

2020

ACTION

PLAN



PLAN
HAMILTON



HELLO

Welcome to the 2020 Action Plan! This document marries the format of the annual Initiative Update with the ideas outlined in Plan Hamilton. All of the City's ongoing, new, and upcoming projects found in these pages will be framed in the context of Plan Hamilton. More information on the details of the plan can be found online at PlanHamilton.com.

What is Plan Hamilton?

Plan Hamilton is the comprehensive plan that will guide the development of Hamilton over the next 15 years. The plan was approved in March 2019, and implementation is now underway.

What is the Initiative Update?

Hamilton has been publishing an annual Initiative Update since 2012. Each document had information about the City's initiatives for the year and how each of those projects was improving Hamilton.

So how is this document different?

It's not! With the completion of Plan Hamilton, the City decided that it was appropriate to frame our efforts within the context of our community plan, so we have changed the name of the Initiative Update to the 2020 Action Plan.

Tell me more about Plan Hamilton.

Plan Hamilton and its initiatives strive to balance quality of life and livability, economic health and prosperity, private property needs, and public fiscal responsibility through a consensus building process that allowed the public to determine the future direction of Hamilton.

Plan Hamilton's top priorities are to:

- Grow businesses and jobs
- Improve our local connections
- Connect Hamilton to the region
- Enhance the well-being of our residents and neighborhoods
- Encourage development and redevelopment

Sounds cool!

We think so! Thank you for taking the time to learn more about what the City of Hamilton is doing to move our community forward into the future. For more information, visit www.planhamilton.com.



Fun fact: Plan Hamilton received the Ohio Planning Award for Comprehensive Planning in Small Jurisdictions from the Ohio Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Ohio) in 2019.

LEGEND



Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

These projects are focused on ensuring that Hamilton is a community of choice and opportunity for all. They promote reinvestment in residential areas, further neighborhood identities, improve safety & cleanliness, retain existing residents, and market Hamilton to prospective residents.



Cooperation & Collaboration

These projects aim to increase Hamilton's collaboration with residents, businesses, schools, community organizations, developers, Butler County, neighboring municipalities, regional partners, and the State of Ohio to achieve shared objectives.



Music, Arts, & Culture

These projects aim to establish Hamilton as a regional destination for music, arts, and culture, and support organizations and individuals leading these efforts.



Utilities

These projects provide the necessary infrastructure to support a thriving community, from transportation systems to electricity grids and water pipelines.



Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

These projects support Hamilton's park system, with a particular focus on maintenance, strategic expansion, programming, and access.



Economic Development

These projects focus on supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses that provide upward economic mobility. Emphasis is placed on business retention & expansion, growing the startup community, and revitalizing key business corridors.



Land Use & Development

These projects ensure that land use and development policies align with community objectives by advocating for resident- & business-friendly regulations.



Mobility

These projects prioritize improvement to Hamilton's streets. They focus on road maintenance strategies, reduce traffic congestion, support alternative modes and routes of transportation, and pursue partnerships for mobility improvements.

INDEX

6 Completed Projects

10 Community Engagement & Improvement

- 11 Citizen Implementation of Plan Hamilton
- 12 17Strong Neighborhoods Initiative
- 16 Love Your Block
- 17 Butler County Land Bank
- 20 MyHamilton Resident Portal / 311
- 22 Planning
- 23 Commercial Vacant Property Registration

24 Ongoing Projects

- 25 Spooky Nook Sports
- 25 Opportunity Zones
- 26 Industrial Investment
- 27 Entrepreneurship
- 30 Downtown Outdoor Refreshment Area
- 32 Downtown Living
- 33 Downtown Events

- 34 StreetSpark
- 34 Great Miami Riverway
- 35 Hamilton Parks Conservancy
- 38 Active Transportation Plan
- 38 Hamilton Beltline Recreational Trail
- 39 Miami 2 Miami Connector Trail
- 42 Route 4 Redevelopment
- 44 West Side Commercial Development
- 44 Summer Work Experience in Law
- 45 Workforce Development

46 Department Services

- 47 Hamilton Police Department
- 48 Hamilton Fire Department
- 49 Resident Services
- 52 Public Works
- 54 Electric Utility
- 56 Underground Utilities
- 61 EmPower Hamilton
- 61 Customer Service

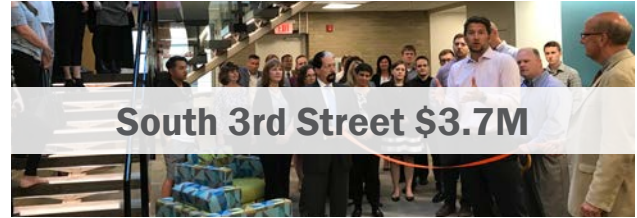
COMPLETED PR



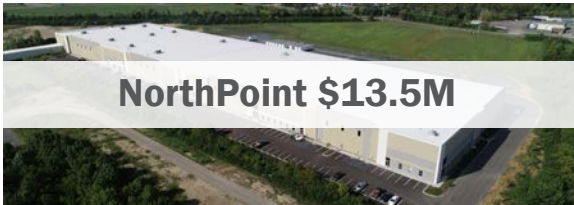
OBJECTS



Rotary Park \$550K



South 3rd Street \$3.7M



NorthPoint \$13.5M



Mercantile Lofts \$11.1M



Municipal Brew Works \$1.1M

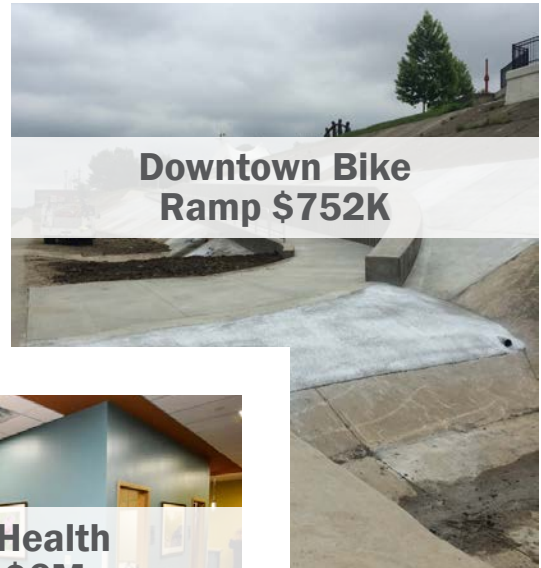


CNG Station \$2.5M

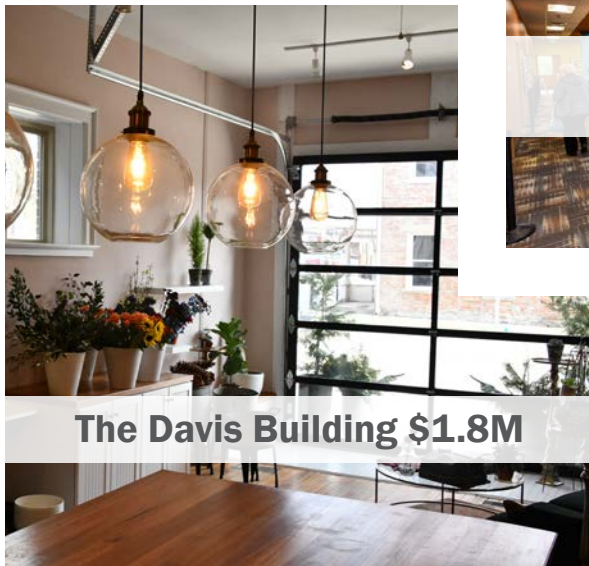
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Marcum Park \$3.9M



Downtown Bike Ramp \$752K



The Davis Building \$1.8M

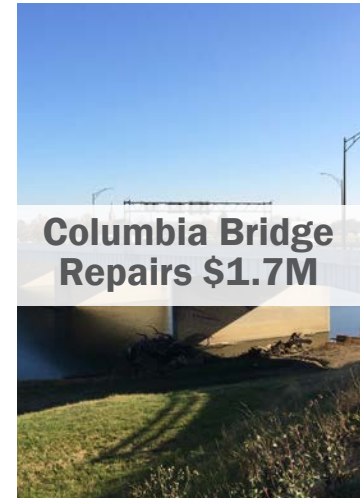


Hamilton Health on Main \$6M



South Hamilton Crossing \$32M

OBJECTS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & IMPROVEMENT



The Neighborhoods of Hamilton, Ohio

Citizen Implementation of Plan Hamilton

Community buy-in to Plan Hamilton is critical to the plan's success. A group of citizens led efforts to implement Vision 2020, the comprehensive plan that preceded Plan Hamilton, and their involvement was a primary driver of the positive change and existing momentum in our community. Keeping this in mind, Plan Hamilton will follow in the footsteps of Vision 2020 in regards to citizen involvement. Soon after Plan Hamilton was approved by the City of Hamilton City Council in early 2019, approximately 60 community stakeholders and leaders came together to talk about implementing the new comprehensive plan.

Since this initial conversation, two citizen groups have formed and are working to realize meaningful change within the next 18 months. The first group's objective is "To Improve Hamilton's Housing Stock." These community members are conducting a blight audit which will track housing improvements, and will be seeking to implement improvements to Hamilton's regulations regarding blight remediation. They also hope to identify and promote services that help Hamiltonians improve their homes.

The second group's objective is "To Build Neighborhood Leadership and Engagement." This group is working to identify training opportunities for 17 Strong leaders, which will equip these community leaders with the skills to build engagement and create change in their neighborhoods. The working group is also focused on increasing 311 utilization as well as bringing awareness to other City tools helpful to residents.

"To improve Hamilton's housing stock"

"To build neighborhood leadership and engagement"



- *Activate neighborhood planning and development efforts*
- *Continue to promote the grassroots efforts to improve the city like community meetings and clean-ups*
- *Communicate with all residents and offer engagement opportunities*

L Land Use & Development

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



- *Support organizations enhancing quality of life*
- *Assist in the development of music, culture, and arts activities and events that help create a sense of place*
- *Retain existing Hamilton residents*
- *Connect neighbors and further neighborhood identities*
- *Improve neighborhood identity within Hamilton's 17 neighborhoods through programs such as neighborhood signage and a neighborhood identity awards program*
- *Support initiatives that empower citizens to invest in their neighborhoods like the microgrant program*
- *Continue to promote the grassroots efforts to improve the city like community meetings and clean-ups*

17Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

For years, the 17Strong Neighborhoods Initiative has been helping residents create cleaner, safer, and more engaged neighborhoods across the city. 17Strong grew out of the Sense of Place committee, one of the four pillars of City Council's 2012 strategic plan. After several years of grassroots relationship building by resident volunteers, City Council, and City staff, the effort found structure in the 17Strong Advisory Board which formed in 2016. As a framework for communication and creating a sense of identity within Hamilton's 17 unique neighborhoods, 17Strong helps increase civic engagement and strengthen community pride. The initiative **seeks to define neighborhoods, community third-places, and the various needs and aspirations of each neighborhood.**

17Strong Advisory Board and Microgrant Program

The 17Strong Advisory Board was formed to provide structure and direction to the neighborhoods initiative. This group of 12 volunteers makes recommendations to further engagement and trust between neighborhoods, within neighborhoods, and between the City and neighborhoods. Additionally, these community leaders oversee the 17Strong Microgrant Program and leverage their neighborhood perspective to advocate for positive outcomes in all neighborhoods. The Board includes a diverse group of community members, ranging from lifelong residents to those who have just moved to Hamilton, and is meant to be inclusive of all Hamiltonians. Four members from each of Hamilton's neighborhood types (urban, traditional, and suburban) are on the board, for a total of 12 members.

The Microgrant Program is a tool to help residents create safe, clean, and engaged neighborhoods. Residents from all neighborhoods are encouraged to apply for a variety of projects on a rolling basis, and can receive funding from \$500-2,500. Projects that receive funding demonstrate an ability to connect neighborhoods and residents to each other, utilize resources efficiently to solve problems, envision and create a path to the future, and to build pride. In 2019, one such project was the Dia de los Muertos celebration planned in the newly created Jefferson Park. As a partnership between the Jefferson Alliance and Miami Regionals, this event drew over 50 Jefferson neighborhood residents on Saturday, November 2 to eat, play, and celebrate a traditional Mexican holiday. Activating Jefferson Park in this way, as a shared space within the neighborhood, helped connect neighbors, build relationships, celebrate the diversity of the Jefferson neighborhood.

In total, 17 microgrants were awarded in 2019, for a total of \$32,687 in funding throughout the year. Since the program launched in 2016, over \$147,000 has been invested in 75 projects throughout the city.

Annual Events

As an organization, the 17Strong Advisory Board holds events throughout the year to promote unity in Hamilton. The annual 17Strong Celebration Breakfast takes place in January and gathers community leaders to celebrate the past year's Microgrant recipients and to share stories about the impacts of these projects. In 2020, this program also gave special recognition to former City Councilwoman Kathy Klink, who has been an outspoken and active advocate for 17Strong and other neighborhood building efforts for years. The second annual Bridging Neighborhoods event took place in September 2019, bringing people together from across the City to have a cookout on the High-Main Bridge. The Great Miami River has traditionally been seen as a barrier that divides the community, but this event helped bridge that divide while encouraging unity and collaboration between residents.

In 2020, two new recurring events are starting up as well. Kickstart Your Neighborhood is an outreach event for residents to learn about and discuss the strategies used in different neighborhoods to activate public spaces, clean up nuisance properties, and address crime. This is a bi-annual event with dates to be announced. Finally, the Leads Summit is a new opportunity in 2020 for selected neighborhood leaders to learn about the resources available to them while also engaging with other leaders. The first of two such events in 2020 will take place on March 14.

2019 microgrants
awarded

17

2019 microgrant
investment

\$32K

Total microgrants
awarded

75

Total microgrant
investment

\$147K

A Music, Arts, &
Culture

R Residents, Housing,
& Neighborhoods

C Cooperation &
Collaboration





Working with neighborhoods through 17Strong is incredibly rewarding and I'm excited about the opportunity to empower residents to have safe, clean, and engaged neighborhoods. 17Strong connects neighbors to each other, to information, and to resources that help them envision and build a prideful future in Hamilton

- Kathy Klink
Former City Councilwoman & 17Strong Advocate



- *Work with organizations that make Hamilton a healthier, safer, cleaner, and more economically vibrant community for all people*
- *Activate neighborhood planning and development efforts*
- *Retain existing Hamilton residents*
- *Make Hamilton safe & clean*
- *Continue to promote the grassroots efforts to improve the city like community meetings and clean-ups*

Love Your Block

The Love Your Block program has become an important strategy in the City of Hamilton's blight reduction efforts. In 2018, 17Strong was awarded a \$25,000 Love Your Block grant from Cities of Service, a national nonprofit. This grant brings a total of four AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers to Hamilton to help reduce neighborhood blight over a two year period. In its first year, VISTA volunteers Brooke Wells and Tyler Cook led the program as it served 14 families who received minor exterior home repairs, landscaping supplies, and debris removal. Over one hundred volunteers worked on homes in the East End and Armondale neighborhoods in May and June of 2019. Residents painted and made minor exterior repairs, removed more than 10,000 pounds of garbage and brush, and performed yard work and landscaping around the homes.

Two new AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers joined the City's newly-created Department of Neighborhoods in September 2019. Current VISTAs Ellen Rakowski and Joshua Clair will serve until late summer 2020, and have been focusing their work in the North End and Jefferson neighborhoods. For the remainder of its second year, the Love Your Block program will continue to focus on building pride in these neighborhoods while cleaning up nuisance properties.

Love Your Block has developed a new partnership with Supports to Encourage Low-income Families (SELF) to transition Love Your Block into a sustainable program after the initial grant funding has ended in late 2020. The existing SELF Home Repairs program, which in 2019 helped over 100 people make free minor exterior repairs and mobility upgrades to their homes, will be extended through this partnership with Love Your Block. SELF volunteers and contractors primarily work with senior citizens, people with disabilities, and families with young children who are unable to do work themselves, and Love Your Block funds will go to purchase tools, paint, and other materials needed to make these repairs and upgrades. In addition to providing materials, Love Your Block will supplement minor exterior home repairs with other neighborhood cleanup projects by bringing neighborhood residents together to make grassroots change. Through this program, many homeowners are able to maintain or improve the value and quality of their homes and neighborhoods.

Butler County Land Bank

The Butler County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) is another critical tool the City of Hamilton utilizes to help fight blight and improve our neighborhoods. Since 2012, the Land Bank has successfully accessed two funding mechanisms from the State of Ohio: the Moving Ohio Forward (MOF) grant program and the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP). In 2012, Butler County was awarded over \$2.6 million dollars through the MOF grant program to facilitate the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property. Of those funds, \$1.1 million was designated for the City of Hamilton through the Land Bank, which the City matched, resulting in a total of \$2.2 million. In 2014, the NIP was created by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency to assist with stabilizing local property values through the demolition and greening of vacant and abandoned residential properties in targeted areas across Ohio.

As a result of both programs, the Land Bank has had significant positive impacts in Hamilton. In 2019, the City secured 38% fewer properties than in 2012, a reduction that correlates to the Land Bank's demolition of the worst properties in our community. The city also experienced 62% fewer vacant structure fires in 2019 versus 2012. As a result of these reduced safety and fire hazards, the City saved more than \$76,000 in 2019 when compared to annual costs incurred prior to the Land Bank. Additional costs to Police and Fire associated with trespassing, drug use, and other illegal activity occurring at vacant structures is not included in those savings. Furthermore, vacant properties pay little to no taxes while also devaluing neighboring properties. Hamilton has experienced a general trend indicating that home values increase as the vacant property rate decreases.

After removing vacant and blighted residential properties through the Land Bank, the City of Hamilton seeks to reactivate these spaces in a positive way. The City's Side Lot Program allows qualifying homeowner occupants immediately adjacent to a City or Land Bank owned empty residential lot to acquire it as an extension of their yard. In certain instances, a non-profit may also qualify to acquire an empty lot through the Side Lot Program. The City has also partnered with Neighborhood Housing Services of Hamilton Inc. (NHS) to enable the construction of single-family homes on now empty lots in strategic areas that are large enough for new infill development. Lastly, the City has partnered with Supports to Encourage Low-Income Families (SELF) to utilize their Neighbors Who Care: Renovations program to revitalize vacant and blighted residential structures that SELF can bring back for home-ownership opportunities to credit worthy, low-income families.



- Utilize partnerships to achieve regional priorities
- Employ public private partnerships to advance projects that have a positive community impact
- Identify economic development opportunities as part of the land bank prioritization strategy
- Focus on the character and density of land uses in areas where we can better define a sense of place
- Promote the creation of high quality residential units in the urban core through public private partnerships
- Develop and execute a plan for land banking activities, including dispensing land for side lots and redevelopment

C Cooperation & Collaboration

L Land Use & Development

E Economic Development

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



Our group is working to impact the overall living conditions of the community and increase Hamilton's quality of life through improved housing stock

- Mitch Vocke
Community Leader







- *Ensure all residents have safe and accessible connections to community facilities and services*
- *Expand access to music, arts, and culture for all people by supporting arts initiatives in schools and neighborhoods*
- *Be responsive to the needs and concerns of Hamilton residents through efforts such as 311 activity, social media engagement, and community meetings*
- *Connect Hamiltonians to the events, parks, and other quality of life improvements occurring in our community*
- *Simplify access to the city and community services for all people*
- *Make Hamilton cleaner through efforts such as a strategic code enforcement strategy and promoting 311 use*
- *Communicate with all residents and offer engagement opportunities*
- *Focus on utility customers*

A Music, Arts, & Culture

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

M Mobility

U Utilities

MyHamilton Resident Portal / 311

The MyHamilton Resident Portal helps Hamilton residents stay informed by providing key information on City services, upcoming events, development projects, road closures, and more. The website helps the City in its ongoing commitment to transparency and civic engagement. Residents can use information on the site to explore the city's parks, sculptures, murals, and museums. MyHamilton also has links to other important Hamilton sites, such as 17Strong, UtilityPay, OpenGov, News, and more. User feedback is encouraged, as it will allow the City to continually improve the web applications. Access the resident portal by going to myhamilton.hamilton-oh.gov.

New in 2020, MyHamilton will also be home to Hamilton's updated 311 system. The 311 system is the best way for residents to communicate any issues or concerns with City departments. Residents are encouraged to use this system to report a variety of non-emergency issues, including leaf collection, potholes, building permit questions, water quality or leaks, utility billing questions, and more. The updated 311 system is more user-friendly, and its integration with the MyHamilton Resident Portal will better equip residents with the tools they need to get things done in the community. Once a service request is submitted, it is sent directly to the staff person responsible for that type of issue, and the resident is updated on the progress of their request via email and, if you have the app installed, notifications on your phone.

2019 total requests

6,177

Average days to resolve

16.8





- *Activate development along the Great Miami River that is envisioned in the River Master Plan*
- *Prioritize key brownfield redevelopment opportunities, such as the Champion Paper Mill and Mohawk Paper sites*
- *Conduct a comprehensive review and update of land use controls and policies*
- *Modernize our zoning ordinance*
- *Evaluate and implement Traditional Neighborhood zoning for Hamilton's urban core*
- *Advocate for resident- and business-friendly regulations*
- *Require pedestrian amenities with new development*
- *Assist in the development of music, culture, and arts activities and events that help create a sense of place*
- *Promote infill development in our urban core and along the riverfront*
- *Make Hamilton cleaner through efforts such as a strategic code enforcement strategy and promoting 311 use*

Planning

The Planning Department is spearheading a number of initiatives to implement Plan Hamilton, and one such effort is developing and implementing new zoning districts. Zoning codes offer a way for communities to organize and manage their ever-changing landscapes and provide guidance on what can be built where and what uses are acceptable in each zoned area. The new zoning districts aim to promote positive development and improve the development process in our community.

Entertainment Mixed-Use Planned Development Zoning

Development along the Great Miami River was identified as a primary objective for the City of Hamilton through the Plan Hamilton workshopping process. The Hamilton River Plan was developed to define the goals for Hamilton's development efforts along the river, and was adopted by City Council in June 2018. In 2019, the first major part of the River Plan was put into action with the establishment of the Entertainment Mixed-Use Planned Development (EM-UPD) zoning. This district accommodates the unique demands and impacts of large scale entertainment developments, such as Spooky Nook. The EM-UPD will also encourage future redevelopment along the riverfront. Next steps include working with developers interested in riverfront development and seeking grants to achieve public improvements along and connecting to the river.

Traditional Neighborhoods Zoning

The new Traditional Neighborhoods (TN) zoning district will be used in the community's traditional and urban neighborhoods, including Rossville, Lindenwald, Dayton Lane, the North End, and Prospect Hill. The built-up character in these neighborhoods is diverse, ranging from areas dominated by single-family homes to moderate- or high-density areas featuring commercial, multi-family residential, and public / semi-public uses. The goals of the new zoning district include protecting the unique character of each neighborhood; creating infill development standards; implementing regulations to prevent the conversion of single family homes into multi-family dwellings; encouraging redevelopment of older structures while retaining their historic integrity; and maintaining flexibility in zoning regulations to allow for diversity of land uses where appropriate. There are four different TN districts to account for the diversity found in Hamilton's urban and traditional neighborhoods and to reflect the dynamic nature of how the communities have been built up. Rossville was rezoned to Traditional Neighborhood zoning in late 2019 and the community feedback was positive. The City is working to implement the new zoning districts in Prospect Hill, Dayton Lane, Lindenwald, and North End in 2020.

Commercial Vacant Property Registration

The City of Hamilton has a significant number of vacant and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings. Unfortunately, in many cases, the owners or other responsible parties fail to adequately maintain and secure these properties. It is a well-established fact that vacant buildings cause harm to the health, safety, and general welfare of the community, including diminution of neighboring property values, loss of property tax revenue, accumulation of trash and debris, increased risk of fire, and the potential for an increase in criminal activity. In an effort to mitigate these risks and to encourage restoration of these commercial and industrial properties to productive use, the City of Hamilton established a vacant commercial and industrial property registration process in 2019.

This legislation mandates that all vacant commercial and industrial properties in Hamilton must be registered annually. The process includes submitting a completed registration form, developing a property plan to either restore the building to use or to demolish it where appropriate, and paying an annual fee which escalates yearly. Given that there is such an increased risk of fire occurring at such properties and potentially spreading to neighboring buildings, this program is administered by the Hamilton Fire Department. The City of Hamilton believes that the vacant property legislation will increase the availability of both commercial and residential space in the community while also protecting the tens of millions of dollars invested by individuals and companies in the urban core, commercial districts, and neighborhoods.



- *Continue to identify funding opportunities to clean-up and restore brownfields and abandoned properties*
- *Maintain a high level of public safety service for both the business and residential communities*
- *Revitalize and reimagine business corridors in Hamilton*
- *Identify any local obstacles to business development and make improvements*
- *Promote reinvestment in our urban core and traditional neighborhoods*
- *Make Hamilton safe & clean*

A Music, Arts, & Culture

M Mobility

E Economic Development

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

L Land Use & Development

ONGOING PROJECTS



Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill

Hamilton's single largest redevelopment project ever is taking place at the former Champion Paper Mill site on the banks of the Great Miami River. Spooky Nook Sports is turning this brownfield into the nation's largest indoor sports complex and convention center, a site that will attract over a million visitors to downtown Hamilton each year and generate millions of dollars in off-site spending throughout the region. Spooky Nook Sports broke ground in October 2018 and construction is now well underway. In 2020, the main area of focus for the City of Hamilton will be completing underground utility work. Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill is planned to open in late 2021.

Expected Completion

2021

Total investment

\$144M

Opportunity Zones

In 2018, the City of Hamilton successfully lobbied for the creation of two Hamilton Opportunity Zones, census tracts which encourage private investment by providing federal tax incentives to investors. One of our Opportunity Zones covers the Prospect Hill area, including the site of Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill, and the other includes much of the Riverview (formerly Second Ward) and Lindenwald. These zones are powerful economic development tools which the City can use to promote investment into some of the most distressed areas in our community. The City of Hamilton was featured by the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) at its Opportunity Zones Showcase in April 2019, an event that highlighted the investment potential of Opportunity Zones throughout Ohio.



- Revitalize & reimagine business corridors in Hamilton
- Prioritize key brownfield redevelopment opportunities, such as the Champion Paper Mill and Mohawk Paper sites
- Employ public-private partnerships to advance projects that have a positive community impact



- Advocate for State policies that support communities like Hamilton
- Revitalize and reimagine business corridors in Hamilton
- Advocate for resident- & business-friendly regulations

C Cooperation & Collaboration

L Land Use & Development

E Economic Development



- *Employ public-private partnerships to advance projects that have a positive community impact*
- *Aggressively work on business retention and expansion*
- *Attract and retain businesses that enhance quality of life*
- *Revitalize and reimagine business corridors in Hamilton*
- *Leverage services and develop economic incentives that attract business to reduce unemployment, achieve economic stability, and increase the standard of living for all citizens*

Industrial Investment

Industrial investment and development has seen a big increase over the past ten years, with more than \$324 million invested into capital expansion and redevelopment projects. New and expanding companies in Hamilton come from a variety of different sectors, from manufacturing to healthcare, logistics to communications. Hamilton's center of manufacturing activity is Hamilton Enterprise Park, where 80 Acres Farms and JWF Technologies both opened in new facilities in 2019. 80 Acres Farms and joint venture Infinite Acres will be investing an additional \$26.9 million into its Hamilton Enterprise Park site to create additional indoor farming space at its site, while JWF plans to create five new positions at its new location.

Kettering Health Network opened Hamilton Health Center on Main in early 2019, an 18,000 square foot, \$6 million primary care center on the west side of Hamilton. It invested a combined \$8.3 million to remodel parts of Fort Hamilton Hospital into both an upgraded cancer center and a neonatal care unit. Fort Hamilton was one of just four regional hospitals to earn a spot on Healthgrades America's "Best Hospitals" list, which represents the best 250, or top 5% of hospitals in the nation. 2019 was the second year in a row that Fort Hamilton received the honor.

Finally, Hamilton Caster, which has been a part of the Hamilton community for over 100 years, held its groundbreaking on a new \$7.3 million, 50,000 square foot facility in February 2020. Once completed, this building will help the company expand its production capacity, bring on new staff, and increase workflow productivity.

10 Year Investment

\$324M

Future Investment

\$34M

Entrepreneurship

Hamilton's Small Business community is stronger than ever and growing daily. The community welcomed 20 new small businesses in 2019 alone, with seven more already planned to open in 2020. Having plentiful local shopping & dining options is imperative to maintain and grow a local economy, as these establishments contribute to the quality of life for visitors and residents alike.

Nine new food & drink locations opened in 2019, greatly increasing the dining and nightlife options available in the community. Tano Bistro is an upscale restaurant that serves contemporary, seasonally-inspired farm-to-table cuisine uplifted by warm hospitality. Fretboard Brewing & Public House is a partnership between Looking Glass Hospitality Group and Fretboard Brewery and serves high-quality pub fare using fresh, local ingredients. The Casual Pint offers a wide selection of drinks on tap as well as a small selection of food, and The Village Ice Cream Parlor can satisfy your sweet tooth with a variety of flavors. Rise & Shine breakfast cafe opened at 102 Main Street in February 2020, and an additional five establishments are expected to open this year, including Pinball Garage, Smoochies, and Billy Yanks Burgers & Bottles.

Specialty retail is also on the rise here in Hamilton. Many existing establishments oversaw expansions or other major milestones in 2019: Sara's House celebrated its five year anniversary in Hamilton, and Petals & Wicks doubled its space and launched a line of bath & body products. Check out what's new at BeYOUtiful Salon, LahVDah, or Rustic Home, or visit one of five new retail locations that opened in the last year. Find the perfect present for any occasion at the new Wildfire Home & Gift, and grab a custom card designed by Carrie O'Neal at Scripted Studios to go with it.

Finally, an additional six service & entertainment venues opened in 2019. These include two event centers (The Blank Space and The Benison Event Center), Future Great Wrestling, two new salons, and a karate space in Lindenwald.

New business in 2019

20

New business in 2020

8



- *Ensure that the City of Hamilton is a business friendly community*
- *Aggressively work on business retention and expansion*
- *Value the important role of the startup community*
- *Attract and retain businesses that enhance quality of life*
- *Invest in programming and special events that improve quality of life and attract and retain small businesses*
- *Market our arts, music, and culture scene to the region*

A Music, Arts, & Culture

E Economic Development

C Cooperation & Collaboration

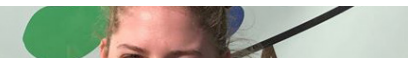
U Utilities



I'm amazed at the vision City leadership has for how to rebuild this City...to see that Hamilton is willing to take a chance on someone [small], but also has this big vision -- it's amazing

- Carrie O'Neal
Owner, Scripted Studio







- *Encourage special events that provide recreational opportunities for residents and draw visitors to Hamilton*
- *Invest in programming and special events that improve quality of life and attract and retain small businesses*
- *Assist in the development of music, culture, and arts activities and events that help create a sense of place*

Downtown Outdoor Refreshment Area

May 2020 will mark the two year anniversary of the Downtown Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA), a program that allows patrons to purchase to-go drinks in designated cups from a participating liquor serving establishment. The goal of the DORA is to encourage people to get out and explore all of the shopping, dining, arts, and entertainment options that downtown Hamilton has to offer. The program has been a tremendous success, with thousands of DORA drinks enjoyed by residents and visitors alike in the last year and a half. DORA serving establishments grew from the original nine locations in 2018 to 13 in 2019, with at least two additional locations already pending for 2020.

The boundaries of the DORA currently encompass both sides of the Great Miami River, including High and Main Streets and historic German Village. The DORA will extend down the North B Street corridor to Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill when the complex opens in 2021.

As of early 2020, public establishments selling into the DORA include:

Basil 1791	Neal's Famous BBQ	Roll On In
Fretboard Brewery & Public House	North Second Tap & Bottle Shop	The Casual Pint
Fitton Center for Creative Arts*	Plaza One Grille	Tano Bistro
Municipal Brew Works	Richard's Pizza	The Drink

- A** Music, Arts, & Culture
- C** Cooperation & Collaboration
- E** Economic Development

**During special events as posted*



C E L R

- *Recruit developers and businesses to do positive projects in our community*
- *Utilize public private partnerships to achieve development objectives*
- *Encourage a broad mix of residential housing types*
- *Promote the creation of high quality residential units in the urban core through public private partnerships*
- *Market Hamilton to prospective residents*

Downtown Living

Hamilton's downtown residential market has grown tremendously over the past few years. More than 185 new units have been created and leased in the last decade, and the increased population living downtown has driven the need for more recreational space, dining, and shopping options. In 2019, both the Marcum Apartments and the Davis Building were completed. The Marcum began filling its 100+ units in summer 2018 and was fully leased less than a year later. In June 2019, the Davis Building opened 12 unique urban lofts on the upper floors of 304 Main Street, and all were filled by September. Both buildings have first floor commercial space with thriving restaurants and shops.

The Third + Dayton building, the former headquarters for Ohio Casualty located at the intersection of Third and Dayton Streets, has also seen a great deal of investment over the last year. Owner Industrial Realty Group (IRG) has invested over \$5 million to create 70 new residential units on the top three floors of the largest building, and is considering options for further development of the remaining space in the complex. Given these recent and ongoing projects, and the increasing interest of developers, the City expects to see dozens of new residential units created in the urban core in the coming years.



Jefferson Park is a space where residents connect, celebrate, and honor the diversity found here, making our neighborhood a better place to live, work, and play

- Carol Combs
Chair, Jefferson Alliance



Downtown Events

Downtown Hamilton continues to host dozens of events put on by a variety of organizations every year. These events, largely organized and hosted by committees of volunteers, help to raise the positive profile of Hamilton in the region while also drawing visitors to shop and dine at local establishments. Operation Pumpkin remains Hamilton's largest single event, a fall arts and crafts festival that draws tens of thousands of visitors to downtown Hamilton the second weekend of October. The RiversEdge free summer concert series is entering its eighth year in 2020, and promises to host old favorites and exciting new bands at 16 events, including a dozen free concerts and several all-day music festivals. The Hamilton Flea, now in its fifth year, will continue hosting an urban curated flea market at Marcum Park on the second Saturday from May through September. Several events take place in the Central and Main Street Business Districts, including Alive After 5, a themed shop hop on the final Friday of the month May through August, as well as Music on Main, Art Hop, and more. Finally, new events in 2020, such as Hamilton Pride, will continue to bring visitors to the community to shop, dine, and play!



- *Encourage special events that provide recreational opportunities for residents and draw visitors to Hamilton*
- *Invest in programming and special events that improve quality of life and attract and retain small businesses*
- *Support the organizations and individuals leading the efforts to build a music, arts, and culture scene in our community*
- *Improve access to, and programming of, parks*
- *Connect Hamiltonians to the events, parks, and other quality of life improvements occurring in our community*

- A** Music, Arts, & Culture
- C** Cooperation & Collaboration
- E** Economic Development

- L** Land Use & Development
- P** Parks, Recreation, & Open Space
- R** Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



- *Continue to look for opportunities for shared services and projects*
- *Support the organizations and individuals leading the efforts to build a music, arts, and culture scene in our community*
- *Value public art as an important placemaking tool through supporting programs like StreetSpark and the hydrant painting program*
- *Make strategic investments throughout the park system that have the most impact*



- *Utilize partnerships to achieve regional priorities*
- *Invest in a public relations strategy as an economic development strategy*
- *Expand on the regional wayfinding system to make it easier to find local amenities, including parking*
- *Work to enhance the river as a form of recreation*

StreetSpark

StreetSpark Murals can now be seen all around Hamilton, with nearly a dozen large-scale pieces of art added to the sides of prominent buildings since summer 2016. In 2020, an additional three murals will be painted throughout the community. One will be created on the fence of the new Jefferson Park at the intersection of East and Hensley Avenues. A second will be created at 190 North Brookwood Avenue, a multi-tenant shopping center on Hamilton's west side. The final mural will be located at 802 Heaton Street, in the North End neighborhood near Moser Park. After their completion at the end of summer 2020, Hamilton will have a total of 14 large-scale murals downtown.

StreetSpark is an initiative led by the Fitton Center for Creative Arts and funded in part by the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Community Foundation. This program creates high-quality public art that enhances the visual appeal of the community while also providing employment opportunities for local arts professionals. In addition to large-scale murals, the Hamilton Parks Conservancy has overseen the creation of smaller murals of native wildlife at local parks. In 2017, six native bird murals were painted in six different parks, in 2018 four additional insect murals were completed, and in 2019 a large mural was completed on the Joyce Park Nature Center.

Great Miami Riverway Coalition

Hamilton is one of ten community partners in the Great Miami Riverway Coalition, a regional partnership focused on leveraging the Great Miami River to increase tourism and economic development. The Riverway corridor includes 99+ miles of land and water trails that connects communities from Hamilton in the south to Sidney in the north.

As a regional branding and placemaking initiative, the Riverway has boosted Hamilton's ongoing redevelopment efforts and brought more attention to members of our local business community which have partnered with the coalition. By bringing a greater awareness of existing outdoor amenities along the river, such as the Great Miami River Recreational Trail, the Riverway has helped increase outdoor tourism in downtown Hamilton and allowed the City to more effectively leverage our marketing dollars. In 2020, Hamilton is hosting the River Summit, an annual gathering of communities in the Riverway. Going forward, the initiative will focus more heavily on economic development opportunities along the Riverway.

Hamilton Parks Conservancy

The Hamilton Parks Conservancy was established in January 2015 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit entity to manage and improve the parks within the City of Hamilton. The Conservancy's mission is to create a clean, safe, and fun outdoor environment for the citizens of Hamilton, and 2020 will be its sixth year in operation. Since 2015, 21 new playscapes have been constructed throughout the community, three new parks have been created, and two more have been reactivated with new playscapes. The Conservancy oversees 50 parks with over 1,300 acres.

The largest Parks project in 2019 was the completion and opening of Jefferson Park in the Jefferson neighborhood. This accessible park includes a playscape, swings, large field, benches, and an Inclusive Whirl installed through a Youth Philanthropy Grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation. Also in 2019, the Conservancy replaced the playscape at L.J. Smith Park in the north end and constructed accessible walks connecting all features at Jim Grimm Park as part of its annual ADA upgrade program. A second set of nine holes were added to the Disc Golf Course at Millikin Woods, the interior of the Joyce Park home was renovated, and the Nature Center in Joyce Park was completed. Finally, an eight station fitness center along the Great Miami River Recreational Trail was added through a grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation's Great Miami Recreational Trail Fund.

In 2020, the Conservancy has an operating budget of \$2.7 million and a capital budget of \$743,000, and will use this funding to focus on increasing the capacity, programming, and accessibility to community parks. Given the Conservancy's excellent record over the past five years of its operations, it has entered into an agreement with the City of Hamilton as of January 2020 to take over operation and maintenance of Potter's Park and Twin Run Golf Courses. Both courses are among the best in the region for quality and value, and come equipped with full-service pro shops and clubhouses. On average, more than 35,000 rounds of golf are played annually between the two courses. The Conservancy will work on improvements at both courses to provide an even better experience for visitors.

Construction on eight pickleball courts located at Officer Bob Gentry Park was started in 2019 and will be completed in 2020. Hamilton's Nature Center will also be ready for programming this year, which will be provided by the Hamilton Conservation Corps. As always, the Conservancy will continue programs such as Arts in the Parks while also working toward improving accessibility and beautification of existing parks.



- *Support organizations enhancing quality of life*
- *Ensure access to greenspace and parks to all neighborhoods*
- *Ensure all residents have safe and accessible connections to community facilities and services*
- *Focus efforts on maintenance with strategic expansion of the parks system*
- *Improve access to, and programming of, parks*
- *Connect Hamiltonians to the events, parks, and other quality of life improvements occurring in our community*

A Music, Arts, & Culture

C Cooperation & Collaboration


E Economic Development

L Land Use & Development

M Mobility

P Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



As StreetSpark continues to create public art in Hamilton, we see the designs reflecting the pride and character of each neighborhood. Our designers begin by responding to the unique spirit of the area, and our artists bring those visions to life. The message and vibrancy of our murals make an impact in our community and inspire others to keep creating

- Jenn Acus-Smith
StreetSpark Program Manager, Fitton Center
for Creative Arts





- *Utilize partnerships to achieve regional priorities*
- *Invest in road improvements in both residential and commercial areas*
- *Expand bicycle infrastructure*
- *Work with regional and state partners on increasing transportation funding*
- *Make Hamilton more navigable*
- *Promote sustainability*



- *Ensure access to greenspace and parks to all neighborhoods*
- *Expand bicycle infrastructure*
- *Work with regional and state partners on increasing transportation funding*
- *Promote sustainability*

Active Transportation Plan

The City of Hamilton is working to create an Active Transportation Plan which will identify and prioritize pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements in our community. This effort, in partnership with Toole Design, began in late 2019 and is completely funded by the Ohio Department of Transportation. The plan will be shaped by community input; City staff have been attending neighborhood meetings and will be conducting online surveys to better understand the priorities of Hamilton residents. Not only will this plan help the City of Hamilton identify which projects to implement in order to improve multimodal connectivity in our community, it will also assist the City in getting grants to implement Active Transportation priorities.

One of the first efforts underway through the Active Transportation Plan is a Safe Routes to School grant, which awarded \$367,157 to make improvements near Linden Elementary. This grant will improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure near the school in a two-phase project that will provide consistent and safe routes for students to travel along both sides of Van Hook Avenue. Due to the significant gaps on the sidewalk in the traditional neighborhoods near the school, walking and biking to school safely is a significant challenge for students. For that reason, this project has been identified as one of the top pedestrian improvement priorities in the community.

Hamilton Beltline Recreational Trail

The Beltline is a 3 mile loop of a former railyard and spur on the west side of Hamilton that the City is transforming into a pedestrian and bike trail. Once completed, this trail will provide an alternative transportation option to over half of Hamilton's population who wish to access downtown and west side amenities. In October 2018, City Council approved the purchase of the former Hamilton Beltline from CSX Transportation, and Hamilton closed on this purchase in August 2019. Construction is planned to begin on Phase I of the Beltline Recreational Trail in spring 2020.

Phase I includes creating the half mile section of trail that runs from Eaton to Cleveland Avenue as well as demolishing and replacing the bridge that crosses Two Mile Creek. The City was awarded over a million dollars in grants from the State of Ohio to fund the acquisition of land as well as Phase I of this project. Once completed by fall 2020, this trail will connect anyone living in proximity to Jim Grimm Park to amenities such as Flub's, the West Side Little League, Fort Hamilton Hospital, and more. Future phases of the Beltline project will complete the path connecting Hamilton's west side to the Great Miami River and downtown Hamilton.

Miami 2 Miami Connector Trail

The Miami 2 Miami (M2M) Connector Trail is the second multi-purpose trail identified as a priority in Plan Hamilton. The City of Hamilton has been an active member of the M2M coalition, along with many of our neighboring communities and the regional trail advocacy organization Tri-State Trails. Together, this coalition is developing plans for a bike route that will link the Great Miami River Recreational Trail in Hamilton to the Little Miami Bike Trail in Warren County, thus allowing for greater options for regional pedestrian travel and tourism.

At present, the M2M coalition has identified several possible routes connecting the two regional trails, including the Canal Cultural Trail. This proposed route would connect to an existing multi-purpose trail in Fairfield Township and go northwest through Gilmore MetroPark to State Route 4 in Hamilton. The route would then pass over Jim Blount South Hamilton Crossing Overpass and eventually connect to the Great Miami River Recreational Trail.

In 2018, the City of Hamilton and Butler County MetroParks partnered on two successful grant applications to the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) to fund construction on Hamilton's portion of the M2M. Funding from these grants will allow construction to begin in 2022 from Route 4, through Gilmore MetroPark, and to North Gilmore Road.



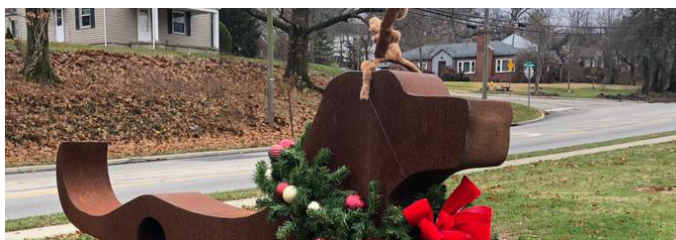
- Utilize partnerships to achieve regional priorities
- Invest in road improvements in both residential and commercial areas
- Expand bicycle infrastructure
- Pursue partnerships for mobility improvements
- Work with regional and state partners on increasing transportation funding
- Promote sustainability

C Cooperation & Collaboration

M Mobility

L Land Use & Development

U Utilities





Hamilton is an important Riverway partner working to increase economic and community investment to attract customers, jobs, and talented workers to southwest Ohio

- Dan Foley
Director, Great Miami Riverway





- *Coordinate with partners on shared access points (work w/ Butler County & City of Fairfield on a coordinated strategy for Route 4)*
- *Partner with businesses to support their efforts to invest in Hamilton*
- *Revitalize and reimagine business corridors in Hamilton*
- *Focus on the character and density of land uses in areas where we can better define a sense of place*
- *Expand bicycle infrastructure*
- *Make mobility and aesthetic improvements on Route 4*
- *Make Hamilton cleaner through efforts such as a strategic code enforcement strategy and promoting 311 use*

C Cooperation & Collaboration

E Economic Development

L Land Use & Development

M Mobility

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

Route 4 Redevelopment

Route 4 is one of the most visible corridors in Hamilton and one of the areas of biggest concern for community members. City staff has worked diligently with property owners and businesses to create incremental positive changes to this critical commercial area over the past several years. For example, the Health Department is working with owners to get their properties into code compliance, including completing building repairs, cleaning up trash, and removing junk vehicles. Since 2015, the Planning and Health departments have worked with property owners along this corridor to address maintenance issues and complete site improvements, including at Auto Express, Quality Auto, Spirits & More, and the office building at 1910 Fairgrove. Other developments along Route 4 include the YWCA's planned new build and a new car wash on the former brownfield site at 1550 Grand. Given that pedestrian improvements are a priority along this corridor, the sidewalks were fixed and expanded at both 1910 Fairgrove Avenue and at the Quality Auto location. These efforts are part of an incremental change strategy that has begun to generate momentum in this corridor.

In 2019, however, the City was able to take the first steps to make even bigger changes. Plan Hamilton identified Route 4 as one of two focus areas important for the future of our community. Because of this, Route 4 has a more focused strategy on the Plan Hamilton website which calls out areas for possible redevelopment, suggests adding streetscape improvements, rezoning legacy industrial land, incorporating design standards, and similar improvement strategies. The Planning Department is working to implement these strategies over the next few years.

Additionally, the City worked with The Kleingers Group to complete a survey of the Route 4 corridor from High Street to just south of Lincoln Avenue in 2019. The survey ascertained the location of residual Miami & Erie Canal land owned by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The objective of this project is to allow the City to take ownership of this land and use it to make vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access safer, as well as to install streetscape improvements in the area. In 2020, the City hopes to analyze vehicular access points and sidewalks in target areas along Route 4 as a next step towards achieving improvements in the area.



C E

- *Employ public-private partnerships to advance projects that have a positive community impact*
- *Aggressively work on business retention and expansion*
- *Revitalize and reimagine business corridors in Hamilton*
- *Identify any local obstacles to business development and make improvements*

C

- *Support the improvement of educational opportunities from preschool to graduate school*
- *Connect Hamilton youth to career opportunities through workforce development efforts*

West Side Commercial Redevelopment

There has been significant growth and interest in the commercial areas of Hamilton's west side. Projects completed in this area, which tend to be chain restaurants, grocery and "big box" shopping, and medical offices, have improved the aesthetics of key corridors, while adding new amenities for residents. In 2019, Chipotle opened one of the first "Chipotlanes," which has a drive-thru option for customers to pick up their food. Neal's Famous BBQ opened a new "grab & go" location on Eaton Avenue. Fort Hamilton Hospital completed work on a 16,000 square foot outpatient building on Main Street, and West Side Animal Clinic moved into its new veterinary clinic at 855 Northwest Washington Boulevard. Hamilton West Barber Shop transformed a former car wash into its new site, and JAG Sporting Goods opened at 1049 Eaton Avenue. Increased economic development activity on Hamilton's west side is expected in the coming years.

Preliminary efforts are now underway to improve the long-underutilized Hamilton West Shopping Center site. The blighted and difficult to navigate parking lot has now been repaved, and in 2020, demolition has begun on the building. Construction has started on the self-storage facility, and the remainder of the site will be marketed for redevelopment. In 2020, the Planning, Economic Development, and Building Departments will continue working with the developers to create a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the site.

Summer Work Experience in Law

For the last five years, the City of Hamilton has participated in the Summer Work Experience in Law (SWEL) program. SWEL was developed in 1988 by the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati - Cincinnati Bar Association Round Table for the purpose of inspiring more African American students to take up an interest in the legal field, and to help these students make an informed decision to enter law school and the legal profession. The eight-week summer enrichment opportunity includes work experiences, coaching, networking, and preparing for professional school entry with resume and personal statement writing, as well as LSAT preparation. The City offers one SWEL opportunity per year, and prefers to hire high school or college students from Hamilton to help grow local legal talent. The 2019 SWEL scholar, a Hamilton High School junior, was the City's fifth participant in the program. In 2020, the SWEL program has been temporarily suspended but should start up again in summer 2021.

Workforce Development

With the fast-paced growth of industry in the Hamilton community, workforce development has become a major topic of interest for business, education, and nonprofit organizations alike. In 2016, Hamilton implemented its first major workforce development initiative in partnership with the Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA). The R6 Job Connector Route launched in April of that year and connects hundreds of Hamiltonians to job centers throughout the region. A number of new programs have been implemented in the years since and will be continued through 2020 and beyond to help companies recruit and upskill employees.

In spring 2019, Miami University Regionals announced Work+, a program for college students to work part-time for an employer and receive free college tuition. Currently, two Hamilton companies have partnered with Miami (thyssenkrupp Bilstein and the BCRTA) with more likely to come in 2020, including Community First Solutions and ODW Logistics.

The Talent Attraction Program Scholarship (TAP), which started in 2018, now has 10 graduates enrolled and living in downtown Hamilton. This program helps anyone who has earned a science, technology, engineering, arts, or math (STEAM) degree with college debt repayments, with the criteria that the graduate must live in downtown Hamilton and work for a Butler County employer.

Finally, the Economic Development Department has fostered relationships with the Hamilton City School District to enact programming meant to help senior students transition from high school into the workforce. These programs include classes on resume writing and job searching as well as mock interviews.

Total TAP recipients

10

2019 unemployment rate

4.1%



- *Connect Hamilton youth to career opportunities through workforce development efforts*
- *Coordinate with employers and local educational institutions on workforce development initiatives that grow and strengthen our workforce*
- *Seek ways to improve and expand bus transportation opportunities, including the possibility of a local circulator and expanded services that connect people to employment opportunities within and beyond Butler County*
- *Collaborate with employers to promote Hamilton to their employees*
- *Continue to promote and develop incentive programs to attract people to live in Hamilton*

C Cooperation & Collaboration

M Mobility

E Economic Development

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

DEPARTMENT SERVICES



Hamilton Police Department

The mission of the Hamilton Police Department (HPD) is “to provide exceptional police service for a better Hamilton”. Through its initiatives, the department aims to connect with the residents and business owners of Hamilton to enhance trust, safety, and overall quality of life. In 2019, the Hamilton Police Department changed its method of recruitment to attract a broader and more diverse group of candidates by employing the use of the National Testing Network for the first time. As a result, the department was able to double the amount of candidates it tested. HPD currently employs 114 officers and handles over 70,000 calls for service each year.

In addition to service calls, officers spend much of their time engaging with the community through a number of initiatives. During the summer months, two police officers are assigned to the Hamilton City Parks as Summer Resource Officers. These individuals help entertain and act as positive role models to the children enrolled in the Summer Parks Program. The Third Grade Seat Belt Program reaches over 1,000 students annually, and two new School Resource Officers (SROs) were added in 2019. Now, seven SROs can be seen daily at all 13 schools in the Hamilton City School District. Over the last several years, Officer Bob Gentry Park has seen improvements that have enhanced the Safety Town program, which has been a staple program for 47 years.

Over the past year, HPD has been expanding its use of social media as a tool to promote community events and update citizens on things that affect their daily lives. 2019 marked the first year that HPD partnered with the Hamilton community to broaden the scope of its annual Open House. 21 businesses and organizations helped HPD open its doors to the community to provide tours, engage with locals, and give demonstrations of police equipment. In 2020, HPD plans to expand the Open House to include even more partners.

In 2020, the department will broaden its social media usage, expand its community education efforts, and increase partnerships with the local business community. HPD will continue to use Neighborhood Policing Officers to address nuisance properties. School Resource Officers will continue to be a vital way for the department to connect with youth, and annual events like the Open House and Safety Town will provide HPD staff the ability to educate the public. More targeted education will be offered through Active Threat and Women’s Self Defense classes in 2020. These classes are free and open to anyone who wishes to attend, and can be brought to business, civic, and fellowship groups of 30 or more on request.



- Partner with the schools in ways that support the important role that education plays in our community
- Work with organizations that make Hamilton a healthier, safer, cleaner, and more economically vibrant community for all people
- Recognize that tweens and teens are especially in need of activities
- Maintain a high level of public safety service for both the business and residential communities
- Ensure high quality Police and Fire services for all residents
- Make improvements to Hamilton’s public safety service facilities

C Cooperation & Collaboration

P Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

E Economic Development

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



- *Partner with the schools in ways that support the important role that education plays in our community*
- *Work with organizations that make Hamilton a healthier, safer, cleaner, and more economically vibrant community for all people*
- *Recognize that tweens and teens are especially in need of activities*
- *Maintain a high level of public safety service for both the business and residential communities*
- *Ensure high quality Police and Fire services for all residents*
- *Make improvements to Hamilton's public safety service facilities*

Hamilton Fire Department

The Hamilton Fire Department (HFD) has worked hard to train many of its officers over the past several years. In 2019, the department met its training goals, and as new officers were promoted, they were enrolled in courses which provided training on the skill sets they need to be managers and fire ground officers. Several firefighters who scored high on the promotional exam for fire lieutenant were also enrolled in courses to prepare them prior to promotion and to build bench strength as acting officers.

With the intent of improving promotional opportunities for emergency medical services staffing, the department initiated a restructuring of ranks to increase fire lieutenant and fire deputy chief positions over time. Additionally, HFD created an assistant chief position to better manage administrative duties and planning functions. This position will be staffed early in 2020.

Hamilton's emergency medical services have undergone significant changes in the past few years and that change is continuing in 2020. HFD was recently loaned two LUCAS devices, machines which improve quality of CPR for heart attack patients, for a trial period. The department is planning to purchase four devices through grant funding and community partnerships in 2020. Additionally, HFD has added two new community risk reduction programs: "Stepping On", a fall prevention program for seniors who are at risk for falls; and a car inspection service, which helps new parents and grandparents learn how to properly install a child's car seat.

Fire department facilities improvements are also ongoing. Station 24 at the intersection of Main Street and Millville Avenue will be renovated in 2020 to provide separate modern facilities for male and female staff as well as to replace a dorm setting with private rooms. This is the second station to undergo modern renovations, and renovations on a third station will be requested in the 2020 budget planning process. Finally, Hamilton's aging fire apparatus fleet is being updated. A new pumper is being purchased and will be assigned to Station 25 in 2020. In total, Hamilton received over 14,600 calls in 2019, a slight increase over the 2018 total of 14,258 calls.

2019 calls received

14.6K+

2018 calls received

14.2K+

Resident Services

The annual RiversEdge free summer concert series is one of Hamilton's longest running and most popular events. The Department of Resident Services, in conjunction with the Hamilton Parks Conservancy, produces and promotes these live music events which take place on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the summer at RiversEdge Amphitheater. In 2019, the department produced 15 concerts, including all-day events such as Whimmydiddle Country Music Festival and David Shaw's Big River Get Down. In total, RiversEdge concerts attracted more than 30,000 people from across the United States and had an economic impact of more than a million dollars in 2019. In 2020, RiversEdge will host 16 events with a variety of exciting new headliners.

Resident Services previously operated and maintained the City's two golf courses, Potter's Park and Twin Run. Beginning in January 2020, the Hamilton Parks Conservancy has assumed management of these courses in partnership with the City of Hamilton. Resident Services will lease three full-time staff members to the Conservancy to maintain continuity of operations.

Finally, the Quick Strike Team (QST) is the driving force behind the fight against blight in the City of Hamilton. The team is responsible for mowing and maintaining over 500 City-owned and Land Bank properties, as well as addressing all 311 requests related to illegal dumping, graffiti, and a myriad of other nuisance-related issues. In 2019, the QST spent \$474,647 on cleanup projects throughout all 17 of Hamilton's neighborhoods. Beginning in 2020, the Quick Strike Team also serves as the code enforcement arm of the City for any nuisance related issues. Any property maintenance issues related to the above issues as well as high grass, trash, building repairs, junk vehicles, and more should be reported to Resident Services via the newly upgraded 311 system (see page 20 for more information).

Land bank properties

500

2020 planned concerts

16



- *Encourage special events that provide recreational opportunities for residents and draw visitors to Hamilton*
- *Invest in programming and special events that improve quality of life and attract and retain small businesses*
- *Assist in the development of music, culture, and arts activities and events that help create a sense of place*
- *Be responsive to the needs and concerns of Hamilton residents through efforts such as 311 activity, social media engagement, and community meetings*
- *Make Hamilton cleaner through efforts such as a strategic code enforcement strategy and promoting 311 use*

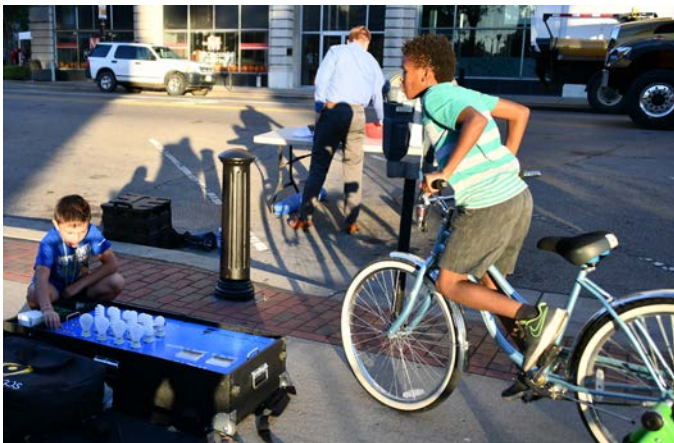
A Music, Arts, & Culture

C Cooperation & Collaboration

E Economic Development

P Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods



Every day, Engineering staff is proud to dedicate themselves to building reliable, sustainable, and economical infrastructure by leveraging Federal and State grant and low interest loan dollars to achieve our goals without burdening Hamilton citizens

- Rich Enge, P.E.
Director of Engineering, City of Hamilton







- Utilize partnerships to achieve regional priorities
- Advocate for state policies that support communities like Hamilton
- Prioritize road maintenance
- Make Hamilton more navigable
- Make Hamilton a walkable city
- Identify major transportation improvements to better connect Hamilton to the region
- Pursue partnerships for mobility improvements
- Proactively invest in infrastructure

Public Works

Street Resurfacing

Each year, approximately \$2-2.5 million is allocated to resurface between two and three centerline miles of roads in the City of Hamilton. This cost includes asphalt pavement, storm sewer repairs, and concrete sidewalk, curb, and gutters. In 2020, however, nearly 4.5 centerline miles of streets will be resurfaced, for a total investment of \$5.2 million in our road infrastructure. This is due to several changes and increases in funding for road maintenance:

1. The State of Ohio increased the gasoline tax effective July 1, 2019, which provides an additional \$1.2 million for Hamilton to use for street improvements
2. Hamilton City Council passed an additional \$5 per vehicle license plate tax which generates an additional \$300,000 per year, money that is exclusively dedicated to street repairs
3. Hamilton City Council passed a resolution to utilize excess funds from the South Hamilton Crossing Railroad Grade Separation Project to resurface specified streets
4. The Ohio Public Works Commission provided a grant in the amount of \$1,200,000 to be used for street improvements
5. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) awarded Hamilton its Urban Paving Program grant in the amount of \$400,000

The City will utilize funds from the additional gasoline tax and license plate tax to resurface parts of Grand Boulevard and Tylersville Road. Excess funds from the South Hamilton Crossing project will be used to resurface other parts of Grand Boulevard as well as parts of Eaton Avenue. The ODOT grant will be used to resurface High Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Monument Avenue.

2020 funding for street
resurfacing

\$5.2M

2020 centerline miles
to be resurfaced

4.5

Intersection Improvements

The City of Hamilton is partnering with Butler County to create the Hamilton Mason Road at Five Points Roundabout. This project is located at the border of the City of Hamilton and Fairfield Township, where Grand Boulevard, Hancock Avenue, Hamilton Mason Road, Tylersville Road, and Tuley Road intersect. The project will improve the intersection by creating a roundabout with a curb and gutter, proper storm drainage, utility relocation and safer roadway geometrics. A total of \$2.5 million has been budgeted to create this roundabout, with Hamilton obligated to cover just under \$250,000 of that amount. The remaining amount is funded through a combination of federal and County dollars. Project design began in early 2018 and is expected to be completed by July 2020. Construction is planned to begin in early 2021 and should be completed in around ten months.

Construction is also underway to improve the intersection of Main Street with Cereal, Haldimand, Western, and McKinley Avenues on the west side of Hamilton. The current layout has five streets converging, resulting in an inefficient and confusing intersection. This area has both significant vehicular and pedestrian traffic and may become an important bike thoroughfare with the construction of the Beltline Recreational Trail. Given this, the new design must incorporate the needs of all three modes of transportation.

In December 2016, the City received notification of an Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Safety Program Grant for \$2.7 million to construct the new Main-Cereal-Haldimand-Western-McKinley intersection in the year 2020. ODOT is contributing 80% of the construction costs, with the City contributing the remaining 20%. The City additionally paid for design and right-of-way acquisition costs, both of which were completed in December 2019. Construction is planned to begin in spring 2020 and will take a little over a year.

5-Points Roundabout

Project total

\$2.5M

City funding

\$250K

West Main Intersection

Project total

\$3M

City funding

\$270K

C Cooperation & Collaboration

U Utilities

M Mobility



- *Continue to look for opportunities for shared services and projects*
- *Partner with businesses to support their efforts to invest in Hamilton*
- *Prioritize key brownfield redevelopment opportunities, such as the Champion Paper Mill and Mohawk Paper sites*
- *Be responsive to the needs and concerns of Hamilton residents through efforts such as 311 activity, social media engagement, and community meetings*
- *Emphasize reliability*
- *Emphasize affordability*
- *Focus on residents and customers*
- *Encourage economic development*
- *Promote sustainability*
- *Strive for operational excellence*

Electric Utility

The City of Hamilton has owned and operated its electric utility system since 1893. As the City's electric service requirements increased, the utility has grown into an integrated generation, transmission, and distribution system serving approximately 30,000 residential and commercial customers. As a leading clean energy utility, nearly 50% of our energy is produced by renewable energy sources, while the remaining comes from coal, diesel, and natural gas. The result is clean, reliable, and affordable energy for our customers.

In 2019, the electric utility completed the rehabilitation on the Horseshoe Dam and several upgrades and replacements to Greenup equipment. It also continued its ten year Utility Pole Replacement program, replacing 150 poles in 2019, and initiated a Ring BUS installation to connect into Duke Energy's system. In 2020, electric will focus on creating a new substation to serve Hamilton Enterprise Park, doing work at Marcum Park, and ramping up its involvement with infrastructure projects in and around the upcoming Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill facility.

C Cooperation & Collaboration

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

E Economic Development

U Utilities





- *Evaluate funding opportunities for infrastructure financing as a coordinated region*
- *Prioritize key brownfield redevelopment opportunities, such as the Champion Paper Mill and Mohawk Paper sites*
- *Be responsive to the needs and concerns of Hamilton residents through efforts such as 311 activity, social media engagement, and community meetings*
- *Emphasize reliability*
- *Emphasize affordability*
- *Focus on residents and customers*
- *Encourage economic development*
- *Promote sustainability*
- *Strive for operational excellence*

Underground Utilities

Hamilton is committed to continually improving its utility systems. To this end, the City is investing over \$13 million in local utility infrastructure in 2020. Underground utilities are upgraded whenever major projects throughout the community are undertaken, and in 2020 those projects include the Spooky Nook Sports redevelopment as well as the intersection improvements at Main-Cereal-Haldimand-Western-McKinley. Additionally, other natural gas, wastewater, and water system improvements have been identified as critical to City infrastructure and are detailed on the following pages.

Gas Utility

Hamilton's gas utility is the largest municipally-owned gas utility in Ohio and the 31st largest in the country, with some of the lowest rates in the state and the tri-state region as a whole. The system serves approximately 23,000 customers through approximately 275 miles of pipelines. In 2019, the Natural Gas System earned a Silver Level System Operation Achievement Recognition (SOAR) designation from the American Public Gas Association (APGA) in 2019. Only 25 of the 750 APGA members have ever achieved the Silver Level SOAR designation. This designation recognizes natural gas distribution utilities that demonstrate commitment to excellence in four areas: system integrity, system improvement, employee safety, and workforce development. Projects in 2019 included the Gas Main Survey, five newly rebuilt regular pits, and a 1.7 mile natural gas main replacement at Taft Place.

In 2020, the system will complete a new loop of medium pressure gas pipe at Hamilton Enterprise Park and update its supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system. Additionally, the utility will fund the replacement of one mile of natural gas main along St. Clair Avenue, and make upgrades to serve the Spooky Nook complex once it has opened. Total capital expenditures are estimated at \$1.42 million.

2020 capital budget

\$1.42M

Water Utility

The City of Hamilton has owned and operated its own water utility since 1884 and today boasts one of the highest quality and best tasting tap water services in the world. The underground distribution infrastructure of the Water System currently consists of over 289 miles of water mains throughout and in areas adjacent to the City. This system provides, on average, over 18.5 million gallons of water per day (MGD) to approximately 25,000 customers in Hamilton and portions of Butler County. In 2019, the water utility took over responsibility of hydrant flushing, a task that had previously been assigned to the Hamilton Fire Department. Every fire hydrant was added to a GPS system, tagged with a barcode, and flushed until clear. Crews made notes on any concerns and took measurements as needed, as well as made improvements or repairs to several areas.

Projects for the utility in 2019 included the replacement of Lime Slakers and refurbishment of the Clarifier Reactor Basins, both at the South Water Treatment Plant. In 2020, the water utility will replace three miles of water main on North Third Street and in the Highland Park neighborhood. This project is partially funded by a grant and zero interest Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) loan. The water utility will also fund the water main replacement as part of the Highland Park Water Main Project as well as make upgrades to the water system at Spooky Nook Sports. Total capital expenditure for the water utility in 2020 will be approximately \$7.62 million.

2020 capital budget

\$7.62M

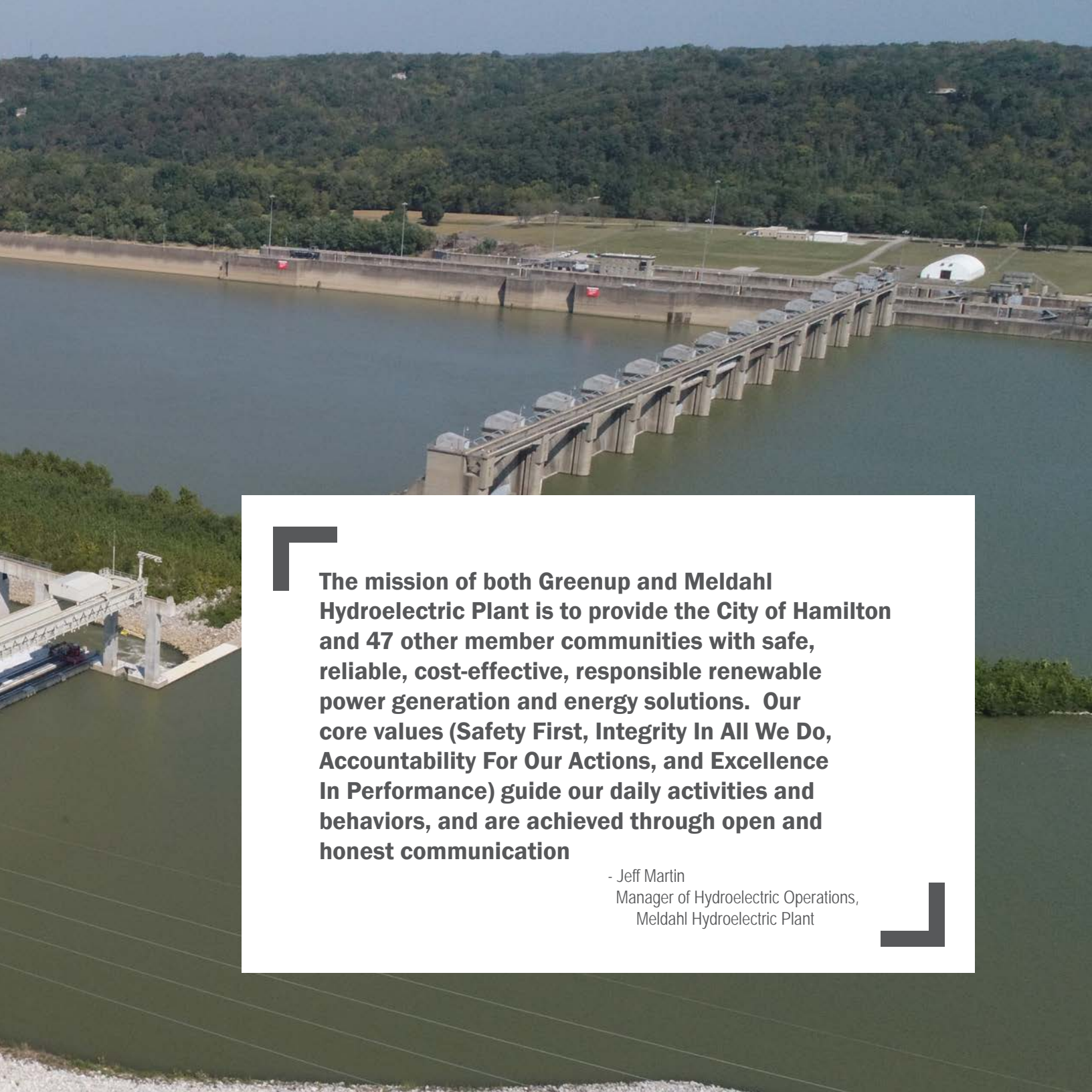
C Cooperation & Collaboration

R Residents, Housing, & Neighborhoods

E Economic Development

U Utilities





The mission of both Greenup and Meldahl Hydroelectric Plant is to provide the City of Hamilton and 47 other member communities with safe, reliable, cost-effective, responsible renewable power generation and energy solutions. Our core values (Safety First, Integrity In All We Do, Accountability For Our Actions, and Excellence In Performance) guide our daily activities and behaviors, and are achieved through open and honest communication

- Jeff Martin
Manager of Hydroelectric Operations,
Meldahl Hydroelectric Plant

Underground Utilities (continued)

Wastewater Utility

The City of Hamilton's wastewater system is made up of two primary divisions. The Sanitary Sewer Division is responsible for operating and maintaining the sanitary sewer infrastructure for the collection and conveyance of wastewater to the Water Reclamation Facility. Water Reclamation is responsible for treating wastewater that is collected and delivered by the sanitary sewer infrastructure. The City's initial wastewater treatment plant was placed in service in 1959 and expanded in 1978 and 2002 to provide more complete treatment services. Today, the Water Reclamation Facility provides primary and secondary treatment to remove approximately 99% of the solids and organics from the wastewater flow and treats approximately 80 tons of solids daily. In 2019, wastewater completed an overhaul on its pug mill mixer at the Water Reclamation Facility, continued its sewer lining project, and began work on the Gilmore Ponds Sanitary Sewer Relocation. In 2020, the sanitary sewer will invest approximately \$3.4 million to fund the rehabilitation of existing sanitary sewers throughout the city as well as to make upgrades at the Spooky Nook site.

Stormwater Utility

The City's Storm Water Management System was created by City Council ordinance in 2002 and has since evolved into the Storm Water Management Division, located within the Department of Public Works. This division is responsible for managing the City's storm water drainage system. The newly developed Stormwater Master Plan was completed in 2019 and will be the driving force and overall vision for this division over the next two decades. The prior plan for the stormwater system is from 1958, and this outdated plan and limited funding has led to a reactive approach to addressing issues. The new plan provides a proactive approach for prioritizing projects and identifying problem areas, and prioritizes compliance with regulations, extending the functioning life of assets, reducing long term operation and maintenance costs, and more. Using these guidelines, 51 projects have been identified. In 2020, the stormwater utility will fund \$1.4 million to rehabilitate existing storm sewers throughout the city as well as to construct new sewers to serve the Spooky Nook site. It will also begin to perform condition and risk assessments throughout the community based on the Stormwater Master Plan.

2020 wastewater capital budget

\$3.4M

2020 stormwater capital budget

\$1.4M

EmPower Hamilton

EmPower Hamilton is a partnership between Hamilton Utilities, the Hamilton Community Foundation, the Salvation Army, and the Emergency Money Fund (EMF) to assist Hamilton customers in need of utility assistance. The program, which rebranded and relaunched in late 2016, accepts donations from the community and uses those funds to help local families who are experiencing job loss, illness, or other financial crises to keep the lights on. As of December 2019, 104 utility customers have signed up as recurring donors to the EmPower Hamilton program, and many others have chosen to round up their utility bills each month and donate the discrepancy to the program. EmPower also raises money through fundraisers such as the now annual EmPower Hamilton Golf Outing, through its presence at Operation Pumpkin and other events, and through special events for City employees. In 2019, EmPower Hamilton was able to give a total of \$18,444 to the Salvation Army and EMF, which is a total of \$50,336 from October 2016 to January 2020.

Customer Service

Infrastructure's Customer Service division is the primary point of contact for both business and residential customers of City services. The department handles the utility billing process for over 31,000 customers monthly and an average of 2,250 customer inquiries per week while maintaining an overall quality and accuracy rating of 99.6%. Customer Service also works closely with local Assistance Agencies, including the Salvation Army, SELF, HEAP, and Catholic churches, to refer customers in need and help them determine available assistance. Major recent and ongoing projects for the Customer Service division include the launch of the BondLink Investor Relations site, the installation of a payment kiosk in the lobby of 345 High Street, and the rollout of a new text message notification system.

Customers served

31K

Overall quality rating

99.6%

2019 EmPower donations

\$18K

Total EmPower donations

\$50K



- Support organizations enhancing quality of life
- Simplify access to the city and community services for all people
- Emphasize affordability
- Focus on residents and customers

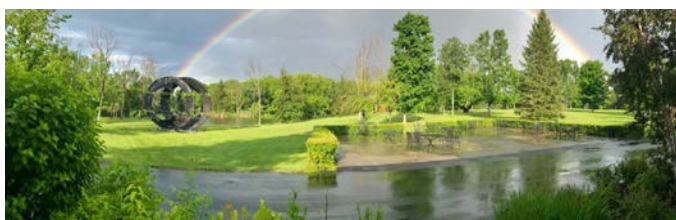


- Be responsive to the needs and concerns of Hamilton residents through efforts such as 311 activity, social media engagement, and community meetings
- Simplify access to the city and community services for all people
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Our committee is building structures that encourage each community member to get involved. From our school children to our oldest resident, we want each person to see they have the ability to help create a clean, safe, and engaged community that we are all proud to call home

- Sami Brandenburg
Community Leader



