




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 13, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Youth Strategy Annual Update (CES15056(e)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION: N/A

INFORMATION:

In 2017, Council directed staff to formally disband the Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee in favour of creating a new engagement collaborative that included engaging youth regarding priorities in the City as well as identifying and implementing new methods to best engage with youth across the City.

The Children's and Community Services Division developed an engagement strategy using the City's Public Engagement Charter to inform this work. Aligning with best practices, a Youth Steering Committee was created to ensure youth provided input on engagement and shared in the co-creation of the strategy. A Project Manager of Strategic Youth Initiatives was hired to lead this work and began extensive engagement with youth, agency partners and parents.

Consultation with the Youth Steering Committee identified social media as a key tool in reaching youth. A dedicated Instagram channel @HamOntYouth was created in 2018 and is primarily used to promote all youth activities.

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In 2021, City staff reconvened the Youth Steering Committee to plan for a re-engagement strategy because the youth engagement work had been paused during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The purpose was to identify if the priorities found in 2018 were still relevant and/or update priorities as needed. Staff re-engaged with youth, parents and youth serving agency partners through focus groups and online surveys. The engagement collected information about what people love about Hamilton, how they like to get information as well as challenges faced by youth, parents, and agency partners. In total, 629 youth, parents, and agency partners participated in the process. This includes 74 youth serving agency partners that participated; of these agencies, more than 900 programs for youth 14-29 are offered across Hamilton. Services are provided to a range of different populations including LGBTQ2S+, Indigenous, Black, and Newcomer youth, and those needing mental health supports.

Following this engagement, an internal Staff Steering Committee was created which meets quarterly to plan and coordinate work relating to youth. The following provides a list of representation:

- City Manager's Office;
 - Intergovernmental Affairs and Community Engagement (Engage Hamilton, Equity and Inclusion)
 - Digital Innovation
 - Strategic Partnerships & Communications
 - Corporate Partnerships
- Healthy and Safe Communities
 - Children's and Community Service; (Community Safety and Well Being Plan, Indigenous Relations)
 - Hamilton Fire Department
 - Housing Services Division
 - Ontario Works Division
 - Public Health Services (Healthy Families, Epidemiology and Wellness)
 - Recreation Division
- Public Works (Transit)
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton Police Service; Community Mobilization Unit (Youth)
- Human Resources
- Planning and Economic Development
 - Workforce Development Strategy
 - Hamilton Business Centre
 - Tourism and Culture

In March 2022, Council approved the 2022-2027 City of Hamilton Youth Strategy (CES15056(d)). The Youth Strategy serves as the cornerstone of our youth engagement efforts in the city. It outlines a clear plan for incorporating youth voices into the strategic priorities. In addition, it ensures that youth perspectives remain integral

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throughout the ongoing process. At this time Council also endorsed @HamOntYouth as the official City brand for youth programming and services which is promoted for use as appropriate by all City departments.

The 2022-2027 Youth Strategy identified the following top five priority themes:

1. Accessing Mental Health Supports
2. Accessing Employment and Training
3. Enhanced Safety and a Sense of Inclusion
4. Enhance Youth Engagement and Leadership Opportunities
5. Access to safe and affordable Housing

To support this work, a governance model comprised of an internal City staff coordination table, youth-led steering committee, and broader system planning through the Child and Youth Network will continue to guide the strategy. More specifically, seven action items were identified across the priority themes and serve as the foundation for the implementation plan. The following table highlights progress made:

Action Item	Progress
<p>Continue with the development of the Youth Steering Committee to ensure that Youth engagement work is co-led by youth for youth.</p>	<p>The Youth Steering Committee now meets monthly with 36 members, an increase from 21 in 2022 Meetings are co-facilitated by rotating youth chairs. The goal is to organize five public events and the committee will launch a promotional campaign in the upcoming fall. The Youth Steering Committee has four working groups that meet as needed. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Team • Evaluation Team • HamOntYouth Summit Planning Team • Beach Clean Up Planning Team <p>City staff are welcome at monthly youth steering committee meetings, to collaborate with members, and collect feedback on effective youth engagement techniques. In 2022/2023, some examples of support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR - Summer Student Hiring - HSR (Re)Imagining the HSR Network - Housing – Youth Talk Back on Housing System - Community Safety and Well Being Plan - Building Safer Communities Fund - Youth Rec Week

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<p>Continue to build cross-departmental capacity within City Government for youth initiatives through an internal staff coordination table</p>	<p>The City Staff Steering Committee was created, to facilitate connections and partnerships across the corporation. This year, the Committee has finalized their Terms of Reference for 2022 – 2027. The committee has grown by three members and supports corporate wide youth initiatives. Most recently, the committee supported implementation of the first HamOntYouth Summit presented by RBC.</p>
<p>Launch a child and youth planning table to support system planning.</p>	<p>Staff completed an environmental scan across Ontario municipalities to learn about successful child and youth planning tables. As a result of this work, the Children’s and Community Services Division is launching the Child and Youth Network in the Fall of 2023. The purpose of this Network is to provide strategic advice and collectively respond to changes in the children and youth sector. This will impact and contribute to the goals of the Early Years Community Plan and Youth Strategy.</p>
<p>Continue to strengthen cross departmental work within the City of Hamilton to promote and build capacity for youth initiatives.</p>	<p>The Youth Team is comprised of the Xperience Annex, Learning Earning and Parenting Program (LEAP), Youth Engagers, and an Ontario Works Youth Case Manager. This team plays a crucial role in various aspects of the strategy, through an integrated model.</p> <p>Peer to peer support is offered through the role of the Youth Engagers. They are hired on six-month contracts to provide support to the Youth Team and Youth Strategy. Youth Engagers primarily engage with youth, attend community events, and create social media campaigns for youth-focused services and events. The Youth Engagers actively participate in all Youth Steering Committee Meetings and events. The Youth Engagers have been key contributors in the growth of Youth Steering Committee membership and the @HamOntYouth Instagram account growth of over 800 new followers. Since 2022 the youth engagers have grown the Instagram Account by over 1000 followers.</p>

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<p>Design an evaluation framework for the Youth Strategy</p>	<p>Staff are currently in the process of developing the evaluation framework to measure progress on the youth strategy. The Youth Steering Committee's input, which is included as Appendix "A" of Report (CES15056(e)), is a valuable contribution to this effort.</p> <p>Moving forward into year two, we will actively involve both the internal staff steering committee and the new agency partner steering committee. Their participation will ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded evaluation framework.</p> <p>Our goal is to present a finalized version of the evaluation framework for approval in the coming year. This timeline allows us to thoroughly review and incorporate feedback from all relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Complete an Annual Progress Report</p>	<p>Staff have been assigned to complete and bring forward an annual progress report to community partners and council. .</p>

As one of the most significant accomplishments this year, The City was proud to host its first annual HamOntYouth Summit presented by RBC. The event was hosted on June 3, 2023, at Mohawk College and was co-created with members of Hamilton’s Youth Steering Committee. Approximately 100 youth attended and 60 youth serving professionals. RBC sponsored the event and has committed funding for another youth summit in 2024. This summit was co-developed and organized as part of the work under the priority “Enhance Youth Engagement and Leadership”.

Youth participants had the opportunity to:

- Participate in youth-led workshops, covering topics such as financial literacy, sustainability, being future-ready, running for student government and how to pursue professional athletics.
- Engage in thoughtful discussions during a Model City Hall session.
- Listen to inspiring speakers who have made a significant impact in the community and beyond.
- Connect with local organizations, businesses and community groups that provide youth-focused resources across Hamilton.
- Network with other like-minded young people in the community.
- Experience musical performances and have the opportunity to win prizes in a giveaway draw.

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Morning sessions included a Model City Hall workshops facilitated by Youth where discussions occurred on the following:

- Barriers and Challenges to Accessing Employment and Training
- Barriers and Challenges to Accessing Mental Health and Addiction Supports
- Re-imagining the Hamilton Transit Network and Fare Policy

Youth input from the Model City Hall workshops was shared with the City staff youth steering committee in June 2023 to help inform work that each area is responsible for.

Evaluation of the summit is underway and will help inform the planning for 2024.

Next Steps

Staff continue to prioritize the seven action steps and are also now shifting their focus towards addressing the next steps identified within the 2022-2027 Youth Strategy Report within each of the five priority themes. They have initiated collaborations with other City staff and community partners to kick-start this important work.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report (CES15056(e)): Youth Strategy Evaluation Framework