THE EMERGENCY & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE PRESENTS REPORT 09-012 AND RESPECTFULLY RECOMMENDS:

1. **Code Zero Report from January to July 2009 (HES08006(f)) (City Wide) (Item 5.1)**

   That Report HES08006(f) - Code Zero Report from January to July 2009, be received.


3. Update on the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration (ECS07069(a)) (City Wide) (Item 5.3)

That the Strategic Framework for the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, prepared by Erin Mitchell, Partner, Mitchell Westlake, attached as Appendix A to Report ECS07069(a), be received.

4. Business Process Review for Child Care Services (CS09065) (City Wide) (Item 5.4)

That Report CS09065, respecting the Business Process Review for Child Care Services be received.

5. Renewal of Provincial Rent Bank Program (CS09063) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)

(a) That the delivery of the new Provincial Rent Bank Program be administered through a community agency, to be selected through the Request for Proposals process, be endorsed.

(b) That the Provincial Rent Bank Program be delivered as a grant to eligible applicants, effective January 1, 2010.

(c) That the Local Rules, attached as Appendix A to Report 09-012, at the request of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, be endorsed.

(d) That a Provincial Rent Bank Program Reserve be established and that all Provincial contributions, including the $226,648 (Provincial Fiscal Year 2009-10), be transferred to this Reserve and that these funds be transferred to the operating fund, as needed, to offset the costs of the Rent Bank Program.

That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute the Licence Agreement, between the City of Hamilton and the Ancaster Minor Sports Association, as per the Key Terms and Conditions (attached as Appendix B Report 09-012) for the Association’s use of the property known as the Richard Hammill House, located at 314 Wilson Street East, Ancaster, as a one-stop location for local residents to register their children in various Ancaster minor sports, upon final completion of the building renovations, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

7. Correspondence from the Township of Madawaska Valley respecting and Increase in Funding for Additional Personal Support Workers (Referred by Council at its Meeting of September 16, 2009) (Item 8.3)

That the correspondence from the Township of Madawaska Valley, respecting and Increase in Funding for Additional Personal Support Workers, attached as Appendix C to Report 09-012, be endorsed.

8. Correspondence from the Corporation of the City of Kingston respecting the Housing Network of Ontario Declaration (Referred by Council at its Meeting of September 16, 2009) (Item 8.4)

That the correspondence from the Corporation of the City of Kingston, respecting the Housing Network of Ontario Declaration, attached as Appendix D to Report 09-012, be endorsed.

9. Hamilton Snow Angels Program (ECS08054(a)) (City Wide) (Item 8.5)

(a) That the Hamilton Snow Angels Program Evaluation, attached as Appendix E to Report 09-012, be received.

(b) That staff be directed to:

(i) Investigate the best method of providing this service of sidewalk snow removal to those who require assistance;

(ii) Investigate the various means of partnering with other groups in the recruitment of volunteers;

(iii) Contact the Property Elves respecting their volunteer recruitment process; and, report back to the Emergency & Community Services Committee.

Council – October 14, 2009
10. Tenant Advisory Committee Member Resignation (Item 9.1)

That the resignation, submitted by Laura Harper-Stubbs, from the Tenant Advisory Committee be received.

11. Citizen Appointments to the Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee (Item 9.2)

That the following four (4) applicants be appointed to the Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee for the balance of the 2006 to 2010 Term of Council or until such times as successors are appointed by Council:

(i) Fatime Sadeq
(ii) Ari Fejzaj
(iii) Michelle Leach
(iv) Tahiya Bakht

12. Discussions with Hamilton Health Sciences regarding Repercussions of the McMaster University Medical Centre Adult Emergency Department Closure (Item 9.3)

WHEREAS, at the March 25, 2009 meeting of the Emergency and Community Services Committee, Report HES09002 - Third Party Review Report on Additional Costs to EMS Resulting from Hamilton Health Sciences Access to Best Care Plan conveyed findings of the Third Party Review, prepared for the City of Hamilton by Integral Performance Solutions, which estimates that the financial impact to Hamilton Emergency Medical Services could be $1.5 million, as a result of the McMaster University Medical Centre Adult Emergency Department closure, and;

WHEREAS, citizens may now need to drive further to obtain adult emergency department care; thereby, possibly putting them and their families at further risk, and;

WHEREAS, to avoid this additional risk, citizens should be advised to call 911 and access ambulance transportation to adult emergency departments, and Hamilton Health Sciences will need to prepare an education program to assist in this transition, and;

WHEREAS, this may lead to additional cost for Emergency Medical Services beyond the $1.5M already stated;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:
That Hamilton Health Sciences staff be requested to attend an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting to respond to the following items:

(a) How they will assist the City of Hamilton in recovering the increased Emergency Medical Services costs associated with their decision to close the McMaster University Medical Centre (MUMC) Adult Emergency Department; both with the current projected $1.5M cost and future costs should citizens make increased use of ambulances to be transported east of MUMC;

(b) To outline what their communication/education plan is to encourage adult patients to use other hospital emergency departments, and the expected outcomes of that plan;

(c) The details on timing for closing the McMaster University Medical Centre Adult Emergency Department; and,

(d) The details for timing and design/functional details for the new west-end Urgent Care Centre.

FOR THE INFORMATION OF COMMITTEE:

(a) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (Item 1)

The Committee Clerk advised of the following changes to the agenda:

(i) Added as Item 4.1 – A delegation request from Lynn Aquin, on behalf of the Campaign for Adequate Welfare, requesting support from Council respecting the continuing Clawback to OW and ODSP.

(ii) Item 9.2 – Citizen Appointments to the Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee (Revised Copy)

(iii) Committee was requested to approve the introduction of a new motion by Councillor McHattie, prior to Item 5.1, as Dr. Shuster, Municipal Medical Advisor to the City of Hamilton, is in attendance to answer any questions respecting this matter, but needs to leave shortly to catch a plane.

The agenda for the October 7, 2009 meeting of the Emergency & Community Services Committee was approved, as amended.
(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)

There were none declared.

(c) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 3)

3.1 September 9, 2009

The Minutes of the September 9, 2009 meeting of the Emergency & Community Services Committee were approved, as presented.

(d) DELEGATION REQUEST (Item 4)

4.1 Lynn Aquin, on behalf of the Campaign for Adequate Welfare, requesting support from Council respecting the continuing Clawback to OW and ODSP

The request made by Lynn Aquin, on behalf of the Campaign for Adequate Welfare, requesting support from Council respecting the continuing Clawback to OW and ODSP was approved.

(e) Minutes of Various Advisory Committees (Items 5.5 to 5.8)

The following Advisory Committee Minutes were received:

5.5 Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee Minutes, Dated May 19, 2009

5.6 Hamilton Youth Advisory Committee Minutes, Dated June 16, 2009

5.7 Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee Minutes, Dated June 11, 2009

5.8 Arts Advisory Commission Minutes, Dated July 28, 2009

(f) Tenant Advisory Committee – Annual Presentation (Item 7.1)

Andrew Cranbury, Chair of the Tenant Advisory Committee, provided a Powerpoint presentation to Committee, which outlined the Advisory Committee’s achievements for 2009 and goals for 2010.

The presentation by the Tenant Advisory Committee was received.
(g) **Discussions with Hamilton Health Sciences regarding Repercussions of the McMaster University Medical Centre Adult Emergency Department Closure (Item 9.3)**

The Rules of Order were waived in order to introduce a motion respecting Discussions with Hamilton Health Sciences regarding Repercussions of the McMaster University Medical Centre Adult Emergency Department Closure.

(h) **Outstanding Business List Items requiring Approval for Proposed New Due Dates (Item 11.1)**

The proposed new due dates for the following items were approved:

- **(a) Item “A” – Little Africa Plaque**
  - Due Date: September 23, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: February 17, 2010

- **(b) Item “B” – Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits**
  - Due Date: October 21, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: December 2, 2009

  - Due Date: October 21, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: December 2, 2009

- **(d) Item “F” – Beach Canal Lighthouse**
  - Due Date: October 7, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: November 4, 2009

- **(e) Item “N” – Infrastructure Grants from Other Levels of Government, Partnerships with Other Organizations or Other Funding Opportunities respecting Recreational Facilities**
  - Due Date: October 21, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: December 2, 2009

- **(f) Item “T” – Auchmar Estate Business Plan**
  - Due Date: October 7, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: November 18, 2009

- **(g) Item “U” – Hamilton & District Injured Workers Group – Social Services Matters**
  - Due Date: September 23, 2009
  - Proposed New Due Date: December 2, 2009
(h) Item “X” – Installation of Sub-Meters in Residential Rental Units and its Impact of Tenant Affordability
Due Date: October 21, 2009
Proposed New Due Date: February 17, 2009

(i) Item “BB” – Best Start Final Action Plan
Due Date: October 21, 2009
Proposed New Due Date: November 4, 2009

(j) Item “CC” – Best Start Transition Plan
Due Date: October 21, 2009
Proposed New Due Date: November 4, 2009

(i) ITEMS REFERRED TO THE 2010 BUDGET FOR CONSIDERATION:

(i) Update on the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration (ECS07069(a)) (City Wide) (Item 5.3)

That staff be directed to include $50,000 in funding for the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration for branding, preliminary event planning and preparation, as part of the 2010 Capital Budget Submission.

(ii) Business Process Review for Child Care Services (CS09065) (City Wide) (Item 5.4)

That staff be directed to forward a program enhancement request, for an increase to the Social Development and Early Childhood Services Division staff complement, for the Child Care Services Management Program, by 1.5 FTEs at a cost of $120,000 with no impact on the net levy.

(iii) Hamilton Snow Angels Program (ECS08054(a)) (City Wide) (Item 8.5)

(a) That the continuation of the Hamilton Snow Angel Program for 2010, at a cost not to exceed $100,000; to be funded from the Community Services Departmental Operating budget, be referred to the 2010 budget process for consideration.

(b) That, pending approval of the Hamilton Snow Angels Program and the associated funding, in an amount not to exceed $100,000, the City Manager be authorized and directed to enter into a Letter of Agreement (attached as Appendix “B” to Report ECS08054(a)) with Volunteer Hamilton, to continue to provide the Hamilton Snow Angels Program for 2010.
(j) ADJOURNMENT (Item 13)

There being no further business, that the Emergency & Community Services Committee meeting be adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor S. Duvall, Chair
Emergency & Community Services Committee

Stephanie Paparella
Legislative Assistant
October 7, 2009
The following Local Rules are recommended for the delivery of the Rent Bank Program in Hamilton:

- Rent Bank assistance will be provided to eligible households in the form of a grant;

- Applicant must be denied Community Start-Up and Maintenance benefits if in receipt of Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program;

- Applicant must provide verification of rent arrears (e.g. Notice to Terminate Tenancy, Board of Directors Letter, etc.). This verification must be satisfactory in order to determine the immediate danger of losing the residence due to unpaid rent;

- Applicant must be an authorized occupant and/or legally responsible to pay rent to the Landlord (i.e. owner of the residence);

- Applicant’s housing is considered on an individual basis to determine whether the individual/family is able to maintain current housing should financial assistance with rental arrears be provided; and,

- Applicant intends to remain in the unit for which rent bank assistance is being provided for at least one year.
Key Terms and Conditions of Licence Agreement

Term:
- Ten (10) year term commencing on September 1, 2010, subject to the building and tenant improvement renovations being completed.
- Commencement date to be extended by any renovation completion delay with the termination date of September 1, 2020 being subject to an extension to reflect the renovation completion delay.

Property and Use:
- 314 Wilson Street, Ancaster, Ontario including basement, first and second floors; and,
- a one stop location for the registration of children for various Ancaster minor sports, administrative activities associated with Association members and their records storage.

Licence Fee:
- Licence fee of One Dollar ($1.00) for the Term.

City’s Costs and Responsibilities:
- to renovate the premises, prior to the Licensee’s occupancy to preserve its unique historic and architectural characteristics as currently designated;
- for the costs of all utilities (including heat and hydro); and,
- to maintain, repair and clean the premises.

Licensee’s Costs and Responsibilities:
- for the costs of installation, maintenance and any fees associated with internet and telecommunications connections and use;
- for the costs of all consumables such as paper products;
- to obtain, maintain and pay the costs of insurance, pay all deductibles in the event of damages and provide insurance certificates, all as may be required by Risk Management;
- to staff the reception area of the premises between the hours of 10:00 am and 6:00 pm Monday through Saturday (except statutory holidays) with sufficient staff to ensure that there is full-time staff coverage of the premises and to pay any costs associated with such staffing; and,
- to provide to the City, on an annual basis, an Association Budget, Schedule of Events and confirmation that all Association Members remain not for profit.
Special Conditions:

- The Premise is designated by By-Law 76-86 under the Ontario Heritage Act, as being of historic and architectural value and interest. The Licensee will be required to acknowledge and agree that it will not attempt to change, restore or rehabilitate the Premises and/or any of the Premises’ character defining features, including, but not limited to:

  - the building’s general architectural form, style, materials, design, scale, proportions, organization of windows, doors, and other openings; interior architectural elements that are integral to the building’s historic character or significance such as the banister, floors and floor coverings, paint colours and baseboards; exterior materials, coatings, textures, details, mass, roof line, porch and other aspects of the appearance of the building’s exterior.

  - In addition, no attaching of any furniture, bookcases, posters, pictures or papers to the walls are allowed. The Culture Division of the City of Hamilton will work with the occupants in hanging pictures and/or information boards, such as whiteboards, chalkboards and/or cork boards, or any other materials to conduct business and the Licensee will contact the Culture Division, Director of Culture or designate in respect to such activities.
Moved By: Bonnie Mask
Seconded by: Phil Conway

WHEREAS Home Care Service is an essential service in rural Ontario in assisting in the well-being of seniors and individuals with physical and mental disabilities;

AND WHEREAS Roy Romanow, Head of the Royal Commission of the Future of Health Care in Canada in 2002 dubbed Home Care Services "the next essential service";

AND WHEREAS Home Care Service responds to the needs of the patients and assists children, parents, spouses and siblings and the broader community by supporting quality of life and ensuring quality health care so that citizens can continue to participate in and contribute to the economic and social life of their community;

AND WHEREAS the Personal Support Workers that provide the home care service create a climate that promotes the optimal physical, social and emotional well being of their clients;

AND WHEREAS the need for Home Care Service in Renfrew County is so great that the Personal Support Workers that provide this essential service are overburdened with the amount of clients that they are only able to provide 2 hour visits to their clients;

AND WHEREAS Home Care Service clients require a minimum of 4 hours of attention per visit;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Madawaska Valley is seeking support from all municipalities and request that they forward a resolution of support to their local MP, Premier Dalton McGuinty, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and the County of Renfrew to ensure an increase in funding for additional Personal Support Workers to be hired to relieve the stresses related to a shortage of staff;

AND FURTHER THAT Personal Support Workers providing Home Care Service be required to provide a minimum of 4 hours of service per client visit which, not only benefits the client, but also allows the primary caregivers the opportunity to maintain a level of normalcy in their daily lives.

CARRIED.

DISCLAIMER
This material is provided under contract as a paid service by the originating organization and does not necessarily reflect the view or positions of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), its subsidiary companies, officers, directors or agents.
July 15, 2009

TO ALL MUNICIPALITIES WITH A POPULATION OVER 50,000

Dear Sirs:

RE: CLAUSE c), REPORT 72, KINGSTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 14, 2009
HOUSING NETWORK OF ONTARIO DECLARATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

I would confirm that Kingston City Council at its regular meeting held on July 14, 2009, the following resolution, being Clause c), Report No. 72, was approved:

c) WHEREAS the City of Kingston endorsed the principles for a poverty reduction strategy contained in the 25-in-5 Founding Declaration, and
WHEREAS the Housing Network of Ontario is linked to the 25-in-5 Network for Poverty Reduction, and
WHEREAS the Ontario government has promised to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure everyone has “adequate, suitable and affordable housing”, and
WHEREAS Breaking the Cycle: Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Strategy document recognizes that all three levels of government are required to work collaboratively on the issue of adequate, suitable and affordable housing,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Kingston endorses the Housing Network of Ontario Declaration,

- and further -
THAT this resolution be forwarded to other municipalities with over 50,000 residents; Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario; Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Deb Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services; and John Gerretsen, MPP for Kingston and the Islands.

CARRIED

Yours truly,

Carolyn Downs
City Clerk

The Corporation of the City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
Phone: (613) 546-4291 ext. 1245 Fax: (613) 546-5232 cdowns@cityofkingston.ca
SNOW ANGELS PROGRAM EVALUATION

MAY 2009

Prepared by:
Marion Trent-Kratz
Social Development Team
Social Development & Early Childhood Services Division
Community Services Department
City of Hamilton
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Executive Summary

Volunteer Hamilton is a non-profit organization, established in 1963 which facilitates and supports volunteer activities in the community through various programs and services. The agency was selected to coordinate and administer the Snow Angels Program beginning in the winter of 2005/2006.

Hamilton Snow Angels Program is identified in the City’s 2008 Accessibility Plan¹ (refer to report FCS08103 page 49) as a resource for Seniors on low income and persons who have a disability to comply with the snow removal municipal by-law. The promotion of the program has, and continues to be, directed at approximately 1,500 to 2,000 potentially eligible clients who require the service to comply with the by-law².

From the inception of the Hamilton Snow Angels Program monitoring has been an integral part of planning for ongoing operation of the program. On November 19, 2008 based on Hamilton Snow Angels Program report ECS08054 Council requested that staff be directed to perform a full evaluation of the Snow Angels Program, and report back to the Emergency & Community Services Committee, prior to the 2009/2010 winter season.

The evaluation was developed, implemented, and completed by the Social Development and Early Childhood Services Division of the Community Services Department. Volunteer Hamilton in accordance with their agreement with the City willingly participated in the evaluation by collecting and sharing information about their recruitment and awareness campaign, the program’s progress, and the organization’s program policy and procedures.

The evaluation was undertaken to determine Volunteer Hamilton’s:

   a) effectiveness in recruiting and raising awareness about the Snow Angels program;
   b) progress in implementing the Snow Angels program;
   c) need for program related policy and procedure changes; and
   d) opportunities for possible program enhancements.

Key findings of the evaluation include:

- The success of Volunteer Hamilton’s recruitment and awareness campaign for 2008/2009 is demonstrated by the increase in clients (49%) and volunteers (75%). However, volunteer recruitment has been an ongoing challenge and considerable efforts have been focused on recruiting more volunteers as service demands have increased.

² “Feasibility of a Snow and Ice Removal Program” consultant report was completed by Lura Consulting in September 2005.
The 40 hour community service requirement for graduating secondary school provides an ideal pool of volunteers. However, the variety of choices those students between the ages of 14 and 19 have for volunteering make volunteer recruitment efforts a competitive endeavor.

For the 2008/2009 winter Snow Angels had its highest volume of service.

The majority of clients surveyed were satisfied with service provision and clients expressed in their comments how fortunate they were to be matched with a Snow Angel.

Since the City of Hamilton entered into Agreement with Volunteer Hamilton to provide the Snow Angels program in 2006, Volunteer Hamilton has undergone changes in management, staff, and organizational structure. In 2007, after 45 years of operation and in response to the changes in their organization Volunteer Hamilton, examined their organization’s purpose and realized a new vision that would better align with the City of Hamilton’s vision of being:

“the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities”.

Volunteer Hamilton is acting on the lessons learned through the shortfall of volunteers for the 2008/2009 season by planning targeted recruitment activities in the 2009/2010. Their goal is to have the number of volunteers eventually exceed the demand for service provision.

Recommendations:

1. Volunteer Hamilton has demonstrated their effectiveness in generating awareness about the Snow Angels Program and recruiting volunteers given the substantial increases in both groups over the past two years. However, it would be advisable that Volunteer Hamilton focus more of their efforts on volunteer recruitment and utilize the most effective sources for recruiting volunteers (e.g. Youth 14-18 and New Canadians) for the 2009/2010 winter season.

2. Volunteer Hamilton would be advised to strengthen client orientation that would outline the expectations and level of service provision within 24 hours after a snow fall.

3. Volunteer Hamilton should be provided the opportunity to review the evaluation report for assisting with planning for their 2009/2010 winter season.

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Introduction

Aging Population

Census data indicates that the City of Hamilton has a considerable percentage of its population over the age of 65. Specifically, 14.9% of Hamilton’s population is over the age of 65. Based on 2006 Census data, Statistics Canada has ranked Hamilton as the city with the 6th oldest population in Ontario. Kingston, Greater Sudbury, Thunder Bay, St. Catharines-Niagara, and Peterborough are ranked above Hamilton as being the top 5 cities with the oldest populations in Ontario.\(^4,6\)

Of those who are 65 or more years-of-age:

- 49% live with a spouse or partner without children,
- 26% live alone.\(^5,6\)

Of those who are 85 or more years-of-age:

- 20% live with a spouse or partner without children,
- 32% live alone.\(^6\)

Predictions from Statistics Canada, based on 2006 Census data, are that this proportion of Hamilton’s population will grow and live longer. For some Seniors living in their own homes may be their only option because of supply and demand issues for nursing or senior residences.\(^6\)

Persons with Disabilities

In 2000, there were 92,920 persons with disabilities in Hamilton. This number represented almost 20% of the total population in that period (490,268 Hamiltonians) and 11% are low-income Seniors 65 years-of-age or older. The prevalence of disability in Hamilton is much higher than the provincial (14%) and the national rates (12%).\(^6\)

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\(^4\) Based on Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which is comprised of Hamilton, Burlington, and Grimsby's populations.
\(^5\) Homes in this circumstance includes apartments and private dwellings but it does give us an idea of the proportions of people who are Seniors that may likely require assistance as they age.
Legislation and Municipalities

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, (ODA), was passed by the Province of Ontario and received Royal Assent in 2001. The purpose of the Act is to:

“improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province”.  

The sections of the ODA which applies to municipalities were proclaimed in 2002, and apply to all Ontario municipalities. In addition to the ODA, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Province of Ontario and received Royal Assent in 2005. The AODA is a provincial law that recognizes the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and will require the:

“…development, implementation and enforcement of standards for accessibility to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation, and buildings for persons with disabilities”.  

The ODA sets out the requirements for the annual accessibility plan that every municipality is required to develop annually. The accessibility plan must address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities in the City’s by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services.

In 2003 the City of Hamilton’s Council enacted by-law No. 03-296 to provide for the removal of snow and ice from roofs and sidewalks. The by-law states:

“That every occupant or owner shall, within 24 hours of the cessation of a Winter Storm Event, or within 24 hours of the cessation of a series of Consecutive winter storm events, remove and clear all snow and ice from sidewalks abutting the highways in front of, or along side, or at the rear of any occupied or unoccupied lot, or vacant lot”.  

Failure to clear sidewalks can result in warnings and potentially costly fines for residents of Hamilton.

The feasibility for some residents (Seniors and persons with disabilities) to comply with the snow removal by-law were identified in the Sidewalk Snow Clearing – Harmonization and Enforcement Report (PW03130(a)/PD03226(a)) and the Residential

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Snow Removal Program Implementation Report (SPH05048/PW05152). Based on these aforementioned reports, Council in 2005 approved creation of the Hamilton Snow Angels Program to help those in need with snow removal. The program was designed to provide assistance to low-income Seniors, age 65 and older and/or low-income persons with disabilities who live in Hamilton (with the exception of Ancaster\textsuperscript{10}) with the removal of snow from sidewalks, windrows\textsuperscript{11} and paths to doorways.

**Hamilton Snow Angels Program and Volunteer Hamilton**

Hamilton Snow Angels Program is identified in the City’s 2008 Accessibility Plan\textsuperscript{12} (refer to report FCS08103 page 49) as a resource for Seniors on low income and persons who have a disability to comply with the snow removal municipal by-law. The promotion of the program has, and continues to be, directed at approximately 1,500 to 2,000 potentially eligible clients who require the service to comply with the by-law\textsuperscript{13}.

Volunteer Hamilton was identified as an organization that had expertise and existing resources (e.g. volunteers, web site) to manage a volunteer based snow removal program. Volunteer Hamilton was selected as the single source to coordinate and administer the Snow Angels Program and a partnership was immediately established with a letter of agreement completed. Volunteer Hamilton is a non-profit organization, established in 1963 which facilitates and supports volunteer activities in the community through various programs and services. Delivery of the Hamilton Snow Angels Program commenced in the winter of 2005/2006.

**Evaluation**

From the inception of the Hamilton Snow Angels Program monitoring has been an integral part of planning for ongoing operation of the program. On November 19, 2008 based on Hamilton Snow Angels Program report ECS08054 Council requested that staff be directed to perform a full evaluation of the Snow Angels Program, and report back to the Emergency & Community Services Committee, prior to the 2009/2010 winter season.

The evaluation was developed, implemented, and completed by the Social Development and Early Childhood Services Division, Social Development Unit. Volunteer Hamilton participated in the evaluation by collecting and sharing information about their recruitment and awareness campaign, the program’s progress, and the organization’s program policy and procedures.

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\textsuperscript{10} In semi-urban/rural neighbourhoods, such as some areas in Ancaster, the sidewalk inventory is intermittent in fashion and only exists in parts of neighbourhoods.

\textsuperscript{11} Windrow refers to the snow that is left over at the end of a driveway when the roads have been plowed.


\textsuperscript{13} “Feasibility of a Snow and Ice Removal Program” consultant report was completed by Lura Consulting in September 2005.
Purpose of Evaluation

In purpose of the Snow Angels Program evaluation was to:

   a) Determine the effectiveness of the recruitment and awareness campaign;
   b) Report on the program’s progress;
   c) Assess the need for policy and procedure changes; and
   d) Identify possible program enhancements.

Methodology

A full evaluation of the Snow Angels Program required multiple approaches to gather a variety of sources of information to achieve the purpose of the evaluation. The approaches for gathering information included:

1. Reviewing the following documentation to provide information about the history, implementation, operation, the program’s progress, policies and procedures, and possible enhancements:
   a. City of Hamilton by-law No. 03-296;
   b. City of Hamilton’s 2008 Accessibility Plan;
   d. Sidewalk Snow Clearing – Harmonization and Enforcement Report (PW03130(a)/PD03226(a));
   e. Residential Snow Removal Program Implementation Report (SPH05048/PW05152);
   f. Hamilton Snow Angels Program Report (ECS08054);
   g. Hamilton Snow Angels Program – Volunteer Screening Information Update to ECS08054 Report;
   h. City of Hamilton Snow Angels Program current and past Agreements;
   i. Proposed Volunteer Hamilton’s Program current and past Budgets and Actual Expenses;
   k. Volunteer Hamilton’s current and past Audited Financial Statements;
   l. Snow Angels: A Strategy for a Vibrant and Caring Community Report (see Appendix A4);
   m. Snow Angels Final Reports from 2005 to 2008;
   n. Volunteer Hamilton’s Awareness and Recruitment Weekly Tracking System;
   o. Volunteer Hamilton’s web site: http://www.volunteerhamilton.on.ca;
   p. Snow Angels Promotional Materials and Activities;
   q. Program’s Administrative Process and Procedures; and
   r. Emails pertaining to the program.

2. Meetings and interviews with the Manager of Special Supports Program – Benefit Eligibility Community Services Department, and Volunteer Hamilton’s Executive
Director, the Manager of Agency & Volunteer Resources. The Snow Angels Program Coordinator also assisted with the development, implementation, and data/information collection for the evaluation.

3. Consultation with:
   a. Public Works Department, Operation and Road Maintenance,
   b. By-law and Enforcement, and
   c. Community Service Department,

to assist with providing a context for the program’s progress and policy and procedures and provided additional resources for the development of the evaluation client and volunteer surveys.

4. A tour of Volunteer Hamilton’s Facilities at 267 King Street East, Hamilton, Ontario, provided a context for how the program is administered and promoted in relationship to the agency’s overall operations.

5. Surveys (see Appendix A2 and A3) were developed and administered to clients and volunteers to assist with determining the effectiveness of the program’s recruitment and awareness campaign and to determine possible program enhancements. Consultation with the Community Services Department, Strategic Services and Social Development staff, Volunteer Hamilton, and the City of Hamilton’s Youth Advisory Committee assisted with the overall development of the survey tools for gathering data.

   a. Client Surveys (see Appendix A2):
      • Clients were surveyed by co-op students from Mohawk College’s Social Sciences Department over the phone. Phone surveys were determined to be the most effective method for gathering data from clients to overcome potential issues (e.g. literacy, visual impairment, mail) that would typically result in a low response rate.
      • Out of the 461 clients, 261 clients were contacted by phone and 216 verbally consented to complete the survey. Attempts were made to contact all clients over two weeks; however, if clients did not answer their phones after two attempts to contact them at two different dates and times, these clients were not included in the survey sample.
      • Based on the number of clients who were successfully reached by phone 83% verbally consented to complete the survey and this group represented almost half (47%) of all clients.
      • Matched and unmatched clients (Volunteer Hamilton has two types of clients: matched and unmatched. Matched clients are clients who have been successfully matched with a volunteer and unmatched clients are waiting to be matched) were included in the survey sample; however, unmatched clients represented 61% of clients who were surveyed. Matched clients who had volunteers to remove snow
represented 39% of clients who were surveyed. The sample sizes surveyed closely reflect the percentages of matched (37%) and unmatched (63%) clients out of all 461 clients.

b. Volunteer Surveys (See Appendix A3):
• Volunteers were contacted by email and provided a link to a survey on the City of Hamilton’s web site. Email was considered to be the most cost effective and efficient method for contacting the majority of volunteers and increasing the response rates as the majority of volunteers were 14-19 years.
• Volunteers were contacted by Volunteer Hamilton to opt out of the survey if they wanted out of courtesy.
• Out of the total of 89 Snow Angel volunteers registered with Volunteer Hamilton 69 opted to participate by email and 11 by Canada Post mail.
• Out of the 69 links to the survey sent by email, 5 bounced back as undeliverable.
• 75 surveys were administered in total and 38 volunteers responded for a response rate of 51%.

The multiple sources of information were compiled, reviewed, and analyzed to complete the evaluation and report on the findings that form the basis for making recommendations for possible policy and procedure changes and program enhancements.
Effectiveness of the Recruitment Awareness Campaign

Promotion

The Strategic Services Division of the Community Services Department City of Hamilton developed various promotional materials, such as the Snow Angels logo, toques, tag line, etc., in 2006 that provided a branding for the program as outlined below:

“Become a Snow Angel and help a neighbour!”

Along with promotional materials, the Strategic Services Division in 2007/2008 developed a Snow Angels Snow Removal Program Communications Plan Overview (see Appendix A1). The particular focus for the communications plan was to increase recruitment of volunteers while building awareness among potential service recipients in the community.

Volunteer Hamilton as part of their agreement with the City is responsible for implementing, managing, and tracking the promotion of the program. Volunteer Hamilton’s promotion of Snow Angels is an essential part of implementing and building awareness about the program in the community and engaging volunteers. Promotional efforts have included:

- 3,000 grade 10, civic career students receiving the “Value of Volunteering” workshop presentations.
- 300 new Canadians receiving presentations through ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and SISO (Settlement & Integration Services Organization).
- 75 literacy students through the WOW (World of Work) program presentations.
- Advertisements in local print media and ‘spots’ were broadcast on CHCH TV and local Cable 14.
- Posters were placed in local fitness clubs, schools, libraries, scout and guide organizations, recreation centres, service clubs and youth organizations.

Chart 1 shows the sources used to promote Snow Angels in 2008/2009: The main ways that clients and volunteers heard about Snow Angels were through Volunteer Hamilton, word of mouth, CHCH TV, CHML AM Radio and “other”. “Other” includes sources such as doctors, physical therapists, schools, teachers, guidance counselors, high school presentations, website, and personal support workers.

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14 2007/2008 Snow Angels Snow Removal Program – Communication Plan Overview (Report ECS08054)
In the 2008/2009 winter Snow Angels received 662 calls from clients about requesting service and volunteers about registering. Out of 662 inquires about Snow Angels, 19% of clients and volunteers were “uncaptured” in Volunteer Hamilton’s promotion tracking. Uncaptured means the clients or volunteers did not remember where they had heard about the program or they were not asked how they heard about Snow Angels when they contacted Volunteer Hamilton.

Chart 1: Snow Angels 2008/2009 Source of Promotion

The success of Volunteer Hamilton’s recruitment and awareness campaign for 2008/2009 is demonstrated by the increase in clients and volunteers. However, volunteer recruitment has been an ongoing challenge and considerable efforts have been focused on recruiting more volunteers as service demands have increased. An overview of the number of clients applying for service and volunteers recruited in the past and most recently provides substantive evidence that Volunteer Hamilton’s recruitment and awareness campaign has been effective.
Matched and Unmatched Clients

Volunteer Hamilton’s rate of growth in clients for the past three years demonstrates the effectiveness of the program’s awareness campaign. Table 1 shows the increases in clients each year.

Table 1: Snow Angels Clients Growth Rates by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate of Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>222%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to Volunteer Hamilton’s promotional efforts, the increase in snow occurrences in 2007/08 and 2008/2009 have been related to an increase in client applications and demand for snow removal services.

Chart 2 shows the number of snow falls across the four years the program has been operating:

- 28 in 2008/2009 with 6 considered “Snow Emergencies” due to the high volumes of snow or storm conditions,
- 16 in 2007/2008 previously reported (ECSO8054) to Council, and

Chart 2: Number of Snow Events by Year
Volunteer Hamilton has two types of clients: matched and unmatched. Matched clients are clients who have been successfully matched with a volunteer and unmatched clients are waiting to be matched.

Chart 3 shows the numbers of clients (matched and unmatched) compared with volunteers across the four years of the program's operation: The increase in clients and the shortfall in Snow Angels Volunteers continues despite Volunteer Hamilton’s increased recruitment efforts.

**Chart 3: Number of Snow Angel Clients Matched and Unmatched and Volunteers**

Volunteers

Although there was a disproportionate number of clients to volunteers, Volunteer Hamilton’s efforts to recruit volunteers was demonstrated by their 75% increase in volunteers in 2008/2009 compared to the number of volunteers recruited in 2007/2008.

As reported to Emergency and Community Services Committee on January 29, 2009 (update to report ECS08054):

- Volunteer Hamilton has been collaborating with both the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board in support of the 40 hour community service requirement and offering youth the opportunity to earn volunteer hours through the Snow Angels Program.
- As a part of a requirement for graduation, all students entering Grade 9 must complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement during their four years of secondary school. The requirement encourages civic responsibility,
promotes community values, supports students’ career exploration, develops interests and skills, and reinforces the importance of volunteering.

The 40 hour community service requirement is an ideal way to tap into a captive market for recruiting volunteers. However, the variety of choices that students have for volunteering between the ages of 14-19 is likely to make volunteer recruitment efforts a competitive endeavor.

Chart 4 shows the large number of volunteers between the ages of 14 to 19 that were recruited and matched to clients in 2008/2009. This group represented almost half (45%) of all the volunteers recruited. Only 10 out of 45 volunteers between the ages of 14-19 responded to the evaluation survey and all 10 volunteers identified that they were fulfilling their community service hours. Over half (55%) of all volunteers recruited were 20 years-of-age and older and this may have been associated with Volunteer Hamilton’s promotional efforts targeted at New Canadians and literacy students.

**Chart 4: 2008-2009 Snow Angels Volunteers By Age**

Volunteer Hamilton has proactively engaged in developing and implementing plans for increasing their volunteer recruitment in the past and for the future. As part of ongoing volunteer recruitment efforts, the Snow Angels Program Coordinator has identified areas of the city where there were unmatched clients that needed volunteers to target the agency’s recruitment based on clients’ need.

As part of the evaluation of the program, volunteers were asked to identify how they heard about Snow Angels because of the ongoing challenges in recruitment. Volunteers who responded to the survey identified the following promotional sources more often than other sources:

1. Volunteer Hamilton’s Web Site
2. Hamilton Spectator
3. Word of Mouth
4. City of Hamilton’s Web Site
5. Other Newspapers/Sources
Volunteers were also asked to identify the reasons that they chose to become a Snow Angel. The item most often chosen (68.4%) was:

“I wanted to give something back to my neighbourhood”.

Volunteers were asked to rate how volunteering made them feel and the following are the results of volunteers’ responses in the “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed” categories:

- 92% felt needed
- 82% wanted to be a Snow Angel next year
- 66% felt more confident about their skills
- 68% felt like a leader in their neighbourhood
- 68% were interest in other volunteer activities

The large (82%) proportion of volunteers who indicated a desire to return as a Snow Angel in 2009/2010 provides evidence that Volunteer Hamilton is effective at recruiting and keeping volunteers engaged.

Identifying the most effective sources for promoting volunteerism may assist with planning for targeted volunteer recruitment in 2009/2010. Using the concept of what it means to be a volunteer and the organization’s reputation as a source for “meaningful volunteer experiences”\(^\text{16}\) may assist Volunteer Hamilton with targeted volunteer recruitment in the future.

**Program’s Progress**

**Service Delivery Trends**

For the 2008/2009 winter Snow Angels had its highest volume of service compared to the previous years. Table 2 provides the total numbers of volunteers recruited and eligible clients. As well, eligible clients are broken down into matched and unmatched clients by year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Clients Eligible</th>
<th>Matched Clients</th>
<th>Unmatched Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of Snow Angels’ eligible clients were mostly (83%) comprised of Seniors (65 years-of-age and older). Chart 5 shows the proportions of eligible clients who were

Seniors and who have disabilities. Accessibility for this proportion of the population is often critical and can mean the difference between having full inclusion/access to their community. It would appear fewer individuals with disabilities were unmatched clients however just under two-thirds (63%) of all clients were unmatched for the 2008/2009 winter season.

Chart 5: 2008-2009 Snow Angels Clients by Eligibility

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the number of clients by gender. Females comprised the largest group of clients. The average life expectancy of females in the City of Hamilton is 81.6 years-of-age when compared to males at 76.5 years-of-age. Seniors who reside in their own homes without other individuals to assist them with snow removal are more likely to require Snow Angels. According to 2006 Census data 74% of females over the age of 65 reported themselves as living alone in the City of Hamilton.

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17CANSIM (Statistics Canada's Key Socioeconomic Database). (2001). Life expectancy, abridged life table, by age group and sex, three-year average, Canada, provinces, territories, health regions and peer groups, occasional (years) [Table No. 102-0218]. Retrieved on May 21, 2009 from http://casim2.statcan.gc.ca/.
20Life expectancy is the number of years a person would be expected to live, starting from birth (life expectancy at birth) and similarly for other age groups, if the age- and sex-specific mortality rates for a given observation period (such as a calendar year) were held constant over the estimated life span. The estimates are based on three consecutive years of death data and the population estimate of the middle year.
Table 3: Number of Clients by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unmatched</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of the evaluation volunteers were asked to identify the services they provided to clients:

- 97.4% cleared sidewalks in front of clients homes,\(^{21}\)

Additional services provided were:

- 94.7% cleared pathways and door steps,
- 63.2% cleared windrow (snow at end of driveway),
- 36.8% cleared ice either manually with equipment (e.g. pick/shovel) or with salt,
- 73.7% cleared driveways,
- 7.9% cleared windrow ledges or roof overhangs,
- 7.9% cleared natural gas meters, and
- 2.6% cleared high efficiency furnace venting.

Chart 6 shows the number of times a volunteer would return to a client’s home to ensure that his/her home remained accessible during continuous snow falls. In some cases, volunteers would go more than five times in one snow fall. Half of all volunteers identified that they at least went two times. This may help to explain the general satisfaction that most clients expressed in their comments regarding how fortunate they were to be matched with a Snow Angel.

\(^{21}\) Note that some volunteers reported not having to clear snow because they became a Snow Angel at the end of February or the beginning of March, 2009.
When surveyed more than half (68.4%) of volunteers reported that they had one or two homes to clear snow for as shown in Chart 7. Over half of volunteers (55.3%) identified that the number of homes they were assigned to clear snow for was “Just Enough” and 36.8% of volunteers identified that they felt they “Could have done more”. Volunteers who felt they could have done more indicated that they had the time, smaller properties that required less snow removal or snow was removed before they arrived on some occasions. Volunteer Hamilton could possible increase matched clients by better determining if volunteers have the capacity to clear snow for more homes.
When surveyed volunteers responded that they felt frustrated with providing the service if they were unable to meet the demands (e.g. clients who expected them to clear more than sidewalks). Some volunteers cited that a better job could have been done matching them with clients because in some cases volunteers would be duplicating service because the snow was already removed. When surveyed, almost half (47.4%) of the volunteers reported that snow had been removed before they could do it.

In fact over half (52%) of all clients surveyed indicated that there were times when someone else was able to help clear their snow. Specifically, clients most often said a neighbour, family member, or they would pay for someone to clear snow. Often these types of snow removal options were sporadic and the least desirable option. Paying for the snow removal service was often cited as a challenge due to clients’ limited income. In some cases the owner reported attempting to clear snow for themselves.
Despite the challenges volunteers experienced with duplication in service matched clients were for the most part satisfied (see Chart 8) with the level of service provided for the 2008/2009 winter. Of the 85 matched clients who were surveyed 78 rated the service that volunteers provided. The ratings ranged from “Excellent” to “Poor” with 60% rating the Snow Angels service as “Excellent” or “Good”

Chart 8: Snow Angel Clients' Satisfaction with Snow Removal 2008/2009

Clients cited the volunteer’s reliability and the speed of service as the main reasons for their “Fair” to “Poor” ratings. However, while clients reported that service was not always provided quickly enough they agreed that the snow was usually cleared within the 24 hour time frame. Clients are provided orientation about service expectations; however, Volunteer Hamilton reported that often their expectations for service were incongruent with the by-law that states snow must be cleared within 24 hours after a snow fall. 

Clients identified the need for snow removal as necessary for receipt of services that required access to their homes, such as:

- Meals on Wheels,
- D.A.R.T.S. (Disabled & Aged Regional Transportation System),
- Paramedics,
- Personal Support Workers,
- Health Care,
- Emergency Services,
- Therapists, or
- Prescription Drug Delivery.
When clients were surveyed about other reasons they needed snow removal services they often cited being able to just simply leave their home or having others access their homes (e.g. mail delivery). The following email to the Snow Angels Program Coordinator from a matched client for 2008/2009 demonstrates the extent to which the Snow Angels Program impacts Seniors capacity to stay in their homes.

“Hi Annie:

I just wanted to say A BIG THANK YOU to all the staff and volunteers of the Snow Angels program.

I wanted to let you know that I have had to sell my house and I no longer live in Hamilton.

I appreciate everything that the Snow Angels have done for me. Your program was a life saver for me, and at least allowed me to stay in my house for a little bit longer.

Thanks again and keep up the great work. Your program allows so many people to be able to stay in their residences.

J.R.”

Generally, most clients who commented about the service were pleased with their volunteer and felt “fortunate” to have the service. One client commented:

“Great service, no way she could do it herself, she’s grateful to receive the help.”

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22 Permission to use the email was obtained via email 2009: “Of course you can quote my email. I’m very flattered and happy that it came at such an opportune time. The Snow Angels are wonderful and I wish you and the program all the best in the future. Take care, J.”
In fact, as Chart 9 shows almost half (43.6%) of eligible clients surveyed were repeat clients. Most first year clients were unmatched but (21%) of those were willing to wait for the service. Like volunteer retention, the Snow Angels Program appears to have a loyal clientele who are willing to wait to be matched with a volunteer.

**Chart 9: Snow Angels Client History**

Some clients expressed dissatisfaction with being unmatched for the season. When asked what impact being unmatched had on their access to the community clients identified the following experiences after heavy snow falls:

- 46% were unable to leave their home,
- 30% had cancelled medical appoints, and
- 33% could not run errands.

Generally, comments regarding other problems clients experienced because they were unmatched were related to accessibility to and from their homes. One client’s comment outlines Volunteer Hamilton’s priorities for 2009/2010 winter season:

> “Make the system better so they [clients] can have a volunteer”

As outlined earlier, Volunteer Hamilton’s plan for targeted volunteer recruitment in 2009/2010 would assist in making the “system better” as they set goals for matching clients with volunteers.
Funding

Funding for Snow Angels was initially provided out of the Tax Stabilization Reserve (2005 Corporate Surplus) for 2005/2006. The program was approved in 2006 and on an annual basis since then through the Community Services Departmental operating budget. Funds are released in installments based on requirements that Volunteer Hamilton must adhere to (e.g. statistics, audited financial statements, annual report, proof of insurance, and budget reports with forecasted and actual expenses) as set out in the Hamilton Snow Angels Program Agreement.

The funds are to be used to:

- promote the program,
- screen clients’ applications and determine eligibility,
- recruit and match volunteers to clients, and
- coordinate the program.

As part of the Agreement with the City of Hamilton, Volunteer Hamilton must submit a budget report on proposed expenses anticipated for the year that outlines the allocation of funds. For 2009, Volunteer Hamilton was provided funds that were not to exceed $100,000 in 2009. Based on the proposed expenses for 2009 the following proportions (see Chart 10) represent the bulk of the program’s budget:

- Over three-quarters (78%) of the expenses have been allocated to cover administrative costs: salaries/wages, benefits, and staff development.
- Core operational expenses have been allocated to cover 18% of expenses for rent/taxes, utilities, insurance, equipment rental/maintenance, and financial fees.
- Direct program expenses represent 4% of expenses that have been allocated to cover travel/meetings, materials, supplies, printing, communication, and volunteer expenses.
- There is an anticipated surplus for the 2009 budget of 1% ($1,308).

Chart 10: Snow Angels 2009 Proposed Budget Allocations

- Administrative (78%)
- Core Operations (18%)
- Direct Program Expenses (4%)
Assessment of Policy and Procedure

Strategy for a Vibrant and Caring Community

Since 2005/2006 Volunteer Hamilton has undergone some changes in management, staff, and organizational structure. In 2007 after 45 years of operation and in response to the changes in their organization, Volunteer Hamilton re-examined their organization’s purpose and realized a new vision. In creating a new vision, Volunteer Hamilton, wanted to ensure that their vision aligned with the City of Hamilton’s vision. By aligning Volunteer Hamilton’s vision with the City of Hamilton’s vision, they were laying the foundation for assisting the City in realizing Hamilton:

“To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities”.23

As well, Volunteer Hamilton recognized a need in the City to build capacity for volunteerism. A report “Snow Angels: A Strategy for a Vibrant and Caring Community” (see Appendix A1) prepared by Volunteer Hamilton outlines the extent to which the Snow Angels program has had an impact on realizing their vision:

“All Lives Enriched Through Volunteerism”.24

Volunteer Hamilton recognized that increasing volunteerism equated to a mission for:

“Engaging the community to stimulate innovative volunteer practices AND developing volunteerism through education and participation AND linking volunteer resources to community need.”24

Equipped with their new vision and mission, much of the work that Volunteer Hamilton has been engaged in over the past two years has been building the community’s capacity for people to care about their community and neighbours. Community reciprocity or goodwill in the community, as Hamilton grows and its demographics shift towards increasingly diverse populations, is an issue that may require considerable investment to maintain to ensure that Hamilton remains the City with neighbourhoods that care.

Volunteer Hamilton’s restructuring of their focus can be evidenced by their 75% increase in volunteer recruitment for the 2008/2009 winter season. As well, Volunteer Hamilton’s recruitment efforts have become more targeted towards new Canadians, youth, Gen Next and ‘Zoomers’ with the intent of providing volunteers with more “meaningful volunteer experiences”. As part of the evaluation, volunteers were asked about whether volunteering as a Snow Angel had changed the way they felt about volunteering. The majority felt that their experience as Snow Angels had changed the

way they felt about volunteering because it made them feel more connected to their communities. The following survey responses from volunteers demonstrate the extent to which Volunteer Hamilton’s vision is being realized:

“I feel a stronger sense of community!”

“It has made me a bit more confident about volunteering especially since I am new to the community.”

“Yes, it is a great way to give back to our community.”

Volunteer Hamilton is aware of the challenges they are faced with engaging people to become volunteers as evidenced by their considerable promotional activities for the 2008/2009 winter season. Volunteer Hamilton has developed a tracking system to monitor program needs on a weekly basis which is used to inform volunteer recruitment. As well, they have evaluated the program yearly to inform and improve the program’s process and procedures. Just recently, in January 2009, the volunteer application and screening process was streamlined to enhance and facilitate registration and matching. Streamlining the volunteer registration process by eliminating the need for police record checks (PRC) and replacing the PRC with personal reference verification and orientation cut down on the time in matching clients to volunteers. It is anticipated that this new registration process will assist with increasing volunteer recruitment for the 2009/2010 winter season.
Snow Angels Service Path

The City of Hamilton and Volunteer Hamilton entered into a Letter of Agreement, which sets out specific criteria for the administration of Hamilton Snow Angels Program. As part of that agreement Volunteer Hamilton must develop and maintain a system to receive, grant or deny and track applications for the Program. Figure 1 shows the process that volunteers and clients must follow to be part of the program.

Figure 1: Snow Angels Service Path
Client Application and Volunteer Recruitment Processes

Volunteer Hamilton’s web site streamlines the client application and volunteer recruitment processes. The Snow Angels web pages facilitate clients to easily apply for snow removal services online. As well, volunteers can register to be a Snow Angel online. Additionally, Volunteer Hamilton has developed innovative strategies for volunteer recruitment by partnering with the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board and registering volunteers on-site at schools. It is Volunteer Hamilton’s intentions to develop a similar relationship with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board for recruiting volunteers in 2009/2010. The online application and registration processes assist with determining initial client eligibility and volunteer suitability that is verified upon receipt of clients’ applications and volunteer’s registration.

Clients

The Snow Angels Program Coordinator screens all applicants to determine eligibility for the service and confirms the following criteria for each potential client:

- they reside on and are responsible for, as owners or tenants, the property where snow is to be removed;
- they do not share the property with others who are able to remove snow;
- if 65 years of age or older, they currently receive the Seniors Tax Credit;
- if they have a disability, their:
  - disability is documented (e.g. an Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) cheque stub, a wheelchair parking pass or a doctor’s note, regardless of age);
  - financial eligibility (combined gross income of the house owner and spouse is $30,170 or less) and,
  - liquid assets are less than $5,000 for an individual and less than $7,500 for a couple.

As part of the survey, matched and unmatched clients were asked to identify what would improve the program. A large majority (76.4%) of clients surveyed commented about possible improvements. Possible improvements included advertising and promoting for more volunteers.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the essential part of Snow Angel’s service provision. Without willing volunteers, the program could not provide services to clients. Volunteer recruitment is a large part of the Program Coordinator’s job. The recruitment and screening of volunteers is continuous throughout the year. The following outlines the volunteer screening process:

25 http://www.volunteerhamilton.on.ca/svc_snowangels.php
26 Amount is consistent with the 2008 Senior Tax Rebate Program
• must be 14 years of age or older;

• supply at least two references to be verified by Volunteer Hamilton;

• liability and personal risk are addressed through a review of volunteers’ information provided on application forms, interviews, personal references and orientations.

• Upon their application being accepted by Volunteer Hamilton, volunteers must sign a Volunteer Agreement and a waiver of liability, with Volunteer Hamilton, and are required to review the safety tip sheet provided by Volunteer Hamilton. The following standards must be adhered to by all Snow Angel volunteers:

• younger volunteers, 14-18 years of age, must be accompanied by a second volunteer when removing snow,

• volunteers are to use only their own snow removal equipment and not that of a client’s;\(^{27}\)

• Volunteer Hamilton encourages a “civil” relationship between the Snow Angel and service recipient (e.g. wave and say “hello”), however, discourages any extended contact (e.g. entering a service recipient’s home, accepting refreshments/gifts, using a service recipient tools, sharing of personal names, etc.);

• volunteers must complete an assignment card, which is to be left in each client’s mailbox, indicating the volunteer’s first name only, their commitment to the Hamilton Snow Angels Program and the approximate timing of snow removal after a snow event; and,

• removal of snow must be completed within 24-hours of the end of a snow event.

In an update to Council in January 2009 to Report ECS08054 staff reported that the process for screening volunteers had been streamlined to speed the process of matching volunteers to clients. Police Record Checks, that take considerable time to be processed, were eliminated and replaced with personal reference verification. The City of Hamilton provides funding only to the Snow Angels program, there is no provision under the Agreement with Volunteer Hamilton for the City to assume liability for services provided under the Program nor is Volunteer Hamilton deemed to be an agent of the City for any purpose.

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\(^{27}\) Corporate Donations from Canadian Tire and Home Depot provided some volunteers with snow removal equipment.
Volunteer Hamilton is responsible for selecting and utilizing volunteers so as to ensure, to the best of their ability, the safety and security of both volunteers and clients. As part of the evaluation, volunteers who responded to the survey were asked if they had experienced any problems during the 2008/2009 winter season. No volunteer reported being hurt or sick while shoveling and almost half (42.1%) responded that they had no problems. The greatest problem identified by volunteers (47.4%) was that snow had already been removed before they could shovel. Determining clients' snow removal needs before dispatching Snow Angels may assist with decreasing the duplication of service that volunteers experienced in 2008/2009. Currently dispatching does not occur and Volunteer Hamilton reported that they do not have the capacity to provide this level of service. As well, streamlining the volunteer process is anticipated to assist with increasing volunteer recruitment in the 2009/2010 winter season as Volunteer Hamilton reported volunteers losing interest or volunteering somewhere else as they waited for their Police Record Checks.

**Tracking System**

Volunteer Hamilton has developed and implemented a system for tracking the application process and provides a weekly report to the Special Supports Program Manager, Benefit Eligibility, Community Services Department, that identifies the number of applications for service that were received, granted, not granted, and referrals to other services/options for ineligible clients. Once a client is considered to be eligible for Hamilton Snow Angels Program they are matched, if possible, to a volunteer who resides in their neighbourhood. A mapping system has been used to visually match volunteers to clients based on geographic proximity. A map of the City of Hamilton serves as a visual cue for the Program Coordinator to identify serviced and under serviced areas where clients reside.

Volunteer Hamilton’s proactive and informative way of tracking provides them with weekly updates for making program decisions based on data-driven planning. Based on Volunteer Hamilton’s tracking for the 2008/2009 winter season, a plan for targeted volunteer recruitment is being undertaken for the 2009/2010 winter season to work towards matching clients. It is Volunteer Hamilton’s goal to eventually exceed demand for volunteers for Snow Angels through its new vision and mission.
Conclusions

The City of Hamilton’s ongoing Investment in Volunteer Hamilton’s Snow Angels Program will continue to build capacity for increasing volunteerism in our community and therefore will support the City of Hamilton realizing its vision “To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities”.  

Volunteer Hamilton’s 2008/2009 winter season was its busiest season to-date. There were substantial increases in both clients and volunteers accompanied by an increase in snow falls. Although there were challenges with providing service to every client due to the shortfall in volunteer recruitment for 2008/2009, for the most part clients were satisfied with the service and a substantial proportion of clients reported being registered for the program more than one season. Volunteer Hamilton is aware of their need for an increase in their volunteer recruitment and has been proactive in planning for the 2009/2010 season to work towards the long-term goal of volunteers exceeding the demand for service. Faced with a competitive volunteer recruitment market given the choices youth 14-18 have for fulfilling community services hours to graduate from secondary school, increased efficiencies such as managing service and monitoring snow removal may better utilize volunteers and match more clients. Volunteer Hamilton has reported however, that they do not currently have the capacity (e.g., staff) to enhance their level of service by adding both assessment/monitoring of individual client needs and dispatching service on an incident by incident basis (at the time of each snow fall).

Recommendations

1. Volunteer Hamilton has demonstrated their effectiveness in generating awareness about the Snow Angels Program and recruiting volunteers given the substantial increases in both groups over the past two years. However, it would be advisable that Volunteer Hamilton focus more of their efforts on volunteer recruitment and utilize the most effective sources for recruiting volunteers (e.g. Youth 14-18 and New Canadians) for the 2009/2010 winter season.

2. Volunteer Hamilton would be advised to strengthen client orientation that would outline the expectations and level of service provision within 24 hours after a snow fall.

3. Volunteer Hamilton should be provided the opportunity to review the evaluation report for assisting with planning for their 2009/2010 winter season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Activity/Tactic</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential volunteers/service</td>
<td>Lure cards / posters / toques - contact school boards to communicate program</td>
<td>Volunteers representing the younger demographic, are recruited to assist with the program</td>
<td>Oct 2007- Mar 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>providers – schools</td>
<td>information and desire to connect with students and faculty - develop schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of speaking appearances - compile materials for school presentations - give</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>school presentations - distribute toques to recruited/approved volunteers -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>track interest from students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential</td>
<td>Lure cards / posters - distribute posters and lure cards to area City facilities</td>
<td>Volunteers are recruited through some of the City’s existing channels</td>
<td>Oct-Feb 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers/service providers</td>
<td>(i.e. libraries and recreation centres)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service recipients</td>
<td>Postcards – a leave-behind for volunteers to leave in recipients’ mailboxes to</td>
<td>Service recipients are able to confirm that a Snow Angels volunteer had provided them the snow removal service</td>
<td>Dec 2007– Mar 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>let them know they had been there</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential</td>
<td>Radio – strategic placement of radio spots on CHML and Y108</td>
<td>Potential volunteers are made aware of the program</td>
<td>Feb-Mar 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers/service providers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential</td>
<td>Media relations - piggyback on impending snowfall (‘trigger’) - determine</td>
<td>Potential volunteers and service recipients are made aware of the program</td>
<td>Nov 2007– Mar 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers/service providers and recipients</td>
<td>photo/video footage opportunity - follow-up with print and broadcast media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by telephone - insert ad and editorial in City’s Winter Safety Report (Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Works)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential</td>
<td>- Electronic – renew domain name <a href="http://www.snowangels.ca">www.snowangels.ca</a> and use in all promotions</td>
<td>Program has an online presence</td>
<td>Oct 2007– Mar 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers/service providers and recipients</td>
<td>- Ensure website receives updates as needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current and potential</td>
<td>- Internal communications channels (City); - Add message to City intranet</td>
<td>Internal stakeholders/staff are made aware of the program and the opportunity to support it</td>
<td>Dec 2007– Jan 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers/service providers – City staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Activity/Tactic</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Site ‘enet’ | - Add message to City’s internal electronic newsletter Connections  
- Add message to City website Hot Topics page | through volunteerism                                             |                                             |
| Current and potential volunteers/service providers | Neighbourhood volunteer recruitment (generic letter inserted into mailboxes in areas where recipients live ‘help someone in your community’) | Potential volunteers are made aware of the program               | Jan-Feb 2008                                |
| n/a      | Data capture forms – to be used during telephone calls from potential service recipients and volunteers | Data is collected so it can be compiled, analyzed and used for future program planning | Forms in use by Nov 2007  
(Completed forms submitted to City by June 08) |

**NOTE:** HSR bus shelter ads and branded safety vests for Snow Angel volunteers, to be explored in 2009.
Hi, my name is [insert interviewer’s name]:

I am calling from Snow Angels and I am calling to ask your opinion about the services you received from Snow Angels this winter. Your answers will be kept confidential and will be added together with other survey answers in a report to the City of Hamilton. I need to inform you that you do not have to take this survey but if you agree to take the survey, it will help us to plan for next year’s winter season. You can choose to answer all of the questions or you may decide to skip some.

Would you have 10 minutes to be able to answer some survey questions over the phone that I will ask you?

Please check the **one** box below that applies to the client’s verbal consent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[If no, thank them for their time and hang up] or [If yes, proceed with survey]

Thank you for deciding to take the survey.

Please check the **one** box below that applies *without asking the client*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>What is your current status, are you a matched or unmatched client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unmatched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please check the one box below that applies without asking the client unless it is unclear

2. Gender

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check the one box below that applies by asking the client

3. I am going to list some age categories and you can tell me which one you belong in

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 39</td>
<td>Over 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check the one box below that applies for the number of seasons the client has been with Snow Angels?

4. How many winter seasons have you been a Snow Angel client?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check the one box below that applies by asking the client

5. How would you rate your Snow Angel snow removal for this season?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Type in client’s response to this question

If *fair to poor* please ask the client to explain why they felt that way?

Please check the **one** box below that applies by asking the client

6. **Are there times when there is someone else who helps clear your snow?**
   - Yes
   - No

Type in client’s response to this question

Can you comment about the **reliability** of someone else clearing your snow?

Please check all the **boxes** below that apply by asking the client

7. **Did you require your home to be cleared of snow because you needed the following services to have access to your home?**
   - Meals on Wheels
   - Paramedics
   - Personal Support Worker
   - Health Care
   - Emergency Medical Services
   - Therapist
   - Prescription Drug Store Delivery
Please type in client’s response to this question

Did you require your home to be cleared of snow for any other services that needed access to your home? If yes, ask the client what the other services were?

Type in client’s response to this question

Ask the client if there were any other reasons for their home to be clear of snow?

Type in client’s response to this question

8. What could Snow Angels do to service you better?

Please ask this question only for unmatched clients ONLY and all the boxes that apply by asking the client

9. What problems did you experience because you were not matched with a volunteer to clear your snow?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unable to leave home when it snowed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to have any visitors (e.g. Meals on Wheels, friends, Para meds) come to my home when it snowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelled medical appointments when it snowed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cancelled neighbourhood outings (e.g. going to the senior’s center or to visit a friend) when it snowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to run errands (e.g. groceries, banking) when it snowed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Felt cut off from my neighbourhood when it snowed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix E to Item 9 of E&CS Report 09-012**

**Page 39 of 51**

**Type in client’s response to this question**

Ask the client if there were **any other problems** they experienced because they were unable to have their snow cleared by a Snow Angel

**Please check the one box below that applies by asking the client**

10. Would you be interested in being a part of the Snow Angels Program again next year?

| Yes | ☐ | No | ☐ |

**Type in client’s response to this question**

11. Ask client if they have any other opinions or suggestions about Snow Angels?

________________________________________________________________________

Inform the caller who they can contact if they have any questions about the survey:

If you have any concerns about the survey, please contact Marion Trent-Kratz, City of Hamilton, at 905-546-2424 extension 6091.

**Thank the caller for taking the time to help us by agreeing to fill out a survey.**
April 28, 2009

Dear Snow Angels:

The City of Hamilton would like to get your feedback about your experience as a Snow Angel to assist with the planning for next year’s winter season.

Complete the attached survey to be eligible to win one of the following items:

- One $30 Gift card to Cineplex
- One $25 Bon Appetit Gift Card redeemable at Swiss Chalet, Montana’s, Kelsey’s, Harvey’s or Milestones restaurants
- One Change the World T-shirt - Value at $15
- Two Volunteer Hamilton silicon bracelets (one orange, one purple) valued at $2.50 each (total of $5)

The mail-in contest runs April 28 to May 15, 2009. Completed surveys must be received by May 15 to be entered into the prize draw.

The draw for prizes will take place on May 26, 2009. Winners will be contacted by telephone the week of June 1 to 5, 2009 by Volunteer Hamilton.

Winners must answer the following skill testing question correctly to claim their prize (2 x 4 + 10 x 3). The prize draw is only open to Volunteer Hamilton Snow Angels volunteers who complete the survey.

Your survey answers will:
- be kept confidential
- be compiled in a report with other volunteers’ feedback
- be kept separate from your contact information for the prizes
- not be seen by Volunteer Hamilton

What you need to do.
- You will need about 15 minutes to finish the survey.
- Each family member who volunteers is encouraged to complete their own survey.

Personal information received as part of the Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001 c.25 and will be used to enter names into the prize draw, determine eligibility and contact the five winning prize draw volunteers.

If you have any questions about the prize draw or survey, please contact Marion Trent-Kratz, Program Analyst, City of Hamilton, 1 Hughson St. North, 3rd floor, Hamilton, ON L8R 3L5 or by phone at 905-546-2424 extension 6091 or by email at Marion.TrentKratz@hamilton.ca

Thank you in advance for your participation in our Snow Angel Volunteer Feedback Survey.

Marion Trent-Kratz, Program Analyst
Community Services Department
City of Hamilton
Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey

1. How did you hear about Snow Angels?
(Select all that apply)

Newspaper
☐ Hamilton Spectator
☐ Hamilton Community News
☐ Other: ___________________________________________________________

Television
☐ CHCH TV
☐ Cable 14
☐ Other: __________________________________________________________

Radio
☐ CHML AM 900
☐ K-Lite FM 102.9
☐ Other: __________________________________________________________

Website
☐ City of Hamilton
☐ Volunteer Hamilton
☐ Inform Hamilton
☐ Snow Angels Facebook Group
☐ Other: __________________________________________________________

Other
☐ Pamphlet
☐ Poster
☐ Bus or bus shelter ad
☐ Volunteer Hamilton’s classroom presentation
☐ Word of mouth
☐ Other agency or youth group
☐ Other: __________________________________________________________
2. Why did you decide to be a Snow Angel? 
   (Select all that apply)
   - To earn community service hours for school
   - Chance to meet people and make friends
   - It allows me to volunteer with my family
   - My friends were Snow Angels
   - To learn new skills
   - Fits my personal beliefs
   - To help with my job/resume
   - To get a recognition letter for being a Snow Angel
   - It connected me with my interests/hobbies
   - I was already involved with Snow Angels
   - I wanted to give something back to my neighbourhood
   - Other:

3. How many homes did you clear snow for this winter? (Select one)
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - More than 7

4. What is the maximum number of times you went back to the same client’s home to clear snow for one snowfall? (Select one)
   - 1 time
   - 2 times
   - 3 times
   - 4 times
   - More than 5 times

5. How do you feel about the number of homes you had to clear snow for this winter? (Select one)
   - Too many
   - Just enough
   - Could have done more

Please provide any comments you have about the number of homes you had to clear snow for this winter:

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________
Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey continued...

6. Where did you clear snow at the clients' homes?  
(Select all that apply)

☐ Sidewalk in front of house
☐ Windrow (snow at end of driveway from plow)
☐ Pathways or doorstep to house
☐ Windows, ledges or roof overhangs
☐ Driveway
☐ High efficiency furnace venting
☐ Natural gas meter
☐ Other: ____________________________

7. Did you clear ice from clients' homes? (Select one)

☐ Yes          ☐ No

If yes, how did you clear ice from their homes?

8. What problems did you experience while clearing snow?  
(Select all that apply)

☐ No snow removal equipment
☐ Hurt while shoveling
☐ Sick/unwell
☐ Snow already removed
☐ Too much snow or heavy snow
☐ Dangerous weather conditions
☐ Other:

☐ Did not experience any problems

9. Volunteering made me feel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needed</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More confident about my skills</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like a leader in my neighbourhood</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like I want to be a Snow Angel next year</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interested in other volunteer activities</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please explain any other ways volunteering has made you feel.

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________
Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey continued...

10. Do you have any comments or suggestions about Volunteer Hamilton and your experiences with Snow Angels?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. Has the way you feel about volunteering changed since you started volunteering as a Snow Angel? Please explain why.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

12. Is there anything else you would like to add about Snow Angels that could improve the program?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey continued...

13. Please select your gender. (Select one)
   - Male
   - Female
   - Other

14. Please select your age range. (Select one)
   - 14-19
   - 20-24
   - 25-30
   - 31-34
   - 35-39
   - 40-44
   - 45-50
   - Over 50

If you would like to enter our contest for a chance to win one of 5 prizes, please provide your name and telephone number where you can be contacted. Your contact information is for the prize draw only and will not be connected in any way to your survey responses.

Name

Telephone

Skill testing question. $2 \times 4 + 10 \times 3 = \underline{_______}$

Personal information received as part of the Snow Angels Volunteer Feedback Survey is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c.25 and will be used to enter names into the prize draw, determine eligibility and contact the five winning prize draw volunteers. If you have any questions about the prize draw or survey, please contact Marlon Trent-Kratz, Program Analyst, City of Hamilton, 1 Hughson St. North, 3rd floor, Hamilton, ON L8R 3L5 or by phone at 905-546-2424 extension 6091 or by email at Marlon.TrentKratz@hamilton.ca.
Snow Angels:
A Strategy for a Vibrant and Caring Community

Prepared for Marion Trent-Kratz
Community Services Program Analyst
City of Hamilton
Community Services Department

By Volunteer Hamilton
May 11, 2009
**Introduction:**
The diagram on the cover of this report represents the three Volunteer Hamilton strategies and program streams designed to enhance our Vibrant and Caring Community. This diagram is presented in the corporate colours of the City of Hamilton and Volunteer Hamilton in order to illustrate the alignment of our corporate mandates to support our community.

The convergence of the circles with each other creates a space in which opportunity and development can occur. It’s in these spaces that outcomes and change can be achieved and measured. The Snow Angels program is integrated into the Volunteer Engagement sphere creating outcomes of both a vibrant volunteer base and individuals who evoke a chosen accountability for developing leaders in our community.

The intent of this document is to explore the value and impact of the Snow Angel program as funded by the City of Hamilton and implemented by Volunteer Hamilton. In order to do so, it is important to review the past two years of Volunteer Hamilton’s evolution as a means of establishing context.

**Context:**
In September 2007, after 45 years of operation, Volunteer Hamilton realized a new vision:

*All Lives Enriched Through Volunteerism*

This vision is lived through our mission:

*Volunteer Hamilton mobilizes community to embrace volunteerism*

Through:
- *advocating* the role and contribution of volunteerism
- *engaging* the community to stimulate innovative volunteer practices
- *developing* volunteerism through education and participation
- *educating* community organizations in the potential and contribution of volunteerism
- *linking* volunteer resources to community needs
- *celebrating* the volunteers in all their diversity that enrich our community

Our values are *Accessibility, Innovation & Responsible Relationships*

Our strategies for a Vibrant and Caring Community (as illustrated on the cover) will drive us to our new vision of *All Lives Enriched Through Volunteerism* and they include:

1) Volunteer Engagement: Our first goal is to engage volunteers from across a wider community perspective that includes new Canadians, youth, Gen Next and ‘Zoomers’. Each of these groups has their own specific reasons for volunteering. Whatever the motivation, these volunteers are all searching for a meaningful volunteer experience and
they want to have impact on their community. Collectively, they are described as the *New* volunteer.

2) **Agency Capacity** Our second strategy is the development of Agency Capacity. Volunteer Hamilton is an expert in the field of volunteer management. In short, our role is to assist our member agencies with organizational readiness in order to recruit and retain the *New* volunteer.

3) **Community Leadership Development.** The third VH strategy is our programming in Community Leadership Development. The outcome of this programming is to build up the pool of volunteers who become Board members and who engage in other leadership roles in the community.

The overall strategy hinges on our ability to first engage the *New* volunteer and the City of Hamilton through the Snow Angels program plays a pivotal role in our success.

**Pivotal Partnership:**

The vast majority of our nation’s volunteer base is populated by the ‘boomer’ generation – a generation that is now becoming the majority of individuals requiring the services of volunteers. *Are they to help themselves?* More so, the ‘face’ of our community is changing and so are its needs. As a Volunteer Centre we need to be reflective of our population and the community opportunities ahead.

Census data indicates that our city has a considerable percentage of its population over the age of 65 and that Hamilton is the 6th oldest city in Ontario according to 2006 census data with an average age of 39.9 (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census) based on the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which is comprised of Hamilton, Burlington, and Grimsby's populations. Of those 65+ years-of-age 48.5% live with spouse or partner without children, 25.5% live alone which means 74% of those over the at of 65 are still living in their own homes. Further, those who are 85+ 20.0% live with spouse or partner without children and 32% live alone which means 52% over 85 years-of-age are still living in their own homes. Homes in this circumstance are not defined as apartments or private dwellings but it does give us an idea of the sheer numbers of people who are older that may likely require some assistance as they age and predictions from Statistics Canada based on 2006 Census data is that this proportion of the population will continue to grow older, live longer, and that living in their own homes may be the only option due to supply and demand issues for nursing or senior residences.

The *New* volunteers are looking to be engaged around an opportunity that inspires a passion. The community in tandem is looking for volunteers that will choose to be accountable. Volunteer Hamilton’s role is to develop individuals along the volunteer continuum that starts with the simple giving-of-time and evolves into a volunteer leadership role.

Our strongest strategy in building-up our volunteer base is in the engagement of youth. Through the Snow Angels program we are able to bring youth as early as 14 years-old into the beginning
of that volunteer continuum. We do this through the “Value of Volunteering” workshop which features the Snow Angels program as a meaningful volunteer opportunity.

Over the past two years, Volunteer Hamilton staff and key volunteers have delivered the “Value of Volunteering” workshop to:
- 3,000 Grade 10, Civic and Career students
- 300 New Canadians through ESL (English as a Second Language) and SISO (Settlement & Integration Services Organization) programming
- 75 Literacy students through the WOW (World of Work) program

The Snow Angels program is integrated into our Volunteer Engagement strategy that reaches out to traditionally untapped segments of our community. This program as funded by the City of Hamilton and implemented by Volunteer Hamilton delivers on mutual missions.

City of Hamilton: We engage our citizens and promote a fair, diverse and accepting community.

Volunteer Hamilton: Engaging the community to stimulate innovative volunteer practices AND developing volunteerism through education and participation AND linking volunteer resources to community need.

Over the course of the partnership between the City of Hamilton and Volunteer Hamilton, Snow Angels staff has provided quantitative measures regarding volunteers and clients. This document outlines some of the qualitative impacts of the program, its value to community and how it further translates into our mutual organizational mandates.

Snow Angel Impact on Community:
- Creates a sense of community and neighbourhood: Snow Angels encourages direct civic involvement through service to neighbours. It gives those neighbours the peace of mind that someone is watching over them.

- Engages volunteers in meaningful service: The service is provided on a caring and empathetic level. The Snow Angels volunteer knows that through their contribution potentially marginalized individuals continue to have access to vital services during the winter months.

- Provides customer service and direct connections: Snow Angels offer outreach to service recipients by contacting them and by being that “friendly voice”. We help solve snow removal issues by accepting the client into the Snow Angels program or by providing alternative solutions in the case of ineligibility. The Snow Angels program provides clients with human contact and care.

- Provides access and removes barriers: The “extras” that Snow Angels volunteer do (snow removal beyond just the sidewalks) allows vital services such as Meals on Wheels, Homecare, visiting nurses and DARTS access to the client. Many essential services will not put their own staff or volunteers at risk if the residence is snowed-in.
Puts Hamilton on the map as a city that cares: Other communities such as Guelph, Oakville, Mississauga, and Seattle and Colorado in the United States have sought out the advice of Volunteer Hamilton to form their own Snow Angels Programs. The City of Hamilton is viewed as a “City that Cares” and as a leader in Senior Care and Accessibility. The following is a quote from the Executive Director of Volunteer Guelph Wellington.

“Volunteer Hamilton provided crucial assistance to us as we embarked on creating a Snow Angels program in our community. They allowed us to consult with key staff, and they provided us with documentation, reporting mechanisms and core messages. Their help in launching our program in a short period of time has been one of the keys to our success.”

- Cathy Taylor

Volunteer Power:

- **No timeframe limits:** Volunteers are not constrained by contracts and they are ready for the entire season, beginning with the first snow fall and ending with the last snow fall.

- **No machinery:** Volunteers do the work by hand and take care to do a thorough job. They are able to provide “extras” such as clearing access to backyards, clearing snow around high-efficiency furnace vents and gas meters.

- **Service as needed:** A volunteer uses their own judgment and removes snow when they feel there is enough accumulation to impede the mobility of a senior, or an individual that requires use of a cane, walker or wheelchair. Volunteers will often return to their client’s address more than once during a 24-hour time period.

- **Capacity for on-call or emergency snow-clearing:** Some Snow Angels provide on-call or emergency snow-clearing services for extenuating circumstances.

Snow Angels Deliver Mission:
The Snow Angels program is a living example of how the City delivers on its service mandates.

**City of Hamilton:**
We provide high quality services in a fiscally and socially responsible, environmentally sustainable and compassionate manner in order to ensure a healthy, safe and prosperous community.

*and by extension through Volunteer Hamilton staff and Snow Angels Volunteers*

We are a skilled, knowledgeable, collaborative and respectful organization that thrives on innovation and quality customer service.
The Snow Angels program is first and foremost designed to serve seniors and persons living with disabilities - allowing them to remain in their homes with dignity. Program statistics provide a one-dimensional assessment of success and growing service need. The intrinsic value of the program is lived out in organizational vision, mission and values. The quality of the program is reflected in its impact on the volunteers, the service recipients and how it creates community capacity. The Snow Angels program is an effective strategy in creating a Vibrant and Caring Community.