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Poverty Reduction Initiatives

Date: February 17, 2015
To: Budget Committee
From: Deputy Mayor Pam McConnell

SUMMARY

The 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budget includes \$24.5 million in new and enhanced spending for programs and services aimed at poverty reduction. This recommended investment of Poverty Reduction Initiatives in the 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budget aligns with Council direction, CD27.9, to create a Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy, and signals the City's commitment to building a great city with greater opportunities for all.

The 2015 investment in Poverty Reduction Initiatives include \$2.2 million set aside for targeted allocation to strategic initiatives. This report recommends allocation of these funds to eleven (11) initiatives aimed at reducing poverty in communities across the city. These strategic initiatives span five themes: Access to City Services, Food Security, Employment, Housing, and Transportation. The \$2.2M will enhance existing programs and services, expand services, and create new initiatives that pilot different approaches.

This report also provides an update on the development of the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Deputy Mayor McConnell, in consultation with the Acting Deputy City Manager, Cluster A, recommends that:

1. City Council adjust the 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budget by reducing \$2.200 million gross and net from the Non-Program budget and increasing the 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budgets by \$2.200 million gross and net and 9.2 full time equivalent staff complement for the following City Programs and Agencies:
 - i. City Programs:
 - a) Parks, Forestry and Recreation by \$0.533 million gross and net and 9.2 full time equivalent staff complement;
 - b) Social Development, Finance & Administration by \$0.554 million gross and net;
 - c) Toronto Employment and Social Services by \$0.226 million gross and net;
 - d) Shelter Support & Housing Administration by \$0.075 million gross and net
 - ii. Agencies:
 - e) Toronto Public Library by \$0.375 million gross and net; and,
 - f) Toronto Public Health by \$0.437 million gross and net.
 - iii. The incremental costs for 2016 be included in the 2016 Operating Outlooks as set out in the Financial Impact Sections of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budget includes \$2.200 million gross and net in the Non-Program budget. This report requests City Council to amend the 2015 Staff Recommended Operating Budget by reducing the Non Program Budget by \$2.200 million and allocating this amount to six City Programs and Agencies to provide funding for several Poverty Reduction Initiatives as outlined in the Table below. The annualized impact of these initiatives is \$2.203 million gross and net and will be included in the 2016 Operating Outlooks.

Poverty Reduction Theme	Division/Agency	Poverty Reduction Initiatives	Allocation to 2015 Recommended Operating Budget	Full Annualized Amount for 2016 Operating Budget Plan
	Parks, Forestry and Recreation	Youth Worker Expansion (2 New Permanent Youth Outreach Workers)	\$0.130 million gross and net	\$0.146 million gross and net
	Parks, Forestry and Recreation	Youth Lounges Phase 2 Expansion (3 New Sites, 7.2 FTEs)	\$0.400 million gross and net	\$0.537 million gross and net
	Social Development, Finance & Administration	Neighbourhood Improvement Area Resident Engagement	\$0.207 million gross and net	
	Toronto Employment &	Hardship Funding Inflationary Increase	\$0.026 million gross and net	\$0.026 million gross and net

Poverty Reduction Theme	Division/Agency	Poverty Reduction Initiatives	Allocation to 2015 Recommended Operating Budget	Full Annualized Amount for 2016 Operating Budget Plan
Access to City Services	Social Services			
	Toronto Public Library	Library Access – Fine Forgiveness Pilot	\$0.175 million gross and net	\$0.175 million gross and net
	Toronto Public Library	Youth Hubs Expansion (4 New Sites)	\$0.200 million gross and net	\$0.400 million gross and net
Employment	Social Development, Finance & Administration	Youth Arts Employment & Training Program	\$0.200 million gross and net	\$0.200 million gross and net
	Toronto Employment & Social Services	Employment Program for Single Parents	\$0.200 million gross and net	\$0.200 million gross and net
Food Security	Toronto Public Health	Student Nutrition Expansion (Up to 27 New Schools)	\$0.356 million gross and net	\$0.356 million gross and net
	Toronto Public Health	Mobile Good Food Market	\$0.081 million gross and net	\$0.088 million gross and net
Housing	Shelter Support and Housing Administration	Enhanced Tenant Supports	\$0.075 million gross and net	\$0.075 million gross and net
Transportation	Social Development, Finance & Administration	Seniors Community Transportation Pilot	\$0.150 million gross and net	
Total			\$2.200 million gross and net	\$2.203 million gross and net

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

EQUITY IMPACT

The Poverty Reduction Strategy, along with the new and enhanced Poverty Reduction Initiatives in the 2015 Recommended Operating Budget, are aimed at creating greater equity in Toronto by mitigating the impacts of poverty for those with low incomes, and helping them to move out of poverty, as well as preventing others from falling into poverty.

DECISION HISTORY

At its April 2014 meeting, City Council unanimously adopted recommendations related to developing a Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy. A key recommendation directed that the Strategy should be primarily focused on actions and ideas for the City of Toronto and its ABC's to implement, as well as areas where inter-governmental advocacy is required, and those where leadership from the community sector and other partners is needed.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD27.9>

Subsequently, in his December 3, 2014th inaugural address to City Council, Mayor Tory emphasized the importance of poverty reduction among his priorities, and appointed a Deputy Mayor responsible for overseeing the development of a Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Growing Disparity

Toronto is a vibrant, prosperous city. It is also a city of growing disparity and inequity - trends that will challenge its long-term success. The polarization of incomes and wealth is steadily increasing while poverty is deepening.¹ In Toronto, twenty-five per cent of children (age 14 and under) live in poverty and 1 in 5 adults live in poverty.² Based on current trends, by 2025 Toronto risks becoming a city sharply divided between wealthy (30%) and poor neighbourhoods (60%).³ Poverty is both deep and pervasive and continues to be concentrated in specific groups and neighbourhoods. There is a strong consensus across all sectors that growing poverty hurts the city, its communities, its economy, and Toronto's bottom line.

This growing consensus led Toronto City Council, in April 2014, to unanimously adopt recommendations to develop Toronto's first Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Strategy will be brought to City Council in summer 2015, followed by an Implementation Plan with targets and measurements in fall 2015.

Building on City Measures

Currently, the City of Toronto is pursuing efforts to support low-income Torontonians and address poverty. In fact, the City has long taken a lead in developing strategies and providing programs and services that support people experiencing poverty and that support people to move out of poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategy is an opportunity to build on current City measures by bringing all the pieces together in a comprehensive, integrated, long-term overarching approach to reduce poverty in Toronto.

While the intent is to bring a robust report describing the City's proposed strategy to Executive Committee in June of this year, there is an urgent need to identify key areas where further or new investments can support initiatives or programs that will contribute to poverty reduction now and become a base from which the City can grow.

City staff, in conjunction with Deputy Mayor McConnell, have identified a range of investments for inclusion in the City's 2015 Operating Budget that will directly support Toronto residents' experiencing poverty. The total allocation in this 2015 Recommended Operating Budget is \$24.5 million. Of this amount, \$2.2 million was set aside for targeted allocation of strategic initiatives.

¹ Toronto Foundation, *Vital Signs*, 2013.

² Statistics Canada 2012 T1 Family File.

³ Hulchanski et al, 2010.

This report recommends the allocation of the \$2.2 million to eleven (11) initiatives aimed at reducing poverty in communities across the city. These strategic initiatives span across five themes: Access to City Services; Employment; Food Security; Housing; and Transportation.

COMMENTS

2015 Poverty Reduction Initiatives

The \$24.5 million in the 2015 Recommended Operating Budget (see Appendix B), inclusive of the \$2.2 million, are directed in ways that reflect the broad areas crucial to addressing poverty and that resonate with the way Torontonians are experiencing poverty. These include:

- Ensuring people can access City services, notably child care;
- Supporting people to move into good employment;
- Increasing food security for city residents;
- Increasing housing related supports;
- And increasing access to transportation.

While these are not the only areas a poverty reduction strategy must address, they are central to supporting people who live in poverty, assisting them move out of poverty and helping to prevent others from falling into poverty. These are also areas that Torontonians talk about frequently when they are asked about the steps the City can take to reduce poverty in Toronto.

A modest allocation, \$2.2 million, will support eleven (11) Poverty Reduction Initiatives described in Appendix A. These initiatives span six (6) City divisions and agencies: Parks Forestry & Recreation; Social Development, Finances and Administration; Shelter Support and Housing Administration; Toronto Employment and Social Services; Toronto Public Health; and Toronto Public Library.

The \$2.2 million supports:

- Enhancement of existing programs or services: increases in funding to offset inflationary cost increases or to support additional services in the same locations;
- Expansion of services: funds to provide existing services out of additional or new locations;
- New initiatives: a range of projects/initiatives to pilot new approaches to providing services to specific or new populations.

The 2015 Poverty Reduction investments in the Recommended Operating Budget support the development or expansion of services in areas where there are clear needs and where the City is a primary service provider. They also build on and continue current City priorities and are consistent with recommendations made in existing City strategies. A number of new initiatives proposed will support different approaches to working with specific populations or to addressing issues that may can make a difference to whether

youth in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas can access library books, seniors can access community transportation to participate in the life of their neighbourhoods, or whether single parents receiving Ontario Works can move quickly into sustainable employment.

Update on the Development of the Strategy

The City's Social Development, Finance & Administration Division, partnering with Toronto Employment and Social Service, were tasked with creating a collaborative, community-driven approach to developing a Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy. Working with the Deputy Mayor for Poverty Reduction, the development process as it unfolds, reflects a range of perspectives and ensures ongoing commitment for moving ideas forward.

In August 2014, staff formed a multi-sector Advisory Committee to provide strategic advice on the Strategy, and to help drive a process of community engagement.

In October 2014, a Senior City Staff Steering Committee consisting of representatives from 19 City programs across the three clusters and agencies, was established to guide City engagement in the development process. Divisions and agencies have been conducting their own program-specific discussions (Drill Downs) to inform the Strategy.

In the broader community, three main engagement activities occurred between November 2014 and January 2015:

- (1) a full-day, multi-sector stakeholder dialogue was held on November 28th;
- (2) Community Conversations across the city aided by a Facilitation Guide; and,
- (3) a resident questionnaire posted on the City website. Over 1,550 Torontonians have contributed to date.

In this first exploratory phase of engagement, Torontonians told us about the context of poverty in Toronto, their vision for Toronto in 2025, principles that should guide the City's work in developing the Strategy, and the key issues that must be addressed to reduce poverty in Toronto. Torontonians shared many ideas across a range of issues that capture the complexity and seriousness of poverty's effect on this city, and on its communities and residents. A Phase 1 Engagement Report summarizing all of the recorded input, data and submissions, analyzed and coded for recurring themes, is being published on the City website at the end of February 2015.

This exploratory phase was the basis for a more comprehensive and deliberate second phase of engagement. From February to March 2015, Torontonians will have further opportunities to think about and propose more focused recommendations for addressing poverty, as well as for advising on foundational principles that City Council can use to make decisions that will help Toronto move towards shared prosperity.

Torontonians will have the opportunity to provide their best advice to the City in three ways:

- In person through one of the City-led Days of Dialogue;
- Within communities by hosting or attending a Community Conversation using the City Facilitator's Guide; and, or

- On-line via a Resident Feedback Form.

Community ideas and insights will inform the development of a long-term Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy targeted for the end of second quarter 2015. Following Council consideration, additional community engagement is being planned, with the subsequent release of an Implementation Plan and Evaluation Framework in the fall 2015.

SIGNATURE

Deputy Mayor Pam McConnell

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Initiative Descriptions (\$2.2 million)

Appendix B: 2015 Poverty Reduction Strategy Investments - New and Enhanced Initiatives (\$24.5 million)

Appendix C: Map of Priority Centres and After School Recreation and Care

Appendix D: Map of Youth Hubs, Youth lounges, Student Nutrition Programs and Library Access – Fine Forgiveness Program

Appendix A: Initiative Descriptions (\$2.2M)

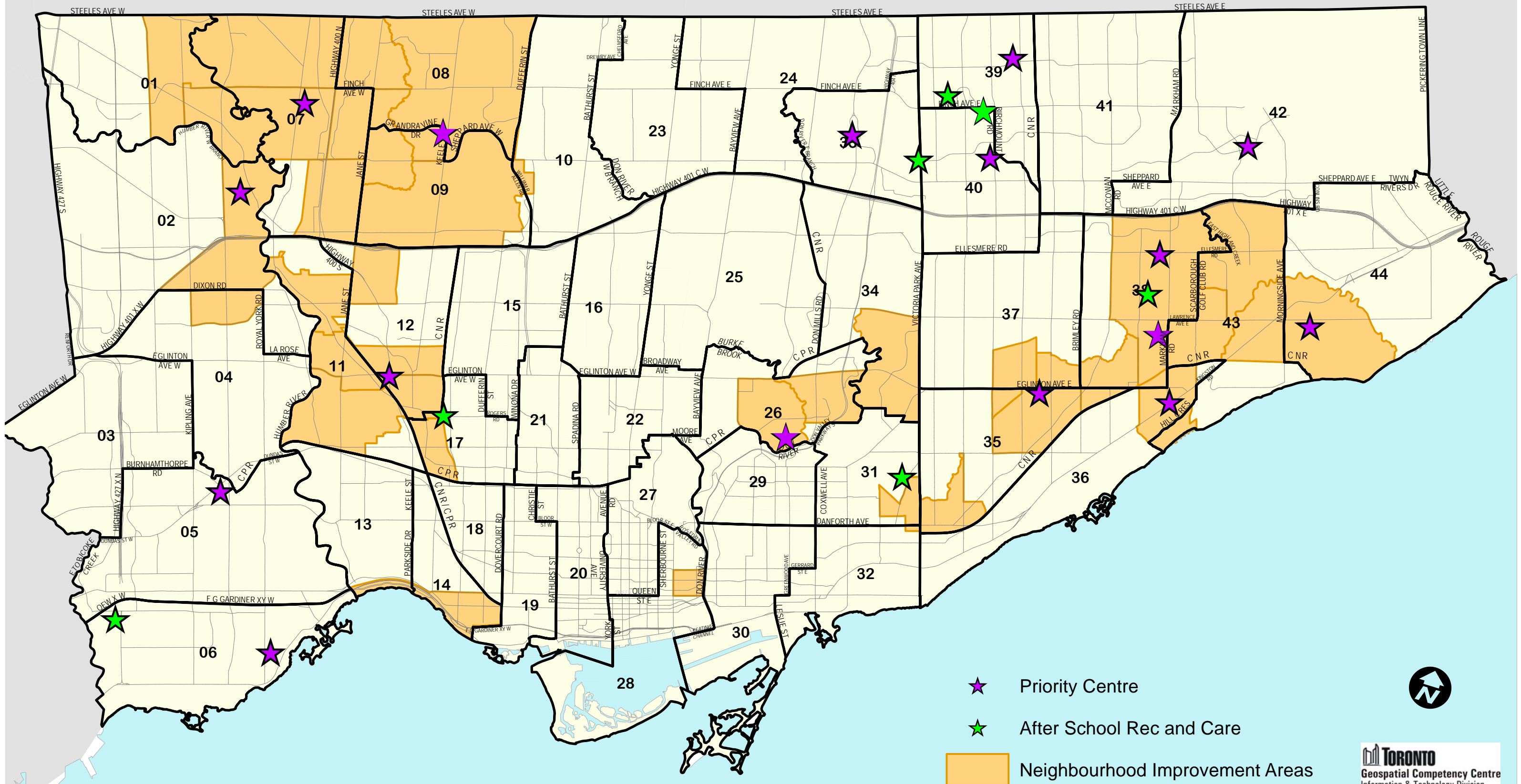
Poverty Reduction Theme	New / Enhanced Detail
Access to City Services	<p>(PFR) Youth Outreach Worker Expansion - \$0.130M Two permanent Youth Outreach Workers (YOWs): one at Fairbanks Memorial CC as the current YOW serving the Ward 15 area is primarily assigned to Lawrence Heights. The second YOW will provide more support to underserved areas of Wards 7, 8, & 9.</p>
	<p>(PFR) Youth Lounges – Phase 2 Expansion - \$0.400M Three new sites to open in Q2. This represents Phase 2 of the Council directed Youth Lounge Expansion. The identified sites are: (1) Native Child & Family Services (655 Bloor St. W. at Christie), (2) East Metro Youth Services (1200 Markham Rd), and (3) Don Montgomery (2467 Eglinton Ave. E). Phase 3 for 2016 will need to include the final 3 sites to reach the 10 approved by Council. The locations for these sites will be recommended by PFR with the input of the Youth Lounge Advisory Committee.</p>
	<p>(SFA) Neighbourhood Improvement Area Resident Engagement - \$0.207M Contributes \$6,593 per NIA (31 in total) to support resident engagement and leverage partnership investment. Contribution to resource requirement outlined in the 2012 Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy report (CD10.3).</p>
	<p>(TESS) Hardship Fund - \$0.026M Toronto Employment and Social Service provides funding for special health-related items for individuals not in receipt of social assistance. Inflation increase on \$1M base budget</p>
	<p>(TPL) Library Access - Fine Forgiveness Pilot - \$0.175M Pilot program to reinstate full library services and borrowing for children and youth at 31 library branches in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas by forgiving late fines starting. Pilot begins in Q2 2015, making summer reading programs, collections and after school programs fully accessible to children and youth. Expanded access would be considered in following years.</p>
	<p>(TPL) Youth Hubs Expansion - \$0.200M After school drop-in program to provide grades 7-10 students with free tutored help, workshops, and other activities. Expansion into 4 library sites: Cedarbrae, Fairview, York Woods, Maria A. Shchuka. Opens in Q3. Supports recommendations in the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy.</p>
Employment	<p>Youth Arts Employment & Training Program - \$0.200M Connect2youth Youth Arts Employment & Training Program invests in projects through community partners that support education attainment, skills building and community based training, and the arts. Job-ready youth with criminal records also receive direct supports towards employment. Supports a Youth Employment Strategy and 4 recommendations of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy.</p>
	<p>Employment Program for Single Parents - \$0.200M Pilot program to assist single parents on OW achieve meaningful employment – Children's Services to earmark a portion of subsidies within base budget to assist</p>
Food Security	<p>Student Nutrition Expansion - \$0.356M Expands the Student Nutrition program up to 27 new sites at the existing 14% Toronto contribution rate. Sites were identified through consultation with school, school boards, community contacts and key data sources such as the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods 2020. Funding will bring these schools to an equal funding level as other student nutrition programs operating in Toronto.</p>
	<p>Mobile Good Food Market - \$0.081M Retrofitted bus that visits multiple sites to provide opportunities to purchase fresh food. Targeted to the lowest income residents who are underserved by traditional food retail.</p>
Housing	<p>Enhanced Tenant Supports - \$0.075M Provides a range of tenant support to help to prevent evictions and stabilize tenancies.</p>
Transportation	<p>Seniors Community Transportation Pilot - \$0.150M Pilot to create effective community-based transportation for seniors in Scarborough in partnership with community agencies. Seniors will receive greater options to partake in the life of their communities, attend appointments and access services. This initiative connects to CD1.5 and the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods 2020.</p>




Appendix B: 2015 Poverty Reduction Strategy Investments - New and Enhanced Initiatives (\$24.5 Million)

Poverty Reduction Theme	Division	New / Enhanced Detail	Poverty Reduction Investment (\$ 000)
			2015 Allocation
Access to City Services	PFR	Priority Centre (Expansion to 16 Locations)	2,443.0
	PFR	Youth Lounges (4 New Sites)	338.0
	PFR	After-School Recreation & Care (ARC) (8 Sites)	358.0
	SWM	Waste Diversion Waiver (Fee Relief for CIROs)	892.0
	SDFA	Community Partnership Grants Inflationary Increase	386.7
	PFR / CS	After-School Recreation & Care (ARC) (10 Sites)	760.0
	CS	Child Care Subsidy Increase (Additional 184 subsidies)	3,371.0
Employment	TESS / EMS	Paramedic Training (Primary Care Paramedic Program for Low Income Clients)	300.0
Food Security	PH	Student Nutrition Inflationary increase	381.9
Housing	MLS	Multi-Residential Building Audit Program	90.0
	SSHA	Drop-ins (2 New 24 Hour Drop-ins for Women)	2,250.0
	SSHA	Shelter (54 beds for LGBTQ)	600.0
	SSHA	Shelter (Increase Capacity by 127 Bed Nights)	2,500.0
	SSHA	Housing Allowance (Funding Increase for Toronto Housing Allowance Program)	1,072.0
	SSHA	Warming Centres (Enhanced Services)	240.0
	SSHA	Housing (Purchase of Service Subsidy Increase - 3 Shelters)	706.6
	SSHA	Shelter (Kennedy House Youth Shelter Investments)	221.6
Transportation	TTC	Eliminate Child Fare (Ages 2-12)	5,411.0
Strategic Initiatives ⁴			2,200.0
TOTAL			24,521.8

⁴ The 2015 investment of Poverty Reduction Initiatives includes \$2.2 million set aside for targeted allocation to strategic initiatives. This report recommends allocation of these funds to eleven (11) initiatives aimed at reducing poverty in communities across the city.

Priority Centres and After School Recreation and Care

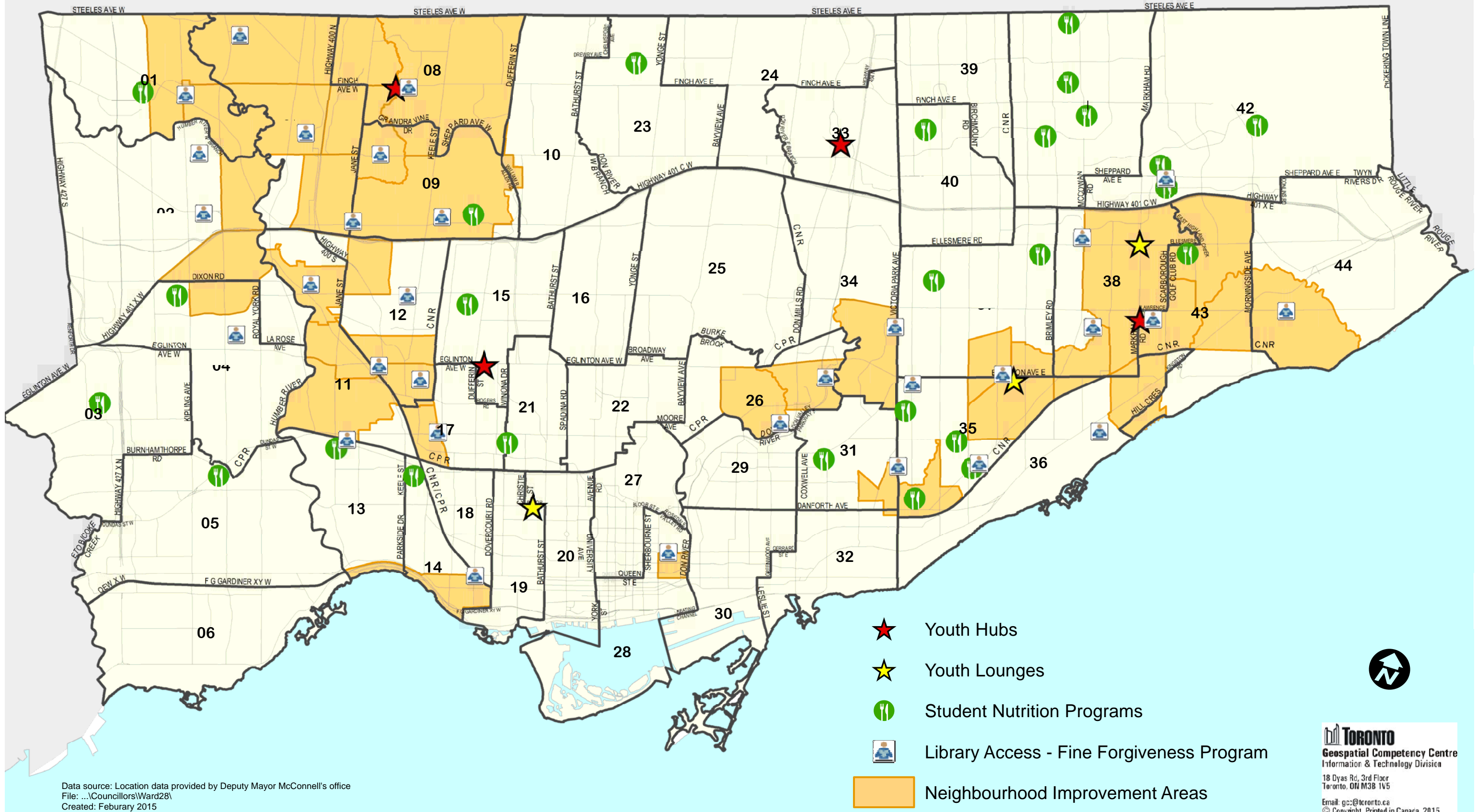


-  Priority Centre
-  After School Rec and Care
-  Neighbourhood Improvement Areas



Data source: Location data provided by Deputy Mayor McConnell's office
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 Created: February 2015

Youth Hubs, Youth Lounges, Student Nutrition Programs and Library Access - Fine Forgiveness Program



Data source: Location data provided by Deputy Mayor McConnell's office
 File: ...Councillors\Ward28\
 Created: February 2015

-  Youth Hubs
-  Youth Lounges
-  Student Nutrition Programs
-  Library Access - Fine Forgiveness Program
-  Neighbourhood Improvement Areas



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