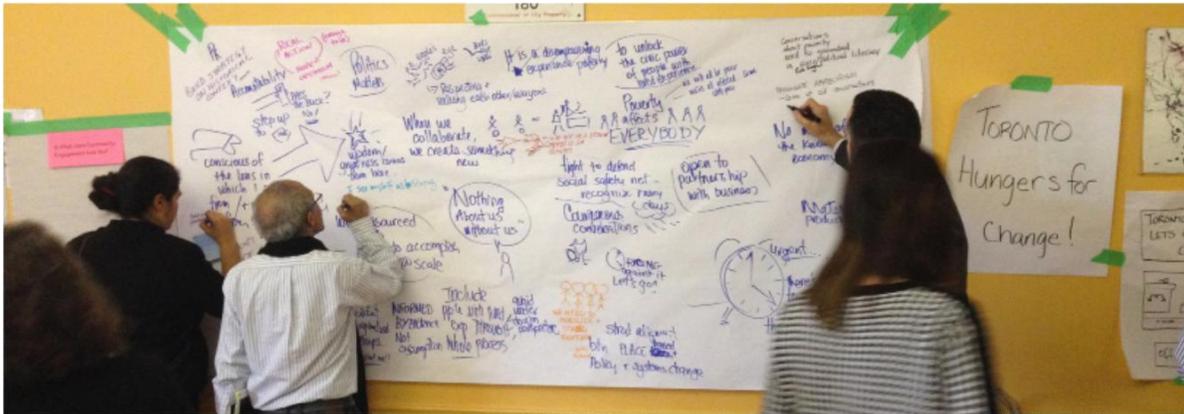# Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy (2015-2035)

Community Conversation Guide

∎∎ TORONTO

Location:_____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Number of Participants:_____

Please let us know if a Community Animator supported this event.

Name(s): _____

All worksheets must be received by October 5, 2018.

When completed, please submit your worksheets via email to prso@toronto.ca, by fax at 416-392-4976, or by mail or hand to Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, East Tower 14th Floor, M5H 2N2.

WORKSHEETS

The City of Toronto is developing the next four-year Poverty Reduction Strategy action plan (2019-2022). The Poverty Reduction Strategy contains 12 recommendations across five themes:

1. Housing Stability
2. Service Access and Coordination
3. Transportation Equity
4. Food Access
5. Quality Jobs and Liveable Incomes

There are five worksheets in this Community Conversation Guide. Use these worksheets to tell us what you think should be done over the next four years to achieve these recommendations. Please focus on any or all of the areas of importance to you.

Feel free to adjust the questions on these worksheets according to your needs and the needs of your community. Some questions may not be relevant to your priorities, and you may need to change the question in order to tell us what we need to hear. At the end of this guide there is a page where you can record any additional thoughts or recommendations not captured in the worksheets.

HOUSING STABILITY

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Recommendations

1. Improve the quality of all affordable housing
2. Assist low-income individuals and families to secure and maintain affordable housing
3. Increase the supply of affordable housing

Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2018 plans

In 2018, the City will address the quality of rental housing through the continued implementation of Rent-SafeTO, a bylaw and pro-active enforcement program focused on ensuring that by-law requirements and property standards are met in rental apartment buildings across Toronto.

The City will continue to pursue its annual targets of creating 1,000 new affordable rental and 400 new affordable ownership homes. New affordable rental homes will be approved through the second annual Open Door Affordable Housing Program Call for Applications. Federal, provincial, and City investments will be dedicated to new supportive homes for people living on low income.

Toronto will work with its government partners to implement the new federal National Housing Strategy and the provincial Fair Housing Plan.

Funding of $160 million requested by TCH was recently approved in the 2018 Budget. This funding will enable TCH to address its state of good repair backlog and prevent permanent unit closures. City staff will report back in 2019 on a permanent funding model for TCH.

For the #TacklePovertyTO Speaker Series in March-April 2018, the City of Toronto prepared a Policy Back-grounder to inform discussion on this theme. Please find the document and raw notes from the discussion at www.toronto.ca/povertyreduction.

TORONTO

HOUSING STABILITY

1. What can be done to make it possible for more low income people to move out of the shelter system and into transitional and supportive housing?

2. How can the City better address the quality of housing for people with low incomes?

3. What can the City do to substantially increase the number of affordable housing units of all types across Toronto?

4. What one idea or action would you like to see included in the 2019-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan to improve housing stability?

TORONTO

SERVICE ACCESS AND COORDINATION

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Recommendations

4. Increase service access and availability

5. Improve access to high quality programs for children and youth

Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2018 plans

In 2018, the City will continue to implement its ambitious plan to increase access to child care. The plan will be rolled out over several years. The first target is, by 2019, to reduce parent fees by 10%, add 2,000 new physical child care spaces, and increase the wages of Registered Early Childhood Educators by 6%. Achieving these targets will depend on provincial and federal investments.

The City will also expand Sunday service to an additional 25 library branches serving current and former neighborhoods improvement areas (NIAs).

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SERVICE ACCESS AND COORDINATION

1. What can the City of Toronto, and its service delivery partners, do to make it easier to navigate the various services available to residents?

2. How can we build on lessons learned from community-led models of service user engagement in the design and location of services and apply those learnings across the City?

3. Are there ways that the City of Toronto can partner with other service providers to share spaces that currently exist and deliver programs more fairly and effectively across Toronto?

4. What one idea or action would you like to see included in the 2019-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan to improve service access and coordination?

TORONTO

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Recommendations

6. Make transit more affordable for low income residents

7. Improve transit services in the inner suburbs

Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2018 plans

In 2018, Council approved the first phase of the Fair Pass program as part of the 2018 Operating Budget process. This phase provides the reduced fare to city residents receiving support from Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program. This first phase of implementation began on April 4, 2018.

The second phase will extend eligibility to residents receiving housing supports or child care fee subsidies, while the third phase provides reduced fares to all other Toronto residents living with an income below the Low Income Measure +15% threshold. These phases are expected to commence in 2019 and 2020 respectively, contingent on funding from City Council.

City staff will also develop and implement a robust evaluation program of phase one to inform the design of subsequent phases. The evaluation will provide more information on the real impacts and benefits of the program on low-income residents.

Transit equity is also about availability. With that in mind, the TTC has started developing an equity assessment tool to ensure the needs of low-income riders and other transit-dependent groups inform all decisions about proposed changes to routes.

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1. How can the Fair Pass Program be improved? In what other ways can the City support price equity for transit users, and how should that be funded? Will this require advocating to other orders of government?

2. How can the City address inequities in transit service planning? What can the City do to meet the needs of low-income neighbourhoods that are currently transit deserts?

3. What can we do to ensure that active transportation options are widely available to low-income residents? What are other barriers to accessing forms of transit faced by low-income Torontonians?

4. What one idea or action would you like to see included in the 2019-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan to improve transportation equity for people living on low incomes?

FOOD ACCESS

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Recommendations

8. Eliminate hunger

9. Increase access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food

Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2018 plans

Toronto Public Health, through the Toronto Food Strategy, will continue to implement and, if successful, expand Community Food Works for Newcomer Settlement to all newcomer groups, and will work with the TFPC and the Toronto Agricultural Program on a work plan for the expansion of urban agriculture. The TFS is also developing a prototype project for a social supermarket, where people on low income will be able to shop for quality food at deep discounts. Some of this food supply will include surplus food from manufacturers and producers. As well, the City will monitor emerging Provincial and Federal food strategies for opportunities for intergovernmental advocacy and alignment.

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FOOD ACCESS

1. How can the City improve access to services that address residents' food needs and provide stabilization supports? What role should other levels of government play? What role should other stakeholders play (community agencies, farmers, etc.)?

2. What supports do low income communities need to better access existing municipal resources and services around food, and advocate more effectively?

3. What would make it easier for people to start community gardens or small-scale food enterprises?

4. What would you like to see in the 2019-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan to increase access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food for residents living on low incomes?

TORONTO

QUALITY JOBS AND LIVEABLE INCOMES

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Recommendations

10. Improve the quality of and access to income supports

11. Create employment opportunities for low-income groups with high unemployment rates

12. Improve the quality of jobs

Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2018 plans

In 2018, the Poverty Reduction Strategy will be launching a pilot project to explore how the City can promote decent work standards in its contracts by ensuring fair scheduling and equitable hiring practices that are not directly addressed by Bill 148 or the City's Fair Wage Policy.

Additionally, the City will explore how a Community Benefits Framework can best be implemented. The City's Community Benefits Framework will build on existing levers, such as Section 37 of the Planning Act, the Social Procurement Program, and Build Toronto projects to create mechanisms for the City to achieve social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities impacted by proposed development and infrastructure projects.

Over the next two years, the City will also be building on the momentum of its AnchorTO Network to connect anchor institutions with local community economic development hubs and collectively implement inclusive economic development initiatives.

These initiatives have the potential to make a significant difference in the quality of life for Torontonians on low-income and income support. However, major gaps remain. Going forward, there is an opportunity to identify specific, concrete, achievable initiatives that will fill these gaps, and scale up practices that are already showing meaningful progress in supporting quality jobs and livable wages.

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TORONTO

QUALITY JOBS AND LIVEABLE INCOMES

1. How can the City maximize the value of its economic development partnerships by targeting residents who are currently the most disconnected from the workforce?

2. How can the City broaden the number of businesses, public institutions, and community partners engaged in increasing the number of quality job opportunities for residents who are currently unemployed?

3. As a Community Benefits Framework is considered, what role should the City play in securing community benefits outcomes in the context of private, non-profit or institutional sector developments?

4. What one idea or action would you like to see included in the 2019-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan to improve access to quality jobs and livable incomes?

TORONTO

HAVE YOUR SAY

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Thank you very much for your submission. All of your comments will be reviewed by the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy Office to inform the next phase of the Strategy. The raw notes from all Community Conversation Guides will be published online, and the 2019-2022 term action plan will be public when it goes before Toronto City Council in early 2019.

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