INTRODUCTION
1.0/ INTRODUCTION

Context

Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue both have thrived in the past as vibrant commercial streets that served the adjacent residential communities and workers from nearby factories on Hamilton’s Harbour. With the changing economy, Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue have declined alongside industry, and this decline has manifested itself in vacant and neglected properties, and a high proportion of low-income households facing social and economic challenges.

The challenges facing Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are apparent to any observer, but there is also an emerging desire, and commitment by local residents and businesses, to revitalize the corridors. Residents are coming together to take back their neighbourhoods and dispel the area’s reputation as a hot spot for crime. The business community is using innovative strategies to attract a new wave of investment to refurbish old buildings to bring businesses back. Behind commercial façades, ground floor shops are being re-purposed as homes, which is just one sign that change along Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue may look significantly different from the areas’ past in terms of the ways buildings, streets, and spaces are used.

Study Areas

The study area includes:

- Barton Street between James Street and Ottawa Street (within Ward 2 (James Street to Wellington Street) and Ward 3 (Wellington to Ottawa)); and
- Kenilworth Avenue North between Main Street and Barton Street (within Ward 4).

The study area includes buildings and parcels directly fronting on the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue corridors. The adjacent neighbourhoods and areas are also considered in this study for context.

Study Purpose

The purpose of the Commercial Corridor Study for Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue is to develop a strategy for facilitating positive change along the corridors. At the most basic level, the planning and design framework will be updated to enable an organic evolution of the commercial corridors, led by local residents and businesses, and supported by the City. The framework will need to remove regulatory barriers that are no longer useful and that have thwarted efforts to re-purpose, rebuild and revitalize these neighbourhoods in recent years, while also providing new tools that support revitalization over time.

Throughout the course of the study, the project team will:

- Examine existing conditions, in terms of the built form, streetscape, transportation network, land uses, and the commercial and residential market;
- Work with the local community to articulate a Vision for each corridor that builds on other neighbourhood planning initiatives;
- Identify public realm improvements for each corridor; and,
- Examine land use planning policies, zoning standards, and financial incentive programs to:
  - Confirm where ground floor residential uses should and should not be permitted along the corridors;
  - Develop design strategies and standards to better manage commercial-residential conversions at grade; and,
  - Identify how the City can stimulate and remove barriers to investment and redevelopment.

Report Outline

This report documents the first phase of the project, which has focused on completing a detailed background review, analysis of existing conditions, and community visioning process for each corridor. The remainder of this report is organized according to the following sections:

2.0 Relevant Plans and Studies
3.0 Existing Conditions - Barton Street
4.0 Existing Conditions - Kenilworth Avenue
5.0 Character Types
6.0 Market Analysis
7.0 Consultation Summary
8.0 Assets and Challenges
9.0 Vision Statements
RELEVANT STUDIES AND PLANS
2.1/ LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Urban Hamilton Official Plan (2011)

The new Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) (declared in force and effect by the Ontario Municipal Board on August 16, 2013, except for specific policies, schedules, maps and appendices that remain under appeal) is the overarching policy document outlining the land use and planning framework for the City’s urban area. The Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue study areas have historically been designated almost exclusively commercial, and while the UHOP retains a strong commercial emphasis for the corridors, greater flexibility is now permitted under new mixed use designations.

The predominant land use designation for the two corridors is “Mixed Use Medium Density”, which permits residential and institutional uses alongside commercial uses. Notwithstanding this designation, a “Pedestrian Predominant Streets” overlay prohibits residential uses at-grade in specific areas to protect the commercial main street character that once defined the corridors. This overlay applies to the section of Barton Street between Wellington Street and Sherman Avenue (in the Barton Village BIA), and Kenilworth Avenue from Barton Street to Main Street. The maximum building height within the Mixed Use Medium Density designation is six storeys, although buildings up to eight storeys may be considered.

Notably, the Mixed Use Medium Density policies acknowledge that there may be an oversupply of commercial space along some historic main streets where this designation applies, and “in these locations, residential development and conversion shall be encouraged on the fringes outside of the pedestrian predominant streets” (UHOP, Section E.4.5.26). More generally, the Mixed Use Medium Density designation is intended to support the development of “vibrant people places”, with opportunities to live, work, and shop.

Zoning By-Law 05-200 (2005)

The City is currently updating its Zoning By-Law to address amalgamation and implement the new policy framework adopted under the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. The Zoning By-Law is being developed in phases, with staff currently preparing the final zone-specific sections for Commercial & Mixed Use Zones and Residential Zones. Completed and in-effect sections of the Zoning By-Law include the Downtown Zones, Open Space and Park Zones, Institutional Zones, and Industrial Zones.

Seven distinct zones are proposed for Mixed Use & Commercial Zones, two of which are of particular relevance to the Barton and Kenilworth study areas. These include the Mixed Use Medium (C3) Zone and the Main Street Commercial (C7) Zone, which correspond to the Mixed Use Medium Density and Pedestrian Predominant Street designations of the UHOP.

The Mixed Use Medium Zone permits a range of urban uses, including a mix of commercial, institutional and some residential uses, including multiple dwellings, lodging houses, retirement homes and residential care facilities, but not lower density forms of housing. As a designation that is intended to promote intensification and development at greater densities, the zone permits buildings up to a maximum height of four storeys or 17.0 m, or eight storeys or 26m where 3m sideyards are provided.

Under Section 19(3), the existing Zoning By-Law establishes conditions for converting existing uses in an “H” district to a residential use. In particular, residential conversions must maintain the ground floor for commercial uses, or be located on a lot with a minimum radial separation of 180 m from another residential conversion. These policies were originally intended to protect the commercial character of main streets by limiting the concentration of ground floor residential uses.

Zoning By-Law 6593 (1950, consolidated 2013)

Until the new zoning for Mixed Use & Commercial Zones comes into effect under the new Zoning By-Law 05-200, the existing zoning under Zoning By-Law 6593 (originally enacted in 1950) remains in place. Currently, the majority of Barton Street and Kenilworth are zoned “H” Community Shopping and Commercial, which permits commercial, institutional and limited residential and industrial uses up to a maximum height of four storeys or 17.0 m, or eight storeys or 26m where 3m sideyards are provided.

The Main Street Commercial zoning includes many of the same development standards, although heights are limited to 11 m (3 storeys) maximum, and residential uses (i.e. multiple dwellings) are only permitted above the ground floor. In terms of permitted uses, the focus is on commercial and residential, without integrating institutional uses.

Legend

- Neighbourhood
- Institutional
- Utility
- Mixed-Use High Density
- Mixed-Use Medium Density
- Industrial Land
- Open Space

Planned Land Use, from Schedule E1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan (2011)
2.2/ DESIGN GUIDELINES

City-wide Corridor Planning Principles and Design Guidelines (2012)

Although neither of the Barton Street or Kenilworth Avenue study areas are designated Corridors under Schedule E (Urban Structure) of the UHOP, the planning principles and design guidelines for City-wide Corridors include useful considerations for future planning, development and design along these two streets. The principles and design guidelines focus on:

- recognizing the diversity of conditions along corridors;
- identifying areas where change is desired at defined scales;
- identifying areas that will be protected from change; and,
- identifying tools to manage change where it is desired.

The actual guidelines were developed to apply to different scales of properties – those with a lot area of 486 sm where typical building heights are 2 to 4-storeys, and those with a lot area of 1,020 sm or 2.5 ha, where typical building heights are 2 to 12-storeys. The design guidelines then address a number of considerations, including maximum building heights in relation to the property depth and street width (i.e. angular plane); minimum building height; landscaping; parking and loading; relationship of buildings to the street in commercial areas, “flexible” areas, and residential areas; side yards, blank side walls, and side step backs; long buildings; sidewalks and streetscapes; land assembly; shadow impacts; and, precedent site development. Although more detailed, the corridor guidelines are consistent with the proposed development standards for the new Mixed Use Medium Zone, albeit with a difference in maximum permitted heights.

Residential Intensification Guide

The City’s Residential Intensification Guide provides information on different types of intensification projects, how they can be sensitively designed, and what planning considerations guide staff’s review of such development applications. The guide applies to a wide range of residential intensification projects. Particularly relevant forms of potential residential intensification for the Barton and Kenilworth study include infill along main streets, conversion of previous commercial or industrial spaces, redevelopment of underutilized properties, vertical additions to existing buildings, and infill development through a land severance of larger parcels.

The key questions that guide staff’s review of residential intensification projects are as follows:

- Density: Will these developments be too dense for the neighbourhood?
- Character: Will these [sic] residential intensification affect the character of my neighbourhood?
- Height: Will the new buildings be too high for my neighbourhood?
- Traffic: How would residential intensification affect traffic in my neighbourhood?
- Parking: Will there be enough parking for the project?
- Ownership: What about ownership of the building?

For each question/topic area, the Guide provides tips and techniques for addressing the concern. The Guide concludes with an overview of the planning tools the City may utilize to manage residential intensification, including the Official Plan, Zoning By-Law and Site Plan Control, and a number of residential intensification demonstrations for sites in Hamilton and other cities.


Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are both currently served by bus, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. There are plans to develop a rapid transit line along James Street North at the western edge of the Barton Street study area where a new GO Station (opposite LIUNA station) is proposed as well. In the long-term, there is also potential for a rapid transit line along Kenilworth Avenue, terminating at the Centre on Barton Street (UHOP, Appendix B).

The City’s TOD Guidelines do not directly apply to the two study areas based on their characteristics and planned level of transit service. However, the guidelines should be considered in evaluating future development along these two streets to improve the experience of transit users and so that enhanced transit services are not precluded in the long term. The key principles for TOD identified in the Guidelines include:

- Promote place making
- Ensure a mix of appropriate land uses
- Require density and compact form
- Focus on urban design
- Create pedestrian environments
- Address parking management
- Respect market considerations
- Take a comprehensive approach to planning
- Plan for transit and promote connections for all modes
- Promote partnerships and innovative implementation
2.3/ INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Financial Incentive Programs in Hamilton

There are various Financial Incentive Programs in Hamilton, which are applicable to specific areas including the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue North commercial corridors. The programs are offered to assist with the costs of improvements and renovation of properties to improve the area in which they are located. These programs are available to both property owners and tenants. All financial incentive programs are subject to an application fee that is payable upon submission, which range from $205 - $710 depending on the program.

The range of financial incentive programs offered under the Downtown and Community Renewal Community Improvement Plan include:

• Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program, supporting the redevelopment of residential and commercial land and buildings;
• Commercial Facade Property Improvement Grant Program;
• BIA Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program, providing a larger scale facade grant to BIA properties only (in recognition of their BIA levy contribution);
• Office Tenancy Assistance Program, providing a low interest loan to support eligible leasehold improvements; and
• Commercial Corridor Housing Loan and Grant Program, for new and/or renovated dwelling units.

Programs designed to support the restoration and/or maintenance of property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act include:

• Hamilton Heritage Property Grant Program; and
• Hamilton Community Heritage Fund Loan Program.

Amendments to the Downtown and Community Renewal Community Improvement Plan came into effect in March 2013 to expand the range of programs available to Kenilworth Avenue North and Barton Street. Prior, the only program available to Kenilworth and Barton east of Sherman Avenue was the Commercial Corridor Housing Loan and Grant Program. The Barton Village BIA was previously able to access only the BIA Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program, Commercial Corridor Housing Loan and Grant Program, and the heritage programs. Information brochures specific to Kenilworth Avenue and Barton Village were prepared in 2013 to help promote the programs to potential applicants.

Additional programs offered through the Downtown and Community Renewal Community Improvement Plan not available to the study area include the Hamilton Downtown Multi-residential Property Investment Program (a larger scaled housing loan program for Downtown) and the Gore Building Improvement Grant Program.

In addition, the City supports the remediation of brownfield sites and green building efficiency. Environmental programs offered under the ERASE and LEED Community Improvement Plans include:

• ERASE Redevelopment Grant Program (ERG), including the Development Charge Reduction Option;
• ERASE Tax Assistance Program;
• ERASE Study Grant Program;
• ERASE Municipal Acquisition and Partnership Program; and
• LEED Grant Program.

2.4/ INVESTMENT AND REVITALIZATION

Barton Village Business Improvement Association (BIA)

The Barton Village BIA includes businesses located on Barton Street, from Ferguson Avenue North to Sherman Avenue North. During a Strategic Planning Session of their Board of Management in November 2012, the BIA adopted the following vision and mission for the area:

Vision
The ideal Barton Street Business Improvement Area is a family-friendly, attractive, accessible destination which is rich in retail and service oriented and a place that cultivates entrepreneurship within a unique environment that values art and culture.

Mission
The mission of the Barton Street Business Improvement Area is to create an environment that attracts new businesses and retains existing businesses through advocacy, promotion and communication.

To implement the vision and mission, the following goals were identified:

• To fill the vacant properties with new businesses/investors
• Address zoning issues, e.g. all illegal zoning matters
• Continue the streetscape improvements, e.g. boulevards and bump outs
• Encourage façade improvements
• More financial incentives for property improvements (creation of new programs or revise existing criteria)
• Encourage owners to maintain a high order of property standards and cleanliness
• Advocate for strengthening property standards

Key actions that have been undertaken since these goals were identified include, but are not limited to, the initiation of this commercial corridor study, the posting of available properties on the BIA’s website, and promotional events, as described below.
The business community has come together to support the revitalization of Barton Street through a number of initiatives, including streetscape improvements in the Barton Village BIA area, and the Barton Street Real Estate Crawl. Two real estate crawls have been held, in June and September 2013. The events have showcased select properties to developers and interested business owners, primarily from Toronto and Hamilton, and have been considered a success with more than 100 people turning out for the first event in June. The event has been championed by the BIA, and the Yoke Group Inc., which purchased a building in the area and are working on renovations.

The City of Hamilton is also promoting investment and redevelopment through an innovative website called urbanspacehamilton.ca. The website includes a photographic collection of vacant buildings that are available for purchase or lease in Hamilton’s downtown. The objective is to attract investors and businesses who can redevelop former industrial buildings into new work spaces for creative businesses, which are increasingly drawn to the City’s gritty, historic and affordable real estate stock. This innovative model could be used to showcase development opportunities within the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue commercial corridor study areas.

The Commercial Strategy was prepared to inform the development of commercial policies, and included information on retail trends and locational criteria for retailers, which may be relevant to the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue commercial corridors. The report analyzes retail trends in terms of shopping patterns, retail formats, and built forms. Key findings from the report include:

• Shopping patterns
  ○ There are three primary shopping categories: chore shopping, amenity shopping and discretionary shopping.
  ○ People have less time available for shopping and this has led to retailers catering for convenience and selection.

• Retail formats
  ○ There has been a trend away from the department store and store loyalty, and towards online stores and stores that are specialized and/or offer discount pricing (Wal-Mart, Costco etc.).

• Built form trends
  ○ There are a diversity of retail formats, including traditional main streets, neighbourhood shopping centres, outlet malls etc. Although Main Street shopping in the past has declined, it is being revived in many cities as it provides a unique function and caters to a mix of shoppers.
  ○ An emerging form of retail is the lifestyle centre – a multi-function shopping experience that incorporates traditional main street characteristics with a mix of commercial uses, ranging from entertainment to restaurants and shops.
2.6/NEIGHBOURHOODS & ACTION PLANS

Neighbourhood Action Strategy (2011)

The City of Hamilton has developed a comprehensive Neighbourhood Action Strategy to spark long-term improvements in a number of priority neighbourhoods, the majority of which are concentrated in the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue study areas. The Strategy’s core components include enhanced community development work, developing resident-led Neighbourhood Action Plans, increasing investment in neighbourhoods, and building new partnerships.

The Strategy was instigated by a Hamilton Spectator series in 2010, which highlighted socio-economic and health inequities among the City’s neighbourhoods. Building on the Spectator series, the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton commissioned the Social Planning & Research Council (SPRC) of Hamilton to complete a series of demographic profiles for selected neighbourhoods in Hamilton, including four within the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue study area. These four areas include the Beasley, Lansdale, South Sherman and Crown Point neighbourhoods. Highlights from the neighbourhood Demographic Profiles and Action Plans are presented throughout this section of the Background Report.

The following is a summary of selected demographic data for neighbourhoods within the Barton and Kenilworth study areas, as compared to the citywide average in the SPRC/United Way Report.

Demographic Profiles (2012)

Beasley
Location: James to Wellington / CN Rail Corridor to Main Street
Highlights
Age: Younger population, with higher proportions of people aged 0 to 35 years (53%), and lower portions of people aged 35+ (48%)
Population Groups: Higher proportion of visible minorities (39%), recent immigrants (14%), and residents with activity limitations (27%)
Tenure: Majority of residents are renters (79%)
Dwelling Type: Majority of people live in an apartment building with 5+ storeys (50%)
Affordability: 49% of renters spend 30% or more on shelter costs; 28% of owners spend 30% or more on shelter costs
Poverty Rate: 57% of residents live on incomes below the Low Income Cut Off

Lansdale
Location: Wellington to Wentworth / CN Rail Corridor to Main Street
Highlights
Age: Older population, with higher proportions of people aged 35+ (54%), and lower portions of people aged 0 to 35 years (44%)
Population Groups: Higher proportion visible minorities (21%) and residents with activity limitations (21%)
Tenure: Majority of residents are renters (62%)
Dwelling Type: Majority of people live in an apartment building with 5+ storeys (26%)
Affordability: 59% of renters spend 30% or more on shelter costs; 28% of owners spend 30% or more on shelter costs
Poverty Rate: 40% of residents live on incomes below the Low Income Cut Off

South Sherman
Location: Wentworth to Gage/CN Rail Corridor/Burlington Street to the Mountain
Highlights
Age: Older population, with higher proportions of people aged 35+ (54%), and lower portions of people aged 0 to 35 years (45%)
Population Groups: Slightly higher proportion visible minorities (15%) and residents with activity limitations (25%)
Tenure: Almost equivalent portion of renters (49%) and owners (51%)
Dwelling Type: Low share of people living in an apartment building with 5+ storeys (12%)
Affordability: 50% of renters spend 30% or more on shelter costs; 25% of owners spend 30% or more on shelter costs
Poverty Rate: 37% of residents live on incomes below the Low Income Cut Off

Crown Point
Location: Gage to Kenilworth / Burlington Street to the Mountain
Highlights
Age: Younger population, with higher proportions of people aged 35+ (54%), and lower portions of people aged 0 to 35 years (45%)
Population Groups: Slightly higher proportion visible minorities (15%) and residents with activity limitations (25%)
Tenure: Majority of residents are renters (62%)
Dwelling Type: Low share of people living in an apartment building with 5+ storeys (12%)
Affordability: 50% of renters spend 30% or more on shelter costs; 25% of owners spend 30% or more on shelter costs
Poverty Rate: 37% of residents live on incomes below the Low Income Cut Off

Beasley Neighbourhood Plan (2012)

Through an extensive community engagement process, the following five Priority Actions were identified by the Beasley neighbourhood:

2. Food Security: households in Beasley experience hunger, which can be addressed through short-term responses such as food banks, as well as through more innovative and empowering responses such as community gardens and community kitchens.
3. Road/Traffic Safety – the neighbourhood experiences high traffic volumes, which need to be better managed to improve Walkability.
4. Recreation and healthy living, park clean up – clean public parks are attractive and provide opportunities for physical activity (thereby reducing chronic illnesses).
5. Building cultural/social capital, compact and mixed-income housing – these elements were identified as important building blocks to healthy communities where people have opportunities for social interaction, greater access to better community facilities and services, as well as local amenities.

Following this process, an Action Plan was developed with many activities for improving the neighbourhood, albeit primarily for areas outside of the Barton Street study area.
South Sherman Neighbourhood Action Plan (2012)

Through a structured and engaging community process, a Neighbourhood Action Plan was developed for the South Sherman Neighbourhood. A number of community assets were identified within the Barton Street study area portion of this neighbourhood, including Stadium Mall at Gage Avenue, the Dairy Queen, MacDonald's and Karoline's Kitchen at Lottridge Street, the now-closed Gibson School at Gibson Avenue, the Barton Library at Westhinghouse Avenue, and the Fire Station at Wentworth Street. In addition, the following goals and actions were identified for the South Sherman Neighbourhood:

1. Create a community where everyone can feel safe – with community spaces, alley safety program, and reduced speeding
2. Equal access to services our neighbours need to live a healthy life
3. Create a clean, safe and comfortable environment for people to live, work and play – through clean ups, public art, air quality improvements
4. Advocate for all neighbours to have access to safe, affordable and dignified housing – by supporting property repairs, yard maintenance and pest control
5. A Community that supports a livable wage that allows all to live a healthy life – including by attracting new businesses
6. Build a strong community that is engaged, caring and inclusive – for example by organizing events and neighbourhood projects


The Crown Point Neighbourhood Action Plan was developed by a Community Planning Team (CPCPT) using multiple engagement techniques including: face to face, surveys, community meetings, research and focus groups. The following goals and actions have been identified by the Crown Point community:

- Greater power to make decisions about community planning, budgeting etc. – by leveraging member assets and strengths, building capacity, supporting the work of CPCPT and continuing outreach to the community
- Clean, green, beautiful and environmentally sustainable neighbourhood – by planting more trees and developing a community garden
- Well-utilized, easy, affordable, accessible activities for people to participate in together – by creating programs for youth and increasing food security
- Vibrant, local economy with many small family businesses – through new job creation, new business attraction to the Kenilworth Commercial Corridor, expansion of the farmer’s market and support for local businesses
- Crown Point Community Planning Team is known, respected and has the capacity to make change and responds to needs in/advocates for the community – by increasing visibility within the community (marketing), allowing for residents and local businesses to be part of CPCPT and engaging the community through more events

Gibson and Landsdale Area Community Planning Team (GALA Hub) Neighbourhood Action Plan (2013)

The Neighbourhood Action Plan was developed after monthly meetings that were held over a span of over a year and half. Participants included people that live and work in the community. The input resulted in an action plan with the following goals, objectives and actions:

- Safety – through policing, design of alleyways, traffic calming measures and a clean environment
- Communications – to include the engagement of residents and institutions so that they can become acquainted with each other
- Businesses and Services – specific actions for Barton Street includes enforcing commercial zoning, improving marketing strategies and providing financial incentives for improving facades
- Culture – to improve community programming and events
- Education – to improve learning opportunities through establishing programs and additional locations for schools

Pan Am Precinct Plan and Neighbourhood Strategy (2012)

The Hamilton Stadium Precinct includes a portion of Barton Street between Lottridge Avenue and Gage Avenue. The Precinct Plan (2012) provides an analysis of the area surrounding Ivor Wynne Stadium, and identifies goals for revitalizing the area in advance of the 2015 Pan Am Games. The objectives of the Stadium Precinct Plan are to:

- Respect the urban context surrounding the stadium
- Consider context sensitive planning approaches for adjacent uses
- Provide recommendations that consider the legacy impact of the 2015 Pan Am Games investment for the community
- Encourage consistent community activity and involvement through new development

Following the preparation of the Hamilton Stadium Precinct Plan, the City initiated a Neighbourhood Strategy for the Precinct. Phase II of developing the Strategy is currently underway and has produced a Master Plan (2013) for the Precinct which calls for the following along Barton Street:

- Streetscape improvements, such as decorative lighting, paving, site furnishings, crosswalk treatments, street trees, and new transit shelters
- Mixed-use development, with retail, services, office, restaurants and parking at grade, and residential uses above, in street-related buildings that are 2 to 6-stories in height
- Improved transit facilities at the intersections of Lottridge Avenue and Gage Avenue
3.0
EXISTING CONDITIONS
BARTON STREET
3.1 CIRCULATION

Street Network

- Barton Street is a two-way, minor arterial road that runs east-west.
- For the vast majority of the corridor, the street includes two lanes of traffic in each direction, with the curb lane used for on-street parking during off-peak hours.
- In the Barton Village BIA area, between East Avenue and William Street, there is only one lane of traffic in each direction and layby parking in the curb lane.
- 24-hour traffic volumes along the corridor range from approximately 8,000 cars and 420 pedestrians in the west end at John Street, to approximately 14,800 cars and 400 pedestrians in the east end at Ottawa Street.
- Along the 4-kilometre length of the study area, Barton Street is part of highly connected, walkable, fine-grained grid pattern.
- North-south streets intersect the corridor at regular intervals, and include:
  - Three major arterial roads (Wellington Street North, Victoria Avenue North, and Ottawa Street North south of Barton Street);
  - Eight minor arterial roads (James Street, John Street south of Barton Street, Wentworth Street, Sanford Avenue south of Barton Street, Birch Avenue, Sherman Avenue, Gage Avenue, and Ottawa Street north of Barton Street);
  - Two collector streets (John Street north of Barton Street and Lottridge Street); and,
  - Many local streets.
- Beyond the study area, Barton Street extends west to its terminus at Locke Street North in the West Harbour area, and east to its terminus at Fifty Road.
- Barton Street intersects with the Red Hill Valley Parkway in the east of the City, which provides access from the harbour area up the Niagara Escarpment and to the Lincoln M. Alexander Parkway (i.e. “the LINC”).

Street Hierarchy

Legend

Vehicles: 16,056 (98%)
Pedestrians: 407 (2%)

Vehicles: 7,989 (95%)
Pedestrians: 420 (5%)

Vehicles: 14,818 (97%)
Pedestrians: 400 (3%)
Transit Network

- Barton Street is served by Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Bus route 2, which runs east and west with bus stops at frequent intervals.
- Bus route 2 intersects with north-south bus route 99 along James Street North and route 12 along Victoria Avenue North and Wentworth Street North, and route 41/41A along Ottawa Street North and Kenilworth Avenue North.
- Bus route 2 accesses the Hamilton GO Transit rail station and bus terminal on Hunter Street via James Street and John Street, providing connection to regional transit and many other HSR bus routes. It passes a block from the MacNab Street Transit Terminal for connection to additional HSR bus routes.
- The future GO Transit rail station to be constructed at James Street North prior to the 2015 Pan Am Games will be located one block north of Barton Street.

Cycling Network

- Few cycling facilities are provided along Barton Street, or intersecting streets within the study area.
- On Barton, there is a “Signed On-Street Bike Route” that connects westward to the Downtown. This signed route terminates at Ferguson Avenue.
- A designated bike lane is provided on Ferguson Avenue as part of the Trans Canada Trail. The only other bike lane in the study area a short one on Victoria Avenue, between Barton Street and Ferrie Street.
- Although no on-street facilities or signage are provided, the 2013 Hamilton Bike Routes, Trails and Park map indicates Barton Street as a “Cautionary, Un-Signed Bike Route” east of Ferguson Avenue. The same designation applies to Gage Avenue (south of Barton Street), and Frederick Avenue (south of Barton Street).
3.2 BUILT FORM

Block Structure

- The gridded street network creates a legible block structure along Barton Street.
- The relatively narrow block widths and consistent spacing of intersections creates a walkable streetscape throughout much of the corridor.

Figure Ground

- The figure ground reveals that, although parts of Barton Street feature consistent building frontages built at the street, this consistent street wall condition is interrupted by parking lots separating the buildings from the street, as well as larger institutional buildings with deep setbacks.
- Building setbacks and gaps between buildings caused by vacant lots and parking lots interrupt the streetscape.
Street Edge and Building Heights

- Some portions of the study area feature consistent street edge conditions, with two-storey buildings forming a strong street wall.
- This consistency is broken by parking lots separating the buildings from the street edge, fast food outlets and strip retail with large parking areas fronting the street, and some larger institutional buildings, including the detention centre and hospital.
- The study area has a relatively consistent built form character, consisting mainly of one to three storey buildings. However, this character is interrupted by parking lots, vacant lots, and some high-rise institutional buildings.
- There are a number of significant buildings over three storeys tall in the area, including some of the houses of worship, Hamilton General Hospital, and Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre.
Overview

The Barton Street corridor is primarily characterized by commercial uses at grade, which are either currently functioning, are vacant, or have been converted to residential units (often illegally).

- In areas with an older building stock, the commercial uses are small-scaled and often independently owned. In other sections of the corridor that have been redeveloped in a more suburban format, larger scaled chain commercial uses are predominant.
- Where multi-storey buildings exist, dwelling units are typically provided above grade. There are also several sections of the corridor with purpose-built residential uses, for example between Minto Avenue and Wentworth Street North.
- In addition to commercial and residential uses, there are a significant number of institutional uses in the study area, including many places of worship, a library, fire hall, the hospital, detention centre, and a crime prevention centre.

Vacant Storefronts

- Storefront vacancies are concentrated between Victoria and Sherman. There are approximately 164 vacant storefronts along Barton Street.

Residential Conversions

- There are approximately 57 storefronts that appear to be used for residential purposes. These units often include curtains in the storefront window and visible mailboxes for multiple apartment units.
Community Facilities

There are a number of community facilities in the study area, including:

- Hamilton Fire Station 6
- Hamilton Public Library Barton Branch
- Hamilton General Hospital
- Hamilton Police Service Community Policing and Crime Prevention Centre
- The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board plans to construct a new high school adjacent to the Pan Am Stadium on the site of the current Parkview Secondary School, to close in 2014, and the vacant King George Elementary School. Parking will be provided at the site of the former Scott Park Secondary School, to be demolished, between King and Cannon Streets.

- St. Ann’s School (currently being rebuilt at Barton and St. Ann Streets), plus Cathy Wever School, Prince of Wales School and St. Brigid School within a block or two of Barton
- Norman Pinky Lewis Recreation Centre (192 Wentworth St. N.), one block south of Barton Street adjacent to Cathy Wever School, features an indoor pool and gyms

Public Space

- Woodlands Park at Barton Street and Wentworth Street North is the only park with direct frontage onto Barton Street in the study area. Woodlands Park is one of the City’s oldest parks and has a playground, soccer field, softball diamond, outdoor exercise equipment, and a small parking lot.
- Other municipal parks within a block or two of the study area include:
  - Belview (Belmont Ave next to Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Elementary School)
  - Birch Avenue (along the hydro corridor)
  - Birge (Birge Ave west of Wentworth St)
  - Lucy Day (Clinton St at Ruth St)
  - McLaren (John St near Cannon St)
  - Powell (Birch Ave at Huron St)
- A new recreation and seniors centre is planned at Scott Park, to the south of the Pan Am Stadium.
- The City is acquiring a 4 hectare site near Barton Street in Ward 3 for a new outdoor sports park. It will feature a soccer facility to replace Brian Timmins Stadium that was demolished together with Ivor Wynne to make room for the new Pan Am Stadium.
### 3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

#### Heritage Buildings and Landscapes

- There are two properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in the study area along Barton Street, including: the former St. Paul’s Ecumenical Church located at 384 Barton Street East at Smith Avenue, now home to the Canadian Spanish Pentecostal Church (Inglesia Pentecostal Hispana de Canada); and the former West Avenue Public School, located at 255 West Avenue, which was converted to 26 residential condominiums in 2010.
- The former Westinghouse Canada office building, just north of Barton Street at 286 Sanford Avenue North, opposite Woodlands Park, is also designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. The building remains vacant after plans in the 1990’s to convert it to residential use were defeated over noise and compatibility concerns from industry across the CN railway line.
- Other buildings with historic character that are not designated, registered or listed include the present day Community Policing Centre at 450 Barton Street East at Wentworth Street.
- Woodlands Park, at Barton Street and Wentworth Street North, is recognized on the City of Hamilton’s Inventory of Cultural Heritage Landscapes.
- There are 23 places of worship in the vicinity of the study area.
- There are 11 buildings listed in the City’s Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and/or Historical Interest which include:
  - Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre (165 Barton Street)
  - Mark Preece Family House (191 Barton Street)
  - Kenesky Sports and Cycle (228 Barton Street)
  - Hamilton General Hospital (237 Barton Street)
  - Former BMO Bank, now La Luna Express restaurant (281 Barton Street)
  - Taylor Block (1922) (301-314 Barton Street)
  - 317 Barton Street
  - Former Bank, future 541 Eatery and Exchange (541-543 Barton Street)
  - Ridgecrest Southern Baptist Church (582 Barton Street)
  - Gibson Public School (601 Barton Street)
  - Hamilton Korean (St. Andrew’s) Presbyterian Church (200 Standard Avenue North at Barton Street)
### 3.5 DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### Applications

The following is a list of recent development activity in the study area, with numbers corresponding to the map below. Many of the development applications are to recognize and/or expand above grade dwelling units and to repair/renovate existing buildings. Notably, parking requirements have been waived or reduced for several applications. Few major new developments are planned along the corridor.

1. **Tim Horton’s, 200 Barton Street East**
   - **Proposal:** Replace the current Tim Horton’s just to the east at 222 Barton Street East
   - **Status:** Building permit under review

2. **Mark Preece Family House, 191 Barton Street East**
   - **Proposal:** 10 additional bedroom suites on second floor and minor renovations to basement
   - **Status:** Building permit issued for construction

3. **La Luna Express Restaurant, 281 Barton Street East**
   - **Status:** Restaurant opening soon (former Bank of Montreal site)

4. **Fragoso Sea Food, 291-299 Barton Street East**
   - **Proposal:** Façade improvements and a 24-seat outdoor patio
   - **Status:** Site plan application submitted

5. **374 Barton Street East**
   - **Proposal:** Construction of new residential units through the addition of third storey on the existing building, which includes legal non-conforming apartments on the second floor and two vacant ground floor commercial units.
   - **Status:** Minor variance granted for expansion

6. **St. Matthew’s House, 440 Barton Street East**
   - **Status:** Building permit issued for renovations to establish a community centre and administrative offices. Parking requirement was waived.

7. **541 Eatery and Exchange, 541-543 Barton Street East**
   - **Status:** Minor variance granted and renovations underway for a 60-seat restaurant on the ground floor. Parking waived for existing dwelling units on second floor.

8. **594-598 Barton Street East**
   - **Status:** Building permit issued to create 4 dwelling units on second floor of existing building and increase occupancy of existing day nursery

9. **Gibson School, 601 Barton Street East**
   - **Proposal:** Property was purchased in December 2013 by a private developer who intends to redevelop the school into affordable condominiums.
   - **Status:** The redevelopment application process has not yet been initiated

10. **Maxim’s Family Restaurant, 629 Barton Street East**
    - **Status:** Building permit issued for construction of a second storey and façade and window upgrades

11. **St. Ann’s Catholic Elementary School, 15 St. Ann Street**
    - **Status:** Currently under construction

12. **Centre de santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara, 1320 Barton Street East**
    - **Proposal:** Office and medical clinic in existing two-storey building.
    - **Status:** Minor variances for landscaping and parking granted. Building permit currently under review

13. **The City of Hamilton has announced the purchase of a 4 hectare property in the Barton Street area, which will be developed as a new outdoor sports park (not shown on map).**

14. **The new Pan Am Stadium (Tim Hortons Field), built to replace the former Ivor Wynne Stadium on site, is scheduled to host soccer for the 2015 Pan Am Games and the Canadian Football League’s Hamilton Tiger-Cats.**

#### Parking Lots

- There are 12 municipal parking lots within one block of Barton Street.

#### Other Development Opportunities

- There are 11 vacant sites identified in the Barton Street study area.
- McMaster Family Medicine has expressed interest in developing a new family health teaching clinic on Barton Street, potentially near the Pan Am Stadium or Woodlands Park.
EXISTING CONDITIONS
KENILWORTH AVENUE
Kenilworth Avenue is a two-way, major arterial road that runs north-south, with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h.

Between Barton Street and Main Street, the street includes two lanes of traffic in each direction, with the curb lane used for on-street parking during off-peak hours.

24-hour traffic volumes along the corridor are lowest in the north end at Barton Street, at approximately 11,644 cars and 688 pedestrians. Further down the corridor, the 24-hour traffic volumes increase to 16,954 cars and 785 pedestrians at Cannon Street, and 15,617 cars and 401 pedestrians at Main Street.

Kenilworth Avenue is part of a grid street pattern of primarily local streets, which provide a high degree of connectivity to adjacent neighbourhoods for pedestrians.

Left turn restrictions (including at Barton Street, Britannia Avenue, and Cannon Street) reduce connectivity for motorists, while also contributing to speeding.

Major east-west streets that intersect or border the corridor include:
- Main Street (major arterial);
- Barton Street (minor arterial); and,
- Cannon Street (collector).

Kenilworth Avenue is also part of a historical commuter network, providing quick access between factories along the harbour and neighbourhoods on the mountain. In the north end, it is also a short distance from the Burlington Street exit on the QEW.
Transit Network

- Kenilworth Avenue is served by Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Bus route 41 and 41A, running north and south on Kenilworth Avenue.
- Bus route 41 and 41A intersects with nearby east-west bus route 4 along Burlington Street East, route 3 along Britannia Avenue, and route 2 along Barton Street.
- Bus route 41 and 41A also intersects with B Routes 1, 10, and 10A along Main Street.
- Bus Route 10/10A provides the B-Line Express service west through Downtown to McMaster University and University Plaza and east to Eastgate Square.

Pedestrian Network

- Kenilworth Avenue has consistent sidewalks on both sides of the road.
- Dunsmure Road crosses Kenilworth Avenue and is identified as a “Cautionary Un-signed Bike Route” in the 2013 edition of the Hamilton Bike Routes, Trails and Parks map.
- A pedestrian pathway intersects Kenilworth Avenue between Cannon Street and Roxborough Avenue along a pipeline corridor. It provides a continuous pedestrian connection between London Street, one block northeast of the Main Street/Ottawa Street intersection, and Garside Avenue North at Cannon Street. The pathway continues from Andrew Warburton Memorial Park at Cannon and Cope Streets to Strathearn Avenue at Barton Street.
4.2/ BUILT FORM

**Block Structure**

- The gridded street network creates a legible block structure along Kenilworth Avenue.
- The relatively narrow block widths and consistent spacing of intersections creates a walkable street network.

**Figure Ground**

- The figure ground reveals that some blocks of Kenilworth Avenue feature a consistent street wall, with building frontages at the street edge.
- This consistent street wall condition is interrupted by parking lots separating the buildings from the street, mainly in front of strip mall retail and used car lots between Britannia Avenue and Main Street East.
Street Edge and Building Heights

- Some portions of the study area feature consistent street edge conditions, with two-storey buildings forming a strong definition at the street edge.
- This consistency is broken by parking lots separating the buildings from the street edge and strip retail with large front lot parking areas.
- Three categories of building heights were identified:
  - One storey
  - Two-three stories
  - Four or more stories
- The study area has a relatively consistent built form character, consisting almost exclusively of one- to three-storey buildings. However, this character is interrupted by parking lots and vacant lots.
- The church at Kenilworth Avenue and Cannon Street is the only building higher than four storeys in the study area.

Existing Land Use

Overview

- The existing land use along Kenilworth Avenue in the study area is primarily mixed use, with commercial at grade and residential uses above grade where multi-story buildings are present.
- The consistent ground floor commercial uses are interrupted by vacant land and some retail-to-residential conversions.
- There is limited office space, as well as some institutional uses with frontages on Kenilworth Avenue, including the fire hall, the library, a church, and a school (to be closed in 2014).
Vacant Frontages

- Storefront vacancies are dispersed along Kenilworth Avenue. There are approximately 38 vacant storefronts along Kenilworth Avenue.
- In one portion of Kenilworth Avenue, on the east side of the street from Roxborough north to Britannia, there is a strip of consistently active commercial uses on the ground floor. There are no vacant frontages in this portion of the street.

Residential Conversions

- There are approximately 13 storefronts that appear to be used for residential purposes. These units often include curtains in the storefront window and visible mailboxes for multiple apartment units.

Community Facilities and Public Space

- There are a number of community facilities located within the study area, including the Hamilton Public Library Kenilworth Branch and Hamilton Fire Station 9.
- The former Holy Family Roman Catholic Elementary is the temporary holding site for students who will attend the new St. Ann’s Catholic Elementary School currently under construction on Barton Street near Sherman Avenue.
- There are no parks fronting onto Kenilworth Avenue in the study area.
- There are three smaller public parks near the study area, including Andrew Warburton Memorial Park at Britannia Avenue and Cope Street, RT Steele Park on Ellis Avenue just south of Barton Street, and a small playground on the pipeline pathway, often referred to as Pipeline Park, at Huxley and Roxborough Avenues.
4.4/ CULTURAL RESOURCES

Heritage Buildings and Churches

- One church, Holy Family Parish, faces onto Kenilworth Avenue at Cannon Street.
- Kenilworth Library, built in 1932, is located just south of Roxborough Avenue. It also has historic character; however, there are no designated or registered heritage buildings on Kenilworth Avenue.

4.5/ DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Applications

The following is a list of recent developments in the study area, corresponding to the map to the left:

1. Vacant Canada Post Building, 60 Kenilworth Avenue North
   Status: Vacant. Proposal by potential purchaser to accommodate medical building was denied by Committee of Adjustment due to concerns over lack of parking.
2. The Gathering Space, 10-20 Kenilworth Avenue North
   Status: Building permit issued for renovations and additions for apartments, office, and banquet hall.
3. Centre de santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara, 1320 Barton Street
   Proposal: Permit an office and medical clinic in existing two-storey building.
   Status: Minor variances for landscaping and parking granted. Building permit currently under review.

Parking Lots

- There are four municipal parking lots within one block of Kenilworth Avenue.
- Metered public on-street parking is located on both sides of Kenilworth Avenue North throughout the length of the study area. On-street parking is prohibited during peak hours.

Legend

- Development Applications
- Surface Parking
- Surface Parking (Municipal Parking)
- Vacant Sites
CHARACTER TYPES
5.0 CHARACTER TYPES

Character Types Along the Corridors

Five defining character types are evident along Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue, including traditional main street, auto-serving areas, strip plaza areas, suburban format retail areas, and religious and institutional areas. The combination of these conditions along the corridors gives rise to an almost block-by-block flux between a pedestrian-oriented and urban character, to a more auto-oriented and suburban character.

Character Areas

- Traditional Main Street
- Auto Serving Areas
- Strip Plaza
- Suburban Format Retail Areas
- Religious and Institutional Areas
5.1 TRADITIONAL MAIN STREET

Traditional main street sections of Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are characterized by the following:

- Streets that are continuously framed with buildings that are typically two-storeys in height
- Buildings are set at the property line with access to the primary entrance provided directly from the public sidewalk
- Parking and services are located to the rear of the buildings
- Many small lot frontages
- A mix of uses with retail on the ground floor and residential or office/commercial on the upper floors
- Commercial-to-residential conversions are apparent in some traditional main street commercial buildings

5.2 AUTO-SERVING AREAS

Auto-serving areas along Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are characterized by the following:

- Auto repair, sales and maintenance businesses, such as car dealerships and mechanics
- One-storey buildings that are set back from the street
- The space between the building and the street is often used for parking or for the storage of cars
- Building are typically in poor condition
5.3 STRIP PLAZAS

Strip plazas along both Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are characterized by the following:

- Groupings of multiple buildings that are set back from the street
- The space between the building and the street is occupied by parking
- The buildings are one-storey in height and not in good condition
- The land use is primarily retail with some office

5.4 SUBURBAN FORMAT RETAIL AREAS

Suburban Format Retail Areas along Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue are characterized by the following:

- Stand alone, “large format” retail buildings, including fast-food drive through retail
- The space between the building and the street is occupied with parking
- The buildings are generally one-storey in height, but with an extra tall floor-to-ceiling height
- Building conditions are variable, with some buildings in good condition
5.5 RELIGIOUS & INSTITUTIONAL AREAS

Both Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue have number of places of worship and institutional buildings such as schools, the hospital, the detention centre, police stations, fire stations, and libraries. These community assets have a distinct condition characterized by the following:

- The churches, hospital and detention centre are built at a monumental scale that stands out along the corridor; other institutional uses are smaller in size but still typically larger than the commercial buildings.
- With the exception of the hospital and detention centre, buildings are oriented to the street.
- Buildings typically have a direct connection to the sidewalk in front of the buildings.
- The buildings are in good condition.

Figure Ground

Street Edge and Building Heights

- Street Edge
- Building Heights: One storey, Two-three storeys, Four or more storeys.
MARKET ANALYSIS
Methodology

The Barton and Kenilworth corridors were inventoried by Cushman & Wakefield on Monday, October 28, 2013, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This work was undertaken in a door-to-door visual inspection. The commercial categories relied upon were the same as utilized in the Ryerson University’s Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity (CSCA) Survey of Commercial Strips. These are SIC codes based upon the 1980 Statistics Canada Standard Industrial Classification. The CSCA is a member-supported non-profit research centre at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario. The CSCA studies location-based trends in the consumer service sector and collects and reports on a broad array of location data sets. While efforts have been made to categorize all commercial establishments, the intent of this survey was to focus on the level of commercial vacancy in each of the study areas.

Businesses that were not open at the time of the inspection were considered “in business” if there was evidence of signage, and general ongoing occupancy of the premises. Notably, several restaurants do not operate on Mondays. Other businesses do not have daytime operating hours. Certain properties that were not open exhibited indications that the businesses were no longer in operation, despite there being no indication of a “for lease/for sale” sign posted at the premises. In conclusion, we recognize that there is some subjectivity to our analysis.

A property was considered to be a commercial property if it had a front door right on the sidewalk, and if the building had a prominent front window that appeared intended as a storefront — even if the property was not in use as a commercial establishment (i.e. appeared to have been converted to residential use). This aspect of our methodology may overstate the actual commercial vacancy in the study area, but we feel that it reflects the functional vacancy level for the commercial corridor — apart from the truly residential sections of the street (seen in row houses and multi-level apartments).

We have not identified all land uses, such as parking lots and undeveloped/vacant lots. Temporary businesses (food trucks) were also not counted. Our survey identifies the commercial, residential and certain other land uses (hospital, fire stations, libraries, etc.). Where “residential” is indicated, this may refer to a single structure, or multiple buildings — in essence, a break in the continuous commercial corridor by a residential land use. It is possible that inconspicuous lower level or upper level commercial units were omitted from the survey; our focus was the air-grade environment. Also, we have not identified all occupants of enclosed buildings (such as a medical/professional building).

Commercial Inventory Analysis

The Barton Street corridor from James Street to Ottawa Street is roughly 4 kilometres in length. It has a large proportion of properties with air-grade commercial space and upper level apartments. There were few strip retail plazas along this corridor. There is a cluster of automotive service uses between Cawood Avenue and Roselyn Avenue. We observe a scarcity of franchise restaurants; food service is predominantly independent businesses. There is also a scarcity of financial institutions in this area. The absence of drug stores is also notable. Although there are residential buildings in the area — either row houses or apartments above the commercial corridor — there are few large apartment buildings nearby. This may limit the area’s density of consumers, constraining the commercial/realtor potential for this area. There does not appear to be any significant commercial redevelopment taking place — apart from activity at The Centre on Barton (former Centre Mall). This property, which lies just outside the study boundary, east of Ottawa Street, clearly dominates the retail environment in this part of the city, to the detriment of the Barton Street corridor. The Centre on Barton is home to various national retail banners, restaurants, banks, and is anchored by Walmart, Target and Metro.

Figure 1 presents the commercial composition of the Barton Street corridor. Cushman & Wakefield identified 419 total commercial units or other land uses (excluding residential). Of this count, 164 units were identified as vacant (39% share).

The Kenilworth Avenue corridor from Barton Street to Main Street is approximately 1.5 kilometres in length. It is different in character from the Barton Street corridor. There was notably less multi-storey development along Kenilworth Avenue, and therefore fewer upper level apartment units. Similar to Barton Street, the study area had a cluster of automotive services from Britannia Avenue to Dunsmure Road. There is a newly developed plaza at Dunsmure Road, along with a property under construction just north of Main Street on the east side. As with the Barton Street corridor, here we observe a scarcity of franchise restaurants; food service — while a notable presence in the area — is predominantly independent businesses. Proximity to The Centre on Barton has an influence on the patterns of commercial/retail use in this area.

Figure 2 presents the commercial composition of the Kenilworth Avenue corridor. Cushman & Wakefield identified 108 total commercial units or other land uses (excluding residential). Of this count, 36 units were identified as vacant (33% share).

Figure 3, compares the distribution of commercial/retail uses along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors to the overall CSCA Survey of Commercial Strips area in the Barton-Kenilworth Area. Notable is the much higher proportion of stores in the “All Other Categories” segment. We have presented the top six segments for Barton and Kenilworth, and grouped other segments into the “All Other Categories” group. This accounts for roughly 19% and 13% of the units in the Barton and Kenilworth corridors, respectively, while it represents 49% of the count of establishments in the CSCA survey. This is due to the much broader variety of commercial uses along most commercial strips — as well as the much lower level of vacancy.

Given that the high proportion of vacant units distorts the comparison of the Barton and Kenilworth corridors to the overall GTA retail strips total. Automotive, General Merchandise and Personal & Household Services establishments are more prevalent along the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue corridors compared to the GTA total. The “All Other Categories” segment is substantially greater for the GTA total, indicating a wider variety of retail stores and services compared to the mix of uses along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors.
Vacancy Analysis

The level of commercial vacancy along the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue corridors can be compared to other commercial strips surveyed by the Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity in its Commercial Strip survey. The following compares the results of the CSCA’s 2012 survey for select urban areas in the western Greater Toronto Area to Cushman & Wakefield’s inventory survey. The Grand Total represents the summary of all areas examined by the CSCA survey, across the Greater Toronto Area.

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<tr>
<th>COMMERCIAL VACANCY ANALYSIS</th>
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<tr>
<td>STUDY AREA</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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Discussion with Market Participants

Cushman & Wakefield has identified various active real estate professionals (brokers, landlords, property managers) along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors, and has held discussions to gain insight into market activity and trends in the area. The following are some of the key insights from these discussions:

- Some commercial properties have remained vacant for several years, with little interest from tenants.
- Some landlords settle for modest rent, and are unwilling to invest in their properties to achieve a higher rental income.
- The commercial occupancy level has improved in recent years.
- Lack of on-street parking is a deterrent to securing commercial tenants in some areas of the street.
- Landlords have seen tenants close their business due to City’s By-Law enforcement addressing the lack of a proper license to operate.
- Potential steady income from a residential tenant (perhaps illegally) is more secure than an unproven, independently-owned commercial/retail business.
- Achievable commercial rents (if you can find a tenant) are comparable to residential rent (albeit an illegal conversion).

Conclusions

The level of vacancy along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors is well in excess of that seen in other urban areas across the Greater Toronto Area. This is consistent with the finding from the 2006 City-Wide Commercial Strategy Study completed as background for the Urban Hamilton Official Plan that the lower City is over-served with retail-commercial designated strips. In the view of Cushman & Wakefield, the extent of commercial space along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors is excessive.

While the vacancy levels in the Barton and Kenilworth corridors indicate that unoccupied units are a widespread problem, there are certain concentrations of vacant units that suggest that particular landlords are exacerbating this situation. It may be that certain property owners lack the resources (financial and otherwise) or ability to effectively market their units for lease or for sale. Further, they may lack the property management skills to oversee the ongoing operation of their real estate.

Various landlords have turned to property conversions (likely illegally) as a solution to their ongoing commercial vacancy issues. The small commercial streetfront spaces are generally a suitable size to accommodate a single residential apartment unit – although having a front door and window directly onto the sidewalk is not ideal. Some properties have been converted so that the large front storefront window has been removed to increase privacy. Also, in some cases, the storefront window has been decorated to appear to be a commercial use, although there is no business signage. This may be an effort to obscure the actual use of the premises.

From the property owner’s perspective, receiving rent from a residential tenant (while perhaps illegal) is preferable to being unable to lease the space to a commercial/retail occupant. Ironically, the presence of these illegal residents may help to support the viability of the existing businesses in the area. It appears that achievable commercial rents are in the range of $600 to $900, based upon discussions with local real estate brokers and active listings. This is comparable, or marginally higher, than the achievable residential rental rate for converted commercial units. Notably, given the propensity for independent business along the Barton and Kenilworth corridors, commercial tenant leasing may be an issue, and the greater certainty of receiving rent for a residential tenant may be appealing to landlords/property investors.
According to the Fall 2012 Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Rental Market Survey, with a rate of 3.5% in October 2012, the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) average vacancy rate for purpose-built rental apartment buildings remained relatively unchanged year-over-year. In its projection, CMHC indicated that the rental apartment average vacancy rate in Hamilton was anticipated to decrease to 3.0%, as fewer potential first-time buyers make the transition from rental accommodation into homeownership. CMHC notes that factors exerting downward pressure on vacancy rates in Hamilton include declining first-time buyer demand and to a lesser degree, migration. Notable factors exerting upward pressure on vacancy rates in the local market include weaker job markets for Hamilton residents under the age of 25 and increasing purpose-built rental completions.

The Fall 2012 CMHC report notes that high home prices in Hamilton have widened the cost gap between owning and renting. Housing market activity in Hamilton rebounded strongly in 2009 and strong home price growth has continued since then. Even as the costs of homeownership continued to rise, between 2009 and 2012, the two-bedroom average rent in Hamilton has remained relatively stable. Consequently, some renter households may have postponed their home purchase. With fewer potential first-time buyers shifting from renting to owning a home, demand for rental units was sustained in October 2012. CMHC notes that average rental rates have been increasing in the Hamilton CMA. In October 2012, the fixed sample average rent in apartment structures surveyed in both 2011 and 2012 rose across all bedroom types. The two-bedroom units recorded an average rent increase of 3.1% year-over-year. This rent growth was in line with the maximum allowable rent increase in 2012, according to the Ontario rent review guideline. According to the recent data released by Statistics Canada, between 2006 and 2011, international migration was the major source of Hamilton’s population growth. Given that immigrants tend to lack the credit history and savings to jump into housing ownership, they typically move into rental accommodation upon arriving in Canada. The Barton Street corridor is part of the Central and the Central East zone of the CMHC rental market survey, while Kenilworth Avenue is contained within the Central East zone. The following exhibit presents inventory, vacancy rate and rental rate information for these areas, compared to the overall City of Hamilton and Hamilton CMA.

### Conclusions

The continuing low level of residential apartment vacancy – in the range of 3.0% - 4.5% across the Hamilton CMA for the past decade – has placed upward pressure on rental rates. Residential accessibility and affordability are key issues for lower income households. The (illegal) residential conversion units along the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue corridors would appeal to renters – likely single person households, or couples without children, and perhaps recent immigrants – that are faced with few affordable options in the local rental market. These renters may face issues such as recent unemployment and/or a poor credit history that makes access to other private market residential units a challenge.
7.0 CONSULTATION SUMMARY
7.0/CONSULTATION

OVERVIEW

During the Fall of 2013, the project team met with community members to gather input on the vision, strengths, and weaknesses for revitalizing the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue commercial corridors. Consultation events included:

- a roundtable discussion with City staff in October,
- a day of stakeholder focus groups in November, and
- a public visioning workshop in early December.

The public workshop was held as part of a joint Public Information Meeting for planning studies taking place in the Barton Street study area.

Participants in the focus groups and public workshop included:

- Residents, including representatives of the Crown Point and Gibson Landsdale Community Planning Teams;
- Barton Street businesses, including the Barton Village BIA Board of Management;
- Local developers;
- Staff from the Hamilton General Hospital;
- Staff from the Barton and Kenilworth Branches of the Hamilton Public Library;
- Agency representatives from Urban Native Homes Incorporated, Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition, and Homestead Christian Care;
- Local foot patrol and crime prevention staff from the Hamilton Police Services; and,
- City staff from Planning and Economic Development (Urban Renewal, Policy Planning, and Community Planning), Municipal Parking, the BIA Liaison, Building Services, and Municipal Law Enforcement.

Representatives of the Kenilworth business community were not able to attend the focus group sessions or public workshop.

Common themes highlighted by community members are summarized on the following pages. Key insights are also reflected in the overview of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in Chapter 7 of this Report.

COMMON THEMES

1. Crime & Safety

- The area has a bad reputation for crime, drugs and the sex trade. This reputation is propagated by the media.
- Outsiders perceive the area as dangerous and unattractive.
- Barton Street defines people’s impression of the area, but adjacent neighbourhoods are quite different in character.
- The experience of residents and business owners and statistics show the area is no worse than other parts of Hamilton.
- Many residents feel safe in their neighbourhood, and that the area has improved in recent years as residents “take back” their neighbourhoods.
- It is important to build relationships, be clear about consequences of criminal behavior, and provide supports to people with mental health and addiction issues.
- Remaining problem areas are concentrated (e.g. Barton and Emerald).

2. Derelict Appearance

Property Standards

- The main streets look terrible because people don’t maintain their properties.
- It can be difficult to tell which stores are open and which ones are not because the storefronts are a mess.
- Property standards are not enforced, and when people see adjacent properties are not properly maintained it discourages them from taking care of their own property.
- There needs to be better enforcement of property standards, and the community should encourage property stewardship.
- Low rents mean property owners can’t afford improvements, and don’t see the value in renovations.

Residential Conversions

- Illegal commercial-to-residential conversions are a major reason for the derelict appearance of both Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue.
- Many storefront windows are boarded up, or have curtains in them.
- There are also safety concerns about residential conversions (i.e. with regard to building code, as well as illegal activity).
- Building owners are forced to take on residents to pay their mortgage, but they still can’t justify proper conversions or other renovations due to low rents.
- The conversions provide an affordable housing option that people rely on, and care must be taken to avoid displacing people when cracking down on conversions.
- Given the demand for affordable housing, the focus should be on promoting safe and affordable housing that meets property standards and building code. There also need to be design guidelines for the conversions, and grants that ensure quality.

Absentee Landlords & Vacant Properties

- Absentee landlords from out of town don’t contribute to the community’s development or take care of their properties. When they leave their properties vacant it has a negative impact on the look of the area.
- The City needs to find ways to penalize speculation and vacant property holdings, and provide incentives for redevelopment. The Province also has a role to play because currently owners can apply to the City for a reduction in property taxes for vacant properties. The Municipal Act (Section 364) compels municipalities to offer a 30% property tax rebate to vacant commercial properties, and a 35% rebate to vacant industrial properties.
- Residents could participate through an Adopt-a-Property program, particularly for vacant corner lots that could be used for hockey, skateboarding, food trucks, farmer’s markets and other community uses.

Financial Incentive Programs

- The Façade Improvement Program is the most well-known financial incentive program offered by the City.
- The potential benefits for improving the look of the street are significant, but are not necessarily being recognized.
- Problems with the program, including:
  - A lack of quality control, which results in façade updates that actually make the buildings look worse, and harder to sell or rent;
  - The program is too complicated to access;
  - Requirement for two quotes is not always feasible, e.g. for specialty restoration work; and,
  - Fees have to be paid upfront, and then can be rebated.
- Local business owners recommend the City should:
  - Support improvements to the existing façade, rather
### 3. Commercial Land Use, Activity & Design

#### Land Use Composition
- There is strong support for retaining a commercial presence at grade along Barton and Kenilworth, and a feeling that there is a market for retail.
- Locals also acknowledge there is a place for new residential development. The objective should be to focus commercial uses in concentrated areas.
- Consider extending the requirement for commercial uses at grade eastward on Barton Street to capture the block from Sherman to Lottidge (there are vacancies there, but the street is beautiful).
- Avoid creating a concentration of social service agencies within the Barton Village BIA area.

#### Neighbourhood-serving Commercial Uses
- The focus of commercial activity should be on businesses that serve the neighbourhood – once those businesses are thriving people from other areas will come.
- Encourage owner-occupied buildings, and support people who already live and work in the neighbourhood so that they stick around, and put in their sweat equity.
- People want to see bakeries, flower shops, and healthy fresh food options in a walkable distance to their homes. Several people noted Barton Street is losing its last bank.
- A core challenge for businesses is that the low density and low incomes in the area mean there is little consumer power to support businesses.
- The Hamilton General Hospital administration would love to see more vibrant commercial areas and visitor amenities along Barton and integrated within their site.
- Kenilworth is dominated by bars and automotive repair shops, and needs a greater diversity of commercial uses.

### Relationship between Buildings and the Street
- Many parts of Barton and Kenilworth are traditional main streets with small-scaled, pedestrian-oriented commercial buildings – but high vacancy levels.
- Other parts of the corridors (e.g. between Lottidge and Ottawa) are characterized by large format commercial uses that are set back from the street with large parking lots. These areas are not attractive or walkable – but those are the businesses that are surviving.
- The challenge is to:
  - Revitalize the traditional main street sections of the corridors; and,
  - Humanize the suburban arterial sections.
- The hospital has a poor street presence (i.e. a blank wall), but is committed to improving its street frontage along Barton in the next ten years. The hospital is also interested in improving access into the hospital for both staff and visitors, and identified an opportunity to introduce a new entrance with retail space on the northeast corner of Barton Street and Victoria Avenue.

#### BIA on Kenilworth
- There has been resistance to creating a BIA on Kenilworth because people are concerned that improvements to the area would cause their taxes to go up and they don’t want to pay a BIA tax levy.
- Owners who currently have residential units at-grade are also concerned about losing that income, which they rely on to pay their mortgage.
- Other obstacles to forming a BIA include a lack of cohesion – both in terms of the geographic distribution of businesses and the types of businesses. Also, the area becomes much more residential south of Main Street (outside of the study area).

### Partnerships and Coordination
- Stronger relationships are needed between residents and businesses to support revitalization; currently they are working in silos.
- Everyone has a role to play – residents, businesses, organizations and the City.

### Streetscaping
- The community has mixed views on whether streetscaping is a priority, or whether the emphasis should be on stimulating redevelopment through other planning tools first.
- Priorities for streetscaping would be street trees, garbage cans (currently lacking so people litter), green spaces, seating areas, and wayfinding (e.g. for routes up the escarpment or to the waterfront).
- To avoid past mistakes, new streetscaping features should be bicycle-friendly.
- Quick fixes along Kenilworth include limiting any future use of fencing, and encourage de-fencing projects.
- There is also potential for a greenway corridor in the Kenilworth Avenue area along the pipeline corridor (just north of Roxborough Avenue).

### Neighbourhood-serving Commercial
- The hospital has a poor street presence (i.e. a blank wall), but is committed to improving its street frontage along Barton in the next ten years. The hospital is also interested in improving access into the hospital for both staff and visitors, and identified an opportunity to introduce a new entrance with retail space on the northeast corner of Barton Street and Victoria Avenue.

### 4. Qualities to Protect

#### Existing Buildings
- Respect the age of the buildings, they have an original flavour that reflects the area’s past.
- The area is distinct from newer areas of the City, and should be revitalized rather than left behind or demolished.

#### Affordability
- Ward 3 has the lowest socioeconomic profile of any ward in the City, and both study areas have high rates of poverty.
- Don’t push people out to create a completely gentrified, trendy area that current residents and businesses can’t afford. Keep the area affordable and inclusive as it changes over time, e.g. by blending different social groups.
- Currently, real estate agents and out-of-town investors buy up properties, leave them vacant, and flip them for higher rates that locals can’t afford. This is not a trend that locals support.
5. Transportation

Traffic Calming & Circulation

- Traffic speeds are high on Barton and Kenilworth, which makes it unsafe and unappealing for transit users, pedestrians, cyclists, and shoppers in general.
- Many people in the study area don’t use a car to get around, and there are lots of kids on the street. The streets need to be made safer by calming traffic and introducing bike lanes (on Barton).
- Historically, the objective was to get workers from the factories through the area in their cars and on to their homes on the mountain as quickly as possible – but that traffic pattern no longer makes sense.
- Speeding is enabled by a lack of enforcement, and traffic planning remnants from a by-gone era, including left-turn restrictions (on Kenilworth), and prohibitions for on-street parking during rush hours. There is also no reason for people to stop in the area.
- Eliminating left-turn restrictions on Kenilworth (at Barton, Britannia and Cannon) will also help to reduce driver frustration and improve connectivity to adjacent neighbourhoods.
- A new traffic light is needed on Kenilworth at Rouseborough to help people cross the street between the library and Tim Horton’s.
- Traffic calming strategies (e.g. on-street parking, left turn lanes), must be accompanied by interventions to stop drivers from turning to residential side streets to get through the area (e.g. stop signs and diversions from entering adjacent neighbourhoods).
- Other specific concerns include the volume of trucks using Barton Street (instead of Burlington Street), and motorbikes with illegally modified exhausts creating excessive noise along Kenilworth Avenue.
- Opportunities to create connections to the waterfront (e.g. Pier 4, Bayfront Park) should be explored.

Parking Fees

- Parking fees are a disincentive for people to come to the area.
- Typically, parking fees are used to encourage turnover in commercial areas, but they don’t make sense in the study area because there is no shortage of parking.
- One exception regarding the parking supply is in the south end of Kenilworth Avenue (south of Cannon) where there are no municipal parking lots to meet the demand for parking.
- Parking should be free during the day for up to three hours to encourage people to get out of their cars – and to encourage drivers to stop and visit – and on-street parking could help to slow down speeding traffic.
- Overnight parking restrictions should be retained.

The Median on Barton Street

- The median and sidewalk bulb-outs in the Barton Village Area are a nuisance because they:
  - Make it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street;
  - Create pinch-points/hazards for cyclists;
  - Create traffic problems and safety hazards during spring maintenance; and,
  - Slow down emergency vehicles heading to and from the hospital.
- Impaired drivers often hit the median and bulb-outs, taking out trees and bricks, and causing unsightly and expensive damage.

6. Planning Regulations & Approvals

Land Use Regulations

- There is a consensus that the planning regime is too restrictive, and that the City needs to provide more flexibility to facilitate revitalization.
- Complaints about the land use planning framework are that it:
  - Doesn’t permit innovative land use mixes (e.g. craft-industrial/trades uses, urban animal husbandry, mixed uses above grade);
  - Doesn’t recognize the existing close mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses and overemphasizes nuisance and compatibility concerns, which should not be used as obstacles to redevelopment;
  - Only permits up to two residential units above a commercial use, even though people don’t need or can’t afford such large units and many of the buildings already have three units above grade;
  - Small business owners can’t afford to apply for a variance or rezoning.

- Key considerations for updating the planning regime should include:
  - The area needs an organic model that is responsive to opportunities as they arise and that supports independent businesses and entrepreneurs with a personal investment in the area;
  - Zoning must be predictable, and land use permissions should be based on performance standards (e.g. regarding noise and vibration) rather restrictive lists of permitted uses; and,
  - To facilitate investment, the City must reduce the need for costly variance applications and zoning by-law amendments.

Parking Standards

- Development proposals have been turned down over parking concerns, even though redevelopment is badly needed.
- On-site parking requirements (provision of parking spots and/or cash-in-lieu) are deterring people from investing in the area.
- The City needs to reduce on-site parking standards and/or find other strategies for meeting parking requirements. Parking should never be a reason to turn down a development application.

Development Approvals Process

- Local business owners expressed mixed reviews on the ease of the development approvals process.
- Some people feel the development application process is too complicated to navigate, which frustrates redevelopment and deters investment.
- Others commented on how helpful and accommodating city staff is through the process, which is coordinated through the user-friendly One Stop for Businesses program.
8.0

ASSETS AND CHALLENGES
8.1/NINE ASSETS TO BUILD ON

1. Stable neighbourhoods and engaged communities
   The stable neighbourhoods surrounding the study area are home to engaged residents with an interest in working with the business community to revitalize the corridors.

2. Development opportunities
   There is affordable, development-ready land in the study area, including vacant lots, parking lots, and underutilized sites.

3. Human-scale building form
   The two- to three-storey small format retail and residential buildings lend visual interest to the study area and contribute to its human-scale.

4. Highly connected street network
   A connected street network with intersecting streets at short intervals and a network of rear servicing and loading lanes contributes to the study area’s walkability.

5. Foundation for complete streets
   Streets in the study area are two-way and relatively narrow, with sidewalks on both sides of the street, and local bus service.

6. Central open spaces
   Woodlands Park on Barton Street and the pipeline corridor on Kenilworth provide opportunities to create a central open space and focal point for each corridor.

7. Strong base of community assets
   The study area is well served by community services, including the Hamilton General Hospital, branches of the Hamilton Public Library, fire stations, and schools.

8. Churches and other iconic buildings
   The study area is home to churches and buildings of historical and architectural interest that contribute to the character and aesthetic quality of the area.

9. History and industrial past
   The industrial history of the area provides a unique character that distinguishes the corridors from other parts of the city, and is attractive to creative and skill-based industries and trades.

8.2/NINE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS

1. Perception of crime
   The area is perceived by outsiders as a hot spot for crime, and an unsafe place to visit, live or invest in.

2. Low rents
   Low achievable rents make it difficult for property owners to maintain or renovate their buildings, or to properly convert ground floor commercial units to a residential use.

3. High number of vacancies and residential conversions
   The high number of vacant storefronts and storefronts that have been illegally converted to a residential use contribute to the area’s derelict appearance. The vacancies and conversions reflect the low-density and low-income profile of neighbourhoods in the area, which lack the consumer power to support an extensive commercial corridor.

4. Poor quality buildings
   The poor aesthetic quality and physical condition of many buildings detract from the corridors attractiveness, both for visitors and investors.

5. Dispersed retail
   The lack of a geographic focus to the existing retail detracts from the walkability of the corridors, and from the formation of a critical mass of activity to support businesses.

6. Areas of suburban format retail
   Strip retail and fast food outlets with deep setbacks create gaps in the street wall and make the area less attractive, particularly for pedestrians.

7. Traffic flow
   Both corridors serve as high-speed thoroughfares, which make them unsafe and unattractive for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. Left-turn restrictions also frustrate drivers and deter them from visiting the area.

8. Restrictive land use regulation
   Inflexible land use regulations under the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law deter investment and redevelopment by limiting opportunities for the area’s transformation, and by fuelling the need for costly rezoning applications and minor variances.

9. High parking standards
   The number of required parking spaces under the Zoning By-Law are often not feasible to achieve for redevelopment and infill projects, and have already deterred investment on both Barton and Kenilworth.
9.0 VISION STATEMENTS
9.1/BARTON STREET

Barton Street will become a vibrant main street and the focal point of a complete community where people come to live, work, play and raise a family. The historic prominence of this street will be reflected in its re-birth as a mixed use corridor, with an inclusive housing mix, diversity of community services and amenities, and new job opportunities in healthcare, social services, skilled trades, and creative industries. Buildings, streetscapes and public spaces along Barton Street will be safe, clean, green and well cared for, and contribute to a positive image of the street and adjacent neighbourhoods to the rest of the City. The ongoing evolution of the Street is an organic process, built on the commitment of local residents and businesses, and their partnerships with the City and community organizations.

9.2/KENILWORTH AVENUE

Kenilworth Avenue will become a meeting place for surrounding neighbourhoods, with new residential opportunities, public spaces and a mix of supporting commercial and community facilities that make the corridor an attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family. A strong sense of community will be fostered through a safe, clean and green public realm, physical connectivity along the street, an inclusive housing mix, support for local businesses and neighbourhood-serving retail, and innovative partnerships that champion social enterprises and property stewardship to revitalize the corridor. Kenilworth Avenue has the potential to become a vibrant street, where people from a diversity of backgrounds, economic means, and social status come together to support one another and the area’s ongoing revitalization.
INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

There are 16 Financial Incentive Programs in Hamilton, 13 of which are currently applicable in the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue commercial corridor. The programs are offered to assist with the costs of improvements and renovation of properties to improve the area in which they are located. These programs are available to both property owners and tenants. All financial incentive programs are subject to an application fee that is payable upon submission, which range from $205 - $710 depending on the program.

Hamilton Economic Development

Financial Incentive Programs

Business Improvement Area

Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program

• This incentive program is for new improvements to storefronts and buildings made by commercial property owners and authorized tenants within active Business Improvement Areas and corresponding Community Improvement Project Areas. The program matches grants in three price categories based on building/property location and linear foot street frontage with amounts to a maximum of $10,000-$20,000 and $25,000. The grant can also be used to match an additional $10,000 for art pieces or art related façade improvements on private property that is viewable by the public. The General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department is responsible for approving the grant. Heritage features proposed for restoration or conservation are not eligible for the grant program.

Hamilton Tax Increment Grant Program

• This incentive program is for developing, redeveloping or renovating residential or commercial lands, buildings parking lots and vacant lots within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns, Business Improvement Areas and the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue North commercial corridors. The program is not available to vacant sites that become vacant as a result of demolishing a designated building. The program is a five year grant that may not exceed 100% of the municipality realty tax increase for the first year, 80% for the second year, 60% for the third year, 40% for the fourth year and 20% for the fifth year. City Council is responsible for assessing the eligibility of applicants to this program. Specific existing or proposed uses (Adult Entertainment Parlour, Body Rub Establishment, Correction Facility etc. as defined in the Zoning by-law) are not eligible for the grant program.

Office Tenancy Assistance Program

• This incentive program assists owners and authorized tenants with leaseholds to make improvements to office buildings within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns, Business Improvement Areas and the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue North commercial corridors. The City will provide a low interest loan at 1% below prime rate for tenants establishing a new office location by a minimum of 1,000 square feet of gross leasable office space. The maximum loan is $450,000 per application and the loan term is five years or the end term of the lease.

Commercial Corridor Housing Loan and Grant Program

• This incentive program provides an interest free loan (for the first five years) to stimulate residential development through the construction of new units through building, extensions, new units on vacant land, renovation of residential units or conversion of commercial space into residential units (not including single-detached or “individual” street townhouse units) within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns, active and dormant Business Improvement Areas and “main street” corridors. The loans are limited to $15,000 per dwelling unit up to $600,000 per property (40 units). A grant in the amount of $5,000 per application is available for professional fees paid. The loan term is a maximum of five years and six months. The General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development or City Council is responsible for approving the application. This program can be applied for in conjunction with other City programs (except the Hamilton Downtown Multi-Residential Property Investment Program).

Commercial Façade Property Improvement Grant Program

• This incentive program is a grant for eligible façade improvements for property owners and tenants of commercial properties within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and the Barton Street and Kenilworth Avenue North commercial corridors. The grant provided will match the amount paid by the property owner/tenant to a maximum of $10,000 per property or $12,500 for corner properties. The General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department is responsible for approving the grants.

Hamilton Heritage Property Grant Program

• This incentive program is a grant to conserve and restore heritage features for commercial, institutional or multi-residential properties designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns, active Business Improvement Areas or located within the lower city between 403 and the Red Hill Valley Parkway. The grant will be based upon the value of the project to a maximum of $150,000. An additional grant of up to $20,000 is available for heritage reports/assessments/studies.

Commercial Façade Property Improvement Grant Program

• This incentive program is applicable for applications approved under the ERASE Redevelopment Grant Program (ERG). The applicant can apply the costs of environmental remediation on the property against the development charges payable for that property.

Environmental Programs

ERASE Redevelopment Grant Program (ERG)

• This program is offered to offset the cost of environmental remediation and rehabilitation and where re-valuation and tax increase occurs on these properties. The program is paid on an annual basis for up to 10 years and calculated at 80% of the increase in the municipal portion of property taxes.

ERASE Tax Assistance Program

• This financial incentive is available for owners of properties designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act to restore and conserve heritage features. There are two options for the term of the loan: one is a maximum of 10 years, repayable on a monthly basis and the second is a term of 4 years, repayable annually commencing one year after final completion of the work in the amounts of 10% of the loan and at the end of the term the balance will be paid by a balloon payment.

ERASE Study Grant Program

• This program provides grants that are matched for one-half the cost of a Phase II and/or Phase III Environmental site Assessment (Remediation Action Plan) from the City for property owners or potential purchasers of commercial or industrial properties. The program provides grants up to $20,000 per study for a maximum of two studies and $25,000 per property.
ERASE Municipal Acquisition and Partnership Program

• This is a program of City property acquisition, investment and involvement, it assists with brownfield pilot projects with the private sector to clean up and redevelop these sites using innovative tools such as new environmental remediation technologies.

LEED Grant Program

• This is a five year grant program for the City to assist applicants to achieve LEED certification by matching the incremental construction costs (to a maximum), consultation, energy modeling and certification fees. The grant cannot exceed the increase in municipal realty taxes as a direct result of the development/ redevelopment of land and/or building and the amount of the grant cannot exceed 75% of municipal realty tax increase during the term of the grant. City Council is responsible for approving the grants.

Downtown Hamilton Financial Incentive Programs (not applicable to study areas)

Hamilton Downtown Multi-Residential Property

• This incentive program is an interest free loan for renovations of multiple dwelling units (minimum of three units), new multiple dwelling units on vacant land, and conversions of commercial space to multiple dwelling units within the Downtown Hamilton CIPA. The loan is limited to a maximum of $5m per development, based on 25% of the cost-to-construct budget. The term of the loan is five years and six months.

The Gore Building Improvement Grant Program

• This grant program assists in building improvements (including façade, signage, roofing and etc. as described in the program description) for owners and authorized tenants with properties fronting on King Street East between James and Catharine Street around Gore Park. The City matches grants up to $50,000. The General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department is responsible for approving applications for the grant.

Development Charges

• This financial incentive allows for 90% of City and GO Transit Development Charges to be waived within the Downtown Hamilton CIPA. The developer receives an additional dollar for dollar exemption that is matched to the amount of a voluntary contribution to the Downtown Public Art Reserve for any remaining City and GO Transit Development Charges payable. Education Development Charges are not waived.