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## 2018 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

### Closing the Service Gap & Addressing Poverty in the Downtown East Area

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#### Background:

- On December 5, 2017 City Council adopted motion MM 37.15 to address the service gap in the Downtown East Revitalization Area. Council requested City staff to identify resources required to address current challenges and report to Budget Committee with a funding request. Council also directed City staff to establish an expert staff team to respond to the immediate crisis and a comprehensive 5-year plan.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.MM35.17>
- The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) places great emphasis on the need to better coordinate and integrate health and social services and programs. Doing so would allow crisis responses to be delivered more expediently, and would coalesce individual programs into a strategic and concerted effort to provide low-income residents the required wrap-around supports.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX9.5>

*Action 4.4 - Integrate health system and mental health services with other City programs and services in accessible community locations.*

*Action 14.1 - Stabilize funding for community based organizations.*

*Action 14.3 - Coordinate seamless care and support among hospitals, the child welfare system, correction and mental health facilities and City services.*

#### The Downtown East Area

- The Downtown East Area is bounded by Bloor Street on the north, Front Street on the south, Yonge Street on the west, and the Don Valley Parkway on the east. It is home to approximately 115, 255 Torontonians, about 4.2% of the city's population. The area covers approximately seven square kilometres, in comparison to the city as a whole which covers 630.2 square kilometres.<sup>i</sup>
- Three of the ten poorest census tracts in the city are within the Downtown East Area. Low income prevalence rates for adults (15-64 years of age) in these areas range from 44%-51%, whereas the overall average for the city is 20%<sup>ii</sup>. (See Attachment A.)
- Although the Downtown East Area is home to only 4.2% of the population, 8.4% of 211-listed community services in Toronto are in the area.<sup>iii</sup> (See Attachment B.)

- Given the concentration and city-wide reach of many of the services in the Downtown East Area, it is not only the local population who are served by them.

### **The Opioid Crisis**

- Between 2013 and 2017, there has been a 33% increase in the number of accidental opioid toxicity deaths.<sup>iv</sup>
- The number of Emergency Department visits for opioid overdoses increased from 47 in July 2015 to 163 in June 2017.<sup>v</sup>
- From August 7, 2017 to January 7, 2018, Toronto Paramedic Services received a total of 1,422 calls for suspected opioid overdoses, including 94 fatalities and 1,328 non-fatal cases. Thirty percent of these calls were in the Downtown East Area.<sup>vi</sup> (See Attachment C.)

### **Other Health Issues**

- A report by the Toronto Central Local Health Integrated Network indicates that in 2015/16 there were 1,306 mental health and addictions (MHA) visits by Moss Park residents with a total of 582 patients (those who had a valid health card number). The report also found that Moss Park had highest rate of visits to Emergency Departments for mental health and addictions conditions in the mid-east Toronto sub-region (99.5/1,000) and was 2.5 times the rate of mid-east Toronto (40.1/1,000). Three quarters (75%) of MHA Emergency Department visits were discharged home with no supports, with only 3% being discharged with supports and 13% being admitted.<sup>vii</sup>
- A Community Assessment conducted by Toronto Public Health (TPH) found that the 519 Community Centre has identified that critical health needs of very marginalized people, especially those experiencing chronic homelessness, are not being met. The Assessment also found that with the exception of population specific organizations (e.g. AIDS Committee of Toronto), there is no comprehensive harm reduction program in the Church and Wellesley area and minimal harm reduction street outreach.

### **Community Safety and Well-being**

- In 2017, the City of Toronto's Community Crisis Response Program responded to 604 violent critical incidents, 64 of which were within the Downtown East boundaries of the 51 Division of Toronto Police Service. This is a 53% increase over the same area in 2016.
- In 2017, the FOCUS Toronto Downtown East Situation Table responded to 179 situations of acutely elevated risk experienced by families and individuals, which was 40-53% greater than the number of situations to which Tables working in other parts of the city responded. Mental health issues, housing insecurity, addiction and victimization were among the top risk factors.

- The Community Assessment conducted by Toronto Public Health (TPH) found that residents in the Church and Wellesley area report feeling unsafe as a result of drug use, trafficking and related behaviours.

### **Homelessness, Shelter Demand and Social Housing**

- In Wards 27 and 28, in which the Downtown East Area is located, there are 18 shelters which serve 1885 people. This represents 32% of all the shelter capacity in the city. Half of all of the men's shelter beds are in these wards.
- In 2017, approximately 19,000 individuals relied on the shelter system. Representing approximately 70% of all shelter users in the city, 13,500 individuals relied on the 18 shelters in Wards 27 and 28.
- In Wards 27 and 28, there are 5,300 social housing units, with 55% of the tenants receiving rent geared-to-income assistance. This represents approximately 20% of the social housing units in the city.
- In Wards 27 and 28, there are 10,000 Toronto Community Housing units with 83% of the tenants receiving rent geared-to-income assistance. This represents approximately 17% of the Toronto Community Housing units in the city.

### **City Initiatives**

- A number of initiatives have been undertaken in the area, including the Downtown East Revitalization, the Moss Park Redevelopment, Regent Park Revitalization, George Street Revitalization and TO Core.
- Through the Tenants First Project and Homes for Good program, it is proposed that 22 TCHC rooming houses, comprising 204 units be converted to supportive housing. All but seven of these units are in the Downtown East Area. It is expected this transformation will impact over 200 people, improving their housing stability and well-being.
- Toronto Public Health opened a Supervised Injection Site at 277 Victoria Street in August, 2017. Currently, it has an average of 60 visits a day. Additionally, TPH has trained over 1600 City and agency staff on overdose prevention and treatment. Thirty agencies have been contracted to distribute naloxone directly to their clients. Through the Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF), TPH funds: five harm reduction projects, seven HIV prevention projects and four child and youth resiliency projects in the Downtown East Area.
- The Shelter, Support and Housing division funds 53 projects related to housing and homelessness in Wards 27 and 28, representing approximately 25% of all SSHA grants to community agencies.
- In 2017, the Social Development, Finance and Administration division provided \$3.6 million in funding to 47 groups and organizations based in Wards 27 and 28. Nearly \$3 million of

this funding was provided through the Community Services Partnership grants stream, which provides on-going support to 30 agencies in Wards 27 and 28. The remaining funding was provided through short-term grants, including Community Projects and Events, Neighbourhood Grants Program and the Community Crisis Response Fund.

### **Twelve Month and Five Year Plans**

- Council has directed the establishment of a dedicated staff team, within existing resources, to respond to immediate community crises in the Downtown East Area. This team, now in place and housed in the Social Development, Finance and Administration division, is working with community agencies and other local service providers to address urgent concerns relating to violence, homelessness, addiction and mental health issues.
- Council has directed the Deputy City Manager, Cluster A to develop a 5-year plan to coordinate City services and programs and develop a comprehensive plan to holistically address the long-term community needs. This report will be submitted in Q2 of 2018.

### **Key Points:**

- Given the concentration of need, significant City and community services for Torontonians experiencing homelessness, poverty, addictions, mental health issues and other vulnerabilities exist in the Downtown East Area. Attachment B provides a map of services delivered both by the City and community agencies in the Downtown East Area that are primarily targeted to residents with low-income and other vulnerabilities.
- Despite the concentration of services in the Downtown East Area community agencies, advocates and residents, as well City and agency staff, report that there are unmet needs related to: addictions, mental health, primary health, community safety and well-being, housing and shelter. City and community service providers report that in addition to the abject poverty in the Downtown East Area, the complexity of the needs of many Torontonians accessing services in the Downtown East Area is great. Many people are not only experiencing poverty, but also mental health and addictions issues.
- No resources have been specifically allocated for service coordination. The need for improved service coordination, with a multi-disciplinary approach that fosters collaboration and communication among City and community service providers and the LHIN has been identified as an urgent priority.
- There are three Budget proposals that have already been submitted, through the Budget process, for Budget Committee consideration that can contribute to addressing the crises in the Downtown East Area. Firstly, the Toronto Urban Health Fund budget requests can support increased harm reduction programming. Secondly, the requested Community Services Partnership funding increase can increase resources directed to community organizations active in the Downtown East Area.

- Additionally, a short-term Budget proposal is being made in conjunction with this Briefing Note, at the request of Council. As noted in Table 1 and Table 2 (below) the proposal requests temporary funding for a 12 month period. The proposal puts an emphasis on improving service coordination. It also recommends that staff be directed to request emergency funding from the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network to fund harm reduction programming. A forthcoming report to the Community Development and Recreation Committee will address the need for longer-term improved planning, funding and coordination with the LHINs.
- To help improve service coordination, as noted in Table One below, 1 new temporary Service Coordinator position will be required for \$0.084 million gross and net in 2018, with an additional \$0.042 million gross and net in 2019. In addition, as noted in Table Two, funding for 2 temporary positions for enhanced harm reduction for \$0.095 million gross and \$0 net in 2018, with an additional \$0.095 million gross and \$0 net in 2019, will be requested from the Toronto Central Local Integration Network for the 12 month period.
- The 5-year Plan regarding the service gap in the Downtown East Revitalization Area that will be submitted in Q2 of 2018 may include additional budget considerations. Additionally, at Council direction, a Budget Briefing Note has also been submitted regarding the budget required to add 1,000 new shelter beds and to maintain the respite and warming centres past their scheduled closures on April 15, 2018.

**Table One – Funding request to Budget Committee**

<b>Service Coordination</b>	<b>2018 Cost</b>	<b>2019 Cost</b>
One FTE	\$77, 425	\$38, 713
Materials and supplies	\$6,600	\$3,400
<b>TOTAL request to Budget Committee</b>	<b>\$84,025</b>	<b>\$42, 113</b>

**Table Two – Funding request to Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network**

<b>Enhanced Harm Reduction</b>	<b>2018 Cost</b>	<b>2019 Cost</b>
Two FTEs	\$90,402	\$90,402
Materials and supplies	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL request to Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network</b>	<b>\$95,402</b>	<b>\$95,402</b>

\*Service coordination funded for 2/3 of 2018 fiscal year. Enhanced harm reduction funded for ½ of 2018 fiscal year.

**ATTACHED:**

A - City of Toronto Prevalence of Adult Low Income

B - City of Toronto Low Income & 211 Service Locations

C - Suspected opioid overdose calls By Toronto Paramedic Services, Toronto

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**Prepared by:** Sarah Blackstock, Social Policy Manager, Social Development, Finance & Administration, 416-392-8291, [sarah.blackstock@toronto.ca](mailto:sarah.blackstock@toronto.ca).

**Further information:** Denise Campbell, Director of Social Policy, Analysis & Research, Social Development, Finance & Administration, 416-392-8614, [deniseandrea.campbell@toronto.ca](mailto:deniseandrea.campbell@toronto.ca).

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<sup>i</sup> Census 2016, Statistics Canada; Data collated by the Research unit, SDFa, City of Toronto on Jan 11, 2018.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> FindHelp Ontario 211 service listing database (April 2017). Calculations by the Research unit, SDFa, City of Toronto on Jan 11, 2018.

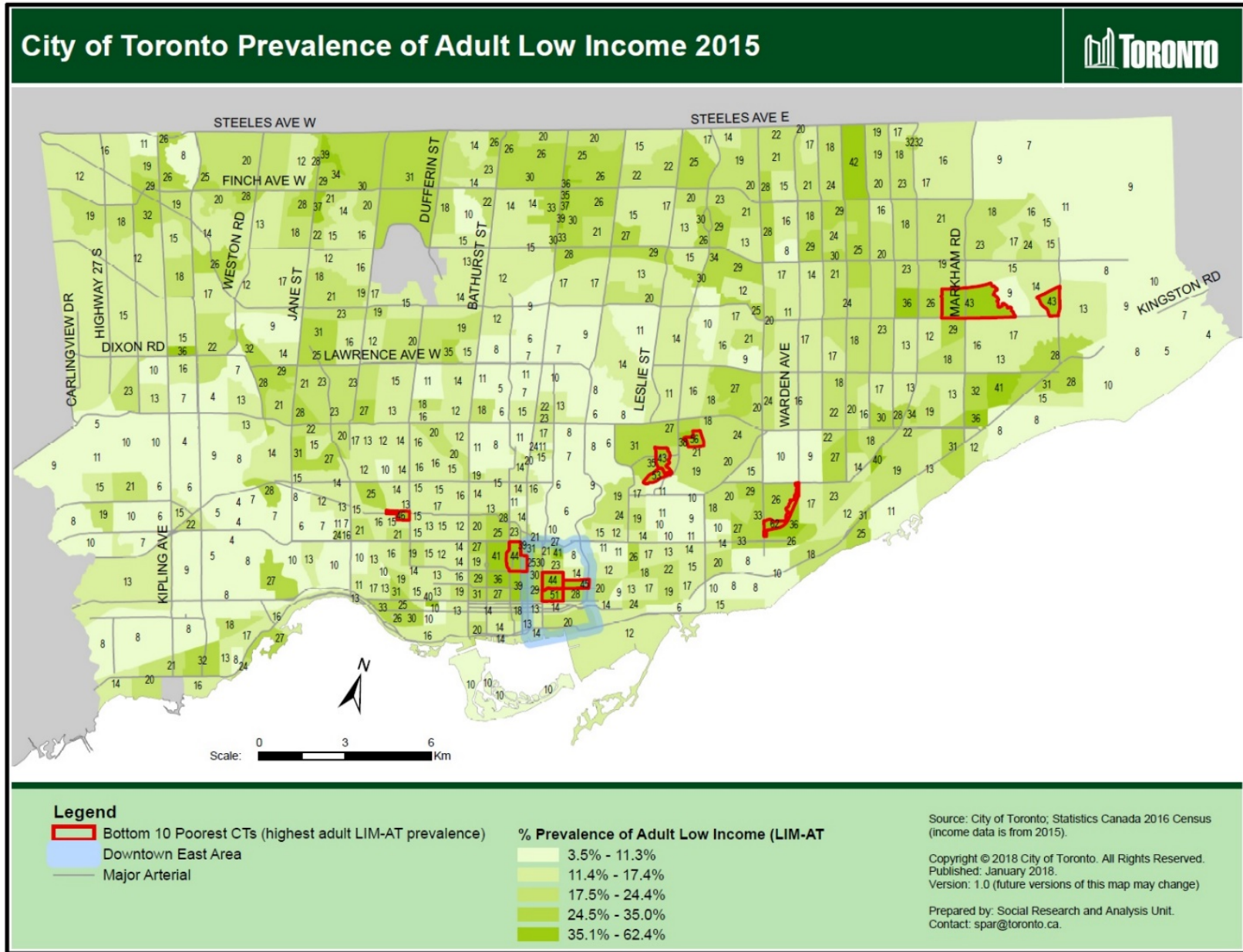
<sup>iv</sup> Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario. Number of Toxicity Deaths in Toronto – Accidental Manners of Death. 2013 to 2016. Received September 2017.

<sup>v</sup> National Ambulatory Care Reporting System, July 2015 to June 2017. Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO. Extracted November 2017.

<sup>vi</sup> Toronto Paramedic Services. Electronic Patient Care Record. August 7, 2017 to January 7, 2018. Extracted January 9, 2018.

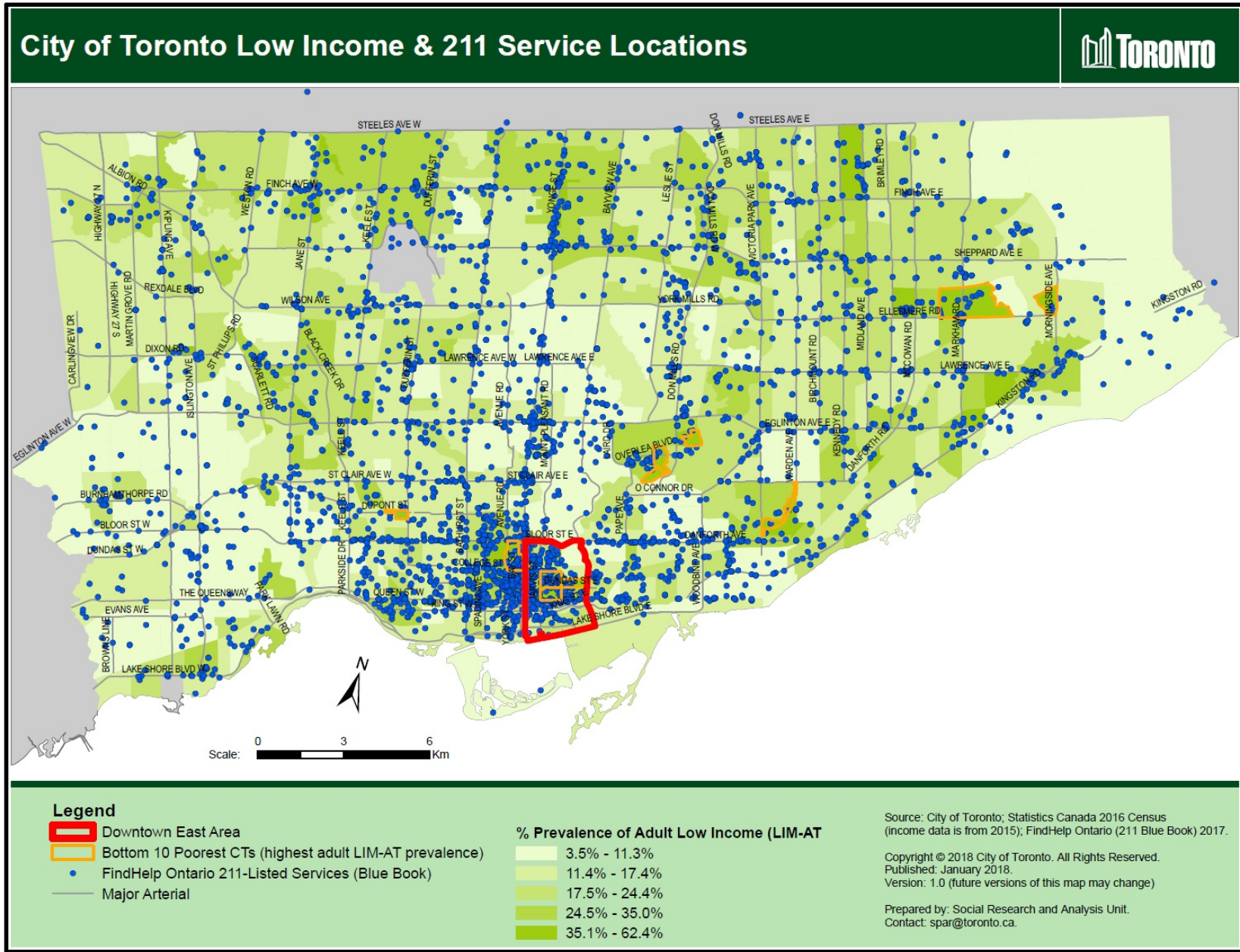
<sup>vii</sup> Toronto Central LHIN. Mid-East Toronto Local Collaborative Priority Area: Moss Park – Focus on Mental Health and Addictions. April 2017.

Attachment A





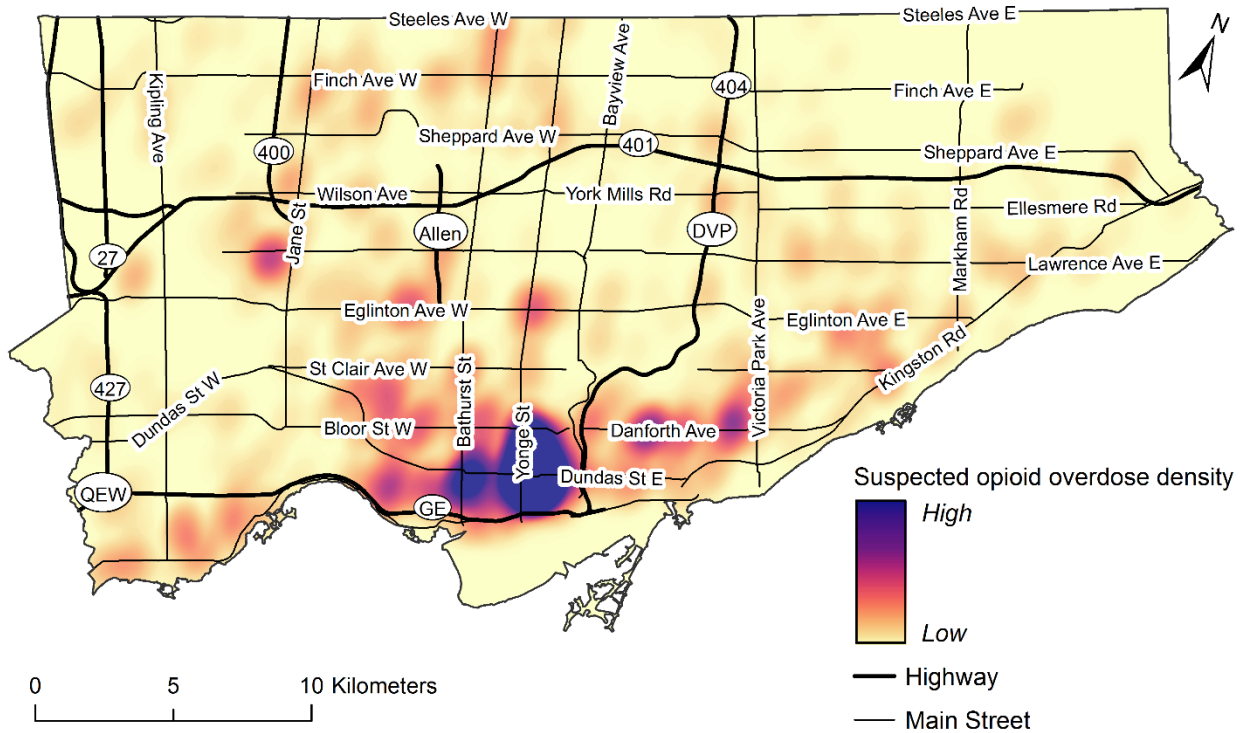
### Attachment B





### Attachment C

**Map of suspected opioid overdose calls received by Toronto Paramedic Services, Toronto, August 7, 2017 to January 7, 2018**



Source: Toronto Paramedic Services. Electronic Patient Care Record. August 7, 2017 to January 7, 2018. Extracted January 9, 2018.