



City of Hamilton Report for Consideration

To: Chair and Members
General Issues Committee

Date: April 15, 2026

Report No: HSC26020

Subject/Title: Housing Focused Community Liaison Group

Ward(s) Affected: (City Wide)

Recommendations

- a) That the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee **BE DISSOLVED** and;
- b) That the Housing Services Division and the Housing Secretariat **BE DIRECTED** to continue community engagement through existing City-led community tables.

Key Facts

- At the February 2025 Council meeting, staff were directed to report back to the General Issues Committee on the further development of a community liaison group to replace the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, expanding their mandate to work to address the needs of residents within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes.
- The Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee was established in 2015 through report CES15053 with a mandate to support the implementation of the City of Hamilton's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.
- Since the establishment of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, the following additional groups have been created and remain active:
 - The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Planning Group, established in 2013 with updated Terms of Reference in 2018.
 - The Community Partnership Action Table (CPAT), established by the Housing Secretariat.
 - A new community research table as part of the Tenant Support Program, as approved in report HSC23023(b), established by the Housing Services Division.

Financial Considerations

In 2024, the approved budget(s) assigned to the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee was transferred to the Housing Secretariat Division to support Community Partnership Action Table.

There are no further financial considerations associated with this Report and its recommendations.

Background

In February 2025, the Volunteer Advisory Committee Review (report CM23025(b)) directed Housing Secretariat staff, in partnership with Housing Services Division staff, to report back to the General Issues Committee on the development of a community liaison group to replace the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee. This expanded the group's mandate to work to address the needs of residents within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes; and that the 2024 approved budget currently assigned to the Housing and Homelessness Committee be transferred to the Housing Secretariat Division to support this working group.

The Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee was established through Report CES15053 in November 2015. The full mandate of the group was to communicate and work to address the needs of citizens within the community for whom barriers exist to accessing safe, suitable, and affordable housing, including the supports needed to enable citizens to obtain and retain their homes, and; support the City of Hamilton's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan by providing information, advice, and recommendations to the Emergency & Community Services Committee regarding the Action Plan's successful and implementation.

Since establishing the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, the City of Hamilton has also renewed and updated the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Planning Group Terms of Reference, created the Community Partnership Action Table, and created the Community Research Table within the Tenant Support Program.

The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Planning Group has two core functions:

1. Working with the City of Hamilton Housing Services Divisions to guide the implementation and evaluation of the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan as written by the Planning Group and endorsed by Hamilton City Council.
2. Fulfil the required role of Community Advisory Board (CAB) for engagement and consultation as mandated by Provincial and Federal funding agreements.

The Community Partnership Action Table was established in 2024 as part of the Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap to seek input from community partners and individuals with life experience to identify housing needs and priorities.

On August 17, 2023, through the Hamilton Tenant Support Program, (Report HSC23023(b)), Council approved the creation of the Community Research Table with the direction to provide a vehicle for communication between the City of Hamilton, tenant advocacy organizations, tenant support service providers, and tenant support-related stakeholders. This table will be co-led by Housing Services Division staff and community partners and will allow the City of Hamilton and community to develop proposals for the creation of greater coordination and integration of tenant supports. This table will also plan and implement direct tenant engagement activities to ensure tenants can have input on future program changes.

Analysis

The Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee was established with the mandate to provide support and input on the implementation of the City's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and provide a vehicle for communication to the City for persons with lived experience. During the time which the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee was active the agendas were created by the committee with support from the staff liaison. The meetings regularly included presentations about current and planned investments in the affordable housing and homelessness serving sectors, and allowed for committee feedback on implementation plans of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.

The membership of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee included a diverse group of individuals and experiences. Members had lived and living experience, development experience, work experience in the sectors, and came from diverse backgrounds. Since the establishment of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee a number of additional tables have been created or enhanced through Council and staff direction. The whole of Hamilton approach to housing now includes three key community engagement tables (the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Planning Group, Community Partnership Action Table, Community Research Table) that all include mandates to have individuals with lived experience and also include a broad cross section of key stakeholders. Feedback and engagement with these three groups is then partnered with the City's internal policy development, and a framework for engagement with individuals with lived experience.

These existing tables all have integrated membership that includes individuals with lived experience as part of their terms of reference. The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Planning Group takes a high-level systems approach to the housing and homelessness system, whereas the Community Partnership Action Table and Community Research Table are working at a more tangible level of support of individuals who are currently impacted by the affordable and supportive housing system. These complimentary focuses support community feedback about how best to structure the engagement around housing and homelessness issues from the previous members of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee who provided feedback on the Community Liaison Group report.

It is staff's recommendation that a new Community Liaison Group related to housing at the City of Hamilton would be a duplication of effort and that the City should allow

existing groups and engagement practices to continue to operate with their current mandates. Through the existing groups and their inputs City Council would be informed of the feedback received through ongoing City reports that are informed by these tables. Through ongoing community engagement staff will be sure to include feedback in future reports. In keeping with the direction to report back on the formation of a community liaison group, these tables and alternative groups are already fulfilling that requirement by connecting the community with staff to provide feedback on initiatives, projects and plans. Staff can include these groups as part of the City's forthcoming Civic Engagement webpage with staff contact information and share information about the template community report as appropriate.

The existing tables and their mandates may fulfil the core requirements, mandate and goals of the Community Liaison Groups. Staff believe that creating a new housing focused Community Liaison Group would be a duplication of resources already functioning in the community.

Past members of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee were invited to share feedback on creating a Community Liaison Group or approaching engagement through the already existing tables. The feedback received from the past members supported the focus of engagement through existing tables with a focus on actionable support for those currently in rental housing or experiencing homelessness. The importance of including a variety of community voices into the existing engagement tables was highlighted by past members of the committee. In the consultation the group stressed the importance of having diverse voices and a balanced blend of committee members who work directly in housing or with those who are experiencing homelessness around the table with individuals with lived or living experience.

Alternatives

Create a Community Liaison Group, inviting members of these pre-existing groups to consult with and engage directly with the City on this development, including review the Community Partnership Action Table or Community Research Table to become the official Community Liaison Group for housing related matters and amend their existing Terms of Reference if required.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

1. Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods
 - 1.1. Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing and reduce chronic homelessness
The engagement being done by Housing Services Division and the Housing Secretariat are supporting this outcome. Through robust community dialogue these Divisions are working to implement their strategic plans to increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing and reduce chronic homelessness.
2. Responsiveness & Transparency
 - 2.1. Prioritize customer service and proactive communication

This approach will ensure that community members who are currently investing their time and talents to the existing committees time is honoured and they continue to have input on the strategic direction and implementation of whole of Hamilton housing strategies.

2.2. Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving

The acknowledgement of the existing engagement tables that are operating ensures that key stakeholders and voices in the community have opportunities to engage with staff on work being done, but also work to avoid burn out or volunteers and stakeholders.

Previous Reports Submitted

[Hamilton Tenant Support Program \(HSC23023\(b\)\)](#) August 17, 2023, Emergency & Community Services Committee

[Volunteer Advisory Committee Review \(CM23025\(b\)\)](#) February 26, 2025, General Issues Committee

Consultation

- City Clerk
- Communications and Engagement Division, City Manager's Office
- Housing Secretariat Division
- Members of the previous term of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee were invited to engage about this report in February 2026. A focus group was held Feb 10, 2026, with interested members of this former committee.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

N/A

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