

ABOUT THE STUDY

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

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

In 2012, we did surveys with residents in Keith, Stinson and StipleY neighbourhoods. This report presents results from the 386 people who completed a survey with us in StipleY in 2012, the neighbourhood surrounding the stadium, from Sherman to Gage and Main to the CN tracks.

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



WHO WE TALKED TO IN STIPLEY

StipleY residents over the age of 18 were eligible to take part in our study, and we selected residents at random in the neighbourhood by knocking on their door and asking if they'd like to complete a survey. We talked to a total of 386 residents in StipleY. The following table describes our survey respondents with respect to certain characteristics of the neighbourhood as a whole, as taken from the most recent census.

We surveyed more female respondents and slightly more Canadian-born respondents than is found in the StipleY neighbourhood as a whole.

	SURVEY RESPONDENTS	STIPLEY AS A WHOLE
gender	40% male; 60% female	47% male; 53% female
average age	44 years	45 years*
Canadian-born	84%	79%

* excludes residents under 18

The average length of time respondents had been living in the neighbourhood was 10 years, and 8 years in their current dwelling. Most people (80%) had not moved residences during the past year, and almost half (47%) had been in the same dwelling for over 5 years.

There is a high degree of residential stability in StipleY.

	SURVEY RESPONDENTS	STIPLEY AS A WHOLE*
detached house	60%	51%
semi-detached house	3%	2%
row house	0%	0%
duplex apartment	11%	16%
apartment less than 5 storeys	26%	29%
apartment 5 or more stories	0%	0%

* these percentages do not total 100 because of the way Statistics Canada ensures data anonymization

We surveyed more respondents who rent their homes than is found in the StipleY neighbourhood overall.

	SURVEY RESPONDENTS	STIPLEY AS A WHOLE
renters	53%	41%
owners	47%	59%

Note that our renter category includes individuals who reported that they lived rent-free in a dwelling they did not own or pay rent for (7%).

DWELLING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SATISFACTION

	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
satisfaction with residence overall	32%	54%	9%	4%
satisfaction with the neighbourhood overall	18%	55%	23%	5%

Survey participants in Stipley felt positive about both their residence and neighbourhood overall (see red numbers in the table above). However, participants felt somewhat less positive about their neighbourhood as a place to bring up children. All respondents were asked this question, whether or not they had children of their own. There was no appreciable difference in how men and women responded to this question.

	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
feelings about the neighbourhood as a place to bring up children*	9%	16%	32%	24%	19%

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

Participants reported that their **most important** reason for moving into the neighbourhood was:

affordable	35%
knew people in the neighbourhood	8%
convenient - close to downtown	<2%**
convenient - close to transit	2%
convenient - close to work	6%
convenient - close to good schools	9%
convenient - close to services/amenities	3%
safety	2%
investment property	3%
neighbourhood had character	4%
liked the residence	10%
ethnic/cultural draw	<2%
other	17.4%

** figure not reported due to small number of responses to protect participant anonymity

86% reported that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their residence overall, and **73%** with the neighbourhood overall.

53% of respondents reported that they did not want to move from their current dwelling, and **39%** said they did not think they would move within the next 2 years.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Overall, I feel safe when I am outside in my neighbourhood during the day	46%	48%	5%	<2%
Overall, I feel safe when I am outside in my neighbourhood at night	14%	45%	26%	15%

94% of respondents felt safe in the neighbourhood during the day. At night, respondents felt less safe in the neighbourhood.

Most respondents felt very safe in the neighbourhood during the day – only 6% told us that they did not feel safe during the day. At night, respondents felt less safe in the neighbourhood.

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

	STRONGLY AGREE	DISAGREE	MY CHILDREN NEVER WALK HOME FROM SCHOOL
Overall, I feel that my child/children are safe walking to and from school*	50%	33%	18%

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

NEIGHBOURHOOD AMENITIES

About half of the respondents indicated that services for youth, banks and family doctors or walk-in clinics were lacking.

Approximately 1 in 4 people felt that places to buy healthy food, meet people, and have a meeting were lacking. Around 2 in 5 people felt that childcare, public libraries, and places to be physically active were lacking.

About 1 in 12 people felt that family doctors, banks and services for youth were inaccessible.

Our survey asked people about what kinds of services and amenities they felt were important to have in the neighbourhood, whether those services currently existed in their neighbourhood, and whether existing services were accessible. Highlights are on the previous page. The table below gives the details.

	SERVICE IS IMPORTANT BUT IS LACKING IN NEIGHBOURHOOD	SERVICE EXISTS, BUT IS INACCESSIBLE
family doctors or walk-in clinics	48%	8%
childcare	38%	5%
places to buy healthy food	25%	3%
public libraries	39%	2%
places for worship (e.g. churches, mosques etc.)	2%	2%
parks	7%	2%
banks	49%	7%
public schools	3%	2%
public transportation (e.g. buses)	0%	2%
services for youth (employment services, counselling or recreation programs)	51%	7%
places to get together with people you know (cafés, community centres etc.)	28%	<2%
places to have a meeting (café, library, community centre etc.)	28%	2%
a place to exercise or be physically active (outside of the home)	40%	4%

NEIGHBOURHOOD PROBLEMS

One problem, SEX WORK, was considered a 'serious problem' by just under half (47%) of respondents.

More than half of the issues (11 of 18) were seen as 'not a problem' by over half of respondents.

TOP 5 'SERIOUS PROBLEMS' IN STIPLEY:

1. Sex work (47%)
2. Drug dealing or use (39%)
3. Vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property (36%)
4. Traffic and road safety (34%)
5. Poor air quality (32%)

We asked respondents to rate a list of common issues in terms of how much of a problem they felt these things were in Stipley. The highlights are on the previous page, while details (including notable results in red) are in the table below.

	NOT A PROBLEM	SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM	A SERIOUS PROBLEM
litter in the streets	27%	43%	30%
poor air quality	25%	43%	32%
problems with dogs	67%	20%	13%
noise from traffic	57%	24%	19%
lack of entertainment (cafés, cinemas, pubs etc.)	43%	34%	23%
traffic and road safety (including speed of traffic)	34%	33%	34%
lack of places to shop	56%	27%	17%
vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property	33%	31%	36%
problems with neighbours	66%	22%	12%
run-down or boarded-up properties	61%	25%	14%
racial harassment or discrimination	87%	8%	5%
people being attacked or harassed	63%	25%	12%
household burglary	59%	24%	17%
drug dealing or use	35%	26%	39%
sex work	32%	21%	47%
teenagers or youth hanging around on the streets	60%	24%	16%
disturbance from gangs or crowds	79%	14%	7%
lack of police protection	67%	18%	15%

NEIGHBOURHOOD PRIORITIES

RESPONSES UNIQUE TO STIPLEY: Generally, our survey showed that Stipley residents are concerned about traffic safety issues, in particular speeding vehicles, cars running through stop signs, generally high-traffic roads, and dangerous conditions for children playing in the streets.

There was some concern about the lack of garbage cans, particularly along main streets, and the accumulation of litter. Because many of the larger homes have been sub-divided into multi-unit dwellings, when waste collectors enforce a two-bag limit, many garbage bags end up being left behind. The resulting debris contributes to residents' litter (as opposed to formal, municipal waste removal) and beautification concerns.

A number of respondents link some more dominant themes with Ivor Wynne stadium, in particular, lots of litter and debris after football games, speeding cars and congestion around game time. The cleanup after games is not immediate, but instead at the next regular garbage pickup day, increasing the concerns about litter.

Participants were asked: **“What do you think are the TWO most important things that would make your neighbourhood a better place to live?”** Responses could be assigned to more than one theme. The table below shows the broad categories of responses, and, for the top categories, the most frequent specific themes included in that category.

Crime and safety TOTAL: 190	Address sex work and sex workers	59	Non-specific e.g. “Too much crime; unsafe neighbourhood”	10
	Address drug use and drug dealing	58	Other e.g. particular criminals/offenders in neighbourhood	9
	Greater police presence needed	42	Prevent/prosecute physical assaults that occur on the streets	<5
	Address break-ins, burglaries, theft of personal property	11		
Amenities needed TOTAL: 139	Community/recreation centre needed	30	More and/or better grocery stores needed	6
	More parks and green space needed; take better care of existing parks and trees on public property	26	More elementary schools within walking distance needed	6
	More cafés, restaurants, places to meet friends needed	15	Dog park or leash-free zones needed	<5
	More neighbourhood activities and events needed so we can know our neighbours better	15	Walk-in clinic, doctor’s offices and other health care services needed	<5
	Other amenities needed e.g. banks, post office, dollar store, beer/liquor store	15	More services for seniors needed	<5
	More shopping options needed	8	Library needed	<5
	More social services needed in neighbourhood	7		
Beautification TOTAL: 103	Clean up derelict and abandoned residential properties	29	Clean up graffiti and vandalism	14
	Improve garbage pickup services/increase bag limit	21	Clean up dirty-looking industrial/commercial properties	5
	Clean up litter on the streets	17	Plant more flowers and trees	<5
	General/non-specific e.g. “make the neighbourhood prettier”	14		
Sense of community TOTAL: 67	General e.g. “people should be kinder to each other; increase the sense of community”	23	Neighbourhood association needed	16
	Neighbourhood Watch needed	16	More/better communication among neighbourhoods and neighbourhood institutions needed	12
Traffic/road safety TOTAL: 64	Traffic calming measures needed e.g. stop signs and traffic lights	31	Other e.g. fix potholes, improve roads	16
	Too many speeding cars and trucks that go through neighbourhood	17		<5
Other	Improve roads, street lights and other infrastructure	20	Increase public transit	5
	Parking: decrease on-street parking, increase on-street parking	16	Address problems with driving, parking and speeding around Ivor Wynne during football games	<5
	Address pollution, air quality and environmental concerns	11	Address problems with industrial neighbours	<5
	Address problems with institutional homes in area	8	All other, with single responses	24
	Address problems with stray animals	7		
Housing and tenancy TOTAL: 49	E.g. too many renters, too many houses divided into multiple rental units, landlords need to maintain their properties better			
Economic Development TOTAL: 29	E.g. more jobs are needed, more businesses are needed in the area			
Children and youth TOTAL: 27	E.g. address problems caused by children and youth hanging out on the streets, more resources needed for children and youth			
Neighbours, Neighbourliness TOTAL: 22	E.g. neighbours should be kinder to each other, problems with specific neighbours			

Among the top 5 specific themes we found that there was very little difference in results based on respondents’ gender and age, with the exceptions highlighted in the table to the right.

PRIORITY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
sex work	59	32%	68%
drugs	58	36%	64%
policing	42	45%	55%
traffic calming	31	42%	58%
community/rec centre	30	47%	53%

SOCIAL COHESION AND TRUST

Respondents agreed the neighbourhood has ways of sharing information and opportunities for celebration and fun. Respondents weren't convinced the neighbourhood has ways of working together to solve problems, or that they have influence over what their neighbourhood is like.

94% of respondents described the people in their neighbourhood as 'friendly' or 'very friendly'

Most respondents felt that people in the neighbourhood share the same values, want the same things for the neighbourhood, can be trusted, and look out for each other's properties.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DIS-AGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
My neighbourhood continually looks for solutions to local problems rather than being satisfied with the way things are	5%	37%	40%	11%	8%
My neighbourhood has good leaders who look out for the best interests of our neighbourhood	7%	41%	35%	10%	7%
I know about a local neighbourhood or business association or group that meets regularly in my neighbourhood	4%	25%	54%	17%	<2%
Our neighbourhood has ways of sharing information (talking to neighbours, newsletters etc.)	11%	55%	26%	8%	<2%
I have influence over what this neighbourhood is like	5%	35%	44%	15%	<2%
There are opportunities for celebration and fun in my neighbourhood	14%	53%	24%	8%	<2%
If there is a problem around here, neighbours get together to deal with it	7%	46%	35%	12%	n/a
In my neighbourhood, neighbours watch over each other's property	25%	58%	12%	5%	n/a
People in this neighbourhood can be trusted	11%	57%	27%	5%	n/a
People in this neighbourhood share the same values	7%	52%	33%	8%	n/a
My neighbours and I want the same things for the neighbourhood	13%	65%	19%	3%	n/a

64%
of respondents
would like to stay
in their neighbour-
hood for years
to come.

COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT AND PRIDE

Residents in Stiplely generally have a strong level of attachment to their neighbourhood. The majority felt that living in Stiplely gave them a sense of pride, and that their neighbourhood had a distinctive character.

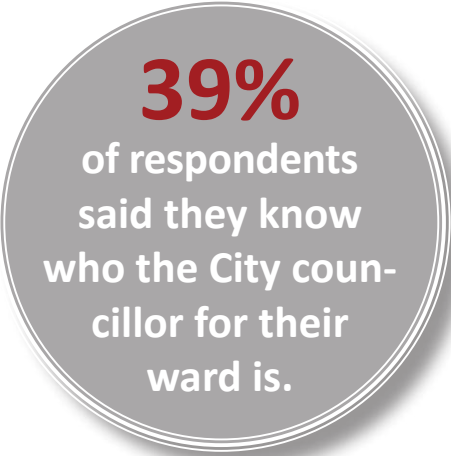
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I would like to stay in my neighbourhood for many years to come	22%	42%	21%	15%
Living in this neighbourhood gives me a sense of pride	12%	48%	30%	9%
It is very important to me to live in this particular neighbourhood	9%	37%	42%	13%
My neighbourhood has a distinct character—it is a special place	17%	50%	26%	7%

CIVIC AWARENESS, ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Results around civic engagement, awareness and involvement are generally neutral. 61% of respondents either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that information about their neighbourhood’s services and activities was available to them. However, only 49% stated that they were invited to be a part of decision-making activities and 55% agreed or strongly agreed that the City was responsive to their queries and requests.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Information is readily available to the public on City services and activities that take place in my neighbourhood	9%	52%	31%	6%	2%
The City is responsive to residents’ inquiries, input and/or requests	6%	49%	30%	9%	7%
Residents are invited to be involved in decision-making in my neighbourhood	5%	40%	40%	7%	8%

MORE ON CIVIC AWARENESS, ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT



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

	YES	NO
through friends or family	59%	41%
through work or colleagues	27%	73%
leaflets or flyers in the mailbox	78%	22%
posters on telephone poles, in shops or community buildings	56%	44%
free newspapers or community language newspapers	55%	45%
radio stations	49%	51%
television stations	58%	42%
websites or email	45%	55%
on buses	43%	56%
at public meetings	16%	83%
through volunteer or community organizations	21%	79%
other ways	9%	91%

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

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

		TOTAL COUNT
Busy with...	Work	42
	Children	24
	Other family	12
	Other reasons	<5
Barriers	Health reasons/mobility concerns	33
	Transit/access/distance	12
	Financial	16
	Feels excluded/marginalized	6
Lack of...	Language	<5
	Time	104
	Interest	56
	Awareness: don't know what's available	27
	Opportunity: nothing is available	8
Other reasons	Childcare	5
	No barriers/nothing	42
	Other	29
	Anxiety/shy/other people/ mental health	13
	Age	8
	Lazy	<5

The table below lists the top five barriers in Stipley (with a tie for 3rd place), and the proportion of respondents by gender and age range. Notable age and gender patterns have been highlighted in red:

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	AGE						
				19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
lack of time	104	37%	63%	17%	22%	25%	26%	9%	1%	0%
lack of interest	56	55%	45%	30%	13%	18%	21%	16%	2%	0%
busy with work	42	33%	67%	17%	24%	31%	21%	7%	0%	0%
no barriers/ nothing	42	36%	64%	21%	14%	21%	17%	7%	12%	7%
health reasons/ mobility concerns	33	39%	61%	3%	15%	15%	45%	12%	6%	3%

CONCLUSIONS—ALIGNMENT WITH THE SOUTH SHERMAN NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP)

The South Sherman NAP, which includes Stipley, identifies five goals with nine objectives.

A. Create a Community Where Everyone Can Feel Safe

1. Provide Viable Opportunities for Youth and Expose Them to Positive Alternatives
2. Increase Resources to Ensure Safety
3. Enhance Traffic Safety

B. Equal Access to Services our Neighbours Need to Live a Healthy Life

1. Invite Additional Health and Wellbeing Services to Relocate Into Neighbourhood
2. Create More Social and Recreational Opportunities for Our Neighbours

C. Create a Clean, Safe and Comfortable Environment for People to Live, Work and Play in our Neighbourhood

1. Improve Neighbourhood Appearance

D. Advocate for All Neighbours to Have Access to Safe, Affordable and Dignified Housing

1. Support Property Repairs and Maintenance

E. A Community that Supports a Liveable Wage that Allows All to Live a Healthy Life

1. Increase Access to Living Wage Employment Opportunities
2. Promote Post Secondary, Continuing Ed and Training for Youth and Adults Within the Neighbourhood

There is strong coherence on the issue of road and traffic safety, (Goal A: Objective 3), which was the #4 most prioritized item by survey respondents in our 'neighbourhood priorities' question. Some examples of traffic calming concerns included:

- Four-way stop signs in intersections in the neighbourhood which would ensure safety for the kids
- Reduce traffic on Sherman, Main, King Streets
- Controlling the noise from traffic on Cannon Street
- Reducing speeding in the neighbourhood (i.e. eliminating drag racing in the area)

There was also strong awareness and concern regarding inequality and social problems. While the NAP uses productively phrased objectives (e.g. "Provide viable opportunities for youth"), survey respondents tended to identify problems in more immediate ways, as problems to "clean up." Notably, sex work and drugs were the top first and second concern of survey respondents. These concerns are not as central to the NAP. Some survey respondents connected drug use and sex work activity with the presence of back alleys in the neighbourhood, which is a feature of Action A.2.1, the "Alley safety program."

Sex work and drugs are the top concerns of respondents. These concerns are not as central to the neighbourhood action plan.

Both the neighbourhood action plan and our survey respondents endorse beautification of the neighbourhood.

Road and traffic safety is a priority for both respondents and the neighbourhood action plan.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

Dr. James Dunn and his staff at McMaster University are doing this research project. If you have any questions, call the study hotline or email us.



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