



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 16, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation Community Engagement Report (CM15001(a)/CES15010(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	John Ariyo 905-546-2424 ext. 1564
SUBMITTED BY:	Paul Johnson Director, Corporate Initiatives City Manager's Office Suzanne Brown Director, Neighbourhood & Community Initiatives Community & Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

The General Issues Committee at its meeting of March 30, 2015 approved the following as one of five recommendations: "That staff be directed to provide regular updates regarding the progress of the 25-year Community Vision public engagement plan".

Information:

In April 2015, the City of Hamilton launched a broad community engagement initiative known as "*Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation*". The initiative is renewing Vision 2020, Hamilton's first Community Vision developed in 1992. The project engagement plan is designed to engage broadly, with a target of reaching 50,000 Hamilton residents, community leaders, interest groups, businesses, institutions, organizations and other community stakeholders. The goal of the project engagement plan being to understand their dreams, priorities and the direction in which they think Hamilton should be heading in the next 25 years. The project engagement plan was informed by the 40-member Hamilton Engagement Committee.

Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation project is being completed in three (3) phases, from April 2015 to March 2016. The project is turning out to be one of the largest community engagement initiatives undertaken by the City of Hamilton.

As at mid-August 2015, the project has engaged with 23,795 residents and stakeholders through its various engagement channels such as attending community festivals and events, surveys, focus groups, public workshops, newsletters, bus tours, social media, online engagement and other creative engagement initiatives. All project information, activities, upcoming events and reports can be found on the website at www.hamilton.ca/ourfuturehamilton.

Phase 1 - Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation (April to August 2015)

The objective of Phase One was to “Share Vision” by engaging broadly with residents and stakeholders around their ideas for the future of Hamilton. Below are some of the key engagement highlights of Phase One completed by the project team and community volunteers:

- Participation at approximately 70 community festivals, events and pop-up activities spread across all City of Hamilton Wards. At the events, the project team interacted one-on-one with about 10,317 attendees, out of which 3,439 completed “Tell Us Your Vision” engagement cards.
- 1,935 “Tell Us Your Vision” engagement cards were specifically completed in 10 major languages other than English spoken by Hamilton’s diverse population.
- 554 residents completed a comprehensive online community survey, with respondents from all across Hamilton.
- 90 residents attended a public workshop at the Waterfront Banquet and Conference Centre on June 15th.
- The project team gave presentations to 10 community groups and organizations, with a total of 240 participants in attendance.
- The project team partnered with Hamilton Youth Poetry Slam to launch the 2015 Youth Week in May 2015. Over 800 youth participated in the one-week event. A youth video was produced by event organizers, involving youth sharing their vision for the future of Hamilton.
- The project team participated in the launch of the 2015 Senior’s Week. Over 500 seniors attended the event. The project team interacted one-on-one with 56 seniors who shared their vision for the city.
- 1,275 residents and students reviewed or contributed to Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation displays (SPARK boards at high schools and displays at City Hall).
- 1,149 children and youth were engaged by staff at the City parks and at Camp Kidaca.

- 90 new immigrants participated in a “fresh-eye tour” of Hamilton organized by the project team. Newcomers saw the city from a different perspective and provided their vision for the future of Hamilton.
- 214 residents signed up for the monthly project newsletter to receive regular project updates. Five updates were sent out within this reporting period.
- 6,747 users visited the project website during the reporting period. An additional 290 residents engaged with the project through social media.
- Lastly, the impressions the project generated through print media and other citywide awareness campaigns were in the hundreds of thousands.

The community engagement report for Phase One is attached as Appendix A to Report CM15001(a) / CES15010 (a). The report provides a summary of ideas that Hamiltonians and community stakeholders noted as being important to informing a new community vision. Among others, these include the environment, infrastructure, economy, education, health, public safety, youth, seniors, arts, inclusion and civic engagement.

A list of all the events attended, survey report, public display locations, community presentations and other engagement activities is attached as Appendix B to Report CM15001(a) / CES15010 (a). This report will also be shared with community partners and stakeholders in Hamilton.

Although Phase one of the project can be considered a success, there are three gaps identified in the engagement results that will be addressed in Phase Two. These include engagement with small businesses, people living with disabilities and further engagement within the rural areas of Hamilton.

To address these gaps, the project team will recruit volunteers from local university and college students to interview small business owners using a guided survey. Staff will connect with the Chamber of Commerce, local BIAs and the City’s small business office to obtain strategic advice that will guide further engagement with the small business sector. The project team will also engage with City Council’s Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities to understand key issues relating to people with disabilities that need to be captured as part of Hamilton’s 25-year Community Vision. Lastly, more staff and volunteer support will be deployed to support further engagement in the rural areas of Hamilton as part of activities for project phase two.

Phase 2: Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation (September to November 2015)

The objective of Phase Two is to “Shape Vision”, which involves inspiring and further engaging with residents and community stakeholders to bring together the vast number of ideas and information gathered in Phase One. Some of the planned engagement activities include:

- Friday, September 18, 2015:

Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield, known as “the most famous astronaut since Neil Armstrong”, will appear at Hamilton Place to inspire Hamiltonians to look at our magnificent city from a different perspective. The sold-out event runs from 7:00-9:00pm, with 2,000 expected participants.

- Saturday, September 19, 2015:

A public workshop is being conducted with great inspirational speakers already lined up. Some of the speakers include Ron J. McKerlie, President, Mohawk College; Trish Hennessy, Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives; Brock Dickinson, Principal at Miller Dickinson Blais Inc.; and Spencer West from the Me to We Movement. The workshop will run from 8:30am-4:00pm, with about 500 expected participants.

- October to November 2015:

Key scheduled community engagement activities, designed to ensure there is citywide community support and understanding for the final project deliverable include:

- eight (8) Public Open Houses in different geographical locations of Hamilton
- online engagement and partnering with around 10 community groups that are *subject matter experts* on key emerging issues, with direction to review, discuss and provide feedback on the key directions that will form the draft of Hamilton’s 25-year Community Vision.

- December 2015:

A draft 25-year Hamilton Community Vision report is expected early December 2015. The draft report will inform the development of a new 10-year Strategic Plan for the City of Hamilton. Many community partners have indicated they are looking forward to the report to inform their key strategic priorities for 2016 and beyond.

Phase 3: Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation (December 2015 to March 2016)

The project concludes with Phase Three. The goal of Phase Three is to obtain final feedback and validation from the community on the draft 25-year Hamilton Community Vision. Engagement activities include an Open House, online engagement and other engagement meetings. A collaborative implementation plan / task force will also be constituted involving key community partners. This will ensure the new Hamilton 25-year Community Vision is measurable, tracks key achievements and reports back to the community on a consistent basis.