

POVERTY REDUCTION IN TORONTO

Toronto Poverty Reduction Plan: The Priority Focus

The City of Toronto is in the process of developing a poverty reduction plan that will outline bold steps to tackle both the effects and root causes of poverty. Led by Deputy Mayor Pam McConnell, the city of Toronto has consulted with Torontonians since 2014 to address the immediate needs of people living in poverty, to create a pathway to prosperity and drive systemic change to help reduce poverty.

Five Fingers

The City of Toronto has chosen to focus on five issue areas in the poverty reduction plan, these are: food security, transit, affordable housing, programs and services and jobs. Deputy Mayor McConnell describes these 5 priorities as the five fingers of a human hand that holds the palm together. The city's interest in these five issue areas is based on the following rationale for prioritization:

- 1. Housing Stability:** The city needs more quality affordable housing so that individuals and families who have low-incomes do not need to sacrifice basic needs to live in decent conditions.
- 2. Access to Services:** Not all residents find the services they need when they need them. The City can do more to make services available and effective.
- 3. Transportation:** Public transit needs to be affordable and reliable. It needs to take residents to opportunities and bring opportunities to neighbourhoods.
- 4. Food Access:** Torontonians, especially in many low-income communities, need better access to affordable, nutritious food.
- 5. Quality Jobs and Living Wages:** Toronto cannot achieve its vision of being an equitable and inclusive city while so many residents are unable to find quality jobs.

Consultation Process

Since 2014, the city has consulted with many individuals who are living in poverty, as well as other stakeholders about needs and solutions. The city adopted an interim poverty reduction strategy after robust dialogue and consultation on July 7th, 2015. A 6th issue area was added to this interim strategy – **Institutional Change**. By adding this 6th area of focus, the city of Toronto has made a commitment to address poverty from a holistic perspective, involving the entire city and through looking at new ways of thinking and working, with the ultimate goal of reducing and ultimately ending poverty.

Source:

http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Social%20Development,%20Finance%20&%20Administration/Strategies/Poverty%20Reduction%20Strategy/PDF/community_briefing_june24.pdf