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Appendix B

APPENDIX B

MEMO ON UNITED WAY TORONTO YORK REGION FUNDING CHANGES



United Way Toronto & York Region

Memorandum

To: Chris Brillinger,
Director, Social Development, Finance & Administration
City of Toronto

From: Deb Shime
Senior Vice President, Community Impact
United Way Toronto and York Region

Date: November 28, 2016

Re: United Way's Community Service Strategy

Item Description:

This communication provides details about United Way Toronto and York Region's (hereby United Way) new Community Services Sector strategy (CSS).

Background/ context:

United Way is the largest non-government funder of social services, agencies and programs in Toronto and York Region, investing \$86 million in the 2015-16 fiscal year. But our relationship with the agencies we fund goes far beyond simply a financial transaction. We work with the sector to build its capacity and sustainability, identify and overcome systemic issues and convene other city building organizations, our donors and partners in government to help ensure Torontonians have the opportunities and support they need to build better lives.

United Way's CSS is the next critical step of that work: helping us move from a static portfolio of agencies to a more dynamic and diverse group of community partners. Over the past few years, we have conducted broad consultations and engagement with community, the sector, and other stakeholders. We heard that we're on the right track — but we need to do more. The challenges facing our city are increasingly complex, and demand new ways of working together. More than a decade ago we resolved to begin working in a new way — what we call the "community impact" approach. It led us to use our research, public policy and investments in a strategic way so United Way can work with our partners to



United Way Toronto & York Region

strengthen our city. Put simply, it's about working in partnership with every sector to create conditions for lasting community-wide change.

Our Community Services Sector strategy is the next big leap forward in our community impact journey and will complement our Youth Success and Building Strong Neighbourhoods strategies. We are updating our investment framework and re-examining all of our funding contracts and relationships. Through this process, we will be re-committing to many of our existing funded partners and we will be opening up our funding to both existing and new organizations through an open funding call as well. It enables us to deepen our sector-wide partnerships, work together toward more impact for the communities we serve and support our partners respond to emerging needs and community priorities.

Key elements of CSS:

Our CSS investment portfolio will consist of three funding streams: Anchor, Program and Project. A majority of our investments will be in Anchor Agencies that will serve as an essential pillar in each community. These are organizations that know their neighbourhoods and the community, conduct or participate in important research, provide vital support, and engage communities in locally-developed solutions. Anchor Agencies are also our key partners in delivering on neighbourhoods and youth employment outcomes.

Further details about Anchor, as well as Program and Project, funding can be found in the attached appendices.

Our CSS investments will be guided by three considerations:

- A primary focus on people living in poverty and ensuring access to programs and services;
- Geographic diversity;
- A diversity of issues and populations.

Implementation process for CSS:

140 currently funded agencies from Toronto and York Region responded to an Expression of Interest for Anchor applications earlier this year, out of which 102 were asked to apply.



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United Way anticipates that between 40 and 60 applicants will be selected to serve as Anchors. A five-step review process has been implemented to make the selection fair, transparent and evidence-based. United Way's staff, volunteers, Senior Executive Team and Community Impact Committee (a committee of our Board of Trustees) all had opportunities to review decisions and ask questions. There is also an independent review - appeals process - for any agency that is unsuccessful and would like to have the decision reviewed.

Any agency that is not funded as an Anchor Agency will have the opportunity to apply for Program Funding. Furthermore, we have extended funding contracts with all agencies through March 2018 to ensure stability in the sector, as we implement new funding stream opportunities in the coming years:

- Through Anchor Funding, we will re-commit our funding to a group of organizations that align strongly with the mission of United Way and play a leadership role in responding to the needs of their local neighbourhoods or populations they serve. (Anchor Agency funding will begin in April 2017 for a five-year term).
- Program Funding will support high quality service delivery aligned to ten broad program areas (Program funding will begin in April 2018 for three-year terms).
- Project Funding will support emerging needs, initiatives, and opportunities for innovation (Expected launch in 2018).

Conclusion:

United Way is committed to continuing to align and coordinate investment strategies with various divisions at the City of Toronto to ensure resources are being directed to where the need is greatest. We would like to thank City of Toronto staff for offering us their advice, time and resources over the years, especially in reviewing applications and our final recommended list for CSS Anchor Agencies. Together, we have invested in strong neighbourhoods and tower renewal strategies, youth success and a strong network of community agencies. We will ensure that this spirit and practice of collaboration will continue as we rollout CSS.

Contact:

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Toronto & York Region

Appendices:

1. CSS-New Investment Framework
2. CSS- Program Framework
3. Change Starts Here – United Way’s Strategic Plan



United Way
Toronto & York Region

Community Services Sector Strategy

New Investment Framework

Overview

January 2016

1. Context

The Community Services Sector Strategy is one of three priorities identified in United Way Toronto York Region's (UWTYR) new Strategic Plan, *Change Starts Here*. The three priorities for having greater community impact are:

1. Support a strong responsive community services sector (CSS)
2. Build strong neighbourhoods (BSN)
3. Create youth success (YSS)

2. Introduction

Our vision for a strong, responsive community services sector is:

A city and region united by a strong community services sector. We want every person in every community to have the services and supports they need to build a better life.

We have identified three **desired results**:

- Strengthened community agencies that are responsive, sustainable and effective
- A strong network of community services to help people build a better life
- A strong network of community sector-serving agencies that are able to raise public awareness, influence social policy issues and create a responsive sector.

To help achieve this, UWTYR has identified that our role is to support a network of community organizations that work together to support people who live in poverty and to improve social conditions across the City of Toronto and York Region. We have designed a new funding model that focuses our investments towards this end at the same time as providing more flexibility to respond to changing conditions and needs.

3. New Approach to Investment

UWTYR has long been a major supporter of the community services sector through our support of a network of community services. In our new approach, we will provide more strategic support focused on our desired results. We will make use of our array of community impact resources, including research, strategy, funding, partnership, evaluation and advocacy, to support people who live in poverty and improve social conditions across the city and region.

Our investments will be guided by **three considerations**:

- a primary focus on people living in poverty and ensuring access to programs and services
- geographic diversity
- a diversity of issues and populations

4. Funding Strategy for Organizations and Programs

UWTYR will transition to new funding models that support a diverse, dynamic portfolio of community partners and enable our funding to respond to new and emerging needs.

This means a new relationship with funded organizations. We will evolve from having member agencies (Toronto) and partner agencies (York) and will adopt more flexible mechanisms with defined contract periods.

Three new funding streams have been designed:

- Anchor Funding Stream
- Program Funding Stream
- Project Funding Stream

These streams will be introduced over the next three years, with the Anchor Funding Stream launching first with a call for Expressions of Interest to be released on February 2, 2016.

4.1 Anchor Funding Stream

What: Multi-year (5 year) renewable funding for both general operating costs and high impact programs that align with UWTYR's CSS Program Framework.

Purpose: Anchor funding is UWTYR's contribution to strengthening a group of agencies across the City of Toronto and York Region that reflect the scope of the CSS sector and:

- play a leadership role in their communities and the sector to mitigate the effects of poverty, help people move out of poverty, and/or address the underlying causes of poverty
- are responsive, effective and sustainable
- address the needs of, and ensure access for, equity-seeking groups (as identified by the Ontario Human Rights Code) in their programming as well as their organizational structure
- work in partnership with UWTYR to strengthen the sector and support UWTYR's mission, vision and stewardship

Portfolio:

UWTYR will provide anchor funding to 40 – 60 organizations across Toronto and York Region, seeking geographic, issue and population diversity across the portfolio. Anchor organizations will be expected to play a leadership role in their communities and the sector and work in a reciprocal partnership with UWTYR to advance each other's missions.

Eligible Organizations:

Only organizations that are currently receiving funding as grant-funded agencies, member or partner agencies are eligible to apply for anchor funding by submitting an online Expression of Interest.

UWTYR will consider organizations in three categories:

- organizations providing services to individuals, families and communities in your local community
- organizations providing services to individuals, families and communities across the City of Toronto or York Region
- community-based social policy and research and or sector capacity building organizations

Please review UWTYR CSS Eligibility Guidelines for more details.

Use of Funding:

General Operating Costs

Agencies may apply for up to \$250,000 of anchor funding to direct towards general operating costs such as: infrastructure and management, organizational effectiveness, community or sector engagement, capacity building, social policy or research work. Funding is intended to sustain or enhance the organization's general operations so that it can meet UWTYR expectations of anchor agencies, contribute to strengthening the sector, and deliver high impact programs. Annual objectives will be set by the organization and approved by UWTYR and the agency will report on the use of these funds.

Program Costs

Service Delivery Agencies must apply for at least one program and may apply for up to 5 programs that align with categories of the UWTYR CSS Program Framework. As a guide, the average support per program is between \$50,000 -

\$60,000. Agencies intending to request support of more than \$200,000 per program must have prior approval from a UWTYR staff person. Up to 20% of program funding may be applied to program administrative costs.

Sector Serving Agencies are not required to apply for a program under the UWTYR CSS Program Framework but may apply for 1 – 3 programs.

Process and Timing:

Organizations will complete and submit an Expression of Interest application online. Those meeting the basic criteria will be invited to submit a full application by the end of June 2016. Decisions will be announced early in 2017.

4.2 Program Funding Stream

What: Multi-year (3 year) renewable funding for high-impact programs that align with UWTYR's CSS Program Framework

Purpose: To support a broad array of programs, services and initiatives across the City of Toronto and York Region that are responsive to community needs

Eligible Organizations:

This funding is open to all social service organizations with charitable status providing services in Toronto and/or York Region. Please see UWTYR CSS Eligibility Guidelines for more details.

Agencies funded under the Anchor Funding Stream will not be eligible to apply under this stream.

Use of Funding:

Agencies may apply for 1 – 3 programs that align with categories of the UWTYR CSS Program Framework. As a guide, the average support per program is between \$50,000 - \$60,000. Agencies intending to request support of more than \$200,000 per program must speak to a UWTYR staff person before submitting. Up to 20% of program funding may be applied to program administrative costs.

Process and Timing:

An open RFP will be announced in Winter 2017. Interested organizations will complete a pre-screening application online and those approved at that stage will be invited to submit a full application. Successful organizations will be notified in Winter of 2018.

4.3 Project Funding Stream

What: Short-term (1-3 year) funding for innovative and emerging programs, services and initiatives

Purpose: To support innovative responses to new and emerging issues

Eligible Organizations:

All social service organizations with charitable status providing services in Toronto and York Region

Process and Timing:

Details are under development. This stream will be launched in 2018.

5. Summary of Dates

Anchor Funding Stream

Phase 1 – Expression of Interest application due: March 15 2016

Agencies informed about expression of interest: May, 2016

Phase 2 – Full applications due: June, 2016

Announcements: February 2017

Program Funding Stream

Call for proposals: Winter 2017

Applications due: Spring 2017

Announcements: Winter 2018



United Way
Toronto & York Region

Community Services Sector Strategy Program Framework for Anchor and Program Funding Streams January 2016

Poverty Focus

All program applications will be assessed for their ability to demonstrate how they reach and serve people who are in, or are at risk of falling into, poverty or how they address the underlying causes of poverty through a systems approach.

While there is no official measure of poverty in Canada, we define a state of poverty as one in which income is too low to provide for an adequate standard of living.¹ However, we know that poverty is about more than income. Poverty is also about exclusion from resources, opportunities, and connections. Therefore, for United Way Toronto & York Region (UWTYR) poverty is not about an income-test or an income cut-off line. Instead, it is about ensuring a focus on organizations and programs that mitigate the effects of poverty, and/or help people and communities move out of poverty, and/or address the underlying causes of poverty.

Programs may demonstrate that they focus on poverty in some of the following ways:

Target population or constituency

- Provide research or reports that link the target group they are serving (or in the case of a sector serving organization, the constituent group) with a significant incidence of poverty (this could be based on a population, a geographic area) and/or;
- Provide information about the incidence of poverty among the people they serve.

Program design and impact

- Provide information about how the program is designed to reach people living in poverty and/or;
- Provide information about the impact of the program on mitigating the effects of poverty or helping people move out of poverty and/or;
- Provide information about how systems or social change has or will positively impact those living in poverty.

¹ UWTYR uses the after-tax LIM50 as a measure of low income. Low income measures (LIMs) are relative measures of low income, set at 50% of adjusted median household income. These measures are categorized according to the number of persons present in the household, reflecting the economies of scale inherent in household size. In 2010, median household income in Toronto was \$58,381.

All programs will be assessed for their ability to demonstrate clear impact. Where the program has already been in operation, the organization will provide information about the results of their program to-date and where the program is new, the organization will not provide this in the application but will be expected to report on results.

Use of Funding

In all cases, the applicant will be asked to identify the anticipated overall impact of the program as well as the impact of UWTYR funding. We understand that our funding may be used to leverage other funding and in these cases, the applicant will be asked to identify the impact of UWTYR funds and report on these impacts.

What is a program?

Our working definition of programs is a group of clear, related, complementary activities that are intended to achieve a desired outcome among the target group(s). In the community services sector, the scale of a program can vary. A program may deliver a specific service (e.g., an after-school program for school-aged children) or a broader collection of related services (e.g., an employment program that provides wrap-around supports).

However, for the purposes of the CSS strategy, an applicant should not submit an application that is:

- too narrowly focused on only one activity of a program (e.g., providing transportation supports, when those transportation supports are actually part of a broader community-connection program for seniors).
- so broadly defined that it is difficult to understand the relationship between the activities, target population and intended outcomes (e.g., identifying all youth-related activities as one program, even though they are actually distinct programs with different activities and intended outcomes).

Choosing a Program Area

Organizations must choose one area of the program framework for each program submitted. UWTYR understands that a program may have several objectives and may fit under more than one of the following program areas. Organizations should consider the following when selecting the thematic area most suited to the program submitted:

- Choose the area that most clearly aligns with the primary focus of your program;
- Organizations will be required to report on the results of the program in relation to the objectives identified, so your agency should ensure that reporting will be able to address the primary objectives presented for the program.

Program Focus Areas

1. Early Learning and Parenting

These programs are designed to promote social interaction and learning opportunities for children ages 0 – 4² years who are experiencing poverty, as well as providing supports, information and resources for parents and caregivers. The emphasis will be on programs in group or community settings. Programs will help give children living in poverty opportunities early in life that will provide a foundation for success in school and in the community.

2. Enrichment and Skill-building Programs for Middle Years

These programs are designed to help children ages 5-12 years to: develop skills and confidence; promote positive social interactions and relationships with their peers and the adults in their lives; and lead to greater success in school. Programs may also provide support to parents to enable their children's success.

3. Youth development

These programs are designed for youth ages 13-24 years to: support positive interactions and meaningful relationships with peers and adults at home, in school and in the neighbourhood; promote meaningful participation in, and contributions to, community; promote leadership opportunities; encourage and support youth to complete high school; and support youth to develop purpose and aspirations for their futures. Programs will take a positive youth development approach (PYD).³

Exclusions:

- Programs funded through UWTYR Youth Success Strategy

4. Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

These programs provide supports to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to ameliorate the conditions of homelessness as well as helping people transition to housing or to maintain housing. These programs may help people find and maintain housing; increase social supports, access temporary shelter or housing; access food; or develop skills.

² Age ranges are a guide for applicants. Populations served by a program may include those just above or below the age ranges identified.

³ PYD is a theoretical framework that is defined by UWTYR as an approach that includes:

- Focus on the development of youth assets (e.g., commitment to learning) and not solely on the reduction of problem behaviours (e.g. school dropouts);
- Seeing the potential in *all* youth and including youth in decision-making and program design; and
- Consideration of the multiple contexts in which youth live (e.g., family, school, work, faith communities).

5. Employment and financial security

These programs support access to income support programs as well as promoting employability, skills building and networking opportunities to assist people experiencing poverty to participate in the labour market. Pre-employment programs are eligible for populations that face significant barriers to the workforce. Additionally, programs in this area may offer other supports to promote employability and/or financial security.

Exclusions:

- Programs funded through UWTYR Youth Success Strategy

6. Counselling and Mental Health for Individuals and Families

These programs offer support to individuals and families experiencing poverty to: handle life's challenges or mitigate the effect of mental health and/or addictions challenges in their lives.

Counselling and support

These programs have intensive and often ongoing contact with participants delivered by trained staff. These programs often use more intensive and structured forms of outcome measurement as well. Programs will also offer intervention or assist people to navigate the health and social service system to get supports.

Group and community programs

These programs have intentional goals to reduce harm, assist with transition, or provide peer and community support that will help people develop or sustain relationships and supports in order to develop and maintain coping and life skills needed to participate fully in their community.

7. Programs to support people to live independently

These programs offer interventions and support to assist people with physical or cognitive challenges to live independently and to cope with challenges they face to maintaining independence in their homes or to participating fully in their communities.

8. Community Building and Connections

These programs and initiatives provide opportunities for individuals and families to connect with each other, with the broader community and with services and programs they may need to mitigate the effects of poverty or find their way out of poverty. Programs promote opportunities to engage people in their communities and reduce social isolation; help people navigate access to resources; promoting culturally competent programming as well as increasing understanding among cultures.

Community building: Programs enable low-income people to form bonds and networks with one another, promote diversity and inclusion, reduce social isolation, and develop their potential. These programs may support individuals to connect with each other or promote broader connection to a community. Programs will identify strengths and leverage the knowledge, skills and experience of participants to enable greater connections.

Service access: These programs will enable people to gain access to services and supports that they would not have been able to access on their own. These programs seek to address barriers of equity seeking groups and individuals in order to effectively connect people to needed supports.

9. Programs to address domestic violence

These programs assist people who are experiencing domestic violence or who are fleeing violence. Programs offer crisis support, opportunities to heal from the trauma of violence, and support to access resources and services needed to live free from violence or to reduce the risk of violence.

10. Social and Systems Change

These programs and initiatives seek to create change at the community, sector, institutional and/or public policy level. Programs may use community building or connections as a part of the process but their end goals will focus on broader system, institutional or policy changes.

Community development initiatives will focus on enhancing or building the capacity of community members to participate in social change efforts and may:

- bring individuals together to influence their local communities
- support community planning
- build local leadership to voice issues of concern
- test innovative solutions to community issues
- promote social and community engagement for the purpose of affecting institutional or policy change

Research and public policy initiatives may focus on:

- identifying and researching social and/or policy issues
- providing policy analysis, development and/or advocacy
- strengthening community-based policy activities
- engaging constituents (organizations or individuals affected by poverty) in research, policy and advocacy work

Sector-level initiatives may focus on:

- strengthening collaboration between organizations and networks on key community services sector issues

Change starts here.

United Way Toronto
Strategic Plan



United Wa
Toronto

Our mission

United Way Toronto works to meet urgent human needs and improve social conditions by mobilizing the community's volunteer and financial resources in a common cause of caring.

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Message from the Chair and CEO

Change starts here.

United Way Toronto has always worked to improve lives by creating the opportunities people need to build a better future for themselves and their families. Throughout the years, we've made a real difference by supporting a variety of services that people turn to when they need help: assistance in finding a job, a safe place to play after school, support settling into a new life in a new city.

But times are changing.

The challenges facing our city today are increasingly complex. Meeting immediate needs and focusing on short-term solutions alone isn't enough. And today's donors expect the charities they support to be more innovative and deliver better results than ever before.

A decade ago, we resolved to modernize the way we work by adopting a community impact approach. We began to leverage our greatest assets—the donors who support our work and our network of community agencies—in more strategic ways. Our goal was to improve the accessibility and coordination of the services that improve lives. And we wanted to go even further, by expanding our efforts to address the root causes of our city's problems and create long-term change.

Together, we've made good progress. But we can't stand still. It's time to take another step forward.

Last year, we started a conversation with Torontonians about the role they want United Way to play in building a better city. These consultations confirmed that the issues United Way champion are essential to a thriving city: building strong communities; helping young people be all they can be; moving people from poverty to possibility. And that a strong, responsive community services sector is vital to meeting urgent needs and creating change over time.

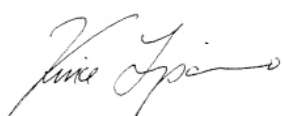
We heard that we're on the track—but that we need to do more. More to involve current donors and engage new supporters in meaningful ways. More to ensure the services people rely on are accessible when and where they're needed most.

More to get ahead of issues and address the reasons why people are in vulnerable situations. More to close the gaps that threaten to divide our city. More to bring people together in a common cause and build a united city.

Our new strategic plan builds on a solid foundation laid over the past ten years and confirms our commitment to do more. It provides clarity of focus about our priorities and a renewed sense of purpose in how we approach our work. In many ways, this plan is a logical next step in an ongoing evolution toward maximizing our impact on the communities we serve.

It's also a declaration. We will work to become more nimble and better able to respond to emerging priorities. A commitment to innovation will be embedded in everything we do, and we will challenge both our partners and ourselves to find new and better ways of working. We will set clear objectives, base our strategies on solid research, and foster partnerships across all sectors to build momentum for change. We will work to ensure the success and sustainability of the community-serving sector that so many people rely on. We will continue to build awareness and understanding of key issues facing our city. And as we drive greater impact in the community, so too will we work to make our own internal operations more efficient and effective.

Our new strategic plan will strengthen United Way's capacity for making lasting, measurable improvements in both individual well-being and in community-wide social conditions. Ultimately, our goal remains the same. We will continue to create the opportunities people need for a better future. And we will continue to bring people together from all walks of life to build a stronger city—because we believe that no one organization can create a better future by working alone. We look forward to working with you as we take the next steps together on this journey.



Vince Timpano
Chair, Board of Trustees



Susan McIsaac
President & CEO

The role of United Way in building a better city

What we do:

Our focus areas and community impact priorities

Like all United Ways across Canada, we focus our efforts on three main building blocks that are essential for our community to thrive:

Focus areas

- **Building strong communities**—We empower individuals and promote wellbeing through a variety of community services—and ensure that people have access to supports, no matter where they live.
- **Helping kids be all they can be** — We help to put kids on the path to success by investing in their development from early childhood to young adulthood—giving all young people the opportunities they need to thrive.
- **Moving people from poverty to possibility**—We support people living in poverty through services that create opportunities to build a better life.



Community impact priorities

In our new strategic plan, we're committing ourselves to strengthening these building blocks in three significant ways:

- A city-wide strategy for supporting community services so that Torontonians in every neighbourhood have access to the services and supports they need to build a better life (Priority 1, Page 8).
- A place-based strategy for ensuring that residents in the inner suburbs have access to the same opportunities to succeed. (Priority 2, Page 10).
- A strategy that gives young people a chance to achieve economic security through opportunities that support education, employment, and engagement (Priority 3, Page 12).

Embedded throughout these strategies is our commitment to ensuring newcomers have the opportunities they need to build a good life in their new country.



Community consultations: What we heard and what we learned

United Way began the process of developing a new strategic plan by reaching out to those who know our work best.

More than 1,900 people from community agencies, residents, community partners, funders, donors, and policy makers from all three levels of government told us what role they want United Way to play in building a better city.

Our process for developing United Way Toronto's new strategic plan included an extensive analysis of trends impacting our city, our sector, and our organization. And we commissioned research into key areas. We looked at the effectiveness of different funding models; we prepared a fundraising competitiveness analysis, and we conducted evidence-based reviews related to our priority areas.

Here's what we learned about our overall work.

Key Themes

Need in Toronto is rising.

- Our consultations with residents and agencies confirmed that the services provided by United Way funded agencies have rarely been in greater demand.
- Precarious employment is a reality for almost half of working adults in the Toronto region—and it's even worse for young people.

The community sector is experiencing instability.

- Shift to project funding by many funders means very limited sources of support for core functions, such as building agency capacity.
- Fiscal austerity has led to reduced government support at the same time that needs are rising.

The fundraising sector is under pressure.

- Our ability to raise dollars has slowed down with the economy.
- We are operating in an increasingly sophisticated and competitive fundraising environment.



Donor expectations are changing.

- Donors demand more line-of-sight between the dollars they give and tangible results.
- There is increased interest in targeted giving to specific themes and initiatives.
- In addition to dollars, there is a growing desire to diversify giving through in-kind expertise and volunteerism.

United Way is a trusted and respected organization.

- United Way has a positive reputation among residents, agencies and donors in terms of our effectiveness, expertise and ability to deliver impact.
- All levels of government identify United Way as a valued senior partner.

The community sector is resilient.

- Community agencies are adept at being nimble, leveraging resources and keeping up with changing needs through difficult times.
- There are excellent examples of innovation in action among community agencies.

Together, we are making a difference.

- United Way's shift to a community impact approach has driven tangible results. Over the past years we have expanded opportunities for residents in the inner suburbs, grown the capacity of the community-based sector, and built new approaches to youth leadership and engagement.

Priority 1: Support a strong, responsive community services sector

What we heard and what we learned:

- Persistent poverty is a serious issue that is driving demand for services in mental health, family violence, and food accessibility, among others.
- We must evolve our investment approach in the sector in order to address the growing complexity of social needs in our city as well as fundraising pressures that demand a growing ability to measure and communicate impact.
- United Way and its funded agencies now have an opportunity to build on a great legacy of service to develop a stronger capacity to collaborate, coordinate and measure impact as part of increasing our effectiveness in meeting the needs of local residents.

Our vision for a strong, responsive community services sector

Toronto is a city united by strong community services: We want every person in every community to have the services and supports that they need to build a better life.

The role of United Way

We will support a network of community organizations that work together to support people who live in poverty and to improve social condition across our city. We will prioritize our support to agencies serving populations facing barriers caused by poverty, social and economic inequity, direct and indirect discrimination and geographic disparities, newcomer status, among other factors.



Desired results: The change we want to see

1. A stronger network of community services to help people build a better life.

Actions:

- Transition to new investment models that ensure a diverse, dynamic portfolio of community partners — so that our investments continue to change and evolve over time in order to achieve our goals.
- Change our approach to working with partners in the community so that we can better capture the reach and scale of activities supported by the new investment models.

2. Strengthened community organizations that are responsive, sustainable, and effective.

Actions:

- Work with other funders and community agencies to provide capacity building supports that strengthen organizational effectiveness, innovation, and responsiveness.
- Support evaluation approaches to better capture the impact of the community services sector.

3. A stronger network of community sector-serving organizations that are able to raise public awareness about our collective role in building a better city for everyone.

Actions:

- Support planning, research and evaluation activities related to key social/policy issues affecting the sector.
- Invest in collaborations/partnerships and organizations that focus on sector issues.
- Convene key stakeholders for knowledge sharing and partnerships to leverage greater impact and social/policy change.

Priority 2: Build strong neighbourhoods

What we heard and what we learned:

- There is widespread agreement that United Way should continue to place focused attention on specific neighbourhoods based on their level of need, especially in Toronto's inner suburbs.
- Life in many of Toronto's inner suburban neighbourhoods is drawing further away from life in the city's downtown core. Unless focused action is taken, almost 60% of Toronto's neighbourhoods are projected to drift towards low or very low income status in the next decade.
- There is a call for United Way and other funders to continue to build on and expand our successful place-based strategy into other areas of the city that require attention and to increase our attention to the root causes of poverty in these neighbourhoods.

Our vision for strong neighbourhoods in Toronto

Toronto is a city united by strong neighbourhoods: We want every resident in every neighbourhood to have the opportunity to succeed, no matter where they live.

The role of United Way

We will focus investment and mobilize action in support of residents in neighbourhoods most in need — neighbourhoods that face barriers due to poverty, social and economic inequity, direct and indirect discrimination, prevalence of newcomers, among other factors.



Desired results: The change we want to see

1. Increased resident leadership, so that local community residents have greater influence over decisions that affect their lives and to improve neighbourhood conditions.

Actions:

- Invest in building resident skills in collaboration and community organizing, and increase opportunities for residents to connect with one another.
- Support resident civic engagement and facilitate stronger connections to decision-makers.
- Support neighbourhood improvement through implementation of priority actions identified by residents.

2. Stronger social infrastructure to support the health and wellbeing of residents.

Actions:

- Fund and support integrated and accessible services that are responsive to the needs of residents.
- Increase the amount of community space that is accessible to residents.
- Work with community agencies to support their capacity for engaging local residents in program design, delivery, and decision making.

3. Increased public awareness about strong neighbourhoods and change public policy leading to long-term, transformational change in neighbourhoods.

Actions:

- Champion a place-based approach among policy makers, funders and donors, and community organizations for targeting efforts where they're needed most.
- Collaborate with other key stakeholders to influence policies related to place-based interventions.

Priority 3: Create youth success

What we heard and what we learned:

- In our consultations, creating youth success was one of the most consistently mentioned areas for United Way's attention, particularly our Youth Challenge Fund partnership.
- Of the many areas of concern for youth success, economic opportunities remain top of mind for Torontonians as youth unemployment has been on the rise for more than a decade in the city, up more than 50% since 2001.
- Driving economic opportunities and continuing to build youth leadership to influence decisions over programs and policies that have an impact on their own lives need to be a focus of United Way's work over the next five years.

Our vision for creating youth success

Toronto is a city united for youth success: We want every young person to achieve economic security through education, employment and engagement.

The role of United Way

We will create opportunities for youth by targeting the barriers that can prevent young people from succeeding. Barriers include poverty, social and economic inequity, direct and indirect discrimination and geographic disparities, newcomer status, among other factors.



Desired results: The change we want to see

1. Enhanced employability and life-long earning potential to improve economic security for youth facing multiple barriers.

Actions:

- Invest in the design and implementation of a major initiative to improve employability for targeted groups of youth facing multiple barriers.
- Provide a mix of project funding and general operating support to youth serving and youth-led organizations to provide a diverse portfolio of relevant youth programming.

2. Increased youth leadership and engagement in the design and delivery of programs, services and policies that impact their lives.

Actions:

- Enhance the capacity of youth-serving and youth-led organizations to adopt and apply a positive youth development approach.
- Increase capacity of youth to engage with and influence social/policy change.

3. Growing public awareness and change in public policy and practice leading to long-term transformational change in the systems influencing youth economic security.

Actions:

- Collaborate with key stakeholders (including youth and other funders) to influence key policies and practices related to youth economic security and/or positive youth development.

Enabling a strong organization

Our Community Impact approach is geared to the achievement of lasting, measurable improvements in the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. We will enable our ability to deliver impact in the community by focussing on three organizational priorities:

1. We will take action to increase the relevance of United Way among key stakeholder groups
2. We will focus on ensuring the sustainable growth of revenues and volunteer resources, and,
3. We will invest in our internal capacity to deliver and sustain impact in our community priority areas



Our organizational priorities in action

Research: Acting on a solid base of evidence

We will invest in research and consultation initiatives to better understand trends that impact life here in Toronto and how these inform our long-term community investment strategy. To ensure we can grow and evolve strong fundraising strategies, we will build on our market research capacity to allow us to better understand, engage and respond to new and existing supporters of our work.

Strategy: Being purposeful about long-term change

Driving towards an impact approach requires that we become more purposeful, deliberate and strategic in all that we do as an organization. To increase our strategic focus we have restructured to drive further integration and collaboration across every part of our organization. We will ensure we have the ability to be nimble and responsive so that we can address emerging challenges within our priority areas. We will find new approaches to success through investments in innovation and piloting of new approaches. We will ensure that we have a strong operational environment through effective business processes and technology solutions.

Investment: Growing our support so we can grow our impact

We will invest donor dollars in smart strategies and impactful agencies that make a real difference in people's lives. To support long-term, measurable progress in our community priorities, we will ensure sustainable growth of revenues and volunteer resources. This includes strengthening our communications and marketing capacity to grow awareness of our work in the community. We will also grow our ability to deliver donor customization and responsiveness, strengthen donor stewardship and recognition opportunities, and investing in strategies that target new and emerging donor segments. We will also ensure financial, reporting and management information systems are in place to effectively manage our resources.

Partnerships: Building a strong city by working together

We will actively develop partnerships with governments, the private sector and community organizations—while deepening our collaborations with agencies and donors with a focus on growing our impact. This will include expanding engagement opportunities for volunteers in our work.

Evaluation: Setting goals and tracking progress

We will work with partners and our community to set goals, then measure ourselves against those outcomes and make course corrections as necessary to ensure we're on the right track.

Advocacy: Opening doors for sustainable change

Many of the issues that contribute to social problems and community vulnerability are systemic—meaning they involve broad economic, social and political trends. We will work to improve the public's understanding of our role and the role of others in resolving these issues and we will seek to engage policy-makers in common cause.





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