

## **CityLAB Semester-in Residence ELAP Report Components for “Prototype Implementation of CityLAB Project Concepts”**

This material reports on the utilization of \$3750 of ELAP resources for the installations associated with the project work for the inaugural offering of the CityLAB Semester-in-Residence projects that have been completed. The available resources were evenly divided across four project groups (Economic Development, Transportation, Public Health and Infrastructure), organized according to departments within the City of Hamilton, and who all conducted project research under the Climate Change umbrella for the Beasley and Jamesville neighbourhoods. The resources were used to purchase materials and services that ensured a successful installation experience at various locations within downtown Hamilton in late November, and to present findings at the CityLAB Showcase on November 30, 2018.

### **Economic Development Group:**

**Purpose**– To become more informed on the wants and needs of the community by gathering feedback specific to our project proposal: green shade structures. We chose to go into the public sphere in order to facilitate conversation with people who may use the canopy, if implemented.

**What we planned** – As our overarching goal was to facilitate discussion and generate feedback, we planned an interactive display to be set up at the Hamilton Farmer’s Market and Hamilton Public Library. We utilized three main components to do so; **we set up a table top display with an informative poster detailing the issues at hand** (severe heat) **and our solution** (the green canopy design model). The second component used was **an interactive, trivia-style game**. Residents could spin a wheel and then answer a question corresponding to the spot the wheel landed on, with all questions relating to heat and how it affects Hamilton. The third component was **a short, anonymous feedback survey, that asked questions about residents’ experiences in the Beasley neighbourhood and their thoughts, opinions, and suggestions for our project**. We used coffee and cookies, donated by other market retailers, and custom-made buttons as an incentive to fill out the survey. All three pieces were interconnected to best facilitate discussion and were designed to be easily understood by all Hamiltonians, regardless of their prior knowledge of the subject being discussed.

**What happened**– We held two sessions, the first at Hamilton’s Farmers Market from 11:30am until 1:30pm. We were set up on the second floor of the market by a major throughway connecting the mall and the front entrance of the market. The second session was held at the Jackson Square Central Library from 2pm until 3pm. We were set up at a table at the connection from Jackson Square Mall into the library location. **Both had a good turnout and we were able to collect over 50 feedback surveys** that we will transcribe and analyze.

**What we reflected on**–

1. Each showcase drew in a different crowd of people – **During the first installation session there was a lot more foot traffic, but attracting people was more difficult; during the second installation, there were fewer people but they stopped more readily and became engaged easier.** At the farmer’s market, we noticed the two most prominent groups were elderly shoppers and business professionals. It was noted that we had a more difficult time attracting these groups of people. Comparatively, the library event drew people from a wider range of demographics, who seemed engaged for longer periods of time. This may be due to the fact that the library may be a place of leisure where people go for longer periods of time, whereas the market event was situated in a throughway. Alternatively, this may be the result of other extraneous variables (ie., demographic groups approached or time of day).

2. We recognize the limitations of our installation design, specifically the location. As our project is mainly for the Beasley community, ideally our installation would have fallen within the neighbourhood boundaries. Unfortunately, due to confounding variables and time constraints, we held it in Jamesville. This may be another reason we found it challenging to engage people, if they felt the project would not directly benefit them, they may be less likely to stop. However, finding the space we did have proved challenging, and was a lesson on its own. We were able to overcome obstacles faced while planning the event, including our emails and calls repeatedly being left unanswered and the extensive red tape associated with using public spaces.



## **Transportation Group:**

**Purpose:** To gather stakeholder insight on the elements they would like to see incorporated within a King William street opening in order to shape the vision of the study moving forward.

Project material disseminated: Various research material collected over the course of the semester regarding the 8 components of the project as outlined by MobilityLab.<sup>1</sup> Logistics including timing proposals, funding, street activities, and insurance policies for the street opening were introduced. In addition, the future implications and next steps of the street opening study were discussed, specifically the 1 year pilot-project implementation, 2-year permanent street opening, and 5 year mobility hub construction.

### **Results from Charrette Activities:**

- Overall vision: Create a healthy, sustainable and economically vibrant destination with a sense of community.
- Most attendees preferred the street opening to occur on the weekends.
- Avenues for future research: emergency vehicle access
- New LiUNA building is going to be the largest building in Hamilton.
- Street components that attendees are interested in seeing include:
  - Patio extensions on the restaurants
  - SoBi hubs and secure, sheltered bike parking
  - Parking for visitors (80% of whom do not live downtown)
  - Activations of public spaces
  - Artistic wayfinding and placemaking elements along the street

Lessons for improvement based on feedback from City Staff:

- Continue strong oral communication skills and slideshow visuals.
  - Introduce the facilitators and the agenda beforehand.
  - Be deliberate and conservative in discussion. The event made it seem that the opening was permanent and definitely going to occur.
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- Acknowledge contributors. Jennifer Kinnuen, Public Health and Planning and Economic Development were involved and should have been commended for their efforts at the event. Personalized follow up “thank you” emails will be sent to these contributors. In addition, thank you emails will be sent to attendees, asking if they request a meeting summary.



## Public Health Group



Our installation event was a combination of a **project presentation, panel discussion, and interactive display**. First, when guests arrived, they were treated to a breakfast spread. In the theatre, we then presented a summary of our group's work this semester to give attendees a sense of the project's direction and overall aims. Martha and Hana took the lead on this presentation, reducing confusion for the audience and allowing other group members to manage other matters, including food delivery and space setup.

The panel discussion that followed served to elaborate upon the connections our group has made this semester and the work that aligns with our project's trajectory. Our panelists included Louise Thomassin, who graciously represented Landscape and Architectural Services in Meghan Stewart's place; Juby Lee from Environment Hamilton; Matt Thompson from the Beasley Neighbourhood Association; and our project champion and Senior Project Manager from the City of Hamilton, Trevor Imhoff. Each panelist introduced themselves and their respective organization, followed by a question period led by Martha and Daniel. The audience was then invited to pose questions to panelists or to Public Health group members themselves.

From the feedback received, the panel appeared to be effective in conveying information about air quality in Hamilton. Thus, we learned that partnerships and facilitating effective dialogue are important components when translating information for a larger group.



Following this, guests were invited to help themselves to lunch, catered by Pita Pit, as they interacted with our display showroom, project members, and panelists. This allowed them to experience project elements in a more personal, direct manner. For example, our installation guests had the opportunity to connect with the issue of air quality and understand our data collection process by participating in demonstrations of the air quality monitors on loan from Environment Hamilton and the Ministry of the Environment. The interactive display space itself was decorated to resemble an

approximation of the John Rebecca Park plan, which was posted on one of the whiteboards. Samples of plant species the project recommends for integration into the John Rebecca Park development were displayed throughout the room (as seen pictured on the right). The educational component was



also very prominent throughout our display as various prototypes for informational park signage were showcased to demonstrate QR technology. Attendees were encouraged to scan the codes and peruse our website. Laptops were available for guests who preferred to view the site on a bigger screen. In addition to the feedback tree, where attendees could “leaf” us any kinds of comments, feedback was collected on laptops through an online Google form.

The feedback we gathered was overwhelmingly positive. Comments left on the tree praised the space decor, the interactivity, and the informative nature of the presentation and panel. We also received 8 responses through the online form (3 CityLAB students, 1 unspecified student, 1 member of city staff, and 3 community members). From this information, we ascertained that the majority were not aware of the park development prior to the event (62.5%). This feedback also gave some indication that our presentation and display were effective in communicating our project’s ideas and aims. For the aspect of tree planting/grove design, guests submitted comments including descriptors like “thoughtful” and “well-developed”. For the



website, guests appreciated the layout and ease of navigation, as well as the actual information conveyed. One respondent wrote that they believed the website is a “great way to engage people with the park.” Lastly, the concept of QR signage in parks was similarly well-received. Comments praised the incorporation of technology in modernising parks and the use of basic information on signage with the option to scan for more information. From this, we learned that information can be more accessible when presented in an interactive, engaging way.

In summary, it would appear that our event was successful in engaging guests, communicating a broad range of information and allowing opportunities to gain a tangible understanding of our project work. In engaging with attendees, we learned that these connections are critical to the success of a community-engaged project - a sentiment that will surely inspire our final report.



## **Infrastructure Group**

On Tuesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, the infrastructure group completed a sustainability workshop in a senior's social housing unit located on 226 Rebecca Street. The purpose of this workshop was to engage the resident community at 226 Rebecca and empower them to adopt sustainable behaviours. Specifically, proper waste management and energy efficient habits were encouraged through meaningful dialogue, teamwork activities, and the accessible dissemination of pertinent information. An open dialogue was formed the week before the workshop took place where feedback was collected from current tenants. This feedback was essential to direct points of emphasis in our workshop, and the materials we would choose to provide. For example, one resident expressed his frustrations over plastic bags being used to contain compostable materials. As such, we decided to provide green bins with compostable liners to every resident who attended the workshop. Each green bin also contained two informational pamphlets about sorting waste. Further, we distributed custom-designed playing cards which include 52 tips and facts about sustainable living. The cards are available in English, Arabic, and Chinese, in response to the specific demographics of 226 Rebecca. To encourage turnout and keep energy high, we provided a catered lunch from The Fizz to all attendees. This, along with the use of promotional posters in three languages on every floor, yielded a higher turnout than almost every other facilitator-led event held at 226 Rebecca to date.

The residents in attendance provided us with a wealth of information with which we can develop future plans and recommendations for the building. The entire process was informed by CityHousing partners and resident champions and resulted in an extensive list of lessons learned. These include:

- The importance of accessible language: translated materials and an in-person interpreter is essential for demographics with a high proportion of non-english speakers.
- A more rich understanding of the unique barriers residents of 226 Rebecca face when attempting to participate in sustainable behaviours (ex: no hazardous waste bin, mobility issues, expenses related to compost bins and bags, poor insulation of building, language, etc.)
- Residents were extremely receptive to the material and had a high degree of interest in the topics. Encouraging residents to share this information and passion with other

residents is a potential untapped resource to promote sustainability. In other words, a community champion program should be considered.

Overall, the installation was incredibly well-received. Its success was largely due to informed promotional materials and positive interactions with tenants which resulted in a high turnout. A carefully planned workshop then thrived on its flexibility, allowing the residents to guide their experience to some degree. We are thrilled to take what we learned from our installation to CityHousing in the completion of our second final project component: A facilitation manual and future recommendations for the future implementation of this workshop throughout CityHousing and greater Hamilton.



