



## REPORT FOR ACTION

## Toronto Public Health 2019 Operating Budget Enhancements: Creating Health Plus and Toronto Food Policy Council

**Date:** November 16, 2018

**To:** Board of Health

**From:** Medical Officer of Health

**Wards:** All

### SUMMARY

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Creating Health Plus is a partnership program to provide homeless and under-housed people regular and reliable access to fresh foods on a weekly basis at drop-ins in Toronto. The initiative evolved in response to research that identified considerable nutritional gaps in meals served at Toronto drop-ins. Toronto Public Health currently provides in-kind support to Creating Health Plus through participation on the Advisory Committee and provision of nutrition advice. Shelter, Support and Housing Administration provides \$330,000 to cover the cost of fruits, vegetables, milk, yoghurt and eggs provided to 29 drop-ins across the City. Over the past three years, Creating Health Plus has had a program manager, funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation although this funding ended on June 30, 2018. In June 2018, City of Toronto Council approved one-time funding of \$55.0 thousand to support continued project management of Creating Health Plus until December 31, 2018.

The Toronto Food Policy Council advises the Board of Health on issues relating to community food security and a healthy sustainable food system. Established in 1991, the Toronto Food Policy Council has undertaken multiple initiatives including Food by Ward asset mapping, which helped establish a network of food champions in diverse neighbourhoods across the city. The Toronto Food Policy Council currently does not have the resources to effectively engage and support this network or address emerging issues.

This report outlines the funding required in the Toronto Public Health 2019 operating budget to support these programs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health request City Council to consider increasing the 2019 Operating Budget of Toronto Public Health by \$55.0 thousand gross, \$13.75 thousand net to support project management of the Creating Health Plus partnership, which provides nutritious food to 29 drop-ins across the City of Toronto as part of the 2019 Budget process.
2. The Board of Health request City Council to consider increasing the 2019 Operating Budget of Toronto Public Health by \$30.0 thousand gross, \$7.5 thousand net for the Toronto Food Policy Council to support food champions across the City and to address emerging issues as part of the 2019 Budget process.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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Funding of \$0.055 million gross was originally provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and ended on June 30, 2018. This funding was not extended. Toronto Public Health provided one-time funding to support Creating Health Plus to conclude on December 31, 2018, as directed by City Council in HL27.4 "2018 Toronto Public Health Budget and Provincial Funding Enhancement for Cost-Shared Mandatory Programs and Services."

This report, requests that a total added pressure of \$0.085 million gross, \$0.021 million net be included within the 2019 Operating Budget to be considered by City Council approval in March/April of 2019 to support project management of the Creating Health Plus partnership and to support issues identified by the Toronto Food Policy Council.

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

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its meeting on November 13th, 2018 the Board of Health Budget Committee requested the Medical Officer of Health report to the Board of Health meeting on November 19, 2018 with additional information on enhanced funding for the Toronto Food Policy Council and Creating Health Plus.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getMinutesReport&meetingId=14330>

At its meeting in June 2018, City Council approved \$55,000 one-time funding, to support a part time coordinator for Creating Health Plus and thereby enable program continuity and stability.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2018/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-116422.pdf>

At its meeting on July 16th, 2018 the Board of Health requested the Medical Officer of Health to give consideration, as part of the 2019 budget submission for Toronto Public Health, to the allocation of additional annual project funding of \$30,000 to the Toronto Food Policy Council, starting in 2019.

[HL28.1 Toronto Food Policy Council 2017-2018 Annual Report](#)

## COMMENTS

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Creating Health Plus (CH+) is a partnership program between Toronto Public Health (TPH), Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC), North York Harvest Food Bank and Toronto Drop-In Network. The initiative evolved in response to research that identified considerable nutritional gaps in meals served at Toronto drop-ins. Drop-ins serve the City's most vulnerable people; many users are homeless or under-housed, have mental health or substance use issues, and/or are street-involved. For most clients the meals served at drop-ins are their primary and sometimes only source of food for the day. Creating Health Plus intervenes by providing regular and reliable access to fresh foods on a weekly basis including fruits, vegetables, milk, yoghurt and eggs.

Toronto Public Health currently provides in-kind support to CH+ through participation on an advisory committee and provision of nutrition advice. Shelter, Support and Housing Administration provides \$330,000 in financial support to cover the cost of food for 29 drop-ins across the city. Over the past three years, CH+ has benefitted from a dedicated program manager to coordinate this program across these drop-ins. This position was funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation although this funding ended on June 30, 2018. At its meeting in June 2018, City Council approved \$55,000 in one-time funding, to support a part-time coordinator for the program and thereby enable program continuity and stability. This report requests continuation of this funding to enable program sustainability.

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) is a 30 member council of food experts and advocates. Established in 1991, the TFPC advises the Board of Health on issues relating to community food security and a healthy sustainable food system, and is the community reference group for the Toronto Food Strategy. The TFPC has undertaken multiple initiatives including Food by Ward asset mapping, which helped establish a network of food champions in diverse neighbourhoods across the city. However, the TFPC currently does not have the resources to effectively engage and support this network.

In addition, there are growing demands on the City to address health, social, economic and environmental issues related to food security and food systems resilience, with corresponding increased demands on the TFPC. Despite this, the TFPC currently has fewer resources (staffing, administration and project) than at any other time in its history. This report requests \$30,000 additional funding for the TFPC to support food champions and to enable the council to address emerging issues.

## **CONTACT**

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Jann Houston, Director, Strategic Support, Toronto Public Health,  
Tel: 416-338-2074, Email: [jann.houston@toronto.ca](mailto:jann.houston@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Dr. Eileen de Villa  
Medical Officer of Health