TORONTO

STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 – Recommended Neighbourhood Improvement Areas

Date:	March 4, 2014
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	AFS #18226

SUMMARY

This report recommends that Council adopt a <u>Neighbourhood Equity Score</u> for establishing *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas* (NIAs) under the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 (TSNS 2020). The recommended Neighbourhood Equity Score is a single number designed to capture the total weight of unnecessary, unfair and unjust differences[1] faced by neighbourhood residents in five key areas: Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Healthy Lives, Participation in Decision-Making and Physical Surroundings. The Score and Benchmark have been calculated using *Urban HEART@Toronto*, an evidence-based standard for measuring the well-being of Toronto's neighbourhoods.

The report recommends that Council designate 31 neighbourhoods as Neighbourhood Improvement Areas under the Strategy. These recommended neighbourhoods have the lowest overall Neighbourhood Equity Scores. Their Scores fall below the recommended <u>Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark</u>, a measure that signals that the overall burden of inequities faced by a neighbourhood requires action.

Under the 2005 Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, a total of 23 of the City's 140 social planning neighbourhoods were designated and grouped together into 13 *Priority Neighbourhood Areas for Investment* (PNIs) for implementation purposes. The 31 neighbourhoods recommended as NIAs under TSNS 2020 include 15 neighbourhoods that were a part of the PNIs and 16 new neighbourhoods. A total of 8 neighbourhoods included in the 2005-designated PNIs have Neighbourhood Equity Scores above

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[1] By definition, an *inequity* is an unnecessary, unfair and unjust difference. Because these differences are unnecessary, action can be taken to remedy them.

Benchmark and are not recommended as NIAs. A complete listing of Neighbourhood Equity Scores for Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods, the Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark, and recommended NIAs are provided in Appendix B.

Once NIAs have been designated by Council, implementation of the Strategy will begin in five areas:

- Engagement with partners to establish implementation priorities;
- Targeted action in approved Neighbourhood Improvement Areas;
- Implementation in neighbourhoods that are not NIAs;
- Systemic change to improve equity across all neighbourhoods; and
- Strategy monitoring, evaluation and data development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the method for calculating the Neighbourhood Equity Score and Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark provided in Appendix A of this report;

2. City Council designate the 31 neighbourhoods with Neighbourhood Equity Scores below the Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark as *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. These neighbourhoods are listed in Appendix B of this report; and

3. City Council direct the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to work with partners in the implementation of the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020, including residents, community agencies, funders and City Agencies, Corporations and Divisions, to identify implementation priorities for 2014 and beyond.

Financial Impact
This report will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the 2014 Operating Budget.

As a part of the 2014 Operating Budget process, Council approved an additional $300,000 in Community Funding to support emerging needs in underserved areas. These funds will be allocated during 2014 and 2015 to support the 8 neighbourhoods that are transitioning from the *Neighbourhood Improvement Area* portfolio.

As a part of its 2014 Capital Budget process, Council approved a total of $12M in funding for infrastructure investments in *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. A total of $3M has been approved for each of 4 years beginning in 2015.

Any financial impacts arising from implementation priorities for 2015 and beyond that are identified by the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration in conjunction with implementation partners will be considered as a part of the appropriate budget process.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on June 29, 2011, the Community Development and Recreation Committee, in response to a communication from Councillor Vincent Crisanti titled Priority Neighbourhood Designation, directed the Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration to provide a report updating the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.CD5.9

At its meeting of March 5, 6, and 7, 2012, Council adopted the report titled *Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020* and directed the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to report back on the designation criteria for NIAs and to seek authority for the next group of *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.CD10.3

At its meeting of July 16, 17, 18 and 19, 2013, City Council adopted the report titled *Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 Implementation* with amendments. The report provided updates on the process to develop the Neighbourhood Equity Score and establish an evidence-based approach for the designation of *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD22.7

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy was first adopted by Council in 2005, premised on the understanding that an historic under-investment in the community infrastructure of some Toronto neighbourhoods had resulted in a variety of challenges, particularly in the area of community safety, and particularly for racialized youth.[2] The Strategy introduced *Priority Neighbourhood Areas for Investment* (PNI), neighbourhoods where targeted investments in community infrastructure were most urgently needed. The Strategy is one of the many approaches the City has available to improve the quality of life for residents and enhance Toronto's reputation as a world class city. The Strategy's

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[2] Racialization is the process of assigning socially constructed racial categories onto certain groups, often to their detriment. It is the act of imposing a racial interpretation on someone, typically casting them as 'other' and inferior. The term 'racialized' commonly refers to people of non-European ancestry, or what was previously known as 'visible minority. 'Non-racialized' commonly refers to individuals of European ancestry, often thought to be the dominant group, and held up as the norm in society.

intensive focus on the quality of life in neighbourhoods most closely parallels the City's neighbourhood revitalization strategies that targets intensive capital and service investments to strengthen neighbourhoods with a large number of social housing units.

TSNS 2020 also complements the development efforts that are reshaping Toronto's waterfront, and enhances the broader city-building efforts that are guided by the *Official Plan*. It also provides an important complement to sector strategies such as *Collaborating for Competitiveness*, *The Creative City*, *Housing Opportunities Toronto*, and *Working as One*, and to population-focused strategies such as the *Middle Childhood Strategy*, the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy*, the *Toronto Seniors Strategy*, and the *Toronto Newcomer Strategy*.

In 2012, the Strategy was updated to reflect learnings from implementation and respond to changes in the City's strategic goals and objectives that had taken place since 2005. This first update to the Strategy has been designed to advance outcomes across Toronto neighbourhoods until 2020, when a second update to the Strategy will be made with the goal of strengthening all Toronto neighbourhoods.

The key change approved by Council in 2012 was a significant broadening of the Strategy's goals and objectives. Whereas the 2005 Strategy placed its primary focus on community safety, the updated Strategy will work to advance equitable economic, social, health, environmental and participation outcomes in addition to community safety. This change was motivated by a desire to build on the success of the 2005 Strategy and was supported by a wide range of partners in the implementation of the Strategy.

Consistent with its goals and objectives, three factors were considered to identify PNIs under the 2005 Strategy:

- A combination of demographic indicators (such as the percentage of recent immigrants and the percentage of lone parent families) were used as a measure of resident needs;

- the percentage of residents within one kilometre of the services they might most need was used as a measure of the historical investments in social infrastructure; and

- homicides and other gun shootings were used as a measure of community safety.

Although the designation of neighbourhoods under the Strategy was widely supported, many residents and community agencies noted that their neighbourhoods had outcomes that were similar to those of PNIs even though there was some service infrastructure in place. They noted that because the method used a fairly simple measure of the services or "inputs" available to address social needs, neighbourhoods that would have benefited from a targeted approach to improve outcomes had not been identified for investment.

To support the updated Strategy's expanded goals, a revised, transparent method of identifying neighbourhoods based on equity of outcomes has been under development since 2012. This work has included extensive consultation, and the resulting

Neighbourhood Equity Score and Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark are described in detail in the following section.

The recommended approach allows the City to move from a primary focus on social needs and service inputs to focus more sharply on the outcomes it wants to achieve for all neighbourhoods. TSNS 2020 focuses squarely on reducing inequities: the unnecessary, unfair and unjust differences in outcomes that the City, residents, community agencies and other partners can take action to address.

COMMENTS

Measuring Neighbourhood Equity

To identify those neighbourhoods most in need of targeted attention to improve outcomes, a measure of equity at the neighbourhood level was developed in five stages:

1. Research on neighbourhood equity measurement;
2. Public consultation on neighbourhood equity;
3. Development of options for calculating a neighbourhood equity score;
4. Implementation partner meetings; and
5. Finalizing an approach to measuring neighbourhood equity.

Research on Neighbourhood Equity Measurement:

To create a measure of neighbourhood equity, the City partnered with United Way Toronto, the Centre for Research on Inner City Health, the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and other partners to form the Urban HEART@Toronto project (UHT). The project engaged a total of 80 researchers from the community, public, private and academic sectors to determine the best available measures of neighbourhood equity from five different perspectives: Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Participation in Decision Making, Healthy Lives and Physical Surroundings.

A total of 15 indicators were selected by the project across these five areas, with each indicator functioning like a snapshot of neighbourhood equity taken from a different angle and location. Taken together, these 15 snapshots provide a compact, composite picture of neighbourhood equity in Toronto. The full set of UHT indicators is provided in Appendix A.

To create the clearest possible picture of neighbourhood equity, UHT also developed a benchmark for each indicator. These benchmarks act as marker of the most serious inequities. When a snapshot shows that a neighbourhood is beneath the benchmark for the indicator, the neighbourhood likely requires immediate attention in the corresponding equity area.

Four methods were considered for each indicator to establish an appropriate benchmark:

1. Population Quintile: the rate at the 20th percentile of the population with the worst rates;
2. Standard Deviation: the rate worse than 1 Standard Deviation from the mean rate;
3. Rate Ratio: the rate 1.2 times (20%) worse than city rate; and,
4. External Benchmark: based on the 20th percentile of 15 comparisons cities ranked by worst rates.[3]

Potential benchmarks were screened against six criteria that paralleled those used to screen the UHT indicator set:

1. Clear: the measures are understandable and easy to interpret;
2. Relevant: the measures are relevant and useful for Toronto neighbourhoods;
3. Equity-Focused: the measures demonstrate inequities, and the cut-off values are at a level that represents issues of concern;
4. Variability: the measures reveal variability across Toronto neighbourhoods. A benchmark should not be so low that fewer than 10% (14) or so high that more than 50% (70) of neighbourhoods are below benchmark;
5. Analytically Sound: the measures are quality, accepted and well-established in theory and practice and are broadly supported as approaches for making comparisons; and
6. Comparability: the comparison data were available and measured the same way as the Urban HEART indicators, and the external urban comparison places are relevant to Toronto's urban density and population diversity.

The method that best met these six criteria was used to establish the benchmark for the indicator. The complete set of UHT benchmarks is provided in Appendix A, along with a map of each UHT indicator.

The UHT project's indicator identification phase concluded in September 2013, and results are available online as a part of the Toronto Health Profiles at http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php.

Public Consultations on Neighbourhood Equity:

As soon as the UHT project's indicator identification phase was complete, public consultations were conducted to provide residents with an opportunity help shape the use of the data and the implementation of the overall Strategy. Consultations took place in

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[3] The 14 Canadian cities with at least 5% of the population comprised of recent immigrants in the previous 5 years and density of at least 1000 persons/km2 were chosen as comparators: Montréal, Calgary, Edmonton, Mississauga, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Brampton, Surrey, Markham, Burnaby, Saskatoon, Richmond, Richmond Hill, and Coquitlam.

October and November 2013, and engaged 380 residents in person through both City and community-agency led meetings. Approximately 1,400 residents participated in a survey that was available online and in print format. The full results of the consultation process are provided in Appendix C.

<u>Development of Options for Calculating a Neighbourhood Equity Score:</u>

During December 2013, a number of possible options for calculating a Neighbourhood Equity Score using the UHT data in a way that reflected the advice provided by residents during consultations were developed and tested. Of these, two options were identified as being both methodologically sound and consistent with resident advice. Materials were developed to explain these options and their implications for subsequent discussion by the Strategy's implementation partners.

<u>Implementation Partner Meetings:</u>

A series of meetings were held in January 2014 with both past and potential partners in the implementation of the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 (TSNS 2020). These meetings engaged City Divisions, Agencies and Corporations, educational institutions, government and community funders, community agencies and resident leaders. Partners reviewed and commented on the two options developed for creating a Neighbourhood Equity Score, and provided advice on key implementation issues and approaches.

<u>Finalizing an Approach to Neighbourhood Equity Measurement:</u>

A preferred option for creating a Neighbourhood Equity Score was identified based on the advice of implementation partners and the public consultations. This preferred option was reviewed with the Deputy City Manager , Cluster A, Division Heads from Cluster A, the Chief Planner, and the Medical Officer of Health, all of whom were supportive of this option.

Neighbourhood Equity Scores for all 140 Toronto neighbourhoods were calculated using the preferred option, and the corresponding Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark determined. This option is described in greater detail in the following section.
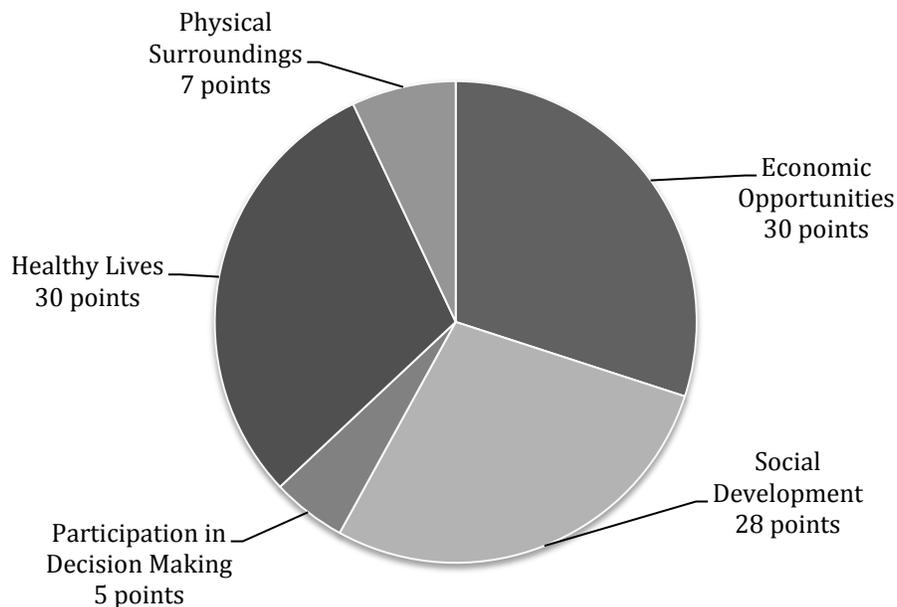
Calculating a Neighbourhood Equity Score

The recommended Neighbourhood Equity Score and Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark have been calculated by applying a statistical method called a *Principle Components Analysis* (PCA) to the UHT indicators and benchmarks. This technique identifies how much of the overall composite picture of equity across Toronto neighbourhoods each of the 15 UHT indicator snapshots provide.

The PCA technique found that each of the 15 UHT indicator snapshots provide different percentages of the overall composite picture of neighbourhood equity. For example, the unemployment indicator provides 10.6% of the overall picture of neighbourhood equity,

while access to community meeting spaces provides only 2.3% of the overall picture. When the entire set of indicator snapshots is considered and grouped by subject area, the overall picture of neighbourhood equity is composed as follows:

- Economic Opportunities provides 30% of the composite picture;
- Social Development provides 28% of the composite picture;
- Participation in Decision Making provides 5% of the composite picture;
- Physical Surroundings provides 7% of the composite picture; and
- Healthy Lives provides the final 30% of the composite picture.

Chart 1:
Neighbourhood Equity Score Contribution (100)

A 100-point Neighbourhood Equity Score was created using the PCA results with each of the Urban HEART@Toronto indicators contributing points in proportion to the percentage of the overall picture of neighbourhood equity they provide. For example, because unemployment provides 10.6% of the overall picture of neighbourhood equity, a neighbourhood's unemployment rate contributes up to 10.6 points to the overall Neighbourhood Equity Score. The number of points each UHT domain contributes to the overall Neighbourhood Equity Score is shown in Chart 1.

Neighbourhood Equity Scores range from a low of 21.38 out of 100 for the neighbourhood facing the greatest overall level of inequity, to 92.05 for the neighbourhood facing the fewest inequities.

A Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark was calculated from the benchmarks provided by UHT for each of its 15 indicators using this same approach. The resulting

Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark was calculated at 42.89 points out of 100, and neighbourhoods with Scores below this value face a significant burden of inequities across the five UHT domains.

A total of 31 neighbourhoods, or 22% of Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods, have Scores below the Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark. These neighbourhoods face significant inequities in Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Participation in Decision-Making, Healthy Lives and Physical Surroundings and are recommended for targeted support as *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas* (NIAs) under the Strategy. The Neighbourhood Equity Scores for all neighbourhoods and the Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark are provided in Appendix B.

The demographic composition of neighbourhoods with Scores below Benchmark was analysed to identify areas of correspondence between the City's place-based equity work and its population-focused equity efforts. The full list of comparisons against demographic measures is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Comparison of Recommended NIAs with Other Neighbourhoods			
Population Group	**Neighbourhoods Below Benchmark**	**Other Toronto Neighbourhoods**	**Toronto Overall**
Children 0-14	19%	14%	15%
Youth 15-25	14%	12%	13%
Newcomers	20%	15%	16%
Seniors 65+	13%	15%	14%
Visible minority	66%	44%	49%
Low-income	26%	17%	19%
Unemployment rate	13%	8%	9%
Social assistance rate	18%	8%	10%

Source: 2011 National Household Survey, Wellbeing Toronto

The demographic analysis found that neighbourhoods with Equity Scores beneath the Benchmark have rates of low income, unemployment and social assistance that are higher than those of other Toronto neighbourhoods by 52.9%, 62.5% and 125% respectively. This is an expected result since these rates were used as measures of inequity by UHT.

The demographic analysis also found 66% of residents in neighbourhoods with Scores below Benchmark are visible minorities,[4] a rate 50% higher than that of neighbourhoods

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[4] See note 4.

with Scores above the Benchmark, and 35% higher than the overall city rate. This result suggests that systemic racism is playing an important role in shaping Toronto's neighbourhoods. It is consistent with the report *The Three Cities Within Toronto*,[5] which found 66% of residents in Toronto neighbourhoods where incomes have fallen substantially over the past few decades compared to the Census Metropolitan Average were visible minorities. It also is consistent with the recent Toronto Public Health report *Racialization and Health Inequalities in Toronto in Toronto*,[6] which found differences in health outcomes for racialized groups that were not attributable to income, education or other factors.

Neighbourhoods with Scores below Benchmark were also analysed to determine whether equity issues related to housing, child development and community safety were a significant factor in these neighbourhoods. This issue analysis found that:

- 22% of private housing in recommended NIAs is unsuitable,[7] compared with 12% in other neighbourhoods, and 14% in the city overall;

- 35% of recommended NIAs have low levels of child readiness for school,[8] compared with 4% of other neighbourhoods, and 11% in the city overall; and

- 38% of all homicides since 2009 have taken place in recommended NIAs, even though they comprise only 22% of all neighbourhoods and 23% of the overall population.[9]

These comparisons suggest important opportunities to align the Strategy with other City strategies including *Collaborating for Competitiveness*, *Working as One*, *Housing Opportunities Toronto*, the *Child Care Services Plan*, the *Middle Childhood Strategy*, and with priorities related to community safety.

A total of 23 of the City's social planning neighbourhoods were designated as a part of *Priority Neighbourhood Areas for Investment* (PNIs) by Council under the 2005 Strategy. The recommended 31 *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas* going forward in TSNS 2020 include 15 of these social planning neighbourhoods and 16 new neighbourhoods.

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[5] Hulchanski, David J, 2010. *The Three Cities Within Toronto: Income Polarization Among Toronto's Neighbourhoods, 1970-2005.* Cities Centre & Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto.

[6] http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-62904.pdf

[7] Housing suitability refers to whether a private household is living in suitable accommodations according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS); that is, whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household. A household is deemed to be living in unsuitable accommodations if its dwelling does not have enough bedrooms for its occupants, as calculated using the NOS.

[8] Child readiness for school is measured using the Early Development Instrument (EDI). Groups of children are assessed on 5 areas of competence: Physical Health & Wellbeing, Social Knowledge & Competence, Emotional Health & Maturity, Language & Cognitive Development, Communication Skills & General Knowledge. The results are not meaningful for individual children.

[9] Toronto Star Open Data.

A total of eight neighbourhoods included in the PNIs have Neighbourhood Equity Scores above Benchmark and are not recommended in the next generation of NIAs: Malvern, Dorset Park, Westminster-Branson, Steeles and L'Amoreaux (adjacent neighbourhoods referred to as the Steeles-L'Amoreaux PNI), Yorkdale-Glen Park and Englemount-Lawrence (adjacent neighbourhoods referred to as the Lawrence Heights PNI), and Humber Heights-Westmount (included as a part of the Weston-Mount Dennis PNI). The work that will be undertaken to ensure the gains made in these neighbourhoods under the 2005 Strategy are maintained and strengthened are described in the following section of the report.

This report makes two recommendations related to *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. First, the report recommends that Council adopt the method of calculating a Neighbourhood Equity Score and Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark described here and in detail in Appendix A. Second, the report recommends that Council designate the 31 neighbourhoods with Scores below the Benchmark as *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas* under TSNS 2020.

Next Steps in TSNS 2020's Implementation

Once Council approves the next generation of NIAs, work will take place in five inter-related areas to implement TSNS 2020:

1. Engagement with partners to establish implementation priorities;
2. Targeted action in approved *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*;
3. Implementation across neighbourhoods that are not NIAs;
4. Systemic change to improve equity across all neighbourhoods; and
5. Strategy monitoring, evaluation and data development.

Engagement with partners to establish implementation priorities:

During consultations on neighbourhood equity, residents, community agencies, funders and other partners critical to the success of the 2005 Strategy expressed significant interest in participating in the revised Strategy's implementation planning. City Agencies, Corporations and Divisions are also committed to drawing from best practices to advance equitable outcomes across neighbourhoods and have identified a number of opportunities to align activities under the Strategy with their own strategic initiatives.

To ensure the Strategy makes best use of all available resources, this report recommends that the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration work with implementation partners to identify implementation priorities for 2014 and beyond. This engagement and coordination will take place during the second and third quarters of 2014.

Targeted action in approved Neighbourhood Improvement Areas:

The strength of the 2005 Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy was its ability to focus a wide range of resources on the Council designated *Priority Neighbourhood Areas for Investment*. Since 2005, the Strategy has brought significant activity and investment in the form of improved City and community services; investments in new programs, facilities and initiatives by the City, United Way Toronto, the federal and provincial governments, the private sector, and community partners; new and strengthened partnerships among service providers from all sectors; and a significant expansion in resident engagement and leadership at the local level.

In 2011, partners in the Strategy's implementation identified this unique combination of activities as essential to the development of strong neighbourhoods, and recommended their enhancement in PNIs and beyond. These activities were subsequently approved by Council in 2012 as foundational elements of TSNS 2020 under the categories: Continuous Service Improvement, Targeted Investments, Networks and Service Partnerships, and Resident Engagement.

Planning for implementation of these Strategy elements at the local level will begin immediately in all neighbourhoods designated as NIAs by Council. This planning will include an assessment of neighbourhood assets (such as community leadership, existing programs and facilities, community organizations, and networks and partnerships) that will provide an important foundation for equity-building work within the five key areas according to local priorities: Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Healthy Lives, Participation in Decision-Making and Physical Surroundings. Because the goals of TSNS 2020 are much broader that those of the 2005 version, this transitional work will also take place in neighbourhoods that are already NIAs.

Implementation in neighbourhoods that are not NIAs:

Because the goal of TSNS 2020 is to advance equitable outcomes across all neighbourhoods, the Strategy's implementation must also positively impact the wellbeing of neighbourhoods that are not Council-designated NIAs. There are no Toronto neighbourhoods that meet the targets recommended by the Urban HEART@Toronto project for all measures of neighbourhood equity, and many Toronto neighbourhoods have Neighbourhood Equity Scores only minimally above the Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark.

A total of eight previously-designated neighbourhoods have Scores above Benchmark and are not recommended in the next generation of NIAs. Over the past year, efforts have been underway in these and other designated neighbourhoods to advance the community's leadership of neighbourhood improvement work. These efforts will help to solidify the gains that have been made in neighbourhood wellbeing over the last eight years, and ensure that these neighbourhood's Equity Scores remain above Benchmark. TSNS 2020 is not a redistribution strategy; the goal is not to remove resources from some neighbourhoods in order to strengthen others. The research underpinning the 2005 Strategy indicated that redistribution simply destabilizes other neighbourhoods elsewhere

in the city and the goal of the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy is to strengthen all of the city's neighbourhoods by targeted actions and investments to bring those facing the most inequities above benchmark.

During the 2014 Operating Budget process, Council designated an additional $300,000 in Community Funding to support emerging needs in underserved areas. These funds will be allocated during 2014 and 2015 to support the eight neighbourhoods that are transitioning from the NIA portfolio. These funds will be used to help ensure that support exists within these transitioning neighbourhoods to convene continued local improvement planning and delivery efforts.

To advance the Strategy in other neighbourhoods that are not designated as NIAs, Social Development, Finance and Administration has already begun working with other City Divisions, Agencies and Corporations to identify the ways in which their strategic priorities align with those of TSNS. The purpose of this work is to ensure that all of the City's strategic initiatives are implemented in a way that strengthens neighbourhoods.

Although TSNS is a place-based strategy, its implementation will be coordinated with other City population and service priorities both in neighbourhoods that are NIAs and beyond. For example:

- Toronto Employment and Social Services' initiatives to improve rates of employment and income levels among residents could be coordinated and piloted across neighbourhoods that face inequities in Economic Opportunities;

- Programs designed to improve the health of racialized groups could be piloted in neighbourhoods facing inequities in the area of Healthy Lives to determine whether the impact of racism on the health of Toronto's ethno-racial communities can be reduced; and

- Programs designed to address the mental health needs of communities experiencing high rates of violence could be piloted across neighbourhoods to help build community resilience, whether or not they are designated as NIAs.

Opportunities to pilot these kinds of population and service-focused initiatives in both NIAs and other Toronto neighbourhoods will be explored with partners during the second and third quarters of 2014 as a part of implementation planning and priority setting.

Systemic Change to Improve Equity Across All Neighbourhoods:

The majority of the equity issues faced by Toronto neighbourhoods do not have their root causes in the neighbourhoods themselves. Instead, broader economic, social, health and environmental policy decisions create inequities that are concentrated spatially in cities, and result in the patterns of inequity evident across Toronto's neighbourhoods.

For example, low income residents do not experience poverty because of the neighbourhoods they live in. They live in poverty in part because of policies that have established the Minimum Wage at rates that do not pull full-time workers above the Low Income Measure, the low level of financial support provided by Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program, and barriers that prevent them from accessing the Employment Insurance Program. They also have low incomes because of a lack of well-paying quality jobs and other economic and labour market trends not attributable to any single policy decision.

Low income residents live in the neighbourhoods they do largely <u>because</u> of their low incomes and because of the nature of the housing market. As Hulchanski noted in his report *The Three Cities Within Toronto*:

> The price of housing is a key determinant of neighbourhood stability or change in societies where the real estate market largely governs access to housing. Higher-income households can always outbid lower-income households for housing quality and preferred locations. If a lower-income neighbourhood has characteristics that a higher-income group finds desirable, gentrification occurs and the original residents are displaced. The opposite also occurs. Some neighbourhoods, once popular among middle- or higher income households, fall out of favour and property values fail to keep up with other neighbourhoods. Over time, lower-income households replace middle- and higher-income households.

Because of the central role that systemic issues and policies play in shaping equity across neighbourhoods, all place-based approaches are necessarily limited in what they can accomplish with location-specific efforts. At the local level, their true strength and effectiveness lie in their ability to develop collective assets such as community facilities, programs and services, and community leadership that can create significant improvements in the quality of residents' lives.

TSNS 2020 explicitly recognizes the need to develop collective assets at the local level with its first objective: "to ensure every Toronto neighbourhood has the public, private and community infrastructure required for equitable resident opportunities." The need to complement this place-specific work with efforts to affect broader systems is reflected in its second objective: "to ensure broader municipal, regional, provincial and national policies, programs and funding priorities are informed by a neighbourhoods perspective."

To support this second objective, a new tool has been developed to complement the Strategy's neighbourhood-focused work: a Neighbourhood Lens. The purpose of the Lens is to bring important characteristics about neighbourhoods into focus for those who do not work directly in neighbourhoods. The Lens allows decision-makers to better assess the intended and unintended neighbourhood-level impacts of broader policies, programs and funding priorities.

As a part of this implementation of the Strategy, the Lens will be piloted by SDFA and other divisions to help identify how City policies, programs and funding priorities could

better advance equity at the neighbourhood level while furthering equity for diverse population groups. Its use will be complemented by an enhanced population-focused Equity Lens currently under development by the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office.

The Lens will also be an important offering as part of a plan to engage a wide array of private, public and community funders in advancing equity across Toronto neighbourhoods. This funder engagement plan will be developed in collaboration with United Way Toronto with the goal of ensuring that the federal, provincial, and regional policies, programs and funding priorities that have an impact on the advancement of equitable neighbourhood outcomes and the provision of equitable resident opportunities are informed by a neighbourhoods perspective.

Strategy Monitoring, Evaluation and Data Development:

The successes of the 2005 Strategy in building equity for residents in PNIs has been well documented. Over a period of eight years, more than 50,000 youth and 38,000 other residents were reached under the Strategy by:

- the more than 1,200 engagement, education, skill development, justice and community and family initiatives that took place; and

- the 52 new or enhanced community facilities that were developed, including 10 multi-service community hubs, 20 youth programming spaces, 2 community programming rooms, 11 playgrounds and recreation facilities, 2 community centres, and 7 parks and outdoor gathering spaces.

The 2005 Strategy increased community infrastructure and increased program and service opportunities for residents in 23 social planning neighbourhoods across the city. The impact of these initiatives and facilities will support resident wellbeing in neighbourhoods for years to come.

Although the concrete products that emerged from the Strategy are well documented, the impact that the Strategy could have on longer-term outcomes, such as community safety and economic prosperity, are not known. To better understand the Strategy's impact both on neighbourhoods and on system-level outcomes, a monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed with internal and external partners during 2014.

The plan will include the development of important neighbourhood equity measures that are not currently available. Indicator development will focus on the areas of safety, housing, transit, racism, participation in decision-making and the community service system – areas identified as critical to neighbourhood wellbeing by participants in the Strategy's consultations on neighbourhood equity.

A wide range of partners, including City Divisions, Agencies and Corporations, academic and research institutions, and community agencies are already working to develop measures of equity relevant to Toronto neighbourhoods. For example, Toronto Police

Service has expressed its interest in working with SDFA and others to develop measures of community safety at the neighbourhood level; Shelter, Support and Housing Administration has indicated its willingness to assist in the development of a housing equity indicator at the neighbourhood level; Toronto Public Health has committed to working with SDFA and other partners on the development of a transit equity indicator; and community agencies are keen to engage with SDFA on the development of measures of equity for the community service system. Priorities for the development of these and other measures of neighbourhood equity will be established with the Strategy's implementation partners as a part of the implementation planning that will take place beginning in the second quarter of 2014.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – TSNS 2020 Neighbourhood Equity Index - Methodological
　　　　　　 Documentation
Appendix B – Neighbourhood Equity Scores for Toronto Neighbourhoods and
　　　　　　 Recommended Neighbourhood Improvement Areas
Appendix C – Public Consultation Results – Summary and Complete Notes