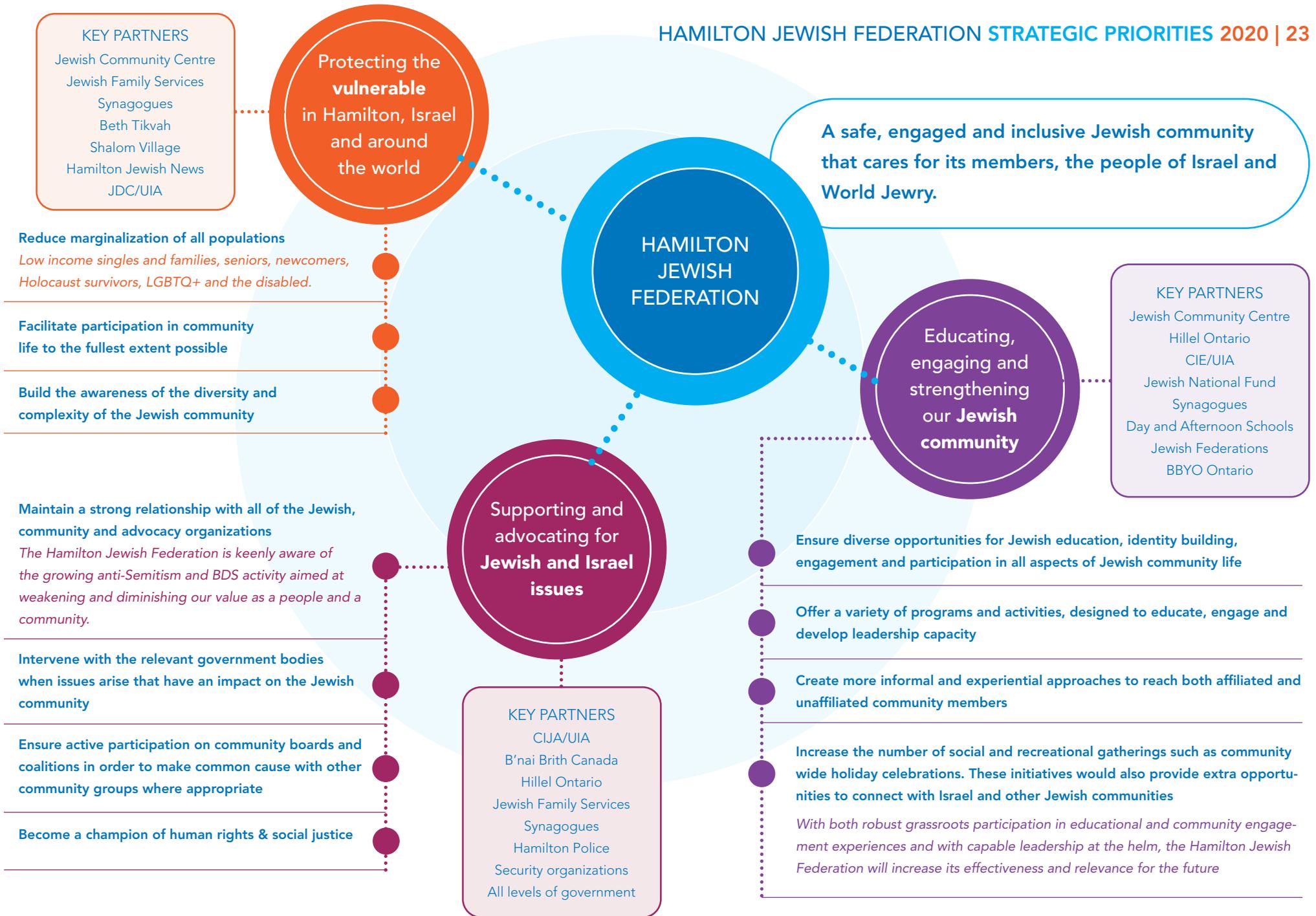


HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020 | 23



KEY PARTNERS

- Jewish Community Centre
- Jewish Family Services
- Synagogues
- Beth Tikvah
- Shalom Village
- Hamilton Jewish News
- JDC/UIA

Protecting the vulnerable in Hamilton, Israel and around the world

Reduce marginalization of all populations

Low income singles and families, seniors, newcomers, Holocaust survivors, LGBTQ+ and the disabled.

Facilitate participation in community life to the fullest extent possible

Build the awareness of the diversity and complexity of the Jewish community

Maintain a strong relationship with all of the Jewish, community and advocacy organizations

The Hamilton Jewish Federation is keenly aware of the growing anti-Semitism and BDS activity aimed at weakening and diminishing our value as a people and a community.

Intervene with the relevant government bodies when issues arise that have an impact on the Jewish community

Ensure active participation on community boards and coalitions in order to make common cause with other community groups where appropriate

Become a champion of human rights & social justice

KEY PARTNERS

- CJA/UIA
- B'nai Brith Canada
- Hillel Ontario
- Jewish Family Services
- Synagogues
- Hamilton Police
- Security organizations
- All levels of government

Supporting and advocating for Jewish and Israel issues

A safe, engaged and inclusive Jewish community that cares for its members, the people of Israel and World Jewry.

HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION

Educating, engaging and strengthening our Jewish community

KEY PARTNERS

- Jewish Community Centre
- Hillel Ontario
- CIE/UIA
- Jewish National Fund
- Synagogues
- Day and Afternoon Schools
- Jewish Federations
- BBYO Ontario

Ensure diverse opportunities for Jewish education, identity building, engagement and participation in all aspects of Jewish community life

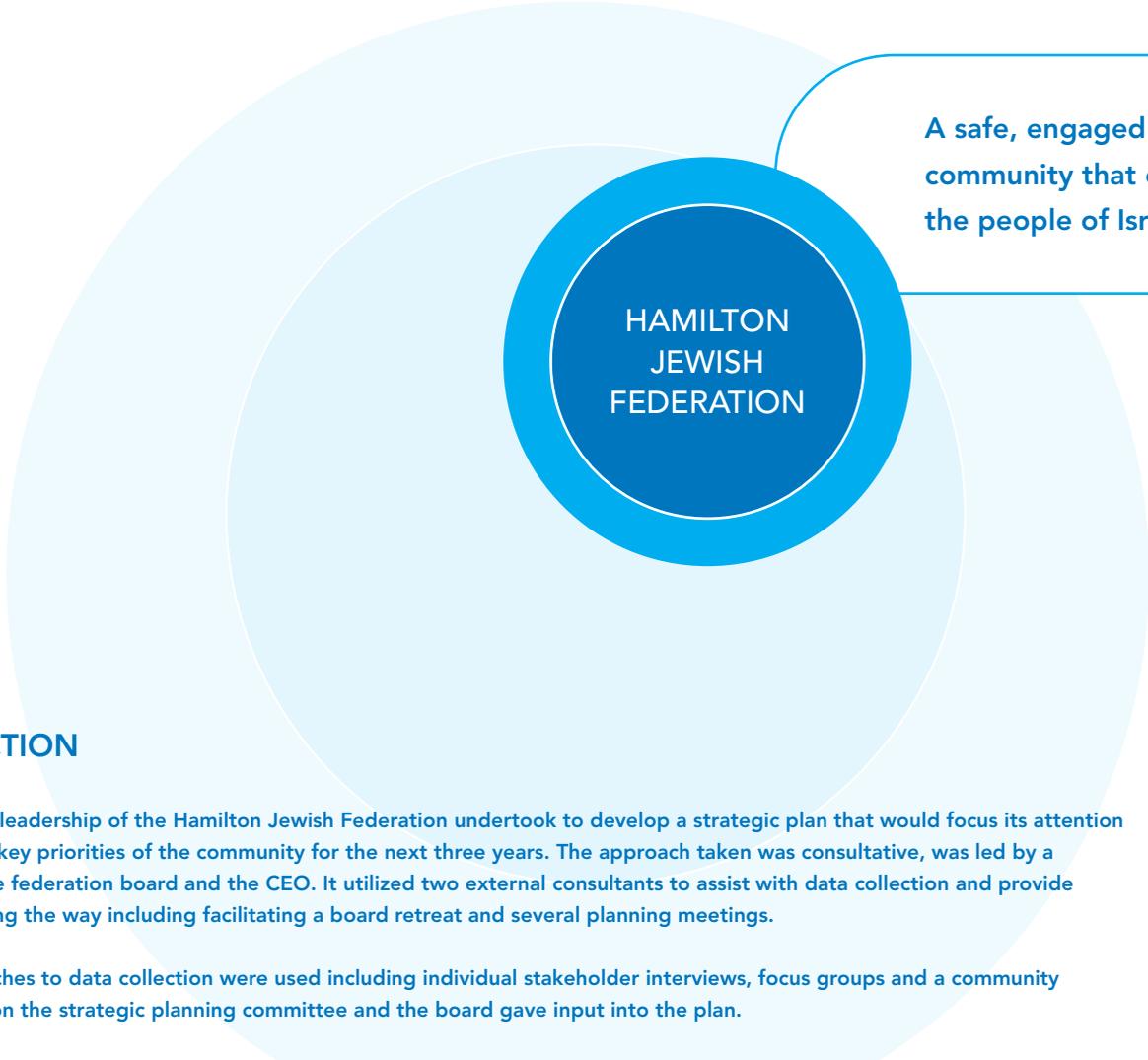
Offer a variety of programs and activities, designed to educate, engage and develop leadership capacity

Create more informal and experiential approaches to reach both affiliated and unaffiliated community members

Increase the number of social and recreational gatherings such as community wide holiday celebrations. These initiatives would also provide extra opportunities to connect with Israel and other Jewish communities

With both robust grassroots participation in educational and community engagement experiences and with capable leadership at the helm, the Hamilton Jewish Federation will increase its effectiveness and relevance for the future





HAMILTON
JEWISH
FEDERATION

A safe, engaged and inclusive Jewish community that cares for its members, the people of Israel and World Jewry.

INTRODUCTION

In Jan 2019, the leadership of the Hamilton Jewish Federation undertook to develop a strategic plan that would focus its attention and identify the key priorities of the community for the next three years. The approach taken was consultative, was led by a committee of the federation board and the CEO. It utilized two external consultants to assist with data collection and provide expert input along the way including facilitating a board retreat and several planning meetings.

Multiple approaches to data collection were used including individual stakeholder interviews, focus groups and a community survey. In addition the strategic planning committee and the board gave input into the plan.

The process was designed to develop the strategic priorities of the Hamilton Jewish Federation and to substantiate the resource development needs (funds, facilities and talent), as well as the priorities for investment. The process was grounded in the federation's core values of social justice (Tzedaka) caring for one another (Chesed), fostering belonging to community and the people of Israel (Klal Yisrael) and repairing the world (Tikun Olam). It was intended to be both aspirational and practical and it was intended to build on the progress made to date in transforming the federation into a central force in the community.

Hamilton is a Jewish community of approximately 5000. Its population had been declining and aging over the past two decades as the main industrial base virtually disappeared. Many of its younger population had chosen to move to the larger urban centres where there are more career and business opportunities. That being said, there is a very important and significant counter trend emerging noting young families choosing Hamilton as an affordable place in which to raise their families and be involved in the Jewish community.

The Hamilton Jewish community is home to Adas Israel Synagogue, Beth Jacob Synagogue, and Temple Anshe Sholom; and has very strong Rabbinic leadership. In one case the Rabbinic leadership has passed to the second generation and has continued to be a significant force in the community. In addition, Chabad has a presence in the community.

Hamilton is also home to McMaster University which attracts many Jewish students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. There is an active Hillel on campus which engages with the Jewish students as well as the general student campus life. The university and health organizations are among the largest employers in Hamilton.

Historically, the Jewish Community Centre was located in an inadequate facility and in an undesirable location. The Hamilton Jewish Federation was housed in this facility as well.

In the past 3 years, and under new professional and lay leadership, two important strategic decisions were made that effectively launched a reimagining of the community:

First the JCC facility was sold. Until a permanent location was secured, the JCC adopted a JCC without walls approach, offering programs in many different venues. Notwithstanding the JCC's efforts to maintain services and programs, the synagogues quickly filled the vacuum. More recently, J Hamilton was created as a central location for several community organizations including the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the JCC, JNF, and Beth Tikvah. J Hamilton not only created a hub for all of its partners, by positioning all of its partners to build their collective capacity by maximizing opportunities for collaboration, synergy and efficiency. J Hamilton also conveyed the importance of the federation's role as a convener, community builder and trustworthy partner.

Second and most recently, a new relationship was forged between the JCC and the Hamilton Jewish Federation. This collaborative model was instrumental in helping both organizations to be seen as a central force in the community led by a new, energetic CEO. It would facilitate an efficient use of resources and a united approach to community development leveraging and growing the capacities of both. A true win-win scenario.

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Another initiative, known as GROW Hamilton, was developed to attract and retain young Jewish singles and young Jewish families in the community.

GROW Hamilton promoted Hamilton as a great place to live – affordable and rich with multiple opportunities for Jewish community engagement. This initiative is gaining traction and is already showing positive results.

There is excitement and optimism about the future in Hamilton.

It is therefore not surprising that there is a renewed commitment from lay leaders and volunteers to devote time, attention and financial resources to a community that they can be proud of. There is renewed donor confidence and potential. There are new professional leaders, most notably in the Jewish Family Services agency, making a deeper collaborative relationship possible.

THE PROCESS

The process was designed to ensure that a variety of perspectives would be represented. It was important to include different age groups, different needs and views, and different degrees and types of involvement ranging from community leaders, to community members with little or even no connection. This diversity was aimed at getting a broad base of viewpoints to guide the strategy for the future.

In order to accomplish this there were 3 types of data gathered:

- stakeholder conversations (52) - This sample consisted of active leaders in the community;
- focus groups (31) – Small groups of engaged community members including a specific group devoted to students;
- a community survey (160) - The survey reached out to community members who wished to express their opinion but who were not necessarily actively involved except for being on a mailing list.

A grand total of 255 participants were reached in at least one of the input methods.

Data was gathered and analyzed and a summary was presented for discussion at an all-day board retreat. Two external consultants were engaged, one focused on the data collection and the other on the retreat facilitation and synthesis of the data into a final report.

THIS REPORT REPRESENTS A SYNTHESIS OF THE DATA FROM ALL SOURCES.

It is constructed around 3 key priority themes that were important to some degree to all of the constituents and that were consistent with the mission and vision of the Hamilton Jewish Federation.

THE RESULTS

THE FOLLOWING THREE PRIORITY AREAS EMERGED FROM THE DATA

Protecting the **vulnerable** in Hamilton, Israel and around the world

Educating, engaging and strengthening our **Jewish community**

Supporting and advocating for **Jewish and Israel issues**

The Hamilton Jewish Federation recommitted itself to reducing the marginalization of all populations that are unable to participate fully in community life. The key populations include low income singles and families, seniors, Holocaust survivors, newcomers, LGBTQ+ and the disabled. It committed itself to supporting the vulnerable at home in Hamilton, in Israel and where ever Jews might be in distress in the world.

All members of the Jewish community, including all denominations as well as unaffiliated, should be helped to develop their full potential, to take care of themselves and their families and to participate in community life to the fullest extent possible.

It also committed itself to building the awareness of the diversity and complexity of the Jewish community so that there would be more understanding of the variety of needs and the related resource requirements. Work in this priority area would be done in collaboration with community partners both within the Jewish community and in the larger community.

In this priority area, capacity building is a twofold approach. The community organizations must be supported so that they in turn can strengthen the families and enable ALL to belong and feel connected.

SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Increased knowledge and awareness of the issues facing marginal groups and the roles that each organization can play in creating a strong and integrated support system.
- Campaigns must be strategic and stratified raising the knowledge and awareness capacity of both leaders and donors within the Jewish community as well as the broader community.
- A more welcoming and inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity and capacity to meet their basic needs and to belong would go a long way to reducing marginalization. Evidence of success would be higher degrees of participation from ALL parts of the community.
- Increased accessibility of all types (e.g. physical, sensory) as well as affordability are among the key elements to ensure success.

Protecting the
vulnerable
in Hamilton, Israel
and around
the world

KEY PARTNERS

Jewish Community Centre
Jewish Family Services
Synagogues
Beth Tikvah
Shalom Village
Hamilton Jewish News
JDC/UIA

Hamilton Jewish Federation is committed to strengthening and deepening the engagement and connectedness of the community in a number of key ways:

- ensuring diverse opportunities for Jewish education and identity building;
- ensuring opportunities for engagement and participation in all aspects of Jewish community life;
- ensuring the development of a capable and dedicated leadership pipeline;
- growing community wide program opportunities.

To actualize this important strategic area, the key priority for the next 3 years will focus on young adults and young families.

A variety of programs and activities will be offered, designed to educate, engage and develop leadership capacity. The approach will be diverse and will include both traditional models such as day schools and afternoon schools as well as more informal and experiential approaches that may be effective in reaching both affiliated and unaffiliated community members. Some of the long-standing signature programs such as Holocaust Education week and the Jewish film festival as well as the most recent addition of the Jewish book fair would continue to be supported while other new initiatives, that were consistent with this priority, would be encouraged. Social and recreational gatherings such as community wide holiday celebrations would be increased. These gatherings would also provide an opportunity to connect with Israel.

A healthy community must always look to the future. To do that effectively requires a knowledgeable and dedicated cadre of leadership. Leaders must be identified, and their capacities must be cultivated and developed to ensure that the community remains strong and vibrant. With both robust grassroots participation in educational and community engagement experiences and with capable leadership at the helm, the Hamilton Jewish federation will increase its effectiveness and relevance for the future.

Collaboration with other Jewish organizations including the synagogues and the Canada Israel Experience of Jewish Federations of Canada should be encouraged.

SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Increased variety of informal Jewish education experiences that build and strengthen the knowledge and participation of the community with a particular attention to young adults and young families.
- More active and diverse participation from all ages and sectors of the community but most particularly young adults and young families.
- A more engaged community participating in large scale community events and more niche oriented experiences.
- An ongoing commitment to creating and supporting a leadership pipeline that prepares community members for leadership roles. The result will be a pipeline of trained individuals who are willing and able to step up and take responsibility.

Educating,
engaging and
strengthening
our **Jewish**
community

KEY PARTNERS

Jewish Community Centre
Hillel Ontario
CIE/UIA
Jewish National Fund
Synagogues
Day and Afternoon Schools
Jewish Federations
of North America
BBYO Ontario

The Hamilton Jewish Federation is keenly aware of the growing anti-Semitism and BDS activity aimed at weakening and diminishing our value as a people and a community. Therefore, the Hamilton Jewish Federation must maintain strong relationships with all of the Jewish community advocacy organizations including CIJA and B'nai Brith Canada and work together with them on critical incident intervention as well as long term strategic relationships.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation must also work together with its health and social service partner, Jewish Family Services, as well as the Hamilton Jewish Federation community advocacy committee to intervene with the relevant government bodies when issues arise that have an impact on the Jewish community. E.g. social policy changes, funding changes.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation must also ensure active participation on community boards and coalitions in order to make common cause with other community groups where appropriate.

It must also rededicate itself to being a champion of human rights and social justice.

SUCCESS FACTORS:

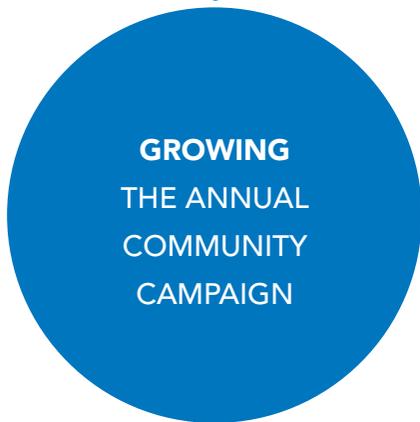
- Strong relationships with ALL relevant advocacy organizations that are strategic and with respect to both domestic and Israel based issues.
- A committed and knowledgeable group of lay and professional leaders who are invested in taking leadership and responsibility including acting as community representatives and spokespeople.

Supporting and advocating for Jewish and Israel issues

KEY PARTNERS

CIJA/UIA
B'nai Brith Canada
Hillel Ontario
Jewish Family Services
Hamilton Police
Synagogues
Security organizations
All levels of government

IMPLEMENTING AND SECURING THIS PLAN WILL REQUIRE A MULTI PRONG FINANCIAL APPROACH



The current level of growth is only sufficient to maintain the actual allocations. New approaches and programs require additional investment. Special campaigns either in the form of a second line or designated themes aligned with the strategic plan, should be considered as a way to increase the annual financial base.



Two scenarios need to be considered: renovating and expanding the current site or moving into a new location. In both cases, plans for capital fund raising and implementation need to be developed.



Existing efforts need to be expanded and developed.





HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION

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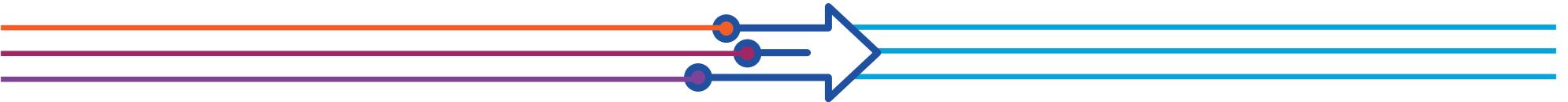
Jacki Levin, President | Hamilton Jewish Federation

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