STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Update on Toronto's Youth Employment Action Plan

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<th>November 9, 2015</th>
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<td>To:</td>
<td>Economic Development Committee</td>
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<td>From:</td>
<td>General Manager, Toronto Employment and Social Services</td>
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SUMMARY

Recognizing the damaging economic and social consequences of high and persistent youth unemployment, in May 2015 Toronto City Council adopted Work-Based Learning Works: An Action Plan for Youth Unemployment in Toronto. The Action Plan noted the important role that work-based learning plays in preparing youth for successful labour market transitions and highlighted a number of promising models and practices that the City can build on to connect more unemployed youth with jobs, career pathways and a wider range of work-based learning opportunities.

Following a brief review of the context shaping the development of the Plan, this progress report provides an initial update on the implementation of the Action Plan and the work that is underway in the following areas: the City as an employer; the City's work with employer and sector partners; and the City's work with young entrepreneurs. Moreover, given the specific challenges facing youth who are more distant from the labour market, there is an emphasis on this group in each area. Demonstrating the benefits of a more coordinated and focused City approach to the challenge of youth unemployment, significant progress has already been made to both increase the reach and impact of existing City initiatives and to develop new ones.

In addition, the City continues to work with a range of government and community partners to identify opportunities to drive systemic change. The report describes the steps that have been taken to engage key stakeholders to better align our work and to increase the number and range of work-based learning opportunities for Toronto youth.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Toronto Employment and Social Services recommends that:

1. The Economic Development Committee receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report beyond what is included in the 2015 Approved Operating Budget for City Divisions. Any additional resources required beyond 2015 will be addressed through subsequent budget processes.

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

Equity Impact

The City's youth employment initiatives support a range of equity seeking groups including youth from Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) across Toronto, Aboriginal youth, youth with disabilities, racialized and newcomer youth and other vulnerable groups. This report provides an initial update on the implementation of the Youth Employment Action Plan and the work that is being done to connect more unemployed and underemployed youth with a range of work-based learning opportunities.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on May 5, 6 and 7, 2015, City Council adopted Work-Based Learning Works: An Action Plan for Youth Employment in Toronto. Building on best practices inside and outside the City, the report identified a range of short term actions the City will take to increase work-based learning opportunities for youth.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.ED3.1

At its meeting on February 16, 2015, the Economic Development Committee requested that the General Manager, Toronto Employment and Social Services, in conjunction with the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Executive Director, Social Development Finance & Administration develop a Youth Employment Action Plan.


ISSUE BACKGROUND

Levels of youth unemployment (and underemployment) continue to be elevated in Toronto, with large numbers of young Torontonians struggling to find work, balance multiple, insecure contracts and identify pathways to better jobs and careers. At approximately 18%, the youth unemployment rate (15-24) in the Toronto Census
Metropolitan Area is nearly triple the overall rate and is consistently higher than the rates for Ontario and Canada. There are significant variations between different groups, particularly among racialized youth. For example, 28% of youth aged 15-19 are unemployed, compared to 35% and 31% of Aboriginal and newcomer youth in the same age range. There are also significant variations across Toronto’s neighbourhoods, with one quarter experiencing a youth unemployment rate higher than 18%.

Reflecting their various skills and experiences, unemployed and underemployed youth have diverse employment service needs. Typically, those with highly marketable skills and qualifications (“close to the labour market”) require relatively limited supports focused on identifying connections to employers and job opportunities. Meanwhile, those with multiple barriers to employment (“distant from the labour market”) require more intensive supports, skills training and specialized services and assessments.

To address these different needs, the City plays the following roles for youth and others:
- offering jobs and work-experience opportunities as a large employer in the city;
- delivering and referring residents to various employment services and supports; and
- contracting out additional employment services to better serve various groups.

Through this work the City provides a range of Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities that cover the continuum from shorter-term work experience opportunities to career preparation and permanent employment. The City’s experience in this area, combined with the growing international evidence-base on the benefits of WBL[^1], strongly suggests that expanding WBL will yield positive outcomes for youth, enabling them to access vital experience, jobs and careers. The Action Plan proposed enhancing work in the following areas to increase the number and range of WBL opportunities for Toronto youth: the City as an employer; the City’s work with employer and sector partners; and the City’s work with young entrepreneurs. Given the wide range of youth that the City serves, strategies and initiatives are designed to meet the needs of a continuum that runs from most employable to most ‘distant’. However, as youth in this latter group face multiple complex labour market challenges, in each of the areas above there was a particular focus on addressing the needs of more distant youth.

In addition, the Action Plan highlighted two other key issues. First, to better understand the impact of City initiatives and to identify what might be expanded or replicated as best practice, the Action Plan noted the need to move towards a common approach to collecting and reporting data on City youth employment initiatives. Second, recognising the need for greater alignment within the broader youth employment services landscape

in Toronto, the Plan stressed the need for further collaboration with other orders of government and community organizations.

Before reporting on progress to date in each of these areas, below we briefly note a number of current developments inside and outside the City, and, where relevant, highlight recent or upcoming staff reports which will address these in greater detail. Together, these provide the current context for enhancing youth opportunities in Toronto.

*The City Context: Related Strategies and Initiatives*

While the Youth Employment Action Plan is at the heart of the City’s work to address youth unemployment there are a number of related strategies and initiatives. Notably, the continued implementation of key strategies such as the Workforce Development Strategy, Collaborating for Competitiveness: A Strategic Plan for Accelerating Economic Growth and Job Creation in Toronto, the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020, the Toronto Newcomer Strategy and the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES) provide the overarching framework for City efforts to address youth unemployment.

A recent report to Council provided an overview of the Workforce Development Strategy's ongoing impact in enhancing and aligning services for employers and job seekers. Notably, it expanded the existing annual Workforce Development Week and established October 2015 as the City's first annual Workforce Development Month. This expansion ensured broader outreach to and participation among a range of job seekers, including youth. The City’s commitment to expand the Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) in 2015 has also resulted in an increased number of employer partnerships that not only provide greater youth access to jobs, but also a platform on which to build and shape innovative WBL approaches. The TYES, meanwhile, highlights steps the City is taking to better coordinate youth services and ensure that existing employment services are accessible to more youth who face barriers to employment. A report in 2016 will detail the work to date on the implementation of TYES.

Finally, in July 2015, the City endorsed an interim poverty reduction strategy which identified critical actions and committed additional resources to a range of poverty reduction initiatives. Supporting youth was a particular focus of the $25.9M invested in 2015 in 28 poverty reduction initiatives targeted at jobs, housing, food access, transportation and service access. The final strategy, *TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy*, approved by Council in November, sets out a 20-year plan, with 17 recommendations and 71 actions to advance equity, opportunity and prosperity for all Toronto residents. Increasing the number -- and improving the quality -- of employment opportunities for youth remains a key component of the Strategy.

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The Broader Context: System Alignment and Coordination

Ensuring that Toronto youth have opportunities to build their skills and find and keep jobs requires the concerted efforts of many stakeholders. There have been a number of important developments from other orders of government as well as community organizations since the Action Plan was developed. These include:

- The province recently passed Bill 6: Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act which includes a focus on Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) to create jobs and training opportunities for local residents as part of large infrastructure investments. Plans are currently underway to secure a CBA with Metrolinx under Bill 6 as part the Eglinton Crosstown project. This project is expected to commit to certain targets for local hiring and training with a focus on the construction sector.
- The province has also moved forward with consultations and various calls for proposals as part of the Employment and Training Services Integration (ETSI) initiative. For instance, in May the province issued a Call for Proposals to establish a new Ontario Centre for Workforce Innovation. More recently, in June, the province issued a call seeking proposals to launch eight pilot Local Employment Planning Councils aimed to provide communities with expertise and local labour market information to improve local planning of employment and training services.
- In September the province announced the $160 million Youth Job Connection program to provide intensive support and training to young people with multiple barriers to employment. The two year initiative will provide paid pre-employment training, job opportunities and mentorship to youth aged 15 to 29 who face barriers to employment and who are not working, not in school and not enrolled in training. It will also provide summer, part-time and after-school job opportunities to high school students 15-18 who face challenging life circumstances and require support to transition between school and work.
- Beyond the work of the province, the launch of United Way Toronto and York Region's (UWTYR) Youth Success Strategy, as well as the implementation of CivicAction's Escalator: Jobs for Youth Facing Barriers initiative, are creating opportunities to improve the planning and coordination of employer engagement and employment service delivery. An important aspect of this is the opportunity to capitalize on a CBA as part of the Eglinton Crosstown project noted above.

As the next section describes the City is continuing to work with government, community and private sector partners to leverage opportunities not only to connect more youth to a range of work-based learning opportunities, but also to better align and coordinate our collective work to inform necessary systemic changes.

COMMENTS

The Action Plan for Youth Employment set out a number of short term actions organized into the following areas: the City as an employer; the City's work with employer and sector partners; and the City's work with young entrepreneurs. After describing the progress made to date, the remainder of this report outlines the steps taken to measure the
impact of City youth employment initiatives and to engage internal and external stakeholders to better align work and identify promising approaches to address youth employment and drive systemic change.

**Update on Recommended Actions**

1. **Update on Leveraging the City's role as an employer**

The City's role as an employer has been an important area of focus in the months since the Action Plan was passed. This is where the City is able to exert significant influence and further enhance its leadership role. The main areas of progress to date are:

- **Increasing Access to City Jobs:** The City already hires large numbers of youth, with nearly 8,500 staff – or 25% of the workforce – under age 30. The Action Plan committed to increase access to City opportunities for low-income youth by more explicitly targeting youth in receipt of social assistance, youth connected to community networks or those living in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs).

  As a result of these targeted efforts, to date in 2015, over 250 jobseekers from underrepresented communities have applied to City jobs, resulting in over 50 hires, nearly half of which were youth. To support this work, Human Resources (HR) and TESS have been actively developing joint outreach plans to more deliberately target youth to City jobs, including low-income youth. The outreach plans generally involve a network of community service providers and TESS divisional offices reaching out to unemployed and underemployed youth and providing targeted information sessions, learning and networking forums, and job preparation supports.

  HR and TESS are also more actively promoting City opportunities to young people using social media and new technology platforms. For instance, the City of Toronto currently maintains an employer profile with TalentEgg – a job board and online career resource that connects employers with young talent. City opportunities are also viewable through the City’s career webpage and through the PAYE employment opportunities system. By maximizing these information channels, the City is better able to share recruitment and placement opportunities, reach various groups of youth, and keep track of diverse recruitment sources.

- **Expanding work-based learning opportunities at the City:** The City currently has a number of paid and unpaid work-based learning initiatives that support skill development, work experience and professional networks. For instance, initiatives such as academic co-ops, the Toronto Urban Fellows Program, and Career Bridge – function as gateways to City jobs and are typically filled by young people. Through TESS’ student placements alone, in 2015, over 35 young people obtained work experience with the City as part of their academic program. However, more needs to be done to ensure that underrepresented youth, including youth receiving Ontario Works, youth living in NIAs and youth connected to community services have access to these early work-based learning experiences at the City.
Currently, HR and TESS are exploring avenues to expand the breadth and scope of opportunities for youth to gain paid work-based learning with the Toronto Public Service. More specifically, efforts are underway to identify placement opportunities with City divisions to pilot an innovative work-based learning program that is aligned with divisional talent needs. The pilot program is expected to be launched in 2016.

- *Expanding the Job Incentive Program for Youth:* The Job Incentive Program (JIP) was created in 2010 to assist unemployed residents in receipt of social assistance to gain work experience, develop skills and establish networks to help them transition to employment. Since its inception, over 500 placements have been filled in a range of City divisions with over 50% of participants finding employment within 6 months. In the Action Plan, the City committed to expand the JIP program for youth by challenging more divisions to participate in the program and offer youth placements. To date in 2015, JIP has placed nearly 20 youth into placements with a range of City divisions and these numbers are projected to increase to more than 80 in 2016.

While the JIP initiative provides invaluable experience and boosts employment networks, it is an unpaid volunteer opportunity. Recognizing this, the City, through TESS, will introduce an enhanced program model consisting of additional financial supports, through Ontario Works, to cover participation-related expenses such as transportation, clothing and equipment.

- *Supporting Targeted Career Pathway Models:* In 2015, the City has continued to support innovative approaches that link education, training and hands-on learning to support young residents along particular career paths. Previous reports have described the success of NPower's Technology Service Corps program in providing young people with intensive IT skills training and work experience through paid internships with leading employers. Now in its second cohort, the City has demonstrated continued leadership by being the largest referral source to the program, outreaching to more than 85 young people through IT Career Information Sessions co-delivered by NPower Canada and City staff. In total, 16 City-referred youth were accepted to the program's second cohort, representing 25% of all program participants. The City of Toronto has also offered to host 6 paid student placements this fall.

Furthermore, the City is exploring creative ways to increase access to public service careers with the City of Toronto. Currently, Toronto Fire Services, TESS and Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PFR) and Centennial College are partnering to deliver the Firefighter Career Access Program. Expected to begin in early 2016, the program aims to support 20-30 candidates in receipt of Ontario Works access academic and physical firefighter training and testing. The program will provide an opportunity for candidates to prepare and apply for work as firefighters in the Toronto Public Service.

2. *Capitalizing on Existing Connections with Employer and Sector Partners*

Another focus of the Action Plan was to continue to capitalize on the City's numerous relationships with employers and sectors to identify their current and future workforce
needs and to provide youth with the preparation, training and employment opportunities they need to meet them. The previous report highlighted the successful work underway with initiatives such as the CNC Machinist Recruitment and Training Program and the Bombardier Aircraft Assembler Fast Track Certification Program. Below we highlight recent progress on a number of other initiatives.

- **Toronto Pan Am Games SEEDS Initiative:** More than 700 applicants were screened and 103 youth were hired for a range of seasonal positions which included a corporate mentorship component. In addition, Mayor John Tory and other senior executives from sponsor organizations acted as youth mentors and mentorship opportunities were extended to volunteers of the Games. The SEEDS initiative is an excellent example of how the City and the province can work together to implement a large-scale hiring pipeline related to economic development. Working with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and TO2015, the City linked over 30 Employment Ontario agencies on the ground to coordinate provincial youth employment funds and provide a single access point to recruit candidates and streamline screening efforts. The City's PAYE initiative and Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) played a central role in this regard; working closely with the community sector to ensure that youth employment opportunities were shared widely.

- **netWORKS Mentoring Initiative:** Some 40 young people with multiple barriers to employment, including youth with criminal records, are participating in the netWORKS pilot launched by Civic Action, Ten Thousand Coffees and United Way Toronto and York Region (UWTYR). TESS, SDFA and Toronto Community Housing referred youth and helped them obtain employment services and wrap-around social supports. Efforts are also underway to obtain the commitment of City of Toronto staff in diverse occupations to participate as employer mentors.

- **United Way Career Navigator pilots:** TESS is working with the United Way Toronto York Region (UWTYR) to support two Career Navigator pilot projects, the Irving Tissue Community Training and Employment Project and the Retail Foundations for Leadership Pathway. Both projects provide education, skill building, WBL and potential employment opportunities for youth facing multiple barriers to employment. Combined, these small-scale initiatives are expected to reach 50-70 youth with multiple barriers by 2016. TESS is part of the project Steering Committee for both projects, contributing to the service components and implementation strategy of each. In addition, TESS staff provide support to youth participants in receipt of Ontario Works through financial benefits to access needed supports during program preparation activities and academic upgrading.

- **Eglinton Crosstown Line Community Benefits Framework:** As part of a Labour Market Partnership project lead by the United Way of Toronto & York Region (UWTYR) and supported by MTCU, a construction focused jobseeker 'pathway' model is being developed to support the implementation of the Metrolinx Community Benefits Framework for the Eglinton Crosstown Line (ECL). TESS has played an active role in informing the development of this pathway model concept. The aim of
the model is to ensure that disadvantaged residents, including youth, benefit from training and employment opportunities related to the construction of the ECL. The model, to be finalized by the end of 2015, will include recommendations on how the pathway should be operationalized, including the roles and responsibilities of various employment service and training stakeholders in Toronto. Over 1000 construction and engineering-related jobs have been projected for this multi-year project.

3. Increasing Support to Youth Entrepreneurs

Supporting entrepreneurship is another key way of helping build skills and to better integrate youth into the labour market. The previous report highlighted the range of entrepreneurship services delivered by the Economic Development & Culture division. Below we note how interdivisional partnerships are improving access to existing programs and how new resources and initiatives are being leveraged to support more young people interested in entrepreneurship.

- **Integrated Employment and Entrepreneurship Site:** In November 2015, TESS and EDC are launching the City's first integrated employment and entrepreneurship site at the Crossways Employment Centre located at 2340 Dundas Street West. The centre will provide a broader range of services and supports that build the employment and entrepreneurial skills of residents. More specifically, EDC will deliver its Starter Company Program from this site. This provincially funded program assists youth aged 18-29 to start or expand a business by providing a $5,000 grant, training, mentoring, and ongoing support. In 2015, Starter Company served 75 youth and this number is expected to increase to 200 young entrepreneurs through the end of 2016.

With the expanded reach of Starter Company, the City is also exploring opportunities to ensure that more distant youth are connected to the program. Specifically, TESS and EDC will collaborate on an enhanced outreach model for Starter Company to increase access for youth on Ontario Works, youth living in NIAs and youth connected to community services. The plan will consist of targeted outreach through community service networks, a pre-training component to assist interested youth in applying, an additional business fundamentals training component and one-on-one advisory services. Shared office space at the new integrated site will further ensure that more distant youth have access to work spaces in the community.

- **Enterprise Toronto Entrepreneurs Mentoring:** The Enterprise Toronto Entrepreneur Mentoring Program, launched in April this year, matches new business owners and start-up entrepreneurs with experienced mentors who can provide more specialized knowledge about specific business challenges. To date in 2015, 140 residents have accessed the program and efforts are underway to expand the reach of the program for OW clients participating in TESS' Self-Employment Development Program. While the program is not youth specific, networking and mentorship has been recognized as a top challenge among youth interested in starting and growing a business. As such, lessons from this program can inform the development of new and more focused mentorship opportunities for young entrepreneurs over time.
• **Young Entrepreneurs Council Advisory Body (YECAB) Projects:** In 2014, the Deputy Mayor's Young Entrepreneurs Roundtable was convened with the aim of building a stronger partnership with this dynamic subsector. The Young Entrepreneurs Council Advisory Body (YECAB) was established as a result of this process to further the discussion between advisory members and City staff. In 2015, four workshops were held with YECAB to catalyze and prioritize projects, programs and policies that the City could undertake to support young entrepreneurs. A concurrent report to Economic Development Committee provides an update on the engagement process and details on the ideas generated. In sum, various opportunities for partnership were suggested, including actions to better align City strategies and programs focused on more distant youth and work-based learning, as well as actions to strengthen connections with Toronto’s school boards and post-secondary institutions. Many of these actions represent areas of ongoing interdivisional work. For instance, as part of the implementation of TYES, SDFA has been actively supporting entrepreneurship creation for youth most vulnerable to violence in crime.

**Advancing System-Level Coordination and Change through Strategic Engagement**

As we noted at the start of this report, the broader context surrounding workforce development and employment services is generating opportunities to enhance coordination and advance system change. Whether it is the potential to do things differently that could result from the Province’s ongoing work to transform and integrate employment services (ETSI), or the lessons already emerging from large scale initiatives such as the ECL Community Benefits Framework and the TO2015 SEEDS initiative, there appears to be significant appetite to think differently and to try new things. Indeed, on the ground experience testing new practices such as sector-focused and pathways models is already beginning to build knowledge of what works and the roles that different stakeholders can play to ensure success for youth and others.

To support the successful implementation of the Action Plan, the City is capitalizing on these opportunities by engaging with key government, community and employer stakeholders, and by better aligning its own efforts. A large number of internal and external stakeholders have been engaged to ensure greater alignment with existing youth employment strategies, priorities and investments in the broader workforce development ecosystem. To date, leading City divisions – TESS, SDFA and EDC – have pursued the following outreach activities and partnerships:

• **Youth Employment Action Plan Advisory Committee:** A multi-stakeholder advisory committee has been established to provide City staff with direction on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Action Plan. The Committee is co-chaired by Peter Leon (former City Councillor and retired businessman) and Mike Yorke (President, Local 27, Carpenters Union) and consists of a cross-section of leaders including employers, sector representatives, labour, educational institutions, umbrella organizations and youth. Attachment 1 provides a list of members and the Committee Terms of Reference. City staff from a range of divisions are also supporting the Committee's work.
Led by the co-chairs, an introductory meeting was held in September to discuss how the Committee could best focus its work to support the development of work-based learning initiatives and approaches and to provide an initial scan of some exciting projects now underway in the city. It was agreed that the Committee would hold four themed workshop meetings beginning in November and extending into 2016. The initial meeting will be held in November and will focus on ways to support the City's efforts to develop and/or scale up work-based learning models or initiatives that are sector based. This will be done by building on lessons learned from promising youth initiatives currently underway or proposed.

Subsequent meetings will focus on strengthening connections with educational institutions and employers and the role of the City as an anchor institution as well as ways the City may be able to better take advantage of its own role as an employer. Overall, these meetings will help generate ideas for immediate and longer-term actions the City can pursue to advance work-based learning opportunities for youth.

- **City, United Way Toronto and York Region and CivicAction Reference Table:** Recognizing the important role that non-governmental institutions play in advancing youth employment, City staff participated in two planning sessions with senior representatives and program staff from United Way Toronto and York Region and CivicAction. Through these meetings, the City has been able to advance mutually beneficial partnerships and initiatives. As well as the netWORKS mentoring initiative described earlier, for example, the City has worked in partnership with LinkedIn and CivicAction on a research project focused on the IT-skills needed to drive the local economy in the future. Ongoing engagement with this reference table will support the ongoing planning and coordination of strategic initiatives focused on youth employment, with a view to better align activities and to address ongoing systemic challenges related to workforce development in Toronto.

- **Interdivisional Planning Tables and Networks:** City staff continue to participate in a range of interdivisional planning tables and stakeholder advisory channels with a youth employment focus. The TYES interdivisional workgroup in particular has provided a forum for advancing the Action Plan's fourth action area focused on supporting youth who are most distant from the labour market. Furthermore, the City's work with the Young Entrepreneurs Advisory Body has identified concrete opportunities for action that may be further pursued through this Action Plan. Overall, continued involvement in these tables will ensure that existing City priorities are aligned moving forward.

**Measuring Outcomes**

Just as important as better aligning the City’s work on youth employment is better capturing the impacts of this work. Over and above the specific initiatives highlighted in this report, the City helps thousands of youth each year build their skills and employability, find and keep jobs, and advance in their careers. Whether as an employer, through its delivery and referral of employment services and supports, or through its
contracted employment services, the City supports youth through a wide variety of programs, initiatives and pilots. Notable examples of this work include:

- The Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) provides youth (18-29) with one-on-one employment coaching, learning and networking opportunities and access to jobs. In 2015, more than 1,800 youth have participated in PAYE, of which over 800 have obtained employment.
- TESS, through its Purchase of Employment Services, contracts with 60 service providers to deliver more than 100 programs that serve a range of population groups, including 11 programs that are youth specific. Overall in 2015, more than 150 youth have participated in TESS contracted programs.
- The Toronto Youth Jobs Corps program, coordinated by SDFA and delivered by three community agencies, provides youth aged 16-29 with pre-employment and job placement support. In 2015, approximately 500 youth have participated.

Currently, however, each City division or each youth initiative independently establishes metrics to measure outputs and outcomes. As a result, the City is not able to report comprehensively on the numbers of youth who participate in these various initiatives or on the outcomes that are achieved. This is a pressing gap. Establishing a common process for collecting and reporting data on City youth initiatives is therefore an important goal of the Action Plan. Doing so will provide greater insights into the impact of initiatives, the outcomes for youth and the effectiveness of City investments. Staff from TESS and SDFA have met to identify these issues and to determine the process to move forward. As a first step, a workgroup consisting of staff from TESS, SDFA and EDC, along with other appropriate City divisions, is being convened to explore how to work with existing resources to develop a consistent approach to tracking youth outcomes across the City. Rather than creating an additional interdivisional workgroup, the existing City Workforce Development Table may be a logical venue, given its focus on planning and management issues related to workforce development. The primary focus of the workgroup will be on:

- Identifying appropriate programs and initiatives to include, based on factors such as the City's role in delivering, funding or administering programs, the focus on employment and work-based learning, and the number of youth participants;
- Consolidating existing metrics being used and establishing common outputs and outcomes to be tracked, as well as common definitions;
- Balancing 'hard' measures such as access to employment, education and training, and 'soft' measures of progress and success which are especially important for youth who are most distant from the labour market;
- Determining the appropriate length of time to track different outcomes;
- Identifying and/or developing common tools to support tracking outcomes; and,
- Establishing a process to share and report on outcomes.

4 'Soft' measures, such as enhanced work, interpersonal or analytical skill are especially important as they demonstrate the "distance travelled" by individuals who do not secure employment but as a result of initiatives are closer to the labour market and more employable.
As this work proceeds, it is essential that it be aligned with related initiatives inside and outside the City. For example, high profile initiatives such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy and the Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy, which have an ongoing focus on measuring and monitoring, and which in some cases include relevant disaggregated youth data, will provide important insights. Externally, meanwhile, the province has established *Stepping Up: A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario’s Youth Succeed* which includes a focus on employment outcomes. Moving forward, therefore, the workgroup will engage appropriate stakeholders in the City and beyond to inform their thinking and actions related to measuring success.

**Conclusion**

In the first six months since the Action Plan was passed, significant gains have been made with respect to partnerships and plans to scale up and create new initiatives to support young people. Beyond the positive impacts these numerous initiatives are having on youth and employers, they are also seeding and testing new practices and solidifying collaborative approaches. Collectively, by engaging in new partnerships and advancing innovative models, the City is both capitalizing on existing -- and creating new -- opportunities to inform future systemic changes.

Over the next year, continued engagement with various stakeholders, including the youth employment action plan advisory committee, will identify new approaches, strategies and actions to support the successful implementation of the Action Plan. Finally, the City will ensure that actions to address youth employment are aligned with the vision, objectives and recommended actions outlined in the City’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

**CONTACT**

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**SIGNATURE**

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Patricia Walcott  
General Manager  
Toronto Employment and Social Services

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Youth Employment Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and Membership
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Background

In May 2015, Toronto City Council endorsed *Work Based Learning Works: An Action Plan for Youth Employment in Toronto*. This report highlights a number of promising models and practices that the City can build on to connect more unemployed youth in Toronto with jobs, career pathways and work-based learning opportunities.

Reflecting best practice and the City's own experience, moving forward, the City has committed to increase the number and range of work-based learning opportunities by taking actions in the following areas:

1. Leveraging the City of Toronto's role as an employer;
2. Capitalizing on existing connections with employer and sector partners;
3. Increasing support to entrepreneurs, including youth; and
4. Supporting youth who are more distant from the labour market.

Mandate

Bring together a multi-stakeholder group to provide strategic advice to support the successful implementation of the City of Toronto's Youth Employment Action Plan.

Objectives

1. Strengthen and expand relevant stakeholder partnerships;
2. Identify creative ways to advance work-based learning opportunities for youth; and
3. Work with employers to support their workforce needs in ways that benefit youth

Structure and Functioning

The Committee will meet four times over the next year. Staff from relevant City divisions, including Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS), Economic Development and Culture (EDC) and Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) will provide secretariat support and will be responsible for the implementation of the directions set out by this Committee.

Membership

The Committee will consist of two chairs and approximately 10-15 members who represent a cross-section of leaders including employers, sectors, educational institutions, umbrella organizations, youth, and other identified stakeholders.
### Advisory Committee Members List

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<tr>
<td><strong>Committee Co-Chairs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Leon</td>
<td>Former City Councillor and Retired Businessman, Ward 3 Etobicoke Centre</td>
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<td>Mike Yorke</td>
<td>President, Local 27, Carpenters Union</td>
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<td><strong>Employers/Business/Labour</strong></td>
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<td>Stephen Diamond</td>
<td>President, Diamond Corp</td>
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<td>Andrew Seigwart</td>
<td>Senior Vice President, Membership Services, Retail Council of Canada</td>
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<td>Paul Scrivener</td>
<td>Director of External Relations, Toronto Industry Network</td>
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<td>Lis Pimentel</td>
<td>President, UNITE HERE Local 75</td>
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<td>Emanuel Carvalho</td>
<td>Secretary-Treasurer, SEIU</td>
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<td><strong>Educational Institutions</strong></td>
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<td>Brenda Pipitone</td>
<td>Dean, Academic Services and Student Affairs, George Brown College</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’neil Edwards</td>
<td>Program Director, Spanning the Gaps and Community Engagement, Ryerson University</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community-Based Organizations/Foundations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Julia Blackburn</td>
<td>Executive Director, NPower Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danielle Olsen</td>
<td>Executive Director, Hospitality Workers Training Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeannette Campbell</td>
<td>Director, Youth Initiatives (A), United Way Toronto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Tan</td>
<td>Project Director, Escalator: Jobs for Youth Facing Barriers, CivicAction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth Clarke</td>
<td>Director, Employment Programs, TRIEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danbi Cho</td>
<td>Research Coordinator, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business</td>
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<td><strong>Youth Representatives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gareh Murray-Johnson</td>
<td>Workforce Scheduling/Training Coordinator, Toronto Pan Am/Parapan Am Games (TO2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigel Rose</td>
<td>Business Operations Assistant, Deloitte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sageena Ralph</td>
<td>Fraud Response Officer, CIBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chloe-Marie Brown</td>
<td>Director of Policy, Toronto Youth Cabinet</td>
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</tbody>
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