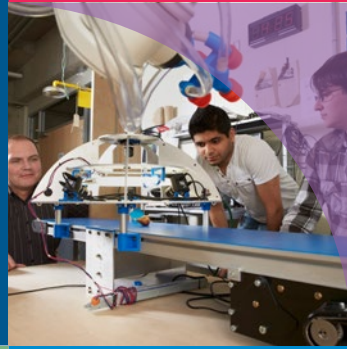
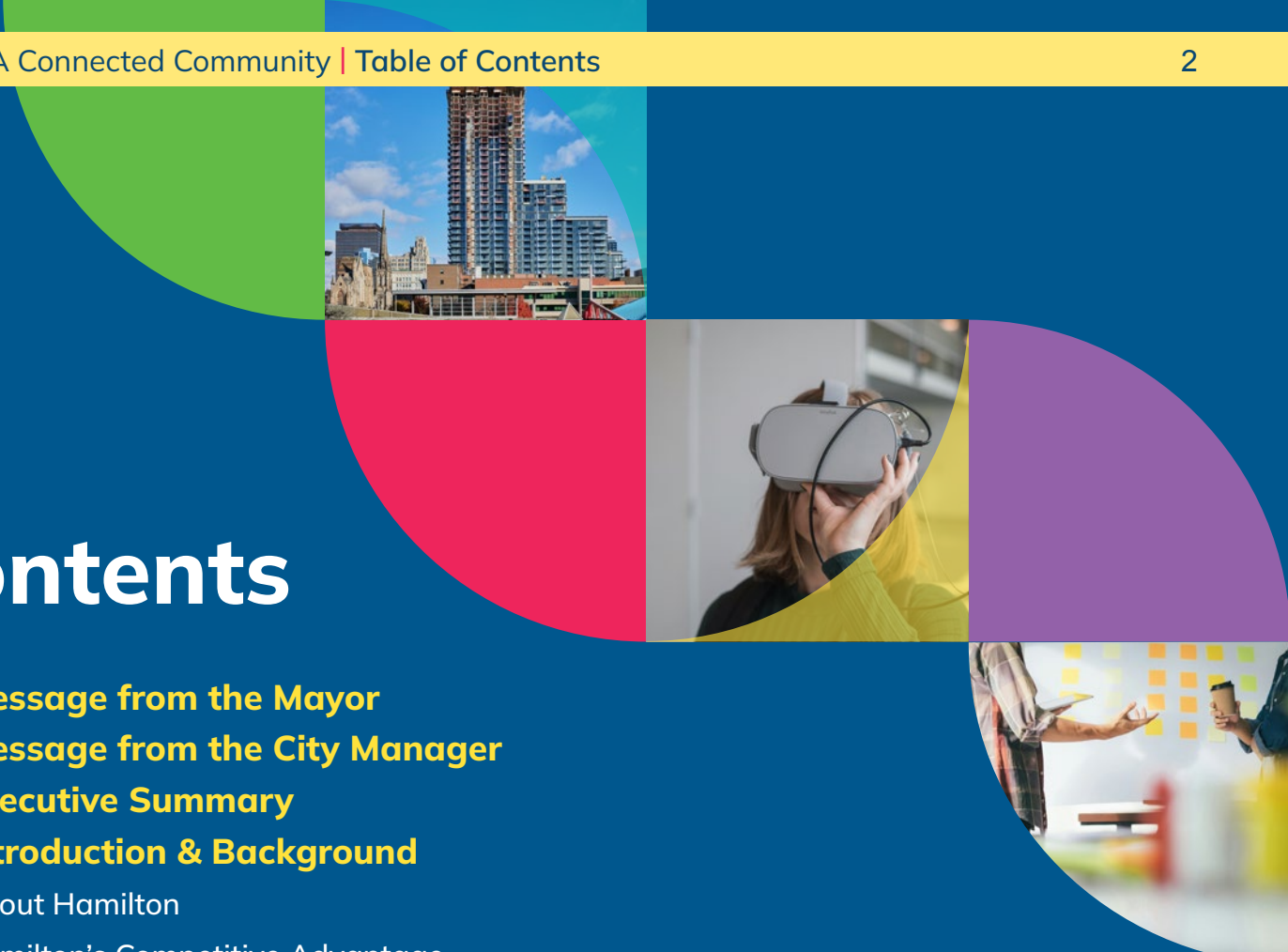


Hamilton: A Connected Community

October 2025



Hamilton



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Message from the Mayor



Mayor
Andrea Horwath

Dear Hamiltonians,

We are proud to present Hamilton's Connected Communities Strategy, a transformative blueprint that reflects our city's vision for a sustainable, inclusive, and innovative future. Hamilton has long been a city of resilience and progress, evolving from its industrial roots to embrace a new identity as a hub for technology, education, and community development.

This strategy is built upon three foundational pillars: Physical Connectivity, Digital Connectivity and Social Connectivity. Each pillar is supported by key initiatives designed to address the critical needs of our city, from climate action and digital equity to enhanced mobility and workforce training. Together, these efforts will ensure Hamilton remains competitive, connected, and adaptable in an increasingly complex world.

Collaboration has been at the heart of developing this strategy. We extend our deepest thanks to the dedicated City staff and community partners who contributed their expertise, insights, and passion. Your involvement has ensured this plan is not only visionary but grounded in the lived experiences of Hamiltonians.

As we implement these initiatives, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering an inclusive city where technology enhances quality of life, economic opportunities are accessible to all, and sustainability is a shared priority. This strategy is not just a plan - it is a promise to create a city where everyone can thrive, for generations to come.

We invite you to join us on this journey. Together, let's build a Hamilton that leads by example as a Connected Community—one that thrives through innovation, equity, and collective action.

Message from the City Manager



Marnie Cluckie
City Manager

To the Residents of Hamilton,

The Hamilton Connected Communities Strategy is a bold step toward transforming how we deliver services, drive economic growth, and strengthen connections across our communities. It is a commitment to modernizing our city in ways that are efficient, forward-thinking, and accessible to all.

At the heart of this strategy is a commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA). By embedding equity and accessibility into digital transformation, mobility planning, and economic development, we are ensuring that Hamilton is not just a smarter city but also a more inclusive and equitable one. Every resident, regardless of background, identity, or ability, should be able to fully participate in and benefit from Hamilton's progress.

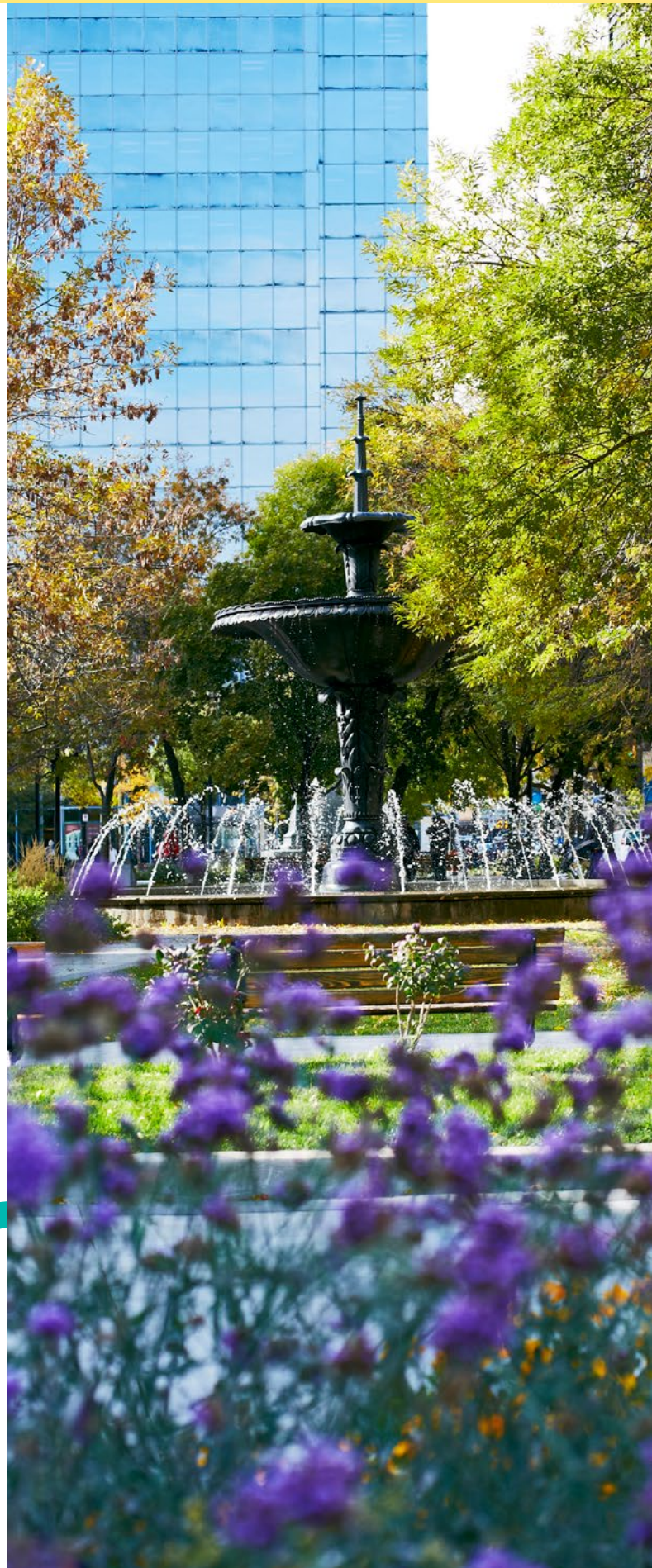
Equally important is our dedication to Transparency and Accountability. Residents deserve a clear, open, and responsive government that ensures public investments are made responsibly and in alignment with community needs. This strategy reflects Hamilton's commitment to decision-making, public engagement, and measurable progress. Success will require collaboration across City departments, community organizations, businesses, and residents.

This strategy is more than a document — it is a framework for action, with clear steps, shared responsibilities, and measurable outcomes that will guide our progress. By working together and staying accountable, we will turn this vision into real improvements that residents can see and feel in their daily lives.

Executive Summary

Hamilton is at a defining moment in its growth, evolving from a manufacturing powerhouse into a diverse, future-focused city. Strategically located 70 kilometers southwest of Toronto and close to the U.S. border, Hamilton is an essential hub for trade, transportation, and economic activity. With all four major transportation modes: road, rail, air, and port within its boundaries, the city plays a vital role in national and global supply chains. Supported by top-tier post-secondary institutions, a highly skilled workforce, and investments in digital infrastructure and innovation, Hamilton is well-positioned as a prime destination for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs.

The **Hamilton Connected Communities Strategy** is a bold initiative designed to enhance physical, digital, and social connectivity across the city. This strategy aligns closely with **Hamilton's Strategic Plan** and **City Council's** priorities. It supports residents, businesses, and community partners by improving infrastructure, expanding digital services, and fostering a strong and healthy community that drive economic and social success.



The Pillars of Connectivity

The strategy is structured around three key pillars that enable economic and community growth:



Physical Connectivity

Investing in transit, smart mobility, and resilient infrastructure to support efficient movement of people and goods.



Digital Connectivity

Expanding broadband access, promoting open data, enhancing digital services, and leveraging technology to create a competitive digital economy.



Social Connectivity

Strengthening partnerships, fostering inclusive economic development, and ensuring equitable access to resources that benefit all residents and businesses.

A Vision for the Future

The Connected Communities Strategy envisions an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative Hamilton, where physical, digital, and social connectivity work together to create opportunity, strengthen resilience, and empower every resident, business, and community partner to thrive. By integrating people, infrastructure and technology, Hamilton is ensuring a future-ready city that fosters economic competitiveness, social equity, and environmental responsibility.

A Call to Action

This strategy is more than a roadmap it's a call to action for businesses, institutions, community partners, and residents to collaborate in building a city that is innovative, sustainable, and more inclusive. Now is the time to work together, innovate, and build a Hamilton where connectivity fuels progress and everyone has a role in shaping what comes next.

Introduction & Background

About Hamilton

Hamilton is a city in motion. Located at the heart of Canada's Golden Horseshoe, it has evolved from a manufacturing and steel powerhouse into a diversified, forward-looking city. With a population of 581,722 (2021 Census), Hamilton is the third-largest metropolitan area in Ontario and a key driver of regional economic activity.

Today, Hamilton is recognized for its strong knowledge economy, life sciences sector, and technology-driven growth, underpinned by world-class institutions like McMaster University, and Mohawk College. The city continues to expand broadband access, integrate smart mobility solutions, and enhance digital services, making connectivity a key focus of its development.

This transformation is no accident. It is the result of deliberate planning, forward-thinking investments, and a commitment to innovation. Now, Hamilton is taking the next step forward with the Connected Communities Strategy—a blueprint for ensuring seamless physical, digital, and social connectivity to enhance economic competitiveness, quality of life, and long-term resilience.



Hamilton's Competitive Advantage

Hamilton has a strong foundation for economic success, with a resilient business environment that continues to attract investment, create opportunities, and drive sustainable growth.

- **Strategic Location** – Positioned in the heart of Canada's most densely populated and economically advanced region, offering direct access to U.S. markets.
- **Transportation Hub** – One of the few Canadian cities with all four major modes of transportation—road, rail, air, and port—within its boundaries, ensuring efficient trade and business connectivity.
- **Strong Economic Momentum** – A diversified economy, multi-billion-dollar development projects, and leading sectors in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and technology.
- **Innovation & Digital Transformation** – Once rooted in steel manufacturing and textiles, Hamilton has evolved into a hub for advanced, technology-driven industries.
- **Growing Workforce & Talent Pipeline** – Home to top-ranked institutions like McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University, ensuring access to skilled professionals and future industry leaders.

The Connected Communities Strategy builds on these strengths by fostering collaboration, improving connectivity, and supporting long-term growth.



Why a Connected Communities Strategy?

A Connected Community extends beyond the technology-driven “smart city” concept, prioritizing people and their needs. While a smart city uses technology and data to optimize infrastructure and services, a Connected Community ensures that technology serves as a tool to foster inclusion, spark innovation, and deepen engagement.

The Connected Communities Strategy builds on consultations that shaped major City strategies such as the Economic Development Action Plan, Digital Strategy, and Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Drawing on this collective input ensures the Strategy reflects community priorities and strengthens transparency.

The Strategy is built on three key elements:

1. **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA):** Hamilton is committed to removing barriers so every resident, regardless of background or ability, can participate in the city’s progress. This is reflected in accessible spaces, efforts to bridge the digital divide, and partnerships that reduce barriers for underrepresented groups.
2. **Public Engagement:** A Connected Community listens and responds to residents. Hamilton is expanding dialogue through culturally responsive consultations and digital platforms, ensuring every voice can shape policies, projects, and services.
3. **Transparency and Accountability:** Hamilton embraces transparency and accountability as cornerstones of good governance. Guided by the Mayor’s Task Force on Accountability, Transparency, and Responsiveness, the City is committed to clear communication, data-driven decision-making, and measurable outcomes.

A truly Connected Hamilton is one where every resident feels empowered, every voice is heard, and opportunities are accessible to all. By prioritizing inclusion, engagement, and transparency, we are creating a city that works for everyone.

Hamilton's Vision & Framework of Connectivity

Hamilton envisions an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative city where physical, digital, and social connectivity work together to create opportunity, strengthen resilience, and empower every resident, business, and community partner to thrive.

To achieve this vision, the Connected Communities Strategy is built on three interconnected pillars that form the foundation for a more connected, accessible, and forward-thinking city:



Physical Connectivity Infrastructure

Physical connectivity refers to the infrastructure that connects people, goods, and services across Hamilton. This includes transportation networks, parks, utilities, and the built environment. It ensures residents can move easily, access essential services, and enjoy public spaces that enhance their quality of life.

Digital Connectivity - Technology

Digital connectivity focuses on technology and digital infrastructure, enabling seamless access to information, services, and opportunities online. By bridging the digital divide, Hamilton can ensure equitable access to high-speed internet, smart city tools, and digital public services for all residents and businesses.

Social Connectivity - People

Social connectivity focuses on fostering relationships, inclusivity, and collaboration to build a sense of community and shared purpose. It emphasizes growing the economy by attracting, training, and retaining talent, creating spaces for innovation and creative thinking, and ensuring residents' health and well-being.

Interaction and Synergy

These three pillars: physical, digital, and social connectivity, are interdependent, working together to create a unified, thriving city. Infrastructure supports technology, technology enhances community engagement, and engaged communities shape a sustainable, forward-looking city. By integrating these elements, Hamilton is shaping a city where people, technology, and infrastructure work seamlessly to support a stronger, more connected future.

The Connected Communities Strategy is more than a plan—it's a call to action for businesses, institutions, community partners, and residents to collaborate in building a city that is innovative, sustainable, and more inclusive. The success of this strategy depends on partnerships and shared ideas. How can we better integrate physical, digital, and social connectivity to create a city where infrastructure is sustainable, technology enhances daily life, and communities are empowered to grow and succeed?

Now is the time to think big and work together. Whether through new business ventures, technology advancements, or stronger community networks, every contribution helps shape Hamilton's future. Let's build a city where connectivity fuels progress, and everyone has a role in shaping what comes next.





Strategic Pillar 1

Physical Connectivity

A city is only as strong as the infrastructure that moves it forward. Hamilton's Physical Connectivity pillar ensures that roads, transit, green spaces, and essential utilities are built for a resilient, growing, and sustainable future.

Hamilton's physical infrastructure is the foundation of a thriving, accessible, and sustainable city. With a diverse landscape that includes urban centers, suburban neighborhoods, and rural communities spanning over 1,100 square kilometers, Hamilton faces unique challenges and opportunities in ensuring seamless connectivity for residents, businesses, and industries.

As Hamilton evolves from its industrial roots into a modern, forward-looking city, investments in smart mobility, resilient infrastructure, and sustainable development are essential. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) is also central to creating a connected city, ensuring equal access to transit, public spaces, and services for everyone, regardless of ability or background.

Hamilton is building a city that is not only economically competitive but also livable and inclusive. Whether through better transit, improved roadways, or expanded cycling and pedestrian networks, Physical Connectivity ensures that Hamilton remains a city where movement is easy, access is equitable, and growth is well-planned.

Focus Area 1

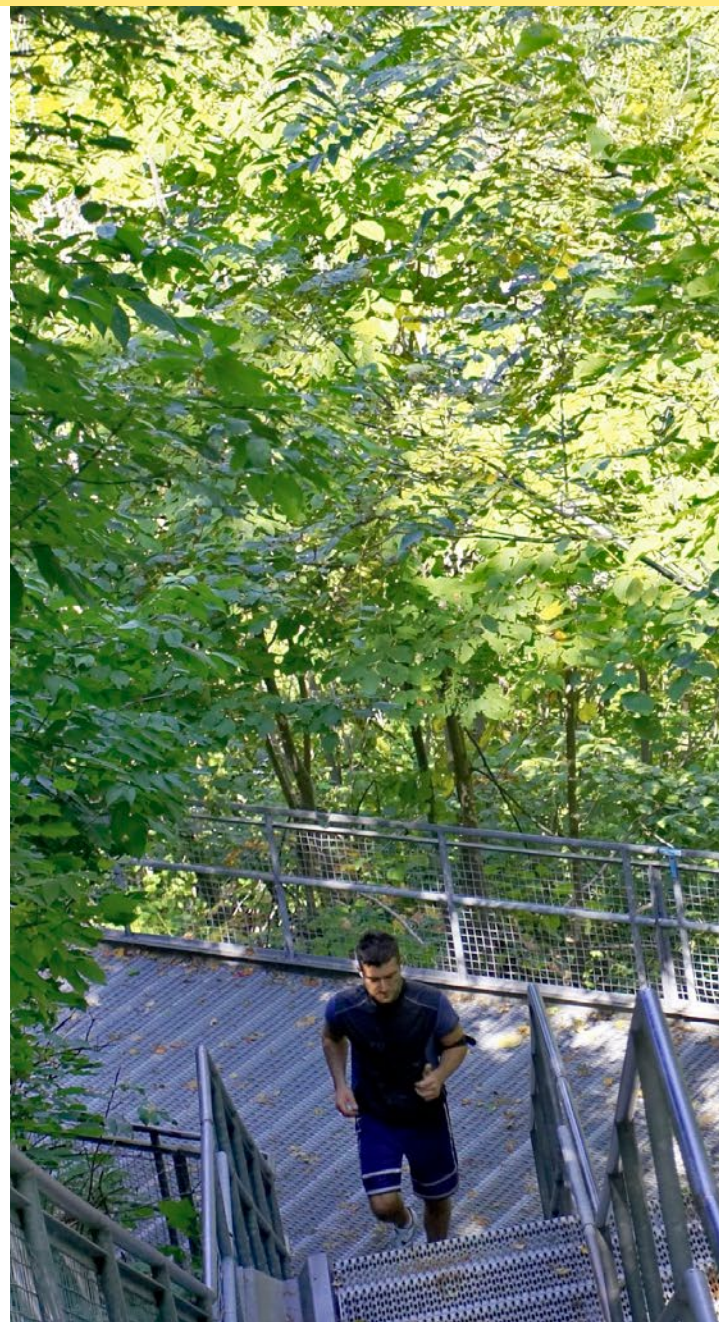
Climate Resilience, Energy and Resource Management

Why This Matters

Climate change poses an increasing risk to Hamilton's infrastructure, economy, and residents. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and urban flooding threaten public health and safety, requiring immediate and sustained action. To address these challenges, Hamilton is committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, transitioning to renewable energy, and strengthening resilience against climate-related risks. This section outlines key strategies to achieve net-zero emissions, promote energy efficiency, and enhance climate adaptation across the city.

Objectives

- Prepare for and adapt to the emerging impacts of climate change and promote green initiatives as part of Hamilton's Climate Action Strategy.
- Achieve the community-wide net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050, and the interim target of 50% reduction by 2030.
- Improve energy efficiency in buildings and infrastructure, promote retrofitting of existing buildings to enhance energy performance and encourage adoption of energy-efficient technologies in residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.
- Increase the share of renewable energy and support the development of local renewable energy projects.



Connected Strategy for Climate Action

Hamilton's Climate Action Strategy, approved in August 2022, serves as a city-wide framework to guide both climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Through strategic investments, policy measures, and innovative initiatives, Hamilton is laying the groundwork for a resilient and low-carbon future.

- **Climate Mitigation** ([ReCharge Hamilton: Community Energy and Emissions Plan - CEEP](#)): Defines a pathway to net-zero emissions by 2050 that increases the resilience of the energy system and improves economic prosperity for all.
- **Climate Adaptation** ([Climate Change Impact Adaptation Plan - CCIAP](#)): An action-oriented plan to minimize climate impacts on residents, businesses, and infrastructure, prioritizing vulnerable populations.
- **Office of Climate Change Initiatives (OCCI)**: Established in November 2022, the OCCI oversees the Climate Action Strategy and leads five priority areas: Climate Change Governance & Innovation, Community Climate Outreach, Carbon Budgeting, Green Buildings and Urban Greening

Financial Investments in Climate Action

The City has made significant financial commitments towards fighting climate change and plans to invest \$11.4 billion by 2050 in its Climate Change Strategy, indicating a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability.

1. **Recent Investments and Commitments:** Investment of \$57.3 million in climate-positive actions, including bicycle infrastructure, parks, tree planting, electrification of vehicles and equipment, and improved stormwater infrastructure. In 2023, the City doubled the staff capacity of its Office of Climate Change Initiatives and committed sustainable funding of \$2.5 million annually for its Climate Change Reserve.
2. **Supported Projects:** These investments support preventative measures for recovery from extreme weather events, adaptation and resiliency initiatives, and community-led climate change actions.

These strategic investments not only mitigate climate risks but also create a robust foundation for economic resilience, offering significant potential for investment and collaboration.

Key Initiatives

1. **Better Homes Hamilton Program:** In line with Hamilton's Climate Action Strategy, the City Council approved the Better Homes Hamilton Pilot Program, offering up to \$1 million in loans for energy efficiency retrofits. Launched on December 1, 2023, this two-year pilot provides 0% interest loans up to \$20,000 per household to 50 Hamilton homeowners, including air source heat pumps. The program aims to improve home comfort, reduce fossil fuel burning, and enhance building performance. Participating homeowners are expected to cut household greenhouse gas emissions by 60%, or 2.9 tonnes of CO₂e annually.
2. **Upgrades to existing corporate buildings:** The City is installing energy-efficient lighting and equipment, or utilizing new technologies to improve operational efficiencies, cost-effectiveness, and meet corporate targets for energy intensity and GHG reductions, including the goal of net zero emissions by 2050. These efforts have led to significant savings, contributing to millions of dollars in annual project savings and receiving substantial incentives. Additionally, the City has recovered costs through utility account reviews and fuel tax recovery programs.
3. **Renewable Energy Generation:** The City owns and manages renewable generation operations through Hamilton Renewable Power Inc., which includes three 1.6 MW biogas-fueled systems operating at the Woodward Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Glanbrook Landfill. These systems use both raw biogas and landfill gas to produce electricity for the power grid, contributing to a more efficient and sustainable process and offsetting GHG emissions.
4. **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project:** The City is expanding its electric vehicle charging infrastructure. In 2020, the City received a \$200,000 investment from the Canadian Government, complemented by \$251,400, bringing the total to \$451,400. The City will install 40 EV chargers, with an additional 49 charging stations pending federal funding approval. These efforts support the city's climate action goals and commitment to sustainable transportation, including achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
5. **EcoDiesel Fuel Replacement Program:** Aims to replace traditional diesel with EcoDiesel across the City's fleet. This program reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from municipal vehicles, supporting short-term emission reduction goals while complementing long-term electric vehicle (EV) strategies.

6. **Electric Street Sweeper & Electric Maintenance Vehicles:** This initiative focuses on transitioning Hamilton's fleet to electric alternatives, including street sweepers and maintenance vehicles. By reducing emissions from transportation infrastructure, it contributes to cleaner air and operational efficiency, aligning with Hamilton's broader sustainability goals.
7. **Solar Powered Ambulance Fleet:** This innovative initiative integrates solar technology into Hamilton's ambulance fleet, reducing reliance on fossil fuels. It also leverages IoT capabilities for real-time energy monitoring, enhancing efficiency and environmental sustainability in emergency services.
8. **Fire Truck Anti-Idling Technology:** This initiative involves the purchase and installation of battery-powered auxiliary power units (APUs) on 15 existing heavy fire vehicles, reducing idling by up to 45% and lowering overall engine use by up to 15%, leading to significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years):

9. **Corporate Energy and Sustainability Policy:** Revised in 2020, this policy focuses on energy and sustainability in capital planning, aligning with city-wide initiatives. It targets a 45% reduction in energy intensity of City-owned facilities and operations by 2030 and a 60% reduction by 2050. The policy also aims for net zero emissions by 2050 through improvements in building efficiency, sustainable practices, and operational enhancements.
10. **District Energy System:** Since 2014, the City's District Energy System has generated and distributed energy via underground insulated pipes, providing centralized cooling and heating to key locations. Managed by Hamilton Community Enterprises (HCE), the system is undergoing a reinvestment cycle to decarbonize operations and expand its footprint.



11. Developing an Integrated Energy Strategy at Steelport: HCE is collaborating with Slate Asset Management to transform the Stelco port lands into a sustainable industrial park with a micro-grid, district energy system, distributed energy resources, and energy storage systems. Building on HCE's Energy Harvesting Initiative, the project aims to repurpose waste heat for the City's District Energy System, enhancing resilience and marketability while fully decarbonizing operations.

12. Climate Resilience and Sustainability Initiatives: The City will assess infrastructure projects for climate resilience and readiness, develop a Climate Lens template for major projects, and create a Carbon Budget and Accounting Framework for greenhouse gas emission calculations. The City will also develop a flooding resiliency framework and revise programs to support climate change targets, such as converting parking lots to green spaces and installing charging stations.

Hamilton is committed to a resilient and sustainable future, where climate adaptation and energy efficiency are embedded in all aspects of city planning. In the coming years, Hamilton will expand its renewable energy portfolio, enhance infrastructure resilience, and strengthen its response to climate-related risks. Progress will be measured through improved energy efficiency in municipal facilities, the integration of climate adaptation projects, and increased urban greening initiatives.

Focus Area 2

Smart Mobility & Transportation

Why This Matters

A well-connected, efficient, and low-carbon transportation system is essential to Hamilton's economic growth, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. As the city continues to grow, ensuring that residents and businesses have access to safe, reliable, and sustainable mobility options is critical to maintaining economic competitiveness and social equity. By investing in smart mobility solutions, such as expanded public transit, active transportation networks, and electric vehicle infrastructure, Hamilton can reduce congestion, improve air quality, and create a more inclusive urban environment.



Objectives

- Utilize advanced systems and real-time data to improve traffic management, reduce congestion, and ensure smoother traffic flow.
- Encourage the use of electric vehicles, cycling, and walking to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increase safety using smart technologies and intelligent transportation systems, while providing equitable access for all residents, including vulnerable groups.
- Foster better integration of transportation modes to increase public transit use and enhance overall mobility and accessibility.



Connected Strategy for Smart Mobility

Hamilton's [Transportation Master Plan](#) provides a comprehensive vision to create an efficient and balanced transportation network that supports sustainable growth, economic development, and environmental responsibility. The plan integrates multiple transportation modes, ensuring that residents and businesses have access to safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly travel options. By prioritizing public transit, active transportation, and emerging smart mobility technologies, the strategy aims to create a more connected and accessible city.

- **Community-Based Programs** – Encouraging shared mobility services, micromobility options, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure to enhance local travel convenience.
- **School-Based Programs** – Increasing active transportation for students through education initiatives and safer school travel planning.
- **Workplace Programs** – Supporting employers and employees with transportation options that promote sustainable commuting, such as carpooling and public transit incentives.

Additionally, Hamilton's [Vision Zero initiative](#) is a road safety strategy aimed at eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by incorporating data-driven road safety measures and infrastructure upgrades. The City is currently updating the plan to meet modern transportation demands and ensure safety for everyone.

Key Initiatives

Micromobility and Carsharing

1. **Free-Floating CarShare Pilot Program:** On June 13, 2022, the City of Hamilton and Communauto launched an 18-month pilot for the free-floating carshare project. The Communauto FLEX system allows one-way trips, with cars picked up and left in permitted on-street parking spaces. Starting with 25 vehicles across a 12 square kilometer service area in Wards 1, 2, and 3, the FLEX service added to Communauto's 35 station-based vehicles. In 2023, the FLEX pilot program became permanent, and the number of FLEX cars doubled in 2024.
2. **The Bike Share Program:** Since 2015, the Bike Share program has been a crucial part of the City's transportation network, now boasting over 32,000 active members with 900 bicycles operating across more than 150 stations. Riders have travelled over 6.5 million kilometres across more than 3 million trips, resulting in an estimated reduction of 1.6 million tonnes of carbon equivalent, burning over 161 million calories, and saving approximately \$2.3 million collectively. In 2022, the City partnered with McMaster University to analyze bike share data to support city planning activities.
3. **E-Bike Pilot for Hamilton Bike Share:** Purchases a minimum of 100 e-bikes and related equipment to support a 3-year pilot program. This initiative promotes sustainable transportation options, encouraging modal shifts towards low-emission travel.
4. **Cargo E-Bike Pilot Program:** Approved in 2022, the Cargo E-Bike Pilot Program enables residents and businesses to use cargo e-bikes for transporting people and goods within the city. This initiative aims to enhance cycling infrastructure, modernize urban transportation, and promote sustainable, efficient, and versatile mobility options. A total of 100 E-Bikes are scheduled to be deployed, complementing the Hamilton Bike Share and Commercial E-Scooter Pilot programs.
5. **The E-Scooter Pilot Program:** As part of a Provincial pilot program, the E-Scooter Pilot program aims to evaluate the safe integration of E-Scooters with other vehicles and assess the adequacy of existing road rules. Initially deploying 150 e-scooters in April 2023, the program has expanded to additional neighbourhoods, including the Mountain, with up to 900 devices available citywide to support short trips and first-/last-mile connections.

Active Transportation & Infrastructure

6. **Accelerated Active Transportation Implementation Plan:** Approved in January 2024, this plan aims to deliver 151 kilometers of cycling facilities from 2024 to 2028. Developed to expedite the Cycling Master Plan, it will double the annual delivery of new or improved bike lanes and multi-use pathways over the next five years. Funding has been committed by municipal, provincial, and federal governments, with additional funds to be requested through the capital budget process.

7. **Secure Bike Parking:** Hamilton expands bike parking through the Public Right-of-Way Request Program and proactive installations. In 2022, the City added 112 publicly accessible spots at 26 sites. In 2023, Council approved \$350,000 to enhance secure facilities and add new locations at transit hubs and major destinations. Across 2023–2024, more than 300 racks were deployed to close gaps and meet demand. As of 2025, over 50 secure bike-parking spaces are available downtown, with additional installations underway at transit hubs and other high-demand areas.

Public Transit and Accessibility

8. **HSR Fare Assist Program:** Launched in 2024 as a 30-month pilot, the program offers a 30% discount on single-ride PRESTO fares for qualified low-income earners and their household members. Eligible customers also receive free fare after reaching the weekly cap of 11 paid trips. All persons receiving Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program are eligible to apply.
9. **Active and Sustainable School Travel (ASST) Program:** For over 15 years, Planning & Economic Development and Public Health have delivered the ASST programs to schools across Hamilton. The ASST certification initiative uses the School Travel Planning (STP) model from Green Communities Canada, encouraging active transportation to and from school and addressing environmental, health, and safety issues. The City also collaborates with the non-profit organization Daily School Ride (DSR) on school programs.
10. **Smart Commute Program:** Led by Smart Commute Hamilton, this transportation management association works with workplaces to encourage active and sustainable transportation. With over 300 employers and 730,000 commuters enrolled, the program aims to ease congestion, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Services include carpool ride matching, emergency ride home programs, and promotions for walking and cycling. The new Smart Commute ride-matching tool, launched in 2022, allows commuters to explore travel options, connect with others, and track savings in greenhouse gas emissions and cash.
11. **Green Venture:** Established in 1994, Green Venture is a registered non-profit organization that promotes sustainable living in the Hamilton area. The City's Public Works Department provides approximately \$65,000 in annual funding to Green Venture for community programs that educate residents about environmental services. Green Venture's messaging includes water conservation, waste reduction, public transit, and sustainable transportation options. Annually, approximately 25,000 people are directly or indirectly informed through these efforts.

Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

12. **Transit Investments:** Hamilton Street Railway (HSR), one of North America's oldest transit systems, employs 880 people, operates 308 buses on 35 routes, and serves 21 million passengers annually. The 2023 budget allocated \$71 million towards the 10-Year Local Transit Strategy, adding 49,000 service hours and expanding routes, including:

- All-day Sunday express service on routes 10 B-line and 20 A-line
- Expanded transit service to Stoney Creek and Winona, adding 29 stops
- \$33.5 million capital investment: \$19 million for bus replacements and \$11 million for expansion buses

HSR is one of the greenest fleets in Canada, with approximately 80% of the fleet powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) by the end of 2023.

13. **Transforming the HSR Network:** [\(Re\)envision the HSR](#), launched in 2019, is an initiative to redesign the network and improve customer experience through extensive community engagement with more than 27,000 residents and community partners. The redesigned network supports Hamilton's future LRT and enhances connections across the city, reducing congestion and emissions. By creating a hub-to-hub system built around community and employment hubs, the change will make it easier for customers to travel to important places

in the community. The next step, **HSR Next: Moving Hamilton Forward**, is the proposed implementation plan for phasing in the redesigned network between 2026 and 2032; it remains under Council review as of this publication.

14. **[Hamilton Light Rail Transit \(LRT\) Project:](#)** In May 2021, a \$3.4 billion investment was announced for the Hamilton LRT project, featuring 17 stops and creating a 14-kilometer multi-modal corridor. This project revitalizes the urban environment and connects key areas along Main Street, King Street, and Queenston Road. It includes broader infrastructure development like roads, sidewalks, bridges, and utilities, supporting multi-modal transportation options and contributing to Hamilton's Intelligent City development.

Hamilton is transforming its transportation network into a seamless, multimodal system that supports active and sustainable travel. Investments in smart mobility solutions, public transit improvements, and active transportation infrastructure will drive future progress. Indicators of success will include increased transit ridership, expanded cycling and pedestrian networks, and advancements in electric vehicle infrastructure.

Focus Area 3

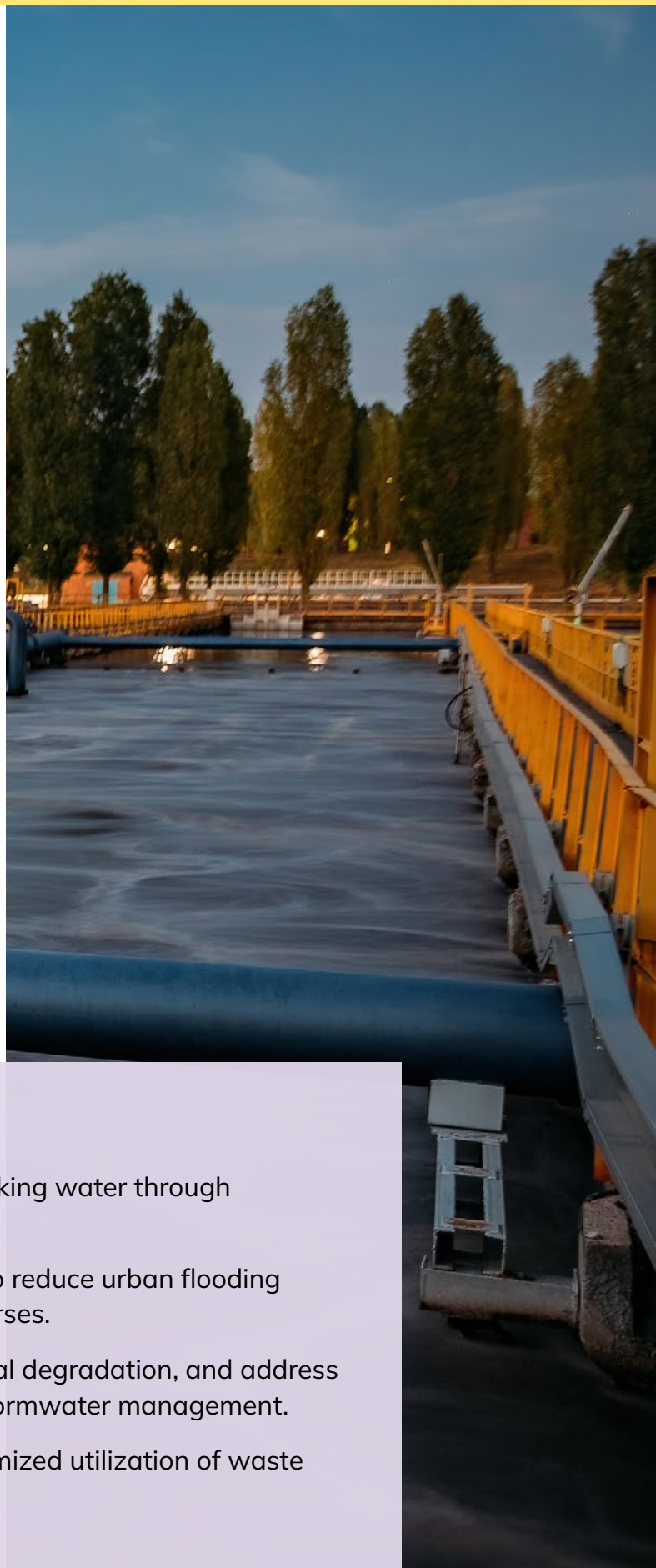
Water and Solid Waste Management

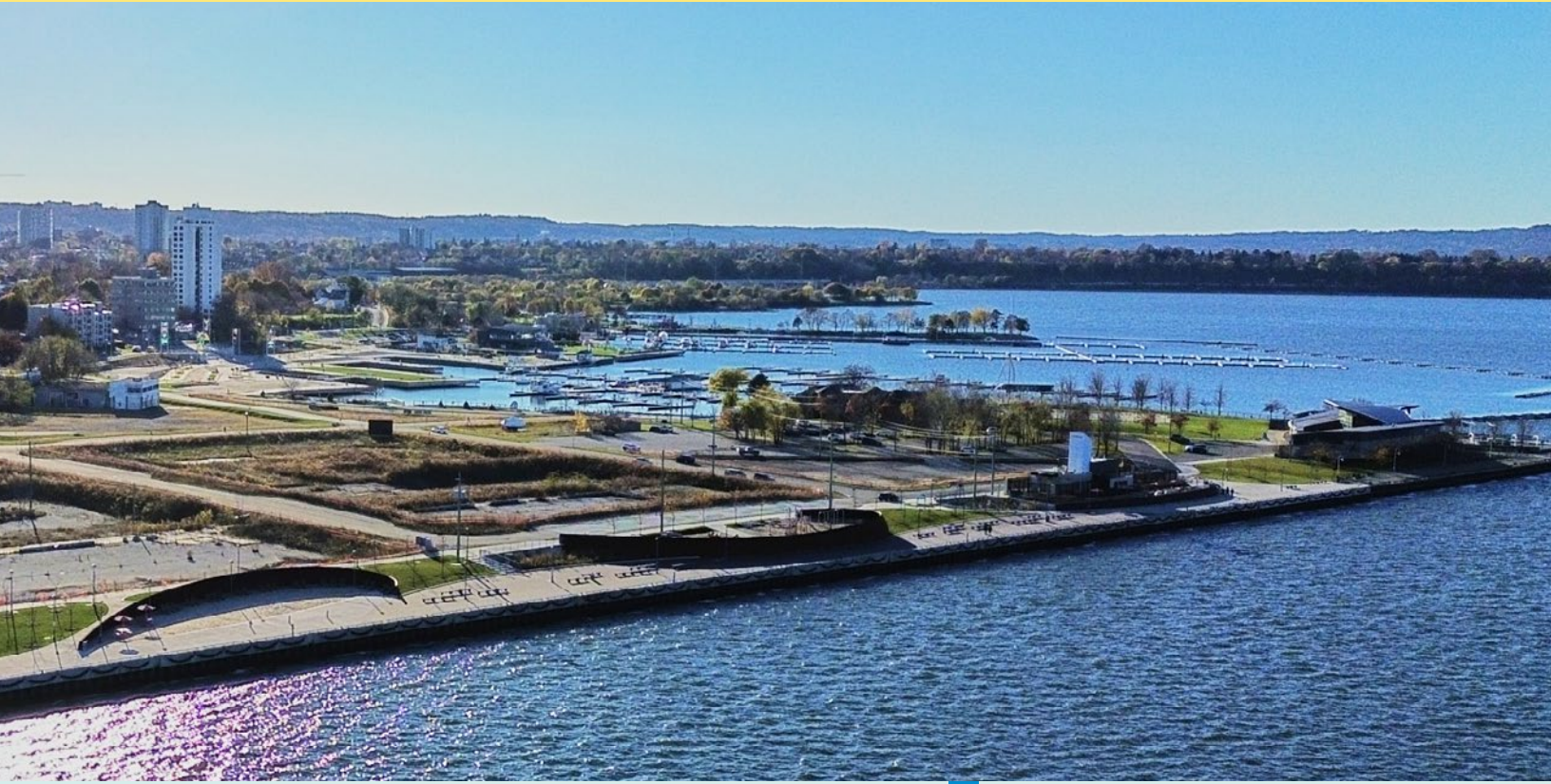
Why This Matters

Effective water and waste management is critical to public health, environmental sustainability, and economic resilience. Hamilton must address aging infrastructure, reduce water loss, and optimize waste diversion to ensure long-term resource efficiency and resilience against climate change. Investments in modernized water systems, circular economy practices, and smart waste management solutions will reduce environmental impact while maintaining high service standards for residents and businesses.

Objectives

- Ensure the delivery of safe, high-quality drinking water through sustainable practices and equitable access.
- Guarantee efficient wastewater treatment to reduce urban flooding and improve water quality in local watercourses.
- Mitigate flooding risks, prevent environmental degradation, and address climate change impacts through effective stormwater management.
- Emphasize waste reduction, reuse, and optimized utilization of waste diversion and disposal facilities.





Connected Strategy for Water and Solid Waste Management

Hamilton is committed to building a sustainable and resilient city through comprehensive water and waste management strategies. Here's a look at our plans:

1. [Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plan](#): The Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Master Plan outlines a 30-year strategic vision to accommodate future growth, ensuring safe drinking water and environmental protection. It includes growth projections, servicing policies, and public consultations to determine infrastructure needs up to 2051.
2. [Solid Waste Management Master Plan](#): The updated Solid Waste Management Master Plan (SWMMP), set to be completed by 2025, will guide waste diversion and optimize operations for the next 25-30 years. It will address waste management once the Glanbrook Landfill reaches capacity and includes actionable items for enhancing waste diversion over the next five years.

Together, these master plans ensure Hamilton is well-equipped to handle growth and environmental challenges, promoting a sustainable future for all residents.

Key Initiatives

1. **Woodward Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades:** To delist Hamilton Harbour as an International Joint Commission Area of Concern, Hamilton has invested \$340 million in upgrades at the Woodward Wastewater Treatment Plant. Inaugurated in November 2023, the project includes constructing a new Raw Sewage Pumping Station, an energy center, and upgrades to the treatment system. The upgrades will reduce total phosphorus loading by 500 tonnes over 10 years, create a more reliable wastewater system, and increase capacity for wet weather.
2. **Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project:** We're upgrading over 5,000 water meters across various sectors, including industrial, commercial, and institutional customers, as well as seasonal and hard-to-read locations. This new system will enable automatic hourly readings, providing accurate water usage data and eliminating manual meter readings. This project ensures quick detection of leaks and water issues, enhances customer service, improves billing accuracy, and reduces energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions from fewer manual reads. It also increases worker safety through automation.
3. **Leak Detection Program:** Launched in early 2021, this proactive program uses advanced sensors to find and fix leaks in underground pipes. It has identified 523 leaks since 2019, resulting in significant water savings and cost reductions. The program reduces water loss, unbilled consumption, and operational costs. It has improved planning for infrastructure repairs and replacements and received recognition with two Water Efficiency Awards from the Ontario Water Works Association.
4. **Overflow and Bypass Reporting:** Implemented in 2020, this initiative provides real-time updates on wastewater overflows, notifying residents and users of Hamilton Harbour about untreated or partially treated discharges. The system offers real-time updates every 15 minutes during events and weekly summaries of discharge duration and quantity. This initiative enhances transparency and public awareness during wet weather events.
5. **Central Composting Facility SCADA System:** In 2021, a SCADA system was introduced to monitor and control the composting process at the Central Composting Facility (CCF). The system continuously collects data such as temperature, air pressure, humidity, and volumetric air flow rate for precise composting control. Remote access for efficient monitoring and reporting ensures efficient and compliant operations.
6. **Waste Collection Route Optimization:** A review and optimization of waste collection routes have improved efficiency and resource utilization. Adjustments to existing routes have led to better resource utilization and enhanced waste collection services, ensuring timely and reliable pickups.

Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

7. [Hamilton Clean Harbour Program:](#)

The Hamilton Clean Harbour Program is a long-term initiative focused on restoring and enhancing the water quality of Hamilton Harbour and its surrounding ecosystem. Spearheaded by the City of Hamilton, the program works in partnership with environmental groups, industries, and the local community groups, to tackle pollution, improve stormwater management, and reduce contaminants. More than \$530 million has been committed to Clean Harbour projects and efforts include projects such as upgrading wastewater treatment infrastructure, implementing green infrastructure solutions, promoting sustainable practices, and raising public awareness about water stewardship. The program aligns with the broader goal of making Hamilton a healthier, more resilient community with a cleaner waterfront and more vibrant aquatic habitat.



8. **Woodward Drinking Water Plant**

Update: The Woodward Water Treatment Plant Phase 2 Capital Program is a large-scale upgrade of the City's only lake based drinking water treatment facility. The key goals of this capital program are to enhance asset condition identified within the 2022 Asset Management Plan, resolve process capacity restrictions, provide a more resilient water treatment system and robust production process, while utilizing best available technologies. The capital work will be split into 2 phases estimated to be beyond \$500M including engineering, construction, contingency and inflation. The work intends to focus on high level goals including:

- Implementation of new process technologies to improve water treatment performance.
- Consideration for Climate Change resiliency.
- Implementation of remedies for process area capacity restrictions.

9. **Advancing Hamilton Water Systems**

Modeling: Efforts are underway to enhance water and wastewater system monitoring and modeling capabilities. This includes improving tools for assessing system capacities and exploring new technologies for better rainfall monitoring. The initiative aims to ensure efficient and sustainable water management through improved data accuracy and system monitoring.

10. **Organics Strategy:** The long-term City organics strategy will determine whether to invest in and continue operating the current Central Composting Facility for processing green bin material or to invest in a new facility with updated technology. This strategy will evaluate the benefits of capturing renewable natural gas from green bin material, which is not currently harnessed, and explore options for processing yard waste material.
 - a. Reduce the pollution of waterways due to rural and urban runoff.
 - b. Increase the retention and infiltration of stormwater into the ground.
 - c. Increase the connectivity of naturalized areas and green infrastructure.
 - d. Minimize system capacity risk due to growth, development, and climate change.
 - e. Maximize the adaptability of investments to manage future uncertainties.
11. **Watershed Action Plan:** The City is developing a comprehensive Watershed Action Plan to address non-point-source contamination issues within Hamilton's watersheds. The plan will identify activities within the City's control through extensive consultation and engagement, including Indigenous Nations and First Peoples. It will include a capital implementation strategy with a five to ten-year capital budget plan and financing strategy. The objectives of the Watershed Action Plan are:

Ensuring access to clean water and effective waste management is critical to Hamilton's long-term sustainability. The city will continue modernizing water infrastructure, improving stormwater management, and increasing waste diversion rates. Progress will be reflected in reduced water loss, increased recycling and composting rates, and the implementation of smart waste monitoring systems.

Focus Area 4

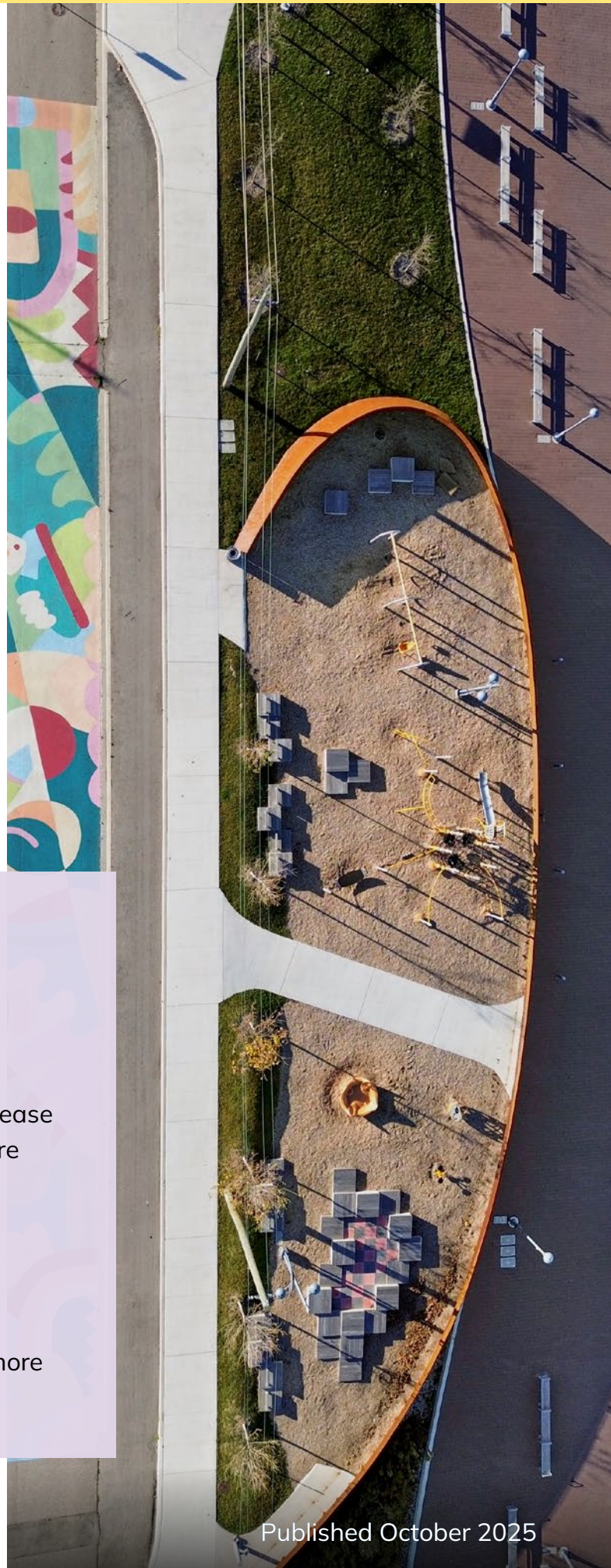
Parks and Green Spaces

Why This Matters

Access to parks, green spaces, and recreational areas is essential for public health, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience. As Hamilton continues to grow, preserving and expanding natural areas will enhance air quality, reduce heat islands, and improve community well-being. Investing in urban reforestation, park revitalization, and green corridors will support sustainability goals and make Hamilton a more livable city for all residents.

Objectives

- Implement sustainable practices in the development and maintenance of parks and green spaces.
- Preserve and restore natural habitats to increase biodiversity and integrate green infrastructure like urban forests and green roofs.
- Expand the total area of parks and natural spaces within the city and ensure equitable distribution across all neighborhoods.
- Increase tree canopy coverage by planting more trees, particularly in areas of higher need.





Connected Strategy for Parks and Green Spaces

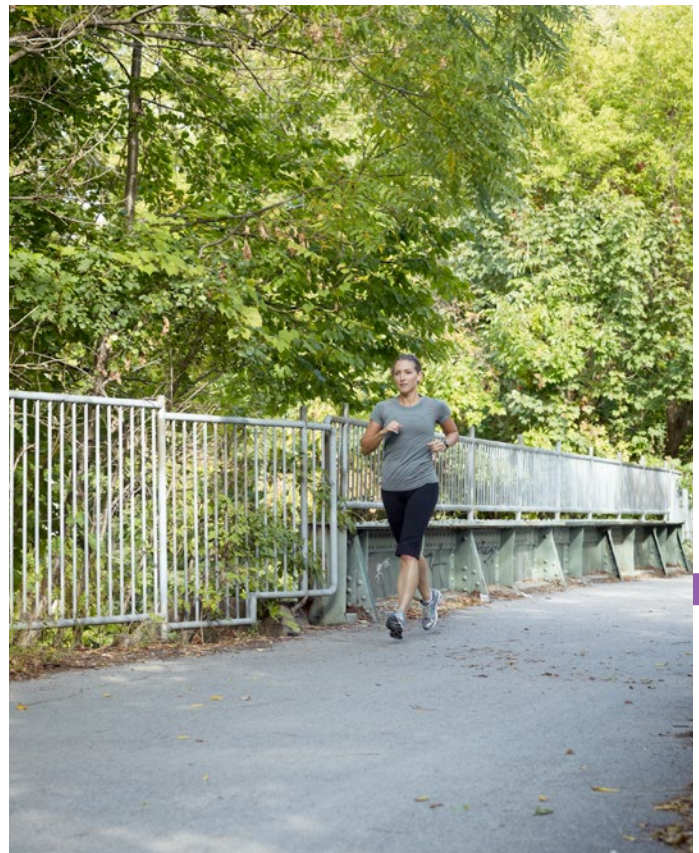
Hamilton's [Parks Master Plan](#) and [Urban Forest Strategy](#) provide a roadmap for sustainable green space expansion, environmental stewardship, and climate adaptation. These plans use census data, demographic criteria, and GIS spatial software mapping to guide decision-making, ensuring parkland growth is strategic and equitable.

Key components include:

- **Parkland Expansion & Accessibility** – The Parks Master Plan guides land acquisition efforts to expand and improve access to existing parks, focusing on areas with the greatest need.
- [Urban Forest Strategy](#) – Hamilton plans to double its tree canopy from 20% to 40% by 2050, planting 20,000 trees per year and maintaining existing tree health through city-wide policies and guidelines.
- **Sustainable Park Maintenance** – Implementing initiatives such as de-pave projects, optimized grass-cutting schedules, and enhanced waste management solutions to improve efficiency and environmental sustainability.
- **Technology & Community Engagement** – Using GIS-based asset management tools to link tree inventories to city operations and leveraging outreach strategies to increase awareness of green space initiatives.

Key Initiatives

1. **De-Pave Projects:** De-pave projects remove hard surfacing like asphalt and concrete and replace with gardens, trees and 'soft' landscape elements. De-pave projects are typically undertaken in areas where there isn't a lot of gardens, trees, or grass space. In order to be strategic about where the City selects de-pave locations, GIS data analysis is used to help identify areas that are most in need and would benefit the most from this type of initiative.
2. **Solar Compacting Waste Containers Pilot Project:** Solar compacting waste containers were installed in Victoria Park as a trial project to address the ongoing challenges of managing waste at the park. Equipped with technology to monitor and report waste levels, the City utilized the information gathered from the containers to assess their effectiveness in a park setting.
3. **Park Grass Cutting Route Optimization:** With the goal of optimizing both staffing and equipment resources, the City initiated review of its routes for grass cutting maintenance in parks. The City leveraged internally created GIS mapping to better understand how grass cutting schedules could be more efficient, while maintaining level of service standards for residents.
4. **If Trees Could Talk:** This public education initiatives aims to generate interest and raise awareness of the critical role trees play in mitigating climate change. This initiative involves the use of data sensors to collect and share real-time information about the health and growth of trees with residents. The collected data will be displayed on a dedicated web page, presenting easy-to-understand and meaningful facts and statistics to engage and educate the community.
5. **Municipal Parking Lot Greening/ Climate Adaptation:** Introduces permeable, sustainable surfaces at municipal parking lots, combined with urban greening efforts. This enhances stormwater management and supports climate adaptation goals.



Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

6. Hamilton Parks Master Plan

Implementation: Hamilton's Parks Master Plan is a guiding document that will help the City plan for and provide parks for residents. Using census data, demographic criteria and GIS spatial software mapping, the Parks Master Plan will guide the planning of new parks and the expansion and improved access to existing parks across Hamilton. The Master Plan assesses current parkland supply and provides a framework to guide decisions that will help focus land acquisition efforts to areas of the city that are most in need. The Master Plan offers innovative and collaborative approaches to funding, acquisition and development of new parks and sets a clear path forward for Hamilton's parks system in the decades to come.

7. Urban Forest Strategy Execution:

Hamilton's Urban Forest Strategy will guide the protection, care and planting of the City's trees and forests on public and privately-owned land in the urban area. Using an equity approach, the Strategy uses GIS spatial software mapping to identify and target areas most in need of increased tree canopy. The City plans to double its tree canopy from 20% to 40% by 2050, with the goal of planting new trees (20,000 per year) and keeping existing trees healthy and protected by adopting new City-wide policies and guidelines. The Strategy also recommends the use of GIS-based asset management software that will link tree inventory to City operations systems to ensure that information about trees and the urban forest remain reliable and up to date.

Hamilton's parks and green spaces are central to enhancing community well-being, improving biodiversity, and strengthening climate resilience. In the coming years, the city will focus on expanding parkland, increasing urban canopy coverage, and integrating green infrastructure into urban areas. Success will be indicated by higher tree planting rates, new park developments, and improved accessibility to recreational spaces.



Strategic Pillar 2:

Digital Connectivity

A truly connected city is one that leaves no one behind. Hamilton's Digital Connectivity pillar ensures that broadband access, smart technology, and open data empower residents, businesses, and institutions to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

In today's digital age, seamless connectivity is essential for economic growth, innovation, and public engagement. Hamilton is well-positioned to bridge the digital divide and expand access to high-speed broadband, ensuring that all residents and businesses, regardless of location, income, or ability, can fully participate in the digital economy.

However, digital transformation is not just about technology—it's about people-first service delivery. As Hamilton enhances its digital infrastructure, the City is committed to usability, accessibility, and resident-centered design to ensure that online services are intuitive, inclusive, and efficient. Digital tools and platforms will be designed based on user feedback to improve trust, transparency, and customer experience.

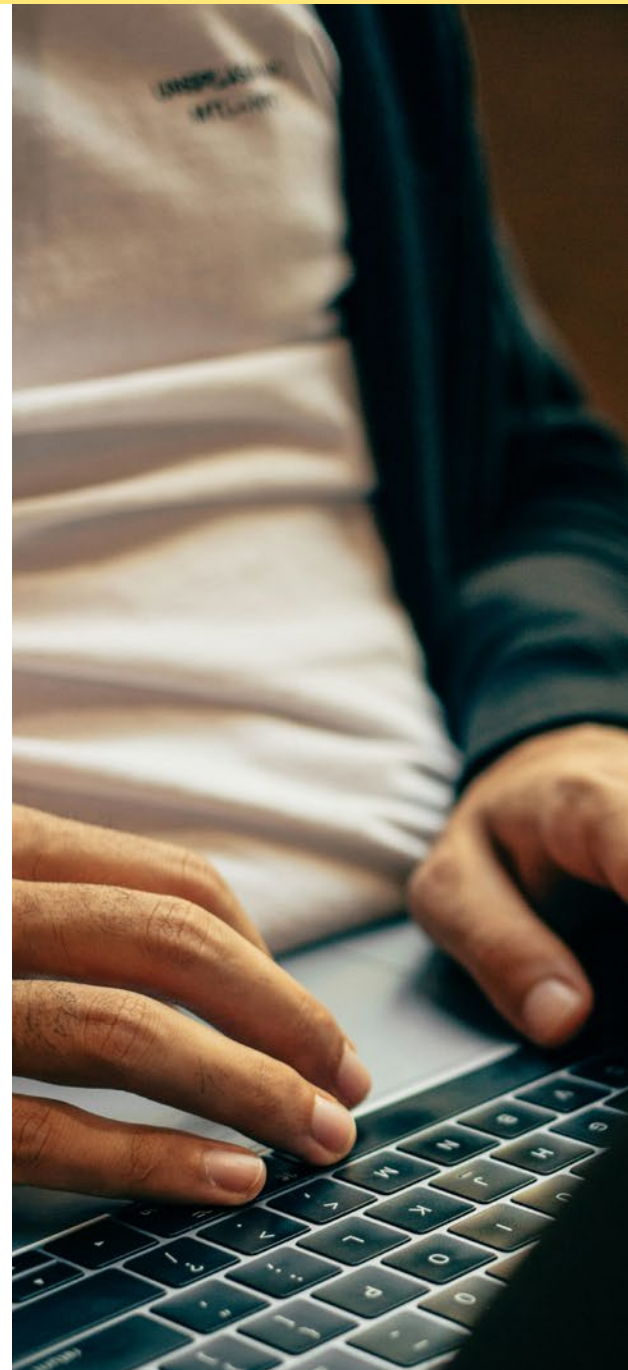
By prioritizing both technological advancement and user experience, Hamilton is creating a digitally connected community that is future-ready, inclusive, and accessible for all.

Focus Area 5

High-Speed Internet Connectivity & Broadband

Why This Matters

Reliable and high-speed internet access is essential for economic development, education, public services, and achieving digital equity. The digital divide, referring to the gap between those with access to reliable digital technologies like the internet and those without, stems from factors such as geographic location, socioeconomic status, and affordability barriers. Ensuring that all Hamiltonians can access affordable, high-speed broadband is critical to bridging this divide. Expanding broadband infrastructure not only drives business growth and enhances municipal services but also fosters innovation and improves the quality of life for everyone. While the City has limited direct levers in this domain, it can influence outcomes through advocacy, applicable supports, partnerships, and raising awareness of the importance of digital infrastructure to the City as a whole.



Objectives

- Advocate for and promote investment in broadband connectivity to support rural Hamilton reaching 50/10 Mbps and urban Hamilton 100/20 Mbps, with 1 Gbps options available for residents and businesses that need higher speeds.
- Bridge the digital divide by addressing infrastructure, equipment, access, equity, inclusion, and digital literacy.
- Support improved access to internet, enhanced digital infrastructure, and increased digital capacity and capabilities for all Hamiltonians through advocacy and partnerships.

Connected Strategy for High-Speed Internet & Broadband

Hamilton's approach to high-speed internet prioritizes equitable access, affordability, and reliable service across every part of the city. This section also serves as **Hamilton's Broadband Strategy (2025–2027)**, building on the Objectives above to guide implementation and delivery. Our vision is that every resident, business, and community partner can confidently connect, anywhere in Hamilton, at a speed that meets their needs, at a price they can afford, on a network they can trust. This strategy aligns with Council priorities and the City's Digital Strategy, ensuring broadband investments and programs advance shared goals for service excellence, inclusion, and resilience. It also supports Hamilton's long-term vision for a connected community where digital infrastructure enables economic growth, civic engagement, and public safety.

While many urban neighbourhoods benefit from robust broadband options with speeds reaching up to 1.5 Gbps, rural and underserved areas continue to face limited choices and slower, less reliable service. Citywide testing shows strong progress since 2020, median download speeds up 186%, upload up 210%, and latency down 20%, but gaps persist. See the City's [Internet Performance Map](#) for area-level trends. Closing these gaps is essential to support remote work, online learning, health care access, and full participation in civic life.

Hamilton will deliver this strategy through targeted municipal action, partnerships, and clear, resident-facing information. The hamilton.ca/internet portal remains the central hub for residents and businesses to explore local options, access programs, and view performance data. It also links to a Hamilton-specific [Canadian Internet Registration Authority \(CIRA\)](#) speed-test site that helps identify service gaps and guide continuous improvement. To advance digital equity alongside infrastructure, the [City Enrichment Fund \(CEF\) – Digital Stream](#) provides ongoing support for community-led initiatives that build digital skills, increase adoption, and reduce barriers for underserved residents.

Focus Areas for 2025–2027:

- Continued advocacy for improved service in rural and underserved areas to meet the City's broadband performance targets.
- Continued expansion of access to free public Wi-Fi in parks and public spaces, guided by usage data and community need.
- Advance planning for the feasibility review of Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) to strengthen emergency communications and network reliability.
- Keep residents informed through hamilton.ca/internet and regular reporting using local CIRA speed-test results.
- Support and explore opportunities to enhance digital inclusion through community programs that promote affordability, access to devices, and digital literacy.

Together, these actions strengthen connectivity, improve equity and public safety, and support a more inclusive, resilient Hamilton.

Key Initiatives

Parks & Public Spaces Free Wi-Fi: Hamilton's free wireless network, "Hamilton_Guest," is available at 84 locations city-wide, including arenas, recreation centers, libraries, and select parks. A \$99,999 grant in late 2021 expanded Wi-Fi access to parks such as Beasley Skate Park, Gage Park, and Victoria Park. Residents can check the live Public Wi-Fi Locations map to find coverage near them: [Public Wi-Fi Locations](#)

1. **Hamilton Public Libraries Digital Access:** The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) plays a vital role in bridging the digital divide across the city. With 23 branches and two bookmobiles, HPL provides barrier-free access to essential online resources, including free 24/7 Wi-Fi, public computers, and printing services. In 2023 alone, Wi-Fi usage surged by nearly 138%, reaching 1.8 million sessions. HPL also enhances digital literacy through partnerships with local organizations, ensuring residents can develop essential technology skills. By prioritizing accessibility, literacy, and digital inclusion, HPL continues to evolve as a key player in Hamilton's broadband and connectivity landscape.
2. **Hamilton.ca/internet and CIRA:** The City's broadband webpage on Hamilton.ca offers comprehensive information on internet and broadband services. It includes links to public Wi-Fi spots, local internet service providers, internet incentive programs, and various reports. Additionally, it features a link to the Canadian Internet Registry Association's broadband performance test site, which was launched in 2022 to collect connectivity speed data for the Hamilton community.
3. **HCE Telecom:** Established in 2014, HCE Telecom is a city-owned carrier that provides high-speed data, voice, firewall, and internet solutions based on a 10-gigabit fiber network. HCE serves over 160 locations, including residents, universities, hospitals, businesses, and government entities. The acquisition of Sunrise Interactive Inc. Net6 in 2017 enhanced their capabilities, allowing them to offer data center solutions, telephony, and other video conferencing services. HCE continues to invest in fiber optic, data center, and cloud infrastructure, supporting millions across the GTHA and Ontario.

4. City Facilities Connectivity Upgrades:

HCE Telecom upgraded broadband fiber connections at 115 City facilities, significantly increasing internet speeds. The upgrade improved connectivity for City services and supports Hamilton's future readiness as demand for broadband increases. This enhancement ensures residents can access online services more efficiently and supports the digital infrastructure needed for various City operations.

5. City Housing Hamilton (CHH)

Affordable Internet: CHH and HCE Telecom partnered to provide low-cost internet to multi-tenant buildings at locations such as 500 MacNab St. N. and 181 Jackson St. W., and public spaces. This initiative aims to bridge the digital divide, ensuring affordable and quality internet access for residents.

Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)**6. Public Safety Broadband Network**

For Hamilton: The City is exploring the implementation of a Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN), a private cellular network built exclusively for public safety. This network aims to resolve issues such as coverage in rural areas, dead zones, network oversaturation, and reliability challenges due to carrier outages, disaster events, and surge events. The PSBN will support related systems, applications, and services, enhancing public safety and providing opportunities for Digital Transformation and IoT

benefits. In May 2025, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP C1-04-25) for a PSBN feasibility study, which closed on May 29, 2025, to assess governance models, technical requirements, partnerships, costs, and implementation timelines.

7. Hamilton LRT Digital Integration:

The City is considering ways to incorporate new digital technology into the Hamilton Light Rail Transit (LRT) project to enhance the city's transit system. Potential initiatives include adding digital signage to improve connectivity between the LRT and existing bus routes, making transit more seamless and efficient. The City is also exploring the possibility of testing innovative technologies that promote smart mobility and improve accessibility within the LRT corridor. These efforts aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote sustainable transit options, and increase public Wi-Fi access, contributing to a more connected community.

A digitally connected Hamilton is essential for economic growth, education, and social equity. Future efforts will focus on expanding broadband infrastructure, increasing free public Wi-Fi access, and ensuring more households have affordable internet options. Progress will be seen through improved broadband speeds, reduced connectivity gaps in underserved areas, and increased participation in digital literacy programs.

Focus Area 6

Open City

Why This Matters

Transparency, accessibility, and public trust in government are key to a thriving and engaged community. Open City initiatives ensure that Hamilton's residents, businesses, and institutions have access to data, digital tools, and participatory platforms that empower informed decision-making. By increasing access to open data and enhancing digital government services, Hamilton can foster innovation, improve accountability, and strengthen public engagement in civic life.

Objectives

- Enhance transparency, accountability, and public engagement by providing accessible government data for residents to participate in civic matters.
- Support data-driven decision-making and improve city services by using high-quality data to inform policies and track performance.
- Promote innovation and economic development by enabling access to data for entrepreneurs, researchers, and businesses to create new solutions.
- Increase resident involvement and trust in government through greater transparency and accessible data.
- Invest in public engagement infrastructure—such as online platforms and reporting systems—that facilitate participation and showcase how Hamiltonians influence decision-making processes.



Connected Strategy for Open City

Recognized by the Canadian Data Society with the **2022 Open Data for Democracy Award**, Hamilton has demonstrated national excellence in advocating and enhancing open data.

The [Open Data Policy](#), established in 2023, provides a framework for sharing reliable, machine-readable, and user-friendly data while protecting privacy and security. It outlines guiding principles, roles and responsibilities of management staff, and processes for making datasets available on the Open Data Portal to increase transparency and accessibility. The **Open Data Working Group** develops the Open Data platform, ensuring datasets adhere to guiding principles. They assist departments, engage with staff and the public, maintain datasets, oversee training, designate contacts for inquiries, and monitor progress.

Hamilton is also improving digital access to government services and decision-making. The **Mayor's Taskforce on Transparency, Access, and Accountability** reviews how the City can be more open, ensuring meaningful resident engagement.



Key Initiatives

1. **Open Data Program:** The program aims to enable easy and transparent access to City data, deliver high-quality data, and build a sustainable program through policy development and business processes. A key component of this program is [Open Hamilton](#), the city's Open Data Portal launched in October 2018 with 82 datasets, now supporting over 337 datasets. The portal receives approximately 100,000 website visits annually, providing the community with tools to explore, visualize, and download City data. This initiative enhances civic engagement and allows residents to better understand and utilize the data for various purposes, including research, business, and community development.
2. **City Dashboard:** Launched in 2023, the City dashboard shares information about the community, City services, and strategic priorities. It tracks data over time, highlighting areas of success and those needing attention. The dashboard will evolve with the City's performance, adding measures, service levels, and targets, while enhancing user experience. This tool provides residents with a transparent view of the City's operations and progress, fostering trust and accountability.
3. **What Works Cities Certification:** The City has achieved What Works Cities Certification (WWCC), launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies in 2017, recognizing municipalities that use data and evidence effectively to improve residents' lives. This certification assesses cities based on data-driven decision-making practices and provides a customized roadmap for improvement. Benefits include visibility into current practices, benchmarking against national standards, and access to resources such as training and peer support. Achieving WWCC aligns with the City's Digital Strategy, IT Strategy, and Enterprise Data Management Strategy, enhancing the City's ability to make informed, evidence-based decisions that positively impact the community.

Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

4. Open Data Roadmap

Implementation: This strategic plan guides the implementation and management of the Open Data program and initiatives. It aims to improve operations, transparency, and service delivery. The workplan aligns with the Open Data Policy and lays out a phased implementation approach. The plan emphasizes building foundational strengths before expanding offerings, enhancing accessibility, and sustaining the initiative. Continuous community engagement, adaptation to feedback, and commitment to open governance and transparency principles are essential. The roadmap is flexible and can adjust to future opportunities and community needs, ensuring the program remains relevant and effective.

5. Mayor's Taskforce on Transparency, Access and Accountability:

The taskforce's mission is to advance the 2022-2026 Council's Priority of Responsiveness and Transparency. It will conduct a comprehensive review of public concerns related to access and openness, providing non-partisan recommendations to improve resident access, trust, accountability, and transparency. The taskforce will engage with diverse communities to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are addressed.

Transparency, accessibility, and public trust are at the core of Hamilton's Open City initiatives. The city will work to expand its open data platform, improve user experience, and strengthen digital public engagement tools. Indicators of progress will include higher public engagement rates in decision-making, increased data transparency, and more user-friendly government service platforms.

Focus Area 7

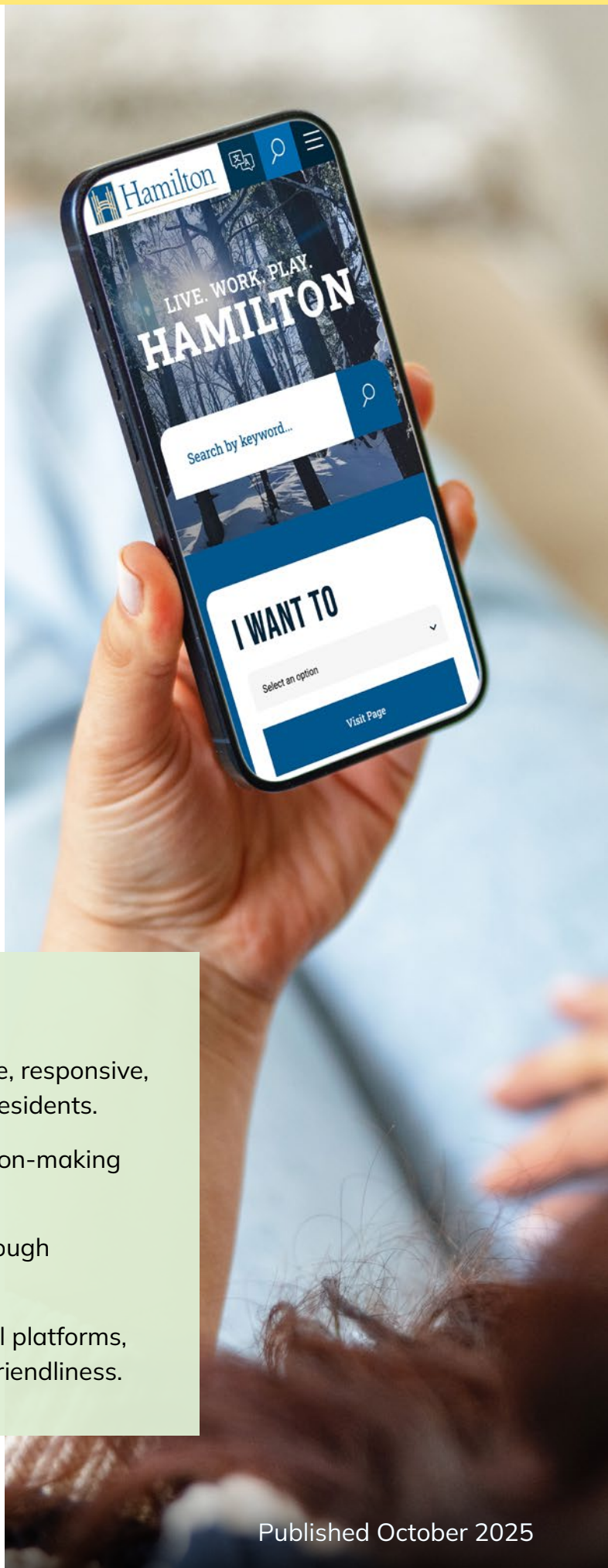
Digital Services & Public Engagement

Why This Matters

As public services move online, they must be accessible, user-friendly, and resident-centered. A seamless digital experience improves efficiency, reduces barriers, and increases civic engagement. By prioritizing usability, accessibility, and transparency, Hamilton ensures that all residents—regardless of digital literacy or ability—can easily navigate and benefit from online services. Modern digital engagement tools will also make it easier for residents to participate in decision-making and stay informed.

Objectives

- Utilize technology to foster a more interactive, responsive, and efficient environment for City staff and residents.
- Encourage community participation in decision-making through accessible digital platforms.
- Support local businesses and innovation through improved digital tools and infrastructure.
- Empower residents through advanced digital platforms, enhanced accessibility, and increased user-friendliness.





Connected Strategy for Digital Services & Public Engagement

The City's comprehensive strategy integrates various guiding frameworks to create a seamless and connected digital experience for the community.

1. **Digital Strategy:** Developed in 2023, the City of Hamilton's Digital Strategy serves as a guide for embracing the digital era and evolving to meet future community needs and expectations. It outlines how the City will use digital technologies to achieve its vision and objectives, and explores how these technologies can create or modify processes and user experiences across all business areas.
2. **Customer Service Experience Strategy:** Currently in development, this strategy prioritizes public service quality by setting clear principles and standards. It aims to improve customer experiences, establish performance benchmarks, and ensure consistent service delivery across all City departments. The strategy focuses on increasing public satisfaction, empowering both customers and staff, and addressing inconsistencies in service levels.
3. **Public Engagement Policy:** Launched in 2024 and informed by public feedback, this policy aims to improve public engagement processes. It ensures consistency, transparency, accountability, equity, and inclusivity. This policy supports staff in delivering on current Term of Council Priorities, including Priority 3: Responsiveness and Transparency, aimed to get more people involved in decision-making and problem solving.

By integrating these guiding strategies, Hamilton is driving innovation, improving services, and strengthening civic engagement to remain transparent, connected, and forward-thinking.

Key Initiatives

1. **Engage Hamilton:** Launched in 2020, Engage Hamilton is an interactive online engagement platform for residents to provide feedback on City initiatives. It complements other engagement tools and methods, promoting stronger, more inclusive public participation. The platform also outlines Hamilton's commitment to meaningful public engagement and includes the City's principles and levels of engagement that guide interactions with residents on decisions impacting their community. This contributes to a more consistent, effective, and meaningful engagement process.
2. **Self-Serve Options Expansion:** The City is dedicated to providing self-serve options that allow residents to connect with the City and track progress on their service requests. These options streamline interactions and make it easier for residents to access the services they need without requiring in-person visits or phone calls.
3. **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System:** The City has rolled out a new cutting-edge CRM system designed to streamline operations and provide a more responsive and efficient service experience for residents, businesses, and community partners. This system serves as a foundational piece for the City's transition toward a robust 311 program, providing a unified platform for accessing municipal services.
4. **Digital Standards:** The City is developing Digital Standards to ensure consistency, interoperability, and quality in digital services. These standards focus on customer-centric service delivery, agility, simplicity, accessibility, security, privacy, and openness, providing a foundation for the City's shift to a more agile and user-focused approach.
5. **Telephony Infrastructure Upgrades:** Upgrades to the City's Telephony infrastructure support new features like number in line, estimated wait times, and the future ability to request call-backs. These enhancements aim to improve how residents interact with the city, offering a more efficient and transparent experience.
6. **Payment Modernization:** Payment Modernization is a multi-year commitment to ensure that Hamilton remains consistent with today's digital economy. Our residents seek continuous improvement and a consistent payment experience across all available digital services (e.g., introduction of electronic transfers, credit card payments for all City services). The project aims to adopt an integrated payment approach for City services via a single e-commerce platform (e.g., "shopping cart" to pay for several services in one transaction).

7. Accessibility Improvements:

Accessibility is a top priority for the City, ensuring barrier-free access to programs, services, and opportunities for persons with disabilities. Initiatives include adopting Integrated Accessibility Standards, addressing barriers in transportation, employment, and information, and upgrading approximately 300 City forms to fillable AODA-compliant PDFs in 2022, making them accessible to people with disabilities such as mobility impairments, blindness, and low vision.

8. City Website & Digital Information Enhancements:

This project focuses on enhancing the [City website](#) by improving user experience (UX) and user interface (UI), optimizing for mobile devices, and exploring the use of AI-enabled tools, such as virtual agents or chatbots, to improve search, navigation, and service access for residents and businesses.

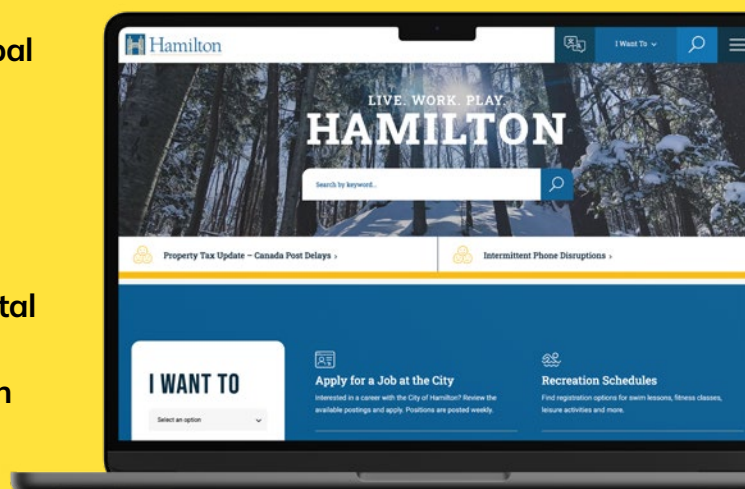
Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)**9. Digital Strategy Roadmap Execution:**

Hamilton's Digital Strategy Roadmap Execution is a structured approach to transforming the City's digital services. This initiative focuses on modernizing infrastructure, platforms, and service delivery models to create a more connected and accessible city. Key priorities include improving online service integration, expanding digital literacy programs, and strengthening cybersecurity to enhance trust and accessibility.

10. Customer Service Experience Strategy Roadmap Execution

Currently under development, this strategy is being designed to transform how residents interact with municipal services, ensuring a consistent, user-friendly, and efficient experience across all channels. This initiative focuses on streamlining service access, improving response times, and integrating multi-channel support—including online, phone, and in-person options.

Enhancing digital services is key to making municipal interactions more seamless, efficient, and user-friendly. Hamilton will continue modernizing online platforms, improving self-service options, and adopting new technologies to streamline services. Future improvements will be reflected in increased online service offerings, reduced wait times for digital transactions, strengthened public engagement opportunities and greater resident satisfaction with online interactions.

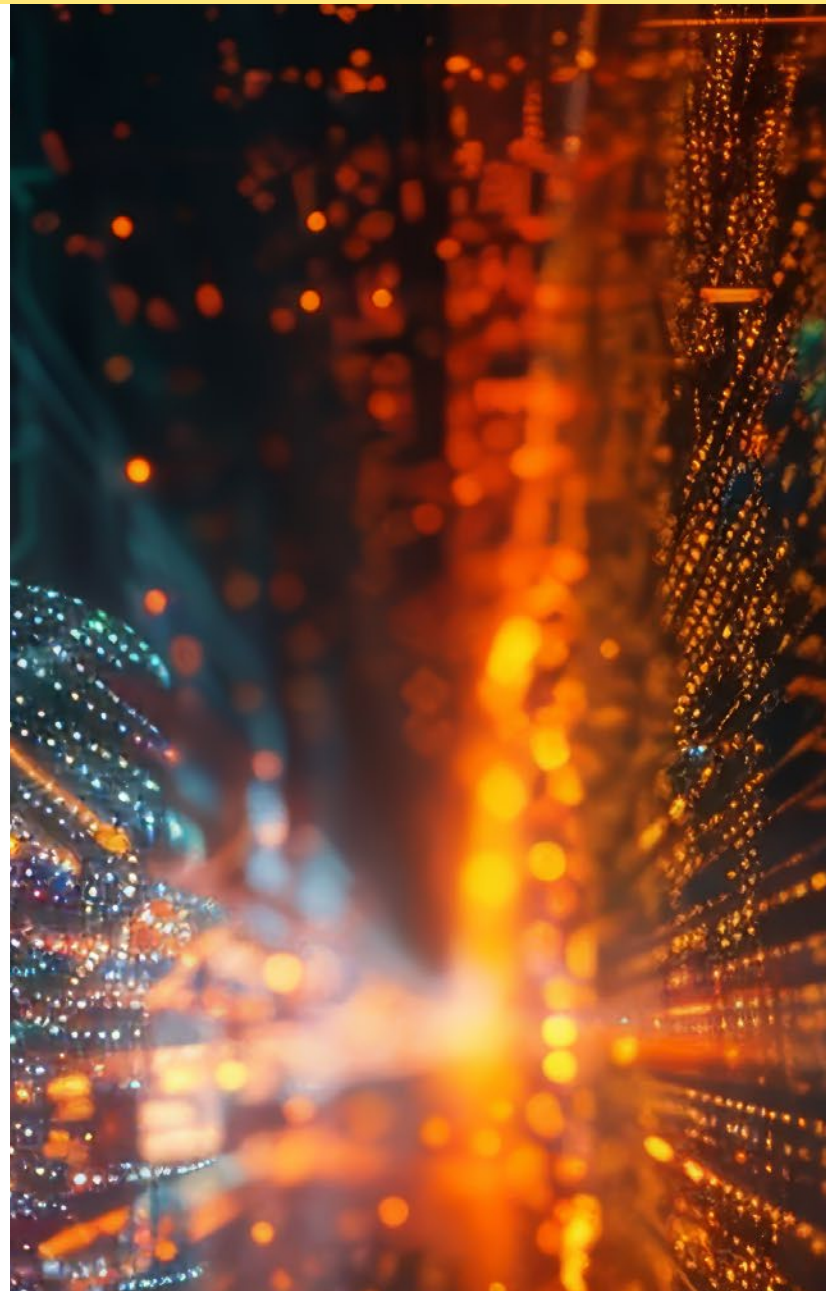


Focus Area 8

IoT Integration, Artificial Intelligence and Analytics

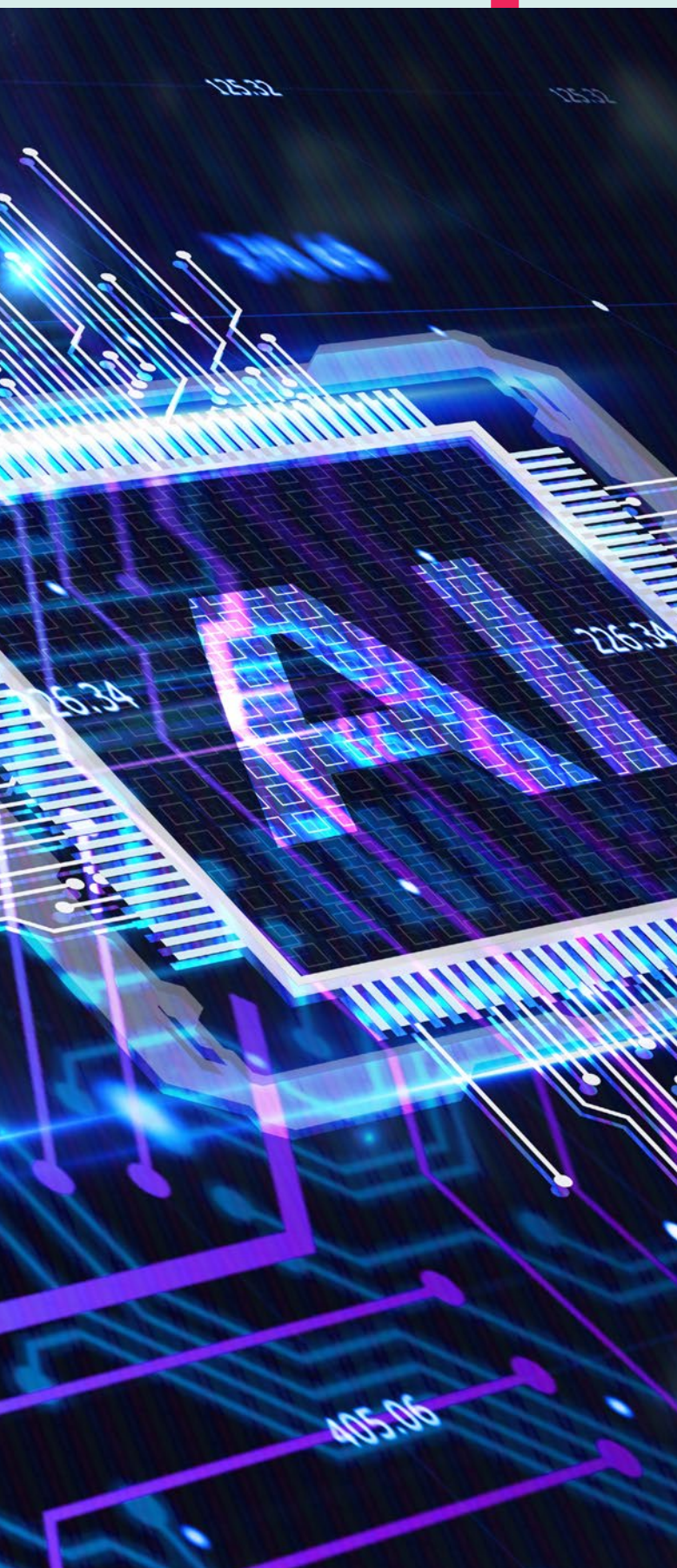
Why This Matters

Innovative city technologies and data-driven decision-making enable Hamilton to optimize infrastructure, enhance public safety, and improve service delivery. By integrating Internet of Things (IoT) technology and advanced analytics, the city can reduce operational inefficiencies, predict maintenance needs, and improve urban planning. These innovations lead to a more connected, efficient, and resilient city, improving both municipal operations and residents' daily lives.



Objectives

- Optimize city operations and resource management through real-time IoT data and automation to achieve cost savings and increase efficiency.
- Foster innovation and economic development by supporting startups and businesses in the IoT sector, creating job opportunities, and promoting smart city solutions.
- Leverage IoT data analytics for informed decision-making and policy development, while engaging residents through accessible real-time information and participation in city planning.
- Enhance city services by leveraging IoT-enabled devices for real-time monitoring and targeted interventions to improve service delivery and resident satisfaction.



Connected Strategy for IoT & Analytics

Hamilton is committed to leveraging innovative technologies and AI to optimize infrastructure, enhance public safety, and improve service delivery. With a strong focus on integrating IoT and advanced analytics, the city aims to reduce operational inefficiencies, predict maintenance needs, and improve urban planning.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidelines and Policy: Launched in 2024, this policy ensures the responsible use of AI technologies for content creation, process automation, and data analysis. It includes online learning and staff training, maintaining resident trust and service quality. The AI policy is a cornerstone, guiding the city's use of technology to enhance services and operations.

Hamilton's strategy integrates these guiding principles with key initiatives, driving the city towards a more connected, efficient, and resilient future.

Key Initiatives

1. **Elections Voice Agent and Virtual Agents:** During the 2022 municipal elections, the City of Hamilton piloted two new online tools to help residents easily access election information:
 - **Ask Hamilton:** A voice query directory providing users with instant access to current and accurate information about the 2022 Hamilton Municipal Election through voice-enabled devices like Alexa and Google, or smartphones.
 - **Elections Virtual Assistant:** A chatbot on the City's website that allowed users to type questions about the upcoming municipal election and receive information.
2. **Automating Sign Inventory:** In 2022, the City partnered with a local technology startup to use AI IoT technology to locate, identify, and catalogue traffic signage data, focusing on speed limit and hazard marker signs. Technology was installed on six city road patrol vehicles to provide coverage of all municipal roadways. This pilot helped the City identify assets, asset deficiencies, and supported the City's Vision Zero goal by ensuring infrastructure is inspected and maintained.
3. **Smart Litter Bins:** In 2023, the City initiated a pilot project installing street-side litter bins with fill sensors. These sensors detected the amount of litter and notified staff when a bin required collection. This technology helped staff determine optimal collection schedules, resulting in more efficient use of resources and fewer instances of overflowing litter bins.
4. **Air Quality Tracker:** In 2022, the City partnered with a local startup and the Center of Integrated Transportation and Mobility (CITM) to analyze localized air quality before and after truck route changes. AI-powered devices with gas sensors collected real-time data along existing and proposed truck routes. Each data point included geolocation information, allowing for hyper-local air quality analysis. This study provided detailed insights to understand air quality impacts before and after implementing revised truck routes.
5. **Noise Monitoring Pilot Project:** Starting in September 2022, the City collaborated with a Canadian technology company to install 15 IoT noise sensors along established and proposed truck routes. These sensors continuously monitored ambient noise levels, providing data to evaluate the impact of truck route modifications. Transportation planners used this data-driven approach to identify noise hotspots and areas needing additional interventions, informing future policy decisions.

6. **AI Waste Participation Study:** In 2021, the City partnered with a local AI startup to automate data collection of resident participation rates in waste programs. IoT devices installed on waste collection vehicles mapped the location and number of garbage, recycling, and organics bins set out for pick-up in real-time. This technology showed promise as a cost-effective alternative to manual curbside audits, allowing for large-scale data collection and analysis.
7. **GIS Data Dashboards:** The City's Geospatial Solutions team provides spatial data in easy-to-use, interactive formats to help you find information easily and efficiently. The team has released several dashboards and maps that are available for public use such as City Dashboard, Hamilton Census Data Maps, Hamilton Maps, Encampment Dashboard etc. Geospatial and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) at the City is a vital tool that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations. It supports data-driven decision-making, improves service delivery, and promotes transparency and public engagement. By leveraging GIS technology, Hamilton is better equipped to manage its resources, plan, and respond to the needs of its residents.
8. **AI Planning Assistance:** As part of the 2023-2024 Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, the City of Hamilton is preparing to test the First Wave Portal. This AI-powered platform is designed to provide data-informed planning support, improve customer service, and streamline application processes. The initiative aligns with the City's goal of approving 20,000 new housing units by 2026.
9. **HCE IoT:** Hamilton Community Enterprises (HCE) is a City-owned utilities company that manages fiber infrastructure and provides internet, phone, and IT services. To improve infrastructure management, the City and HCE have introduced a real-time monitoring system to track temperature, humidity, power status, and door access at key facilities such as data centers and network equipment sites. This system helps detect power outages, water leaks, and overheating, sending instant alerts to staff before problems escalate. By identifying issues remotely, the City reduces unnecessary site visits, saving time and resources.

Harnessing IoT and AI-driven analytics will enable Hamilton to optimize city operations, enhance public safety, and improve service delivery. The city will gradually integrate smart monitoring systems, predictive analytics, and AI-powered tools to support decision-making. Indicators of success will include improved traffic management through real-time data, increased use of smart sensors in public infrastructure, and expanded AI applications in municipal services.



Strategic Pillar 3:

Social Connectivity

A city thrives when its people are connected—not just physically and digitally, but socially. Social Connectivity is about bringing people together, creating opportunities, and ensuring that everyone can contribute to Hamilton's success.

This pillar focuses on economic growth, workforce development, innovation, and access to essential services, all anchored in a commitment to social connectivity. By supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and encouraging new ideas, Hamilton can build a city where everyone, regardless of background, has the practical tools to succeed.

At the heart of this vision is the belief that a connected community comes alive when residents, businesses, and organizations engage in open dialogue. Through transparent communication and collaborative decision-making, Hamilton is building a dynamic economy that adapts to changing times while putting the well-being of its people first.

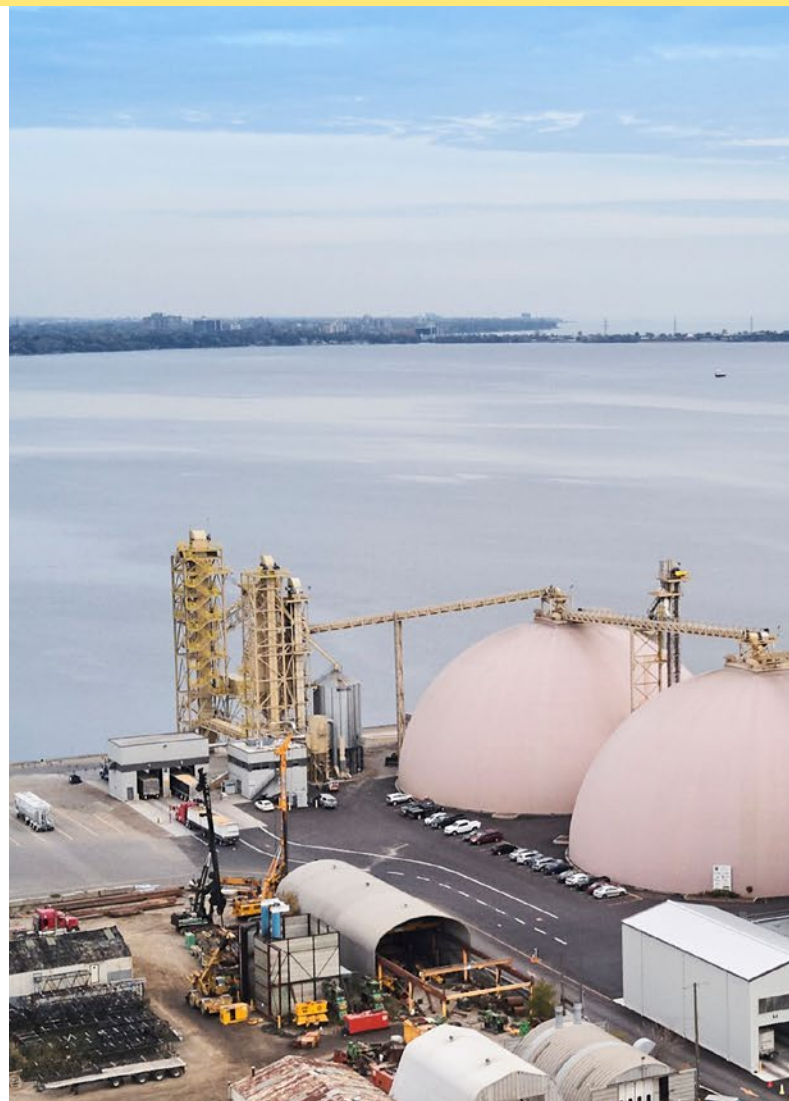
By focusing on removing barriers and opening up opportunities, Hamilton is paving the way for a future defined by shared progress and sustainable prosperity—one where every strategic step reinforces community strength and resilience.

Focus Area 9

Economic Growth & Community Partnerships

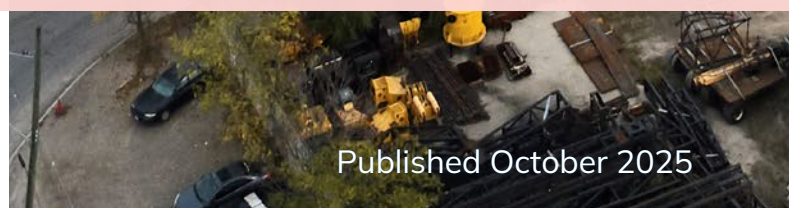
Why This Matters

A strong and diverse economy is key to Hamilton's long-term prosperity. Strategic partnerships between the city, businesses, and community organizations drive job creation, attract investment, and foster entrepreneurship. Supporting small businesses, innovation ecosystems, and workforce development ensures Hamilton remains competitive and provides economic opportunities for all residents.



Objectives

- Enhance airport, port, and city infrastructure to support increased traffic, trade and economic activities, while fostering innovation through research and startup incubation.
- Generate employment opportunities through strategic expansions and support for local businesses, coupled with training and education programs to build a skilled workforce.
- Foster innovation through collaboration between the city, academic institutions and businesses while supporting the growth of startups and new ventures through resources and mentorship.
- Invest in projects that stimulate economic growth and enhance city's attractiveness as a tourist destination through funded projects.
- Create safer environments that attract businesses and foster economic stability and improve community safety to enhance the city's appeal to potential residents and workers.





Connected Strategy for Economic Growth & Community Partnerships

The **2021-2025 Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP)** is a comprehensive blueprint aimed at guiding the City's economic future. The plan builds upon Hamilton's strengths while addressing emerging economic trends, climate resilience, and equity, diversity, and inclusion. It aims to sustain momentum in attracting businesses, supporting workforce development, and enhancing infrastructure to drive long-term prosperity. The strategy focuses on six priorities:

- Facilitating a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce
- Enhancing Digital Infrastructure and Services
- Growing Business and Investments
- Moving Goods and People
- Revitalizing Priority Areas and Placemaking
- Building Transformational Projects

Under these six priorities, a total of 77 actions that have been identified. The ongoing status of the actions, indicators, and stretch targets are being communicated through annual updates.

Key Initiatives

1. **CityLab:** Launched in 2017 as a 3-year pilot and later extended, CityLAB Hamilton is a collaborative model developed jointly by Hamilton's post-secondary institutions (McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University) and the City of Hamilton. CityLAB engages students directly in the work of city-building by fostering innovation, collaboration, and experiential learning. It works with City staff to identify complex challenges in areas like Healthy Neighbourhoods, Climate Change, and Municipal Excellence, and matches them with faculty and courses from Hamilton's universities. Students and staff co-create real-world projects to address these challenges, gaining valuable insight and data that can be shared and potentially scaled up. CityLAB is about mentoring and engaging the next generation of leaders, maximizing resources and talent to solve community challenges. Since 2017, CityLAB has collaborated with 3,581 students, 79 faculty members, and 151 City staff members to co-create 222 projects, contributing over 90,279 student hours to make Hamilton a more vibrant, healthy, and sustainable city.

2. **City Enrichment Fund:** The City Enrichment Fund (CEF) is Hamilton's municipal investment in a wide range of program areas supporting the City's Strategic Plan and 25-Year Community Vision. It supports community-based projects and initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for Hamilton residents through cultural, social, and economic programs.

The CEF encompasses seven program areas: Agriculture, Arts, Communities, Culture & Heritage, Community Services, Digital, Environment, Sports & Active Lifestyles. Guided by funding principles, the CEF allocates available funding among non-profit organizations, registered charities, grassroots organizations, and professional artist projects. In 2025, the CEF provided funding to 435 programs, totaling \$7,970,771. By supporting a diverse range of community projects, the CEF fosters a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community in Hamilton.

3. **Healthy & Safe Communities Strategies:** The Community Strategies Team, based in the Healthy & Safe Communities Department, leads three interconnected initiatives aimed at fostering safety, well-being, and positive development across Hamilton. These strategies include the [Community Safety and Well-Being \(CSWB\) Plan](#), [Youth Strategy](#), and the [Early Years Community Plan](#).

The Early Years Community Plan aims to transform Hamilton's Early Years System, ensuring seamless transitions for children and families from birth to young adulthood. Building on the 2016-2020 plan, it identifies five priority areas: equity, diversity, and inclusion; developing a high-quality workforce; expanding childcare accessibility; supporting middle years (ages 8-14); and enhancing system-wide coordination. This plan fosters collaboration across community partners to improve services for children and families, with a focus on inclusion and equity.

4. **All4One Team:** Under the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, the City of Hamilton has formed the All4One Team. This cross-departmental team aims to accelerate development application approvals, targeting Conditional Site Plan approval within 30 days. The team is also developing a "playbook" for streamlined procedures to meet the goal of approving 20,000 new housing units by 2026.



Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

5. **John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport:** As Canada's busiest cargo airport, John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport transports almost 1 million passengers per year, employs over 4,700 people, and is evolving to train the next generation of airplane technicians and mechanics. Since 1996, TradePort and its partners have generated over \$1.5 billion in total economic output and \$536.7 million in value-added GDP.

In 2023, the Federal government announced a \$23.5 million investment as part of a \$46.9 million initiative under the National Trade Corridors Fund. This funding will help alleviate constraints on domestic and international trade routes, ensuring just-in-time goods are moved coast to coast without delay. The project includes expanding airfield and de-icing capacity, strengthening airfield infrastructure, treating de-icing water to reduce community flooding risk, and constructing a dedicated service road to reduce delays. The project is expected to create 460 construction jobs and 1,839 full-time jobs by 2025, generating approximately \$2.1 billion in economic activity annually by 2025.

6. **Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA):** HOPA offers real property and industrial development solutions suitable for various business applications. The Port of Hamilton, Canada's largest Great Lakes port, is a multimodal transportation hub providing direct marine, rail, and road connections. The port is within an hour of the Greater Toronto Area and key U.S. markets, served by both CN and CP railway networks, and has easy access to major highways. Transload facilities allow goods to be loaded directly onto railcars or trucks for immediate delivery, reducing transportation and logistics costs.

With 260 hectares (650 acres) of industrial land, warehouse space, and brownfield land for future development, the port aims to enhance its infrastructure, sustainability, and economic impact. Current projects include building Canada's largest sugar refinery by Sucro Can Sourcing with a \$135 million investment, multiple infrastructure enhancements at various piers, and installing 20 new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to reduce carbon emissions. HOPA is also investing in a new Intelligent Vehicle Management System using AI-enabled technology to monitor truck activity, improve operational efficiency, and enhance supply chains and environmental performance. The implementation of the \$512,354 project is funded on a 50/50 basis by HOPA Ports and the NTCF program.

Hamilton's economic future is rooted in fostering innovation, strengthening partnerships, and supporting business growth. Future efforts will focus on attracting investment, supporting emerging industries, and enhancing workforce development programs. Indicators of progress will include an increase in business startups, new industry partnerships, and expanded workforce training opportunities.

Focus Area 10

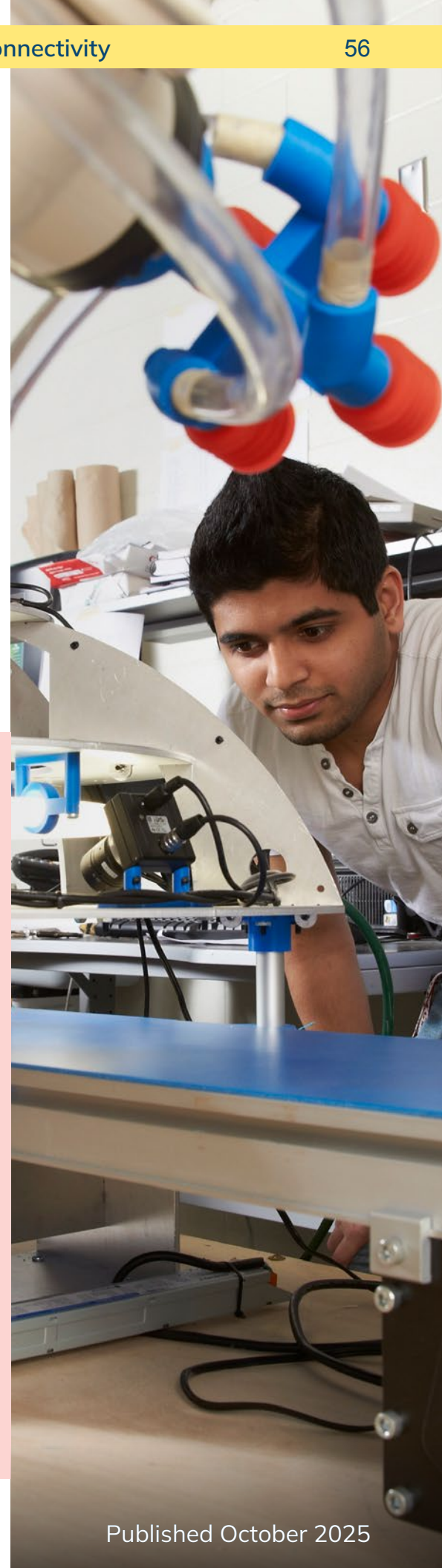
Education, Job Creation & Workforce Training

Why This Matters

Ensuring Hamilton's workforce is equipped for the jobs of the future is essential for sustained economic growth and social equity. Investments in education, skills training, and career pathways empower residents with opportunities for stable, high-paying jobs. A well-trained workforce supports local industries, attracts employers, and strengthens Hamilton's ability to compete in a rapidly evolving global economy.

Objectives

- Foster innovation and technological advancement in education by integrating smart technology into local educational institutions' curricula and promote interdisciplinary research.
- Foster partnerships with local institutions to support Hamilton's objectives of creating job opportunities and driving economic growth through internships, co-op programs, and startup incubators.
- Offer specialized training programs, certifications, and professional development, in alignment with Hamilton's aim to ensure a skilled workforce that meets the needs of emerging smart city technologies, contributing to workforce readiness and economic resilience.
- Connect students, educational institutions, and local industries, as well as advocate for job growth, supporting Hamilton's goal of building strong community partnerships and enhancing the local economy.





Connected Strategy for Education, Job Creation & Workforce Training

Building on Hamilton's **Economic Development Action Plan**, which made attracting and retaining a skilled workforce a top priority, Council approved the standalone **Hamilton Workforce Strategy** in 2023, underscoring our commitment to a strong, resilient economy. This strategy combines research and analysis of Hamilton's workforce ecosystem with a comprehensive consultation process. The consultation involved over 270 interactions with employers, jobseekers, community organizations, and business associations.

The strategy envisions Hamilton as a city recognized for workforce excellence, where talent thrives, businesses succeed, and the community prospers. It offers evidence-based areas of focus and objectives, supported by a tailored action plan. These areas outline aspirational outcomes for Hamilton's future labor market, backed by objectives that define how these outcomes will be achieved. Each objective is guided by actions delivered through collaboration within Hamilton's Workforce Ecosystem. The ultimate goal is for local industries and employers to have access to a skilled and resilient talent pool, enhancing Hamilton's competitive position to attract and retain businesses and talent.

Key Initiatives

Education and Research Excellence

1. **McMaster University:** McMaster University is home to more than 70 high-impact research centers and institutes, with nearly a quarter of its 1,000 full-time faculty holding prestigious research chairs. In 2023, researchers from its six faculties: business, engineering, health sciences, humanities, science, and social sciences, attracted \$391.5M in sponsored research income. McMaster boasts nearly \$1.2B in total revenues and is ranked 72nd in the world, second globally for impact, and Canada's most research-intensive university for the third consecutive year. McMaster also ranks third in Canada and 51st globally in Universitas Indonesia's GreenMetric World University Rankings for its environmentally friendly infrastructure. McMaster researchers tackle urgent societal needs, from combating disease to developing smart cars, improving quality of life, productivity, and opportunities for communities locally and globally.
2. **Mohawk College:** Mohawk College educates over 37,100 students across three main campuses and the Centre for Aviation Technology and Research at Hamilton International Airport. Renowned for health and technology education, it is one of Ontario's largest trainers of apprentices, offering over 210 programs, including 10 degree programs. With more than 177,900 graduates, Mohawk College has been named one of Canada's top employers and greenest employers for eleven years. It holds a GOLD STARS rating from AASHE and is home to Canada's largest zero carbon building, The Joyce Centre for Partnership & Innovation. Collaborating with thousands of employers and industry partners through co-ops, internships, advisory roles, and joint research, Mohawk College addresses evolving workforce needs and fosters economic prosperity in Hamilton and beyond.
3. **Redeemer University:** Redeemer University offers over 35 majors and streams leading to recognized degrees, with more than 1,034 students from across Canada and 34 other countries enrolled. The university offers 19 programs with co-op or internship options, boasting a >90% job offer rate for co-op graduates. Through CityLAB, Redeemer University collaborates with the City of Hamilton, bringing together students, academic staff, city officials, and community partners to co-create solutions addressing the city's strategic priorities.



Workforce Development & Skills Training

4. Industry Education Council (IEC):

The Industry Education Council (IEC) of Hamilton is a not-for-profit organization that fosters partnerships between industry, business, education, and community groups. IEC supports experiential learning opportunities for students of all ages through various programs and industry-led initiatives, accommodating career exploration needs. Acting as a catalyst between education, industry, and the broader community, the IEC collaborates with local school boards, post-secondary institutions, private sector firms, and municipal government to develop quality partnerships that support future workforce development in Hamilton. IEC offers programs such as the W.A.G.E. (Introduction to Residential Construction Trades program), Gateway to the Trades, Codefest, Career Exploration, and Edge Factor to support digital literacy and student learning.

5. **Pathways to Employment Program:**

The Pathways to Employment Program helps candidates aged 15 to 30 with disabilities or health conditions gain job-related skills and work experience. Pathways 2.0 offers 7 weeks of paid employment skills training followed by a 12-week employment opportunity. Participants earn minimum wage for 150 hours of pre-employment training and

receive employment coaching, mentorship, and job readiness training. Participants receive essential and technical skills certifications, including First Aid and CPR, Health and Safety, WHMIS, Smart Serve, and Working at Heights. They also receive professional skills training in communication, diversity and inclusion, resume and cover letter writing, interview skills, confidence and motivation, document use, and computer use.

The program equips participants with in-demand skills, enhancing their employability and providing lifelong learning opportunities. By helping participants secure stable and meaningful employment, the program reduces unemployment rates and supports local business growth through a reliable supply of trained workers, contributing to the local economy.

Building a skilled, adaptable workforce is essential for Hamilton's continued economic success. The city will prioritize collaboration between post-secondary institutions, businesses, and workforce training programs to prepare residents for evolving industries. Progress will be reflected in greater participation in upskilling programs, an increase in employer-led training initiatives, and expanded career pathway opportunities for young professionals.

Focus Area 11

Innovation

Why This Matters

Innovation is a key driver of economic transformation, technological progress, and long-term sustainability. By fostering an environment that supports startups, research institutions, and emerging technologies, Hamilton can attract talent, create high-value jobs, and build a resilient economy. Encouraging cross-sector collaboration and public-private partnerships ensures Hamilton remains at the forefront of innovation and intelligent city development.



Objectives

- Foster an environment that prioritizes innovative approaches to problems and supports the development of new products and processes.
- Collaborate with educational institutions to develop programs that equip the workforce with the skills needed for a competitive global economy.
- Utilize cutting-edge technologies to drive efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness across various sectors.
- Stimulate economic growth by encouraging investment in local businesses and innovation hubs.



Connected Strategy for Innovation

Hamilton is driving economic growth through innovation, leveraging digital transformation, emerging industries, and strategic partnerships to build a resilient, future-ready economy. Rooted in its legacy as a City of Innovation, Hamilton is expanding its focus on technology, entrepreneurship, and research commercialization to power the next wave of economic transformation.

The **Economic Development Action Plan** and [Digital Strategy](#) guide Hamilton's approach by:

- Expanding digital infrastructure, including broadband and connected city initiatives, to support business growth and innovation.
- Supporting entrepreneurship and commercialization, ensuring startups and small businesses have access to resources and funding.
- Advancing innovation testbeds, including autonomous vehicle networks and digital infrastructure pilots, to support technology adoption, commercialization, and investment attraction.
- Bridging the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to technology, digital skills, and business opportunities.

By investing in digital transformation, industry collaboration, and inclusive innovation, Hamilton is building a smarter, stronger, and more connected economy.

Key Initiatives

Education and Research Excellence

1. **[Innovation Factory:](#)** Established in 2010 at McMaster Innovation Park, Innovation Factory (iF) is a not-for-profit Regional Innovation Centre that supports technology innovation and startups. Funded by the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs, iF offers resources such as funding access, business development tools, commercialization support, intellectual property guidance, and talent acquisition assistance. Since inception, iF has helped over 3,000 businesses. In 2021, FedDev Ontario invested \$7 million in iF to launch the SOPHIE program, providing life science startups with commercialization funding and research access, leveraging an additional \$7.5 million in private-sector investment, creating 196 jobs, and supporting dozens of companies.
2. **[The Forge Accelerator:](#)** The Forge is the business incubator for the Hamilton Region and McMaster University. It works hands-on with early-stage entrepreneurs to help them build successful startups. As of 2023, 143 companies have been through The Forge, collectively raising over \$31 million and selling products in 50 countries. The Forge's programs are open to anyone pursuing scalable, technology-based companies.
3. **[MacChangers:](#)** a McMaster University co-curricular program that pairs multidisciplinary teams with community partners to propose innovative solutions to local and global challenges. It invites students from all disciplines to be part of interdisciplinary teams, particularly those passionate about knowledge translation and solution implementation.
4. **[Mohawk College IDEAWORKS:](#)** Mohawk College's IDEAWORKS drives community and industry innovation, enabling companies to fast-track new technologies, products, and processes. IDEAWORKS provides specialized expertise and equipment to help organizations de-risk new technologies and offers students opportunities to work on industry-driven projects. Key centers and labs include:
 - Additive Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC)
 - XR (AR/VR) Development Lab
 - Unmanned and Remote Sensing Innovation Centre (URSIC)
 - MEDIC (Canada's Digital Health Technology Access Centre)
 - Energy & Power Innovation Centre (EPIC)
 - Sensor Systems and IoT Lab

5. **Canadian Bio-Cleantech Applied Research Network (CBARN):**

A network of six colleges and universities collaborating with bio-based companies to advance biotechnologies. Supported by the Government of Canada through FedDev Ontario, CBARN leverages faculty expertise and state-of-the-art equipment to drive commercialization and job growth in the bio-cleantech industry.

6. **Hamilton Public Libraries (HPL):**

HPL drives innovation by supporting technical and digital literacy through programs, classes, and individual appointments. Makerspaces at multiple branches offer equipment like 3-D printers, vinyl printers, embroidery machines, and sound studios. These spaces provide a rich learning environment for young minds and resources for music enthusiasts. HPL also collaborates with university researchers to study how digital literacy programs can support older adults and reduce social isolation. By providing these resources, HPL fosters learning, creativity, and community engagement, bridging the digital divide and promoting lifelong learning.



Hamilton's long-standing reputation as a center for innovation continues to grow as it invests in research, commercialization, and technology-driven industries. The city will focus on strengthening its innovation ecosystem, supporting startups, and promoting applied research collaborations. Success will be measured through an increase in new business incubators and expanded commercialization of locally developed technologies.

Focus Area 12

Healthcare and Social Services

Why This Matters

A strong healthcare system and accessible social services are fundamental to community well-being and equity. Ensuring affordable, high-quality healthcare and comprehensive social support systems enables all residents, especially vulnerable populations, to thrive. By integrating technology, enhancing healthcare accessibility, and addressing social determinants of health, Hamilton can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for its residents.



Objectives

- Foster initiatives and collaborations that prioritize patient-centered care and actively engage the community to improve overall healthcare delivery and address diverse health needs.
- Utilize technology to enhance healthcare delivery, ensuring comprehensive and efficient services across various healthcare sectors through collaborative efforts and partnerships.
- Develop and support social service initiatives and partnerships aimed at tackling health disparities, reducing poverty, and promoting civic inclusion within the community.
- Implement programs and collaborations focused on improving community safety, ensuring a secure and supportive environment for all residents.

Connected Strategy for Healthcare and Social Services

A strong healthcare and social services network ensures that all residents, from young children to adults, have access to essential resources. The [Early Years Community Plan](#) provides a roadmap for improving childcare accessibility, middle-years support, inclusive services, workforce development, and system-wide collaboration, ensuring seamless transitions for children and families through continued community partnerships.

The [Community Safety and Well-Being \(CSWB\) Plan](#), mandated by Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, was first adopted in 2021 and will be revised in 2025. The updated plan focuses on strengthening coordination across government, social services, healthcare, and community organizations; improving access to essential services by integrating resources and reducing barriers; and aligning economic investment and social supports to address housing, employment, and education.

As part of this work, in 2025 Council approved \$192 million for housing and homelessness, including approximately 272 new shelter beds (an ~80% increase), \$4 million for the Affordable Housing Fund targeting around 450 units, and \$4.2 million for supportive housing representing about 435 units.

Together, these plans guide Hamilton's long-term efforts to reduce service fragmentation, improve well-being, and create a safer, more inclusive community.



Key Initiatives

Healthcare System & Medical Research Advancements

1. **Synapse Life Sciences Consortium:**

Founded in 2016, Synapse is a not-for-profit organization supporting the life sciences ecosystem in Hamilton. It aims to accelerate the commercialization of life science innovations by fostering collaboration across the cluster. Synapse supports companies and institutions, promoting Hamilton as a great place to live, work, and invest. Key achievements include launching the Technology Access Centre (TAC) for Digital Health at Mohawk College and establishing MEDIC, which has worked with over 60 partners globally to advance digital health technologies

2. **St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton:**

A premier academic and research healthcare organization, SJHH is a member of St. Joseph's Health System and affiliated with McMaster University and Mohawk College. SJHH is home to the Firestone Institute for Respiratory Health, the Brain-Body Institute, and the Centre for Minimal Access Surgery. Designated as Baby-Friendly, SJHH is renowned for excellence in respiratory, kidney, urinary, mental health, addictions, surgical services, cancer surgery, and women's and infants' care.

3. **Hamilton Health Sciences:** Serving southwestern Ontario, Hamilton Health Sciences is a community of 15,000 staff, physicians, researchers, and volunteers. They provide advanced care across all ages, from pre-birth to end-of-life, specializing in cardiac, stroke, cancer, palliative, and pediatric care. As the largest employer in the region, they collaborate with McMaster University and Mohawk College to train future health professionals. Key locations include Hamilton General Hospital, Juravinski Cancer Centre, McMaster Children's Hospital, and St. Peter's Hospital.

4. **Population Health Research Institute (PHRI):**

PHRI is a world leader in large clinical trials and population studies, focusing on cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other common conditions. With unmatched expertise in epidemiology and clinical trials, PHRI has conducted international studies with nearly 1.5 million participants in 105 countries. They also train and mentor health researchers worldwide, with five researchers named among the top 1% of cited authors globally.



Public Health & Community Based Healthcare Initiatives

5. [Hamilton Public Health Services \(HPHS\)](#): HPHS offers a wide range of services related to health promotion, protection, and disease prevention. Their team includes nurses, doctors, public health inspectors, nutritionists, social workers, and health promoters. Services include immunization, disease screening, family and child health services, sexual health services, air quality monitoring, and food and water safety. HPHS collaborates with partners like Hamilton Health Sciences and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton to provide healthcare options and emphasize preventive measures.
6. [Greater Hamilton Health Network \(GHHN\)](#): One of 54 Ontario Health Teams, GHHN focuses on transforming healthcare through partnerships with patients, families, care partners, primary care, and local organizations. Involving over 40 organizations, GHHN aims to create a patient-centered health system tailored to the needs of communities across Hamilton, Haldimand, and Niagara Northwest. Their principles include health equity, patient/community engagement, and environmentally sustainable healthcare.

Social Services & Community Wellbeing Programs

7. [United Way Halton & Hamilton \(UWHH\)](#): Guided by a vision of strong, empowered communities, UWHH values courage, compassion, conviction, and credibility. Since 2005, city staff have raised over \$2.3 million through the annual giving campaign in partnership with United Way Halton & Hamilton. UWHH has raised \$12.5 million for community programs, supported 61 agencies, 117 programs, and over 220,568 families, and distributed \$969,128 in-kind donations. Funds support access to healthy food, youth programs, and services for older adults to reduce isolation.
8. [Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council](#): Established in 2009, HIPC aims to create a seamless settlement experience for immigrants in Hamilton. It collaborates with partners from various sectors to provide welcoming and accessible services. Guided by a strategic plan until 2025, HIPC focuses on ensuring basic needs for newcomers, leadership from those with lived experience, and anti-racism and anti-oppression actions. Located within the City's Economic Development Division, HIPC emphasizes the importance of immigration to Hamilton's economy, culture, and population growth.

9. **Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWB):** Adopted by City Council in June 2021, the CSWB Plan aims to create a safe community with access to essential services. Key priorities include addressing hate incidents, violence, mental health, substance use, homelessness, and income access. Current initiatives include the Community Safety & Well-Being Data Strategy, Building Safer Communities Grant, Situation Table, and Hate Prevention and Mitigation efforts. The City also advocates for a living wage, conducts gender-based safety audits, and supports initiatives like “Hamilton for All” and the Anti-Hate Toolkit.
10. **Hamilton Community Foundation:** Part of a network of over 191 Canadian community foundations, HCF funds projects addressing social issues and fostering development in Hamilton. HCF launched SCAFFOLD, a 10-year, \$50 million commitment to affordable housing, with \$12.5 million invested and \$3.6 million in further commitments pending. This supports the City’s Housing Sustainability Investment Roadmap. HCF also funds the City’s new housing secretariat to support the roadmap’s implementation.
11. **HamOnt Youth Strategy:** Developed through extensive engagement, this strategy focuses on improving outcomes for Hamilton youth aged 14-29. Priorities include mental health supports, employment and training, affordable housing, and youth engagement. The HamOntYouth Steering Committee empowers youth to contribute to making Hamilton more youth-friendly. Current initiatives include Hamilton’s first Youth Town Hall, Annual Youth Summit, and Beach Clean Up.



Long-term vision & Major Capital Projects (5+ years)

12. Housing Services Division Projects:

- 1. Coordinated Access:** Since 2016, Hamilton's Coordinated Access system streamlines resources for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Managed by the City's Housing Services Division, it reduces the need for clients to tell their story multiple times by using a shared HIFIS database. Currently, 28 programs share responsibility to ensure equitable and efficient access to housing.
- 2. Housing and Homelessness Dashboard:** Launched in 2022, this dashboard provides data on homelessness and affordable housing in Hamilton. It tracks key metrics like shelter occupancy rates, the number of people experiencing homelessness, and waitlists for affordable housing, updated monthly.
- 3. Point-in-Time Connection (PiTC):** From November 4-18, 2024, in collaboration with the Coalition of Hamilton Indigenous Leadership, the City conducted the PiTC to gather comprehensive data on homelessness. The initiative engaged 150 sector staff from 28 programs with over 600 people, informing resource allocation and enhancing support services.

4. Housing & Homelessness Action Plan and Systems Planning Framework

Framework: The 10-year HHAP aims to ensure every Hamiltonian has a home, setting targets for housing supply, affordability, support services, quality, and equity. Complementing this is the Systems Planning Framework, which aims to end chronic homelessness through immediate and long-term strategies.

A strong, accessible healthcare and social services network is fundamental to Hamilton's long-term well-being and equity. The city will focus on improving service coordination, expanding community health programs, and leveraging technology to enhance healthcare accessibility. Progress will be seen in reduced service wait times, greater integration of digital health solutions, and expanded mental health and social support services.



**Hamilton
is ready for
the future —
let's build it
together.**

Get involved.
Stay connected.

In Conclusion

The Hamilton Connected Communities Strategy is more than a vision—it is a commitment to action. By investing in resilient infrastructure, digital transformation, and inclusive economic development, Hamilton is building a future where every resident, business, and community partner can thrive.

What This Means for Hamilton

- **Stronger Infrastructure:** Investments in smart mobility, public spaces, and climate resilience create a more livable city.
- **Seamless Digital Access:** Expanding broadband, open data, and digital services supports businesses and residents alike.
- **An Inclusive Economy:** Workforce development, innovation hubs, and partnerships open opportunities for all.
- **A Transparent & Engaged City:** Guided by Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), Hamilton is ensuring fair access to resources, meaningful public engagement, and open decision-making processes.

The Road Ahead

Success depends on collaboration across public and private sectors. Residents, businesses, institutions, and community organizations all play a role in making Hamilton a more connected, innovative, and sustainable city.

How can you contribute to a more Connected Hamilton?

- Stay informed and engaged in city initiatives and programs.
- Partner with local organizations to drive innovation and community growth.
- Support efforts that enhance accessibility, sustainability, and digital inclusion.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated internal staff at the City of Hamilton, whose expertise, commitment, and collaborative spirit have been invaluable throughout the development of this Connected Communities Strategy. We are grateful for the opportunity to highlight the programs and initiatives being undertaken by your departments and the benefit they provide to the overall community.

We also deeply appreciate the input and support from our community partners, who provided feedback regarding their institutions and innovative programs and projects, ensuring this strategy is inclusive and reflective of the aspirations and needs of Hamilton's residents.

To everyone involved, your vision, passion, and collaboration have not only guided the drafting of this strategy but have also inspired a shared commitment to making Hamilton a more connected, innovative, and sustainable community. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to shaping the future of our city.

We eagerly anticipate future iterations of this document, showcasing an expanding array of programs as Hamilton progresses in its journey toward becoming a fully realized Connected Community.



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