# Outline

- About the Digital Infrastructure Plan (DIP)

- Accessibility policies in the DIP

- Upcoming public consultations

# What is a Connected Community?

A 'Connected Community' empowers a city to use processes, tools, data and technology to optimize resources and enhance the quality, accessibility and performance of urban services, increase economic competitiveness, and engage residents, businesses and visitors more effectively.

This approach leads to greater use of digital infrastructure.

# What is digital infrastructure?

**Digital infrastructure** means infrastructure that creates, exchanges or uses data or information as a part of its operation.

*Digital infrastructure* includes physical structures, cabling and network systems, software systems, data standards and protocols.

**Examples:**

- sensors (e.g. cameras, GPS sensors, microphones, etc.),
- broadband and telephone networks,
- Wi-Fi,
- Apps,
- open data standards, etc.

# Digital Infrastructure Plan

- Digital infrastructure is changing the way we access information, work, and connect with each other.

- Digitized municipal services are leading to increased efficiencies, improved decision-making and the better management of public assets as well as concerns about issues like privacy, security and equity.

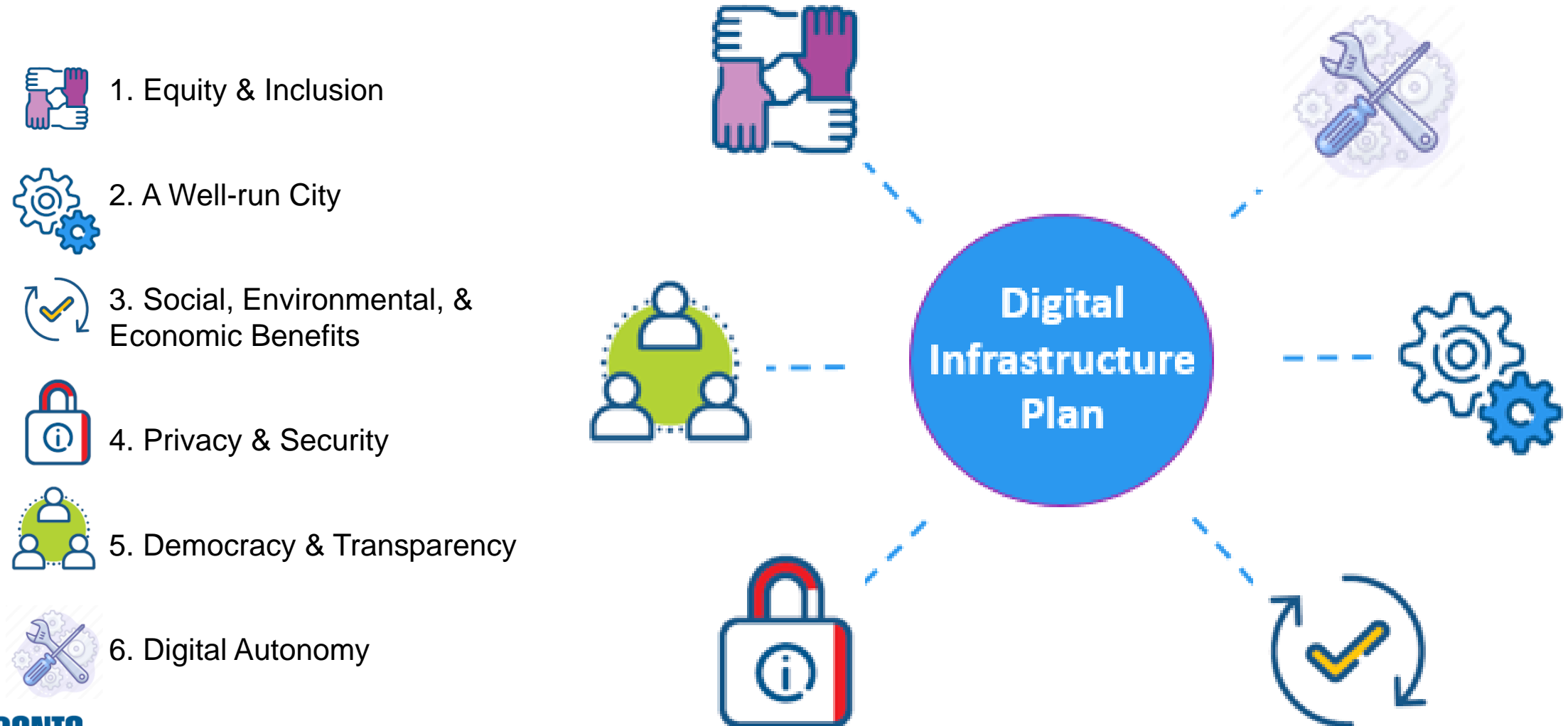- As the use of digital technologies increases, the City is developing a **Digital Infrastructure Plan.**

# What is the Digital Infrastructure Plan?

# Responding to Opportunities & Challenges

- DIP will guide decision-making associated with increased use of digital infrastructure

- In addition to existing policies and standards, guidance is needed on:

  - Digital rights

  - Access and equity considerations

  - Consent and the collection of youth data

  - When and how to engage the public

- Formalized governance

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# Digital Infrastructure Plan Principles

1. Equity & Inclusion

2. A Well-run City

3. Social, Environmental, & Economic Benefits

4. Privacy & Security

5. Democracy & Transparency

6. Digital Autonomy

**Digital Infrastructure Plan**

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# 1. Equity and Inclusion

Digital infrastructure will be used to create and sustain equity, inclusion, accessibility, and human rights in its operations and outcomes. Digital infrastructure will be flexible, adaptable and responsive to the needs of all Torontonians, including equity-deserving groups, Indigenous People, those with accessibility needs, and vulnerable populations.

# 2. A Well-run City

Digital Infrastructure will enable high quality, resilient and innovative public services, and support evidence-based decision-making.

# 3. Social, Economic, and Environmental Benefits

Digital Infrastructure will contribute to positive social, economic and environmental benefits by supporting the success of Toronto's residents, businesses, academic institutions and community organizations.

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# 4. Privacy and Security

Toronto's Digital Infrastructure will operate in a way that protects the privacy of individuals in accordance with legislative requirements, and be safe from misuse, hacks, theft or breaches.

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# 5. Democracy and Transparency

Decisions about Digital Infrastructure will be made democratically, in a way that is ethical, accountable, transparent and subject to oversight.

Torontonians will be provided with understandable, timely, and accurate information about the technologies in their city, and opportunities to shape the digital domain.

# 6. Digital Autonomy

The City will maintain control in the selection, use and design of its digital infrastructure, so that it can act with autonomy and in a self-determined manner within the digital realm.

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# 1. Equity and Inclusion (repeat slide)

Digital infrastructure will be used to create and sustain equity, inclusion, accessibility, and human rights in its operations and outcomes. Digital infrastructure will be flexible, adaptable and responsive to the needs of all Torontonians, including equity-deserving groups, Indigenous People, those with accessibility needs, and vulnerable populations.

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# Policy Area: Equity, Inclusion & Human Rights

**Policy Statements**

The City will:

- Build digital infrastructure using equity as a lens, emphasizing human dignity, human rights, and shared ethical values

- Address systemic barriers to enable the full participation of Toronto's diverse communities in the digital realm

- Be clear about the value, need or harm addressed by new digital infrastructure by proactively considering and accommodating or designing for the consequences of that infrastructure

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# Policy Area: Equity, Inclusion & Human Rights (continued)

**Policy Statements**

The City will:

- Develop a Digital Equity policy that addresses digital exclusion and improves digital equity by:

  - Ensuring that communities facing systemic barriers and discrimination have access to affordable high speed internet connectivity

  - Working with partners such as the Toronto Public Library to improve residents' digital literacy, awareness, skills and reinforce their ability to act and make informed decisions in the digital realm, and

  - Improving residents' access to internet-enabled devices that meet user needs

- Ensure that safeguards are in place to detect, prevent, and remedy discrimination and inequity that could arise through the use of digital infrastructure

# Policy Area: Accessible Digital Infrastructure

**Policy Statements**

The City will:

- Ensure that people are not excluded from accessing digital services and infrastructure

- Ensure people have the literacy, skills, connectivity, devices, and assistive technology required to safely and affordably participate in the digital realm

- Ensure that all web applications and websites are fully accessible and useable by people, businesses, visitors and City staff

- Ensure that digital transformation includes and is accessible to seniors and persons with disabilities, and address participation gaps

- Make services fully available via standard mobile devices and accessible for all people, including seniors and those with disabilities

- Integrate usability and accessibility testing in any new digital infrastructure initiative

# Policy Area: Responsive Digital Infrastructure

**Policy Statements**

The City will:

- Pursue a human-centred, responsible and common-good oriented development approach to sourcing and implementing digital infrastructure

- Design and deliver digital infrastructure and services that are inclusive, ethical and resilient, based on user needs

- Develop a consistent user-experience for City web-based services that is intuitive, simple, and that responds to and evolves with citizens' digital preferences

- Ensure that continued access to non-digital public services remains available to people who do not have the required device, skills, or inclination to access it by digital means

- Ensure people can access services in a language they understand that meets their needs

- Enable access to digital public services through different channels, devices and platforms

# Related: Addressing the Digital Divide

- The City of Toronto is carrying out multiple initiatives to understand and address the digital divide in the City. Recently completed reports include:

  - Mapping Toronto's Digital Divide - Ryerson University, Ryerson Leadership Lab and Brookfield Institute

  - SDG Digital Inclusion Framework - University of Toronto, Media Ethics Lab

  - Digital Access for Jane Finch Youth: Phase 1 Report - York University, Institute for Research on Digital Literacies

  - Dimensions of Digital Inclusion - Ryerson University

# Summary of existing input

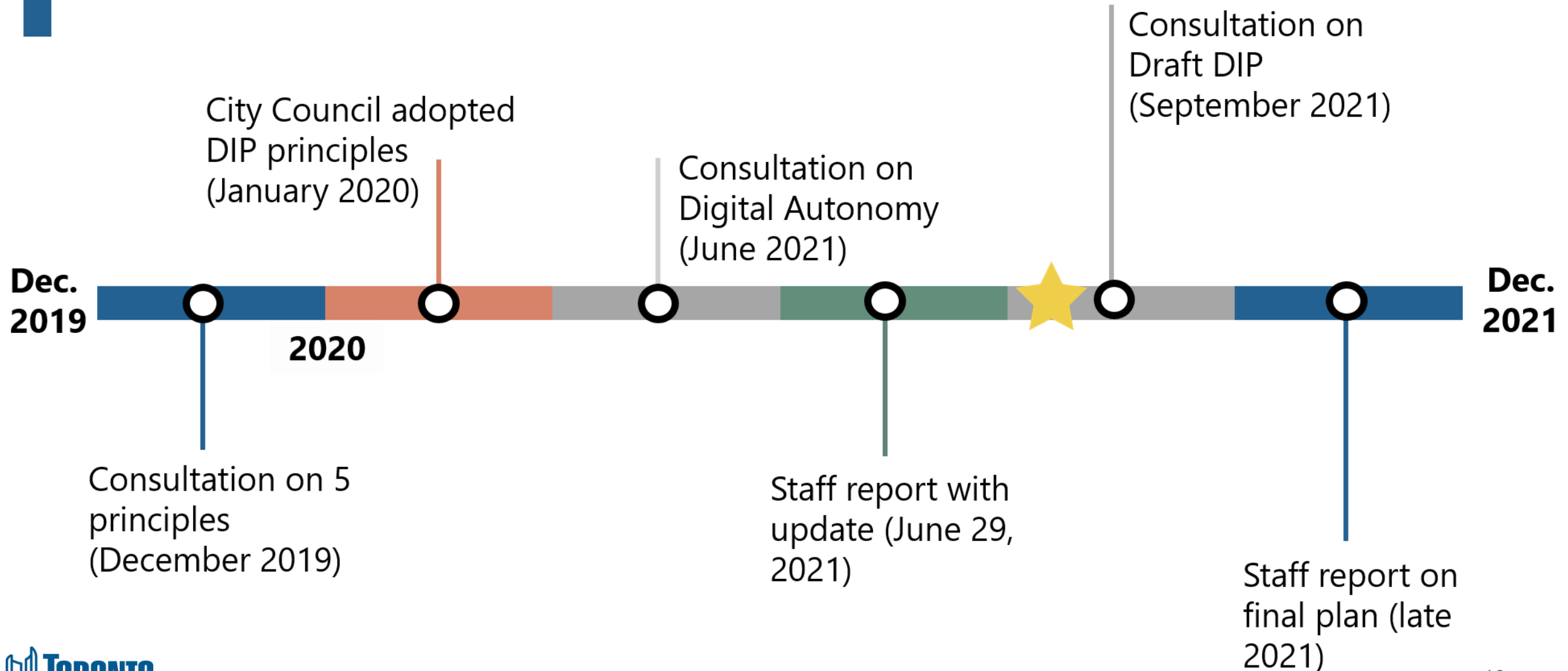**We have consulted, or will consult, the following groups:**

- Accessibility Unit, City of Toronto

- Equity Unit, City of Toronto

- Indigenous Affairs Office, City of Toronto

- Cities Coalition for Digital Rights

- Accessible Toronto (#a11yTO)

*Note: This list is not exhaustive.*

**Legislation & policies that have been consulted include:**

- Ontario Human Rights Code

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

- City of Toronto Corporate Accessibility Policy

- City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Standard

- Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines

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# Roadmap of DIP Development (visual)



Consultation on Draft DIP (September 2021)

City Council adopted DIP principles (January 2020)

Consultation on Digital Autonomy (June 2021)

Dec. 2019

2020

Dec. 2021

Consultation on 5 principles (December 2019)

Staff report with update (June 29, 2021)

Staff report on final plan (late 2021)

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# Roadmap of DIP Development (text)

- **December 2019**: Consultation

- **January 2020**: City Council adopted DIP principles

- **June 2021**: Consultation on Digital Autonomy

- **June 2021**: Staff report with update

- **September 2021**: Consultation on draft DIP

- **Late 2021**: Staff report on final plan

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# Discussion

- How can we build upon the policy statements provided under the policy area of Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights?

- How can we build upon the policy statements provided under the policy area of Accessible Digital Infrastructure?

- What elements should be considered as we develop a Digital Equity policy?

- Are there key groups or organizations we should meet as we carry out public consultations?