Neighbourhood Liaison Table (NLT)
Meeting Minutes - June 1, 2026
Location: Virtual Meeting

Attendance: J. MacLeod (Chair), S. Atungo, T. Bruce, G. Cowell, K. Ritchie, Y. Stoikos, K. Gargarello, R. Greenspan, M. Payette, M. Abdelmaseh

Regrets: N. Buckley, S. Boyd, L. Fuller

1) **Welcome & Land Acknowledgement**
   a) J. MacLeod called the meeting to order and delivered the Land Acknowledgement.

2) **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**
   a) J.MacLeod asked if there were any conflicts of interest to be declared.
   b) No conflicts were declared.

3) **Approval of Agenda**
   a) The minutes from the previous meeting were circulated in advance. J.MacLeod asked whether there were any edits, concerns, questions, or clarifications. None were raised.
   Motion: To approve the previous meeting minutes, as presented.
   Moved by: K Ritchie
   Seconded by: G. Cowell
   Motion Carried.

4) **KPI and Performance Measures**
   a) S. Atungo provided an overview of the key performance indicators currently required for reporting to the Ministry of Health. These include:
   - Number of unique clients seen
   - Net new clients
   - Total service interactions
   - Specific clinical interactions, including primary care services
   - Non-clinical interactions, including health promotion and support services
   - Outreach encounters
   - Group attendance
   - Unique group participants

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b) S. Atungo noted that some of this data was included in the Community Impact Report previously circulated to the table and reflected the first year of the Hub model's implementation
c) S. Atungo reviewed the proposed neighbourhood-level indicators discussed at the previous meeting, including:
    - Police calls
    - EMS calls
    - Bylaw-related concerns, including noise and loitering
    - Number of complaints received
    - Smoking concerns
    - Safety concerns
    - Parking concerns
d) S. Atungo also noted that Hamilton Police have been engaged and that a police liaison is expected to attend a future meeting, likely in July, to support discussions around baseline crime statistics and community safety data.
e) G. Cowell shared feedback from neighbours who expressed concerns about loitering or people "hanging around" near the facility or nearby parks. He clarified that the concern was primarily about individuals who are not part of the recovery centre waiting outside or gathering near the site.
f) S.Atungo distinguished between designated smoking areas for clients and concerns about unscheduled visitors or people loitering outside the building. She noted that loitering can be added to the KPI list and that the program does not anticipate people gathering at the front of the centre.
g) K. Ritchie provided context regarding differences between the proposed HART Hub residential treatment model and other service models, such as the YWCA drop-in services, noting that the HART Hub is a structured residential treatment program rather than a drop-in or emergency shelter.
h) K. Gargarello asked whether the contact number provided for concerns would be available 24/7 or only during business hours. J. MacLeod clarified that the current contact is available during business hours, generally Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. S. Atungo added that an after-hours designated contact is anticipated once the site is operational, so issues can be addressed in real time.
i) M. Payette raised the importance of measuring positive neighbourhood outcomes, not only concerns or complaints. He suggested considering indicators such as community education sessions, facility tours, neighbourhood engagement, and examples of how the program has not negatively changed the neighbourhood environment.

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j) T. Bruce agreed and emphasized that the centre may bring positive benefits to the community. She suggested exploring community engagement opportunities, possible off-site programming, and opportunities for residents or community members to contribute skills or volunteer in some capacity.
k) R. Greenspan noted that the program should also be framed as a positive response to broader community challenges, including violence, instability, and the need for treatment and support for Hamilton residents. She described the HART Hub as a "good news story" that could help people access support and stability.
l) S. Atungo committed to taking the discussion about positive community benefit indicators to the provincial HART Hub Community of Practice table to learn whether other communities are measuring similar outcomes and to bring examples back to the NLT.

5) Program Update
   a) K.Gargarello asked whether the site remains on track for the July 6, 2026 opening. Simone confirmed that, as of the most recent update, the project remains on track for the July 6 opening date.
   b) S.Atungo noted that program readiness work is ongoing, including:
      i) Finalizing policies
      ii) Developing screening and intake processes
      iii) Working with partner organizations to support seamless transitions into the residential treatment and recovery centre
      iv) Preparing for operational launch
   c) K.Gargarello asked when policies related to smoking, noise, neighbourhood interaction, staffing, and parking would be shared. Simone explained that internal policies are currently being developed and approved and noted that the smoking policy will be circulated to the table before the next NLT meeting once approved.
   d) K.Gargarello also asked about barrier-free accommodations and the commercial kitchen. S.Atungo committed to taking those questions back internally and following up with the table.
   e) Regarding staffing, S.Atungo explained that the staffing model has been adjusted in relation to the revised 14-bed model. Revised budget and staffing information has been submitted for approval to the Ministry of Health/Ontario Health, and confirmation is pending.

6) Community Outreach Planning
   a) J. MacLeod provided an update from Sergeant Alan Schultz, the Ward 1 liaison with Hamilton Police, who was unable to attend due to another commitment. J.

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MacLeod read an email from Sergeant Schultz regarding baseline crime data for the area around 276 Aberdeen Avenue.

b) The police data referenced Beat 1163 and focused on a more specific area around 276 Aberdeen Avenue rather than all of Kirkendall, to avoid skewing the data. The area reviewed included Aberdeen Avenue, Herkimer Street, and the section of Aberdeen Avenue between Queen and Locke Streets.

c) For the period January 2026 to May 25, 2026, the reported results were:

- Two thefts, both involving bicycles from a porch and shed
- Fifty calls for police service across the broader Beat 1163 area, including traffic, domestic calls, disturbances, and other general calls
- No specific pattern identified for the immediate area surrounding 276 Aberdeen Avenue

d) Sergeant Schultz suggested the data provides a baseline and can be revisited after the site has been operational for one full year, while also allowing for review during the year as needed.

e) K. Gargarello later noted that the police email referred to the area as Kirkendall South, while the facility is on the north side of Aberdeen and may be considered Kirkendall North. J. MacLeod agreed to seek clarification from Sergeant Schultz and report back to the NLT.

f) J. Macleod reported that Hamilton Urban Core has been holding quarterly community engagement meetings. Previous meetings were held in October 2025 and March 2026, with the March session held virtually due to weather.

g) A third community engagement meeting is being planned prior to the July 6 opening. The detail are as follows:

- Proposed date: Tuesday, June 23, 2026
- Proposed time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Preferred format: In-person, neighbourhood-based venue

h) The 276 Aberdeen site cannot be used for the meeting because it remains under construction.

i) Members suggested several possible locations, including:

(1) Local churches with basement or community spaces
(2) Ryerson Recreation Centre
(3) McMaster Innovation Park
(4) Hindu temple on Aberdeen Avenue
(5) Blessings Christian Church at Stanley and Locke, which has hosted Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association meetings in the past

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j) J.MacLeod noted that he would be attending the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association Executive meeting the following day at Blessing Christian Church and would assess the venue.
k) Members discussed topics that should be addressed proactively at the community meeting.
l) Y. Stoikos suggested that the meeting include a clear explanation of what a typical day at the facility will look like from both the inside of the building and from the neighbourhood perspective, including deliveries, parking, staffing, and client activity.
m) T. Bruce suggested preparing a concise one-page handout addressing recurring concerns in point form, including:
    i) Loitering
    ii) Coming and going from the facility
    iii) Parking
    iv) Staffing complement
    v) Smoking
    vi) Fencing
    vii) What remains undecided or pending approval
    viii) How community members can become involved or support the centre
n) G. Cowell agreed that community meetings may become challenging if key operational details remain unknown and encouraged the team to have clear answers ready where possible.
o) R. Greenspan suggested involving people with lived experience or professionals who can speak to the positive impact of treatment and recovery programs. She also noted that local concerns about changes to lanes on Aberdeen may intersect with concerns about the site, and the team should be prepared to respond to questions about traffic and neighbourhood impacts.
p) K. Gargarello provided feedback on a video circulated previously, highlighting the lived experience of a HART Hub client, noting concern that it could reinforce stereotypes about people coming to Hamilton from outside the community. J. Macleod responded that the video reflected the real experience of one client and that the HART Hub is intended to support people like him in recovery.
q) G. Cowell suggested the community may ask how many residents or clients will come from Hamilton versus outside Hamilton.
r) S. Atungo noted that the Hamilton HART Hub is intended to serve the Hamilton area and that geography matters, while also acknowledging privacy and consent considerations pertaining to release of client information.

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s) M. Payette suggested that the team describe the program's catchment area and explain how it relates to other HART Hubs and service availability.
t) K. Gargarello supported the idea of providing a diagram or explanation of catchment areas and referral eligibility.
u) J. MacLeod explained that there is a referral process, including walk-in access at 430 Cannon Street and referrals from partner organizations in Hamilton. He noted that the program has limited capacity and cannot accept unlimited referrals.
v) J. Macleod shared that Hamilton Urban Core is updating its website to better centralize information related to the project. The updated site is intended to act as a one-stop shop where community members can access agendas, minutes, and related materials.
w) J. MacLeod noted that document migration from the old site to the new site is still underway and that some materials may not yet be fully uploaded
x) T. Bruce asked whether NLT members should identify themselves at the June 23 community meeting so that community members could approach them with questions.
y) J. MacLeod said he would appreciate members attending in their capacity as Neighbourhood Liaison Table members, if they are comfortable and available. He emphasized that members would not be required to speak or defend the project, but that having members present would help put faces to the NLT and demonstrate the table's role in shaping the process.
z) J. MacLeod invited members to email him privately regarding their availability.

7) Wrap Up and Closing

a) J. MacLeod asked for a motion to adjourn.
   i) Motion: To adjourn the meeting.
      (1) Moved by: Tobi Bruce
      (2) Seconded by: Kim Ritchie
      (3) Result: Carried.
b) The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:06 p.m. J. MacLeod thanked members for attending the meeting.

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