

East End Neighbourhood Asset Mapping

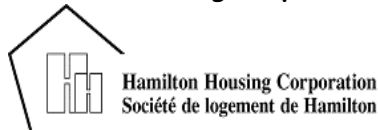
January 2005

Funded by:
National Crime Prevention Strategy,
Community Mobilization Program
Government of Canada



Canada

In Partnership with:
Hamilton Housing Corporation



Prepared by:
Jeff Wingard,
Senior Social Planner

Maps Prepared by:
Sandy Shaw,
Senior Social Planner

Social Planning & Research Council

SPRC
of Hamilton

162 King William Street, Suite 103, Hamilton Ontario L8R 3N9
Tel: 905-522-1148 Fax: 905-522-9124
Email: sprc@sprc.hamilton.on.ca Website: www.sprc.hamilton.on.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
2.0	COMMUNITY MAPS.....	2
	Map 1: Location of Housing Developments within Municipal Wards 4 &5.....	2
	Map 2: Community Services in Former City of Hamilton.....	3
	Map 3: Community Services in Wards 4 & 5.....	4
	Map 4: Incidence of Low Income by Ward.....	5
	Map 5: Recent Immigration Wards 4 & 5.....	6
	2.1 Key Findings from the Maps.....	7
3.0	RESULTS OF THE SURVEY.....	8
	3.1 Limitations of the Survey.....	8
	3.2 Community Assets.....	9
	3.2.1 Positive Aspects of the Neighbourhoods.....	9
	3.2.2 Citizen Engagement.....	10
	3.2.3 Potential for Community Mobilization.....	11
	3.3 Community Challenges.....	12
	3.3.1 Neighbourhood Attachment.....	12
	3.3.2 Social Issues.....	12
	3.3.3 Discrimination.....	14
	3.4 What Does the Neighbourhood Need?.....	15
4.0	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.....	16
	4.1 Meeting with Tenants.....	16
	4.1.1 Approach & Results.....	16
	4.1.2 A Success.....	16
	4.1.3 Key Issues for Meetings with Tenants.....	17
	4.2 Meeting with Community Stakeholders.....	18
	4.2.1 A Success.....	18
	4.2.2 Key Issues from Meeting with Community Stakeholders.....	18
	4.2.3 Community Strengths.....	19
	4.2.4 Community Challenges.....	19
	4.3 Summary of Community Development.....	19
5.0	ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	20
	5.1 Crime-Related Activity.....	20
	5.2 Recreation.....	20
	5.3 Social Exclusion.....	20
	5.4 A Role for the Larger Institutions & Community Services.....	21
	5.5 Implications for Community Development and Participation.....	21

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report will outline the key findings of the East End Neighbourhood Asset Mapping and Community Capacity Building project that was funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre, and implemented by a number of community partners: the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC), Hamilton Housing Corporation, Community Action Program for Children (CAPC), Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Community Access to Child Health (CATCH), and the STAR program. This project took place from April 2003 - August 2004.

The objectives of this project were:

- to identify neighbourhood assets and challenges for six different geographical areas in East Hamilton;
- to promote leadership development and community partnerships as a means to planning and implementing appropriate services; and
- to evaluate, report, and develop means of sustaining the project.

The subsidized housing developments where this project focuses has high rates of resident turnover, with evictions and requests for transfers based on a range of social problems. In a recent study conducted by the Hamilton Housing Corporation, 56% of tenants surveyed reported a "poor" or "fair" sense of community (based on a 4 point scale).

The area is extremely culturally diverse as well, with a high proportion of recent immigrants and refugees. Many of these recent immigrants face additional barriers such as racism, language barriers, foreign credentials that aren't recognized in Canada, lack of familiarity with community resources, difficulty securing employment, etc.

The poverty rate in this area of Hamilton is higher than most other areas of Hamilton at approximately 26%. There have been several crime related events in these areas that have received significant local media attention: a shooting at Quigley Road near the St. Andrew's neighbourhood in 2001, and various gang related events from 2001 - 2002.

In addition to this project, there have been several other responses from the community including:

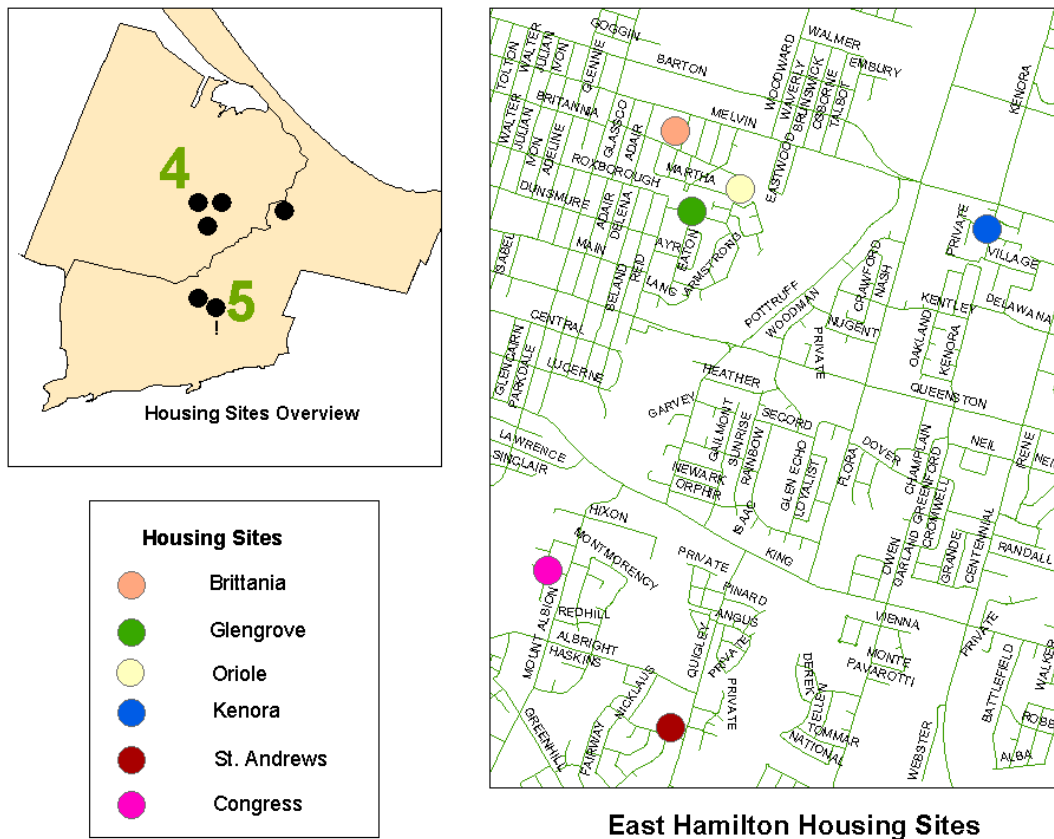
- The development of the Martha Movers Neighbourhood Cares program - a homeowner group organized to prevent crime, similar to a Neighbourhood Watch program.
- A community development initiative by the Hamilton Community Foundation to organize and empower several of the neighbourhoods.
- Expansion and relocation of the Community Access to Child Health Resource Office into one of the neighbourhoods.
- Support for the STAR recreation program to increase access to recreation for some of these neighbourhoods.

This report is organized into four sections. The first section examines several maps of the area that have been developed using GIS technology. The second section describes the tenant survey that was carried out with 252 tenants in the six different neighbourhoods. The third section summarizes the community development work that was carried out over the life of the project. The final section offers some analysis and conclusions about the impact of the project, challenges, and further opportunities.

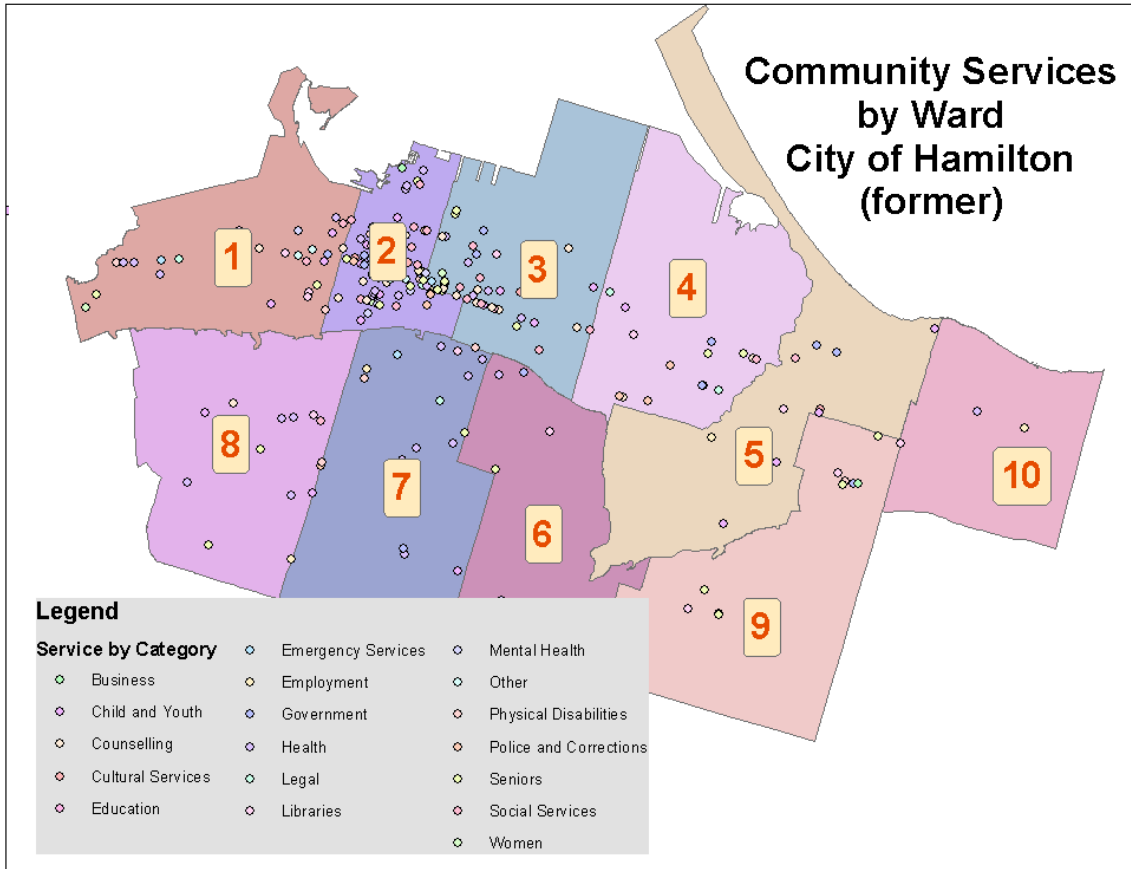
2.0 COMMUNITY MAPS

One aspect of this project utilized GIS mapping technology to conduct a brief analysis of issues facing these six neighbourhoods. There were several maps generated for this project. The first map displays the locations of the neighbourhoods relative to local political wards 4 & 5. The second and third maps display community services and organizations for the City of Hamilton and for Wards 4 & 5. The third map looks at levels of poverty in the neighbourhoods, and the final map looks at levels of immigration by neighbourhoods.

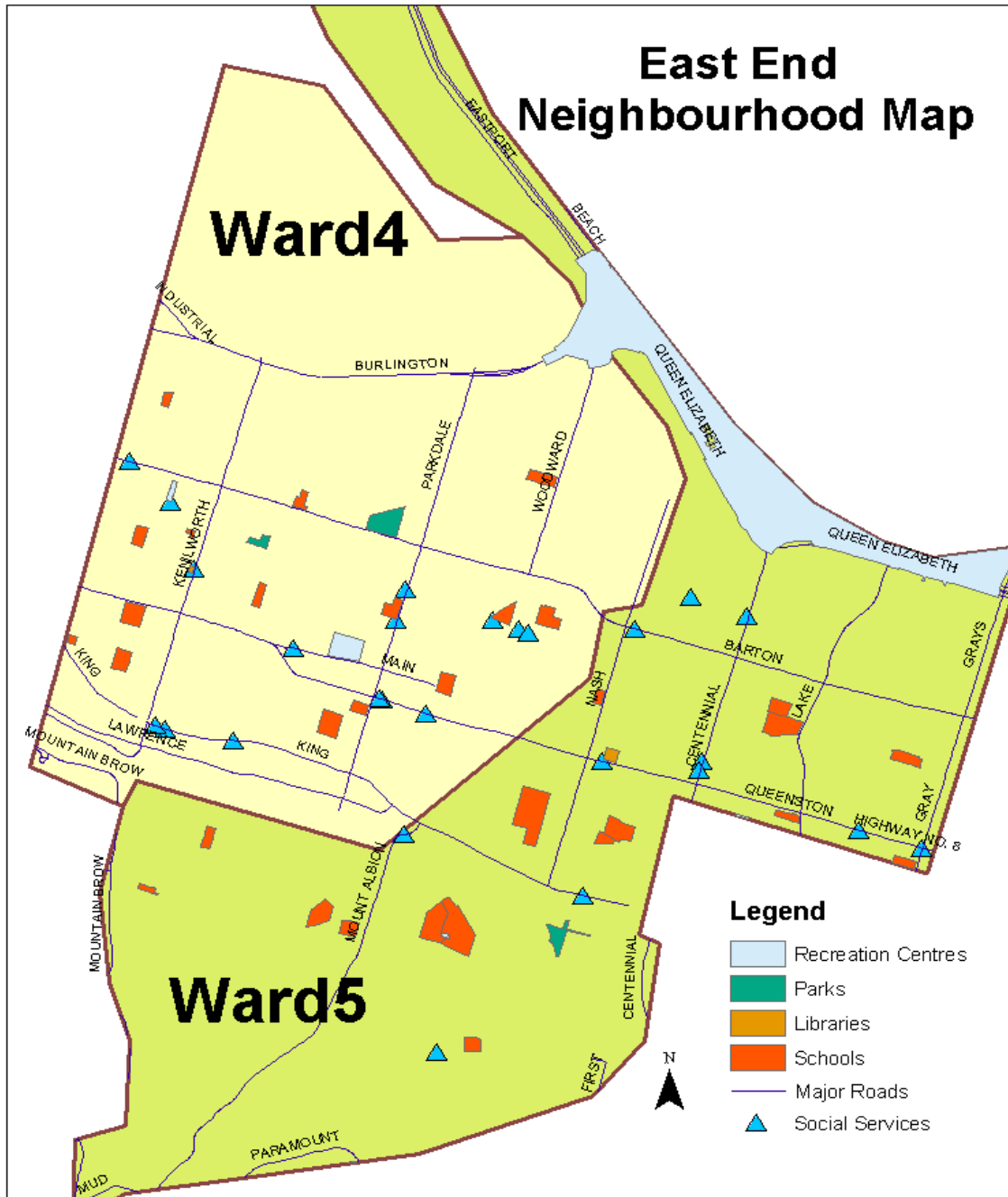
Map 1: Location of Housing Developments within Municipal Wards 4 & 5, City of Hamilton



Map 2 - Community Services In Former City Of Hamilton

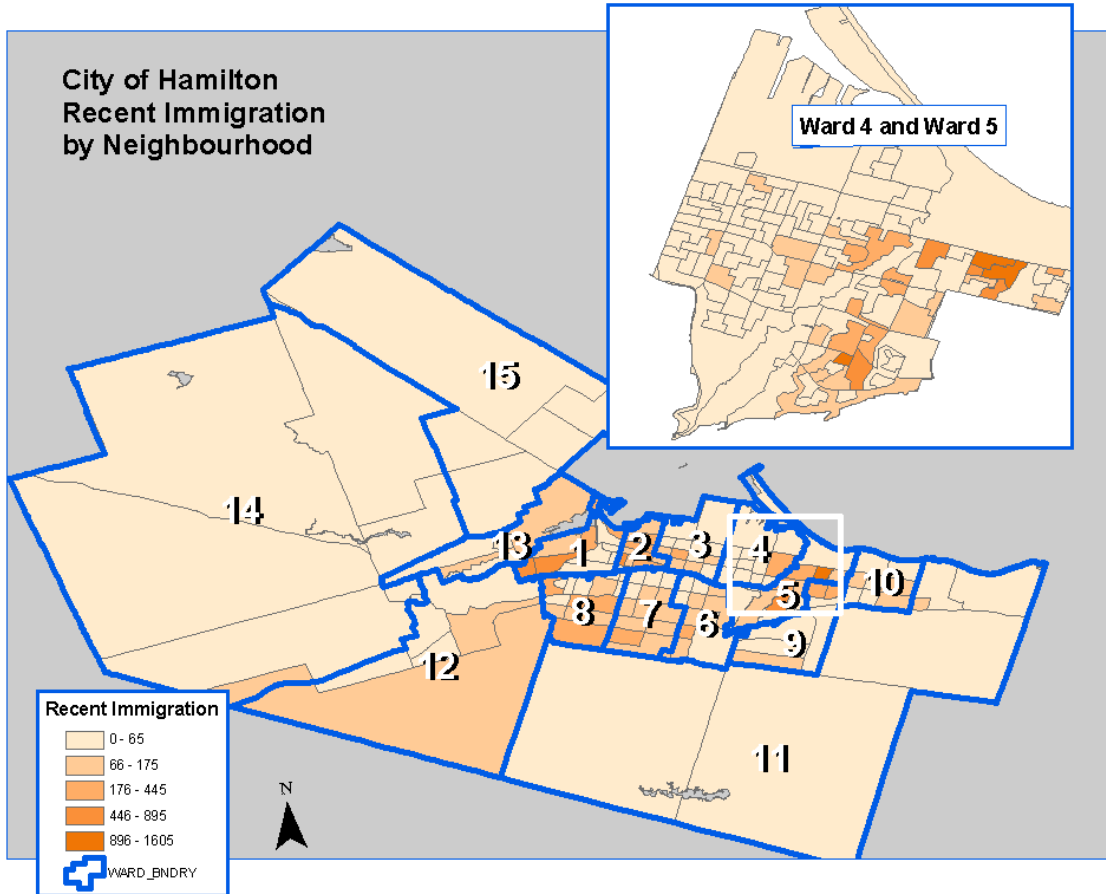


Map 3 - Community Services in Wards 4 & 5, City of Hamilton



MAP 4 - Incidence of Low Income by Ward, City of Hamilton

MAP 5 - Recent Immigration - Wards 4 & 5



2.1 Key Findings from the Maps

There a number of observations that can be made from these maps.

- In the surrounding area of these neighbourhoods, there are 28 schools identified.
- There is a lack of parkland, recreation centres and libraries in Wards 4 & 5. There are only three parks, one recreation centre and one library on the entire map of the area.
- There are a number of social services in the area, however, when comparing the area to the downtown region of Hamilton, the concentration of services is notably less dense.
- Wards 4 & 5 have a higher rate of poverty than many other wards in the City. The poverty rate for Ward 4 is 27% and Ward 5 is 26%.
- The areas of Hamilton where this project took place are some of the most diverse in Hamilton, with high numbers of recent immigrants and refugees.

3.0 RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The survey is based on a Neighbourhood Survey developed by Helen Thomas of McMaster University for use in a project for Community Access to Child Health. As a tool, it allows communities to explore a number of different components of community capacity, including neighbourhood attachment, neighbourhood organizational involvement, social issues facing the community, and gaps in community services.

In July 2003, a community development worker and two summer student interns were hired to carry out the survey during the summer and early fall of 2003. They went door to door in the different areas, asking tenants to participate in the 30-40 minute survey. Overall, 1,052 apartments were approached, and 252 total surveys were completed (response rate = 24%). While the researchers spoke multiple languages, the surveys were offered and completed only in English.

TABLE 1 below shows the total number of surveys completed in each geographical area:

TABLE 1: Total Number of Surveys Completed in Each Geographical Area

Geographical Region	Total Number of Surveys Completed
Congress	42
Britannia	50
Glengrove	52
St. Andrew's	14
Oriole	47
Kenora	47
Total	252

This section conveys the key findings of those surveys. It is divided into the following two subsections: 1) Community Assets and 2) Community Challenges.

3.1 Limitations of the Survey

There were several limitations to the survey.

Generalizability: These findings are not generalizable to other Hamilton Housing locations, or other subsidized housing developments in Hamilton, or other cities.

Language: Given the high number of tenants whose first language is not English, these results would have been greatly strengthened by offering the survey in other languages. While the project's resources did not allow this, future endeavors should take this into account.

Detailed Demographic & Socio-Demographic Profile: We did not gather information on demographics (age, gender, racial background, ability level). Nor did we gather information on income level or source. Both types of information would have been very useful.

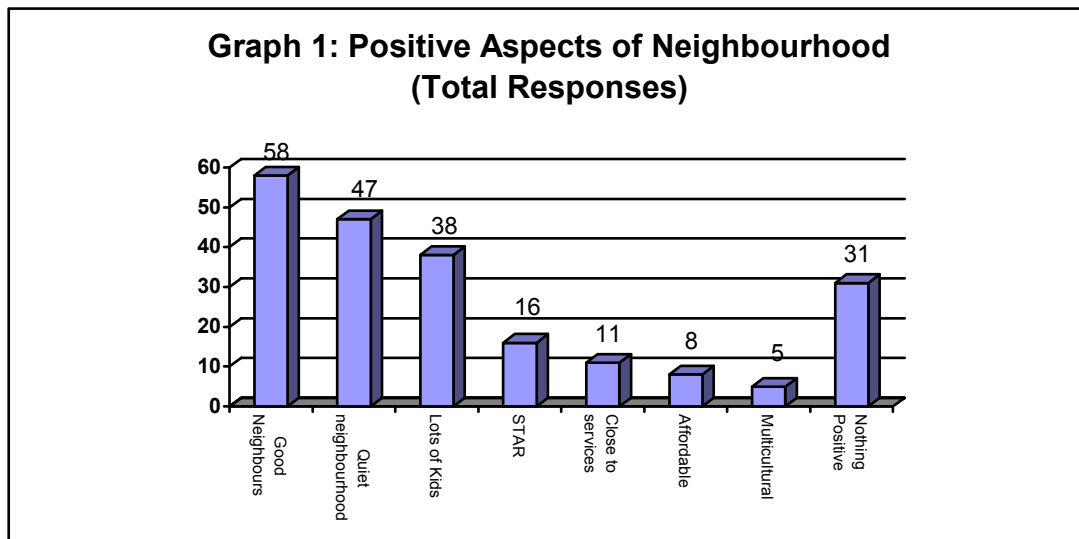
Self-Report: The limitations of using self - report are well described in other sources. However, here, the reader must remember we are asking tenants about their *perceptions* of different occurrences and community gaps. We are not attempting to measure the precise number of actual events or services. This has both strengths and weaknesses. For example, while there may be many community services in a certain area, if area tenants are unaware of their availability, they are unlikely to use them. Therefore, the community response should promote services that are already available, rather than introduce new ones.

Differences between the Areas: For the most part, the six different geographical areas were similar in results. When reporting, unless otherwise specified, the percentage or total comes from all 252 surveys. Individual areas are only identified separately if they deviate from the average by more than 10 percentage points. These areas are identified as "Outliers" and presented after the graph.

3.2 Community Assets

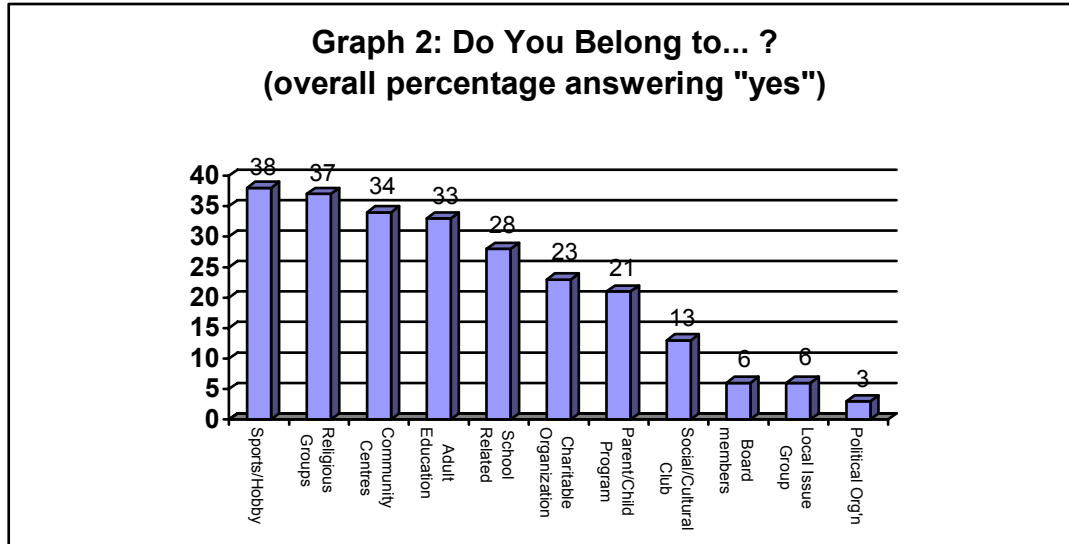
3.2.1 Positive Aspects of the Neighbourhoods

Tenants were asked the open-ended question "What are some of the positive things about your neighbourhood". Graph 1 describes the categorized responses:



3.2.2 Citizen Engagement

This survey asked people to identify different types of groups that they were involved with. The following graph illustrates the responses:



Outliers: Sports/Hobby - Glengrove 27%; Community Centres - Glengrove 44%; Adult Education - Congress 47%; School Related - St Andrew's 57%; Parent/Child Programs - Congress 36%, St Andrew's 7%); Charitable Organization - Glengrove 10%, St Andrew's 7%; Political Organization - Glengrove 0, St Andrew's 0, Oriole 0, Kenora 0.

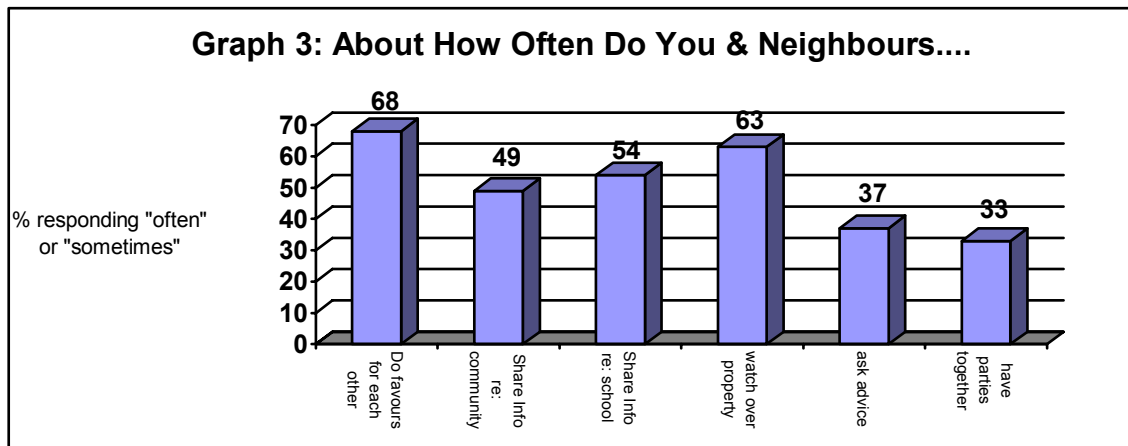
These graphs show that tenants are involved in a wide variety of groups and organizations. These are most commonly groups organizing around sports or hobbies, religion, or education; rather than around local issues or politics, which were extremely low or non-existent. This suggests that while these geographic areas do represent a *geographic community*, tenants are organizing themselves around *communities of interest*. This difference will likely have implications when trying to organize around local issues.

3.2.3 Potential for Community Mobilization

The survey asked a series of questions about whether people had been involved or would like to be involved in efforts to change their community. The following are excerpts from the results:

- ⇒ 58% of tenants stated it was "very likely" or "somewhat likely" they would try stop a change in their neighbourhood they did not like
- ⇒ 80% of tenants agreed or strongly agreed they would be willing to work with others on something to improve the neighbourhood
- ⇒ 67% of tenants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt proud of their neighbourhood
- ⇒ 26% of tenants indicated that, while they had lived there, residents had come together to solve a problem.
- ⇒ 30% of tenants thought that neighbourhood residents would be either "very effective" or "somewhat effective" at their change effort
- ⇒ Only 4% of tenants had ever been asked by any organization to participate in solving a neighbourhood problem.

Finally, the survey also asked what types of activities tenants involve their neighbours in. The following graph demonstrates the results:



3.3 Community Challenges

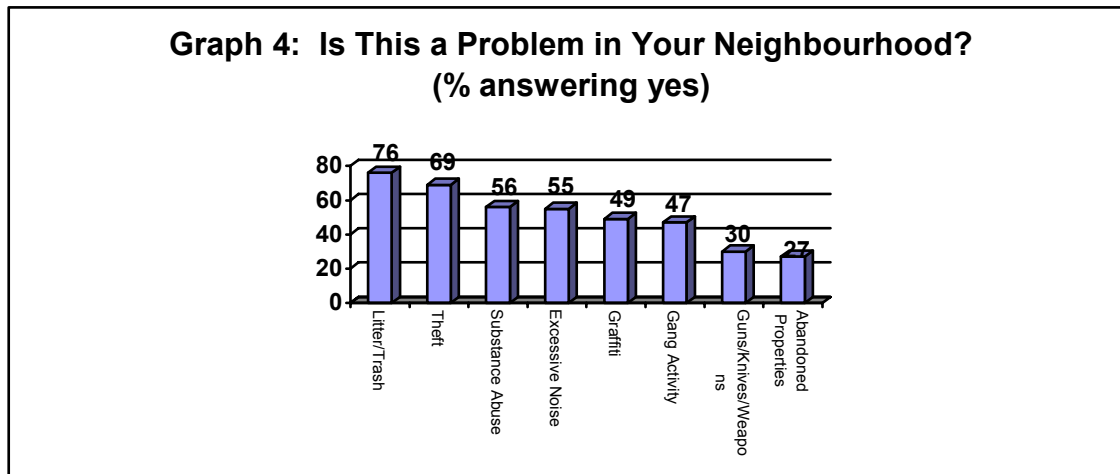
3.3.1 Neighbourhood Attachment

The survey asked about how long people intended to stay in their housing, their feelings about the neighbourhood, and local networks. The following excerpts demonstrate the key findings:

- ⇒ 23% of tenants intend to stay less than one year
- ⇒ 49% of tenants feel "poor" or "very poor" as a place to live and bring up children; only 5% feel "excellent".
- ⇒ 53% of tenants said it was "very likely" they would move out of this neighbourhood (Congress higher at 64%; Britannia lower at 41%)
- ⇒ 44% of tenants said they would be "quite happy" if they HAD to move away from their neighbourhood; 13% said they would be "very sorry".
- ⇒ 24% of tenants reported no adult friends, relatives or in-laws in the area, 16% reported 10 or more.

3.3.2 Social Issues

The survey also gathered information about the many pressing social issues facing these different neighbourhoods. The following graphs show this information.

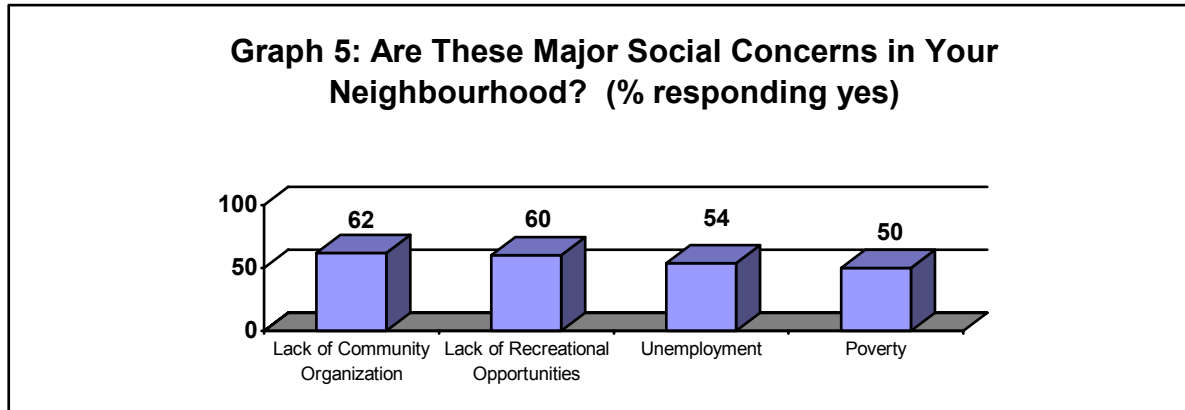


Outliers: Excessive Noise - Congress 42%, Kenora 68%; Graffiti - Congress 62%, Kenora 38%; Gang Activity - Congress 57%; Guns/Knives/Weapons - Oriole 20%; Abandoned Properties - St Andrew's 42%, Britannia 16%.

With the exception of the most common response (litter/trash), the next series of responses falls into the domain of crime prevention.

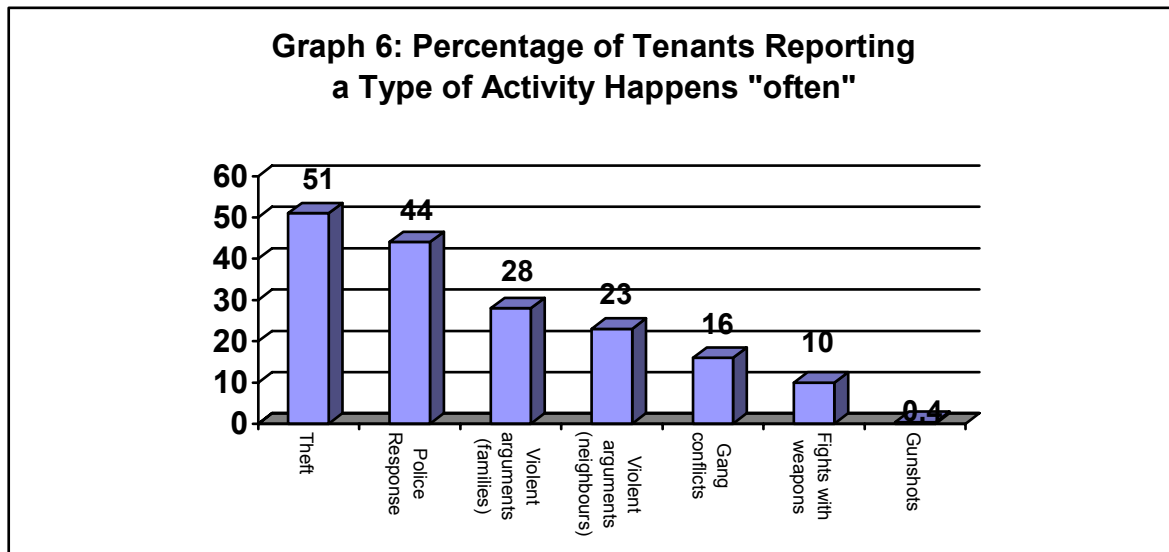
Theft, substance abuse, and excessive noise were all named by the majority of tenants, while graffiti and gang activity were named by almost half of tenants. There was a significant amount of variation between the neighbourhoods in this category.

The survey then asked about larger issues facing the neighbourhoods: poverty, unemployment, recreation, and community organization. The majority of tenants saw each of these issues as major social concerns. The shortage of recreational opportunities was particularly noted in St Andrews, and concern about poverty was above the average in Glengrove.



Outliers: Lack of Recreational Opportunities - St Andrews 72%; Unemployment - St Andrew's 43%; Poverty - Glengrove 61%.

Tenants were asked to identify how often certain activities took place in their neighbourhoods. The following graph shows each type of activity and the percentage of tenants that described the frequency of that activity as "often". Half of tenants reported theft as happening "often". St. Andrew's had a higher rate in both police response (57%) and much higher reports of gang activity (36%).



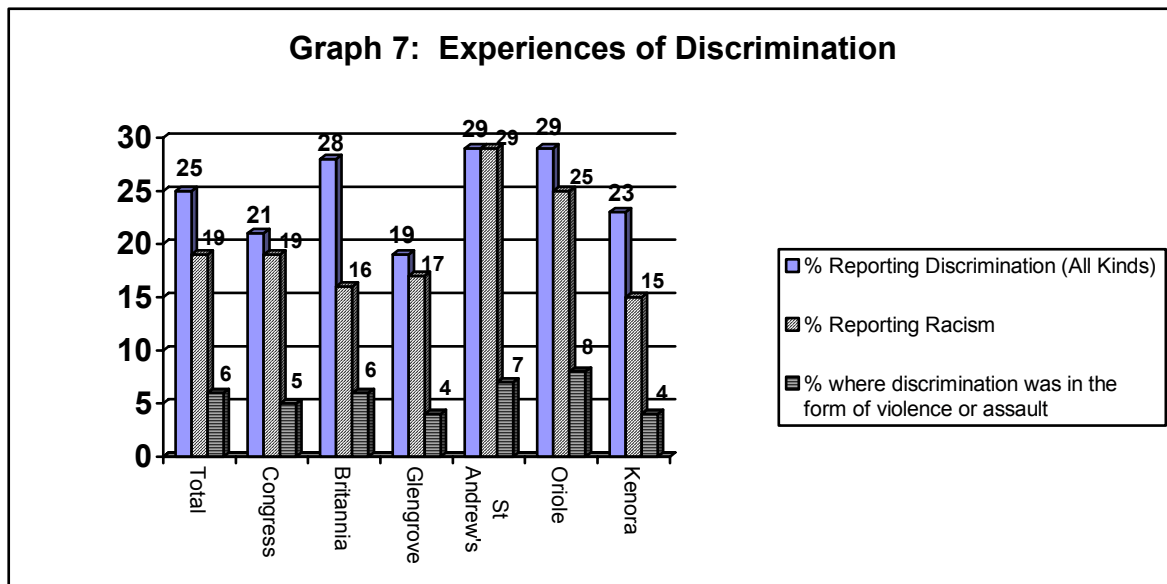
Outliers: Theft - Glengrove 40%; Police Response - St. Andrew's 57%; Gang Conflicts - St Andrew's 36%; Kenora 4%.

3.3.3 Discrimination

The survey asked a series of questions about tenants' experiences of discrimination. The survey separated between racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and ageism. As the results show below, racism was by far the most common type of discrimination reported.

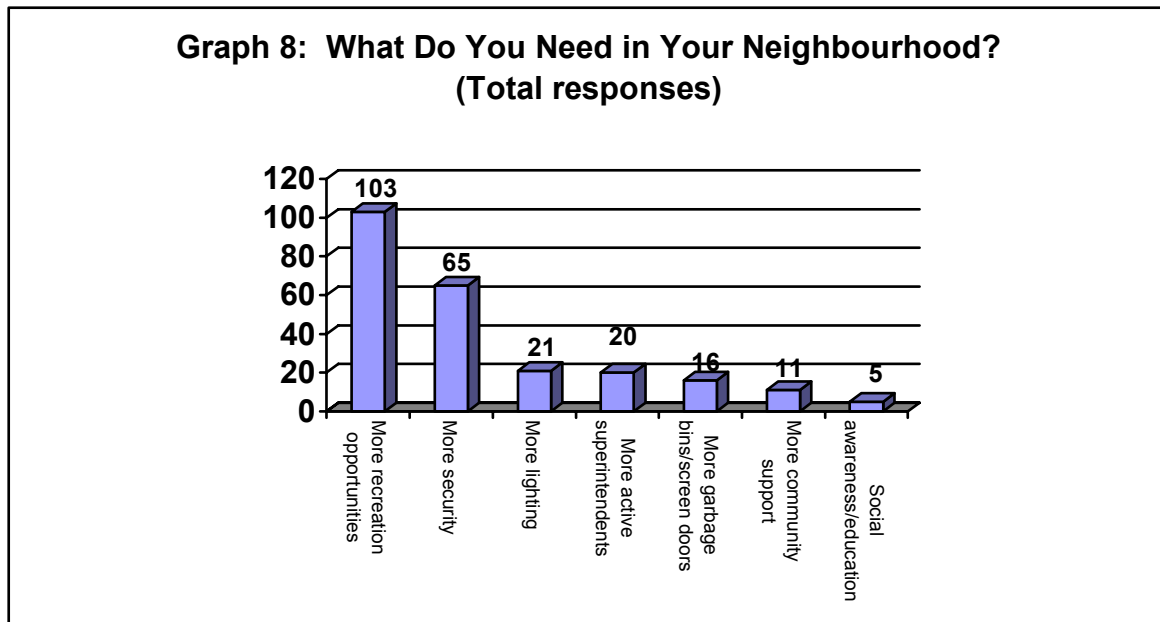
Tenants were also asked what form the discrimination took (differential treatment, harassment, violence/assault, etc.). In all 6 areas, some tenants reported discrimination that took the form of violence/assault, and overall, 1 in 4 tenants reported they had experienced discrimination.

Overall, 3 in 4 tenants agreed or strongly agreed that people of different cultures and races were accepted in the neighbourhood. One of four tenants disagreed or disagreed strongly with that statement.



3.4 What Does the Neighbourhood Need?

Finally, tenants were asked what was needed in their neighbourhoods. The following graph shows the responses. When asked about the needs in the neighbourhood, the responses overwhelmingly supported increased recreational opportunities. Tenants also strongly identified a need for more security in the neighbourhoods. Given the concerns noted above about theft, substance abuse, excessive noise, gang activity, and discrimination, these results are not surprising. Tenants in these neighbourhoods desire *activities* to help prevent crime, as well as increased *resources* to respond to crime related activities when they do happen.



4.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The community development work for this project had several objectives and related activities:

- 1) Phase 1: conduct extensive consultations with residents and local service providers;
- 2) Phase 2: develop the capacity of community leaders to participate in community planning processes; and
- 3) Phase 3: solidify partnerships between residents and service providers.

Phase 1 consultations were in the form of the survey that is reviewed in the previous section. Key issues related to Phase 2 and 3 activities will be described here.

The community development worker was hired in July 2003 and worked with several placement students to carry out the survey of 252 residents in 6 geographic areas of Hamilton. Following the survey, the worker initiated a series of meetings with tenants and organizations. With regard to the tenants, participation was a challenge throughout, and the possible reasons for that are discussed below. The worker also arranged several meetings of community stakeholders that were more successful, and would benefit from continued resources.

4.1 Meeting with Tenants

4.1.1 Approach & Results

Following the completion of the survey, the community development worker made Fact Sheets based on the results. Over the next several months, the worker organized meetings at the different locations of the project to share these Fact Sheets with tenants. To publicize the meetings, several strategies were used:

- 1) flyers publicizing the event & phone calls
- 2) free child care through STAR during the meeting
- 3) attendance by Hamilton Police Services and Hamilton Housing personnel and
- 4) the worker's own personal networks.

The turnout at these meetings was low, partially due to the winter weather. Those tenants who did attend generally supported the findings of the research, but did not want to get further involved in moving the project forward. The advisory committee chose to focus on one particular neighbourhood - Oriole Crescent, where a series of 6 meetings were held. Even with the focused attention on one neighbourhood, turnout was extremely low. The community development worker canvassed many apartments face to face to publicize the meetings. People would agree that the issues were important, however, would not appear at the meetings.

4.1.2 A Success

Finally, in early summer 2004, the project partnered with Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) to put on a community BBQ in the St Andrew's neighbourhood. Turnout was over 100 tenants and people were interested to hear about the results of the survey and gave feedback on the project.

4.1.3 Key Issues for Meetings with Tenants:

- ⇒ Organizing tenants around neighbourhood issues is a difficult community development exercise, particularly in areas with high levels of social exclusion and marginalization. Additional challenging issues include English as a second language for many tenants, work schedules that not regular, and child care issues. The 1-year time frame for this project was not long enough to overcome these barriers.

- ⇒ The venue is important. The success of the community BBQ would indicate that tenants in these neighbourhoods are more willing to come out to an event like a BBQ rather than an "information night". Also, organizing activities during the winter months and during inclement weather adds an additional level of difficulty.

- ⇒ Lack of time for community activities. Tenants that took part in the survey were busy - and had little time for extra activities such as neighbourhood organizing efforts.

There was another factor that was alluded to by tenants, but was expressed more directly by the Advisory Committee members and community stakeholders:

- ⇒ *Lack of perceived "safety"*. There is a perception among tenants, as well as some staff and community stakeholders, that safety is a key issue in determining participation. Tenants and stakeholders spoke of the risk to one's safety of becoming a community leader and advocating against criminal activity (e.g. drug activity) or for complaining about conditions for fear of retribution. Much of this is due to a mistrust of other tenants in addition to government/institutions (in this case Hamilton Housing). Additionally, some recent immigrants and refugees may be unwilling to act as community leaders because of how authority figures were treated in their homeland (e.g. if fleeing from a country at war). Many disenfranchised tenants are afraid to complain about the "system" because they fear they may suffer consequences as a result. Efforts to organize tenants will need to include strategies to make it safe to complain about conditions without fear of retaliation.

4.2 Meeting with Community Stakeholders

Another aspect of the community development work for this project was to help organize services and organizations that work in these neighbourhoods. Over the term of the project, the community development worker and Advisory Committee made contacts with the following groups:

- ⇒ Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative (anti-racism)
- ⇒ Citizen Action Group (employment resource)
- ⇒ Bishop Ryan High School
- ⇒ Glendale High School
- ⇒ Winston Churchill High School
- ⇒ Hamilton Police Services
- ⇒ Festival of Hearts 2004

Many of these contacts served to share information about the survey and the work that was underway in these neighbourhoods, but did not lead to ongoing partnerships.

4.2.1 A Success

A Brown Bag Lunch was held in February 2004 and was attended by more than 20 people representing over 12 different agencies that serve East Hamilton. At this meeting, this project was presented: brief results of the survey, plan for community development, and partnerships. The people in attendance were very supportive, and reflected back the findings of the survey: lack of services, lack of sufficient resources, and high levels of poverty and social exclusion in these neighbourhoods. However, they were very satisfied with the opportunity to come together and discuss the challenges of these neighbourhoods in a format like a brown bag lunch. The Advisory Committee agreed to continue the series of Brown Bag Lunches and meet quarterly.

4.2.2 Key Issues from Meeting with Community Stakeholders

- ⇒ Community supports are more difficult to provide because there are fewer resources (and people) to carry out the work.
- ⇒ These neighbourhoods are highly marginalized and have a high number of social problems/challenges.
- ⇒ Some of the larger institutions: the schools boards, Hamilton Police Services, the City of Hamilton must continue to play key roles in these communities. With regard to recreation, safety, education, and community building, these organizations can and do have a significant impact.
- ⇒ Services are under-represented in East Hamilton, and there is a disproportionate need for services by people who live in these neighbourhoods.
- ⇒ Issues of youth loitering and getting involved in criminal activity is a neighbourhood issue and must be addressed by all community stakeholders (not only the police and the schools, but also businesses and parents).

Finally, the community development worker was asked to identify his assessment of the neighbourhood strengths and weaknesses. Here are his answers:

4.2.3 Community Strengths

- ⇒ STAR
- ⇒ Community Access to Child Health
- ⇒ Community Action Program for Children
- ⇒ Schools
- ⇒ Community and Recreation Centres
- ⇒ Diverse communities
- ⇒ High number of youth that can be involved in positive activities
- ⇒ Political and community leadership

4.2.4 Community Challenges

- ⇒ High crime rate
- ⇒ Youth issues
- ⇒ Lack of education and awareness
- ⇒ Lack of community resources and proper maintenance of recreational opportunities.
- ⇒ Lack of volunteerism.
- ⇒ High turnover of tenants
- ⇒ Less sport and activities in the area
- ⇒ High poverty.

4.3 Summary of Community Development

The objectives for this project around identifying community leaders and solidifying partnerships between residents and services were only partially achieved. There were many unanticipated challenges in these areas, and while some members of the community did come forward, they were reluctant to take on leadership roles. However, there were some elements of success that could be built on. First, events such as a community BBQ that was sponsored in partnership with existing agencies and the Brown Bag Lunch for community agencies to share information and problem solve can serve as a model for community development exercises in the East End. Second, the strong relationships formed by the Advisory Committee between the SPRC, STAR, CAPC, CATCH and Hamilton Housing Corporation are an increase in our community's capacity to gather information about particular neighbourhoods in Hamilton. Finally, while there were significant barriers to tenant participation, our knowledge of those particular barriers (particularly, the need for safety) has increased through this project and can be incorporated into our future efforts in these, and other, neighbourhoods.

5.0 ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

These results point to a series of marginalized neighbourhoods in Hamilton that face concerns about crime-related activities, but also larger social issues including a lack of recreational opportunities and social exclusion. There were also a number of findings that suggest an increased role for the larger institutions in our community (the school board, police services, and the City of Hamilton). Finally, this project has implications for future community development and organizing work in this area.

5.1 Crime-Related Activity

Crime-related activity is a concern for these neighbourhoods. Tenants report different aspects of these activities impact on their feelings of safety, their attachment to the neighbourhood, as well as their willingness to participate in community development activities. They asked for more support from police services to improve security in the area, as well as increased recreational opportunities to give youth alternative activities to engage in. Community organizations, schools, and the community development worker echoed these concerns.

5.2 Recreation

One of the resounding themes from this project was the need for increased recreational opportunities for children and youth in these areas. This theme was demonstrated through the community maps, the survey of tenants, the community development worker, and the advisory committee's recommendations. Increasing recreational opportunities in these areas is one possible way to build community participation, reduce criminal activity, and strengthen neighbourhoods.

5.3 Social Exclusion

There is a high degree of social exclusion in the neighbourhoods. High rates of poverty, multiple reports of discrimination, concerns about criminal activity, and low levels of neighbourhood attachment indicate marginalized tenants in most of these neighbourhoods. The impact of these findings suggest that future interventions will have to be long term and focus not only on increased security, increased recreational opportunities, and community building; but also the factors that are causing the social exclusion to exist.

The larger issues that are facing these neighbourhoods, poverty, unemployment, racism and other forms of discrimination, resources for recreation and public safety, are not unique to six neighbourhoods in East Hamilton. Solutions to these issues are simply not available at the neighbourhood level; these are responsibilities of both local and senior levels of government. In order to have healthy neighbourhoods, it will take an increased emphasis on poverty reduction, job creation, recreational and community supports (including crime prevention) by all levels of government. An analysis and strategies to address structural poverty, racism, and gender inequities must be part of the longer term solutions for these neighbourhoods.

5.4 A Role for the Larger Institutions & Community Services

An additional finding of this project has been that there are many resources in the community that *are* having a positive impact in these neighbourhoods. There are multiple schools in the area that are viewed by community stakeholders as extremely valuable assets to the community. Other larger institutions such as the City of Hamilton (both through City Housing Hamilton and through the Culture and Recreation department), Hamilton Police Services have potential to increase their role in the neighbourhoods.

Additionally, there are number of social service agencies in these neighbourhoods that have indicated an interest in increased coordination, and the Brown Bag lunches are a possible way to implement this coordination.

5.5 Implications for Community Development and Participation

The neighbourhoods are currently not organized. Tenants are involved in different types of groups in the community (*communities of interest*), but these do not tend to be political or local issue groups that could work for neighbourhood level change. For the most part, tenants do not intend to stay for long periods of time in the neighbourhood, and thus are less likely to invest time and energy to improve local conditions. Community mobilization is more likely to take place over a longer time period.

That being said, tenants have clearly stated that more recreational opportunities and increased policing in the neighbourhoods would be of benefit. The vast majority of tenants already work with their neighbours in a number of ways: doing favors for each other, sharing information about events, and watching over property. Most have also indicated an interest in working toward solutions - this demonstrates a capacity that must be tapped to mobilize the neighbourhoods toward solutions.