.1 - Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) Community:

6.4(a) Angela Burns, Parkview East Neighbourhood Association (In-Person)

6.4(b) Karl Andrus (In-Person)

6.4(c) Brodie Riske (In-Person)

(Horwath/Beattie)

That the following delegations respecting Item 9.1 - Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) Community, be received:

- 6.4(a) Angela Burns, Parkview East Neighbourhood Association (In-Person)
- 6.4(b) Karl Andrus (In-Person)
- 6.4(c) Brodie Riske (In-Person)

CARRIED

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were no Items for Information.

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

8.1 Amendments to the Outstanding Business List:

(Clark/Nann)

That the following Amendments to the Outstanding Business List, be approved:

8.1(a) Items Requiring a New Due Date:

Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap 2024 Annual Update and 2025 Objective Setting (HSC23028(f) / FCS23055(d) / PED23099(g)) (City Wide)
 OBL Item: GIC-11/20/24-8.1(d)
 Added: November 20, 2024 (Item 8.1)
 Original Due Date: Q2 2025
 Proposed New Due Date: July 30, 2025

8.1.(b) Items Considered Complete and Needing to be Removed:

Revenue Sources to fund Council Priorities and Ongoing Operating and Capital Works
 Added: May 15, 2024 at GIC (Item 11.2)
 Completed: January 15, 2025 at GIC (Item 7.4)

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
Yes	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
Absent	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Absent	-	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
 Yes - Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

**8.2 PED25016
 Stoney Creek Business Improvement Area 2025 Revised Board of
 Management (Ward 5)**

(Clark/Nann)

That Report PED25016, dated February 5, 2025, respecting Stoney Creek Business Improvement Area 2025 Revised Board of Management (Ward 5), be received, and the following recommendations be approved:

- (a) That the following individuals be removed from the Stoney Creek Business Improvement Area Board of Management:
- (i) Roman Marcone – Halo Music;
 - (ii) Paulina Yousef – Community Rep;
 - (iii) Lana Flinn- StoHo;
- (b) That the following individuals be appointed to the Stoney Creek Business Improvement Area Board of Management:
- (i) Brandon Carrol – Raw Roots;
 - (ii) Michael Thompson – The Jamaican Patty Shack;
 - (iii) Chelsey Overell – Chestnut Tree Foot Care.

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
 Yes - Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
 Yes - Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang
 Absent - Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
 Yes - Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
 Yes - Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
 Absent - Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
 Yes - Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
 Absent - 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
 Yes - Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

8.3 PED25030

City Comments in Response to ERO Posting Nos. 019-9284, 019-9285 and 019-9300 Respecting Energy Planning (City Wide)

(A. Wilson/Kroetsch)

That Report PED25030, dated February 5, 2025, respecting City Comments in Response to ERO Posting Nos. 019-9284, 019-9285 and 019-9300 Respecting Energy Planning (City Wide), be received, and the following recommendations be approved:

- (a) That Council endorse the submissions and recommendations attached in Appendix “A” to Appendix “C” to Report PED25030 regarding Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting Nos. 019-9284, 019-9284, 019-9300; and,
- (b) That the Acting Director of Planning and Chief Planner be authorized and directed to confirm the submissions and recommendations made to the Province resulting from Council’s review and decisions on Report PED25030.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 15 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
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

8.4 Community Benefits Sub-Committee Report 24-002 – December 16, 2024

(i) (McMeekin/A. Wilson)

That the Community Benefits Sub-Committee Report 24-002, dated December 16, 2024, be received, and the following recommendations be approved:

**(1) Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement
(HSC24042/FCS24069) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)**

- (i) That sub-sections (b) through (f), as amended, to Report HSC24042/FCS24069, respecting Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement, be REFERRED to the Procurement Sub-Committee with the direction that the Social Procurement Pilot Program prioritize Indigenous-owned, diverse-owned, and equity-deserving businesses and social enterprises:
- (b) That the Procurement Division, Corporate Services and Strategic Initiatives, Health and Safe Communities, in consultation with the cross departmental Procurement Advisory Committee, jointly report back to the Community Benefits Protocol Sub-Committee with a proposed Phase One - Social Procurement Pilot Program leveraging City-led procurement activities to deliver additional social value outcomes as a first step in exploring a social procurement policy;
- (c) That Procurement Division and Strategic Initiatives, Health and Safe Communities, in consultation with the cross departmental Procurement Advisory Committee be directed to jointly oversee the development and delivery of a corporate wide staff training, including workshops, on social value outcomes for staff involved in procurement activities and applicable business units;
- (d) That the Director of Procurement, be authorized and directed to engage an external consultant in the development of the Social Procurement Pilot Program and supporting staff training and workshops;
- (e) That up to \$75 K from the Tax Stabilization Reserve (110046) be allocated to fund the consultant and works required for the Phase 1 - Social Procurement Pilot Program and including any staff training sessions and workshops; and,
- (f) That the Director of Procurement, or their assigned delegate, be authorized and directed, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, to enter into and/or execute all necessary agreements and ancillary documents on terms satisfactory to the above identified individuals and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

(ii) That sub-section (a) to Report HSC24042/FCS24069, respecting Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement, be DEFERRED to a future meeting of the Community Benefits Protocol Sub-Committee:

(a) That the Community Benefits Sub-Committee adopt the use of the term “social value outcome” in place of “Community Benefits” as the overarching term when referring to the work resulting from the recommendations of this report;

(2) Municipal Social Procurement Policies – Analysis of Recommendations from Research Shop, McMaster University (HSC24053/FCS24031) (City Wide) (Item 9.1)

That report HSC24053/FCS24031 respecting Municipal Social Procurement Policies – Analysis of Recommendations from Research Shop, McMaster University, be REFERRED to the Procurement Sub-Committee.

(3) Light Rail Transit Early Works Community Employment Benefits (Item 11.1)

WHEREAS, the construction of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) project and the delivery of regular operation and service will create significant employment opportunities;

WHEREAS, community benefits agreements ensure residents have equitable opportunities and economic inclusion through commitments to social procurement and social enterprise opportunities;

WHEREAS, the Pillar One “Employment Opportunities” of Metrolinx’s Community Benefits and Supports Program, and reiterated by their former President and Chief Executive Officer Phil Verster, looks to promote apprenticeship training and workforce development opportunities for local communities and equity seeking groups;

WHEREAS, Metrolinx, through project delivery on the Finch West, Eglinton Cross Town and Hazel McCallion LRTs, has gained substantial experience in delivering Community Employment Benefits and providing apprenticeship training and workforce development opportunities for local communities and equity seeking groups; and

WHEREAS, The City of Hamilton has been responsible for the delivery of several LRT early works, including Wentworth –

Construction of a 500mm and 200mm watermain, Sherman –
Construction of a 300mm watermain; and, Rosewood/Main –
Construction of a 1200mm watermain paid for by Metrolinx.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff be directed to work with Metrolinx, to identify projects, and attempt to deliver community employment benefits and social procurement ideals to the City-led procurement for any future LRT early works tendered in 2025 and beyond;
- (b) That City Staff report back to the relevant committees the findings of those conversation with Metrolinx, including any challenges, barriers or successes; and
- (c) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor and Metrolinx while meeting the City's procurement policy and authority to award the contracts.

(ii) **(Clark/Jackson)**

That Item 1 of the Community Benefits Sub-Committee Report 24-002, dated December 16, 2024, respecting Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement (HSC24042/FCS24069) (City Wide) (Item 8.1), **be amended**, by adding '**but not to the exclusion of other businesses**', as follows:

(1) **Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement (HSC24042/FCS24069) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)**

- (1) That sub-sections (b) through (f), **as amended**, to Report HSC24042/FCS24069, respecting Community Benefits and Social Value Procurement, be REFERRED to the Procurement Sub-Committee with the direction that the Social Procurement Pilot Program prioritize Indigenous-owned, diverse-owned, and equity-deserving businesses and social enterprises, **but not to the exclusion of other businesses**:

Result: AMENDMENT, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 1, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Absent	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
Yes	-	Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang

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Yes	-	Ward 5	Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6	Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7	Councillor Esther Pauls
Absent	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

Result: MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED, CARRIED by a vote of 15 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
Absent	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

8.5 Facility Naming Sub-Committee Minutes - FNSC 25-001 - January 27, 2025

(Francis/Jackson)

That the Facility Naming Sub-Committee Minutes - FNSC 25-001, dated January 27, 2025, be received, and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 15 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
Absent	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko

Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

**8.6 Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities Minutes - ACPD
25-001 - January 14, 2025**

(Tadeson/McMeekin)

That the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities Minutes - ACPD 25-001 - January 14, 2025, dated January 14, 2025, be received, and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 15 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
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9. MOTIONS

**9.1 Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS)
Community**

(McMeekin/Tadeson)

WHEREAS, our city has declared homelessness to be a crisis according to recent research, which indicates that one unhoused person dies in Hamilton every 10 days;

WHEREAS, our city has resolved that the best way to manage, mitigate and eventually resolve this crisis is through an 'all of Hamilton' approach coupled with a three-level government commitment to build more affordable housing;

WHEREAS, dedicated volunteers of the Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) have worked for over two years advocating a gated community for the unhoused based on Kitchener's award-winning Better Tent City model;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has already committed to partnering with HATS on a two-year Pilot project;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has recently adjusted the existing homelessness strategy and protocol in favour (based on broad community input focused on the safety of public parks and those currently encamping in those parks) of a combination of additional Shelter beds and Cabin transitional housing;

WHEREAS, HATS is dedicated to a best-practice project consistent with their researched study of the best North American practices of similar initiatives as outlined in their presented and comprehensive 95-page report;

WHEREAS, there is broad-based community support for HATS expressed by the following:

- the support of dozens of businesses and faith-based groups and leaders, including the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce;
- the training of over 100 police vetted community volunteers;
- the support of our Chief of Police;
- Over \$800,000 on-hand dollars raised from within the Hamilton community; and
- the to-date construction of 15 stand-alone cabins by volunteers and local providers

WHEREAS, HATS has made and continues to maintain contact with and support for many of our unhoused citizens;

WHEREAS, Hamilton has located a non-park site deemed worthy of rehabilitation in order to provide a 40-cabin site capable of housing 80 people;

WHEREAS, the creation of an additional 15 to 25 cabin site would enhance our city's ability to meet the need to provide safer transitional housing to those currently encamped in public parks and,

WHEREAS, a highly reputable social services agency, namely, St. Matthew's House, has been identified by HATS to manage a HATS site is supplemented by the support of THE HUB.

WHEREAS, HATS has sufficient funds raised and pledged privately to establish, maintain and sustain a village through 2025 and into 2026; and

WHEREAS, HATS has secured advocacy from permanent supportive housing providers to participate in an EXIT strategy for HATS village members.

Councillor McMeekin WITHDREW sub-section (a) and the following friendly Amendment to sub-section (b) was accepted by Councillor McMeekin and the seconder of the Motion.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

~~(a) — That the 2300 Brampton Street site previously identified be reviewed in Q1 2025 to ascertain what rehabilitation can be expedited to possibly make this site useable for a 25-site cabin Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) community; and~~

~~(a)(b) That staff be directed to immediately locate and propose an alternative site in Q2 2025 in concert with support from the local Ward Councillor, if remedial action(s) cannot be quickly taken to make the Brampton Street site suitable for a HATS community.~~

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 7 to 7, as follows:

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

9.1(a) Correspondence respecting Item 9.1 - Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) Community

(Clark/M. Wilson)

That the following Correspondence respecting Item 9.1 - Suitable Site for a Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters (HATS) Community, be received:

(a) Cassandra Galardo

CARRIED

(Nann/Tadeson)

That the General Issues Committee recess for 37 minutes until 1:00 p.m.

CARRIED

The General Issues Committee reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor M. Wilson introduced the following notice of motion:

10.1 Tackling Barriers to Building More Affordable and Supportive Housing

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton is experiencing a housing crisis, with increasing demand for affordable and supportive housing outpacing available supply;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton continues to make significant investments in housing, including a gross allocation of \$192 million in the proposed 2025 Tax budget to address housing affordability and housing supports;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton provides a suite of mandatory and discretionary housing enabling exemptions from Development Charges, Community Benefits Charges and Parkland Dedication Fees to stimulate the construction of affordable and supportive housing;

WHEREAS, there may be barriers that prevent or delay the construction of affordable and supportive housing;

WHEREAS, innovative approaches and reforms, including alternative financing mechanisms aimed at lowering housing costs, have been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions to support the development of affordable and supportive rental housing while maintaining municipal revenue streams; and

WHEREAS, a jurisdictional scan to explore best practices aimed at diversifying, incentivizing and expanding Hamilton's rental housing stock while ensuring continued investment in critical infrastructure may assist the City of Hamilton in getting more homes built.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Housing Secretariat, in collaboration with other city divisions be directed to conduct a jurisdictional scan to identify and assess the potential adoption of reforms and financing mechanisms to support affordable and supportive properties while reducing reliance on development charges and property taxes; and,

- (b) That the Housing Secretariat be directed to report back to Council as part the Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap annual update, on the findings of the jurisdictional scan and providing recommendations for implementation in the City of Hamilton.

Councillor Clark introduced the following notices of motion:

10.2 Explore Area Rating or Tax Relief for Residents Within 3km of the GFL Landfill

WHEREAS, residents living in Upper Stoney Creek within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) have been experiencing horrific odours since April 2023;

WHEREAS, residents have not had daily reasonable use and enjoyment of homes, property, community spaces and workplaces, especially pertaining to outdoor lived experiences;

WHEREAS, residents have experienced inconvenience, discomfort and loss of amenity caused by odours being emitted from the landfill;

WHEREAS, residents have regularly complained about the odour seeping into their homes; and,

WHEREAS, GFL and the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks have not been successful in stopping the odours;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the taxes and finance divisions review the possibility of providing area rating relief or any other tax relief to mitigate the financial burden on residents living within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) and report back to the General Issues Committee by the end of Q2 of 2025 with all costs to be funded through the GFL royalties.

10.3 Section 447.1 Against GLF Stoney Creek Regional Facility - REVISED

WHEREAS, residents living in Upper Stoney Creek within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) have been experiencing horrific odours since April 2023;

WHEREAS, residents have not had daily reasonable use and enjoyment of homes, property, community spaces and workplaces, especially pertaining to outdoor lived experiences;

WHEREAS, residents have experienced inconvenience, discomfort and loss of amenity caused by odours being emitted from the landfill;

WHEREAS, residents have regularly complained about the odour seeping into their homes;

WHEREAS, GFL and the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks have not been successful in stopping or abating these odours;

WHEREAS, the community group known as STAND for Stoney Creek (Stand) has had discussions with their lawyers from Ross and McBride; and,

WHEREAS, their research found the following case wherein Section 447.1 of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001* was applied *Newmarket (Town) v. Halton Recycling Ltd. 2006 CarswellOnt 5920 (S.C.J.)*;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That Legal Services be directed to review all legal options available to the City, including *Section 447.1* of the *Ontario Municipal Act*, to address the concerns raised by residents and report back to the General Issues Committee by the end of Q2 of 2025.

Councillor McMeekin introduced the following notice of motion:

10.4 Flamborough Women's Resource Centre / Interval House

WHEREAS, in 2023, the City of Hamilton declared intimate partnership violence a crisis;

WHEREAS, the Flamborough Women's Resource Centre, located in Waterdown, has focused on reducing gender violence and providing counselling support, group programs and legal advocacy;

WHEREAS, the Flamborough Women's Resource Centre, a satellite program of Interval House, has provided the only Outreach program for Flamborough women experiencing domestic violence and in need of safety and support services;

WHEREAS, rural women experience intimate partner violence at rates 5 times higher than rural men and 75% higher than rural women (CWF, 2022);

WHEREAS, the Waterdown area is one of the fastest growing population centres in Hamilton and, to date, not received any sustainable increased funding for the FWRC since 2009;

WHEREAS, the goal of the FWRC is to create an accessible hub in the core of Waterdown to expand services to those experiencing domestic violence;

WHEREAS, additional resources are required to help reach and respond to rural women in crisis, through the provision of occasional mobile services;

WHEREAS, the Ward 15 community Council has reviewed the request for assistance and, like the City of Hamilton, understands the urgency of a response capability; and,

WHEREAS, this grant will assist the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre/Interval House to secure a larger service location needed to provide no charge counselling, safety planning, housing assistance, income navigation, employment readiness training and where necessary, legal advice.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That a grant be provided to Interval House for the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre. That this grant be funded from the Ward 15 Non-Property Tax Revenue Account (3301609615) at an upset limit, including contingency, not to exceed \$10,000.00;
- (b) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Deputy Mayor Cassar relinquished the Chair to Councillor Tadeson to introduce the following motion:

10.5 Protecting Hamilton’s Economy and Jobs: Strengthening Local Procurement and Resilience Amid U.S. Tariff Threats – REVISED

(Cassar/Francis)

That the Rules of Order be suspended to allow for the introduction of a motion respecting Protecting Hamilton’s Economy and Jobs: Strengthening Local Procurement and Resilience Amid U.S. Tariff Threats – REVISED.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a 2/3 majority vote of 14 to 0, as follows:

Absent	-	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
Absent	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

(Cassar/Francis)

WHEREAS, the United States government, under President Donald Trump, had announced the imposition of 25% tariffs on Canadian goods effective February 1, 2025;

WHEREAS, the potential threat of tariffs on Hamilton's key industries poses significant risk to local businesses, workers, and the overall economic stability of our community;

WHEREAS, these tariffs could potentially reduce the city's GDP by up to \$1.1 billion, impacting key sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and the automotive industry;

WHEREAS, Hamilton's manufacturing sector employs over 28,000 workers locally and over 48,000 within the broader Hamilton CMA, and plays a critical role in the city's economic stability;

WHEREAS, the potential decline in Hamilton's largest export sector—iron and steel—could result in a \$3.6 billion reduction in export value;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has significant purchasing power through its capital projects and infrastructure investments, which can be leveraged to support local and national businesses during this economic uncertainty;

WHEREAS, although a 30-day pause on the implementation of these proposed tariffs has been agreed upon by President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, the potential threat remains, necessitating the exploration of proactive measures to protect and support Hamilton's local businesses, workers, and families to ensure economic resilience, growth, and long-term prosperity for our city;

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2025, Council referred Councillor Matt Francis's "Buy Local and Canadian First Procurement Policy" motion to the Procurement Sub-Committee for consideration with the intention to lay the groundwork for prioritizing local procurement;

WHEREAS, the current economic climate and the urgent threat posed by new tariffs necessitate accelerated action to expand on the aforementioned motion and reinforce Hamilton's economic resilience; and,

WHEREAS, municipalities, while traditionally constrained by trade agreements, can play a pivotal role in supporting Canadian businesses through strategic procurement practices.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) Staff expedite the review of current procurement policies and report back to GIC on February 26th, 2025 with preliminary recommendations on the feasibility of integrating “Buy Local and Canadian” policies effectively and urgently given the current economic uncertainty;
- (b) The City of Hamilton stands in solidarity with federal and provincial governments to advocate against U.S. tariffs and support a coordinated "Team Canada" response.
- (c) The City of Hamilton calls on the federal and provincial governments to collaborate with municipalities in identifying and removing barriers that prevent local governments from preferring Canadian businesses in procurement processes.
- (d) The City of Hamilton endorses the City of Burlington’s “Buy Canada” resolution, dated January 31, 2025, and that the clerk forward this resolution to the following organizations for their information:
 - (i) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
 - (ii) Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
 - (iii) Ontario Big City Mayors Caucus
 - (iv) Hamilton Members of Parliament (MPs)
 - (v) Hamilton Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs)
 - (vi) Municipalities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe

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

Absent	-	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
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko

Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

Councillor Cassar assumed the Chair.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Committee determined that discussion of Item 11.1 was not required in Closed Session; therefore, the matter was addressed in Open Session, as follows:

11.1 Closed Session Minutes – January 15, 2025

(Clark/Tadeson)

That the Closed Session minutes of the January 15, 2025 General Issues Committee meeting, be adopted and remain confidential.

CARRIED

(Tadeson/Beattie)

That Committee move into Closed Session for Items 11.2, and 11.3, a pursuant to Section 9.3, Sub-Sections (c) and (k) of the City's Procedural By-law 21-021, as amended, and Section 239(2), Sub-sections (c) and (k) of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, as the subject matter pertains to a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land for City purposes or a local board; and, a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the City or a local board.

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

Absent	-	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
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

The General Issues Committee resolved into closed session at 1:25 p.m.

The General Issues Committee meeting reconvened in Open Session at 3:05 p.m.

**11.2 PED25006
Surplus Land in Ward 14 (Ward 14)**

(Beattie/Tadeson)

That Report PED25006, dated February 5, 2025, respecting Surplus Land in Ward 14 (Ward 14), be received, and the following recommendations be approved:

- (a) That Council of the City of Hamilton, as approving authority, authorizes relief from Section 42 of the *Expropriations Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.26, requiring the expropriating authority to give the previous owner of 1126 Garth Street, from whom the land was taken, the first chance to repurchase the lands on the terms of the best offer received by the expropriating authority; and,
- (b) That Report PED25006, respecting Surplus Land in Ward 14, remain confidential.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 12 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
Absent	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Absent	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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

**11.3 PED20074(b)
Animal Services Facility Report (City Wide)**

(Clark/Beattie)

That Report PED20074(b), dated February 5, 2025, respecting Animal Services Facility Report (City Wide), be received, and the following recommendations be approved:

- (a) That the direction provided to staff in Closed Session, respecting Report PED20074(b), Animal Services Facility, be approved and remain confidential;
- (b) That Report PED20074(b), respecting the Animal Services Facility and its Appendices remain confidential.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 12 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
Absent	-	Ward 5 Councillor Matt Francis
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Absent	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Absent	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator

Deputy Mayor Craig Cassar
Chair, General Issues Committee



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-002**

9:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 23, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

Absent: Councillor M. Spadafora - Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Tadeson/Hwang)

That the agenda for the January 23, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1 January 20, 2025

(McMeekin/Danko)

That the minutes of the January 20, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget), be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

6.1 Written Delegations respecting the 2025 Tax Budget

(Cassar/A. Wilson)

That the following Written Delegations respecting the 2025 Tax Budget, be received:

- (a) Jim Mackey
- (b) Rick & Lyn Folkes

CARRIED

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**7.1 Economic Overview**

Mike Zegarac, General Manager of Finance & Corporate Services, introduced Andrew Grantham, Executive Director and Senior Economist, Capital Markets, CIBC who provided Committee with a presentation on the Economic Overview.

(Danko/Kroetsch)

That the presentation respecting the Economic Overview, be received.

CARRIED

**7.2 FCS25004
2025 Tax Budget Overview (City Wide)**

Marnie Cluckie, City Manager, provided opening remarks and introduced Mike Zegarac, General Manager of Finance & Corporate Services, who provided the Committee with a presentation respecting Report FSC25004, 2025 Tax Budget Overview.

(Hwang/Tadeson)

That the General Issues Committee (Budget) recess for 40 minutes until 1:05 p.m.

CARRIED

(Beattie/Cassar)

That Report FCS25004, and the staff presentation respecting the 2025 Tax Budget Overview, be received.

CARRIED

7.3 Mayor's Memorandum - 2025 Proposed Tax Budget

(Pauls/Hwang)

That the Mayor's Memorandum - 2025 Proposed Tax Budget, be received.

CARRIED

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

9.1 Request for a Report Respecting Reduction of the Global Budget Number to 3.44%

(Francis/Beattie)

WHEREAS, the 2025 tax levy increase stands at 6.3%; and

WHEREAS, the 5-year average CPI is 3.44%.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the City Manager be directed to report back to the General Issues Committee (Budget) by February 7, 2025, indicating how the final global budget number can be reduced to 3.44% maximum, while maintaining current service levels.

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 7 to 8, as follows:

No	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
No	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
No	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
No	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Absent	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

The motion respecting a Request for a Report on the Recipients of City of Hamilton Funding (Item 9.2) was WITHDRAWN prior to the meeting.

9.3 Request for a Report on Capital Projects

(Tadeson/Hwang)

That staff be directed to report back to the February 7, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) with the following:

- (i) An accounting of the Capital Projects funded in 2023 and 2024 that have not started and remain unfinished;
- (ii) Identify any Capital Projects funded in 2025 budget will likely not be started in 2025; and,
- (iii) How many Capital Projects can be pushed to the 2026 and 2027 Capital Budget without an effect on what would actually be completing in 2025.

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 7 to 8, as follows:

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

9.4 Request for 2025 Capital Projects Detail Sheets

(Kroetsch/Clark)

- (a) That the 2025 Capital Project detail sheets be circulated to Committee after the conclusion of this meeting; and,
- (b) That the 2025 Capital Project detail sheets be put together in an AODA compliant version and be published online as an attachment to the January 23, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 14 to 1, 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
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
No	-	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

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor Danko introduced the following notices of motion:

10.1 Elimination of Council Referred Items 11 & 12 City Enrichment Fund Increases

WHEREAS the City Enrichment Fund invests in the community by providing taxpayer funded grants from the City of Hamilton.

WHEREAS the purpose of the City Enrichment Fund is to provide transparency and access to taxpayer funded grants for eligible not-for profit organizations, registered charities, grassroots organizations, and professional artist projects that are determined through an independent, transparent, and defined application and approval process.

WHEREAS the City Enrichment Fund protects the interests of taxpayers by ensuring that City funding is only directed to legitimate, eligible, organizations that support the City's strategic plan and Our Future Hamilton – Community Vision.

WHEREAS the City Enrichment Fund was created to eliminate arbitrary Councillor directed funding to organizations, groups and individuals that may be, or may be perceived to be, politically motivated spending intended to gain political support.

WHEREAS all Councillors have access to various reserve funding accounts including the Area Rating Special Capital Discretionary Reserve and Non-Property Tax Revenue Reserves.

WHEREAS subsequent to the 2022 municipal election, various Councillors initiated their own “Ward Community Grants” programs that now direct taxpayer funding to community organizations, groups and individuals at the discretion of the Ward Councillor without appropriate financial oversight.

WHEREAS there is no purpose to increase funding to the City Enrichment Fund when individual Councillors have created their own “Ward Community Grant” programs and continue to direct hundreds of thousands of dollars per Ward, annually, to their own individually selected recipients.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the 2025 Budget, *be amended*, as follows:

- (a) Eliminate Council referred Item 11 - 2025 Proposed Increase to City Enrichment Fund \$568,110
- (b) Eliminate Council referred Item 12 – Digital Program Area – City Enrichment Fund \$100,000

10.2 Financial Relief to Help Offset the Increase Cost of Municipal Police Service

WHEREAS, the Ontario government will provide over \$77 million in financial relief to small and rural municipalities to help offset the increased cost of municipal police services provided by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).

WHEREAS, Solicitor General Michael Kerzner stated: “The financial relief we (the Ontario government) are proposing will help municipal leaders balance their budgets and invest in their communities while ensuring no change to the policing provided by the OPP that keeps families and businesses safe”.

WHEREAS, the Ontario government acknowledges that the financial impacts resulting from police collective bargaining agreements has a significant impact on municipal budgets.

WHEREAS, all of the factors that resulted in significant costs to policing for small and rural communities also exist in large municipalities.

WHEREAS, municipalities that do not rely on the Ontario Provincial Police also require financial relief to offset the increasing cost of police services.

WHEREAS, urban municipalities have additional challenges such as homeless encampments, guns, gangs, drug trafficking, auto theft and organized crime that require significant police resources and specialized equipment and personnel.

WHEREAS, residents overwhelmingly support police and request a stronger and more effective police presence in their neighbourhoods.

WHEREAS, the Ontario government is a strong supporter of policing throughout the province.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the City of Hamilton request the Province of Ontario provide financial relief to the City of Hamilton due budget impacts of the increasing cost of policing;
- (b) That City Finance staff work with the City Manager, Mayor's Office, Police Services Board and the Chief of Police to quantify a specific financial relief request; and,
- (c) That this direction be circulated to Ontario Big City Mayor and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

10.3 Re-Alignment of Taxpayer Funding to Good Faith Encampment Support Organizations

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton relies on many local social agencies, harm reduction, homeless and encampment organizations that provide various levels of support to vulnerable populations throughout the City.

WHEREAS, in 2024 the City of Hamilton invested a total of \$186 million dollars towards housing and homelessness, \$125 million funded by municipal taxpayers, equivalent to approximately \$215 per resident per year.

WHEREAS, on December 23rd, 2024, Ontario Superior Court Justice James Ramsay, issued a ruling dismissing the claim of fourteen homeless applicants that the City of Hamilton breached their right under the Charter to life, liberty and security of the person (s. 7) and to equal benefit of the law (s. 15).

WHEREAS, paragraph 4 of Justice Ramsay's ruling states "I observe that the most vulnerable includes not only the homeless but also the elderly person and the child who want to use a sidewalk or a city park without tiptoeing through used needles and human feces."

WHEREAS, paragraph 24 of Justice Ramsay’s ruling states “Many of the affidavits of the applicants contained boilerplate. Parts were obviously drafted by lawyers.”

WHEREAS, paragraph 61 of Justice Ramsay’s ruling states “...there is a developing, false narrative that encampments are a safe alternative form of housing. That narrative appears in the affidavits of some of the applicants’ witnesses. From talking to her (expert witness Dr. Koivu) patients it appears that it has been a factor in the decision to leave safer environments.”

WHEREAS, paragraph 64 of Justice Ramsay’s ruling states “...Dr. Koivu’s concern about the false narrative encouraging people to leave safer alternatives is supported by the evidence...a member of the Outreach Team, who has observed organized groups encouraging encampment residents to resist options other than encampments.”

WHEREAS residents have reported observing instances where homeless individuals have received organized assistance to set up, relocate and provision encampments in City parks.

WHEREAS, limited taxpayer resources should be prioritized to fund organizations that are proven good faith community partners, working collaboratively with the City of Hamilton in alignment with the interests of the City, residents, and the wellbeing of homeless individuals.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- (a) That Housing Services staff be directed to identify and itemize all City funding allocated to homelessness support social agencies, harm reduction, legal advice, and encampment outreach organizations; and,
- (b) That Housing Services staff propose opportunities to re-align City funding, limited to organizations that are proven good faith community partners committed to collaboratively working with the City of Hamilton in alignment with City and Council interests, approved by-laws and policies.

10.4 Taxpayer Funding Exclusion for Organizations Involved in Litigation Against the City of Hamilton

WHEREAS Section 3 of the *Procurement Policy for the City of Hamilton* defines “Litigation” as “any dispute between the City and a vendor, where a legal proceeding...or other form of adjudication has been commenced..., against the City, its elected representatives, appointed officers, or employees...in relation to any...matter arising from the City’s exercise of its powers, duties, or functions.”

WHEREAS Section 4.1, Clause 2(a) of the *Procurement Policy for the City of Hamilton* states “the City may reject any Bid from a vendor where, in the opinion of the City, the commercial relationship between the City and the vendor has been impaired by the act(s) or omission(s) of such vendor including...any one or more of the following having occurred within the five year period immediately preceding either the date on which the RFP or RFT is awarded or the date on which the vendor has been shortlisted...

- (i) the vendor being involved in Litigation with the City;”

WHEREAS the City of Hamilton provides taxpayer funding for various third-party organizations, groups and individuals through grants, loans, donations, in-kind contributions, direct financing, Council directed financing and other City sources of public funds.

WHEREAS the *Procurement Policy for the City of Hamilton* explicitly bans vendors engaged in litigation against the City of Hamilton from participating in City contracts for a period of five years.

WHEREAS it is in the interest of all City of Hamilton taxpayers to uphold the integrity of City funding by extending the provisions of the *Procurement Policy for the City of Hamilton* to apply to all City funding for all third-party organizations, groups and individuals.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That all third-party organizations, groups and individuals engaged in litigation against the City of Hamilton within the last five years (2019 to 2024) are excluded from all City funding in the 2025 budget, including grants, loans, donations, in kind contributions, direct funding or any other sources of funding from the City of Hamilton; and,
- (b) That Finance, Procurement and Legal Services staff report back to the Audit and Finance Committee no later than Q4 of 2025 with by-law and policy updates that will align the provisions of the Procurement Policy with City taxpayer funding agreements for third-party organizations, groups and individuals.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-003**

9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Clark/Kroetsch)

That the agenda for the January 28, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no minutes of the previous meetings.

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Hamilton Public Library

Nicolas Van Velzen, Hamilton Public Library Board Chair; Paul Takala, Hamilton Public Library CEO and Chief Librarian; and, Gagan Batra, Hamilton Public Library Vice Chair, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the 2025 Budget for the Hamilton Public Library.

(Nann/Beattie)

That the presentation respecting the Hamilton Public Library – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

7.2 Hamilton Conservation Authority

Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer; Scott Peck, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer / Director, Watershed Management Services; and Scott Fleming, Director of Finance & Central Support Services, Hamilton Conservation Authority addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the 2025 Budget for the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

(Clark/Cassar)

That the presentation respecting the Hamilton Conservation Authority – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

7.3 Hamilton Police Services Board

Don Robertson, Board Chair; and Police Chief Frank Bergen, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the 2025 Budget for the Hamilton Police Services Board.

(Pauls/Spadafora)

That the presentation respecting the Hamilton Police Services Board – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

(Pauls/Spadafora)

That the General Issues Committee (Budget) recess for 42 minutes until 2:30 p.m.

CARRIED

7.4 Conservation Halton

(Danko/Krotesch)

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Conservation Halton 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

7.5 Grand River Conservation Authority**(Spadafora/Francis)**

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Grand River Conservation Authority 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**7.6 Hamilton Beach Rescue****(Francis/Cassar)**

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Hamilton Beach Rescue 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**7.7 Hamilton Farmers' Market****(Kroetsch/Hwang)**

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Hamilton Farmers' Market 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**7.8 Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority****(Tadeson/Clark)**

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**7.9 Royal Botanical Gardens****(A. Wilson/Cassar)**

That the discussion and materials provided respecting the Royal Botanical Gardens 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

There were no Motions.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-004**

9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, January 29, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

Absent: Councillor T. McMeekin – Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Beattie/Kroetsch)

That the agenda for the January 29, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no minutes of the previous meetings.

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Healthy and Safe Communities - 2025 Budget Presentation

Angela Burden, General Manager, Community Services, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the Healthy and Safe Communities - 2025 Budget.

(A. Wilson/Jackson)

That the presentation respecting the Healthy and Safe Communities – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

There were no Motions.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-005**

9:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 30, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

Absent: Councillor M. Tadeson – Personal

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Hwang/Kroetsch)

That the agenda for the January 30, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mayor Andrea Horwath declared a Disqualifying interest to Item 7.1, respecting Corporate Services Department – 2025 Budget Presentation, as the presentation includes reference to the Vacant Unit Tax, and she has a vacant unit.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no minutes of the previous meetings.

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Corporate Services Department - 2025 Budget Presentation

Mike Zegarac, General Manager of Finance and Corporate Services, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the Corporate Services Department - 2025 Budget.

(Cassar/A. Wilson)

That the presentation respecting the Corporate Services – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

7.2 City Manager's Office - 2025 Budget Presentation

Marnie Cluckie, City Manager, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the City Manager's Office - 2025 Budget.

(Hwang/Clark)

That the presentation respecting the City Manager's Office – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED

7.3 FCS25005 Review of the City of Hamilton's Debt Policy (City-wide)

(Danko/Clark)

That Report FCS25005, respecting Review of the City of Hamilton's Debt Policy (City Wide), be received.

CARRIED

7.4 FCS25010 2025 Budget Engagement Results (City Wide)

(Cassar/Spadafora)

That Report FCS25010, respecting the 2025 Budget Engagement Results (City Wide), be received.

CARRIED

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

There were no Motions.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-006**

9:30 a.m.

Friday, January 31, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Tadeson/Beattie)

That the agenda for the January 31, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mayor Andrea Horwath declared a disqualifying interest to Item 9.1, Options to Re-deploy Safe Apartment FTEs to Encampment Enforcement, as she is a landlord.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no minutes of the previous meetings.

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**7.1 Planning and Economic Development Department - 2025 Budget Presentation**

Anita Fabac, Acting Director of Planning and Chief Planner, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the Planning and Economic Development Department - 2025 Budget.

(Hwang/Cassar)

That the presentation respecting the Planning and Economic Development Department – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**(Beattie/Nann)**

That the General Issues Committee (Budget) recess for 7 minutes until 10:50 a.m.

CARRIED

The General Issues Committee reconvened at 10:50 a.m.

7.2 Public Works Department - 2025 Budget Presentation

Carlyle Khan, General Manager of Public Works, addressed the Committee with a presentation respecting the Public Works Department - 2025 Budget.

(Nann/Kroetsch)

That the General Issues Committee (Budget) recess for 60 minutes until 1:05 p.m.

CARRIED

The General Issues Committee reconvened at 1:05 p.m.

(Pauls/Kroetsch)

That the presentation respecting the Public Works Department – 2025 Budget, be received.

CARRIED**8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

9.1 Options to Re-deploy Safe Apartment FTEs to Encampment Enforcement

(Danko/Francis)

WHEREAS, by Mayoral directive all departments were directed to identify efficiencies to reduce the municipal property tax rate;

WHEREAS, as part of the 2025 budget, seventeen full time staff will be added to Licensing and By-Law services compliment, and under the current direction, are dedicated to specific by-law initiatives and cannot be re-deployed to other needs;

WHEREAS, the Rental Renovation and Relocation By-Law came into effect on January 1st, 2025 and has received no applications to date and the Safe Apartment By-Law will not be in effect until January 2026;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton will no longer permit homeless tent encampments in City parks beginning March 6th, 2025;

WHEREAS, staff have been directed to report back to the General Issues Committee with recommendations for additional resources needed to clear and proactively enforce the pending restriction against homeless tent encampments in City parks;

WHEREAS, additional Municipal Law Enforcement staff will be required to enforce and maintain the pending restriction against homeless tent encampments; and,

WHEREAS, enforcement of the restriction against homeless tent encampments in City parks is a top priority for residents across the City;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That staff be directed to review options to amend the scope of duties for all staff dedicated to both the Renovation License and Relocation By-Law, the Safe Apartment Buildings By-Law and any other program specific staff to permit re-deployment to other Municipal Law Enforcement needs including but not limited to encampment enforcement and report back to the February 7, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting.

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 5 to 8, as follows:

Conflict	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
No	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann

General Issues Committee (Budget)
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No	-	Ward 4	Councillor Tammy Hwang
Yes	-	Ward 5	Councillor Matt Francis
Absent	-	Ward 6	Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7	Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
No	-	Ward 9	Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10	Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11	Councillor Mark Tadeson
No	-	Ward 12	Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13	Councillor Alex Wilson
Absent	-	Ward 14	Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela McRae
 Legislative Coordinator

Councillor Maureen Wilson
 Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)



**GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
(OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET)
MINUTES GIC-B 25-007**

9:30 a.m.

Friday, February 7, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario

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

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Budget Chair M. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

There were no ceremonial activities.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

(Clark/Kroetsch)

That the agenda for the February 7, 2025 General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Kroetsch declared a disqualifying interest to Item 9.3 - Re-Alignment of Taxpayer Funding to Good Faith Encampment Support Organizations, and Item 9.4 - Taxpayer Funding Exclusion for Organizations Involved in Litigation Against the City of Hamilton, as he has a personal and professional relationship with Ashley Wilson who works at the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic under the Tenant Support Program.

Councillor B. Clark declared a non-disqualifying interest to Item 9.3 - Re-Alignment of Taxpayer Funding to Good Faith Encampment Support Organizations, as he referred Wade Poziomka to a Ward 9 community group experiencing an ongoing environmental issue.

Council – February 12, 2025

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no previous meeting minutes.

6. DELEGATIONS

Delegations on the 2025 Budget were received on November 18, 2024 & January 20, 2025.

6.1 Written Delegations Respecting the 2025 Tax Budget

(Nann/Tadeson)

That the following Written Delegations respecting the 2025 Tax Budget, be received:

- (a) Clare Freeman, Executive Director, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- (b) Lois Corey
- (c) Harriet Woodside
- (d) Anne Washington
- (e) Caitlin Craven, Executive Director, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
- (f) Brad Evoy, Executive Director, Disability Justice Network of Ontario
- (g) Daniel Coleman
- (h) Lynn Gates
- (i) Jeff Davies
- (j) Jacqueline Wilson, Canadian Environmental Law Association
- (k) Jen Baker, General Manager, Hamilton Naturalists' Club
- (l) Ian Borsuk, Executive Director, Environment Hamilton
- (m) Olivia O'Connor, ACORN Hamilton
- (n) Maryanne Lemieux
- (o) Elizabeth Knight
- (p) Rick Johnson

CARRIED

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Mayor's Memorandum - 2025 Proposed Tax Budget - REVISED

(A. Wilson/Cassar)

That the Mayor's Memorandum - 2025 Proposed Tax Budget - REVISED, be received.

CARRIED

7.2 Correspondence from Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO, Hamilton Public Library respecting the 2025 Budget Submission for the Hamilton Public Library (HPL)

(McMeekin/Kroetsch)

That the Correspondence from Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO, Hamilton Public Library respecting the 2025 Budget Submission for the Hamilton Public Library (HPL), be received.

CARRIED

8. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no Items for Consideration.

9. MOTIONS

9.1 Elimination of Council Referred Items 11 & 12 City Enrichment Fund Increases

(Danko/Spadafora)

WHEREAS, the City Enrichment Fund invests in the community by providing taxpayer funded grants from the City of Hamilton;

WHEREAS, the purpose of the City Enrichment Fund is to provide transparency and access to taxpayer funded grants for eligible not-for profit organizations, registered charities, grassroots organizations, and professional artist projects that are determined through an independent, transparent, and defined application and approval process;

WHEREAS, the City Enrichment Fund protects the interests of taxpayers by ensuring that City funding is only directed to legitimate, eligible, organizations that support the City's strategic plan and Our Future Hamilton – Community Vision;

WHEREAS, the City Enrichment Fund was created to eliminate arbitrary Councillor directed funding to organizations, groups and individuals that may be, or may be perceived to be, politically motivated spending intended to gain political support;

WHEREAS, all Councillors have access to various reserve funding accounts including the Area Rating Special Capital Discretionary Reserve and Non-Property Tax Revenue Reserves;

WHEREAS, subsequent to the 2022 municipal election, various Councillors initiated their own "Ward Community Grants" programs that now direct taxpayer funding to community organizations, groups and individuals at the discretion of the Ward Councillor without appropriate financial oversight; and,

WHEREAS, there is no purpose to increase funding to the City Enrichment Fund when individual Councillors have created their own “Ward Community Grant” programs and continue to direct hundreds of thousands of dollars per Ward, annually, to their own individually selected recipients.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the 2025 Budget, be amended, as follows:

- (a) Remove Council referred Item 11 - 2025 Proposed Increase to City Enrichment Fund \$568,110
- (b) Remove Council referred Item 12 – Digital Program Area – City Enrichment Fund \$100,000

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 6 to 10, as follows:

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

9.2 Financial Relief to Help Offset the Increase Cost of Municipal Police Service

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

9.3 Re-Alignment of Taxpayer Funding to Good Faith Encampment Support Organizations

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

9.4 Taxpayer Funding Exclusion for Organizations Involved in Litigation Against the City of Hamilton

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

On a Point of Order, Councillor Francis requested that Chair M. Wilson divulge all Motions that are going to be ruled out of order at one time instead going through the motions one at a time.

Chair M. Wilson ruled that Committee would continue to follow the process of considering the motions one at a time.

(1) Challenge the Chair

Councillor M. Francis challenged the ruling of the chair. Clerk Trennum assumed the Chair and called the vote on the challenge as follows:

(Francis/Pauls)

That the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

Result: MOTION on the Chair's Ruling, SUSTAINED by a 2/3 vote of 12 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
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
No	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
No	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
No	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

Clerk Trennum declared the ruling of the Chair to be sustained and Chair M. Wilson assumed the Chair.

9.5 Electric Maintenance Vehicles – REVISED

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

(1) Challenge the Chair

On a Point of Order, Councillor Francis challenged the ruling of the Chair that the Motion respecting Electric Maintenance Vehicles was out of order.

Clerk Trennum assumed the Chair and called the vote on the challenge as follows:

(Francis/Spadafora)

That the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

Result: MOTION on the Chair's Ruling, SUSTAINED by a 2/3 vote of 12 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
Yes	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
No	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
No	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
No	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

Clerk Trennum declared the ruling of the Chair to be sustained and Chair M. Wilson assumed the Chair.

9.6 Climate Change Initiative

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

9.7 Amendment to the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget - Development of a Community Benefits Protocol

(Kroetsch/Hwang)

WHEREAS, the Community Benefits Protocol Sub-Committee was established by Council on June 27, 2018 and the main purpose of the Sub-Committee is to “develop a protocol” (called a Community Benefits Protocol or Social Value Framework);

WHEREAS, there is currently no internal City staff resource with the expertise to support the development of a protocol;

WHEREAS, it will cost \$75,000 to hire a consultant to support the development of a protocol, which represents an approximate increase to the overall City budget of 0.006%, as each percentage increase to the overall City budget is valued at approximately \$13m; and

WHEREAS, the City's projected budget increase for 2025 is 5.663% and increasing it by 0.006% would raise the overall increase to approximately 5.669%.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget, be amended, as follows:

- (a) That \$75,000 be allocated to support the hiring of a consultant to develop a draft Community Benefits Protocol or Social Value Framework;
- (b) That staff be directed to develop a scope of work to meet the objective of developing a draft Community Benefits Protocol or Social Value Framework and oversee the consultant's work; and
- (c) That the City Manager, or General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, or their assigned designate, be authorized and directed, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, to negotiate, enter into and/or execute, all agreements and necessary ancillary documents on terms satisfactory to the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 9 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
No	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
No	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
Yes	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson

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No - Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
 Yes - Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.8 Amendment to the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget - Hamilton Police Service Board Budget

(Kroetsch/A. Wilson)

WHEREAS, the Hamilton Police Service Board submitted a budget increase of \$12,252,775 representing a 5.7% increase for a total 2025 budget of \$227,075,420;

WHEREAS, according to the City of Hamilton's budget documents there is a budget increase of \$17,351,475 for the total costs of policing, including legally mandated costs, representing an 8.1% increase for a total 2025 budget of \$232,174,120;

WHEREAS, the Hamilton Police Service Board budget has received more consistent support from City Council than any other departmental budget, with all increases approved without modification since amalgamation;

WHEREAS, the Hamilton Police Service Board budget has increased by \$145,825,170 since amalgamation (the 2001 Annual Report of the Hamilton Police Service Board indicated a total budget of \$86,348,950 as compared to \$232,174,120 in 2025);

WHEREAS, the Hamilton Police Service Board's submitted increase (\$12,252,775) represents an approximate 0.94% increase to the overall City budget, as each percentage increase to the overall City budget is valued at approximately \$13m; and,

WHEREAS, the City's projected budget increase for 2025 is 5.66% and reducing it by 0.94% would lower the overall increase to approximately 4.72%.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget, be amended, as follows:

- (a) That the Hamilton Police Service Board's 2025 Budget be established at \$214,822,645.

(1) Recess

Without motion Chair M. Wilson recessed the General Issues Committee (Budget) at 11:41 a.m. as order was not able to be maintained.

The General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting reconvened at 11:56 a.m.

After further discussion, the Chair called the vote on the Motion respecting the Amendment to the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget - Hamilton Police Service Board Budget, as presented.

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 2 to 14, as follows:

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

9.9 Amendment to the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget - Improving the Cleanliness and Safety of Downtown Underpasses

(Kroetsch/Nann)

WHEREAS, Transportation Roadway Maintenance has received an increase in the number of requests regarding underpass maintenance and cleaning, including surrounding sidewalks and adjacent roadways;

WHEREAS, all underpasses throughout the City were assessed and 14 were identified based on high pedestrian and pigeon activity;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton currently does not have an annual underpass cleaning program with an established level of service, sidewalks, stairs, or adjacent roadways;

WHEREAS, pigeon feces, dead pigeons and other birds, litter, and illegal dumping are all prevalent issues in underpasses, which require regular maintenance;

WHEREAS, the City is currently is making a series of capital investments including repairing and replacing vital underpass infrastructure, putting up bird netting, installing new and brighter lighting, and painting that require regular maintenance;

WHEREAS, it will cost \$130,000 annually to perform this regular maintenance, which represents an approximate increase to the overall City budget of 0.01%, as each percentage increase to the overall City budget is valued at approximately \$13m; and,

WHEREAS, the City's projected budget increase for 2025 is 5.66% and increasing it by 0.01% would raise the overall increase to approximately 5.67%.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget, as follows:

- (a) That fourteen (14) underpass locations with heavy pedestrian activity and a high volume of sanitary and debris complaints be added to a Roadway Maintenance Underpass Cleaning Program including:

Ward 1

- (i) Aberdeen Avenue at Studholme Road - underpass
- (ii) Main Street West at Osler Drive - underpass

Ward 2

- (iii) MacNab Street South at Hunter Street West - tunnel, stairs
- (iv) James Street South at Hunter Street - underpass, stairs
- (v) John Street South at Hunter Street East - underpass
- (vi) Catharine Street South at Hunter Street East - underpass
- (vii) Walnut Street South at Hunter Street East - underpass
- (viii) Ferguson Street South at Young Street - tunnel
- (ix) Young Street near Ford Street - underpass, stairs

Ward 3

- (x) Charlton Avenue East at Victoria Avenue South - tunnel
- (xi) Victoria Avenue South at Young Street - underpass
- (xii) Victoria Avenue South at Stinson Street - tunnel
- (xiii) Birch Avenue at Burlington Street East - underpass

Ward 4

(xiv) Kenilworth Avenue North at McAnulty Boulevard - underpass

- (b) That the Transportation Division budget be amended in 2025 for all costs associated with the Roadway Maintenance Underpass Cleaning Program (\$130,000); and
- (c) That the General Manager of Public Works and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

(Danko/Francis)

That sub-section (b), **be amended**, as follows:

- (b) That the **one-time funding Transportation Division budget be amended in 2025** for all costs associated with the Roadway Maintenance Underpass Cleaning Program (\$130,000 **annually**) **be funded from the respective Ward Area Discretionary Reserves budgets in 2025**; and

Result: AMENDMENT, DEFEATED by a vote of 7 to 9, as follows:

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

The Chair called the vote on the motion as presented.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 3, 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
Yes	-	Ward 6	Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7	Councillor Esther Pauls
No	-	Ward 8	Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	Ward 9	Councillor Brad Clark
No	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15	Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.10 Amendment to the Proposed 2025 Tax-Supported Budget - Unallocated Ward 2 Balance from the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF)

(Kroetsch/Nann)

WHEREAS, a motion was ratified by Council at its July 9, 2021 meeting to allocate \$30M from the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) to road projects across all wards (\$2M each);

WHEREAS, the former Ward 2 City Councillor allocated all of the \$2M for Ward 2 to road repaving projects in the Corktown neighbourhood;

WHEREAS, the Canada Community-Building Fund can be used to support a wide range of projects, not only local roads and bridges, in 17 additional areas including improvements to broadband connectivity, brownfield redevelopment, capacity-building, community energy systems, culture, drinking water, fire stations, public transit, recreation, regional and local airports, resilience, short-line rail, short-sea shipping, solid waste, sports, tourism, and wastewater;

WHEREAS, approximately \$97,415.72 remains as unallocated funding from these repaving projects in Ward 2;

WHEREAS, returning the remaining unallocated funds (\$97,415.72) represents an approximate decrease to the overall City budget of 0.008%, as each percentage increase to the overall City budget is valued at approximately \$13M; and,

WHEREAS, the City's projected budget increase for 2025 is 5.663% and reducing it by 0.008% would lower the overall increase to approximately 5.655%.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:

- (a) That Capital Project 4032111102 be closed and the remaining uncommitted funds be transferred to the Canada Community-Building Fund Reserve 112213 and applied as a funding source in 2025 on other Canada Community-Building Fund eligible capital projects currently funded through the 2025 capital levy.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 16 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
Yes	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

(1) Recess

(A. Wilson/Jackson)

That the General Issues Committee recess for 32 minutes until 1:30 p.m.

CARRIED

The General Issues Committee reconvened at 1:31 p.m.

9.11 Deferral of 2025 Budgeted Funding Related to Light Rail Transit (LRT)

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

9.12 Indefinitely Pause The Safe Apartment Buildings By-law and Additional 17 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Hires For The Renovation License and Relocation By-law

This Motion was deemed not in order and therefore was withdrawn from consideration.

**9.13(a) Removal of \$372,490 Budgeted for the Realigned Gardens Program
(PW24031(a))**

(Spadafora/Beattie)

WHEREAS, the General Issues Committee (Budget) on November 28, 2024, received a Memorandum respecting a Budget Process Update;

WHEREAS, members of Council may propose amendments to the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has supported Community Garden Programs in their current form for many years as successful volunteer-led programs, without drastic increases to project funding, enabling Hamilton residents to safely and affordably grow their own nutritious food;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:
- (i) Remove the \$372,490 budgeted for 2 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) as part of the Realigned Gardens Program (PW24031(a))

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 11 to 5, as follows:

No	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

**9.13(b) Budgeting of \$350,000 for the YMCA of Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford
Men's Residence to Re-Open the Third Floor and House 43 Individuals -
REVISED**

(Kroetsch/Spadafora)

WHEREAS, for the past 66 years, since September 14, 1959, the downtown YMCA has provided transitional housing for 173 men while

supporting individuals at risk who are facing both health and social challenges;

WHEREAS, representatives from the YMCA delegated and presented their budgetary needs of \$350,000 at the General Issues Committee (Budget) meeting on November 18, 2024, at which time they communicated the devastating impact of the fire that initially displaced their tenants from all 174 units;

WHEREAS, the third floor of the downtown YMCA remains vacant and could accommodate an additional 43 men in a transitional program including wraparound services focusing on onsite health care and addiction and mental health supports; and

WHEREAS, the creation of 43 spaces for homeless individuals will expand the City of Hamilton's supportive housing ecosystem, reduce the strain on public systems, address homelessness at its root, and build a healthier, more equitable community.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:
- (i) That the one-time costs of \$350,000 for the YMCA of Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford Men's Residence to fund Staffing, Security and Public Safety Measures, a Mental Health and Addiction Specialist, Food Security (Non-Perishables) and Resident Essentials, and Capital Repairs so as to open the third floor and house 43 men, be funded from the Ward 2 Area Rating Reserve (108052).

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 15 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
Absent	-	Ward 6 Councillor Tom Jackson
Yes	-	Ward 7 Councillor Esther Pauls
Yes	-	Ward 8 Councillor J. P. Danko
Yes	-	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

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Yes - Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.14 Removal of Senior Level Leadership Mental Health Position from the 2025 Proposed Tax Budget

Councillor Beattie withdrew the Motion from consideration.

9.15 Removal of Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan (PED21065(d) / PW24040) From the 2025 Budget

(Beattie/Spadafora)

WHEREAS, the General Issues Committee (Budget) on November 28, 2024, received a Memorandum respecting a Budget Process Update;

WHEREAS, members of Council may propose amendments to the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget;

WHEREAS, Council recently declared an affordability crisis in the City of Hamilton;

WHEREAS, a distinction has been made during this 2025 budget process of recognizing needs versus wants, similar to a household's fiscal responsibility;

WHEREAS, the Biodiversity Action Plan, approved in 2024, is an enhancement to the City of Hamilton's core service delivery mandate, including but not limited to parks, roads, water and wastewater, recreation and emergency services;

WHEREAS, the full implementation – in 2025 - of components of the Action Plan may not have the same material impact on residents as the above stated services;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:

- (a) That 2025 Council referred item of Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan (PED21065(d) / PW24040) be removed from the 2025 Proposed Tax Supported Budget, resulting in a net operating budget savings of \$560,000; and,
- (b) That the four FTE's associated with 2025 Council referred item of Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan (PED21065(d) / PW24040) be removed.

Result: MOTION, DEFEATED by a vote of 7 to 9, as follows:

No	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
No	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
No	-	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
No	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
No	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.16 Removal of PED 21065(d) Biodiversity Action Plan - Sr. Planner From the 2025 Budget

(Beattie/Spadafora)

WHEREAS, the General Issues Committee (Budget) on November 28, 2024, received a Memorandum respecting a Budget Process Update;

WHEREAS, members of Council may propose amendments to the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget;

WHEREAS, Council recently declared an affordability crisis in the City of Hamilton;

WHEREAS, a distinction has been made during this 2025 budget process of recognizing needs versus wants, similar to a household's fiscal responsibility;

WHEREAS, the Biodiversity Action Plan, approved in 2024, is an enhancement to the City of Hamilton's core service delivery mandate, including but not limited to parks, roads, water and wastewater, recreation and emergency services;

WHEREAS, the full implementation – in 2025 - of components of the Action Plan may not have the same material impact on residents as the above stated services;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:

- (a) That 2025 Council referred item PED 21065(d) Biodiversity Action Plan - Sr. Planner be removed from the 2025 Proposed Tax Supported Budget, resulting in a net operating budget savings of \$128,860; and,
- (b) That staff from the Planning and Economic and Development Department in the Planning Division assist in the interim to facilitate the development of the Biodiversity Action Plan governance model and other administrative and communications duties related to implantation of the plan.

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

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
No	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
No	-	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
No	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
No	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.17 Reduction of Consultant Fee Amounts

(Tadeson/Kroetsch)

WHEREAS, the General Issues Committee (Budget) on November 28, 2024, received a Memorandum respecting a Budget Process Update;

WHEREAS, residential taxpayers are looking at a potential 5.7% increase in their property taxes;

WHEREAS, council has declared an affordability crisis;

WHEREAS, fiscal responsibility is a priority for the municipality, and every expenditure should be evaluated for its impact on taxpayers;

WHEREAS, in accordance with Council's motion on January 30, 2024 Budget General Issues Committee reflecting "Attaining Efficiencies Through the Review of the Use of Consultants" and subsequent report (FCS24033) (City Wide) the next steps for staff was to focus on a comprehensive evaluation aimed at identifying long-term, cost-saving opportunities;

WHEREAS, results were to be included in 2025 and subsequent year's budget materials;

WHEREAS, a detailed review of the list of projects that have historically relied on external consultants, particularly, those under the Tax Capital and Rate funded categories and the specific expertise that these projects demand is still outstanding; and,

WHEREAS, the 2025 Net Levy Summary indicated a proposed 2025 Budget of \$1,824,719 for consulting;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:

That all departments (responsible for the total costs of proposed consulting fees totaling \$1,824,719 in the 2025 Net Levy Summary) reduce their budget for consulting fees a further 8% resulting in a decrease of further \$145,977 and new total of \$1,678,742 for consulting fees for the 2025 Proposed Tax Supported Budget.

After some discussion, Councillor M. Tadeson withdrew the motion in order to obtain additional information from staff.

9.18 Flamborough Reserve (108032) Contribution to the City Enrichment Fund

(McMeekin/Jackson)

WHEREAS, the City Enrichment Fund (CEF) is a program that's been making a measurable difference in our community;

WHEREAS, in 2022, Council directed an 8% annual increase to the CEF, toward a target value of just over \$9.6 million by 2028;

WHEREAS, the 2025 Proposed Tax Budget reflects a Council Referred Item (CRI), item 11, proposing an increase of \$568,110 in levy funding to the overall City Enrichment Fund (CEF);

WHEREAS, any year-end Flamborough slot revenue surpluses are transferred to the Flamborough Reserve;

WHEREAS, the Flamborough Reserve has a balance of approximately \$1,000,000; and,

WHEREAS, the City has adopted a multi-year reserve strategy to address affordability challenges, as per the Mayor's 2025 Budget Directive;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the 2025 proposed City Enrichment Funding increase of \$568,110 be funded accordingly, \$335,000 from the Flamborough Reserve and the balance of \$233,100 from the levy, and
- (b) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

After some discussion, Councillor T. McMeekin withdrew the motion.

9.19 Reduction of Staffing to Support Public Engagement

(Francis/Spadafora)

WHEREAS, residential taxpayers are looking at a potential 5.7% increase in their property taxes;

WHEREAS, council has declared an affordability crisis;

WHEREAS, the threat of looming US tariffs will create an economic recession in Canada and will have a billion dollar impact on Hamilton's local economy that could impact thousands of jobs;

WHEREAS, fiscal responsibility is a priority for the municipality, and every expenditure should be evaluated for its impact on taxpayers;

WHEREAS, 2 FTEs were referred to the 2025 Tax budget to support Public Engagement (CMO), with a net levy impact of \$235,969; and,

WHEREAS, the current Public Engagement staffing compliment amounts to 5 FTE's and the Communications staffing compliment amounts to 28 FTE's;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, as follows:

- (a) That the Council Referred Item, Staffing to Support Public Engagement, representing a 2025 net levy impact of \$235,969 and 2 FTEs be removed from the 2025 Proposed Tax Budget.

Result: MOTION, CARRIED by a vote of 13 to 3, as follows:

Yes	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
Yes	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
Yes	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
Yes	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.20 Removal of 2025 Capital Funding for Expedited Bike Lanes

Councillor Francis withdrew this Motion from consideration.

9.21 Removal of Funding for the Poet in Place Pilot Program

(Francis/Jackson)

WHEREAS, residential taxpayers are looking at a potential 5.7% increase in their property taxes;

WHEREAS, council has declared an affordability crisis;

WHEREAS, the threat of looming US tariffs will create an economic recession in Canada and will have a billion dollar impact on Hamilton's local economy that could impact thousands of jobs;

WHEREAS, fiscal responsibility is a priority for the municipality, and every expenditure should be evaluated for its impact on taxpayers;

Whereas the Poet in Place pilot program is funded at \$25,000 per annum allocated from the Culture Strategic Priorities Capital Project;

WHEREAS, \$10,000 per year is designated as an honorarium for the Poet in Place, while \$15,000 per year is allocated for program-related expenses;

WHEREAS, these funds could be redirected to provide tax relief to residents by applying the savings directly to the tax levy; and,

WHEREAS, the municipality should prioritize essential services and initiatives that provide the greatest benefit to the community as a whole;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, be amended, as follows:

- (a) That the \$25,000 allocated for the Poet in Place be removed from the 2025 Proposed Tax Budget; and,
- (b) That the \$25,000 in related funding be moved to the unallocated Capital Reserve for the purpose of funding infrastructure projects such as roads, sidewalks, and parks.

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

No	-	Mayor Andrea Horwath
No	-	Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson
No	-	Ward 2 Councillor Cameron Kroetsch
No	-	Ward 3 Councillor Nrinder Nann
No	-	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
Yes	-	Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark
Yes	-	Ward 10 Councillor Jeff Beattie
Yes	-	Ward 11 Councillor Mark Tadeson
No	-	Ward 12 Councillor Craig Cassar
No	-	Ward 13 Councillor Alex Wilson
Yes	-	Ward 14 Councillor Mike Spadafora
No	-	Ward 15 Councillor Ted McMeekin

9.22 Lowering of the Contingency Funds for Levy Supported Public Works Projects

(Tadeson/Beattie)

WHEREAS, the General Issues Committee (Budget) on November 28, 2024, received a Memorandum respecting a Budget Process Update;

WHEREAS, residential taxpayers are looking at a potential 5.7% increase in their property taxes;

WHEREAS, council has declared an affordability crisis;

WHEREAS, the threat of looming US tariffs will create an economic recession in Canada and will have a billion dollar impact on Hamilton's local economy that could impact thousands of jobs;

WHEREAS, fiscal responsibility is a priority for the municipality, and every expenditure should be evaluated for its impact on taxpayers;

WHEREAS, the Directors and Project Managers in Public Works have set budgets for the completion of tax funded Public Works Projects with contingencies funds allowing for unforeseen setbacks totaling between 10-12%; and,

WHEREAS, the majority of projects will come in below the set budget allotted and those funds will be directed towards reserve funds for future use.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Proposed 2025 Tax Supported Budget, be amended, as follows:

- (a) That applicable tax funded 'Public Works Projects' reduce their budget totals by 2% and work within a budget for said projects with an 8 -10% contingency.

After some discussion, Councillor M. Tadeson withdrew the motion.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

11. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

There were no Private & Confidential Items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the General Issues Committee (Budget) adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Trennum
City Clerk

Councillor Maureen Wilson
Chair, General Issues Committee (Budget)

Submitted on Mon, 01/13/2025 - 15:03

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
Jodi Formosi

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
I would like to address Council about public theft and safety concerns that are ongoing.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Wed, 02/05/2025 - 09:50

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
Tim Potocic
Sonic Unyon Records
200 Caroline St. N.
Hamilton, ON. L8R0A6
tim@sonicunyon.com

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
Providing an update on Because Beer Craft Beer Festival's audience data and economic impact, and speaking to City support

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Wed, 02/05/2025 - 09:49

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
Tim Potocic
Supercrawl Productions
200 Caroline St. N.
Hamilton, ON. L8R 0A6
tim@sonicunyon.com

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
Providing an update on Supercrawl's audience data and economic impact, and speaking to City support

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Fri, 02/07/2025 - 13:24

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
Tenysha Graham

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
I would like to speak to support the motions brought forward by Brad Clark regarding GFL and share my perspective as a community member.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
General Issues Committee

Date: February 26, 2025

Report No: HSC23029(a)

Subject/Title: 2023 Access to Housing Centralized Waitlist Update

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- 1) Report HSC23029(a) respecting the 2023 Access to Housing Centralized Waitlist Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- Report HSC23029(a) provides annual comparative information on the applicants housed through the Access to Housing Centralized Waitlist for the 2023 year-end and is an update to HSC23029.
- The City of Hamilton's Centralized Waitlist is a provincially mandated list for individuals who require Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance and alternate housing assistance.
- The Housing Services Act, 2011 lays out the rules governing these forms of assistance.

Financial Considerations

There are no budget impacts or costs associated with this report/recommendation.

Background

Not applicable.

Analysis

Table one (1) reports the number of households on the Centralized Waitlist as of December 31 of the years 2018 to 2023. In 2023, the number of households on the waitlist stood at 6,258. This number is relatively stable over the six-year period reported below. The decrease in 2021 can be attributed to data clean up that was done in preparation for the migration of data to a new software system. It is important to note that the actual number of waiting households is larger owing to a backlog in inputting applications. The backlog is due to staffing shortages, demands on staff relating to rent-up of new buildings and an increase in new applications. Of the total number of households on the Centralized Waitlist, 1,217 were currently living in an Rent-Geared-to-Income unit and waiting for a transfer to another unit.

Table 1 - Access to Housing Centralized Waitlist - as of December 31 by Year

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# total households	6,704	6,231	6,647	5,716	6,110	6,258
# households living in Rent-Geared-to-Income unit	1,166	1,113	1,089	916	930	1,217
# households not living in Rent-Geared-to-Income unit	5,538	5,118	5,558	4,800	5,180	5,041
# of households housed in Rent-Geared-to-Income unit	508	469	416	412	653	657
# of households housed with a Canada Ontario Housing Benefit		126	246	129	429	359
# total households housed from Centralized Waitlist	508	595	662	541	1,082	1,016
% of households housed	7%	9%	9%	9%	15%	14%

The number of households housed in a Rent-Geared-to-Income unit in 2023 was 657. This is the largest number housed since 2018 and a significant increase from 2020 and 2021. The percentage of households housed is calculated based on the total number of annual applications which combines both the number of households currently active on the waitlist and those who have been housed. The increase in households housed can likely be attributed to buildings that opened in 2023 including CityHousing Hamilton's

projects at 8 Roxanne Ave., 35 Arkledun Ave and CHH continued efforts to house waitlist applicants in vacant units. The implementation of the 'one-offer/one-refusal' rule which requires waitlist applicants to accept the first offer of subsidized housing for a unit in a housing location they selected facilitated more households to accept a housing offer.

The number of households housed with a Canada Ontario Housing Benefit was higher in 2022 than in 2023 because the province issued Hamilton additional funding beyond the original amount from underspent allocations from other municipalities.

Between 2018 and 2021, the number of units offered declined for a variety of reasons. One of the most significant is the number of households that opt to remain in a social housing unit even when they no longer qualify for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance. This is still experienced today by many housing providers who are unable to meet their Rent-Geared-to-Income targets. This decision is likely driven by the increasingly high prices in the private rental market. The reduction also relates to fewer units being available due to redevelopment as well as units being offline due to long term repairs. However, CityHousing Hamilton is currently using Council approved funding to support the \$5.7 M cost to repair and rent 476 vacant units by the end of 2024.

Most of the households housed in 2023 have Special Priority Status, Urgent or Homeless status. Special Priority Status is a provincially mandated priority for victims of human trafficking or family violence, where the applicant intends to permanently separate from an abusive family member with whom they are residing. The chronological applicants housed were primarily seniors because of the large number of buildings with senior mandates. To manage the application backlog, Access to Housing staff have prioritized the assessment of Priority applications and seniors. These applications are entered in real time and are not a part of the current backlog. This backlog will have no effect on an applicant's ability to access social housing. The Access to Housing staff continue focused efforts on the backlog to prioritize customer service.

Alternatives

Not applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Priority 3: Responsiveness & Transparency

- Prioritize customer service and proactive communication.

Previous Reports Submitted

- [2022 Access to Housing Update](#) (HSC23029)

Consultation

Not applicable.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Not applicable.

Prepared by: Tammy Morasse, Senior Project Manager & Pilar Homerston,
Social Housing Manager, Housing Services, Healthy and Safe
Communities

Submitted and

recommended by: Michelle Baird, Director, Housing Services, Healthy and Safe
Communities



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
 General Issues Committee
Date: February 26, 2025
Report No: HSC23016(a)
Subject/Title: 2023 Social Housing Annual Update
Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- 1) That Report HSC23016(a) respecting the 2023 Social Housing Annual Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.
- 2) Appendix "C" attached to Report HSC23016(a) remain confidential.

Key Facts

- Report HSC23016(a) provides an update on Social Housing in the City of Hamilton, including funding, key performance indicators, and property by-law violations based on 2023 data.
- The City of Hamilton continues to meet all Service Level Standards except rent-geared-to-income units for tenants at or below the Household Income Limit threshold.
- Most property complaints reported against landlords providing rent subsidies did not result in a by-law violation.

Financial Considerations

There are no budget impacts or costs associated with this report/recommendation(s).

Background

This 2023 Social Housing Update Report includes information on funding, key performance indicators, and data for by-law violations issued to Housing Providers in receipt of rent subsidies and is the second social housing annual report to Council.

In Report HSC23016(a), metrics and key performance indicators are derived from data collected for the 2023 Service Manager Annual Information Return Report. 2022 CityHousing Hamilton data was used to inform the 2023 Service Manager Annual Information Return Report.

In follow-up to a recommendation in Report HSC24009 *Contractual Obligations and Substandard Tenant Conditions*, Housing Services and Licensing and By-law Services staff were directed to develop a process to review and respond to property standard violations as they related to rent subsidy units, with the results reported annually in the Social Housing Update Report.

Analysis

Social Housing Provider Update

In 2023, there were 37 unique housing providers in Hamilton, three fewer than what was reported in 2022. At the end of 2023, Taras Shevchenko transferred their provincial project, 194 Gage, to Good Shepherd Homes. Taras' federal project, 190 Gage, also left the Community Housing Portfolio at the end of April 2023. This project had 34 units, ten (10) of which had previously been rent-geared-to-income. In 2023, Rambynas, a federal project, was incorporated into the social housing stock through an agreement with Hamilton East Kiwanis. This transfer added three (3) rent-geared-to-income units to the social housing portfolio. The third housing provider, Howell Non-Profit Homes, while no longer funded or providing rent-geared-to-income units, is still part of the community housing profile and remains listed under the Housing Services Act. Attempts to re-engage Howell continue however, as a federal housing provider, Howell is not bound to the same terms as provincial housing providers. A full list of current housing providers who were funded in 2023 appears in Appendix "A" attached to Report HSC23016(a).

Service Manager Funding for Social Housing

Funding to housing providers is reported to the Province annually. As Service Manager, the City is required by the *Housing Services Act, 2011* to fund legacy Social Housing providers according to legislated formulas. While not required legislatively, one-time funding is provided to support the operation and affordability of the units for capital repairs and Building Condition Assessments.

HSC23016(a) 2023 Social Housing Annual Update
Page 3 of 7

Table 1 – Social Housing Investments

	One Time Subsidy	Ongoing Subsidy	Total
2022	\$2,629,361.01	\$48,328,152	\$50,957,513
2023	\$5,033,407	\$49,631,763	\$54,665,169

Table 1 outlines Hamilton’s expenditures in Social Housing as reported in the Service Manager Annual Information Return for both 2022 and 2023. In 2023, \$54,665,169 was spent overall on social housing of which \$5,033,407 was one-time capital grants and the balance of \$49,613,763 was ongoing funding. The one-time subsidy increases from 2022 to 2023 as a result of increased provincial and municipal funding. Most of the funding for ongoing subsidy came from the municipal tax levy with only \$11,348,866 in federal funding.

Metrics & Key Performance Indicators

Service Level Standards (SLS) are used by the province as a key accountability measure for oversight of Social Housing. For a unit to count toward the Standard, its rent must be geared-to-income, households must be eligible for rent-geared-to-income and households must be selected in accordance with provincial priorities and rules.

The City reports performance against the Service Level Standard annually to the province in its Service Manager Annual Information Return. The data is gathered from housing providers. Service Levels are reported under the following categories: households at or below the Household Income Limits, High Needs Households and Modified Units. Household Income Limits represent the maximum income a household may have to qualify for Rent Geared to Income in a particular size unit. High Need threshold is a subset of the Household Income Limits, representing households at the lowest income bracket. These limits are set annually by the province.

Table 2 outlines the number of units that the City is legislated to provide and the total number of units provided in 2022 compared to 2023.

Table 2 City of Hamilton Legislated Service Level Standards

# of households	Legislated	2022 SMAIR	2023 SMAIR
At or below the Household Income Limit (HIL) threshold	9,527	7,606	7572
High Need (HNH) threshold	5,174	6,548	6530
Modified (accessible) units	322	502	481

While not legislated, the Service Manager Annual Information Return also tracks the number of households requiring support services. 189 households were receiving support services in 2023 compared to 199 in 2022.

Based on this 2023 Report there were a total of 11,621 social housing units, representing a mix of rent-geared-to-income, market, and vacant units.

Table 3 City of Hamilton Maximum Income Limits for Rent-Geared-to-Income for 2023

	Bachelor unit (\$)	1-bedroom unit (\$)	2-bedroom unit (\$)	3-bedroom unit (\$)	4-bedroom unit or larger (\$)
Household Income Limits	34,000	44,000	52,000	59,500	74,500
High Need Households	20,400	26,400	31,200	35,700	44,700

Part of the challenge in meeting Service Level Standards relates to the large number of households remaining in social housing once they are no longer eligible, as well as a large number of units vacant for redevelopment or long-term repair. Once a household no longer qualifies for rent-geared-to-income assistance, they may continue to occupy the rent-geared-to-income unit if they pay market rent. The number of rent-geared-to-income households with incomes above the Household Income Limits increased from 294 in 2022 to 406 in 2023.

Vacant Units

As Service Manager, the City of Hamilton monitors vacancy rates across the social housing portfolio and works with our housing providers to address chronic vacancies. The 2022 Social Housing Update report highlighted that the bulk of vacancies reported were due to CityHousing Hamilton units being off-line. In April 2023 CityHousing Hamilton adopted its current Vacancy Management and Reset Plan which committed \$5.7 million to repair 467 units of housing. As of December 31, 2023, CityHousing Hamilton had fully completed 51% or 243 units. CityHousing Hamilton reported being on track to meet their commitment achieving a 2% vacancy rate by December 2024. As Service Manager, we continue to work with CityHousing Hamilton to ensure that vacancies are addressed.

While there is no single industry standard, 2 – 3% is generally considered a reasonable vacancy rate depending on the size and type of provider. In 2023 there were 133 vacancies for non-CityHousing Hamilton Social Housing units, representing a vacancy rate of 2.8% compared to 165 vacancies in non-CityHousing Hamilton Social Housing units reported in December 2022, representing a vacancy rate of 3.3%.

New Units

Two new buildings with a total of 176 units were added to the Community Housing Portfolio in 2023: 8 Roxanne and 35 Arkledun Avenue. CityHousing Hamilton developed 8 Roxanne with 103 units, 62% of which are deeply affordable rent geared-to-income and 38% moderately affordable 'half-market' rent. Dorothy Day Place, a five-story building at 35 Arkledun Avenue run by Good Shepherd, has 73 supportive housing units.

Provider	Address	Replacement Rent-Geared-to-Income Units	New rent-geared-to-income /rent supplement units	Market Units	Total
CityHousing Hamilton	8 Roxanne	73	0	30	103
Good Shepherd	35 Arkledun Avenue	0	73	0	73

Rent Subsidy Units & Work Orders/Violations

A list of social housing addresses in the City of Hamilton was provided to Licensing and By-law Services to cross-reference with property violation data. In total, from January until December 2023, of the 1790 social housing addresses receiving rent subsidies, 145, or approximately 8% of addresses, had received a property violation notification. Of these, 101 were in compliance of the work order received and 42 were either in non or partial compliance and were having the work ordered carried out through contractors. One additional project was in the process of being investigated. There were also 322 occurrences (and three cancelations) where no violation was found to have occurred, i.e., either no violation was determined at the time the officer attended or compliance was met prior to the issuance of an order. Charts detailing violations & investigations, count and compliance can be found in Appendix "B" attached to Report HSC23016(a). A list of social housing addresses, including ward information and violation type can be found in confidential Appendix "C" attached to Report HSC23016(a).

Licensing and By-law Services will continue to follow-up on by-law violations and provide yearly data to Social Housing with respect to units in receipt of rent subsidies. In turn, Social Housing will analyse and report back to Council on property order violations in the annual social housing update report. Based on one year of data, the majority of property complaints (69%) were determined not to be violations, and of the complaints that were violations, Housing Providers had a high rate of complying and carrying out the work orders. The City of Hamilton agreements allow for Service Managers to take action through remedies with Housing Providers who do not action work order violations.

Alternatives

Not applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Priority 2: Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods

- Preservation and expansion of affordable rental housing

Previous Reports Submitted

- [2022 Social Housing Annual Update](#) (HSC23016)
- [Contractual Obligations and Substandard Tenant Conditions](#) (HSC24009)

Consultation

The following internal divisions were consulted and are supportive of the information presented in this report:

Heather Snider, Financial Coordinator, Housing Services/ Corporate Services Department, Financial Planning Administration and Policy Division

Tamara Reid, Manager - Enforcement, Planning and Economic Development Department, Licensing & By-law Services Division.

Stefanie Wiebe, Project Manager Licensing and Bylaw Services, Planning and Economic Development Department, Licensing & By-law Services Division.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: 2023 List of Social Housing Providers

Appendix B: Chart Summaries of By-law Violations

Appendix C: CONFIDENTIAL Appendix "C" to Report HSC23016(a) - 2023 Social Housing Annual Update

Confidential Appendix C is private & confidential in accordance with Section 239(2)(b) of the Municipal Act 2001 as it contains personal matters about an identifiable individual, including City or local board employees;

Prepared by:

Elissa Press, Senior Policy Analyst & Pilar Homerston, Social Housing Manager, Housing Services, Healthy and Safe Communities

Submitted and

recommended by:

Michelle Baird, Director, Housing Services, Healthy and Safe
Communities

Appendix "A" to Report HSC23016(a)
Page 1 of 1

2023 Social Housing Providers funded by the City of Hamilton are listed below:

Ancaster Village Non-Profit Homes
Andes Heritage Co-operative
Artaban Non-Profit Homes
CityHousing Hamilton
Corktown Co-operative Homes
Eaton Place (Flamborough) Inc.
Ebony Group Community Homes of Hamilton
Good Shepherd Non-profit Homes Inc.
Halam Park Housing Co-operative Inc.
Hamilton Baptist Non-profit Homes Corporation
Hamilton Senior's Citizens
Hamilton East Kiwanis Non Profit Homes Inc.
Hamilton Jewish Homes
Heritage Green Senior Centre
Indwell Community Homes
ITCA Community Involvement Inc.
Lions Freelon Villa Non-Profit Housing
LIUNA (Hamilton) Association
Local 1005
Los Andes of Hamilton Co-operative Inc.
McGivney Community Homes Inc.
McMaster Community Homes
Meridian Co-operative Homes Inc.
Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services
Ryerson
Sacajawea Native Non-Profit Housing, Inc.
Slovenian Society of St Joseph
Sons of Italy
Southern Lights Co-operative
Stoneworth Co-operative
Stoney Creek Community Homes
Tabby Town Urban Co-op
The Ukrainian Villa
Township of Glanbrook Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Victoria Park Community Homes
Wesley Community Homes Inc.
Women's Community Co-op

Appendix “B” to Report HSC23016(a)
Page 1 of 3

Chart A – Violation Type, Count and Compliance

Violation Type	Count	Compliance	2023 investigations
Garbage/debris- private property- By-law 10-118	58	Complied- 31 Carry out work- 26 Blank -1	33
Heat-By-Law 04-091	1	Complied – 1	1
Hedge Obstructing Sightlines of Vehicles on Road By-Law-10 - 142	1	Complied- 1	1
Inoperable Vehicles – Private Property- By-Law 10-118	1	Carry Out Work-1	
Long Grass/Weeds- Private Property- By-Law 10-118	10	Complied- 4 Carry Out Work- 6	5
Long Grass/Weeds & Garbage Debris- Private Property- By-Law 10-118	18	Complied- 11 Carry Out Work- 7	10
Noise-By-Law 11-285	4	Complied - 4	3
Property Standards-By-Law 23-162*	35	Complied- 32 Carry Out Work- 2 Blank – 1	12
Property Standards (Public Health) (By-law 23-162)	1	Complied - 1	1
Property Standards (Tree) (By-law 23-162)	1	Complied-1	1
Property Standards 10-221-Tree	4	Complied- 4	1
Property Standards [10-221]	1	Complied-1	-
Signs-Election-By-Law 10-197	1	Complied-1	1
Snow & Ice on Sidewalks – Enforcement – By-Law 03-296	7	Complied-7	6
Tenants- Property Standards [10-221]	1	Complied- 1	-
Zoning-By-Law 05-200	1	Complied- 1	-
Total	145	Carry out work- 42 Complied- 101 Blank- 2	75

*Property Standards By-law 10-221 was repealed September 2023 and is now Property Standards By-law 23-162. Violations for property standards 10-221 and 23-162 merged in charts.

Appendix "B" to Report HSC23016(a)

Page 2 of 3

Chart B – No Violation, Count, and Investigations

Complaint No Violation	Count	2023 Investigations
Dumping – Private Property- By-Law 10-118	13	5
Establishment Licence-By-Law 07-170	1	1
Fence By-Law – By-Law 10-142	1	1
Fireworks-By-Law 02-285	1	1
Garbage/Debris – Private Property – By-Law 10-118	55	36
Heat-By-Law 04-091	16	3
Hedge Obstructing Pedestrian Traffic on Sidewalk – By-Law 10-142	1	-
Infill 15-091 Installation of Equipment on Roads	1	-
Infill 86-077	1	1
Inoperable Vehicles – Private Property- By-Law 10-118	2	1
Long grass/weeds – Private Property- By-Law 10-118	13	12
Long Grass/Weeds & Garbage Debris-Private Property- By-Law 10-118	5	3
Noise-By-Law 11-284	1	-
Noise-By-Law 11-285	70 Cancelled – 1	43
Property Standards-By-Law 23-162*	74 Cancelled-1	37
Property Standards (Public Health) (By-law 23-162) **specific to pests	4	2
Property Standards (Tree) (By-law 23-162)	3 Cancelled-1	4
Property Standards 10-221-Tree	8	4
Signs – Mobile- By-Law 10-197	1	-
Snow & Ice – Private Walkways/Stairs-By-Law 10-118	2	-
Snow & Ice on Sidewalks – Enforcement-By-Law 03-296	21	15
Streets By-Law-By-Law 86-77	7	3
Tenants- LGW &GD [10-118]	1	1
Tenants- Property Standards [10-221]	9	2
Tenants- Vital Services [09-190] – No Gas	1	1
Zoning-By-Law 05-200	10	5
Total	322 (+ 3 cancelled)	180

Appendix “B” to Report HSC23016(a)
Page 3 of 3

Chart C – Violations Under Investigation and Count


Violation – Under Investigation/Investigating	Count	Investigation
Property Standards-By-Law 23-162	1	1
Vacant Building Registry By-Law 17-127	1 (unregistered vacant)	
Total	2	1

Chart D- Violations by Ward

Ward	# of subsidized addresses	# of RGI social housing addresses	Total # of violations	# of RGI social housing violations	Total # violations in compliance	# RGI social housing violations in compliance	Total # of work orders carried out	Total # of RGI work orders carried out	Total # of unique addresses for work orders
1	62	29	7	1	7	1	0	0	N/A
2	269	42	14	3	10	2	4	1	3
3	296	238	32	27	13	12	19	15	9
4	396	331	32	25	18	14	14	11	11
5	85	15	13	1	13	1	0	0	N/A
6	161	111	15	8	14	7	1	1	1
7	255	223	11	9	9	7	2	2	2
8	62	41	5	5	5	5	0	0	N/A
9	56	46	9	6	7	4	2	2	1
10	7	3	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A
11	3	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A
12	3	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A
13	14	5	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A
14	27	10	1	1	1	1	0	0	N/A
15	1	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A



CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Economic Development Division

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 26, 2025
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206 King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 2
PREPARED BY:	Carlo Gorni (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2359
SUBMITTED BY:	Norm Schleeahn Director, Economic Development Planning and Economic Development
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That a Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application submitted by Radio Arts G.P. Inc. (King Stuart Developments Inc., Innisbrook Management Corporation, Tsurt Holdings Inc.), for the property at 206 King Street West, Hamilton, estimated to total \$646,555 over a maximum of four years based on the incremental tax increase attributable to the redevelopment of 206 King Street West, Hamilton, be authorized and approved in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program;
- (b) That the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department be authorized and directed to execute a Grant Agreement together with any ancillary documentation required, to give effect to the Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant for Radio Arts G.P. Inc. (King Stuart Developments Inc., Innisbrook Management Corporation, Tsurt Holdings Inc.) for the property at 206 King Street West, Hamilton, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;
- (c) That the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department be authorized and directed to administer the Grant and Grant Agreement including, but not limited to, deciding on actions to take in respect of

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2) - Page 2 of 3**

events of default and executing any Grant Amending Agreements, together with any ancillary amending documentation, if required, provided that the terms and conditions of the Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program, as approved by City Council, are maintained and that any applicable Grant Amending Agreements are undertaken in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program (the Program) Application for the redevelopment of the property at 206 King Street West, Hamilton (the Property) was submitted by Radio Arts G.P. Inc. (King Stuart Developments Inc., Innisbrook Management Corporation, Tsurt Holdings Inc.), (the Applicant), the owner of the Property.

The development involves the construction of a 13-storey building with 122 residential condominium units and 138 square meters of new commercial space. There will be 37 parking units.

Prior to redevelopment, the Property had been a vacant lot following a fire which resulted in the demolition of the remains of a commercial building.

Construction costs are estimated at \$32,842,000. The assessed value of the Property is estimated to increase from its preconstruction value of \$1,349,000 to \$22,613,000.

This will increase total annual property taxes generated by the property. The municipal share of this property tax increase (municipal tax increment) will be approximately \$258,622 of which 100% would be granted to the owner during year one, 75% or approximately \$193,966 in year two, 50% or approximately \$129,311 in year three and 25% or approximately \$64,656 in year four. The estimated total value of the Grant is approximately \$646,555. Note that each year's Grant payment is calculated based on the actual tax increment realized annually.

The previous and now current use of the Property post-redevelopment are shown below for each building:

**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2) - Page 3 of 4**

Pre-Construction Photo



Source: Google Street View

Post Construction Rendering



Source: Radio Arts G.P. Inc.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 8

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The City will collect full property taxes on the property and, in turn, provide a Grant for four years, declining each year after the first year by 25%, based on the increase in the municipal portion of the taxes, post-redevelopment completion of 206 King Street West, Hamilton. Following year one (1) of the Grant Payment, the City will start to realize the positive results of the

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**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2) - Page 4 of 5**

Program from a financial perspective. Based on the projected figures, the estimated tax increment over four years' totals \$1,034,488, of which the Applicant would receive a Grant totalling approximately \$646,555 and the City retaining taxes totalling approximately \$387,933.

Staffing: Applications and Grant payments under the Program are administered by staff from the Economic Development Division, Planning and Economic Development Department and the Financial Planning, Administration and Policy Section of the Corporate Services Department.

There are no additional staffing requirements arising from this Report's recommendations.

Legal: The Program is authorized by the Revitalizing Hamilton's Commercial Districts Community Improvement Plan which was last comprehensively reviewed and approved by City Council on September 29, 2021 via By-law No. 21-164.

The Applicant will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement prior to Grant payment which will specify the obligations of the City and the Applicant and will be prepared in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

As projects move forward, it is sometimes necessary to amend previously approved Grant Agreements and any ancillary documentation. Therefore, staff are recommending that the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development be authorized to amend Grant Agreements and any ancillary documentation, provided that the terms and conditions of the Program are maintained.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Program is intended to incentivize property owners located in Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns, Business Improvement Areas, the Mount Hope/Airport Gateway, and to properties designated under Part IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* to develop, redevelop or otherwise improve properties and/or buildings in a manner that will support the broader revitalization of these districts as well as generate new municipal property tax revenue through increased property assessments.

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**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2) - Page 5 of 6**

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Urban Hamilton Official Plan

The subject lands are municipally known as 206 King Street West, Hamilton and are identified as a Node on Schedule “E” – Urban Structure, and designated as “Downtown Mixed Use Area” on Schedule “E-1” – Urban Land Use Designations of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. The subject lands are also located in the Downtown Hamilton Secondary Plan and designated “Downtown Mixed Use” with a Pedestrian Focus overlay. These designations promote a balanced mix of uses, including residential uses, at a scale that supports the development of a vibrant downtown.

Zoning By-law No. 05-200

The subject lands are zoned “Downtown Mixed Use – Pedestrian Focus (D2)” with a site specific exception “731”, within the City of Hamilton’s Zoning By-law 05-200. This site specific exemption was passed through a zoning by-law amendment in 2021 and permits modifications to the D2 zone (e.g. height, setbacks and parking). The D2 Zone is found throughout the Secondary Plan area and permit a range of uses including retail, commercial and residential uses in a pedestrian and transit supportive built form intended to create vibrant areas with active street levels.

The planned use of the site is permitted.

Site Plan Control

The Site is subject to Site Plan Control. The development has received Site Plan approval (DA-21--156).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff from Financial Services, Taxation and Legal Services Divisions of the Corporate Services Department were consulted, and the advice received incorporated in this Report.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Property is located within the Downtown Hamilton Community Improvement Project Area required for eligibility under the Program as established via By-law 21-163. The redevelopment of the Property, which previously served as a vacant lot meets the Program’s intent for eligibility by supporting the following key City objectives:

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**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
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- Reducing the need for greenfield or agricultural lands to accommodate future growth by directing development to under-utilized/vacant properties in the urban area;
- Efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure and reducing related costs to the City;
- Supporting the achievement of Provincial/City residential unit/jobs density targets;
- Maintaining and growing resident populations/jobs in commercial districts to support existing and new commercial businesses;
- Supporting population/employment concentrations that better utilize existing transit and support new demand and investment in higher-order forms of transit; and,
- Enabling new economic development opportunities.

The following is an overview of pre and post development Property assessments and associated taxes which have informed the estimated Grant contained in this Report:

Grant Level:	100%	
Total Eligible Costs (Maximum)	\$32,842,000	
Total Pre-Project CVA: CX Vacant Commercial Land	\$1,349,000	
Total	\$1,349,000	Year: 2023
Pre-Project Property Taxes:		
Municipal Levy	\$31,372	
Education Levy	<u>\$11,881</u>	
Pre-Project Property Taxes	\$43,253	
Estimated Post-Project CVA:		
NT New Residential	\$22,404,000	Year: To be determined
CT Commercial	<u>\$209,000</u>	
Total	<u>\$22,613,000</u>	
**Estimated Year 1 Municipal Levy	\$289,994	
**Estimated Education Levy	<u>\$36,117</u>	

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**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
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**Estimated Total Post-Project Property Taxes	\$326,111	
--	------------------	--

Provisions for Calculations:

- 1) The actual roll number(s), assessed value(s), tax classification(s) and value partitioning (where applicable) are to be determined by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation;
- 2) As per Program requirement, the increase in realty taxes is based on the year in which Building Permit that initiated the above grade construction of the development was issued;
- 3) 2024 tax rates have been used for calculation of the estimated post-development property taxes;
- 4) Annual taxes exclude any Local Charges; and,
- 5) All dollar figures rounded.

Estimated Grant Payments

The estimated Grant Payments under the terms of the Program are provided below and based on the following municipal property tax increment calculation:

Pre-project Municipal Taxes = Municipal Levy = \$31,372
 Estimated Post Project Municipal Taxes = Municipal Levy = \$289,994
 Municipal Tax Increment = \$289,994 - \$31,372 = \$258,622

Year	Grant Factor	Tax Increment	Grant
1	100%	\$258,622	\$258,622
2	75%	\$258,622	\$193,966
3	50%	\$258,622	\$129,311
4	25%	\$258,622	\$64,656
Total		\$1,034,488	\$646,555

The Grant Agreement required to execute the Grant payments will contain provisions respecting the timing of payments and criteria for calculating the Grant payment in each year to ensure Grant payments reflect the Property's actual assessed value and actual

**SUBJECT: Revitalizing Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program Application - 206
King Street West, Hamilton (PED25050) (Ward 2) - Page 8 of 8**

municipal taxes levied each year. The Applicant will be required to accept the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement prior to any Grant payments being made.

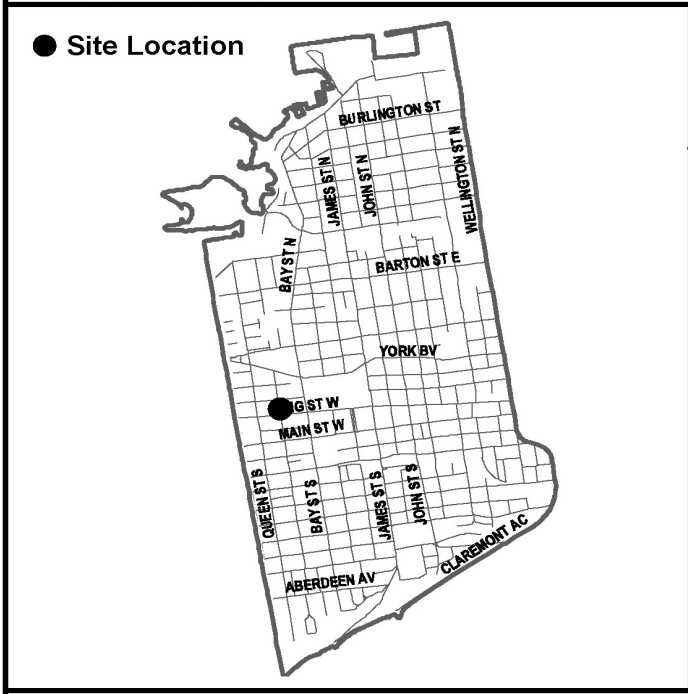
ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Application meets the eligibility criteria and requirements of the Program. Declining a Grant and/or approving a reduced amount would undermine the principles of the Program and urban regeneration efforts in general. This alternative is not recommended.

In the event the project is not considered for the Program, the Application should be referred to staff for further information on possible financial and/or legal implications.


APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report PED25050 – Location Map




Key Map - Ward 2



<h1>Location Map</h1>		 Hamilton
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT		
File Name/Number: 206 - 208 King St W	Date: January 9, 2025	
Appendix "A"	Scale: N.T.S	Planner/Technician: CG/NB

Subject Property

 206 King Street West, Hamilton
(Ward 2)



Volunteer Advisory Committee Review

General Issues Committee

February 26, 2025

Volunteer Advisory Committee Review



Priority 3: Responsiveness & Transparency

Get more people involved in decision making & problem solving

- Council Motion 11.1 (July 13, 2023)
- Council-directed scope of work (Sept 2023)
- Last Volunteer Advisory Committee review (2015)
- Guided by Term of Council Priorities & municipal best practices
- Recommendations aligned with Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy

Public Engagement Policy Key Directions

“Getting more people involved in City-led decision-making”

Adopted by Council in January 2024 to:

- Achieve a **consistent, strategic, and outcomes-driven** approach to public engagement
- Increase **impact** of City-led decision-making processes
- Establish **trust and relationships** with members of the public who are impacted by decisions

Engagement Principles

Hamilton's approach to public engagement is guided by five **principles** that support open, transparent, accountable, equitable and inclusive public engagement activities:



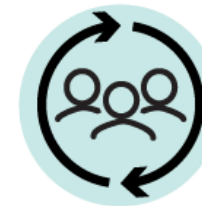
Building Trust and Relationships



Adapting Along the Way



Every Voice is Valued



Continuously Improving



Clear, Timely and Transparent Information

What is a Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC)?

Who?

- Passionate and civically-engaged residents (volunteers)
- Diverse in expertise on a range of local priorities

What?

- Provide advice and recommendations on issues and policies
- Local Board, subject to unique liability and expectations

How?

Council-directed, supported by clerks and departmental staff

Organization of Current 14 VACs

Audit, Finance & Administration:

- Committee Against Racism
- Women and Gender Equity
- Immigrant and Refugees
- Hamilton Indigenous Advisory
- Mundialization

General Issues:

- Arts Advisory
- Climate Change

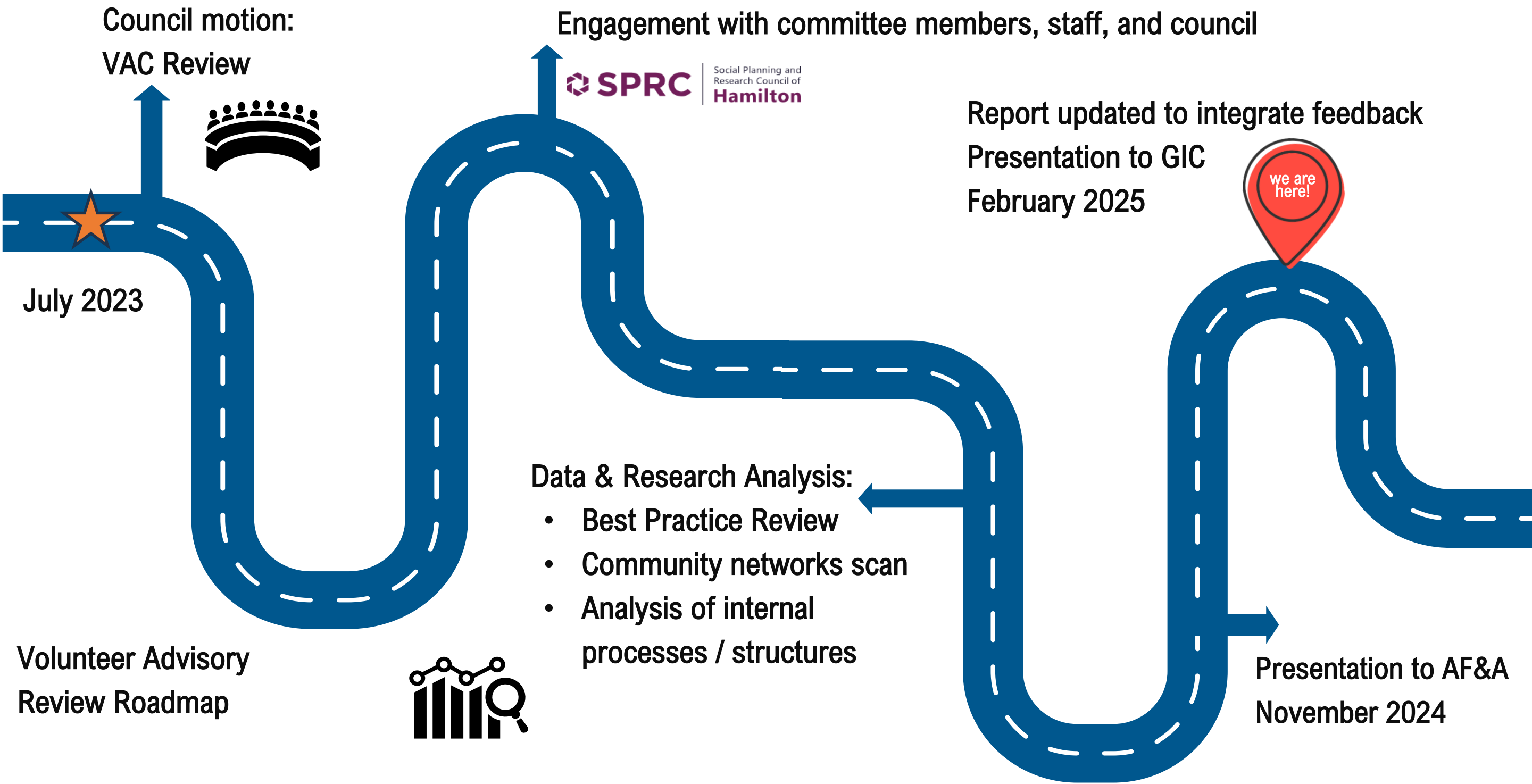
Emergency & Community Services:

- Hamilton Veterans
- Housing and Homelessness
- LGBTQ Advisory
- Seniors Advisory

Public Works:

- Hamilton Cycling
- Keep Hamilton Clean and Green

Public Health: Food Advisory



Engagement Methods

Who did we engage?

56 current VAC members

10 City of Hamilton Councillors

10 staff liaisons

City Clerk

Other cross-departmental groups

What did we do?

SPRC-led public engagement activities:

66 surveys

10 interviews

1 focus group

What We Heard: A Desire for Change

✓ Meaningful Engagement

✓ Improved Work Culture

✓ Increased Transparency

✓ Structural Changes

✓ Role Clarity

✓ Enhanced Training & Development

What We Learned

Local Boards (inclusive of VAC)

- present higher liability for members

Municipal trends

- Shift from formal structure that follows Procedural By-law to resident-led liaison groups that are responsive to emerging community needs.

What We Learned (cont'd)

Key elements for success

- Establish **training** opportunities and process guidelines
- **Alignment** to public engagement best practices
- **Mentorship** and staff support
- **Flexibility** for meeting dates and community participation

Alternatives

Based on public engagement and research **three alternatives** have been developed:

Alternative #1

Transition 14 VACs to Community Liaison Group (CLG) model
(Report CM23025(b))

Alternative #2

Transition 10 VACs to CLGs, remove four VACs
(Report CM23025(a))

Alternative #3

Status quo, no change from current format

Alternative 1

Transition 14 VACs to Community Liaison Group (CLG) model

- ✓ Responds to Council directions from November 2024
- ✓ Reflects experiences from VAC members
- ✓ Reduces barriers to support meaningful participation
- ✓ Alignment to relevant departmental work plans
- ✓ Implements Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy
- ✓ Creates training and support opportunities for CLG members

Alternative 2

Transition 10 VACs to CLGs

- ✓ Reflects experiences from VAC members
- ✓ Reduces barriers to support meaningful participation
- ✓ Alignment with Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy
- ✓ Creates training and support opportunities for CLG members
- × Four VACs withdrawn
 - × Reflects work being led in community, including City partnerships
 - × Includes: Food Advisory, Mundialization, Committee Against Racism, Immigrant and Refugees

Alternative 3

Status quo, no change from current format

- ✓ Maintains familiar process
- × Does not respond to experiences shared by VAC members
- × Presents barriers to support meaningful participation
- × Subjects members to higher liability standards
- × Institutional processes prevent meaningful participation
- × Recruitment processes do not offer flexibility or responsiveness
- × Citizen Committee Reports process presents many challenges

Recommendation: Alternative 1

Transition 14 VACs to Community Liaison Group (CLG) model

Benefits:

- Resident-led with support from City staff
- Roles and responsibilities are established by CLG members
- Transition includes:
 - Defining the process for CLGs to share their voice with Council
 - CLGs reflect community interest and needs

Success Story: HamOnt Youth Steering Committee

- Formerly the Youth Advisory Committee
- Transformed to working group in 2021
- Increased youth participation levels
- Provides a safe space for youth to share ideas & make recommendations for a more youth-friendly city
- Leading model for youth & City staff collaboration

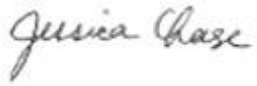
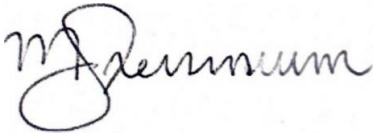


Thank you





CITY OF HAMILTON
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
Communications & Engagement Division
and
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Office of the City Clerk

TO:	Chair and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 26, 2025
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Volunteer Advisory Committee Review (CM23025(b)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Rebecca Banky (905) 546-2424 Ext. 6732
SUBMITTED BY:	Jessica Chase Acting Director Communications & Engagement Division City Manager's Office
SIGNATURE:	
SUBMITTED BY:	Matthew Trennum City Clerk Office of the City Clerk Corporate Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That, based on municipal best practices, a new civic engagement model be applied that uses **resident-led, staff facilitated** community liaison groups of volunteers **with a clear ability to make their voice heard by council**, with each Division reporting back **with tailored solutions**, within one year, and that the:

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**SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Committee Review
(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 12**

- (i) Tourism and Culture Division staff report back to the General Issues Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Arts Advisory Committee to recommend activities for the stabilization and strengthening of the arts community, monitor and assist with the implementation of the Arts Awards Program and Public Art Program, and inform Council of issues and achievements in the Hamilton arts community and acts as a point of contact for members of the arts community regarding issues affecting the arts community; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Arts Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (ii) Climate Change Initiatives Division staff report back to the General Issues Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Climate Change Advisory Committee to provide advice to Council and City of Hamilton staff on the prioritization, implementation, and monitoring of Hamilton's Climate Action Strategy, through an equitable, inclusive, and climate justice lens, that responds to the perspectives and needs of all, while transitioning to a prosperous, healthy and vibrant net-zero greenhouse gas community that is a national leader in climate adaptation; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Climate Change Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (iii) Active Transportation and Mobility Division staff report back to the Public Works Committee on the further development of the Division's Mobility Lab, a community liaison group, to also replace the Hamilton Cycling Committee, expanding their mandate to encourage residents to cycle and monitor the implementation of the Hamilton Cycling Master Plan; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Hamilton Cycling Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (iv) Indigenous Relations Division staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee to honour and engage Indigenous residents in the pursuit of the City of Hamilton's vision by providing advice and recommendations that enhance the wellbeing of Indigenous people; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (v) Heritage Resource Management Division staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Hamilton Veterans Committee to

**SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Committee Review
(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 3 of 12**

- oversee the planning and delivery of military remembrance and commemoration activities on behalf of the City of Hamilton; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Hamilton Veterans Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (vi) Children's & Community Services Division staff report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Advisory Committee to provide input with respect to the issues of women, non-binary individuals and gender diverse people; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
 - (vii) Housing Secretariat staff, in partnership with Housing Services Divisions staff report back to the General Issues Committee on the further development of a community liaison group to also replace the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, expanding their mandate to work to address the needs of residents within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Housing and Homelessness Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
 - (viii) Environmental Services Division staff report back to the Public Works Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee to beautify our community, promote environmental stewardship, and prevent litter, illegal dumping, and graffiti; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
 - (ix) Children's & Community Services staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the LGBTQ Advisory Committee to eliminate barriers experienced by LGBTQ communities by giving voice to the perspectives of LGBTQ individuals and evaluating the City of Hamilton on its related efforts; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the LGBTQ Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;

**SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Committee Review
(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 4 of 12**

- (x) Lodges Division staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Seniors Advisory Committee to organize the Senior of the Year Awards and to be a credible communication vehicle regarding the quality of life for all older persons in the City of Hamilton; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Seniors Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;
- (xi) ***Children and Community Services staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Committee Against Racism to advise, advocate and consult on relevant issues in the community of Hamilton relating to racism and its consequences, including anti-racism strategies; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Committee Against Racism be transferred to this Division to support this working group;***
- (xii) ***Public Health staff report back to the Public Health Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Food Advisory Committee to identify and inform, where appropriate, innovative community food security policies and programs that align with the vision and goals of the Hamilton Food Strategy, Hamilton Food Charter, and other City of Hamilton strategies; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Food Advisory Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group;***
- (xiii) ***Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council staff report back to the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees to address the needs of immigrants and refugees within the City of Hamilton; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees be transferred to this Division to support this working group;***
- (xiv) ***Business Development and Sector Development division staff report back to the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee on the creation of a community liaison group to replace the Mundialization Committee to undertake twinning programs in international cooperation with like-minded municipalities in this and other countries to foster an understanding of the increasing interdependence of the municipalities, peoples, and countries of the***

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(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 5 of 12**

world; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Mundialization Committee be transferred to this Division to support this working group; and

- (xv) Reserve budgets remaining from Advisory Committees transitioning to working groups be transferred to the Tax Stabilization reserve ***and that the transfer from the Hamilton Veterans Committee reserve of \$49,058 be committed for future investments for Remembrance Day services and youth-specific education regarding Veterans and Remembrance.***
- ~~(b) That the following Advisory Committees be disbanded, and their members thanked by Council for their service to the community:~~
 - ~~(i) Committee Against Racism;~~
 - ~~(ii) Food Advisory Committee;~~
 - ~~(iii) Immigrants and Refugees Advisory Committee; and,~~
 - ~~(iv) Mundialization Advisory Committee.~~
- (c) That staff be directed to review the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities for alignment with the City of Hamilton's new civic engagement model and community liaison groups;
- (d) That staff in the Office of the City Clerk, in consultation with the City Manager's Office, develop and host a robust and mandatory training program for staff supporting community liaison groups, inclusive of:
 - (i) Civic engagement best practices in alignment with the City of Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy and Framework;
 - (ii) Legislative policies and procedural requirements for meetings; and,
 - (iii) Decorum and behavioural expectations including an explanation of the role of the City of Hamilton's Integrity Commissioner.
- (e) That staff in the City Manager's Office be directed to work with the Integrity Commissioner and Clerks Office to develop and host a training program for members of community liaison groups on expectations, liabilities, and project plans;

**SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Committee Review
(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 6 of 12**

- (f) ***That the Review of the City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committees be removed from the Outstanding Business Item list.***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recommendations outlined in Report CM23025(b) are based on municipal best practices, comprehensive engagement efforts, and analysis of the current structure's inherent challenges. Structural changes are required to address the needs of more effective engagement.

Council-directed the Volunteer Advisory Committee Review (VACR) in September 2023. At that time, the City of Hamilton (City) had fourteen volunteer-led Advisory Committees. Engagement with City staff supporting Advisory Committees, former and current City of Hamilton Advisory Committee members, and members of City Council showed significant need for change, some of which was outside the boundaries of the current structure as shown in Appendix "A" attached to Report CM23025(b).

Advisory Committee members represent some of the City's most passionate and engaged residents. While trends from the jurisdictional scan, included in Appendix "B" attached to Report CM23025(b), show a movement away from this specific form of engagement, and the Recommendations outlined in Report CM23025(b) would significantly reshape several of the committees, it remains important to allow effective civic engagement opportunities to advance the 2022-2026 Term of Council Priority of responsiveness and transparency, especially as it relates to getting more people involved in decision making and problem solving.

~~Advisory Committees that have duplicative mandates of community tables the City already consults, discussed in Appendix "C" to Report CM23025(b), were considered in the context of their unique workplans and recent contributions. Advisory Committees with clear project workplans and strong alignment with a department within the City as detailed in Appendix "D" to Report CM23025(b), were considered for community liaison groups, removing some of the procedural challenges of hosting in-camera meetings, and providing a better opportunity for civic engagement.~~

Report CM23025(b) offers community liaison groups as an alternative format to advisory committees, stressing the need to eliminate the procedural challenges that may deter volunteer involvement, and providing a better opportunity for civic engagement. The newly recommended structure is intended to be supplemented by training, a significant deficiency identified through the VACR engagement process.

As a revised Report, CM23025(b) positions alternatives to the Recommendations outlined to the Audit, Finance, and Administration Committee on November 21st, 2024, by report CM23025(a). Report CM23025(b) is in alignment with the research

**SUBJECT: Volunteer Advisory Committee Review
(CM23025(b)) (City Wide) - Page 7 of 12**

done to present the original report and offers alternatives still in line with the jurisdictional scan, engagement findings, and analysis.

Alternatives for Consideration – See page 11.

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: ~~Disbanded committees will no longer have associated budget requirements.~~ Committees transitioning to community liaison groups will have their budgets transferred to appropriate departments to continue project plans in this new form.

Staffing: In cases where an Advisory Committee has been replaced by a community liaison group, departmental Staff Liaisons will continue to support these new groups.

Legal: None

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An Advisory Committee review was last conducted and presented to the Audit, Finance, & Administration Committee in June of 2015 (CM15007). The review made several recommendations, including establishing Advisory Committees for the 2014-2018 Term of Council. This report informed the current shape and policies of the City's Advisory Committees.

At the July 13, 2023, meeting of the Audit, Finance, & Administration Committee, the Committee considered a motion to review Voluntary Advisory Committees. Consideration of this motion was deferred pending a Staff Report on the expected duration of the pause of these committees. Report CM23025 was brought to the Audit, Finance, and Administration Committee on September 7, 2023. The motion passed and included a pause on existing Volunteer Advisory Committees, with the exception for the Climate Change Advisory Committee, for which recruitment was already underway, but included it in the review process.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The pause and review motion specifically did not include the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD), a legislatively required sub-committee of council previously referred to as an Advisory Committee.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

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Staff in the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division partnered with the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to conduct arms-length engagement with three groups: City staff supporting Advisory Committees; former and current City of Hamilton Advisory Committee members; and members of City Council. Engagement methodology took the form of surveys, key informant interviews, and focus groups described in Appendix “A” attached to Report CM23025(b).

Engagement from support staff, committee members, and councillors was high in all groups, reflecting the dedication and desire to ensure Volunteer Advisory Committees can operate in a way that effects meaningful change in the City. SPRC-led engagement efforts also identified significant areas of need for change, many of which fell outside the capacity of the Advisory Committee structure.

Staff leading the review conducted internal cross-departmental engagement to identify community tables and networks the City regularly consults with, included as Appendix “C” attached to Report CM23025(b). To complete the picture of who we may be missing from existing consultation, SPRC conducted a scan of community tables leading work efforts similar to Volunteer Advisory Committees, Appendix “E” attached to Report CM23025(b).

A jurisdictional scan of other municipalities was conducted by staff, offering alternative models for civic engagement in alignment with current best practices, outlined in Appendix “B” attached to Report CM23025(b). Of note, the City of Ottawa has recently moved entirely away from non-legislated Advisory Committees and toward a departmentally led model like community liaison groups.

Staff engaged in the review met with staff supporting the Climate Change Advisory Committee to discuss their role in the upcoming model and attended the inaugural meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee.

Preliminary recommendations were shared with staff liaisons supporting Volunteer Advisory Committees to provide relevant context and discuss the implications of these changes. In a few instances, support staff identified unique situations specific to their committees that informed staff recommendations.

Staff supporting the Food Advisory Committee specifically identified Covid-related staff redeployment as a challenge for their committee’s activity and success.

Staff leading the review spoke with Active Transportation and Mobility staff about their existing Mobility Lab and about whether it aligns with the new model of community liaison groups. Aligned with this new model, the recommendations outlined here suggest this group should be expanded to take on work previously assigned to the Hamilton Cycling Committee.

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The Housing Secretariat's Community Partnership Action Table serves a similar role to what a developed Housing and Homelessness community liaison group might serve. Staff leading the review work met with members of both the Housing Secretariat and the Housing divisions to discuss this and received general agreement for the adaptation of a group, be it this one or another related working group.

Staff met with members of the Committee Against Racism to discuss alternatives to disbanding including the formation of a Community Liaison Group (CLG). Members were amendable to this model and agreed it might be possible, in a simplified format, for the group to take on a role that could be less duplicative of other City efforts than the previous review indicated.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

A scan of ten similarly sized municipalities revealed that the City has more Advisory Committees than comparable municipalities as outlined in Appendix "B" attached to Report CM23025(b). This indicates a trend moving away from this form of civic engagement. Alternatively, municipalities are moving forward with a variety of civic engagement methods like experts' panels, task forces, and departmentally led working groups.

~~For our purposes in Hamilton, the model we are recommending is the community liaison group. A Community Liaison Group (CLG) reports directly to staff to advise on the community perspective, which staff includes in the process of making recommendations directly to Council. Such groups can meet in person, regularly, or even virtually, corresponding over email to share recommendations, like a public information session. The groups are chaired by and called to order by departmental staff and do not follow the procedural by-law.~~

Engagement and consultation findings showed a significant need for change, with major areas of improvement identified across themes of meaningful engagement, transparency, clarity, and culture. The feedback gathered by the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC), summarized in Appendix "A" attached to Report CM230325(b), indicated the interdependence of most of these issues, with greater clarity on policies and procedures contributing to effective engagement, more transparency contributing to overall process clarity, and culture being largely dependent on how the Advisory Committee functions.

A SWOT analysis of the Volunteer Advisory Committees is attached as Appendix "F" attached to Report CM23025(b). While there are strengths to the Advisory Committee model, there are considerable disadvantages and leaving the structure unchanged could result in negative public engagement outcomes, especially in the context of the

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City's Public Engagement Framework. Restructuring to community liaison groups presents an opportunity to address these weaknesses and further the goals of public engagement.

Recommendations around training focuses on these identified needs, both supporting Advisory Committee members with fulfilling their mandates and training support staff to better aid advisory bodies. Training recommendations also suggest that new community liaison groups receive specialized training owing to the expectation, responsibility, and liability of their roles.

Analysis was done of comparable tables the City consults with, shown in Appendix "C" attached to Report CM23025(b) and meetings, budgets, and citizen committee reports made to a committee's standing committee as indicated in Appendix "G" attached to Report CM23025(b). ~~In cases where the recommendation is to disband a given Advisory Committee, these recommendations stem from related work being done by other community tables and a lack of product from the Advisory Committee in terms of integrated workplans, produced citizen committee reports, and in some cases even meetings with quorum.~~ The expectation is that increased support and training opportunities would lead to better quorum and member participation, so a lack of quorum alone was not considered sufficient reason to disband an Advisory Committee when their work was not also duplicative of other community tables the City consults with, included as Appendix "C" attached to Report CM23025(b), or other community tables in the scan conducted by SPRC, included as Appendix "G" attached to Report CM23025(b). ***As revised Report CM23025(b) does not recommend removing any groups, moving to a simplified engagement model is critical to fulfilling the term of council priority of getting more people involved in decision making and problem solving.***

~~For the remaining Advisory Committees, a **Staff's** recommendation is made around to **make** a shift toward **resident-led**, staff-directed-**facilitated**, community liaison groups to reduce some of the procedural requirements around open meetings that have been challenging for volunteer members. Council-directed working groups would still, by the legislative requirements, be expected to hold open meetings, **and be legally considered local boards with corresponding procedural and liability constraints.**~~

To ensure ongoing transparency and accountability for the new community liaison groups, it is also recommended that departmental staff report back on an annual basis to the relevant committee on the feedback and results of the groups. Staff would also be more easily able to integrate community liaison groups into workplans and project plans. ***The recommendation here stipulates that community liaison groups (CLG) created to replace advisory committees have a way to make their voices heard, even if group members disagree with a staff recommendation. This could take the form of an attached appendix to a staff report, or a format more tailored to a***

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specific group's needs. Each division would report back to Council on the specific mechanism for CLGs to provide recommendations back to Council.

~~Where there was evidence of a strong project plan and close alignment with a department, the recommendation was made to shift the Advisory Committee to this form of civic engagement.~~

Appendix "D" attached to Report CM23025(b) shows each Volunteer Advisory Committee's mandates and objectives and a suggested departmental alignment. ***The recommendations here work to align each new CLG to an appropriate department where support and workplan integration are easiest to achieve.***

Next steps for successful implementation of community liaison groups will include departments reporting back on tailored solutions around recruitment and structure. Community liaison groups allow for more fluid recruitment, supported by Human Resources, and are not restricted to four-year terms. This recruitment should and could include former members of VACs but could also broaden to a wider group who might not have felt comfortable with the formality of the VAC structure. Staff will work closely with existing VAC members, Clerks, Councillors and Human Resources to ensure a smooth transition to the new community liaison group structure.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Report CM23025(b) is a revision of CM23025(a) presenting a new civic engagement model, based on municipal best practices, that are resident led and staff facilitated. The revisions here provide direction that a clear and transparent mechanism for Community Liaison Groups' recommendations to come to Council and its committees is an essential component of the tailored solutions departments will report back on.

As an alternative to Recommendation (a), the report-back direction could be more stipulative about the relationships of staff and residents in Community Liaison Group organization, emphasising a need to be resident-led and having a clear voice to Council. As it is in alignment with the original recommendation, a revised recommendation here makes this relationship clearer. The revised report reflects this alternative.

An alternative for consideration to Recommendation (b) would be, rather than eliminating any advisory committees, transitioning any or all of the VACs to Community Liaison Groups. Having an easier, simplified, and staff-supported method of engagement would almost certainly strengthen the opportunities for these groups. The revised report reflects this alternative.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

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Appendix "A" to Report CM23025(b):	SPRC Engagement Findings
Appendix "B" to Report CM23025(b):	Jurisdictional Scan Summary
Appendix "C" to Report CM23025(b):	External Community Tables and Networks the City Consults
Appendix "D" to Report CM23025(b):	VAC Mandates, Objectives, and Alignment
Appendix "E" to Report CM23025(b):	Community Tables Scan
Appendix "F" to Report CM23025(b):	SWOT Analysis
Appendix "G" to Report CM23025(b):	Current VAC Structure Overview

City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee Review: Engagement Report

April 2024

Report prepared by:



SPRC

Social Planning and
Research Council of
Hamilton

City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee Review: Engagement Report

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that the land on which we work this work is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We hope to honour the spirit of the Dish With One Spoon agreement by working to build a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous communities in Hamilton.

ABOUT SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF HAMILTON

The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) is an independent non-profit and community-based research organization. SPRC promotes equity, informs policy and planning decisions, and increases community engagement to improve social conditions. We accomplish this through research and program evaluation, policy analysis, community partnerships, and program delivery. SPRC is funded by the United Way Halton Hamilton, The City of Hamilton City Enrichment Fund and through independent service contracts.

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Executive summary & Recommendations

Under the direction of the Hamilton City Council, the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division is conducting a review of Volunteer Advisory Committees to provide recommendations around engagement to fulfill the priorities of the 2022-2026 Term of Council. As part of this review, the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division engaged the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to collect feedback from key community partners including VAC members, staff liaisons, and council members.

Overall, there was a high level of engagement across all participant groups, with 56 of 112 VAC members completing the VAC member survey, 10 of 10 staff liaisons completing the staff liaison survey, 29 VAC members participating in the focus groups, and 10 of 16 council members participating in an interview.

Across all engagements, there was recognition of the immense opportunity VACs provide in leveraging both the enthusiasm and expertise of community members in Hamilton. The diversity of experiences and opinions on VACs was highlighted as a critical asset that allows the City to tap into and engage with a critical knowledge base, as well as provide the opportunity to foster more equitable solutions that meet community needs.

Council members, staff liaisons, and VAC members also spoke to a desire for an improved process that enables meaningful participation of volunteers through improved structure and supports for VACs. Challenges consistently raised among all three participant groups spoke to the unfulfilled potential and underutilization of VACs. Lack of clarity with respect to scope and mandate, as well as misalignment in the understanding of the role VACs, were commonly identified as unmet needs by the participant groups. The need for a clearly articulated, accessible, and transparent process for communicating with council was also commonly raised, both in relation to how VAC recommendations are brought forward, but also in how council receives, reviews, and responds to VAC recommendations. The need for more consistent and comprehensive training for both VAC members and staff liaisons, as well as the need for improved transparency in the VAC member selection and decision-making process, were also frequently raised as areas for improvement.

The recommendations brought forward in this report are based on and suggest remedy for the challenges and opportunities raised throughout the report.

Recommendations:

1. As the City looks to potentially amend the VAC model considering the outcomes of this review, it is imperative that the City continue to involve and consult VAC members with respect to potential changes moving forward. VAC members have tremendous knowledge on what has

been working well and what has not with respect to VAC function. Their involvement will only strengthen remedies to the challenges identified in this report, as well as provide an opportunity to rebuild trust lost with VAC members.

2. Given the sentiments of disregard and confusion communicated by VAC members with respect to how the VAC Review was initiated, we encourage the City to proactively inform and engage VAC members in the next steps of the review.
3. Overall, there is a need for greater clarity and consistent understanding of the role of VACs, their expected outcomes, and how each participant group (i.e. VAC members, staff liaisons and council members) participate in and contribute to the work of VACs. As this was a need identified by all three groups, it is recommended that the scope, mandate, role and intended outcomes of VACs be clearly defined in VAC governing document.
4. In addition to clear objectives, there is a need to develop ongoing feedback mechanisms and an evaluation plan for VACs. Evaluation of VACs needs to capture both the effectiveness of the VACs in fulfilling their mandates as well as volunteer experiences on the committees, necessitating feedback from council, staff liaisons and VAC members on their effectiveness. Additionally, implementing a process for ongoing feedback would create opportunities to address challenges with VACs as they arise.
5. It should be recognized that all challenges brought forward in this report and the associated recommendations for remedy have direct implications on the effectiveness and impact VACs can have. As a result, it is recommended that careful consideration is given to how all recommendations could be implemented.
6. The City should look to implement processes and engagement opportunities that support improved collaboration and a more intersectional approach to VAC work, including vehicles that enable VAC engagement with the broader community as well as means for VACs to collaborate with each other on intersecting issues.
7. Implement VAC Terms of Reference (TOR) reviews at regularly scheduled intervals to ensure governing documents continue to meet the needs of VAC members and council.
8. Given that the importance of community expertise was highlighted as a key asset by all three participant groups, it is recommended that VACs be provided the latitude necessary to raise concerns identified at the community level. Additionally, there was an identified need for better alignment between council and City priorities and the work of VACs; therefore, it is recommended that the City review existing VACs for alignment with strategic priorities and refocus VAC work as needed.

9. There is also need for consideration of the diverse mandates and functions of current VACs, therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach to VAC governance and supports would likely not support the success of current VACs.
10. As the rigidity of the current VAC structure was raised as a barrier to VAC's ability to fulfill their role by all three participant groups, it is recommended that the City consider less structured formats/processes for VACs. While it was recognized that some structure is required for meaningful participation, procedures around quorum and how discussions are held were generally viewed as inhibiting the important advisory and engagement function of VACs.
11. To fully utilize the expertise on VACs, proactive and ongoing engagement with VACs should be embedded into existing consultation processes that inform council priorities and departmental work as they relate to VAC scope and mandate (e.g. in the development and implementation of City action plans). This consultation should be done as part of departmental work on strategic initiatives and before staff reports are put to council for consideration.
12. VAC governance documents should clearly articulate the role of council members on VACs, including the expected level of participation from council members (e.g. frequency of meeting attendance, availability for consultation to VAC outside of meetings) to support consistent understanding across all VAC participants.
13. Governance documents should also provide clear direction on the role of staff liaisons in facilitating and supporting VAC work. VACs also require ongoing support from staff content experts as well as procedural experts. Delineation of these roles, and consistent access to both competencies, would better support VACs as well as the staff supporting their work.
14. Ensure a clear and transparent process, with expected timelines, is provided to VAC members with respect to communicating and making recommendations to council. The process should identify how recommendations are put forward, how and by whom recommendations are received, and deliberated. It should also clearly outline how council will respond to the recommendations, and if/how they have been actioned, focusing on ensuring a clear feedback loop to VACs.
15. There is a need for improved, consistent, and accessible training for VAC members. More comprehensive training on council structure and process, VAC scope and responsibilities, meeting procedure and VAC decision making, report-writing, and role-specific training for VAC chairs were identified needs.
16. Steps should also be taken to develop and implement consistent training for staff liaisons that clearly outlines the role of staff liaisons, as well as VAC purpose, function, and structure.

Consistent onboarding and handoff planning should also be developed to better support transitions between staff liaisons. A centralized location for all VAC documents/work accessible to staff liaisons and all VAC members would also support these transitions.

17. Involve community stakeholders in the VAC member selection and decision-making process.
18. Working with citizen representatives supporting VAC selection work, develop selection criteria for VAC members, inclusive of how equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are accounted for in decision-making. Communicate selection criteria to applicants/public during the call for applications. Where a VAC applicant is unsuccessful, communicate the outcome to the applicant and provide a brief explanation of the decision to further support transparency of the process.
19. Established term limits for VAC membership. Clearly communicate term limits in VAC Terms of Reference.
20. Greater attention needs to be given to the timely transition between VAC members in the event a VAC member resigns. Maintaining a list of applicants who met the application criteria but were not selected for the role would assist with this transition.
21. Provide robust, consistent training to all VAC members, including those brought on mid-term.

1.0 Introduction

Under the direction of Hamilton City Council, the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division was assigned to lead a review of Volunteer Advisory Committees (VACs), in July 2023. As part of the review, the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division partnered with the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to collect and analyze feedback from Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) members, VAC staff liaisons, and council, through a series of surveys, focus groups, and interviews. The objective of the broader review is to provide recommendations around engagement methods inclusive of the Volunteer Advisory Committees to fulfill the priorities of Council aligned with the Term of Council priorities 2022 – 2026.

This report highlights key feedback received throughout engagement efforts with current advisory committee members, council members, and VAC staff liaisons to map the challenges and identify the unmet needs resulting from the current advisory committee structure.

The second key element of this review includes a scan of community advisory tables that the City actively consults with for advice and feedback, including community-based task forces, grassroots organizations doing aligned work, steering committees, and working groups. This includes preparing a list of the external community-based tables and organizations that support work similar to that of advisory committees.

1.1 About Volunteer Advisory Committees

According to the City, VACs in Hamilton are established by Council and consist of volunteer members from the local community. The City of Hamilton has 14 VACs. All VACs operate under a Terms of Reference (TOR) document that outlines the scope of their work. In the City of Hamilton, VACs typically provide recommendations to Council through reports on their area of expertise to an assigned Standing Committee. Currently, members of VACs are selected by the Interview Sub-Committee of the appropriate Standing Committee and are appointed by Council¹. VACs, with the exception of the Climate Change Advisory Committee, Veterans Affairs Committee, and Seniors Advisory Committee, were mandated to pause, beginning October 1, 2023, in light of this review.

¹City of Hamilton (2022). Committee Listings. Accessed <https://www.hamilton.ca/city-council/council-committee/council-committee-meetings/committee-listing#sub-committees>

2.0 Scope

The scope of the SPRC's engagements was limited to current VAC members, current staff liaisons, and current council members. The scope included a broad analysis of VACs, therefore data and analysis on the challenges and unmet needs of individual VACs is not part of the review.

The following volunteer advisory committees and key informants were included within the scope of this work:

- a. Committee Against Racism
- b. Women and Gender Equity Committee
- c. Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees
- d. Indigenous Advisory Committee
- e. Mundialization Committee
- f. Food Advisory Committee
- g. Hamilton Veterans Advisory
- h. Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee
- i. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee
- j. Seniors Advisory Committee
- k. Arts Advisory Committee
- l. Hamilton Cycling Committee
- m. Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee
- n. Staff Liaisons (10)
- o. Members of Council (16)

The Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC) and CCAC Staff Liaison were not included in the scope of SPRC's engagements with VACs.

3.0 Methodology

Figure 1. VAC review engagement timeline



The information presented in this review was obtained through surveys, key informant interviews, and focus groups with current VAC members, staff liaisons, and Hamilton City Council members.

Over the course of the project, the SPRC met bi-weekly with the Project Manager in the City of Hamilton’s Government Relations and Community Engagement Division. These meetings were used as an opportunity to establish and review the workplan, and review and approve distribution materials.

Given their intimate knowledge of VACs, SPRC consulted with VAC chairs and vice chairs in December of 2023 to help develop appropriate research questions that would inform the breadth of information captured throughout the data collection process. The SPRC received feedback from 11 chairs/vice-chairs. Key research questions were established focusing on four central themes:

- 1) What is working well with respect to how VACs currently operate?
- 2) What are the unmet needs resulting from the current structure?
- 3) Ideally, what would the role and structure of VACs look like in the future?
- 4) What (if any) changes would be needed to fulfill this role?

The City provided a list of VAC members, chairs, vice-chairs, and staff liaisons from which the SPRC was able to engage for the purpose of this review. Recruitment and data collection began in January 2024. Data collection for focus groups and interviews occurred in both virtual and in-person settings.

The SPRC hosted a validation session in March 2024 open to all VAC members to present preliminary findings and engage in further discussions to ensure that themes and ideas were holistic and representative of the information captured in the VAC member survey and VAC member focus groups. The one-hour validation session occurred on a weekday evening to encourage equitable member participation. Eight VAC members participated in the session, representing six VACs. The main themes uncovered during data analysis were presented to VAC members and polling was utilized throughout the presentation to capture members' sentiments. Overall, polling indicated that those in attendance felt the themes presented aligned with the data.

3.1 Surveys

The SPRC consulted with VAC co-chairs to broadly identify key research areas that would inform the survey questions administered to both VAC members and staff liaisons. The surveys consisted of five main categories:

- 1) Application, selection, and appointment of VAC members
- 2) VAC mandate and role
- 3) Member training and materials
- 4) Effectiveness in fulfilling mandate
- 5) Opportunities.

The survey included closed-ended questions that asked participants to rate their agreement with a statement provided as well as open-ended questions. All surveys were administered virtually.

a. VAC member survey

The SPRC contacted all current committee members via email providing a link to the anonymous survey. Participants were given approximately two weeks to complete the survey. Surveys were administered to 112 committee members with an overall response rate of 56 out of 112 (50%).

b. Staff liaison survey

The SPRC contacted all staff liaisons via email with a link to an amended version of the VAC member survey. Amendments were made in consultation with the Project Manager to ensure applicability to the staff liaison role. Staff Liaisons were initially provided just over a week to

complete the survey. A short extension was provided at the end of the survey period. Surveys were administered to ten staff liaisons and all staff liaisons completed the survey (overall response rate of 100%).

3.2 Council member interviews

The SPRC contacted council members via email to participate in key informant interviews. Additionally, follow-up emails were sent to council members to provide multiple opportunities to engage with the review. Each interview was scheduled for approximately 20 minutes. The interviews were attended by both an interviewer and a notetaker from the research team alongside the key informant. Interviews were not recorded and were conducted either virtually or in person based on the Council member's preference.

All interviews featured four questions that addressed central themes regarding VACs:

- 1) What is going well with respect to VACs?
- 2) What are the unmet needs?
- 3) What could the role of VACs look like in the future?
- 4) What changes are necessary to fulfill this role?

Council members were also asked to provide any additional commentary or feedback on VACs outside of the four main themes and had the opportunity to provide additional feedback via email following the interview. Each interview concluded with a read-back of notes to ensure that information was captured in full and with accuracy. The data collected through interviews is representative of engagement, with 10 out of 16 council members, representing a 63% response rate.

3.3 VAC member focus groups

The SPRC contacted all current VAC members via email to participate in focus groups to expand upon feedback received through survey implementation. Four focus groups were offered (one in-person and three virtual via Zoom) to accommodate the needs of interested participants. Each focus group was attended by six to ten participants, as well as one moderator and one to two notetakers. Overall, 29 VAC members from 11 VACs participated in a focus group. VAC members who expressed interest in participating in a focus group but were unavailable on the scheduled dates were offered a brief key-informant interview utilizing the focus group questions.

Focus groups lasted approximately one hour and occurred during weekday evenings to provide an equitable time frame for participation. The in-person focus group occurred at City Hall and participants were provided with bus fare as required. All focus group participants were provided with a \$25.00 gift card as an honourarium for participating. This amount was selected to avoid

undue influence on whether VAC members chose to participate in a focus group, and in consideration of the living wage in Hamilton.

Focus group questions consisted of an identical set of research questions used during key informant interviews with Council, with additional prompts informed by VAC member survey feedback. Each focus group began with a discussion of the review, group norms, and accessibility considerations, followed by the main discussion, and concluded with a review of the next steps. Participants were also provided with the option to offer additional feedback via email for up to three days following the focus group.

An individual interview was conducted with one VAC member who was unable to attend a focus group. Feedback gathered from this interview was anonymized and integrated into the data received from focus groups.

4.0 Limitations

As with all research, this report is subject to several limitations:

a. General limitations

Due to the scope of this review, this research captures a broad understanding of what is currently working well and the unmet needs of Volunteer Advisory Committees (VACs) and does not examine specific VACs. We acknowledge that VACs have diverse purposes and support needs, and a detailed analysis of the role and function of each committee falls outside the scope of this research.

Additionally, meta-data on VAC membership was not collected in the survey, such as the gender or age of participants, length of time they had been VAC members, and committee membership. This was done to ensure VAC members felt that they were able to share freely and candidly about their experiences. As a result, the data may be skewed due to possible over-representation of responses from participants who are members of particular committees. Although not all VACs may have been represented equally in the review, the review captured a diversity of experiences across VACs and within individual VACs. The themes drawn out from the review process were consistent overall. In the future, individual consultation with each VAC would illuminate the unique needs based on their role and mandate.

Given participation in the engagements was optional for VAC members, staff liaisons and council members, this review is subject to *non-response bias*. For example, the VAC members who did not participate may have more negative experiences and may have been less likely to answer the

survey or attend a focus group if they felt the process was flawed and would not be a good use of their time.

Additionally, given the scope only included current VAC members, current staff liaisons, and current council members, the feedback contained in this report is subject to *survivorship bias*. This type of bias reflects a possible positive skew in the data, as VAC members who may have previously resigned their VAC membership due to frustrations with one or more aspects of the VAC process were not included in this review, and only those whose level of satisfaction with the VAC process was greater (evidenced by their continued participation) were invited to participate. Excluding the perspectives of those who have previously been engaged with VACs represents a significant gap in understanding the experiences of those who may have disengaged for a variety of reasons. These perspectives would be helpful to frame a more inclusive understanding of the unmet needs of VACs and the barriers they present for citizen participation.

b. Survey limitations

The research team, in consultation with the City Project Manager, decided not to include a neutral response option to the survey questions to account for neutral response bias. However, this may have encouraged respondents to select an answer that did not completely align with their beliefs. This highlights possible *acquiescence bias* (the tendency for survey participants to agree with the presented research statement, even if it does not truly reflect their opinion²) within the quantitative survey data. There is also a possibility that *social desirability bias* (providing a response the participant feels is the more socially desirable when asked a sensitive question³) may influence the quantitative data obtained from the surveys, as some respondents expressed agreement with the statements in the survey yet made recommendations for change when answering the corresponding open-ended question.

c. Focus group and interview limitations

The research team made an intentional decision not to record focus groups and interviews to solicit frank and candid feedback from participants and ensure anonymity. In place of recording, there was a designated note taker in addition to the facilitator for each focus group as well as each key informant interview. Not recording and transcribing the focus groups and interviews limited our ability to include direct quotes from these feedback sessions.

²Toor, M. (2020). What is acquiescence bias and how can you stop it? Accessed <https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/avoiding-the-yes-bias/>

³Qualtrics. (2024). What is response bias and how can you avoid it? Accessed <https://www.qualtrics.com/experience-management/research/response-bias/#:~:text=Social%20desirability%20bias%20often%20occurs,and%20underreport%20'bad%20behavior>

d. Limitations of the analysis

As the qualitative component of this research relies on a thematic analysis (a process of identifying key themes and coding collected qualitative data based on the themes that arose to identify trends), there is a possibility that data interpretation may have been influenced by *researcher bias*. To help mitigate this risk, the research team incorporated both a deductive and inductive approach to data analysis. Initially, qualitative data was reviewed and coded using the main research questions and survey themes. In this preliminary analysis, several additional themes emerged and were subsequently incorporated. The data was then re-coded to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the feedback and major themes. Additionally, a validation session was held with VAC member participants to evaluate the accuracy of data collected and subsequent findings from surveys and focus groups.

5.0 Key Findings

The key findings are broken down by the three groups engagements were conducted with: VAC members, staff liaisons, and council members. We received a greater volume of feedback from VAC members based on a larger number of possible participants (112) in comparison to the staff liaisons (10) and council members (16). Additionally, several staff liaisons and council members expressed less familiarity with VACs because they were new to their roles, and therefore, were unable to provide the same level of feedback. The feedback from VAC members was coded and analyzed based on the frequency of a theme, whereas data from the staff liaison survey and council interviews was primarily analyzed based on the number of participants that raised a theme due to the smaller number of participants.

Although the data and analysis presented below are broken down into thematic sections for each group, it is imperative to acknowledge that in reviewing and analyzing the data, the research team identified patterns suggesting a strong likelihood that the many benefits and challenges raised intersect and influence each other. For example, when issues of quorum were raised, VAC members noted that issues with quorum were likely a direct result of volunteers not feeling valued. Not feeling valued, in turn, could be a result of not being adequately trained and, therefore, not having a clear understanding of the scope, mandate, and process related to VACs. As a result, VAC members may have become frustrated by the process and their inability to have a broader impact, which may have contributed to their decision to stop attending meetings.

5.1 VAC members

Key findings from engagements with VAC members are separated into sections based on subject areas in the survey. Quantitative data from the VAC surveys is presented first and contextualized within the open-ended qualitative survey responses and focus group results. Focus groups were

not transcribed to encourage open dialogue, therefore, all quotes included in the following sections were captured in the open-ended survey responses. The quotes used are a direct transcription from the survey responses.

In the survey, VAC members were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with statements about specific subject areas related to overall VAC function. These subject areas were identified by VAC Chairs as requiring notable improvement. In the open-ended survey questions and in the VAC member focus groups, several other aspects related to VACs were consistently identified as areas for significant improvement. These are also highlighted in the sections below.

It is important to consider and analyze the closed survey questions in the context of the open-ended responses. Although there were relatively high levels of agreement generally expressed by VAC members who participated in the survey, when looking at the sentiments expressed in the open-ended response box that pertained to the same survey section, over 60% of responses identified a need for change, even among those who expressed agreement to the survey statements. This highlights that although there may have been a general agreement, there were still significant areas for improvement noted amongst participants.

Overall, sentiment analysis was done by comment, with each comment being tagged as positive, neutral, or identifying a need for change. Each comment was then coded based on the themes, as well as specific benefits and challenges identified in the comment. Some comments contained multiple themes or identified both benefits and challenges, and these were coded accordingly.

Table 1. VAC member survey and focus group code areas

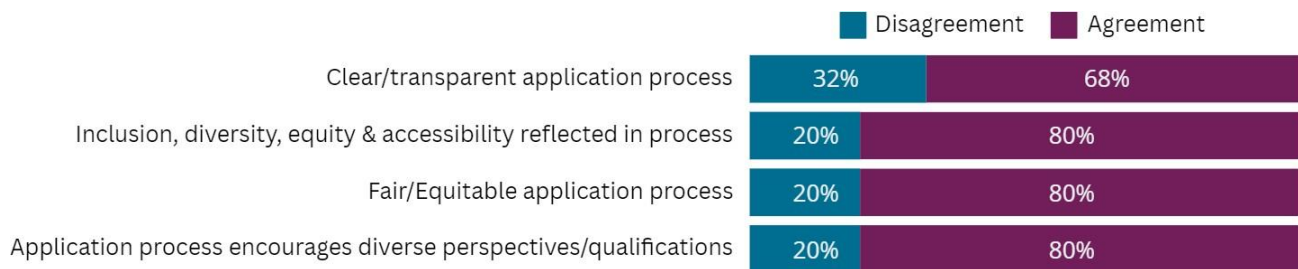
Theme code	Survey Responses (by code application)*	Focus Groups (by code application)*
Application, Selection & Appointment	Total: 34 Challenges: 29 Benefits: 4	Total: 12 Challenges: 11
Mandate & Role	Total: 43 Challenges: 28 Benefits: 15	Total: 37 Challenges: 29 Benefits: 8
Training & Materials	Total: 25 Challenges: 20 Benefits: 5	Total: 12 Challenges: 12
City Staff	Total: 43 Challenges: 33 Benefits: 10	Total: 52 Challenges: 24 Benefits: 28
VAC Membership	Total: 57 Challenges: 41 Benefits: 16	Total: 36 Challenges: 24 Benefits: 11
VAC Process/Structure	Total: 55 Challenges: 53 Benefits: 2	Total: 50 Challenges: 44 Benefits: 4
Councillor Involvement	Total: 20 Challenges: 20	Total: 27 Challenges: 17 Benefits: 9
Effectiveness in Fulfilling Mandate	Total: 143 Challenges: 99 Benefits: 44	Total: 75 Challenges: 58 Benefits: 17

*Code application refers to the number of times a theme was identified in the responses. In some responses, more than one theme, or specific aspects of a theme, was identified as a challenge or benefit. For example, with respect to VAC process/structure, one response could highlight the benefits of the processes in place generally, while also noting challenges that this creates when quorum is not able to be met. These were coded separately as benefits and challenges.

5.1.1 Application, selection, and appointment process

As seen in the Figure 2., when asked to express agreement or disagreement with statements related to the application, selection, and appointment process, approximately one in three survey respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, “The application, selection, and appointment process is clear and transparent.” When looking at the other three statements, one in five respondents expressed disagreement.

Figure 2. VAC member survey: Application, selection, and appointment process



The survey asked participants about their experience with the application, selection, and appointment process. In the additional feedback we received in this section of the survey, there were a total of 35 comments. When looking at the broad sentiment of these comments, 12% were positive comments about the application process, 11% were generally neutral, and 77% of comments reflected a need for change. Further thematic analysis using the coding method detailed above was also carried out as explored below.

Sentiment analysis of responses in application, selection, and appointment process:



VAC survey responses:

In analyzing the open-ended survey responses related to the VAC Application, Selection, and Appointment process, approximately 80% of responses identifying a need for change spoke to challenges with the **selection/decision-making process**. Comments related to the selection/decision-making process were made second most frequently when looking at the total

number of survey responses identifying a need for change. Only comments with respect to VAC impact were made more frequently.

Most of these responses identified issues related to **transparency** in the decision-making process (this represents nearly 40% of the comments that identified a need for change with respect to the selection/decision-making process) or a lack of **representation and diversity** (over 20% of responses that identified a need for change related to the selection/decision-making process).

“The process for how the applications are reviewed, screened and shortlisted was not at all clear to me - from what information I saw it seemed fairly random or arbitrary, especially in terms of which incumbent committee members were selected for a second term.”

“The process is flawed and is not inclusive of marginalized identities. It also keeps members on for too many terms and should have an end date. The selection committee needs to be aware of how unconscious bias is playing a role in selecting and appointing members. They need to have an equity lens when selecting candidates.”

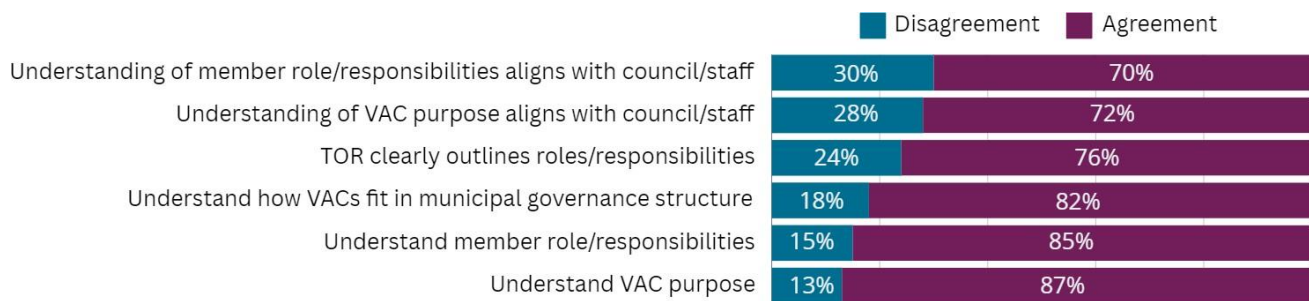
VAC focus groups:

While not mentioned as frequently, VAC members raised transparency and representation/diversity as areas in need of improvement. However, more frequently, focus group participants identified issues related to **timelines for onboarding new members** after a VAC member has stepped down as an area for improvement. This represents approximately 35% of comments that identified a need for change with respect to the selection /decision-making process and the impact this has on VAC work.

5.1.2 Mandate and role

When asked to express agreement or disagreement with statements related to the mandate and role of VACs (Figure 3), 30% of survey respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, “My understanding of the role and responsibilities of VAC members aligns with that our council and staff liaisons,” followed by 28% of respondents indicating disagreement with the statement “My understanding of the purpose and mandate of VACs aligns with that of council and staff liaisons. Interestingly, when looking at where most of the agreement was expressed pertaining to mandate and role, VAC members expressed agreement with “I understand the purpose of VACs” and “I understand the roles and responsibilities of VAC members.” This is further explored in the qualitative analysis below.

Figure 3. VAC member survey: mandate and role



Sentiment analysis of responses in the mandate and role section of the survey:



Overall, approximately 75% of the VAC member comments made in the role and mandate section of the survey identified a need for change.

VAC survey responses:

When analyzing the open-ended survey responses specific to the scope and mandate broadly, all comments identified a need for change, with 50% identifying a need for improved **clarity**. Both **alignment with community need** and **engagement with the broader community** were frequently raised in comments in relation to the mandate and role of VACs, with comments indicating almost equally these areas as benefits and working well, and areas for improvement.

“It was not very clear what we were expected to do and how it would be relayed to the city or impact it would have on our communities”

“The committee that I was a part was greatly impactful. We often challenged city council to be better and accountable to their community. We also offered the community another option to be heard and access city council which is a very important role!”

“I am sure if Volunteer Advisory Committees are given more leeway, and bring in suggestions from other stakeholders and boundary partners, they could impact more change and influence for the benefit of the public.”

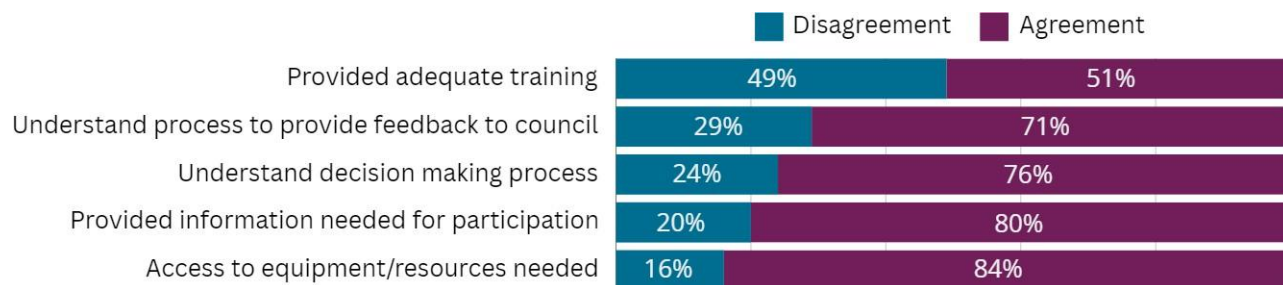
VAC focus groups:

In the focus groups, the lack of **clarity** on the VACs scope and mandate was also raised by participants as a challenge. Additionally, the need for **broader community engagement** was also raised as a challenge, along with the need for **improved collaboration among VACs**. Participants highlighted the intersectional nature of the scope of many VACs and noted challenges that the currently siloed model of VACs presents, for example, seniors intersecting with immigrants and refugees and LGBTQ).

5.1.3 Training and materials

When asked to express agreement or disagreement with statements related to VAC training and materials made available to members (Figure 4), 49% of respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, “I was provided adequate training to fulfill the responsibilities of a VAC member.” Additionally, 29% of respondents expressed disagreement with the statement “I understand the VAC member structure and process to provide feedback to council,” and one in four respondents expressed disagreement with the statement “I understand the decision-making process and how my voice can be heard within a VAC.” These sentiments are explored further in the qualitative sections below, as many comments in the survey and focus groups centered around challenges with respect to training.

Figure 4. VAC member survey: training and materials



Sentiment analysis of responses in the training and materials section of the survey:

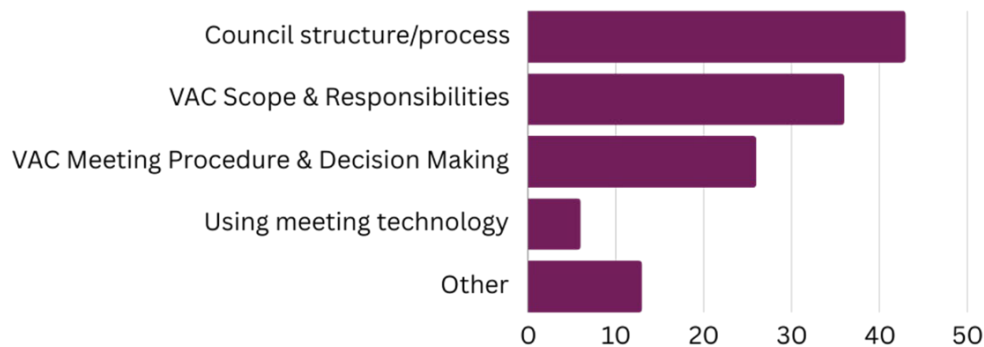


Overall, approximately 72% of the broad sentiments in the comments in this section identified a need for change.

VAC survey responses:

In addition to the questions above, survey respondents were also asked to identify areas where further training would be beneficial. The chart below is a breakdown of responses (Figure 5):

Figure 5. VAC members survey: Where additional training would be beneficial:



Responses to “Other” included: communication procedures, role specific training for VAC Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Secretaries, writing committee reports/motions, budget process, and community engagement.

Approximately 80% of open-ended survey responses related to VAC Training and Materials identified a need to improve VAC member training, and approximately one-third of the responses spoke to the need for better training related to process/procedure (both with respect to internal VAC processes and interfacing with Council).

“I have served on a committee for 8 years and am still not 100% clear about the process of communications and decisions between Committee and Council. I feel

there was regular confusion about this and it really hindered our meetings and effectiveness. I think training and support for meeting process and decision making could be significantly improved and would make the whole experience much more enjoyable, meaningful and productive for everyone involved.”

“It will be of great help for volunteers to be trained, advised of the expected outcome of their meetings/discussions, and how this will fit into the bigger picture and future planning of the Council, and how this will benefit the citizens in Hamilton. I suggest the training to be done on first meeting.”

There were several accounts of VAC members receiving no training in the survey responses.

VAC focus groups:

Focus group participants were not specifically asked about VAC training, and concerns with training were not raised as frequently in focus groups as they were in the survey. However, when training was raised, comments largely echoed those made in the survey, identifying a need for improved training related to interfacing with council as well as better training consistency. This also included accounts of no or minimal training when VAC members were onboarded, notably when brought on part way through the term. Training related to interpersonal skills, self-confidence and self-improvement, and motivational speaking were also suggested.

5.1.4 Additional thematic areas

In reviewing the feedback from both the open-ended survey responses and focus groups, several themes emerged that were not previously captured by the broader areas of inquiry in the survey or focus groups. These themes are explored in the below sections.

City staff

VAC survey responses:

In the open-ended survey responses, working with **staff** was raised frequently. Three-quarters of the comments identified this as an area that needs improvement. **Staff involvement** in VACs and **clerks** were identified as the most significant areas for improvement, with around 40% of the challenges raised indicating sentiments of **staff influence/gatekeeping**.

“... we were told that we couldn't say certain things and we were told to change how we said things. In the meetings, the clerks would dissuade us from making certain motions or create certain committee reports. [...] The staff liaison weren't as bad, but they still tried to

dissuade us by preventing us from raising systemic issues because there was no "process" for it."

Concerns around staff knowledge of VAC processes and lack of specific content expertise relating to the mandate of the VACs were both raised as challenges that likely impacted staff involvement with VACs. When clerks were raised in comments, the comments identified working with clerks as an area of improvement.

"While I might understand how the process works, it is not effective. The city liaison person makes a big difference in what is allowed to be put forth and how the mandate of the committee is interpreted."

VAC focus groups:

The analysis of the focus group responses pertaining to staff highlights an almost equal split between comments identifying benefits and those identifying areas for improvement. Similar to the survey responses, sentiments of **staff influence/gatekeeping** were identified as challenges, and more commonly, the impact of **staff turnover** was identified as a challenge (30% of challenges identified). Many participants noted disruption of work plans and inconsistencies in the level of staff training and knowledge about VAC processes as challenges resulting from frequent turnover in the staff liaison position. Additionally, where benefits of staff involvement were identified, the **content expertise** of staff was noted most frequently.

VAC membership

VAC survey responses:

Comments related to VAC Membership (both positive and those indicating a need for change), including those concerning quorum, committee make-up, and VAC member skills, were raised second most often in the open-ended survey responses (coded nearly 60 times). Over 70% of these comments identified a need for change, and of these comments, lack of **quorum** was raised as the most frequent issue (approximately 30% of challenges with respect to VAC Membership).

"We had huge quorum issues and it's not fair to the people devoting their time, we couldn't get anything done and missed many opportunities because of participation"

However, as noted previously, VAC members raised the importance of considering issues related to quorum in the larger context of VAC effectiveness/impact, remarking during the Validation Session that member participation rates were likely reflective of feeling devalued since their

contributions were not resulting in meaningful impact. This is explored further in the "VAC Effectiveness" section of this report.

Community expertise came up most frequently in comments related to VAC Membership and was raised almost equally as a current benefit and as an area that required improvement.

Positive comments with respect to community expertise highlighted VAC members' function/potential to provide a diversity of insights and knowledge that may be outside of the expertise of staff and Council. Most comments identifying a need for improvement highlighted the need to better utilize the community expertise within VACs or the need for a diversity of skills/viewpoints within the VAC member selection/decision-making process.

"It lets community members share their expertise to help their community in a non-intimidating way (ex. the budget process while open for community comments, can be daunting to be involved in). In many cases the volunteers have more expertise than staff and Council, so it provides reliable advice from experts who want the best for the City."

"The committee members have valid opinions about issues and we are not taking advantage of this. There is a lot of talent in these groups. If they are given proper support and training, the advisory committees can be the best source of true community opinion."

VAC focus groups:

Quorum was raised most frequently in comments related to VAC Membership during the focus groups, and all but one of these comments identified quorum as a current challenge, representing approximately 50% of comments identifying a need for change related to VAC Membership in focus group feedback.

Comments related to **community expertise** were raised almost as frequently as quorum in the focus groups, though they were raised more frequently as a current benefit of VACs (nearly 65% of focus group comments related to community expertise) as opposed to an area that needs improvement (approximately 35% of comments) when compared to the survey responses. Comments echoed those made in the open-ended survey responses, underscoring the role/potential for VACs to bring forward community perspectives.

VAC process and structure

VAC survey responses:

VAC processes and structure were frequently brought up in open-ended survey group responses, with 95% of comments identifying a challenge or area for improvement. The structure/process for **communication with council** was identified as the most common challenge by survey respondents. Around 30% of comments pertaining to challenges resulting from the current VAC process/structure spoke to the **rigidity/bureaucracy** of the VAC structure, with respondents noting the barriers this created to being able to provide meaningful participation and impact.

“I would like to think that Volunteer Advisory Committees are places where change, impact, and influence can happen but in my time serving on a Committee, I haven't ever felt this. It often feels that the formalities and structures preclude meaningful impact.”

Lastly, the lack of **proactive consultation** or simply being **outside of the consultation process** was raised in approximately 20% of the comments by survey respondents. VAC members raised concerns around not being consulted on issues that directly pertained to the mandate/scope of the VACs they are a part of.

“Also relevant items/projects that city staff are requesting advise for, should be noted BEFORE the work is done, and not afterwards”

“To have a committee with citizen volunteers to be able to check off a box by saying we have a committee and then not bringing issues to it, makes it a waste of time for both citizen reps and staff.”

VAC focus groups:

The comments from VAC members in focus groups around the VAC process/structure echoed the open-ended responses in the survey, centering around the same three themes. **Communication with council** was again raised as the most common issue and will be explored in the following section around council involvement.

In the focus groups, **rigidity/bureaucracy** was frequently raised (representing approximately 25% of challenges identified in relation to VAC process and structure) in the context of VACs not being able to meet, even informally, if quorum was not met. Participants identified that the bureaucracy is challenging to navigate and, as a result, can limit the voices that are heard. They identified the process itself as intimidating and associated this with contributing to issues around not achieving quorum.

Focus group participants also spoke to a lack of **proactive consultation** or being **outside of the consultation process** (representing around 20% of challenges raised around VAC process and structure). VAC members who participated in the focus groups spoke to a desire to be more formally integrated into the City's engagement process, and to be able to provide advice and input prior to council decisions.

Council involvement

While not directly addressed in either the survey or focus group questions, comments related to councillor involvement in VAC, including both attendance and participation in VAC meetings, were raised frequently in both VAC member engagements.

VAC survey responses:

All responses in the open-ended survey questions related to council involvement in VACs identified a need for improvement. Most frequently, these comments raised concerns about the lack of **councillor attendance** at VAC meetings.

"I was profoundly disappointed that the Council rep on my advisory committee never attended, not once. Spoke volumes about respect for the Committee."

"We are supposed to have two Council members assigned to our committee. One of them never shows up and the other is an occasional show. How our progress gets transmitted to Council is not known to me"

VAC focus groups:

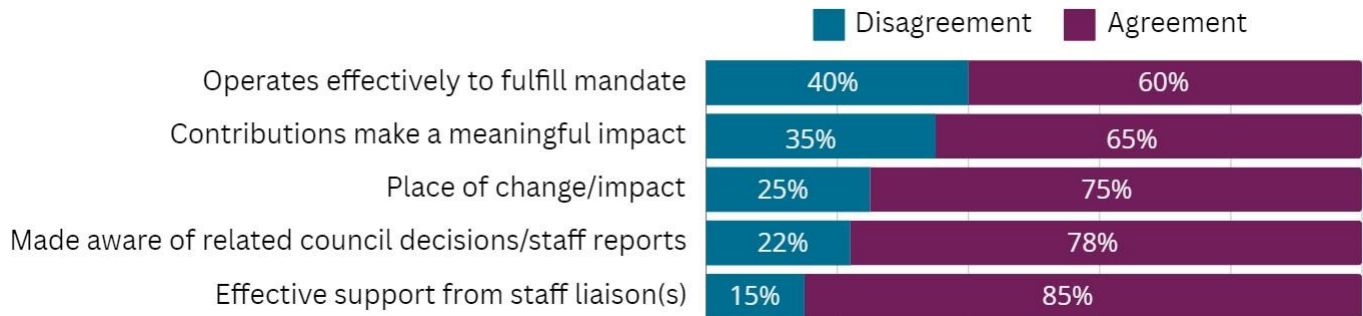
Comments made during the focus groups more often reflected a positive sentiment towards councillor involvement; however, 60% of survey responses identified a need for improvement with respect to councillor participation. Comments related to lack of **councillor attendance** made up most of the feedback received (representing approximately 75% of comments indicating a need for change within the VAC process and structure).

5.1.4 Effectiveness in fulfilling mandate

The second largest area of disagreement noted in the survey was in regard to the statement, "The VAC(s) I am a member of operates effectively to fulfill its mandate," with 40% of respondents indicating disagreement (Figure 6). Furthermore, 35% of survey respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, "My contributions through the VAC(s) make a meaningful

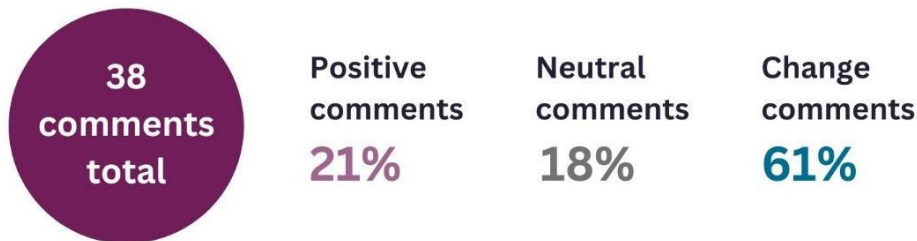
impact in the City of Hamilton,” and 25% (one in four respondents) expressed disagreement with the statement, “VACs are a place where change, impact, and/or influence can happen”.

Figure 6. VAC member survey: Effectiveness in fulfilling mandate



Interestingly, only 15% of survey respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, “The staff liaison(s) effectively supports the work of the VAC(s).” As noted in the section on City Staff, this was not fully echoed in the open-ended survey responses and focus groups and became a significant theme relating to areas for improvement in the broader analysis.

Sentiment analysis of responses in the effectiveness in fulfilling mandate section of the survey:



Overall, approximately 61% of the comments made in this section identified a need for change.

In a preliminary analysis of the survey responses and feedback received through focus groups, it became evident that the challenges discussed in the previous sections of the report intersect with and impact the effectiveness of VACs and their ability to fulfill their mandates. For example, lack of transparency in communicating with council left VACs unclear if and how their recommendations had been received and deliberated by council. Therefore, while effectiveness of fulfilling the mandate was a section of the survey, a broader thematic approach was taken to analyzing feedback with respect to VAC effectiveness to better reflect the interplay between this and other themes. For this reason, some themes already considered in this analysis will be highlighted again.

The major themes related to VAC effectiveness identified in VAC member feedback in the open-ended survey question and focus groups were:

1. Impact (including sentiment of fulfilling mandate/role; having wider community impact; value/regard for VAC work)
2. Transparency
3. Clarity
4. Timelines (general timeliness of VAC processes, e.g. selection process, communications with council, training etc.)
5. VAC Culture

Overall, VAC Effectiveness was by far the most common theme raised in VAC member feedback in the open-ended survey questions and was also the most common theme raised in focus group comments, though by a smaller margin.

1. Impact

VAC survey responses:

Out of all open-ended survey responses identifying a need for change, impact was the theme most commonly raised and made up approximately 40% of comments identifying current challenges related to VAC Effectiveness. Impact was also the most common theme raised in comments that spoke to aspects of VACs that are currently working well, and approximately 40% of comments raised with respect to impact conveyed a current benefit.

In the survey, comments identifying challenges related to impact intersected most with **communicating with council** (approximately 25% of negative comments related to impact) and **rigid/bureaucratic process** (also about 25% of impact comments identifying a need for improvement).

“The lasting impression gained from [my years on VAC] is that the city doesn't listen to these committees or care about enacting policies it creates. This is truly demoralizing and causes citizens to feel actively ignored. The city needs to do better and let citizens take an active role vs. placating them with seats in an ignored room.”

VAC focus groups:

Impact was also the overall most common theme that arose in feedback from the focus groups, though by a smaller margin. Comments related to impact made up approximately 35% of total comments related to VAC effectiveness, though positive comments with respect to impact were

made far more infrequently in comparison to the open-ended survey responses (just over 15% of comments related to impact).

When analyzing the focus group feedback, comments suggesting improvements with respect to **impact** most often intersected with **communicating with council**. These comments made up approximately 30% of all comments identifying a need for change related to impact. These comments echoed the sentiments that VACs are disregarded or devalued by council, and encouraged council and the City to more proactively seek out VAC advice on matters related to their mandates.

2. Transparency

VAC survey responses:

Transparency and VAC Culture were raised second most frequently in open-ended survey comments related to VAC Effectiveness. Almost all comments raised in the open-ended survey questions related to transparency identified a need for change. Transparency also made up approximately 20% of comments identifying a need for change related to VAC Effectiveness. Comments identifying current challenges related to transparency most frequently raised the **selection/decision-making process** for VAC membership (just over 40%) and **communicating with council** (approximately 30%).

“Our recommendations have to travel up through a bureaucratic structure and then it seems they get lost. Very few recommendations if any result in Council or City action”

“In terms of the everyday issues our community faces, that would potentially need to be communicated to our council, there seems to be a disconnect in communicating these things. Somehow this information often gets lost and/or is misinterpreted at times.”

VAC focus groups:

Comments related to transparency made up a smaller portion of total comments related to VAC Effectiveness (approximately 15% of total comments related to VAC Effectiveness, and 20% of challenges raised with respect to VAC Effectiveness). All comments concerning transparency in the focus groups conveyed a need for improvement, and most again related to **communicating with council** (approximately 45) and the **selection/decision-making process** (nearly 30%).

3. Clarity

VAC survey results:

Feedback related to clarity in the open-ended survey questions made up approximately 20% of comments identifying a need for change related to VAC Effectiveness and almost approximately 90% related to clarity identified a need for improvement.

In the survey responses, the need for improved clarity was most commonly raised in relation to **scope and mandate** (approximately 30% of comments) and **communication with council** (approximately 25% of comments). The need for improved clarity with respect to the VAC role as part of training/onboarding was also referenced several comments.

“I never got a proper explanation of the expectations of the role, as it aligns to Staff Liaison and Council, hence I was actually confused for the most part. I felt that we did not make any marked difference or served any purpose, besides fulfilling a need for Council.”

VAC focus groups:

Feedback with respect to clarity in the focus groups made up approximately 25% of comments reflecting need for improvement related to VAC Effectiveness, and almost all comments related to clarity identified a current challenge.

Similar to the survey responses, comments that identified a need for change related to clarity most often intersected with **scope and mandate** (approximately 25% of comments), as well as **VAC structure/process** (approximately 20% of comments).

4. Timelines

VAC survey responses:

Feedback related to the timelines of VAC processes was least common in comments related to VAC Effectiveness (approximately 6% of all comments related to VAC Effectiveness, and 10% of those that identified a need for improvement), and all comments raised with respect to timelines identified this as a current challenge. Several of these comments were raised about VAC/Council processes more broadly as well as in relation to the VAC member and **selection/decision-making process**.

“The speed and flexibility of the process is lacking. At times, we needed to recruit members part way through the cycle to fill any expertise gaps or replacing members

and it can take a very long to find new members. This is especially challenging when working within the 4 year committee term.”

“You submit a report and they just vote to receive it and everything is so SLOW. People need to be prepared for how SLOW politics are and how long it takes for ideas to come to fruition.”

VAC focus groups:

Comments related to timelines were more frequently raised in the focus groups, making up approximately 20% of comments that identified a need for change related to VAC Effectiveness. Most of these comments related to the timeliness of bringing on new VAC members when someone had stepped down, though timeliness related to the feedback loop with council when recommendations have been put forward was also raised.

5. VAC culture

VAC survey responses:

In the open-ended survey responses, VAC Culture was raised in approximately 15% of comments about VAC Effectiveness and was raised fairly equally as both something currently working well with respect to VACs (approximately 55% of comments) as well as an area that needs improvement (approximately 45% of comments).

Many of these comments highlighted camaraderie among VAC members and members' dedication to VAC work.

“I enjoyed my participation in the committee and meet wonderful Hamilton members. We were able to advance some change for our community.”

“[VAC] is a hard working committee, well attended at committee meetings and working groups. We have kept [type of] issue in the forefront”

“Some members use the experience on the committee as a line in their CV and some try to bring their own personal agendas in front of the city council not understanding that committees advise, not decide on issues.”

VAC focus groups:

Comments related to VAC Culture made up a larger portion of comments raised about VAC Effectiveness (over 15%) and were also raised more frequently as an aspect of VACs that is

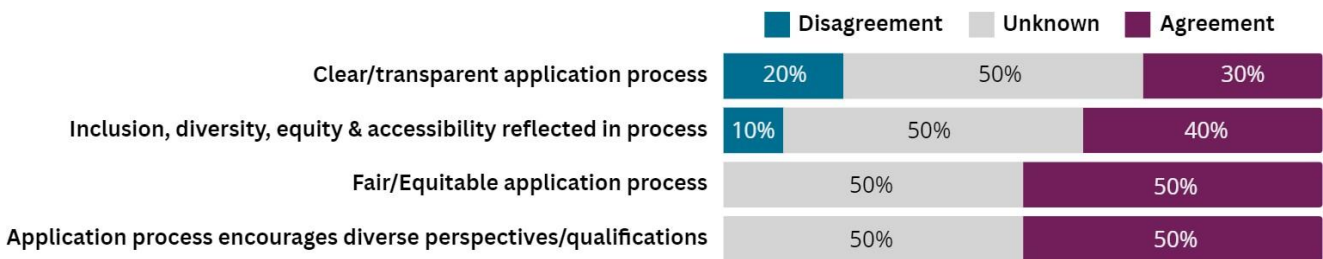
currently working well (approximately 75%), again highlighting member’s commitment to VAC’s and their goals.

5.2 Staff liaisons

5.2.1 Staff liaison survey

a. Application, selection, and appointment process

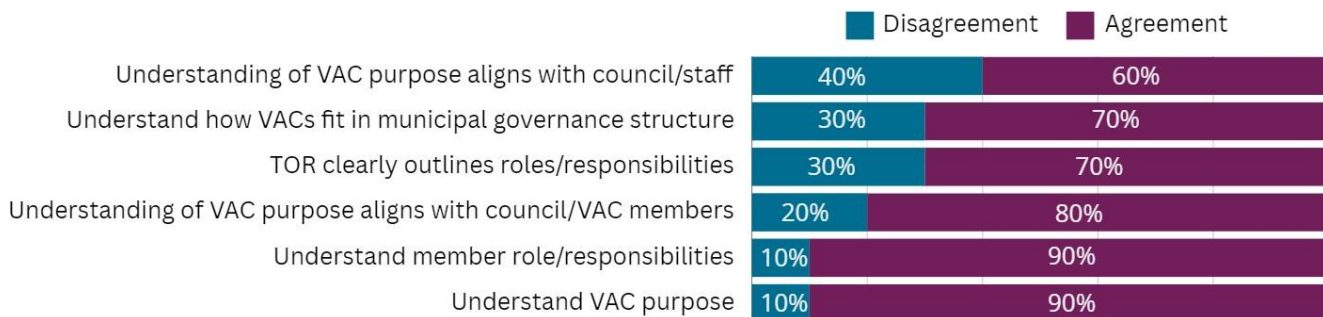
Figure 7. Staff liaison survey: application, selection, and appointment process



When looking at staff liaison responses to statements around the application, selection, and appointment process, 50% of staff answered unknown to the statements, with the majority indicating in the comment box that they were not with the committee during the VAC member selection process. Otherwise, staff liaisons generally expressed agreement with statements in this section, apart from the statement “The Application, selection, and appointment process is clear and transparent,” where 20% expressed disagreement. This was also the statement with the highest level of disagreement among VAC members who completed the survey.

b. Mandate and role

Figure 8. Staff liaison survey: mandate and role



When looking at staff liaison responses to the mandate and role of VACs, the statement “I understand how VACs fit within the municipal governance structure” has the highest

disagreement, with 40% of respondents indicating disagreement. The statements “The Terms of Reference for the VAC I am a staff liaison for clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the members, staff liaisons and council,” as well as “My understanding of the scope and responsibilities of the VAC aligns with that of council and VAC members,” both had 30% of staff liaisons indicate disagreement.

c. Member training and materials

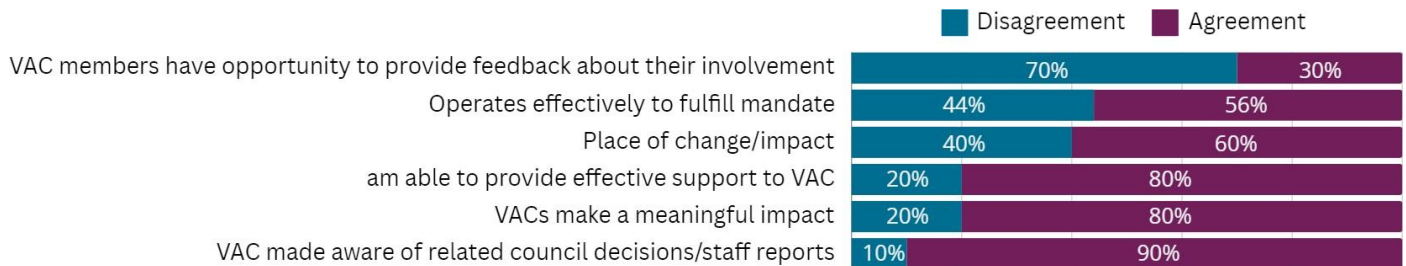
Figure 9. Staff liaison survey: Member training and materials



The statement “I was provided adequate training to fulfill the responsibilities of a Staff Liaison” had the largest indication of disagreement, with 80% of staff liaisons indicating disagreement. Regarding whether VAC members received adequate training, 50% of staff liaisons expressed disagreement. 40% of staff liaisons expressed disagreement with the statement, “I understand the VAC structure and the process by which VAC members can provide feedback to council.” Staff liaisons all expressed VAC members are provided with materials that they need to participate in VAC meetings in a timely manner, and that, as staff liaisons, they have access to the equipment and resources needed to fulfill their role.

d. Effectiveness in fulfilling mandate

Figure 10. Staff liaison survey: effectiveness in fulfilling mandate



70% of staff liaisons expressed disagreement with the statement, “VAC members have adequate opportunity to provide feedback about their involvement in a VAC.” Over half of the staff liaisons (55%) expressed disagreement with the statement “The VAC I am a staff liaison for operated

effectively to fulfill its mandate.” Half of the staff liaisons expressed disagreement with the statement, “VACs are a place where change impact, and/or influence can happen;” however, 70% of staff liaisons expressed agreement with the statement, “VACs make a meaningful impact in the City of Hamilton.”

Staff liaison open-ended survey responses:

Table 2. Staff Liaisons: Theme areas of open-ended responses

Theme	# Staff Liaisons who discussed theme (out of 10)	Frequency of theme in responses*
Scope and mandate	5	Total: 9 Challenges: 8 Benefits: 1
Staff Liaison training	5	Total: 5 Challenges: 5
Rigidity/bureaucracy	4	Total: 5 Challenges: 5
Impact	4	Total: 8 Challenges: 5 Benefits: 3
Member training	4	Total: 5 Challenges: 5
Involvement of staff	3	Total: 3 Challenges: 3
VAC Culture	2	Total: 8 Challenges: 8
Engagement with broader community	2	Total: 5 Challenges: 4 Benefits: 1
Councillor attendance	2	Total: 3 Challenges: 3

*themes may have come up multiple times in one staff liaison survey

When looking at the open-ended survey responses from staff liaisons, challenges pertaining to the **scope/mandate** of VACs were brought up most frequently, and by the greatest number of staff liaisons (five staff). The lack of **clarity** around the scope/mandate for VAC was the challenge raised most frequently, specifically with respect to the role of VACs. It was raised that VACs ought

to play more of an advisory role rather than program delivery or budget administration. Comments also raised confusion among both staff and VAC members about the advocacy capacity of VACs. One staff liaison also noted that developing priorities and work plan was a challenge for the VAC they worked with.

“There were challenges with staying in scope and knowing what they could [do] with a small budget. For example, it was difficult for them to know what was their role vs. staff's role vs. council's role.”

Staff liaison training was also raised by five staff as a challenge, with two staff indicating that they did not receive any onboarding or training before starting in their role. Staff indicated a need for specific training for the staff liaison role.

“When I started in this role there was no cross-over and no formal staff liaison training provided at the corporate level, which I expected given the weight of the role.”

“I think a well developed training for volunteers and staff liaisons that included information on the structure, function, roles, examples of activities etc. could be helpful and might address these changes.”

The **rigidity/bureaucracy** of the VACs and associated processes, **impact**, and **member training**, were all raised as challenges in the comments made by four staff liaisons. In reference to rigidity/bureaucracy, staff spoke to the formality of VACs inhibiting committee work, along with lengthy timelines of moving things forward presenting challenges for VACs. Staff liaisons also noted training for VAC members as an area for improvement, indicating that training for VAC members should include orientation and training specific to: role, structure, function, and report writing. It was also suggested that newly formed committees have a senior clerk at an early meeting, or a pre-made video, outlining the reporting process, code of conduct etc. to make processes clearer. One comment also noted that the introduction of the citizen committee report in the middle of the term was confusing and that staff liaisons and VAC members were not adequately trained on this. In regard to impact, three staff liaisons noted that the current structure of VACs is not working effectively to allow VACs to fulfill their purpose, underscoring the importance of soliciting advice from citizen experts while speaking to the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of the current structure for doing this.

Impact:

“I feel like the advisory committee model is ineffective in what I think their purpose is; to provide guidance to council. Our Committee doesn't do that. People on our committee actually interact more with council outside of the committee [...] because it is easier.”

“I think it is a challenge for people to understand how council and committees function and the various ways in which they fit within this structure. A challenge of this structure for the committee I worked with is the timelines associated with moving things forward. It can be a slow process which can be frustrating for people.”

“We also need to shift the culture of the committee to make them less formal / bureaucratic so that we can inspire and encourage genuine contributions. This may mean having less formal & less public meetings & staff can remit formal minutes as needed.”

Three staff liaisons identified challenges around **involvement of staff** liaisons in VACs in the open-ended responses. Staff noted challenges with being required to run meetings when they had content expertise, but no knowledge of the processes pertaining to VACs, not having a clear understanding of their role in directing the committee, and the over-emphasis on administrative work.

Additionally, although only raised by two staff liaisons, challenges pertaining to **VAC culture** are important to highlight as concerns of bullying towards VAC members and staff liaisons, as well as concerns of broader toxicity within the VAC were raised.

“I had my intentions, work ethic, and performance attacked regularly. I had comments from Committee members that they felt bullied and that they would never come back to the committee because of the toxicity. As staff, I can take it, but committee members shouldn't have to.”

Engagement with broader community and lack of **councillor attendance** at meetings were also raised by two staff liaisons as challenges. A staff liaison noted that VAC membership is not necessarily reflective of the community and highlighted the need for feedback mechanisms to increase broader community engagement and input at the grassroots level. Comments with respect to councillor attendance underscored the importance of having a councillor attached to each VAC as well as the importance of their attendance at meetings.

5.3 City Council members

5.3.1 City Council interviews

Given that Council Interviews were a comparatively smaller data set, the data was analyzed by the number of Council Members that raised a particular theme (Table 4).

Table 3. Council member interview theme areas

Theme	# Council Members who discussed theme (out of 10)	Frequency of theme in responses*
Communication with council	9	Total: 19 Challenges: 14 Benefits: 5
Scope and mandate	8	Total: 32 Challenges: 26 Benefits: 5
Impact	7	Total: 30 Challenges: 19 Benefits: 11
VAC member selection process	7	Total: 7 Challenges: 7
VAC structure/process	7	Total: 11 Challenges: 11
Clarity	6	Total: 14 Challenges: 13 Benefits: 1
Alignment with Council priorities	4	Total: 7 Challenges: 6 Benefits: 1
Timelines and effort required to meet them	4	Total: 6 Challenges: 6
Value of community expertise in VAC	4	Total: 14 Challenges: 5 Benefits: 9
Alignment with community need	4	Total: 5 Challenges: 4 Benefits: 1
Transparency	4	Total: 4 Challenges: 4

*themes may have come up more than once in each council member interview

Council members conveyed the general sentiment that VACs play an important role in providing community feedback. Council members also raised a number of areas of suggested improvements to the VAC function and process. Many of the themes raised coincided with the

feedback provided by VAC members and staff liaisons, although there was some divergence both thematically and in terms of the recommendations put forward. These are explored below.

In terms of the themes most frequently raised as areas of improvement, **communication with council** was raised most frequently by Council members. Comments by Council members generally suggested improvement to the process related to VAC recommendations (both how they are put forward as well as how they are received/actioned by Council). A need for a clear, transparent process of receiving, deliberating on, and communicating back to VACs was an identified need. Also, proactively engaging VACs to inform departmental reports and policy initiatives from the outset rather than reviewing reports that have already been put forward to council was raised. One comment raised that the City has enacted several new action plans that could align with existing VACs, though it is unclear if they have been consulted as part of the process. Alternatively, it was also suggested that VACs should be able to request a meeting with the committee they report to with respect to work they have taken on. Some comments raised issues related to the clarity of the work being undertaken by VACs, for example, improved clarity on how VACs fit into City policy-making as well as the relationship between council, staff liaisons, and VACs. Other comments suggested a need for uniformity in VAC reporting, and some suggested that the reports be provided to the whole of Council for review instead of going to committees.

Issues related to **scope and mandate** were raised in eight of ten Council interviews. Similar to feedback received in the VAC Member engagements and the Staff Liaison survey, lack of **clarity** of scope and mandate was raised most frequently and by the majority of Council Members that raised challenges related to scope and mandate. Comments by Council members identified the need to provide greater clarity to VACs on the expected outcomes of their work. Related to this, several council comments spoke to the need for clear terms of reference that are reviewed at regular intervals to ensure their currency. Though not raised as frequently in the VAC engagements, consideration of the **relevance** of VAC's scope and mandate in the current climate was raised by a majority of Council members that spoke to scope and mandate.

Impact (sentiment of VAC fulfilling mandate/role, having wider community impact, being valued/regarded) was raised by seven of ten Council members. Some comments made expressed that VAC members feel devalued or are underutilized (most frequently raised) and others spoke to the lack of proactive consultation with VACs on issues related to their mandate. Council members noted that VACs ought to be providing policy recommendations related to council's strategic priorities and should carry the same weight as consultant feedback. A desire to bring back the passion and commitment of community members who have otherwise joined advocacy groups into the formal VAC process was identified. To support this work, Council members identified a need for robust and consistent staff support, as well as a need for VACs to access financial resources and additional expertise as needed. There was divergence on the role of Clerks in VACs. Further training for VAC Chairs to effectively facilitate meetings to allow for meaningful

participation among all VAC members was also raised, along with improved training for staff on meaningful engagement with VACs.

Seven of ten Council Members also spoke to VAC member **selection/decision-making process** as an area that needs improvement. Most commonly, council members identified a need for increased **community involvement** in the selection and decision-making process. Creating a process for greater **transparency** in decision-making, for example, by using of a skills matrix, was seen as one way to improve the selection/ decision-making process. Adding transparency with respect to how inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are factored into member selection was also suggested. Some Council members commented on the importance of establishing clear membership requirements in the selection process to avoid VACs being used to push personal agendas.

The **VAC Structure/Process** was also referenced by seven of ten Council Members. These comments largely identified that the over-structuring of VACs impedes their function and spoke to the need for some flexibility, less formality, and a balance between structure and overall purpose to allow VACs to carry out their work as intended. One council member suggested that VACs should be restructured as working groups rather than a local board to allow for greater flexibility. It was identified that committees that serve different purposes may require different structures and supports.

There was notable divergence among council members with respect to restructuring. One suggestion made was to only have VACs with specific mandates related to council priorities, while another spoke to the importance that all VACs can have if provided the opportunity and adequate support. It was noted that council may need to consider the creation of additional VACs to support their work. There was also a suggestion that VACs representing equity-deserving communities could be amalgamated as a potential means of supporting a more intersectional approach.

Several comments focussed on the need for a diversity of voices and expertise in each VAC to provide comprehensive advice to Council on Council priorities. One comment pointed to how the Climate Change Advisory Committee has been structured in that it is linked to a strategic priority of council, has membership that complements and enhances the capacity of the City and reflects diverse backgrounds that intersect with climate change, and suggested all VACs should be structured this way.

The need for greater clarity was also a notable theme, raised by six of ten Council Members. Like the feedback received through the engagements with VAC Members and Staff Liaisons, comments with respect to clarity were most often raised with respect to VAC **scope and mandate**. The need for greater clarity was also brought up more generally with respect to VAC processes and how information is shared between Council and VACs.

Misalignment with Council Priorities was brought forward as an area of improvement by four Council Members. Comments spoke to the desire for clear delineation between the mandate of VACs and current council priorities. It was also suggested that VAC terms align with those of council.

The **timelines** with respect to VAC processes were also raised as a current challenge by four Council Members, both with respect to the need for timely recommendations from VACs, the considerable time it takes to put recommendations forward given the current VAC structure, and the timelines for feedback. Time constraints related to recruitment was also identified as a concern.

The value of the **community expertise** brought forward by VACs was brought forward by five Council Members as an aspect of VACs that is currently working well. Most highlighted the value of citizen input and the importance of leveraging community knowledge and expertise. Community expertise was also raised as an area that needs improvement by four Council Members, and reflected sentiments that **community expertise in VACs could be better utilized**.

Alignment with community needs was raised by four Council Members, with respect to the importance of balancing/incorporating feedback from the broader community in addition to or as part of the VAC through VAC engagement with the wider community. One comment suggested that VACs ought to be able to use the Engage Hamilton platform or host town halls to seek advice from residents on initiatives and recommendations being considered by the VAC.

Transparency was also raised by four Council Members, with respect to VAC's relationship to Council, noting a lack of transparency with respect to Council expectations of VACs and receiving/actioning VAC reports.

5.4 Additional considerations

Although the themes below were not raised with the same level of frequency as the previous sections in the VAC member, staff liaison and council member engagements, issues around accessibility, the VAC review, and measuring success were raised among VAC members, staff liaisons, and councillors.

5.4.1 Accessibility

Several challenges regarding accessibility were raised. Most frequently, the suggestion to offer **hybrid** VAC meetings was raised, both in terms of making VACs more accessible for a broader audience, as well as a means to address issues with quorum.

Storage of relevant documents for VAC members (past meeting minutes, presentations, working documents) in an accessible manner was raised second most frequently. VAC members voiced challenges with the lack of infrastructure available to VACs to store documents currently, with VAC members having to store items on personal computers and drives. For those who do not have access to personal storage, this presents a significant barrier to meaningful participation in VACs; members also voiced concern that the lack of availability of documents in an accessible format affects the continuity of work, especially when there is turnover among VAC members.

Stipends and Meeting supports for VAC members was raised third most frequently. Staff and VAC members noted that offering stipends would enable more diverse representation and experience on committees. The availability of childcare and more disability-related supports were also raised as areas for improvement, as well as parking and having food available at VAC meetings. Council member feedback included that VAC members take time away from their families to participate and should at least get a meal as a token of the City's thanks for their time and efforts.

5.4.2 VAC review

Although not necessarily part of the scope of this review, VAC members raised several questions and concerns around the current VAC review. These comments highlight the lack of **clarity** and **transparency** VAC members have felt around the review process and timelines.

VAC members expressed concerns about the lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the review process. In the absence of clear and transparent communication, members were left to speculate about the intended outcome of the review, with some noting they were told their committees might not exist after the review.

As VACs played a role in facilitating feedback from the broader community related to their mandates to council, VAC members also noted concerns around this “missing link” that exists with regards to council consultation and engagement with community expertise while the review is being undertaken.

5.4.3 Measuring success

Measuring success was raised in three of the focus groups and by a few council members. VAC members highlighted that having ongoing feedback methods (e.g. and annual survey on VAC functioning) would be beneficial to address challenges as they arise, and gauge what VAC members feel is working well, and provide opportunities to suggest areas for improvement. Others suggested that where possible, VACs have work plans or strategic plans that include indicators of success.

Overall, measuring the success of VACs is an area that needs significant consideration, specifically around how success is defined, and who defines the success of VACs.

“On measuring success, One suggestion would be that if the City establishes a new approach to Advisory Committees, there should definitely be an evaluation plan to go with it e.g. annual survey to measure 'how's it going?' for both the committee members and the staff liaison, and a measure of Councillor participation too”

“valuable if each committee had a stat plan and committee workplan – when there is turn over there is an agreed up plan that the committee could continue working towards (Clean Air Hamilton provided as an example), renewed every year or term of council/committee, provided measurement and indicators to know if work has been successful”

6.0 Discussion and recommendations

The high level of participation from VAC members, staff liaisons and council members speaks to dedication and desire to ensure VACs can operate in a way that affects meaningful change in the City of Hamilton. Council members, staff liaisons, and VAC members spoke to a desire for an improved process that enables meaningful participation of volunteers, recognizing that VAC members have a wealth of knowledge and expertise based on their lived and professional experiences that can be utilized for the greater good of Hamilton.

Important for consideration in both the discussion and recommendations, is the intersecting nature of the challenges and benefits brought forward in participant feedback. As previously noted, areas requiring improvement cannot be looked at in isolation and must be situated in the broader context of VAC function, particularly in considering recommendations for change moving forward. Moreover, steps taken to remedy areas that were identified as needing improvement should strive to understand and work to address the root causes of issues to avoid the reoccurrence of challenges. For example, while improved training may address some issues related to lack of clarity with respect to VAC process and structure and would likely have other positive implications for VAC participation, comments in the engagements with VAC members, staff liaisons, and council demonstrated misalignment in the understanding of the purpose and role of VACs. This incongruence would likely not be addressed by training alone and requires intentional work to establish a common understanding of the purpose and intended outcomes of VACs.

6.1 Summary of aspects currently working well and opportunities

Across our engagements with all participants, there was recognition of the immense opportunity VACs provide in leveraging both the enthusiasm and expertise of community members in Hamilton. The diversity of experiences and opinions on VACs was highlighted as a critical asset that allows the City to tap into and engage with a knowledge-base they may otherwise not have access to, as well as provide the opportunity to foster more equitable solutions that meet community needs. This is demonstrated in the below staff liaison quotes:

"...having a group of diverse folks that can bring an array of ideas to the table is really amazing. There's so many things that other people can think of."

"A focussed, involved advisory committee can bring relevant issues to Council's attention and suggest ways to deal with these issues. The citizen view of Hamilton, as a place to live and work, raise a family and age successfully, is not necessarily the same as that of an employee who may live elsewhere. These committees have the opportunity to suggest events and ways to generate more equitable involvement in the city by marginalized groups."

All participant groups also highlighted the importance of VACs as a vehicle for community involvement and engagement. In particular, VAC members noted the importance of the connections built through VACs and the role VACs can play in fostering a sense of community, breaking down barriers to civic engagement, and providing opportunities to contribute to the creation of a thriving Hamilton.

There was also a strong desire by VAC members, staff liaison, and council to establish appropriate structure and supports that would enable meaningful integration of VACs into City processes as a means of identifying issues from the community as well as providing advice on strategic initiatives being undertaken by council and the City.

6.2 Summary of areas for improvement

Similar to the above-noted opportunities, several challenges were also consistently raised among the three participant groups. Challenges pertaining to impact were most commonly raised among the engagements. These comments spoke to the unfulfilled potential and underutilization of VACs and the community expertise held within them. Lack of clarity with respect to the scope and mandate of VACs was also frequently raised among all three participant groups. Notably, there was both a lack of clarity around scope and misalignment between the three participant groups with respect to the role of VACs in Hamilton. The current structure and processes of VACs were also consistently raised as an area for improvement among VAC members, staff liaisons and

council. All three participant groups identified over-structuring VACs as an impediment to their function and ability to take on meaningful work. The need for a clearly articulated, accessible and transparent process for communicating with council was also identified, both in relation to how VAC recommendations are brought forward, but also in how council receives, reviews, and responds to VAC recommendations. While not raised as frequently as council, the need for more consistent and comprehensive training for both VAC members and staff liaisons was commonly raised by the two groups. The need for improved transparency with respect to the VAC member selection and decision-making process, including clear selection criteria, was also raised frequently by both VAC members and council.

6.3 Recommendations

Overall:

1. As the City looks to potentially amend the VAC model considering the outcomes of this review, it is imperative that the City continue to involve and consult VAC members with respect to potential changes moving forward. VAC members have tremendous knowledge on what has been working well and what has not with respect to VAC function. Their involvement will only strengthen remedies to the challenges identified in this report, as well as provide an opportunity to rebuild trust lost with VAC members.
2. Given the sentiments of disregard and confusion communicated by VAC members with respect to how the VAC Review was initiated, we encourage the City to proactively inform and engage VAC members in the next steps of the review.
3. Overall, there is a need for greater clarity and consistent understanding of the role of VACs, their expected outcomes, and how each participant group (i.e. VAC members, staff liaisons and council members) participate in and contribute to the work of VACs. As this was a need identified by all three groups, it is recommended that the scope, mandate, role and intended outcomes of VACs be clearly defined in VAC governing document.
4. In addition to clear objectives, there is a need to develop ongoing feedback mechanisms and an evaluation plan for VACs. Evaluation of VACs needs to capture both the effectiveness of the VACs in fulfilling their mandates as well as volunteer experiences on the committees, necessitating feedback from council, staff liaisons and VAC members on their effectiveness. Additionally, implementing a process for ongoing feedback would create opportunities to address challenges with VACs as they arise.

Impact:

5. It should be recognized that all challenges brought forward in this report and the associated recommendations for remedy have direct implications on the effectiveness and impact VACs can have. As a result, it is recommended that careful consideration is given to how all recommendations could be implemented.
6. The City should look to implement processes and engagement opportunities that support improved collaboration and a more intersectional approach to VAC work, including vehicles that enable VAC engagement with the broader community as well as means for VACs to collaborate with each other on intersecting issues.

Scope/Mandate:

7. Implement VAC Terms of Reference (TOR) reviews at regularly scheduled intervals to ensure governing documents continue to meet the needs of VAC members and council.
8. Given that the importance of community expertise was highlighted as a key asset by all three participant groups, it is recommended that VACs be provided the latitude necessary to raise concerns identified at the community level. Additionally, there was an identified need for better alignment between council and City priorities and the work of VACs; therefore, it is recommended that the City review existing VACs for alignment with strategic priorities and refocus VAC work as needed.
9. There is also need for consideration of the diverse mandates and functions of current VACs, therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach to VAC governance and supports would likely not support the success of current VACs.

VAC Structure/Processes:

10. As the rigidity of the current VAC structure was raised as a barrier to VAC's ability to fulfill their role by all three participant groups, it is recommended that the City consider less structured formats/processes for VACs. While it was recognized that some structure is required for meaningful participation, procedures around quorum and how discussions are held were generally viewed as inhibiting the important advisory and engagement function of VACs.
11. To fully utilize the expertise on VACs, proactive and ongoing engagement with VACs should be embedded into existing consultation processes that inform council priorities and departmental work as they relate to VAC scope and mandate (e.g. in the development and implementation of City action plans). This consultation should be done as part of

departmental work on strategic initiatives and before staff reports are put to council for consideration.

12. VAC governance documents should clearly articulate the role of council members on VACs, including the expected level of participation from council members (e.g. frequency of meeting attendance, availability for consultation to VAC outside of meetings) to support consistent understanding across all VAC participants.
13. Governance documents should also provide clear direction on the role of staff liaisons in facilitating and supporting VAC work. VACs also require ongoing support from staff content experts as well as procedural experts. Delineation of these roles, and consistent access to both competencies, would better support VACs as well as the staff supporting their work.

Council Communication:

14. Ensure a clear and transparent process, with expected timelines, is provided to VAC members with respect to communicating and making recommendations to council. The process should identify how recommendations are put forward, how and by whom recommendations are received, and deliberated. It should also clearly outline how council will respond to the recommendations, and if/how they have been actioned, focusing on ensuring a clear feedback loop to VACs.

Training:

15. There is a need for improved, consistent, and accessible training for VAC members. More comprehensive training on council structure and process, VAC scope and responsibilities, meeting procedure and VAC decision making, report-writing, and role-specific training for VAC chairs were identified needs.
16. Steps should also be taken to develop and implement consistent training for staff liaisons that clearly outlines the role of staff liaisons, as well as VAC purpose, function, and structure. Consistent onboarding and handoff planning should also be developed to better support transitions between staff liaisons. A centralized location for all VAC documents/work accessible to staff liaisons and all VAC members would also support these transitions.

Selection/Decision Making:

17. Involve community stakeholders in the VAC member selection and decision-making process.
18. Working with citizen representatives supporting VAC selection work, develop selection criteria for VAC members, inclusive of how equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are accounted

for in decision-making. Communicate selection criteria to applicants/public during the call for applications. Where a VAC applicant is unsuccessful, communicate the outcome to the applicant and provide a brief explanation of the decision to further support transparency of the process.

19. Established term limits for VAC membership. Clearly communicate term limits in VAC Terms of Reference.
20. Greater attention needs to be given to the timely transition between VAC members in the event a VAC member resigns. Maintaining a list of applicants who met the application criteria but were not selected for the role would assist with this transition.
21. Provide robust, consistent training to all VAC members, including those brought on mid-term.

Appendix

Appendix A – VAC member survey



Under the direction of the Hamilton City Council, the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division is currently leading a review of Volunteer Advisory Committees to provide recommendations around engagement to fulfill the priorities of the 2022-2026 Term of Council.

As part of this review, the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division has engaged the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to collect feedback from key community partners. The SPRC is an independent, non-profit organization that conducts program evaluations and community-based research.

This survey collects information about members' experiences on Volunteer Advisory Committees as aligned with the scope of the Volunteer Advisory Committee Review. The survey has 27 questions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It will ask you to reflect on your experience in four areas:

- (1) The application, selection, and appointment process
- (2) The mandate and roles of your Volunteer Advisory Committee
- (3) Member training and materials, and
- (4) How effective the Volunteer Advisory Committee is at achieving its mandate

The survey does not ask for any identifying information and the answers provided will be anonymous. Questions can be skipped if you don't have the information or are uncomfortable providing an answer. Information shared through the survey will be reported to the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division.

Thank you for your participation. Your feedback is important and will help inform City staff recommendations to Council. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact SPRC Social Planners, Jen Matthews (jmatthews@sprchamilton.ca) or Alana Westervelt (awestervelt@sprchamilton.ca). To learn more about SPRC, visit sprchamilton.ca.

By clicking next to enter this survey, I indicate that I have read the information provided and agree to participate in the survey.

Application, Selection & Appointment Process

Based on your personal experience with the City of Hamilton's Volunteer Advisory Committees, please respond to the following statements:

1. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees is fair and equitable.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees is clear and transparent.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees reflects the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees encourages a diversity of perspectives and qualifications among committee membership.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committee application, selection and appointment process.

Mandate & Role

Based on your personal experience with the City of Hamilton's Volunteer Advisory Committees, please respond to the following statements:

6. I understand the purpose of Volunteer Advisory Committees.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. My understanding of the purpose and mandate of Volunteer Advisory Committees aligns with that of council and staff liaisons.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. I understand the role and responsibilities of Volunteer Advisory Committee members.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. My understanding of the role and responsibilities of Volunteer Advisory Committee members aligns with that of council and staff liaisons.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. The terms of reference for the Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) that I am a member of clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of members, staff liaisons, and council.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. I understand how Volunteer Advisory Committees fit within the municipal governance structure.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committees mandate and role.

Member Training & Materials

Based on your personal experience with the City of Hamilton's Volunteer Advisory Committees, please respond to the following statements:

13. I was provided adequate training to fulfill the responsibilities of a Volunteer Advisory Committee member.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

14. Further training in these areas would benefit me as a Volunteer Advisory Committee member (please select all that apply):

Council structure/procedure

Volunteer Advisory Committee scope and responsibilities

Volunteer Advisory Committee meeting procedure and decision making

Using meeting technology

Other (please specify)

No further training

15. I am provided the information needed to fully participate in Volunteer Advisory Committee meetings in a timely and efficient manner.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

16. I understand the Volunteer Advisory Committee structure and the process to provide feedback to council.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

17. I have access to the equipment and resources needed to fulfill my role on a Volunteer Advisory Committee.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. I understand the decision-making process and how my voice can be heard within a Volunteer Advisory Committee.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

19. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committee member training and meeting materials.

Effectiveness in Fulfilling Mandate

Based on your personal experience with the City of Hamilton's Volunteer Advisory Committees, please respond to the following statements:

20. The Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) I am a member of operates effectively to fulfill its mandate.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

21. The staff liaison(s) effectively supports the work of the Volunteer Advisory Committee(s).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. I am made aware of council decisions and staff reports that relate to the mandate of the Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) I am a member of.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

23. My contributions through the Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) make a meaningful impact on the City of Hamilton.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

24. Volunteer Advisory Committees are a place where change, impact, and/or influence can happen.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

25. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the effectiveness of Volunteer Advisory Committees in fulfilling their mandates.

Opportunities

26. Based on your experience as a Volunteer Advisory Committee member, what do you see as the biggest opportunity for Volunteer Advisory Committees in the City of Hamilton?

27. Please use the space below to share anything else about your experience as a Volunteer Advisory Committee member that has not already been included.

Appendix B: Staff liaison survey



Volunteer Advisory Committee Review - Staff Liaison Survey

Under the direction of the Hamilton City Council, the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division is currently leading a review of Volunteer Advisory Committees to provide recommendations around engagement to fulfill the priorities of the 2022-2026 Term of Council.

As part of this review, the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division has engaged the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to collect feedback from key community partners. The SPRC is an independent, non-profit organization that conducts program evaluations and community-based research.

This survey collects information about Staff Liaisons' experiences on Volunteer Advisory Committees as aligned with the scope of the Volunteer Advisory Committee Review. The survey has 31 questions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It will ask you to reflect on your experience in four areas:

- (1) The application, selection, and appointment process
- (2) The mandate and roles of your Volunteer Advisory Committee
- (3) Member training and materials, and
- (4) How effective the Volunteer Advisory Committee is at achieving its mandate

Questions can be skipped if you don't have the information or are uncomfortable providing an answer. Information shared through the survey will be anonymized and reported to the City's Government Relations and Community Engagement Division.

Thank you for your participation. Your feedback is important and will help inform City staff recommendations to Council. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact SPRC Social Planner, Jen Matthews (jmatthews@sprchamilton.ca). To learn more about SPRC, visit sprchamilton.ca.

By clicking next to enter this survey, I indicate that I have read the information provided and agree to participate in the survey.

1. What Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) are you currently the Staff Liaison for?

Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees

Arts Advisory Committee

Committee Against Racism

Food Advisory Committee

Hamilton Cycling Committee

Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee

Hamilton Veterans Advisory Committee

Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Committee

Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee

Keeping Hamilton Green and Clean Committee

LGTBQ Advisory Committee

Mundialization Committee

Seniors Advisory Committee

Application, Selection & Appointment Process

Based on your personal experience as a City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) Staff Liaison, please respond to the following statements:

2. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees is fair and equitable.

Strongly Agree Agree Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees is clear and transparent.

Strongly Agree Agree Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees reflects the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Strongly Agree Agree Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The application, selection, and appointment process for Volunteer Advisory Committees encourages a diversity of perspectives and qualifications among committee membership.

Strongly Agree Agree Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committee application, selection and appointment process.

Mandate & Role

Based on your personal experience as a City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) Staff Liaison, please respond to the following statements:

7. I understand the purpose of Volunteer Advisory Committees.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. My understanding of the purpose and mandate of Volunteer Advisory Committees aligns with that of council and Volunteer Advisory Committee members.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. I understand the role and responsibilities of the Staff Liaison role.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. My understanding of the scope and responsibilities of the Staff Liaison role aligns with that of council and Volunteer Advisory Committee members.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. The terms of reference for the Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) that I am a Staff Liaison for clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of members, staff liaisons, and council.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. I understand how Volunteer Advisory Committees fit within the municipal governance structure.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committees mandate and role.

Member Training & Materials

Based on your personal experience as a City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) Staff Liaison, please respond to the following statements:

14. I was provided adequate training to fulfill the responsibilities of a Staff Liaison.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. Volunteer Advisory Committee members receive adequate training to fulfill their role.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

16. In what areas do you feel Volunteer Advisory Committee members require additional training (please select all that apply):

Council structure/procedure

Volunteer Advisory Committee scope and responsibilities

Volunteer Advisory Committee meeting procedure and decision making

Using meeting technology

Other (please specify)

No further training

17. Volunteer Advisory Committee members are provided the information needed to fully participate in VAC meetings in a timely and efficient manner.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. I understand the Volunteer Advisory Committee structure and the processes by which Volunteer Advisory Committee Members can provide feedback to council.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

19. I have access to the equipment and resources needed to fulfill my role as a Staff Liaison.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

20. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the Volunteer Advisory Committee member training and meeting materials.

Effectiveness in Fulfilling Mandate

Based on your personal experience as a City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) Staff Liaison, please respond to the following statements:

21. The Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) I am a Staff Liaison for operates effectively to fulfill its mandate.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. As a Staff Liaison, I am able to effectively support the work of Volunteer Advisory Committees to fulfill their mandate.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

23. Volunteer Advisory Committee members are informed of the council decisions and staff reports related to the mandate of their committee

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

24. Volunteer Advisory Committee(s) make a meaningful impact on the City of Hamilton.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

25. Volunteer Advisory Committees are a place where change, impact, and/or influence can happen.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

26. Volunteer Advisory Committee members have adequate opportunities to provide feedback about their involvement in a Volunteer Advisory Committee.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

27. Please share any other feedback or examples you have about the effectiveness of Volunteer Advisory Committees in fulfilling their mandates.

Opportunities

28. Based on your experience as a Staff Liaison, what do you see as the biggest opportunity for Volunteer Advisory Committees in the City of Hamilton?

29. Based on your experience as a Staff Liaison, what do you see as the biggest challenge(s) for Volunteer Advisory Committees in the City of Hamilton?

30. Are there changes needed to overcome these challenges? If so, in your opinion, what changes need to be made?

31. Please use the space below to share anything else about Volunteer Advisory Committees that has not already been included.

Appendix C: VAC focus group questions

1. From your perspective, what has been working well with respect to Volunteer Advisory Committees?

Prompt: Members who filled out the survey shared a number of things that they feel have been working well – are there any key highlights from your experience that you would like to share?

2. From your perspective, what are the unmet needs resulting from how Volunteer Advisory Committees are currently or were operating before being put on hold?

Prompt: In the survey, volunteer advisory committee members noted some significant challenges that their committees faced, does anyone here tonight have any general challenges or specific examples that they would like to highlight?

3. In an ideal world, what role would Volunteer Advisory Committees play in the City of Hamilton?

4. What, if any, changes would be necessary for Volunteer Advisory Committees to better fulfill this role?

Prompt: Would changes need to be made to VAC's current structure or processes? What would be the relationship between VACs and council? What role would Staff Liaisons play? What supports would VAC members need to carry out this role?

Appendix D: Council member interview questions

1. From your perspective, what has been working well with respect to Volunteer Advisory Committees?
2. From your perspective, what are the unmet needs resulting from the current Volunteer Advisory Committee structure and process?
3. In an ideal world, what role would Volunteer Advisory Committees play in the City of Hamilton?
4. What, if any, changes would be necessary for Volunteer Advisory Committees to better fulfill this role?

Prompt: Are there any structural changes to volunteer advisory committees needed to better fulfill this role?

Appendix E: Thematic analysis codes

- 1) Benefits
- 2) Challenges
- 3) Scope/mandate
 - Collaboration with other VACs
 - Alignment with current council priorities
 - Alignment with community need
 - Engaging broader community
- 4) Councillor Involvement
 - Councillor meeting attendance
 - Council participation at meeting
- 5) Logistics
- 6) Measuring success
- 7) Application process
 - Advertising
 - Selection/decision-making process
- 8) Staff
 - Process expertise
 - Content expertise
 - Clerk
 - Staff Involvement
 - Turnover
- 9) Training
 - Staff liaison training
 - Other training
 - Co-chair specific training
- 10) VAC effectiveness
 - VAC member training
 - Timelines
 - Impact
 - Clarity
 - Transparency
 - VAC culture
- 11) VAC membership
 - Quorum
 - Community expertise
 - Alternate agenda
 - Representation/diversity
- 12) VAC process/structure
 - Continuity of work
 - Consultation process/proactive consultation
 - Accessibility
 - Communication with council
 - Structured process (rigidity/bureaucracy)
- 13) VAC review process

Appendix F: Community scan of advisory tables consulted by the City (Added June 2024)

As outlined in the Introduction to the broader VAC Review Engagement Report, SPRC was asked to work with the City to generate and analyze a list of the community tables actively consulted by the City as a component of the VAC Review. Appendix F and G fulfill this component of the review.

a. Methodology

SPRC's research team developed a list of survey questions to be circulated among City staff in various departments to identify the tables, groups, and organizations the City consults with in addition to VACs. The questions were reviewed by the City Project Manager and subsequently sent to City staff in a survey distributed by the Government Relations and Community Engagement Office. The survey featured three questions:

- 1) What City department/division do you work in?
- 2) Do you seek input from any external community groups, collaboratives, or organizations to inform your work?
- 3) If so, what community groups, collaboratives, or organizations do you regularly consult with for input? Please list all.

The City Project Manager compiled and alphabetized the responses from City staff and sent the list of responses to SPRC for analysis. SPRC's research team reviewed the provided list, identifying and organizing the entries into the following categories (see Appendix G):

- 1) Current VAC/Sub-committee
- 2) City-led/coordinated advisory tables, groups, and other City advisory bodies
- 3) Community-based/led tables, collaboratives, and other initiatives consulted by the City
- 4) Single entities (e.g. non-profit organizations, neighbourhood associations, community groups, and corporations) consulted by the City
- 5) City Strategies and Plans

The re-organized list was subsequently sent to the City to review for accuracy.

The research team conducted a broad-based analysis of the entries, providing general considerations around the role of VACs and consultations with other community groups. This analysis is provided below.

b. Limitations

The timelines for this component of the VAC Review were significantly affected by the cybersecurity incident that has impacted the City's IT systems since February 2024, as well as shifts in departmental capacity within the Government Relations and Community Engagement Division at the City. As a result, the scope and outcomes for this component of the project were amended to accommodate a much larger data-collection timeframe than initially anticipated.

c. Analysis

The list generated through the survey sent to City staff identifies over 200 different tables, community groups, and organizations that staff consult. Of these, roughly

- 8% are VACs or Council sub-committees
- 18% are City-led/coordinated advisory tables, groups, and other City advisory bodies
- 11% are Community-based/led tables, collaboratives, and other initiatives consulted by the City
- 45% are Single entities (e.g. non-profit organizations, neighbourhood associations, community groups, and corporations) consulted by the City
- 3% are City Strategies or Plans
- 15% were unable to be categorized

It is important to note that other community tables and collaboratives exist in the city that were not captured in the list generated by City staff. These groups may provide further opportunities for engagement.

Frequent opportunities for engagement are important to ensure City work plans and strategies are informed by community level expertise. As demonstrated in the list generated by City staff, the City currently undertakes many forms of engagement and consultation with various community bodies. While information related to the extent to which these bodies are consulted was not collected, the input provided from these consultations undoubtedly provides the City with important insights related to City plans, policies, and priorities.

Below are important general considerations when exploring the role of VACs and other consultations undertaken by City staff. This analysis is based on SPRC's experience and knowledge due to the limitations described above. Future analysis could further expand on the roles, opportunities, and mechanisms by which community groups, listed or otherwise, can provide input to the City.

- **The makeup of VACs and community tables often differ:** Community members/individual constituents make up a large part of VAC membership, whereas many community tables are made up of organizational representatives. Each offers different perspectives, including on the implementation of City plans and council priorities.
- **VACs often have a different relationship with council compared to community tables:** VACs provide a direct link to council, whereas it is frequent practice for tables/organizations to rely on City staff to bring forward information raised in their engagements, creating an intermediary relationship with council.
- **There are transparent parameters for how the City engages VACs:** There are transparent processes for how VACs should be engaged and consulted by the City. These parameters are available to the public through VAC Terms of Reference, public VAC meetings, agendas, and minutes. Although incredibly important, the City's process for engaging and consulting with community bodies may not have the same degree of transparency for the general public, specifically pertaining to who gets consulted, when, and how frequently, as well as the role and impact of these consultations.
- **VACs provide space for ground-up ideas from community:** Based on their guiding documents, VACs offer space for generative and iterative ideas to be identified and brought forward by participants, in addition to providing engagement on City plans and other strategic areas identified by the City. Other community engagement methods used by the City, for example, Engage Hamilton, offer community members the opportunity to provide feedback on specified projects and initiatives.
- VACs have resources that support their operations including secure funding and support staff. Many community tables have ad-hoc funding that is often less dependable and may change with shifting funder priorities.

Conclusion

In summary, VACs and community tables provide different, but equally important, engagement opportunities on City priorities, strategies, and workplans given their differences in composition, accountability mechanisms, and transparency in how they are engaged by the City. It is suggested that attention is paid to these nuances in enhancing and implementing City engagement strategies.

Appendix G: List of tables and organizations consulted by the City (Added June 2024)

Please note that italicized entries are the organizations/tables presumed to be referenced and have been categorized on this basis.

Volunteer Advisory Committees and Council Sub-Committees

1. Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD)
2. Agricultural and Rural Affairs committee
3. Clean and Green Committee (*Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee*)
4. Climate Change Advisory Committee
5. Committee for Immigrants and Refugees (*Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees*)
6. Cross-Melville Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee (*Cross-Melville District Heritage Committee*)
7. Development Charges Stakeholder Sub-Committee
8. Development Industry Liaison Group (DILG)
9. Glanbrook Landfill Coordinating Committee
10. Hamilton Cycling Advisory Committee (*Hamilton Cycling Committee*)
11. Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee
12. Hamilton Veterans Committee
13. Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Advisory Committee (*Women and Gender Equity Committee*)
14. Heritage Permit Review Subcommittee
15. Indigenous Advisory Committee
16. LRT Sub-committee
17. LGBTQ Advisory Committee
18. Open for Business Sub-committee
19. Seniors Advisory Group committee (*Seniors Advisory Committee*)

City-led/coordinated advisory tables, groups, and other City advisory bodies

20. Early on Equity and Engagement Advisory Group
21. Adopt A Park Working Groups
22. Age Friendly Hamilton Collaborative Committee
23. Age-Friendly Governance Committee
24. Bayfront Industrial Area Strategy Steering Committee
25. City Housing Hamilton
26. CityLAB (CoH)
27. CityLab Steering Committee
28. Clr. Beattie's student council
29. Club 60 Senior's Club Board
30. Community Partnership Action Table (CPAT)
31. Daily School Routes (*Active and Sustainable School Travel*)
32. Early Years CMSM Advisory
33. Early Years HR Workforce Committee

34. EarlyON Operational Committee
35. EarlyOn, Veteran's Committee
36. Extreme Heat Working Group
37. Fair Wage Ad-Hoc Committee
38. Hamilton Bee City
39. Hamilton Breastfeeding Coalition
40. Hamilton Drug Prevention (*Hamilton Drug Prevention Steering Committee*)
41. Hamilton Early Years Research Network (*Hamilton Early Years Research & Evaluation Network*)
42. Hamilton Food Literacy Network
43. Hamilton Future Fund Board of Governors
44. Hamilton Healthy and Safe Communities Joint Boards of Education Leadership Committee
45. Hamilton Music Advisory Team
46. Hamilton Opiate Action Table
47. Hamilton Prenatal Nutrition Program
48. Hamilton Trillium Awards Committee
49. Hamilton Ukrainian Crisis Response (*Hamilton Ukrainian Crisis Response Working Group Team and Working Groups*)
50. Hamilton's Child and Youth Network
51. HamOnt Youth Steering Committee
52. Housing Focused Outreach
53. HPHS/School board collaboration meetings
54. Infant and Early Years Mental Health Committee
55. Internal Youth Steering Committee
56. Mobility Lab
57. Perinatal Mental Health Workgroup
58. Salam Hamilton Planning Group
59. Smoking Cessation Community of Practice
60. Woodward Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade & Expansion Project Community Liaison Committee
61. Youth Serving Advisory Network (YSAN)
62. Youth Steering Committee (City of Hamilton)
63. Youth Strategy Working Group

Community-based/led tables, collaboratives, and other initiatives consulted by the City

64. Basic Income Hamilton
65. Bay Area Climate Change Council
66. Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative
67. Circle of Beads (COB)
68. Coalition of Hamilton Indigenous Leadership
69. Community Data Program Data Working Group
70. Community Transitions Network (CTN)
71. Dust and Particulate Matter Working Group
72. Embolden Advisory Group (McMaster)

73. FASD Network
74. GHHN Partnership Council
75. Hamilton Coalition for Refugee Claimants
76. Hamilton Committee for the Collaborative Management of Youth Suicide
77. Hamilton Community Benefits Network
78. Hamilton Community Cat Network
79. Hamilton Employment Resource Network
80. Hamilton For All
81. Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC)
82. Hamilton is Home Coalition (HiHC)
83. Hamilton Transit Oriented Affordable Housing Lab
84. McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) Community Stakeholder Committee
85. No Hate in the Hammer
86. SCORE! Advisory Team
87. Seniors at Risk Community Collaborative (SaRCC)
88. Street Youth Planning Collaborative
89. Tastebuds Student Nutrition Program Steering Committee
90. Women's Shelter System (*Women's Housing Planning Collaborative*)

Single entities (e.g. non-profit organizations, neighbourhood associations, community groups, and corporations) consulted by the City

91. Aboriginal Health Centre
92. Afro Canadian Caribbean Association
93. Ainslie Wood Community Association (AWCA)
94. Air, Army, Navy Cadets
95. Ancaster Achievement Senior's Club (*Ancaster Achievement Senior's Centre*)
96. Ancaster Horticulture Society
97. Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Hamilton Branch
98. Architectural Conservatory of Ontario
99. Argyll and Sutherland Highland Light Infantry
100. Bay Area Research Logistics
101. Bay Area Restoration Council
102. Beasley Neighborhood Association
103. Blk Owned
104. Bruce Trail Conservancy
105. Business Improvement Area Groups (BIAs)
106. Canadian Council for the Blind
107. Canadian National Institute for the Blind
108. Centre for Civic Inclusion YWCA
109. Chamber of Commerce
110. Citizens at City Hall (CATCH)
111. Clean Air Hamilton
112. Columbia International College
113. Compass Community Health

114. Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System Alliance
115. Cycle Hamilton
116. Dundas Community Services - Seniors Supports
117. Dundas Senior's Club Board
118. Dundas Turtle Watch
119. Durand Neighborhood Assoc.
120. Empowerment Squared
121. Environment Hamilton
122. Everyone Rides Initiative
123. Flamborough Chamber of Commerce
124. Flamborough Senior's Board
125. Friends of Auchmar
126. Golden Horseshoe Live Steamers
127. Good Shepherd
128. Greater Hamilton Health Network
129. Green Communities Canada
130. Green Venture
131. Hamilton Arts Council
132. Hamilton Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
133. Hamilton Bike Share
134. Hamilton Burlington SPCA
135. Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
136. Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
137. Hamilton Council on Aging (HCOA)
138. Hamilton Gardening Network (*Hamilton Community Garden Network*)
139. Hamilton Health Sciences
140. Hamilton Ladies of Film and Television
141. Hamilton Naturalist Club
142. Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority
143. Hamilton Poverty Roundtable (*Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction*)
144. Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
145. Hamilton Seniors Centres
146. Hamilton Urban Core
147. Hamilton Wentworth Heritage Association
148. Hamilton-Burlington Society of Architects (HBSA)
149. Historical Societies
150. Hospital to Homes
151. HWCDSB Operators/Operations Committee
152. Industry Education Council
153. Indwell
154. Innovation Factory
155. Jewish Community Centre
156. Kirkendall Neighbourhood (*Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association*)
157. Lights, Camera, Hamilton

158. McMaster Innovation Park
159. McMaster University
160. Mission Services
161. Mohawk College
162. Mohawk College Challenge 2025 Employment Action Group
163. Municipal Finance Officers Association (MFOA)
164. Neighbour 2 Neighbour
165. Neighbourhood Associations
166. New Hope Community Bikes
167. North End Neighbours
168. Older Adults Centre's Association of Ontario (OACAO)
169. Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB)
170. Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington (RAHB)
171. Redeemer University
172. Regional Heritage Organizations
173. Rosedale Senior's Club Board
174. Royal Botanical Gardens
175. Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) Working Groups
176. Royal Canadian Legion Branches
177. Royal Hamilton Light Infantry
178. Sackville Senior's Board
179. Salvation Army
180. School Boards
181. School Parent Councils
182. Social Navigation
183. Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC)
184. Sports Teams
185. St. Joseph's Healthcare
186. Stoney Creek Chamber of Commerce
187. Sustainability Leadership/Sustainable Hamilton Burlington
188. Synapse Life Science Consortium
189. The Children's Garden Project
190. The Hamilton Hub
191. Twenty Place Resident Committee
192. Warden Senior's Club Board
193. West End Home Builders Association (WEHBA)
194. West Harbour Waterfront Recreational Boating Clubs
195. Winona Senior's Club Board
196. Workforce Planning Hamilton
197. YMCA

City Strategies or Plans

198. Biodiversity Action Plan
199. Digital Access Strategy

- 200. Hamilton Remedial Action Plan (*Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan*)
- 201. Hamilton's Age and Dementia Friendly Plan (*Hamilton's Plan for an Age-Friendly Community*)
- 202. Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy
- 203. Hamilton's Youth Strategy

Unknown Categorization

- 204. Accessible Taxi Committee
- 205. Bennetto/St. Lawrence Community Collaborative
- 206. Coordinated Service Planning Leadership Table
- 207. Cootes to Escarpment Management Committee and Stewardship Subcommittee
- 208. Discovery Centre Project Working Group
- 209. Downtown West Harbour Committee (*West Harbour Development Sub committee*)
- 210. Dundurn Gardeners
- 211. Fieldcote Expansion Committee
- 212. Golden Horseshoe Aquatic Municipal Group
- 213. Griffin House Black Heritage Committee
- 214. Halton and Hamilton Conservation Working Groups
- 215. Hamilton Disability Employment Network (HDEN)
- 216. Hamilton Inclusive Professionals Network (*City of Hamilton Inclusive Professionals*)
- 217. International Day of Older Persons
- 218. Invasive Species quasi formal
- 219. Lifesaving Society Area Chair Committee
- 220. Local Housing Providers Community of Practice
- 221. McMaster University, Age-Friendly University Collaborative
- 222. Open Data Champions
- 223. Professional Learning Committees
- 224. Public Health Services and Joint Boards of Education Steering Committee
- 225. Quality Operations Committee
- 226. School Safety Zone Working Group (regional)
- 227. Skills Development Flagship
- 228. Special Needs Resourcing Committee
- 229. Summer Student Recruitment Committee
- 230. Traditional Ecological Knowledge Committee
- 231. Volunteer Park Beautification Groups
- 232. Waterfront Industrial Heritage Committee
- 233. Wellness Connect Mohawk College Table
- 234. West End Women's Network
- 235. Woodward Ave Community Liaison Committee
- 236. Young Parent Collaborative Table
- 237. YWCA Older Women and Homelessness



VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW JURISDICTIONAL SCAN SUMMARY

Executive Summary

In September 2023, Hamilton City Council approved a motion for a review of the Voluntary Advisory Committees (VAC), including a best practice scan of municipal VAC's and related alternatives. Analysis of advisory bodies was done across other jurisdictions in Ontario (London, Kingston, Toronto, Ottawa, Brampton, and Windsor) as well as in Canada (St. John's, Edmonton, Victoria). Some common themes emerged.

The jurisdictional scan demonstrated that cities who recently conducted reviews are moving away from the formal structure of Advisory Committees that Hamilton currently utilizes and toward working groups in one form or another. Support staff were a key factor in the success of any advisory body, as was embedding principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in recruitment and approach. Training for volunteers, including both initial orientation and ongoing resources, was highlighted as essential for ensuring the success of these advisory bodies.

The scan also supported a reduction in the overall number of Advisory Committees. This shift would be better in line with both the municipal best practice and be a more structurally permissive model for civic engagement.

Analysis

Types of Advisory Bodies

In some jurisdictions, Advisory Committees have been replaced by the efforts of Working Groups. By comparison, these working groups put less of a burden of procedural understanding on volunteers, increasing the likely effectiveness of recruitment and retention. Compared to Advisory Committees, working groups are typically established around a specific project or goal and at the conclusion of which they adjourn (although in some cases these Working Groups were also tied to terms of council).

In their 2012 review and then again in their 2023 review, the City of Ottawa has shifted focus to department-led working groups. These were formed to help inform staff recommendations to council, rather than being formed by council. These departmental working groups are more easily able to fit into staff workplans early enough to contribute effectively as tools for public engagement. In a 2023 report Ottawa also identified that working groups, unlike advisory committees, would not be considered local boards, opening members up to fewer procedural requirements for participation.

In the City of Toronto, a distinction is drawn between Council Advisory Bodies (CABs) and Program Advisory Bodies (PABs). CABs are tied to terms of Council, have specific terms of reference, and report to council like the current Hamilton Advisory Committees. PABs are staff-created, helping to inform recommendations but ultimately not reporting formally to council, with terms of reference that include what staff they report to. At the discretion of staff, Toronto PABs may hold closed meetings and may recruit selectively from targeted groups without an open application process.

Expert Panels, populated by subject matter experts, and Task Forces, defined by narrow mandates, each also provided a useful tool for civic engagement in some municipalities. In Kingston and Ottawa, panels convened with equity-deserving groups and people with lived experience were offered honorariums to offset the burden of participation. Narrower mandates helped inform recruitment, and the City of Windsor found that these panels, with their focus on subject matter expertise, often better aligned with the needs of council and staff consultation.

While staff led working groups did not need the same support from clerks as publicly held/streamed meetings, staff capable of training and supporting volunteers on project plans were identified as critical to the success and attendance of volunteer bodies. While working groups do not have the same quorum requirements, are not required to meet publicly, and offer more flexibility to members, in some ways they required more staff support with more focused project deadlines to produce more tangible outcomes.

In understanding the criteria and form an advisory body may take, the City of Windsor offered that their council asks:

1. is the subject matter still relevant?
2. what form of advisory body will this group take?

Table 1 offers a comparison of the types of advisory bodies most used by municipalities across the jurisdictional scan, along with their roles and guiding principles.

Table 1	Role	Principles
Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides citizen and Organizational expertise on matters relevant to the Committee’s mandate. • Involved in the development of solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to a committee of council. • Has a Terms of Reference. • Duration tied to term of council. • Minutes and Citizen Committee Reports disclosed to reporting committee.
Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide citizen or organizational expertise or oversight in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in the development or delivery of an approved plan or strategy. • Term tied to project or goal.

	development or delivery of a program or project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May report to staff or council.
Task Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide citizen or organizational expertise on a specific set of defined topics/issues • Involved in the receipt of information and providing feedback on the specific topics/issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a defined timeline and goal. • May develop Terms of Reference. • May recommend items for implementation.
Experts Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides expert opinion on topics or issues within a defined mandate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not have a defined timeline. • Report to Standing Committee

At the City of Hamilton there are recent examples of alternative bodies being formed, either as staff directed groups or as council directed groups. This includes a Mayor’s Taskforce on Economic Recovery, and a Mayor’s Task Force on Transparency, Access, and Accountability. The task forces are council-directed bodies, that meet publicly with the support of clerks and other municipal staff and behave similarly to existing Advisory Committees. Task forces typically have a shorter intended term, however because of the structure are prone to the same structural limitations of existing Advisory Committees at the City of Hamilton.

Comparatively, the Youth Steering Committee, formed in response to the ending of the Youth Advisory Committee, is departmentally led and considerably more agile based on staff feedback. Following a more flexible working group model, the staff-directed relationship of this group makes it possible to meet more flexibly, recruit in an ongoing manner, and host a much larger and more engaged body of passionate volunteers.

Recruitment and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Common themes regarding recruitment included the use of dynamic social media marketing and an easy-to-fill-out application form. Ottawa emphasized that working group recruitment could look to local community groups, advocates, and subject matter experts in a more relationship-focused approach to recruitment. In Windsor, the city worked closely with a local Instagram influencer and saw significant success producing short recruitment videos, a model they plan to return to for future recruitment.

The City of Toronto identified three key strategies for recruitment: being clear about the work, providing some form of honorarium where appropriate, and accessing diverse, multiethnic promotional resources. The City of Victoria emphasized the need for an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) approach during recruitment to find suitable subject matter experts with lived experience. Staff at the City of Victoria also stressed

the potential failing of advisory bodies assembled for generic EDI needs, noting a lack of intersectionality as a potential challenge.

The current model of recruitment for Advisory Committees could be significantly improved with structural changes. Limits around who is involved in the recruitment process mean it is often not those with subject matter expertise actively interviewing prospective members of an advisory group. This process could be improved by transitioning to a staff-directed, working group model.

Training and Member Orientation

Most consulted municipalities had in place an overview of the terms of reference and handbooks for advisory bodies, be they those reporting to council or those reporting to staff. In municipalities where clerks conducted an official training session for members, it was offered both in person and as a virtual recording. In the City of St. John’s, clerks staff make themselves available to answer questions on procedure and motion crafting, providing an ongoing member resource.

In Ottawa, training for Advisory Committee members was identified by their 2023 review as deficient, especially in the context of the statutory ruling that Advisory Committees are “local boards,” subjecting them to certain mandatory policy requirements. These requirements include behaving according to a code of conduct, stipulations around actions taken during an election, holding open-to-the-public meetings, and others under the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The challenges of organizing and supporting these local boards supported the need for change recommendations in Ottawa, moving entirely away from non-legislated Advisory Committees.

In Hamilton, we do not have legislated volunteer-led Advisory Committees. The Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) is required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* but is a sub-committee of Council and not within the scope of the Volunteer Advisory Committee review. This means that a similar shift to what was done in Ottawa would transform all Advisory Committees into departmentally led working groups, if adopted here.

Reduction in Number of Advisory Committees

Across the jurisdictional scan there was a tendency toward a reduction in the number of Advisory Committees. Most did not have as many as the City of Hamilton to begin with, but even among those with close to the same number there’s a tendency toward a reduction.

Table 2 shows some municipalities from within the scan that recently conducted reviews, and the trend among them toward a reduction in the number of overall

committees. Also indicated here are the estimated staffing requirements of their existing process, for comparison across the jurisdictions.

Municipality	Current Number of Committees	Staffing Support	Date of Recent Reviews	Number of Committees Before Review
Hamilton	14	Clerks assigned to each AC and a staff liaison	2015	14
Kingston	7	Two clerks per committee, with 3 committee clerks handling all 7 ACs	2023	8
London	7	Clerk supports meeting operations and staff support attending meetings when required	2024	13
Ottawa	4	Clerk appoints a Committee Coordinator for each AC. Each AC also supported by departmental staff	2023, 2012	5 (2023), 15 (2012)
Windsor	9	1-2 Staff per committee to provide resources	2023	18
St John's	11	There is a lead staff assigned to each committee, from the program/topic area, and a legislative assistant from the City Clerk's office	2015	11

Conclusion

Hamilton has more advisory committees than similarly sized municipalities, in part because of a trend toward alternative models of civic engagement, and in part because of a general shift away from this form of civic engagement. Staff-led volunteer teams are often more effective groups for moving forward workplans and projects, based on the feedback through the jurisdictional scan. Training, both of staff supporting these bodies and of volunteers themselves especially those in the role of chair, was identified as a key element of the success of these groups. For volunteers to be effective in their roles, they need to be resourced and supported effectively.

The jurisdictional scan and the Hamilton-specific context support a restructuring of Advisory Committees. While this structure could look a few different ways, it is both important to consider the leadership structure (council-directed or staff-led) and the form (working group, task force, experts panel).



External Community Tables and Networks the City Consults

Staff sent out the VACR Community Partners Survey to assist in identifying all other advisory tables consulted with by the City of Hamilton, including community-based task forces, steering committees, and working groups.

While there are many tables and community networks listed here, we understand this list is not exhaustive, as the City’s consultation changes and this may not reflect every City staff member’s engagement.

We received 136 responses across six departments, broken down below:

- City Housing Hamilton – 2 responses
- City Manager’s Office – 6 responses
- Corporate Services – 6 responses
- Health and Safe Communities – 37 responses
- Planning and Economic Development – 44 responses
- Public Works – 41 responses

Grouped broadly by theme, the City engages with:

Accessibility and Inclusion

- Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD)*
- Age Friendly Hamilton Collaborative Committee
- Age-Friendly Governance Committee
- City of Hamilton Inclusive Professionals
- Hamilton Coalition for Refugee Claimants
- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC)
- Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy
- Indigenous Advisory Committee*
- LGBTQ Advisory Committee*
- Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Advisory Committee*

Community and Youth Development

- Bennetto/St. Lawrence Community Collaborative
- Community Partnership Action Table (CPAT)
- Community Transitions Network (CTN)
- Hamilton is Home Coalition (HiHC)
- Hamilton’s Child and Youth Network
- Internal Youth Steering Committee
- Young Parent Collaborative Table
- Youth Serving Advisory Network (YSAN)

*Advisory Group or Sub-committee

- Youth Steering Committee (City of Hamilton)

Economic and Employment Initiatives

- Basic Income Hamilton
- Development Charges Stakeholder Sub-Committee*
- Development Industry Liaison Group (DILG)*
- Hamilton Community Benefits Network
- Hamilton Employment Resource Network
- Hamilton Future Fund Board of Governors
- Open for Business Sub-committee*

Environmental and Sustainability Initiatives

- Bay Area Climate Change Council
- Biodiversity Action Plan
- Clean and Green Committee*
- Climate Change Advisory Committee*
- Dust and Particulate Matter Working Group*
- Hamilton Bee City
- Mobility Lab

Health and Wellbeing

- Fair Wage Ad-Hoc Committee
- Hamilton Breastfeeding Coalition
- Hamilton Drug Prevention Steering Committee
- Hamilton Early Years Research & Evaluation Network
- Hamilton Prenatal Nutrition Program
- Infant and Early Years Mental Health Committee
- Perinatal Mental Health Workgroup
- Seniors at Risk Community Collaborative (SaRCC)

Heritage and Culture

- Bayfront Industrial Area Strategy Steering Committee
- Hamilton Community Cat Network
- Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee*
- Hamilton Music Advisory Team
- Heritage Permit Review Subcommittee*
- McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) Community Stakeholder Committee

Planning and Development

- CityLAB (CoH)

*Advisory Group or Sub-committee

- CityLab Steering Committee
- Discovery Centre Project Working Group
- Hamilton Transit Oriented Affordable Housing Lab
- Salam Hamilton Planning Group
- Woodward Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade & Expansion Project Community Liaison Committee

Social Services and Support

- Coalition Hamilton Indigenous Leadership
- Hamilton Food Literacy Network
- Hamilton Healthy and Safe Communities Joint Boards of Education Leadership Committee
- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
- Street Youth Planning Collaborative
- Tastebuds Student Nutrition Program Steering Committee
- Glanbrook Landfill Coordinating Committee

Advisory and Special Interest Groups

- Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees*
- Early on Equity and Engagement Advisory Group
- Early Years CMSM Advisory
- Early Years HR Workforce Committee
- Hamilton Trillium Awards Committee
- SCORE! Advisory Team
- Embolden Advisory Group (McMaster)

Special Initiatives

- Club 60 Senior's Club Board
- Hamilton Cycling Advisory Committee*
- Hamilton Opiate Action Table
- Extreme Heat Working Group

*Advisory Group or Sub-committee

Table 1 - Volunteer Advisory Committees: Mandates, Objectives, and Alignment

Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
Makes recommendations to City Council and staff about policies, procedures and guidelines that address the needs of immigrants and refugees within the City of Hamilton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and comment on pertinent reports, proposed legislation and studies that affect immigrants and refugees. Be consulted by City of Hamilton staff and Council on the review, development and implementation of City policies, procedures, programs and services that affect, directly or indirectly, immigrants and refugees. Facilitate, organize and promote open lines of communication with the school boards, police services, City of Hamilton, (e.g. Public Health Services, Healthy and Safe Communities, etc.) and other relevant organizations to provide advice and recommendations about the service needs of newcomers, immigrants, and refugees. Make presentations, host workshops and/or open houses to educate service providers, police, Ontario Works, school boards, settlement agencies, employment agencies, professional regulating bodies and other relevant services and programs about immigrant and refugee issues. Develop relationships with the Access to Fair Trades Office and training institutions to gain a better understanding of their processes and find some common ground that will assist newcomers and immigrants in their pursuit of timely certification and upgrading. Complement and collaborate with the work of the City of Hamilton’s Volunteer Advisory Committees. 	Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving	Community Engagement & Participation Culture & Diversity	Planning and Economic Development – Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council

Arts Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>To recommend activities for the stabilization and strengthening of the arts community.</p> <p>To monitor and assist with the implementation of the Arts Awards Program and Public Art Program.</p> <p>To inform Council of issues and achievements in the Hamilton arts community and acts as a point of contact for members of the arts community regarding issues affecting the arts community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Advisory Commission (AAC) held a public art forum in 2017 to gather information about the growth and needs of the arts community in Hamilton. The Big Picture Report was created with seven recommendations which would guide the work of AAC. • The 2018-2022 Term of AAC began working on The Big Picture recommendations, when the Covid-19 pandemic paused this initiative. The AAC pivoted by working with Hamilton Arts Council (HAC) to create a survey asking Hamilton artists to share how the pandemic affected their lives. Post-survey, AAC and HAC did a call for submissions, where art works were selected, awarded honorariums and are featured on the AAC City webpage. • The Big Picture Celebrating Resilience in the Arts Symposium being held November 18th 2022 will gather the arts community in Hamilton again to revisit The Big Picture 2017 recommendations, to garner feedback around the current needs of the community post pandemic and serve to guide the work of the next term of AAC 2022-2026. • The AAC continues its work monitoring and assisting with the implementation of the Public Art Program and the City of Hamilton Arts Awards Program. 	N/A	Culture and Diversity	Planning and Economic Development – Tourism and Culture

Climate Change Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>To provide advice to Council and City Staff on the prioritization, implementation and monitoring of Hamilton’s Climate Action Strategy, through an equitable and inclusive manner and a climate justice lens, that responds to the perspectives and needs of all, while transitioning to a prosperous, healthy and vibrant net-zero greenhouse gas community that is a national leader in climate adaptation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide recommendations on prioritization and implementation of actions in Hamilton’s Climate Action Strategy; • Advise on developing a ‘City and Community Climate Change Report Card’ that tracks meaningful targets, indicators and timelines for monitoring that is transparent and easily accessible; • Identify, support and enhance existing climate positive actions across the community, within the municipal government, and at other levels of government to accelerate meaningful climate action, in a manner that supports existing efforts of other organizations and avoids duplication of efforts; • Work together to better understand the diverse perspectives across Hamilton’s community to better provide advice and recommendations to Council and to City staff to ensure no one is left behind; • Support and advise on protecting biodiversity through the integration of western science combined with Traditional Ecological Knowledge and other sources of lived experiences with Mother Earth; and • Provide advice to City staff and Council on other matters related to climate change and actions to address climate change, as may be identified from time-to-time by Council or City staff. 	<p>Sustainable Economic & Ecological Development – Accelerate our Response to Climate Change</p> <p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Clean and Green</p>	<p>Planning and Economic Development – Climate Change Initiatives</p>

Committee Against Racism				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The Committee Against Racism is a Volunteer Advisory Committee of the City of Hamilton, appointed by Council. Members comprise residents of the city of Hamilton, representing diverse backgrounds and cultures. The mandate of the Committee Against Racism is to advise, advocate and consult on relevant issues in the community of Hamilton relating to racism and its consequences, including anti-racism strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make recommendations and give advice to the City of Hamilton’s staff and Council on issues relating to racism, equity, diversity and inclusion as well as issues relating to antiracism. • Encourage every person, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, creed or any other grounds based on the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), to participate in programs and services for the improvement of community relations and the fulfilment of Human Rights. • Work actively with institutions and all other relevant organizations, including educational institutions, Police Services, Emergency Services, public, private, voluntary sector and all levels of government to advise, consult, advocate and to promote proactive measures pertaining to racism and its impacts. • Consult with individuals and/or groups with respect to complaints regarding racism and to make referrals within the community for complainants. • Initiate and facilitate discussions between individuals and/or groups to address issues and concerns of racism and/or while promoting respect and understanding in the community. 	<p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Community Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Culture & Diversity</p>	<p>Healthy and Safe Communities – Children and Community Services</p>

Food Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>Identify and inform, where appropriate, innovative community food security policies and programs that align with the vision and goals of the Hamilton Food Strategy, Hamilton Food Charter, and other City strategies</p> <p>Identify and advise on emerging issues affecting Hamilton's food system</p> <p>Facilitate connections and share information and resources between members, the Public Health Committee, City staff, and as appropriate, further disseminate these lessons and resources among community organizations, businesses, citizens, and other groups that have an impact on community food security</p> <p>Support research, monitoring, and evaluation efforts, and identify gaps and opportunities that may inform community food security policies and program modifications</p> <p>Facilitate the cross-promotion of community food security within existing programs, events, policies, services, and other actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and inform, where appropriate, innovative community food security policies and programs that align with the vision and goals of the Hamilton Food Strategy, Hamilton Food Charter, and other City strategies. Identify and advise on emerging issues affecting Hamilton's food system. Facilitate connections and share information and resources between members, the Public Health Committee, City staff, and as appropriate, further disseminate these lessons and resources among community organizations, businesses, citizens, and other groups that have an impact on community food security. Support research, monitoring, and evaluation efforts, and identify gaps and opportunities that may inform community food security policies and program modifications. Facilitate the cross-promotion of community food security within existing programs, events, policies, services, and other actions. 	N/A	Healthy & Safe Communities	Healthy and Safe Communities – Public Health, Environmental Health

Hamilton Cycling Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The Hamilton Cycling Committee (HCC) advises City Council on:</p> <p>a. all matters related to cycling and micro-mobility</p> <p>b. monitors the implementation of the Hamilton Cycling Master Plan</p> <p>c. encourages and participates in planning for bicycling and micro-mobility facilities</p> <p>d. encourages citizens to cycle instead of drive</p> <p>e. educates the public about the benefits and necessities of cycling</p> <p>f. integrates the work of area municipal bicycle and active transportation committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and support progress in implementing the Cycling Master Plan • Ensure community input on specific details associated with implementing the Cycling Master Plan • Ensure that cycling needs are emphasized in all transportation related decisions • Encourage legislation and policy changes that are supportive of cycling and sustainable mobility • Promote cycling and micro-mobility for transportation and recreation through relevant events • Educate the public on the benefits, necessities, and safety aspects of cycling • Assist in establishing secure, adequate bicycle and scooter parking facilities • Represent the cycling community at City of Hamilton sponsored functions/events • Encourage the formation of, and liaise with other municipal cycling and active transportation committees • Foster a mutual respect between cyclists and other road users 	<p>Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods – Make sure people can safely and efficiently move around by foot, bike, transit, or car</p>	<p>Built Environment & Infrastructure</p>	<p>Planning and Economic Development – Active Transportation and Mobility</p>

Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The Indigenous Advisory Committee assists the City of Hamilton to honour and engage its Indigenous citizens in the pursuit of the City's vision by providing advice and/or recommendations, through the appropriate Standing Committee of Council, that enhance the wellbeing of Indigenous people and/or resolve municipal issues.</p> <p>The Committee envisions a future where Hamilton is an inclusive and culturally-aware community, where issues of importance to its Indigenous peoples are addressed proactively, effectively and respectfully on the municipal agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist the City in achieving and demonstrating progress or positive change in support of the equitable economic, social, health and overall wellbeing of Indigenous citizens; to provide a forum and mechanism for coordinated dialogue and consultation between and among Indigenous leaders and other stakeholders, acting as a catalyst for the development of positive relationships and open, transparent dialogue between and among the City and these stakeholders; and, to offer input, advice and recommendations, through the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee, informed by stakeholder consultation, to support the City in determining effective municipal strategies and/or policies on issues of importance to Indigenous peoples. 	<p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Community Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Culture & Diversity</p>	<p>Healthy and Safe Communities – Indigenous Relations</p>

Hamilton Veterans Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>Reporting to Council, through the Emergency and Community Services Committee, the Hamilton Veterans Committee oversees the planning and delivery of military remembrance and commemoration activities on behalf of the City of Hamilton. When directed by Council, the Committee will provide input on projects and issues that are of concern to Hamilton Veterans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a liaison for the veterans of the City of Hamilton on all matters that fall within Council's jurisdiction. Coordinate Decoration Day, Remembrance Day Parades, community engagement pieces and Memorial Services in multiple wards. Maximize the engagement of youth in the act of Remembrance through projects and events. <p>How will they be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the remembrances for significant anniversaries such as Decoration Day, Remembrance Day, Garrison Parade and including but not limited to parades and memorial services. Administer all other matters directly relating to or of concern to Hamilton Veterans that fall within Council's jurisdiction. Provide written letters of support for Veterans causes when requested and deemed appropriate. Veteran's Committee advises on the use and care of cenotaphs in partnership with Heritage Resource Management. Present opportunities for the engagement of youths in acts of Remembrance in the City of Hamilton through events and community projects <p>Who will benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All citizens of the City of Hamilton as well as local veterans and active forces. Upward of 2,000 people attend the Remembrance Day services and parades coordinated by the Veterans Committee. All residents of Hamilton will have the opportunity to show respect for Veterans service to our country. The Youth of Hamilton will be given the opportunity to be engaged with Acts of Remembrance outside of the classroom setting through hands-on and digital platforms. 	<p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Community Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Culture & Diversity</p>	<p>Planning and Economic Development – Tourism & Culture Division</p>

Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Committee is a Council mandated advisory committee of the City of Hamilton. Serving and acting as an advisory committee of Council it provides input with respect to the issues of women, non-binary individuals and gender diverse people.</p> <p>The Committee is empowered by City Council and is responsible to City Council for its services; it reports to City Council on issues and concerns pertaining to women, non-binary individuals, and gender diverse people through the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To define, investigate, study and make recommendations on issues of concern affecting women, non-binary people, and gender diverse individuals in the City of Hamilton and other matters of social or municipal concern including matters referred to this Committee by City Council, staff, and City of Hamilton committees. • To inform citizens of the City of Hamilton on issues affecting women, non-binary people, and gender diverse individuals. • To actively encourage women, non-binary people, and gender diverse individuals to participate in all aspects of society and support them in their life choices. • To advise residents of the City of Hamilton of decisions made by City Council which may impact women, non-binary people, and gender diverse individuals including matters of social concern and those referred to City Council by this Committee. • To review the progress and measure of success of the Committee and its activities on a regular basis. 	<p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Community Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Culture & Diversity</p>	<p>Healthy and Safe Communities – Children and Community Services</p>

Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>To communicate and work to address the needs of citizens within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes.</p> <p>To support the City of Hamilton's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan by providing information, advice, and recommendations regarding the Action Plan's successful and meaningful implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with the coordination and implementation of Council approved recommendations, including the City of Hamilton's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan. • Ensure that recommendations regarding issues relating to people who are experiencing homelessness or who may be at risk of becoming homeless are brought forward to Council in a timely manner. • Devise and recommend to Council innovative and preventative measures to assist in addressing homelessness within the community; • Identify emerging trends, potential gaps and best practices in emergency housing needs. • Provide Council and staff with information, advice, and recommendations about residential landlord and tenant issues and policies that would improve the overall well-being of tenants in Hamilton and support landlords in the provision of safe, quality, and affordable rental units. • Identify housing-related supports available in the community and facilitate relationship-building between community partners, citizens and government to ensure that people have the individualized supports needed to help them obtain and retain housing. • Regularly update Council about homelessness and affordable housing issues through the discussion and analysis that takes place at HHAC. • Respond to requests and direction from staff and Council. • Collaborate and cooperate with other City of Hamilton committees and community groups doing work around issues that impact homelessness and affordable housing to stay apprised of relevant initiatives and contribute information and advice as needed. 	<p>Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods – Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing and reduce chronic homelessness</p> <p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Healthy & Safe Communities</p>	<p>Healthy and Safe Communities – Housing Services</p>

Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>To provide input and advice to staff and Council on engaging citizens to take greater responsibility for improving our community environments. Primary focus is on effecting behaviours and attitudes conducive to a clean, healthy and safe community through leadership and action.</p> <p>To provide input and guidance to City staff, Council and other stakeholders on community involvement, private sector involvement and identification of resources to sustain Clean City programs and initiatives that aim to beautify our community, promote environmental stewardship and prevent litter, illegal dumping and graffiti.</p>	<p>Litter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development and marketing of a coordinated cigarette litter prevention program. • Lead the promotion and collaboration with community partners for the ongoing operation of Team Up to Clean Up. • Administer Keep America Beautiful Community Appearance Index survey in 2022. • Support and promote City and community litter remediation and prevention initiatives. <p>Illegal Dumping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of educational and communication tools to prevent illegal dumping. <p>Graffiti</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support stakeholder engagement strategies and victim assistance initiatives with prevention and remediation tools. <p>Beautification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize volunteer contributions to beautification initiatives and projects that support the Clean & Green Hamilton Strategy. • Support neighbourhood beautification and greening initiatives as needed. <p>Environmental Stewardship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote the engagement of citizen volunteers in programs and initiatives that encourage ecological integrity and minimize human impact on natural habitats and ecosystems on public and private properties. 	<p>Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods – Provide vibrant parks, recreation, and public spaces</p>	<p>Clean & Green</p>	<p>Public Works – Environmental Services Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy</p>

LGBTQ Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 TOCP	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The LGBTQ Advisory Committee for the City of Hamilton exists to eliminate barriers experienced by LGBTQ communities by giving voice to the perspectives of LGBTQ individuals and evaluating the City on its related efforts. The Committee does this by making recommendations to Council and staff in order that the City of Hamilton will excel in providing services to and interfacing with members of the LGBTQ communities.</p> <p>The Committee is empowered by City Council and is responsible to City Council for its services; it reports to City Council on issues and concerns pertaining to the LGBTQ communities through the Emergency and Community Services Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide opportunities for members of Hamilton’s diverse LGBTQ communities to share stories, impart information, raise concerns and recommend changes as they relate to the way the City develops by-laws, policies, programs and services that impact LGBTQ communities, through the appropriate Standing Committee of Council. • To provide advice and recommendations to City council and staff with respect to the implementation of by-laws, policies, programs and services that impact LGBTQ communities. • To educate and increase the awareness and understanding of City Council and staff on issues that impact LGBTQ communities. • To facilitate access to accurate information about LGBTQ communities, including an up-to-date list of LGBTQ positive spaces, programs, resources and organizations. • To acknowledge and respect the diversity of Hamilton’s LGBTQ communities, including those voices not represented at the Committee table, with respect to gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, ethno-cultural background and socio-economic status. • To review the progress and measure of success of the Committee and its activities on a regular basis. 	<p>Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving</p>	<p>Community Engagement & Participation</p> <p>Culture & Diversity</p>	<p>Healthy and Safe Communities – Children's and Community Services</p>

Mundialization Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 TOCP	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
<p>The purpose of the Hamilton Mundialization Committee shall be:</p> <p>a) to promote Hamilton as "A World (Mundialized) City" dedicated to global awareness, international cooperation, and world law</p> <p>b) to further the work of the United Nations through publicity and education and to have the United Nations flag always flown with the Canadian flag the City Hall</p> <p>c) to undertake twinning programs in international cooperation with like-minded municipalities in this and other countries to foster an understanding of the increasing interdependence of the municipalities, peoples, and countries of the world</p> <p>d) to involve Hamilton residents of different cultures, especially those from the countries of our sister communities, to share in our multicultural programs</p> <p>e) to include representatives from City Council in the Committee for implementing the above programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating and supporting peace initiatives and the twinning relationships between Hamilton and its ten twin-cities around the world. • Assisting Council in implementing its Mundialization resolution • Complementing and affirming the objectives of the City's "Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative" • Supporting any and all relationships with the City of Hamilton's Twin Cities <p>In alignment with the Committee's mandate, key deliverables include leading the following efforts, activities, and initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Kaga/Hamilton events commemorating the 50+ year relationship between Kaga and Hamilton (Dundas) • Anniversary twinning events or other twinning events as identified • Racalmuto Regional events • World Citizenship Award • Photo Contest • Hiroshima-Nagasaki Vigil • The Committee provides an ongoing review of Mundialization relationships and processes thereof. The benefit of participation is the enhancement of relationships between the residents of our twin communities, both locally and internationally, and the residents of the city of Hamilton. 	N/A	Culture & Diversity	Planning and Economic Development – Business Development and Sector Development

Seniors Advisory Committee				
Committee Mandate	Committee Objectives	2022-2026 Term of Council Priority	Community / Strategic Plan Priority	Department / Divisional Areas of Alignment
To be a credible communication vehicle regarding the quality of life for all older persons in the City of Hamilton. It will provide a forum for consumers and deliverers of seniors' services and facilities to identify issues, explore possible remedies, and work to implement them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist Council in decision making as it pertains to senior's issues in Hamilton. To respond and advocate concerns affecting policies, services and facilities for seniors delivered by and funded by all levels of government. To promote and disseminate all decisions relating to access, the provision of services programs and facilities for seniors in the City of Hamilton. To liaise with other organized groups when there are matters of mutual concerns. To promote and advocate, wherever appropriate, the concept of healthy aging by encouraging improved and responsive programs and services in a timely fashion. 	Responsiveness & Transparency – Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving	Community Engagement & Participation Culture & Diversity	Healthy and Safe Communities – Lodges

Scan of community organizations with mandates and/or services aligned with City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committees

July 2024

Prepared for: City of Hamilton

Prepared by: Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton

In November 2023, the Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) was engaged by the City of Hamilton’s Government Relations and Community Engagement Division to collect feedback from key community partners including VAC members, staff liaisons, and council members as part of the Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) review undertaken by the City. SPRC’s report “*City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee Review: Engagement Report*” outlines the feedback and recommendations based on these engagements.

In addition, at the request of City’s Government Relations and Community Engagement Division, SPRC developed the below list of organizations, community tables, and local collaboratives that have a mandate that, at least in part, are similarly aligned with the mandates of VACs. This includes organizations that provide significant programming and/or services in related areas.

Similarly aligned organizations and community tables have been provided for all VACs. The City’s Sub-Committees (e.g. Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities and Agriculture and Rural Affairs Sub-committee) have not been included as they are not Volunteer Advisory Committees.

At the outset, it is important to acknowledge that this is not an exhaustive list. It is not intended to capture all not-for-profit entities that operate in areas related to the VACs, but rather provides a broad picture of organizations working in each area. The fluid nature of community-based work makes it difficult to capture all not-for-profit entities and community tables working in similar areas to VACs.

The selection of organizations and collaboratives was based on reviews of publicly available lists of organizations in different subject areas, the Hamilton Red Book, the City's Enrichment Fund recipient lists, a previous survey of city staff¹, and existing knowledge and networks of SPRC staff. The criteria for inclusion were limited to non-profit organizations and associated community tables. In some instances where government/quasi-government entities are key players in a specific area, these have also been included. In generating this list, SPRC looked at organizations similarly aligned with aspects of the VAC mandates. Where not included on the City's VAC listing webpage, the mandates of the VACs included below were provided by City staff.

As highlighted in Appendix F of SPRC's "*City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee Review: Engagement Report*", VACs provide unique engagement opportunities for City staff and Council, and while there may be some consistencies between VACs and engagements with other community tables and organizations, there are also distinctions between engagement opportunities. These include:

- VAC membership is often made up of a larger portion of individual community members/constituents, whereas community tables are often made up of organizational representatives. Consultation with community tables or directly with organizations may provide a different perspective, representing institutional or agency feedback.
- As council representatives make up part of VAC membership, VACs have a direct link to council, which is not necessarily the case with community tables, collaboratives and organizations as consultation with these groups is often conducted by City staff.
- There are delineated processes for how VACs should be engaged and consulted by the City, that support transparency of VACs. These parameters are available to the public through VAC Terms of Reference, public VAC meetings, agendas, and minutes. The City's process for engaging and consulting with community bodies may not have the same degree of transparency for the public, although these consultations and relationships between the City and outside organizations also bring valuable feedback. City consultations with community organizations and tables are not typically open or recorded for the public and therefore may not have a clear framework on who gets consulted, when, and how frequently.

¹ See Appendix G of SPRC's "*City of Hamilton Volunteer Advisory Committee Review: Engagement Report*"

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Arts Advisory Commission</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“To recommend activities for the stabilization and strengthening of the arts community; to inform Council of issues and achievements in the Hamilton arts community; to liaise with and act as a point of contact for members of the arts community regarding issues affecting the arts community; to monitor and assist with the implementation of the Public Art Program; to monitor and assist with the implementation of the Arts Awards Program.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Arts and Culture Collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art Gallery of Hamilton - Centre [3] for Artistic and Social Practice - CoBALT Connects - Dundas Arts & Crafts Association - Dundas Little Theatre - Dundas Valley School of Art - Hamilton Arts Council - Hamilton Artists Inc. - Hamilton Festival Theatre Company (Fringe Festival) - Hamilton Music Collective - Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra - Hamilton Theatre Inc. - Immigrant Culture and Art Association - Players Guild Theatre - Re-Create Outreach Art Studio - Supercrawl Productions - Theatre Ancaster - Theatre Aquarius - Women’s Art Association of Hamilton - Workers Arts and Heritage Centre - Various choir and music performance organizations - Various craft-specific guilds

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Climate Change Advisory Committee*</p> <p>Purpose: <i>“To provide advice to Council and City Staff on the prioritization, implementation and monitoring of Hamilton’s Climate Action Strategy, through an equitable and inclusive manner and a climate justice lens, that responds to the perspectives and needs of all, while transitioning to a prosperous, healthy and vibrant net-zero greenhouse gas community that is a national leader in climate adaptation.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean Air Hamilton - Friendly Streets - Hamilton Community Climate Action Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bay Area Restoration Council - Environment Hamilton - Green Venture - Hamilton 350 - Hamilton Conservation Authority - Hamilton Conservation Foundation - Hamilton Industrial Environmental Association - Hamilton Naturalist Club - Royal Botanical Gardens

*While not included in as part of the VAC Review engagements conducted by SPRC, the Climate Change Advisory Committee was included in this list at the direction of City staff. Please also note that a SPRC staff is a member of the Climate Change Advisory Committee.

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Committee Against Racism</p> <p>Mandate: <i>"The Committee is empowered by and responsible to City Council for its activities; it reports to City Council, on issues and concerns pertaining to racism and provides advice to address the impacts of racism, through the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circle of Beads - Hamilton For All - No Hate in the Hammer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Anti Racism Resource Centre - Hamilton Community Legal Clinic - Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion - Various faith and cultural organizations

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Food Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“As a volunteer advisory committee to the Board of Health, the Food Advisory Committee will support and advise on the implementation of Hamilton’s Food Strategy, and the development of inclusive and comprehensive food related policies and programs at the individual, household, and community/population level based on internationally recognized principles of healthy public policy and best practices/available evidence.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction - Hamilton Emergency Food Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compass Community Health Centre - De dwa da dehs nye -Aboriginal Health Centre - Eva Rothwell Centre - Food4Kids - Good Shepherd - Hamilton Community Food Centre - Hamilton Community Garden Network - Hamilton Dream Centre - Hamilton Foodshare - Hamilton Regional Indian Centre - Hamilton Sustainable Victory Gardens - Hamilton Tastebuds Student Nutrition Program - Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre - Living Rock Ministries - McQuesten Urban Farm - Mission’s Services - Native Women’s Centre - Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg - Neighbour to Neighbour - Salvation Army - St. Matthew’s House - Welcome Inn Community Centre - Various foodbanks at places of worship

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Hamilton Cycling Committee</p> <p>Purpose: <i>“The Hamilton Cycling Committee (HCC) advises City Council on:</i> <i>a. all matters related to cycling and micro-mobility</i> <i>b. monitors the implementation of the Hamilton Cycling Master Plan</i> <i>c. encourages and participates in planning for bicycling and micro-mobility facilities</i> <i>d. encourages citizens to cycle instead of drive</i> <i>e. educates the public about the benefits and necessities of cycling</i> <i>f. integrates the work of area municipal bicycle and active transportation committees”</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bike for Mike - Cycle Hamilton - Daily School Route - Environment Hamilton - Hamilton Bike Share/Everyone Rides Initiative - Hamilton Burlington Mountain Biking Association - Hamilton Glow Riders - New Hope Community Bikes - Steel Town Athletic Club (Cycle)

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Hamilton Veterans Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“Reporting to Council, through the Emergency and Community Services Committee, the Hamilton Veterans Committee oversees the planning and delivery of military remembrance and commemoration activities on behalf of the City of Hamilton. When directed by Council, the Committee will provide input on projects and issues that are of concern to Hamilton Veterans.”</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cadets - Legions - Veteran Affairs, Hamilton District Office - Veterans Service League

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The mandate of the HHAC is to: - communicate and work to address the needs of citizens within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes; and - support the City of Hamilton’s 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan by providing information, advice, and recommendations to the Emergency & Community Services Committee regarding its successful and meaningful implementation.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coalition of Hamilton’s Indigenous Leadership - Men’s Emergency Services Committee - Women’s Housing Planning Collaborative - Street Youth Planning Collaborative - Hamilton is Home - Emergency Shelter Coordination Table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACORN Hamilton - City Housing Hamilton - Golden Horseshoe Co-operative Housing Federation - Good Shepherd - Greater Hamilton Health Network - Habitat for Humanity - Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters - Hamilton Community Benefits Network - Hamilton Community Legal Clinic - Hamilton Housing Help Centre - Hamilton Regional Indian Centre - Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre - The Hub - Indwell - Interval House of Hamilton - Keeping Six/HAMSMaRT - Kiwanis Non-Profit Homes - Living Rock Ministries - Mission’s Services - Native Women’s Centre - Nisa Homes - Residential Care Facilities - Sacajawea Non-profit Housing - Shelter Health Network - Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton - St Matthew’s House - The Salvation Army - Womankind Addiction Services - Wesley - West End Home Builders Association - YMCA - YWCA

		- Various non-profit and co-operative housing providers
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VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“To make recommendations to City Council and staff regarding policies, procedures and guidelines, which address the needs and concerns of people who are immigrants or refugees.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) - Hamilton Coalition for Refugee Claimants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afro Canadian Caribbean Association - Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara - College Boreal Hamilton - Compass Community Health - Empowerment Squared - Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre - Immigrant Culture and Art Association - Immigrant Working Centre - Micah House - Open Homes Hamilton - Rafiki Hamilton - Refuge: Hamilton Centre for Newcomer Health - Welcome Inn Community Centre - Wesley - YMCA - YWCA - Various cultural groups and events

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Indigenous Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The Indigenous Advisory Committee assists the City of Hamilton to honour and engage its Indigenous citizens in the pursuit of the City’s vision by providing advice and/or recommendations, through the appropriate Standing Committee of Council, that enhance the wellbeing of Indigenous people and/or resolve municipal issues.</i> <i>The Committee envisions a future where Hamilton is an inclusive and culturally-aware community, where issues of importance to its Indigenous peoples are addressed proactively, effectively and respectfully on the municipal agenda.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circle of Beads - Coalition of Hamilton’s Indigenous Leadership (CHIL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De dwa da dehs nye -Aboriginal Health Centre - Hamilton Regional Indian Centre - Native Women’s Centre - Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg - NPAAMB Indigenous Youth Employment & Training - Sacajawea Non-Profit Housing - Woodland Cultural Centre

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The KHCG Committee will support and provide advice to City staff, elected officials and other stakeholders to implement the Clean & Green Hamilton Strategy and Our Future Hamilton community vision. Reporting through the Public Works Committee, the KHCG Committee will provide input to staff and Council on issues relating to environmental sustainability and stewardship and advice on approaches to engaging citizens to take greater responsibility to protect and revitalize natural and built environments. The KHCG Committee’s primary focus is on effecting behaviours and attitudes conducive to a clean, healthy and safe community through leadership and action. The Committee will provide input and guidance to City staff, Council and other stakeholders on community and private sector involvement and identification of resources to sustain Clean and Green programs and initiatives that aim to beautify our community, promote environmental stewardship and prevent litter, illegal dumping and graffiti.”</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bay Area Restoration Council - Environment Hamilton - Green Venture - Hamilton Conservation Authority - Hamilton Naturalists Club - Trees for Hamilton

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The Committee is empowered by City Council and is responsible to City Council for its services; it reports to City Council on issues and concerns pertaining to the LGBTQ communities through the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Trans Health Coalition - Queer and Trans Youth Collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compass Community Health - Good Shepherd - Greater Hamilton Health Network - Hamilton Community Legal Clinic – Queer Justice Project - Positive Health Network - Pride Hamilton - Shelter Health Network - Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton & Area) - Youth Wellness Centre - YWCA/Spectrum

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Mundialization Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>"The Committee is empowered by City Council and is responsible to City Council for its activities; it reports to City Council, on facilitating and supporting peace initiatives, supporting, facilitating twinned city relationships, through the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee."</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rotary Club of Hamilton - Various cultural organizations, societies and clubs

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Seniors Advisory Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The Senior Advisory Committee is empowered by City Council and is responsible to City Council for its activities; it reports to City Council, on issues and concerns pertaining to seniors in Hamilton, through the Emergency & Community Services Committee.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age Friendly Hamilton - Seniors at Risk in Hamilton Collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able Living - The Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton Halton - Afro Canadian Caribbean Association Hamilton - Ancaster Community Services - Banyan Community Services - Centre de Sante Communautaire de Hamilton/Niagara - Compass Community Health - DARTS - Dundas Community Services - Flamborough Connects - Glanbrook Community Services - Good Shepherd - Hamilton Council on Aging - Hamilton Health Sciences - Hamilton Public Library - Hamilton Recreation Centres - Hamilton Regional Indian Centre - Meals on Wheels (various organizations) - Non-profit long term care homes - Public Health Seniors Dental Bus and Clinic - Seniors Centres - St. Joseph’s Healthcare - St. Matthew’s House - Victorian Order of Nurses - Wesley

VAC name and mandate	Tables/collaboratives	Service Providers/ Organizations
<p>Women and Gender Equity Committee</p> <p>Mandate: <i>“The Women and Gender Equity Committee for the City of Hamilton acts as an Advisory Committee on matters pertaining to gender inequities faced by women, trans, and non-binary individuals. It achieves this mandate by providing Council input on matters of municipal concern and evaluating the City on its related efforts.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women Abuse Working Group (WAG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centre de Sante Communautaire de Hamilton/Niagara - Good Shepherd - Hamilton’s Women’s Clinic - Interval House - Mission’s Services - Native Women’s Centre - Nisa Homes - Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area) - Sex Workers Action Plan - Womankind Addiction Service - YMCA - YWCA - Zonta Club



Volunteer Advisory Committee – SWOT Analysis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The analysis highlights that while Volunteer Advisory Committees have strengths such as diverse representation and public accessibility, they also face significant weaknesses related to slow processes and rigidity. To enhance their effectiveness, there is a clear need to streamline procedures, potentially adopting more agile and flexible models similar to those seen in other municipalities. This could involve restructuring committees to be more dynamic or adopting working group models that facilitate quicker decision-making and adaptability.

There is a substantial opportunity to improve volunteer engagement and satisfaction by implementing comprehensive support systems. This includes providing better training, recognition, and honorariums, as well as ensuring a transparent and accessible recruitment process. Enhancing these aspects can help attract and retain motivated volunteers, thereby strengthening the committees' overall impact and effectiveness.

The committees have the opportunity to align more closely with current Public Engagement best practices and the City's new Public Engagement Policy. By addressing barriers and increasing representation, the committees can improve their relevance and effectiveness in community engagement. This alignment can also help bridge gaps in public involvement and ensure that the committees are better integrated with broader municipal goals.

Several threats, such as the slow realization of outcomes and issues with transparency, need to be addressed to maintain and build trust in the committees. Ensuring clear communication with decision-makers and the public about processes and delays is crucial for maintaining credibility. Additionally, overcoming resistance to change and addressing the attachment to existing models are important for achieving the committee's potential and aligning with council priorities.

The analysis underscores the importance of flexibility and innovation in the functioning of Volunteer Advisory Committees. Embracing new engagement methods and adapting to evolving community needs can enhance their effectiveness. This includes exploring new models of engagement and being open to structural changes that can improve responsiveness and impact.

In summary, while Volunteer Advisory Committees have several strengths, addressing their weaknesses and threats through structural changes, enhanced volunteer support, and alignment with best practices presents significant opportunities for improvement.

Embracing these opportunities will be crucial for maximizing their effectiveness and achieving their goals.

SWOT ANALYSIS: KEY THEMES

Overview: Strengths

Volunteer Advisory Committees offer a robust framework for community engagement and decision-making. They serve as a vital communication channel at the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)’s Involve/Consult level, bringing together diverse voices to support and guide decision-makers. The committees are notable for their broad representation, with 14 distinct groups actively working to include a wide range of perspectives through targeted recruitment efforts. This diversity is complemented by the passion and commitment of community members, who are deeply invested in the work of the committees.

Transparency and accessibility are key strengths, as the committees are open to the public, allowing for in-person attendance, online viewing, and public access to meeting minutes. This openness fosters a sense of accountability and community involvement. Additionally, committees benefit from dedicated staff support and a budget, which helps in managing resources effectively and supporting their initiatives.

The structured nature of the committees, backed by clerks and a well-defined framework, ensures organized operations. Furthermore, the committees play a crucial role in advancing principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), addressing key community concerns, and aligning with the City’s strategic priorities. By providing a direct link to City Councillors and engaging in civic activities, the committees demonstrate the City’s investment in community engagement and provide valuable platforms for addressing high-conflict topics and building meaningful relationships.

Overview: Weaknesses

Volunteer Advisory Committees face several challenges that impact their effectiveness and efficiency. One significant issue is the slow and burdensome process involved in advancing workplans and priorities, which can hinder timely progress and limit the committees’ ability to respond to emerging needs. The complex budgetary and council-approval structure further complicates the spending of allocated funds, often leading to financial and operational constraints.

Additionally, the committees struggle with alignment to current Public Engagement best practices. Their infrequent evaluations—only every four years, with the last review in 2015—can result in outdated practices that do not fully address current community needs. Long fixed terms for members and limited recruitment opportunities outside of these cycles can also restrict flexibility and responsiveness. There is a notable lack of a

formal volunteer engagement process, including policies for recognition and honorariums, which can affect volunteer motivation and satisfaction.

The committees also face challenges related to perception and process. Decision-makers may not fully appreciate the value of the committees, leading to potential issues with trust and support. The rigidity of the existing structural system makes it difficult to implement necessary changes, and transparency issues—exemplified by the lack of communication about delays during the current review pause—can undermine accountability and confidence in the system. These factors collectively contribute to a sense of stagnation and inefficacy within the committees.

Overview: Opportunities

Volunteer Advisory Committees have several promising opportunities for enhancement and greater impact. One key opportunity lies in evolving their engagement strategies to be more meaningful and flexible. By creating innovative, creative spaces for community interaction, the committees can better reflect the diverse voices they aim to serve, fostering more impactful and relevant discussions. Embracing trends from other municipalities, which are moving towards streamlined or working group models, presents a chance to explore structural changes that could improve effectiveness and responsiveness.

Enhancing the volunteer program itself offers substantial opportunities. Implementing comprehensive training, recognition systems, and honorariums can greatly improve volunteer engagement and satisfaction. A clear and open recruitment process, along with agile and reduced-barrier participation, would make the program more inclusive and responsive. Integrating principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) and expanding access to various levels of IAP2 engagement can further enhance the committees’ effectiveness and alignment with best practices.

Moreover, strengthening the City's new Public Engagement Policy by aligning committee operations with its principles can increase consistency and inclusiveness in community engagement efforts. This alignment could help bridge gaps, increase representation, and reach new demographics, thus broadening the committees' impact and relevance. By accessing new audiences and referencing municipal best practices, the committees can improve their approach and better serve the community's evolving needs.

Overview: Threats

Volunteer Advisory Committees encounter several threats that can undermine their effectiveness and credibility. A primary concern is that these committees might inadvertently undermine the Public Engagement Policy, Framework, and guidelines, potentially failing to advance meaningful engagement. The slow pace at which

committees realize outcomes can erode trust in both the committees themselves and the broader City government, as delays and inefficiencies become more apparent.

Liability expectations associated with committee work can negatively impact members' reputations and careers, deterring potential volunteers and causing stress for current members. Additionally, the lack of confidence in the current system may result in diminished trust in the advice and recommendations provided by the committees. Issues with transparency and accountability have arisen, particularly during periods of review or change, which can exacerbate concerns about the system's effectiveness.

Resistance to change poses another significant threat which can hinder progress and adaptation. This resistance threatens to prevent the achievement of Term of Council priority #3, which focuses on increasing public involvement in decision-making and problem-solving.

SWOT ANALYSIS DATA

Identified Strengths

- **Structured Communication:** Advisory Committees serve as a regular communication channel at the IAP2 Involve/Consult level, providing a panel of diverse voices to assist decision-makers.
- **Diverse Representation:** With 14 committees, there is a strong emphasis on recruiting members from diverse backgrounds, ensuring a broad range of perspectives.
- **Passionate Volunteers:** Members are highly motivated and committed to their roles, contributing to a vibrant and engaged committee.
- **Public Accessibility:** Meetings are open to the public, allowing for in-person attendance, online viewing, delegation delivery, and public access to process and minutes, fostering transparency.
- **Support and Resources:** Committees benefit from dedicated staff support, allocated budgets, and resources, which aid in their functioning and initiatives.
- **Awareness and Connection:** There is some awareness and opportunity for consultation with the Advisory Committees, along with connections to Term of Council Priorities and the Strategic Plan.
- **Conflict Engagement:** Committees provide a platform for engaging with high-conflict topics, offering a structured method to address sensitive issues.
- **Relationship Building:** Opportunities exist for building and strengthening relationships within the community and with stakeholders.
- **Policy Alignment:** There is potential alignment with the Public Engagement Policy, enhancing the committee's relevance and impact.
- **Community Feedback:** Committees facilitate shared feedback on community concerns, such as police board selection questions, ensuring that diverse viewpoints are considered.

- **Expertise and Skills:** Members bring a wealth of expertise, skills, and knowledge, representing broader sections of the population and enhancing the committee’s effectiveness.
- **Well-Defined Structure:** A clear organizational structure, supported by clerks, ensures efficient operation and clarity in roles and responsibilities.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Equity-deserving committees address key community issues, advancing principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) and supporting council priorities.
- **Direct Council Connection:** There is a direct link to City Councillors, which can facilitate better communication and influence.
- **Civic Engagement:** Committees play a role in civic engagement, including leading community events and demonstrating the City’s investment in various communities.
- **Broad Coverage:** The existence of a large number of committees allows for extensive community involvement and representation.

Identified Weaknesses

- **Slow and Burdensome Process:** The process for advancing workplans and priorities can be slow and cumbersome, hindering timely progress.
- **Budgetary Challenges:** Navigating the budget and council-approval structure can be difficult, often leading to challenges in spending allocated funds effectively.
- **Misalignment with Best Practices:** Advisory Committees may not fully align with current Public Engagement best practices, potentially limiting their effectiveness.
- **Relevance Concerns:** Committees are evaluated only every four years, with the last evaluation occurring in 2015, which may result in outdated practices that do not address current needs.
- **Long Fixed Terms:** Members are appointed for long fixed terms (4 years), which can limit flexibility and responsiveness to changing community needs.
- **Limited Recruitment Opportunities:** Recruitment opportunities are restricted to a four-year cycle, making it difficult to introduce new members outside of this period.
- **Perceived Lack of Value:** Decision-makers may not fully appreciate the value or impact of the committees, affecting their support and engagement.
- **Timeliness Issues:** The committees often struggle to meet timelines for public engagement projects due to procedural constraints.
- **Limited Tools and Methods:** While the Public Engagement policy supports diverse methods and tools, these are not available to Advisory Committees, limiting their engagement capabilities.

- **No Volunteer Engagement Process:** There is no formal policy for volunteer engagement, including the absence of honorarium payments or recognition processes.
- **Intimidation Factors:** The presence of recordings, live streaming, and adherence to ombudsman and integrity commissioner restrictions can create a sense of intimidation for members.
- **Inflexible Structure:** The structural system of the committees can be rigid and difficult to change, sometimes making it impossible to adapt or address issues.
- **Limited Recognition and Compensation:** Volunteers receive minimal recognition and cannot receive honorariums, which may impact motivation and appreciation.
- **Complex Learning Curve:** There is an extensive learning process involved in understanding municipal processes and working with government structures, which can be a barrier for new members.

Identified Opportunities

- **Enhanced Community Engagement:** There is a chance to create more meaningful and flexible ways to engage communities, fostering creative and brave spaces that reflect the diverse voices of those being reached.
- **Adapting Municipal Trends:** Other municipalities are evolving their approaches by reducing the number of committees or shifting towards working group models. This trend presents an opportunity to explore similar innovations.
- **Structural Evolution:** There is an opportunity to move away from the traditional Advisory Committee model towards a more dynamic and adaptable structure.
- **Volunteer Program Enhancements:**
 - **Training:** Implement comprehensive training programs for volunteers.
 - **Recognition:** Develop systems to recognize and celebrate volunteer contributions.
 - **Honorariums:** Introduce honorariums to acknowledge the time and effort of volunteers.
 - **Clear Recruitment:** Establish a transparent and efficient recruitment process.
 - **Agility:** Facilitate quick and open participation with reduced barriers.
 - **IDEA Principles:** Integrate Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) principles into the volunteer program.
 - **IAP2 Engagement Levels:** Increase access to various levels of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum.
 - **Privacy and Anonymity:** Ensure that the program supports privacy and anonymity where needed.
- **Career Advancement and Networking:** Advisory Committees offer opportunities for members to build valuable relationships and advance their careers.

- **Best Practice Integration:** Reference and incorporate municipal best practices to enhance committee operations and effectiveness.
- **Strengthening Public Engagement:** By aligning more closely with the City's new Public Engagement Policy, there is an opportunity to strengthen engagement efforts with greater consistency and inclusiveness.
- **Increased Representation:** Reducing barriers and increasing representation can help ensure that diverse voices are heard and involved.
- **Access to New Demographics:** Engage with new people, audiences, and demographics to broaden the committee's impact and relevance.

Identified Threats

- **Undermining Public Engagement Standards:** Advisory Committees may undermine the Public Engagement Policy, Framework, and guidelines, potentially failing to advance meaningful and effective engagement.
- **Reputational and Career Risks:** The liability expectations associated with committee work can negatively affect reputations and careers, deterring potential volunteers and impacting current members.
- **Slow Outcome Realization:** The slow pace of committees in delivering outcomes can erode trust in the City and local government, affecting public perception and confidence.
- **Lack of Confidence:** The current system's inefficiencies or perceived shortcomings can contribute to a lack of trust in the advice and recommendations provided by the committees.
- **Transparency and Accountability Issues:** During the pause for review, a lack of communication with decision-makers about delays can lead to issues with transparency and accountability, undermining stakeholder confidence.
- **Attachment to Existing Models:** Staff or members may have strong attachments to existing Volunteer Advisory Committees (VACs), making it difficult to implement changes or reforms.
- **Resistance to Change:** Current committee members may be invested in maintaining the status quo, creating resistance to necessary changes, and making it challenging to adapt to new approaches.
- **Impact on Council Priorities:** Maintaining the status quo threatens to hinder progress toward Term of Council priority #3, which aims to increase public involvement in decision-making and problem-solving.

Current Volunteer Advisory Committee Structure Overview

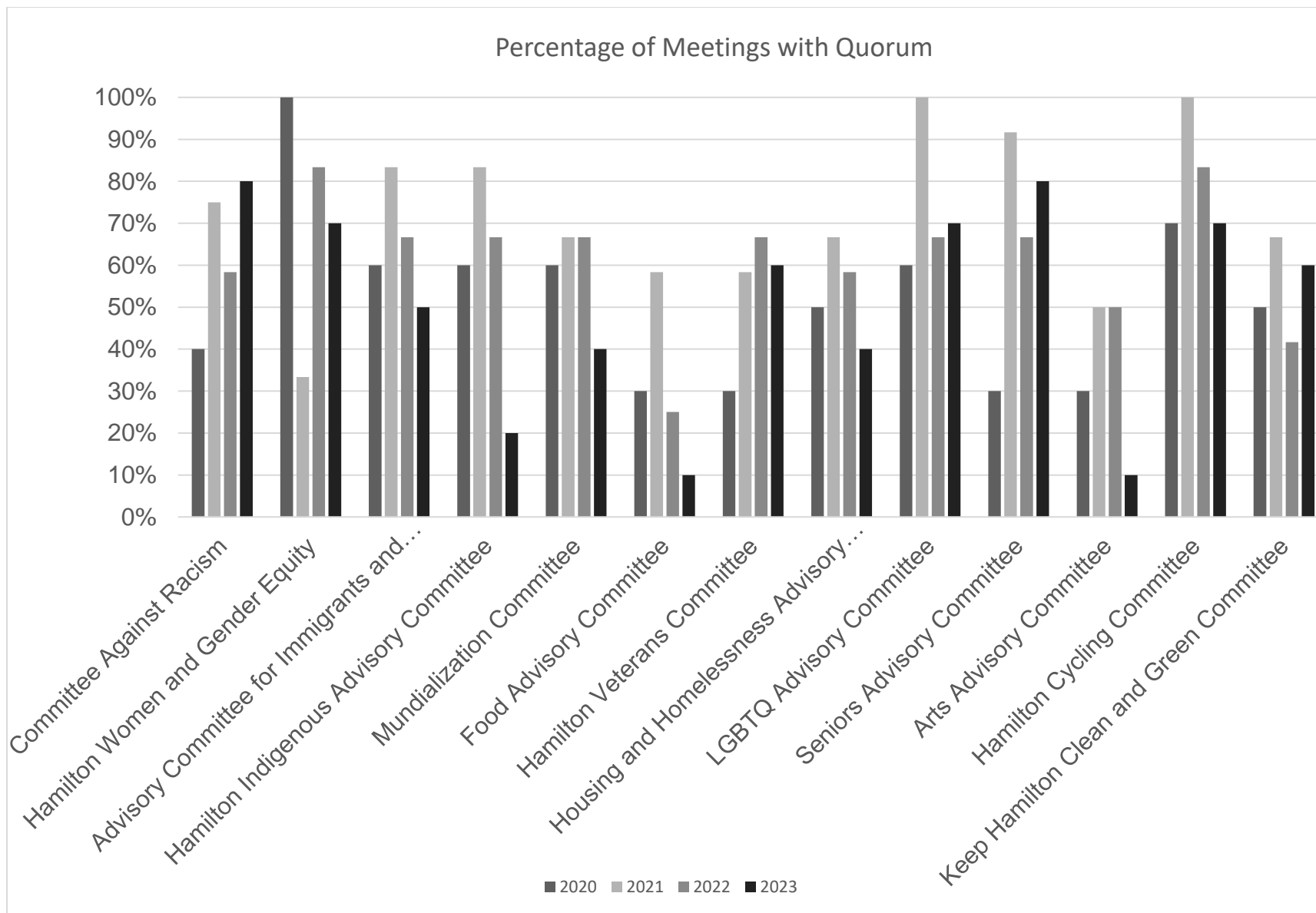
An advisory committee is established by City Council for the purpose of providing advice on matters that are related to the specific mandate of the committee, comprised of a group of appointed citizens. An advisory committee is accountable to City Council for its actions through the appropriate Standing Committee to which they report.

An advisory committee member is recruited based on their understanding of and expertise around the advisory committee's mandate and willingness to volunteer their time.

Advisory committees play an important role in providing resident input on proposed policy and City initiatives and are often used as another way to connect directly with the broader community. Advisory committees and task forces have a clearly defined terms of reference document which provides the committee's mandate and outlines parameters for committee activity.

Advisory committees/task forces review or provide advice to City Council and staff on mandated matters; assist in public consultation processes and committee work; and liaise with other advisory committees/task forces. Two of the Advisory Committees organize and participate in community events. The Hamilton Veteran's Committee has organized the annual Remembrance Day Events in the City of Hamilton. The Seniors Advisory Committee assists in the organization of the Senior of the Year Awards. Being a member of an advisory committee/task force offers residents a unique chance to volunteer their highly valued skills, diversity, and knowledge to strengthen our shared sense of community.

The work of the Advisory Committee is facilitated by staff from various departments. Often these staff persons are facilitating the work of the advisory committee along with many other responsibilities. The work of the advisory committee is not always well served by the committee meeting process. When an advisory committee requires approval for any action, other than basic actions around the operations of the advisory, from their respective Standing Committee, the advisory committee is required to prepare a Citizen Committee Report (CCR) with recommendations. Recommendations: are proposals/requests from an advisory committee to their respective Standing Committee to approve, amend, cancel, consider, implement, direct staff respecting a matter, issue, project, service or program. Committee members may not have much experience drafting reports or recommendations and staff liaisons may not always have the capacity to provide needed assistance, which can lead to delays in action. Additionally, the advisory committee are limited as to contacts that they can make with various organizations, due to the advisory committee meeting structure. Staff-lead groups would better facilitate the connection between interested citizens and the City of Hamilton.



Advisory Committee	Citizen Advisory Committee Reports (CCRs) Submitted to Council			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees	0	1	0	0
Arts Advisory Committee	0	0	0	0
Committee Against Racism	0	1	0	1
Food Advisory Committee	0	0	0	0
Hamilton Cycling Committee	0	4	1	4
Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee	1	0	1	1
Hamilton Veterans Committee	0	0	0	0
Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Committee	0	2	2	4
Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee	0	0	0	0
Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee	2	0	2	1
LGBTQ Advisory Committee	4	10	2	2
Mundialization Committee	0	0	0	0
Seniors Advisory Committee	0	5	2	0

Advisory Committee	Allocated Budget (Percentage Spent*)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees	\$3,500 (5.1%)	\$3,500 (0.0%)	\$3,500 (0.0%)	\$3,500 (42.9%)
Arts Advisory Committee	\$9,000 (62.6%)	\$9,000 (52.2%)	\$9,000 (214.4%)	\$9,000 (0.3%)
Committee Against Racism	\$8,900 (79.8%)	\$8,900 (11.1%)	\$8,900 (0.6%)	\$8,900 (25.8%)
Food Advisory Committee	\$2,500 (100.0%)	\$2,500 (40.0%)	\$1,500 (0.0%)	\$1,500 (0.0%)
Hamilton Cycling Committee	\$13,000 (28.3%)	\$10,000 (90.8%)	\$10,000 (76.7%)	\$14,000 (36.8%)
Hamilton Indigenous Advisory Committee	\$3,552 (3.7%)	\$3,552 (24.5%)	\$3,552 (52.4%)	\$3,552 (22.5%)
Hamilton Veterans Committee	\$43,000 (127.9%)	\$43,000 (100.0%)	\$43,000 (143.1%)	\$55,000 (98.7%)
Hamilton Women and Gender Equity Committee	\$3,500 (48.1%)	\$3,500 (202.9%)	\$3,500 (191.2%)	\$3,500 (85.7%)
Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee	\$1,000 (88.4%)	\$1,000 (0.0%)	\$1,000 (0.0%)	\$1,000 (0.0%)
Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee	\$18,250 (80.8%)	\$18,250 (50.5%)	\$18,250 (92.0%)	\$18,250 (152.7%)
LGBTQ Advisory Committee	\$3,960 (60.9%)	\$3,960 (85.8%)	\$4,039 (51.6%)	\$4,050 (14.8%)
Mundialization Committee	\$5,890 (14.0%)	\$5,890 (10.2%)	\$5,890 (34.6%)	\$5,890 (33.0%)
Seniors Advisory Committee	\$2,500 (62.9%)	\$2,500 (33.8%)	\$2,500 (43.2%)	\$3,000 (98.5%)

*In cases where the percentage spent exceeds 100% this represents funds spent from the Advisory Committee's reserves

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. WILSON.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR.....

Tackling Barriers to Building More Affordable and Supportive Housing

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton is experiencing a housing crisis, with increasing demand for affordable and supportive housing outpacing available supply;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton continues to make significant investments in housing, including a gross allocation of \$192 million in the proposed 2025 Tax budget to address housing affordability and housing supports;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton provides a suite of mandatory and discretionary housing enabling exemptions from Development Charges, Community Benefits Charges and Parkland Dedication Fees to stimulate the construction of affordable and supportive housing;

WHEREAS, there may be barriers that prevent or delay the construction of affordable and supportive housing;

WHEREAS, innovative approaches and reforms, including alternative financing mechanisms aimed at lowering housing costs, have been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions to support the development of affordable and supportive rental housing while maintaining municipal revenue streams; and,

WHEREAS, a jurisdictional scan to explore best practices aimed at diversifying, incentivizing and expanding Hamilton’s rental housing stock while ensuring continued investment in critical infrastructure may assist the City of Hamilton in getting more homes built.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Housing Secretariat, in collaboration with other city divisions be directed to conduct a jurisdictional scan to identify and assess the potential adoption of reforms and financing mechanisms to support affordable and supportive properties while reducing reliance on development charges and property taxes; and,
- (b) That the Housing Secretariat be directed to report back to Council as part the Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap annual update, on the findings of the jurisdictional scan and providing recommendations for implementation in the City of Hamilton.

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR B. CLARK.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR.....

Explore Area Rating or Tax Relief for Residents Within 3km of the GFL Landfill

WHEREAS, residents living in Upper Stoney Creek within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) have been experiencing horrific odours since April 2023;

WHEREAS, residents have not had daily reasonable use and enjoyment of homes, property, community spaces and workplaces, especially pertaining to outdoor lived experiences;

WHEREAS, residents have experienced inconvenience, discomfort and loss of amenity caused by odours being emitted from the landfill;

WHEREAS, residents have regularly complained about the odour seeping into their homes; and,

WHEREAS, GFL and the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks have not been successful in stopping the odours;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the taxes and finance divisions review the possibility of providing area rating relief or any other tax relief to mitigate the financial burden on residents living within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) and report back to the General Issues Committee by the end of Q2 of 2025 with all costs to be funded through the GFL royalties.

From: Paul S
Sent: February 8, 2025 12:11 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Cc: Noemie Honey Ko(new) Sheldon Supers ; Sheldon Supers ; Clark, Brad
<Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC committee,

I am writing to formally lodge a complaint regarding the ongoing issues with the GFL landfill site located near 65 Green Mountain Road West. The situation has been unbearable, and I am deeply concerned about the impact it is having on our community.

****1. Horrendous Odor:****

Yet again, the smell emanating from the landfill is absolutely horrendous. It resembles a mix of a gas leak and the foul stench of a dead animal, making it impossible to enjoy our homes or even keep windows open. Yesterday morning, Feb 7th, at 7:20 AM, the odor was so overpowering that it seeped into my house, creating an intolerable living environment. This is not an isolated incident but a ****daily occurrence**** that has been reported multiple times since 2023 and continues to persist to this day.

****2. Noise Violations:****

In addition to the unbearable smell, I was woken up this morning by loud hammering or chiseling noises coming from the GFL site. These activities began as early as 6:30 AM, which is a clear violation of the local noise bylaw that prohibits such noise before 7:00 AM. This is not the first time I have witnessed GFL starting work before the permitted time, and it is unacceptable that this continues to happen despite previous complaints.

****Reference Number:****

I have already reported this issue earlier today and was provided with the following reference number: ****[REDACTED]****. Please use this number to track my complaint and investigate the matter as soon as possible.

****Request for Action:****

I urge you to:

1. Investigate the source of the foul odor and take immediate steps to mitigate it.
2. Address the repeated noise violations and ensure GFL complies with the local noise bylaws.
3. Consider imposing fines or penalties for these ongoing violations.

This situation is causing significant distress to our community, and we expect prompt and effective action to resolve these issues. Please keep me updated on the progress of your investigation and the steps being taken to address these concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response in GIC meeting.

Sincerely,

Paul Supers

From: Paul S.

Sent: February 11, 2025 9:01 AM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Cc: Noemie Honey Ko(new) ; Sheldon Supers ; Sheldon Supers ; Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>; Office of the Mayor <Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Re: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC Committee,

I am writing to file another formal complaint regarding a severe air quality issue affecting my neighborhood from the GFL site located at 65 Green Mountain Rd W, Stoney Creek, ON L8J 1X5.

Today, on February 11, 2025 at approximately 7:30am, there is an overwhelming foul odor permeating the area surrounding the GFL site. The smell was comparable to rotten eggs and sewer gas, which I suspect contained high levels of hazardous hydrogen sulfide gas.

This putrid odor is so strong that it is seeping into my residential home. My family experienced headaches, dizziness and other concerning symptoms as a direct result of exposure to these fumes.

I have significant concerns that the GFL site may be improperly handling hazardous waste materials and illegally releasing cancerous and toxic gases into the air we breathe. This poses an unacceptable public health risk to everyone in the community.

I urgently request that an air quality survey be conducted at the GFL site address provided above, as well as comprehensive testing of emissions being released from their facility. Appropriate enforcement action must be taken if they are found to be in violation of air quality regulations.

The health and safety of area residents is my top priority. I look forward to your prompt investigation and remediation of this serious issue before further damage is done.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Regards,

Paul Supers

From: Sharon Moran
Sent: February 8, 2025 1:09 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Cc: Shar Moran

Subject: Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC committee,

I am writing to formally lodge a complaint regarding the ongoing issues with the GFL landfill site located near 65 Green Mountain Road West. The situation has been unbearable, and I am deeply concerned about the impact it is having on our community.

****1. Horrendous Odor:****

Yet again, the smell emanating from the landfill is absolutely horrendous. It resembles a mix of a gas leak and the foul stench of a dead animal, making it impossible to enjoy our homes or even keep windows open. Countless reports have been filed to date with no real lasting resolve, the odour has been so overpowering that it seeped into my house and garage creating an intolerable living environment. This is not an isolated incident but a ****daily occurrence**** that has been reported multiple times since 2023 and continues to persist to this day.

****2. Noise Violations:****

In addition to the unbearable smell, I sited loud banging, hammering or chiseling noises coming directly from the GFL site. These activities are random in nature and ongoing throughout this ordeal. The mountain of landfill pile is also an eyesore and embarrassing to me when I have visitors that question it.

****Request for Action:****

I urge you to:

1. Investigate the source of the foul odor and take immediate steps to mitigate it.
2. Address the repeated noise violations and ensure GFL complies with the local noise bylaws.
3. Consider imposing fines or penalties for these ongoing violations. Also tax relief for immediate residents in close proximity to the site that have not been able to enjoy reasonable and normal use of their property and surrounding area since 2023.

This situation is causing significant distress to our community, and we expect prompt and effective action to resolve these issues. Please keep me updated on the progress of your investigation and the steps being taken to address these concerns. I have also been experiencing lots of mucus issues whenever I go outside and in the vicinity. Even at night and I believe there is a strong possibility that it is related to the dump. I have reported this to my family doctor recently. We/she are very concerned. My teen has experienced nosebleeds also since 2023. We attribute it to this area and the odours etc. from GFL.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response and an immediate resolution to this issue.

Sincerely,

Sharon Moran

Resident

From: Sharon Moran
Sent: February 10, 2025 8:06 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Cc: Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Fw: Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Additional resident complaint

Dear GIC Committee,

I am writing in absolute frustration, anger, and desperation regarding the GFL landfill site near Green Mountain Road West, Stoney Creek Hamilton. The situation is beyond unacceptable—it is a full-blown crisis that is destroying our community's quality of life, and the inaction from those responsible is nothing short of disgraceful.

1. The Stench of Negligence: The revolting stench emanating from the landfill is unbearable, making it impossible to live, breathe, or even step outside. Every single day, we are forced to endure the nauseating, toxic mix of gas leaks, rotten eggs, and decaying matter. The stench is overpowering that it invades our homes, turning it into an unlivable hell. This is not a minor inconvenience—it is an environmental disaster that has been ongoing since 2023, despite relentless complaints. The complete disregard for our well-being is appalling.

2. Blatant Noise Violations: On top of the choking odor, residents are now being bombarded by noise pollution from the landfill site. Hammering and chiseling noises—clearly violating local noise bylaws that prohibit such disturbances before 7:00 AM. This is not an isolated incident; GFL repeatedly ignores regulations and continues to operate with impunity. Why are they allowed to get away with this blatant disregard for the law?

3. Empty Promises and Gaslighting Responses: Since Summer of 2023, I and the whole community have tirelessly lodged complaints, desperately seeking a solution. What have we received in return? Generic, meaningless template responses from both GFL and the Ministry of Environment, as if we are mere statistics to be brushed aside. We have logged hundreds if not thousands of pollution reports on the Ministry of Environment's website, as well as on GFL website, yet NOTHING has changed. The odorous nightmare persists.

GFL officials in fact have repeatedly insulted our intelligence with laughable responses like: "the landfill was not operational during the time the smell was reported." OR "GFL staff drove to your home and conducted a perimeter check. A strong wood-burning odor was evident. We assessed the situation and determined the odors did not correlate with landfill activities."!!!!!!!!!!!!.Are you kidding me? The smell the community is being suffocated with is gas, sulfur, rotten eggs, cat urine—not wood burning. This is an outright mockery of the residents suffering day after day. GFL is drowning us in

chemicals to cover up the real issue, likely exposing us to even more hazardous substances.

4. The Impact: Financial Ruin and a Public Health Crisis The sheer irresponsibility of extending the landfill's operation instead of shutting it down is infuriating. Home values have plummeted by at least \$100,000 to \$150,000 due to this disaster. We cannot sell or rent our homes—who in their right mind would want to live in a sewer? This isn't just about inconvenience; it is about the destruction of lives, financial security, and mental health. And the story is now repeating itself, to make matters worse, a school is set to open in the area in 2027. How can children be expected to learn and grow in an environment filled with toxic fumes?

We are DONE waiting. The only viable solution is to shut this landfill down immediately. Enough with the band-aid fixes that clearly do not work. We demand immediate, decisive action, not another empty statement or bureaucratic delay. The health, (both physical and Mental) and safety of thousands of residents are at stake.

I am attaching a Word document detailing my several email efforts to escalate this urgent matter to multiple authorities, all of which have been met with inaction. Despite repeated attempts to demand real solutions, no meaningful action has been taken to date.

Please consider this serious desperate plea. We demand answers, we demand accountability, and we demand results.

On behalf of a disappointed, exhausted, and desperate community

Begin forwarded message:

On Saturday, February 8, 2025, 1:08 PM, Sharon Moran wrote:

Dear GIC committee,

I am writing to formally lodge a complaint regarding the ongoing issues with the GFL landfill site located near 65 Green Mountain Road West. The situation has been unbearable, and I am deeply concerned about the impact it is having on our community.

****1. Horrendous Odor:****

Yet again, the smell emanating from the landfill is absolutely horrendous. It resembles a mix of a gas leak and the foul stench of a dead animal, making it impossible to enjoy our homes or even keep windows open. Countless reports have been filed to date with no

real lasting resolve, the odour has been so overpowering that it seeped into my house and garage creating an intolerable living environment. This is not an isolated incident but a ****daily occurrence**** that has been reported multiple times since 2023 and continues to persist to this day.

****2. Noise Violations:****

In addition to the unbearable smell, I sited loud banging, hammering or chiseling noises coming directly from the GFL site. These activities are random in nature and ongoing throughout this ordeal. The mountain of landfill pile is also an eyesore and embarrassing to me when I have visitors that question it.

****Request for Action:****

I urge you to:

1. Investigate the source of the foul odor and take immediate steps to mitigate it.
2. Address the repeated noise violations and ensure GFL complies with the local noise bylaws.
3. Consider imposing fines or penalties for these ongoing violations. Also tax relief for immediate residents in close proximity to the site that have not been able to enjoy reasonable and normal use of their property and surrounding area since 2023.

This situation is causing significant distress to our community, and we expect prompt and effective action to resolve these issues. Please keep me updated on the progress of your investigation and the steps being taken to address these concerns. I have also been experiencing lots of mucus issues whenever I go outside and in the vicinity. Even at night and I believe there is a strong possibility that it is related to the dump. I have reported this to my family doctor recently. We/she are very concerned. My teen has experienced nosebleeds also since 2023. We attribute it to this area and the odours etc. from GFL.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response and an immediate resolution to this issue.

Sincerely,

Sharon Moran

Resident

From: O'Neil Graham
Sent: February 9, 2025 4:05 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

My name is O'Neil Graham, and I have happily lived in Hamilton for over 33 years. I could not have imagined my family's life-changing so drastically, based on where I live in Hamilton. This is one of the worst experiences in our lives, trying to exist with a landfill in our community. We are simply distraught & disconcerted. My family and I don't even sit outside in our backyard anymore, or worse, invite friends and family over, with the fear they will smell the stink that emanates from the landfill. Sometimes it's a sulphur smell, a rotten egg smell, or an unbearable stink that forces you to run from your car into your house. We have purchased two air purifiers for our home, and every time the front door opens the indicator goes red!!! My wife recently had to have surgery on her throat, and I can't help but think this odour had something to do with it, this is unbelievable!! Mowing the lawn is a challenge, we don't go for walks around the neighbourhood anymore, and we don't ride our bicycles anymore, this has caused anxiety, distrust, frustration and constant worry that whatever we are breathing could be doing imminent damage to our bodies and/or shortening our life expectancy.

-----Original Message-----

From: Carol Sebben

Sent: February 9, 2025 8:30 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: GIC agenda of February 26

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

To Whom It May Concern,

Our family has struggled with huge inconveniences and health issues due to the GFL landfill. Our son suffers from asthma and has had to increase his medication due to his asthma being so bad. Since last summer his asthma has been increasingly getting worse and his meds are less effective. In August he had to go into the ER as he could not breathe. We believe this is in direct relation to the pollution from the dump. I, myself suffer from migraines and dry eyes, which I also believe are influenced by the toxins and smells that are being emitted from the landfill.

The smells from the dump are often horrendous and definitely impact our enjoyment of our home. Over the summer we always had to have our windows closed and many times we tried to have gatherings in our backyard only to be chased inside due to the odors. This was highly embarrassing!

My husband is an umpire and had several games at the heritage green sports complex. My family and I would go and support him and hear the teams and fans complain about the stink.

Many times we would head out for walks in our neighborhood only to have to turn back home as the smell would give me a migraine. This would often occur when I would try to sit in our backyard as well.

This landfill needs to be closed and at the very least this community should receive a tax break. If we could move, we would. Unfortunately circumstances are such that we have to live here for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this very important matter.

Carol Sebben

Sent from my iPhone

From: jumana dajani
Sent: February 10, 2025 2:40 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC Committee,

I am writing in absolute frustration, anger, and desperation regarding the GFL landfill site near Green Mountain Road West, Stoney Creek Hamilton. The situation is beyond unacceptable—it is a full-blown crisis that is destroying our community's quality of life, and the inaction from those responsible is nothing short of disgraceful.

1. The Stench of Negligence: The revolting stench emanating from the landfill is unbearable, making it impossible to live, breathe, or even step outside. Every single day, we are forced to endure the nauseating, toxic mix of gas leaks, rotten eggs, and decaying matter. The stench is overpowering that it invades our homes, turning it into an unlivable hell. This is not a minor inconvenience—it is an environmental disaster that has been ongoing since 2023, despite relentless complaints. The complete disregard for our well-being is appalling.

2. Blatant Noise Violations: On top of the choking odor, residents are now being bombarded by noise pollution from the landfill site. Hammering and chiseling noises—clearly violating local noise bylaws that prohibit such disturbances before 7:00 AM. This is not an isolated incident; **GFL repeatedly ignores regulations and continues to operate with impunity.** Why are they allowed to get away with this blatant disregard for the law?

3. Empty Promises and Gaslighting Responses: Since Summer of 2023, I and the whole community have tirelessly lodged complaints, desperately seeking a solution. What have we received in return? Generic, meaningless template responses from both GFL and the Ministry of Environment, as if we are mere statistics to be brushed aside. We have logged hundreds if not thousands of pollution reports on the Ministry of Environment's website, as well as on GFL website, yet NOTHING has changed. The odorous nightmare persists.

GFL officials in fact have repeatedly insulted our intelligence with laughable responses like: "*the landfill was not operational during the time the smell was reported.*" OR "*GFL staff drove to your home and conducted a perimeter check. A strong wood-burning odor was evident. We assessed the situation and determined the odors did not correlate with landfill activities.*"!!!!!!!!!!!!.Are you kidding me? The smell the community is being suffocated with is **gas, sulfur, rotten eggs, cat urine**—not wood burning. This is an outright mockery of the residents suffering day after day. GFL is drowning us in chemicals to cover up the real issue, likely exposing us to even more hazardous substances.

4. The Impact: Financial Ruin and a Public Health Crisis The sheer irresponsibility of extending the landfill's operation instead of shutting it down is infuriating. Home values have plummeted by at least **\$100,000 to \$150,000** due to this disaster. We cannot sell or rent our homes—who in their right mind would want to live in a **sewer**? This isn't just about inconvenience; it is about the destruction of lives, financial security, and mental health. And the story is now repeating itself, to make matters worse, a school is set to open in the area in 2027. How can children be expected to learn and grow in an environment filled with toxic fumes?

We are **DONE** waiting. The only viable solution is to **shut this landfill down immediately**. Enough with the band-aid fixes that clearly do not work. We demand immediate, decisive action, not another empty statement or bureaucratic delay. **The health, (both physical and Mental) and safety of thousands of residents are at stake.**

I am attaching a Word document detailing my several email efforts to escalate this urgent matter to multiple authorities, all of which have been met with inaction. Despite repeated attempts to demand real solutions, no meaningful action has been taken to date.

Please consider this serious desperate plea. We demand answers, we demand accountability, and we demand results.

On behalf of a disappointed, exhausted, and desperate community

Jumana Dajani

(Action Demand email #1)

From: Jumana Dajani

To: mayor@hamilton.ca, brad.clark@hamilton.ca, donna.skelly@pc.ola.or, david.piccini
co@pc.ola.org, sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org, premier@ontario.ca, MTaylor-
QP@mdp.on.ca, Mstiles-
QP@ndp.on.ca, jfraser.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org, justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca, mark.hollan
d@parl.gc.ca, steven.guilbeault@parl.gc.ca, matt.francis@hamilton.caHide

Bcc:

Wed, Sep 27, 2023 at 4:48 PM

Dear Sir, Madam

I hope this letter finds you in good health, but I regret to inform you that my own well-being has been severely compromised by an ongoing and distressing situation.

With a heavy heart, I write to express my extreme frustration, disappointment, and heartbreak due to the unbearable circumstances that have befallen me and my family in our new home. This letter serves as a desperate plea for help and a cry for justice.

For five long years, my family and I diligently saved every penny, made countless sacrifices, and dreamed of the day when we could finally afford the down payment for our first home. That dream came true in February 2023 when we closed the deal on our house in the Victory Empire community on Green Mountain West, Stoney Creek, Hamilton Ontario.

It was a day we had anticipated with excitement and joy, believing it to be the crowning achievement of our lives, especially given the exorbitant house prices and mortgage rates at their peak. We chose to purchase our house in this location because we fell in love with the area and with how clean and pure the air was up on the mountain

At the time of our home purchase, we sought reassurance about the GFL site located opposite our new residence. We were explicitly told that this industrial site was entirely safe, and we were fortunate to have a protective shield of lush green trees outlooking the view of windows. We were assured that the industrial facility had operated without issue for a considerable duration, and, as residents of phase 4 of our community, we were told that no previous complaints had arisen concerning odours or noise due to the nature of the industrial waste it handled.

However, as winter gave way to spring, our idyllic life turned into a harrowing nightmare. An overwhelming, noxious odour, reminiscent of rotten eggs or toxic gas, permeated the entire vicinity. By May, we were forced to keep our windows sealed shut, for fear that our home would become saturated with the repugnant stench. What should have been a time of enjoyment during the spring and summer months

was transformed into an ordeal that took a toll on our physical and emotional well-being.

My family and I are not the sole victims of this abhorrent situation. The whole of Victory Empire community on Green Mountain West share our anguish. Stoney Creek residents as far east as 5th road, north to Barton Street, south to Summit Park and West to Red Hill have also complained of the horrible smell. Together, we have raised our voices in protest, pleading for a resolution to this untenable issue. Yet, our appeals have thus far fallen on deaf ears. To our dismay, the stench grows more unbearable with each passing day. I have spent countless nights in tears, and I have been forced to concoct excuses to deter visitors from our home, such is the shame I feel about the pervasive odour. I know of many residents in the community who have reported health issue related to this disgusting smell varying from sore throats, headaches, nausea, vomiting to the extremes measures of anxiety and mental and phycological issues!!!

Our plea is simple but urgent: We implore you to take action by shutting down the GFL site. No alternative solution can adequately address the severity of this issue. We, the residents of Victory Empire, need this blight on our lives to be eradicated so that we can regain the peace, health, and happiness that should rightfully accompany homeownership. We have addressed this issue on several occasion with GFL and it is very disappointing to say that they have referred to the smell as being occasional!!!! Reality is that had been consistent, and it should not even be acceptable to have any smell in the first place!!

Canada, its leaders, and its institutions have always been committed to ensuring the highest quality of life for its citizens. I beseech you to regard this matter with the utmost urgency, empathy, and determination. Imagine for a moment that you and your loved ones were living in our community, experiencing the same distressing conditions that have befallen us. I implore you to stand in solidarity with us and act swiftly to rectify this grave injustice.

We look to you for hope, relief, and a restoration of the tranquillity we so ardently sought when purchasing our home. Please hear our plea and act decisively to close the GFL site. Our lives and well-being depend on your intervention.

Please please please put an end to our misery.

Sincerely,

Jumana Dajani

(Action Demand email #2)

From: Jumana Dajani

To: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 1:22 PM

Dear Minister Khanjin,

I trust this email finds you in good health. I am writing to represent the residents of the Victory community, located off Highway 20 (upper centennial) and Green mountain Road West in Stone Creek, Hamilton Ontario. Our community has been grappling with significant challenges, and we were referred to your office by the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's team as the appropriate point of contact to address these pressing issues.

Across from our community lies GFL Environmental (<http://gflstoneycreek.com/about-us>), a facility that specializes in receiving solid, non-hazardous residual materials from various commercial, industrial, and institutional sources. Their operations, as detailed on their website, encompass the handling of materials such as residues from local steelmaking and other industrial processes, excavation materials from industrial sites, and construction/demolition materials and rubble, primarily originating from the Hamilton Area. It is crucial to note that their site does not handle municipal garbage.

Since May of this year, our community has been enduring a range of challenges stemming from the activities at the GFL site. These issues encompass concerns related to environmental impact, air quality, and our overall quality of life. Regrettably, the situation has deteriorated to the point where we are compelled to endure an unbearable stench on a daily basis. We firmly believe that the operations of GFL Environmental are the primary source of this odorous problem, which can be aptly described as a combination of a noxious gas, burning rubber and cat urine. The odour has reached intolerable levels, causing serious health problems for many residents, including persistent headaches, nausea, vomiting, coughing, eye irritation, sinus issues, respiratory issues and a prevailing sense of depression. This situation has severely restricted our ability to open windows, go for walks, or even have guests over due to the overwhelming and embarrassing odour.

In response to these challenges, our community has established a Facebook group called "SHUT DOWN THE STONEY CREEK DUMP" to collectively address our concerns and brainstorm potential solutions to alleviate our suffering. We also submitted hundreds of pollution reports to the ministry of environmental concerns in Ontario, we approached contact GFL addressing our persistent problem and all we got back from them was that they were working on finding a solution, we gathered up in the community park with councillor Brad Clark to address this issue with the

Ministry of Environment in presence of the media (you can find media coverage of this situation on utube) .But non of the above had resulted to a solution to our misery. The smell had been getting worse month by month that it is now inside our homes and not only outside.

We strongly request your assistance in resolving this matter.

I urge you to review my email to Mr. Trudeau for more comprehensive details about my agonizing personal experience. Additionally, we encourage you to peruse the Facebook group for up-to-date information regarding this distressing situation.

Minister Khanjin, we humbly request your support and guidance in investigating the impact of GFL Environmental' s operations on our community and in seeking viable solutions to mitigate the adverse effects. We firmly believe that your office's involvement will play a pivotal role in safeguarding the well-being of the residents of the Victory community.

We sincerely appreciate your prompt attention to this urgent matter and eagerly anticipate your assistance in addressing our concerns. Your dedication to the welfare of all Canadians is greatly valued.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jumana Dajani

(Action Demand email #3)

From: Jumana Dajani

To: mayor@hamilton.ca,brad.clark@hamilton.ca,elizabeth.richardson@hamilton.ca,donna.skelly@pcola.org,andra.khanjin@pc.ola.org,sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org,premier@ontario.ca,Mstiles-QP@ndp.on.ca, jfraser.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org,justin.trudeau@parl.gcca,mark.holland@parl.gc.ca,steven.guilbeault@parl.gcHide

Thu, Feb 8, 2024 at 1:43 PM

Dear respectful decision makers,

I trust this email finds you well. I am writing to you today as a concerned resident of the Empire community, located off Centennial Street West and Green Mountain West. I had previously reached out to your office in September 2023 regarding a distressing matter that has been plaguing our community—namely, the noxious and unbearable Odor emanating from the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility.

Last summer was an extremely challenging time for my family and me, as we endured a pervasive and foul air quality issue that prevented us from opening our windows, inviting people over to enjoy the outdoors, sitting in our backyard, or even taking a simple walk around the neighbourhood. Despite our diligence in choosing a newly developed area away from industrial zones, we found ourselves subjected to an intolerable stench that significantly impacted our quality of life.

Our first-owned home, which we invested our hard-earned savings into, was meant to be a sanctuary of peace and clean air. However, the distressing Odor persisted throughout the summer, prompting protests and complaints from numerous residents. Subsequently, the Ministry of the Environment conducted air quality tests, leading GFL to implement temporary solutions that provided only momentary relief. The problem has reemerged in the last month, impacting our lives once more, and we are now fearful of experiencing another challenging summer similar to the one we endured last year.

The unbearable smell, reminiscent of animal urine or gas leakage, permeates our homes even with windows closed. Additionally, the unsightly hills of material dump near the GFL site are an eyesore, replacing the once picturesque view from our windows with a scene of environmental degradation.

What troubles me further is the response we receive from GFL when we lodge complaints through their website. They dismissed our concerns, citing a lack of information and implying that the odour was not confirmed to be from their operations. They even send representatives to go door to door telling people that the smell is gone!!! Its like they want people to believe the opposite of what reality is.

This dismissive attitude is particularly concerning given that the smell persisted around the clock during the summer and is now back so strong again.

A Facebook group named "SHUT DOWN THE STONEY CREEK DUMP," boasting 1.2k members comprising individuals residing in the vicinity of the GFL dump was created to address this issue. The community has come together to address the ongoing challenges and collaboratively seek a resolution to the distressing situation, aiming to restore a peaceful living environment in our neighbourhood. We encourage you to explore the page, where you'll find documented comments from affected residents highlighting the severity of this issue.

I reach out to you, esteemed decision-makers, with a plea for assistance in bringing an end to our community's suffering. We implore you to investigate this matter thoroughly, hold GFL accountable for their actions, and consider closing down the facility to restore peace and well-being to our lives.

Your attention to this urgent matter is greatly appreciated, and I hope you understand the depth of frustration, mental, and emotional distress that we, as a community, are enduring.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jumana Dajani

(Action Demand email #4)

From: Jumana Dajani

To: Chabot, Katherine

Wed, Mar 6, 2024 at 11:56 AM

Dear Katherine,

Thank you for your email and the information provided by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

We appreciate the efforts being made to address the odour concerns at the GFL Stoney Creek landfill site. However, it's disheartening to note that, despite reassurances, the issue persists, the smell is still there and is still very disgusting and awful and the mounting waste has become a pressing concern for our Victory community.

Since the problem began, residents have consistently received updates indicating that the problem originates from the leachate, and GFL is actively working on solutions. Nevertheless, the existence of the smell since last May 2023 and the increasing height of the waste pile, especially near Victory community, adds to our distress. Especially that the summer is approaching and we are so worried that the issue will continue to remain unresolved and we will not be able to sit outside and enjoy our summer that we wait all winter for.

The prolonged duration to resolve this issue has left us without clarity on when this situation will come to an end. The response we receive from GFL, denying odour on the reported days and times, is also very frustrating. If we report the smell during the weekend, they reply back saying that they were closed on the weekend, or they say that the wind on the day was going to the other direction, they simply don't want to own the problem and are always on the defensive mode instead of providing us with reassurance that they are working on resolving the issue. We firmly confirm in the community that, whether the plant is open or closed, the leachate odour persists, and we seek transparency regarding the measures in place to eliminate this persistent stench, which we are not able to receive from anyone at this point.

While we acknowledge the interim measures that have reportedly led to very slight improvements in odour levels, we urge for a more permanent resolution. Our community deserves to breathe clean air like every other community in Canada. The uncertainty surrounding the closure of the landfill site, which is the only solution we currently see has become a source of frustration for us as citizens.

We kindly request clear and definitive action plans from GFL and from your end to bring an end to our ongoing distress. We just seek more transparency and clarity on the steps GFL is taking instead of doubting our complaints when we complain to

them. Understanding the steps being taken and the timeline for a permanent solution will go a long way in reassuring our community.

We trust that the Ministry will continue to work closely with GFL to ensure comprehensive efforts are made to minimize odour impacts on our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to a prompt and effective resolution.

Best regards,

Jumana Dajani

From: Izabella Wozniak
Sent: February 11, 2025 2:16 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

The GLF landfill has been detrimental to our community and our living conditions. When my first daughter was born in June of 2022 I would look forward to going outside and going for walks to benefit the both of us, but almost everyday we were bombarded by the awful smell of the landfill. It was unbearable. I felt guilty for keeping my daughter inside during the summer because the smell was too overwhelming to go out in our backyard or to the neighbourhood park, and I wasn't sure what we were breathing in. So I started driving us to places further away, down the mountain to go for our walks, or to play in the park.

After all of our complaints of what I would describe as the worst summer ever, there seemed to be some improvement in the late Fall, early Winter. However it was short lived. The same smell would come back over and over, no matter how many complaints I have submitted, nothing has changed, to my knowledge GFL hasn't even been fined.

I now have another daughter and I fear that this will be another awful summer where we can't use our backyard, our front yard, open our windows, or go to the park because GFL has continued to ignore our concerns and to carry on, business as usual. The stench is unbearable, frequent and unrelenting. I cannot enjoy being in my own home, my own property that I have worked so hard to buy. Nothing has changed on the GFL front and it seems like no one cares, this all seems like a precursor to a Netflix documentary. This Spring and Summer, I anticipate that I will have to take my kids on a 30-40 min car ride just to be able to enjoy the outdoors.

At the very least, please consider the notices of motion filed by Councillor Clark, it has now been years of this with no end in sight and our community is becoming tired, frustrated and hopeless as we continue to go unheard.

Kindest regards,
Izabela Wozniak

From: Chris Mitton
Sent: February 12, 2025 4:39 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Good afternoon,

I have lived near Mud St and First Rd for about the last 9 years with my wife and young family - 3 daughters, 5, 8, and 11 years of age. The smell and toxic air from the dump on Green Mountain road has gradually gotten worse over the years and for the last 5 years have almost been unbearable. We have a pool out back and if the wind is blowing in our home's direction we cannot even stay outside to enjoy our property. We cannot go for walks around the block, and my children cannot play outside due to the smell. I have contacted GFL, the environmental minister and about every politician I could think of and no one has done anything to rectify this putrid, disgusting, toxic smell coming from this place. It needs to be shut down, and now, before someone gets sick!

Today, it is bitter cold out, everything is frozen, and I just returned from walking to pick my children up at their school and the toxic air is terrible. I can only imagine how bad it will be again in the summer once everything melts.

Please, please, please do something for the thousands of residents that have to deal with this toxic dump in the middle of our homes, communities and our children's schools. Most people have completely given up hope that anyone will help our community. It's not fair that this can go on for so long and the city does nothing to stop it. Council needs to stop thinking about money and think about how many people's lives this place is ruining!! I am literally scared that my family will end up getting sick from constantly breathing this in.

Thank you,
Chris Mitton

-----Original Message-----

From: Michele

Sent: February 12, 2025 6:59 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: GFL dump on Green Mountain Road

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Attention Hamilton City Councillors,

Ward 9 Councillor Brad Clark is putting forth a motion regarding the ongoing toxic odours emanating from the GFL dump. We have been dealing with this in 2023, 2024, 2025. GFL is a scourge for our many citizens residing in the area and the stench has been present, in my experience, as far as Trinity Church Road. The stench seeps into our homes, prevents us from going outside and from experiencing normal activities such as sitting out on our decks or hosting outdoor BBQs. I am old enough to remember the tragedy of Love Canal.

I have participated in online GFL meetings, sent multiple complaints to the Ministry of the Environment and GFL. GFL gaslighted every complaint except one. Residents are exhausted with having to file complaints repeatedly so have tired of this but this does not mean that the issue is resolved, as proposed by GFL. I have stood along Centennial Parkway, beside the entrance to GFL, with a placard and GFL called the police.

I have suggested that perhaps our residents should withhold property taxes until this issue is resolved.

I implore you to act to stop this critical problem for your residents.

Sincerely,

Michèle Bertothy

Stoney Creek

Sent from my iPad

From: Kathie Farroway
Sent: February 13, 2025 11:35 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC agenda Feb 26

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear Committee;

Hi there. I am a resident living at Stoney creek on. Not too far from the gfl landfill in the old satellite city area . I've lived here for 26 years. My home is a modest semi-detached. We literally bought this house because of the extra large back yard and when we moved in we had 6 small children so I'm sure you could see the appeal of a large yard.

Our 6 kids have grown and now have many children of their own 19 to be exact. So we now have an even bigger use of a large yard! We are very involved with our grandchildren. We love having large family dinners bbq movie nights out side camp outs (kids love tents!) I tell you all that to give you the idea of how much my out door space means to me. It's not uncommon to be at my house on any given Saturday or Sunday and have 24/25 people in our yard.

Until the last three years. Last year I planned a large event with my grand kids "camp grandma" being exactly what it sounds like. We made calls back and forth and planned games and who was in who's tent and what games and what movies and night swims etc. only to have the smell from the dump most of the weekend chase us all in the house. The kids and I were all heart broken. We did the best we could to salvage the weekend and we're hoping to try again this year but that was a huge expense for not much reward. Memories ruined and lost. My daughter and her husband came all the way from Tobermory with 5 kids in tow for this event it was heart breaking.

We installed a in ground pool 2 years ago for our family to enjoy. It's often, very often too gross outside to use but I guess it looks nice from the window.

It's now to the place where we are not inviting people other than family over as we don't know if we can be outside to bbq or enjoy a swim.

I used to ride my bike 4/5 times a week out side I've since bought indoor bike. It's not the same. But cycling outside is not always option.

All of this has taken a huge toll my family mentally that's for sure. It's just so draining working all day thinking I'm going to go home and have a swim, walk the dog or just enjoy a coffee on my back deck to be hit with stench and you draw closer to the place that's supposed to be your refuge.

Please help us. I helped collect names for a petition going door to door hearing story after story of asthma being worse during odours. Headaches etc. and ruined birthday parties. Bbq and depression. People are tired of complaining as it gets them no where. Gfl saying wasn't us. (like who else creates that distinctive odour). Despite protests hours and hours spent in community meetings hours upon hours on a petition. There are no fines. There's no impact to gfl.

These people need to be hit financially it's the only thing they understand. I just don't understand why they are allowed to continue to receive loads when it's very clear they are having issues with what they have going on over there. I am asking that you

consider cease and desist from them receiving any more truck loads. Until there current problems are fixed. And not until they are able to do so without impacting their neighbours.

We coexisted the first 23 years I lived here in fact I didn't know it was a landfill. They were great neighbours. We need to get back to that and they need to finally be held accountable.

I would also like to ask to have a reduction in my city taxes for the past two years and until the situation is fixed as the enjoyment of my property is definitely been affected in a negative way.

My last ask would be a health study done in our area it was alarming hearing how many people have illness they are attributing to this. It would be nice to know if I should move or not and if people need to be warned.

Thanks so much for considering all this and reading my long wordy letter.

Have a wonderful Day

Kathie Faraway.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Raymond Mattar
Sent: February 15, 2025 8:53 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: [***POSSIBLE SPAM***]GIC Agenda of February 28

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of a community that has suffered for the last 3 years of the stench and disturbance caused by the GFL dump at 65 green Mountain Rd W, stoney Creek.

We have spoken and attended multiple meetings where promises were made to be broken, where our physical and mental health were treated like a joke and brushed off just because GFL could not smell the odours.

We are shocked by how the city perceives the residents of our community, and the lack of accountability and action towards such a public health and community safety issue.

Our houses , which most of us are working hard to maintain, have lost at least 10% of their values. Not to mention that when you live in such a beautiful, environmentally diverse area, you cannot use your outdoors space because you are pushed inside by the odours coming from the GFL dump.

We pay and contribute our share to the city of Hamilton, and yet we are being ignored and deflected every time this matter arises.

We demand swift action and compensation to this community who has suffered enough in the past years.

A very upset and concerned Hamiltonian.

Raymond Mattar

From: Dana Kennedy
Sent: February 15, 2025 1:58 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC Committee,

I am writing to inform you of the impact that the odours from the GFL landfill have had on my family's quality of life over the last (almost) two years.

I have lived in the Penny Lane Estates subdivision since 2013. Not once from September 2013 to March of 2023 did I ever experience any sort of odour coming from the landfill. I regularly forgot they were even there.

Late in the evening of April 14, 2023 while sitting in my living room watching tv, with the windows open, we suddenly were inundated with an intense rotten egg smell seeping into our home. We immediately closed the windows. Within minutes I received texts from my neighbour asking if we could smell it too. We thought there was a gas leak and called the gas company. They arrived and did an inspection and investigation and informed us that it was a sewer backup likely caused by something happening at the landfill.

Since that dreadful night, we have experienced countless days of horrendous odours (rotten eggs, garbage, burning tires) coming from the landfill for GFL to initially deny their role in the smell only to later confess that it is coming from them after intense pressure from the community to be truthful. GFL lies and gaslights residents by telling us that they do not smell it when they investigate reports that are filed, or that it is mild and intermittent. They have promised a "leachate treatment facility" for a year and it has only been delayed and delayed with no ETA for completion.

In the Fall of 2022 we spent over **\$25,000** on a backyard patio upgrade which we were only able to use and enjoy twice during the following summer of 2023 and only a handful of times in 2024. I feel like we are trapped in our homes, scared of what me and my children are breathing in only to have concerns brushed off by GFL. We are unable to enjoy our property, allow our kids to play outside, have family and friends visit and enjoy fresh air or even open our windows overnight for fear of the smell returning while we are sleeping.

I am requesting that the City of Hamilton please consider some sort of financial compensation for the residents of my community as we have suffered long enough mentally, financially and emotionally and should not have to suffer even more financially because of this due to increased property taxes when we cannot even enjoy the property we're paying for. GFL cannot be allowed to continue to accept new waste

until this matter is fully and completely resolved. The City of Hamilton has a responsibility to protect the people who live in this city and to do everything in its power to stop GFL from continuing to torment their neighbours.

With regards and thanks,

Dana Kennedy

From: Sabrina Davidson
Sent: February 15, 2025 2:50 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Hello, I live on [redacted] Drive, I moved here in 2020.

We have always enjoyed our summer/spring/fall days and nights outside in our backyard, and going for long walks in our neighbourhood with our dog. Our large backyard backs on to the forest and open field, we had plans to make it more livable by putting a patio and a pool, but all that has unfortunately been put on hold due to the HORRENDOUS stench coming from the GFL landfill. We had many nights in 2023 where we smelled gas/rotten eggs and called the gas company who said they have received hundreds of calls in the neighbourhood and they are trying to figure it out just for us to find out it was coming from the landfill.

We welcomed a baby boy in July 2021, now that he's older he loves playing outside, I am home with him everyday and it's hard telling a 2 year old (now 3) that we can't play outside because it smells bad, or we can't go to the park today because the smell hurts our throats. I have to run to our car and drive far away to get to a park or a family members backyard so we can be outside.

We have cancelled his birthday party and many backyard gatherings because of the smell. It's very depressing having to stay inside or leave our house to go somewhere we can breathe. My son developed a cough in the summer and needed a puffer to help him breathe, this is because of breathing in the fumes from the landfill. I get an instant headache from smelling it. I can't open my windows in the spring and get fresh air, and sometimes it comes in my house even with our door and windows closed! Makes you feel sick. It's taking a toll on our mental health.

Also,
WHY AM I PAYING SO MUCH PROPERTY TAX WHEN I CANT EVEN USE MY BACKYARD?!!!!!!!

GFL has lied and gaslighted me and many others saying I didn't smell anything at the time of my complaints.

They hired a company to test the air quality and it was 23 times the legal amount we were allowed to smell!!! What are we breathing in? They are killing us slowly.

They have lied to us, they came to my door and told me I will never smell it again and they are sorry BUT THE NEXT DAY THE SMELL WAS SO BAD I MADE NUMEROUS

CALLS COMPLAINING ABOUT IT. HOW CAN THEY JUST LIE TO OUR FACES?! I am disgusted that they even stepped foot on my property. How can they get away with doing some many illegal things.

They also control when they release it into the air, they tend to do it early morning when we leave for work at 4am and when I make the complaint they says we didn't smell it because the wind was blowing a different direction. Absolutely mind blowing how horrible this company is. Gaslighting people.

Something needs to happen. We work hard to buy a house, try to make it a home we want to stay in forever, but when our health is being affected, makes it hard to live here.

We want to be financially compensated for all this, we suffered enough, this is not right! My property tax is increasing and I can't even use my property! How does that make sense?

Regards.

Sabrina Davidson

From: Ray Menard
Sent: February 17, 2025 6:43 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Gfl landfill issues.

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Hello the highlights. They created the issue. People open there doors to smell test the air. To see if it a good / or poor air day. Why Gfl has broken Mto / by law rules for the last 15 - 24 months. They openly amitted gross mis management. By stockpileing old material. And with only 16 staff taken to long to build the new cell s..

From: Ray Menard
Sent: February 17, 2025 7:00 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Miss management.

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

GFL has been caught excepting hazarads waste. 8 loads @ 40 ,000 lbs equals 300,000 of e colie slug. From Chedoke with out a fine.. Employee with Cancer and respritory issues. A Accountant who has found issues with the book. Told to look the other way. The Green Mountain Gardens was closed because of odour issues. But the dump stays open. With a 4000 name petition to close it down. The location is to close to housing. And greed to keep building doesnt stop. Thus real estate values are going down because of Gfl. And now a School less than 300 ft from to be built really ???. The lies to the community for the last 2 years. Has angered the community. By adding so many chemicals to treat the leache. They have turned this area in to . The City into a chemical valley.

From: krista.clarke < >
Sent: February 17, 2025 7:31 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: GFL Stoney Creek.

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

I have lived in the Midhurst Heights Community for 5 years. The first 2 years were wonderful , so pleased being a homeowner and a single working lady. How excited to grow and enjoy my investment for my future.

Fast forward....no one in our Fallingwaters Community can sell their property due to the fact that we collectively have had to make so much noise to get any attention that everybody knowswe live on a stinking, foul dump site. Add insult to injury, I just got my interim tax bill with an education levy???? the one for the proposed school across from the toxic (industrial waste) dump....that sits vacant. My understanding that most parents prefer the bussing just to get their children away from our neighbourhood during the day.

I would welcome compensation for the terrible inconvenience of our situation BUT this needs to be addressed. This landfill needs to shutter as promised....are you waiting for health implications? It is your duty as our elected officials to not pander to big business and take care of your residents now.

Krista Clarke

Stoney Creek

From: Navdeep Sandhar
Sent: February 18, 2025 4:10 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: GIC Agenda of February 26th

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear GIC Committee,

I, Navdeep Sandhar, am writing to inform you of the impact that the odours from the GFL landfill have had on my family's quality of life over the last (almost) two years.

I moved here - St, within the Victory community, with my family in view of the great community, few friends and colleagues were living here already and spoke highly of the community consisting of young families like ours. We put our hard earned savings to buy a house here. We were so happy to call this place home and settle in our First home. It was all going well until the spring-summer of 2023.

As a part of our daily routine we would take our 6 month old daughter out for walks and to the park everyday, more than once. In April 2023, one day my wife and I noticed a disgusting, awful and unbearable smell in the air, the winds were bit Gusty than normal calm day and flowing down the hill. We were super worried and immediately went back into our house , we could also notice it within the house- that ugly smell. I asked my neighbour if they could smell it too? and yes they would as well. I remember it was so bad that someone called the gas company suspecting it was a gas leak. They arrived and did an inspection and investigation and informed us that it was a sewer backup likely caused by something happening at the landfill.

Since that dreadful day this smell has not stopped and we have experienced countless days of horrendous odours (rotten eggs, garbage, burning tires) coming from the landfill only for GFL to initially deny their role in the smell to later confess that it is coming from them after intense pressure from the community to be truthful. GFL lies and gaslights residents by telling us that they do not smell it when they investigate reports that are filed, or that it is mild and intermittent. They have promised a "leachate treatment facility" for over a year that has been delayed and delayed with no ETA for completion. I have spent over thousands of \$ on our backyard which we were only able to use and enjoy only maybe 10 times since 2023, those are the days we couldn't smell this horrendous stench. I feel like we are trapped in our homes. I'm scared of what me, my wife and my daughter are breathing in only to have concerns brushed off by GFL. We are unable to enjoy our property, allow our kids to play outside, have family and friends visit and enjoy fresh air or even open our windows overnight for fear of the smell returning while we are sleeping.

I am requesting that the City of Hamilton please consider some sort of financial compensation for the residents of my community as we have suffered long enough mentally, financially and emotionally and should not have to suffer even more financially because of this due to increased property taxes when we cannot even enjoy the property we're paying for.

GFL cannot be allowed to continue to accept new waste until this matter is fully and completely resolved.

The City of Hamilton has a responsibility to protect the people who live in this city and to do everything in it's power to stop GFL from continuing to torment their neighbours.

Regards,
Navdeep Sandhar

February 19, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Tatyana Graham, and I am a resident living in Stoney Creek, Ontario. Since April 2023, my neighbourhood has been affected by strong repulsive intermittent odours from the GFL Stoney Creek Industrial Landfill on First Rd. & Green Mountain Rd. The dump is so close to my house that when I walk in the mornings, I reach the bus stop and the landfill at the same time. Just to give you a visual...this is what I'm living close to (300 meters away):





When my family moved into this brand-new house in 2018, the landfill area was empty and inactive. The builders (Empire Communities) lied to us, they said that it will remain closed

and **“inactive”**. Later on, we would find out that many others who moved here at that time were told the same thing. We did not know the history of the landfill, and we were not told that this landfill has been previously owned by several other landfill companies who have been shut down for various legal reasons.

After 5 years of living here, in 2023 we received a letter from GFL (Green for Life) delivered to our front door stating that there would be some activity in the landfill that may cause odours, but that this will not last long. Needless to say, **it lasted LONG**. First it lasted the whole summer...then one year...and now it's been almost 2 years, and we STILL smell strong odours intermittently. Sometimes the smell is so pungent we hold our breaths while walking to our car, wear masks OUTSIDE, feel nauseous, and get headaches.

Since April 2023, our community has been back and forth with GFL: we protested, attend monthly GFL community meetings, and hold our own community meetings regarding this issue. In the spring/summer of 2023 we woke up every morning and went to bed every night inhaling **hydrogen sulfide**. We inhaled the offensive sulfuric odour while walking to bus stops, mailboxes, and our cars; while standing in our backyards and front porches; while hanging out at the park nearby; and while doing just about anything. Many days we could even smell it inside our houses. We had to close our windows and turn off the ventilation feature that pulls in outdoor air so that we could breathe in our houses without feeling sick. We also purchased an air purifier for every level of the house. Our air purifier turns red when it detects impurities in the air, and every time we open the door it turns red. We continuously report the smells to the Ministry of Environment and to GFL directly, but to no avail.

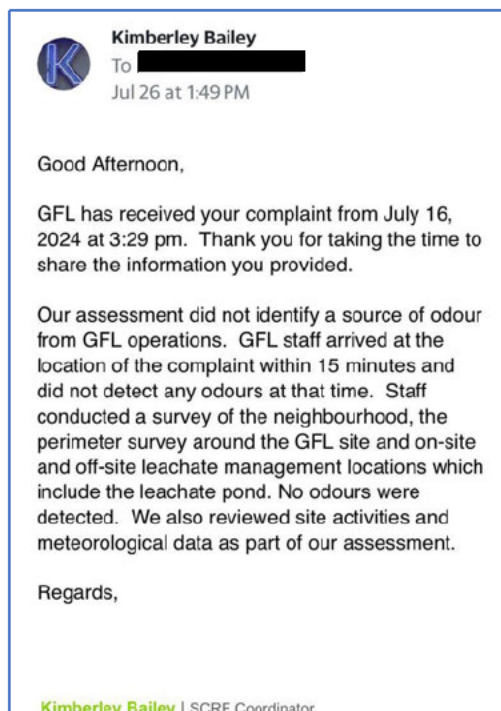
This past summer (2024), the smell has changed. It is a **rotten fish/chemical smell**...it is very likely **ammonia** is in the air. GFL's 2023 annual report would confirm that this is not the

first time unacceptable levels of ammonia have been emitted from the dump:

<https://gflstoneycreek.com/document-library>. Hydrogen sulfide and ammonia are both **toxic gases**. But GFL continues to say that this landfill only accepts “non-toxic waste”. I have said this to GFL representatives repeatedly, but none of them seem to get it: **“Toxic gases can be emitted from a non-toxic waste site and can cause health issues,”** and that’s exactly what is happening. They always respond with: “We only accept non-toxic waste”. I have spoken to some of my neighbours and found out that many people have been experiencing minor health issues (asthma, headaches, vomiting, etc.) and major health issues (long-term illnesses) and believe it is linked to this dump.

When my neighbours and I put in formal complaints regarding these offensive smells, this seems to get us nowhere. We are told by GFL that the smells are not them, and we are told by the Ministry of Environment that our reports are being kept on record. Nothing further has been done to ensure that we residents feel safe and secure living in this neighbourhood. Below are examples of the dismissive responses I have received from GFL:





At this point, we are very frustrated. We bought this house 6 years ago, and after surviving the COVID-19 pandemic here, while others were able to enjoy the nice summer in 2023 chilling in their back/front yards and taking a walk at their local park, we were stuck inside trying not to inhale toxic gas. Ultimately, we agree as a community we would like to see this dump shut down for good this time. We don't want to live near this landfill. Unfortunately, moving out of the neighbourhood is not an option for many of us due to financial limitations and the high housing costs. The problem will go away only if GFL goes away and the landfill shuts down permanently.

The City of Hamilton has a responsibility to protect us residents and ensure we have access to our human rights. Clean air is a human right. As long as GFL is operational and continues to accept waste into the landfill, our human rights are being violated. I am asking the City of Hamilton to investigate and put in effort to mitigate the landfill emissions. Additionally, I

am requesting financial compensation from the City of Hamilton for the residents of my community. We continue to suffer mentally, financially and emotionally; we should not be further burdened by increased property taxes when our properties are not fully usable due to the odours.

Sincerely,

Tatyana Graham

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR B. CLARK.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR.....

Section 447.1 Against GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility

WHEREAS, residents living in Upper Stoney Creek within 3km of the GFL Stoney Creek Regional Facility (landfill) have been experiencing horrific odours since April 2023;

WHEREAS, residents have not had daily reasonable use and enjoyment of homes, property, community spaces and workplaces, especially pertaining to outdoor lived experiences;

WHEREAS, residents have experienced inconvenience, discomfort and loss of amenity caused by odours being emitted from the landfill;

WHEREAS, residents have regularly complained about the odour seeping into their homes;

WHEREAS, GFL and the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks have not been successful in stopping or abating these odours;

WHEREAS, the community group known as STAND for Stoney Creek (Stand) has had discussions with their lawyers from Ross and McBride; and,

WHEREAS, their research found the following case wherein Section 447.1 of the *Ontario Municipal Act* was applied [Newmarket \(Town\) v. Halton Recycling Ltd. 2006 CarswellOnt 5920 \(S.C.J.\)](#);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That Legal Services be directed to review all legal options available to the City, including Section 447.1 of the *Municipal Act*, to address the concerns raised by residents and report back to GIC by the end of Q2 of 2025.

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR T. MCMEEKIN.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR.....

Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre / Interval House

WHEREAS, in 2023, the City of Hamilton declared intimate partnership violence a crisis;

WHEREAS, the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre, located in Waterdown, has focused on reducing gender violence and providing counselling support, group programs and legal advocacy;

WHEREAS, the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre, a satellite program of Interval House, has provided the only Outreach program for Flamborough women experiencing domestic violence and in need of safety and support services;

WHEREAS, rural women experience intimate partner violence at rates 5 times higher than rural men and 75% higher than rural women (CWF, 2022);

WHEREAS, the Waterdown area is one of the fastest growing population centres in Hamilton and, to date, not received any sustainable increased funding for the FWRC since 2009;

WHEREAS, the goal of the FWRC is to create an accessible hub in the core of Waterdown to expand services to those experiencing domestic violence;

WHEREAS, additional resources are required to help reach and respond to rural women in crisis, through the provision of occasional mobile services;

WHEREAS, the Ward 15 community Council has reviewed the request for assistance and, like the City of Hamilton, understands the urgency of a response capability; and,

WHEREAS, this grant will assist the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre/Interval House to secure a larger service location needed to provide no charge counselling, safety planning, housing assistance, income navigation, employment readiness training and where necessary, legal advice.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That a grant be provided to Interval House for the Flamborough Women’s Resource Centre. That this grant be funded from the Ward 15 Non-Property Tax

Revenue Account (3301609615) at an upset limit, including contingency, not to exceed \$10,000.00;

- (b) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR B. CLARK.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR

Inflation Rate for 2026

That staff be directed to provide information to Council through the General Issues Committee (Budget) on how the City could operate with an inflation rate (2.5%) increase for 2026.

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR B. CLARK.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR J. BEATTIE.....

Identifying Areas for Improvement, Efficiency and Effectiveness

WHEREAS, there has been an exponential growth in new FTEs over the last 4 years with a total of 731 new hires: 73 new FTEs in 2022, 242 new FTEs in 2023, 196 new FTEs in 2024, 220 new FTEs in 2025;

WHEREAS, the total number of employees in city of Hamilton has now exceeded 8,000; and

WHEREAS, Outcome Number 1 under Priority Number 1 under Sustainable Economic and Ecological Development in the approved 2022-2026 Council Priorities was "Reduce the Burden on City Tax Payers"

THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED:

That starting in 2026 the City Manager be directed to conduct a Functional Improvement Process/Program or a Business Process Improvement plan which will be defined as a management exercise to assess city procedures to identify areas that can be improved to be more efficient and/or effective to be financed out of the tax stabilization reserve with semi-annual report backs to GIC

CITY OF HAMILTON MOTION

General Issues Committee: February 26, 2025

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR . CASSAR.....

SECONDED BY

Feasibility of the Relocation and Adaptive Re-use of the Marr-Phillipo House

WHEREAS, the Marr-Phillipo house, a circa 1850 two storey rubble stone building currently located at 398 Wilson Street East in Ancaster, is designated under section IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and plays an important role in defining the unique heritage character of the Ancaster Village;

WHEREAS, there is a current Planning Act application for an 8-storey 118 unit mixed use development and an associated heritage permit for 392-412 Wilson St. E. and 15 Lorne Ave. that proposes moving the Marr-Phillipo house to the rear of the site where it would be used as amenity space for the proposed residents, would not be visible from Wilson Street and would not be accessible to the public;

WHEREAS, staff continue working with the proponent through the development approvals and heritage permit processes recommending that the Marr-Phillipo house remain in its current location or remain on the site in a location addressing Wilson Street recognizing that environmental concerns affect the development of site;

WHEREAS, the developer of the site has agreed to cover the cost of relocating the house to a location within the Ancaster Village BIA;

WHEREAS, the Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre grounds facing Wilson Street may provide a location for the relocated house that would maintain its historic relationship with Wilson Street, visibility to the public, and its role in contributing to the unique historic character of the Ancaster Village; and,

WHEREAS, local organizations have indicated that they are in need of more space and may consider leasing the former home adaptively reused as office or meeting space once relocated and in City ownership;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That Planning Division, Corporate Facilities and Energy Management Division and Corporate Real Estate Office staff be directed to investigate the feasibility of relocating the Marr-Phillipo house to the Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre grounds or other publicly owned property in the Ancaster Village BIA and report back toto

the General Issues Committee in Q3 2025, with the following considerations in mind:

- (a) Zoning;
- (b) Parking;
- (c) Servicing;
- (d) Site drainage;
- (e) Interior upgrades;
- (f) Ongoing maintenance;
- (g) Possible tenants; and,
- (h) Any other opportunities and constraints to inform any future negotiations with the developer for the City of Hamilton to take ownership of the building, in the event the building cannot remain in its current location or as part of the proposed development directly addressing Wilson Street.