

Project Agreement - CityLAB Semester in Residence Fall 2023

Due Date: Draft Due Thursday September 21, Final Document Due Thursday September 28

Introduction: The role of the project agreement is to document the expectations for the project, define objectives, clarify constraints or limitations, and outline responsibilities to ensure clarity for the project. Students are responsible for ensuring that all sections of this agreement are complete, with the knowledge that this agreement will be referenced throughout the semester. This agreement will form the structure of the final academic report.

Project Summary (50-100 words describing your project at a high level):

We aim to collect relevant information, such as survey and census data, to create a report that addresses the absence of a maximum heat by-law in Hamilton, and the impacts this has on residents, specifically for low to middle-income tenants in apartment buildings. We will investigate policies in other jurisdictions and combine this with Hamilton-specific data to create comprehensive recommendations to present to Hamilton's City Council. Furthermore, we hope to equip affected tenants and their allies with the education and resources to advocate for their human rights, as this pertains to their health and wellbeing.

Project Team (ACORN)

Students: Alex, Victoria, Helena, Ayesha, Surbhi

Project Advisors (please note here 2 or 3 of our advisors who you feel may be most relevant to your project): Olivia, Randy, Kojo, Bohmee, Hannah

Project Overview (to be informed by working directly with project advisors and CityLAB SIR teaching team)

Context (100 words or less)

Between 2051-2080, it is estimated that 60 days annually will be over 30 degrees. As heatwaves become more regular, tenants without reliable access to cooling are left at higher risk of heat-related death and illness. Currently, there is no maximum heat by-law in Hamilton amidst the ever-increasing summer temperatures. ACORN Hamilton advocates for the interests of low to moderate-income tenants; the most pertinent being the sweltering temperatures in their units. Unfortunately, many landlords prioritize profits over the health and well-being of their tenants, add AC-related fees, raise costs, and suggest impractical solutions such as moving.

Problem (100 words or less)

Since 2022, tenants have advocated for extreme heat awareness and its subsequent risks. Considering that the demographic of low and moderate-income residents is more likely to work in physical labour, be recent immigrants, and be at greater risk of health issues, their right for safe and affordable homes has not been addressed by the City despite campaigns by ACORN Hamilton since July 2022. Often, landlords make air conditioning (AC) inaccessible to tenants through tactics including imposing additional fees for installment. Proposed solutions such as cooling centres are inequitable as they have limited accessibility and only provide short-term relief.

Design Challenge (50 words or less): How might we.....

How might we propose an actionable, strategic plan to Hamilton City Council to address the lack of appropriate cooling in Hamilton apartment buildings in hopes of

protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of a vulnerable, Hamilton tenant population?

In Scope (what fits within the resources and time we have available for this project?)

- We hope to create and conduct a survey that will supplement ACORN Hamilton's previously collected data on the impacts of extreme heat for tenants. This survey will provide data on access to air conditioning and cooling needs of tenants across Hamilton.
- Our group will additionally research what other municipalities are doing, have done, or have proposed doing to confront extreme heat, including Toronto, New Westminster, BC, and others.
- Based on our research we aim to create comprehensive, evidence-based recommendations to present to the City of Hamilton to protect and promote healthy living conditions for tenants.
- After taking inspiration from the free three-year air-conditioning pilot program currently happening in British Columbia, we hope to investigate whether or not this could be an effective, short-term solution that Hamilton could implement as well.
- Additionally, we hope to spread information via (social) media to raise awareness and support the maximum heat by-law in Hamilton

Out of Scope (what doesn't fit within the resources and time we have available for this project?)

- While we aim to collect preliminary data and engage/provide incentives for tenants to participate in our survey, we do not have the capability or resources to comprehensively

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| | <p>survey/hear from all affected tenants nor to ensure that we will get enough responses to ensure we have a sample that accurately represents Hamilton's tenant population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to the short term nature of CityLAB, seeing long-term projects through to completion will not be feasible. This includes seeing a maximum heat bylaw enacted or seeing substantial utilization of federal and provincial programs for retrofits. We hope, however, that our work helps perpetuate these solutions to eventually come to fruition. |
| <p>Goals (what are three to five objectives that this project will aim to achieve within the semester)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct research and analysis on proposed or enacted maximum heat solutions in other municipalities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. This includes directly reaching out to advocacy organizations and stakeholders in other municipalities 2. Conduct a survey targeting low-moderate income tenants in Hamilton to hear qualitatively about the conditions in these units and the impact on their daily living 3. Synthesize collected information and research to produce a report for the City of Hamilton, which includes evidence-based recommendations. 4. Creating a final summary of our report to be distributed to tenants and the general public, aiming to be as clear and digestible as possible. 5. Humanizing and fostering empathy for the affected tenants and inspiring other community members to be allies and participate in finding and implementing solutions |
| <p>Background Research (what research will be)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research the social, economic, and health impacts of extreme heat from existing research and past ACORN reports, focusing on individuals living in un-air-conditioned apartments. |

required to pursue the challenge)

- Research what other jurisdictions are doing (or not doing) about extreme heat and lack of air conditioning.
 - Investigate what barriers have come up in different jurisdictions
 - In the jurisdictions that have succeeded in enacting short-term and/or long-term solutions, investigate what factors have made these campaigns successful.
- Examine the progress of ACORN Hamilton's "Beat the Heat" campaign so far
 - Identify the successes and barriers of the campaign
 - Gain context on ACORN's demands via the September 2022 ["Beat the Heat" report](#).
- Review ACORN Hamilton's Summer 2022 tenant survey.
 - Review the questions asked and the survey results to determine what questions to ask on the next survey.
 - Examine how ACORN publicized the 2022 survey, and investigate strategies we can employ to increase engagement on the next survey.
- Examine a heat map to understand the vulnerability of different areas to extreme heat to provide context for the report.
- Look into municipal and provincial heating and retrofitting policies
 - Investigate whether any policies prevent maximum heat bylaws, or if any policies might support a heat bylaw
 - Examine municipal and provincial retrofitting policies; whether these policies pose any barriers to improving cooling in apartment buildings; and if there are any grants/bursaries for retrofitting

Relevant Stakeholders

(Who are the key stakeholders that might be engaged in this process - *note that you are not expected to know all stakeholders at this point, but rather to begin thinking critically about who to engage)

- Tenant Boards and Neighbourhood Associations
 - Beasley Neighbourhood Association
 - Crown Point Neighbourhood Association
 - Davis Creek Community Planning Team
 - GALA Community Planning Team
 - Keith Community Hub
 - McQuesten Planning Team
 - Riverdale Community Planning Team
 - Rolston Neighbourhood, Sherman Hub
 - Stinson Community Association
- ICLEI Canada
- City of Hamilton
 - City Planners and Staff (Monica Ciriello - Director of Licensing and Bylaw Services, Matthew Lawson - Manager of Hamilton Public Health)
 - City Council¹ (Andrea Horwath, **Ward 1 - Maureen Wilson, Ward 2 - Cameron Kroetsch, Ward 3 - Nrinder Nann, Ward 4 - Tammy Hwang, Ward 5 - Matt Francis, Ward 6 - Tom Jackson, Ward 7 - Esther Pauls, Ward 8 - John-Paul Danko, Ward 9 - Brad Clark, Ward 10 - Jeff Beatie, Ward 11 - Mark Tadeson, Ward 12 - Craig Cassar, Ward 13 - Alex Wilson, Ward 14 - Mike Spadafora, Ward 15 - Ted McMeekin)**
 - Climate Change Department (Lynda Lukasik)*
- Hamilton Building Owners/Managers/Developers and Landlord
 - City Housing and Subsidized Housing Department of City of Hamilton, Effort Trust
- ACORN Hamilton (Olivia O'Connor)
- ACORN Hamilton Elected Chairs and Tenant Members (Liz Scott, Veronica Gonzalez, Marnie Schurter, Christine Neale, Ted Plastaras, Stewart Klazinga)
- Public Health (Hamilton Public Health, Public Health Ontario, Public Health Agency of Canada,

Health Canada, Canadian Public Health Association, Office of the Chief Coroner)

- Canadian Environmental Law Association (Jacqueline Wilson)*
- Environment Hamilton (Ian Borsuk)*
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic (Maria and Clare)*
- City Staff and Council in cities comparable to Hamilton and are further in the process of implementing a maximum heat bylaw (Mississauga, ON, New Westminister, BC and Montgomery County, MD)*
 - Mississauga: John Kovac, Sam Rogers (Director in Enforcement)
 - New Westminister: Nadine Nakagawa, Tasha Henderson, Brook Jensen (New Westminister Tenants Union Organizer), Michael Schwandt (Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officer), Sarah Henderson (BC Centre for Disease Control Environmental Health Services Scientific Director), BC ACORN Leaders
 - Montgomery: Matt Losak (Montgomery County Renters Alliance Executive) County Council President and all Council Members (county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov)

*As advised by project supervisor, Olivia O'Connor.

¹Ward Councillors bolded will be the prioritized focus of research due to greater rates of low and moderate-income populations within.

Pursuing Equity Diversity and Inclusion

(What are the key EDI considerations needed for this work? Are there equity deserving groups or voices missing from this work? What are the voices or groups we are already hearing from?)

What barriers or power imbalances need to be addressed?)

What are the internal/external decisions and philosophies you will be using to adhere to anti-racism & anti-oppression?

- Considering accessibility when engaging with residents
 - Advertising through multiple platforms.
 - Offering online and in-person options for engagement.
 - Creating opportunities for engagement in different languages.
- Maintaining a recognition of EDI when conducting research and creating recommendations. Some EDI considerations include:
 - Language/cultural barriers
 - Socioeconomic positions
 - Gender barriers
 - Disability
 - Age
 - Power imbalances: Often present between landlords, government employees, and tenants
- Ensuring the voices of equity-deserving groups such as low-income tenants, new immigrants, and tenants with a disability are included in our research and final product. This may include, for example, making a specific effort to advertise in spaces occupied by these groups.

Practising letting go of biases and having an open mind during any dialogue, meeting, or group session within the team or with an outside individual.

External Philosophies

- “What happens in ACORN, stays in ACORN”
 - Agreement to keep sensitive information private, especially if it puts anyone at risk of endangerment
 - Ensuring safety about information collected/shared
 - Keeping up promise to cease further interaction if person being spoken to seems uncomfortable, is in danger, or

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| | <p>verbally/non-verbally does not consent to sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect anyone’s wishes to remain anonymous without questioning - <u>“We are here for everyone and anyone”</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessible childcare if meeting with a parent - Food provided that accounts for dietary needs and restriction - Accessibility to meet online or in-person <p>Internal Philosophies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>“Don't let your first thought be your last thought”</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leave your assumptions at the door and challenge them - Open up floor for continual feedback - <u>“Equitable engagement > Equal output”</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being mindful that everyone has different ways of being involved in a team - Careful to not place value on someone based on their level of output |
| <p>Timelines (What needs to be done during Phase 2, Phase 3, and Phase 4 of the semester)</p> | <p>Phase 2: Sept 18 - Oct 6 (Research and Development Phase)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group Orientation (Sept 18-Sept 22): - Obtaining foundational knowledge and researching the perspectives behind key issues from different stakeholders <p>Phase 3: Oct 16 - Nov 17 (Ideation and Creation Phase)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a holistic understanding municipal systems required to propose ACORN’s issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eg. Process of passing a by-law - Conduct survey - Have a clear plan in who our audience is and how we will present information |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eg. Social media advertising campaigns, raising awareness to ACORN's causes - Outline and draft of report <p>Phase 4: Nov 20 - Dec 8 (Consolidation and Synthesis Phase)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wrapping up and synthesize all our learning and discoveries to be communicated externally - Established advertising campaign of report and simplifying it to be understood by the general public - Finalize report that is to be used before City Council |
| <p>Deliverables (what are the anticipated tangible outputs/outcomes that will be achieved by Phase 4)^[1]</p> | <p>Anticipated Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results of the survey of tenants throughout Hamilton. - A report presented to Hamilton City Council that provides a comprehensive overview of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The impacts of extreme heat on low-income tenants, - Findings from other municipalities, - Results of tenant survey, - Recommendations for the council, including the implementation of a maximum heat bylaw. - An educational and accessible resource for tenants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary of report in accessible terminology, published in multiple languages if possible. <p>Anticipated Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attention and support from government officials - More involvement from community members (tenants' group) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive feedback from ACORN and tenants |
| <p>Resources (What resources, if any, are available to pursue this project – e.g. staff time, budget)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CityLAB and ACORN Staff Time - Internet and scholarly literature access - Connections to stakeholders - ACORN Hamilton will provide printing and office space to work - Canva Pro and access to ACORN’s social media for outreach purposes |
| <p>Risk (What are some possible risks of this project? How might these risks be mitigated/addressed if they arise?)</p> | <p>Increasing Housing/Utility Costs: The ultimate goal of our report is to prompt City Council to introduce a maximum heat bylaw. If landlords are forced to introduce air conditioning as a result of this bylaw, housing or utility costs may rise due to additional amenities. This especially puts low-income tenants at risk. When making recommendations to the City Council, we must explicitly share concerns about raising tenant costs unreasonably and recommend that the bylaw will prohibit landlords from raising prices unreasonably as a result of implementing proper cooling methods.</p> <p>Bias resulting from insufficient engagement with stakeholders: We may encounter low engagement and response rates from tenants, which may introduce bias into our research. Though, we hope this is not the case, we will mention this in our final report and consider what biases may have been introduced into our data. Furthermore, we want to note that ACORN Hamilton conducted a city-wide survey in the summer of 2022 and was only able to ascertain ~200 responses. Although unfavourable, we will assess the 2023 and 2022 data and see what would make sense to include in our report for this project. We hope to use our primary research, we may revert to secondary research as we see fit and if appropriate. Secondly, we may struggle to effectively</p> |

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| | <p>communicate with other stakeholders, and we will seek assistance from CityLAB staff for strategies and support.</p> |
| <p>Learning Objectives (What does your team want to learn through this process?)</p> | <p>We have identified multiple learning objectives that we hope to achieve throughout this semester, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding how the policy-making process works at a municipal level - Understanding how to create continuity plans for a project that is still in progress - Practicing truly empathising and mindfully conversing with the diverse perspectives of the many stakeholders involved - Understanding how to network and incentivize crowds to successfully reach a large group of people to participate (surveys, interviews, etc.) |
| <p>How we will work together?</p> | <p>Meeting Frequency and Process (How often will we meet? How will we delegate tasks? How will we share and rotate meeting roles?):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We plan to meet as a group a minimum of once a week in afternoon work periods. - We plan to have bi-weekly meetings with our community partner, regularly meeting Thursdays at 1:00 pm. - Tasks will be delegated by consulting with team members on personal availability in the upcoming weeks, and referring to the skills chart in the project team agreement. Based on this, team members will volunteer for specific tasks they would like to take on; multiple team members may collaborate together if multiple team members would like to perform a task. - If there is a task no one volunteers for team members will discuss who is best suited based on |

individual skill sets, or a random name will be drawn.

Communication (How will we stay in touch? What platform will we use to share files, manage deadlines, etc.):

- We will be using a WhatsApp group chat as a primary form of communication outside of class as well as a forum for our virtual meetings
- A shared folder on google drive will be used to access shared files.
- We will communicate with our community partner through email outside of our bi-weekly meetings.
- Deadlines will be managed on an excel sheet found in the shared google drive, and upcoming deadlines will be reviewed at weekly team meetings.

Conflict Resolution (How will we address challenges as they arise?):

- Provided in more detail to scenarios addressed in Project Team Agreement signed by group members.

Principles of Community Engagement (What principles will guide our work?):

As a group, we shall agree to work in such a way that ultimately benefits the growth and wellness of each individual on our team. This entails that we are grounded in empathy towards the needs of one another, and will remain open to learning from each other. We will respect each person's unique ability to contribute, meaningfully consider each other's ideas, and focus on fostering a safe team environment alongside the development of our collaborative project. We will try our best to give constructive feedback to each other when needed.

Principles of Equity Diversity and Inclusion (How will we reflect a commitment to EDI within our work together as a group?):

As discussed in detail (above) under internal/external philosophies of EDI:

- "What happens in ACORN, stays in ACORN"
- "We are here for everyone and anyone"
- "Don't let your first thought be your last thought"
- "Equitable engagement > Equal output"

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| Roles | Students: Alex, Ayesha, Helena, Surbhi, Victoria |
| | Instructors: Randy, Kojo, Liz, Darina |
| | Project Advisors: Olivia, Bohmee, Hannah |

[1] <https://www.bmc.com/blogs/outcomes-vs-outputs/>