

OHIO ACTIVISTS SHARE STRATEGY ON AIR EMISSIONS

In early February Environment Hamilton hosted a visitor from Ohio Citizen Action – an Ohio-based environmental advocacy organization known for its ability to effectively mobilize industrial neighbourhoods to push for industries to clean up their act.



Liz Ilg, the organization's Cleveland-based ArcelorMittal campaigner was in Hamilton to meet with EH staff and area residents who have been working to see Hamilton's ArcelorMittal (Dofasco) plant, along with other local industries, address on-going industrial emission problems.

Liz shared some of the strategies utilized as part of Ohio Citizen Action's trademark approach of developing and implementing what the organization calls 'Good Neighbour Campaigns'. These campaigns involve door-to-door efforts where staff and volunteers talk with residents in affected neighbourhoods about the impacts they are experiencing and encourage individuals to take action.

Actions can range from contacting elected representatives to writing letters directly to company representatives, asking them to take corrective action to alleviate neighbourhood impacts.

Over its 30+ year history, Ohio Citizen

continued on page 2



EH REPORT CARD ISSUED:

WHAT'S THE CITY DONE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

In December 2006, Environment Hamilton suggested 10 "baby steps" that city council should take to begin addressing the threat of climate change. The proposals were formally presented to councillors in February 2007.

Two years later, our review has found some progress on implementation, but far less than necessary to show a serious municipal commitment to what is now recognized as the most significant threat to human civilization.

Council scored no higher than "B-" on any of the steps and there are three "F" grades. The full report starts on page 4, along with the grades assigned by Environment Hamilton's team of evaluators.

While we are disappointed in the city's efforts, the climate change challenge has not diminished, and we have prepared a new list of additional more substantial practical steps that can put Hamilton in the company of numerous global cities who are making an effective contribution to this critical problem.

We're unveiling that new list at the March 24th AGM at the FRWY Cafe, and will be formally presenting it to city council soon afterwards.

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SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE JADED

ENVIRONMENT HAMILTON'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

GUEST SPEAKER: DR BOB GIBSON, EDITOR OF ALTERNATIVES MAGAZINE FOR 25 YEARS

TUES, MARCH 24, 7 PM- FRWY CAFE, 333 KING ST E @ WELLINGTON

Civilization is what grows up in the margins of leisure and security provided by a workable relationship with the natural world. That margin won't exist, at least not for long, as long as we remain on the wrong side of 350. That's the limit we face. – Bill McKibben

Why 350? We must return to the earth's natural balance! – David Suzuki

OHIO ACTIVIST from previous page

Action has waged successful Good Neighbour campaigns in a number of Ohio communities, securing commitments from industries to make improvements that, in some instances, go beyond what the law requires. The group's strategy is all about encouraging industry to accept the fact that it is part of the community around it and to commit to behaviour anyone would expect of a good neighbour.

Part of Ohio Citizen Action's approach involves engaging residents who might not otherwise become involved in Good Neighbour campaigns. One approach that has certainly caught the eye of Hamilton area activists is a campaign the group launched that involves putting up lawn signs around Cleveland, and particularly in the neighbourhoods located closest to and



impacted most by the ArcelorMittal plant.

The signs called for 'Mittal Steel' to 'clean up for real', and are part of a larger community campaign to urge the company to invest in much-needed pollution control upgrades. The campaign provides a way for more members of the community to play a part, even if participation amounts to something as simple as agreeing to put up a lawn sign.

The effort has helped to send a very visible message to the company that neighbours all around the plant are being impacted by them and want to see action from the company to resolve the problems. The campaign has also engaged a broader audience by encouraging local physicians, politicians and other leaders to call or write to the company to express their concerns.

Ohio Citizen Action also helps impacted residents to gain a voice by providing them with a platform telling their own personal stories about the industrial impacts they

contend with in their neighbourhoods.

A visit to the group's website provides access to video clips and a documentary that capture stories that are all too familiar to Hamiltonians living near our own industrial core. Struggles with sooty black fallout, kids with asthma, and fears about health impacts top the list of concerns shared by Cleveland residents living near the city's steel mill.

From Ohio to Toronto

It's funny how people become connected. On the heels of her visit with us here in Hamilton, Liz continued on to Toronto, where she met with staff at the Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA). Ohio Citizen Action has been working with TEA for some time now, helping the Alliance to develop and implement Good Neighbour campaigns in Toronto. Liz has helped to bring TEA and EH together through this Good Neighbour work. As a result, on March 7 and 8, EH staff along with community members, participated in a weekend 'Good Neighbour Campaign' training workshop, along with residents from Toronto and the Aamjiwnaang First Nation beside Sarnia. The workshop was being led by Paul Ryder, the founder of Ohio Citizen Action.

We are thrilled to have had this opportunity and look forward to what might come of it. Watch for the possibility of an EH member session for information and experience-sharing after we complete our Good Neighbour Campaign training!

To learn more about Ohio Citizen Action, visit www.ohiocitizen.org. On the website you can access the full text of the group's recently released book entitled 'Good Neighbour Campaign Handbook – How to Win'.

350 CAMPAIGN

Leading scientists and environmentalists argue that real protection for the planet from climate change requires REDUCING the existing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to no higher than 350 parts per million from current levels of 387 ppm.

The 350 target is endorsed by NASA scientist Dr James Hansen, who says: "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted, paleoclimate evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that CO₂ will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm." Visit www.350.org for more info.

PLAGUE OF DUNDAS PROPOSALS: PART 2: THE THREAT TO PLEASANTVIEW

The Pleasantview proposal is described as a 'residential lifestyle community' that the developer hopes to build on 2 parcels of land totaling 60 hectares (147 acres) in the last rural part of Dundas located north and south of York Road, east of Valley Road.

The proposal includes a total of 760 units (100 single family bungalows, 150 town-houses, 360 apartments in low-rise buildings, and a 150 unit nursing home). There's also a wellness centre, in a "village setting" described as accommodating 'aging in place' by allowing "...residents to take advantage of different housing types within the community as their lifestyle needs change".

The Niagara Escarpment Commission, in a submission prepared by staff and unanimously approved by the commission, provided comment to Ontario's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on this proposal, as it will require an amendment to the province's Parkway Belt West plan in order to proceed. The NEC's submission provides a powerful overview of the challenges with this proposal:

The subject lands are in an area affected by a proposed amendment to Regulation 827 of the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act – The proposed amendment to the Regulation would incorporate the subject lands into the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area... The proposed use... for a "Lifestyle Retirement Community" would not be consistent in our view with the objectives of the Niagara Escarpment Program....

These lands are within the 'Escarpment Link' portion of the Parkway Belt West Plan (PBWP) – The intent of the PBWP for these lands was very limited development with emphasis on the preservation of the natural environment associated with the Escarpment landscape to reflect its context between the Escarpment to the north and south.

The lands lie also within the Greenbelt Plan (GB) – ...lands identified as being within the GB are not the focus of future urban development in the Province.

The Growth Plan (GP) directs development to lands outside of the Greenbelt - The policies on when, how and where to grow when read in

In our last newsletter, we provided members with an overview of the proposal to build a self-storage facility at 201 King Street East in Dundas. Since that article was published, the proposal was unanimously rejected by the city's planning committee members, despite a staff recommendation to approve the plan. Council confirmed the decision of the committee at its February 25th meeting, although an appeal can be made to the Ontario Municipal Board.

conjunction with the GP and Provincial Policy Statement would not encourage urban growth in this area.

The City of Hamilton's ne Official Plan for the rural area does not include these lands within the urban boundary – As such, the application is contrary to the City's most recently expressed growth direction and policy.

Meanwhile, at the March 3rd meeting of the city of Hamilton's Economic Development and Planning Committee, the approach taken by planning staff was considerably different. Staff recommended to committee members "...that no decision be made by the MMAH (Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing) regarding the application by Mattiacci and Strobel for an amendment to the Parkway Belt West Plan until such time that a comprehensive land-use review has been completed by the City".

The recommendation was passed by the committee, with Councillors Brian McHattie and Bob Bratina registering their opposition.

As reported in CATCH, Councillor McHattie reacted very strongly to the staff recommendation. "What's happening here is you've got a developer who's trying to go around the process and who's trying to have this area developed, despite a comprehensive OMB decision, despite a comprehensive GRIDS process, despite council's suggestion that this should be in the Niagara Escarpment Plan area – and we're facilitating that," charged the councillor. "Very disappointing."

Visit www.hamiltoncatch.org for the detailed March 7th CATCH article on the City of Hamilton's handling of the proposal - 'Pleasantview future unclear' . To get involved, contact Kris at gkrobinson@cogeco.ca or call us at EH.



Concerned?
Consider writing your own letter to Hamilton City Council. Letters should be sent to the Mayor and Members of Council c/o the City Clerk, Hamilton City Centre, 77 James St. N, Suite 220, Hamilton ON L8R 2K3. FAX (905)546-2095, clerk@hamilton.ca.

REPORT
CARD

CITY'S EFFORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Sponsor a 2007 conference in Hamilton on Effective Municipal Actions to Address Climate Change and commission a study of best practices being utilized in other cities.

ACTION: The February 2008 Upwind-Downwind two-day conference focused one day on climate change and included a public lecture on making Hamilton a pedestrian and cycling friendly city. One panel discussion shared some actions on climate change of other southern Ontario cities. We had hoped

for a best practices investigation that included cities well beyond southern Ontario, but this is a start. Our objective was to have a formal report that would provide some guidance to the city. That hasn't happened.

2. As part of the annual Clean Air Hamilton Report, include an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in Hamilton by municipal operations and by the community, and updates on programs and measures to reduce these emissions.

ACTION: In 1996 the city (former region) committed to a 6% cut in city-wide emissions and a 20% cut in corporate GHG emissions by 2010 using 1994 as the base year. The December 2004 Sustainability Indicators Report says a 3.8% reduction in corporate emissions occurred by 1998 but that subsequent amalgamation "make comparisons between the current situation and the 1998 figure impossible". Any further updates on emission reduction actions would normally be available in subsequent Vision 2020 annual Indicators Reports, but none have appeared since December 2004.

to report by June 2009.

In May 2008 provisionally approved reduction targets of 10% below 2005 by 2012 and 20% below by 2020 (dependent on calculating the cost of implementation). These roughly match the targets of the Harper government. In 2005 Canada's emission levels stood at 125% of 1990 levels. Using these national figures to translate the city's new targets, they are much lower than those approved in 1990. The 2012 target is equivalent to a 12.5% INCREASE in emissions over 1990, and the 2020 target is equivalent to a 0% increase over 1990.

In May 2008 council authorized the calculation of the city's corporate and community GHG emissions as of 2005. That has moved slowly but a consultant was approved in October 2008 and is scheduled

However, EH asked for an inventory, and the city has committed dollars to obtain that information.

3. Adopt the recommendation of Dr Richard Gilbert to commission a detailed study on how Hamilton can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and respond effectively to the pending shortages of fossil fuels.

In April 2006, council asked their staff to "consider a Terms of Reference and cost analysis for a follow-up report" and report back to council on May 18, 2006. But that instruction initially got lost. When EH presented the 10-point plan to Committee of the Whole on February 12, 2007, the Committee resurrected the request. That remained on the outstanding business list of Committee of the Whole until a further motion was approved at the June 23, 2008

meeting. In November 2008, a report was presented and adopted that calls for establishing a volunteer stakeholder committee to prepare the followup report. A budget of \$35,000 has been allocated to facilitate this process. The report noted that \$100,000 would be necessary to hire a professional consultant to prepare the report. As of today, no further steps have been made public.

4. Establish a timetable, annual targets and an implementation program to achieve the city's Official Plan objective of increasing transit ridership to at least 100 rides per capita by 2020 (currently 47).

The city has not responded to this specific recommendation. The number of rides per capita reported in November 2008 had slipped to 46.

In 2007 a new Transportation Master Plan was approved which sets a new transit target of 80-100 rides per capita by 2031 (as opposed to the previous Vision 2020 target

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of 100 rider per capita by 2020). It calls for increasing transit capital spending from the current \$12 million to \$20 million a year, but says road spending should rise from \$42 million to a \$60-100 million level.

The city established a rapid transit office in 2007. Bike racks were installed on all buses, some new hybrid buses were purchased, and the Eastgate transit terminal was reconstructed. The HSR and the Transit Steering Committee held a workshop in October 2007 and developed a five year expansion plan. Three new routes were approved by council in November 2007 and implemented in 2008. Service to Hamilton airport is scheduled to be re-introduced in 2009.

With encouragement and promised funding from the provincial Metrolinx agency, city staff are developing plans for rapid transit in either a light rail or bus rapid transit format. Hamilton is included in the provincial budgetting for rapid transit by 2015 on an east-west line between Eastgate Square and University Plaza. Council is

5. Provide free public transit on all smog days.

Council narrowly approved a motion in December 2007 asking city staff to investigate the costs and implications of providing free transit all the time. In the debate, the possibility of free transit on smog days or snow days was raised, but no decision has occurred. The study was scheduled to begin in April 2008. It has not yet been presented to council. In November

supporting these efforts, but has not committed to share in the funding.

In January 2008 transit fares were increased for the second time in six months. The cumulative increase for cash fares was 14%, adult tickets 9%, adult passes 21% and elementary and secondary school passes 26%. Proposals to increase fares by an additional 5% in 2009 were defeated in November 2008 on a tie vote.

The last two staff reports recommending fare increases have not specified the impact on ridership levels, but councillors questioned the director of transit on this at the November 26, 2007 COW meeting. He said he expected ridership will grow by 0.5 to 1.5% in both 2007 and 2008. In November 2008 the transit director reported an expected 1% increase in ridership for 2008 and predicted a similar increase in 2009. This is less than the projected population growth rate but probably close to the actual rate of population increase. Thus no progress has been made to increase the level of rides per capita.

2008 council approved providing free transit to persons 80 years of age or over using a Golden Age pass. It also received a staff recommendation to provide "fare-optional" transit service on up to six smog days in 2010. A decision on this step was postponed until later in the 2009 budget process. There were 17 smog days in 2008.

6. Support the establishment of high occupancy vehicle lanes within the City of Hamilton, and initiate steps to implement these by 2010 on at least two major east-west corridors (such as Main-King, Mohawk).

There does not appear to have been any action on this recommendation. No plans for

HOV lanes are included in the Transportation Master Plan completed in May 2007.

7. Approve and enforce an anti-idling bylaw and adopt a bylaw banning or restricting the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers and weed whackers within the city of Hamilton.

An anti-idling bylaw was approved in June 2007 to take effect in September 2008 and to be enforced in September 2009. However, further objections to the bylaw were raised in relation to funding an enforcement officer

position and in January 2008, councillors agreed to postpone enforcement until January 2009. No action has been considered on the banning or restricting of gas-powered leaf blowers and weed whackers.

8. Impose a moratorium on all new commercial drive-thru operations, and establish a timetable to phase out existing commercial drive-thru operations.

No moratorium has been imposed, and none appears to be under consideration. The issue was debated at the planning committee in relation to two specific sites – one on Dartnall Road and one on Rymal

Road, but only appears to have the support of two councillors – McHattie and Clark – and was specifically opposed by the new general manager of planning and economic development. Mayor Eisenberger has

A shift from industrial agriculture to ecological, local food systems would be the biggest single step to move towards 350 and a safe climate, while simultaneously solving the food crisis. – Vandana Shiva

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indicated his general support for a moratorium, but opposed a phase out of existing drive-thrus. A staff report in

9. Establish a timetable and annual targets to double Hamilton's urban tree canopy by 2025.

No action has been announced on setting targets. However, forestry staff have indicated they are working on a plan to establish a 35% canopy cover by 2030 in the urban area of Hamilton. The most recent estimate of coverage is about 18%. The city continues to plant more trees than it cuts down and increased the budget allocation in 2007 and 2008 for tree maintenance,

10. Establish an after-hours lights-out program for all city facilities and offices and encourage private businesses to do the same.

The corporate energy policy approved in November 2007 specifically acknowledges the Environment Hamilton recommendation and says staff agrees with this initiative. The report says staff "will continue to educate security guards, cleaning staff and maintenance staff on the importance of

December 2007 cited a Clean Air Hamilton study that said air pollution was not significantly higher downwind of drive-thrus.

although at a lower level in 2008 than had been planned. In the 2009 budget discussions (not yet finalized) a decision was taken to provide the missing 2008 funding but not the planned 2009 funding – effectively delaying the full implementation of the tree maintenance program by one year (from 2015 to 2016).

lighting only areas that are necessary during unoccupied periods" and will work "to phase in automated lighting control upgrades on City facilities as budgets allow." Implementation is difficult to judge because of the dispersal of city offices while City Hall is being renovated.

MARCH BREAK ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR

EH and Green Venture's Climate Change Champions project is organizing a March Break environmental fair at Eastgate Square.

The east end mall traditionally hosts family events every year over March Break. In the past the entertainment has featured petting zoos and other child-friendly activities. This year, Barbara Miele, the mall's new marketing Director, decided a Green Friendly Fair would be appropriate and our program was contacted to help out.

The activities include:

- o Guess how much water a rainbarrel holds (the closest guess wins the barrel!)
- o A puppet show that promotes recycling
- o Stories about corn – interactive storytelling
- o Union Gas will be giving out free energy-saving kits
- o Horizon Utilities will be promoting their refrigerator round-up
- o Various City departments will be on hand with information on energy, waste and water conservation
- o The opportunity to meet reptiles up close
- o An arts table where children can make creations out of everyday recycled objects and there will a professional musician to lead a drumming session where everyone is invited to create the sounds of nature.

Aside from organizing the event, Climate Change Champions will also be there with our unique Green Twister (the popular game gets a green twist) and a chance to play our Green Bingo, with energy-saving prizes for the winners.

The Green Friendly Fair runs from Tuesday March 17-Thursday March 19, from 10am to 3pm. Go to <http://www.eastgatesquare.ca/contact.htm> for directions on how to get to the mall. (Eastgate Square is an HSR transportation hub and has been identified as the eastern terminus for the proposed rapid transit/light rail system.)

Tell Your Story Contest

If you've made an environmental difference to where you live or work, Earth Day Canada wants to hear about it.

Enter the EcoAction Teams 2009 Storytelling Contest and tell us what you did. Panasonic camcorders and digital cameras are up for grabs! Deadline for entries: March 22, 2009

Earth Day Canada, one of our partners, is providing us with an online carbon footprint calculator - and to take part you in this contest you need to sign up first. Visit our website for directions. Become an online Champion, tell us what you have done to help the environment - and you could win one of these prizes!

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Reaching 350 ppm is a matter of living by my values—which include both 'love your neighbour' and 'try not to wreck every blooming thing on the planet while you're here.' –
Barbara Kingsolver



SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE JADED

Environment Hamilton is pleased to announce that Dr. Bob Gibson will be the keynote speaker at our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, March 24th, starting at 7pm at the Freeway Café.

Dr Gibson is a professor of Environment & Resource Studies in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Waterloo.

He will be speaking about sustainability for the jaded, in recognition of the fact that many communities (including Hamilton) have struggled with notions of sustainability but have failed to succeed in implementing meaningful plans. How do we begin to hold our decision makers feet to the fire?

Bob is known for his dry sense of humour,

so his discussion of this topic will be one you don't want to miss. We encourage you to join us on March 24th.

In addition to reports on our project achievements, this year's AGM includes the unveiling of our new ten-point plan for serious city council action on climate change.

The FRWY Cafe is at 333 King Street East at Wellington.



350 is a great initiative, which all those who care about the future of humanity should support. Only by holding down concentrations of greenhouse gases to this level can we be sure of preventing the runaway climate change which threatens our ability to feed ourselves. – George Monbiot

WHAT CAN I DO TO LIMIT MY EXPOSURE TO FLUORIDE?

In considering this question it is important to understand that even if artificial fluoridation of the municipal water supply were to be stopped tomorrow we would all continue to ingest Fluoride in our food and water.

This is because Fluoride is found naturally in both lake and spring water, and in soil, where it is taken up by crops and other plant life, largely as a result of the natural erosion and breakdown of Fluoride-containing rock.

This natural level is added to by fallout and runoff from such human activities as the manufacture of Steel, Glass, Aluminum, Bricks, Ceramic Products, Pesticides, etc. and from the use of Rock Phosphate fertilizer and some types of Pesticide in agriculture.

While there is no argument that exposure to high levels of ingested Fluoride can result in visible symptoms, and toxicity in extreme cases, it is also true that throughout our evolutionary history as a species we have been exposed to lower "background" levels of Fluoride in our food and water, and have developed physiological mechanisms to manage it within our bodies.

For those with ongoing concerns however there is equipment available which can remove most of the Fluoride from your home drinking water supply.

Most home water filters, such as the "Brita" jug, and common faucet-end or under-sink filters use a filter containing a

material known as "Activated Carbon", sometimes combined with a particulate filter and an / or an "ion exchange resin". These types of filters reduce many contaminates but are not effective at reducing Fluoride.

The following options can achieve effective Fluoride reduction:

- 1) The use of distilled water, either purchased in jugs or made at home using a distillation unit.
- 2) A "Reverse Osmosis" type filter system certified to include Fluoride reduction.
- 3) A special purpose Fluoride reduction cartridge filter. In this system the water is passed through a matrix containing "Activated Alumina" (Not Activated Carbon), which is a processed form of Aluminum Hydroxide.

This is probably the most cost effective option, at about \$150 for the initial purchase of a single sink sized unit and then the replacement of a disposable \$50 filter cartridge 3 to 4 times per year. These units are available for purchase on-line from a number of vendors, or at retail plumbing specialty outlets, probably as a special order item.

Installation could be a "do it yourself" project if you would be comfortable doing a job such as installing a new kitchen faucet, otherwise budget some extra for having a plumber install it for you.

RENEWED FUNDING FOR EH WORK

The Hamilton Community Foundation has extended funding for a fifth consecutive year to EH's work in lower-income communities. We were among a handful of organizations singled out for designated support of "ongoing poverty-reduction programs that work within [HCF's] priorities of youth, the environment and citizen engagement".

Other recipients of automatically extended funding were the local school boards, the YMCA and Wesley Urban Ministries.

The monies are part of HCF's five-year, \$5 million "Tackling Poverty Together" initiative that runs to 2013 and extends an earlier \$3.4 million investment in alleviating, preventing and reducing poverty in Hamilton.

"Since Hamilton Community Foundation's focused commitment to this issue started in 2004, we have seen meaningful impact in helping Hamiltonians along the path out of poverty" said Sheree Meredith of the Foundation. "These new opportunities support work that builds on the successes seen so far."

EH's work over the past four years has focused on expanding availability and use of

public transit, increasing waste diversion in schools, supporting energy conservation and reducing unacceptable environmental impacts on neighbourhoods.

Successes have included inauguration of the Wentworth North HSR route, an energy and transit use survey of 3200 households, distribution of over 5000 energy-reduction kits, and winning compensation for residents affected by pollution and action to reduce or eliminate these problems.

The successful Passport to Hamilton transit pass program and environmental programs in over 20 schools are part of the current EH work funded in part by the HCF.

The Hamilton Community Foundation was founded in 1954 and brings people together to convene solutions to Hamilton's most pressing challenges. It has total assets of approximately \$120 million and since it was founded, has made grants to our community totalling more than \$51 million. Last year, HCF made grants of approximately \$6.2 million to Hamilton organizations involved in health, social services, arts, environment, education and recreation.



The Hamilton Community Foundation supports EH's ongoing work in North Hamilton neighbourhoods

Join Us!



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www.environmenthamilton.org

Memberships
\$25 per year
\$15/unwaged & student

BEING A TOURIST IN HAMILTON

With Spring Break just around the corner, and summer not far behind, take advantage of EH's Passport to Hamilton project to explore some of Hamilton's treasures. Passport gives discounts at over 60 destinations throughout the city to groups arriving with a valid HSR day pass.

This transit pass is our City's best-kept secret. For only \$8, six people (maximum of two adults and 4 under the age of 19) can ride the bus all day. Add that to the discounts at your destination and you've got a fun, affordable hometown holiday. Here are some suggestions for you:

Discover the Discovery Centre on Discovery Drive:

A great destination for all ages, experience hands-on, innovative and interactive exhibits that highlight Canada's water features. When you're done, stroll along the waterfront and find "Rafaga - Unleashed", an artistic focal point of the park. Buy one adult ticket, get one child ticket free.

To get there: Take the #4 Bayfront north, jump off at the corner of James and Burlington St. E, walk north on James St, one

block, turn east on Guise and north on Discovery Dr. (10 minute walk total)

Hamilton Children's Museum

This heritage home-turned children's museum is packed with hands-on fun. Parents are guaranteed to learn some history, science and chemistry too. The best part of the museum is the staff who will gladly give you a tour, pull out a science experiment or dazzle you with weird and wacky facts. Buy one, get one free admission.

To get there: Take the #1 or #5 on Main St. to Gage Park at the Delta - minutes from downtown Hamilton!

Get Active - Rec Centre swim or skate

Take your pick of City Rec centres and get your kids active over the break. Arrive with a valid HSR Day pass and receive buy one, get one free discounts to swim or skate. For a complete list of City arenas and pools, visit www.hamilton.ca/rec

There is so much more to see and do using the Passport to Hamilton. To see a complete list of participants, go to www.environmenthamilton.org