




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	January 8, 2024
SUBJECT:	Residential Zones Project (Reimagining Neighbourhoods) Public Engagement (Wards 1 to 12)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Wards 1 to 12
SUBMITTED BY:	Shannon McKie Acting Director, Planning and Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this Communication Update is to provide Council with an update to the Community Outreach and Engagement activities that Planning staff initiated in November 2023 for the Residential Zones Project. An engagement plan was developed by City staff in consultation with other teams, including the Community Engagement Team. The Community Outreach and Engagement activities were introduced to Council in a previous Communication Update on November 8, 2023.

Through Reimagining Neighbourhoods, the City's residential zones are changing to enhance housing options in predominately low-rise residential neighbourhoods. The objective of the Community Outreach and Engagement activities is to provide homeowners, renters, developers, and the general public with access to information to understand how zoning changes will provide the opportunity for more housing choice and more affordable housing options and growth that is more sustainable and equitable across the City.

Community Outreach and Engagement activities undertaken by the City over the course of November and December 2023 included:

- Updated Residential Zones Project website, available at www.hamilton.ca/residentialzoning;
- Engage Hamilton launch on November 17, 2023 available at www.engage.hamilton.ca/reimagining-neighbourhoods;

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- Publication of an interactive Story Map, available at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9f202598778c436f906f9154d9fbbf9d>, and Survey on November 17, 2023;
- Regular email updates and social media posts;
- Participation in a podcast interview with Global News and Building Hamilton in December 2023, to be released on January 6, 2024;
- Presentations to three Advisory Committees and the Development Industry Liaison Group (DILG); and,
- Facilitation of eight in-person community pop-up events.

The activities identified above are summarized at a high-level in this Communication Update, with the exception of the podcast interview to be published in January 2024. A summary graphic has been attached to this Communication Update to capture the work completed to date. Additional outreach and engagement are continuing in January 2024. A full summary of all engagement carried out for the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project will be incorporated into and appended to the Recommendation Report to Council presenting the proposed residential zone changes for Council's consideration.

Summary of Community Outreach and Engagement

Project and Engage Hamilton Webpage

The City of Hamilton updated the Residential Zones Project (Reimagining Neighbourhoods) webpage and launched the Engage Hamilton Reimagining Neighbourhoods microsite on November 17, 2023. The Residential Zones Project webpage contains important project related information, including the project phases, timing, important contact information to ask questions and submit comments, and a sign-up link for the project notification list. Visitors to the Residential Zones Project webpage are also enabled to click on a link to visit the Engage Hamilton Reimagining Neighbourhoods microsite.

The Reimagining Neighbourhoods microsite, hosted on the Engage Hamilton platform, was launched by the City to collect feedback from the public related to the Residential Zones Project. The microsite includes a project timeline and information about past and upcoming consultation and engagement events. It also includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the project, as well as a direct link to the project Survey, described further in this Communication Update.

Since the Residential Zones Project webpage was updated, the webpage has been visited by over 1,200 users, with over 8,000 interactions with the webpage¹. This

¹ Data collected between November 17 and December 8, 2023

includes page views, scrolls, and clicks of different components on the webpage. The Residential Zones Project webpage remains active and will continue to be used by the City as a tool to inform the public about the Residential Zones Project.

Story Map and Survey

The Reimagining Neighbourhoods Story Map and Survey were launched on the Engage Hamilton webpage on November 17th, 2023. The purpose of the Story Map was to inform members of the public about the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project. The Story Map was leveraged as a tool to educate members of the public about the expanded residential permissions in neighbourhoods, and the types of built form that could occur along the edges of neighbourhoods through the proposed Mid Rise Residential Zones. The Story Map described and provided visuals of the potential changes that could occur within and along the edges of neighbourhoods as a result of changes to residential zones proposed through the Residential Zones Project.

The Survey was open from November 17, 2023 to December 8, 2023. The Survey included a total of five multiple choice and open-ended questions. A total of 221 responses were received from members of the public who shared their priorities and feedback on the benefits of and concerns related to new housing options in Hamilton's neighbourhoods. A fulsome summary of the results and analysis will be provided in the Consultation summary report as noted above.

Video

To further the public's understanding of the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project and to reach a wider audience through additional engagement tools, a series of videos are being produced to highlight aspects of the project. The first video provides an overview of the project by presenting what a reimaged neighbourhood may look like. This video was launched on the Engage Hamilton webpage on December 14, 2023 and subsequently promoted via the City's social media posts.

Social Media

The City launched the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project to the City's various social media platforms. The purpose of these social media posts was to promote and inform the general public about the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project and communication and engagement activities. These posts provided a link to the Reimagining Neighbourhoods webpage and invited the public to view the Story Map and complete the Survey. Social media posts to the City's X (Twitter) and Facebook pages were published on November 17, 2023 and to LinkedIn on December 4, 2023. A subsequent social media post to the City's X and Facebook pages was published on December 21, 2023 to promote the Reimagining Neighbourhoods video and upcoming public

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information meeting scheduled for January 18, 2024. Together, these posts have been reshared more than 15 times.

Advisory Committees and Other Committees

City staff met with and provided a presentation to the following advisory and other committees:

- Development Industry Liaison Group (DILG) on November 20, 2023;
- Seniors Advisory Committee on December 1, 2023; and,
- Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities on December 12, 2023.

The purpose of the presentations was to inform members about the ongoing Reimagining Neighbourhoods project. City staff prepared a comprehensive presentation that provided background on the project and a summary of ongoing initiatives led by the City to provide housing choice in Hamilton’s neighbourhoods.

Following the presentation, the Advisory Committee and DILG members were invited to ask questions and provide comments. City staff received minor questions and comments from participants, which were addressed and responded to by City staff.

Pop-Ups

City staff hosted eight pop-up events throughout Hamilton between November 22, 2023, and November 29, 2023. The City also attended Hamilton Day on November 4, 2023 to advertise the pop-ups and invite residents and business owners attending Hamilton Day to participate in the upcoming pop-ups. During Hamilton Day, City staff visited the Locke Street Business Improvement Area, the International Village Business Improvement Area, and the Hamilton Farmer’s Market.

Pop-up events were identified by City staff and the consultant team at WSP as an important approach to engagement for the Reimagining Neighbourhoods Residential Zones Project. Traditional engagement methods, such as public open houses, are often scheduled at inconvenient locations and times. Pop-ups reduce this barrier and allow people to engage in quick, accessible, and fun opportunities to share their experience, provide comments, and ask questions. They are an important tool to inform and educate broad audiences and can increase project visibility directly in the community. Importantly, pop-ups were leveraged by City staff as an intentional approach to engage seniors, youth, and families in a civic process and to expose them to a city-building initiative. The pop-ups were hosted in high-traffic areas such as community recreation centres and a shopping centre and were strategically located across the City.

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Details of the pop-ups, including date, time, and location, are identified below:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday, November 22, 2023	Stoney Creek Recreation Centre	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Wednesday, November 22, 2023	Valley Park Recreation Centre	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Friday, November 24, 2023	Morgan Firestone Arena	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Friday, November 24, 2023	Lime Ridge Mall	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Saturday, November 25, 2023	Lime Ridge Mall	2:00pm to 4:00pm
Monday, November 27, 2023	J.L. Grightmire Arena	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Monday, November 27, 2023	Sackville Senior's Centre	10:30am to 1:30pm
Wednesday, November 29, 2023	Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre	6:00pm to 8:00 pm

The objective of the pop-up events was to:

- Drive traffic to the Reimagining Neighbourhoods webpage on Engage Hamilton, and promote the webpage as a destination for all things related to Reimagining Neighbourhoods;
- Provide a method for the public to easily access the Story Map and Survey using a QR Code, to gather feedback from the public; and,
- Engage with individuals who may not typically participate in open houses and/or other forms of traditional engagement approaches to receive their feedback and inform them about the Reimagining Neighbourhoods project and provide an opportunity for the public to sign up to the project notification list.

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Two City staff members attended each pop-up event. City staff distributed informational postcards about the Project, engaged residents in discussion about the project and directed residents to the Residential Zones Project and Engage Hamilton microsite using the QR Code, specifically the Ideas Tool on Engage Hamilton to collect feedback. City staff recorded the following impressions from the pop-ups:

Approximate Number of Attendees*	402
Postcards Distributed	650
Email Registrations	36
Survey Completions**	5
One-on-One Conversations	110

* Approximate number of attendees generally refers to the number of individuals who were present at the location during the time of the pop-up.

** Survey completions indicates the number of surveys that were completed at the pop-up by using a tablet provided by the City.

Next Steps

City staff continue to be available to meet one-on-one with Councillors to review details of proposed zoning changes within each Ward as requested. Outreach and engagement with the community will continue into the new year, including a public information meeting scheduled for January 18, 2024. A fulsome Consultation Report will be provided to document the outcomes of all Reimagining Neighbourhoods consultation events.

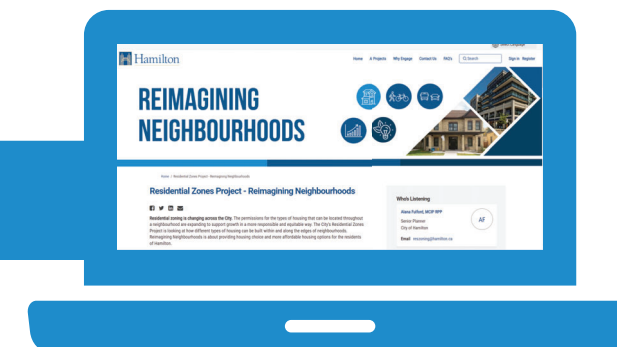
Please contact Shannon McKie, Acting Director, Planning and Chief Planner with any questions or comments or to set up a meeting to discuss the Residential Zones Project by email at Shannon.McKie@hamilton.ca or by phone at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1288.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” – Engagement by the Numbers

Reimagining Hamilton Engagement by the Numbers

Engagement Period: November 4 to December 12



Project Webpage

1,200 Visitors

8,000 Interactions
(Webpage views, scrolls, and clicks)

Podcast Interview

 **1** Podcast interview

Story Map and Survey

 **221** Survey Responses

Advisory Committee Meetings

 **3** Meetings
65 Participants

Community Pop-ups



8 Pop-ups **402** Approximate Number of Attendees

5 Survey Completions **36** Email Registrations

650 Postcards Distributed **110** One-on-One Conversations

