

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy 2019-2022 Action Plan

Update to Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

February 3, 2020

Poverty Reduction Strategy Office, SDFA

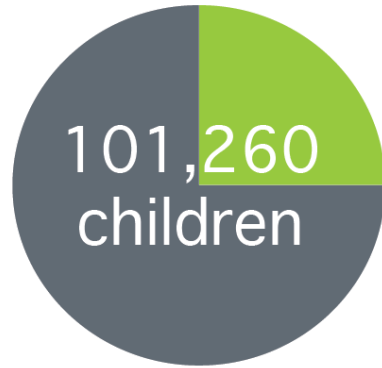


Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Office

- The Poverty Reduction Strategy Office (PRSO) is the main point of contact both within the City of Toronto and with external partners on poverty reduction related initiatives
- PRSO is housed in the City's Social Development, Finance & Administrative Division (SDFA), which functions as the City's lead social policy division on issues related to social inclusion and wellbeing

MANY TORONTONIANS LIVE IN **POVERTY**

25% of children
(14 and under)
in Toronto



374,530 Torontonians



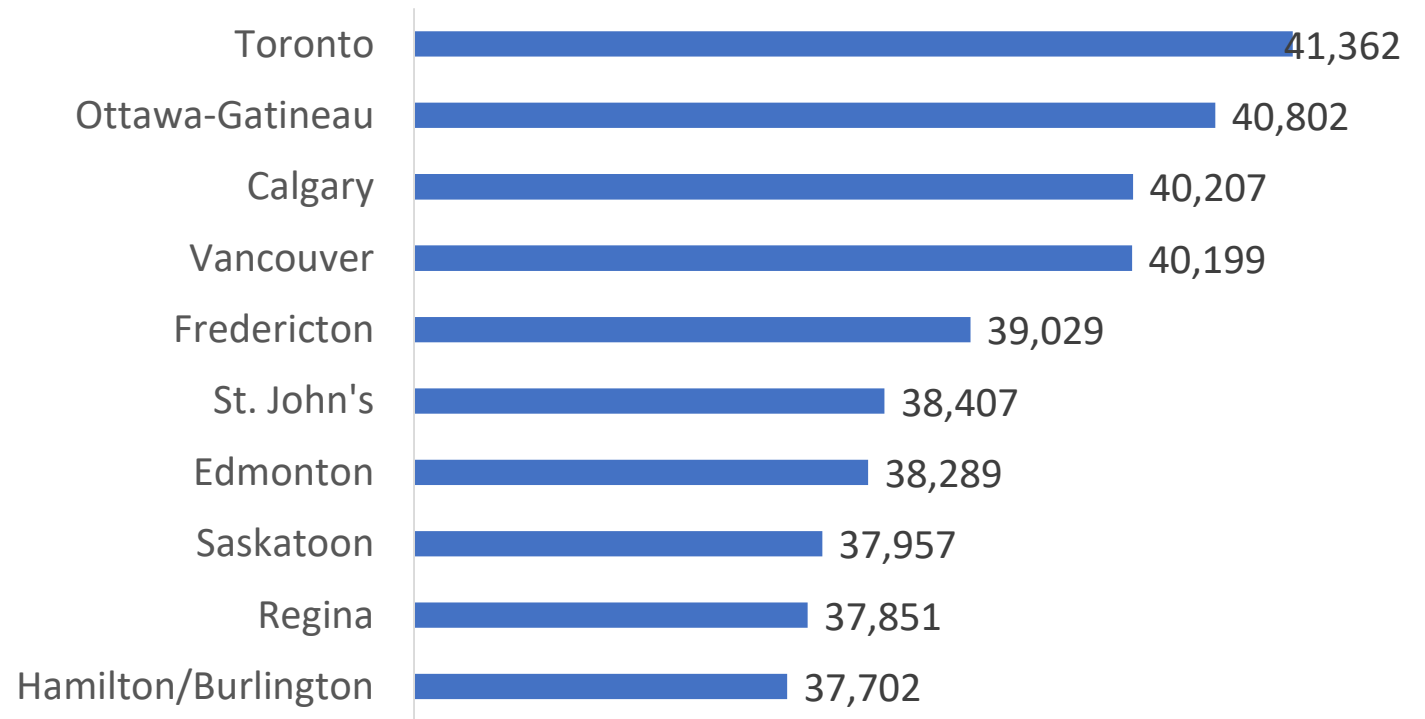
SOME TORONTONIANS ARE **MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS** TO LIVE IN POVERTY



Poverty in Toronto

- 1 in 5 adults and 1 in 4 children continue to live in poverty in Toronto
- City of Toronto's poverty rate is 1.5 times higher than the greater Census Metropolitan Area, 1.7 times higher than the provincial rate, and 1.8 times the national rate
- Poverty is disproportionately experienced by Indigenous and equity-seeking communities: e.g. Black Torontonians, racialized youth, people with disabilities, vulnerable seniors, singles/socially isolated individuals

Official Poverty Line for Family of Four
(2017, Major Urban Census Metropolitan Areas)



The Poverty Reduction Strategy is a 20-year plan to make Toronto a city with **opportunities for all.**

In Toronto, poverty is:

- Created by systemic barriers
- Gendered, racialized, and geographically concentrated
- A shared responsibility

More info: toronto.ca/povertyreduction

SIX AREAS OF INTERVENTION



Housing Stability



Service Access



Transit Equity



Food Access



Quality Jobs & Living Incomes

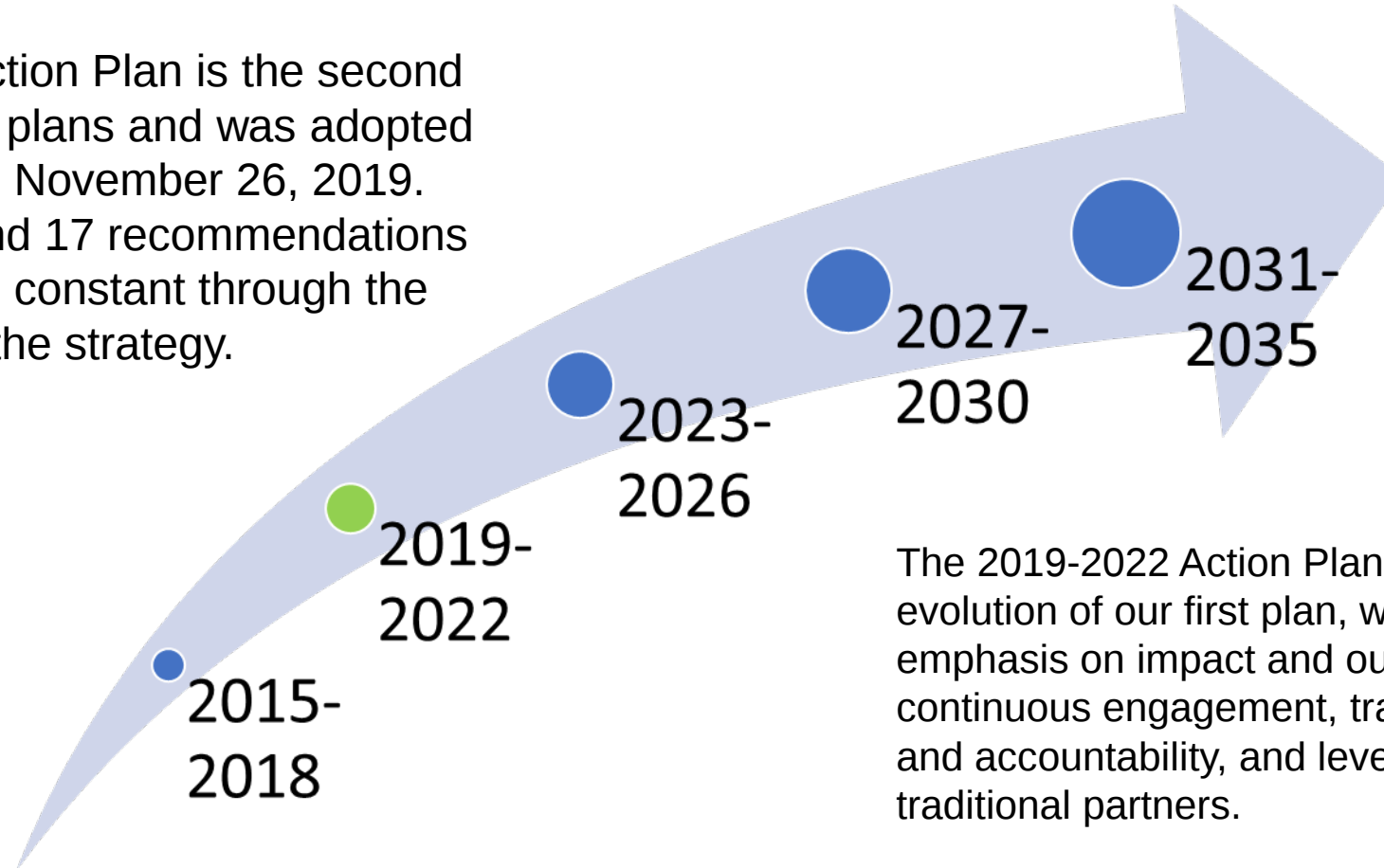


Systemic Change



Second of Five Action Plans

The 2019-2022 Action Plan is the second of five term action plans and was adopted by City Council on November 26, 2019. The six themes and 17 recommendations of the strategy are constant through the 20-year length of the strategy.



The 2019-2022 Action Plan is an evolution of our first plan, with a greater emphasis on impact and outcomes, continuous engagement, transparency and accountability, and leveraging non-traditional partners.



Poverty Reduction Strategy Structure

- PRS contains 17 recommendations divided into 5 core themes and an additional broader theme:

- Housing Stability
- Service Access and Coordination
- Transportation Equity
- Food Access
- Quality Jobs and Livable Incomes
- Systemic Change

Each recommendation, and associated action is tied to one of the following objectives:

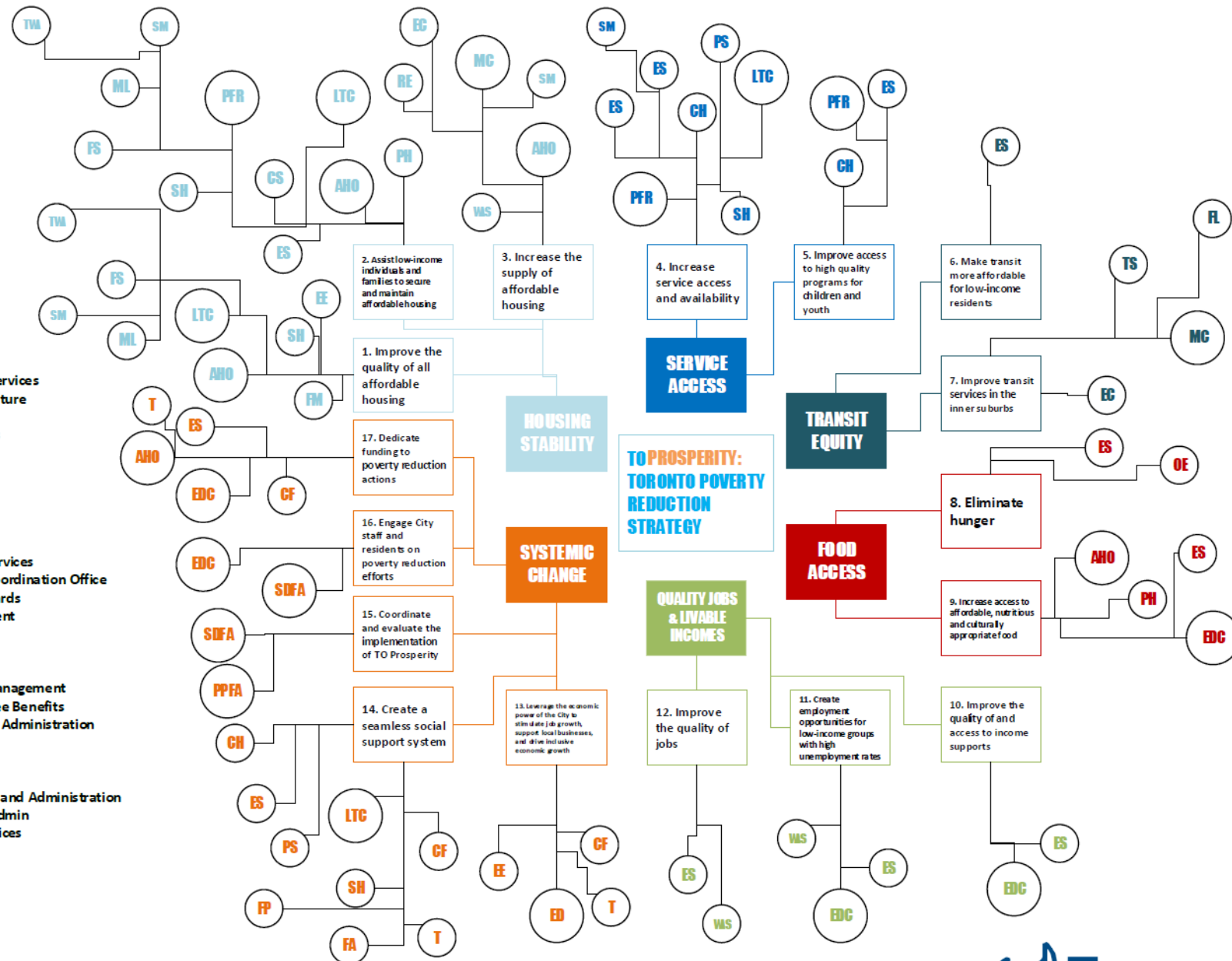
- Address immediate needs
- Create pathways to prosperity
- Drive systemic change

- Actions that fall within the Housing Stability recommendations will be consistent with and complementary to the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan.

How can your division support the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy?

Divisions

311 – 311 Toronto
 AHO – Affordable Housing Office
 AS – Accounting Services
 CF – Corporate Finance
 CH – Children's Services
 CoS – Corporate Security
 CP – City Planning
 CS – Court Services
 EC – Engineering and Construction Services
 ED – Economic Development and Culture
 EE – Environment and Energy
 ES – Employment and Social Services
 FA – Finance and Administration
 FL – Fleet Services
 FM – Facilities Management
 FP – Financial Planning
 FS – Fire Services
 IT – Information and Technology
 LTC – Long-Term Care Homes and Services
 MC – Major Capital Infrastructure Coordination Office
 ML – Municipal Licensing and Standards
 OE – Office of Emergency Management
 OP – Toronto Office of Partnerships
 PFR – Parks, Forestry and Recreation
 PH – Toronto Public Health
 PMM – Purchasing and Materials Management
 PPEB – Pension, Payroll and Employee Benefits
 PPFA – Policy, Planning, Finance and Administration
 PS – Toronto Paramedic Services
 RE – Real Estate Services
 RS – Revenue Services
 SDFA – Social Development, Finance and Administration
 SH – Shelter, Support and Housing Admin
 SM – Solid Waste Management Services
 T – Treasurer
 TB – Toronto Building
 TS – Transportation Services
 TW – Toronto Water
 WS – Waterfront Secretariat



System Map of Service Access

City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy Office, updated July 2019

Recommendation:
Increase service access & availability



2015-18 Progress: Middle Childhood Strategy quality standards. Raising the Village outcomes framework & recommendations.

Recommendation:
Improve access to high quality programs for children & youth

Need & Demand

Population growth & Age distribution
Levels of disability, other needs

Balance availability with need/demand, long-term
Need increases participation
Effective services decrease demand for some services

Pressure

Client barriers to access

Low income	No computer	Distance
Cash flow	No internet	Transit
Financial literacy	No smartphone	Fatigue
Disability	Language	Scheduling
Mental health	Literacy	Homeless
Social isolation	Digital literacy	Move often

Outcome:
Decrease the number of low-income residents who experience inequitable barriers to accessing programs & services



A client may have many barriers

Funding

Taxes, donations, corporate sponsors
For service delivery, administration, facilities, training...

Dollar total
Stability
% for admin
Governance
Audit requirements



Providing services creates jobs & economic activity

Consider ROI, KPI, humanity & stories

Coordinated Budgets

Facilities

Build infrastructure
Furnish & equip buildings
Suitable for the service
Maximize use, day & night
Rent \$ affordable



Co-Location
Share use of facilities

2019-22 Actions:
Establish an **inventory** of underused public infrastructure, in partnership with the For Public Benefit Sector, with the goal of unlocking those spaces for new & enhanced service provision

2019-22 Actions:
Leverage more public infrastructure & assets to provide enhanced services that address the immediate needs of low-income and vulnerable individuals

Capabilities

Methods, activities, content
Staff selection, skills & training
Case management, client tracking
Quality control

Common Methods & Best Practices

Data sharing

Cross-trained Front-line Staff

Training & Sharing

Factors in Service Access

Awareness

Official publicity to potential clients
Info to referring professionals
Informal knowledge shared by clients
Word of mouth from satisfied clients
Awareness of discounts & subsidies
Staff aware of who's eligible

Channels (web, brochure, video...)
Languages, reaching newcomers
Reading level
Accuracy & updating

Central 211 information

Comprehensive Support & Referral

2019-22 Actions: Integrate financial empowerment and literacy into the delivery of City services to enhance (tax) benefit access and financial resilience.

Availability

Choice of service providers
Number of spaces
Waiting list rules

Central waiting list
2015-18 Progress: Shelter capacity expansion

Increase spaces
2019-22 Actions: Reduce waiting lists for City services with set targets & timelines

Equitable access
2015-18 Progress: New childcare subsidies & spaces, youth hubs & spaces

2019-22 Actions: Improve the affordability of child care services across the system and expand the number of spaces by implementing the **Child Care Growth Strategy**.
Outcome: Increase the number of low-income families with access to more affordable childcare. Creation of more spaces.

Eligibility

Universal or low-income?
Criteria match who needs service?
Barriers e.g. homeless, newcomer?
Exclusion of "difficult" clients?
Lose eligibility after transitions?

Consistent Eligibility Rules

Navigation

For each SA client
Near TCHC buildings
Referral to all programs
Various intensities
HSI Knowledge base
Track changing rules

2019-22 Actions: Leverage the **Human Services Integration** initiative to create a seamless information provision, navigation & transitions system for City Human Services

Navigator staff role



Intake

Referral or self-identified
Ease of application
Deadlines or continuous

Coordinated Intake

Fees

Initial & periodic fees
Fines & penalty charges
Discounts & subsidies
Universal vs Means-test

Reduce fees

2015-18 Progress: New community centres where programs are free

Channel

Client's home
Service provider location
Telephone & IVR
SMS texting
Website or Mobile app

2019-22 Actions: Expand **online access & literacy** to address the Digital Divide by ensuring residents can effectively access digital programs & services

Combined websites, call centres, counters

Costs

Transit fare provided?
Childcare provided?
Food provided?
Fair to singles & families?



Location

Transit trip duration
Near other destinations
Near TCHC buildings
Washroom, wifi, charging...
Comfortable, quiet
Art & landscaping
Autistic sensory needs
Accessible to mobility devices

2015-18 Progress: Creation of **public WiFi** in City facilities & WiFi hotspot lending program



Client experience

Safety
Respect
Empathy & Humanity
Discrimination
Accommodation
Relationship with staff
Reduce loneliness
Reliability of service
Speed of service



Open Hours

2019-22 Actions: Expand the availability of high-quality programs for children & youth outside of school hours
Consistent Hours

Longer hours

2015-18 Progress: **Library** open hours / Sunday hours pilots

Participation Level

Outcome:
Increased participation level of low income residents in City-run programs & services

Satisfaction Level

2019-22 Actions:
Review means-tested services available to Toronto residents, including service pricing and subsidy allocation policies

Service Effectiveness

Housing



Food access



Physical & Mental Health



Employment & Income Support



Education Training Learning



Newcomer settlement



Recreation & Social inclusion



Systemic effects of services  Safety  Dignity  Quality of life  Youth engagement  Reduce poverty of next generation

Effective methods & Capable staff

Icons from the Human Project, by Philanthropists, Goodwill, Priyanka, Adrien Cioque, Tomas Knapik, Benjamin, Johny, Don Lash, St. Sam, Paragon, Nicosian, Andy Mena, Camila Quintero, Laynak



From Recommendations to Activities



The PRS Office has identified six different types of activities, with varying degrees of financial impact, that all can contribute to mitigating the impact of, or reducing poverty for Toronto's residents:

- **Service Provision:** design and delivery of new or enhanced services for residents that have a direct impact mitigating the effects of, or reducing the number of people in poverty.
- **Policy and Regulation:** research, engagement and policy development work to revise or create new policies and regulations that shifts practices or creates an enabling environment to improve outcomes for residents living in poverty.
- **Funding:** grants and other supports (e.g. assets, in-kind, deferred revenue) that incubates new ideas or sustains supportive programs, services and initiatives that improve the outcomes of residents living in poverty.
- **Leadership:** establishment or implementation of best practices and, including change management and government modernization initiatives, that improve services for and outcomes of residents living in poverty.
- **Stewardship:** facilitating, convening, and establishing partnerships that drives systemic change or transformation that benefit residents living in poverty.
- **Purchasing and Investment:** leveraging existing operating spending or capital infrastructure investment to improve social and economic outcomes of communities.



2015-2035 Recommendations

1. Improve the quality of all affordable housing
2. Assist low-income individuals and families to secure and maintain affordable housing
3. Increase the supply of affordable housing

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

Low-income residents and community partners have the capacity to engage with the City of Toronto to support the City's pillars of housing success, as defined by the HousingTO plan.

- *Note: Actions and activities that fall within the Housing Stability recommendations will be consistent with and complementary to the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan.*



2015-2035 Recommendations

4. Increase service access and availability
5. Improve access to high quality programs for children and youth

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

Low-income residents can easily discover and access consistent, predictable, human services that deliver the outcomes they are intended to achieve.



2015-2035 Recommendations

6. Make transit more affordable for low income residents
7. Improve transit services in the inner suburbs

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

Low-income residents are able to afford and access a public transit system that connects residents to jobs, services and civic life.



2015-2035 Recommendations

8. Eliminate hunger
9. Increase access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

Ensure low-income children have access to nutritious foods, and ensure low-income residents can participate in healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems.



2015-2035 Recommendations

10. Improve the quality of and access to income supports
11. Create employment opportunities for low-income groups with high unemployment rates
12. Improve the quality of jobs

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

Social assistance and related supports are delivered in a dignified and supportive manner. Low-income residents are financially empowered and are connected to pathways to quality jobs.



2015-2035 Recommendations

13. Leverage the economic power of the City to stimulate job growth, support local businesses, and drive inclusive economic growth
14. Create a seamless social support system
15. Coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy
16. Engage City Staff and residents on poverty reduction efforts
17. Dedicate funding to poverty reduction actions

What We Want to Achieve in 2019-2022

All City of Toronto divisions and agencies are leaders in driving innovative ways of thinking and operating that promote economic inclusion, resident empowerment, and collective impact for residents experiencing poverty.



Thank You

For more information, or if you have any further questions, feel free to contact us at :

prso@toronto.ca

www.toronto.ca/povertyreduction