

# Associate Vice-President: Municipal Affairs

BY: SHEMAR HACKETT

Shemar Hackett | McMaster University | September 4, 2018



## AVP: Municipal Affairs Yearplan

### Introduction

Dear Assembly Representatives and MSU Members,

My name is Shemar Hackett and I am extremely excited to be the Associate Vice-President for Municipal Affairs this year! From the upcoming municipal election to the rewriting of the policy paper *Student Housing in Near Campus Neighborhoods*, our committee will have lots to accomplish this year.

Going into this year, the biggest priority for the Municipal Affairs committee will be preparing for the Municipal Election; On October 22<sup>nd</sup> polls will open to elect, or reelect, our current Mayor, Ward Councilor and School Board trustees. This election is incredibly important as it only occurs every 4 years and significantly affects our advocacy efforts.

The following document outlines all the objectives that the Municipal Affairs Committee and I will be working on over the next year. As a committee member for MA last year, there is an in depth understanding of the issues students face locally and the limitations when it comes to our current advocacy efforts. Moving forward, we hope to build upon the excellent foundations created by our AVP's last year and continue towards increasing the quality of student experiences within Hamilton.

To my committee members, Marina, Vaishna, Josh A., Hargun, Cassidy and Josh Y., thank you for your enthusiasm in municipal politics. I cannot wait to work with all of you to accomplish all of our points!

Sincerely Yours,

*Shemar Hackett*

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### PLATFORM POINTS

Objective 1:	Prepare for the Municipal Election
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On October 22<sup>nd</sup> polls will officially open for the municipal election. We plan to have a series of events throughout October encouraging students to vote.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the last municipal election in 2014, we have constantly been reminded by councilors and other stakeholder that students do not vote, which negatively affects our advocacy efforts. The benefit of running an extensive campaign is that more students will be motivated to vote. A higher voter turnout gives us tangible proof when advocating externally that students have a vested interest in what is happening in Hamilton.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with municipal politics has been low in the past. It will be difficult to encourage students to interact with our campaign and show up at the polls.</li> </ul>
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Strategic Promotions Planning:</b> one of the first steps would be for the Advocacy Coordinator and myself to have a sit-down conversation with Michael Wooder to discuss effective ways/platforms for us to promote the election to students to ensure we are reaching as many people as we can. This will be done before the school year starts so that we can set dates for the debate, campaigns and tabling days.</li> <li><b>Mac Votes Campaign:</b> This is a staple for all our elections on campus. This is a section on the MSU website that will have all the information students need to vote (where to vote, what identification is needed and platform summaries of mayor and Ward 1 candidates).</li> <li><b>All Candidates debate:</b> for all electoral cycles the candidates for our ward are invited to campus to give a quick statement to students and answer a series of questions. This will occur at some point in October and students will have the opportunity to submit questions ahead of time. We are also looking into having a mayoral debate and partnering with Mohawk college on holding this event.</li> </ol>
Partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> <li>Elisha Martin, Advocacy Coordinator</li> <li>Michael Wooder, Marketing &amp; Communications Director</li> </ol>



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Objective 2:	Rewrite the Student Housing in Off-Campus Neighborhoods Policy Paper
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our current policy paper for <i>Student Housing in Off-Campus Neighborhoods</i> expires this year. Since being written three years ago, students are still struggling with inadequate housing conditions.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many McMaster students have made testimonials about how they do not always feel safe, particularly at night, when going to their student house. Having a stance ensures we are keeping our students safe and actively advocating for safer neighborhoods.</li> <li>• With the municipal election around the corner, this is a great time to try and push for Landlord Licensing. It will be beneficial to have an updated stance on current student housing conditions when advocating to the incoming councilors.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every semester we write policies and there are no large issues that occur. Only difficulty may be time constraints.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Research Assistant to collect data on the issues students are currently facing in their students' homes.</li> <li>• Ensure my committee and I are co-authors on this paper.</li> <li>• Advocate to the new Ward 1 Councilor on student safety off-campus once policy is written</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> <li>• Education Department</li> <li>• Teresa Zetko, MA Research Assistant</li> <li>• The SRA</li> <li>• The MA Committee</li> </ul>



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Objective 3:	Continue presence at community meetings in Hamilton
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My predecessor did a great job at building a strong rapport with community members in Ward 1. Moving forward, I believe it is essential to continue attending AWWCA, AWCA meetings, Hamilton events, attending council meetings, and taking up every opportunity to be covered in the media.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a better relationship with community members and stay up to date on how they are affected by what is occurring on campus.</li> <li>• Keeps students and stakeholders aware of our unique structure and the significance we put on our municipal advocacy.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may be difficult to build/sustain certain relationships with key stakeholders as they do not have the best perception of students.</li> <li>• As this position was created a year ago, it is hard to accurately determine what meetings are pertinent and what meetings aren't relevant to the MSU.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically attend the meetings             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is AWWCA and AWCA</li> <li>- Also attend the Rental Housing Sub Committee meetings</li> <li>- Attending City Council meetings when they are discussing issues that heavily affect students</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Opening these meetings to my committee as well so they can also get tangible experience with our advocacy efforts</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AWWCA</li> <li>• AWCA</li> <li>• Rental Housing Committee</li> </ul>



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Objective 4:	Find new ways to ensure students are engaged with municipal politics/advocacy
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After being on the Municipal Affairs committee last year, I realized the amount of work that occurs behind the scenes that many students aren't aware of. From new residence building being built off campus to changes in bylaws in our ward, many students were left in the dark about our advocacy efforts. Going into this year, my committee and I would like to ensure that students are consistently kept up to date with everything that we are working on.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds transparency between the MSU and students.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have found that many of the advocacy concerns students ask for are already in motion, so ensuring they are kept up to date will create a better relationship between MSU and students.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The biggest difficulty I see is just consistency. Between fulfilling my platform points, the sporadic projects that pop up during the year and the upcoming municipal election, it may be difficult to find a consistent method of ensuring students are being kept up to date on everything we are doing.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regarding the issue of consistency, I plan on delegating tasks from early in the year so that things are on a rotating schedule and no one person is tasked on writing for the Sil every month.</li> <li>• Look into using the MSU advocacy social media pages more OR have our own municipal affairs Facebook/Twitter page             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If I did go down this route I would for sure talk to Wooder first to see if this is a good idea. I would also ensure that I had information to post consistently on the website rather than a random update every few weeks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have more smaller events throughout the year to ensure students are being engaged.</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sil</li> <li>• Municipal Affairs Committee</li> <li>• Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> </ul>



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Objective 5:	Municipal Budget Submission
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In February of 2019, City Council will vote to approve their new budget. We plan to submit our own budget outlining what our priorities are and what we believe council should invest in. Our priorities include:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Move forward with the LRT and BLAST network</li> <li>2. Landlord Licensing</li> <li>3. Student Safety off Campus</li> <li>4. Eliminating Area Rating</li> <li>5. Post-Grad Employment Opportunities</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives us the opportunity to influence how City Council allocates their funding for the year.</li> <li>• Creating a stronger relationship with the City illustrating that students care about Hamilton.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In previous years choosing a date to submit our budget was difficult as the public delegation date seemed to be after council has already written their budget for the year. Finding the best time to advocate our wants prior to the final copy of the budget being made will be difficult.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with my committee, Stephanie and Ikram to determine our priorities for the year to include in the submission.</li> <li>• Meeting with councilors and other relevant stakeholders in Hamilton to advocate on behalf of students.</li> <li>• Detailed research on all our priorities prior to the submission.</li> <li>• Speak to City Council on the day of the public delegation for the budget .</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Affairs Committee</li> <li>• VP (Education), Stephanie Bertolo</li> <li>• Tereza Zetko, Research Assistant</li> </ul>



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Objective 6:	Municipal Advocacy Week
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Advocacy Week is when representatives from the MA committee meet with relevant stakeholders within Hamilton to advocate on student issues.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to advocate to councilors on important student issues.</li> <li>• Great opportunity for MSU members/Committee members to get hands on experience with advocacy.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating meetings will be difficult as my committee and the councilors all have varying busy schedules.</li> <li>• There are a lot of councilors/stakeholders in Hamilton so putting them into one week may be difficult; may spread it across two weeks.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up meetings with councilors in January.</li> <li>• Ensuring that the Municipal Budget submission is finished. prior to advocacy week so that my committee and I have official stances on issues.</li> <li>• Train my committee members/volunteers on how to advocate to stakeholders (aka advocacy training).</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA committee</li> <li>• The SRA</li> <li>• Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> <li>• Incoming City Councilors</li> <li>• Incoming Mayor</li> <li>• Tereza Zetko, Research Assistant</li> </ul>



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Objective 7:	Landlord Wiki
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Landlord Wiki is a website where students would be able to see various landlords/houses and get feedback on other students' experiences when living in a house they are interested in.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all students live near Hamilton or have the means to travel here before leasing their student house. Rather than only having the landlord's opinions on a house, a wiki would give renters the opportunity to see how past renters feel about the house, area and landlord.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding/creating a separate website will be difficult. Last year, Ryan D., VP (Ed), got the project going but it took a while as the website had various structural issues.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephanie found a popular website called Y(omes) that is currently based in Halifax. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The website shows rentals across the city and gives renters the opportunity to see reviews on the house they are looking to live in. the website is very similar to Air BnB except its for longer term rentals.</li> <li>Steph has already reach out to the owner of the website and they have agreed to expand their current layout to support our location in Hamilton.</li> <li>The goal is for by the end of the year to have the website up and going for the 2019-2020 school year.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> </ul>



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Objective 8:	Change Camp
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change camp is an event that brings together community members, faculty from post-secondary institutions and representatives from the City of Hamilton to have discussions on community, partnership and collaboration for the next year.</li> <li>• The goal is to discuss issues our city faces and ways that we can all work together to make sure none of these problems go unaddressed.</li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great networking event for students</li> <li>• Sets us in a good place, advocacy wise, as we meet many people from various areas of Hamilton</li> <li>• Opportunity to discuss our ideas/plans for the year and get unbiased feedback on how accurate or successful our plans will be</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event itself is quite expensive</li> <li>• In previous years the event has not been student centered which leaves the MSU to question how important it is to have the event still run every year</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Office of Community Engagement on their ideas for the event</li> <li>• Collaborate with Mohawk, the City and other off-campus community partners to ensure equal distribution of the promotion and funding of the event</li> <li>• Event will most likely be held early second semester, as first semester will largely be taken up by the OUSA campaign, the municipal election and policy con.</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tereza Zetko, Research Assistant</li> <li>• Stephane Bertolo, VP (Education)</li> <li>• Office of Community Engagement</li> <li>• Mohawk College</li> </ul>



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### List things that you would like to have prepared for the beginning of September

1. Emails of all my committee members
2. Spoken to all interested MSU and SRA members who are interested in my committee
3. Have a rough idea of the policies being written for first semester and provide that information to committee members so we can start dividing tasks

### List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term

1. Meet with the HSR director to advocate for better transit
2. Launch the landlord wiki
3. Meet with the new Ward 1 Councilor
4. All Candidates Debate
5. Distribute door knockers to promote bylaw education

### List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term

1. Municipal Advocacy week
2. Transition new AVP: MA
3. Change Camp (tentative)
4. Experiential Education Campaign
5. Municipal Budget Submission



## AVP: Municipal Affairs Yearplan

### Master Summary

May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get situated with the AVP role</li> <li>• Begin meeting with relevant stakeholders</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on municipal topics and get familiar with councilors</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach out to committee members and begin to organize emails for the year</li> <li>• Start collecting data on candidates running in the municipal election</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From this point until September, start setting up meetings with candidates running for Councilor and Mayor</li> <li>• Meet with Advocacy coordinator and begin planning municipal election</li> <li>• Update the website</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start having regular Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Give committee members roles/responsibilities for the election</li> <li>• Textbook Broke campaign</li> <li>• Distribute door knockers</li> <li>• Meet with Stephanie and Ikram to discuss our priorities for the Municipal Budget Submission</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Election month!!!!</li> <li>• All candidates debate</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “cupcakes for community change” event (tentative)</li> <li>• Meet and greet with the new ward 1 councilor</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin researching/writing the municipal budget submission</li> <li>• Reach out to newly elected councilors for meetings during our advocacy week</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish municipal budget</li> <li>• Municipal advocacy week</li> <li>• Change camp (tentative)</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish municipal budget submission</li> <li>• Delegate to city council on our budget</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #YesLRT campaign (tentative)</li> <li>• Prepare your city survey</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition the new AVP</li> <li>• Collect feedback from committee members on how the year went to pass along to the new AVP</li> </ul>