

HAMILTON'S VitalSigns®

Hamilton's Vital Signs

A citizens' report from Hamilton Community Foundation on 10 areas that contribute to the city's quality of life

Hamilton's Vital Signs is a new report that looks at the vitality of our city, identifies significant trends and is intended to stimulate citizen awareness, discussion, and action. It's part of a national initiative from Community Foundations of Canada; Hamilton is one of 16 Canadian cities releasing a local Vital Signs report today.

As a starting point to the discussion, we asked the community to share their perception on the 10 quality of life aspects presented in Vital Signs. The "stoplight" symbols that accompany each aspect provide insight into the perspectives of more than 1,000 citizens who responded to an online and telephone survey, conducted by Leger Marketing. That level of participation already tells us that Hamiltonians are ripe for the conversation.

Through the Vital Signs survey, citizens gave their opinion, based both on their own first-hand experience and a brief overview of the data, on each aspect using these descriptions:



Green – I believe we are moving in the right direction;

Yellow – I am concerned, or

Red – this issue is unacceptable.

We offer these opinions as a kickoff to community conversation. What do Hamiltonians think and feel about where they live? How do those opinions compare with your own? How much reflects what the facts and the trends are saying, and how much reflects day-to-day experience, or an exchange in the coffee shop? What can each of us learn, and how can we use that information both to change our own behaviour, and advocate for change in the broader community?

The issues presented in Vital Signs are complex. This report and the opinions are simply a jumping off point that we hope will inspire you to learn more about the underlying issues, the progress we are making as a community, where we need to go next and what each of us can do. We hope it will encourage dialogue, connections and action. If your interest is piqued by this report, we encourage you to go to hamiltonvitalsigns.ca for more context and an in-depth perspective. You can also tune in to weekly Vital Signs segments on Cable 14's *For the Record*, Mondays beginning November 1.

What do you think about what you have read? Send us a note: vitalsigns@hcf.on.ca.



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For Hamilton, For Ever

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A Message from Hamilton Community Foundation

This Vital Signs report captures a snapshot of Hamilton's quality of life. It shows a good city, holding its own with other cities across the province. Public safety is improving. Our environmental footprint is shrinking. Hamiltonians are creating and enjoying a burgeoning arts and cultural community.

That's the picture at first glance. But look a little closer, dig a little deeper into the data. Under the surface, you discover two cities that share the same urban boundary but little else. One city is an archipelago of affluent neighbourhoods with healthy, well-educated residents enjoying an enviable quality of life. The other city concentrates shocking levels of poverty, curtailed education, high unemployment and ill health into poor neighbourhoods that might as well be on a different planet.

Vital Signs tells us that while Hamilton broadly tracks the provincial average for the various issues we present – our 7.7% unemployment rate, our 6.1% rate of low birthweight babies, our 84% high school completion rate – that average masks the vastly different realities of our two cities.

For example, poverty rates in Hamilton neighbourhoods range from less than 3% to over 40%. Similarly, families in Hamilton's five highest-income neighbourhoods had median incomes over three times higher than those in the five lowest-income neighbourhoods. The difference to a family between \$110,000 a year and \$33,000 a year is the difference between a high standard of living and a constant struggle.

Education levels also segregate our two cities. The proportion of 20- to 24-year-olds who have not completed high school ranges by neighbourhood, from zero to over 65%. The difference between our two cities extends to health as well. Vital Signs shows that the rate of low birthweight babies is twice as high in some neighbourhoods as it is in others.

Concentrated poverty is devastating to the communities that suffer it, but it surely harms our city as a whole. It inevitably spreads out and undermines economic growth, property values, public health and educational outcomes across entire regions. Understanding and addressing the economic segregation that cleaves our city is the moral imperative of our generation. It calls us to do more to meet the complex challenges of concentrated poverty. It calls us as citizens to

"We need more citizens engaged and working to build community, social and economic capital."

What the Findings Show

These recurring themes underlie the data you'll read in this report:

- **Dramatic disparities between neighbourhoods.** Where information was available by neighbourhood, there are profound and inter-related disparities. Housing, the gap between rich and poor, health, learning, safety, and voter turnout vary widely depending on where you live.
- **Impact of a shifting economy on future prosperity.** The findings reflect the shift of Hamilton's economy from a manufacturing base and the need to prepare our workforce. Currently, Hamiltonians are less educated than the provincial average, and there is a lower percentage of people in the labour force. School readiness is slightly below the provincial average and standardized test performance varies widely by school.
- **Citizens, organizations and government can make a difference.** The results show that people can have a significant impact on progress. With strong leadership from local government and citizens, water use, and waste diversion improved remarkably, and reductions in some types of air pollutants showed improvement. Fewer seniors lived in poverty in 2006 than in 2001, and we have found strategies to reduce homelessness among men in Hamilton.
- **Trends beyond borders.** Hamilton is unique in many ways, but is also consistent with, and influenced by, trends across the province, country and beyond. The city reflects the drop in violent crime and property crime rates which have fallen



Terry Cooke
President & CEO, HCF



Dr. Lindsey George
Board Chair, HCF

become more engaged in finding solutions and building community.

The good news is that Vital Signs provides clear statistical evidence that, in specific instances, we're moving in the right direction. Poverty among senior citizens fell from 24% to 17% between the last two census periods. Our environmental record is also improving. Overall water consumption dropped by over 50% between 1993 and 2009, and waste diversion from landfills rose from 17% in 2000 to almost 50% in 2008.

Hamilton's "Transitions to Homes" program has successfully moved hundreds of chronically homeless men into stable housing. At the same time, Canada's Vibrant Communities network has recognized the Poverty Roundtable as one of the country's leading examples of transformational change.

But we need to do more. We need more citizens getting engaged, working to build community and investing in neighbourhood revitalization so we can build the social and economic capital that will restore our city. Tackling poverty and neighbourhood disparity has been a strategic focus of the Foundation's work since 2002. The themes you see summarized below, reinforced by Vital Signs data, confirm that HCF's work to tackle poverty, strengthen neighbourhoods, promote collaboration and engage citizens is vital to Hamilton's future.

As you dig below the surface of this snapshot, dig deeper as well into your store of compassion, outrage and action. Together, we can make powerful changes. Through a range of actions from individual behaviour change to policy change, Hamiltonians can and will continue to make a difference.

across North America. We felt the effects of the global recession in rising unemployment numbers and social assistance cases, while the causes were not under local control.

- **Poverty affects different people differently.** Poverty has an impact beyond the issue of the gap between rich and poor. Low birthweight, obesity, smoking, and a lack of physical activity are all more common in lower socio-economic households. Current challenges in the rental housing market tend to be caused by a lack of income to pay for rent, rather than a shortage of available apartments.

There are also extreme differences in poverty and employment rates, housing affordability, and education levels between sub-populations, such as recent immigrants, single parent families, Aboriginal people and women.

- **The challenge and opportunity of immigration.** *Vital Signs* indicates that immigration is likely to be one of the primary sources of Hamilton's future population growth. Recent immigrants tend to be well educated and contribute to Hamilton's vibrant and creative city aspirations – well known author and scholar Richard Florida uses diversity as a key indicator for new business attraction and economic development. The challenge: fewer skilled immigrants are coming to Hamilton than to other major Ontario cities. Recent immigrants face higher unemployment rates than do non-immigrants.

www.hamiltonvitalsigns.ca

Arts and Culture



Hamilton's art and cultural industry workforce is growing faster than its overall labour force. Library use is also growing rapidly, and exceeding provincial averages in many categories.

Arts and Culture Employment

As of 2006, Hamilton's 7,290 cultural industry workers accounted for 2.6% of its labour force, slightly less than provincial and national averages. Hamilton's 1,680 artists account for 0.6% of the labour force, and is similar to the national average of 0.8%. The number of artists has increased 22% in the last 15 years, growing faster than the overall labour force.

Library Use

Library use is growing rapidly in Hamilton. The 6 million items checked out in 2009 represent a 28% increase from 4.7 million in 2007. Circulation per capita is slightly higher than average at 11.6 items per person, and 56% of Hamiltonians owned a library card

in 2009, compared to the 43% provincial average. Over the past three years, total library uses per capita have been 3 to 13% higher than the average for large municipal libraries in Ontario.

Cultural Organizations and Festivals

A recently-completed baseline inventory of Hamilton's cultural resources identified 2,254 cultural assets including 870 creative cultural industries (e.g. publishing, art dealers, libraries), 180 community cultural organizations, 260 spaces and facilities, 824 cultural heritage properties, 28 natural heritage properties, and 92 festivals and events.

Belonging and Leadership



Hamiltonians are more likely than average to give to charity and two-thirds feel connected to the community, but voter turnout is low, especially in some neighbourhoods.

Charitable Donations

In Hamilton in 2008, 26.7% of tax filers made charitable donations. This was higher than provincial (25.7%) and federal averages (24.1%). These results are lower than in 1997 when 30.5% of Hamilton tax filers made donations. The median charitable donation has increased to \$290 from \$210 over the same period.

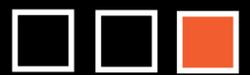
Sense of Community Belonging

In 2007-8, 65.1% Hamiltonians 12 and over reported having a strong or positive sense of community belonging, similar to the provincial average and an increase over 2001 when Hamilton's percentage was 59.0%. Almost one-third of Hamiltonians report not having even a "somewhat strong" sense of community belonging.

Voter Turnout

In the 2003 and 2006 municipal elections, only 37% and 38% respectively, of eligible Hamiltonians voted, three percentage points lower than the provincial average. Turnout increased to meet the average for the last two provincial elections when 57% and 54% of eligible Hamiltonians voted. Hamilton's federal election turnout has been slightly higher: 58% in 2004, 63% in 2006, and 56% in 2008 – but all were two to three percentage points below national average. Voter turnout varies dramatically by neighbourhood: for instance several polling stations in the 2008 federal election reported turnout below 25%, while others were above 75%.

Economy and Work



Hamilton's unemployment rate is lower than the Ontario average, but proportionally fewer people are in the labour force. The local economy has had shifts toward smaller employers and knowledge-based institutions.

Employment and Unemployment Rates

The June 2010 unemployment rate for the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area (includes Burlington and Grimsby) was 7.7%, compared to the 8.3% provincial average and similar to the 7.9% national average. In 16 of the last 18 months, the Hamilton "CMA" has had unemployment rates below the provincial average. In June 2010 the participation rate (the percentage of people who are either employed or looking for work) was 65.8%, some two percentage points lower than the provincial and national rates, meaning that Hamilton has a larger proportion of people who are out of the labour force entirely.

Living Wage

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction estimates that a living wage for full-time, full-year work equates to a \$27,000 annual

salary. In 2008 in the Hamilton CMA, 17% of full-time, full-year workers earned less than \$25,000 per year. Women were more likely to earn less than a living wage: 22% of female full-time full-year workers earned less than \$25,000 compared with 14% of males. The overall provincial average was 19%.

Number and Type of Employers

From 2003 to 2009, the city of Hamilton had a net gain of 553 employers. Most of these gains were found in the "Small Business" category, and there was a decrease of registered "Medium to Large" businesses over the past five years. In the broader CMA over the same time period, the employment sectors with the most job growth were health care, social services and transportation/warehousing. Jobs in the manufacturing sector declined by 13.7% between 2001 and 2006.

Environment



Water consumption and waste management have improved substantially. Reductions in local air pollutants have been offset by increases in ground level ozone and greenhouse gas emissions.

Water Consumption

Between 1993 and 2009, industrial, commercial and residential water consumption dropped by more than 50% to 453 cubic metres from 1,042 per metered account, exceeding the City's 521 cubic metre target. Residential use accounts for most consumption and decreased almost 40% from 2001 to 2006. Universal water metering, rate increases, and greater recognition that water is a valuable commodity all played a part.

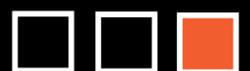
Waste Production and Diversion

Hamiltonians cut waste produced by 4% from 2000 to 2009. They increased the waste they composted to 24% from 2%, and the waste they recycled to 22% from 14%. As a result, waste diverted from our landfills rose to 47% in 2009 from 17% in 2000, meeting the provincial average. The City's diversion target is 65%.

Air Quality and Pollution

Local air pollutants (including particulate matter) have decreased by almost 40% over the past decade, but have been offset by higher ground level ozone, or "smog", and greenhouse gas emissions. In Hamilton, "hourly exceeds of 50 parts per billion" of ozone increased by 45% to 500 in 2008 from 345 in 1993. In most areas across southern Ontario, this has increased by between 10 and 30%. Greenhouse gas emissions, the release of carbon dioxide, methane, and other gases, increased to 13.1 million metric tonnes in 2008 from 12.7 million in 2006. The largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions are steel and heavy industry (76%), commercial (9%), transportation (8%) and residential (6%).

Gap between Rich and Poor



Hamilton's poverty rates are well above provincial and national averages. There are extreme differences between the city's neighbourhoods in incomes and poverty rates.

Overall Poverty Rate

Based on Statistics Canada's Before-tax Low Income Cutoff, Hamilton's overall poverty rate declined from 19.8% in 2001 to 18.1% in 2006 (the most recent figures available), but remained well above the provincial and national averages (14.7% and 15.3%, respectively). Hamilton's Social Planning and Research Council found certain groups more than twice as likely to experience poverty: recent immigrants (those who arrived between 2001 and 2006), single people, Aboriginals, and female lone parents. Poverty among seniors improved between 2001 and 2006, dropping to 16.6% from 24.4%.

Child Poverty Rate

Nearly one in four Hamilton children under 18 lived below the poverty line (23.6%) in 2006, a small increase since 2001 (23.4%),

and a rate higher than the provincial and national averages (18.0% and 17.7%). As The Hamilton Spectator's Code Red series reported, child poverty is concentrated: some neighbourhoods had rates of over 55%, while there were seven neighbourhoods with no child poverty.

Income Gap Between Neighbourhoods

Families in Hamilton's five highest income neighbourhoods had median incomes 3.3 times higher than those in the five lowest income neighbourhoods in 2006. The average of the family median incomes for the five highest income census tracts was \$110,796; for the lowest income five it was \$33,345, a difference of \$77,345. Across Hamilton, neighbourhood poverty rates varied from less than 3% to over 40%.

Getting Started in our Community



Hamilton's youth and recent immigrants are more likely to be unemployed than the overall population. Hamilton gained over 4,600 people from other parts of Canada, and those that have moved here tend to be under the age of 45.

Recent Immigrants

In Hamilton, recent immigrants are twice as likely to be unemployed as non-immigrants (11.7% vs. 6.0% in 2006). This difference decreases with length of residence in Canada. Almost half of recent immigrant families have an income below \$40,000, and recent immigrants have the highest poverty and child poverty rate of any sub-population in Hamilton at 50.5%.

Youth Unemployment

The youth unemployment rate for the Hamilton CMA has remained between 12% and 15% over the last four years, approximately double that for the overall population (6.0 to 7.5%). Youth unemployment peaked in April 2010 at 19.2%, but returned to 14.8% in June 2010. This rate is consistently two to three percentage points better than the provincial average.

Migration within Canada

From 2002 to 2007 (the most recent figures available), 93,368 people moved to Hamilton from other parts of Canada. During the same time period, 88,742 people moved away, resulting in a net gain of 4,626 people or an average of 771 people per year. People moving to Hamilton tended to be younger: 81% of the people who moved to Hamilton were under age 45; 6% were over 65.

Health and Well-Being



Hamilton is on par with Ontario on measures like low birthweight and physical activity, but is worse on obesity. We have more physicians than average, but almost 7% of people say they don't have a family doctor.

Low Birthweight

Low birthweight describes babies born weighing between 500 grams and 2,500 grams (5 lbs, 8 oz), which puts them at higher risk of health and other problems. Hamilton's 6.1% low birthweight rate in 2008 was similar to the 6.3% provincial average, but between 2004 and 2008 ranged from a low of 4.8% in some areas of the city to a high of 9% in other areas.

Physical Activity and Obesity

In 2007-8, almost half of Hamiltonians 12 years and older reported being active (enough to improve cardiovascular health), or somewhat active (enough to have some health benefit), similar to the province. The percentage of Hamilton adults who are overweight or obese increased to 59.8% from 50.4% between 2001 and 2008; and is significantly higher than the provincial average of 50.0%.

Physicians per 100,000 Persons

In 2008, Hamilton had 1,383 physicians including 443 family doctors and 940 specialists. Adjusted for population size, Hamilton was equal to the Ontario average for family doctors, and had nearly double the number of specialists. Currently, 6.9% of Hamiltonians 12 years old and over report not having a family doctor – better than the 8.5% provincial average and 15.1% national average.

Housing



On average, housing is more affordable in Hamilton than elsewhere in Canada, but the gap is closing. Emergency shelter usage by men has fallen in the last three years.

Homeowner Affordability

In 2008, the ratio of average house price to median annual family income was 3.44, meaning families spent about three and a half times their annual income to buy a house, lower than the 3.95 provincial average and the 4.12 national average. Hamilton's housing is getting less affordable over time: in 2001, the ratio was just below two and a half times family income.

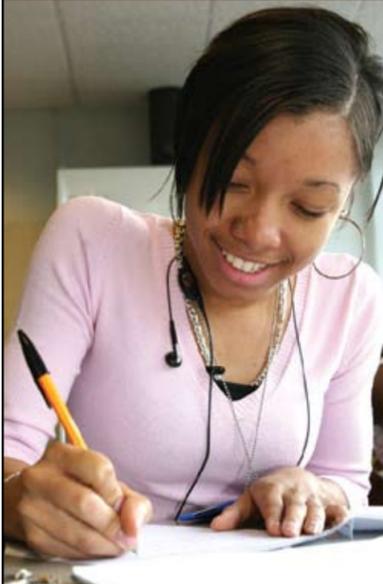
Renter Affordability

Hamilton's rents remain below provincial average. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in 2009 was \$767, compared to a provincial average of \$955. Just over 1 in 5 tenant households in Hamilton are paying more than half their income on rent, making their housing very precarious.

Emergency Shelter Use

The number of people using emergency homeless shelters dropped 7% to 3,617 in 2009 from 3,950 in 2007. The number of people who stayed in shelters most of the year also dropped to 40 from 70. The occupancy rate in men's shelters has fallen from 87% to 70%. Occupancy in emergency shelters for women and their families leaving abusive situations climbed from 86% to over 95% for the same period.

Learning



Hamilton's high school completion and post-secondary education rates are lower than the provincial average. School readiness is slightly below the provincial average and standardized test performance varies widely by school.

Completed Post-Secondary Education

As of the 2006 census, 58% of Hamiltonians aged 25-64 had completed either a post-secondary certificate, trades program, diploma, or degree, compared to the provincial average of 61%. One-quarter of Hamilton residents had completed a university degree compared with 31% across Ontario. Degree completion among Hamilton's recent immigrants is higher, at 38%.

High School Non-Completion

In Hamilton, 16% of people aged 25-64 have not completed high school, higher than the 14% provincial average. This varies both by sub-population and by neighbourhood: e.g. 27% of Aboriginal people aged 25-64 have not completed high school, and the proportion of 20-24 year olds who do not have a diploma and

are not in school varies from 0% in 23 neighbourhoods to over 65% in four neighbourhoods.

Standardized Student Test Scores

Students in Hamilton schools are tested in Grade 3, Grade 6, and Grade 9 by the "EQAO", which measures student performance against provincial standards. The HWDSB consistently achieves higher than the provincial averages. Though improving, the HWDSB is usually just under the provincial average. In most areas measured, girls outperform boys and there is a wide variation by school: in both boards there are schools that exceed the provincial average, and schools that are below. Hamilton children are also slightly below the provincial average in school readiness, as measured by the "Early Development Instrument".

Safety



Property and violent crime rates have fallen by more than 20% over the last decade. Calls-for-service and charges laid related to domestic violence have increased by 10% over the past three years.

Property Crime

Property crime rates have dropped steadily since the late 1990s. In the Hamilton CMA, property crimes dropped by 28% from 4,963 crimes per 100,000 persons in 1998 to 3,578 per 100,000 in 2009. Overall, Canada experienced the same decline, and Ontario had an even larger decline of 35%. Hamilton's property crime rate is lower than the national average, but higher than the provincial average.

Violent Crime

Violent crime rates have fallen by 21%, from 1,377 per 100,000 in 1998 to 1,092 per 100,000 in 2009, a decrease greater than the provincial (17%) and national (2%) decline over the same period.

Similar to the property crime rate, Hamilton's violent crime rate is lower than the national average, but higher than Ontario's average.

Domestic Violence

In 2009, Hamilton Police Service received 5,769 calls-for-service relating to domestic violence (7.3% of all calls), representing an increase from the two prior years, when there were 5,178 calls (2007) and 5,604 calls (2008). Of these calls, 711 charges were laid in 2007 and 789 in 2008.

About Hamilton Community Foundation

Hamilton Community Foundation's mission is to strengthen Hamilton's quality of life as an inclusive and sustainable community through philanthropy. We help people make the difference *they* want to make by:

- Working with donors to build funds that meet their philanthropic and financial objectives.
- Granting to the widest possible range of charitable organizations and initiatives.
- Fostering community leadership by bringing people, knowledge and resources together around the community's needs and opportunities.

Since it was founded in 1954, Hamilton Community Foundation has made grants to our community totalling more than \$59 million, including approximately \$4.0 million last year.

Why we're publishing *Hamilton's Vital Signs*

Building and sharing knowledge about our city is at the heart of our mission.

Hamilton's Vital Signs is one aspect of informing our own work as a grantmaker and catalyst for community change. It's also knowledge we offer as we work with all Hamiltonians towards a strong and vibrant city. Our goals in providing this data are to:

- Create a portal to a wealth of in-depth research about Hamilton
- Highlight the needs of our community and show evidence of progress
- Provide information for community planning and decision-making
- Spark discussion and offer grist for community conversations
- Inspire action and engage citizens further in civic life



Examples of our own work, in the context of themes highlighted in *Hamilton's Vital Signs*, are:

- **Strengthening challenged neighbourhoods:** HCF has made strengthening low-income neighbourhoods a priority since 2002. Working with residents, we fund local programs ranging from seniors services to homework clubs to nutrition, addressing both the root causes and the symptoms of poverty.
- **Preparing for a changing economy:** We fund stay-in-school initiatives, educational assessments for low-income adults, early childhood education and other programs that help Hamiltonians reach the skill level they need for employment in a knowledge-based economy.
- **Empowering citizens:** *Vital Signs* points to the difference individuals can make in areas like the environment. One example is HCF's small grants to Hamilton's high schools to turn their environmental ideas into action and experience the power of civic engagement.
- **Welcoming newcomers to Hamilton:** *Vital Signs* highlights the under-utilization of newcomers. HCF supports a wide range of programs to help integrate newcomers into their neighbourhoods and broader community, including those in the arts,

environmental, social, employment and economic development opportunities.

- **Poverty reduction:** Recognizing that poverty is the key to many of Hamilton's major challenges, HCF implemented its *Tackling Poverty Together* granting initiative in 2004, and has committed \$8.4 million in funding to this issue. We also continue to provide leadership to the community-wide Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction.

All the evidence shows that these strategies are effective, but as *Vital Signs* confirms, the challenges are complex. Each of us has a critical role, but on its own, is not enough. The broad engagement and collaboration of our whole community is needed to move our city forward.

That's the action we hope *Vital Signs* will inspire.

We encourage you to visit www.hamiltonvitalsigns.ca for more about HCF's investment in these areas, and to visit www.hcf.on.ca to learn how we can help you make the difference you want to make.



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How You Can Use Vital Signs

Go deeper into the research and the impact of the results at hamiltonvitalsigns.ca. There's more information including links to the source data and the organizations involved. You can find out more about what this information means for Hamilton.

Pass it on. Share the report and the hamiltonvitalsigns.ca link with your family, friends, colleagues, your faith organization, school council, neighbourhood association and service club, as well as with electoral candidates and officials.

Start conversations. If you, or your organization, are moved or motivated by what you read, use *Hamilton's Vital Signs* as a starting point for individual and collective action.

Request a speaker. We'd love to talk to your organization about *Vital Signs* or to connect you with speakers on the topics profiled.

Visit hcf.on.ca. Find out more about the good work already going on by local charities in partnership with businesses, government and everyday citizens and read about the differences donors are making through Hamilton Community Foundation.

Let us know how you're using it! Send a note to vitalsigns@hcf.on.ca

Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. *Vital Signs* is co-ordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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Hamilton's Vital Signs Methodology

Indicator Selection

This research was overseen by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee. This group includes members of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's Evaluation and Learning Working Group, which has spent several years researching and developing a set of indicators to measure Hamilton's progress on a wide range of socio-economic issues, the core of which are covered in this report. To cover all the Vital Signs issue areas and provide a broader quality of life picture, the Evaluation and Learning Committee was supplemented with additional experts from the environment, economy, and arts and culture sectors to form the Vital Signs Advisory Committee.

As part of a national initiative, all Canadian community foundations who are publishing Vital Signs reports agree to report on five common topics (e.g. "environment"), and one common indicator within each. These common indicators, as well as the indicators previously developed by the Evaluation and Learning Committee, were prioritized for this report by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee at a consultation session in June 2010.

Thank You to Our Partners

Hamilton Community Foundation would like to thank the many organizations and individuals who provided expertise, guidance and resources to this report. In particular we wish to acknowledge the extraordinary work of the Evaluation and Learning Working Group of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction over the last several years identifying key local indicators.

Vital Signs Advisory Committee

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Dr. Peter Kitchen, *School of Geography & Earth Sciences*
Dyanne Semogas, *School of Nursing*

Progress was examined in three ways:

- 1) the indicator's change over time
- 2) its comparison to provincial and national averages
- 3) the disparity present within the indicator – e.g. between different neighbourhoods or between different groups of Hamiltonians.

References

Information in this report was gathered in co-operation with research experts from a variety of local and national organizations. Links to data sources, contributors, definitions, additional information about the indicators and a full list of references are available at hamiltonvitalsigns.ca.

Statistical Notes

Every effort was made to use information pertaining to the city of Hamilton where possible. In the case of some Statistics Canada information, data was available only for the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which includes Burlington and Grimsby. This is indicated in the report where applicable.

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Local Contributors of Information

City of Hamilton, *Public Health Services; Community Services; Planning and Economic Development*
Clean Air Hamilton
Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council
Hamilton Police Service
Hamilton Public Library
Hamilton Training Advisory Board
McMaster University
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton

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