

Hamilton tenants are dying. We must act.

Presentation to City of Hamilton Board of Health
Monday, May 17, 2021

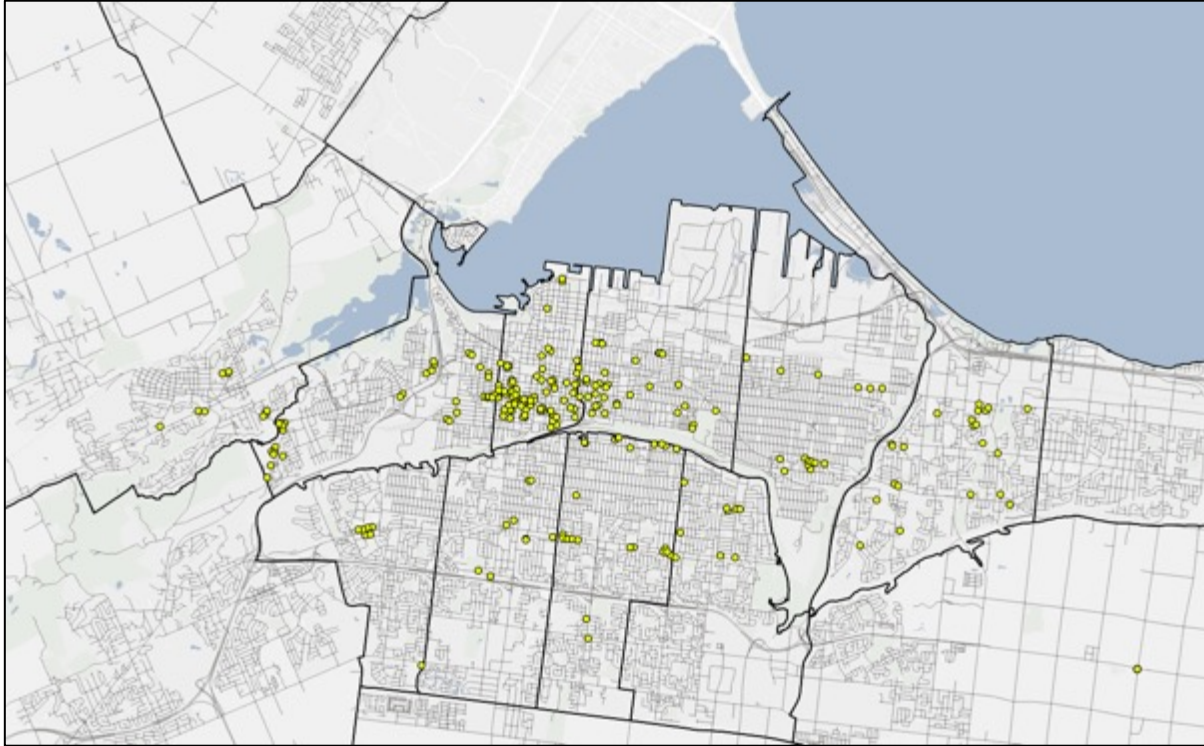
Emily Power

How many Hamiltonians live in large apartment buildings?

| Ward | Area | Percent of Population Renting | Percent of Population Living in 5+ Storey Apartment Building | Estimated Number of People Living 5+ Storey Apartment Building |
|------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Chedoke-Cootes | 51.6% | 28.7% | 8,567 |
| 2 | Downtown | 76.4% | 59.4% | 19,958 |
| 3 | Hamilton Centre | 52.9% | 11.2% | 4,615 |
| 4 | East Hamilton | 30.3% | 8.8% | 3,396 |
| 5 | Redhill | 49.4% | 38.2% | 15,989 |
| 6 | East Mountain | 28.6% | 10.7% | 4,136 |
| 7 | Central Mountain | 32.3% | 13.9% | 6,597 |
| 8 | West-Central Mountain | 27.2% | 8.3% | 2,862 |
| 9 | Upper Stoney Creek | 11.9% | 0.1% | 29 |
| 10 | Lower Stoney Creek | 10.4% | 4.3% | 1,600 |
| 11 | Glanbrook | 6.0% | 0.0% | 0 |
| 12 | Ancaster | 7.3% | 0.1% | 43 |
| 13 | Dundas | 19.4% | 11.1% | 3,926 |
| 14 | West Mountain | 23.0% | 8.0% | 2,738 |
| 15 | Flamborough-Waterdown | 11.8% | 3.9% | 1,079 |
| | City of Hamilton | 32.4% | 15.9% | 85,370 |

Source: City of Hamilton Ward Profiles, with data from custom tabulations of Statistics Canada's 2016 Census.

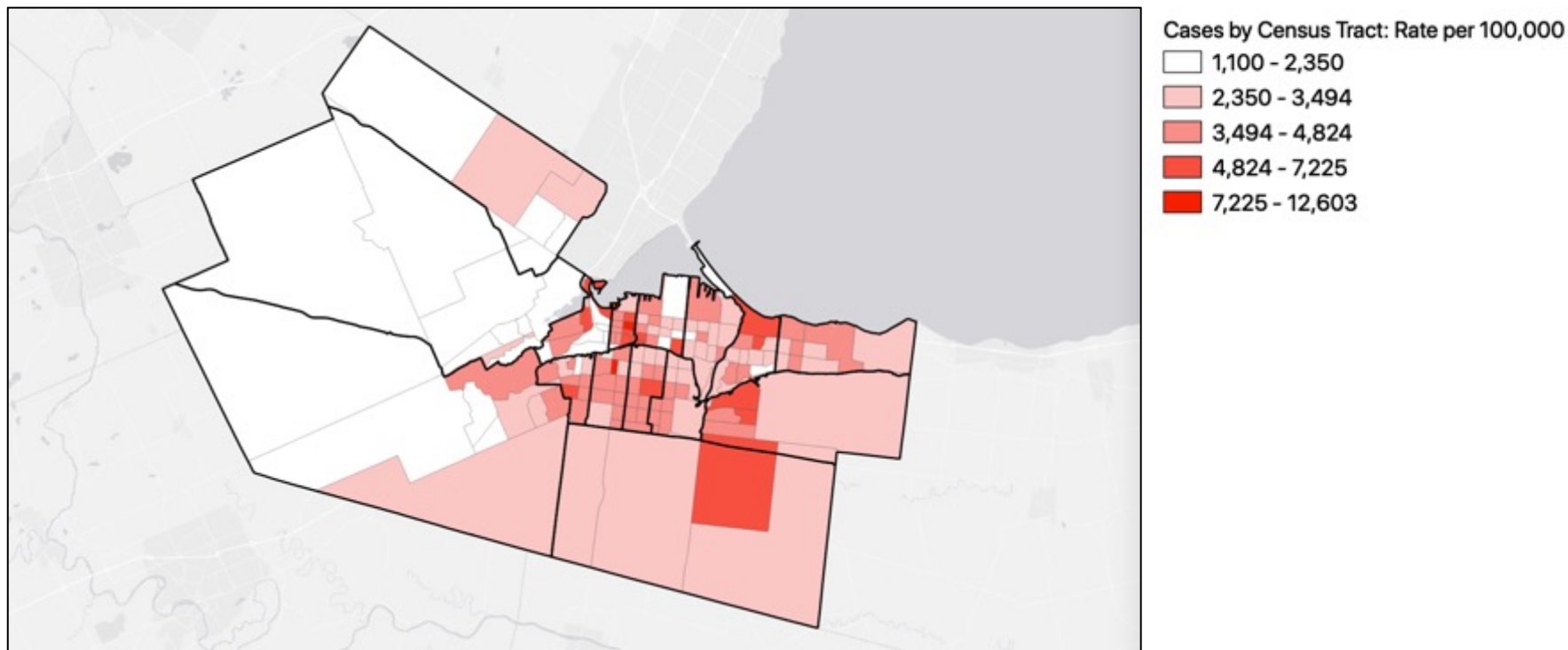
Where are apartment buildings concentrated?



Locations of apartment buildings owned by private landlords and social housing landlords. Addresses compiled from landlord websites and City of Hamilton social housing directory. **254 buildings identified**, though likely missing some addresses.

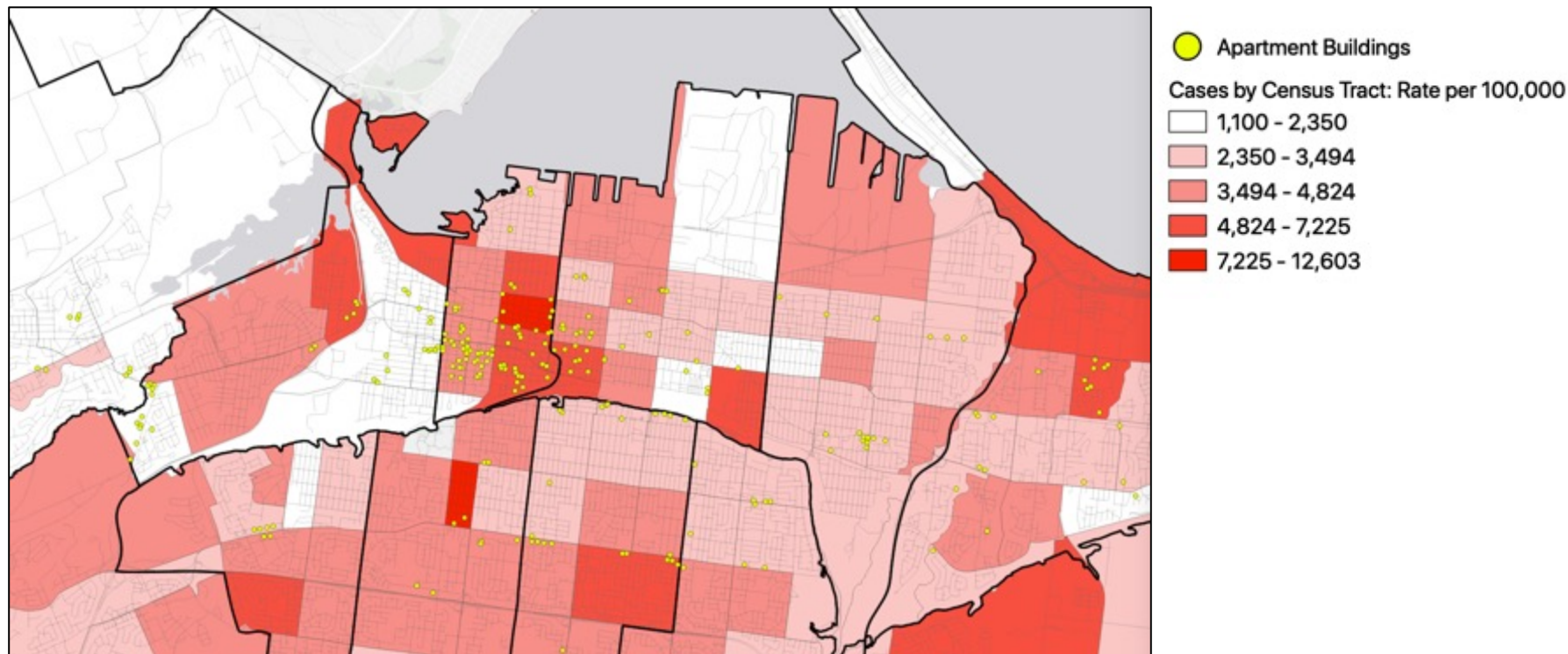
14,810 Hamilton households report living in housing in need of major repairs
(Statistics Canada 2016 Census)

Where are COVID-19 cases concentrated?



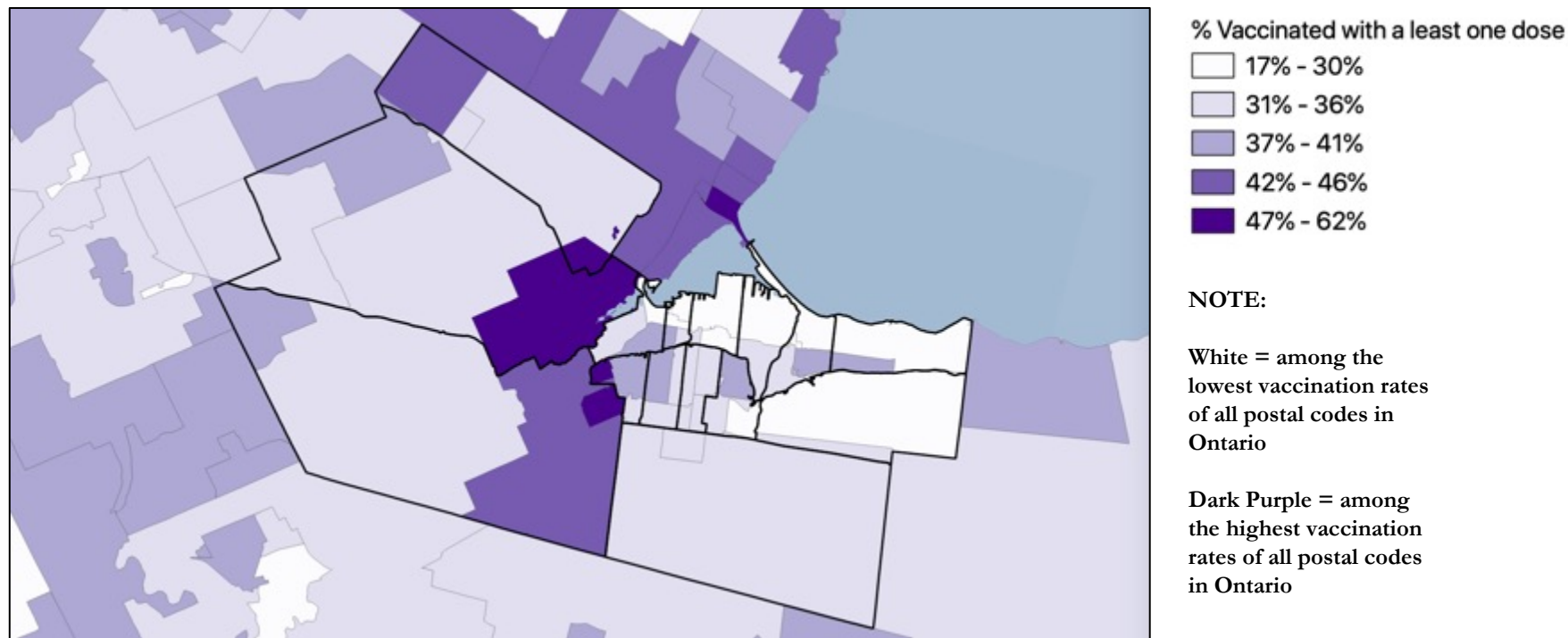
City of Hamilton Public Health (May 16, 2021): COVID-19 Incidence Rate per 100,000 by Census Tract.

Detail: COVID-19 Cases and Apartment Buildings



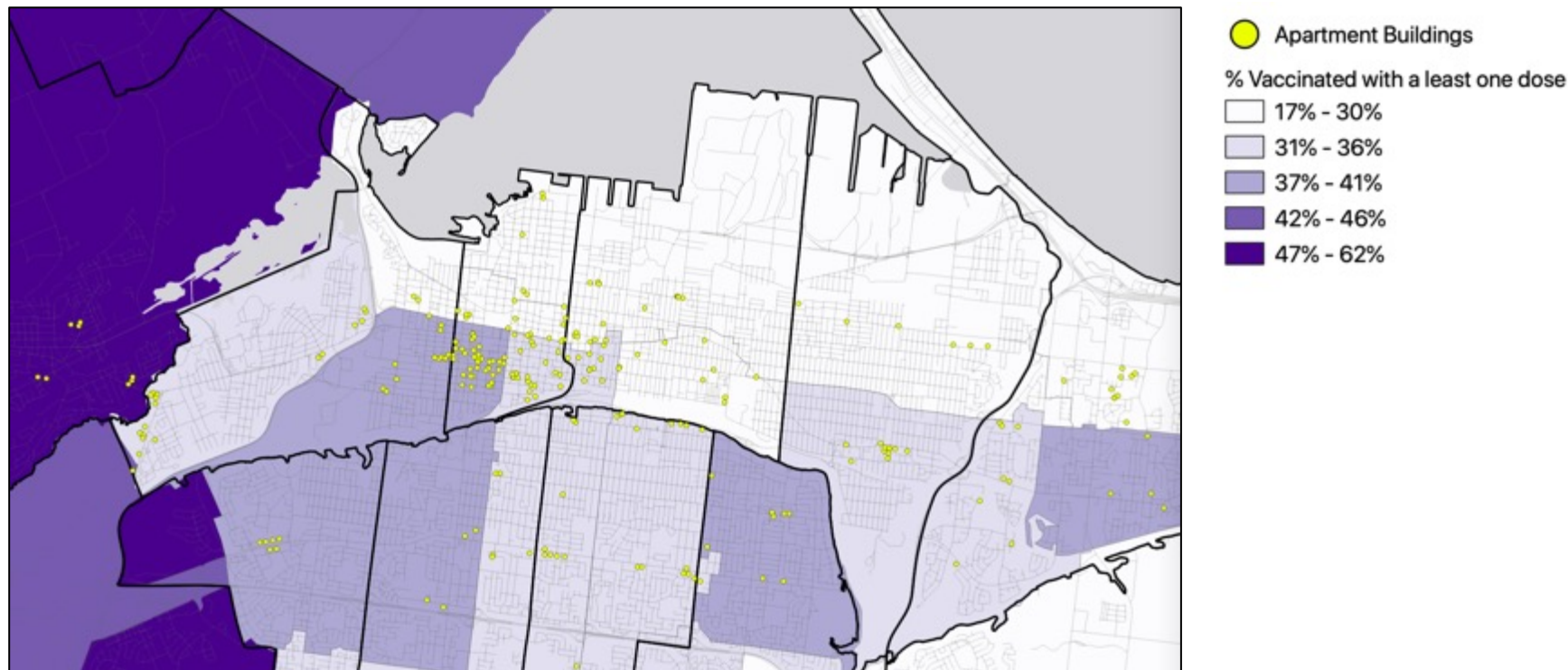
City of Hamilton Public Health (May 16, 2021): COVID-19 Incidence Rate per 100,000 by Census Tract.

Who is getting vaccinated? Who is getting left out?



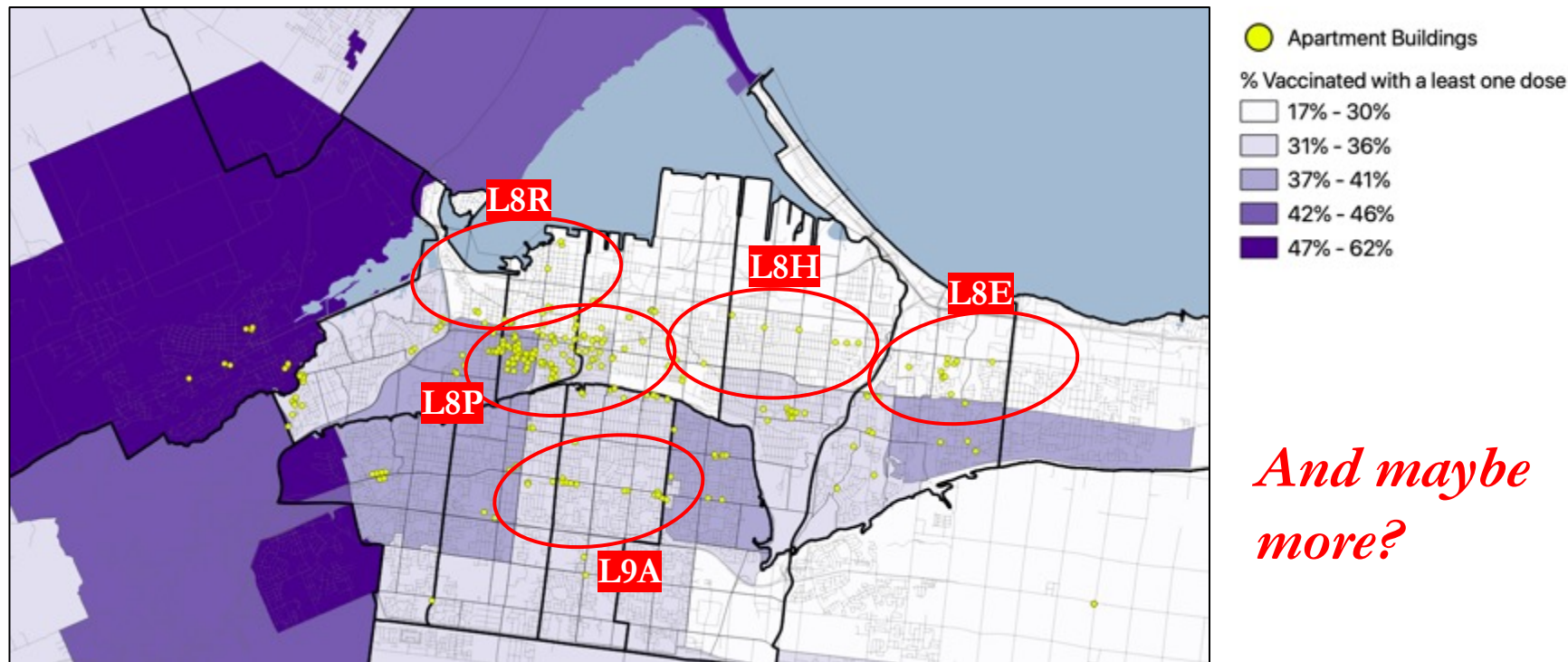
Shows percentage of Hamiltonians by postal code vaccinated with a least one dose (all ages) as of May 10, 2021, the most recent data available.
Data from Ontario's Institute for Clinical Evaluative Science's COVID-19 Dashboard.

Detail: Vaccination Rates and Apartment Buildings



Shows percentage of Hamiltonians by postal code vaccinated with a least one dose (all ages) as of May 10, 2021, the most recent data available.
Data from Ontario's Institute for Clinical Evaluative Science's COVID-19 Dashboard.

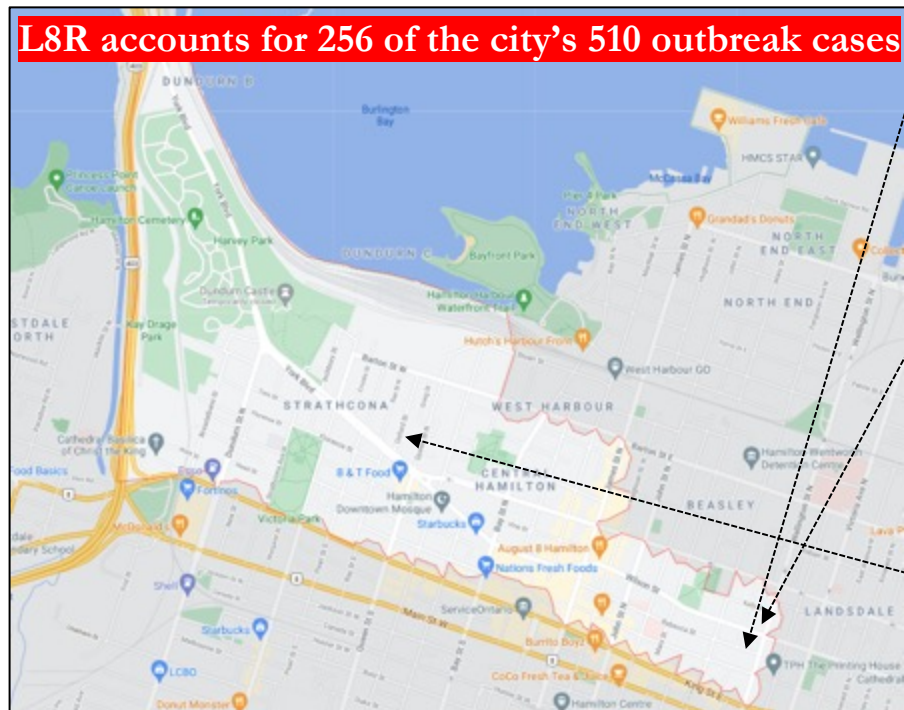
Where are future apartment outbreaks likely to occur?



And maybe more?

Shows percentage of Hamiltonians by postal code vaccinated with a least one dose (all ages) as of May 10, 2021, the most recent data available.
Data from Ontario's Institute for Clinical Evaluative Science's COVID-19 Dashboard.

Example: Postal code L8R



Google Maps, 2021.



235 Rebecca Street (164 units)
Medallion Corporation
Outbreak declared May 3, 2021
107 tenant cases (as of May 16, 2021)
65% of households infected to date
1 death



125 Wellington Street North (360 units)
Equiton Real Estate Investment Trust
Outbreak declared May 10, 2021
36 tenant cases (as of May 16, 2021)
10% of households infected to date
No deaths yet



151 Queen Street North (250 units)
Victoria Park Community Homes
Outbreak declared May 10, 2021
68 tenant cases (as of May 16, 2021)
27% of households infected to date
No deaths yet

City of Hamilton Public Health COVID-19 Outbreak Data, May 16, 2021.

What barriers do tenants currently face when accessing vaccines?

For tenants in general:

- ☐ May not be eligible yet (depending on postal code, age, type of job)
- ☐ Confusing booking process
- ☐ Working long shifts; do not have time to wait on hold for hours to get appointment; can't afford phone minutes
- ☐ Clinic locations may not be accessible for those who depend on transit
- ☐ Language barriers

For tenants in buildings with active outbreaks:

- ☐ Serious fear of leaving unit and passing through common areas of building (hallway, elevator, stairwell) to travel to get vaccine; breathing air + interacting with other people, both neighbours in building and wider Hamilton community en route to clinic and back
- ☐ Especially true for seniors, people with autoimmune diseases or other pre-existing health conditions, people with disabilities, parents of infants and young children, etc.

What actions can be taken ***now*** to save tenants' lives?

- ☐ **Be adaptable and responsive to the need.** Change the vaccination strategy to bring the vaccine to the working-class people who have been left behind and who need it most.
- ☐ Allocate money from the **\$45 million in emergency pandemic funding** from the province.
- ☐ Work with Primary Care Team to **deliver vaccines to apartment buildings** through pop-up on-site clinics and door-to-door, ***as a proactive measure to save lives***. Doctors and pharmacists are willing and able to do this, and have experience doing it in the shelter system and at long-term care homes.
- ☐ **Track case counts at apartment building addresses** to anticipate outbreaks. **Notify tenants early on.** Similar work has been done by St. Joseph's Hospital staff to track cases in shelters and other outbreak settings. St. Joseph's partners have offered to do the same for apartment buildings.
- ☐ **Work with tenants** to identify poor building conditions that might contribute to COVID transmission, rather than blaming tenant behaviour by default.



Pop-up clinics and door-to-door vaccination used in several Toronto neighbourhoods in April, 2021.

**For example:
3,140 vaccinations given in Jane & Finch neighbourhood in one weekend.**



Clockwise: #1, 3, 4: Yader Guzman, April 19, 2021, *The Local*. #2: Cole Burston, April 26, 2021, *The Guardian*.

We can do it in Hamilton, too. *We already have.*



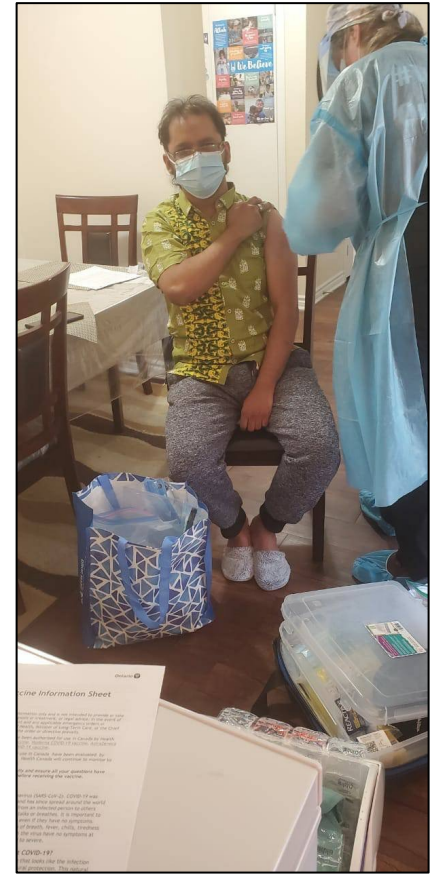
**Door-to-door on-site
vaccination clinic at Rebecca
Towers on Sunday, May 16, 2021
was a great success.**

28 tenants got their shots.

Pictures by author, used with permission of tenants.

“Today was a great and exciting day for me and my family living at Rebecca Towers. Despite having an outbreak in our building and my family contracted covid we can still see some lights around the corner. Raising demands finally brought Hamilton Public Health to provide vaccine at our door step. Me, my wife, and my mom all got our first shot. We are feeling safer now as we try to give good care to our newborn daughter. I especially thank the doctor and their team who did a tremendous job to fulfill our immunization demand and also Rebecca Towers Tenant Committee who has stood together to unite all tenants for their health safety and well being.”

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Appendix: Why is L8R not a host spot already? Come on!!!

| Postal Code | L8R | L9K | L8L | L8N | L8W | L9C |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Neighbourhoods Included | South Beasley, Central, Strathcona | Ancaster Meadowlands | North Beasley, North End, Landsdale, Gibson, Stipley, Crown Point West, Keith | Corktown, Stinson | Southeast Mountain | West Mountain |
| Designated by | ----- | City | City | City | Province | Province |
| COVID-19 cases, per 100 | 3.76 | 2.71 | 2.86 | 3.49 | 3.45 | 3.18 |
| Hospitalizations & deaths, per 1,000 | 3.24 | 1.55 | 2.44 | 2.89 | 2.07 | 1.62 |
| Test positivity rate | 22.34% | 9.48% | 5.41% | 8.38% | 8.18% | 6.16% |
| Vaccination rate | 27.65% | 47.42% | 29.32% | 34.30% | 36.16% | 41.61% |
| | | | | | | |
| Average household income | \$50,708 | \$138,335 | \$55,010 | \$51,129 | \$95,056 | \$87,539 |
| Percent of population below poverty line | 35% | 10% | 31% | 36% | 14% | 14% |
| Percent of population living in large apartment building | 48% | 0% | 10% | 48% | 1% | 9% |

COVID-19 postal code data from Ontario's Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences at the time L9K, L8L, L8N, L8W, & L9C were designated hot spots (April 3, 2021) vs. most recent data for L8R (May 8, 2021). Most recent vaccination rate given for all postal codes (May 10, 2021). Demographic data from Statistics Canada's 2016 Census.