

## Recovery Updates by Theme

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In addition to information provided in Section 3 of the main report, this attachment provides additional updates and details on actions since the start of 2021, related to *COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities* (“*Opportunities*”) report recommendations, Council-directed recovery actions and other actions identified by Divisions to support Council's recovery objectives.

Updates are grouped by the following themes of the Corporate Strategic Plan with additional focus on economic recovery and equity priorities:

- A. Maintain and Create Housing that is Affordable
- B. Keep Toronto Moving
- C. Invest in People and Neighbourhoods
- D. Tackle Climate Change
- E. Economic Recovery
- F. Financial Sustainability
- G. A Well-Run City

In the October 2020 *Towards Recovery* report from the City Manager, a preliminary disposition of the *COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities* report recommendations was included as an attachment.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-157348.pdf>

Since October, City Divisions further reviewed the recommendations in the *Opportunities* report and updates are provided in this section. The following table is a summary of the current status all recommendations.

**Table 1: Summary Disposition of *Opportunities* Report Recommendations**

Status	Recommendations
26 have been implemented	2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 26, 34, 35, 47, 51, 52, 56, 70
43 are partially complete or in progress	1, 4, 19, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 49, 50, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 72, 75, 76, 77, 80, 82, 83
6 actions are planned but not yet started	22, 28, 33, 57, 73, 74
8 recommendations continue to be under review	7, 42, 46, 48, 71, 78, 79, 81

### A. Maintain and Create Housing that is Affordable

The City's focus on affordable housing is led by the Housing Secretariat and guided by the *HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan*. Reports in 2021 to Council's Planning and Housing Committee on the HousingTO Action Plan have included recommendations that support the City's response and recovery.

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Recent reports include:

- Modular Housing Initiative: Phase Two Sites – 175 Cummer Avenue and Trenton/Cedervale Avenue  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH21.1>
- Open Door Program 2020 Call for Applications Results: Supporting 971 New Affordable Rental Homes  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH21.4>
- Extending the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) Moratorium on Evictions due to Non-Payment of Rent  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH21.6>

Several recommendations in the *Opportunities* report relating to Affordable Housing are being actioned, including support for Indigenous communities:

- Recommendation 30: Council approved the development of 2,400 supportive units for Indigenous communities, 20% of the units funded by the Federal Rapid Housing Initiative will be allocated to Indigenous communities, and 20% of the Canadian Ontario Housing Benefits will be allocated to Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board members. Further planning is underway between the Housing Secretariat, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and Indigenous housing providers.
- Recommendation 31: The City continues to explore opportunities to expand the definitions of "Municipal Uses" to include affordable housing, supportive housing, long-term care facilities and public schools, and to create space for additional housing by increasing density above existing and future community infrastructure.
- Recommendation 32: Work is underway to better deploy the City's assets (i.e., land and buildings) to develop additional affordable housing units while also improving the conditions of assets.
- Recommendation 37: The City has engaged the Province to explore the impacts of the pandemic on mental health and addictions, particularly for vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Recommendation 70: Planning applications for affordable housing continue, and any appeals related to affordable housing are identified and prioritized to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, as per Council direction.
- Recommendation 71: The City is consulting on a proposed Official Plan policy for inclusionary zoning that would require a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new residential developments. A report is forthcoming later this year following additional consultation and analysis.

In December 2020, City Council requested an immediate provincial commitment of \$26.24 million in operating funding for 1,098 supportive housing units, recognizing that federal and City resources have been secured for capital construction. The City has an ongoing Health Services in Shelters Steering Committee co-chaired with Ontario Health Toronto Region looking at matching all homelessness services with primary care, mental health case management and harm reduction services, as well as a needs assessment to identify and address gaps in service levels.

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### **B. Keep Toronto Moving**

The *Opportunities* report contained several recommendations to address the loss of public transit revenue during the pandemic, to enhance the affordability and accessibility of transit, and promote active transportation.

The City continues to engage with the provincial government and regional counterparts on “Safe Restart” transit funding, associated policy objectives, and regional approaches to transit planning and delivery. An update on transit operating funding is provided in the Financial Sustainability section under the heading Intergovernmental Funding Commitments.

The federal government recently announced \$14.9 billion over 8 years for transit and mobility, including \$2.7 billion over five years for zero-emission fleet and \$400 million over five years for active transportation. Details on these programs is forthcoming.

The Province, through phase 2 of Safe Restart transit funding, has signaled an interest to discuss how to optimize transit through new regional approaches (*Opportunities* recommendation 60). City Planning, with the TTC and Transportation Services, will be consulting the public in spring 2021 on priority bus corridors (recommendation 61).

### **C. Invest in People and Neighbourhoods**

#### *Child Care*

The *COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities* report identified child care as a key component of economic recovery. Examples of City decisions and intergovernmental requests in 2020 and 2021 related to child care include:

- Deferring provincial policy changes for administrative expenses proposed for child care in 2022 (2021 Children’s Services Budget Note: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/bu/bgrd/backgroundfile-160356.pdf>);
- Continuing to provide stable and ongoing provincial funding for child care centres for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Dedicating new provincial investments in 2021 to increasing compensation for the early years workforce and improve recruitment and retention;
- Requesting, in previous years and in the 2021 Budget, that the provincial and federal governments to invest \$1.4 billion in capital funding from 2020-2026 to create 30,000 child care spaces, along with stable, predictable investments (\$70 million over three years) in operating funding; and
- Requesting the federal government to partner with the City to fulfill new federal commitments to create additional before and after school spaces, provide additional support for early childhood educators, and lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian child care system.

#### *Long Term Care Homes and Planning for Seniors*

The *Opportunities* report highlighted the concerns that have been raised across the province with respect to long-term care (LTC) homes and recommended that the City contribute its perspectives to the Independent LTC Commission. In October 2020,

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Senior Services and Long-Term Care submitted 12 recommendations to the Independent LTC Commission, with a focus on safety and the necessary investments to ensure resiliency in the sector, improve quality of care and life for residents, enhance trust and accountability, and improve working conditions (<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/8e2f-SSLTCCommissionReportOct8.pdf>).

The Commission's first interim report recommended moving to 4 hours of care per resident per day, which aligns with the City's position and a long-standing sector request to increase staffing resources to better support the complex care needs of LTC residents. The Commission's second interim report recommended focused inspections to assess compliance with measures known to reduce the impact of the virus. Senior Services and Long-Term Care supports the need to establish and implement standards to ensure training and resources for infectious disease control and an Incident Management System including optimal use of personal protective equipment. The Commission's final report is expected in April 2021.

The City's intergovernmental priorities include securing enhanced funding to support LTC homes during the current and future pandemics and meet the increasingly complex health, social, emotional and culturally-diverse care needs of residents, building a resilient and high-quality LTC workforce, and committing to provide an average of four hours per day of direct care per resident in Ontario Long-Term Care Staffing Plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.MM28.14>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.MM28.15>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX14.16>

The City will also work with the Province on a plan to introduce dedicated LTC beds for the Indigenous community through the Council-approved 2015 Long-Term Care Homes and Services Capital Renewal Plan (recommendation 33).

### *Community Benefits Framework*

The City continues to make progress on its Community Benefits Framework which signals Toronto's commitment to maximizing the use of City levers to create social and economic impact through community benefits initiatives. The disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 and the emphasized need for a recovery and rebuild strategy that prioritizes Indigenous, Black and equity-seeking communities, have highlighted the importance for community benefits initiatives to maximize municipal levers to create inclusive economic opportunities. City Council received an update on the Framework in February 2021

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX20.7>).

## **D. Tackle Climate Change**

The City has undertaken actions to adapt and be more resilient to challenges related to climate change, such as extreme weather. The City's approach to resilience, launched prior to the pandemic, identifies goals and actions to help Toronto survive, adapt and thrive in the face of any challenge, particularly climate change and growing inequities. Climate change and resilience activities highlighted in this section, reference

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recommendations in the *Opportunities* report and to recovery-related Council directives, and include:

- The City continues to apply a climate lens in City decision making with an initial focus on capital project spending (*Opportunities* recommendation 55). Preliminary outputs from a new climate lens tool were presented as part of the 2021 budget process, allowing tracking of investments in projects with a climate action component and prioritization of projects to advance through infrastructure stimulus funding based on Toronto's net-zero goal.
- Initial steps have been taken to identify the capital projects that could proceed (i.e. shovel ready projects) provided added infrastructure funding programs are introduced (recommendation 57). Divisions have been canvassed for shovel-ready infrastructure projects, based on the recently approved 10-year Capital Budget and Plan. Currently, staff are evaluating capital projects with a resilience and equity lens. City infrastructure project teams are also considering how to leverage community benefits including retraining and reskilling. In addition to this work, staff from People and Equity, Social Development, Finance and Administration and Financial Planning Division meet regularly on the continued advancement of Equity Responsive Budgeting, with initial steps taken to incorporate the Capital Budget for the 2022 Budget process.
- Corporate Real Estate Management is developing a strategy to reduce the energy use and emissions associated with City-owned facilities. The City is also in ongoing conversations with other orders of government around financing and investment approaches to decarbonize City facilities.
- The City's TransformTO Climate Action Strategy continues to guide activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. As part of Council's 2019 climate emergency declaration, Council updated the City's greenhouse gas reduction targets to 30 per cent reduction of 1990 levels by 2020, 65 per cent by 2030 and net zero by 2050 or sooner.
- The City has nominated projects for the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, as authorized by City Council in December 2020 (*Opportunities* report recommendation 56).  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX19.2> Projects are currently under review by the other governments. Nominated projects include \$6.2M to support the implementation of Toronto's Ravine Strategy as well as COVID-19 health and safety impacts, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements, and projects that advance critical building repairs, retrofits and upgrades in City buildings including long-term care homes and shelters.
- The City Manager is reporting to Executive Committee on March 30, 2021 in response to Council direction in October 2021 (rec.19 of EX17.1) to develop recommendations for Toronto Hydro to achieve greater outcomes for energy efficiency, demand management and renewable energy within the service area and report to City Council on the proposed recommendations and how to implement them  
(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/decisionBodyProfile.do?function=doPrepare&decisionBodyId=1944#Meeting-2021.EX22>).
- The Environment and Energy Division will submit a report to Council in Q4 2021 on accelerating the retrofit of existing buildings and a Net Zero Strategy to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or sooner.



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- Options for establishing an advisory committee that includes scientists, businesses, community experts, labour groups, Non-Governmental Organization experts and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to provide regular peer review on plans to achieve net-zero; and research on establishing an advisory committee has been ongoing throughout 2020 and will continue in 2021. The work has been informed in part by a series of Roundtables on the Environment, Climate and Sustainability hosted in 2020 to inform the *COVID-19: Impacts and Opportunities* report. Options and recommendations for the establishment of an advisory committee will be presented in the Q4 report.

In light of COVID the existing TransformTO implementation plan was extended through the end of 2021, and the next TransformTO Implementation plan will be integrated into the overall Net-Zero Strategy in Q4 2021. Throughout 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, Environment and Energy Division continued to implement the priority activities associated with advancing TransformTO to respond to the Climate Emergency. One third of Environment and Energy Division staff were redeployed and/or recalled, they supported the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild and provided front-line service to shelter and long-term care clients, among other COVID-19 related emergency services. Timelines and deliverables have been adjusted as a result of Environment and Energy Division's contribution to the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### **E. Economic Recovery**

#### *Supports for Business*

A report is planned for Q4 2021 that will outline a proposal for a permanent CafeTO program in response to recommendations 67 and 68c of the *COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities* report. Additional information is also in the CaféTO and CurbTO - Pandemic Response Programs

(<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-159875.pdf>) and

Temporary Use Zoning By-laws to Provide an Extension to Existing Temporary Permissions for Outdoor Patios for Bars and Restaurants reports

(<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ph/bgrd/backgroundfile-164240.pdf>).

City officials continue to engage federal, provincial and regional counterparts as we identify new ways of working together on shared recovery priorities, including on *Opportunities* recommendation 53 on planning for downtown. Further details are provided in the renewed intergovernmental strategy section of this report.

The City will continue to advance several issues through intergovernmental collaboration, including developing the local innovation ecosystem for emerging technologies and providing upskilling and retraining opportunities for workers (recommendation 40), measures for job retention and future growth and expansion (recommendation 41), expanding the culture sector's digital infrastructure and adaptation to enable online and virtual delivery of cultural events and experiences (recommendation 44); and additional supports for business continuity for cultural

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industries and operations (recommendation 45). Program related intergovernmental discussions are being led by Economic Development and Culture.

In response to October City Council directives related to recovery, requests have been made to the federal and provincial governments to review regulations to mitigate the impacts of rising business insurance premiums for small business; and to the provincial government to review the Commercial Tenancies Act to support main street businesses and minimize vacancies on Toronto's main streets.

### *Income and Employment Supports*

The *Opportunities* report recommended ways of supporting worker safety and wellbeing through advocacy to other orders of government on labour force and income support policies (recommendations 23, 25 and 26). Only 42% of workers in Canada have access to paid sick leave. This number falls to approximately 10% among low-paid workers deemed essential during the pandemic. At its meeting on February 3, 2021, City Council adopted a recommendation from the Medical Officer of Health and Board of Health requesting Ontario to require employers to provide 5 days of paid sick leave annually to employees and, during a declared infectious disease emergency like COVID-19, 10 days of paid sick leave annually. Mayor Tory also joined the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Mayors and Chairs in identifying sick pay as a crucial issue and called on both the provincial and federal governments to find an effective solution (statement issued February 22, 2021).

Ontario continues to indicate that it does not want to “duplicate” the federally administered Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit. On February 19, 2021, the federal government proposed changes that would increase the CRSB from two weeks (10 days) to four weeks (20 days). The City will continue to advance this issue through intergovernmental collaboration with both the federal and provincial governments. As co-chair of the Provincial Municipal Social Assistance and Employment Committee, Toronto Employment and Social Service division continues to advance, with the Province, Council's endorsed position on the adequacy of social assistance rates and to contribute to the development of an implementation plan for the Province's Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal plan. As part of the Province's High Priority Communities Initiative, Toronto Employment and Social Services successfully advocated to the Province for emergency funding to reduce COVID testing hesitancy for residents who are not eligible for provincial and federal emergency funding. This funding is currently being delivered in partnership with Social Development, Finance and Administration through a community organization. Toronto Employment and Social Services continues to monitor the impact of changes to the federal Employment Insurance system on City residents.

### *Skills Training/Labour Market Opportunities*

The City is taking several steps to advance *Opportunities* report recommendation 39, on establishing 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

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expanding job opportunities for youth, women and gender-diverse peoples, especially for Black and Indigenous populations and people from vulnerable populations.

The Youth Development Unit is in the planning stages of the Build Back Better, Youth Employment Initiative to enhance the City's effort to support Toronto's most vulnerable neighbourhoods and youth (ages 15-29) affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative will provide enhanced employment pathways and training opportunities for youth. The target group of this initiative is youth identifying as Indigenous or part of equity seeking groups (i.e. Black and racialized communities, newcomers, and refugees, LGBTQ2S+ communities, persons with disabilities, persons with low income/in receipt of social assistance). One of the pre-employment and training programs is funded with support from the federal government.

There are also two relevant interventions that the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit has undertaken:

- As of February 2021, the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit has been supporting Black Urbanism TO in its efforts to secure Metcalf Foundation's Local Inclusive Economies Opportunity Fund with respect to the commercial community land trust that the Foundation is looking to establish. Black Urbanism TO is a member of the Mayor's Roundtable on Black Business, which serves as a convening space to encourage collaboration between the City of Toronto and Black business communities by identifying successes, best and promising practices, and sharing obstacles and lessons learned with respect to supporting Black business and entrepreneurship in Toronto. The outcome of this effort won't be known until late spring 2021.
- As of January 2021, the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit has been supporting the Black Business and Professional Association and Ryerson University's Diversity Institute's efforts to secure funding from the Government of Canada's Black Entrepreneurship Program to establish the Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub. The Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub is a research, knowledge translation, incubation and advisory initiative to advance the opportunities and reduce the barriers faced by Black businesses, business professionals and those aspiring to be. The Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit is supporting the Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub in knowledge mobilization from the research that is generated by the project and assists in amplifying the Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub's outreach and consultation efforts with Toronto's diverse Black communities.

The People and Equity Division and Indigenous Affairs Office are also advancing a number of initiatives to support women and youth leaders from Indigenous, Black and equity-seeking populations. Initiatives include an Indigenous Youth Research Associate Program to employ youth researchers who can help break down silos and increase interdivisional collaboration (increasing number of Indigenous Youth Research Associates from one to 11 in 2021); a Work Based Learning internship partnership with Miziwe Biik, Targeted Emerging Leaders programs for Black employees; and expanding the City's Summer Internship Program to provide opportunities for Black youth to find meaningful City employment.



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The City will continue to advance this issue through intergovernmental collaboration with both the federal and provincial governments.

### **F. Financial Sustainability**

#### *Advances in Procurement*

PMMD continues to implement recommendation 77 of the *Opportunities* report by modernizing the City's procurement processes and systems, including procurement solutions for Toronto-based companies. By fully implementing Category Management over the next 15 months, the City will transition from a transactional and reactive approach to a more strategic forward-looking way of procuring goods and services. The relationship with suppliers will be proactive and value driven, while partnering with City Divisions in meeting their service delivery requirements.

To supplement the above, procurement systems will be upgraded such that they support the over-arching shift to strategic procurement and automate transactional processes. Modules, such as Contract Management, Supplier Lifecycle Performance and Procure to Pay, will be implemented in a phased approach and will be completed by Q4 2022.

The financial benefits of this strategic and technology-enabled procurement are estimated to be \$110 million, which includes cost saving and avoidance of future costs.

PMMD is also working closely with SDFA to review and enhance the City's Social Procurement Program with a focus on improving access to the procurement process for black owned and Indigenous owned businesses, and working closely with EED to implement a climate change lens into the procurement process as part of an overall Procurement Directive initiative. Both aspects are intended to help improve environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles in procurement.

In addition, the City continues to respond to the on-going demands Covid-19 has placed on procurement. For instance, the City has successfully established partnerships with a number of vendors to protect the supply of PPE for City services and staff. The City is also receiving funding from the Province to study a more regional approach to procurement for common goods, such as PPE, to determine more efficient and effective ways to approach procurement. The work on providing business and non-profit agencies with access to PPE sources through the City is in the initial phases (Recommendation #79).

#### *Asset Management*

Recommendation 80 of the *COVID-19: Impact and Opportunities report*, to take an enterprise-wide horizontal approach to capital budgeting and assessment of owned assets be taken, will be completed as part of City's requirement to develop an asset management plan for municipal infrastructure (Ontario Regulation 588/17) and its work to implement a multi-year capital modernization plan. Extensive work is currently underway to develop a core asset management plan for water, wastewater, stormwater,

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roads, bridges and culverts by July 2022. Further, an extensive asset condition assessment of all assets will be completed by July 2025.

### *Small Business Support*

To support small businesses through the pandemic and to stimulate economic growth and job creation post-pandemic, the City adopted the following policies for the 2021 taxation year as part of its 2021 Tax Policies

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX20.5>):

- Limit tax increases for commercial, industrial and multi-residential property classes by capping taxes at 10 percent of the preceding year's annualized taxes (Recommendation #51); and
- Continuation of graduated tax rate bands for commercial properties, and the consideration of possible further tax rate reductions through a small business tax class that will be considered for 2022 (Recommendation #51).

Additionally, City Council at its meeting on February 2, 2021 Adopted EX20.4 Development Charges Policy Updates, including a development charges deferral program for non-profit long term care homes.

Looking ahead, we are making progress on the new special tax subclass for small businesses announced by the Province, as part of its November 5, 2020 Budget announcement (<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-229#BK5>). As directed by Council, staff will report to Council on the implementation of the small business tax subclass as soon as possible and no later than 2022. Options for a small business tax subclass remain pending the release of province regulations that will establish allowable eligibility parameters for the subclass.

Concurrently, we are investigating the options for implementing different development charges across the city, especially in areas experiencing slow growth. This will be considered as part of the City's development charges bylaw update that is expected to be completed in Q2 2022 (Recommendation #72).

## **G. A Well-Run City**

### *Diversity and Representation in Leadership and Decision Making*

The *Opportunities* report recommended the City enhance diversity and representation of Black and Indigenous people at decision making tables and senior leadership. The City's goal is to have a workforce that reflects the diversity of the City we serve. Through a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, the People and Equity Division promotes a structured and practical approach to increasing diversity and modelling excellent human resource and inclusive practices. People and Equity is also deploying initiatives aimed at increasing representation of talent from Black, Indigenous and other under-represented groups at all levels within the public services. The initiatives include building a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Team responsible for developing and implementing innovative approaches to sourcing diverse candidates and developing diverse talent already within the City. They will develop and implement corporate

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targeted programs e.g., programs for Black and Indigenous youth and for employees with disabilities.

The City is also developing a targeted emerging leaders programs for Black and Indigenous employees and Strengthening Communities of Inclusion such as the Employee Disabilities Network, Ambe Maamowisdaa Employee Circle and Black Staff Network. The Indigenous Affairs Office has also begun discussions with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council and the City Clerk's Office on ways to increase Indigenous voices at decision-making bodies at the City.

### *ModernTO and Remote Work*

Previous reports have updated City Council on progress made to support virtual work and services during the pandemic. In November 2020, The City of Toronto released the Emergency Remote Work Policy to respond to the immediate needs raised by COVID-19 to support employees while working remotely. Starting in early 2020, efforts have been undertaken to identify best practices in remote working from private and public sector organizations related to COVID-19 and longer-term strategies. The City anticipates having revised remote work guidelines in place in the summer of 2021.

### *Data, Insights and Research Coordination*

As mentioned in this report, Governance and Corporate Strategy in the City Manager's Office will review the City's engagement strategies and identify ways to increase public participation in decision making and better use data to inform research and insights. Council directed that this work prioritize engagement with Black, Indigenous and equity-seeking communities. This work is referenced in a City Manager's Office Budget Briefing Note (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/bu/bgrd/backgroundfile-163339.pdf>).

Through 2021 and 2022, staff will review engagement approaches, resources and best practices in the City and other municipalities and consult the public and community partners on how to enhance opportunities and the experience of participation. Staff will also explore opportunities to support engagement through strengthened sharing and use of data from City engagements, information management and research, building on the City's experience in the past year establishing research partnerships with academic and research institutions. The City Manager will present the results of this work and recommendations to Council in Q4 2022.

Also, Council directed the City Manager to develop a renewed research and data coordination strategy to prioritize better access, sharing and coordination of research and data to inform policy development, engagement and advice to Council. City divisions, agencies and partners will be engaged by Governance and Corporate Strategy to explore how we can support: i) access to critical data, ii) well-coordinated, corporate wide research and insights, and iii) clear, purposeful and timely information is made available to the public, senior leadership and City Council to support evidence-based reports, recommendations and decision-making.

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In November of 2021 City Council approved the Data for Equity Strategy which will support City divisions to collect, analyze, report and apply disaggregated population and place-based data to inform program planning and service delivery in support of the City's equity and prosperity goals

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX18.6>).

The Data for Equity Strategy includes a goal, objectives, guiding principles and guidelines on how City programs and services should collect, manage and share data that is broken down by socio-demographic groups such as Indigenous communities, racialized groups, gender identities, and neighbourhoods.

In the 2021 Budget, Council approved funding for the establishment of an Equity Unit within the People and Equity Division to support a phased implementation of the strategy. The implementation plan for Phase One includes pilot projects in existing programs to test and learn from the application of the guidelines in different program contexts.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the City Clerk's Office has used its networks of international municipalities to support response and recovery efforts. This network continues to meet virtually and exchange best practices, research and information among Toronto and cities around the world on COVID-related efforts, including emergency measures, vaccine rollout information, community engagement strategies, reopening plans and recovery initiatives. As of March 5, the City Clerk's Office has provided 24 general reports and 12 specific international jurisdictional scans to City divisions. This and other research conducted by City divisions will be better shared and coordinated through the renewed strategy.