

Downtown Hamilton Creative Placemaking Grant 2026 Funded Projects

Celebrating Community

Location: Meridian Co-Op, 185 Ferguson Ave N (Ward 2)

Applicant: Meridian Co-Op

Funding: \$15,000

Estimated Timeline: July - August 2026

Project Description:

Residents will collaborate through two creative workshops to explore shared stories, symbols, and hopes for their community. These ideas will inspire a large public mural painted on a visible wall. The project culminates in a vibrant community celebration featuring a DJ, facilitated dancing experience for community and multicultural performances, unveiling the mural as a collective expression of neighbourhood identity.

York Poetry Apartment and Zine Project

Location: York St and James St N (Ward 2)

Applicant: Sara Mann, Lishai Peel, Ashley Feldman

Funding: \$15,000

Estimated Timeline: August 2026

Project Description:

This project invites Hamiltonians to share what it feels like to live, work, and move through downtown across the four seasons. Their responses inspire poems and visual art displayed in illuminated, Little Free Library-sized installations at one outdoor location. The work will also be published in a free zine, creating visible, place-based reflections of downtown life.

Dis Place

Location: Various locations (Wards 2, 3)

Applicant: New Harlem Productions

Funding: \$11,000

Estimated Timeline: August 1 – October 31, 2026

Project Description:

Public Poetry brings poets into public spaces to engage with the people and the place, with an offering of free food for thought and for body.

Hamilton Public Piano Pilot

Location: Claremont Underpass (Ward 2)

Applicant: Squint Cultural - Robert Wharry, Forrest Fannin, Isadora Cass, Connor Marquis-Young, Nathan Ivanco

Funding: \$5,155

Estimated Timeline: July 2026

Project Description:

A piano will be placed at a downtown location for three weeks in July 2026. The project will be a place for the community to commune, listen and play. A place for experienced players to dazzle and for new players to practice. It will be monitored daily by community members and professionally maintained throughout the project.

Co Creating Strachan: A Neighbourhood Visioning Series

Location: Strachan Linear Park (Ward 2)

Applicant: Group of residents led by Dave Heidebrecht, Mandy Roveda, and Victoria Alstein

Funding: \$5,000

Estimated Timeline: May 2027

Project Description:

This is a month-long series of workshops in Strachan Linear Park. Local residents, families, elementary students, and community partners will walk the park, map ideas, and create visual visions of its future. McMaster students in The Art of Change course will help facilitate and document the process, with all input shared with the City to inform long-term planning.

Conduct Me 2026

Location: Gore Park (Ward 2)

Applicant: Brott Music Festival

Funding: \$5,000

Estimated Timeline: July 7, 2026

Project Description:

CONDUCT ME 2026 is a free interactive music activation at Gore Park where members of the public are invited to step onto a podium and try conducting a live ensemble of professional musicians. The project transforms the park into a welcoming space for creativity, connection, and shared cultural experience in downtown Hamilton.

James Street Pop-Up Short Film Festival

Location: James and Wilson (Ward 2)

Applicant: Monday Press

Funding: \$5,000

Estimated Timeline: July 2026

Project Description:

A pop up outdoor, short film festival that takes place on James Street. The festival will be a curated collection of short films from a broad collection of filmmakers across the city. The films will be projected onto a large exterior wall in the downtown core. Local filmmakers apply to have their films shown at no cost.

Puppy Dog Picnic – Hamilton

Location: Strachan Linear Park (Ward 2)

Applicant: A partnership between Dog-Friendly Hamilton and the Hamilton/Burlington SPCA.

Funding: \$5,000

Estimated timeline: August 29, 2026

Project Description:

Strachan Linear Park will transform into a dog-friendly community picnic area - complete with local food vendors, picnic blanket stations where owners can sit comfortably and secure their dog, and dog-friendly and human-friendly sanitation and water access. The park will transform into a bustling community gathering--with dogs as the ice-breakers--rather than a strip of green to pass through.

Zalabia and Kids Corner: A Sudanese Cultural Gathering in Public Space

Location: Ferguson Station (Ward 2)

Applicant: Sahari Organization for Development

Funding: \$5,000

Estimated Timeline: July 2026

Project Description:

Zalabia and a Cup of Tea is a one-day outdoor experience that brings community together. In Sudan, preparing Zalabia (a beloved fried pastry) and tea is a communal event. Family members gather around a traditional stove, stories are exchanged, children play nearby, and music often fills the air. The preparation process itself becomes performance, ritual, and shared art.

Stories of Home in Central Park

Location: Central Park (Ward 2)

Applicant: Central Neighbourhood Association

Funding: \$4,975

Estimated Timeline: September 2026

Project Description:

The goal of this collaborative placemaking process is to build relationships between Central neighbourhood residents and to promote increased use of Central Park. This project incorporating stories of newcomer experiences in Hamilton will bring together residents of Central neighbourhood and also nearby neighbourhoods to share their own experiences and highlight the amenities of Central Park.

Dough Make Say Think - a park pizza party pop-up

Location: Beasley Park (Ward 2)

Applicant: Group of residents, co-designed by Elyse Pipitone, Brendan Platts and Kelsey Tremblay

Funding: \$4,750

Estimated Timeline: August 2026

Project Description:

Dough Make Say Think is an intergenerational, end-of-summer pop-up that feels like everyone’s favourite birthday party. Families, kids, and seniors will make and bake pizzas, enjoy homemade gelato, and take part in colourful crafts and activities. The event invites neighbours to break bread together and transforms Beasley Park into a joyful space of connection and celebration.