



**Boys & Girls Clubs  
of Hamilton**  
A good place to be

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To the Mayor and Members of Council,

As an agency whose mandate includes the provision of service to children, youth, and families most in need in our community, we are highly supportive of the investment in poverty reduction proposed by Mayor Eisenberger and Councillor Collins. We are particularly pleased with the longer-term lens and outcome tracking built into the model and would equally encourage Council to include a strong focus on the prevention of poverty and disrupting generational impacts in addition to poverty reduction and alleviation.

Our 30 Boys & Girls Club sites across Hamilton are located in neighbourhoods experiencing higher than average rates of poverty, including five sites co-located in City Housing complexes and one in a Kiwanis Homes building. A significant percentage of the families we serve are housed precariously and we frequently provide referrals and advocacy for basic needs and services beyond our scope of core programs in the areas of healthy living, leadership and empowerment, learning engagement and career, and strength-based child development. Investments in affordable housing and food security allow us to build upon our relationship-based model and focus on our areas of expertise in building the capacity, confidence, and aspirations of a major, otherwise disengaged constituency in our population.

Our friends on Council are also well aware of the tremendous impact of investing in opportunities for our young people with each dollar leveraging up to \$20 in savings, according to current estimates and the acclaimed work of Hamilton's own Dr. Gina Brown. Boys & Girls Clubs of Hamilton and our partner youth-serving agencies have extensive networks and grass-roots credibility to work with the City of Hamilton and its agencies in growing our collective capacity to effect change and start leveling the playing field for all Hamiltonians to contribute meaningfully to our community.

We applaud the vision and leadership of those on Council as well as City staff who have prioritized the issue of poverty as the greatest limiter of our city's potential. The Boys and Girls Club shares your goals of positive outcomes for all including self-sufficiency and meaningful participation in our society. We encourage all members of Council and our community to rally together in these efforts and heartily endorse the additional investments proposed in this motion.

Respectfully,

Glenn Harkness

Executive Director