

## MEMO

**TO:** Community Development and Recreation Committee

**FROM:** Councillor Joe Mihevc, Ward 21, St. Paul's West

**RE:** Support for Proposed Welfare Reform

**DATE:** November 20, 2017

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### Recommendation:

1. That City Council advise the Provincial Government that it supports the suite of changes recommended in the recent provincial report *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*, including recommendations to increase Ontario Works and ODSP rates by 22 and 15 per cent respectively, and to improve the integration and accessibility of employment training and health care supports for low-income residents.
2. That City Council direct the General City Manager of Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and the General Manager of Employment and Social Services to work with the City Manager to review these recommendations and identify alignment with their respective divisional plans.
3. City Council request the City Manager to write to the Minister of Community and Social Services to inform her of the City's support for this initiative.

### Background:

As the Province of Ontario develops a Poverty Reduction Strategy, the City of Toronto wants to support welfare reforms that are complementary to our own Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The report entitled [Income Security: A Roadmap for Change](#) outlines a comprehensive 10-year strategy to transform our current welfare system to better support people living in



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poverty. The report includes a plan that will create a provincial income floor that no resident would fall below. The bold plan envisions simpler, more accessible and integrated employment and training supports; access to prescription drugs, dental, vision, and hearing care services for all low income Ontarians; and affordable child care, a portable benefit and an assured income for people living with disabilities. The plan also focuses on particularly vulnerable populations, including families with children and seniors, and recommends an overall increase of 22 per cent to Ontario Works and 15 per cent to the Ontario Disability Support Program.

In addition to addressing the program configuration, it also recommends that the Province develop a market-based measure that reflects the cost of a basket of goods, with prices that reflect regional differences to improve the adequacy of minimum income measures.

The support of these changes will improve the outcomes of our poverty reduction efforts at the City and will help to ensure that Toronto residents who access social assistance and ODSP are better positioned to navigate these services, so they can begin to achieve increased levels of social and economic inclusion.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joe Mihevc  
Ward 21, St. Paul's West



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