



2021-  
2022

# CITYLAB HAMILTON ANNUAL REPORT



Celebrating  
**5 years of  
CityLAB &  
Looking  
Forward to  
the Future**



## Contents

How CityLAB Started..... 2

How It's Going..... 3

Program Analysis..... 4

Recommendations Report..... 6

Looking Ahead..... 8

Strategic Planning..... 10

Appendix: 2021-2022 Projects... 11

# How CityLAB Started

CityLAB Hamilton launched in 2017 as a 3-year pilot, later extended to May 2022, as a collaborative model developed jointly by Hamilton's post-secondary institutions (McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Redeemer University) and the City of Hamilton. These parties recognized a need to engage students directly in the work of city-building, by kick-starting CityLAB as a place for innovation, collaboration, and experiential learning.

Over the last 5 years, CityLAB's various projects & partnerships have worked to make Hamilton a more vibrant, healthy, and sustainable city. The program benefits have been proven reciprocal for all involved: students, academic institutions, the City, and the broader community.

## Our Vision

To provoke students and city leadership to inspire, energize, and build a healthy, sustainable, and vibrant Hamilton.

## Our Mission

CityLAB is an innovation hub that brings together student, academic, and civic leaders to co-create a better Hamilton for all.



Artist: Pam Hubbard, 2017

Each institution benefits uniquely from this partnership:

- Students gain real-world skills, a connection to the city and additional employment opportunities after graduation
- Post-secondary schools can provide experiential learning opportunities for students while building networks across disciplines and institutions; and
- City of Hamilton staff are exposed to new ideas that support the City’s strategic priorities, strengthen networks across industries, and can mentor future leaders.

# How It’s Going

Since 2017,



have co-created **159 Projects** & contributed **61,250 student hours** to building a more vibrant, healthy, and sustainable Hamilton.

CityLAB has hosted **9 project showcases:** 5 in-person and 4 virtually.



## Projects Include...



Designing a BIPOC entrepreneurship program with community input



Creating a resource kit & FAQ guidebooks for immigrant CityHousing tenants



Analyzing municipal voter demographic data & strategizing to improve voting equity

For a full list of 2021-2022 CityLAB projects, see page 11.

# Program Analysis

## What we have heard from Students, Faculty & Staff

An analysis of 2017-2021 survey data from students, faculty, and City staff was completed by Elise Desjardins in 2021.

### Students

In pre- and post term surveys, several students discussed how the most significant change in their learning was that they recognized *their ability to make or contribute to change in their communities*, and to *work collaboratively with diverse peers*. Finally, the nature and process of the projects they worked on gave some students experience *working in the “real world”* and taught them *how to be flexible and adapt to unexpected changes* throughout project development.

“I received an opportunity to learn about the history of the City, current state of municipal politics, policies, and governance, demographics of different neighbourhoods, and initiatives being led by residents and City staff.”

“The level of caring does change, it’s not the same when you just care about marks than caring about the lives of real people, and how you will actually be impacting that. Then you get serious and think deeply about how to make that impact positive, effective, and long lasting.”

Several students recommended *more guidance or support from City staff* and CityLAB instructors. One student suggested:

“Give the class some ideas of what was previously suggested to get us on the right track and also to get us to make solutions that could be more innovative. [This would] avoid suggesting the same solution over and over again.”





# Faculty & Staff

## *Students' understanding & knowledge of local issues was the most significant change*

Staff and faculty also highlighted how CityLAB Hamilton gave students the opportunity to gain real-world experience.

"For students: becoming aware of the complexities and challenges of addressing real-world problems (it's a lot harder than it looks!)"

## *Shift in students' mindset or outlook*

One staff or faculty touched upon several other changes:

"Students were made aware of issues affecting the community and given an opportunity to support future change. They were able to look beyond their own experiences."

## *Mixed responses regarding "immediate" wins for the City of Hamilton*

Nearly half of staff and faculty indicated that there were no "immediate" wins or that they were unsure. However, some staff indicated that the CityLAB projects led to **time or cost savings**. Tangible and intangible benefits were highlighted, including the cost savings:

"New ways of online dialogue. Reports that will inform the next steps for city strategic priorities. High quality background research. All of this would have equated to hundreds of thousands of dollars in expenses if a consultant were hired."

## *Tangible benefits*

Other project-specific **benefits** resulted from CityLAB work including:

"two new types of programs and some valuable research that our staff wouldn't have had the time to create"

"immediate accessibility changes"

"more affordable housing units"

## *Intangible benefits*

Staff and faculty highlighted that their CityLAB project led to intangible benefits such as **new insights, knowledge, or ideas**, as well as **support provided to an ongoing project**. One City staff highlighted:

"It was innovative in that the research done was by students, not a consulting company, and the ideas presented were unique and well thought out."

"[The project was] multi-phased, but we do anticipate that tangible benefits will result upon full completion."

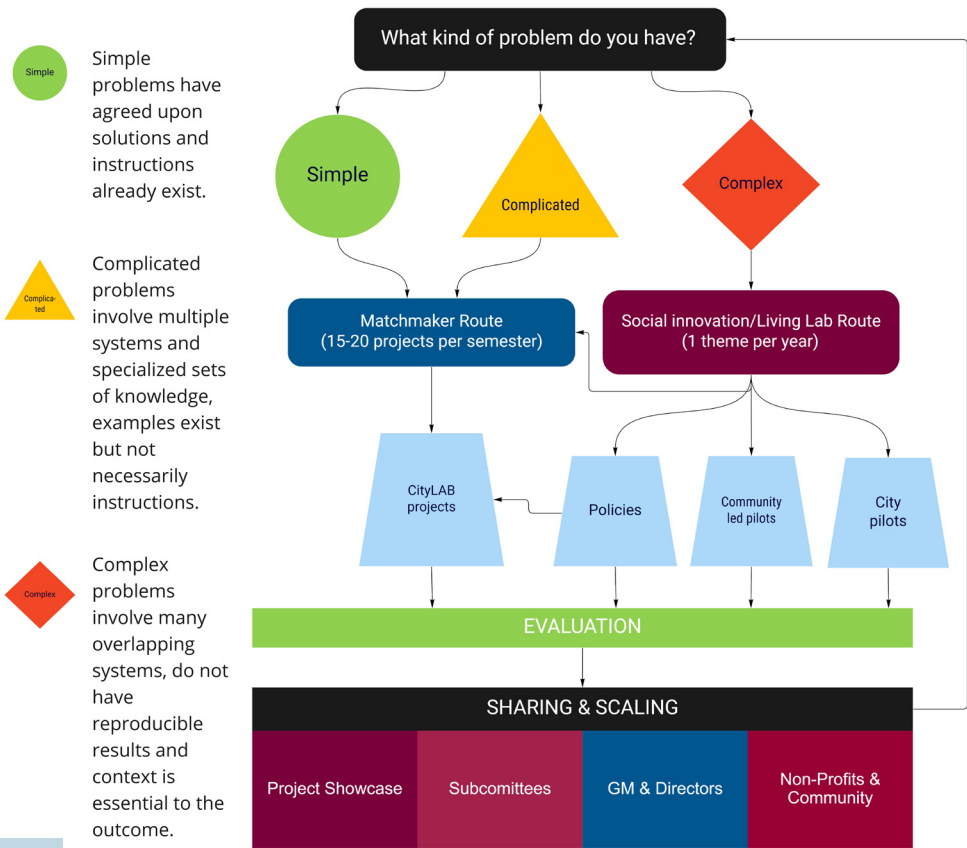
# Looking Ahead

## Social Innovation Program: Living Lab

Building on the success of the program to date, and the direction from Steering Committee in designing and budgeting for the permanent program, CityLAB is testing how a social innovation stream can be added in to complement our existing project matching work.

### CityLAB Challenge Framework

CityLAB gathered key representatives from each school and the City to take part in a workshop co-hosted by the Tamarack Institute and Maison de l’Innovation Social (MIS) called “Living Labs: A Place-Based Innovation Approach” on March 3, 2022 to explore the social innovation approach and how it might apply within our context.



# What is a social innovation lab?

A social innovation lab brings together stakeholders to collaboratively address complex and multi-faceted challenges in the community using a design thinking and systemic design model.

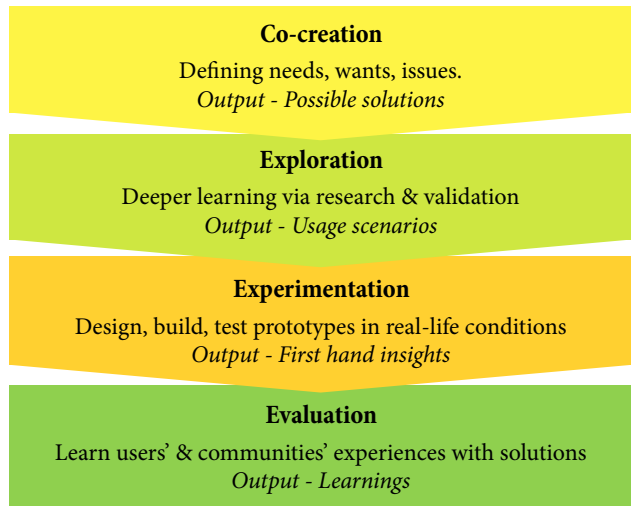
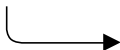


## Some features of a social innovation lab:

- Facilitated & curated gatherings that intentionally create space for differing opinions & interests
- Focused on designing & creating processes that bring forward innovative ideas and thinking
- Bring together different users and perspectives early in order to produce results that generate real impact and have buy-in from stakeholders

## The Living Lab Process

Each stage of the project will involve collaboration between stakeholders.



## 2022 Theme: Housing & Homelessness

In 2022, CityLAB will run a pilot social innovation lab in partnership with relevant staff across the City of Hamilton, citizens, non-profits, private businesses, and other stakeholders as relevant to the theme of affordable housing. While the Semester in Residence program will anchor this work by embedding it within the curriculum for the Fall 2022 program, the approach will be designed to include both concurrent learning opportunities and subsequent projects that could be taken up as distinct challenges by academic and community partners.



# 2021-2022 Projects

## By Institution

In the 2021-2022 school year, students, faculty and City staff collaborated on a total of 26 projects across McMaster, Mohawk, and Redeemer.



### Mohawk College

[Measuring Community Trust: Environmental Monitoring](#)

[Parking for a Modern City \(HEAD competition\)](#)

[Enhancing Wi-Fi User Experience at HPL](#)

[HSR Schedule Adherence](#)



### Semester In Residence

[LRT, For the Community](#)

[Cycling towards improved Community Engagement](#)

[Who are we Building Cities For?](#)

[Voice Your Vote!](#)



### McMaster University

[The Beyond Care: Digital Innovation in Long-Term Care Facilities](#)

[Recommending sustainable parking and alternative transportation solutions for McMaster University](#)

[Responding to Hamilton's Opioid Crisis](#)

[CityLAB Framework - Independent Study](#)

[Developing a Community Safety Model](#)

[Parking for a Modern City](#)

[BIPOC Entrepreneurship in Hamilton](#)

[Hamilton's History, Today](#)

[Breaking Barriers in Firefighting](#)



### Redeemer University

[Human Centered Design at CityHousing - Newcomers](#)

[Renovictions](#)

[Device Training & Education](#)

[Device Accessibility Recycling Program](#)

[Responding to Hamilton's Opioid Crisis](#)

[Human Centered Design at CityHousing - Seniors](#)

[BIPOC Entrepreneurship in Hamilton](#)

[Bridging the Digital Divide](#)

[Reaching More Voters](#)