ABOUT THE STUDY

The City of Hamilton's new Neighbourhood Action Strategy is working towards improving social, economic and health outcomes in targeted neighbourhoods in the city. The City is working with community partners, neighbourhood groups, and residents to develop neighbourhood action plans. These action plans lay out a vision for the future of each neighbourhood, and the specific projects needed to get there.

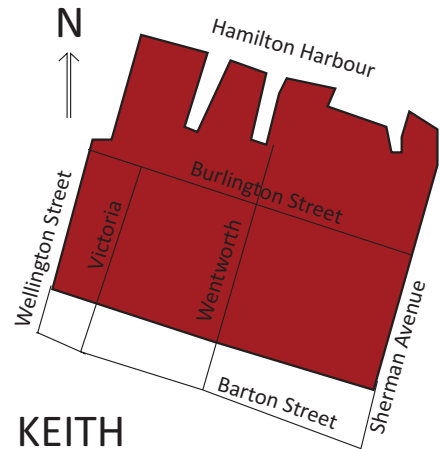Another important part of this work is research and evaluation. We want to find out more about residents' views and priorities, how well the planning and neighbourhood projects are going and what might need to be changed along the way, as well as the kind of impact the strategy has on residents in the neighbourhoods overall. Our research team at McMaster, led by Dr. Jim Dunn, has undertaken the Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study to help answer these questions.

In 2012-3, we did surveys with residents in Keith, Stinson and Stipley. This report presents results from the 307 people who completed a survey with us in Keith in 2012-3.

In this report, we've focused in particular on the questions we asked residents about how they feel about their neighbourhood now and their priorities and concerns. We talk about what we found in our survey in comparison to Keith's neighbourhood plan. We also present results on other areas that our survey asks about – housing, safety and security, and civic engagement.

2014 interim report

KEITH
neighbourhood

hamilton neighbourhoods study

N

Hamilton Harbour

Wellington Street

Victoria

Burlington Street

Wentworth

Sherman Avenue

Barton Street

KEITH NEIGHBOURHOOD

WHO WE TALKED TO IN KEITH

Keith residents over the age of 18 were eligible to take part in our study. We selected residents at random in the neighbourhood, and knocked on their door to ask if they'd like to complete a survey. Some people also received a letter asking them if they'd like to participate. Interpretation assistance was available for respondents who required it. We talked to a total of 307 residents in Keith. The following table describes our survey respondents with respect to certain characteristics of the neighbourhood as a whole, as taken from the most recent census.

	OUR SURVEY RESPONDENTS	2011 CENSUS
gender	42% male; 58% female; <1% transgender	51% male; 49% female
average (mean) age	44 years	45 years*
Canadian-born	88%	86%**

* excludes residents under 18; not exact as ages are reported in ranges in the census (i.e., 20-24 years old and 85+ years old)

** from the 2011 National Household Survey

There is a high degree of residential stability in Keith.

On average, survey respondents in Keith had been living in the neighbourhood for almost 11 years, and in their current dwelling for 8 years. Most people (81%) had not moved residences during the past year, and half (50%) had been in the same dwelling for over 5 years. 48% of people owned their home and 45% were renters. Another 6% lived rent-free in a dwelling they did not own or pay rent for. 1% had a different arrangement.

We surveyed slightly more female and Canadian-born respondents than is found in the Keith neighbourhood as a whole. Our group of respondents was close to Keith as a whole in terms of what kind of dwelling they live in.

	OUR 307 PARTICIPANTS	COMPARED TO KEITH ON THE WHOLE…*
detached house	68%	75%
semi-detached house	9%	8%
row house or town house	9%	6%
duplex apartment	4%	5%
low-rise apartment (less than 5 storeys)**	9%	6%
other	1%	n/a

* Owing to the method by which Statistics Canada ensures data anonymization, these percentages do not total 100

** This category includes apartments within a house

DWELLING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SATISFACTION

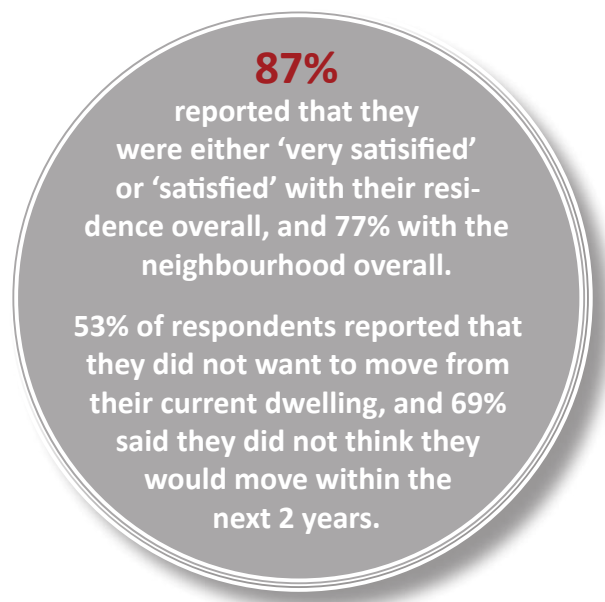|	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
satisfaction with residence overall	30%	57%	10%	2%
satisfaction with the neighbourhood overall	18%	59%	18%	5%

Participants in Keith felt postive about their residence and neighbourhood overall, but somewhat less positive about the neighbourhood as a place to bring up children. Note that all respondents were asked this question, whether or not they have children of their own. The responses to this question were very similar across genders.

	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
feelings about the neighbourhood as a place to bring up children*	8%	13%	32%	26%	20%

*   asked of all respondents, whether or not they had children of their own

Participants reported that their **most important** reason for moving into the neighbourhood was affordability. We didn't find any substantial difference in how men and women answered this question.

affordability	**47%**
knew people in the neighbourhood	9%
convenient – close to downtown	1%
convenient – close to public transit	1%
convenient – close to work	6%
convenient – close to good schools	2%
convenient – close to services/amenities	1%
safety	1%
investment property	2%
neighbourhood had character	4%
liked the residence	9%
other	17%

87%
reported that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their residence overall, and 77% with the neighbourhood overall.

53% of respondents reported that they did not want to move from their current dwelling, and 69% said they did not think they would move within the next 2 years.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Most respondents felt very safe in the neighbourhood during the day – less than 2% told us that they did not feel safe during the day. At night, respondents felt somewhat less safe in the neighbourhood.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Overall, I feel safe when I am outside in my neighbourhood during the day	47%	52%	1%	<1%
Overall, I feel safe when I am outside in my neighbourhood at night	21%	47%	23%	9%

Residents who had children in school (kindergarten to grade 12) were asked if they felt it was safe for their children to walk to and from school; the results of that question reflect only those respondents who have children in this age category.

	STRONGLY AGREE	DISAGREE	MY CHILDREN NEVER WALK HOME FROM SCHOOL
Overall, I feel that my child/children are safe walking to and from school*	32%	24%	28%

*   asked only of respondents with children in school, K-12

99% of respondents felt safe in the neighbourhood during the day.

At night, respondents felt somewhat less safe in the neighbour-hood.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AMENITIES

Our survey asked people about what kinds of services and amenities they feel are important to have in a neighbourhood, whether those services currently exist in their neighbourhood, and (if they do exist in the neighbourhood now), if the services or amenities are accessible.

One in ten people said that **public transit** existed, but was inaccessible. People felt that there were plenty of **parks** and that they were accessible.

Over 50% of respondents felt that banks were lacking. Close to 50% also felt that places to buy healthy food were lacking.

For over half of the services/amenities that we asked about, at least 1 in 5 people felt that it was lacking in the neighbourhood.

	SERVICE IS IMPORTANT BUT IS LACKING IN NEIGHBOURHOOD	SERVICE EXISTS, BUT IS INACCESSIBLE
family doctors or walk-in clinics	22%	4%
childcare	24%	3%
places to buy healthy food	48%	2%
public libraries	36%	2%
places for worship (e.g. churches, mosques etc.)	11%	3%
parks	<1%	1%
banks	53%	3%
public schools	38%	4%
public transportation (e.g. buses)	7%	10%
services for youth (employment services, counselling or recreation programs)	19%	<1%
places to get together with people you know (cafés, community centres etc.)	26%	3%
places to have a meeting (café, community centre, library etc.)	16%	2%
a place to exercise or be physically active (outside of the home)	39%	2%

NEIGHBOURHOOD PROBLEMS

We asked respondents to rate a list of common issues in terms of how much of a problem they felt these things were in Keith. Of these, we found that only one issue, poor air quality, was deemed 'a serious problem' by more than 50% of respondents.

One problem, POOR AIR QUALITY, was deemed a 'serious problem' by more than 50% of respondents. More than half of the issues (10 of 18) were seen as 'not a problem' in Keith by 60% or more of respondents.

TOP 5 'SERIOUS PROBLEMS' IN KEITH:

1. Poor air quality (52% said this)
2. A lack of places to shop (30%)
3. Traffic or road safety (27%)
4. Drugs (26%)
5. Litter (26%)

	NOT A PROBLEM	SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM	A SERIOUS PROBLEM
litter in the streets	34%	40%	26%
poor air quality	16%	32%	**52%**
problems with dogs	**71%**	19%	10%
noise from traffic	**61%**	24%	15%
lack of entertainment (cafés, cinemas, pubs etc.)	46%	37%	17%
traffic and road safety (including speed of traffic)	45%	28%	27%
lack of places to shop	33%	37%	30%
vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property	41%	34%	25%
problems with neighbours	**71%**	18%	11%
run-down or boarded-up properties	48%	29%	23%
racial harassment or discrimination	**81%**	13%	6%
people being attacked or harassed	**71%**	19%	10%
household burglary	**68%**	21%	11%
drug dealing or use	50%	24%	26%
sex work	**63%**	17%	20%
teenagers or youth handing around on the streets	**65%**	23%	12%
disturbance from gangs or crowds	**87%**	9%	4%
lack of police protection	**74%**	14%	12%

NEIGHBOURHOOD PRIORITIES

Participants were asked: **"What do you think are the two most important things that would make your neighbourhood a better place to live?"**, to which they could give two short responses. The table below shows the broad categories of responses and, for the top categories, the most frequent specific themes that are included in that category.

Category	Theme	Count	Theme	Count
Amenities needed TOTAL: 117	More and/or better grocery stores	37	More cafés, restaurants, bars and places for people to meet	12
	Community or recreation centre	25	More or closer schools	6
	Other, single responses	24	More social services	5
	Events and activities for the neighbourhood	23	Dog park or leash-free zone	<5
	More and/or better parks and greenspace	17	More services for seniors	<5
	More and/or better retail/shopping options (not grocery)	13	More health care services, including doctors, hospital, walk-in clinic	<5
Beautification TOTAL: 114	Clean up litter on the streets	28	Clean up graffiti and vandalism	10
	Improve run-down residential properties	27	General/non-specific e.g. "make the neighbourhood prettier"	8
	Improve garbage pick-up	18	Plant and maintain more flowers and trees	5
	Address issues with industrial and commercial properties, e.g. street-level unsightliness and smoke stacks	15	Other, single responses	<5
Crime and safety TOTAL: 89	Address drug use and drug dealing	31	Address property crime problems (theft, break & enter)	<5
	Greater police presence needed	30	General/non-specific e.g. "too much crime"	<5
	Address sex and sex workers	12	Address violent crime problems (assault)	<5
	Other, single responses	7		
Sense of community TOTAL: 54	More/better communication needed among neighbourhoods and neighbourhood institutions	24	Neighbourhood Watch needed	7
	General/non-specific e.g. "people should be nicer"	18	Other, single responses	5
Traffic and road safety TOTAL: 53	Too much speeding; slow down traffic	12	Too many trucks in the neighbourhood	9
	Address other traffic and road problems, e.g. potholes	12	Other, single responses	9
	Traffic calming measures needed , e.g. stop signs	11		
Children/youth TOTAL: 52	Resources needed for children and youth	31	Poor parenting and other problems	8
	Problems with children and youth, e.g. loitering on streets	13		
Neighbours TOTAL: 32	Address problems with specific individuals	9	Negative attitudes in the neighbourhood	6
	Too many undesirable people in the neighbourhood	8	Not enough desirable people	<5
	Other, single responses	7		
Housing TOTAL: 28	Improve derelict and abandoned properties	11	Other, single responses	7
	Address problem renters/tenants in the neighbourhood	8	Affordability of housing	<5
Economic development TOTAL: 21	More businesses needed	10	Other, single responses	<5
	More jobs needed	9		
Animals TOTAL: 15	Wild and urban animals, e.g. skunks, racoons	6	Pet waste	<5
	Strays	5		
Ungrouped	Nothing/no improvements needed	48	Improve parking options	14
	Address pollution, air quality and environmental concerns	40	Improve public transit options	13
	Address issues with having industrial neighbours	34	Trains and train noise	5
	Infrastructure improvements needed	16		

We found that issues resulting from having industrial neighbours are of equal concern to all genders. Lack of resources for children and youth and poor grocery options are more of a concern for women.

PRIORITY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
nothing/no improvements needed	48	**71%**	29%
pollution, air quality, environmental concerns	40	50%	50%
groceries	37	38%	**62%**
industrial neighbours	34	53%	48%
resources needed for children/youth	31	26%	**74%**

SOCIAL COHESION AND TRUST

Respondents felt positively overall that their neighborhood looks for solutions to local problems, has good leaders and ways of sharing information. People also felt positively that neighbours are friendly, trustworthy, and watch out for each other, and that they share the same values and vision for the neighbourhood.

90% of respondents described the people in their neighbourhood as 'friendly' or 'very friendly'

79% of respondents agreed that the neighbourhood has ways of sharing information. **78%** felt that neighbours want the same things as them for the neighbourhood.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
My neighbourhood continually looks for solutions to local problems rather than being satisfied with the way things are.	9%	50%	26%	7%	9%
My neighbourhood has good leaders who look out for the best interests of our neighbourhood.	11%	52%	22%	8%	7%
I know about a local neighbourhood or business association or group that meets regularly in my neighbourhood.	11%	39%	38%	9%	3%
Our neighbourhood has ways of sharing information (talking to neighbours, newsletters etc.).	20%	59%	15%	4%	1%
I have influence over what this neighbourhood is like.	7%	37%	40%	13%	2%
There are opportunities for celebration and fun in my neighbourhood.	15%	58%	20%	5%	1%
If there is a problem around here, neighbours get together to deal with it.	13%	47%	28%	8%	4%
In my neighbourhood, neighbours watch over each other's property.	28%	56%	10%	5%	<1%
People in this neighbourhood can be trusted.	11%	59%	22%	7%	2%
People in this neighbourhood share the same values.	8%	48%	32%	7%	6%
My neighbours and I want the same things for the neighbourhood.	14%	64%	15%	3%	4%

COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT AND PRIDE

65% of respondents would like to stay in their neighbourhood for years to come.

Residents in Keith generally have a strong level of attachment to their neighbourhood. The majority would like to stay in their neighbourhood for years to come, feel that living in Keith gives them a sense of pride, and that their neighbourhood has a distinctive character.
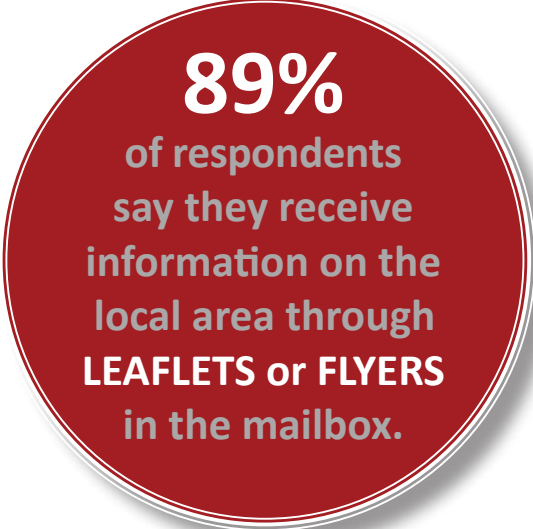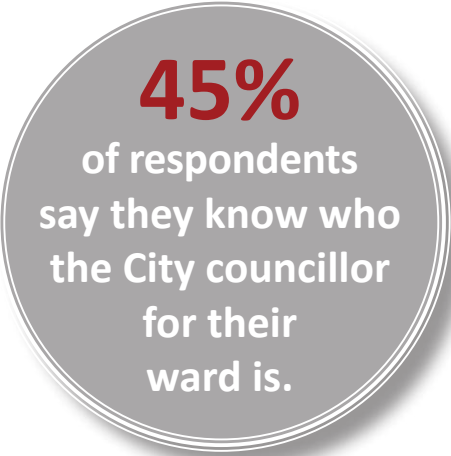
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I would like to stay in my neighbourhood for many years to come	20%	45%	24%	11%
Living in this neighbourhood gives me a sense of pride	13%	44%	31%	12%
It is very important to me to live in this particular neighbourhood	9%	39%	38%	13%
My neighbourhood has a distinct character—it is a special place	15%	55%	23%	6%

CIVIC AWARENESS, ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Results around civic engagement, awareness and involvement are generally very positive. 72% of respondents either "agree" or "strongly agree" that information about their neighbourhood's services and activities is available to them. However, they feel less strongly that the City is responsive to their queries and requests and that residents are invited to be involved in decision-making in the neighbourhood.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Information is readily available to the public on City services and activities that take place in my neighbourhood	14%	58%	20%	5%	3%
The City is responsive to residents' inquiries, input and/or requests	8%	44%	31%	8%	9%
Residents are invited to be involved in decision-making in my neighbourhood	8%	50%	27%	7%	7%

MORE ON CIVIC AWARENESS, ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

45%
of respondents say they know who the City councillor for their ward is.

89%
of respondents say they receive information on the local area through **LEAFLETS or FLYERS** in the mailbox.

We also asked respondents to tell us more about how they get information about the local area, (for example information about events and meetings happening in the neighbourhood, or information on issues of concern in the neighbourhood).

	YES	NO
through friends or family	59%	41%
through work or colleagues	18%	82%
leaflets or flyers in the mailbox	**89%**	11%
posters on telephone poles, in shops or community buildings	58%	42%
free newspapers or community language newspapers	60%	40%
radio stations	34%	66%
television stations	42%	58%
websites or email	38%	62%
on buses	32%	68%
at public meetings	24%	76%
through volunteer or community organizations	38%	62%
other ways	10%	90%

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

When asked if there was anything that made it difficult to participate in community events and organizations, respondents were invited to state up to two barriers. The results are grouped into categories below.

		TOTAL COUNT
Busy with...	work	69
	children	34
	other reasons	15
	other family	9
	school	<5
Barriers	health reasons/mobility concerns	43
	transit/access/distance	12
	feels excluded/marginalized	5
	language	<5
	financial	0
Lack of...	interest	46
	awareness: don't know what's available	19
	time	16
	opportunity: nothing is available	13
	childcare	<5
Other reasons	no barriers/nothing preventing participation	125
	other	29
	feels shy or anxious around other people/ mental health	11
	age	7
	lazy	5

The table below lists the top five barriers in Keith, and the proportion of respondents who gave that response by gender. Notable patterns have been highlighted. Many more women than men named caring for children and mobility concerns as barriers.

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TRANS-GENDER
no barriers	125	45%	54%	1%
busy with work	69	41%	59%	0%
lack of interest	46	52%	48%	0%
health reasons/mobility concerns	43	28%	**72%**	0%
busy with children	34	9%	**91%**	0%

CONCLUSIONS—COMPARING OUR RESULTS WITH THE KEITH NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN

The Keith Neighbourhood Action Plan identifies four broad goals:

1. **Enhance neighbourhood beautification and pride**

2. **Increase neighbourhood health, safety and security**

3. **Strengthen educational, business and economic opportunities**

4. **Promote community interaction and partnerships**

By and large, our results with regards to neighbourhood priorities mirror the priorities identified in Keith's Neighbourhood Action Plan.

By and large, our results with regards to neighbourhood priorities mirror the priorities identified in Keith's Neighbourhood Action Plan. Beautification, parks, green spaces, and sense of community were dominant themes in our survey responses. In addition, our participants also identified the need for more places to shop, in particular a grocery store (which could be considered aligned with Goal #3, Objective #3 "Attract New Business and Commercial Investment") as well as a community or recreation centre. Respondents also prioritize a perceived lack of police presence, the undesired presence of drug dealing and use, and a need for resources for children and youth.

In Keith neighbourhood, survey respondents identified the presence of industrial neighbours as a particular concern, as well as a need for public transit and a grocery store. These concerns were not as prevalent in the other two neighbourhoods surveyed.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

Dr. Jim Dunn and his staff at McMaster University are doing the research study this report is based on. If you have any questions, please contact us.

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