



Semi-Annual Monitoring Report

The People's Platform – Hamilton (2014-2018)

June 1, 2015 (Revised July 2, 2015)

Semi-Annual Report

This report provides the first of four semi-annual updates on the status of Hamilton's People's Platform (2014). We will also publish more extensive annual updates.

Our first report provides an update on motions by City Council that:

- 1) Relate indirectly to the Platform; or
- 2) Arise directly from the Platform.

At the time that we prepared this report, minutes for meetings of City Council were available up to May 13, 2015. Altogether, we examined fourteen sets of minutes.

We have identified nine motions by Council that relate indirectly to the Platform (Appendix A), and no motions that arise directly from it.

The nine indirectly related motions are supportive of seven elements of the Platform. It is notable that we did not find any motion that conflicted with the Platform.

We are encouraged by this early evidence of harmony between Council and the Platform, and we look forward to reporting more good news in our next update.

We are concerned that the Platform has not received any formal attention by Council. On March 30, 2015, we presented the Platform to the General Issues Committee and asked Council to review the Platform through its standing committees. Council received our request but has not taken any action since then.

During the municipal election, nine members of Council indicated their support for elements of the Platform. They are: Mayor Eisenberger and councillors A Johnson, Farr, Green, Merulla, Duvall, Conley, Pearson, and VanderBeek.

We call on these members to follow through on their support and move the following motion:

Whereas, a coalition of ten not-for-profit organizations facilitated participation by hundreds of residents in the creation of a Peoples' Platform during the 2014 Hamilton municipal election; and,

Whereas, the Peoples' Platform – Hamilton (2014) ("the Platform") was created in an impartial, transparent, and participatory way; and,

Whereas, nine members of City Council (“Council”) indicated their support for some of the 44 proposals that comprise the Platform; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Council refer the proposals to Standing Committees (as specified in the Appendix) for consideration of possible recommendations to Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Council work with The People’s Platform to keep the public informed of the status of the platform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Standing Committees bear the proposals in mind whenever relevant to recommendations that they make to Council, and that Council bear the same in mind whenever relevant to the actions that it considers taking.

This motion would ensure that all forty-four elements of the Platform receive attention by Council in a transparent and accountable manner. We believe that it is important that Council take these steps in order to demonstrate respect for the hundreds of Hamiltonians and ten non-profits that participated in making the Platform. In a time when trust in politics is low and apathy is high, two-way engagement between the public and government is urgently needed.

We hope Council will take this opportunity to build trust and mutual respect with Hamiltonians.

Norman Kearney
Director, Hamilton People’s Platform

On behalf of the coalition

1. Hamilton Civic League
2. Council of Canadians, Hamilton Chapter
3. Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
4. Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability
5. Hamilton Organizing for Poverty Elimination
6. Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
7. Congress of Union Retirees, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter
8. Hamilton and District Labour Council
9. Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
10. Immigrant Women’s Centre

APPENDIX A

Analysis of Motions by Council that Indirectly Relate to the Platform

Date of Council Meeting	Agenda Item of Council Motion*	TPP - Hamilton (2014) Proposal*	Status of Council Motion	Analysis
17-Dec-14	9	33	Carried	While there is no evidence that the Council motion arose directly from proposal #33, the substance of the motion and the proposal are compatible. Notably, although Councillor Doug Conley said he did not support the proposal he voted for the motion.
17-Dec-14	7.2	5	Carried	The City has designated five properties on King St as culturally significant. The property owner has appealed this designation to the Conservation Review Board. This motion gives an extension to the parties for reaching a “compromise”. The City is currently offering \$1.1 million in incentives to the property owner to assist in the cost of conserving the properties.
21-Jan-15	3.1	5	Carried	The motion demonstrates that the City’s commitment to protecting and honouring local heritage extends beyond physical structures to include preservation of the memory of great Hamiltonians.
25-Feb-15	7	22	Carried	The motion is symbolic and does not commit the City to prioritizing the environment over corporate interests.
11-Mar-15	7.8	9	Carried	The recommendations of the City’s previous Citizen’s Forum on

				Area Rating were not binding on the City. It remains to be seen whether the City will authorize this forum to make binding decisions. Although the motion calls for “meaningful community dialogue”, it is likely that the forum will be limited to an advisory role. To fulfill proposal #9, the City should consider following up on the forum with a referendum or a larger, randomly selected assembly with binding authority.
11-Mar-15	7.10	18	Carried	The motion does not increase the amount of green space in the city, although it supports already existing green space. To fulfill proposal #18, the City should consider designating additional lands as green space.
31-Mar-15	3.1	5	Carried	This motion contributes to facilitating the preservation of an asset in downtown Hamilton.
08-Apr-15	7.1	11	Carried	An audit of the Hamilton Police Service would be a significant contribution towards fulfilling proposal #11. The City should set timelines for reporting from both the Finance committee and staff. We will continue to closely monitor the progress of this motion.
22-Apr-15	7.1	16	Carried	Although nothing substantial arises directly from this motion, we strongly encourage both the City and the HWDSB to pursue collaborations that increase the availability and use of existing public space. Optimal use of public space contributes to community development and child and family health.

** See Appendix B for text of Council Motions and TPP – Hamilton (2014) proposals.*

APPENDIX B

Text of Council Motions and TPP – Hamilton (2014) Proposals

Date of Council Meeting	Agenda Item of Council Motion	TPP – Hamilton (2014) Proposal	Text of Council Motion	Text of TPP – Hamilton (2014) Proposal
17-Dec-14	9	33	<p>(a) That Mayor Eisenberger send a letter to the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario requesting that immediate steps be taken to return to the previous system, Service Delivery Model Technology (SDMT), while all issues in the new system are resolved; and</p> <p>(b) That all local MPP's and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) be circulated with a copy of the letter.</p>	<p>The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario for a change in the service delivery model and increases to the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits.</p>
17-Dec-14	7.2	5	<p>(a) That a grant commitment to an upset limit of \$850,000 be approved under the Hamilton Heritage Property Improvement Grant Program for Hughson Business Space Corporation (Marvin Barnett, David Blanchard, Ronald Quinn, William Rogan) owner of 18, 20, 22, 24 and 28 King Street East, conditional upon all terms and conditions of the Program being met and subject to complete program applications being submitted no later than December 31, 2015;</p>	<p>The City of Hamilton should protect and honour local heritage.</p>

21-Jan-15	3.1	5	That January 21st be recognized as Lincoln M. Alexander Day in order to commemorate this notable Hamiltonian.	The City of Hamilton should protect and honour local heritage.
25-Feb-15	7	22	(a) That the Mayor, on behalf of City Council, be directed to correspond with the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, and the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario, calling for the development of federal and provincial legislation that recognizes that all people have the right to live in a healthy environment; (b) That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.	The City of Hamilton should prioritize protection of the environment over corporate interests.
11-Mar-15	7.8	9	(a) That Council establish a meaningful community dialogue with the people of Hamilton to discuss all higher order transit options outlined in the 10 Year Transit Plan, the Rapid Ready Report and the Transportation Master Plan along with any and all other documents related to transit in the City of Hamilton; (b) That Council establish a transit community engagement process based on the Citizen Forum Model of randomly selected citizens; (c) That staff be directed to develop the terms of reference, including and not limited to: an independent steering committee, project team, reporting mechanism, schedule, estimated cost and report back to the General Issues Committee by March	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should give residents a say in major planning and spending decisions whenever feasible.

			30, 2015; City Council March 11, 2015 Minutes 15-005 Page 20 of 27 (d) That membership composition be based on 1 person from each ward for a total of 15 members, and employ the same method as the Citizen's Forum on Area Rating selection process; (e) That, once individual citizens are selected, the list be presented to the General Issues Committee for consideration no later than May 6, 2015.	
11-Mar-15	7.10	18	That the City of Hamilton provide a grant of \$16,000 to the Friends of Eramosa Karst to be funded from the Stoney Creek Compensation Royalties (Newalta Landfill) Reserve 117036.	The City of Hamilton should increase the amount of green space in the city.
31-Mar-15	3.1	5	(b) That the rezoning of the Tivoli Theatre Lands be approved in order to permit the redevelopment of the Tivoli Theatre such that the Tivoli Theatre is restored and that the following accessory uses be permitted: accessory front of house commercial uses and general commercial uses and residential uses in a new 22-storey mixed-use building addition accommodating a maximum of 106 units with associated parking through Special City Council March 31, 2015 Minutes 15-007 Page 3 of 5 combination of surface and stacked parking, the restoration and adaptive reuse of the existing single detached dwelling at 115 Hughson Street North for residential and commercial uses relating to the	The City of Hamilton should protect and honour local heritage.

			Tivoli Theatre;	
08-Apr-15	7.1	11	That City Council endorse an annual external independent auditor to perform an annualized audit of the Hamilton Police Service to begin with the 2016 budget year for review in three (3) years (Ferguson/VanderBeek) (a) That the Motion respecting the Establishment of an Annualized Audit of the Hamilton Police Services Board, as amended, be referred to Finance; and, (b) That staff be directed to review the matter of an annualized audit of the Hamilton Police Services Board; the report is to include, but not be limited to, the scope of audit, and costs associated with an annual review, and report to the Audit and Finance Committee	The boards and agencies of the City of Hamilton (e.g. Police Service Board, Hamilton school boards, etc.) should open themselves up to greater public scrutiny.
22-Apr-15	7.1	16	That staff be directed to investigate the feasibility of a partnership with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, as it relates to the following, and report to the General Issues Committee: (i) Opportunities for recreational programming in both new schools; (ii) The addition of dedicated City programming space in the new Greenville school; and, (iii) The construction of the new Beverly School on City land.	The City of Hamilton should provide inexpensive recreation opportunities to all its residents.

APPENDIX C

Proposals Sorted by City Standing Committee

Legend

- Proposal tracking number

% - Percent of participants who supported the proposal

CM – Number of council members who supported the proposal

Audit, Finance & Administration

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
1	94	9/9	The City of Hamilton should provide clear explanations of planning and spending decisions.	Matters relating to Customer Service, Information Technology, Records Management, and Access & Equity Specifically, policy involving communications issues and policy and direction related to Access and Equity
8	86	7/9	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should make their tendering/procurement contracts and information regarding past relationships with contractors publicly available.	Matters relating to Records Management Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws
10	85	6/9	The City of Hamilton should make planning and spending decisions based on evidence (evidence-based policy-making).	Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws
13	83	8/9	The City of Hamilton should support prompt and transparent investigations by the Integrity Commissioner and empower the	Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws

			Commissioner to enforce judgments.	
17	82	9/9	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should provide easy access to key information relevant to the public interest, e.g. salaries and benefits and past and present committee membership.	Matters relating to Customer Service, Information Technology, Records Management, and Access & Equity Specifically, policy involving communications issues and policy and direction related to Access and Equity
21	80	8/9	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should pay all their employees at least a living wage of \$14.95 in 2011 dollars indexed to inflation.	Matters relating to Human Resources Specifically, compensation administration
30	74	8/9	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should set an example by only contracting with businesses that pay their employees at least a living wage of \$14.95 in 2011 dollars indexed to inflation.	Matters relating to Human Resources Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws
32	71	5/9	Hamilton City Council should provide redacted minutes of in-camera meetings.	Matters relating to Customer Service, Information Technology, Records Management, and Access & Equity Specifically, policy involving communications issues and policy and direction related to Access and Equity
35	63	3/9	City of Hamilton officials and Hamilton school board officials should be subject to term limits (i.e. limits on how many times they can be elected).	Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws

37	60	3/9	Residents of Hamilton should be consulted on proposed increases to the salaries and benefits of City of Hamilton officials and employees.	Specifically, policy respecting human resources, including compensation administration
38	59	1/9	Residents of Hamilton should have a right of recall (i.e. ability to fire City of Hamilton and Hamilton school board officials between elections).	Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws
43	55	3/9	The City of Hamilton should not contract with consultants who are previous management-level employees of the City.	Specifically, policy involving general policies and procedures and administrative By-Laws

Board of Health

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
7	87	9/9	The City of Hamilton should make public health services more accessible to people who are ageing or who have disabilities.	<p>Matters relating to Public Health in order to promote well-being and create opportunities to enhance the quality of life in our community</p> <p>Specifically, overall service levels in relation to the delivery of Public Health programs and public health needs of the community</p>
28	76	8/9	The City of Hamilton should work with Hamilton school boards to provide vision, hearing, dental, and lice screening by a qualified nurse during set hours in every school.	<p>Matters relating to Public Health in order to promote well-being and create opportunities to enhance the quality of life in our community</p> <p>Specifically, overall service levels in relation to the delivery of Public Health programs and public health needs of the community</p>
29	75	8/9	The City of Hamilton should maintain and expand funding to bed bug management programs.	<p>Matters relating to Public Health in order to promote well-being and create opportunities to enhance the quality of life in our community</p> <p>Specifically, overall service levels in relation to the delivery of Public Health programs and public health needs of the community</p>

Emergency & Community Services

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
14	83	8/9	The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario to reinstate funding for discretionary benefits for low-income residents (e.g. antibiotics, dental, glasses, crutches, wheelchairs, etc.).	Matters relating to Benefit Eligibility Specifically, service levels for all direct and indirect services provided by the Department
15	82	9/9	The City of Hamilton should increase the availability of affordable housing and make it cleaner, safer, and more affordable.	Matters relating to Social Housing Specifically, service levels for all direct and indirect services provided by the Department
16	82	9/9	The City of Hamilton should provide inexpensive recreation opportunities to all its residents.	Matters relating to Recreation Specifically, service levels for all direct and indirect services provided by the Department
19	80	9/9	The City of Hamilton should advocate to the federal government for the creation of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy.	Matters relating to Social Development
20	80	8/9	The City of Hamilton should work with Hamilton school boards to strengthen its commitment to a nutrition program for all students, ensuring that all food is fresh, local, and additive- and pesticide-free.	Matters relating to Social Development and Early Childhood Development
24	78	8/9	The City of Hamilton should partner with appropriate agencies to educate people on rules regarding government accountability and	Matters relating to Social Development and Community Programs

			transparency.	
27	77	7/9	The City of Hamilton should partner with appropriate agencies to educate people on their civil and political rights.	Matters relating to Social Development and Community Programs
33	69	8/9	The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario for a change in the service delivery model and increases to the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits.	Matters relating to Benefit Eligibility Specifically, service levels for all direct and indirect services provided by the Department
41	56	5/9	The City of Hamilton should fund a program to place first aid kits in public places such as schools and parks.	Matters relating to emergency medical services Service levels for all direct and indirect services provided by the Department

General Issues Committee

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
6	87	9/9	The City of Hamilton should take action to make it easier to start and operate a small business in Hamilton.	Matters relating to Economic Development Specifically, matters relating to Business Development
9	85	7/9	The City of Hamilton and Hamilton school boards should give residents a say in major planning and spending decisions whenever feasible.	Matters relating to Council Strategic Plan, Corporate Strategic Plan, and Annual Operating and Capital Budgets
11	85	8/9	The boards and agencies of the City of Hamilton (e.g. Police Service Board, Hamilton school boards, etc.) should open themselves up to greater public scrutiny.	Matters relating to Boards and Agencies
12	84	8/9	The Hamilton Police Service should improve sensitivity training for officers, especially in relation to neighbourhood issues and vulnerable populations.	Matters regarding Boards and Agencies
22	80	8/9	The City of Hamilton should prioritize protection of the environment over corporate interests.	Matters relating to Council Strategic Plan and Corporate Strategic Plan
25	77	7/9	The City of Hamilton should work with Hamilton school boards to keep closed schools in their communities as public places.	HWDSB Liaison Committee
36	61	4/9	The City of Hamilton should advocate to the provincial and federal governments for a greater share of tax revenue so that it can provide a	Matters relating to Council Strategic Plan, Corporate Strategic Plan, and Annual Operating and Capital Budgets

			guaranteed annual income to all residents of Hamilton.	
42	55	1/9	The City of Hamilton should advocate to the Province of Ontario for the amalgamation of the public and separate (i.e. Catholic) school boards.	Matters regarding Boards and Agencies
44	54	2/9	The City of Hamilton should advocate to the Province of Ontario to expand the Greenbelt to include the “Whitebelt” (i.e. the areas that are not urban areas or subject to the Greenbelt Plan).	Matters which Council chooses to refer to the General Issues Committee for consideration

Planning

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
5	87	7/9	The City of Hamilton should protect and honour local heritage.	Matters relating to heritage preservation
40	56	3/9	The City of Hamilton should fund and advocate to the Province of Ontario for investment in a light-rail transit (LRT) system for Hamilton.	Matters relating to Long Range Planning

Public Works

#	%	CM	Proposal	Mandate
2	89	8/9	The City of Hamilton should make it easier for residents to set up community gardens, farmers' markets, and urban farming.	Matters relating to Operations & Maintenance and Capital Planning and Implementation Specifically, policies, By-Laws, and procedures governing service delivery implemented by the Department
3	88	9/9	The City of Hamilton should continue to fund its existing brownfield remediation program and make every effort to recoup costs from offending industries.	Matters relating to Capital Planning and Implementation (Strategic and Environmental Planning)
4	87	9/9	The City of Hamilton should make the City's streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.	Matters relating to Operations & Maintenance (Roads and Traffic)
18	81	9/9	The City of Hamilton should increase the amount of green space in the city.	Matters relating to Capital Planning and Implementation (Open Space Planning)
23	80	8/9	The City of Hamilton should fund and advocate to the Province of Ontario for increased funding to expand Hamilton's bus system.	Matters relating to Transit (Operations and Transit Fleet)
31	72	6/9	Rain gardens should be installed on City of Hamilton property as part of its water management program.	Matters relating to Water & Wastewater (Collection)
34	64	5/9	The City of Hamilton should introduce an integrated transit pass for bicycle rentals, public transit, and parking.	Matters relating to Transit (Operations)

39	56	2/9	The City of Hamilton should not permit a gasification plant to be installed in Hamilton.	Matters relating to Waste Management (Solid Waste Planning, Collection, and Disposal)
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8 Main St. E., #101
Hamilton, ON
L8N 1E8
t. 905.529.5209
f. 905.521-0541

182 Rebecca St.
Hamilton, ON
L8R 1C1
t. 905.525.9676
f. 905.521-1981

1119 Fennell Ave. E., #236
Hamilton, ON
L8T 1S2
t. 905.387.1100
f. 905.387.1770

2255 Barton St. E.
Hamilton, ON
L8H 7T4
t. 905.573.7663
f. 905.573.0929

March 26, 2015

Hamilton City Council
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON
L8P 4Y5

Re: Support for the Peoples' Platform declarations

To the Hamilton City Council:

I am writing on behalf of the Immigrant Women's Centre (IWC) to express our strong support for the People's Platform declarations put forth by the Hamilton Civic League.

As a community-based social service organization, we see the importance of enhancing civic-engagement for all the City's residents, particularly those most underrepresented in political processes and policy-making. The Peoples' Platform has proven to be an important tool in this movement, facilitating strategic and collaborative public participation in the civic political process.

IWC works with a range of newcomers to Hamilton, from diverse ethno-racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds. What many newcomers have in common are the multiple barriers to building prosperity in their Canada. As such, we are particularly supportive of declarations that deal with economic development, poverty reduction, and access to essential services and supports.

IWC supports the full package of declarations put forward. We are, however, particularly keen on seeing a positive response to declarations that deal with improving access to resources and quality of life for Hamilton's most vulnerable – those facing the multiple and intersecting challenges associated with poverty. As such, I would like to highlight the following declarations:

- Declaration 14: The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario to reinstate funding for discretionary benefits for low-income residents (e.g. antibiotics, crutches, wheelchairs, etc...)
- Declaration 15: The city of Hamilton should increase the availability of affordable housing and make it cleaner, safer, and more affordable.
- Declaration 19: The City of Hamilton should advocate to the federal government for the creation of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy.



8 Main St. E., #101
Hamilton, ON
L8N 1E8
t. 905.529.5209
f. 905.521-0541

182 Rebecca St.
Hamilton, ON
L8R 1C1
t. 905.525.9676
f. 905.521-1981

1119 Fennell Ave. E., #236
Hamilton, ON
L8T 1S2
t. 905.387.1100
f. 905.387.1770

2255 Barton St. E.
Hamilton, ON
L8H 7T4
t. 905.573.7663
f. 905.573.0929

In addition, we are especially supportive of declarations that deal with promoting increased economic, social and civic participation for Hamiltonians, such as:

- Declaration 6: The City of Hamilton should make it easier to start and operate a small business in Hamilton
- Declaration 16: Hamilton should provide inexpensive recreation opportunities to all its residents.
- Declaration 27: The City of Hamilton should partner with appropriate agencies to educate people on their civil and political rights.

As an organization working towards full social, civic and economic participation for Hamilton's newcomers, we are pleased to support the Hamilton Civic league as they build and promote a collective vision for Hamilton, informed by the diverse voices of our City.

We look forward to a positive and progressive response from you, our City Council, in this movement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ines Rios', written in a cursive style.

Ines Rios
Executive Director

This letter is in support of the Hamilton Civic League from the Hamilton chapter of the Council of Canadians.

We understand that on Monday, March 30 at 9:30am the Hamilton Civic League will present to the General Issues Committee to ask City Council to receive the 44 declarations that comprise the **Peoples' Platform** and refer them to appropriate standing committees.

While most of the declarations are worthy of support, a few of the declarations are of particular importance to the Hamilton chapter.

The Hamilton chapter of the Council of Canadians opposes policies that put the interests of corporations before the interests of people. Therefore, we agree with the declaration that

“The City of Hamilton should prioritize protection of the environment over corporate interests.”

The Hamilton chapter of the Council of Canadians favours the transitioning away from reliance on private automobiles to reliance on public transit. Therefore, we agree with the declaration that

“The City of Hamilton should fund and advocate to the Province of Ontario for investment in a light-rail transit (LRT) system for Hamilton.”

The Hamilton chapter of the Council of Canadians favours utilization of existing brownfield lands versus paving over farmland. Therefore, we agree with the declaration that

“The City of Hamilton should continue to fund its existing brownfield remediation program and make every effort to recoup costs from offending industries.”

Yours,

Edward Reece

Co-chair

Council of Canadians, Hamilton Chapter

To: City of Hamilton General Issues Committee

From: Hamilton & Area Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada [CURC]

Re: Peoples Platform Recommendations

The Hamilton & Area Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada [CURC] represent thousands of union retirees in the greater Hamilton area. CURC affiliates include: UNIFOR, OPSEU, CUPE, OSSTF, USW [SOAR], PSAC, etc. CURC is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress.

The Hamilton Chapter of CURC was directly involved with the Peoples Platform Initiative and supports the vast majority of the recommendations contained in the Final Report.

The following recommendations are of particular interest to CURC and therefore we urge Council's consideration and active support:

[1] Audit ,Finance & Administration

Topic 8

The City of Hamilton and Hamilton School Boards should make their tendering/procurement contracts and information regarding past relationships with contractors publicly available.

CURC adds that preference be made to contractors and subcontractors whose workforces are unionized.

Topics 21and 30

The City of Hamilton and Hamilton School Boards should pay all their employees at least a living wage of \$14.95 in 2011 dollars indexed to inflation.

That the City of Hamilton and Hamilton School Boards contract with businesses that pay their employees at least a living wage of \$14.95 in 2011 dollars indexed to inflation.

[2] Board of Health

Topic 7

The City of Hamilton should make public health services more accessible to people who are ageing or who have disabilities.

Topic 28

The City of Hamilton should work with Hamilton School Boards to provide vision, hearing, dental and lice screening by a qualified nurse during set hours in every school.

[3] Emergency & Community Services

Topic 14

The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario to reinstate funding for discretionary benefits for low-income residents.

Topic 15

The City of Hamilton should increase the availability of affordable housing and make it cleaner, safer, and more affordable.

Topic 19

The City of Hamilton should advocate to the federal government for the creation of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Topic 33

The City of Hamilton should continue to advocate to the Province of Ontario for a change in the service delivery model and increases to the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits.

[4] General Issues Committee

Topic 22

The City of Hamilton should prioritize protection of the environment over corporate interests.

Topic 25

The City of Hamilton should work with Hamilton School Boards to keep closed schools in their communities as public places.

[5] Public Works

Topic 3

The City of Hamilton should continue to fund its existing brownfield remediation

program and make every effort to recoup costs from offending industries.

Submitted by Malcolm Buchanan on behalf of the Hamilton and Area Chapter of CURC.

macbuchanan@rogers.com

[905]575-5639

Dear Councillors,

As a member of HOPE Hamilton, I would like to commend to you the work of the People's Platform. This grassroots group, established by the Hamilton Civic League, worked very hard and effectively in their first attempt to engage Hamilton citizens in the municipal political process.

The People's Platform offered ordinary citizens the opportunity to present their ideas for a stronger and better Hamilton in a series of meetings over the summer and fall. The people who attended these meetings expressed appreciation for the opportunity. I believe this beginning bodes well for increasing citizen participation in the future.

Chris Latour and I were invited, as members of Hamilton Organizing for Poverty Elimination, to participate in this process. We did so gladly, seeing this as an opportunity to advance our concerns about issues related to inequality and poverty in Hamilton. Chris has written you a letter expressing our concerns about the Living Wage and Affordable Housing (Issues 21, 30 and 15).

I would like to address Issues 14, 19, 33, and 36 all of which relate to Council's advocacy with the provincial and federal governments, and issues 14 and 28 which Council is able to address directly.

Issue 14 deals with Discretionary Benefits and asks Council to advocate with the province for the re-instatement of these benefits to people receiving Social Assistance. The importance of vision and dental care as well as the provision of necessary drugs cannot be emphasized enough. For example, dental health is shown to be related to many health issues such as heart disease, and yet the province offers only minimal care to the least fortunate among us. These benefits are vital to the health of those receiving Social Assistance whose health is already at risk because of their low incomes. The City can address some of these issues under its municipal mandate by ensuring that there is regular Public Health screening in the schools for dental, vision, hearing and lice issues. (Issue 28) Hamilton Public Health can also ensure that services are more accessible for those who are aging or those with disabilities (Issue 7), which would help all citizens as well as those receiving Social Assistance.

Issue 33 is an advocacy issue for City Council. Social Assistance rates are far too low in Ontario. This lack of support leads to increased costs in health care, the justice system, and the education system to name a few. We hope that the City sees advocacy with the province to raise Social Assistance rates for both OW and ODSP recipients as an important part of its mandate.

Finally, members of HOPE would like to see City Council advocate with the Federal government to establish a National Poverty Strategy. (Issue 19) Unanimous support to end child poverty by the year 2000 was given but there has been little progress, and it is now 2015. And we would like to point out that child poverty only exists because of family poverty, a situation that needs to be remedied sooner rather than later, a situation that costs all governments an enormous amount of money to maintain. We realize that Issue 36, municipal council offering residents a guaranteed annual income is not within the power of municipalities, but pursuing a greater share of taxes from both the provincial and federal governments would help council with its revenue problem and enable to address the very important issues cited in this letter.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours truly,
Susan Muma

Attn Hamilton City Council,

My name is Christian Latour and I am a member of Hamilton Organizing for Poverty Elimination, a local advocacy group. On behalf of HOPE, I would like to thank the Hamilton Civic League and the organizers of the People's Platform for inviting us to participate in a wonderful example of grassroots democracy.

Poverty can create many barriers for families and individuals. Civic engagement becomes more difficult as pressures from financial instability can often limit activities to those focused on earning a living. By making the democratic process open and accessible, we value people's time and remove some of these barriers. The People's Platform has succeeded in engaging the public and listening to voices across the city and across all income levels. This gives a voice to those who might otherwise have no chance for input on the direction for our city.

We believe that the issues brought forward by the People's Platform reflect the unprecedented reach such initiatives can have. Many of the issues which received high support from both the public and council members are ideas that too rarely receive support but are understood by those living in or at risk of poverty as issues which could greatly help many across the city. I'd like to speak to two policy areas in particular.

Issues #21 and #30 both deal with the 14.95 pay rate referred to as a living wage. By adopting a policy of a living wage around both employment and contracting, the City of Hamilton has the opportunity to be a leader in equitable compensation and increase acceptance of this practice by other industries. We are most encouraged to see greater than 70% support by citizens and near unanimity by the participating council members for both of these issues.

Issue 15 on Affordable Housing also resonates with our members. It is often said that housing is not a problem, it is a solution. As shown by the recent example in Medicine Hat, a housing first strategy is effective both in cost and long term reduction of homelessness. With housing stability we see increased productivity and participation in society. Investment in housing is a direct investment in our citizens. With more than 80% support by participants and unanimous support of participating council members, we look forward to action on the part of the city in the near future.

These are but two examples of the impressive number of possibilities contained within the People's Platform which give our city the opportunity to institute policies in the short term that will impact our city in a meaningful way. I encourage council to embrace this opportunity and move the city of Hamilton towards its full potential.

Christian Latour,
5 East 21st Street, Hamilton

To Members of Hamilton City Council

The Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits (the Campaign) is writing this letter to endorse the effort and results of the People's Platform sponsored by the Hamilton Civic League. The first attempt to involve Hamiltonians in civic politics resulted in some very positive outcomes and recommendations. The Campaign has a number of issues that are near and dear to our hearts and would like to especially recommend them to your consideration. While many are Provincial or Federal issues, we hope that Council will be able to get behind strong advocacy on behalf of those living in poverty to actually make some changes rather than striking more committees and Commissions.

To that end, we believe that it is imperative to make some inroads on Housing and the condition of housing. Points 29 and 15 address those issues and received strong support from both candidates and successful candidates. Housing first has proven very effective at reducing many social ills and maintaining a pest free environment is crucial to the mental well being of residents.

Once housing has been established, it is mandatory that residents be able to afford to remain housed. A living wage for all city employees and any contractors who deal with the city should be a primary consideration. Items 21 and 30 deal with those issues and again received broad support. Item 61 also deals with income and although it is doubtful that Hamilton could support a guaranteed annual income, it would be a solid move forward if they could put pressure on the Province and the Federal government to think along those lines. Item 19 urges advocacy for a National Poverty Strategy. Our current Federal government seems to think that means putting everyone into poverty. We know you agree with us and the residents who put this forward and voted for it that it means eliminating poverty. That would help immeasurably in dealing with so many of the societal problems that have plagued us for decades and are only getting worse.

Once housing and income are rationalized, health becomes a priority; especially as it pertains to those who need health services the most, the elderly and those with disabilities. Item 7 received overwhelming support from candidates and councillors and we hope that Council can find a way to bring health services to those who need them rather than forcing them to venture to the health providers. In line with that, transportation is an issue not only for the elderly and disabled. People living in poverty with or without a job have a great deal of difficulty engaging with the city because transportation costs and accessibility are too high. Item 23 advocates for more funding for transit from wherever the funds can be found. It is imperative in this time of climate crisis that we expand our public transit and get cars off the road. It will not happen unless the system is established and in place.

Of course, the Campaign has primary concerns with Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program. Items 14 and 33 both address issues with the social safety net. Discretionary benefits were removed as a cost cutting measure by the Province regardless what their excuse was. They were embarrassed into reestablishing some of those benefits but

moved them into a different Ministry. The Campaign believes that full restoration of the Discretionary benefit be established. It is not as if the fund was being abused. It is necessary on so many fronts and should be based on need rather than how much is left in the tank. Pressure from all municipalities would help bring the Province realize this small ethical move must be made.

Because the City is responsible for managing the OW system, we hope that Council can make a strong, concerted effort to advocate to the Province for a change in the delivery model of both programs. In spite of internal studies that have shown there is marginal abuse within the system, the Province insists on maintaining a surveil and punishment model. That model creates enormous stress on recipients and makes caseworkers paper pushers rather than counsellors. The whole concept also breeds mistrust of the clients for the workers which makes any positive relationship difficult to attain. Until such time as a guaranteed income is in place, we need an increase in rates for both systems. Living at the poverty line would be one thing but OW singles live at $\frac{1}{3}$ of the poverty line. Other recipients are not much better off. This creates health problems from both stress and less than adequate nutrition. It also fosters crime by some in an attempt to acquire basic necessities.

Finally, item 12 advocates for more and better training for the officers of the Police Service. There have been many positive steps taken by the Force to make their officers more responsive to vulnerable populations but the job is far from complete. We urge that screening of personnel and continued training be provided. Those that are forced onto the sidewalks by a seemingly uncaring mental health system must be handled properly so they can get the help they need rather than being treated as criminals.

The Hamilton Civic League through the People's Platform have provided the City with 44 items of action that matter to the residents of the City. The Campaign endorses all of the platform that has been put forward and sincerely hope that Council will understand these are the things that matter to their constituents. We thank you for receiving their report and look forward to working with you in any capacity that we can in bringing these proposals to fruition.

Sincerely,

Points that matter to CAWDB

1. C 21: (80) 8/9 Living Wage for all employees
2. C 30: (74) 8/9 Contractors must pay a living wage
3. C 7: (87) 9/9 Public health services more accessible to people who are ageing or who have disabilities.
4. C 29: (75) 8/9 Maintain and expand funding to bed bug management problem
5. P 14: (83) 8/9 Advocate to the Province to reinstate discretionary benefits

6. C P F 15: (82) 9/9 Increase availability of affordable housing. Cleaner, safer, more affordable.
7. F 19: (80) 8/9 Advocate to Federal govt. for creation of National Poverty Reduction Strategy.
8. P 33: (69) 8/9 Advocate to Province for change in service delivery model & increases to OW and ODSP
9. C 12: (84) 8/9 The Hamilton Police Service should improve sensitivity training for officers, especially in relation to neighbourhood issues and vulnerable populations.
10. P F 36: (61) 4/9 The City of Hamilton should advocate to the provincial and federal governments for a greater share of tax revenue so that it can provide a guaranteed annual income to all residents of Hamilton.
11. P 23: (80) 8/9 should fund and advocate to the Province of Ontario for increased funding to expand Hamilton's bus system.