

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Inclusive Entrepreneurship
Opportunities Roundtable
December 14th, 2022,
2-3:30pm**



Summary Report by the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre

BACKGROUND

The [Jane Finch Initiative](#) is about planning for the future of the area and how best to leverage the investment in light rail transit (LRT) for the benefit of local communities. It is a collaborative community planning exercise in 'Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek' and 'Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights' (see [Neighbourhood Profiles](#)), centred on the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.

The initiative involves three integrated streams of work:

- 1) **Comprehensive engagement** (ongoing)
- 2) A **community development plan** including a local economic opportunities plan;
- 3) An update to the **land use planning framework**.

The City is working in collaboration with the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre who are supporting community engagement and facilitating community consultations to collect feedback.

MEETING SUMMARY

On December 7th, 2022, the Jane Finch Initiative Inclusive Economic Opportunities Roundtable was hosted by the Jane Finch Community and Family (JFCF) Centre with support from the City of Toronto. This consultation is part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement stream and it was held online over Zoom. The agenda and event materials can be viewed in Appendix 1 on page 65.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Propose short, medium, and long-term actions on inclusive employment opportunities based on the Ideas Report and associated engagement sessions.
- Receive feedback from members on the proposed actions.

ATTENDEES:

- 3 JFCF centre staff, Clara Stewart-Robertson, Denelle Carvalho
- 4 City of Toronto Staff, Leah Birnbaum, Dan Rosen, Jedrick So, John Smith
- 17 Roundtable members, Ibrahim Mohamed, Jackson O. Igbinosun, Kevin Klayman, Taejah Noble, Mike Elliott, Kemisha Thomas, Olu Villasa, Abishak Jeyaseelan, Saher Munir, Afreen Jeelani, Tajiio Smith, Butterfly GoPaul, Troy Budhu, Byron Gray, Barry Rieder, Corina Carvallo, Anna-Kay B.

HOW WE ENGAGED

- Denelle Carvalho shared welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement.
- Dan Rosen shared a presentation on the proposed actions for inclusive entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Attendees provided feedback on the proposed actions.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes the summaries of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting.

- Question: Are there any provisional spaces in the neighbourhood for community organizations to engage with entrepreneurs and businesses? As a leader of a community organization which offers support and advice to entrepreneurs, I often have to hold meetings and engagement sessions in food courts because I do not have access to reliable meeting space.
 - Response from City staff: There is not a clear process for the City to make new engagement spaces available, however, the TESS location in Yorkgate mall and the library are potential meeting spaces.
- Comment: One issue among food business owners is that obtaining food service permits is challenging. An issue among many entrepreneurs is the need for more early business development grants. We should factor development grants for startups and entrepreneurs into our policy development.
 - Response from City staff: Staff will follow up on these topics directly in the new year. Food businesses are important to the community for various reasons, and this topic touches on many themes in the Jane Finch Initiative. Enterprise Toronto provides one-on-one consultation and other resources, so part of the challenge is connecting entrepreneurs to existing resources.
- Comment: There is a lot of support and opportunities for entrepreneurs in the City, but it is hard to find out about these and access them in Jane and Finch. The City can promote awareness of these support, for example by providing tickets for BIPOC students in Jane and Finch to attend relevant events and networking conferences.
 - Response from City staff: The small business forum is an example of an event where the City can find and encourage delegates to attend, or sponsor delegates in some cases. The City may also be able to do this with other conferences.
- Comment: Some existing grants are helpful, such as the Starter Company Plus Grant. the City should create more grants like this which are available to people

who are just beginning their businesses. Pitch contents may also be a good way to encourage innovation in the inner suburbs.

- Comment: The proposed actions primarily focus on food and financial spaces, but we should also include opportunities in housing and other sectors. We could also use terms like “social sector” instead of “social enterprise” to include more entrepreneurs.
 - Response from City staff: What language would be preferred over social enterprise?
 - Response from participant: The term “social entrepreneurs” encompasses a broader range of businesses. The term social sector may also work, and will include nonprofits.
- Comment: Many of the barriers entrepreneurs face need to be addressed urgently. We should increase the amount of short term goals by testing feasibility of middle and long term goals in the short term.
- Comment: Is the City considering making programs and support for entrepreneurs geographically limited to Jane and Finch?
 - Response from City staff: We are not considering changing protocols for any formalized policies, like the social procurement policy, but this may be possible in the future.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

2:00 Participants Join
2:05 Welcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome <p>*Begin recording</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land acknowledgement, agenda, brief introductions [Denelle]
2:10 Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 minutes: Updates from roundtable members (<i>what have you been working on?</i>) [All]
2:20 Presentation and Discussion - Action on Entrepreneurship Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phasing, ideas report directions, short, medium, and long-term actions [Dan]• Proposed actions and feedback [All]
3:20 Closing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closing notes and next steps [Denelle]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Brief recap○ Honorarium process