



Mission: To renew and promote Hamilton's laneways and alleys as safe, environmentally sustainable public corridors that connect people, neighbourhoods and communities.

Vision: Safe, clean and beautiful laneways and alleys, that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.

Values: Pride in our communities, collaboration, partnerships, inclusion, stewardship

Beautiful Alleys is a community group of volunteers who work together to create safe and beautiful green spaces in neighbourhood alleys and laneways. Two organized cleanup days are organized each year, with sponsorship and funding from valued community and business partners.

History

Grace and her husband had been cleaning the alley behind their home for decades. As time passed, they found that they needed some help, so they approached their neighbourhood hub, which was already involved in alley cleanups, for assistance. A small project took shape with a few alleys joining in, eventually creating a project called Beautiful Alleys in the Gibson and Landsdale Area Hub. Two years ago, GALA invited other Hubs to participate, and the project quickly grew to include six other neighbourhoods, hundreds of volunteers, and a collection of community partners from the public and private sectors.

Collaboration and Partnerships

- The City of Hamilton: Supplies - bags for garden waste, recyclables and trash, special garbage pickup, reusable water bottles, public awareness and enthusiastic support
- Neighbourhood Action Strategy: printing, membership on the organizing committee, participation in the event, funding grant for website development
- Hamilton Clean and Green: funding grant for printing, food, safety supplies, volunteer/sponsor thank-you's and cleanup equipment
- Hamilton Community Foundation: arts grant to fund several art installations on fences and buildings
- Master Paints: paint, primer, and cash

- Community Points (The Aids Network): receptacles for sharps and syringes, safety training
- Kristen McNamee, Mary Lisa Russo: cash
- Tim Hortons: coffee
- Councillor Matthew Green: t-shirts
- Local organizations and businesses: various items for gift bags to thank volunteers, such as pens, discount cards and free product samples
- Community newspapers: free ads

Accomplishments

- Neglected spaces become usable and safe pathways for children, cyclists, residents, seniors, residents, and visitors. A community impact.
- New friendships, pride in community, a real sense of working together toward shared goals. A social impact.
- Thousands of bags of trash removed from public spaces, thousands more bags of recycling diverted from landfill, and thousands more bags of yard waste converted to compost. An environmental impact.
- Nine new art installations on fences and buildings. A visual impact.
- Only two years old as an organized project in multiple neighbourhoods, *Beautiful Alleys* has received a 2016 Hamilton Environmentalists of the Year Award of Merit and a Community Builder Award.

Going Forward:

- Beautification projects to include sculpture, signage, and lighting, and wastewater management through grading and permeable paving
- Enhanced relationships with the City of Hamilton, including a designated contact for alley renewal and maintenance
- Improved communication, particularly through the new website and social media
- Education liaison to develop a process for secondary school students to get credit for community volunteer hours
- Recruitment of technical specialists for website and social media
- Change in scheduling for cleanup events to accommodate the special garbage pickup earlier in the day
- A communication plan, including information sessions, to educate residents on illegal dumping, bulk pickup, and donation of unwanted items to charities
- Identification of locations and roles for persons with disabilities
- Special incentives for children