

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION STRATEGY?

That is the question the Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study asks. This study will show how neighbourhoods are changing over time, and what changes may be associated with the Neighbourhood Action Strategy.

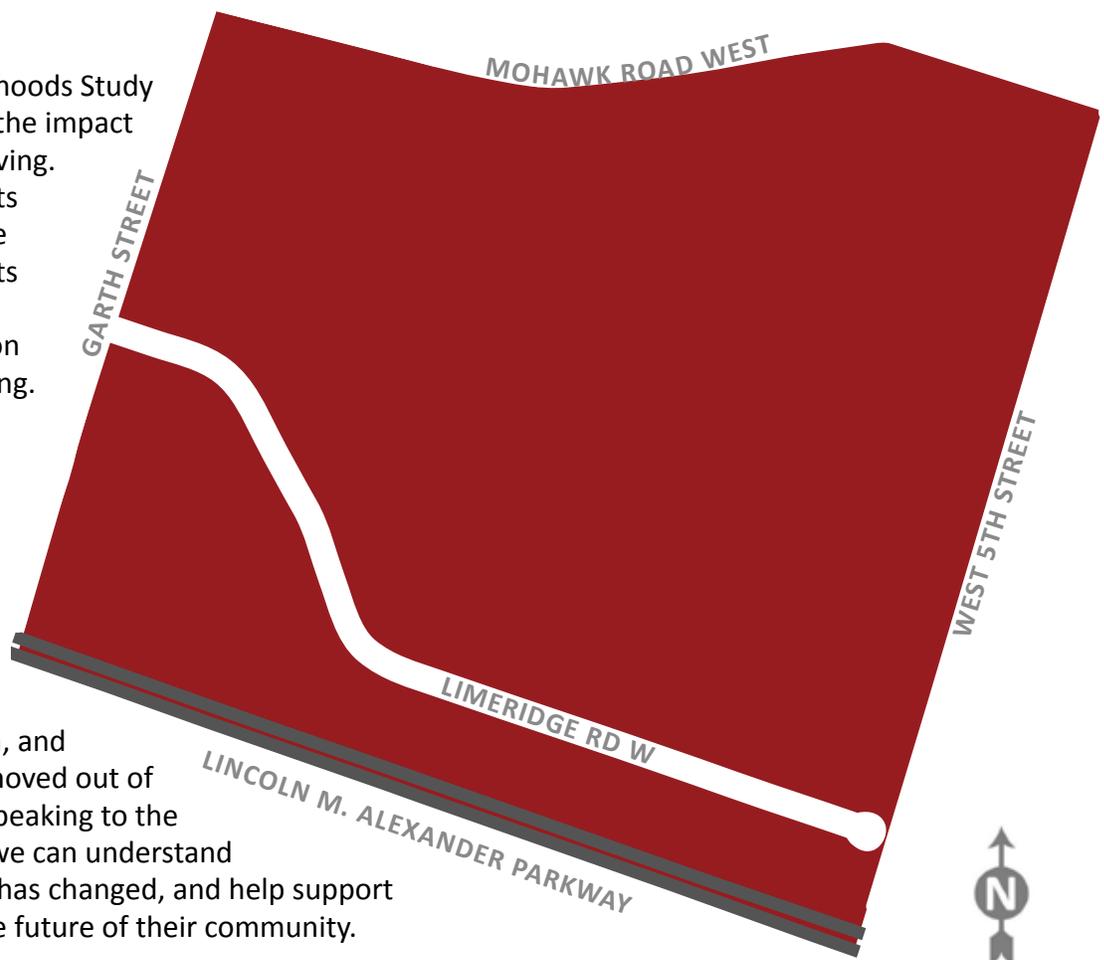
The Neighbourhood Action Strategy is a long-term project that brings residents together to define what is important to them and their community. Residents, Community Developers and representatives from local agencies and businesses meet regularly to plan and complete actions to improve their neighbourhood.

The Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study (HNS) was conducted with residents from randomly selected households in the Rolston neighbourhood.

The Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study is one way to determine the impact that these actions are having. This Rolston study consists of a survey that was done with 302 Rolston residents in 2012 and 2013, when the Neighbourhood Action Strategy was just beginning. This was the “baseline” survey.

Two years later, we conducted the survey again, with the same residents. This was the “follow up” survey. We surveyed residents who were still living in Rolston, and also residents who had moved out of the neighbourhood. By speaking to the same people over time, we can understand how the neighbourhood has changed, and help support residents as they plan the future of their community.

Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study
2016 Follow-up report
ROLSTON
neighbourhood



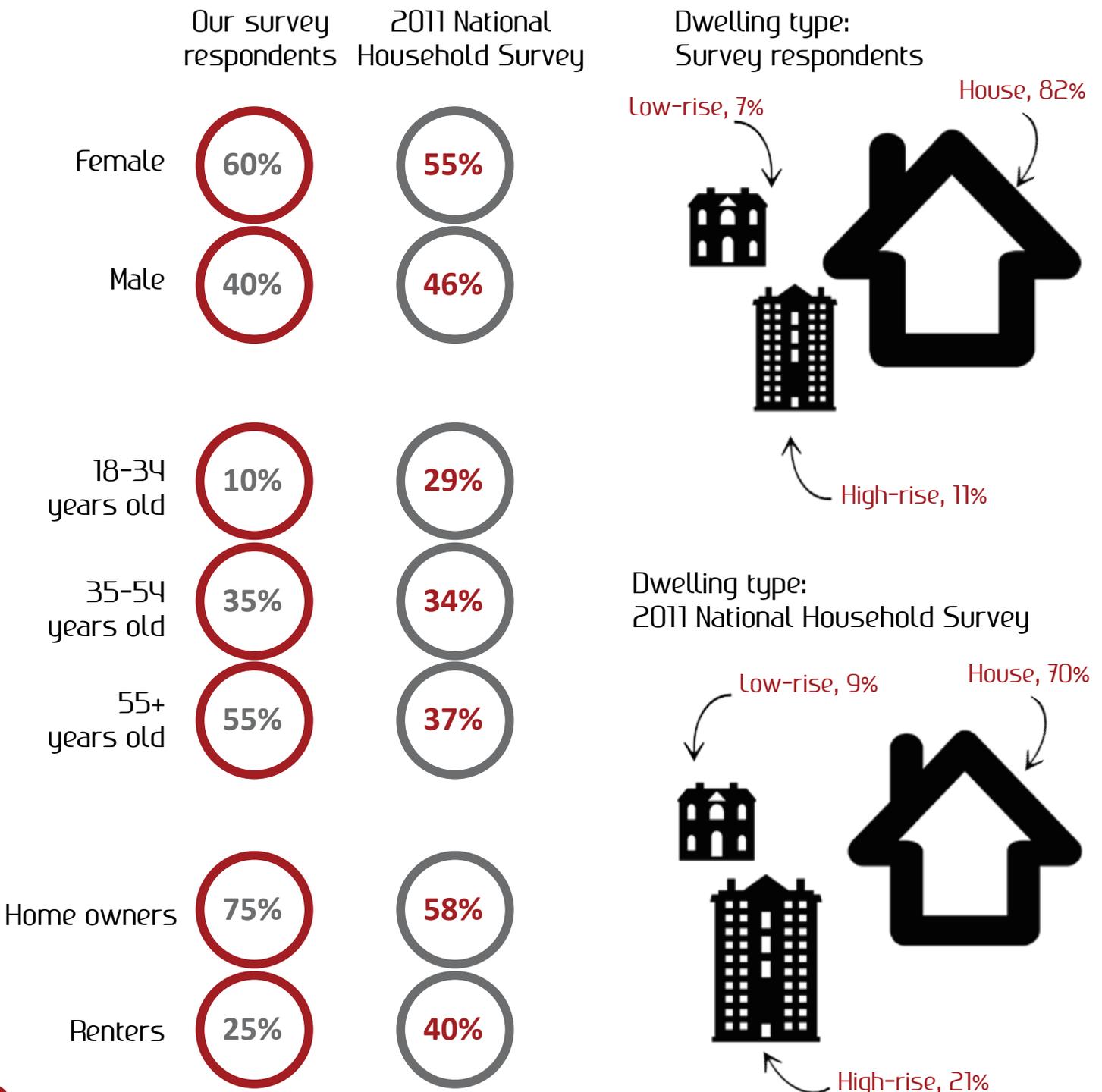
WHO WE TALKED TO IN ROLSTON:

Participants who still live in Rolston

The first report to the Rolston community was published in 2013. That report presented some information from the baseline survey. This report is a follow-up to the first one, to see how things have changed in Rolston.

We spoke to 192 people who were still living in the Rolston neighbourhood. Two of these people had moved to another residence within Rolston.

Comparing our survey respondents to recent Census data allows us to say how representative the responses are of the neighbourhood. Slightly more adults aged 55 years of age and older and people who live in houses participated in this survey compared to the demographics of rest of the neighbourhood.



WHAT CHANGED FOR PARTICIPANTS[†]

Residential Satisfaction, Safety and Security

	Improved	No change	Got worse
Satisfaction with their home		X	
Satisfaction with their neighbourhood		X	
Neighbourhood as a place to raise a child*		X	
Feel safe outside during the day		X	
Feel safe outside at night		X	
Feel safe in home at night		X	
Child(ren) are safe walking to and from school**	X		

Community Attachment and Pride

	Improved	No change	Got worse
I would like to stay in my neighbourhood for years to come.		X	
Living in this neighbourhood gives me a sense of pride.		X	
It is very important to me to live in this particular neighbourhood.	X		
My neighbourhood has a distinct character - it is a special place to live.	X		

Civic Awareness, Engagement and Involvement

	Improved	No change	Got worse
Information is readily available to the public on City services and activities that take place in my neighbourhood		X	
The City is responsive to residents' inquiries, input and/or requests.		X	
Residents are invited to be involved in decision-making in my neighbourhood.	X		
Know who the City councillor for their ward is.	X		

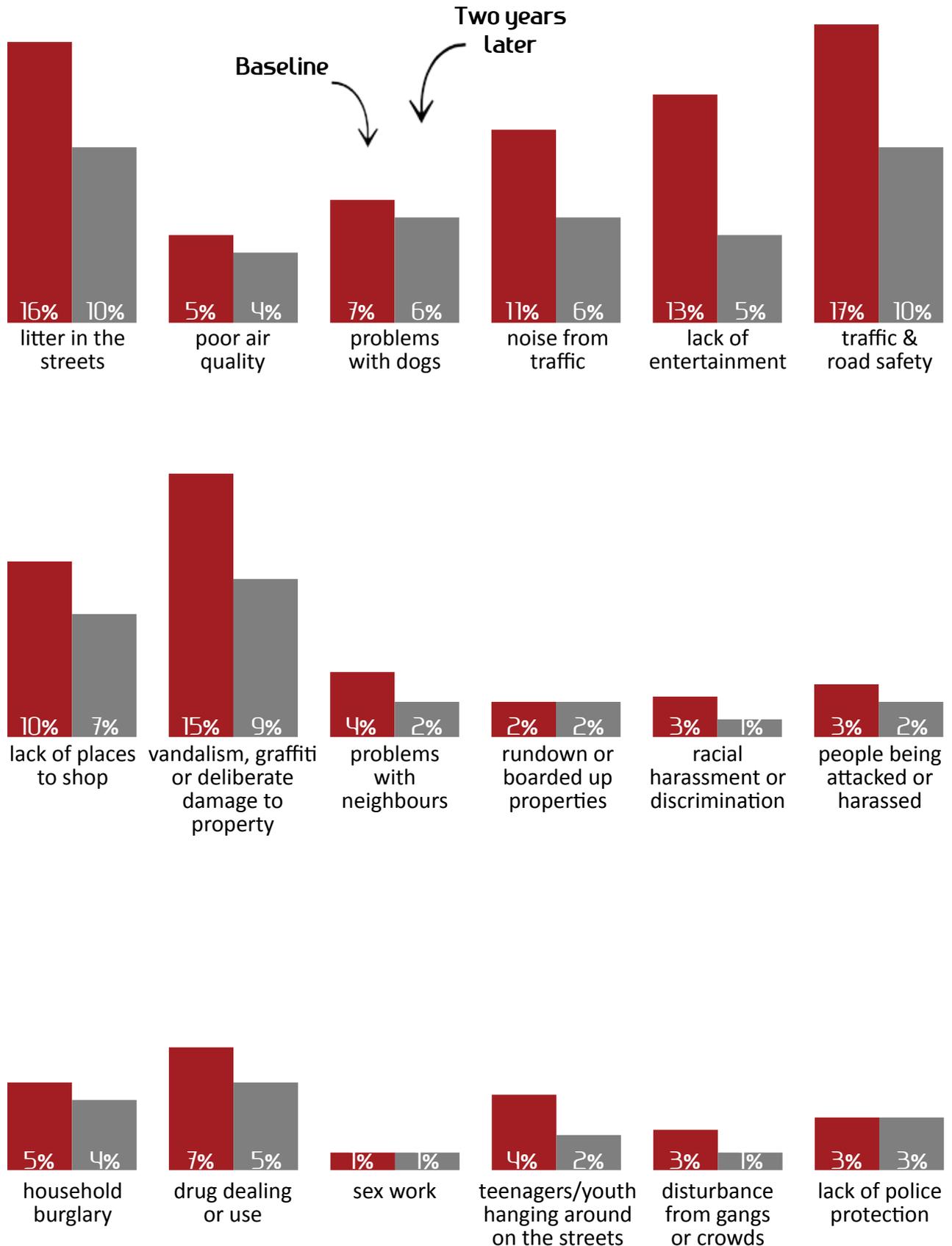
[†] Throughout the report, change is categorized as an increase or decrease of equal to or greater/less than 5%

* asked of all respondents whether they have children or not.

** Asked only of respondents who have children in school (kindergarten to grade 12)

Neighbourhood Concerns

We asked survey respondents to indicate if certain issues were a problem in their neighbourhood. These charts list the percentage of respondents who thought that it was “a serious problem” at baseline and follow-up.



Social Cohesion and Trust

	Improved	No change	Got worse
People in neighbourhood are friendly		X	
Neighbourhood looks for solutions to local problems rather than being satisfied with the way things are		X	
Neighbourhood has good leaders who look out for the best interests of the neighbourhood		X	
Knowledge of a local neighbourhood or business association or group that meets regularly in my neighbourhood		X	
Neighbourhood has ways of sharing information (talking to neighbours, newsletters, etc.)		X	
Participant has influence over what the neighbourhood is like		X	
There are opportunities for celebration and fun in my neighbourhood	X		
Neighbours get together to deal with problems		X	
Neighbours watch over each other's property	X		
People in the neighbourhood can be trusted		X	
People in this neighbourhood share the same values		X	
Neighbours and participant want the same things for the neighbourhood		X	

Economic Development

	Improved	No change	Got worse
There are job opportunities in my neighbourhood.		X	
New businesses succeed in my neighbourhood.		X	
Local businesses stay for a long period of time.		X	

Neighbourhood Engagement

When we did the follow-up survey, we asked Rolston participants how they felt about the Neighbourhood Action Strategy.

	YES
Do you know that there is a neighbourhood action plan, developed by residents for the neighbourhood?	17%
Do you think that actions coming out of the plan have improved your neighbourhood?*	50%
In the last six months, have you been involved with the Rolston Planning Team?*	6%
Are you involved in any other planning team/hub or neighbourhood association?*	0%

* Only asked if they answered "yes" to knowing about a neighbourhood plan.

Ways of receiving information

Survey respondents were asked how they usually learn about important information in their neighbourhood. These items are presented according to the most popular methods of receiving information as reported by Rolston participants.

84%	leaflets or flyers in the mailbox
72%	free newspapers or community language newspapers
52%	television stations
50%	websites or email
49%	posters on telephone poles, in shops or community buildings
48%	through friends or family
44%	radio stations
38%	through volunteer or community organizations
34%	on buses
29%	at public meetings
21%	through work or colleagues

WHO ELSE WE TALKED TO ABOUT ROLSTON: Participants who have moved out of the neighbourhood

We also surveyed 18 people who lived in Rolston for the baseline survey in 2011-2012, and moved out of the neighbourhood.

People moved:

	COUNT
To another part of Hamilton	11
Outside of Hamilton	5
To another neighbourhood that is part of the Neighbourhood Action Strategy (map below)	2

Most important reason for moving from Rolston:

Change in family situation	39%
Disliked residence	11%
Forced out by landlord	11%
Other (single response)	33%



Map: The neighbourhoods of the Neighbourhood Action Strategy

Conclusions

This report was written after the Rolston Action Plan was finalized, at the beginning of the 2016-2021 Workplan. It offers an opportunity to see the extent to which the priorities of respondents mirrors those found in the Action Plan, and if those priorities have remained the same or changed over time, since the Baseline survey was completed. Although the Action Plan formally begins in 2016, the Rolston neighbourhood has been organizing and undertaking community improvements since the Baseline survey was completed in 2013-14.

Priorities identified by survey respondents

How do the priorities by survey respondents align with the priorities of the Rolston Plan?

Overall, there is good alignment between survey responses and the Workplan. Three overlapping themes are addressed here: community cohesion, communication, and safety.

Community Cohesion

During the baseline survey, 17 % of respondents thought that “places to have a meeting” were important, but lacking, and 35% felt the same way about “places to get together with people you know.” Examples of such places include cafés, community centres and libraries. These needs would be addressed by objective A.4, “Increase social activities and enhance spaces to bring community members together.”

Communication

The Action Plan is known by only 17% of respondents, likely because the Action Plan is quite new. This indicates an opportunity for community engagement, and demonstrates the value of pursuing goals that bring neighbours together for shared interests. Many such goals are in the Workplan, for example, recreation opportunities, literacy and ESL programming, events to celebrate diversity and share cultural experiences, and community gardens. Communication is addressed in the Workplan through Objective E.1 “Increase and improve communication among all neighbours” with actions involving a newsletter, social media, and on-going recruitment to the planning team.

Safety

During the 2013-2014 survey, 20% of respondents with school-aged children reported that their kids do not walk to school, and almost 20% do not feel that it is safe for their children to walk to school. This speaks directly to Objectives D.1, “Increase walkability of Rolston neighbourhood” and B.2 “Make community safe for pedestrians and cyclists.” Traffic calming measures and traffic management were identified as a neighbourhood priority, and these are very well reflected in the Rolston Action Plan.

Icons used in this report were designed by various artists and available at The Noun Project, thenounproject.com.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

This report is based on a research study by Dr. James Dunn and staff at McMaster University. If you have any questions, please contact us.



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This research was funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The views expressed are those of the researchers, not the Government of Ontario, or the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

note: This phase of the study is over. There may be future phases. Thank you to our research participants for their time and contributions.

ABOUT THE HAMILTON NEIGHBOURHOODS STUDY (HNS)

The Hamilton Neighbourhoods Study is studying neighbourhoods in six of the eleven Neighbourhood Action Strategy neighbourhoods: Beasley, Keith, McQuesten, Rolston, Stinson and Stipley (part of Sherman). At baseline, we recruited approximately 300 residents from randomly selected houses and apartments in each neighbourhood. 1,896 participants have completed a baseline survey. Follow-up surveys are done with residents approximately two years after their baseline survey.



How the study was done

2011-2013 BASELINE



Residents received a flyer in the mail informing them about the study.



Research staff knocked on randomly selected dwellings to see if someone in the household would like to do the survey.



Number of people who agreed to participate.



Survey was done face-to-face.

2013-2014 FOLLOW-UP



Participants were sent a letter to see if they would like to participate in another survey.



Research staff followed up by telephone with participants who didn't respond to the letter.



Number of people who agreed to participate.



Survey was done on the telephone.



Everyone received \$20 as a thank-you for their time.

Survey questions

Both baseline and follow-up surveys contain the same questions because we want to see what has changed. The follow-up survey contains additional questions about awareness of the Neighbourhood Action Strategy. The survey includes questions on:

- Housing & Physical Environment
- Community
- Safety & Security
- Civic Engagement
- Health
- Employment, Education & Demographics