



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**Neighbourhood & Community Initiatives Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	November 16, 2016
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Neighbourhood Action Strategy Annual Update 2016 (CES15052(a)) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Al Fletcher 905-546-2424 Ext. 4711
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Suzanne Brown, Director Neighbourhood & Community Services Division Community and Emergency Services Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- a) That the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Annual Update 2016 be received; and,
- b) That the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Review for 2016/2017 at an upset limit of \$30,000 be approved from the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Capital fund (20551255204).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy (NAS) launched in 2011 in response to the social, economic and health concerns of specific neighbourhoods within the city of Hamilton. The NAS vision is to create vibrant, healthy and inclusive neighbourhoods built on opportunity and trust by an engaged community. Employing an asset-based community development approach, the Neighbourhood Action Strategy utilized the voice of residents to intentionally focus dialogue around the positive aspects in the community. By blending the foundations of asset-based community development and the Social Determinants of Health with strategic planning principles, residents, supported by community developers and city and community partners developed Neighbourhood Action Plans that built on social capital and addressed the health inequities in eleven Hamilton neighbourhoods.

The purpose of this report is two-fold; first to provide an update of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy (NAS), which includes the accomplishments that residents, community agencies and institutions and City staff have worked together to achieve in 2016. Secondly, to recommend that the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Resident Involved Review project be funded through the NAS fund (project # 20551255204).

The Neighbourhood Action Strategy Annual Update, attached as Appendix A to Report CES15052(a), showcases the successes that neighbourhoods have had in 2015-2016. The collaboration between residents, community developers, City of Hamilton staff, and community partners and institutions, with funding from Hamilton Community Foundation, Best Start Network and the Neighbourhood Action Strategy fund, is responsible for another year of innovative neighbourhood achievement. Of the 452 actions outlined in the 10 neighbourhood action plans the City has a role in 382 of those actions (85%). Of those actions that align with City of Hamilton departmental responsibilities; 11% (42) are completed, 43% (163) are underway and 46% (177) are non-active (on hold, not started or discontinued). Those actions that have not been started generally fall into one of three categories; there is not a resident champion at the planning team table to bring it forward, it is not feasible or fundable, and lastly priorities in the neighbourhood may have changed since the plan was written. Through this year's tracking program, there has been data cleaning by various Departments which has changed how actions were categorized thus making comparisons to previous years not valid.

Planning teams have identified a need to review and renew their plans; therefore, throughout 2016 and 2017, the 11 neighbourhoods will be updating their workplans to validate, revise and determine their priority actions moving forward. These updated action plans will be presented to Emergency and Community Services Committee by the community planning teams (hubs) for endorsement and support for implementation.

There are two independent evaluations of the Neighbourhood Action Strategy. The evaluation led by McMaster University (<https://crunch.mcmaster.ca/>) measures resident perceptions of neighbourhood health and wellbeing. In the six neighbourhoods evaluated by McMaster, the survey notes residents' perception of their neighbourhood over a two year period: residents felt that job opportunities in their neighbourhood had increased (job opportunity actions were identified in nine NAPs), although the perception of safety at night had decreased (safety at night not identified in any NAPs). Of neighbourhood concerns noted at the initial survey, traffic and road safety as well as litter in the streets had improved, both of which were actions identified in most neighbourhood plans. The Study Update Newsletters which provide the evaluation results are attached as Appendix B to Report CES15052(a).

In another evaluation study led by the University of Toronto, it was clear from resident comments that Community Developers play an integral role to providing support to the community. Residents expressed how beneficial having a CD worker was in assisting them make changes in their community and mentioned how progress would have been slower and minimal without the CD worker role.

Since 2011, the NAS has leveraged \$5.5 million in grants, in-kind services and additional funding. The tracked leveraged value does not include the significant investments ward councillors have made to their communities through their area-rating

budgets. Significant leveraged resources include \$880,000 from the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities for the Neighbourhood Home improvement project, \$573,000 from the Local Poverty Reduction Fund for the Xperience Annex, \$50,000 from Arcelor-Mittal Dofasco for the McQuesten Urban Farm, approximately \$2 million from the Hamilton Community Foundation for community development staff and community agency neighbourhood grants and \$1.25 million in research grants for the NAS evaluations through Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

As the evaluation results highlight, many positive changes have taken place in the 11 neighbourhoods over the five years of the NAS, however sustained effort is necessary to continue to build momentum and achieve long-term changes.

As the NAS approached its fifth anniversary, the Steering Committee, made up of Hamilton Community Foundation, Best Start Network and NAS staff, embarked on a series of planning sessions to reflect upon and assess its work to date, which resulted in the decision to conduct a review. Once the NAS Review is completed, it paves the way for a series of operational adjustments which will include: evolving the CD team; formalizing the training, supports and resources required for inclusive civic engagement; and finalizing the NAS governance and operational structure including roles. The evolved NAS model will draw from lessons learned to date (including the findings the planning meetings held in 2015), on a systematic review of relevant research literature and input from the residents as where they see NAS proceeding in the future.

***Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable***

**FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: Staff are recommending approval in the amount of \$30,000 to support the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Review from the NAS fund (project # 20551255204).

Staffing: There are no staffing implications related to Report CES15052(a)

Legal: There are no legal implications related to Report CES15052(a)

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Neighbourhood Action Strategy (NAS) is a partnership between funders, Hamilton Community Foundation, Best Start Network, City of Hamilton; and the residents and community planning teams (hubs), community developers (sponsored by the Social Planning and Research Council), service agencies and institutions. This collective impact approach is working to build healthy and vibrant neighbourhoods.

In 2011, Council approved a \$2 million Neighbourhood Action Strategy capital fund to support the development and work of the NAS. This funding has supported programs, capital improvements, resources for staffing, youth camps, neighbourhood small grants, community leadership development and festivals, events and gatherings that broaden citizen engagement within the 11 NAS neighbourhoods. This \$2 million investment has leveraged an additional \$5.5 million in donations, in-kind services, grants through other funding bodies and levels of government and collaborative activities with other community partners as outlined in Report CES16033 presented to the E&CS Committee on July 6, 2016.

#### Role of City of Hamilton Neighbourhood Action Strategy Staff

The Neighbourhood Action Strategy Section of the Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives (NCI) Division provides staffing to support the planning teams in the 11 identified neighbourhoods. The NAS Section is made of eight staff that provide project management, social policy analysis and neighbourhood development support, including:

- Work with NAS Neighbourhoods to implement Action Plans
- Neighbourhood Action Planning facilitation (including Plan Revisions)
- Support community engagement events and activities across neighbourhoods
- Community development consultation for burgeoning neighbourhood groups outside the NAS neighbourhoods
- Project manage and administer major multi-partner initiatives like the Xperience Annex and McQuesten Urban Farm
- Manage and administer the Community Gardens portfolio across Hamilton
- Support and connect Neighbourhood Leadership Institute participants with City resources and staffing
- Support for Hamilton Roundtable on Poverty Reduction and social policy initiatives like the Living Wage and Basic Income Guarantee and Food Strategy
- Manage and administer Neighbourhood Engagement Matching Grant Program
- Manage and administer Community and Emergency Services stream of Community Enrichment Fund
- Manage and administer Snow Angels Program
- Broker relationships between institutions, community agencies, funding bodies and the neighbourhood planning teams
- Facilitate community meetings and forum, provide presentations to community groups and agencies regarding NAS

#### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

There are no policy implications or legislated requirements related to Report CES15052(a).

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

Finance, Administration and Revenue Generation Division were consulted and have no concerns with the recommendations.

Hamilton Community Foundation and Best Start Network were consulted and have no concerns with the recommendations.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The 452 actions identified in the neighbourhood action plans are as diverse as the 11 neighbourhoods and include; large capital projects (e.g. McQuesten Urban Farm, accessibility improvements to Eva Rothwell Resource Centre, improvements to Captain Cornelius Park), supporting innovative programming that works with youth to gain education, job skills training and ultimately employment (Xperience Annex), supporting residents in community engagement work through projects/programs (start-ups for self-sustaining neighbourhood newspaper/newsletters, festivals, fairs and cultural events) as well as investments in capacity building for residents such as Neighbourhood Leadership Institute and the Beasley Youth Initiative.

### Neighbourhood Action Strategy Capital Fund

To date, the \$2 million Neighbourhood Actions Strategy capital fund expenditures and commitments fall into the following categories (rounded):

Programs/Grants	\$325,000
Capital Projects	\$535,000
Neighbourhood Engagement	\$125,000
Evaluation	\$100,000
Community Development	\$250,000
Printing	\$25,000
Project Staffing (Temporary)	\$515,000
Miscellaneous	\$75,000

- Programs/Grants – funding to assist in providing a community program or granting stream supporting the actions of residents, e.g. Neighbourhood Leadership Institute, McMaster Discovery Program, Neighbourhood Home Improvement Program, etc.
- Capital Projects – funding used to support build of a physical initiative, e.g. McQuesten Urban Farm, Captain Cornelius Path, GALA Community Garden, Carter Park, Sunset Garden, etc.
- Neighbourhood Engagement – funding used to support neighbourhood or City-Wide events for the purpose of increasing engagement, e.g. Building Momentum, Neighbourhood Celebrations, etc.

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*OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.*

*OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.*

*OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.*

- Evaluation – funding to support evaluation of NAS work to provide metrics on changes.
- Community Development – funding community agencies to provide community development services in the NAS neighbourhoods
- Printing – funding for printing of community engagement documents (newspapers and newsletters) as well as Neighbourhood Action Plans and Annual Reports.
- Project Staffing (temporary) – funding to support short term roles to implement a specific initiative, e.g. Social Navigator, Community Nurse Navigator, Senior Project Manager, etc.
- Miscellaneous – funding to support neighbourhood actions/initiatives falling outside other categories, e.g. Canada Post costs to mail Jamesville Anvil newspaper to residents living in high rise apartments, Xperience Annex Branding, resident attendance at forums, etc.

Currently, there are still a number of actions yet to be implemented in the neighbourhood action plans. However, residents have identified a need to review and renew their plans; therefore, throughout 2016 and 2017, the 11 neighbourhoods will be updating the workplan components of their plans to validate, revise and determine their priority actions moving forward. These updated action plans will be presented to Emergency and Community Services Committee by the community planning teams (hubs) for endorsement.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

None

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Community Engagement & Participation**

*Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.*

### **Healthy and Safe Communities**

*Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.*

### **Clean and Green**

*Hamilton is environmentally sustainable with a healthy balance of natural and urban spaces.*

### **Culture and Diversity**

*Hamilton is a thriving, vibrant place for arts, culture, and heritage where diversity and inclusivity are embraced and celebrated.*

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**Our People and Performance**

*Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.*

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix A to Report CES15052(a) – Neighbourhood Action Strategy Annual Report

Appendix B to Report CES15052(a) – CRUNCH Study Update Newsletters