

Circular Economy Road Map

Phase 4 Report

City of Toronto

December 16, 2025

Note: This report was published in December 2025, but covers work completed from July-October 2025

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1. Executive Summary

The City of Toronto (the City) is committed to developing multiple strategies to address its growing landfill waste challenge, going beyond recycling to rethink how products, buildings — even cities — are designed and used from the beginning to extend their useful life for as long as possible. This multi-faceted approach will show how Toronto's residents, businesses, and the City can take practical steps to think differently about waste, helping us reduce waste, address climate change, save money, spark innovation, and create jobs.

Overview

The City's Circular Economy Road Map (the Road Map) is a strategy, based on innovative circular economy approaches. It builds on several prior and related initiatives, such as the [Baselining for a Circular Toronto](#) study (the *Baselining Study*), [TransformTO Net Zero Strategy](#), and [Long-term Waste Management Strategy](#), towards the aspirational goal of becoming the first circular city in Ontario. The Circular Economy Road Map is a City-wide document that guides every Division. Ultimately, the Circular Economy Road Map will help enable the City to achieve its desired circular goals and outcomes as well as related ambitions in terms of decarbonization, preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, economic prosperity, and social well-being, while simultaneously addressing historical inequities and Toronto's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The term “circular economy” refers to a society-wide approach to production and consumption that aims to eliminate landfill waste and maximize resources by recovering as much as possible from used products. It is a system where materials never become waste — instead, they remain in circulation through processes like redesign, reduction, reuse, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing, repurposing, recycling, and recovery.¹

A circular economy goes well beyond traditional recycling or waste collection. It involves the innovative design of products and places, material efficiency, regenerative practices, and sustainable consumption. It also includes minimizing carbon emissions and other adverse environmental impacts to preserve and strengthen the resilience of natural systems.

Purpose of the Phase 4 Report

The City's Circular Economy Road Map project was made up of four phases, which are described in Section 2. This report provides an overview of the activities and outcomes of Phase 4: Develop Strategy, Implementation, and Monitoring Plan (the *Phase 4 Report*). It provides a high-level overview of the jurisdictional analysis that was conducted to inform the road map and outlines key takeaways from external engagement. This *Phase 4 Report* follows the previously released [Phase 1 Report](#), [Phase 2 Report](#), and [Phase 3 Report](#), which provide additional background and context.

¹ World Economic Forum (May 2022). ‘The circular economy: how it can lead us on a path to real change’, available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/the-circular-economy-how-it-can-be-a-path-to-real-change/>

About this Document

This Phase 4 Report was published in December 2025; however, it covers project activities that took place from July-October 2025. These activities informed the development of Toronto's 10-Year Circular Economy Road Map, [Circular Toronto](#), which was adopted by City Council in November 2025: [Agenda Item History - 2025.IE25.1](#).

This document is organized into seven sections:

1. The executive summary
2. A summary of the work completed on the Circular Economy Road Map project
3. An overview of the approach and methodology of the jurisdictional research conducted
4. A summary of the jurisdictional research findings
5. An overview of external engagement conducted in Phase 4
6. Key findings from engagement
7. Project methodology reflections
8. Acknowledgements

2. Project Overview

The Circular Economy Road Map is a 10-year strategy that identifies feasible circular solutions and actions that the public, community-wide actors, industry, and the City can take to enhance circularity across Toronto.

This work is an inter-divisional initiative that is co-led by the City's Environment, Climate & Forestry Division and Solid Waste Management Services Division.

Project Scope

To support its transition towards a circular economy, the City conducted a [Baselining Study](#) (the Study) in 2022. In addition to a community-wide focus, the Study identified three target sectors that could significantly enhance circularity in Toronto: the construction sector, food system sector, and waste management sector (herein referred to as the “target sectors”). These target sectors are the focus areas for the Circular Economy Road Map. Refer to the [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2 Reports](#) for additional information on the target sectors.

The Study also established a baseline level of circularity in Toronto by analyzing specific material flows in each of the target sectors. It identified opportunities for advancing circular economy practices and proposed a vision for a circular Toronto. Additionally, the Study set forth initial goals and indicators for each target sector and at a community-wide level, aiming to guide and evaluate the City's progress towards circularity. This work marked a key milestone in Toronto's journey toward a more sustainable and circular economy.

Project Workplan & Methodology

The workplan for developing the Circular Economy Road Map consists of four project phases:

- Phase 1 – Goal Setting
- Phase 2 – Issues and Opportunity Identification
- Phase 3 – Options Analysis
- Phase 4 – Develop Strategy, Implementation, and Monitoring Plan

Phase 1

Phase 1 took place between April and September 2024. The objective of this phase was to validate prior work by the City, including the *Baselining Study*. This involved inviting the participation of interested Toronto residents, businesses, and other actors engaged in the circular economy with the aim of refining the City's future-state circular vision and goals. Phase 1 involved:

- Holding a series of preliminary engagement activities with interested parties related to the circular economy in Toronto.
- Developing a draft set of guiding principles, goals, and indicators to help shape the development of the Circular Economy Road Map.

- Drafting a compelling circular economy change story that conveys to key interested parties that there is a need for the city to shift to a more circular economy.

For more information, refer to the [Phase 1 Report](#).

Phase 2

Phase 2 took place between September 2024 and January 2025 and focused on identifying current issues and opportunities across the target sectors. Phase 2 involved:

- Preparing sector-specific current state assessments to identify and analyze the specific factors that influence consumption and waste across the three target sectors.
- Completing comprehensive engagement sessions with interested parties within City Divisions, as well as industry, Indigenous businesses and organizations, community organizations, and residents.
- Evaluating the current challenges faced in Toronto to effectively articulate the existing barriers to achieving a circular economy.

For more information, refer to the [Phase 2 Report](#).

Phase 3

Phase 3 took place between January and June 2025 and focused on identifying potential focus areas and actions for the Road Map. Phase 3 involved:

- The development of a long list of opportunities and initiatives to include in the 10-year Circular Economy Road Map
- Gathering feedback on opportunities and initiatives for the Circular Economy Road Map through engagement with internal City Divisions and external interested parties across Toronto.

For more information, refer to the [Phase 3 Report](#).

Phase 4

Phase 4 of the Circular Economy Road Map took place from July to December 2025. Activities included:

- The development of the 10-year Circular Economy Road Map
- An implementation and monitoring plan to guide the City's transition towards a circular economy.

3. Jurisdictional Research

Overview

In Phase 4, the Project Team completed jurisdictional research to identify leading practices across key focus areas.

Approach & Methodology

As part of the development of the Road Map, jurisdictional research was conducted throughout each phase of the project. A long list of more than 100 municipalities was refined to focus on comparable cities, which included those with a population of approximately 500,000 or more and cities located in North America or Europe with circular economy strategies, programs, or initiatives. The final list included 28 large cities matching these criteria (see [Appendix](#)). The goal of the analysis was to understand how municipalities are integrating the circular economy into their policies, operations, and communities. Additionally, the analysis focused on leading practices, innovative approaches, and lessons learned that could guide Toronto's efforts to embed circularity into its own operations and services.

The jurisdictional research focused on how cities are advancing circular economy objectives across several key areas:

1. Raising awareness
2. Supporting businesses
3. Demonstrating leadership
4. Fostering community-level programs and partnerships
5. Leveraging regulatory and policy tools to enable change

In addition to publicly available information, the analysis was supplemented by interviews. Through these conversations, the Project Team gained firsthand insights into the strategies that have been most effective, what challenges cities encountered, and what lessons could be applied in the Toronto context. These discussions helped validate the research findings, add practical perspectives to the development of the Road Map, and create a deeper understanding of how cities can accelerate circular transitions in real-world settings.

The findings from jurisdictional analysis and engagement informed the strategic directions, priority actions, and implementation framework for Toronto's 10-Year Circular Economy Road Map.

4. Jurisdictional Insights

Overview

The key findings below outline how cities and municipalities around the world are advancing the circular economy through different approaches. In addition to government-led efforts, many municipalities collaborate with nonprofits, agencies in other levels of government, industry groups, and other organizations to help manage and administer projects and initiatives on behalf of the city or municipality. Example organizations include, ReLondon, Synergie Montréal, and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (see [Appendix](#)). These partnerships help cities deliver circular strategies and broaden impact. The findings below highlight initiatives that focus on raising awareness, supporting businesses, leading by example, engaging communities, and implementing policy and regulatory tools. Across these topic areas, the examples demonstrate how local governments can drive systemic change to create more sustainable, resource-efficient, and resilient urban economies.

Key findings

Raising awareness:

The jurisdictional scan found that raising awareness is a foundational strategy for advancing the circular economy across leading cities. While many people continue to associate circularity primarily with recycling, research shows that jurisdictions around the world are broadening this understanding — embracing a more transformative approach to how resources are designed, consumed, and managed. The circular economy challenges the traditional “take-make-dispose” model by emphasizing reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and regeneration.

The research indicates that cities are investing in initiatives that help individuals, businesses, and institutions build a clearer understanding of circularity and identify practical ways to participate. These efforts demonstrate how municipalities can play a pivotal role in shifting mindsets and building public engagement around the circular economy.

Table 1 outlines examples of leading practices in cities that have focused on raising awareness on the circular economy.

Table 1: Circular economy awareness initiatives

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Circular Munich Knowledge Hub	Munich	Germany	Circular Munich	A digital platform for bundling existing resources and information on the topic of Circular Economy and Circular Cities that includes easily accessible information on the circular economy, including educational information like Circularity 101, how to act in your daily life, events and learning opportunities, tools and more. ²
Eat Like a Londoner Campaign	City of London	England	ReLondon	A campaign empowering Londoners to cut the carbon impact of their food choices by reducing waste and eating more plant-based meals. Through behavioural nudges, it raises awareness, inspires sustainable habits, and demonstrates how small changes at home can save money and shrink your climate footprint. ³
Greenovate Boston Initiative	Boston	United States	City of Boston	An online platform that serves as Boston's hub for climate and environmental action. It connects residents and the City to collaborate on policies and programs, share ideas, and drive real progress. It provides resources, events, and practical tools so residents can cut waste, live sustainably, and support the City's circular economy and climate goals. ⁴
Zero Waste Scotland Communications Guidance	Multiple	Scotland	Zero Waste Scotland	A guide for local authorities to improve recycling and change consumer habits through effective communication. Used by cities like Glasgow and Aberdeen, it provides materials to raise awareness on recycling, teach proper recycling practices, and promote circular solutions. ⁵

² Circular Munich (July 2023). 'Intro into the CM Circular Economy Knowledge Hub', available at: <https://circular-munich.com/intro-knowledge-hub/>

³ Eat Like a Londoner (n.d.). 'Eat Like a Londoner', available at: <https://eatlikealondoner.com/>

⁴ Greenovate Boston (n.d.). 'Greenovate City of Boston', available at: <https://www.greenovateboston.org/about/>

⁵ Zero Waste Scotland (2012). 'Zero Waste Scotland Communications Guidance', available at: https://cdn.zerowastescotland.org.uk/managed-downloads/mf-p_nlch-o-1678199425d

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Circular Copenhagen Online Platform	Copenhagen	Denmark	City of Copenhagen	An online platform offering circular economy resources for residents, businesses, and community partners. It shares updates on City initiatives and aims to raise awareness while building innovative partnerships with key stakeholders to advance circular solutions. ⁶
Circular Economy Pop-up Events	Mississauga	Canada	City of Mississauga	As part of Circular Economy Month, the City hosts pop-up events to show residents how to reuse, recycle, and dispose of materials responsibly. Pop-ups highlight what the City is doing to build a circular economy and the simple steps residents can take to join in. ⁷

Supporting businesses:

The jurisdictional scan found that businesses are pivotal actors in advancing the circular economy, with the capacity to redesign products, processes, and value chains while developing innovative solutions to reduce waste and promote circularity. Research shows that municipalities can play an enabling role by providing financial incentives or grants, supporting collaboration platforms, addressing policy barriers, and amplifying the visibility of businesses that deliver innovative circular solutions. The findings indicate that supporting business-led innovation can accelerate the development of new materials, reverse logistics systems, and service-based business models.

Table 2 outlines examples of leading practices in cities where businesses have been supported in adopting circular approaches and driving innovation within their local economies.

⁶ Circular Copenhagen (n.d.). 'About Circular Copenhagen', available at: <https://circular.kk.dk/about>

⁷ City of Mississauga (October 2025). 'Give your items a second life during Circular Economy Month', available at: <https://www.mississauga.ca/city-of-mississauga-news/news/give-your-items-a-second-life-during-circular-economy-month/>

Table 2: Initiatives for circular business support

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Synergie Montréal	Montreal	Canada	Recyc-Québec	Synergie Montréal helps businesses shift to circular models and adopt sustainable practices. Over the past decade, it has supported nearly 2,300 companies and engaged more than 4,200 in building a resilient, innovative economy that reduces environmental impact. ⁸
Center for Circular Economy Innovation (CIEC)	Madrid	Spain	City of Madrid	A public-private hub for circular innovation led by the City of Madrid with partners and universities. It supports over 100 companies and has mentored more than 7,000 people, offering funding, tech support, and business guidance to drive sustainable growth. ⁹
XLabs	Auckland	New Zealand	Circularity	A circular economy training program for businesses, offering practical tools and strategies to embed circularity into procurement, supply chains, innovation, and waste reduction. Its modules cover smart materials, regenerative practices, circular business models, data flows, and more to help companies design closed-loop systems and meet evolving customer needs. ¹⁰
Circular Austin Showcase and Accelerator	Austin	United States	City of Austin	A 14-week program that helps entrepreneurs strengthen their circular business ideas. It is supported by the Circular Showcase, an expo for innovative circular products, run by the City of Austin. ¹¹
Circular Economy Grant	Calgary	Canada	City of Calgary	The CEG program provides \$5,000–\$25,000 in funding to non-profit organizations leading innovative projects at the top of the waste hierarchy.

⁸ Project Montreal (April 2025). 'The Circular Economy at the Heart of Development in the East End of Montreal', available at: <https://projetmontreal.org/en/news/the-circular-economy-at-the-heart-of-development-in-the-east-end-of-montreal>

⁹ Center for Circular Economy Innovation (n.d.). 'Center for Circular Economy Innovation', available at: <https://ciecircular.com/ciec-en/>

¹⁰ XLabs (n.d.). 'XLabs', available at: <https://www.xlabs.nz/>

¹¹ City of Austin (n.d.). 'Circular Austin Showcase and Accelerator Programs', available at: <https://www.austintexas.gov/circularshowcase>

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
				Launched in 2023, the program supports Calgary's transition to zero waste and a circular economy and will run through 2026. ¹²
Step Up to Net Zero (SUTNZ)	Glasgow	Scotland	Glasgow Chamber of Commerce	An annual program that trains locals as circularity specialists and places them in businesses through funded placements. Participating businesses receive a customized action plan to boost sustainability, with cities committing to adopt these plans within five months, supported by Circular Glasgow. ¹³
High Streets Beyond Waste Funding Program	London	England	ReLondon	ReLondon's High Streets Beyond Waste programme delivered financial support and upskilling to over 100 food & drink, retail and high-street businesses across 22 boroughs. Through hands-on workshops, businesses learned practical zero-waste ideas and received tailored action plans with quick wins and partner connections. Participants could also apply for small grants to trial reuse, rental, and repair initiatives. ¹⁴

Demonstrating leadership:

The jurisdictional scan found that municipal governments hold significant influence through their operations, procurement, and infrastructure decisions. Demonstrating leadership by integrating circular principles into municipal practices, such as sustainable procurement, material reuse, and resource-efficient public services, sets a visible example for communities and businesses to follow. Research shows that cities can leverage their influence, particularly their purchasing power, to create markets for recycled materials and circular products, while also piloting innovative technologies and waste diversion systems within public facilities. The findings indicate that city-led circular initiatives can reinforce

¹² City of Calgary (n.d.). 'Circular Economy Grant Program', available at: <https://www.calgary.ca/waste/circular-economy-grant-program.html>

¹³ Circular Glasgow (December 2024). 'Step Up to Net Zero Returns for Another Phase of Climate Action in Glasgow!', available at: <https://www.circularglasgow.com/step-up-to-net-zero-returns-for-another-phase-of-climate-action-in-glasgow/>

¹⁴ ReLondon (April 2025). 'Case study – High Streets Beyond Waste: Unlocking zero waste innovation in high street businesses', available at: <https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/case-study-high-streets-beyond-waste-unlocking-zero-waste-innovation-in-high-street-businesses>

credibility and accountability, showing that governments are prepared to “lead by example” and strengthen the business case for wider circular adoption.

Table 3 outlines examples of leading practices in that have demonstrated leadership by embedding circular principles within their own operations and projects.

Table 3: Lead-by-example circular initiatives

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Circular Construction Guidelines	New York City	United States	NYCEDC	A toolkit of circular design and construction strategies. Since 2024, all RFPs include guidelines requiring 75% diversion of construction and demolition waste, plus a strong push for reuse and low-carbon materials. ¹⁵
Paving the Way	Sydney	Australia	Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils	Sydney is turning waste into roads. Crushed glass is replacing sand in roads and footpaths, cutting landfill and conserving natural resources. The city is also trialling innovative materials like crumb rubber from old tires to push recycling even further. ¹⁶
Zero Waste Agreements	Phoenix	United States	City of Phoenix	Through this city program, zero waste businesses apply for an agreement to help Phoenix Public Works gather data on the reuse, recycling, or composting of materials that would otherwise end up in landfills. In return for this data,

¹⁵ New York City Economic Development Corporation (March 2024). 'Clean and Circular: Design & Construction Guidelines', available at: <https://edc.nyc/sites/default/files/2024-03/NYCEDC-Circular-Construction-Guidelines-03-07-2024.pdf>

¹⁶ Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (June 2020). 'Pave the Way', available at: <https://ssroc.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/RCG-RR18.2-200909-Paving-the-Way-Overview1.pdf>

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
				Public Works promotes these businesses through creative public outreach and education. ¹⁷
Adaptive Reuse	Chicago	United States	City of Chicago	The City of Chicago is revitalizing LaSalle Street, a historic financial corridor. Five adaptive reuse projects are transforming 1.6 million square feet of vacant space into 1,423 mixed-income apartments with neighborhood retail and amenities. This initiative is notable for repurposing a major business district into a mixed-use hub, addressing post-pandemic office vacancies and driving economic and community renewal in the Loop. ¹⁸
Material Re-Use for Waste Disposal and Recycling Centre	Zurich	Switzerland	City of Zurich	The city launched an architectural competition to build a waste disposal and recycling site using the highest possible proportion of reused building components. The new facility will reuse the existing hall structure, dismantling and rebuilding it with existing concrete slabs. ¹⁹
Helsinki Circular Economy Cluster Program	Helsinki	Finland	City of Helsinki	The program promotes circular economy in construction by conducting pilot projects, developing tools, and providing training to company employees. With the City of Helsinki acting as a major client, developer, and builder, the program embeds circular practices into every stage of the building process. ²⁰
Rebuild Hub	Vancouver	Canada	Habitat for Humanity	The Rebuild Hub is a deconstruction and salvage network in Greater Vancouver that channels all proceeds to Habitat for Humanity's affordable

¹⁷ City of Phoenix (n.d.). 'Zero Waste Businesses', available at: <https://www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/publicworks/business-sustainability/zero-waste-businesses.html>

¹⁸ City of Chicago (January 2025). 'A Vision for LaSalle Street', available at: https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/sites/lasalle-street/pdfs/LaSalle_VisioningDoc.pdf

¹⁹ Circular Cities Declaration (n.d.). 'Zurich, Switzerland', available at: <https://circularcitiesdeclaration.eu/cities/zurich>

²⁰ City of Helsinki (n.d.). 'Helsinki Circular Economy Cluster Program', available at: <https://testbed.hel.fi/en/circular-economy/helsinki-circular-economy-cluster-program/>

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
				housing projects. Partnering with the hub, the City of Vancouver sends materials from deconstruction sites for reuse, keeping valuable resources in circulation. ²¹

Fostering community-level programs and partnerships

The jurisdictional scan found that the circular economy thrives on collaboration and shared responsibility. Community-level programs and partnerships — between residents, non-profits, schools, and local businesses — translate circular principles into tangible local action. Initiatives such as repair cafés, sharing platforms, community composting, and material exchange networks not only reduce waste and resource use but also strengthen social connections and civic engagement. Research shows that municipalities can act as conveners and enablers by providing space, funding, and coordination to help scale these efforts. Embedding circularity within community culture builds local resilience, inclusivity, and pride in sustainable living. Findings indicate that these grassroots partnerships ensure circular transformation is not only driven by policy but also sustained through local ownership and participation.

Table 4 outlines examples of leading practices related to community-level programs and initiatives that advance circular economy principles.

Table 4: Community-level circular programs and initiatives

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Plant Chicago	Chicago	United States	Plant Chicago	Plant Chicago brings the circular economy to life for residents of the Back of the Yards neighborhood and nearby communities. Through farmers markets, indoor gardening, composting workshops, and community exchanges, it improves food access, promotes sustainable living, and supports local entrepreneurs. Hands-on programs and education empower residents,

²¹ Habitat for Humanity Greater Vancouver (n.d.). 'The Rebuild Hub', available at: <https://www.habitatgv.ca/rebuildhub>

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
				especially youth and low-income households, to adopt circular practices every day. ²²
City Pass	Amsterdam	Netherlands	City of Amsterdam	City Pass gives low-income residents in Amsterdam big savings on everyday essentials. As part of the city's circular economy push, holders get 40% off clothing repairs and discounts on appliance and electronics fixes, making reuse affordable and accessible. ²³
Repair Voucher	Vienna	Austria	Vienna Repair Network	Vienna makes repairs affordable. The city covers up to 50% of repair costs (up to €100 per bill) for items like electronics, textiles, and appliances. Residents can claim the subsidy through a repair voucher at the Vienna Repair Network, a group of 100+ specialist repair firms. ²⁴
Reuse Ottawa	Ottawa	Canada	Circular Innovation Council	Residents can borrow reusable containers from participating restaurants and grocery stores at no cost and return them within 14 days. By partnering with major grocery chains and restaurants, this initiative makes reuse simple and accessible for everyone. This pilot is a collaborative initiative led by Circular Innovation Council, supported by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the City of Ottawa. ²⁵
Food Waste Diversion	Paris	France	City of Paris	Paris is making food waste sorting easy. Collection points are being added to public spaces and food markets. In addition, 500 Trilib' (waste sorting) stations across the city will include food waste modules, giving every Parisian a sorting option within a 3-minute walk from home. ²⁶

²² Plant Chicago (n.d.). 'Plant Chicago', available at: <https://www.plantchicago.org/>

²³ City of Amsterdam (n.d.). 'Policy: Circular economy', available at: <https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/policy/sustainability/circular-economy/>

²⁴ Smart City Vienna (n.d.). 'Repair, Not Replace', available at: <https://smartcity.wien.gv.at/en/22634/>

²⁵ Reuse Ottawa (n.d.). 'Reuse Ottawa', available at: <https://reuseottawa.ca/>

²⁶ City of Paris (June 2025) 'Paris Climate Action Plan 2024-2030', available at: <https://cdn.paris.fr/paris/2025/06/25/plan-climat-en-9E8O.pdf>

Leveraging regulatory and policy tools to enable change

The jurisdictional scan found that municipal policy and regulatory frameworks are powerful tools for scaling the circular economy. Municipalities can apply regulatory and planning mechanisms, such as waste bylaws, zoning incentives, and green building standards, to enable circular innovation. These tools can help reduce waste, encourage reuse and repair, and stimulate local markets for secondary materials and circular business models. The research shows that implementing such frameworks can be complex and often requires ongoing monitoring and reporting to ensure effective alignment with broader sustainability goals. Despite these challenges, the findings indicate that municipal and regional circular-focused policies have significant potential to move circularity from isolated pilot initiatives toward systemic, city-wide transformation that drives innovation, resource efficiency, and sustainable growth.

Table 5 outlines examples of leading practices in cities that have developed regulatory and policy levers to advance the circular economy.

Table 5: Circular policy and regulatory initiatives

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Requirement of Circular Economy Statements	London	United Kingdom	Greater London Authority	Planning applicants for proposals referred to the Mayor are required to submit a Circular Economy statement at the pre-application, planning application submission, and post-construction stages. The statement covers an end-of-life strategy, an operational waste management plan, recycling and waste reporting, and lessons learned with key achievements. ²⁷
Green Demolition By-Law	Vancouver	British Columbia	City of Vancouver	The bylaw sets minimum salvage requirements for demolishing heritage-listed homes or houses built before 1910. A recycling and reuse compliance report must also be submitted. ²⁸

²⁷ London City Hall (March 2022) 'London Plan Guidance Circular Economy Statements', available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/circular_economy_statements_lpg_0.pdf

²⁸ City of Vancouver (n.d.). 'Demolition permit with recycling and deconstruction requirements', available at: <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/demolition-permit-with-recycling-requirements.aspx>

Initiative	Jurisdiction	Country	Lead Organization	Description
Deconstruction Ordinance	Portland	United States	City of Portland	The City of Portland's Deconstruction Ordinance requires certain homes to be deconstructed instead of demolished. It applies to houses built in 1940 or earlier and those designated as historic resources. Contractors must use a city-approved list, document salvaged, recycled, and disposed materials with receipts, photograph salvaged items, and complete a lumber inventory. ²⁹
CircuLaw	Amsterdam	Netherlands	City of Amsterdam and Dark Matter Labs	The City of Amsterdam partnered with Dark Matter Labs to launch CircuLaw, an open-source platform designed for municipal and provincial policymakers. Its purpose is to help policymakers apply existing laws and regulations to accelerate the circular transition. Within the platform, research is conducted and shared on the digitization of laws, policy instrument mixes, and the role of European laws and regulations in the transition. ³⁰
Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law	New York City	United States	New York State	The New York State Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law requires large food scrap generators to donate edible food and recycle remaining scraps if an organics recycler is within 25 miles. It applies to businesses producing more than two tons of food waste per week and mandates following a food recovery hierarchy that prioritizes donation over recycling. ³¹

The jurisdictional scan highlights how cities and municipalities around the world are advancing the circular economy through diverse approaches, often combining government leadership with partnerships across nonprofits, economic development agencies, and other organizations.

²⁹ City of Portland (n.d.). 'Deconstruction permit requirements', available at: <https://www.portland.gov/bps/garbage-recycling/decon/deconstruction-requirements>

³⁰ Openresearch.amsterdam (n.d.). 'CircuLaw - Circular legislation tool', available at: <https://openresearch.amsterdam/en/page/89270/circulaw---circular-legislation-tool>

³¹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (n.d.). 'NYS Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law', available at: https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/foodscrapsleg.pdf

The purpose of this scan was to learn from these leading practices and apply relevant insights to the development of Toronto's 10-Year Circular Economy Road Map. The research provided valuable perspective on policy frameworks, regulatory mechanisms, and market interventions that can enable systemic change. Key findings emphasized the importance of raising awareness as a foundation for action, engaging businesses as pivotal actors in redesigning products and processes, demonstrating municipal leadership through operations and procurement, and leveraging regulatory and planning tools to scale innovation.

By grounding the Road Map in these lessons, Toronto is positioned to deliver a strategy that integrates leading global practices while aligning with the City's priorities, supporting a transition toward a more resilient, innovative, and community-focused Toronto.

5. Engagement

Overview

This section provides an overview of the approach to engagement in Phase 4. External engagement was conducted through the Community Advisory Committee, an Indigenous focus group, community pop-ups and a public survey.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

The CAC was composed of 25 individuals who are demographically representative of Toronto's population. The purpose of the CAC is to bring diverse communities together for discussion and ideation, enabling ongoing engagement with representatives from across Toronto's population, including equity-deserving and historically marginalized communities. In Phase 4, the Project Team engaged the CAC via a two-hour workshop. The workshop provided an update on the development of the draft Road Map framework, highlighted preliminary insights from the project's second public survey, and discussed the pathways for future engagement on the circular economy in Toronto.

Discussion was facilitated through a series of guiding questions that invited members to reflect on whether the interim survey results resonated with their experiences, which findings felt most accurate, and where results were surprising or unclear. The team also introduced a discussion on potential models for sustaining accountability and long-term engagement beyond the CAC, such as advisory circles, neighbourhood hubs, and youth councils. Participants were asked to provide input on the value of these approaches, what would make ongoing participation meaningful and manageable, and how to balance lived and professional expertise in future engagement structures.

Indigenous Engagement

Building on insights from earlier engagement, the Indigenous Focus Group brought together Indigenous business owners, educators, and community leaders for a follow-up discussion on the Road Map. The session provided a space for dialogue on how the City's transition to a circular economy can better support Indigenous peoples, businesses, and organizations. Although the City received valuable and detailed feedback from those Indigenous individuals who participated in the focus group discussion, the City acknowledges that it was unable to achieve a level of engagement sufficient to reflect the full diversity and depth of Indigenous perspectives. As such, the findings in this document represent the views of only a small number of individuals.

The Project Team presented context on the Road Map's development, including key themes and recent engagement findings, while participants offered reflections on language, business supports, and Indigenous-led models of circularity. The conversation highlighted both opportunities and challenges, emphasizing how Indigenous values, teachings, and leadership can shape and strengthen circular practices. Participants also identified actions and priorities to guide the Road Map's implementation in ways that are inclusive, practical, and aligned with Indigenous perspectives.

Community Pop-ups

Five pop-ups were held in-person at community locations across Toronto, from July 28 to August 6, 2025. These included the Toronto Reference Library, North Toronto Memorial Community Centre, Regent Park Community Centre, Access Alliance Multiculture Health and Community Services, and Parkdale Community Centre. The goal of the pop-ups was to educate the public about the City's work to drive the circular economy, including the creation of the Road Map. Additionally, the pop-ups focused on encouraging participation in the public survey and inviting participants to provide feedback on the priorities to drive the circular economy forward.

The pop-ups featured a large presentation board with project information and QR codes linking directly to the public survey. Engagement focused on handing out bookmarks (that also function as rulers) and highlighting the public survey.

Public Survey

A public survey was conducted from August to September to help the City further understand the public's priorities and gather ideas to shape the City's 10-year Circular Economy Road Map. In addition to demographic questions, the survey included 9 questions related to the circular economy.

An overview of the survey results is provided in the section below and located in the [Appendix](#).

6. Engagement Key Findings

Community Advisory Committee

This section provides a summary of the insights provided by the CAC.

Key takeaways:

Accessibility and Visibility of Circular Programs

- Participants identified accessibility as the greatest barrier to participation in circular activities.
- Distance, convenience, and limited options were cited as key obstacles, even among residents eager to participate.
- They are interested in seeing circular practices, like repair, reuse, and waste reduction, be more visible and incorporated into familiar spaces to normalize sustainable behaviour.
- Participants suggested making circularity a part of daily life through community centres, libraries, schools, and workplaces and have additional resources, like repair hubs.

Education and Communication

- Participants highlighted that education is central to shifting behaviour, with schools, universities, and youth programs seen as key drivers of long-term cultural change.
- They recommended using trusted, accessible communication channels, such as property tax bills, waste calendars, and community newsletters, to reach residents beyond digital spaces.
- Culturally sensitive and multilingual communication was emphasized to ensure inclusivity and resonance with Toronto's diverse communities.

Collaboration and Cross-Sector Partnerships

- Participants stressed that achieving circularity requires broad collaboration across public, private, and community sectors.
- They supported joint initiatives involving residents, businesses, and institutions to align goals and share accountability.
- Cross-sector partnerships were suggested as a tool to accelerate progress, foster innovation, and ensure that circularity efforts are well-resourced and inclusive.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Participants emphasized that circularity must be equitable, inclusive, and reflective of Toronto's diverse population.
- Participation should actively involve youth, elders, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, and equity-deserving groups, ensuring all voices are heard and valued.
- Practical supports, like translation, culturally relevant communication, and mobility assistance, were suggested to remove barriers to engagement.

- Diversity was also recognized as a catalyst for innovation. It was highlighted that combining technical expertise with lived experience can produce solutions that are both effective and grounded in everyday realities.

Meaningful and Manageable Participation

- Participants emphasized the importance of visible follow-through and demonstrable outcomes from consultations.
- Participants agreed that ongoing engagement must balance structure with flexibility to respect participants' time and preferences.
- Some said advance reading materials were most impactful prior to discussion, while others preferred diving into the topic through real-time discussion and collaboration.
- Clear linkage between input and outcomes was outlined as important for participants to feel their contributions have impact.

Trust, Continuity, and Long-Term Commitment

- Participants outlined that sustaining trust requires ongoing engagement and long-term structures that extend beyond political cycles.
- They suggested advisory councils, neighborhood hubs, and intergenerational forums to maintain leadership continuity.
- Consistent communication and visible progress were viewed as vital to building confidence and maintaining community participation over time.

Indigenous Engagement

This section provides a summary of the insights provided by participants in the Indigenous focus group. In total, 4 participants attended the Indigenous Focus Group Session. Participants experience and expertise range sectors from food, construction and education.

Key takeaways:

Language, Communication, and Storytelling

- The term “circular economy” does not resonate with many Indigenous communities due to its technical and Western framing.
- Participants expressed a desire for culturally relevant language, visuals, and storytelling that reflect Indigenous worldviews and values.
- Communications should use accessible formats such as short videos, community storytelling, and youth- or Elder-led engagement, avoiding academic or bureaucratic tone.

Business Supports and Procurement

- Indigenous businesses face persistent barriers in accessing City contracts, grants, and funding opportunities.
- Challenges include complex application processes, costly networking requirements, and limited representation in procurement systems.

- Participants proposed measures like an Indigenous procurement quota and simplified funding options such as video or oral applications.

Community-Led Circular Practices

- Participants shared existing Indigenous circular models emphasizing reciprocity, accessibility, and regeneration.
- Examples included seed libraries, medicine sharing, and food distribution systems based on the “model of thirds,” where resources are shared among community, family, and self.
- These practices illustrate how Indigenous values already embody circularity, offering templates for broader city programs.

Partnerships, Mentorship, and Capacity Building

- Participants called for dedicated funding streams to strengthen Indigenous organizations’ internal capacity and leadership in circular work.
- They suggested that they collaborate with established Indigenous organizations rather than create new, duplicative programs.
- Participants felt that effective partnerships with the City should include funded mentorship, equitable compensation, and non-hierarchical collaboration to build trust and sustainable impact.
- Participants outlined the importance of ongoing relationship building between the City and Indigenous communities to ensure real, tangible benefits from circular initiatives are realized.

Community Pop-ups

In total, 253 members of the public were engaged during the five pop-ups. Participants represented a diverse mix different ages and racial backgrounds.

Key Takeaways:

Clear Communication and Accessibility

- Participants stressed that plain, relatable language is crucial to make circular economy concepts understandable to everyone, regardless of background or age.
- Explaining circularity in contrast to the linear “take-make-dispose” system proved to be an effective way to make the concept intuitive and memorable.
- Participants favored visible demonstrations of circular practices in daily life (e.g., food waste reuse, repair workshops) over abstract messaging.

Inclusive Engagement and Shared Responsibility

- A recurring theme was the importance of collective participation. Participants acknowledged that residents, businesses, governments, and Indigenous communities all have essential roles to play in Toronto’s circular economy.
- Indigenous knowledge and Toronto’s multicultural heritage were seen as foundations for culturally grounded solutions, helping ensure circular practices are inclusive and respectful.
- Partnerships with recognizable institutions like community centers, libraries, and local organizations can increase visibility, trust, and long-term engagement.

- Participants expressed that shared responsibility is key to success and that circularity should benefit all demographics, not just those with environmental awareness or resources.

Reframing Waste and Driving Innovation

- Participants encouraged a mindset shift from waste as a problem to waste as a resource, promoting repair, reuse, and regeneration.
- The issue of planned obsolescence (i.e., products designed to break quickly) was identified as a major barrier to sustainability.
- Many suggested that promoting repairable, high-quality goods could reduce waste and generate local economic activity through small businesses.

Motivations, Concerns, and Practical Needs

- Environmental protection and intergenerational responsibility were strong motivators, especially for youth and parents concerned about future impacts.
- Affordability was a recurring theme. Participants valued circular systems that lower household costs and reduce unnecessary consumption.

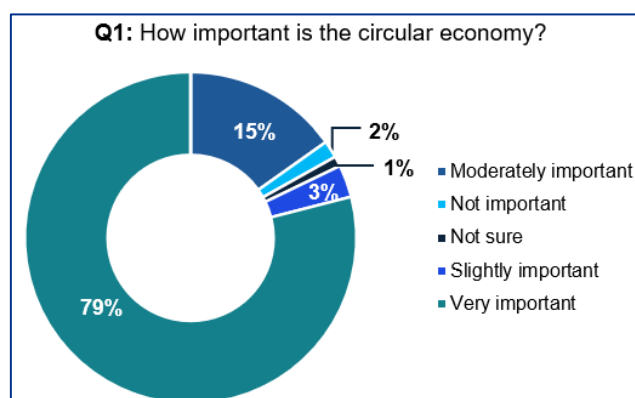
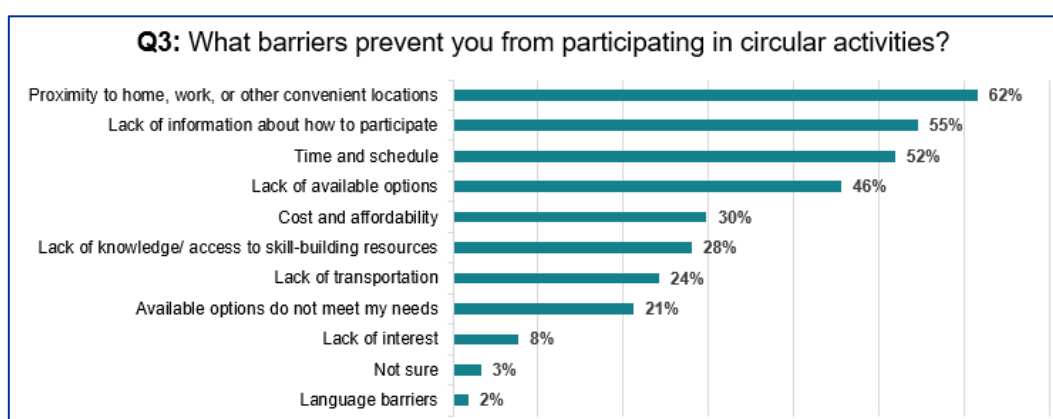
Community-Driven Solutions

- Participants requested neighborhood-level supports like local recycling hubs, textile and battery drop-off points, and repair cafes.
- Older adults emphasized reviving a culture of reuse and repair, citing traditional practices like bottle returns and clothing mending.
- Educational outreach, especially for newcomers and seniors, was seen as vital to ensure proper waste sorting and participation.
- Participants favored hands-on community initiatives that make circularity visible, accessible, and rewarding.

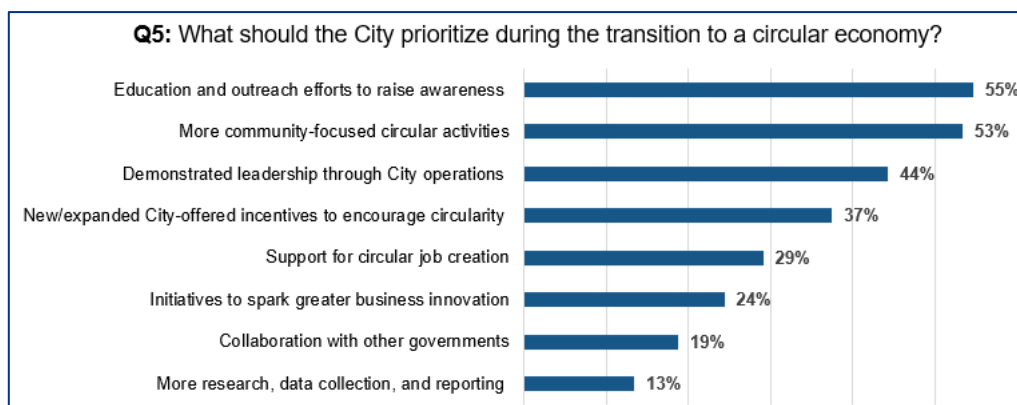
Public Survey

Key Takeaways:

A total of 1,014 respondents completed the public survey. The survey reveals strong public support for advancing Toronto's transition to a circular economy with 79% of respondents considering the topic "very important" (Figure 1). Respondents also identified barriers to participating in the circular economy including proximity and accessibility issues (62%), a lack of information (55%), and time constraints (52%) (Figure 2). Cost and affordability also affected nearly one-third of participants, signalling the need for accessible, convenient options.

Figure 1: Importance of the circular economy**Figure 2: Barriers to participation**

Respondents showed enthusiasm for hands-on, community-driven approaches. The most requested actions include education and outreach campaigns (55%), community-based circular initiatives (53%), and integration of circularity within City operations (44%) (Figure 3). Public libraries, recreation centres, and urban markets emerged as top spaces where respondents would like to see more circular activities, suggesting that embedding circular practices in everyday community life would be most effective.

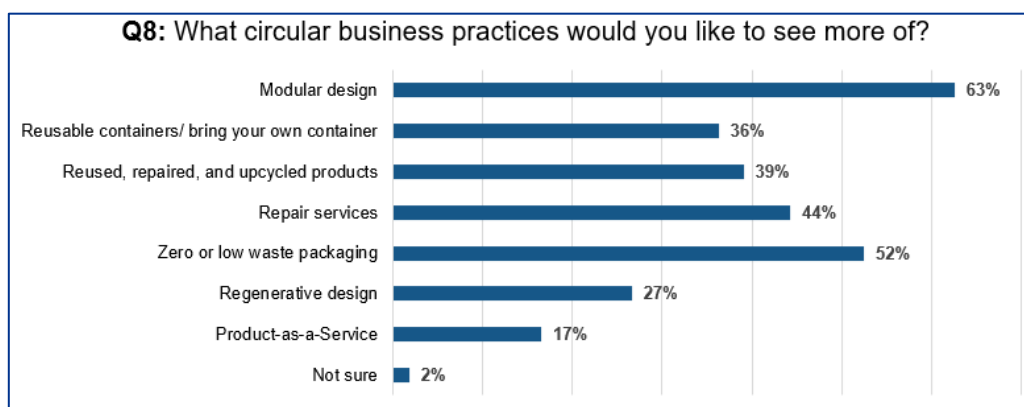
Figure 3: Strategies focus areas

Respondents were interested in seeing the City lead by example, with 66% responding that it is important to integrate circularity into urban planning, building, and procurement processes (Figure 4). Preferred circular business practices included modular design (63%), zero or low-waste packaging (52%), and expanded repair and reuse services (44%), highlighting consumer interest for product longevity and waste reduction (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Circularity in City operations



Figure 5: Circular business practices



Qualitative feedback received through open-ended questions amplified a call for a focus on food systems, with many participants stressing the need for plant-based diets, composting infrastructure, and food rescue programs to curb emissions and waste. Others proposed creative ideas like reusable cup programs, “smart bins” that reward recycling, and community “fix-it” hubs.

Overall, respondents envisioned a circular Toronto driven by education, accessibility, and systemic integration where the City’s leadership and community engagement work together to create a resilient, low-waste future.

7. Project Methodology Reflections

Overview

The development of the 10-Year Circular Economy Road Map was guided by a comprehensive, evidence-based methodology combining global research, current-state analysis, performance measurement, stakeholder engagement, and whole-of-government collaboration. This approach ensured the Road Map reflects international leading practice while remaining tailored to Toronto's unique economic, regulatory, and social context. Across the project's four phases - goal setting, issues and opportunities identification, options analysis, and strategy development - the Project Team applied a structured and iterative process, integrating engagement findings, jurisdictional insights, and technical analysis to produce a strategic plan that is actionable, equitable, and aligned with existing City priorities.

Overall, the methodology focused on producing a Road Map that is:

- Evidence-Based: reflecting proven global approaches and tested interventions.
- Locally Relevant: informed directly by Toronto's communities, industries, and City Divisions.
- Action-Oriented: structured around measurable outcomes and operational feasibility.
- Future-Ready: advancing economic resilience, climate action, social equity, and system-wide sustainability.

This methodology provides Toronto with a durable foundation for transitioning toward a circular, low-carbon, and resilient urban economy over the next decade.

Methodological Components

The following section outlines the key methodological components that formed the foundation of the Road Map.

Jurisdictional Research and Leading Practice

A core pillar of the methodology was continuous jurisdictional and leading practice research. Jurisdictional research was a critical component of developing an effective and future-ready Road Map because it enabled the Project Team to learn from the successes, challenges, and innovations of other cities that are further along in their circular transitions. By examining cities and municipalities with similar populations, economic structures, and governance systems, the Project Team could leverage existing circular practices that have been tested, refined, and proven in real-world contexts. These learnings reduce the risks associated with piloting untested ideas, help avoid repeating common pitfalls, and accelerate progress by adopting interventions that have already demonstrated impact elsewhere. Additionally, understanding how leading jurisdictions align policy, governance, and funding mechanisms allowed the City to design a strategy that is ambitious yet grounded in local context. As outlined in the Phase 2 report and in Section 3 and 4 of this report, the Project Team initially reviewed more than 100 global jurisdictions before refining the list to 28 comparable cities and documented their circular economy strategies and practices. This review assessed governance models, program designs, policy tools, funding mechanisms, community engagement practices, data systems, and performance measurement frameworks. The analysis

focused on cities such as Amsterdam, Copenhagen, London, Vienna, Montreal, Vancouver, Sydney, and New York City, all of which are highlighted in the Phase 4 jurisdictional analysis. Where possible, the team conducted direct conversations with municipal officials, program leads, and practitioners to validate findings and extract real-world insights about implementation challenges, enabling conditions, and lessons learned.

The findings from the jurisdictional analysis strongly influenced the design of Toronto's Road Map and ensured that the Road Map reflects global best practices while remaining locally grounded.

Engagement as a Core Pillar

Stakeholder engagement was a methodological cornerstone and the foundation for developing a made-in-Toronto Circular Economy Road Map. As a result, the Project Team intentionally designed an engagement process that brought together a wide spectrum of perspectives, including residents, industry leaders, Indigenous peoples, nonprofit organizations, local entrepreneurs, and City staff. Across the four phases, more than 2,000 Torontonians contributed insights that shaped the Road Map. Engagement was deliberately designed to be inclusive, iterative, and representative, reflecting the lived realities, cultural diversity, economic conditions, and operational systems unique to the city. Engagement findings consistently shaped project direction, informing goal refinement, current-state mapping, challenge identification, prioritization criteria, and ultimately the design of strategic actions. This diversity of perspectives strengthened the Road Map by validating assumptions, revealing practical barriers, highlighting community priorities, and ensuring that circular actions would be accessible, equitable, and grounded in local context.

Engagement focused on being inclusive and multi-dimensional. Two major public surveys, with over 800 respondents in Phase 1 and more than 1,100 in Phase 4, provided both quantitative and qualitative insight into residents' priorities, behaviours, and barriers. The 25-member Community Advisory Committee (CAC), selected through an adapted civic lottery, ensured ongoing dialogue that reflected Toronto's demographic diversity, including newcomers, youth, low-income residents, seniors, and racialized communities. Sector-specific industry workshops across construction, food systems, waste management, retail, reuse, and technology sectors tested the feasibility of global concepts such as reverse logistics and secondary materials markets within Toronto's economic reality. Targeted Indigenous engagement, including one-on-one conversations in Phase 2 and a dedicated Indigenous Focus Group in Phase 4, surfaced culturally embedded circular practices, Indigenous models of reciprocal resource sharing, and the systemic barriers Indigenous businesses face related to procurement, funding, and representation. These perspectives were crucial in shaping actions that acknowledge and honour Indigenous knowledge systems while addressing structural inequities.

This inclusive, multi-stakeholder process is what makes the Road Map distinctly made-in-Toronto, tailored to the city's people, economy, culture, and governance systems, and built collaboratively with those who will bring it to life.

Whole-of-Government Approach

Transitioning to a circular economy requires a whole-of-government approach and no single City Divisions can deliver this independently. The Road Map was co-developed with 15 City Divisions, coordinated through a Corporate Leadership Table (CLT) (comprised of Division Heads) and an

Interdivisional Planning Table (IPT) (comprised of senior decision-makers who were appointed by their respective Division Heads).

These Divisional leaders were continuously engaged to provide insight on proposed Road Map actions against divisional mandates, identify interdependencies, assess budgetary and staffing implications, and ensure strategic alignment. Divisions contributed to the development of the long list of circular opportunities, participated in challenge identification, and co-evaluated the feasibility and impact of actions during Phase 3.

This approach to co-creation reflects global leading practice, where circular transitions succeed only when embedded across all municipal functions, from planning and infrastructure to waste management, procurement, transportation, and community services. By engaging Divisions early and consistently, the Road Map is positioned for long-term success, supported by shared ownership, clear accountabilities, and a commitment to implementation.

Alignment with Existing City Strategies and Policy Frameworks

Circularity intersects with multiple City priorities, such as climate action, waste reduction and diversion, biodiversity, community wellbeing, and economic development. Therefore, the methodology focused on strong alignment with Toronto's existing strategic landscape. Throughout the project, City Divisions worked closely with the Project Team to ensure that the Road Map builds on, and strengthens, initiatives such as [TransformTO Net Zero Strategy](#), the [Long-term Waste Management Strategy](#), the [Resilience Strategy](#), the [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), the [Toronto Green Standard](#), and the [Single-Use and Takeaway Items Bylaw](#).

This integration ensured that circular interventions reinforced rather than duplicated existing efforts, and that they magnified the impact of ongoing sustainability work across the City. For example, circular construction actions were examined in relation to existing building and planning requirements; food system interventions aligned with Toronto's food security and waste diversion objectives; and waste system actions were mapped against existing producer responsibility frameworks. This approach helped position circularity not as a standalone environmental initiative, but as an organizing framework capable of accelerating multiple City goals simultaneously.

Economic Resilience Lens

Circularity offers significant economic benefits: local value retention, reduced resource dependency, job creation, and more stable supply chains. As Phase 2 and 3 engagement revealed, Toronto's economy has substantial untapped potential in reuse, repair, food upcycling, circular construction, and resource recovery infrastructure. Throughout the project, the Project Team continued to apply an economic resiliency lens when developing the final Road Map. This included focusing on how the circular economy can:

- Support local businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Reduce reliance on volatile global material imports.
- Create or expand markets for secondary materials.
- Enable neighbourhood-level economic participation.
- Strengthen community economic opportunities.
- Generate cost savings for households and businesses.

This approach aligned strongly with global practice, particularly from European cities, highlighting that circular business models can enhance economic stability while lowering environmental impacts. By applying an economic resilience lens, the Project Team ensured that proposed actions would strengthen Toronto's ability to adapt to global supply chain disruptions, resource scarcity, rising material costs, and economic volatility. Circular practices such as reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and local material recovery create new opportunities for local businesses, support workforce development, and reduce dependence on imported virgin resources. This lens also highlights how circularity can diversify local economies by nurturing new sectors, like deconstruction, food upcycling, and sharing platforms, that can create community-centered jobs. For residents, especially those in equity-deserving communities, an economically resilient circular system can reduce household costs, extend product lifespans, and improve access to essential goods and services. It positions circularity as an engine for economic renewal, one that builds stronger neighbourhoods, supports small and medium-sized enterprises, and enhances Toronto's competitiveness in a rapidly changing global economy.

Outcomes-Based Performance Measurement

An outcomes-based approach to performance measurement was foundational to the methodology and essential to ensuring that the Circular Economy Road Map drives meaningful, measurable progress over time. Building on the *Baselining Study*, Phase 1 focused on understanding sector-specific and community-wide goals and indicators with residents, businesses, Indigenous organizations, and City staff. These discussions centered on the challenges and opportunities for measuring the circular economy. During Phase 2, the Project Team conducted detailed current-state assessments of Toronto's construction, food, and waste sectors. These assessments mapped more than 200 influencing factors across all levels of government, industry actors, community organizations, and individual behaviours. Value-chain maps were created to identify upstream and downstream drivers of waste and to illuminate opportunities for targeted interventions. Outcomes-based indicators were then used during Phase 3 to assess and prioritize actions, ensuring that the Road Map focused on interventions capable of delivering measurable progress toward Toronto's climate, waste, and equity goals.

Importantly, the final set of indicators for the strategy is designed to build on and integrate with existing City measurement frameworks, including those established through TransformTO Net Zero Strategy, the Long-term Waste Management Strategy, and various service plans and division-level reporting systems. This alignment ensures consistency, reduces duplication, and allows the City to measure circularity in ways that leverage existing data systems, organizational processes, and reporting requirements.

Jurisdictional research and conversations with stakeholders throughout the project revealed that measurement remains a global challenge in the circular economy field due to evolving definitions, complex data needs, and limited consistency across jurisdictions. Recognizing this, Toronto will adopt an iterative approach to performance measurement, continuously refining indicators and data sources as new information, tools, and measurement practices emerge. This flexible approach ensures that what the City tracks remains relevant, actionable, and reflective of advancements in data availability, circularity metrics, and international standards, positioning Toronto to remain adaptive and at the forefront of circular economy measurement.

8. Acknowledgements

The City of Toronto is deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to the creation of the 10-Year Circular Economy Road Map.

Over the past two years, development of this Road Map has involved:

- 2000+ industry and public survey responses.
- 4 meetings with the 25-person Community Advisory Committee.
- Meetings with 10 Indigenous organization members.
- Workshops with nearly 100 businesses and other organizations.
- Meetings with staff from 15 co-creating City Divisions.
- 5 community pop-ups.

The feedback received throughout the process was instrumental in designing a made-in-Toronto Road Map. The Road Map reflects the collaboration of numerous engaged residents, City staff, business owners and community organizations.

Appendix

Jurisdictions Analysis

Table A.1: List of jurisdictions

#	Government	Region	Population
1	London	Europe	8,982,000
2	New York City	North America	8,336,000
3	Sydney	Oceania	4,700,000
4	Madrid	Europe	3,223,000
5	Chicago	North America	2,665,000
6	Paris	Europe	2,161,000
7	Vienna	Europe	1,897,000
8	Montreal	North America	1,762,949
9	Auckland	Oceania	1,657,000
10	Phoenix	North America	1,644,000
11	Milan	Europe	1,352,000
12	Calgary	North America	1,336,000
13	Edmonton	North America	981,280
14	Austin	North America	974,447
15	Amsterdam	Europe	821,752
16	San Francisco	North America	808,437
17	Seattle	North America	749,256
18	Mississauga	North America	717,961
19	Vancouver	North America	675,218
20	Washington D.C.	North America	671,803

21	Rotterdam	Europe	663,900
22	Boston	North America	650,706
23	Portland	North America	635,749
24	Glasgow	Europe	635,130
25	Helsinki	Europe	631,695
26	Copenhagen	Europe	602,481
27	Lisbon	Europe	504,718
28	Zurich	Europe	402,762

Table A.2: Circular economy delivery organizations

Organization	Operations	Description
Circularity	New Zealand	Circularity is a certified B-Corporation and an impact-led and transformation partner using circular-by-design methods to reduce environmental impacts and unlock innovation. Circularity helps businesses tackle challenges such as waste, emissions, and environmental degradation by redesigning operations for a more resilient, regenerative future through a hands-on approach that empowers teams to learn by doing. ³²
Circular Munich	Munich, Germany	Circular Munich is a not-for-profit association and collaborative project that fosters and drives the Circular Economy at a local level, while remaining open to learning and collaboration globally. They bring together entrepreneurs, makers, engineers, teachers, politicians, designers, and citizens to share ideas, learn, and take concrete action to co-create a resilient and future-fit Munich. ³³
Circular Innovation Council	Canada	Circular Innovation Council is a registered charity and non-profit dedicated to advancing the circular economy and driving Canada's transition from a linear take-make-waste economic model to a

³² Circularity (n.d.). 'Circularity', available at: <https://www.circularity.co.nz/>

³³ Circular Munich (n.d.). 'Circular Munich', available at: <https://circular-munich.com/>

		more sustainable, climate-resilient future. They deliver projects, programs, and policy advocacy while fostering collaboration across supply chains to promote circular business models, products, and services that create lasting value. ³⁴
Dark Matter Labs	Global	Dark Matter Labs is building options for the next economies and advancing Life-Ennobling Economies. They do this through a Matrix of Labs, Arcs, and Studios that collaborate to redesign the codes of systems and develop capabilities, from multi-actor governance and capital systems to net zero cities and civic technology. ³⁵
Habitat for Humanity	Global	Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization working in local communities across more than 70 countries to make safe, affordable housing accessible. They partner with families to build, repair, and finance homes, advocate for equitable pathways to homeownership, and pioneer innovative solutions that strengthen communities and create lasting opportunities. ³⁶
New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)	New York, New York, USA	NYCEDC is a mission-driven nonprofit organization working to build a vibrant, inclusive, and globally competitive economy for all New Yorkers. They strengthen confidence in NYC as a place to do business, grow innovative sectors with a focus on equity, build neighborhoods for living and working, and deliver sustainable infrastructure. NYCED also connects businesses to industry networks, leasing spaces, economic data, financing solutions, and incentives to help them succeed. ³⁷
Plant Chicago	Chicago, Illinois, USA	Plant Chicago is a nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating local circular economies and driving a paradigm shift in how communities produce, consume, and manage waste. They equip people and businesses with tools to live more sustainably through hands-on programs,

³⁴ Circular Innovation Council (n.d.). 'Circular Innovation Council', available at: <https://circularinnovation.ca/support-us/>

³⁵ Dark Matter Labs (n.d.). 'Dark Matter Labs', available at: <https://darkmatterlabs.org/>

³⁶ Habitat for Humanity Canada (n.d.) 'Habitat for Humanity Canada', <https://habitat.ca/en/about-us>

³⁷ NYCEDC (n.d.). 'Doing Business in New York City', available at: <https://edc.nyc/doing-business-new-york-city>

		community engagement, and innovative research projects. ³⁸
Recyc-Québec	Québec, Canada	RECYC-QUÉBEC is a Crown corporation dedicated to making Quebec a model of innovative, sustainable waste management for a zero-waste society. It promotes and develops the reduction, reuse, recovery, and recycling of residual materials, advancing a circular economy and supporting the fight against climate change. ³⁹
ReLondon	London, United Kingdom	ReLondon is a partnership of the Mayor of London and the city's boroughs working to improve waste and resource management and accelerate London's transition to a low-carbon circular economy. They aim to make London a global leader in sustainable living by helping businesses, boroughs, and citizens waste less and reuse, repair, share, and recycle more. ⁴⁰
Vienna Repair Network	Vienna, Austria	The Vienna Repair Network is an umbrella organization of over 100 specialist repair firms committed to prioritizing repair over replacement. Its experts fix everything from furniture to smartphones and some members also offer fully tested second-hand goods, promoting a culture of reuse and sustainability. ⁴¹
Zero Waste Scotland	Scotland, United Kingdom	Zero Waste Scotland is the nation's circular economy public body, working with government, businesses, and communities to shift from a "take, make, waste" model to one that makes the most of existing materials. Through projects, programs, and collaborations, the non-profit helps share knowledge and builds relationships to drive the shift to a circular economy as an essential response to the climate emergency. ⁴²

³⁸ Plant Chicago (n.d.). 'Plant Chicago', available at: <https://www.plantchicago.org/who-we-are>

³⁹ Recyc-Québec (n.d.). 'Recyc-Québec', available at: <https://www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/>

⁴⁰ ReLondon (n.d.). 'ReLondon', available at: <https://relondon.gov.uk/>

⁴¹ Smart City Vienna (n.d.). 'Repair, Not Replace', available at: <https://smartcity.wien.gv.at/en/22634/>

⁴² Zero Waste Scotland (n.d.). 'Zero Waste Scotland', available at: <https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are>

Indigenous Engagement

Table A.3: Indigenous Business Participants

Indigenous Organization Representation
First Nations Sourcing Ltd.
Indigenous Environmental Justice at Osgoode Hall Law School
The Indigenous Foodways project at Toronto Metropolitan University's Urban Farm
Grand River Modular

Additional feedback by theme:

Theme #1: Foster Inclusive Participation and Community Leadership

- Participants would like to see the City to use more language that reflects Indigenous diversity and experience.
- Participants expressed interest in a distinct Indigenous communications strategy using multiple accessible formats (short videos, visuals, infographics). Using storytelling over technical language is more accessible and reflects Toronto's linguistic and cultural diversity.
- There is an opportunity to partner with existing Indigenous organizations to build trust, visibility, and leadership. The City could help enable Indigenous-led initiatives through clear, actionable engagement pathways that elevate Indigenous voices.
- Opportunity to simplify complex, written grant and procurement applications by allowing oral components such as interviews. This approach recognizes relational communication and supports equitable access for Indigenous organizations.
- Participants expressed that Indigenous knowledge systems should be incorporated into City-wide environmental efforts.
- Adopt circle-based, non-hierarchical dialogue to ensure equitable participation and empower Indigenous youth.

Theme #2: Accelerate Circulate Business Innovation

- Recognition of Indigenous businesses should translate into sustained and equitable support.
- Funding systems are largely designed for non-profits, which can leave for-profit Indigenous businesses at a disadvantage.
- Complex and time-intensive grant applications can hinder Indigenous-led businesses from accessing public funding. Simplified, accessible funding processes would help foster Indigenous entrepreneurship and impact.
- Participants outlined the importance of strengthening and partnering with existing Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth training programs. Collaboration through Toronto's existing Indigenous service organizations is an effective engagement channel and resource.
- Indigenous-led construction and environmental initiatives contribute significantly to the city's circular economy and there is an opportunity to recognize them through celebrating their contributions.
- Programs like the green roof training with Miziwe Biik and Indigenous mentorship initiatives demonstrate proven success.

- High costs can be a barrier for Indigenous businesses to participate in conferences and mentorship opportunities. Reducing or waiving fees would create equitable access, promote inclusion, and strengthen relationships within the broader business ecosystem.

Theme #3: Lead by Example Through City Operations

- Participants emphasized ongoing challenges in accessing City contracts, noting that there can be a disconnect between inclusion in supplier databases translating to real opportunities. Participants outlined that that federal government procurement target (5% of the total value of government contracts being awarded to Indigenous businesses) is a good example for the City.
- Funding applications can be complex and resource-intensive, excluding smaller and youth-led Indigenous organizations. Participants discussed flexible approaches, like video or oral submissions, to make funding more accessible, reduce administrative burdens, and increase equitable participation.

Theme #4: Establish the Enabling Conditions Needed to Advance Toronto's Circular Economy

- Varying permitting and development regulations across municipalities can create barriers to innovation, such as modular construction. Greater alignment would support Indigenous business growth.
- Indigenous businesses often provide unpaid input. There's an opportunity for municipalities to create reciprocal arrangements to fairly compensate Indigenous expertise.
- Align with Indigenous research protocols and establish governance committees led by Indigenous youth and business owners to ensure data sovereignty, ethical engagement, and community-led decision-making.

Community Pop-up Materials

Image A.1: Pop Up at Toronto Reference Library



Image A.2: Pop Up at North Toronto Memorial Community Centre



Public Survey

Survey Questions and Results

Survey Questions

1. How important do you think it is for Toronto to prioritize moving toward a circular economy? *(Figure 1)*
2. How easy is it for you to participate in the following circular activities? (consider things like cost, location, accessibility, and convenience) *(Figure A.1)*
3. What barriers prevent you from participating in circular activities? *(Figure 3)*
4. Where would you like to learn more about how to participate in a circular economy? *(Figure A.2)*
5. What should the City prioritize during the transition to a circular economy? (Choose up to 3 options) *(Figure 3)*
6. What local spaces do you feel the City could better use to provide more circular activities? (Choose up to 3 options) *(Figure A.3)*
7. What actions would you like the City to focus on within its internal operations to demonstrate leadership? (Choose up to 3 options) *(Figure 4)*
8. What circular business practices would you like to see more of? (Choose up to 3 options) *(Figure 5)*
9. Do you have any other feedback to share on how Toronto should transition to a circular economy? *(Figure A.4)*

Figure A.1: Participation in circular activities

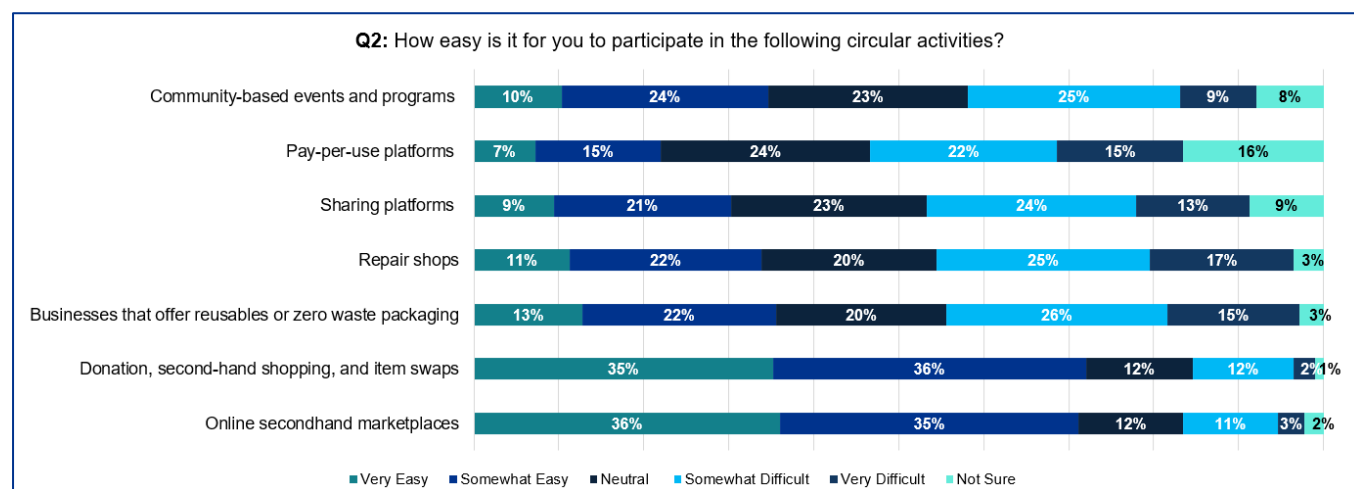
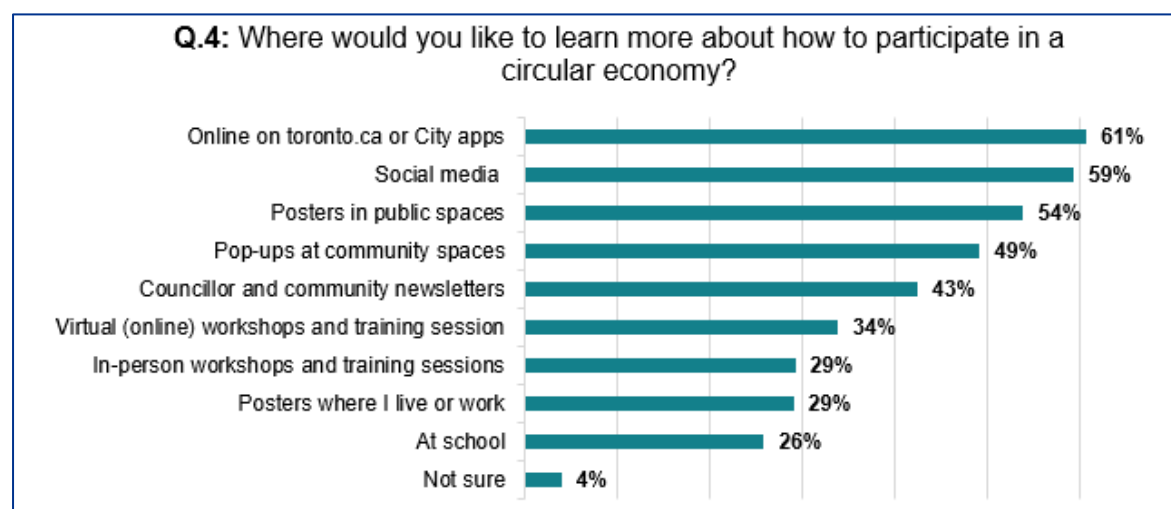
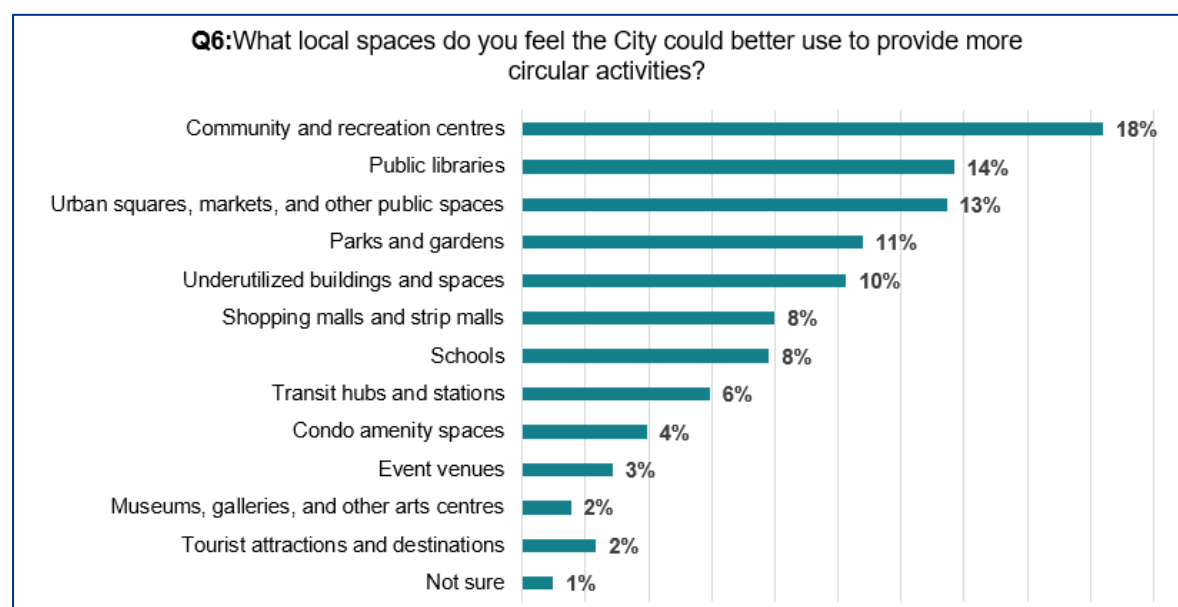
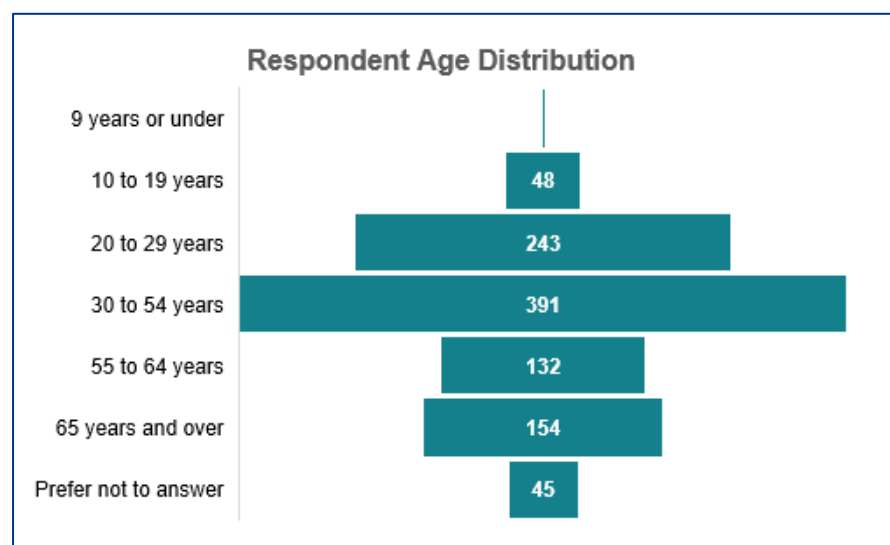


Figure A.2: Circular knowledge sharing and resources**Figure A.3: Circular knowledge sharing and resources**



Ethnicity	Percentage of Respondents
Arab, Middle Eastern or West Asian	3%
Black	2%
East Asian	15%
First Nations (status, non-status, treaty or non-treaty), Inuit or Métis	1%
Latin American	3%
South Asian or Indo-Caribbean	10%

Ethnicity	Percentage of Respondents
Southeast Asian	3%
White	48%
More than one race category or mixed race	3%
Prefer not to answer	9%
Not listed	2%

Table A.3: Gender identity

Gender identity	Percentage of Respondents
Woman	59%
Man	28%
Transgender woman	1%
Transgender man	<1%
Gender non-binary (incl. genderqueer, genderfluid, androgynous)	2%
Two-Spirit	<1%
Prefer not to answer	9%

Table A.5: Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Percentage of Respondents
Heterosexual	68%
Bisexual	7%
Gay	3%
Lesbian	1%
Queer	4%
Two-Spirit	<1%
Prefer not to answer	15%
Not listed	2%

Figure A.6: Income distribution

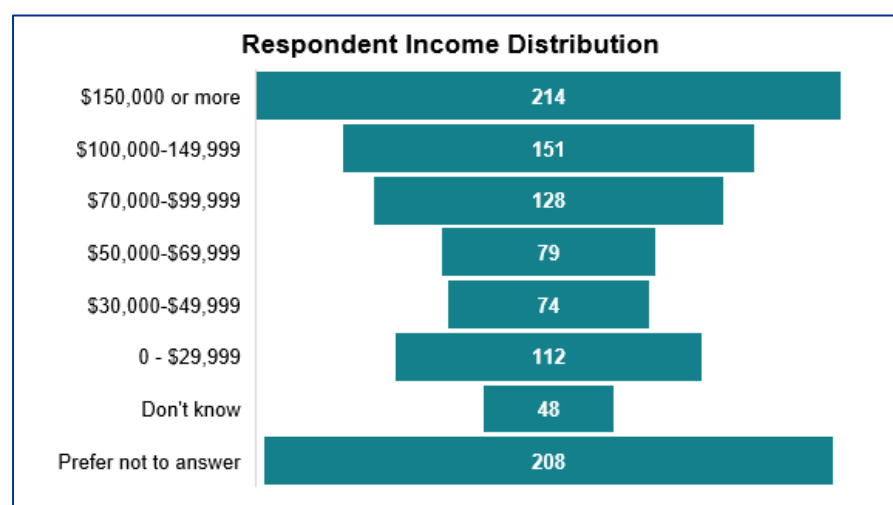


Figure A.6: Postal codes

Postal Code	Response ⁴³
M5J	1%
M1B	1%
M5G	1%
M1N	1%
M8V	1%
M6S	1%
M6K	1%
M5R	1%
M1C	1%
M4W	1%
M4E	1%
M2N	1%
M5B	1%
M4L	2%
L5E	2%
M6P	2%
M6H	2%
M4K	2%
M4J	2%
M5V	2%
M4M	2%
M4C	2%
M5S	3%
M4Y	3%
M5A	4%
Other	24%
Prefer not to answer	31%

² Note: only postal codes with 10 or more responses are listed in this table. Postal code with less than 10 responses are captured under “Other”.

Figure A.7: Survey reach