



**REPORT TO EMERGENCY AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE,
MARCH 20TH 2025**

Tom Cooper, director, and Laura Cattari, senior policy analyst

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction prioritizes ongoing community engagement with a lens on equity and inclusion of individuals with lived experience of poverty. This approach ensures that many voices inform advocacy efforts, local solutions, and system change.

For the past 20 years, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has worked, and continues to work towards:

- Shifting public attitudes about poverty
- Encouraging local employers to adopt living wages
- Providing provincial and national leadership in profiling and promotion of living wage
- Advocating with the provincial government on comprehensive social assistance reform
- Encouraging the federal government to implement a national poverty strategy
- Advocating for affordable housing
- Sharing research



Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

HRP

20 years of championing change



Key Focus Areas	Deliverable	Status
Advocacy for Income Security and Basic Income	Organized 21 community screenings of HRPR-produced documentary 'A Human Picture' about the experience of Hamiltonians during the Basic Income Pilot	ongoing
	Facilitated National Basic Income Forum	May 2024 / ongoing
	Advocating for policy changes to improve the Personal Needs Allowance for RCF tenants & encourage community uptake on new Canada Disability Benefit	2025 project
	Conducted research with McMaster, Carleton & Toronto Metropolitan Universities on the Basic Income experience & lessons for Ontario's social assistance system	Report released July, 2024
	Collaboration with Red Cross & community partners on social prescribing project in Wards 2, 3, 4	2024, into 2025
	Presentations to legislative committees (including Standing Committee on Economic Affairs / Ontario Legislature) on need for income security reforms	January, 2025

Key Focus Areas	Deliverable	Status
Making Hamilton a Living Wage Community	Encouraged and supported adoption of Living Wage Policies within City of Hamilton & public sector institutions	ongoing
	Partnering with City of Hamilton's Economic Development Dept. to survey and educate local employers on benefit of Living Wages	ongoing
	Co-founded and ongoing collaboration with Ontario Living Wage Network to engage local private & public sector employers	ongoing
	With SPRC Hamilton & Ont. Living Wage Network recalculated Living Wage rate for Hamilton in 2024 (\$20.30/hr) with plans for an update in November 2025	ongoing
Addressing rental challenges, housing stability, tenant advocacy	Worked to improve conditions in Residential Care Facilities through collaboration with City, community partners and RCF residents	ongoing

Key Focus Areas	Deliverable	Status
Addressing rental challenges, housing stability, tenant advocacy	Collaborating with SPRC to update 2019 report on rental challenges in Hamilton	Plans for 2025
	Partnering through Extreme Heat Working Group to ensure vulnerable tenants have access to cooling solutions during extreme heat events	ongoing
Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan	Partnered in community engagement sessions to gather input on revision of CSWP	2024 / 2025
	Advocating for policy changes based on 2024 engagement including recommendations for income security, housing, transit	2025
	Leading a 'Shifting Attitudes' initiative with community partners to address polarization and income insecurity in Hamilton	2025

Key Focus Areas	Deliverable	Status
HRPR's 20 th anniversary of community	Launching communications refresh: Updated website, new anniversary logo, e-blasts & expanded social media	2025
	Publish a comprehensive 20 th anniversary report	Fall, 2025
	Community Summit on Poverty & Policy, featuring policymakers & lived experience experts to relaunch work of HRPR	Fall, 2025 (proposed)
	Volunteer Celebration Event to recognize contributions of HRPR members	Late Fall, 2025
	Partnering with national organization to develop long-term recommendations on income security	2025
	Leading a renewal of the Roundtable Membership & restructuring the table to ensure continued effectiveness	2025

Research on the Impacts of Income Security and Employment Policy

Not Back to Normal Social Assistance in Post-Pandemic Ontario



COVID Economic and Social Effects Study (CESES)
McMaster University

Redefining Futures:

The Role of Basic Income in Career and Educational Development in Ontario

With a Foreword by Guy Standing

Mohammad Ferdosi
Toronto Metropolitan University

Peter Graefe
McMaster University

Tom McDowell
Toronto Metropolitan University

Toronto Metropolitan University
Faculty of Arts
School of Public Policy and Democratic Innovation

Hamilton Roundtable
for Poverty Reduction

This year we are looking at the launch of a two-part report on Integrated Employment Services (IES) and participant experiences.

I am also excited to be working on a new and innovative approach to looking at how we can work towards the idea of income adequacy

Understanding the relationship between disability and income, and advocating for the Canada Disability Benefit has been an important part of our work.

Canada Disability Benefit Forum: Response to Draft Regulations



Monday October September 16th, 2024, from 4pm to 6pm
David Braley Health Sciences Centre, 100 Main St. E., Room 2032, Second Floor
(across from City Hall)

CONTRIBUTORS

Opinion | Getting Canada Disability Benefit regulations right is so important

Sept. 12, 2024 | 3 min read



Janet Rodriguez, a community organizer with Disability Without Poverty, speaks in July about the new Canad... ▾

By Laura Cattari and James Kemp

Laura Cattari is a senior policy analyst with the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. James Kemp is chair of the City of Hamilton's Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

A Paradigm Shift in Income Security

Working with Tracy Smith-Carrier Ph.D., M.S.W., OCT, RSW, Professor & Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The project explores what can be done with two principles:

- 1. The notion of “stackable benefits”, where all income is exempt and maximized to a given level such as the poverty line in Canada.
- 2. It utilizes existing benefits and programs so there is no increase in overhead to deliver the funding.

	Ontario Works	Works & Employment	With a New Exemption
Non-Taxable Income:			
OW	\$ 8,796.00	\$ 3,996.00	\$ 8,796.00
Subtotal Non-Taxable Income	\$ 8,796.00	\$ 3,996.00	\$ 8,796.00
Taxable Income:			
Earned Income	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Taxable Income	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Deductions			
(Federal Tax)			
(Provincial Tax)			
(CPP/EI Premiums)		\$ (705.00)	\$ (705.00)
Total Deductions	\$ -	\$ (705.00)	\$ (705.00)
After-Tax Income	\$ -	\$ 11,295.00	\$ 11,295.00
NET INCOME	\$ 8,796.00	\$ 15,291.00	\$ 20,091.00
Credits/Benefits:			
GST/HST Credit	\$ 340.00	\$ 495.12	\$ 519.00
Carbon Rebate	\$ 560.00	\$ 560.00	\$ 560.00
ACWB		\$ 759.00	\$ 759.00
Ontario Trillium Benefits			
Energy & Property Tax Credit	\$ 465.96	\$ 465.96	\$ 465.96
Sales Tax	\$ 360.00	\$ 360.00	\$ 360.00
Total Annual Credits	\$ 1,725.96	\$ 2,640.08	\$ 2,663.96
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 10,521.96	\$ 17,931.08	\$ 22,754.96
Percentage below MBM	61%	33%	15%





"Amazing speakers
and facilitation."

— FORUM SURVEY RESPONDENT



Basic Income Guarantee
Revenu de base garanti

May/Mai 2024 • Ottawa • CANADA



Basic Income Advocacy



A HUMAN PICTURE

A participatory exploration
of Ontario's Basic Income Pilot.

▶ 0:00 / 2:24





Working with the City:

Living Wage, Climate
Change Adaptation, Food
Security & Community
Safety and Wellbeing Plan

CONTRIBUTORS

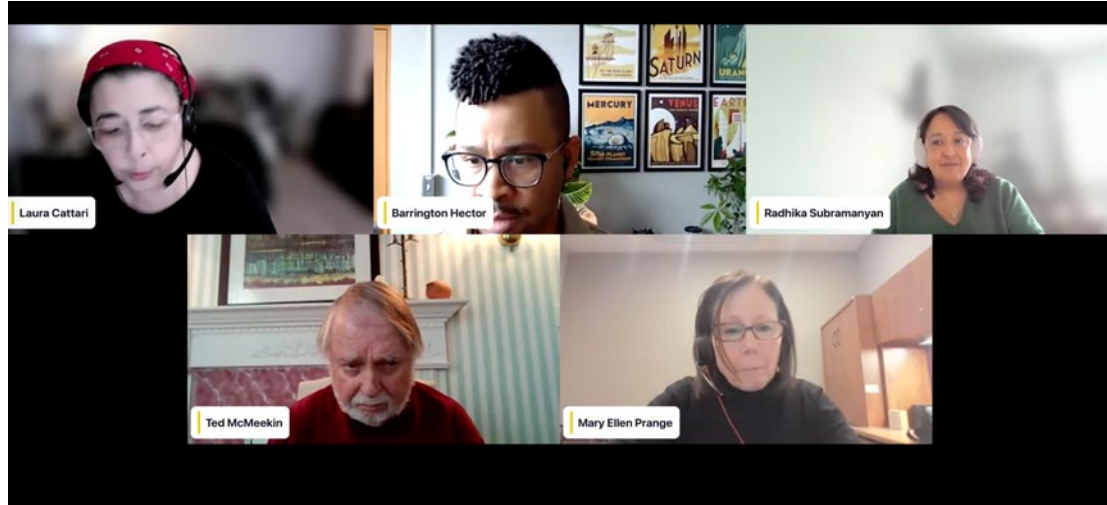
Opinion | Extreme heat's highest toll among vulnerable

Residential Tenancy Act needs revision to reflect today's reality — hot and getting hotter

July 12, 2020 | 3 min read

By Ali Naraghi , Tom Cooper

It's been a wickedly hot summer so far and it's likely to get even hotter in the



Lunch Hour Webinar Series

FOOD INSECURITY IN HAMILTON

Tuesday, January 21st, 2025 at Noon

Talking about Monitoring Food Affordability and Food Insecurity in Hamilton
with our **guest speaker**,

Mary Ellen Prange

RD MHSc, Public Health Dietitian, Hamilton's Healthy and Safe Communities,
Public Health Services - Healthy Environments

**What's
Next...**



Proposed 2025 ‘Unity’ Summit

Addressing Polarization & Building Solutions

- A city-wide summit to tackle the growing divide in attitudes toward poverty and homelessness.
- Focus on shifting narratives from division to collective action.

Engaging the Community & Decision-Makers

Driving Policy & Action

- Identifying practical, community-based solutions for poverty reduction and shifting attitudes towards poverty.

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