



November 5, 2021

City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Members of General Issue Committee,

We at United Way Halton & Hamilton are members of the Just Recovery Coalition, and we send this letter of support and solidarity with our partners to underscore the importance of a Municipal Budget that supports a Just Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to engage on the 2022 Municipal Budget Process for the City of Hamilton.

We have all seen the effects of the pandemic over the course of the past 18 months, and we know that these effects have been felt most by our community members who are most vulnerable. As a community organization connected to over 63 social service programs in Hamilton, United Way is committed to supporting our neighbours in need. Mental health concerns, affordability and subsequently safe housing and access to food are issues that Hamiltonians are facing at increased levels right now, and this is especially true for those who are racialized, disabled, elderly, women, or otherwise marginalized. We support these community members through our funding, capacity building, and support of the social sector in Hamilton, yet we also support them by calling on you, City Council and General Issues Committee, to keep these vulnerable community members at the forefront as you determine the 2022 Budget.

The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 have transformed every aspect of our community and individual lives, and people who were already experiencing inequities, including poverty, homelessness and social isolation, have been disproportionately hurt by the pandemic. Marginalized people have required even more supports during this time. Their needs, along with the challenges of those pushed into crisis for the first time due to the pandemic, will require our attention now and, likely, much further into the future.

As we have shifted into recovery, we must carry the lessons of the pandemic with us to build a more equitable future. Therefore, we engage with you, our elected officials and all members of our community, to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable, and to plan for a just and equitable future. The City of Hamilton needs to keep those most impacted by the pandemic at the fore as it builds the 2022 budget, and focus on equity, environmental impacts, accessibility, affordability, and community wellbeing for all members of our community.

We look forward to connecting again in the later stages of the budget development process, and to continuing to work together to achieve an equitable recovery from the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. Eisenberger", written over a white background.

President and CEO