

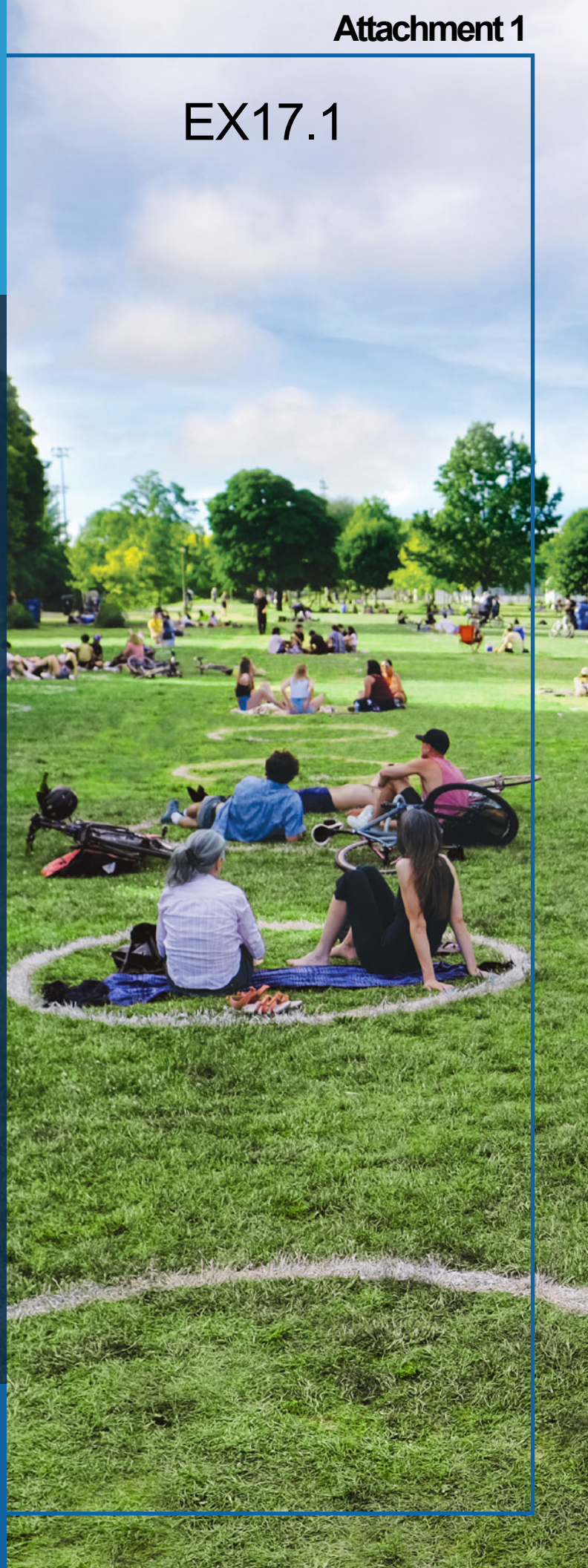
EX17.1

# COVID-19: IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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SUBMITTED TO:  
Toronto City Manager

September 15, 2020



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# 1 | Land Acknowledgement



The authors acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City of Toronto acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.





# 2 | Letter to the City Manager

## To Chris Murray, City Manager

We're pleased to provide this report to help guide and focus the City of Toronto's work in achieving its goals for recovery and rebuilding.

The loss of life and the hardships experienced in Toronto in the pandemic will leave lasting impacts, including the tragic loss of friends and loved ones. Yet, the crisis response also leaves strong evidence of Toronto's collective sense of goodwill and resilience.

In the months since the crisis began, Toronto residents largely listened and adhered to the direction of public health officials. When asked to do so, people limited their activities and stayed home as much as possible. Some businesses shut down entirely, at great sacrifice. Other businesses, and their employees, delivered much-needed goods and services. Companies and their employees adapted to the new environment and managed professional and personal pressures. Neighbours helped neighbours. Morale was boosted by creative displays of appreciation and small acts of kindness.

The leadership of Mayor John Tory, City Council, the City Manager and the City's senior executive team was instrumental in mobilizing such collective action in the crisis, which has enabled conditions for recovery. Recommendations regarding public health are given in acknowledgment of the continuing, highly effective performance of Medical Officer of Health Dr. Eileen de Villa, Toronto Public Health staff and the Toronto Board of Health, chaired by Councillor Joe Cressy. The consistently high-quality of services from the Emergency Operations Center, delivered in a rapidly evolving environment, led by Fire Chief Matthew Pegg, have also helped enable the conditions for recovery.

Recovery and rebuild depend on building public confidence in living, working and visiting Toronto while COVID-19 remains a risk. However, recovery and rebuild efforts must also be undertaken in the knowledge that many impacts of COVID-19 were disproportionately felt by some neighbourhoods, segments of the population, occupations and sectors – a reality that must be addressed in recovery.

In keeping infections in Toronto relatively low, a high proportion of the population remains vulnerable to COVID-19. Part of the challenge of recovery is establishing a sense of normalcy and community while ensuring that infection rates remain low and manageable.

Like others, around the world, we are hopeful that science will deliver solutions that could help break chains of COVID-19 transmission and reduce severe illness and deaths resulting from infection. However, for the purpose of this report, no assumptions are made regarding vaccine availability or treatments and therapies. As such, the terms “recovery” and “rebuild” take on a different dynamic. These activities are usually associated with the work that begins after a disruptive event, such as a natural disaster. In this case, Toronto is still within the event, that is, a global pandemic, and will be for some time.

Given this context, the phases of restart, recovery and rebuild do not represent points in time. There are no clear lines delineating the conclusion of one phase and the beginning of another. Rather, they should be considered stages of effort that will be complementary and overlapping. It is also understood that the rebuild phase must look beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and seek to build resilience into the way Toronto functions, strengthening its ability to overcome future challenges related to natural events.

It is worth noting that Toronto's crisis response relied on consensus, cooperation and significant financial support from the federal and provincial governments. This intergovernmental partnership must continue. In fact, it must be strengthened and realigned. It is time for a conversation among governments on what Toronto means to Ontario and Canada. COVID-19 has reinforced the reality that Toronto's fiscal capacity, funded primarily by property tax, is not commensurate to its responsibilities. Further, the property tax base is funding investments, such as supporting a healthier population and enabling meaningful labour force participation, which significantly benefits the budgets of the provincial and federal governments.

In developing this report, our analysis and recommendations were informed by knowledge, insight, compassion and creative thinking of City of Toronto staff. Their COVID-19 experience has been one of rapid learning, response, application of emerging knowledge and heightened collaboration. The City should approach recovery and rebuild with the confirmed knowledge that its public service is capable of focused and creative innovation that is responsive to the needs of people in an evolving, complex world.

While COVID-19 exacerbated various existing challenges, it also created conditions for accelerating good ideas. We thank all those who took part in the various forms of consultation and generously offered their perspectives. There was an abundance of thoughtful input, though this report's recommendations focused on those that will have the greatest relevance to the mandate of Toronto's recovery and building back better. Where appropriate, recommendations reflect our analysis of policy measures and inter-governmental partnerships that will be needed to make progress on desired outcomes identified in consultations.

The recommendations reflect a desire for measures to promote strong and healthy neighbourhoods, robust main streets, varied and diverse cultural experiences and expanded access to meaningful work and community life, all while ensuring public health and safety. There are also longer-term recommendations

aimed at contributing to more equitable, shared prosperity across the city, which will require further exploration and expanded partnerships. *Recommendations reflect consultations undertaken at a point in time, still early in the pandemic event. They provide a basis for beginning the conversation on recovery and building back better – the City, its agencies, its partners and stakeholders and the senior levels of government, working together, will achieve and refine this transformation.*

Our recommendations reflect a belief that Torontonians are ready for manageable and practical changes that make sense in the post-COVID context. The voices captured in the consultations supporting this report speak to a desire and determination to not only get Toronto back to where it had been pre-pandemic, but to accelerate progress toward what we know it can be – a thriving, equitable, cohesive, entrepreneurially vibrant and culturally dynamic city.



Dr. David Mowat

Mr. Saad Rafi



**While COVID-19 exacerbated various existing challenges it also created conditions for accelerating good ideas.**





# 3 | Recommendations

## 3.1 Introduction and Context

The recommendations in this section are provided in the understanding that the City Manager may undertake further analysis with staff, and seek direction from City Council, on implementation and action. As a result, no weight or priority is given to any of the recommendations and no timetable for implementation is suggested. The recommendations are designed to avoid replication of existing Council strategies and plans, however, there are instances where acceleration of existing initiatives is recommended – including initiatives underway before the pandemic as well as good ideas that were quickly implemented during the crisis. *The recommendations should also be read as interconnected categories of actions that the City and its partners and other levels of government can undertake to aid in the recovery and building back better.*

The recommendations are heavily informed by consultations undertaken in various forms over the period from April through to August 2020, as well as input received in recent City consultations on related topics. These were wide-ranging and useful discussions about Toronto's future. In making recommendations, we have applied input that best meets the direct impacts of COVID-19 and the direction given to TORR. City divisions, agencies, partners and communities will no doubt gain additional value from reviewing all the consultation feedback for further ideas on city building. For that reason, the reports developed by theme leads and research papers generated by City staff are published in the sections following the recommendations. Following each section of recommendations, certain notable findings are highlighted – ideas and information outside the City's direct ability to act upon but useful to consider.

Limitations of time and availability did not allow for the full and comprehensive engagement process that would normally be commensurate with the development of City-wide recommendations. Many of those consulted were themselves striving to understand implications of the pandemic for their community, organization or sector.

Some groups, whose input is vital, such as Indigenous organizations, indicated a desire to consult more thoroughly with their own membership and networks and deliver thoughtful, comprehensive recommendations to the City.

The recommendations in this report are given in the expectation that the City will continue engaging residents, businesses and community groups and be further informed by input that may have been missed in our consultations and by exploring where issues intersect. It is hoped that these recommendations provoke further discussion on how they can be improved, built upon and implemented.

Within the recommendations, there are several suggestions regarding engagement with federal and provincial governments. The existing, established funding relationships with the other levels of government are insufficient to the task of generating a strong recovery and building back better in Toronto. There were strains before the pandemic. The City found ways of getting from one budget year to the next. Post-pandemic, in recovery, it is necessary to plan and strategize on a longer view. Toronto cannot plan a strong, resilient future with an uncertain fiscal foundation. Benefits from building back better, and supporting success for Torontonians, must be re-invested in continually improving services.

To put the issue in context, imagine that a young Torontonian growing up in a low-income, housing-challenged household sees their childhood stabilized by City programs supporting affordable housing, childcare, youth programs, public health and income support, with program delivery funded primarily by the property tax base. Other City investments, such as in high-volume transit corridors, may further enable opportunity. As this young person finds success as an adult, they may launch a business that generates employment for others. To be sure, federal and provincial spending in health care and post-secondary education, as well as other programs, will have contributed to this

Torontonian's well-being and progress in life. However, those levels of government will recover their investment – and more – in the income taxes and HST paid as a result of career success and jobs created for others. In fact, the positive intergenerational impacts may have exponential benefits to the federal and provincial budgets over time.

The City's programs, funded primarily by property tax, played a significant role in the human investments that resulted in this person generating such positive economic activity, but only very limited benefits will accrue to the City's budget, in the form of residential property tax and transit use. The trend toward a knowledge economy and online sales may also mean that such economic success generates little or no commercial property taxes paid to the City.

Many other stories could illustrate how City investments and policy innovations produce savings for the budgets of other governments. For example, walkable neighbourhoods contribute to reductions in chronic illnesses and reduce health-care costs for other levels of government. The operation of one of North America's busiest transit systems contributes to Ontario and Canada meeting their emission reduction targets.

This imbalance and misalignment of responsibilities and their funding has been well discussed pre-pandemic. It must be addressed in order to enable true recovery and rebuild. The magnitude of the challenge requires clarity and thoughtfulness in aligning funding, and services which the City delivers well, from senior levels of government in order to best capture and reinvest the fiscal benefits of policy innovation to continually improve outcomes for people.

This need for partnership involving all levels of government has significant influence on the recommendations, which are organized under six broad categories: Public Health, Social Determinants of Health, Increasing Prosperity, Infrastructure and Mobility, Resilience and City Services.

Lastly, during the crisis period, eight minutes and forty-six seconds of video depicting the brutal, violent death of George Floyd challenged any sense of complacency regarding anti-Black racism across North America and the world. Addressing the longstanding harms of anti-Black and Indigenous racism, and other forms of systemic discrimination, are now closely linked with public perception of successful pandemic recovery in Toronto. Issues related to racism were raised throughout the consultation, and across all themes, particularly in improving the participation of Black and Indigenous voices in the processes and at the tables where decisions are made. While several recommendations speak to issues of equity, inclusion and social determinants of health as essential to recovery and rebuild, they do not presume to speak for equity-seeking groups and racialized communities or the lived experience of racism. Future efforts to build a meaningful and broad public conversation about anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination will produce further ideas that contribute to long-term success for Toronto. It is clear that systemic racism contributed to inordinate incidence and impacts of COVID-19 among Black and Indigenous people through income disparities and other inequities and that is why identifying City actions in addressing systemic discrimination is the focus of the first recommendation in this report.

1

For its part, the City should lead by example and address racism against Black and Indigenous people openly and honestly within the City in its hiring and promotional practices. In addition, the City should set standards for Black and Indigenous representation at the tables where priorities, planning, investments and implementation of City Council decisions are discussed. Moreover, the City should also address the representation of Black, Indigenous and people from other vulnerable populations on Agencies, Boards and Corporations in order to ensure that the decisions made by these City bodies reflect the communities they serve.

## 3.2 Public Health

**For as long as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Toronto will need to maintain vigilance for new outbreaks and continue strengthening its understanding of impacts. This continual improvement in data gathering and understanding should support continual improvement in public health planning and delivery.**

Until there is a solution to the pandemic, it will be necessary to continue measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 (distancing, hand washing and mask wearing indoors). Continuing communication programs can also reinforce preventive actions. Further measures will be needed if there is any form of resurgence, and the extent of those measures will depend upon the source – an outbreak versus generalized spread in the community – and the severity.



The end of this pandemic cannot be predicted. Until then, Toronto must conduct itself in ways that reduce as much as possible the risk of ill-health and death from COVID-19. Recommendations in this section are directed primarily toward Toronto Public Health in its continued planning for addressing outbreaks and a possible resurgence. The epidemiology of COVID-19 has evolved throughout the course of the pandemic. Understanding the progression of the epidemic and the distribution of infection by age, sex/gender, socio-economic status, place, time, race, disability, and other factors will support decision-making in managing the pandemic. Other characteristics should be added as understanding of these relationships increases.

**2** Complete planning for a resurgence of cases, including scenarios, staffing, case and contact management, (expansion, switch to focussed follow-up if cases exceed threshold, technical enhancements), and future adjustments of closures and measures (criteria for dashboard indicators, consultation with Ministry of Health and regional Medical Officers of Health regarding a regional approach).

**3** Continue to collect data on COVID-19 and to publish it in the COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard.

**4** Continue to collect data on equity issues in COVID-19 transmission, including detailed case information, particularly socio-demographic and race-based, to the neighbourhood or individual level, for better understanding of the characteristics of those at higher risk as well as possible mechanisms of transmission.

**5** Work with others within City government and with Public Health Ontario to ensure that there is coordination of work in knowledge synthesis and jurisdictional scans, with the aim of identifying the priorities for accessing existing evidence reviews, undertaking and commissioning evidence reviews, and identifying priorities for primary research. Primary research might be conducted through the Ontario Health Data Platform. Reviews might be undertaken internally (particularly jurisdictional scans) by Public Health Ontario, the Evidence Synthesis Network or National Collaborating Centres for Public Health. Links should also be established with the new Science Table and the Research, Analysis and Evaluation Branch at the Ministry of Health, and collaboration with universities and colleges, within established MOUs, should be continued.

**6** Ensure that surveillance data, evidence reviews and intelligence about sectors and activities that are high-risk for COVID-19 are periodically reviewed, in consultation with Public Health Ontario, with a view to amending the mandated and/or recommended preventive measures (or advocating for amendment, if the subject of a provincial order).

**7** Explore the feasibility of collecting syndromic surveillance data, such as absenteeism in selected sites in workplaces, schools and other settings, or visits at COVID-19 Assessment Centres.

In testing, the emphasis so far has been on maximizing the number of tests performed. This is partly a reaction to a lack of access to testing in the early days of the pandemic, when some symptomatic people did not meet the criteria for testing. Now, testing is available for all those with symptoms.

**8** Continue engaging the Ministry of Health, Public Health Division and Public Health Ontario in seeking to reduce the turnaround time for Toronto's laboratory tests and maintaining this timing once achieved.

**9** Advocate for priority testing in high-needs areas and for the exploration of alternate testing methods in suitable circumstances, such as rapid tests or saliva tests.

**10** Assist in ensuring that pilot programs to promote testing in high-need areas are continued and expanded to all areas with significantly elevated incidence rates or other indicators of need.

It is difficult to trace and manage the contacts of every case once the numbers greatly increase. If many cases are asymptomatic and many contacts are untraceable, it may not be possible for a contact tracing program to keep pace with the spread of an outbreak and to lower the transmission rate. Because COVID-19 is sometimes transmitted via the respiratory route, possibly during “superspreader events”, it will be difficult to identify all exposed contacts.

**11** Prepare the case and contact management capability of Toronto Public Health (TPH) for continuing work during the balance of the pandemic, including throughout a potential second wave, and planning for some degree of repatriation of staff to their original duties while preparing plans to rapidly ramp up staffing if required; follow up with the Ministry of Health about the suggestion of it providing replacement staff so TPH staff can return to essential previous duties.

**12** In view of the limits to rapidly scaling up the case and contact management system, and of the reduction in effectiveness when volumes of community cases are very high, develop plans for switching to a more focused protocol when indicators reach predetermined values; engage the Ministry of Health, Public Health Division in planning for a replacement of CORES by the CCM-Salesforce program, if that is determined to be advantageous; discuss with the Public Health Branch a possible system of “load-sharing” by transferring cases from high-incidence to low-incidence health units.

**13** Continue to participate in the Public Health Measures Table and the Rapid Response Table and advocate for a review of terms of reference in order to reduce duplication and ensure a longer-term agenda and as much preparation time as possible.

**14** Monitor the impact of travel on COVID-19 activity and liaise, through the Ministry of Health, with the Public Health Agency of Canada on related matters such as screening and border management.

**15** Work with other Greater Toronto Area (GTA) health units and the Public Health Division to develop criteria for various stages/types of resurgence, develop pre-set criteria to identify increases in outbreaks and in community cases, and a generalized – possibly province-wide – resurgence; consider adding indicators to the current dashboard of

early increases in incidence such as test positivity rate, rate of untraceable cases and syndromic surveillance; plan an outline response to each type of resurgence.

**16** Continue to plan for, liaising with the Public Health Division and school boards, a possible increase in COVID-19 activity arising from the return of students to schools and to post-secondary institutions in September, expected to be followed by the annual fall season of respiratory viruses including influenza/flu.

Public health expertise will be highly valuable to various sectors and activities in the city as they seek to safely reopen.

**17** Work with the Public Health Division to ensure that proposals submitted to the Chief Medical Officer of Health for approval under O.Reg 364/20, Schedule 1 s4(3) or Schedule 2 s10(2) are discussed with Toronto’s Medical Officer of Health.

**18** Ensure that adequate resources are confirmed to continue to implement preventive measures and to support the ongoing review and revision of guidance documents. Inquiries and complaints from businesses and the public should be collated and reviewed to identify the common themes and emerging trends including the need for adjustments or for clarification; continue to support City with public health advice.

Toronto Public Health must continue both to manage COVID-19 related issues and be prepared to respond rapidly to outbreaks and provide other essential public health services that have longer-term outcomes but are nevertheless important, such as immunization, clinics for sexually transmitted infections and inspections.

**19** Continue to plan for public health services during the remainder of the pandemic, including reinstating some services previously discontinued, such as a program to catch up childhood immunizations and records, thereby meeting the requirements of the Immunization of School Pupils Act. This should also include planning with the Province for the distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine.



**20** Ensure that schools in high-incidence/high-risk areas of the city receive particular attention in planning school-based programs of TPH (including the new allocation of nurses).

extending beyond infectious diseases and services to individuals, together with adequate funding.

**21** Toronto Board of Health and City Council should engage with the Province and with other boards of health to press for a re-examination of previously proposed structural, governance and funding changes for public health in Ontario. The aim should be to secure continued governance through Toronto's Board of Health and a broad mandate

Limiting community transmission of COVID-19 will be essential to a sustained recovery. Beyond mitigating the immediate pandemic risks, the experience of the crisis has re-confirmed the value of broad and meaningful investments in physical and mental health and wellness, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized populations.

### 3.3 Social Determinants of Health

**Toronto can generate increased community and economic benefits by designing, adapting and building services and infrastructure that maximize human health and productivity, often referred to as social determinants of health. The City of Toronto, through Council, has previously approved strategic plans to enact change that will contribute to social determinants of health. The uneven impacts of COVID-19 have shown a clear need to accelerate progress in this area, however, this is not fully possible using the City's current tools for revenue and policy innovation. Therefore, the City must promote a conversation on realigning municipal, provincial and federal roles and responsibilities in ways that maximize human health and potential in generating economic growth and community participation that benefits all levels of government.**

As the pandemic has shown, Toronto can be impacted by global events over which it has limited control. The City with its partners, can, however, prepare for such impacts by maximizing the human potential within its population. There is strong evidence that gender, poverty, racism and discrimination, food insecurity, social exclusion and housing can have significant impacts on health. In addition to the tragic personal costs of systemic inequities, this is a costly economic weight in terms of lost productivity, foregone tax revenue, reduced consumer spending and higher expenditures on income assistance, social services, health care and justice.

Improvements in housing, income supports and child care will bring a return on investment that will, ultimately, positively impact the senior levels of government. They will also contribute to increasing labour force participation and therefore increase overall prosperity and incomes for everyone.

The City should engage with senior levels of government in a meaningful and outcome-based approach to develop additional funding for social determinants of health.

In recovery, it is time to enable methods for improving cross-government investment and delivery in social determinants of health – recognizing that investments and improvements in most social determinants inordinately benefit the senior levels of government.

**22** Measure the extent to which previous transfers of funding and responsibilities to Toronto have not kept pace with, nor been indexed to, inflation pressures.

considered regarding the most effective combination and funding of those supports to improve Torontonians' overall economic conditions (e.g.: Basic Needs and Shelter components of Social Assistance). Monitor the changes announced by the federal government to the Employment Insurance system so the City can offer recommendations for continuous improvement.

**23** Provide recommendations and enable methods to improve on the various income supports that senior levels of government fund to ensure the City's perspective is

- 
- 24** The City needs to call on the provincial and federal governments to work with the City's deep delivery experience to develop a bold plan that will deliver more affordable child care spaces for all families, which will also address the severe inequities for women that insufficient child care exacerbates.
- 
- 25** During the pandemic, essential workers were provided with additional supports to supplement their income. As these supports are eliminated, continue to consider needs of essential workers in recovery. The City can immediately contribute through such measures as increasing and accelerating installation of priority bus lanes thereby improving reliability and reducing commuting time; and, advocate to other levels of government for enhanced and necessary benefits such as paid sick days.
- 
- 26** Provide recommendations to other levels of government regarding social and labour force policies that could reduce COVID-19 transmission through incentives to stay home if sick or needing to quarantine.
- 
- 27** The City of Toronto, including Public Health, is already heavily involved in equity issues. It could expand such efforts by evaluating existing programs from an equity perspective; take inventory of needs and services of priority areas; analyze the burden of illness and key needs and responses in priority areas; implement a rolling plan for measurable reduction in selected indicators of inequality in selected areas; and, re-examine the distribution of services and the uptake by area and equity-seeking group.
- 
- 28** Work with community partners to coordinate and support the development of a Neighbourhood Food Hub model that builds food supply chains and distribution methods with vulnerable and racialized communities; creating effective, streamlined emergency food access in community spaces, and establishing sustainable community food resilience into the future.
- 
- 29** Identify affordable housing projects with the provincial and federal governments and establish dedicated and appropriate funding to develop more modular housing units and accelerate the supply of additional housing units to assist in moving people from shelters into permanent and affordable housing.
- 
- 30** Accelerate targeted funding towards identified affordable housing project opportunities for Indigenous people, as approved by Council in December 2019.
- 
- 31** Explore opportunities to expand the definitions of "Municipal Uses" to include affordable housing, supportive housing, long-term care facilities and public schools, freeing space for additional housing by increasing density above existing and future community infrastructure to realize previously unavailable opportunities, while enhancing green space.
- 
- 32** Aim to fully deploy the City's assets to develop additional affordable housing units while also improving the conditions of assets, for example, identifying housing opportunities on existing community centre sites.
- 
- 33** Seek additional funding from the Province for a long-term care home specifically for the Indigenous Community, by providing City-owned property as a contribution.
- 
- 34** Present the positive and distinguishing features of the City's delivery of care in long-term care homes to the commission established by the provincial government to examine long-term care and present the need for a more stable and equitable wage structure and working conditions for personal support workers (who are predominantly women and integral to delivering patient-focused care), as noted by the Mayor's Task Force on Workers and Labour, chaired by Councillor Mike Layton.
- 
- 35** Continue advocating for public health measures to protect residents and staff of long-term care facilities and retirement homes, including funding for staff training and access to expert advice in infection prevention and control, and ensure Toronto Public Health is a local resource in combating outbreaks and collecting data.
- 

Housing is recognized as a significant determinant of health, particularly among people experiencing poverty. The City should accelerate progress, by working deliberately and cooperatively on City, provincial and federal housing strategies, which would increase supply of affordable units in a timeframe that can aid recovery and ensure a stronger rebuild phase.



A population with equitable access to health, wellness and opportunity will be better able to keep pace with the city's changing needs and economic transitions. The consultation and engagement process generated significant feedback regarding the use of and access to spaces that people and community groups need to advance fairness, wellness and other objectives.

- 36** Make it easier for vulnerable people and community groups in using City-owned spaces in a safe, inclusive manner, including office buildings, parks, Toronto Community Housing facilities, recreation centers and libraries, so that individuals can gain internet access, helping to bridge the digital divide that exists for many households and neighbourhoods, and so that there are spaces for groups to organize and engage communities in recovery. Work with school boards and faith groups to identify opportunities to combine programs and better utilize public assets and to create new opportunities for the accessible, safe and inclusive access to space for not-for profit groups and vulnerable community agencies, not just in the downtown core.

In May, the Canadian Mental Health Association cited that 69% of Ontarians believe the province is headed for a “serious mental health crisis” as it emerges from the pandemic. Research suggests many mental illnesses go unreported. According to a 2016 Centre

for Addiction and Mental Health survey, 40% of respondents reported feelings of anxiety or depression but never sought medical help, with the economic burden of mental illness in Canada estimated at \$51 billion per year. TORR engagement participants cited potential for mental health and addiction impacts arising from the pandemic, particularly among vulnerable populations, which could significantly impact health care costs and wellbeing, as well as economic and community recovery.

- 37** Work with the Province to examine the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic on mental health and addictions among residents of the city from a broad cross section of affected communities, so that measurable impact informs meaningful solutions.



**Notable findings:**

- Consultation participants suggested ramping up programs that fund home modifications for low-income seniors who are renters and homeowners to support aging in place and reduce ongoing demand for long-term care.

In addressing social determinants of health, more Toronto residents are better enabled to meaningfully participate in the labour force and community life, further improving health outcomes, driving economic and income growth and increasing the overall prosperity that supports a healthy, vibrant city.

### 3.4 Increasing Prosperity

**There is consensus that recovery and rebuild must enable renewed and more broadly shared prosperity that helps strengthen the city's resilience and enables Torontonians to make progress in their own lives. However, the City of Toronto has limited ability to effect change in the most important aspects of a prosperity agenda, particularly in enabling greater, more equitable, more meaningful employment and significantly increased labour force participation among its residents. Therefore, the City should strive to establish a prosperity focus to measure and address Toronto's labour force needs, especially among vulnerable populations and equity-seeking groups, and do so in partnership with the federal and provincial government.**

Equity is a fundamental issue of respect and fairness. It is also an economic driver that, by unlocking increased human potential, ultimately increases everyone's quality of life and income. In a city where 52 per cent of the population identify as belonging to a racialized group, Toronto's economy is significantly held back when barriers to work and career advancement exist for racialized groups.

A new understanding of the value of prosperity – measured and supported by all levels of government – can increase equitable and meaningful labour force participation, providing the economy with a skilled, innovative and adaptable workforce. This work is now more urgent. Ontario's Financial Accountability Officer indicates that the participation rate in the labour market in Toronto, between February 2020 and May 2020 was down 5.4 per cent. People from vulnerable populations were hit hardest because they are over-represented in low-wage job sectors. While there may be disagreement on the means and methods to increase prosperity, the benefits derived by increasing labour force participation are clear.

Ontario's Panel on Economic Growth and Prosperity<sup>1</sup> found that increasing labour force participation for youth, women, seniors and Indigenous communities "would increase Ontario's GDP by \$54.0 billion or 6.8 per cent." This additional growth also reduces reliance on income supports, health care system expenditures, justice system costs, to name a few. People from other equity seeking groups who were under-represented in the pre-COVID-19 workforce would undoubtedly generate comparable economic benefits.

**38** Work with provincial and federal governments to begin a meaningful and outcomes-based discussion on a Municipal Agenda; one that begins by recognizing the growth and prosperity role of municipalities; and how a "whole of governments" approach will improve incomes and prosperity for all.

**39** Establish a process with provincial and federal governments to create the most effective programs for assisting businesses with forming internships, apprenticeships and demand-driven skills training, among other supports, with an emphasis on expanding job opportunities for youth, women and gender-diverse peoples, especially for Black and Indigenous populations and people from other vulnerable populations. This will be critical for those just now entering, re-entering or trying to increase their participation in labour markets, as also noted by the Mayor's Task Force sector table on Child and Youth, chaired by Councillor Shelley Carroll.

**40** Encourage the provincial and federal governments to provide support in developing the local innovation ecosystem for emerging technologies, which will be in high demand in the post-pandemic economy, such as continued advances in artificial intelligence, data analytics, the cleantech sector, advanced manufacturing and sensor technologies – thereby also providing upskilling and retraining opportunities for workers.

**41** Develop an investment retention strategy and work with the provincial government, and affected unions, to ensure that measures for job retention and future growth and expansion are in place or supports are being developed.

**42** Facilitate innovations in accessibility by playing a convening role between the technology industry and disability organizations, enabling new partnerships and new sources of funding for the cultural disability community – Toronto has an opportunity to be a global leader in promoting accessibility and the arts in the digital age.

**43** Develop indicators that measure social mobility, distribution of economic gains, per capita income and other measures for measuring growth in equitable prosperity.

Through the Mayor's Roundtables with the Cultural Industry, led by Councillor Gary Crawford, and through the engagement on Recovery and Rebuild Culture theme, there was significant input regarding support and continuity for culture sector businesses.

**44** Significantly expand the culture sector's digital infrastructure and adaptation to enable online and virtual delivery of cultural events and experiences, in doing so, advocate to the provincial and federal governments for major investments in digital infrastructure as stimulus spending – including specific investments to strengthen e-commerce capabilities and data analytics, support efforts to modernize intellectual property protections and facilitate improved connections within the cultural sector.

**45** Given the prolonged impact the pandemic has had on cultural industries and operations, work with the federal and provincial governments to provide additional supports for business continuity throughout COVID-19. This includes support to key cultural institutions, creative businesses, arts and heritage organizations, and festivals and events.

**46** Streamline and simplify permitting of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) pop-up spaces to facilitate safe cultural performance spaces and simplify permitting for alternative use of municipal spaces.

**47** Continue the work of Economic Development and Culture, with the support of Toronto Public Health, to provide guidance to sectors such as the performing arts with continuing significant constraints upon their activities and to review proposals for events.



- 48** Work with the City of Vancouver on its initiative to encourage local arts organizations to provide information to compile national data to help federal policymakers make informed decisions about how to support Indigenous artists and cultural practitioners in the wake of COVID-19.

In the crisis, many businesses demonstrated strong examples of corporate social responsibility and corporate donations to deploy their technology in various social services delivery. In consultations, business leaders consistently commented on the inequities that exist in Toronto and how the pandemic has exacerbated them, as well as consistent feedback that members of vulnerable populations do not have a seat at various "tables".

- 49** Establish, at scale, an emerging women and youth leaders program for people from vulnerable and equity-seeking populations, such as Black and Indigenous communities, which could be done in partnership with school boards, colleges and universities and multi-sector organizations such as CivicAction. In addition, a roster of businesses committed to creating meaningful opportunities for emerging leaders from Black and Indigenous communities should be developed.

- 50** Accelerate the development of the Tkaranto Indigenous Prosperity Plan, an Indigenous-led Toronto Poverty Reduction Action Plan and ensure provincial and federal government participation to provide balanced and accessible funding to implement the Plan. This should also be linked with Indigenous housing and training initiatives as well.

The Mayor's Task Force Sector Table on Small Business and BIAs, Chaired by Councillor Brad Bradford, found that reforming the commercial tax system and addressing long-standing property tax challenges for small businesses would help maintain the vitality of main streets.

- 51** Assess the feasibility and financial implications of creating a rate capping approach or other methods to address volatility impacts of MPAC tax assessments on small businesses.

- 52** Assess the feasibility and financial implications associated with creating additional tax bands for commercial properties to reduce or prevent additional tax burdens on main street locations.

Many major employers have shifted their employees to work from home arrangements, where possible for their operations. They have also determined that these arrangements will continue for some time, based on their operational capabilities and requirements and feedback from their employees. Employers have made these arrangements with prudent adherence to public health guidance; following the public health and occupational health approach of their landlords; and, with employee health and safety in mind.

- 53** The City should convene a table with the federal and provincial governments, major employers, major landlords and BIAs to assess the impact and develop solutions for the "ecosystem" of companies that provide support services to these employers and their employees; the impact of a prolonged work from home approach; and, considerations for economic development and a long-term vision for Toronto's downtown.



#### **Notable findings:**

- Recognizing that the federal support programs will not be permanent, many people who were consulted advocated for a gradual phase-out of these programs as the economy recovers to help mitigate risk and support employers as business levels slowly return to pre-COVID-19 levels or better. Some also advocated for a sector-by-sector approach to maintaining benefits, prioritizing support for industries and workers that will have a slower recovery period (such as hospitality, entertainment, cultural and tourism).
- Provincial and federal government evaluation criteria for cultural grants and program funding, including for Indigenous cultural businesses, place emphasis on attendance numbers, which should be reconsidered in light of continuing pandemic public health requirements for physical distancing.
- The City should consider applying the Creative Co-location tax subclass to expanded classes of cultural businesses.

- The business community and other organizations should be encouraged to continue with their philanthropic and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Some examples, by no means an exhaustive list, are donating computers through the City to vulnerable communities; offering the testing of new technologies to improve services to vulnerable populations (e.g. long-term-care homes); providing meals to the homeless population; and creating financial supports for local Canadian small businesses.

In building equitable prosperity, moving the largest number of people safely and efficiently through reliable public transit and supporting active forms of transportation will be essential to recovery. Therefore, sustaining long-term, socio-economic prosperity requires continual investment in the quality of the city's infrastructure.

### 3.5 Infrastructure and Mobility

**Various governments have recognized that investments in infrastructure will be critical for Toronto's and Canada's recovery to COVID-19. Any stimulus funding for infrastructure should support Toronto's effort to build back better and prioritize investments that support key priorities – all through an equity and resilience lens.**

Public infrastructure includes roads, transit, water and sanitation, digital capacity, community centres and public housing. The City of Toronto owns approximately \$94 billion in infrastructure assets and has a 10-year capital plan (2020-2029) to invest approximately \$12 billion in new infrastructure and state of good repair. Despite substantial investment and a recent increase in the City Building Fund, the City's state-of-good repair backlog will grow to approximately \$18 billion by 2029. The financial challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic may strain the City's ability to fund its capital program, leading to an even greater backlog.

Maintaining and increasing investment in addressing the operating and capital needs for public transit are also critical to the short- and long-term vitality and livability of Toronto and the surrounding interconnected region.

All orders of government have recognized the importance of investing in infrastructure, with the federal government committing to invest \$180 billion over 12 years and the Ontario government making substantial investments in public transit and other areas. The federal and provincial governments have identified the need for providing transit funding support to municipalities to account for reduced ridership and revenues due to the pandemic.

**54** Expedite planning and building processes through all phases for academic institutions, to avoid cost overruns of existing projects and build necessary infrastructure for economic recovery, as identified in the Mayor's Task Force on Higher Education Institutions, chaired by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie.

**55** Formalize the application of a climate lens, alongside equity analysis, in any decisions around infrastructure stimulus funding to ensure climate risks and opportunities are appropriately factored into decision-making in order to meet Toronto's net zero goals.

**56** Develop project ideas, with haste, from the City for infrastructure funding support from the federal government in its recently announced COVID-19 Resilience Funding Stream, which should incorporate ideas quickly undertaken in the crisis as they address the mobility limitations for frontline workers and those over-represented in essential services, among other areas. Improving access to mobility solutions enhances ability to participate in the labour force and contributes to growth and prosperity.



**57** In addition, proactively prepare a comprehensive infrastructure proposal for Toronto – as the largest city in Canada – to the federal and provincial governments, with projects that address resilience and equity, especially considering impacts on Indigenous communities and the Black community. The proposal should partner with labour and trade unions, the development industry, the cultural industry, universities and colleges, City agencies and the TTC, among others. This proposal should also have a retraining and reskilling component.

**58** To be competitive in bandwidth-intensive industries, high speed, VPN infrastructure is needed in Toronto. The City can partner with industry leaders to deliver such infrastructure.

COVID-19 has further illustrated socioeconomic disparities inherent in the uses of mobility in Toronto. While overall transit and traffic volumes are down due to the pandemic, many bus routes remain in high demand and with some trips exceeding COVID-19 crowding standards. These routes provide service to essential workers who are heavily reliant on public transit and largely serve Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

**59** Accelerate or make permanent transit initiatives the City undertook quickly to support crisis response and restart, such as instituting priority bus lanes, improved cycling infrastructure, expansion of bike share and weekend recreational street closures, among others.

A regional transit model would contribute to long-term economic productivity and growth and enhance the long-term benefits of transit investment.

**60** Consider initiating an effective and actionable partnership with all governments that recognizes the interconnected and regional nature of transit in the GTHA and investigates a more regionalized model of transit delivery, with enhanced and dedicated revenue tools.

**61** Accelerate efforts and implementation on the City's surface transit network plan to identify transit priority corridors, applying an equity lens as a key siting criterion.

**62** Work with the TTC to accelerate its successful bus electrification program and pursue green infrastructure funding to support continued progress toward a TTC-wide bus electrification program.



#### **Notable Findings:**

- Consider and assess whether the City should approach the provincial government to alter legislation to provide authority to Toronto for additional transit-related revenue tools.
- It was suggested in consultations that the City consider the candidacy and timing of the renewal of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, which presents an opportunity to create a hub for arts and cultural performance in downtown Toronto. Given its key location, the project should apply an equity lens to the place-making opportunities; after-hours access to equity seeking groups; use of state-of-the-art technology to support the next generation of creative talent in Toronto, thereby driving economic and cultural growth.

Reliable infrastructure is a precondition for creating an optimal vision for the city. Such a vision consists of opportunity for a good education, adequate housing, quality health care and affordable and convenient transportation. Residents would enjoy safe, rewarding and secure employment, an environment with good air quality, access to green space, support when frail or experiencing loss of abilities, freedom from stigma and discrimination, access to culture, the arts, sports and leisure and civic participation. This is a vision of a resilient Toronto.

## 3.6 Resilience

**Council has requested that resilience be part of the assessment of all strategies moving forward. Taking the opportunity to build back better in recovery and rebuild, the City can accelerate the building up of the city's capacity for resilience in future crises, stresses and shocks.**

Cities around the world, including Toronto, are reflecting on the state of their resilience as part of recovery and rebuild from COVID-19. Resilience can include managing chronic stresses such as growing inequality, systemic racism, mobility challenges and ageing infrastructure, and acute shocks such as pandemics, heatwaves, flooding or blizzards.

In addition to other benefits, sustaining the city's progress toward a net zero carbon target supports resilience. As part of this effort, the City is developing a climate lens to apply to major City decisions across the organization. The insights provided would help improve the resilience of infrastructure to future climate events, reduce operating and service disruption and improve the city's accountability and transparency. This effort would also provide data and insights needed to secure intergovernmental funding, strengthen evidence-based policy making and build a more complete understanding of performance-based decision-making – outcomes also related to COVID-19 recovery and rebuild phases.

Resilience must be underpinned by a growing and vibrant economy, an adequate tax base and a more equitable apportionment of fiscal capacity among the orders of government.

**63** Build on Toronto's existing strengths in finance, artificial intelligence, technology and research, cleantech and green industries to attract further foreign direct investment. Opportunities for a green recovery are being exploited by other regions and countries. Canada, Ontario and Toronto have an opportunity to better leverage new investment opportunities in this sector to increase jobs, improve productivity and deliver economic and environmental benefits.

Consultation for this report has generated ideas that can support resilience while creating jobs in the immediate- to mid-term.

**64** As part of the commitment to lead "net-zero retrofits of Toronto-owned buildings", work with the provincial government to identify building retrofit projects, at scale, that would be candidates for innovative financing methods and to identify specific opportunities for training and upskilling to support the development of jobs and workforce capacity. A similar point was recommended by the Mayor's Task Force Sector Table on Workers and Unions, chaired by Councillor Layton.

**65** Work in collaboration with Toronto Hydro to accelerate efforts toward electrification and other activities required to support improvements in energy efficiency.

The pandemic has shown a need for increased access to green and outdoor space for a wider cross section of people in Toronto and in various neighbourhoods, particularly among those who do not have access to private outdoor spaces.

**66** Look for opportunities to enhance future access for those least able to access greenspace.

**67** Consider developing a Winter City Plan to expand winter use of public parks, expand the CaféTO plan and pursue winter solutions for ActiveTO to increase resilience on a year-round basis.

Public health recommendations are considered and developed with an understanding of the way residents of Toronto live, work, play and move around – factors that also determine overall health and well-being and resilience to future epidemics. The City's built form – through its effect on how people live, work, play and move – is increasingly recognized as an important influence for health. Health issues ranging from the prevalence of diabetes to social connectivity have been shown to be associated with the built environment. The City should continue and strengthen its existing efforts in this regard.



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Build upon initiatives put in place during COVID-19 to accelerate progress toward a modern, green and less car-dependent City, which is a network of connected complete communities, and includes a more extensive, integrated public transit system supporting complete streets – for all uses, all ages, all abilities – and public spaces with quality materials, shade, public art and green space.

- a. Apply a wellness lens to transportation planning, as both a preventive health measure and to ensure equitable access to green space, social opportunity and other contributors to well-being, emphasizing public transit and active transportation, including building on the additional cycling routes opened in the pandemic to accelerate progress toward increased provision of safe, protected cycle routes.
- b. Apply the principle of “build back better” to land-use planning and seek to improve the city’s overall built form by prioritizing gentle density that places greater emphasis on a mix of building types and uses – including low-rise residential, retail and services – and that supports transit use.
- c. Improve and refine the use of curb lanes and other spaces for restaurant patios, the success of which has indicated a public appetite for a more European urban form in some parts of the city, with much more pedestrian space, good transit and fewer cars, but taking care to apply a broader equity lens, including impacts on access.



#### **Notable Findings:**

- Many business stakeholders saw an opportunity to champion local capabilities and innovation through the pandemic and recovery period. There are opportunities to, for example,

enhance manufacturing capacity for critical products such as pharmaceuticals and PPE to help protect residents in the event of a second wave of COVID-19, and build resilience for potential public health crises in the future. It is suggested that the provincial government continue its efforts in supporting businesses to re-tool their manufacturing to generate local supplies to develop resilience when addressing future pandemics. This will continue to create additional jobs and the interventions thus far have proved successful in increasing supply and decreasing reliance on firms outside of Ontario. The federal and provincial governments have made a significant move in this direction with their investment in support of 3M Company in the Brockville area for the production, at scale, of N95 masks.

- A circular economy aims to reduce waste and maximize resources by replacing the linear take-make-dispose approach with an innovative system that focuses on product longevity, renewability, reuse and repair. For cities, a circular economy can significantly reduce waste, improve quality of life, and foster economic growth through clean and sustainable innovation, while reducing resource dependency and environmental impacts. There is a unique opportunity to consider a pilot project to intentionally design and implement the circular economy transition to support a bold, prosperous, equitable and sustainable recovery, to determine whether and how to use such an approach in Toronto.

While many recommendations emphasize partnerships with other levels of government, the City can also contribute to a strong recovery using its own regulatory solutions, service delivery innovations, additional financial measures and the strategic use of assets to support progress on social determinants of health and prosperity.

## 3.7 City of Toronto Services

**In recovery and rebuild, the City must continue to innovate and apply lessons learned in the crisis to keep up a brisk pace of modernizing services and improving convenience for residents and businesses. Toronto’s public servants must continue their increased level of collaborating across the organization and with external partners to deliver results that make a meaningful difference in making it easier to do business with the City and in the city.**

The crisis confirmed that the City’s public service is capable of accelerated innovation. While the pandemic has created tremendous challenges for the Toronto Public Service, the City modified and adapted its services to meet the needs of Torontonians during the crisis. With little notice, the workplace underwent profound change as staff worked remotely and more services were moved online. The crisis enabled the public service to propose, plan and implement ideas at an accelerated pace.

The City has, through Council approval, passed several impactful strategies and plans to address many and varied challenges facing the city and its populations. The City will need to accelerate its already approved strategies and initiatives, though it is recognized that this acceleration cannot take place without the rebalancing of funding from other levels of government, as the property tax base is insufficient.

- 69** Continue to closely monitor the implications on development charges and other growth funding tools, given the recent legislative changes introduced by the provincial government but not yet proclaimed into effect, and work to balance the revenue implications with the growth opportunities that additional development may bring during recovery and rebuild.

The Mayor's Task Force's Housing/Planning Table, Co-Chaired by Deputy Mayors Ana Bailão and Michael Thompson, offered recommendations for more efficiently and effectively moving affordable housing proposals through the City's approvals process.

- 70** Prioritize affordable housing appeals by requesting the provincial government and the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal to identify a process to fast track appeals that contain a significant portion of affordable ownership or rental units.

- 71** Specify a base density/height without affordable rental housing from which increases may be permitted if affordable rental housing is provided.

- 72** Implement different development charges across the city, with emphasis on a reduction in areas experiencing slow growth, to seed revitalization.

Councillor McKelvie convened sessions with the eight higher education institutions in Toronto, a conversation that produced recommendations for recovery and rebuild.

- 73** The City of Toronto should consider expanding supports for students through alternative summer job and experiential (co-op/training) opportunities, food security initiatives and supports for international students and racialized and vulnerable youth.

- 74** Develop partnerships between higher education institutions and the City to support local businesses and organizations, leveraging faculty expertise and student placements to develop small business supports, training and transition to online services; and, form a faculty working group to develop methods to support small businesses and arts and culture organizations.

In consultations undertaken for this report and by City Council, business leaders observed that the pandemic has created an opportunity to shine the spotlight on main street businesses across Toronto. They encouraged businesses to take advantage of the strong consumer interest in supporting main streets and trends toward 'hyper-local' shopping.

- 75** Continue to monitor the success of programs implemented in response to the crisis, such as the Ritual app, as well as pre-pandemic digital main street initiatives, and continuously improve on their utility for small businesses.

The City moved very quickly to develop remote, digital service delivery solutions during the response to the pandemic. Deputy Mayor Thompson's Economic and Community Development Committee, Councillor Cynthia Lai's engagement with Ethnic Roundtables and Councillor Bradford's sector table on Small Business and BIAs, indicated support for continuing such efforts at pace.

- 76** Continue with the significant business process redesign efforts in making City services more digitally capable and streamline the City's customer interface.

- 77** Continue with the modernization of the procurement system and continue to explore new programs and incentives for procurement solutions from Toronto-based companies.

- 78** Reduce regulatory burden for businesses, develop small business initiatives and continue with revitalizing main streets while applying a small-business-first lens.

The need for affordable and reliable access to personal protective equipment (PPE) is a precondition for restoring confidence of employees returning to work, as well as consumers and people who rely on non-profit agency supports as the economy reopens. Many businesses – particularly small businesses – and non-profit agencies have indicated that they have had difficulty sourcing the amount of PPE necessary to resume safe operations.

- 79** Support businesses by using the City's purchasing power to competitively select companies that can provide end-to-end solutions, from procuring through to distribution of PPE, to businesses and not-for-profit agencies at lower prices.

The City needs accurate, timely information to more effectively allocate capital funding, make investments and partner with other levels of government through infrastructure spending and investment.

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- 80** Take an enterprise wide, horizontal approach to capital planning and budgeting, thereby identifying "highest and best use" capital priorities. In addition, undertake an extensive asset-condition assessment of City owned assets and ensure that the resulting information is kept up to date.
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A potential second wave of COVID-19 infections could occur, as well as other types of shocks in the future. The pandemic experience confirmed the need to support vulnerable people in a crisis.

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- 81** Work with the provincial government to continue to develop an app that could provide a single source for information on services related to wellness, food insecurity and meal delivery, clothing provision, volunteerism and other assistance. This app could also convey consistent public health guidance.
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Leveraging, insights and analysis across policy areas and public engagement data will create further opportunities for evidence-informed recommendations, decisions and actions.

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- 82** Improve coordination of research and data across City divisions, agencies and corporations.
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- 83** Establish a more formal engagement strategy by:
- Identifying roles and responsibilities across the organization, including a lead practitioner who would support divisional engagement with City-wide guidelines and processes for engagement, including procurement, data management, technology capacity, equity and accessibility, and staff training;
  - Establishing organizational capacity for ongoing and meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities, Black Torontonians and equity-seeking and vulnerable communities;
  - Piloting innovative methods, increased evaluation and partnerships across divisions and agencies and other jurisdictions; and

- Supporting secure and effective collection and management of engagement data in a transparent manner through accessible communications and participant resources; and leveraging feedback across divisions and agencies to gain insights for decision making and continuous improvement.

### 3.8 Conclusion

COVID-19 revealed areas for improving health status and reducing the inequalities in health status. The inequities are extreme in the case of COVID-19, but not fundamentally different from those observed for decades pertaining to most other causes of disease and death. The causative factors, the social determinants of health, are many and are linked together in complex relationships. They influence both the state of health of the whole population and the extent of health inequalities.

Within the recommendations, there are several suggestions regarding engagement with federal and provincial governments. Toronto delivers a range of services that successive Ontario governments have determined to be best delivered at the local level. Consistent year-to-year fiscal pressures have limited the ability of municipal governments to develop transformative, cross-cutting policy innovations that can deliver better overall outcomes for people and contribute to a healthier city. In addition, the net effect of service realignments over many years has not delivered a cost-neutral transfer of programs from the perspective of municipal governments.

The City had many plans and strategies developed before and during the pandemic that can further strengthen recovery and building back better. The recommendations are designed to avoid replication of existing City strategies and plans, however, there are instances where acceleration of existing initiatives is recommended. Going forward, Toronto City Council will be most effective when it decides and acts with unanimity so that its voice is clearly heard by senior levels of government, as these governments' support will be critical to future implementation and for more balanced growth for all people of Toronto.

Many of those engaged and consulted did not need nor want to know which level of government delivered what crisis support. However, they were clear about the need for a continuation of many supports provided in the crisis by all levels of government. There is a collective view that people are still grappling with many challenges that this pandemic has brought to their doors.

So, we implore all levels of government to continue this unprecedented level of cooperation and coordination and engage in meaningful discussion about achieving better outcomes that build lasting, ever-increasing prosperity for Torontonians, Ontarians and Canadians. Because if not now, then when?