

# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members Board of Health
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	October 16, 2017
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	The Right to a Healthy Environment (Blue Dot) (BOH17038) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
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## Council Direction:

At the February 18, 2015 meeting of the General Issues Committee, members approved a motion regarding the Right to a Healthy Environment, including:

- (b) That staff be “Directed to report to develop and report back to the General Issues Committee in 2016, in tandem with the City’s community visioning and Strategic Plan, on the objectives, targets, timelines and actions and the plan for making progress towards fulfilling this declaration;” and
- (b) That staff be “Directed to consult with residents as part of the Right to a Healthy Environment process.”

The following information provides outcomes related to the above direction and next steps.

## Information:

The Right to a Healthy Environment through the Blue Dot Movement is intended as a call to the development of federal and provincial legislation that recognizes that all people have the right to live in a healthy environment. Blue Dot is a David Suzuki Foundation movement to recognize every Canadian's right to live in a healthy

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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.*

environment. Blue Dot (<http://bluedot.ca>) aims to see the right to a healthy environment, including the rights to fresh air, clean water, and safe food, enshrined in the Canadian constitution.

The initial steps of the movement are to build support within communities and municipalities by having them sign a declaration supporting the right to a healthy environment. The next step is to have provinces follow suit and pass environmental bills of rights. When 7 out of 10 provinces representing more than 50 per cent of the Canadian population have recognized the right to a healthy environment the final step is to request the federal government amend the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Recognition in the Charter is the final step in protecting the right to clean air, fresh water and healthy food for all Canadians.

The Right to a Healthy Environment (Blue Dot) Motion passed by General Issues Committee in 2015 asks that The Municipality shall specify objectives, targets and timelines and actions the Municipality will take within its jurisdiction, to fulfil residents' right to a healthy environment, including priority actions to:

- (a) Endeavour to plan for equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within the Municipality, preventing the development of pollution "hot spots;"
- (b) Ensure infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;
- (c) Endeavour to address climate change;
- (d) by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;
- (e) Responsibly increase density;
- (f) Prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as preferred modes of transportation;
- (g) Ensure adequate infrastructure for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
- (h) Promote the availability of safe foods;
- (i) Reduce solid waste and promote recycling and composting;
- (j) Establish and maintain accessible green spaces in all residential neighbourhoods; and
- (k) In taking these aforementioned steps, continue to protect and restore the biodiversity and ecosystem services of the many unique and varied natural features that define our Municipality, from the Niagara Escarpment and its surrounding greenbelt to Lake Ontario, with Cootes Paradise and the Dundas Valley at its heart.

Within the City of Hamilton 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan and the Our Future Hamilton Key Directions, the Right to a Healthy Environment priority actions align with the directions and actions under the theme of Clean and Green, with supporting actions in Built Environment and Infrastructure, Economic Prosperity and Growth, and Healthy and Safe Communities.

Community engagement and consultation that is in line with, and supports the Right to a Healthy Environment (Blue Dot) motion, was undertaken and captured through the Our Future Hamilton initiative. Forty percent of responses in Our Future Hamilton consultations aligned with the Blue Dot priorities. A review of public comments and actions provided in the Our Future Hamilton engagement process reveals the following as community priorities:

- 21% noted (c) Endeavour to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;
- 21% noted (a) Endeavour to plan for equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within the Municipality, preventing the development of pollution “hot spots;”
- 19% noted (e) Prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as preferred modes of transportation, where appropriate and applicable;
- 19% noted (b) Ensure infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;
- 18% noted (d) Responsibly increase density;
- 11% noted (i) Establish and maintain accessible green spaces in all residential neighbourhoods;
- 9% noted (j) Continue to protect and restore the biodiversity and ecosystem services of the many unique and varied natural features that define our Municipality;
- 7% (f) Ensure adequate infrastructure for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
- 5% noted (g) Promote the availability of safe foods;
- 4% noted (h) Reduce solid waste and promote recycling and composting; and
- City staff examined the roles and work activities of City departments that address the priority actions of the Right to a Healthy Environment to identify current responsibilities. The results of this examination are attached as Appendix A.

Current City of Hamilton plans and programs that address the priority actions identified in the Right to a Healthy Environment(Blue Dot) include: The Urban Hamilton Official Plan, The Rural Hamilton Official Plan, Zoning By-Law, Urban Forestry Strategy, Transportation Master Plan, Transportation Demand Management/Smart Commute Hamilton, Cycling Master Plan, Transit Master Plan, Hamilton Food Strategy, Community Climate Change Action Plan, Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategy, Corporate Energy Plan, Water and Wastewater Master Plan, Waste Master Plan, Neighbourhood Action Strategy, and Trails Master Plan.

Identified gaps in the evaluation of progress towards fulfilling the priorities of the Blue Dot motion reveal the need for indicators to track progress and a reporting mechanism. Potential indicators that may be used to track the progress of the Blue Dot priority actions have been identified in Appendix A. Refinement of the indicators by City departments will be undertaken in 2017/2018.

Reporting back on the progress of the Blue Dot priorities and actions identified by the Right to a Healthy Environment can be undertaken through the reporting of the Corporate Strategic Plan and the Our Future Hamilton under the theme of Clean and Green using indicators and a report card format. PHS Staff will work with CMO and CES Our Future Hamilton staff to develop Blue Dot indicators to be used as part of the Corporate Strategic Plan and Our Future Hamilton annual reporting for 2018.

**Appendices/Schedules Attached:**

Appendix A to Report BOH17038 – The Right to a Healthy Environment (Blue Dot)