

Ward 2 Participatory Budgeting

2014 Results Report

July 2014

CivicPlan



PBW2 2014 Results Report

The Centre for Community Study (CCS) is a non-profit urban research organization. The CCS provides services to the public, not-for-profit and private sectors with expertise in a variety of areas including: Urban trends and analysis, community renewal strategies, media policy analysis, organizational and strategic planning. For more information go to www.communitystudy.ca

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1.0 Introduction

Over the last two years, Hamilton Ward 2 Councillor Jason Farr sponsored a participatory budgeting process to help determine how \$1 million in area rating dollars should be spent in the ward. Area rating is the method used to assign specific program costs to different areas within the city for the purposes of taxation. In April 2011, Hamilton City Council approved the transition to an “urban/rural” model of taxation for the area rated services. As a result of these changes, an Area Rating Special Capital Re-Investment Reserve was set up for Wards 1 to 8 (the former City of Hamilton). The purpose of this reserve is to address the required infrastructure needs within the former City of Hamilton. Ward Councillors are responsible to identify infrastructure priorities within their wards for this investment.

Councillor Farr has empowered Ward 2 residents to identify these priorities through a process known as “Participatory Budgeting.” Participatory Budgeting (PB) directly involves the community in making decisions on the spending priorities for a defined public budget.¹

The Ward 2 process was managed and coordinated by a Facilitator and the public meetings were moderated by an Animator. CCS Urban Research was retained to manage the online voting process, as well as collect, analyze and report on the final voting data.

Using CivicPlan, the CCS gathered community input to identify project priorities for area rating funding. CivicPlan is a service of the CCS that provides a platform for community engagement. It combines online tools and analysis to provide clients with a direct way to communicate with citizens and plan for the future. A CivicPlan community mapping tool, the Ward 2 Neighbourhood Explorer, was used to help inform the PB process by outlining existing community infrastructure, as well as the successful projects from the 2013 participatory budgeting process.

This report summarizes the results of the PB voting process for 2014 to help the Councillor and the community in their deliberations on setting project priorities for Ward 2, as well as planning for future years.

2.0 PBW2 Participatory Budgeting Process

A four phased approach was employed in Ward 2 in 2014 as follows:

- **Phase 1: Idea Generation** - Five public assemblies were held throughout the ward between April 19th and May 1st to bring residents together to brainstorm ideas eligible for PBW2 funding. Additionally, volunteers were recruited during the assemblies to work as PB Budget Delegates. At the conclusion of the assemblies, proposed ideas were collected and organized by categories.
- **Phase 2: Project Development** – On May 3rd, 15 Budget Delegates met with City staff to review proposed ideas and develop project proposals. Delegates selected which category of projects they would like to work on (e.g. parks, culture, roads, traffic etc). Following this workshop, Delegates were given 18 days to review, combine, and research the proposed projects transforming them into actual proposals that included high level costs and feasibility assessments. 35 projects were developed into project proposals that were then submitted to City staff from the relevant municipal departments (i.e. Public Works, Economic Development and Planning, and the Division of Culture and Tourism) for a feasibility assessment and firm costs. Following the review by City staff, 21 projects were brought forward for voting.
- **Phase 3: Voting** - This consisted of both online and in person voting during the last week of June 2014.
- **Phase 4: Project Implementation** - This phase of the process involves the submission of the winning projects to City Council for approval for funding and implementation in 2015.

The PBW2 process was communicated widely throughout the ward using social media, the Councillor's ward-wide email list, and neighbourhood associations' communications (newsletters and e-mail lists). Postcards were distributed to ward residents in advance of the idea generation phase of the process, as well as in advance of the voting process. One PBW2 advertisement appeared in *The Hamilton Spectator*, one article appeared in the *North End Breezes*, and the Facilitator conducted one television interview on Cable 14's *Hamilton Life* in June, as well as one radio interview prior to the voting period. Additionally, PBW2 staff and volunteers attended neighbourhood events (a list of events is attached in Appendix A), and PBW2 staff and volunteers were present at the Hamilton Farmer's Market almost every Saturday from April to the end of June.

2.1 Idea Generation and Project Development

The idea generation and project development phases were overseen by the PBW2 Facilitator and Animator. Approximately 100 ideas were generated through the public assemblies. These ideas were then examined by the PB Budget Delegates to ascertain whether they fell within the definition of infrastructure, as follows;

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“... basic physical and organizational structures needed for the operation of a service and facility”

The term typically refers to the *technical structures* that support a society, such as roads, water supply, sewer supply, facilities and so forth. These structures are deemed essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions.²

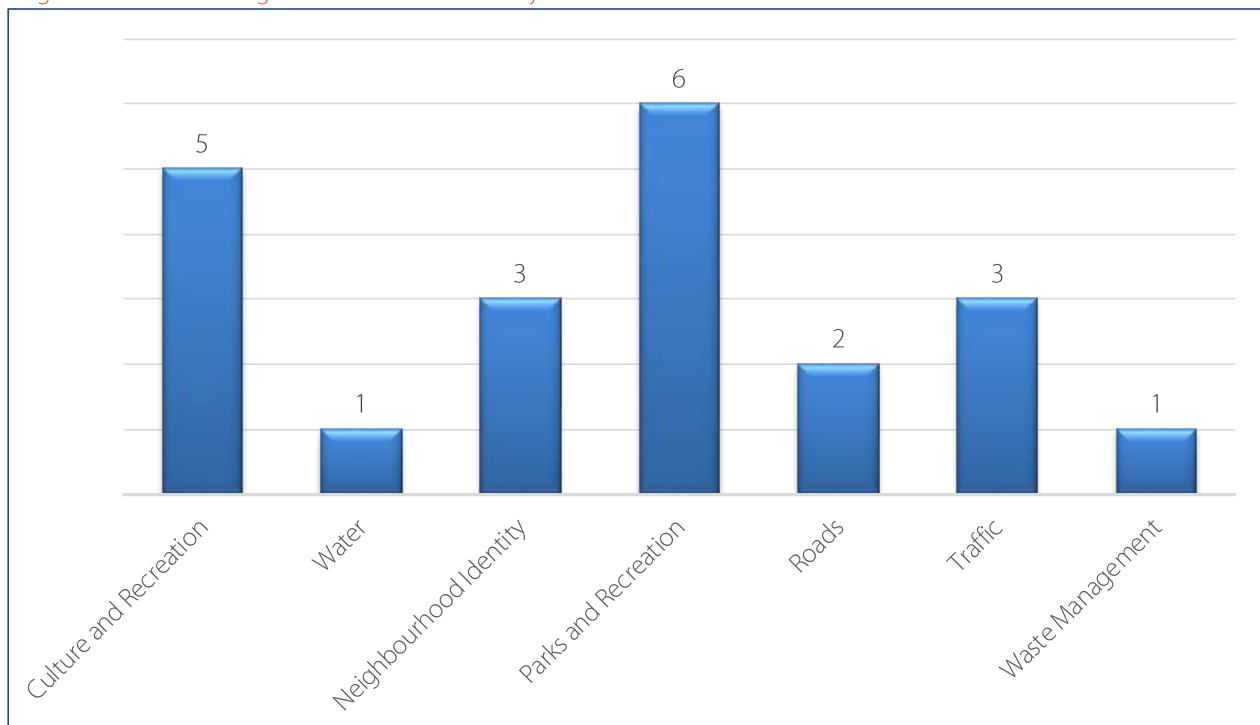
Additionally, the Budget Delegates ensured that eligible projects aligned with the following criteria;

- Must be hard infrastructure,
- Must be on public property,
- Must not be already underway or under study by the City of Hamilton.

Also, where there were duplicate or similar project ideas suggested, these were blended. This first phase of filtering brought the number of projects to 35, which were then presented for review by City staff. Staff reviewed all 35 projects and determined whether or not they were feasible. Additionally, staff provided a hard cost value for each project. 21 projects were successful in making the final shortlist.

These 21 projects were available to be viewed as part of a Project Expo at the Hamilton Farmer's Market from June 21 through 28, 2014. Additionally, a more detailed description of each project proposal was available on the PBward2.ca website. The projects were organized by seven categories as displayed in figure 1 below.

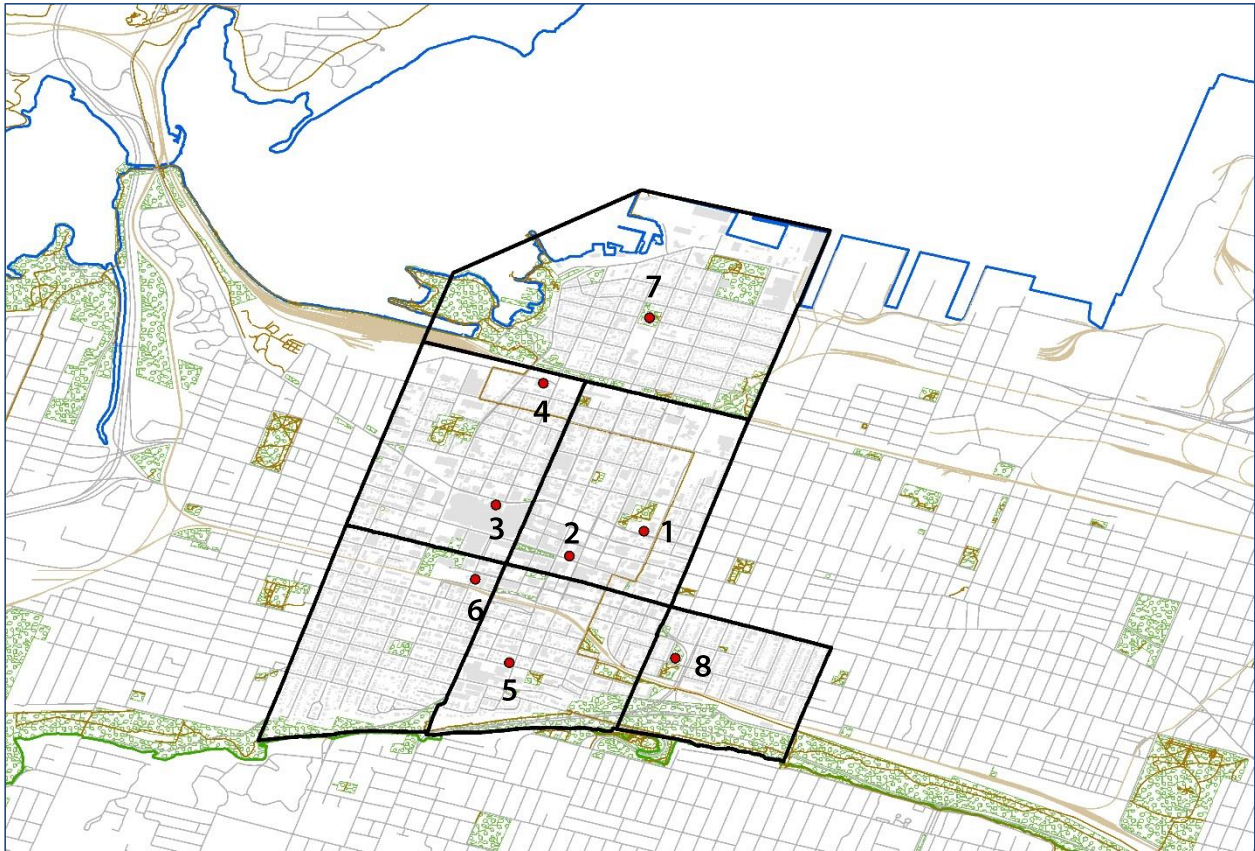
Figure 1: Shortlist Categories and Number of Projects



2.2 Voting Phase

The third phase of the PBW2 process was voting. Residents were able to vote online from June 23 to 29 via the pbward2.ca website, as well as in person on June 28th and 29th at eight different polling locations throughout the ward.³ Figure 2 below identifies the in-person voting locations by neighbourhood.

Figure 2: In-person Voting Locations by Neighbourhood

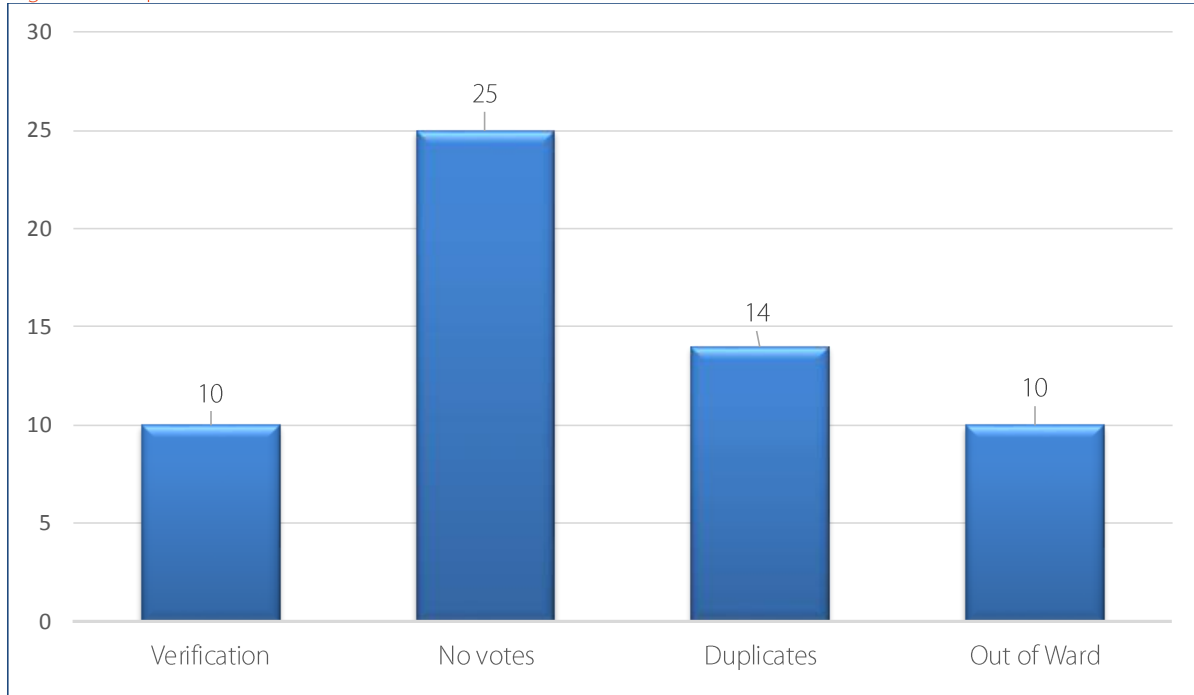


1. The Old Beasley Community Centre (133 Wilson St.) Saturday June 28, 9-5 PM
2. Mills Hardware (95 King St. East) Sunday June 29, 12-4 PM
3. Hamilton Farmers' Market (Jackson Square) Saturday June 28, 8-6 PM
4. Worker Arts and Heritage Centre (51 Stuart St) Saturday June 28, 10-4 PM
5. Church of the Ascension (65 Charlton Ave. E.) Saturday June 28, 10-2 PM
6. YWCA (75 MacNab St. South) Saturday June 28, 10-4 PM, Sunday June 29, 12-4 PM
7. Bennetto Recreation Centre (450 Hughson St. North) Saturday June 28, 10-4 PM
8. Central Memorial Recreation Centre (93 West Ave. South) Saturday June 28, 1-3 PM, Sunday June 29, 12-2 PM.⁴

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In total, there were 577 total ballots cast, of that total, 526 (91%) were valid ballots. There were various reasons why 51 ballots were disqualified. Figure 3 below illustrates the reasons and number of disqualified ballots.

Figure 3: Disqualified Ballots: Reasons and Numbers



- 10 ballots that did not have complete personal information for verification purposes were not counted. Name, address and postal code were required to ensure that all voters were Ward 2 residents, as well as to guard against duplicate voting (whether online or paper and online).⁵
- 25 ballots included personal information but there were no votes cast, these were not counted.
- There were 14 duplicate ballots. In all cases, these were instances where voters did not complete their first attempt at voting online and tried a second time successfully. Only the second vote was counted.
- 10 ballots were cast by individuals from out of ward, therefore these were not included in the vote analysis.

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Of the valid ballots submitted, 96 were submitted in paper format, while 430 were submitted online. Paper ballots represented 18 percent of total valid ballots (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Paper vs. Online Voting

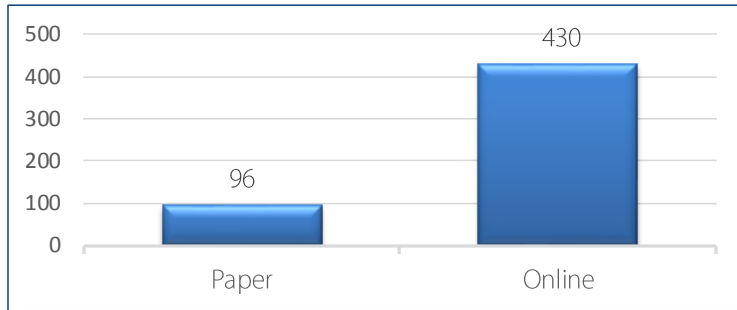
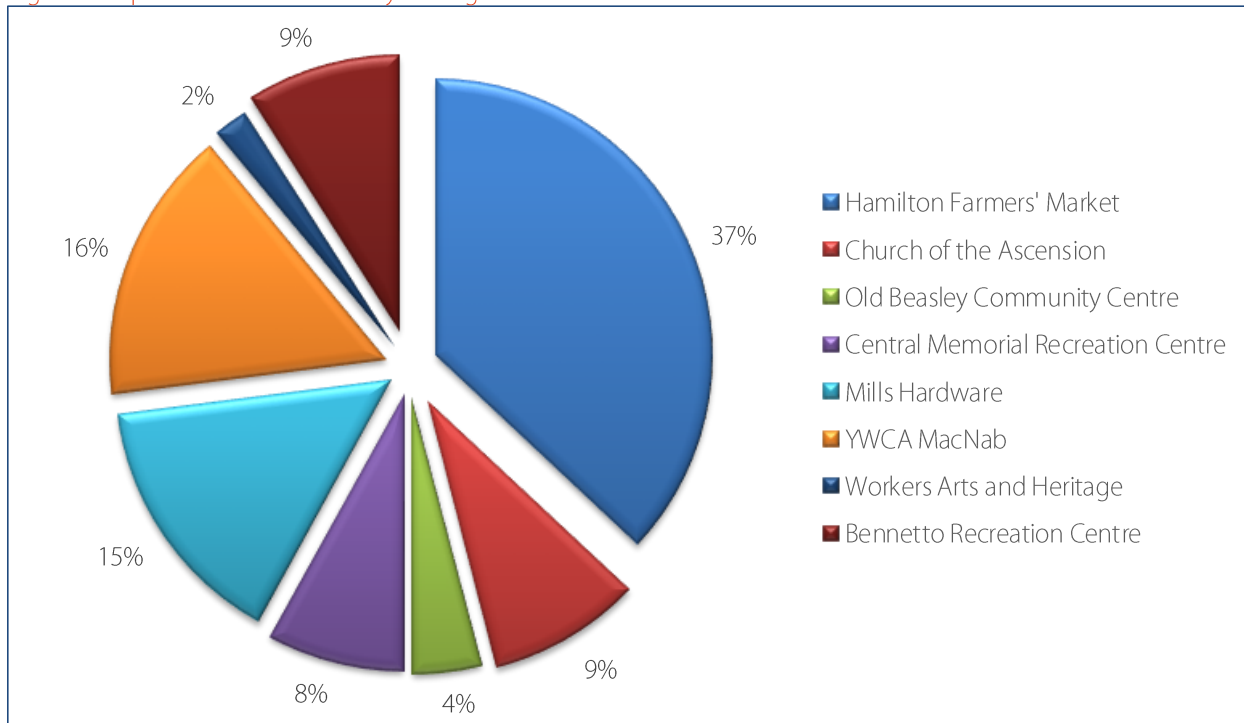


Figure 5 below displays the percentage of paper ballots cast by polling location.

Figure 5: Paper Ballot Distribution by Polling Location



The online voting process allows the assessment of how voters were directed to the PBW2 online ballot. The vast majority of online voters (94%) reached the PBW2 online ballot via the pbward2.ca website. The other six percent of voters were referred to the online ballot from different sources, including, a direct link to the ballot page, the Durand neighbourhood association website, and Facebook.

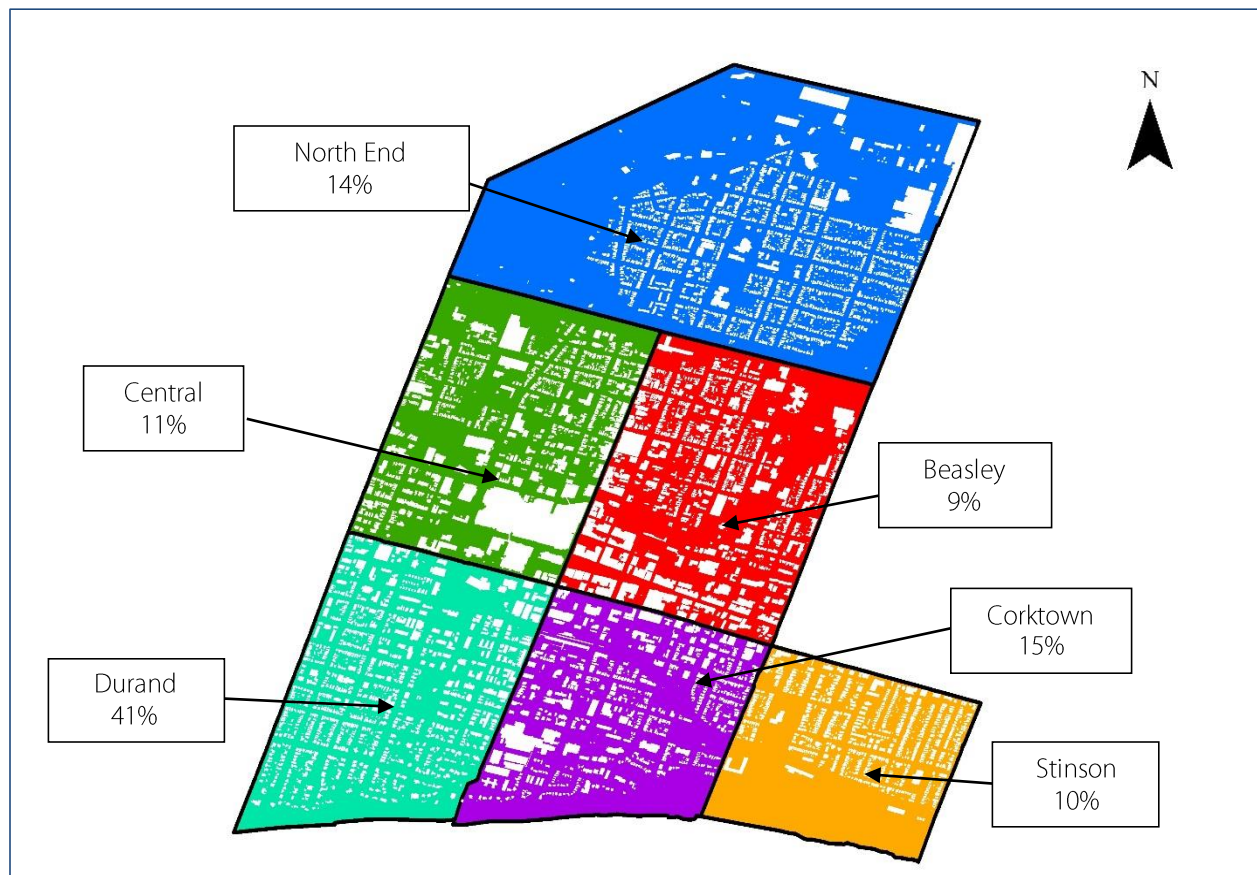
3.0 Voting Results

The following section provides additional detail about voting participation and the project voting results.

3.1 Neighbourhood Participation

Respondents were asked to identify their address and the Ward 2 neighbourhood in which they live. Figure 6 below details the percentage breakdown of valid ballots by neighbourhood.

Figure 6: Neighbourhood Participation

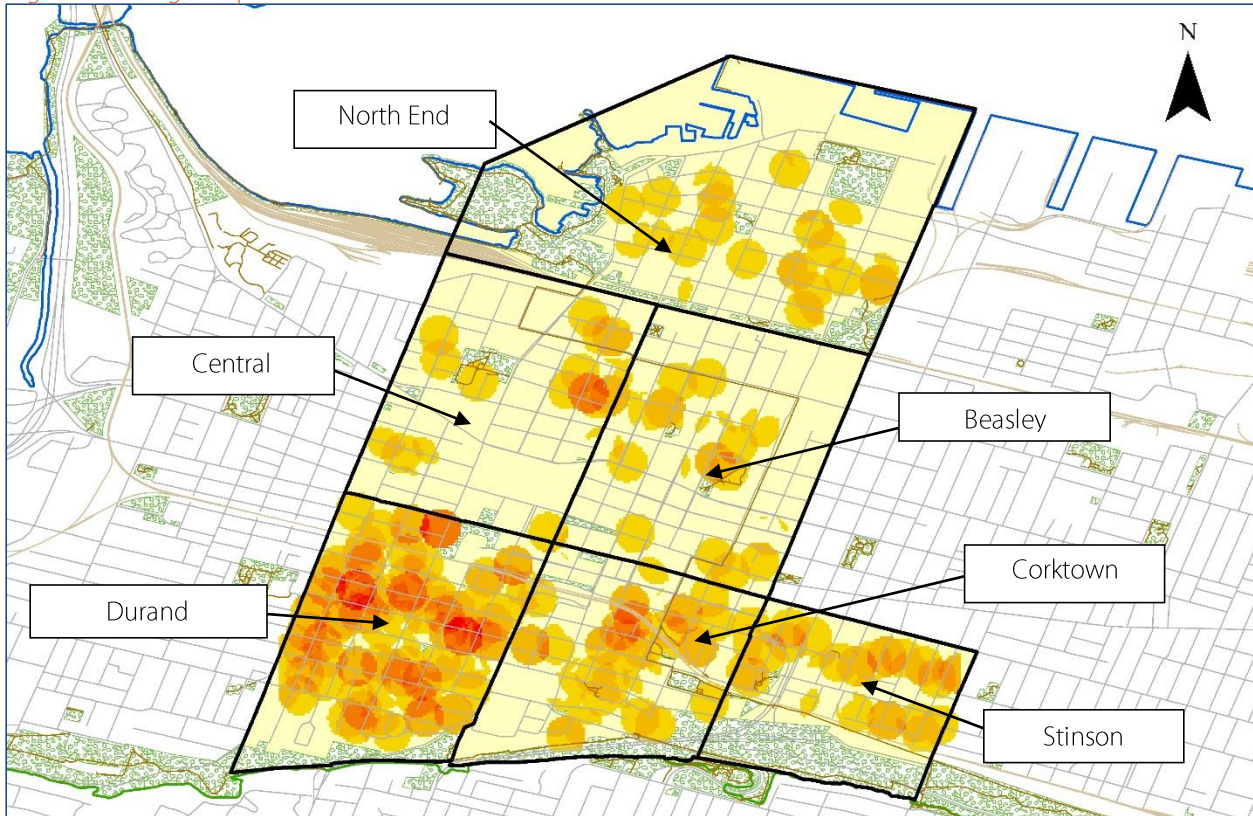


- The largest group of responses came from Durand (41%)
- 15 percent of respondents live in Corktown
- 14 percent of respondents noted they live in the North End
- 11 percent were from Central neighbourhood
- 10 percent live in Stinson neighbourhood
- 9 percent of voters came from Beasley neighbourhood.

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Figure 7 below illustrates the voting hotspot locations within each neighbourhood where the darker red clusters represent areas with a higher density of votes. The highest voter densities were found in Durand, with smaller concentrations of voting in Corktown and Central neighbourhoods.

Figure 7: Voting Hotspot Locations



Source: CCS Urban Research

3.2 Project Voting Results

The following table lists the results of voting, including the overall total points score and the individual vote totals. Ward 2 residents were asked to select their top five projects, ranking their preferences from one to five.

The results of the ranked ballot were totaled using the following weighted method:

- 1st Place Votes = 5 points each
- 2nd Place Votes = 4 points each
- 3rd Place Votes = 3 points each
- 4th Place Votes = 2 points each
- 5th Place Votes = 1 point each

With respect to the paper ballots, 14 ballots did not have ranked choices, but instead the project preferences were indicated by a check or x mark. These ballots were retained, and each selection was given one point, as there was no way to determine the priority of projects selected.

Table 1: Ward 2 Project Voting Results

Project	Total Points	1 st Place Votes	2 nd Place Votes	3 rd Place Votes	4 th Place Votes	5 th Place Votes
1. Restoration of the Roof of St Mark's Church - \$100,000 (Durand)	843	108	28	35	28	26
2. Rail Trail Reconstruction - \$86,000 (Corktown/Stinson)	827	67	52	54	47	25
3. Water Fountain for Drinking - \$25,000 (Central/Beasley)	681	45	56	37	37	39
4. Wheelchair Swings - \$2,200 (Ward-wide)	467	26	32	33	31	41
5. Durand Traffic Calming Reserve - \$60,000 (Durand)	445	20	41	35	27	15
6. Bike Rack Sculptures - \$55,000 (Downtown)	444	32	33	24	23	31
7. Pedestrian Safety Initiative: Wentworth and Charlton - \$150,000 (Stinson)	404	29	26	27	25	22
8. Install FOUR Additional Public Garbage Bins - \$4,000 (Ward-wide)	392	14	22	29	41	63
9. Duke & Bold Street 2-way Conversions - \$300,000 (Durand)	382	32	23	27	17	13
10. Semi-Circular Park Bench Sets (6) - \$18,000 (Ward-wide parks)	328	6	29	24	35	34
11. Neighbourhood Signage - \$180,000 (Ward-wide)	322	23	25	15	22	16
12. Outdoor Games Tables - \$17,000 (Waterfront/North End)	321	6	27	30	34	22

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Project	Total Points	1st Place Votes	2nd Place Votes	3rd Place Votes	4th Place Votes	5th Place Votes
13. Mary Street Complete Streets - \$300,000 (Beasley)	315	23	24	16	14	23
14. Community Notice Boards - \$12,000 (Ward-wide)	273	13	18	23	21	23
15. Traffic Calming/Walkability in the Stinson Neighbourhood - \$62,000 (Stinson)	265	18	16	19	13	28
16. Ward 2 Designation Plaques - \$30,000 (Ward-wide)	216	9	14	18	19	20
17. Decorative Sidewalks - \$200,000 (North End)	193	17	7	14	13	11
18. Resurfaced Tennis Courts - Central Park - \$30,000 (Central)	172	4	9	18	21	17
19. Art in Pedestrian Underpass - \$70,000 (Corktown)	116	7	6	8	7	16
20. Corktown Park Signage - \$100,000	115	5	7	13	9	4
21. 'Atlas In Jeans' Sculpture - \$335,000 (Stinson)	55	3	6	1	4	4
Total⁶		507	501	500	488	493

3.3 Summary of Voting Results

The following outlines the top results from the 2014 PBW2 voting:

- The top project by total points is the restoration of the roof at St. Mark's Church. This project received the most first place votes.
- The second project by total points is the Rail Trail reconstruction in Corktown and Stinson neighbourhoods, which received a more even distribution of votes across all five rankings.
- There is only a small point difference (16 points) between the first and second projects selected.
- The third project selected is for the installation of water fountains along James Street North and in Gore Park.
- The fourth selection is for the installation of wheelchair swings in Ward 2 parks.
- The fifth selection is in support of traffic calming in the Durand neighbourhood.
- Of the top five projects selected, one is ward-wide, two are in the Durand neighbourhood, one serves Corktown and Stinson neighbourhoods, while one serves both Central and Beasley neighbourhoods.
- When looking at the top 10 projects by category, two are from culture and recreation, three from parks and recreation, two are related to traffic and safety initiatives, one is for improved access to fresh water, one is from waste management, and one is related to roads.

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- Support for a simplified, clearer and more transparent process in 2014,
- Support for the continuation of PB in future years.

21 percent of comments related specifically to projects on the shortlist, both supportive and critical. One commonly repeated comment was questioning why certain projects were not being funded through other municipal sources, e.g. road repairs and traffic calming.

A smaller segment of comments dealt with the PB process. In this case, multiple respondents commented on the amount of time for the process, specifically, it was suggested that more time was needed for the PB process as a whole, as well as more time for the idea generation phase, and for communicating the project shortlist before voting. Additionally, a number of comments noted the desire to have more assemblies/meetings after work hours so that more people could participate in proposing ideas.

Another central theme found in the comments were suggestions about how to improve the voting. Many comments complimented the simplified ballot for 2014. While others requested the opportunity to select more than five projects in the ranking. Other comments specific to the voting process focused on design elements.

Communication of the PBW2 process was another important theme found in many comments. While some felt that the process was very well communicated, others suggested more outreach through neighbourhood associations and to different groups in the Ward. Additionally, many respondents suggested increasing the efforts to reach residents for the idea generation and voting phases. Suggestion included more flyers and postering and more coverage in the mainstream press rather than via social media. Another important theme that recurred related to communication was a request for more communication about the progress of the winning projects through the City's budget process, City Council approval, and updates or status reports on implementation.

5.0 Summary

The following summarizes key points about the PBW2 2014 process.

- Following five public assemblies and work by PB Budget Delegates and City staff, the project shortlist of 21 projects was presented for voting in June.
- 577 total ballots were cast, of which 526 were valid ballots.
- 18 percent of valid ballots were cast in person, while 72 percent were submitted online.
- The largest segment of paper ballots were cast at the Hamilton Farmers' Market, while the majority of online voters accessed the online process via the pbward2.ca website.
- The largest single segment of voters (41%) live in the Durand neighbourhood.
- Concentration of voting within neighbourhoods was displayed in Durand, Corktown and Central neighbourhoods.
- The restoration of the roof at St. Mark's Church was the top project selected, followed closely by Rail Trail reconstruction in Corktown and Stinson neighbourhoods. The installation of water fountains downtown, of wheelchair swings in ward parks and Durand traffic calming reserve completed the top five projects, respectively.
- Of the top ten projects, three are ward-wide, three are in the Durand neighbourhood, two serve the Central and Beasley neighbourhoods, while the remaining two serve Corktown and Stinson neighbourhoods.
- 32 percent of all voters submitted feedback about the PBW2 process via the online ballot. Key themes reflected in the comments include ongoing support for participatory budgeting, comments specific to shortlist projects, suggestions about how to improve the PB process in general, suggestions for improving the voting process and comments about communicating the PBW2 process and results.

6.0 Endnotes

¹ For more information on Participatory Budgeting and the PBW2 process please visit www.pbward2.ca.

² The definition of infrastructure used in the PBW2 process was developed from the City of Hamilton Corporate Services, Financial Planning and Policy Report, and the Area Rating Special Capital Re-Investment report (FCS12024) dated February 15, 2012. See <http://www.pbward2.ca/projects/> for more detail.

³ For a detailed list of polling places, dates and times for voting during the 2014 PBW2 process, please visit www.pbward2.ca.

⁴ Voting places and times were taken from the www.pbward2.ca website.

⁵ Personal information was collected for verification purposes only. It is not shared with any third party or used for any purpose other than verification.

⁶ Please note that vote totals do not equal total valid ballots as not all voters provided all five selections on their ballots.

7.0 Appendix A: List of Community Events

Date	Event
March	
5	Central Neighbourhood Association Annual General Meeting
April	
1	Durand Neighbourhood Association Executive Meeting
3	PBW2 2014 Launch Event
9	Beasley Neighbourhood Association Annual General Meeting
12	Karen Burson at Hamilton Farmer's Market
15	Hamilton Youth Action Committee Meeting, Lister Bldg.
17	North End Neighbours Board Meeting
19	Idea Generation Assembly (IGA) # 1 at the Hamilton Farmer's Market Community Kitchen
23	IGA#2 - Homegrown Hamilton
26	IGA #3 - Volunteer Hamilton
30	IGA #4 - Bennetto Recreation Centre
May	
1	IGA #5 - The Corktown
3	Budget Delegate Assembly #1 with City Staff at Hamilton Public Library
5	Ward 2 Neighbourhood Council
10	Karen at Hamilton Farmer's Market
17	Karen/PBW2 Volunteer at Hamilton Farmer's Market, Budget Delegate Assembly #2 at FRWY
24	Karen at Hamilton Farmer's Market
31	Central Neighbourhood Association Event in Central Park
June	
7	Karen at Hamilton Farmer's Market
11	Cable 14, "Hamilton Life"
13	The James St. North Art Crawl – flyering, music
14	Karen at Hamilton Farmer's Market
19-20	Gore Park – Walk a Mile in Her Shoes
21	PBW2 2014 Project Expo Launch
21-28	Displays at Hamilton Farmer's Market
23	CFMU "MorningFile"
26-27	PBW2 displays at Gore Park