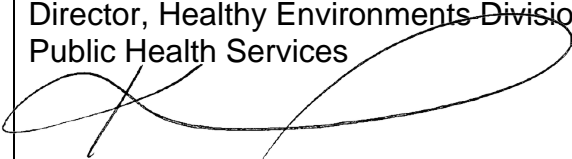




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
DATE:	May 9, 2025
SUBJECT:	Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City (Wards 2, 3, & 4)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Wards 2, 3, & 4
SUBMITTED BY:	Kevin McDonald Director, Healthy Environments Division Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this Communication Update is to inform the Mayor and members of the Board of Health that the report back date for the earlier Public Health Sub-Committee and Board of Health Council approved motion, included herein as Appendix “A” to Communication Update – Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City, has been revised to Q3 2025 to afford the necessary due diligence and time required to identify and secure a third-party vendor in compliance with the City of Hamilton’s corporate Procurement Bylaw.

At its March 17, 2025 meeting, the Public Health Sub-Committee approved the motion included herein as Appendix “A” to Board of Health Communication Update – Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City.

Subsequent to the March 26, 2025 Board of Health and Council ratification of the Public Health Sub-Committee Minutes of March 17, 2025, Public Health Services’ staff commenced the work identified in the motion, namely consulting with the applicable corporate Vendor Roster Captains and with corporate Procurement staff towards identifying and securing a third-party vendor to execute the directions detailed in the approved motion.

A report back date to the Public Health Sub-Committee of Q2 2025 was initially identified, however further time is required to perform the necessary due diligence to ensure that an appropriate and capable vendor is identified for this project.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

SUBJECT: Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City (Wards 2, 3, & 4) - Page 2 of 2

Questions or concerns about the revised report back date can be directed to Kevin McDonald, Director, Healthy Environments Division via phone at (905) 961-4886 or email at Kevin.McDonald@hamilton.ca.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Board of Health Communication Update (2025-05-09): Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City

AMENDED MOTION

Public Health Sub-Committee Minutes PHSC 25-003

March 17, 2025

9.1 Public Health Impacts of Black Soot Residue in the Lower City

(Hwang/Nann)

WHEREAS, Wards 3 and 4 residents have raised concerns about their mental and physiological health due to black soot residue deposits on their residential properties; and on city properties, facilities and assets such as local parks and play structures;

WHEREAS, children and pets are coming in contact with this black soot residue when playing outside, putting them at risk of exposure through inhalation, absorption, and ingestion, and acting as vectors by inadvertently bringing the residue indoors;

WHEREAS, the black soot residue is affecting residents' enjoyment of their properties because they must clean their outdoor furniture before every use, keep their windows closed at all times to prevent the residue from entering their homes, and clean indoor surfaces like carpets, window sills and counters when the residue gets inside;

WHEREAS, the black soot residue is affecting residents' enjoyment of City properties and assets;

WHEREAS, the residents of Hamilton reported the black soot residue to the environmental pollution regulator (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)), who in turn, in some cases, took samples of the residue and tested these;

WHEREAS, Wards 3 and 4 are receiving an increasing number of complaints, therefore referring an increasing number of complaints to MECP, but with no improvement to quality of life for residents nor indication from MECP that they are addressing the issue, and this gap in MECP's response to the issue is why we need Public Health to intervene;

WHEREAS, soot is usually black carbon. It is a component of fine particulate air pollution (PM_{2.5}). It comes from the incomplete combustion of wood and fossil fuels (a process that also creates carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), and volatile organic compounds). Black carbon warms the atmosphere because it is very good at absorbing light. It warms the air and surfaces in regions where it is concentrated and can cause weather patterns and ecosystem cycles to change. Even though black carbon can stay in the atmosphere from days to weeks, it has significant direct and indirect impacts

on the climate, snow and ice, agriculture, and human health;

WHEREAS, according to Health Canada, fine particulate matter is associated with negative health outcomes, including eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, decreased lung function, and aggravated lung and heart conditions, and according to a 2024 study of airborne nanoparticles in Toronto and Montreal by Marshall Lloyd et al., "long-term exposure to outdoor ultrafine particles was associated with increased risk of mortality";

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has no regulatory authority over pollution but does have a public health responsibility; and

WHEREAS, investigating and addressing, within municipal jurisdiction, the health impacts of this black soot residue aligns with this Term of Council's priority 2 of "Safe and Thriving Neighbourhoods," including vibrant parks, recreation, and public spaces.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That Public Health Services' staff be directed to work with a third-party vendor to develop a feasibility study with options to perform particulate matter (black soot) residue sampling and testing in Wards 2, 3 and 4 in the city of Hamilton, and report back to the Public Health Sub-Committee in Q2 2025;
- (b) That all costs associated with the development of the feasibility study outlined in recommendation (a), be funded equally from the Ward 3 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309300 (\$5,000) and the Ward 4 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309400 (\$5,000); at an upset limit, including contingency, not to exceed \$10,000; and
- (c) That the Director, Healthy Environments Division, Public Health Services, or designate, be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

(Nann/Joseph)

- (a) That subsection (a) and (b) ***be amended*** to read as follows:

- (a) That Public Health Services' staff be directed to work with a third-party vendor to develop a feasibility study with options to perform particulate matter (black soot) residue sampling and testing in Wards **2**, 3 and 4 in the city of Hamilton, ***including recommendations for a community engagement strategy to assess lived impacts and inform the development of a***

response plan, and report back to the Public Health Sub-Committee in Q2 2025;

- (b) That all costs associated with the development of the feasibility study outlined in recommendation (a), be funded equally from the **Ward 2 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309200 (\$5,000)**, Ward 3 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309300 (\$5,000) and the Ward 4 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309400 (\$5,000); at an upset limit, including contingency, not to exceed ~~\$10,000~~ **\$15,000**; and

CARRIED

The Main Motion, **As Amended**, reads as follows:

- (a) That Public Health Services' staff be directed to work with a third-party vendor to develop a feasibility study with options to perform particulate matter (black soot) residue sampling and testing in Wards **2**, 3 and 4 in the city of Hamilton, **including recommendations for a community engagement strategy to assess lived impacts and inform the development of a response plan**, and report back to the Public Health Sub-Committee in Q2 2025;
- (b) That all costs associated with the development of the feasibility study outlined in recommendation (a), be funded equally from the **Ward 2 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309200 (\$5,000)**, Ward 3 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309300 (\$5,000) and the Ward 4 Capital Discretionary Account #3302309400 (\$5,000); at an upset limit, including contingency, not to exceed ~~\$10,000~~ **\$15,000**; and
- (c) That the Director, Healthy Environments Division, Public Health Services, or designate, be authorized and directed to execute any required agreement(s) and ancillary documents, with such terms and conditions in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Main Motion as Amended, CARRIED