“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

-Jane Jacobs
A vibrant, connected community...
Welcome to the GALA Neighbourhood!

This Neighbourhood Action Plan is the culmination of ideas and efforts, gathered over a year and half, from people living and working in the community and individuals assigned to support the concept of asset based community development within the GALA boundaries. To better understand the concepts and suggestions within GALA’s Action Plan, a brief history of the formation and development of GALA, from its humble genesis to the present, is essential.

GALA’s first monthly meeting took place April 28, 2012, at the Barton Street Library, initiated by Laura Ryan, a Community Development Worker, who had sent out postcards of invitation piquing the interest of those concerned about issues in the Gibson and Landsdale neighbourhoods. Some of the people in attendance were: Laura Ryan, Brenda Duke, Richard MacLean, Nick Scime and Deb Clinton from the City of Hamilton, Jessica Howe from the Parent Council of Cathy Wever Public School, Suzanne Brown from Neighbourhood Action Strategy at the City and Kathleen Shannon from the Hamilton Public Library.

Initially, ideas emerged from the brainstorm discussions at the monthly meetings. Laura would record and categorize them, e.g: adopt a park, security, policing, etc. Once assembled, the ideas were prioritized and people chose which area they’d like to champion or work on.

By the summer of 2012, monthly meetings were averaging 15-20 attendees. Around this time we began work on our Terms of Reference and a Mission and Vision Statement:

“In Gibson and Landsdale Neighbourhoods, we will respect, protect and engage the community to proudly live, work, play, create, educate and celebrate in places and spaces accessible, affordable and well cared for.”
Ward 3 Councillor Bernie Morelli attended early meetings where concerns about absent landlords, and the need for increased police presence were voiced. As a result, work on an “Action Plan” was started where safety was the focus. Sgt. John Pauls and Assistant Sgt. Kerri Duentch attended meetings. Throughout this time, the new stadium and Go Station, Barton Business Improvement Association, resident patrol, and support from Councillor Bernie Morelli were discussed. Although not all the ideas or plans discussed at monthly meetings were feasible or adopted, several key items were, like the neighbourhood clean-ups and the establishment of the Birch Avenue Greenspace.

Meetings also explored the idea of funding proposals through Small Project Grants with funds provided by the Hamilton Community Foundation. A community movie night was arranged which took place at Powell Park. Maintenance of local parks was also discussed.

The idea of a newsletter was started. The Herald newspaper was established with its first bi-monthly publication going out in May of 2013. In the span of four issues the newspaper has reached financial sustainability and the Herald team has grown from the initial 3 to 15. A website and Facebook page have also been established.

In 2013 Laura Ryan went to another neighbourhood and Rebecca Doll took her place as GALA’s Community Development Worker. Terms of reference were adopted in 2013 along with the mission, vision and values, and the first executive positions were elected at the Annual General Meeting in September 2013:

Chair: Gerry Cunningham
Vice Chair: Sarah Sirket
Treasurer: Alfair Reid
Secretary: Angela Eady

Many new faces appeared at GALA’s Annual General Meeting in 2013, joining the effort to make our community a place where we can all safely live, work and play.

In October 2013 we presented the Neighbourhood Action Plan at the Wever Celebrates event. Community residents were invited to help prioritize the action items and were encouraged to get involved in helping to undertake some of them. In February of 2014 we will be presenting the Neighbourhood Action Plan to City Council for adoption.

For those living in the Gibson and Landsdale area, the establishment of the GALA Hub has offered hope that a community can make a difference, that as a team we can set goals and see them through to completion, and that by engaging people in the neighbourhood the positive energy of the community may be harnessed.
Parks, gardens and gathering places.
By Brenda Duke

It is important to reclaim our parks, greenspaces, and alleys to ensure that they become tools that successfully engage our neighbours; places where we can meet and get to know each other. In October 2012, we adopted The Birch Avenue Greenspace and did a clean-up. In May we held a garden party, did a clean-up, spread mulch, and planted flowers. At the event we launched a Garden Award contest. The City came on board and installed benches, provided equipment, supplies, and prizes for children. In August the neighbourhood came together and held our first BBQ. In October, after a year of effort, we held another clean-up to prepare the park for spring. We gave out the Garden Awards and found more interest for next year’s contest. The Birch Avenue Greenspace has been enhanced to provide a gathering space for the area and now needs only regular and seasonal maintenance.

We have taken stewardship of the alleys on both sides of Fullerton Avenue to ensure that illegal dumping, graffiti, and other by-law issues are dealt with. The area has a clean-team that regularly monitors the alleys, Greenspace, and the streets where we reside. By-law and property standard infractions are reported to the appropriate departments and dealt with in a timely manner. As the clean-team we have engaged neighbouring businesses and helped them improve their business areas, such as the clean-up at Master Paints. As a result, we have developed strong relationships with many businesses and seen improvements in all areas.

We recently adopted Powell Park with the goal in mind to improve the area through better lighting, reduced illegal dumping, and general discouragement of anti-social activity. We hope to engage the children in the area by offering movie nights and by encouraging involvement in other park activities, including maintaining the appearance of the park. We hope that they will develop pride in the park.

Community Engagement
By Rachel Braithwaite

“Through the small grants opportunity, we have helped to support several great community-led initiatives, one of which was helping the local neighbourhood association (GLNA) host a Hallowe’en event at a neighbourhood park. They worked with Wever C.O.R.E. and local schools to get the word out, along with door-to-door delivery of an event flyer. The event was a huge success with over 100 people attending. There was a scavenger hunt (led by Y on Wheels), pumpkins to decorate, and a costume parade around the walking track (led by the police smart car). There was limited lighting at the park so several neighbours walked home and returned with their own flood lights to help improve the event. Numerous neighbours commented to the event organizers about how amazed they were by such a wonderful community activity, saying, “We can’t wait for the next event!”
What Becoming Engaged Means to Us
By Candy Venning of Venni Gardens

My husband and I moved to Hamilton in 2010. We bought the first house that either of us had ever owned and we did this together shortly after we were married. Leaving Toronto was intimidating at first, mostly because we had lived downtown and enjoyed all the cultural activities of a thriving city – galleries and music, pubs and international restaurants – but we didn’t want to work our guts out for a mortgage in Toronto.

As it turned out the Landsdale neighbourhood offered proximity to everything we were worried about losing. I’ll admit it was the house that initially enticed us, but with such a big move on the line we went and looked at what was happening in the area. Upon discovering the local music venue, classic pub (where we grilled the owner about Hamilton over pints), other artists in the area and that we were just 2 km. from the GO station and walking distance to James Street North, we took the plunge and will never look back.

There are so many wonderful things about this city – you can find your niche, whatever your passion. Best of all, you have some time to actually pursue your passion, because your home is well within your means. In our distracting world, the greatest gift after health is time – time to engage in activities from hiking the nearby Bruce Trail or exploring the Waterfront to giving back to your community.

For us it started locally. We gave bulbs to our neighbours, planted a tree to improve the street canopy, and regularly participate in Team Up to Cleanup as well as working with 3 different neighbourhood associations to improve curb appeal by donating design time. We are able to host a free annual neighbourhood Perennial Exchange open to all, and support various organizations through donations to silent auctions.

In 2013 we were able to secure a small project grant through the GALA Hub to order over 2000 bulbs which were distributed for free to residents in order to beautify the neighbourhood and promote stewardship within the community. Health and time - we feel that Hamilton has given us time, that we have found a secret place - a hidden jewel - and the best part is we get to share it with all our happy neighbours.
Live, work and play: that is the Hamilton way!
By Alfair Reid
Resident, Business Owner

Hidden within the steel town image is a city full of life, a sense of community, and the opportunity to grow and become one of the top cities in Canada. I am sure that people living within a certain nearby city will claim that their city is the best, but Hamilton has a lot to brag about.

Growing up in a small town, moving to another big city, and finally settling in Hamilton, I find life here has the feeling of a small town. Hamilton is very community-oriented. Many events take place here that draw the community together in unity. This is a place where you are able to build good relations with people from different nations. There are hidden treasures: waterfalls, nature trails, concert venues, and open street events that exhibit the various cultures of Hamilton. On any given Friday night James Street or Hess Street comes alive with free concerts, unique craft displays, and beautiful art galleries. I cannot forget to mention the food. If your nose could sing, it would. There are water parks, basketball courts, soccer fields, swimming pools, and ice rinks for the whole family to enjoy. We have the Tiger Cats and the Bulldogs whom the whole city rallies around and a farmers market that people come to from near and far. The Bay Front is a beautiful place with a trail for the whole family to walk, run, or bike ride. Many activities occur there throughout the year.

The city of Hamilton is bigger than most people realize. There is the mountain area and the lower city area. Within the downtown area there is a unique blend of old Victorian houses and modern-day homes. The diversity of the homes creates a canvas for the creative mind, leaving the imagination to run wild with all of the potential that is available to enhance the city further. Hamilton is a place of opportunity for everyone. As an individual with a passion for decorating and design, I can see the beauty of Hamilton as it grows further into a city of excellence. As the saying goes, if there is a will, there is a way. Speaking with various people, I hear there is the will. As we come together, the way will be seen. Neighbours are joining together to adopt parks, attend city council meetings to express their concerns - and their voices are being heard by the city council, and progress is taking place. We have a mayor who, in my opinion, seems to truly care. Things are moving in the right direction.

Like any city, Hamilton has its challenges, but we will not let those challenges defeat us. We are banding together and moving forward. When you can find that kind of connection within a large city, that is a place where everyone can work, live, and play.
Re-seeding democracy
By Rebecca Doll

As soon as there is more than one person involved in a thing, there arises more than one account of how the thing happened. Here is one version of how asset-based community development began in Hamilton. In 2001 the Hamilton Community Foundation hired one Community Developer, David Derbyshire, to begin working in one neighbourhood, McQuesten. The aim was to bring people together around the idea of building on their assets rather than focusing on their problems. This way of working - by building relationships, and then building on those relationships to create positive change in the community – was successful and within a few years spread to other neighbourhoods. In 2011 the Hamilton Community Foundation and the City of Hamilton teamed up to expand the effort by hiring four more community developers and by launching the Neighbourhood Leadership Institute to help develop the leadership capacity of the residents involved.

One of the early tools that the HCF offered was the Small Project Grant, which empowered residents to decide what sort of engagement projects would be undertaken in the community. Over the years this effort to support community decision-making has grown into the Neighbourhood Action Grants, for larger projects in partnerships with local service providers.

At the City of Hamilton, through the Neighbourhood Strategies Office and the adoption by Council of the Neighbourhood Action Plans, we see a commitment of one municipal department after another to changing the way the City does business in order to help support the resident-led planning.

I like to look one or two generations into the future, to adults who grew up thinking that all of this is normal - that their neighbours make decisions about their community and about policies that affect them, that government is responsive, and that institutions are supportive of their vision - and I wonder what kind of world might those people create? But how do we get there?

I tell people that my job as a community developer is to build relationships with and between people, to promote asset-based community development, to support resident-led planning teams, and to bring diverse stakeholders together to implement neighbourhood action plans. People often ask how will we measure our progress. Inspired by John McKnight, my answer is that our goal is to help people to share their gifts (assets); we will know we have succeeded when everyone is sharing their gifts with someone else.
Terms of Reference

Name
The group shall be known as the Gibson and Landsdale Area (GALA) Community Planning Team and further referred to as GALA Hub.

Purpose

VISION
Gibson Landsdale is a vibrant, connected community.

VALUES
• Inclusiveness
• Health and wellness
• Respect

MISSION
The GALA Community Planning Team will engage our community to create a neighbourhood where we can proudly live, work and play.

1. To promote a sense of community development and neighbourhood participation and to strive for a vibrant connected area for residents and businesses.

2. To generate a spirit of investment in Gibson and Landsdale neighbourhoods so that our residents, students, visitors, workers and business owners nurture, protect and promote our community and operate on a consensus-based decision-making model.

3. Manage a working action plan that serves to build and maintain the systems, institutions and services that we need to survive and thrive.

4. To provide a forum for interested community residents to develop their leadership, organizational, administrative and teaching skills while representing the views held locally.

5. To foster a spirit of community, communication, interaction and encourage the community to develop cultural, social, intellectual and recreational programs to meet the identified community needs.

6. To improve accessibility to facilities within the community.

7. To operate inclusively and in a non partisan manner
Membership

1. Membership of GALA will be open to all residents or other stakeholders regardless of race, colour, religion, political beliefs, nationality, gender, sexuality or disability. Members must be 18 years to hold an executive position.

2. Members must have a desire to enhance the Gibson and Landsdale neighbourhood.

3. Membership may be of persons who own property, operate business and/or reside in the area defined by the following geographical boundaries: east from Wellington St to Sherman Ave and north from Main Street to CNN tracks.

4. Memberships shall be ongoing. Membership lists shall be reviewed annually.

5. Conduct unbecoming of a member of GALA who misrepresents the GALA team may include dishonest acts, displays of indecency, lawlessness, dealing unfairly, indecorum, injustice, or acts of cruelty. The executive of GALA at the time of the allegation shall determine if action needs to be taken and what action to take. The Secretary shall notify the member in writing of said action without further explanation.

6. All Executive Committee members must be GALA members in good standing.

Remuneration

No remuneration is paid to the members of GALA.

Responsibilities of Executive Members

1. The GALA executive shall consist of 4 (four) officers. Officers are Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

2. Be familiar with GALA objectives, structures, activities, publications and programs.

3. Conduct the affairs of GALA with care and diligence.

4. Try to be familiar with GALA’s budget, budget processes and financial situation.

5. Regularly attend GALA meetings and committee meetings of which they are members.

6. Be familiar and ensure accuracy for the minutes of all meetings including committee meetings of which they are members.

7. Be involved at meetings, ask questions, discuss, challenge, participate in decision making, react to ideas, exercise initiative, influence and initiate change.

8. Support and participate in fund raising.

9. Be punctual at all meetings and advise the Chair well in advance when you are not able to attend.

10. Have a working knowledge of the parliamentary procedure.

11. Abide by the Terms of Reference of GALA.
Committees

1. The Planning team may strike committees when needed. These committees will report back to the Executive and to the General Membership as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

2. Each sub-committee shall provide a verbal status report of the efforts and progress of their committee at the regular meetings. These updates shall be a standing agenda item at each meeting until a committee disbands.

Time Commitment

1. If an Executive Committee member does not serve on or Chair a sub-committee, that member is nonetheless expected to complete a minimum of three hours per month of GALA-related work (e.g. volunteering at events, organizing events, attending community partner meetings). GALA Executive meetings may be included in the three monthly hours. The three-hour minimum time commitment may be averaged over a 12-month term.

2. An Executive member who fails the minimum time commitment between meetings may be asked to resign if their failure is deemed to demonstrate a lack of interest.

3. An Executive member missing three consecutive Executive meetings may be asked to resign if their absence is deemed to demonstrate a lack of interest.

4. Any Executive member having or appearing to have a conflict of interest with the objectives of GALA must resign. The resignation of a GALA Executive Member must be submitted to Chair/Vice-Chair in writing.

Communications

The primary form of communication among the Executive is by e-mail. All members of the Executive are therefore expected to have regular access to e-mail and to ensure that the Chair and Vice-Chair have an up-to-date e-mail address at all times.
Meetings
1. GALA shall hold a minimum of six meetings per year.
2. Each member shall have one (1) vote, save the Chair.
3. In the case of a tie vote on any issue, the Chair shall have the final or time-breaking vote.
4. Preferred decision making is by consensus, except for in the event of an election or when a vote is required. Then decisions shall be democratically made and taken by simple majority vote of members at open meetings. All official decisions of GALA shall be in the form of a motion duly seconded, discussed and voted upon.
5. No proxy votes shall be allowed.
6. A member must have attended three (3) meetings from the date of membership to participate in a vote. Voting commences on the fourth meeting attended.
7. Minutes of meetings will be recorded by the secretary and sent out by e-mail to members within three (3) weeks of the meeting.

Nominations and Elections
1. Voting at an election meeting shall be done under the same terms stated in sections two – seven, Article 9 – Meetings.
2. Members may submit nominations for Executive Committee members for a period of thirty days prior to the Annual General Meeting which shall be held in September of each year. Nominations shall be made using prescribed GALA Nomination Forms.
3. The Chair shall call for further nominations from the floor at the AGM.
4. Election of officers shall take place at the September meeting/AGM.
5. The outgoing Chair shall stand for the September meeting including the elections and GALA business.
6. The newly elected Chair shall assume office and responsibilities for the October meeting.
Terms of Office
1. The 4 (four) officers of GALA executive committee shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
2. The Chair shall serve until succeeded or retired for a term of 12 (twelve) months. The Vice-Chair shall serve until succeeded or retired for a term of 24 (twenty-four) months. The Secretary and the Treasurer shall serve until succeeded or retired for a term of 36 (thirty-six) months. Officers whose terms have expired are eligible for re-election for a maximum of 2 (two) consecutive terms in that position and 6 (six) consecutive years as an officer of GALA.
3. Officers who are absent from 3 (three) consecutive meetings without having provided an acceptable explanation to the membership may have their position terminated. Such vacancies shall be filled by the membership for the duration of the term. The process of selection is at the discretion of the majority of the Executive Committee.
4. Signing officers shall be the Treasurer and either the Chair or the Vice-Chair of GALA.

Fiscal Year
The fiscal year of GALA shall commence on September 1st and terminate on August 31st of the following year.

Finances and Expenses
1. Treasurer will report at each planning team meeting.
2. Small project funding is provided by the Hamilton Community Foundation and is administered through the Social Planning and Research Council.
3. Documents describing how to apply for small project grants shall be made available on the GALA web site.
## The Workplan

### GALA Neighbourhood Action Workplan 2014 - 2018

#### Goal 1: Safety

**Objective 1: Policing**

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<td>Action 1</td>
<td>Increase visibility of police officers in the neighbourhoods</td>
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<td>Action 2</td>
<td>Address prostitution and drug issues</td>
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<td>Action 3</td>
<td>Develop positive relationships between officers and community members</td>
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<td>Action 4</td>
<td>Prompt officer response to calls, both emergency and non emergency (ie. incident reporting)</td>
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<td>Action 5</td>
<td>Continue the “beat cop circuit” and increase the frequency of rounds and perimeter size of rounds (include all parks in rounds)</td>
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## GALA Neighbourhood Action Workplan 2014 - 2018

### Goal 1: Safety

#### Objective 2: Planning and Environmental Design

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<td>Traffic Calming</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Smart Commute Implementation</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Alleyways project: alternate uses such as movie night, market place, parks, award alleyway allstars</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Addition of Lighting in Alleys</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Improve accessibility for people with mobility issues</td>
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#### Objective 3: Conditions of the Environment

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Park Maintenance</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Promote Adopt-a-Park and Clean Team initiatives</td>
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<td>Proactive By-Law</td>
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<td>Address garbage and dumping issues</td>
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## GALA Neighbourhood Action Workplan 2014 - 2018

### Goal 2: Communications

#### Objective 1: Resident to Resident

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<td>Action 1</td>
<td>Involve children, youth and seniors. Start a youth committee</td>
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<td>Action 2</td>
<td>Block Champions/Ambassadors</td>
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<td>Action 3</td>
<td>Engage rental property owners</td>
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<td>Action 4</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
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<td>Brenda Duke, Jerry Cunningham</td>
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#### Objective 2: Institution to Resident

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<tr>
<td>Action 1</td>
<td>Provide education sessions to residents re: how to report criminal and by-law complaints</td>
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<td>Action 2</td>
<td>Alpha Course (Christianity 101) at Wentworth Baptist - includes dinner, all welcome</td>
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#### Objective 3: Resident to Institution

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action 1</td>
<td>Increase reporting of criminal and by-law complaints</td>
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## Goal 3: Business and Services

### Objective 1: Commercial

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<tr>
<td>Remove tax incentive for vacant properties</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforce commercial zoning on Barton and King Streets to combat illegal residential conversions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve marketing strategies for the Barton and King Street commercial districts</td>
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### Objective 2: Institutional

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<tr>
<td>Traffic calming</td>
<td>X</td>
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### Objective 3: Bricks and Mortar

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<tr>
<td>Provide financial incentives to improve Barton and King Street facades</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a “GALA Pride” neighbourhood improvement and stewardship project</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Bricks and mortar</td>
<td>Naturalize/enhance Birch Avenue Hydro right-of-way</td>
<td>Lise Graham, Brenda Duke (City of Hamilton)</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Action 2: Create a volunteer list</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong> Programming</td>
<td>Improve variety and availability of recreational programming</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 3:</strong> Events</td>
<td>Communicate events better</td>
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### Goal 5: Education

**Objective 1: Programming and Curriculum**

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<td>Michael Root (Daniel Moore, Mission Services)</td>
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**Objective 2: Bricks and Mortar/Transportation**

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**Objective 3: Students**

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Acknowledgements

Individuals

Senyo Agbeyaka
Cindy Ashenden
Sharon Bene
Linda Bevan
Charlene Bolonson
Rachel Braithwaite
Suzanne Brown
Sharon Charters
David Chirstopherson
Noah Clitheroe
Luke Clitheroe
Kim Cooms
Gerry Cunningham
Nick Custodio
David Derbyshire
Emily DeBenedictis
Rebecca Doll
Brenda Duke
Angela Eady
Myles Gardner
Deryck Glodin
Matt Goodman
Lise Graham
Eileen Griffets
Elena Guzas
Margaret Hastings-James
Jessica Howe
Chantal Johnson

Paul Johnson
Cathy Licop
Meg Matsos
Richard McLean
Kirsten McNamee
Mary Ann Meyer
Julie Michal
Bernie Morelli
Alex Moroz
Amanda Pepin
Gerry Perry
Alexandra Pope
Alfair Reid
Andrew Reid
Eric Reid
Tammy Rivers
Michael Root
Laura Ryan
Julie Scanlin
Deborah Serravalle
Sarah Sirkett
Tim Tapp
Maggie Tapp
Candy Venning
Jesse Williamson
Lynn Young
Ron Young
Community Partners

Afrocan Food Mart
Auxiliary Police
Barton Library
Barton Street BIA
Barton Street Library
Barton Village BIA
Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton
City of Hamilton
City of Hamilton IT Department
City of Hamilton Neighbourhood Strategies Office
City of Hamilton Recreation
Davids Hair Salon
Fermata Music Therapy
First Place Pharmacy
GALA Blooms
Hamilton Community Foundation
Hamilton Public Library – Barton Branch
Helping Hands
Jack’s Dollar Store
K-Otic Tattoo
King Barber Shop
Master Paints
Medical Pharmacy
Mediserve Pharmacy
Mission Services
Pacos Kitchen

Pinky Lewis Recreation Centre
Powell Park Community Garden
Pure Beauty
Ruffins
Shoppers Drug Mart
Social Planning and Research Council
St Matthews
St Vincent de Paul
The Mystery Ladies
Walt’s Variety
Wentworth Baptist Church
Wever C.O.R.E.
Y on Wheels
Youth Outreach Workers