
2024 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy

Issue/Background:

- In [2015](#), City Council approved the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy, a 20-year strategy to address immediate needs, create pathways to prosperity, and drive system change for those living in poverty in Toronto.
- As directed by Council in [2015](#), S DFA provides a yearly update on progress on the PRS to Council through the budget process.
- The Poverty Reduction Strategy [Second Term Action Plan](#) contains 17 City Council-approved recommendations linked to a set of 32 actions to be carried out over consecutive four-year terms of Council.
- Guided by the Poverty Reduction Strategy's recommendations, this plan has six thematic areas to advance equity, opportunity and prosperity for all Toronto residents: Housing Stability, Service Access and Coordination, Transportation Equity, Food Access, Quality Jobs & Liveable Incomes, and Systemic Change
- Beginning with the 2022 Budget, the City began to identify and report on overall spending within the base operating budget on programs and initiatives that support low-income residents and advance poverty reduction goals.
- The City of Toronto is currently finalizing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Third Term Action Plan (2023-2026), which will be presented to City Council in the first quarter of 2024.
 - As part of this report, an update on the achievements of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Second Term Action Plan (2019-2022) will be provided.

Key Points:

Current Context

- According to the most recent Census data, there were 363,955 persons, or 13.2% of the population in Toronto, with an income below [Statistics Canada's Low-Income Measure After Tax](#) (LIM-AT) in 2021. The threshold for LIM-AT in 2020 for the Toronto region (Census Metropolitan Area) was calculated to be \$53,005 for a family of four.ⁱ
 - This data indicates that Toronto continues to have a higher proportion of low-income individuals than Canada (11.1%), Ontario (10.1%) and the rest of the regions in the GTHA (the other Census Divisions in the GTHA had an average of 8.1%).

- Poverty disproportionately affects Indigenous, Black, racialized, and equity-deserving communities, including women, 2SLGBTQ+, people with disabilities, people that experience homelessness, newcomers, and residents with precarious immigration status.
 - Statistics Canada (2021) data indicates that the prevalence of low income was higher among racialized populations (10.4%) compared to non-racialized populations (6.6%).
 - Similarly, immigrants in Toronto have a higher rate of low-income status (8.7%) than non-immigrants (6.3%) and newcomers (immigrants arriving in the period 2016-2021) have a higher rate than both (11.9%).

2024 Operating Budget

The 2024 Operating Budget contains \$97.061 million (gross) and \$94.768 million (net) in new and enhanced service priorities to advance the Poverty Reduction Strategy. These investments include:

- Expanding the Toronto Community Crisis Service Program citywide.
- Phased implementation of the Open Hours Plan for Toronto Public Libraries.
- Investing in safely run Multi-Tenant housing and supporting renters across the city under the new regulatory framework taking effect on March 31, 2024.
- Increasing the number of Rent-Geared-to Income (RGI) homes to make rent affordable for households.
- Providing additional shelter bed capacity for refugees and asylum seekers.
- Enhancing supports to those who are unhoused or lacking permanent housing.

Table 1. 2024 Operating Budget New and Enhanced Services Priorities

Service	In \$ Thousands		
	Gross	Revenue	Net
Fire Services	181.4	-	181.4
Staff Increase for Multi-Tenant Housing Regulatory Framework	181.4	-	181.4
Housing Secretariat	9,704.5	2,293.3	7,411.2
Increase RGI Units	3,524.3	-	3,524.3
Multi-Tenant Homes Renovation and Retrofit Program	2,000.0	-	2,000.0
Community Housing Anchor Agency Supports	2,000.0	500.0	1,500.0
Homelessness Prevention Program	1,511.7	1,511.7	-
Renter Strategy Team	387.0	-	387.0
Business Transformation	281.6	281.6	-
Social Development, Finance & Administration	12,863.1	-	12,863.1
Toronto Community Crisis Service Expansion City-wide	12,863.1	-	12,863.1
Toronto Public Library	2,449.9	-	2,449.9
Open Hours Implementation Plan – Phase 1 (2024)	2,449.9	-	2,449.9

Service	In \$ Thousands		
	Gross	Revenue	Net
Toronto Shelter and Support Services	71,862.5	-	71,862.5
2024 Plan for Winter Response and Warming Centers	30,728.0	-	30,728.0
Refugee Response - Add 250 Beds to Shelter Capacity for Asylum Seekers	26,787.1	-	26,787.1
Support Increase in Demand - Add 200 new Refugee shelter beds	8,594.7	-	8,594.7
2024 Implementation of the City's Encampment Strategy – Addressing Ombudsman Recommendations	3,741.1	-	3,741.1
Implementation of Staff Equity and Wellness Programs and Initiatives for TSSS Staff	2,011.6	-	2,011.6
Grand Total	97,061.4	2,293.3	94,768.2

2024 Base Budget Investments in Poverty Reduction and Amelioration

To accomplish this, the City collects data on the amount of spending directed to support residents experiencing poverty in two distinct categories:

<p>Core Poverty Reduction Programs: Systems, programs and support that have a direct impact on whether and how residents experience poverty in Toronto.</p>	<p>Other Poverty Reduction Actions: Programs that provide broad services to the public but have specific programs and supports that have an explicit intention to support residents experiencing poverty in Toronto.</p>
<p>Examples include, Children's Services (Childcare subsidy) Economic Development & Culture (Community Economic Development Toolkit) Housing Secretariat (Rent Bank) Toronto Shelter and Support Services (Additional shelter beds) Social Development, Finance and Administration (Toronto Community Crisis Services) Toronto Employment Services (Pathways to financial empowerment)</p>	<p>Examples include, Association of Community Centres (Access to subsidized space) City Manager's Office (Indigenous PRS) Parks Forestry & Recreation (Welcome Policy) Toronto Fire Services (Multi-Tenant Housing Regulatory Program) Toronto Paramedic Services (Community Paramedicine Program) Toronto Public Library (Community librarian team)</p>

The data collection and analysis reveals that the 2024 Base Operating Budget collectively invests \$4.219 billion (gross) and \$1.252 billion (net) in core programs related to poverty amelioration, and \$537.6 million (gross) and \$173.4 million (net) in other programs that support residents in

poverty. Significant proportions of these programs are mandated and funded by other orders of government.

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ⁱ City of Toronto. (2022, July 19). *City of Toronto*. <https://www.toronto.ca/>.
<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/9877-City-Planning-2021-Census-Backgrounder-Families-Hhlds-Marital-Status-Income.pdf>