

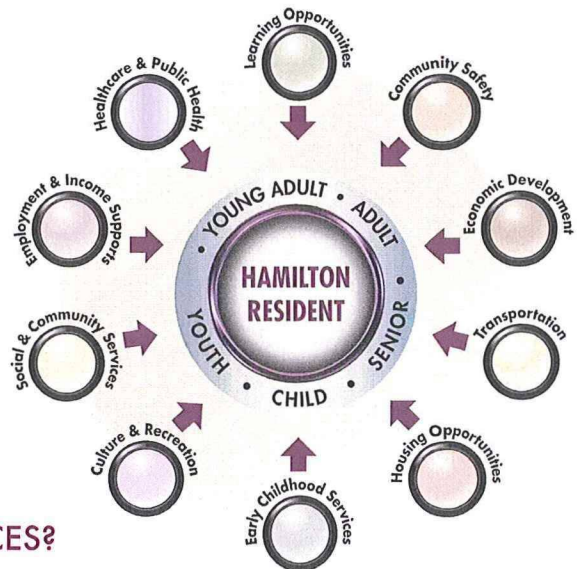
# Human Services Planning Initiative (HSPI) Fact Sheet



## WHAT ARE HUMAN SERVICES?

Human services are the services in the community that many people rely on. For a growing number of Canadians their community is also their safety net. Human services allow people to meet their full potential for their economic, social and health needs such as:

- Transportation
- Early childhood services
- Housing opportunities
- Culture and recreation
- Economic development
- Healthcare and public health
- Community safety
- Learning opportunities
- Social and community services
- Employment and income supports



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO INVEST IN HUMAN SERVICES?

Investing in human services ensures an active and vibrant quality of life for everyone in a community. Just as cities invest in and plan for their physical infrastructure such as roads, sewers and land use, it is equally important to invest and plan for our human services. Without this, a community cannot function well. Our challenge is determining what we have today and what we need to do to make sure that our current human services will support us now and into the future. While it's relatively easy to determine the current state (and cost) of a city's physical infrastructure, communities are just beginning to consider the realities of what the financial and human cost realities would be to plan for human services.

Municipalities alone are responsible for assessing, planning and providing physical infrastructure resources. In contrast, human services are delivered by multiple service providers, organizations and agencies across many sectors within communities.



## HAMILTON: A HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM IN CRISIS

Hamilton's current human services system is failing to meet the needs of all of its residents, particularly the most vulnerable. The Hamilton Spectator series, Code Red (2010), the The City of Hamilton Community Foundation 2011 Vital Signs report and the Hamilton Community Wellness report (January 2012) highlight important health, economic, education and social trends. The facts illustrate the clear connection between health and socio-economic status as well as the inequities that exist between groups across the City.

For example, in Hamilton:

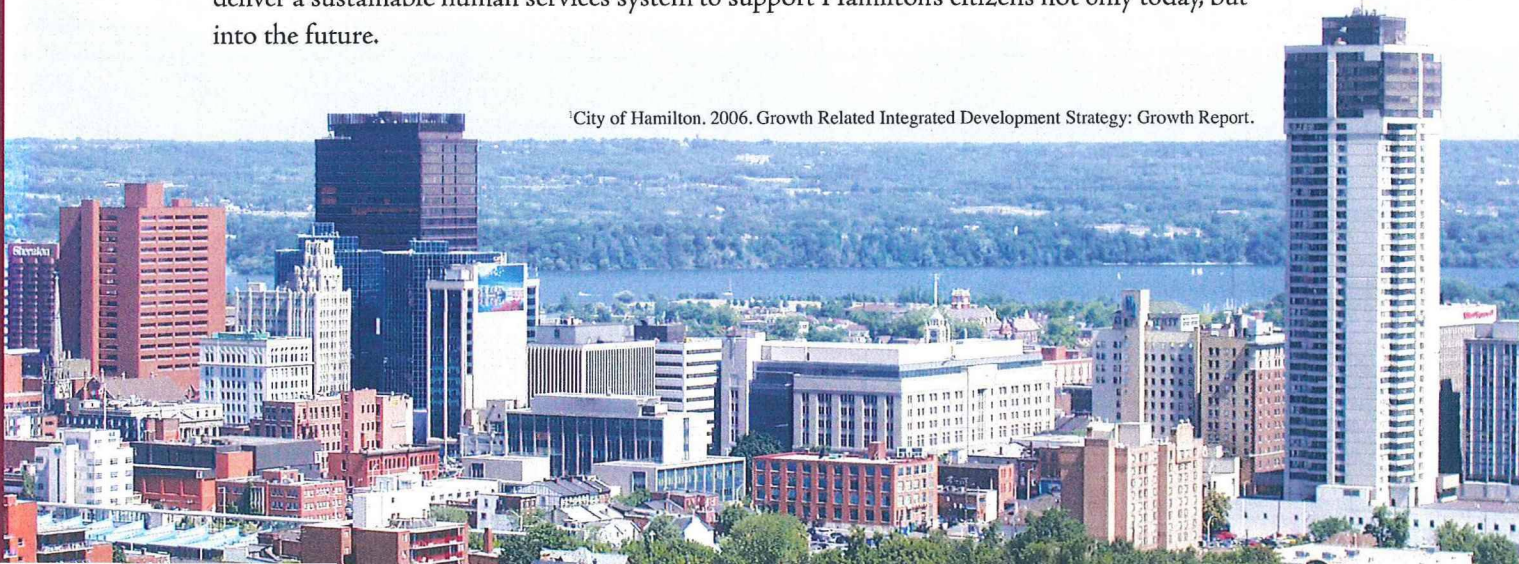
- There is a 21 year difference in life expectancy between Hamilton's wealthiest and poorest neighbourhoods (Code Red 2010)
- In January 2012 the Ontario Works caseload climbed to 13,829, up 96 cases (0.7%) from January 2011 (Hamilton Community Wellness report, January 2012)
- There are almost 100,000 people below the poverty line and more than 22,000 are children. (Code Red 2010)
- Over 20% of our population over age 20 have not graduated from high school. (Vital Signs 2011)
- Approximately 4,000 plus people are on a waiting list for social housing. (Vital Signs 2011)
- Approximately 1,115 children are waiting for child care fee subsidies (The City of Hamilton Community Foundation 2011 Vital Signs report)
- In Hamilton, there is a neighbourhood where nearly half of all babies are born underweight. (Code Red 2010)

The costs associated with having a human services system in crisis impacts all of the human service sectors and can be easily seen in the health care system, policing system, emergency rooms, in food bank line-ups and in homeless shelters.

## WHY DOES HAMILTON NEED A HUMAN SERVICES PLAN?

By 2031, the population of Hamilton is estimated to grow by approximately 150,000<sup>1</sup>, which will add additional pressures to our human services system. The goal of the Community Services Department is to partner with the community and develop a plan that will help us deliver a sustainable human services system to support Hamilton's citizens not only today, but into the future.

<sup>1</sup>City of Hamilton, 2006. Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy: Growth Report.



## WHAT WILL A HUMAN SERVICES PLAN DO FOR THE PEOPLE OF HAMILTON?

A Human Services Plan for Hamilton will ensure that we meet the needs of every citizen today and support our growing and diverse population into the future. **This is a call to action to do things differently.** It means promoting integrated and collaborative planning processes by sharing information, improving two-way communication and developing new partnerships between the organizations who provide human services and the people who use them.

### A Human Services Plan for Hamilton will also:

- Reduce gaps and lessen duplications in services
- Address the diverse and changing needs of our community (e.g. increasingly aging population)
- Ensure that all citizens' needs are met and no one 'falls through the cracks'
- Make better use of limited funds and resources
- Ensure that our service system can be sustained over time
- Advance our understanding of issues facing the human services system

## WHO IS DEVELOPING THE HUMAN SERVICES PLAN AND HOW?

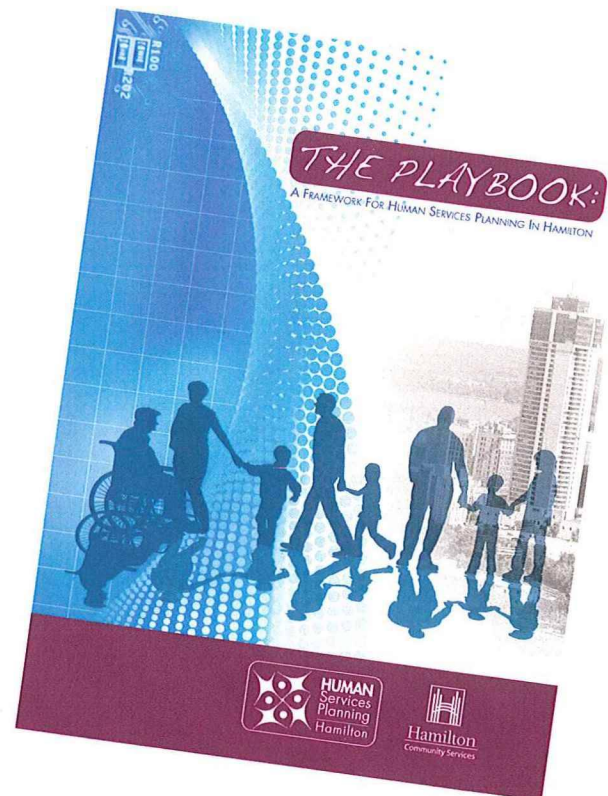
While the City of Hamilton's Community Services Department is taking a lead role in the development of the Plan, the City does not own it. Shared ownership, ongoing collaboration and information sharing with our community partners are critical to the successful development and delivery of the Human Services Plan.

### A Win-Win for Hamilton to plan collaboratively

To develop a human services plan that reflects the needs of our citizens, the City of Hamilton and every service provider needs to work together to find service system solutions. Unless we have all the players at the table, (e.g. healthcare, education, community safety), the big picture will be lost and only partial and sometimes costly solutions will be found.

### The Playbook: A Framework for Human Services Planning

This "how-to guide" outlines the key elements that make for good planning and uses the metaphor of a sports playbook to help stakeholders understand their role in the community as team players. It identifies the planning principles necessary to achieve successful collaboration and integrated planning.



## EXAMPLES OF HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING IN ACTION

### Community Referral Emergency Medical Services (CREMS)

In 2010, Hamilton's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staff used human services planning principles to develop a new way to connect patients with community based healthcare services. The CREMS initiative has been able to reduce the number of repeat paramedic calls by the same patients for often preventable, low-acuity incidents as well as EMS paramedic calls overall. Frequent low-acuity calls often result in situations where no ambulances are available to respond to other emergencies. This collaborative approach is a more sustainable and effective solution to reducing emergency room pressures when compared to the costs associated with purchasing new and additional ambulance services.



### Age Friendly City

Age-Friendly Cities are communities where the policies, services, and structures support and enable older people to "age actively". Guided by human services planning principles, staff will continue to collaborate with Hamilton's Council on Aging to develop a community collaborative to increase Age Friendly City objectives in our community.

### Neighbourhood Strategy

The Neighbourhood Development Strategy is focused on helping neighbourhoods to be great places to live, work, play and learn. To do that, the City of Hamilton is working with community partners, neighbourhood groups and residents to develop action plans to build healthier communities. Guided by human services planning principles, staff will work with residents, public, private and non-profit partners to ensure that implementation of neighbourhood action plans occur in an integrated manner.

For more information, please visit  
[www.hamilton.ca/humanservicesplan](http://www.hamilton.ca/humanservicesplan) or call:

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