



# Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

Annual Report to the  
City of Hamilton  
February 6, 2013

# Who We Are

## **Mission**

A community-based organization mobilizing all Hamiltonians to create an inclusive and welcoming city.

## **Vision**

A united community that respects diversity, practices equity and speaks out against discrimination.

# Civic Leadership

**Community Mobilization Program:** Increased the capacity of newcomers to take up leadership positions through provision of learning platforms and mentoring.

- Enrolment of over 100 participants in this program

# Community Mobilization Program Graduation



# Community Mobilization

- Over 100 local youth graduated from HCCI's Leadership training program
- Connected youth to community agencies





# Capacity Building

## Governance Training Series

- Governance Training Workshops for new and emerging ethno-cultural organizations



# Governance Training

25 board members from various community organizations enrolled in the **6 week** program including representatives from

- Spanish Speaking Association
- Nigerian Association
- Muslim Association
- Aboriginal community groups

# Capacity Building

- Embedded diversity and inclusion practice in the city's neighbourhood development strategy
  - Trained CD workers on Diversity and Inclusion
  - Presented workshops on Diversity best practices in community development work



# Capacity Building

Trained 13 Health & Wellbeing  
Cultural-Linguistic Health  
Promoters in helping newcomers  
connect to Mental Health services  
in Hamilton

# Community Engagement

Held a series of focus group meetings with ethno-cultural seniors to discuss ways to improve their sense of connection and community belonging.

225 seniors completed surveys on community participation/volunteering

# Conversations with Ethno-cultural Seniors



# Community Engagement

Hosted **Conversation Café** with 170 newcomers in the downtown core





# Here is what is being said about the Conversation Café

*“This is the most exciting gathering  
of diverse people I’ve seen in a  
long time...it is inspiring”  
Participant*

# Community Engagement

Hosted a series of community conversations/training sessions with mental health providers on issues/approaches to connecting with Newcomer populations

# Advantage Diversity

Our Social Purpose Enterprise offers the following services:

- Workplace Audits & Assessments
- Strategic Workforce Planning
- Diversity Training
- Workshops



# Advantage Diversity

- Provided diversity training and strategic solutions to a wide cross section of clients
- Projected 2012 Revenue: \$115,000





# Looking Ahead

- Expansion of fee for service offerings
- Fundraising campaign to be launched

# Our Funders 2012

- City of Hamilton
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Seniors Horizon Program
- Ministry of Culture and Immigration
- Ministry of Education



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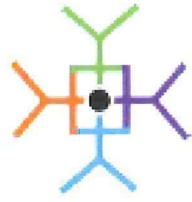
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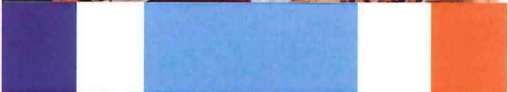


Imagine a city  
where everyone  
matters...



HAMILTON CENTRE  
FOR CIVIC INCLUSION  
[hcci.ca](http://hcci.ca)





Community Report  
January 25, 2013

# Conversation Café # 1





**On November 15, 2012, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion held its first conversation café, an event designed to get residents from every ethno-cultural background talking—to each other and their elected representatives—about their hopes for Hamilton...and the changes they'd like to see.**

Beasley Community Centre could barely contain the enthusiastic audience—a group of more than 150 that The Hamilton Spectator called “a mini-United Nations session.”

Targeted outreach, including posters translated into Spanish, Arabic and Somali, had encouraged Hamiltonians from every walk of life to step through the doors. On-site interpreters encouraged them to speak up. Members of the Turkish, Somali, Chinese, Spanish and Arabic communities, as well as senior and youth representatives, attended.

HCCI's executive director, Evelyn Myrie, was emcee for the evening, welcoming the group and posing four open-ended questions that got people talking non-stop for more than an hour, first in small groups and then as a whole. The evening concluded with Ward 2 Councillor, Jason Farr, and Hamilton Centre MP, David Christopherson, making important commitments to inclusivity and taking questions from participants.

The event was an unparalleled success, offering a large group of diverse citizens the opportunity to safely express their opinions in a room where those listening—including politicians, a public school board trustee and representatives of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Development Strategy—had the power to make changes.

Councillor Farr, for example, said he would offer interpretation services as part of his participatory budgeting process, to enable newcomers to have input into the allocation of \$1,000,000 to be spent in Ward 2. Christopherson promised to speak about the café in the House of Commons.

Since the event, HCCI has facilitated meetings between Councillor Farr and members of the Somali community, been part of the Ward 2 participatory budget process and scheduled cafés in other neighbourhoods. To build capacity in grassroots communities, HCCI is planning a series of training sessions to enhance skills in project planning, fundraising, networking and more.

This report summarizes the responses that audience members offered to the four questions that were posed during the evening. Our hope is that it becomes a useful reference for decision-makers and community members—a tool to help us build an inclusive city.

TOP: A participant passes the mike.

BOTTOM: A Somali interpreter shares the thoughts of the more than one dozen Somali women who attended the café.





# What kind of community would you like to live in?

- Celebrates diversity and culture
- Invests in culture
- Engages everyone
- Has a clean environment
- Respects everyone
- Encourages trust and collaboration despite our differences
- Where people talk to each other
- Access to diverse media
- Respects and values youth as knowledgeable, smart, brilliant, and tolerant members of our society
- Relationships are built based on geographic and common interest communities
- Inclusive, welcoming, safe, respectful
- Where help is provided
- Freedom of speech
- Offers job opportunities according to previous education and experience
- Children feel valued and safe
- Where seniors have a safe, peaceful, and activity-friendly space
- Access
- Safe, loving, friendly, multicultural, compassionate, respectful, affordable, inclusive
- Love each other, respectful, cooperative, know your neighbours
- Play together
- Love, trust, safe, cooperation, appreciation, respect
- Safe, "walkable" neighbourhoods, traffic calming initiatives, crime-free, clean

**"I'd like to see Hamilton become the best place for new immigrants to come to Canada and integrate into Canadian society."**

- Child-friendly
- More conversations
- Friendly, where there's no panhandling
- Access to affordable housing, living wage, social services, human services network
- Respects importance of a vibrant downtown
- There's awareness of skills/differences of people coming from other countries
- Respects our traditions
- Builds culture
- Invests in people
- There's consequences for racism
- Fair, equitable, engaged, aware, accessible, accountable, local food security, holistic, sustainable
- Barrier-free, tolerant, open, seeking understanding, safe, child-friendly, equal, shares diverse experiences, helps to understand other cultures
- Has reflective representation of diverse communities, cultures
- Has support mechanisms in place (in particular language, translations)
- Invests in culture, which celebrates different values and backgrounds to learn from and build a sense of community
- Works together (e.g. crossing guard issue), values people
- Inclusive, welcoming, safe, connected, diverse, Hamilton residents are reflected, treated with dignity and respect
- People can express themselves easily, help each other and live peacefully
- Safe, peaceful, friendly, clean, green environment, active, friendly for seniors

# What's one thing you would change in your community that would make it better for you and your family?

- Invest in translators
- Offer diverse media in my language
- Provide help in different languages
- Encourage trust
- Collaborate despite differences
- Offer day care and other programs for older children
- Provide accessible space for seniors to have activities suitable for them
- Host more community events to explain current changes in all sectors
- Provide free interpretation and translation services to overcome the language barrier
- Develop outreach programs so we can connect with programs and opportunities available
- Offer breakfast and after school programs
- Clean environment, more jobs
- Make it easier to sponsor family in shorter time
- Offer programs/activities that help build a sense of community
- Revitalize the core
- Lower taxes for business
- Make our city a more friendly, "walkable" community
- Rethink the transit plan (to encourage jobs, increase tax base, etc.)
- Education playground
- Create jobs so our children will stay in Hamilton
- Accountable, transparent, accessible, inclusive government
- Provide access to people who can answer real questions
- Listen to my concerns, more conversation and mixing and I will feel more included
- Create more centres like Beasley Community Centre in other parts of city
- Provide more programming supports, e.g. after school, breakfast programs
- Offer discretionary benefits for ODSP longer than 6 months
- Hold politicians accountable on housing
- Work together, accept newcomer students at their school level, get family doctors sooner, sponsor family in shorter time
- Increase minimum wage (living wage)
- Make it easier to get around. Look at traffic flow, the numbering of buildings in Hamilton
- City Hall should be careful when they clean streets; streets are dirty
- Better services for newcomers
- Less crime
- Facilities for exercise in parks, especially for adults

**"You must take the first step and reach beyond your comfort zone. Join a group, attend a meeting, share your opinion, call your councillor, demand more from your government."**



# What can community groups and agencies do to make you feel more included in your neighbourhood?

- Spend the necessary time when interpretation is necessary
- Develop/support community that works together (e.g. Beasley Community Centre)
- Develop outreach programs to engage diverse communities and minorities
- Invite everyone to be part of events and overcome barriers such as transportation, language, etc.
- Better promotion of events so everyone has the information and has the choice to be part of them
- Hamilton can develop a model to be replicated all over the country
- Organize more cultural events like this
- Outreach to youth, let youth bring new ideas
- Clean up Beasley skate park, e.g. needles
- Have diverse groups at the table to help improve the conversation
- Listen to different ideas and concerns, make sure all voices are heard
- Don't make fun of my accent when you're speaking with me
- Provide an appropriate environment so children feel valued and safe
- Host more conversation cafés
- Provide more support for people in poverty, government needs to step up to the plate
- Give voice to those who are voiceless/marginalized
- Listen to the voices of people affected by an issue
- For seniors: a safe, peaceful, active-friendly space for seniors, more events to explain changes, interpretation to overcome language barrier
- Have more opportunities for inclusion that people can take advantage of. Beasley has made a great effort to outreach
- Feel that we are one community that the government cares about
- Support the expansion of the downtown mosque at Wilson Street
- Use other languages everywhere and don't make fun of accent
- Agencies should organize more events to explain new policies/big news announcement
- Advertise more community events
- Better system/improve system of multi-language
- Agencies can organize more cultural nights and every community can show their cultural events. In this way the community can be more included and be together
- Outreach programs to engage diverse communities and minorities
- Improve channels of communication with police
- Increase breakfast and after school programs
- Spend the necessary time when providing services where interpretation is needed
- Invite all to participate in community events
- Neighbourhood groups that come together to talk about the issues (community advisory groups)
- Agencies can provide more opportunities for people; learn more skills, how to be more connected in the community

**“Offer services in different languages to make them more accessible to everyone.”**



# What can governments do to make you feel more included in Hamilton?

- Provide health services in different languages
- Support more cultural events like this café night
- Clean up this area—needles close to schools (Beasley neighbourhood)
- Specific programs to solve the drug problems
- Free parking at City Hall and public services
- Ensure minorities and diverse groups are represented everywhere
- Make appropriate changes in policies and procedures so qualifications of newcomers are recognized
- Hold politicians accountable for employment strategies and housing accessibility
- Provide safe places for kids to play in all seasons
- Provide bigger and safer playgrounds in the core
- Find proper strategies to ensure safety for kids at the crossing points e.g. speed limits
- Sell Hamilton to increase job opportunities
- City Hall that represents population of community
- Offer government services at all levels in different languages
- Create a Safety Council
- Provide funding for interpretation and translation services
- Offer employment opportunities for newcomers according to their qualifications. Recognize credentials from home countries
- Provide the appropriate environment for youth to get involved as they are eager to do so
- Create the environment at the political tables for youth to say what they see
- Provide affordable housing for big families

TOP: Youth leader, Alex Ramirez, addresses the audience.

BOTTOM: A Chinese interpreter reads ideas from Chinese seniors at the event.





- Develop employment strategies and incentives for graduates to stay in Hamilton. Children graduate and leave to look for better opportunities somewhere else and leave parents behind
- Outreach to youth and have them at the different tables and committees as they have a different and refreshing perspective. Hamilton could develop a model to be replicated all over the country.
- More events to explain current changes in all sectors
- Build relationships with the geographic communities as well as the common interest communities
- Education system that supports diverse communities and better communication with parents in different languages
- Provide spaces for diverse communities to celebrate their culture and bring their communities together
- Provide affordable housing to everyone taking into consideration their needs and conditions
- More inclusion, invite them to be part of the platform, consultation
- Visit community centres more frequently
- Greater collaboration and conversation with community
- More direct democracy and outreach using technology
- Participatory budgeting
- Invest in people
- Invest in equitable, sustainable, local economies
- Health system in different languages
- Accreditation of foreign professionals, qualifications being recognized
- Increase the minimum wage
- More jobs, less unemployment, especially for young adults
- Get youth involved in the community

- Federal/Provincial governments should provide funds for parking at City Hall, City offices, library, farmer's market
- Crossing guard – safety
- More accountable; those folks on fixed income (OW/ODSP) should have a say
- Policy should be changed so individuals work/earn more and keep their benefits
- Make sure individual groups within the community are represented on agency and government boards
- Create more jobs, high school students can't get jobs
- Give more funding to community and groups to organize more events like this one
- City Hall should regulate the park rules; people should not free their dogs or animals in the park
- Apply and enforce rules, bylaws fairly
- Provide interpretation services for medical purposes (hospitals, specialists)
- Programs for immigrants who are citizens to improve English and enhance life skills
- Provide support for more lectures, seminars and conversation cafés

**"The hiring practices of government like City Hall should reflect the diversity that is Hamilton."**

TOP: Hamilton Centre MP, David Christopherson, responds to a question from the audience.

BOTTOM: Ward 2 Councillor, Jason Farr (left) with HCCI Governing Council Chair, Milé Komlen.





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