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Attachments: [TORR Submission to City Council by TYRLC Oct 26 2020.pdf](#)

Attached is a submission from Toronto & York Region Labour Council for consideration by Toronto City Council on October 27 and 28, 2020. It concerns the report regarding “Towards Recovery and Building a Renewed Toronto” and expands on a submission sent last week to the Executive Committee.

Thank you,

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SUBMISSION TO TORONTO CITY COUNCIL
EX17.1 Towards Recovery and Building a Renewed Toronto

October 26, 2020

The Toronto & York Region Labour Council represents more than 220,000 women and men who work in every sector of Toronto's economy. Since the start of the pandemic, our Council and affiliates have been involved in ongoing and one-time actions and consultations to protect and support Toronto, our communities, and workers and labour.

As COVID-19 struck Canada, the City of Toronto worked hard to address the pandemic's health, social and economic consequences, with support from the federal government and some limited support from the province. Having taken the summer to consider the longer term process of recovery and creating a new and better normal, City Council now has for its consideration a set of recommendations from the Rafi-Mowat report and from the City Manager. Labour Council appreciates the opportunity to provide an initial response that hopefully helps shape a decision-making process focussing on the lived reality of residents in neighbourhoods across the city, not just Bay Street. We know many other Torontonians and organizations are providing similar responses. For maximum wellbeing of the City, we hope you act on our input.

Toronto began the COVID-19 pandemic with serious inequalities and fiscal challenges already in place. Toronto & York Region Labour Council calls for a plan that avoids a K-shaped recovery, so we can build back better for all, not just for a few. In a K-shaped recovery some parts of the economy see strong growth while others, and the people that participate in them, continue to decline.

COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities Report includes some valuable recommendations. Making them effective requires a plan, commitments, and ongoing engagement with Torontonians, especially those most affected by COVID.

Otherwise, a K-shaped recovery would increase income and racial disparities for many City residents, and especially place-based inequality, e.g., for Torontonians in the northwest part of the city, who have experienced COVID hot spots on top of racial and economic inequality. It would also ultimately harm the overall economy.

Here are some broad principles we call on Toronto City Council to use in your decision making:

- City Council and the Mayor should drive the recovery and rebuild process on an urgent and ongoing basis thereby remaining accountable for the City's decisions and action.
- Protect high quality public services. Our members, and most Torontonians, need services such as childcare, libraries and transit. Stabilize the care sector, maintain public transit under city control, and avoid use of alternative finance schemes.
- Effectively fund and push forward on already-approved strategies, and apply a climate lens in decisions in every department. Transform TO will help to ensure the recovery achieves climate goals and builds resiliency and equity.
- Use and expand existing regulatory powers. The City's social procurement policy, undertaken to deal with inequality and social impacts, provides a model for regulatory actions. The City should take a proactive approach in regulating the gig economy to address unequal impacts, building on the response to Airbnb and other short-term rentals. Regulating "ride sharing" and delivery apps, and the spread of temp agencies in various sectors, is essential to counter the growing racialization of poverty. A Living Wage policy should be applied to all care services, including childcare, longterm care and visiting homecare work.

- Put people first, particularly those facing racism and other forms of inequality – improve supports and benefits for workers, their families and their communities, and protect the health, safety and rights of workers.
- Continue government support for sectors that have been hit by COVID such as hospitality and culture, while allowing those sectors doing well to continue flourishing. For example, the development industry is doing well so there is no need to alter the development charge structure in their favour.
- Recognize the deepening crisis in affordable housing in the city, and undertake to develop alternatives that develop housing which is not subject to the speculative market, while expanding the potential of inclusionary zoning.
- Seek short-term provincial and federal funding and regulatory action during COVID and recovery phases and do so in a transparent way.
- Use revenue tools already at City’s disposal now, and resist any attempts to reduce Toronto’s revenue streams.
- Encourage and empower Toronto residents to mobilize together with the City for a new deal for cities, focusing on elected representatives at the provincial and federal level and their responsibility to ensure the financial integrity of Toronto in 2021 and beyond.

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