



Hamilton

# OPTIONS FOR THE CITY OF HAMILTON'S BOARD OF HEALTH GOVERNANCE

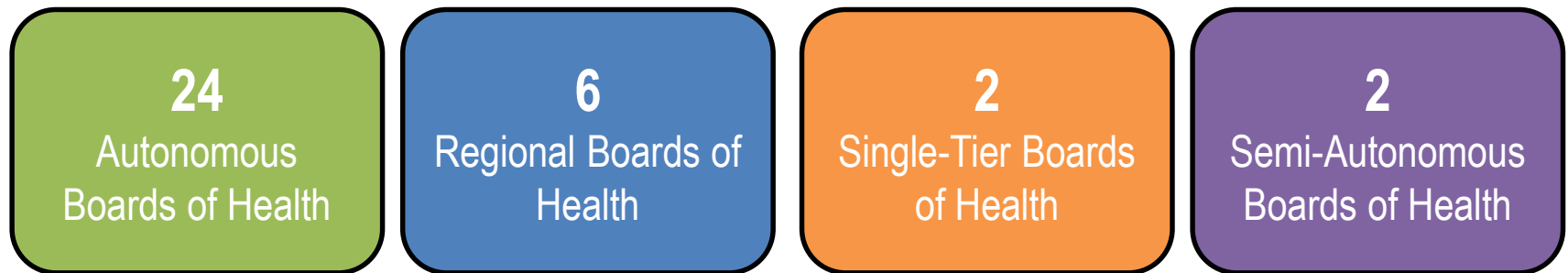
Governance Review Sub-Committee  
November 17, 2023

# Key Message

- There is substantial and widespread support to change the City of Hamilton's Board of Health to a semi-autonomous governance model that consists of six City Council members, six community representatives with health expertise and lived experience, and one education representative.

# Background

- Hamilton City Council operates and functions as the Board of Health, which is referred to as the “single-tier” governance model
- There are four different Board of Health governance models across Ontario, and each model both determines the Board’s composition and reflects how the public health unit is situated relative to the municipality, municipalities, or region



- Since 2006, public health governance in Hamilton has followed a two-step process:
  1. Public Health Standing Committee meets monthly to discuss public health programs and services
  2. Recommendations from these meetings are submitted to City Council, who, acting in the role as the Board of Health, decides whether to approve these recommendations
- Beginning in March 2021, delegations and correspondence were received in support of restructuring the Board of Health to include community representatives with health expertise and lived experience

# Consultation Overview

- Two City Council motions directed a consultation to identify issues and opportunities with the current Board of Health, and specified alternative models for consideration
- MASS LBP, an independent public policy firm with governance and consultation expertise, was contracted to lead the consultation, which included:
  - **A public survey** posted to the Engage Hamilton platform, which was promoted to residents through social media and digital advertisements
  - **Key informant interviews and meetings** with Advisory Committees, community partners, healthcare professionals, and City Council members
  - **A community-led public meeting** hosted by the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre and the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

# Consultation Participants

- **928 survey responses** to the Engage Hamilton survey
- **63 key informant interviews and meetings** with Advisory Committees, community partners, healthcare partners, previous delegates, and City Council members
- **Approximately 50 attendees at the community-led meeting** hosted by Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre and the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

# Consultation Participants

The following Advisory Committees, individuals, and organizations participated through group consultation and/or one-on-one meetings:

- Accessibility Hamilton Alliance
- ACORN Hamilton Chapter
- Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees\*
- Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- AIDS Network
- Canadian Mental Health Association – Hamilton
- Chamber of Commerce (Hamilton)
- Circle of Beads (Indigenous Consultation Circle)
- City Councillors
- Committee Against Racism
- Compass Community Health Centre
- De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre
- Delegates from McMaster University
- Former Medical Officers of Health
- Good Shepherd Hamilton
- Greater Hamilton Health Network
- Greater Hamilton Health Network - Health Equity Council
- Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre
- Hamilton Black Health Community Leaders Forum
- Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- Hamilton Trans Health Coalition
- Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre
- HamOntYouth Steering Committee
- Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee\*
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Advisory Committee\*
- McMaster Family Health Team & Department of Family Medicine
- Seniors Advisory Committee
- Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton
- St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton
- Thrive Group
- Women and Gender Equity Committee\*

\*denotes Advisory Committees where a meeting was not held and individual members participated in the consultation

# Alternative Governance Options

In addition to maintaining the current governance structure, the three alternative options explored in this consultation were:

1. **Adding an Advisory Committee to advise on issues directed to them by the current Public Health Standing Committee**, which would consist of community representatives with health expertise and lived experience and an education representative
2. **Changing the membership of the Public Health Standing Committee** to include City Council members, community representatives with health expertise and lived experience, and an education representative
3. **Changing the structure and membership of the Board of Health** so that it is partially (i.e., semi-autonomous) or fully (i.e., autonomous) separate from City Council, with membership that includes City Council members, community representatives with health expertise and lived experience, and an education representative



# Consultation Results

- The majority of consultation participants felt that **Option 3: Changing the Structure and Membership of the Board of Health** was the governance option most suitable for Hamilton
  - This transition to a semi-autonomous Board of Health will require changes to the *City of Hamilton Act, 1999* and potentially the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*
- Many interview and meeting participants suggested that **Option 2: Changing the membership of the Public Health Standing Committee** could be an interim solution, since these changes could be implemented by City Council and do not require any legislative changes

# Consultation Results

- Key informants provided other ideas to incorporate into the changed governance structures, including:
  - The need for a transparent selection process for the Public Health Standing Committee and/or Board of Health to ensure that membership had the necessary competencies, and that selection was based on best practices, skills, demographic data for representation, and community consultation
  - Membership training and education about public health concepts
  - Stronger Board collaboration, partnerships, accountability, and reporting

# Recommendations

- (a) **That Council approve, in principle, a semi-autonomous Board of Health governance structure with features similar to the City of Toronto and City of Ottawa;**
- (i) That Council direct staff to prepare and submit an application to the Province of Ontario for special legislation amending the *City of Hamilton Act, 1999* and the *Health Promotion and Protection Act* to authorize the City to implement a semi-autonomous Board of Health governance model, with features similar to the City of Toronto and City of Ottawa Board of Health governance structures; and,
- (ii) That Council direct staff to report back to the Public Health Committee, following approval of legislative changes with a plan to implement legislative changes and establish a semi-autonomous Board of Health for the City of Hamilton;

# Recommendations

- (b) **That as an interim solution until legal authorization is received to implement a semi-autonomous Board of Health governance model, a change be made to the membership of the Public Health Standing Committee to include six City Council members, six community representatives, and one education representative, using the City of Hamilton's existing selection processes, and that for the foregoing purposes staff be directed to report back to the Public Health Committee to:**
- (i) Prepare any amendments to the Procedure By-law that shall create a new Public Health Standing Committee, which By-law shall be drafted to become effective not earlier than the date on which the existing Public Health Standing Committee has been dissolved by the Mayor pursuant to section 284.8(1) of the *Municipal Act*; and,
  - (ii) Prepare for approval the qualifications and criteria for the selection of the community representatives to ensure that the Public Health Standing Committee members represent the community and have the necessary skills and competencies.

# Steps for Implementation

1. Initiate process to prepare an application to the Province for special legislation amending the *City of Hamilton Act, 1999* and the *Health Promotion and Protection Act* to authorize the implementation of a semi-autonomous Board of Health
2. For the purpose of implementing changes to the Public Health Standing Committee:
  - Develop qualifications and criteria for the selection of the community representatives and education representative to ensure Public Health Standing Committee members represent the community and have the necessary skills and competencies
  - Amend By-Law 21-021 (By-Law to Govern the Proceedings of Council and Committees of Council)
  - Amend Corporate Policy: Hamilton City Council – Appointment of Citizens to the City's Local Boards (if required)



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QUESTIONS?



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THANK YOU