

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Inclusive Employment
Opportunities Roundtable
December 7th, 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 6.

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, Amadeo Ventura, Denelle Carvalho
- 3 City of Toronto Staff, Leah Birnbaum, Dan Rosen, Jedrick So.
- 14 Roundtable members, Elena Jara, Kevin Klayman, Mike Elliot, Shenali Don, Abishak Jeyaseelan, Anna-Kay Brown, Byron Gray, Barry Rieder, Kemisha Thomas, Saher Munir, Troy Budhu, Tajiio Smith Mc-Farlane, Afreen Jeelani, Stephanie Lucas.

HOW WE ENGAGED

- Denelle Carvalho shared welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement.
- Dan Rosen shared a presentation on the proposed actions for inclusive employment 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: How have employers been engaged thus far, and how can we include employers in two-way engagement moving forward? There may be issues with the proposed recommendations that employers would be able to flag.
 - Response from City staff: As a part of the engagement process, a survey was delivered to over 800 businesses in the study area, but the City received very few responses. The councillor's office has also set up meetings with potential BIA members. These meetings have been well-attended, and this type of meeting may be the best way to consult with local businesses in the future.
- Question: Who will be the stakeholders involved in the next inclusive economic opportunities meeting? Some people who are involved in entrepreneurship in the community are not in the room.
 - Response from City staff: The same people invited to the Inclusive Employment Opportunities meeting have been invited to the Inclusive Entrepreneurship Meeting. We are open to expanding the stakeholder list if attendees have any suggestions.
- Comment: A tax incentive for businesses who engage in the community could encourage more participation from business owners and create employment opportunities.
 - Response from City staff: The City has tax rebates, but these processes often require a lot of administration and follow up to ensure that businesses uphold the terms of the rebate.
- Comment: A local advisory group could be funded by the City as a medium to review the hiring practices of local businesses.
- Comment: Some of the proposed actions assume a BIA model, in contradiction to the feedback shared in previous engagement sessions that the BIA model is not appropriate for Jane and Finch.
- Comment: Many of the plans for Jane and Finch (such as increasing housing density and building the LRT) will benefit the city as a whole. However, the proposed actions for employment opportunities seem to be geographically constrained to the study boundary. We should also be looking at ways for the growth and economic opportunities of the city to be leveraged to support

employment opportunities for residents in neighbourhood improvement areas, including those in Jane and Finch. For example, by incentivising city-wide nonprofits and business partners to hire from NIAs.

- Response from City staff: Although a lot of the proposed actions are within the study boundary, many of the useful policy proposals will be a part of broader approaches.
- Comment: Interested in discussing potential mandated hiring commitments in sectors of work that will benefit from development in neighbourhood improvement areas, such as insurance and real estate, architecture, and construction. Local employment is important, but having worked in a BIA, local hiring will not be a primary goal to BIAs.
- Question: The provincial government is pushing for rapid housing development. Is it possible that this secondary plan will be bypassed or ignored in the push for rapid housing development?
 - Response from City staff: Provincial bills are unlikely to impact the economic development theme (which relates to supporting job seekers and entrepreneurs and increasing access to key goods and services). However, land use policies in the secondary plan may be affected. City planning is concerned about changes to the rental replacement policy, which is a significant tool for preserving affordable housing.
- Question: Are community benefits at risk of being lost due to the provincial legislation?
 - Response from City staff: The City and its agencies has traditionally been solely responsible for providing community benefits, including hiring commitments, through the Community Benefits Unit.
- Comment: Inclusive economic opportunities should not necessarily be paired with development because we should not be waiting for development to create economic opportunities. We need to think about people and opportunities today, not only in the context of long-term development.
 - Response from City staff: The reason we focus on economic opportunities through the development process is because the City has the most leverage through the regulation of land, so the development process is an opportunity point.
- Comment: It will be useful to have a clear summary of what the issues are, what the City can address through policies and programs, and what the City cannot address.
 - Response from City staff: Identifying community needs and addressing gaps is an important thing for the City to do as an ally.

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 Employment 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○ December 14th meeting