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To: [Executive Committee](#)
Subject: EX22.1 - Submission for Executive Committee's meeting on Tues. March 30, 2021
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Attachments: [TORR Submission to City Exec Comm March 29 2021.pdf](#)

Please find attached our submission regarding EX22.1 COVID-19 Recovery and Rebuild Update.

Yours truly,

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SUBMISSION TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, CITY OF TORONTO
EX22.1 COVID-19 Recovery and Rebuild Update

March 29, 2021

The Toronto & York Region Labour Council was pleased to see Toronto City Council adopt at its October 2020 meeting a quarterly reporting schedule on progress in addressing recovery and rebuild plans.

Just as City Council and staff have experienced COVID-19 circumstances in various ways, so have our members and their families, as well as other workers in every sector. Some have worked from home for more than a year now while others have lost their jobs in sectors hard hit by the pandemic. Still others have heroically carried on as essential workers in a range of occupations, many of them facing low wages, housing instability, crowded transit, and daily risks to their health and safety on the job.

We must always keep that in mind when we plan and implement policies and programs. As has been pointed out by many, Toronto began the COVID-19 pandemic with serious inequalities and fiscal challenges already in place. The Labour Council continues to call for a plan that avoids a K-shaped recovery, so we can build back better for all, not just for a few. Alongside many other civil society organizations, we hold the City and all public decision-makers accountable for truly building back better.

In your response to the TORR update, here are some broad principles we call on the City's Executive Committee to recommend to Toronto City Council:

- Put people first, particularly those facing racism and other forms of inequality. Improve supports and benefits for workers, their families and their communities; and ensure these communities are engaged and consulted in recovery and rebuild. Successful recovery and rebuilding will require going well beyond the TORR Report's 83 recommendations, and establishing a concrete recovery vision and strategy.
- Clearly identify the City's finance and staffing capacity and gaps so Torontonians know whether the big deliverables can be met despite a high level of retirements and ongoing position vacancies
- Be transparent about the City's intergovernmental strategy and set priorities for those relationships so it is clear to Torontonians and other levels of government what we are asking for
- Protect and enhance high quality public services and engage in a public model of economic development rather than relying on the private sector to the extent we do
- Recognize the role of the non-profit sector in supporting communities and advocating alongside City Council for support by other levels of government
- Effectively fund and push forward on already-approved strategies. For example Transform TO will help to ensure the recovery achieves climate goals and builds resiliency and equity
- Require that quarterly reporting provides clear details and evidence of *outcomes*, and is also forward looking. A goal has not been met when only the first step has been taken. Asking another level of government for funding to address a priority should not be considered a completed task until the funding has been secured or an alternative agreed on.

- The City must continue to advocate for economic justice – whether that is in the form of paid sick days, living wages or regulations responding to the growth of precarious work. Being the “child poverty capital of Canada” means we must ask hard questions about the racialization of poverty as well as the role of wealthy companies operating on a business model based on poverty wages.
- The City must deepen its commitment to dismantling systemic racism in every part of society.

We recognize the challenges under which the City of Toronto has worked to address the pandemic, plan for recovery, and carry on some programming, all in an uncertain fiscal and economic environment and while much of our society is still experiencing degrees of lockdown. Thank you for that work.

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