

NEIGHBOURS

policies
&
programs

HAMILTON, ON | JUNE 8-10, 2015

RE-IMAGINING CITIES ~ RE-ENGAGING CITIZENS

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THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO:

TAMARACK – AN INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CHANGING THE WORLD ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME...

Founded in 2001, Tamarack Institute is a Registered Canadian Charity that provides engaging learning opportunities and practical resources for community leaders seeking innovative ways to strengthen their communities and address complex issues together. We excel at helping learners turn knowledge into practice and then action.

Our 14,000 members are a connected force for community change.

Tamarack supports our members to form learning communities and action teams that enable them to learn together; co-generate knowledge; and, collaborate to solve complex community problems. Their collective impact has already reduced poverty for more than 250,000 people and is building local capacity to build stronger neighbourhoods and deepening community capacity.

Tamarack currently sponsors three learning communities:

Vibrant Communities Canada - Cities Reducing Poverty is a learning community for cities with comprehensive poverty reduction strategies led by multi sector roundtables. With 2,000 members representing more than 100 cities VC-CRP Action Teams have already reduced poverty for more than 250,000 people. www.vibrantcommunities.ca

Tamarack CCI (Communities Collaborating for Impact) is a learning community of more than 10,000 members who are learning about Collective Impact, Community Engagement, Place-Based Innovation and Collaborative Leadership. www.tamarackcci.ca

Deepening Community is a learning community of more than 2,000 members who care deeply about creating strong communities, strengthening neighborhoods, enhancing social capital and developing programs and policies to sustain them. www.deepeningcommunity.ca

We believe in:

- The power of community
- The unique opportunities of place
- Co-generative learning communities
- Collaboration and collective impact
- Engaged citizens
- Community innovation and systems change

ABOUT TAMARACK

Our Vision: Building a connected force for community change

Our Mission: Collaboratively creating vibrant communities by engaging learning leaders.

Our North Star: When we are effective in strengthening community capacity to engage citizens, lead collaboratively, deepen community and innovate in place, our work will contribute to the building of a more equitable society in Canada. Our Deepest hope is to end poverty.

Our approach moves people and organizations from knowledge to practice to impact. We accelerate our members' learning journeys by providing knowledge products and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. We advance systems change by collaborating with our members in focused action learning initiatives with the ultimate goal of positively impacting communities.

To become a member of our learning communities visit: www.deepeningcommunity.ca; www.tamarackcci.ca; and www.vibrantcanada.ca.

Tamarack's Theory of Change
Building a connected force for social change



To learn more about Tamarack visit: www.tamarackcommunity.ca

WELCOME!

Welcome to **Neighbours: Policies & Programs** - a dynamic gathering that brings together some of the finest minds in neighbourhood building. Together, we will uncover inspirational ideas that help us to **re-imagine cities and re-engage citizens.**

People often ask us, what does it mean to deepen community? Why is it important for us to talk about it? How can we explain this complex idea, which is, in fact, that many of us take for granted or fail to intentionally build?

We are reminded of the Parable of the Earth Science Teacher and the Glass Jar. You know the one... A teacher takes a glass jar and fills it to the top with big rocks and then ask the students if it's full. Then he adds a handful of smaller rocks in the jar to show how they can settle into the spaces between the larger rocks. He asks again if the students think it is full. He then takes a handful of pebbles and adds them to the jar, shaking it to make sure they settle in nicely in the gaps. He then adds a cup of sand and lets the sand trickle its way to fill all of the gaps between the rocks and the pebbles. Again, he asks, is it full? At this point, it looks quite full. Finally, the teacher adds water to the jar, until truly there is no room left.

This parable is a great metaphor to describe the work of deepening community and how this is the essence of building strong neighbourhoods. As our friend and colleague Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor of the City of Kitchener, Ontario explains:

"Let's think of the glass jar as the neighbourhood. It is a defined area by geographical location and social relationships. It is a sense of place and people."

We can add some large rocks to the jar to represent the physical infrastructure that exists within the neighbourhood: roads; buildings; houses; green spaces; hospitals; schools, etc.

Then, we add some formal programs and services that exist within these neighbourhoods with thanks to the assistance of the municipality and organizations. For example: recreational programs; social services; school programs; housing programs; Health Units, etc.

We then include the sand, which represents citizen-led programs whose leadership may or may not be formally organized, for example: neighbourhood associations; block parties; community celebrations; potlucks; gardening; joining together around a common cause, etc.

At last, we add the water. This is what connects people—the relationships. Truly coming to know your neighbor, bringing them chicken soup; gardening together; babysitting; stopping to visit while on a walk; having front porch conversations. This is where we find caring for one another, helping one another, and celebrating one another. This is the motivating force. "Here is where we experience the full value of community."

The moral of this story is that there are things in this world that we MAKE time for, the big rocks. There are things in our lives that we FIND time for - the smaller rocks. And then there are the things that we just do in life that take up a lot of space, but we may not even recognize it. They are just apart of who we are and how we move in the world.

As John McKnight discusses in his article **Neighbourhood Necessities**, we often defer to, or rely on, governments to fulfill many functions in our communities. However, in many cases governments aren't structured to fill these roles. They just aren't built this way, as demonstrated by the rocks. It is up to us, the citizens, to ask ourselves, "What can we do for our community?" Given that we are fluid and dynamic, and know our neighbourhoods better than any one else could, how can we be the sand and water that fill the gaps and binds each other together?

When we look at our neighbourhoods in this way, we can understand that they can be more than nice places to live. As we add programming we can make neighborhoods more fun, caring, and altruistic. As people in neighbourhoods get to know one another we deepen social capital and reciprocity. People feel a deeper sense of belonging, more trust, and less alone. Our neighborhoods are safer for children, empathic for seniors, more inclusive of new comers, people who are living on low incomes, and more accessible for people with disabilities. There is less crime, better health, more cultural vibrancy, and more happiness.

Across Canada and beyond there are inspiring examples of what can be achieved when neighbours work with community organizations, associations and governments. There are also inspiring examples of how policies can support and encourage neighbourhoods to build, strength and foster creativity. Today and in these next few days, our shared challenge is to learn about -- and from -- these innovative examples so that they become the reality in every community.

Joyfully,

Paul Born and Sylvia Cheuy

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

TIME	Day 1 Monday June 8	TIME	Day 2 Tuesday June 9	TIME	Day 3 Wednesday June 10
		9:00 am	Welcoming Back the Learning Community Paul Born & Sylvia Cheuy – Tamarack Institute Inspiration Celeste Licorish, Hamilton Speak Now	9:00 am	Welcoming Back the Learning Community Paul Born & Sylvia Cheuy – Tamarack Institute Deepening Community – Growing our Learning
		9:30 am	The Central Role of Neighbourhoods Jim Diers, Neighbour Power	9:45 am	Neighbours: An Ecology of Caring: Vickie Cammack
		10:30 am	Morning Break	10:30 am	Morning Break
11:00 AM – 1:00PM	Registration Light lunch available	11:00 am	Learning Lab Dialogues	10:45 am	Learning Community Dialogues
12:30 pm	Opening & Building Our Learning Community Paul Born & Sylvia Cheuy – Tamarack Institute	12:00 pm	Lunch	12:00 pm	Closing Circle: Accelerating Community Change
	Welcome – Framing our Learning Agenda Suzanne Brown, Director Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives, City of Hamilton and Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor, City of Kitchener	1:00 pm	Community Tool-Share	12:30 pm	The Learning Community Closes
		1:45 pm	Neighbourhoods, Social Capital & Community Hubs Karen Pitri, Govt. of Ontario Paul Johnson, City of Hamilton & Milton Friesen, Cardus Institute		
1:45pm	Break	2:45 pm	Afternoon Break		
2:00 pm	Neighbourhoods: Organizing Cities for Citizenship John McKnight, Co-Founder ABCD Institute Learning Lab Dialogue	3:00 pm	Concurrent Workshops II & ABCD Walkabouts <i>Description - Page 10</i>		
4:15 pm	Afternoon Break	4:15 pm	Afternoon Break		
4:30 pm	Concurrent Workshops & ABCD Walkabouts <i>Description - Page 9</i>	4:30 pm	Concurrent Workshops III & ABCD Walkabouts <i>Description - Page 11</i>		
6:15 pm	ABCD Walking Bus of Crowne Point Neighbourhood	5:45 pm	Dinner on your own		
6:45 – 9:00 pm	Reception & Dinner in Learning Labs The Ukrainian Centre	7:30 pm	Movie Night & Director Dialogue Hearts: The Jamestown Arts Crawl Story at The Spice Factory Hosted by the City of Hamilton		

AGENDA

Monday June 8, 2015						
11:00 am	<p align="center">Registration Opens Music by Michael Jones with light lunch served</p>					
12:30 pm	<p align="center">Welcome, Inspiration & Building a Learning Community Paul Born and Sylvia Cheuy, Tamarack Institute</p>					
	<p align="center">Welcome – Framing our Learning Agenda Suzanne Brown, Director Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives, City of Hamilton and Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor, City of Kitchener</p>					
1:45 pm	Break					
2:00 pm	<p align="center">Neighbourhoods: Organizing Cities for Citizenship John McKnight, Co-Founder ABCD Institute</p> <p align="center">Learning Lab Dialogue</p>					
4:15 pm	Afternoon Break					
4:30 pm	Workshops I					
	Main Space Capacity 80+	Breakout A Capacity 30	Breakout B Capacity 30	Breakout C Capacity 35	ARCH Space Capacity 50	Walk-About Capacity 40
	<i>Using ABCD to Build Strong Neighbourhoods – John McKnight</i>	<i>Deepening Community for Neighbours – Paul Born</i>	<i>Making Neighbourhood Social Infrastructure Visible – Milton Friesen</i>	<i>Neighbourhood Change: Tools for Thinking Differently – Sylvia Cheuy</i>	<i>Reinventing Aging and End of Life Care in Windsor Essex – Deborah Sattler</i>	<i>Crowne Point Neighbourhood Walk-about - Tammy Heidbuurt</i>
6:15 pm	<p align="center">Walking Bus and ABCD Tour of the Crowne Point Neighbourhood enroute to The Ukrainian Centre</p>					
6:45 pm	<p align="center">Reception and Dinner in Learning Labs The Ukrainian Centre</p>					

Tuesday June 9, 2015						
9:00 am	<p>Welcome Back the Learning Community Paul Born and Sylvia Cheuy, Tamarack Institute</p> <p>Inspiration Celeste Licorish, Hamilton Speak Now</p>					
9:30 am	<p>The Central Role of Neighbourhoods Jim Diers, Neighbour Power</p>					
10:30 am	Break					
11:00 am	Learning Lab Dialogues					
12:00 pm	Lunch					
1:00 pm	Community Tool-Share					
1:45 pm	<p>Neighbourhoods, Social Capital and Community Hubs Karen Pitre, Govt. of Ontario, Paul Johnson, City of Hamilton & Milton Friesen, Cardus Institute</p>					
2:45 pm	Break					
3:00 pm	Workshops II					
	<p>Main Space Capacity 80+</p> <p><i>Essential Strategies for Mobilizing Neighbourhood Action – Jim Diers</i></p>	<p>Breakout A Capacity 30</p> <p><i>Re-imagining Community through Stories of Place – Michael Jones</i></p>	<p>Breakout B Capacity 30</p> <p><i>A Dialogue on Community Hubs – Karen Pitre</i></p>	<p>Breakout C Capacity 35</p> <p><i>From Neighbourhoods to Partnerships – P. Johnson, C. Murray & T. Cooke</i></p>	<p>ARCH Space Capacity 50</p> <p><i>Australia’s Neighbourhood Centres Movement – Can Yasmut</i></p>	<p>Walk-About Capacity 40</p> <p><i>Walkabout: McQuesten Community Centre – Patricia Reid</i></p>
4:15 pm	Break					
4:30 pm	Workshops III					
	<p>Main Space Capacity 80+</p> <p><i>Connecting Neighbours: The Abundant Communities Initiative – Howard Lawrence</i></p>	<p>Breakout A Capacity 30</p> <p><i>Citizen Engagement through an Anti-Oppression Lens – Renee Wetselaar</i></p>	<p>Breakout B Capacity 30</p> <p><i>Hosting Conversations to Deepen Community – L. Bumstead, K. Croker & A. Schieck,</i></p>	<p>Breakout C Capacity 35</p> <p><i>The Ecology of Caring: How to Link Formal Systems & Informal Networks – Vickie Cammack</i></p>	<p>ARCH Space Capacity 50</p> <p><i>Active Neighbourhoods Canada (ANC) Peterborough Project – B. Salmon & Peterborough Project Committee</i></p>	<p>Walk-About Capacity 40</p> <p><i>Walkabout: McQuesten Community Centre – Patricia Reid</i></p>
5:45 pm	Dinner on your own or sign up for a group					
7:30 pm	<p>Movie Night at The Spice Factory Featuring: Hearts: A History of the Jamestown Arts Crawl Hosted by the City of Hamilton</p>					

Wednesday June 10, 2015

9:00 am	<p>Welcome Back the Learning Community Paul Born and Sylvia Cheuy, Tamarack Institute</p> <p>Deepening Community - Growing our Learning</p>
9:45 am	<p>Neighbours: An Ecology for Caring Vickie Cammack, Founder of Tyze</p>
10:30 am	<p>Break</p>
10:45 am	<p>Learning Community Dialogue</p>
12:00 pm	<p>Closing Circle Accelerating Community Change</p>
12:30 pm	<p>The Learning Community Closes</p>

WORKSHOPS & ABCD WALK-ABOUT DESCRIPTIONS

MONDAY JUNE 8TH –4:45 – 6:00 P.M.

Using ABCD to Build Strong Neighbourhoods with *John McKnight* – Learn the fundamentals of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) and discover tools, techniques and examples that demonstrate how ABCD principles are used to build strong neighbourhoods.

Deepening Community for Neighbours with *Paul Born* – This workshop will inspire participants with the power and possibility of deepening community for neighbourhoods. How do we help neighbours get to know one another better, have fun together, take care of one another and bind together in a way to improve their neighbourhoods and cities?

Making Neighbourhood Social Infrastructure Visible with *Milton Friesen* – Learn about network mapping and discover how it can be used as an effective tool for identifying and engaging the untapped potential of a community's social networks to effectively deliver programs and services.

Neighbourhood Change: Tools for Thinking Differently with *Sylvia Cheuy* – Discover why “thinking differently” is an essential skill for those leading neighbourhood change initiatives and be introduced to specific tools to unleash the creativity and innovation of diverse groups working to implement positive change.

Reinventing Aging and End of Life Care in Windsor Essex with *Deborah Sattler* – Learn about the work of The Community Trust Windsor-Essex Coalition, a citizen-led, community-driven initiative to offer authentic, compassionate and flexible support to people who are aging or who have long-term care needs.

ABCD WALK-ABOUT

The Renaissance of the Crowne Point Neighbourhood with *Tammy Heidbuurt* – From the waters of Lake Ontario to the Escarpment, from Gage Ave to Kenilworth Ave, Hamilton's Crown Point neighbourhood enjoys the diversity of physical assets and the deep passions and creativity of many residents. A community newspaper has connected the over 10,000 homes to foster a sense of community and has exposed even more skills and assets among residents. Residents and businesses are working together to revitalize forgotten buildings and commercial corridors by supporting small businesses and addressing needed policy changes.

WORKSHOPS & ABCD WALK-ABOUT DESCRIPTIONS

TUESDAY JUNE 9TH – 3:00 – 4:15 P.M.

Essential Strategies for Mobilizing

Neighbourhood Action *with Jim Diers* – Jim shares his favourite programs and strategies for engaging and unleashing the creativity and power of residents to grow dynamic and vibrant neighbourhoods drawing from his experiences working with neighbourhoods around the world.

Re-imagining Community through Stories of Place

with Michael Jones – Learn how a community's mythic story – or founding narrative – is part of its lifeblood and a powerful building block for creating a resilient future. Discover how leaders in Orillia Ontario are using these stories of place to renew their leadership capacity and identify core patterns to guide their community's effort to re-imagine itself.

A Dialogue on Community Hubs *with Karen Pitre*

– This workshop, hosted by Karen Pitre, the newly appointed advisory to the Premier on Community Hubs, invites participants into a dialogue exploring both the opportunities and challenges of community hubs. Participants will share their input, experience and advice and work together with Karen to identify key elements of success in establishing – and sustaining – vibrant community hubs in a wide diversity of neighbourhood contexts.

From Neighbourhoods to Partnerships *with P.*

Johnson, C. Murray & T. Cooke – Discover how the City of Hamilton's neighbourhood action strategy created a foundation for establishing and deepening relationships of trust amongst unusual partners and is enabling the city to mobilize leaders in its anchor institutions and citizen action groups to collaborate effectively on longer term, ambitious – and sometimes contentious – city projects.

Australia's Neighbourhood Centres Movement

with Can Yasmut – Learn about Australia's Local Community Services Association (LCSA) and how their work with individuals and communities through the Neighbourhood Centres Movement: distinguishes between community development and welfare service delivery; and recognizes the role of community development as a catalyst of social change.

ABCD WALK-ABOUT**The McQuesten Community Hub** *with Patricia*

Reid - Jump on the Hamilton Trolley and take a ride to the McQuesten Community Centre a former elementary school that is now home to a growing community hub for range of community agencies and home to a diverse array of neighbourhood initiatives.

WORKSHOPS & ABCD WALK-ABOUT DESCRIPTIONS

TUESDAY JUNE 9TH – 4:30 – 5:45 P.M.

Citizen Engagement through an Anti-Oppression Lens with *Renee Wetselaar* – Learn more about how Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy has incorporated policies and unique design elements in demonstrate sensitivity to issues of oppression and effectively engage and champion diversity.

Connecting Neighbours: The Abundant Communities Initiative with *Howard Lawrence* – This innovative ABCD program uses casual neighbour to neighbour conversations to reveal residents' visions for their neighbourhood; activities and interests they want to join; and, the skills, gifts and experiences they can contribute and share with the neighbourhood.

Harnessing the Power of Conversations to Deepen Community with *L. Bumstead & A. Schieck, K. Croker* – Learn about this recently completed partnership project between Tamarack and rural Grey-Bruce Counties that engaged more than 500 people in a series of conversations that celebrated strengths and affirmed six regional priorities. The team will share lessons about how they harnessed the power of conversations to strengthen social connections; create shared visions and engage diverse leaders in building consensus around priorities for shared action.

The Ecology of Caring: How to Link Formal Systems & Informal Networks with *Vickie Cammack* – How do neighbour networks differ from formal organizations and what are we learning about the essential policies and principles needed to facilitate them to work well together? Vickie draws on her experience as a founder of PLAN and TYZE, two unique responses to overcoming isolation and fostering belonging, to explore how to create unique experiences of caring and connection for those in need.

The Active Neighbourhoods Canada (ANC) Peterborough Project with *Brianna Salmon & the Peterborough Project Committee* – Learn how this new program is using a proven collaborative approach to create more inclusive and participatory planning pathways in Peterborough's Stewart Street neighbourhood. This national project expands the Active, Healthy and Green Neighbourhood planning approach piloted in several Montréal boroughs to engender more equitable, accessible, and contextually-sensitive public spaces.

ABCD WALK-ABOUT

The McQuesten Urban Farm with *Patricia Reid* - Jump on the Hamilton Trolley and take a ride to the McQuesten Community Centre a former elementary school that is now home to a growing community hub for range of community agencies and home to a diverse array of neighbourhood initiatives.

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WALKABOUTS

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) is at the centre of a large and growing movement that considers local assets as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future. John McKnight is the co-founder of this Institute. For more information, you can visit their site: www.abcdinstitute.org.

On Monday and Tuesday, learners will have the option to visit a neighbourhood and learn more about initiatives that are successfully reconnecting neighbours and building community. A local leader will lead the walk through and provide an opportunity for you to view community building in action.

LOGISTICS:

- These walks will be taking place during the Concurrent Workshop time slots on Monday and Tuesday (see below)
- Each walk will last 60 to 70 minutes (depending on traveling distance to the location)
- Each walk can accommodate a maximum of 35 people
- Each walk will have a local expert offering leadership to the walk
- A trolley car has been arranged to shuttle participants from the main venue to the McQueston Walk-about
- Walk-about will be hosted rain or shine (please dress for the weather)

MONDAY JUNE 8TH, 2015

4:30 – 5:45 P.M

The Renaissance of Crowne Point with *Tammy Heidbuurt* – From the waters of Lake Ontario to the Escarpment, from Gage Ave to Kenilworth Ave, Crown Point enjoys the diversity of physical assets, the commitment of various stakeholders, and the deep passions and creativity of many residents. A community newspaper has connected the over 10,000 homes to foster a sense of community and has exposed even more skills and assets among residents. Residents and businesses are working together to revitalize forgotten buildings and commercial corridors by supporting small businesses and addressing needed policy changes.

TUESDAY JUNE 9TH, 2015

3:00 – 4:15 P.M.

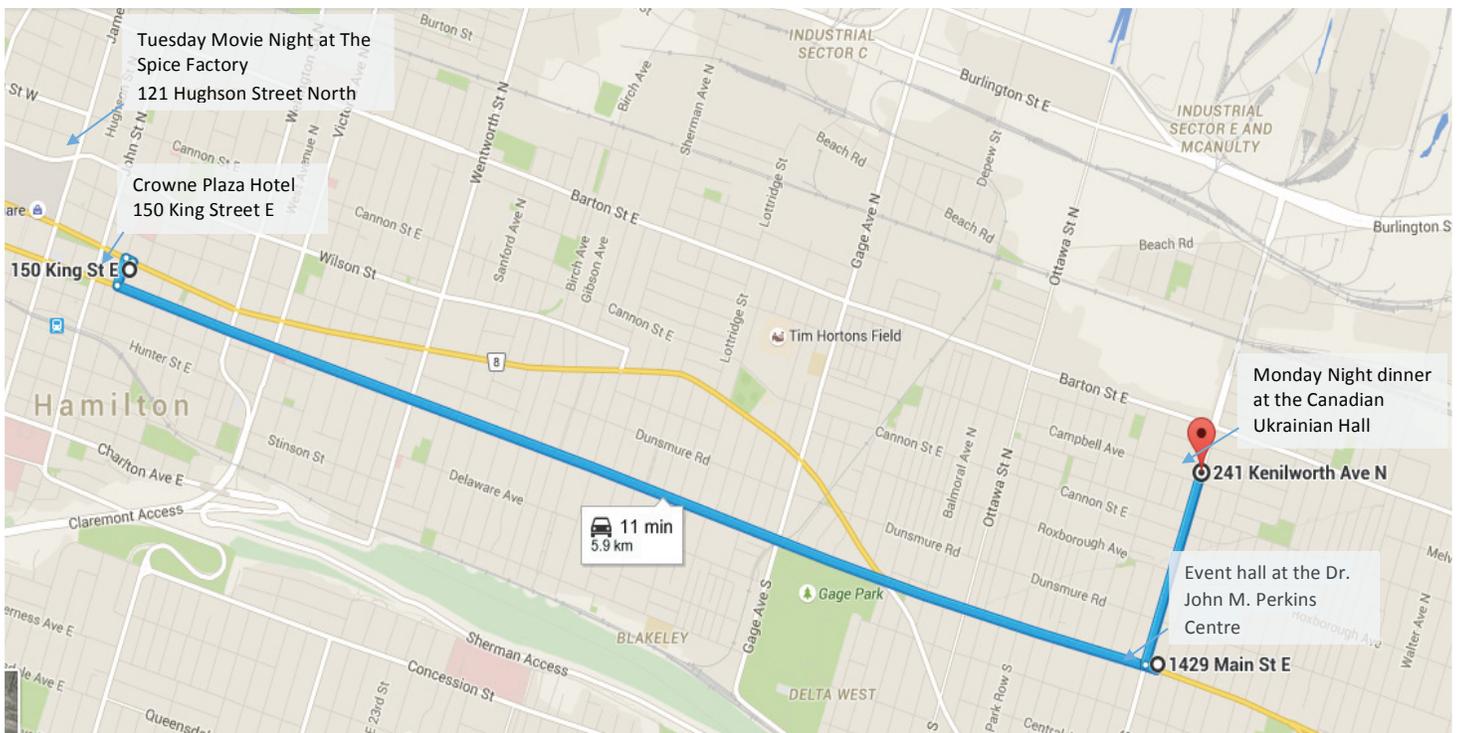
The McQuesten Community Hub with *Patricia Reid* - Jump on the Hamilton Trolley and take a ride to the McQuesten Community Centre a former elementary school that is now home to a growing community hub for range of community agencies and home to a diverse array of neighbourhood initiatives.

TUESDAY JUNE 9TH, 2015

4:30 – 5:45 P.M.

The McQuesten Urban Farm with *Patricia Reid* - Ride the Hamilton Trolley to the McQuesten Community Centre, a former elementary school that is now home to a growing community hub. This walkabout will share how The McQuesten Centre is now home to the one of the first urban farming projects in the City of Hamilton.

EVENT MAP



OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE FUN TOGETHER

Throughout our Gathering we have organized a number of fun and informal opportunities for you to connect informally, sing together, enjoy live music and celebrate the fun of being in community. Below is a listing of the variety of options available during our time together.

18 BLOCKS: AN EXCLUSIVE DEMONSTRATION

June 8th – 10th, 2015 – Throughout the Gathering

We are delighted to be featuring 18 Blocks at the Gathering as an example of a virtual meeting place for participants to post bios, resources, tools and ways of connecting throughout the Gathering.

18 Blocks is a new online neighbourhood notice board that allows for neighbours and neighbourhoods to share, find, and discover community assets and resources. It is also an interactive platform to organize community events, swap, buy and sell, or find the things you need- be it a babysitter, someone to shovel your snow, or find your missing keys.

We encourage you to visit the learning commons throughout the Gathering to explore the site, or if you are inspired, log in to the site at tamarack.18blocks.com.

MONDAY JUNE 8TH, 2015

6:45 – 9:00 p.m.

Reception and Learning Lab Dinner The Ukrainian Centre

Our Learning Community will form an ABCD Walking School Bus for a 10 minute, guided walk through Hamilton's Crowne Point Neighbourhood to The Ukrainian Centre. There we will enjoy a celebratory reception and traditional family-style dinner with our Learning Labs hosted by Tamarack.

TUESDAY JUNE 9TH, 2015

7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

A Public Screening of Hearts

(a film about Hamilton's Art Crawl)

The Spice Factory

121 Hughson Street North, Hamilton, ON

L8R 1G7 T: 905-522-1112

Join filmmaker Cody Lanktree (Director) and Zena Hagerty (Producer) for a public screening of Hearts a documentary about how a small group of Hamilton gallery owners got together to start Hamilton's highly successful Art Crawl and its impact on the city's James Street North neighbourhood. The film offer a powerful lesson in what's possible when a small group of individuals make a decision to take action. Cody and Zena will also lead a dialogue with viewers after the film.

This screening is being hosted by Alexandra Marciello at The Spice Factory, a newly renovated building with a rich history that has recently been converted into a modern and vibrant events venue. It is located in the Beasley Neighbourhood, one of eleven neighbourhoods involved in Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy. The Beasley Neighbourhood has enjoyed a cultural renaissance within Hamilton's arts scene. Coffee, tea and a cash bar will be available.

HEARTS

A Film About Hamilton's Art Crawl

A SPECIAL SCREENING



www.heartsmovie.com

June 9th • The Spice Factory
7:30pm • 121 Hughson Street North



TAMARACK
An Institute for Community Engagement

OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

This gathering is designed for individuals like you, who are building strong neighbourhoods and leading, engaging and transforming your communities.

During our time together in Hamilton, you will be invited to help create a powerful and dynamic learning community dedicated to strengthening our individual and collective capacity to connect, engage and mobilize citizens and policy-makers in collaborating for positive neighbourhood change.

OUR HOPE

We hope that this gathering will offer you with inspiration, information and tools to provide the leadership needed to connect, engage and mobilize citizens throughout your neighbourhood and across your community to generate a shared vision and action plan for change.

During the Neighbours: Policies & Programs gathering, we will:

- **CELEBRATE** and support the innovation, context expertise and solution-making of citizens
- **DISCOVER** infrastructure that engages and supports resident leadership
- **EXPLORE** intentional, shared and strategic processes to bridge and align formal government and organizational systems with informal community systems
- **APPRECIATE** the importance of place – regional economies and local solutions – as essential in addressing issues of food security, community health, safety and well-being.

By forming a learning community, we will build a body of practice together that will advance and strengthen our individual skills and make the work of building engaged, strong, and diverse neighbourhoods easier and more effective.

FORMING THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

In registering for 2015 Neighbours Policies & Programs: Re-imagining Cities ~ Re-engaging Citizens, you are one of a select group of community leaders who have expressed a deep belief in the capacity of place-based collaborative efforts to strengthen neighbourhoods and enhance community well-being. Your attendance in this workshop is an expression of your desire to learn more together. In joining this learning community you have indicated a commitment to share your own learning journey and open yourself to the journey of others. Throughout our time together in Hamilton and afterwards, we hope that the members of this learning community will experience:

Throughout our time together in Hamilton and afterwards, we hope that the members of this learning community will experience:

- **Community** – We hope a sense of the “common” will emerge as members of the learning community spend time together sharing common stories, experiences, and insights about community collaboration and exploring the associated dilemmas and paradoxes of the work. This will leave participants feeling hopeful, supported and renewed.

- **Generative Learning** – We hope members of the learning community will move from being “nice to each other” to a place of trust; to a state of common inquiry where there is a genuine questioning and challenging of ideas and experiences, leading to generative learning and the creation of new knowledge. This will provide an opportunity for members of the learning community to gain new insights and be part of shaping original knowledge to advance the work of renewing our community toward a deeper commitment to collective impact.
- **Turning Answers Into Questions** – Workshop Thought Leaders will share knowledge gained from research and experience with a variety of community initiatives and programs. This knowledge will be used to stimulate and focus conversation. With the understanding that every learner is a teacher and every teacher is a learner, the process will deliberately use generative learning approaches and capture the group’s collective learning. Each session will become a place of inquiry to explore new ideas and embrace paradox, dilemmas and emergence. Thus every module in the gathering is an opportunity to evoke generative learning and experience community.



OUR APPROACH TO LEARNING TOGETHER

- **Affirm what you know** - Each of us is a veteran of thinking and working in new and often innovative ways. You know a great deal already – much of what we know has been mined from experiences in community – and you are doing many things well. We want to affirm and celebrate what you know, what you have learned through your work. We want you to wake up every day acknowledging that together we have already got much of it right.
- **Build a common language** - Comprehensive community building work lacks a simple language that describes what we are trying to do and how. How many of us cannot explain our approach to family, never mind to our colleagues, peers and naysayers (and, on many days, even ourselves)? How do we help people understand the nature of the complex problems we are seeking to address? How do we precisely communicate the challenges and issues and how best to reorganize our traditional responses to them? We want to begin to build a common language for our work that makes these discussions normal and part of the mainstream.
- **Highlight emerging knowledge, skills and resources** - Like you, we don't believe in "cookie cutter" solutions to complex, uniquely local challenges. We do believe that we are collectively building a body of knowledge, skills and resources that can make all of our day to day work more effective and efficient. We have an opportunity to together review what we know so far about doing this work, collectively reflect upon emerging knowledge, skills and resources, and support a broader process of improvement.
- **Build a supportive community** - One of the great metaphors that reflects the power of working together is that of geese flying in formation. While it is not entirely clear whether a goose can get to their destination on their own, we know the chances of getting there are much better if geese fly as a community. Flying in formation, geese enjoy exponentially more power as one cuts the wind resistance for another. When one goose gets tired it drops back and another takes its place in the lead. Our work can be lonely, but we think it can be easier and a lot more fun if we make this journey in good company.
- **Regenerate a sense of energy, mission and purpose** - Coming together can make learning easier and provide some much needed emotional support. It also can reinforce our collective sense of mission by refueling our individual sense of mission and purpose. We collectively are involved in what Jane Jacobs – the late, great commentator on community and urban affairs – called 'a grand effort at self-correction' of our communities and society. We need to feed our higher sense of purpose to continue this self-correction, particularly given that it often seems like we are swimming upstream while doing it.

LEARNING COMMUNITY

What is a learning community?

The learning community consists of a number of small group experiences that provide you with an opportunity for reflection, sharing of information and having challenging discussions. Each learning community small group meets daily and has 8 to 10 members representing a variety of communities and backgrounds.

Why participate in a learning community?

As we engage in the learning experience, each person acquires new knowledge and experience that can be transitioned into other areas of life. The learning process can be isolating without our current paradigms and mindsets. When we take time to explore and discuss a topic, issue or concept with others, this enhances our understanding. Conversations allow us to explore different perspectives and to test our assumptions and beliefs. The learning community small group cultivates a richer learning experience and supports the transformational learning process.

Tips for engaging in a learning community small group dialogue

To support the learning experience here are some tips to consider:

- Take ownership for the learning experience: don't rely on the group facilitator for the individual is part of the learning experience as well.
- Ensure all voices are heard: give everyone the opportunity to express their perspective
- Listen carefully and actively: ensure to hear what each member has to offer and allow others to finish their response
- Maintain an open mind: be open to exploring ideas that you might have rejected
- Keep the discussion on track: make comments related to main points being discussed
- Attempt to understand the point of view of those with whom you disagree: understanding doesn't mean adopting but will enhance your own view/learning
- Talk to the whole group and not only the facilitator: the facilitator is there to begin the discussion for the members that are the subject matter experts and contribute to the collective wisdom
- Ask questions for clarification: asking questions strengthens the whole group's understanding
- Focus on the issue being discussed and not the person: everyone will contribute different perceptions, attitudes and beliefs... this difference enhances the learning experience
- Value your perspective and experience: **everyone has a contribution**

DEEPENING COMMUNITY: AN ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Deepening Community

RE-IMAGINING CITIES | RE-ENGAGING CITIZENS



www.deepeningcommunity.ca

Tamarack's Deepening Community Learning Community is an online space for individuals interested in learning together and developing our collective understanding about the power of citizens and how to make this a guiding force in how neighbourhoods, organizations and institutions address complex community issues. We do this by:

- **EXPLORING AND AFFIRMING COMMUNITY** as a central organizing principle and a driving force for social change;
- **DISCOVERING AND SHARING POLICIES**, programs and practices that cultivate community and strengthen neighbourhoods; and,
- **WORKING, AND LEARNING, TOGETHER** to accelerate our effectiveness at cultivating the shared leadership of citizens and organizations to create dynamic neighbourhoods and vibrant communities together.

We believe that there are four pillars that are the foundation for deepening community. These are:

- Sharing our stories
- Enjoying one another
- Taking care of one another; and,
- Working together for a better world.

Your attendance at this Gathering includes a membership in this dynamic peer learning network and online space. Create a profile, share your ideas and what you are working on; connect with people across Canada and around the world to share your curiosity about the programs and policies that most effective at advancing citizen leadership and accelerating neighbourhood based change.

At Tamarack, one of our roles is to convene and support the members of this online community in learning together; share best practices; test new ideas; create new knowledge and, accelerate the work of this field. Research has shown that people who are members of peer learning networks such as our Deepening Community Online Community are more successful in developing, implementing and taking promising new ideas to scale.



Here are some concrete ways to get involved and contribute to the Deepening Community's Learning Community: :

1. Read the Book

Read Paul Born's book, **Deepening Community: Finding Joy Together in Chaotic Times** which offers an important foundation to help you to better understand the concepts that deepen community, hear stories of deep and shallow experiences of community, and find tools and resources to work with others to deepen community in your workplace, home, church, or neighbourhood. www.deepeningcommunity.org

2. Create an Online Profile & Share Ideas, Resources and Questions

Visit us at www.deepeningcommunity.ca and create a profile, listen to podcasts, post blogs, post links to other websites, and share other resources. Explore the ideas being explored by our community's seven Thought Leaders: people who bring various insights and expertise into this overall dialogue. Access the great library resources, create a profile to engage with others, and post a blog or resource to contribute to the discussion. Email Christie at christie@tamarackcommunity.ca to learn more.

3. Subscribe to Engage! & Seekers Journal

These two e-publications are free and arrive monthly in your inbox. Engage!, Tamarack's signature e-magazine, highlights the latest developments in the fields of multi-sector collaboration, engagement and community change. The Seekers Journal offers a quick snapshot on the latest ideas and thinking from members of the Deepening Community Learning Community. Visit us at www.tamarackcommunity.ca to subscribe.

4. Participate in Webinars

Tamarack regularly hosts webinars with thought-leaders who are advancing important ideas that can help further your own work. Part structured interview, part Q&A dialogue with participants, these free events are a quick and easy way to explore powerful new ideas to advance your work. Learn more at www.tamarackcommunity.ca.

5. Join a Community of Practice (CoP)

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of learners to agree to meet regularly to share stories, tools, questions and experiences. The Deepening Community Learning Community currently hosts two CoPs:

Neighbourliness CoP – This CoP is for residents and staff who are interested in learning and sharing innovative programs and practices that lead to neighbourhood-focused solutions to issues including: housing, food security, healthy aging, events & celebrations and belonging. We meet bi-monthly by tele-conference.

Neighbourhood Strategy Leaders CoP

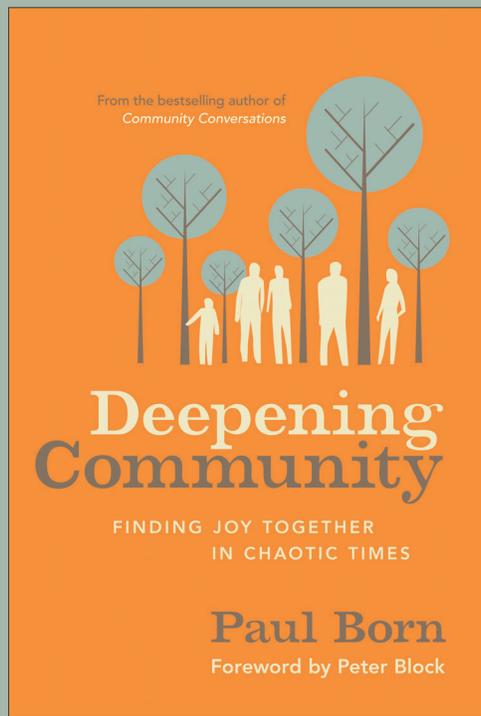
(by invitation only) - This newly forming CoP is for municipal leaders across Canada who have or are developing neighbourhood strategies and are interested in advancing policies that support and encourage neighbourhoods to build, strength and foster connection and well-being for all. This CoP meets bi-monthly via tele-conference.

Contact Christie Nash via email at christie@tamarackcommunity.ca for more information or to join a CoP.

Community shapes our identity, quenches our thirst for belonging, and bolsters our physical, mental, emotional, and economic health. But in the chaos of modern life, community ties have become unraveled, leaving many feeling afraid or alone in the crowd, grasping at shallow substitutes for true community.

In this thoughtful and moving book, Paul Born describes the four pillars of deep community: sharing our stories, taking the time to enjoy one another, taking care of one another, and working together for a better world. To show the role each of these plays, he shares his own stories—as a child of refugees and as a longtime community activist.

“I listen to Paul Born when I want to know how people get together for the common good. He is a master practitioner and storyteller. If you want to know what lies beyond the radical individualism and collective incompetence that plagues our modern lives, read this book.”
—**John McKnight**, Codirector, Asset-Based Community Development Institute, and coauthor of *The Abundant Community*



Paul Born is the cofounder and President of Tamarack—An Institute for Community Engagement, a global leader on issues of place, collective impact, and community innovation. The author of four books, including the bestseller *Community Conversations*, Born is internationally recognized for his community building activities that have won awards from the United Nations and as a senior fellow of Ashoka, the world’s largest network of social innovators.

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Visit www.deepeningcommunity.org

Learn more about how you can:

- Host a Conversation
- Join a virtual book club
- Attend or invite Paul to a speaking event
- Join a growing movement to deepen community across Canada and beyond at www.seekingcommunity.ca



CONVERSATIONS TO DEEPEN COMMUNITY

A Unique Partnership Opportunity



ENGAGING COMMUNITY ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME

Tamarack is looking for 5 innovative communities each year who want to partner with us to lead local **Conversations to Deepen Community** Projects. Recognizing that no one sector alone can address complex community issues, these communities are eager to deepen community engagement uncover untapped community resources and find new ways to work together.

Conversations to Deepen Community Project Champions collaborate with Tamarack to adapt our proven framework and resources to their unique context. The insights from local projects also contribute to Tamarack’s national research exploring the power, possibility and impact of deepening community in Canada.



“All change, even very large and powerful change, starts from very small conversations held among people who care.”

=Margaret J. Wheatley

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Engage and Mobilize Diverse Community Leadership
- Increase Community Engagement
- Strengthen Social Capital
- Cultivate a Shared Community Vision
- Build Consensus on Opportunities for Shared Action

PROJECT IMPACT

The work of two local community partners highlights the impact of this project:

DELBURNE ALBERTA

The rural community of Delburne Alberta was an early local partner with Tamarack. Local project champions were Nora Smith with Family and Social Support Services, Karen Fegan, CAO of the Village of Delburne and the Delburne Village Council. Delburne’s Conversations’ Project:

- Incorporated a powerful photo and mural project – Belonging DELBURNE – into their project
- Engaged 48% of the town’s citizens
- Identified 7 possible projects for shared action
- Cultivated shared ownership and responsibility for emerging projects with residents
- Increased citizen engagement in community priorities



CONVERSATIONS TO DEEPEN COMMUNITY: A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

GREY & BRUCE COUNTIES, ONTARIO

Championed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit, this Conversations Project encompassed a vast rural region that the team divided into four quadrants. Initial results included:

- 500+ residents, representing 10 sector perspectives, participated
- 47 conversations were held
- Community strengths, assets and challenges were affirmed
- Six priorities for shared action were identified
- 6 Community Celebrations were hosted
- 89% of participants expressed interest in working together to strengthen their community after participating in a conversation
- Participants' feelings of being connected to one another increased by 8% after participating in a conversation

Explore highlights from other **Conversations to Deepen Community** here.

IS THIS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR COMMUNITY?

If your community would benefit from an opportunity to strengthen: social connections; welcome diverse voices into conversations about your shared vision for the future; and, build consensus around opportunities for shared action, a Conversations to Deepen Community Project may be just what you need. If you are interested in exploring this opportunity to collaborate with us please contact Christie Nash at christie@tamarackcommunity.ca to learn more.



“Friends go in different directions but community, whether large or small, works together for a common goal.”

- Grey Bruce Conversations participant

ABOUT OUR VENUE AND CATERER



VENUE DR. JOHN M. PERKINS CENTRE

This gathering will be held at the Dr. John M Perkins Centre, a recently renovated building in the Crown Point Neighbourhood in Hamilton, ON. Our Gathering is being held in the main floor event space. The Centre's upper floors are affordable housing units. The Centre is managed by Indwell, a Christian Charity, whose innovative approach combines ABCD principles, and a commitment to community engagement to create supportive housing and communities for people seeking health, wellness and belonging.

Crown Point is one of the neighbourhoods that is taking part in the Hamilton Neighbourhood Action Plan, and this space is ideally situated to take walkabouts to see some of the ideas in action.



Are you involved in community based scholarship, research, or neighbourhood initiatives?

Looking for a free space to hold meetings, study, or conduct research related activities?

The arch is available to you!

ACTION-RESEARCH COMMONS HAMILTON (ARCH)

Immediately next door to the Perkins Centre, the ARCH Space will host a number of our Gathering's workshops. The idea behind the space is to provide a gathering place for researchers, students, area residents, and others to engage with each other while conducting or preparing for community-engaged research. It's not connected with one particular project, school, or agency.



OUR GATHERING'S CATERER

The delicious food we are enjoying together at this Gathering is being provided by the Mes Amis Catering Company, a unique social enterprise that operates out of the Perkins Centre.

At Mes Amis, our food is lovingly made from local, healthy ingredients. We strive to care for the environment in all our methods. We focus on creating a supportive, accessible work environment.
Ruth Anne VanHolst OWNER AND CATERER

EVENT CONTRIBUTORS

18 BLOCKS

18 BLOCKS Introducing 18Blocks.com
The new neighbourhood notice board

FIND
A lost pet, your missing keys, parking space to rent, a trusted babysitter, an expert tutor or the local dog whisperer.

SHARE
A ride, important news, favourite recipes, your expertise, your neighbourhood pride.

ORGANIZE
A block party, a club, a pick-up game, a residents' association, bulk vegetable buys, a knitting group, whatever you need.

DISCOVER
New friends, friendly strangers, friends from home, local arts & crafts, reputable contractors, community events.

SWAP, SELL, BUY
Advertise your sale; pass it on, source locally. No need to travel across town, uncover treasures near you.

plumber

18blocks.com

HAMILTON SPEAK NOW

SPEAK NOW HAMILTON

Stories worth hearing

Let us tell you our stories. Speak Now Hamilton is a collective of individuals sharing stories of personal experience and perspective on poverty and marginalization. The goal is to promote educated dialogue and advocate for change. Our hope is that our stories will change the way you see your community. Speak Now is a project of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. For more information or to book a speaker, please contact Celeste Licorish at 905-667-3595 ext 2, or via email at: celeste@hamiltonpoverty.ca.

RESOURCES FOR DIVING DEEPER

Neighborhood Necessities Seven Functions that Only Effectively Organized Neighborhoods Can Provide

BY JOHN MCKNIGHT

Ours is an era of “pulling back.” Our institutions—not-for-profit organizations, government, and businesses—are downsizing, retracting, and sequestering. These are all names for the process by which systems are occupying less space in society. They are beginning to abandon functions they had previously claimed to perform. Whether they are schools, medical systems, police departments, human service systems, or businesses, they are receding. The functional space they no longer occupy creates either a crisis or an opportunity.

The opportunity is there if we recognize that during recent generations, institutions have often taken over functions once performed by local communities, neighbors, and their collective groups and associations. Medicine has claimed our health. Police have claimed our safety. Schools have claimed the raising of our children. Social services have claimed the provision of care. And corporations have claimed that everything we need can be bought.

The claims have had two unforeseen consequences. First, as these systems have taken over functions, the power of local communities to be producers of well-being has been replaced. Once mutually responsible neighbors have become isolated local residents. In the process, the village has become impotent and unable to perform many of its responsibilities.

Second, many of the functions claimed by large systems and institutions were false claims in the first place. They purported to provide, for money, what only powerfully connected neighbors could achieve.

To achieve our well-being, it is necessary to have effectively organized neighborhoods. These well-being functions were often lost as institutions took over community functions. However, the institu-

tions were never able to create a substitute for the abandoned community capacities. Instead, they provided a counterfeit commodity rather than well-being, and many of our social and economic problems grew worse. Therefore, institutions “pulling back” is less a problem than a new opportunity to solve problems that have not been resolved by counterfeit institutional solutions.

In this sense, the seven unique neighborhood functions are necessities. There are at least seven neighborhood functions that are beyond the reach of institutional powers.

The first of these functions is our health. Our neighborhoods are the primary source of our health. How long we live and how often we are sick is largely determined by our personal behavior, our social relationships, our physical environment, and our incomes. As neighbors, we are the people who can change these things. Medical systems and doctors cannot. This is why epidemiologists estimate that medical care counts for less than 15 percent of our health determinants. Indeed, most informed medical leaders advocate enhanced community health initiatives because they recognize their systems have reached the limits of their health-giving power.

Second, whether we are safe and secure in our neighborhood is largely within our local domain. Important studies show that there are two major determinants of our local safety. One is how many neighbors we know by name. The second is how often we are present and associate in the public space outside our houses. Police activity is a secondary protection compared to these two community actions. This is why most informed police leaders advocate for block watch and community policing. They understand their limits and the necessity for connected neighbors.

Third, the future of our earth—the environment—is a major local responsibility. The “energy problem” is our local domain because how we transport ourselves, how we heat and light our homes, and how much waste we create is a major factor in saving our earth. That is why it is local neighborhood organizations that can call us and our neighbors to be citizens of the earth and not just consumers of the natural wealth.

Fourth, in our villages and neighborhoods, we have the power to build a resilient economy—less dependent on the megasystems of finance and production that have proven to be so unreliable. Most enterprises begin locally—in garages, basements, and storefronts. Neighbors have a vital role in supporting these businesses so that they have a viable market. And neighbors have the local power to capture their own savings through credit unions so that they are not captives of our notorious large financial institutions. Neighbors are also the most reliable sources of jobs. Word of mouth among neighbors is still the most important access to employment. The future of our economic security is now clearly a responsibility, possibility, and necessity for local people and their neighborhood groups.

Fifth, we are coming to see that a part of our local domain is the production of the food we eat. We can be allied with the local food movement, supporting local producers and markets. In this way, we will be doing our part to solve the energy problem caused by transportation of food from continents away. We will be doing our part to solve our economic problems by circulating our dollars locally. And we will be improving our health by eating food free of poisons and petroleum.

Sixth, we all say that “it takes a village to raise a child.” And yet, in most communities, this is rarely true. Instead, we pay systems to raise our children—teachers, counselors, coaches, youth workers, nutritionists, doctors, McDonald’s, and MTV. As families, we are often reduced to being responsible for paying others to raise our children and transporting them to their paid child raisers. Our villages have often become useless places where residents are responsible for neither their children nor their neighbors. As a result, we decry the local “youth problem.” There is no youth problem. There is a village

problem of adults who have forgone their responsibility and capacity to join their neighbors in raising the young. We can see that a remarkable recovery is possible when neighbors join in sharing the raising of the village children. It is our greatest challenge and our most hopeful possibility.

Seventh, locally we are the site of care. Our institutions can offer only service, not care. We cannot purchase care. Care is the freely given commitment from the heart of one to another. As neighbors, we care for each other. We care for our children. We care for our elders. And it is this care that is the basic power of a community of citizens. Care cannot be provided, managed, or purchased from systems. It is the new connections and relationships we create locally that build the community power to care for each other.

The critical issue for our time is how to reconnect ourselves so that we can begin again to act as powerful villages.

The historic institutional invasion of community functions has had a devastating effect on our capacity to fulfill our neighborhood functions. Today, many neighborhoods are not the sites of powerfully connected neighbors. Often they are sites where people live in relative isolation from each other.

The critical issue for our time is how to reconnect ourselves so that we can begin again to act as powerful villages, carrying out the seven functions that only neighbors can provide.

Certainly a part of community renewal is the process of community organizing. However, the common tradition of community organizing is to create groups of neighbors who will advocate with institutions to do more and do it justly. This process does not, however, build the capacity of neighbors to be producers of well-being. It usually addresses neighbors as consumers rather than as producers.

The community organizing that needs support today is focused on enabling local relationships that result in production of well-being rather than

consumption of system commodities. This requires us to understand what we can produce as neighbors and when we need institutional support.

Three basic questions help neighbors distinguish when they have the key productive role from when they need useful institutional support.

1. What functions can we perform with the power of our neighbors, associations, and very local institutions?
2. What can we do if we have the assistance of outside institutions?
3. What can only outside institutions do?

It is critical that these questions be asked in this order. The process that disabled so many neighborhoods began by first asking, “What can outside institutions do for us?” This is called a needs survey. This process has incrementally claimed more and more institutional power until the functions of local people are neutralized.

The reality is that most community organizing that is supported by funders today is for institutional

advocacy or institutional outreach into communities. However, neither of these approaches creates a community organization designed to enable local citizens to be producers of well-being in the seven domains of neighborhood necessities.

The relevant funders of our time are beginning to support local, productive citizen organizations where the first question is “What can we produce that will increase our well-being?” (One example of a neighborhood where this first question has been implemented can be found at www.abcdinstitute.org. Under Publications—Downloadable Resources, see “Exemplary Materials for Designing a Community Building Initiative in a Neighborhood.”) This approach results in neighborhoods where community organizing is building community with the collective power to create their own vision and to be the principal producers of that vision. That is the heart of democracy.

John McKnight is codirector of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute and professor emeritus of communications studies and education and social policy at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL.

STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY THROUGH GENUINE PARTNERSHIPS

By Jim Diers

Local governments everywhere tend to think of their jurisdictions as places and people with needs. They seek to address these needs by relying on tax revenues and bureaucratic expertise. Such a top-down approach may be appropriate at times, but it is certainly not sufficient. If government treats people as nothing more than customers, they think of themselves as taxpayers rather than citizens.

Moreover, government and its partner agencies can't address all of the needs on their own. Needs are growing more rapidly than government resources. And, increasingly complex social and environmental issues can't be resolved by agencies in the absence of community even if they have unlimited resources.

Some local governments are beginning to recognize that their communities have untapped resources as well as unmet needs. They are empowering and partnering with their communities through programs such as bottom-up planning, neighborhood matching funds, and participatory budgeting. Consequently, people are starting to identify as citizens and see the government as an extension of themselves. Not only are many more resources available to address local needs, but the solutions tend to be more creative, holistic and appropriate.

Steps to Effective Partnerships

Building true partnerships between government and community isn't easy. Before they can empower the community, agencies must first cease the harm that they inflict on community and begin removing their own obstacles to engagement. Three major steps need to be climbed in order to get to effective partnerships:

Do No Harm

Ironically, in their sincere effort to help the community, government and other institutions often do it a disservice. They impose their own agenda which distracts the community from its priorities. They don't sufficiently value the time and contributions of the citizens who do get involved so that they are less likely to participate in the future.

Most egregiously, institutions tend to violate the Iron Rule of community organizing: "Never do for people what they can do for themselves." Agency leaders often speak for the community. They provide services that were formerly the community's responsibility. They foster dependence by funding community leaders.

I'm not necessarily arguing for fewer or smaller institutions. There clearly are needs in communities that are best served by government and other agencies. And, most agencies don't have enough resources as it is to adequately address those needs. Institutions should

focus on what they are uniquely capable of and allow communities to do what they do best.

Remove Obstacles

It is extremely difficult for the community to partner with institutions as they are currently constituted, because institutions aren't accessible. Government offices are typically located far from where many people live and open during the same hours when most people work. Specialized language and bureaucratic procedures make it challenging for people to participate. Community volunteers can't possibly be involved in the totality of their neighborhood, because every aspect of the neighborhood (e.g. public safety, parks and recreation, public health, housing, economic development, transportation, arts and culture, youth, seniors, etc.) is associated with a different agency, each with its own staff, meetings, plans and programs.

Government tends to be both too centralized and too segmented to relate to communities. Top-down decision-making doesn't accommodate the community's voice and cookie cutter programs and regulations don't respect unique neighborhood design or community culture. Professional experts often discount the wisdom of communities, and they work in silos that make it difficult for them to share the community's more holistic perspective.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle is bureaucratic red tape. Rather than working through legitimate issues such as safety, liability, maintenance and labor agreements, too often these obstacles become a convenient excuse for government to say no to community initiatives.

Build Capacity

When agencies start to make room for community and to remove obstacles to partnership, the next step is to assist community in rebuilding its capacity. Agencies must be careful to do so in ways that empower the community and don't lead to further dependence. Appropriate capacity-building roles for agencies include leadership development, assistance with outreach and networking, and programs such as those described below that encourage the community to identify and utilize its own assets.

Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships

There are three hallmarks of effective government-community partnerships. When they are in place, they allow government to do what my former colleague, Henry Moore, described as "leading by stepping back."

Neighborhood/Community Focused

Effective partnerships are locally based rather than centralized. They are focused on whole neighborhoods or communities rather than on separate functions. Consequently, the community can easily participate and the resulting actions are both integrated and

culturally appropriate. Following are some tools that have been used to help government move in this direction:

- *Seattle, Sydney and many other cities have established little city halls in neighborhood business districts, shopping centers, libraries or other decentralized locations. Not only do these facilities enable citizens to access a wide range of city information and services in one convenient location, but the coordinator for each little city hall also serves as an overt double agent, helping both government and the community to accomplish their goals by working together.*
- *Many cities have established interdepartmental teams with a neighborhood focus. The City of Toronto, for example, has organized 13 Neighborhood Action Teams “to support integrated City service planning and delivery from a neighborhood perspective.”*

Strength-Based

Effective partnerships begin by focusing on a neighborhood/community’s strengths rather than its needs. These underutilized resources include the gifts of every individual, voluntary associations, the built and natural environment, economy, and culture.

- *Seattle developed the Neighborhood Matching Fund as a powerful incentive for communities to mobilize their strengths. The City provides cash for community-initiated projects when matched by an equal community contribution of cash, volunteer labor, and/or donated goods and services. Over the past 25 years, the City’s \$60 million investment has leveraged \$85 million worth of community resources, more than 5000 projects have been completed, and tens of thousands of citizens have worked together to make these projects possible. The program has since been replicated by towns and cities throughout the world.*
- *Involving All Neighbors is a Seattle Department of Neighborhoods program that involves persons with developmental disabilities in community life by focusing on their gifts and connecting them to existing community initiatives.*

Community-Driven

Finally, and most importantly, effective partnerships should be led by those who will live with the outcomes – the community. It is not enough to decentralize services or to mobilize underutilized resources. The community must have a voice in deciding how those resources can best be used.

- *In the late 1990s, Seattle gave communities the power to create their own neighborhood plans. The community could define the scope of work and use city funds to hire a planner who was accountable to them. In return, the city insisted that all stakeholders be involved in the effort, that outreach be targeted at labeled groups, and that the entire community be given the opportunity to vote on the final plan. The 38 neighborhood planning efforts involved 30,000 people and resulted in over 5000 recommendations. Broad-based community ownership of the plans meant that the city was held accountable for implementation. Equally*

important, the community took responsibility for those recommendations that it could best implement.

- *Following amalgamation in rural Golden Plains, Australia, farmers were picketing Town Hall to protest inadequate services. Local officials had very few resources, so they turned to the only untapped resource they could find – their community members. In 2000, they involved one quarter of the municipality’s 16,000 residents in the creation of 23 community plans. The plans resulted in the identification of 120 priorities; 600 citizens volunteered to manage the implementation of these recommendations. Thanks to broad ownership, the community and government together found ways to implement 96% of the plans’ priorities. The Golden Plains Council subsequently received the highest citizen satisfaction rating of any local government in the State of Victoria.*
- *Other cities give communities a strong voice in developing the government’s budget. In St. Paul, Minnesota, neighborhood representatives draft the city’s capital budget. The city budget of Puerto Allegro, Brazil is based on widespread neighborhood-level discussions.*

Of course, the community’s voice must be broad-based. Too often, self-appointed leaders, whose mouths are bigger than their constituencies, claim to speak for the community. Government has a role in insisting that the associations with which it partners be democratic and inclusive. Government should also provide associations with the training, technical assistance, and other support they need in order to adequately represent the community.

- *In Taiwan, the federal government supports Community Empowerment Centers throughout the country and a Young Community Planners Program that provides in-depth training for aspiring activists.*
- *In the United Kingdom, the coalition government is training 5000 community organizers.*

It’s amazing what is possible when government takes as much interest in its democratic infrastructure as it does in its streets, parks, and regulations.

trends

by Milton Friesen

Social Infrastructure

Underpinning the success of cities

We build the objects and order the spaces around us – sidewalks, roads, sewers, water lines, buildings, mobile phones, and data lines – to serve our needs. This infrastructure, in turn, profoundly shapes us as individuals and as societies. In fact, it is our social infrastructure, the patterns of our relationships with each other as individuals and as groups, that gives rise to our physical infrastructure. Municipal leaders are well aware of the Canadian infrastructure deficit after years of much-needed warnings. The social infrastructure of our municipalities is equally vital, although it seems to be less prominent in our thinking.

Leadership Opportunity

Why bother about the patterns of our individual and collective relationships? Isn't that a sideline, something to which other sectors should pay attention? On the contrary, these human factors in our community building represents an opportunity for deeper innovation in municipal leadership.

If the people we plan for don't show up or decide to leave, municipalities end up with very expensive surplus infrastructure. Interesting examples of this can be seen in the places where changing labour patterns, natural disasters, or climate shifts lead to depopulation: people move on and leave behind the structures that they built to serve their needs. Now-iconic examples are Detroit and New Orleans in the United States; but, Canadian communities from Saint John, New Brunswick to Prince Rupert, British Columbia have

also faced the challenges of managing population decreases. The most severe category comprises towns and communities that have been abandoned completely, of which there are dozens across Canada.

Social change that is faster than physical change is the dynamic at play in both depopulation and rapid overpopulation, each with attendant difficulties. Even if population numbers are static, changing patterns within cities can create challenges as families shift, people age, interests in downtowns or suburbs respectively lead to new density patterns, and so on. We may want the economic, environmental, and social benefits of higher physical densities closer to downtowns – a reversal of the past decades of suburban flight – but, we will have to live with what we have built in our suburban areas for a long time. If suburbs are deemed to make social development difficult, including long-term negative health effects, it isn't something that can be changed next year or even next decade. The physical and social infrastructures of our communities are in a constant flow of interactions, some beneficial and others detrimental.

Paying Attention to the Social Environment

Municipalities carefully work on trying to re-use, re-purpose, and maintain their physical infrastructure because we can't afford to keep starting over. Our social ecology in villages, towns, cities, and regions must be cared for with even greater vigilance

and understanding. Strong, resilient, meaningful social environments cannot be established or fostered on a whim. Changing a policy here and there or embarking on short-term patchwork interventions will be inadequate where the social fabric is getting thin. Municipal governments have limited powers to act on the many factors that contribute to the growth or decay of social infrastructure; but, what they are able to do should be attended to with care and attention. There is room to increase awareness about how spatial planning, taxation, zoning, and other mechanisms create conditions that allow relational or social assets to grow, rather than decay.

A forthcoming book by Benjamin Barber, *If Mayors Ruled the World*, explores how the persistence of cities has made them key contexts for working out democracy, a concept more grounded than comparatively recent ideas of nations and nation states. He examines the roles of city mayors who are significantly shaping the landscape of their cities well beyond the built environment. Leoluca Orlando, Mayor of Palermo, Italy, took on the organized crime in his city as a means of giving it



MILTON FRIESEN is the Program Director of Social Cities at Cardus, a North American public policy think tank based in Hamilton, Ontario. He has served as a municipal councillor and is also working on a Ph.D. at the School of Planning, University of Waterloo, that explores new ways of measuring the social conditions of cities. He can be reached at <mfriesen@cardus.ca>.



new life and opening up new possibilities. This was a social, not a physical, infrastructure issue that needed attention – one that Orlando took on at the risk of his own life. Such changes are a kind of social terraforming; but, instead of new land being created, space is opened up in the social landscape for democracy, equality, innovation, and freedom. Organized crime had displaced these functions and Palermo could not experience vitality without changing the social architecture of its economic activities.

As writer David Brooks' *The Social Animal*, industrial design company IDEO's Human Centered Design Toolkit, scholar Duncan Watts' *Six Degrees*, and many others have reminded us, we are all deeply woven into the profoundly complex web of social ecosystem. Cities, the physical objects, are the products of those interactions and city building must consider social interactions with great seriousness. Jane Jacobs' persistent presence at the top of the list of books most read by planners must certainly be partly due to her attentiveness to the human factors of streets, neighbourhoods, and cities. She noticed the intricate and vital patterns of human interactions at all scales in the city and the way in which the urban landscape enhanced or detracted from human interaction.

The most profound and powerful long-term innovations in cities will be social. Without people, cities are artifacts, ruins that we can study and excavate – but not something alive. The dynamics of the social landscape are evident in places like Lac-Mégantic, High River, and Slave Lake where rebuilding faces long struggles around issues of what people want and when they want it. Some are ready to build right away; others need more time to sort out what fire and flood have done to them psychologically, spiritually, and emotionally – in addition to the physical aspects of loss and changed fortunes. Such is the landscape of our social infrastructure.

Building Our Social Infrastructure

In addition to what is already done by municipalities, what can be done to

more fully attend to our social infrastructure? How can we avoid a social infrastructure deficit?

First, wherever we are actively and intelligently considering the physical and social infrastructure interactions, we must deepen and extend the habit. Integration of these dynamics is vital. If we make token gestures toward human factors, but don't find new ways to weave them together, we won't be able to reap the collective benefits of getting space, place, and people right. Where winning integration happens through design processes, genuine community engagement, and effective reflection on how physical development processes affect people, we can tell the story and learn from each other about those gains. The same must be true of when we get it wrong – streetscapes that don't lead to better community life, new developments that increase social isolation; and community institutions that get pushed to the margins.

Second, we must make adequate investments in understanding the state of our social infrastructure. Are people thriving? Are they finding their place? Who is? Who isn't? There are massive demographic shifts that will re-write certain aspects of our life together. Municipalities are not the causes of these shifts; but, they are increasingly being asked to work with the consequences. Research is not a trivial function or a luxury. We need to increase the quality and quantity of research that is linked to specific challenges, emerging trends, and possible opportunities. Can we find out sooner what is or is not working? Can we use research to solicit feedback from the people and systems that are essential to our collective quality of life? Innovations in sewer and waterline replacement have been a great help in attending to core city infrastructure needs. What are the social innovations that will offset the isolation, disengagement, and stress that people in our communities experience? We are beginning to see, for example, studies that show how social isolation can lead to health risks that are as significant as smoking, heart disease, and obesity. Cities and communities live with the consequences of such outcomes and are the

contexts where changes to those trends are possible.

Third, there are larger pieces of the social infrastructure to which municipal administrations can attend. In particular, the networks of institutions and organizations in cities must be better understood and more effectively engaged in processes beyond their own preoccupations. We often speak of citizenship in an individual sense – vote, volunteer, support good causes, look after your own property, and so on. But, what does institutional or organizational citizenship look like? Are all of the charities and not-for-profits that compose a significant part of urban landscapes working effectively together? Are the human capital, intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom of this sector being tapped for current and future design and development possibilities? An MIT study that compared the "Rust-belt" cities of Allentown, Pennsylvania and Youngstown, Ohio noted that the patterns of civic connectedness led to very different long-term outcomes when the steel industry collapsed – the social infrastructure was a pivotal influence.¹ In most cases, awareness of long-term structural and planning functions is almost non-existent. This is not about fault finding – it is about missed opportunities to establish practices that are at once more democratic, effective, innovative, and hopeful.

Conclusion

The dynamics at work in our communities can indeed be daunting: school boards and cities that don't talk except when they have to; rapidly shifting family patterns and relationships; immigration that leads to rapid increases in community members unfamiliar with local habits and processes; ongoing sprawl, despite attempts to change the pattern and explore alternatives; faith-based organizations as deep repositories of meaning and culture that have strong neighbourhood presence, but don't interact with planning processes at all; technology-mediated human interactions that aren't translating into stronger social fabric – the list could be multiplied. All of these dy-

namics are part of the social infrastructure of our communities.

What is hopeful is that we don't need to start at the beginning. Our communities are already profoundly social places. What is needed is a more conscious and effective consideration of the social infrastructure that contributes to thriving cities. New relationships can be established at institutional levels or strengthened where they already exist. Supporting institutions and organizations – places where citizenship, service to others, and learning happen – can be queried to see how their work might be en-

hanced by municipal governments.

Just as small business has worked to improve its function by advocating for less red-tape, community organizations and institutions can work on finding ways to change the processes that limit their ability to effectively contribute to the city. Some organizations already do this extremely well but there is still a great distance to go. Challenges such as our aging population will put high demands on existing social structures, so that simply maintaining what we have will not be sufficient.²

Without a thriving social infrastructure, the potential of our cities will be

significantly limited. The quality of human interaction in our homes, streets, neighbourhoods, and myriad organizations will, over time, be the feature that determines the long-term viability of the places where we live. Investment of perennially limited municipal resources must reflect strong commitments to not only preserve what we already enjoy, but to extend and deepen it. **MW**

1 <<http://web.mit.edu/ipc/publications/pdf/04-002.pdf>>.

2 <www2.macleans.ca/2013/09/03/the-curse-of-small-families>.

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FEATURE

Deepening community

The joy of togetherness

BY PAUL BORN

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

“I really do not want more community than we already have at this church,” shared a congregant during a Sunday morning adult Sunday school discussion. “What I like about this church is that no one judges you for not being more involved or attending regularly. If we had more community, people would expect too much from me.”

I remember being dumbstruck when I heard these words, especially in this church context, having never considered that a Mennonite congregation—or any of its members—would not embrace community as one of its central organizing principles.

I need to admit, though, my afterthought was, maybe he is right. If community means I am expected to be present every Sunday, give money, sit on at least one committee, join a smaller fellowship group, contribute to monthly potlucks, and provide meals and support to congregational members who are sick or in need, who has the time or energy for all that?

Maybe this is the same reason so many people do not know their neighbours. Do we really want to know when they are sick? Do we want to help them seed a new lawn or dig up one to plant a garden? Do we want to trust them enough to lend them a car or even our favourite kitchen tool?

Is it worth the investment?

Some days I think it would be so much easier to be anonymous in the crowd, to come and go as I like, to care only for those I choose and when I choose. I love this feeling of being free, anonymous, of living life on my terms. Besides, my days are so full, I am constantly with people and exhausted most days when I get home. I deserve that glass of wine by myself, in the backyard with that “keep your dog inside” and “only cut your lawn from 11-12 Saturday morning” kind-of-quiet all around.

Alone

I often feel alone and I do not like it. I find this feeling especially troublesome when I am in the midst of a crowd. You know that feeling you get when you go to a restaurant alone, or you are at

MCC PHOTO BY NINA LINTON



Perhaps the best reason to pursue more community in our lives is that it has proven to make us happier.

MAISON DE L'AMITIE PHOTO



During a recent interview, a young man just out of high school shared, 'When I am in community, I do not feel alone.'

a reception and there is an awkward moment when everyone is talking to someone other than you? You stand there alone, feeling left out, isolated, self-conscious . . . feeling like you want to hide or just walk away.

I am not talking about the introverted side of me that loves time alone to read, to re-energize, and to sit in the quiet of my own thoughts. I am talking about this deep-pitted feeling that it is all up to me. In the midst of the crowd—people all around, even people that love me—I get this anxious feeling and hear this recurring voice that reminds me to “take care of yourself because no one else will.”

I recently had a conversation with a friend who reminded me that we die alone. Therefore, as we age, this pervasive sense of alone is an evolutionary preparation for death. That may be the most depressing thought anyone has ever shared with me.

What I find most curious is that this alone feeling I get is not related to the loneliness I feel at various times. Loneliness might happen when I am missing someone or wishing I was with others. I actually like the feeling of loneliness if for no other reason than that it indicates that I still love and want to be around those others who are dear to me. By viewing loneliness through this lens, it means I am very much alive. It is a part of living in community.

Community

During a recent interview, a young man just out of high school shared, “When I am in community, I do not feel alone.” He was clearly an introvert, shy and self-conscious. But for him, this feeling of belonging was the antidote to feeling alone.

Community has many benefits and feeling a sense of belonging is most likely the most important. To feel a sense of belonging means that we feel we are in the right place, that we feel welcomed and embraced in a place or with a group. To belong is to be cared for and to reciprocate that caring, to know that “I am home.” It is a willingness to extend our identity to a group of people or to an experience.

Having others in your life whom you trust can help you make sense of who you are, and they can help shape your identity and recognize the gifts you have to offer. The African term *ubuntu*, often used by Nelson Mandela, means “I am human because I belong. My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up in yours.”

Community can better your economic prospects. Those in your community—family, friends, fellow church members and neighbours—can help you find a job, or lend you money for a business or to buy a house. They can also teach you to garden or help you learn a new skill. They can support you when you are unemployed and help you choose an educational direction. They can bind together to create a credit union, a school

or community foundation, which all enhance your economic prospects.

Community makes us healthier. Heart surgeon Dean Ornish wrote a book entitled *Love and Survival*. In it, he shares his observations of patients with many supportive relationships and how they were more than twice as likely to recover well and live longer when compared to those who had fewer or no close relationships. Therefore, the love, emotional support and positive healing energy others bring to us during times of illness contribute to our healing just as much as medical science and procedures.

Perhaps the best reason to pursue more community in our lives is that it has proven to make us happier. A whole body of thinking is now catching on, known as the “economics of happiness.” At its core is the argument that our gross domestic product is not a very good measure of human progress; instead, we should be measuring those things that enhance our collective quality of life.

One of the leading scholars advancing this idea is John Helliwell, a world-renowned professor at the University of British Columbia who concludes his talks by leading the audience in the song, “The More We Get Together, the Happier We’ll Be.”

A missed opportunity

Our Mennonite churches are struggling to maintain membership growth. Many are losing their young people to other

denominations or they are stepping away from church altogether. Most of our Mennonite institutions have opened up to “non-Mennonite” membership, not so much to enhance their mission, but to survive.

Most blame this decline in church attendance to shifting priorities in the larger society and to people moving away from a faith identity.

What has contributed to my own Mennonite identity has been both a belief system that forms my faith and the historical Mennonite community I belong to. This identity certainly includes borscht and shoofly pie, but also peace and service. My Mennonite identity and the people who have shaped it make up an important core of our sense of community for me and many others in our congregations.

Have we taken the importance of our identity as a community for granted? Have we downplayed the community aspect of our faith in order to emphasize the religious or spiritual dimension? I believe we have, and that this certainly must be considered when we look to determine the reason for struggling churches.

The imbalance between the community life of a congregation and the spiritual or faith life of a congregation may be contributing to a loss of commitment and membership. Young people, adults in transition or anyone struggling in life and questioning their faith need their community identity and a deep sense of belonging.

I know there are those who now will immediately say that the two are inseparable for them. Their spiritual and church lives are one and the same. To this I would say, try just for a moment to separate them and to recognize the ceremonies we use to strengthen our faith and those which strengthen our community life. Yes, they are connected, but it might be helpful to view them as separate in order to consider how we might strengthen each.

Our spiritual life is enhanced through studying the Bible, prayer, sermons, communion, singing and generally worshipping together. These also support a communal life, as singing and praying

together bind us in a common experience, although their primary purpose is to strengthen our spiritual life.

Our communal life is enhanced by small group gatherings in our homes or through potlucks where we sit together and visit; through gathering to celebrate a wedding or mourn together at a member’s funeral; through bringing meals to the sick or visiting each other in the hospital; through organizing peace walks, credit unions, foundations, schools and service projects; or joining together at the Mennonite relief sale. And these actions all build faith as we act on our beliefs, but their primary purpose is to strengthen the well-being of the community and community life.

Deepening community

At my home congregation, Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., we are taking four Sunday adult education hours to explore the role of community in our congregational life. The goal of this exploration is, first of all, to celebrate our communal life by sharing our stories, and, second, to consider the importance of and restore our commitment to a communal life together.

We are exploring community by considering these four concepts:

• **SHARE OUR STORY:** The journey towards community begins as we share our stories, be they stories of fears or of joy. Sharing helps us to open up, to become vulnerable and to hear other people’s stories. Thus do we begin to work together to distinguish truth from untruth and rational fear from irrational fear, to determine what we might do together. When we really hear one another, the bond of community is forged between us. We smile at each other; we feel warmth and joy as if we are home. In these times, we must make it a priority to take time for community. We need one another now, and we will need one another even more as times become more difficult.

• **ENJOY ONE ANOTHER:** As we continue to share our stories, and do so with the same players over time, reciprocity and trust grow between us. This is an

investment in deepening community, and the dividends this investment pays will be crucial to us in times of need. When we enjoy one another in a community we have invested in, we become a collective witness to the events around us. We can celebrate our achievements and those of our children together. How sweet are the victories and even failures that are experienced in community!

• **TAKE CARE OF ONE ANOTHER:** Reciprocity and trust have a wonderful effect when reaching out to help one another becomes as natural as breathing. We take care of one another not only because it is the right thing to do, and not only because people will help us if we help them, but primarily because the bond of love that has grown between us moves us to do so. Mutual acts of caring that happen often forge a sense of belonging. When we feel we belong, we feel safe and fulfilled; and when we feel safe and fulfilled, we can dare to develop hope and common purpose. Together, we have the strength to overcome almost any challenge that comes our way.

• **BUILD A BETTER WORLD TOGETHER:** The first three acts of community give us energy for the fourth act of deepening community: building a better world together. In fact, we become a force for change that is unstoppable. The work of restoring our communities feels light and possible. We no longer feel alone in our fear or hopeless in our dreams; rather, we have the courage to see our dreams become real.

Each Sunday, we share a Bible verse and introduce the topic for exploration; then two members of the congregation share their experience of community. Next, we take time to share our own experiences in small groups.

During the four Sundays, we are able to answer these questions: How do we come to know each other’s stories? When do we have fun together and why is this important for our congregational life? When have we felt cared for by this congregation, and when have we had the opportunity to give or express our caring

to others in our community? What do we do together to make the world a better place and how has working together this way deepened our commitment to our congregational life?

Investing in community

Like any investment, our faith community takes time and effort. We spend years investing for our retirement, setting aside dollars in order to live a good life in our old age. Our financial advisors tell us to start this process early, when we are young, in order to have enough when we're old, although they're always quick to add that it's never too late to start.

Investing in relationships to deepen community reaps a similar benefit. A strong family, a faith community or club, neighbours we can rely on, and friends who make the hours pass quickly: these are equally worthy investments. The skills we learn by seeking and living in community, and the network of relationships we build, will provide us with the joy and security we need, especially should we experience times of loneliness, financial insecurity or failing health.

Our congregations can be places of community and, in turn, strengthen people's lives. Our faith will not always be strong, but the community of believers will hold us up at these times. They, of course, can only do so if they—we—are strong. ❧

Paul Born is a community activist and best-selling author, who has just released a new book, Deepening Community: Finding Joy Together in



Chaotic Times. He is also president of Tamarack—An Institute for Community Engagement; a faculty member of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute; and a senior global fellow of Ashoka, the world's largest network of social innovators. Learn more at www.deepeningcommunity.org.

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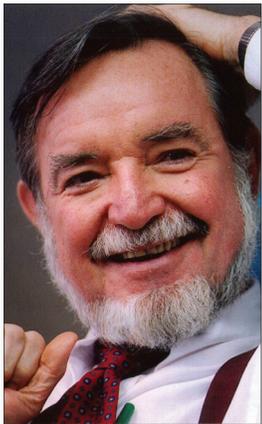
What has contributed to my own Mennonite identity has been both a belief system that forms my faith and the historical Mennonite community I belong to.

/// For discussion

1. What are some examples of things you do to support others in your family, congregation, team or club? In what situations have you received support from others? In what groups do you feel a strong sense of belonging? Have Mennonite congregations tended to take the importance of community for granted?
2. Why do some people feel ambivalent about community? According to Paul Born, what are the positive aspects of belonging to a community? Are there also negatives? What are the challenges of trying to strengthen a sense of community where people don't feel connected to each other? What is the relationship between a strong community and strong faith?
3. Are solid community bonds important to your congregation? How much time do people spend together outside of worship time? Do some people feel stronger bonds to other groups? Why might that be? How could your congregation specifically work at strengthening community?
4. Born says that we need to invest in strong relationships and communities so that they "will provide us with the joy and security we need." Do you agree? How did our parents and grandparents invest in community? How can we help our children do so?

—BY BARB DRAPER

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



JOHN MCKNIGHT is a founder and co-director of Asset-Based Community Development Institute, whose graduates -- including both Michelle and Barack Obama -- continue to have impact strengthening communities and neighbourhoods around the world. In 2013, John was awarded an Honourary doctorate from the University of Waterloo in recognition of his innovative work. For three decades John has researched social service delivery systems, health policy, community organizations and neighbourhood policy. He is the author of *The Careless Society* and co-author of *Building Communities from the Inside Out* and *The Abundant Community*. John serves on the Boards of several national organizations that support neighbourhood development and he remains tireless in his recognition and championing of citizens -- and their capacity to care for one another -- as an essential resource in the work of building better communities and neighbourhoods.



JIM DIERS has a passion for getting people engaged with their communities and in the decisions that affect their lives. His work in the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods was recognized with an Innovations Award from the Kennedy School of Government. In 1988, he was appointed the first director of Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods where he served under three mayors over the next 14 years and created what some would say is a miracle of neighbors. Harnessing his own personal passion, this work resulted in: a direct-action neighborhood association; a community development corporation; a community foundation; and, the nation's largest health care cooperative. Jim now teaches courses at the University of Washington and serves on the faculty of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute. He also travels internationally delivering keynotes and workshops on neighbours and neighbourhoods. His book, *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*, is available in both English and Chinese editions.



VICKIE CAMMACK is the Founding Director of Tyze Personal Networks, a pioneering Canadian social innovation that delivers online networks of care for people facing life challenges. She is a social entrepreneur who has established many organizations dedicated to strengthening community and addressing isolation including Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) and the Family Support Institute of British Columbia. Vickie's unique response to the isolation and loneliness that underpins some of our most intractable social problems - a network model of care, has been adopted internationally. The Women's Executive Network named Vickie one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women and she is the recipient of Meritorious Service Medal of Canada, the BC Community Achievement Award, and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her work in the field.



MILTON FRIESEN is a Senior Fellow and Program Director of Social Cities at Cardus, a North American think tank. He has served as an elected municipal official and his current work at the University of Waterloo School Of Planning involves a new proposal for measuring social impact. His work on network science applications for planning includes participation in the Waterloo Institute on Complexity and Innovation. His paper Social Infrastructure: Underpinning the Success of Cities, explores the “ patterns of relationships we have with each other as individuals and groups” and suggests that these will determine the long-term viability where we live. This paper was recently published in Municipal World.



PAUL JOHNSON is the Director of Corporate Initiatives for the City of Hamilton. In this role Paul works with the Senior Management Team to implement strategic priorities. Paul is also responsible for strengthening the City’s corporate culture, continuous improvement, business planning and strategic planning activities. Paul joined the City of Hamilton in 2010 to spearhead the development of the City’s healthy neighbourhood initiative. Now called the Neighbourhood Action Strategy, the City of Hamilton is working with residents, business and other key institutions to build neighbourhoods across Hamilton that are great places to live, work, play and learn. Born, raised and educated in Hamilton, Paul’s background includes work in the non-profit sector as Executive Director of Wesley Urban Ministries and in the private sector with Compaq Computer Limited. Paul is currently in his 25th season as a basketball referee and has officiated at the local, provincial and national level.



PAUL BORN is a bestselling author, community builder and the President of Tamarack. He will share stories and insights from his newest book, Deepening Community to illustrate how the ideas of caring, empathy and shared responsibility can be translated to build strong communities using a four-step framework that maps the journey to deep, authentic community. He will share inspiring highlights about how people throughout the world are using this framework to advance positive change within their neighbourhoods, their communities and the world.



SYLVIA CHEUY is the Director of Deepening Community Learning Community at Tamarack. She brings with her a wealth of experience in citizenship engagement, community and neighbourhood development, community well-being and social innovation, with a focus on regional food systems. Sylvia’s infinite curiosity allows for her to learn and share practical examples of successful community change initiatives from across the globe.

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



MICHAEL JONES is an evocative writer and storyteller, a thoughtful and inspired speaker and Juno Nominated pianist, composer and performing artist who offers a unique and memorable experience.

His most recent book *The Soul of Place*, is the third in an award winning series of books on re-imagining leadership. The Soul of Place offers a refreshing and richly textured exploration of our relationship with place in nature, art and community and how this connects us with the core underlying patterns of life and living systems.

By asking the question; "Who will play your music if you don't?" Michael creates a place for leaders to discover their own true nature as well as framing a story of the future in which the primary challenges will be both generative and ecological. To learn more about Michael and his work visit www.thesoulofplace.com and www.pianoscapes.com



SUZANNE BROWN has recently accepted the position of Director, Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives at the City of Hamilton, a division that includes the Neighbourhood Action Strategy initiative. Previously, Suzanne managed the Neighbourhood Action Strategy since June 2011, where she coordinated the development and implementation of the City of Hamilton's neighbourhood initiative. Suzanne joined the City of Hamilton in 2003, working in Public Health in program evaluation and chronic disease prevention. Prior to joining the City of Hamilton, Suzanne spent 8 years at the Social Planning and Research Council as a Senior Social Planner where she was involved in range of social planning activities, from grassroots community development through to community-based research, policy analysis and project development. Suzanne has a Masters of Social Work in Social Welfare Policy from McMaster University, and a Bachelor of Arts from Wilfrid Laurier University.



MAYOR BERRY VRBANOVIC

Kitchener Mayor Berry Vrbanovic was born in Zagreb, Croatia, and understands the challenges of immigrant families and the issues facing the thousands of Canadians making Kitchener their new home. Berry's outgoing and personable style has contributed to his election to serve as a councillor for six consecutive terms of council, from 1994-2014. Prior to becoming a city councillor, Berry worked in the city's clerk's office and the information technology division. In 2014, Berry was elected as the Mayor of Kitchener Ontario and is committed to improving quality of life for residents in the city and throughout the Region of Waterloo. Berry is Deputy Treasurer of United Cities & Local Governments and is President Emeritus (2011-12) of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. As a member of Regional Council, Berry sits on all three Standing Committees of Council as well as the Economic Development & Promotion Committee, Public Art Advisory Committee, Grand River Hospital Board of Trustees, and the Victoria Transit Hub Steering Committee.



KAREN PITRE has been appointed Special Advisor to the Premier on Community Hubs in March 2015. Karen Pitre has extensive stakeholder consultation, strategic planning and project management experience. Karen has extensive stakeholder consultation, strategic planning and project management experience including working at Metrolinx, a complex project involving stakeholder consultations developed with the input from a Community Advisory Committee. Karen is also a steering committee member of Community Assets for Everyone, which formed in spring 2013 with a vision of creating the appropriate legislative, political and infrastructure environments to establish Ontario's schools as hubs to support and strengthen the health of Ontario communities.

Karen has also worked with the Toronto District School Board-Toronto Lands Corporation where she developed a framework for stewardship of surplus capital assets. In this role, she managed consultations with key stakeholders including the Ministry of Education, Toronto District School Board trustees and staff, as well as community groups. She has worked with all three levels of government, including as part of her work with the Toronto 2008 Olympic Bid and with Waterfront Toronto. Karen was also the Founding Chair of the Toronto Sports Council. She has a LL.B. from the University of Windsor and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Toronto.



CELESTE LICORISH is the Co-ordinator of Speak Now Hamilton: Stories Worth Hearing and a single mom with multiple kids and multiple passions. She is committed to making her city - Hamilton, Canada - a better place..." Celeste is a single mom with multiple kids and multiple passions – not the least of which is to make her city - Hamilton, Canada - a better place for her family and for people who live there – especially those who struggle with poverty and marginalization.

Celeste was born and raised in Toronto and moved to Hamilton to attend McMaster University where she received a degree in Philosophy. Her diverse background includes a wide range of activities - public relations, marketing, limo driving and carpentry but she has found her calling and gift in the creation and development of Speak Now Hamilton Speakers Bureau: Stories worth hearing - a project of the city's Roundtable for Poverty Reduction.

Celeste believes in the power of stories. She used her personal experiences with poverty to build Speak Now - a collective of individuals living in poverty who share their stories and perspectives to promote educated dialogue and advocate for change. Their stories are changing the way people see themselves and their community. When she's not booking and attending speaking engagements for Speak Now, Celeste is busy in the community with her three daughters, and two cats at her home in the heart of East Hamilton. She hopes her story will engage and inspire you'

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



RENÉE WETSELAAR, M.A., Senior Social Planner, Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, Principal, Renaissance Consulting

Renée Wetselaar is a Senior Social Planner whose work focuses on the priority areas of Housing and Homelessness and Equity and inclusion with her main role being the Manager of the Neighbourhood Action Strategy. She is engaged in strategic planning and policy development, community development, evaluation and collaborative partnerships. She has considerable experience in developing and coordinating initiatives involving a wide variety of stakeholders across many sectors and parts of the community.

For the past 25 years, the main focus of Renee’s work has been nonprofit development and management. Known as a visionary leader, animator and mobilizer, she has researched and written on issues surrounding the arts and artist’s work, poverty, gender, globalization, housing, labour, children and health. Renée is a visual artist, performer and two-time graduate of McMaster University. In 1986 she received a Bachelor of Arts in Art and Art History and in 2007 her Masters in Globalization and the Human Condition with a focus on art and social change. Renée was awarded for her community service work with the Queens Golden Jubilee medal in 2003 and Woman of the Year in the Arts for Hamilton in 2004.



HOWARD LAWRENCE is a Co-founder of the Asset Based Neighbourhood Organizing Association with John McKnight. He is a Neighbourhood Consultant with cities across North America. Currently he is developing and spearheading The Abundant Community Initiative for the City of Edmonton.



LYNDA BUMSTEAD is a Public Health Manager at the Grey Bruce Health Unit overseeing health promotion programming related to the prevention of child health, chronic diseases and injury prevention. Her belief is that health is something that we create in our families, schools, workplaces and in our neighbourhoods Her steadfast commitment to community health helps guide community partnerships to work together to develop healthy public policy. Lynda is passionate about developing a Grey Bruce rural Healthy Communities model that will support the most vulnerable and thus creating a community that supports all.



KAREN CROKER is a Public Health Nurse at the Grey Bruce Health Unit working with under-resourced populations and health equity. She is a member of the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force which examines methods to eliminate poverty and homelessness in a rural setting. She is involved in a project examining how to improve substandard housing conditions for low income persons in a rural area. Formerly, Karen has worked extensively in the area of mental health and addictions as a clinician, consultant and manager of services. Karen has a Masters Degree in Education and Counselling.



AMBER SCHIECK is a Health Promoter at the Grey Bruce Health Unit. Amber has experience in planning, implementing and evaluating programs. Most recently, she has worked in the area of injury prevention. Amber holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Public Health degrees from the University of Guelph.



BRIANNA SALMON is the Manager of Transportation and Urban Design programmes at GreenUP, an environmental charity operating in the Peterborough region. For the past seven years she has worked with community organizations, public health, and local government to develop programs, policies, and a built form to enable active transportation. Brianna is currently working with the Stewart Street Neighbourhood Association in Peterborough on an exciting participatory planning project --Active Neighbourhood Canada – which is part of a national, effort to engage communities in the process of visioning and planning vibrant and healthy public spaces. Brianna has BSc in Environmental Science and a Masters in Sustainability Studies and Transportation Planning. She is currently completing a graduate degree in Philanthropy and Non-Profit Leadership at Carleton University.

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



DEBORAH SATTLER is currently working as a community coach for the Windsor Essex Coalition and the Erie St Clair Local Health Integration Network. Formerly, she was a team manager in the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. She specializes in “Big Collaboration” and has a proven track record delivering large-scale, complex, multi-partner system transformation projects in areas including palliative care, home and community care and integrated care delivery. She has a diverse background and experience spanning health care, social policy, education, intergovernmental relations, and the economy.



TAMMY HEIDBUURT has been a part of the Crown Point Community Planning Team since it formed in 2008, and currently holds the position of co-chair. She enjoys the energy that comes from mobilizing people in community, and has the opportunity to do similar work with her full time job - working with churches to do asset-based community development. Also leading the tour will be Elizabeth Seidl, a mother, co-secretary for the planning team, and design consultant, and Tony Lemma, housing advocate, co-treasurer, and staff member for the John Howard Society. Together, the three are huge fans of the “Hammer” (Hamilton) and specifically, their Crown Point Community!



PAT (PATRICIA) REID In addition to an education that includes high school and college, Pat is currently attending the University of Life experiences, from which she has still not graduated. At 75 she is still learning and struggling with life’s tests and difficulties and dedicating herself in service to humanity in whatever capacity or road that takes. As a Baha’i, she has served abroad as well as in various towns and cities across Ontario but Hamilton has been her home for the past 25 years. Pat shares, “My university of life... creative communities.” She is a strong believer in the empowerment of the McQuesten Planning Team motto “Not About Us, Without Us”. Attending the University of Life experiences and I still have not graduated. In my 75th year I am still learning and struggling with life’s tests and difficulties. Being dedicated to service of humanity in whatever capacity and road that may take has been a great adventure. As a Baha’i I have had the joy and opportunity to serve in Martinique and Haiti as well as various towns and cities in Ontario. Hamilton has been my home for the last 25 years. My University of Life curriculum has been one of challenges of mental illness, homelessness and poverty. These learning opportunities have opened doors of great adventure and desire to work beside my neighbours to build safe, healthy and creative communities. I strongly believe in the McQuesten Planning Team motto “Not About Us, Without Us” is empowering.



CAN YASMUT Can Ya mut* is the Executive Officer of the Local Community Services Association in New South Wales, Australia. The Local Community Services Association (LCSA) is the peak body for Neighbourhood Centres in NSW. Formed in 1974 LCSA supports its members' focus on social inclusion and all facets of community development through resources, networking and advocacy. As an experienced community development worker Can has a passion for challenging equity and social justice issues affecting our community. His is committed to promoting the importance of small, community based not-for-profit organisations and the value of cross-cultural understanding and community engagement.

**Can is a Turkish name; the 'C' is pronounced like the English 'J' and the 'sh' pronounced 'sh'.*



TERRY COOKE is President and CEO of Hamilton Community Foundation which has played a leading role in mobilizing the community to address issues like increasing access to post-secondary education, strengthening neighbourhoods and reducing poverty. Terry's career includes leadership positions in the private, public and non-profit sectors. He served as Chairman of the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth from 1994 to 2000 and was the primary political champion of the amalgamation of Hamilton and its former area municipalities. Terry is a past Chair of the Canadian Urban Institute and serves on the board of Community Foundations of Canada as well as a number of corporate organizations. In recognition of his community service, Terry has been a Paul Harris Fellow, a two-time recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal and is an Honorary Chief of Police.



CHRIS MURRAY has been City Manager since January 1, 2009. He has spent considerable time moving forward on the City's priorities and evaluating its delivery of citizen-centred services. Under his leadership, the City has forged ahead with a number of City building initiatives including the Pan Am Games, a renewed focus on the downtown and waterfront, a mobility strategy, a review of the City's workforce culture, healthy neighbourhood program and most recently the Immigrant Entrepreneurs Program. Chris is a registered professional planner with over 20 years' experience implementing public works projects. Previous to becoming City Manager, Chris was the Director of Housing for the City of Hamilton, where he worked with community partners to find homes for people most difficult to house. The program "hostels to homes" was recognized by the Canadian Urban Institute. Chris resides in Dundas with his wife Michele, daughter Hannah and son Ben.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The following organizations and individuals partnered together to bring you Champions for Change: Leading a Backbone Organization for Collective Impact. We would like to thank them for their commitment and generous support.

