



# The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income

## Final Report

A demonstration project produced by Diaspora Dialogues,  
the University of Toronto Cities Centre, and MASS LBP

Generously supported by the Metcalf Foundation



# Taking Dialogue Deeper

**In 2011, Diaspora Dialogues was fortunate to receive from the Metcalf Foundation a grant to launch a series of ideas-based programming which we called Deeper Dialogues. The series was designed to provide innovative spaces for residents to explore, debate, and discuss the city's diverse artistic, cultural, political, and historical landscapes.**

We wanted to draw together writers, artists, curators, cultural commentators, academics, citizens and others to explore the intersection of sustainability, social justice and culture and how they might work together to build a Toronto that was prosperous, vibrant and inclusive.

“Future City” has been a foundation project for Deeper Dialogues. This first dialogue, “The Toronto Residents’ Reference Panel on Household Income,” asked residents to grapple with difficult decisions about how revenues are raised and how they are spent, and what priorities should guide government in the formulation of policies to deal with the threat that growing income disparity poses to a healthy economy and society.

Torontonians responded enthusiastically. We were impressed and deeply moved by how many were willing to engage in the serious and respectful debate. Not everyone agreed. Not all conversations were comfortable. Democracy can be messy, after all. But these 44 residents devoted precious time – three weekends at a very busy time of year – without financial recompense to engage with each other, with complex and conflicting concepts, and they did it with grace.

We are deeply grateful to them for their participation, for the hard work, and for the recommendations they have put forth. We are also grateful because, without knowing it, they have reaffirmed our belief that Canadians care about the communities in which they live, and when given a chance, provide a thoughtful voice in the shared future of our society.

That voice deserves to be heard. We hope you listen.



Helen Walsh  
President,  
Diaspora Dialogues



# The People's Panel

**The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income is a first-of-its-kind effort to bring together a randomly selected representative group of Torontonians to look deeply at the growing economic divide within the city. Its findings are instructive and provocative. They speak to the growing sense of social and economic anxiety felt by many Torontonians who worry about their ability to provide for their families and maintain a moderate standard of living.**

Over the course of three Saturdays in November and December 2011, the 44 panel members talked openly about their experience of living in the city and how they sense their city is changing. While all could agree that Toronto in 2011 is more vibrant, diverse, and outwardly prosperous than at any time before, they were also unanimous in their concern that unless significant steps are taken, Toronto's future as an inclusive, diverse, and liveable city is threatened.

The report that follows is divided into two sections. The first section explains the context for this project, based on research from the University of Toronto's Cities Centre, and the process the panellists followed. The second section, which begins shortly after, records the panellists' recommendations in their own words.

There is nothing about this report that is exhaustive or authoritative. Any one of the panellists' seven areas of focus could well have been the basis for careful study by a dedicated panel running far longer than just three weekends. Nevertheless, when taken as a whole, the work of the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income deserves to be read carefully by government, as well as by the many public and community agencies that serve the city's residents. Their recommendations provide important guidance concerning the priorities and perspectives of a representative group of Toronto residents who have taken the time to think purposefully about the future of their city.

The report also demonstrates the considerable and rarely tapped capacity of individual citizens to play an informed role in the development of public policy — as well as the willingness and ability of Torontonians to engage in difficult conversations that at times challenge their own beliefs and assumptions. In a time of deep cuts to public budgets and economic uncertainty, this alone is warming and welcome news.

Peter MacLeod  
Principal,  
MASS LBP



## How This Started

**The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income is a project developed by Diaspora Dialogues' Future City initiative, a year-long program to encourage public conversation on the future of Toronto that has been funded as part of the Metcalf Foundation's 50th anniversary celebrations.**

MASS LBP, a local company that specializes in the design of public engagement programs, led the panel, which was based on recent research from the University of Toronto's Cities Centre.

Planning for the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income began in late spring, many months before the Occupy protests erupted in cities throughout North America and Europe and concern over growing income inequality captured the interest of the press and began to dominate headlines. Though entirely unanticipated, these events underscore the timeliness of this exercise, as well as the prescience of Professor David Hulchanski's landmark study concerning growing economic segregation in Toronto. The University of Toronto's *Three Cities* report, based on 35 years of census data and released in November 2010, is a definitive study that shows the erosion of Toronto's vast middle class and the sorting out of the city's households into three distinct "cities" based on income.

According to Hulchanski, Toronto's middle-income earners have been under sustained pressure since the 1970s, and the sharp reduction in their number — a phenomenon that is equally true throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) — has created a city that is increasingly polarized between high- and low-income earners.

While Hulchanski's findings likely match the intuition and lived experi-

ence of many Toronto residents, the implications and extent of this economic shift has yet to enter public debate or be properly understood by policy-makers.

### **What We Learned**

The panellists were very conscientious in their deliberations, examining a wide range of issues affecting the liveability and affordability of the city.

Notably, the panel did not endorse any move to cut taxes and lower city revenues, instead arguing for the reinstatement of the city's vehicle registration fee and also augmenting federal revenues by adding a new income tax bracket for high earners. Though they favoured these additional sources of revenue, they recognized that substantial increases to the city's property tax would increase pressure on low- and middle-income earners.

They also encouraged the provincial and federal governments to modernize employment insurance and review other income supports in light of the needs of part-time, flexible, and contract workers who make up a growing share of the workforce and are underserved by existing programs.

The panel directed a number of recommendations toward improving the city's transit system, including directing a greater share of the gas tax toward public transit and encouraging all three levels of government to reach an accord concerning long-term, stable transit funding that would bring greater predictability

to transit expansion and operations. They also recommended that the city restore the neighbourhood connectivity envisioned by the Transit City plan and accelerate the adoption of Presto, the region-wide integrated fare system.

Concerning housing, the panel recommended that the city continue to encourage greater density and mixed-use developments and to match other North American cities that have introduced inclusionary housing policies to ensure that new housing developments include mixed-income options. Somewhat dramatically, they also recommended the introduction of income-based supports for families in precarious housing spending more than 30% of their gross income on rent.

**Seeking greater collaboration among municipalities, the panel imagined a new biennial 416-905 Summit to promote greater regional integration, as well as new partnerships to improve streetscapes and support enhanced settlement services for newcomers. Their recommendations also contain important ideas for improving health services, the environment, and education.**

Together the recommendations offer a range of sensible approaches for addressing a complex problem. Significantly they reject the binary logic of blaming government or business and are not persuaded by proposals that would simply slash or ratchet up taxes. The panel recognizes that there are many contributing factors to the deepening of income inequality in Toronto. No one recommendation or set of recommendations can reverse this trend.

The panellists volunteered their time because they take pride in their city and its many achievements. They also know that these achievements are rare and can't be taken for granted. If income inequality continues to deepen and divide the city, they worry that attitudes will coarsen and that the city's lasting public consensus concerning investments in public education, health, transit, and, most provocatively, multiculturalism will erode. Their recommendations should be read in the spirit of one group's efforts to ensure that Toronto remains a competitive, liveable, and inclusive city.

## Understanding the Panel Process

The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income consisted of 44 randomly selected Toronto residents. Over three Saturdays in November and December 2011, the panel met to *"learn about the growing income gap, understand the challenges and consider the choices we will need to make to ensure that Toronto remains a competitive, liveable, and inclusive city."*

The panel completed their work in three phases. The learning phase was designed so that each panellist had the opportunity to become better informed about the impact of changing economic trends on the well-being of Toronto residents. Ten experts including Professor David Hulchanski, former PC leader John Tory, and Conference Board president Anne Golden, made presentations covering a range of issues from transportation, to housing, to private sector competitiveness. Each presentation was followed by a lively question-and-answer session.

Next, the panellists were asked to identify the issues they felt were most pressing and propose ideas that could help to address them. A final deliberation phase required the panellists to weigh the feasibility and possible consequences of their ideas and develop broad recommendations agreeable to all members of the panel.

A seven-member advisory board made up of several of Ontario's leading researchers, business, and community leaders guided the development of the panel process and curriculum. They volunteered their time to oversee the process and ensure that it was focused, balanced, and fair.

## The Civic Lottery

The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel members were selected by MASS LBP's Civic Lottery process, in which 7,500 invitations were sent to randomly selected households across the city. Transferable to any member of the household over the age of 18, the invitation asked residents to volunteer three full Saturdays of their time to learn about changing incomes in Toronto and provide an informed public perspective.

More than 350 people responded to the invitation, either volunteering to be part of the panel or regretting their inability to participate but requesting to be kept informed about the process. From among the pool of volunteers, 44 residents were selected in a blind draw designed to ensure that the participants would broadly match the age and gender balance of the city. The draw also ensured that there would be equal representation from each of the former cities that comprise Toronto. Additional attributes such as ethnicity, income or educational attainment were not specifically identified in the selection process. Instead, these and other attributes reliably appear among the volunteers who are ultimately selected in numbers roughly proportionate to the general population. In short, the panel was composed in such a way as to deliver good demographic diversity and to ensure that it was broadly representative of all Toronto residents.

## Project Advisory Board

- **Helen Walsh**, advisory board co-chair; president, Diaspora Dialogues
- **David Hulchanski**, advisory board co-chair; associate director, Cities Centre, University of Toronto
- **Richard Joy**, vice president, public policy and government relations, Toronto Board of Trade
- **Gillian Hewitt-Smith**, executive director and CEO, Institute for Canadian Citizenship
- **Sheila Block**, director, economic analysis, Wellesley Institute
- **Israt Ahmed**, community planner, Social Planning Toronto
- **Mitzie Hunter**, CEO, Civic Action

# Session One: November 5, 2011

The panel met for the first time at the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, next to St. Michael's Hospital, in downtown Toronto. As panellists arrived, each was welcomed by the panel coordinators and given a binder that contained information about the program as well as copies of the University of Toronto's *Three Cities* report and the Toronto Community Foundation's *Vital Signs* report. Each document was referred to by many of the speakers, and provided useful background information.

Each panellist was asked to sign a "Public Service Pledge," affirming their commitment to work diligently on behalf of all Torontonians. Six vertical banners based on the *Three Cities* report hung in the foyer, and as panellists waited for the morning to begin, they chatted with one another.

Once everyone arrived, they were welcomed by Peter MacLeod who served as the panel's moderator, and Helen Walsh, president of Diaspora Dialogues and co-chair of the advisory board. MacLeod briefed the panel about their task and reviewed the process. He cautioned the panellists that they could expect long days and hard work. There was a lot of material to cover, and half their time would be spent interacting with ten guest speakers who had been selected to present information that could be useful to their deliberations. MacLeod was clear that the panellists would potentially disagree with or even dislike some of the ideas they were going to hear, but he encouraged them to weigh all perspectives and try not to dismiss anything immediately out of hand.

The panellists then spread out across the foyer to introduce themselves, standing in rough proximity to one another as they pretended the room was a giant map of the city. As they introduced themselves, they also discussed why they had volunteered.

Some panellists said they had noticed changes in their neighbourhoods over several years and wanted to understand more about the "Three Cities" phenomenon. Others had been born in countries where inequality was more pronounced and were concerned that Canada might go down the wrong track. Many of the panellists said they had volunteered out of a sense of civic responsibility and expressed their desire to "give back" to their city and contribute to an important public discussion.

Having become acquainted with the process and one another, the panel began an intensive study session.

## Understanding Inequality

The panel's learning phase began with a presentation from Anne Golden, president and CEO of the Conference Board of Canada. Golden presented highlights of the Conference Board's recent research comparing inequality among OECD countries. The panel learned that among all OECD countries, Canada is in the middle of the pack, but that the country is trending in the wrong direction. In fact, according to Golden, Canada is growing more unequal faster than every other OECD country except Germany. She also noted that while inequality has always risen during economic downturns, over the past several decades inequality has increased

steadily in good times as well. Golden stressed that definitive studies have found no conclusive evidence that inequality is an inevitable, or an unavoidable, side effect of economic competitiveness. In fact, she argued that the far-reaching social effects of income inequality could produce a significant drain on a country's economic resources.

Next, Professor David Hulchanski, the author of the *Three Cities* report and a co-chair of the panel advisory board, presented his research. He argued that while middle-income earners were once predominant, since the 1970s the city has become increasingly divided by disparities in income. Perhaps not surprisingly, "City Three," where incomes are more than 20% lower than the city-wide average, is home to a disproportionate number of the city's immigrants, people of colour, and low-income residents. He also pointed out that "City Three" has access to far fewer public services, transit routes, and employment opportunities. Hulchanski warned that if his projections are accurate, "City Three" will expand as more people and neighbourhoods fall behind, with serious consequences for the city's future.

Completing the morning's presentations, Dr. Arjumand Siddiqi, a social epidemiologist at the University of Toronto, discussed how a city's social environment affects the health of its residents. Her presentation demonstrated that increased inequality is strongly correlated with the prevalence of a wide variety of diseases, including obesity and diabetes, as well as chronic stress. Many panellists were surprised to learn that while the poor are most affected by these problems, even the rich in unequal societies show poorer health outcomes than their peers in more equal societies.

After lunch, the panel heard from the first of three Issues Panels. Michael Shapcott, director of affordable housing and social innovation at the Wellesley Institute, Dr. Michael Rachlis, a health system consultant and associate professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, and Jeff Evenson, from the Canadian Urban Institute, each spoke about one major facet of public policy affecting equality. First, Shapcott spoke about housing policy in Toronto, noting affordability, supply, standards, and

support are each major challenges that the city must overcome. Dr. Rachlis then discussed the vicious cycle between poverty and ill health. He argued that by shifting our focus to improving population health — preventing illness and promoting wellness — the health system could help break this cycle. Evenson concluded by echoing Hulchanski's concern regarding the number of people in Toronto who do not have adequate access to transit. As a result of isolation and immobility, many Torontonians are less able to find jobs and be full members in the social life of the city.

Following this presentation, the panellists began to discuss their neighbourhoods and compared their individual experiences as Toronto residents. They cited rising housing prices, demographic change, frustrating transit experiences, and the poor repair of many rental properties among many of their concerns. Panellists also discussed whether divisions between the "Three Cities" had changed the way Torontonians think about themselves and one another.

## Choosing Values

In their final activity of the day, the panel began to consider the values that would provide the framework for their recommendations. They were asked to decide which values should guide the development of Toronto over the next ten years. In small groups, they shared their aspirations for the panel process and their hopes for the city. Each table of panellists came up with a list of the most important values and then shared their list in plenary. While there was some duplication between the tables, together the panel produced a lengthy list of 42 values, which were soon consolidated into a more manageable list of eight. These values are listed in the recommendations section of this report.

The panellists then adjourned for a two-week break but not without first being assigned to speak with their friends, colleagues, and neighbours about the "Three Cities" phenomenon in Toronto and to get their perspective on changing neighbourhoods in the city. Participants were also asked to review the *Three Cities* and *Vital Signs* reports.

## Session Two: November 19, 2011

The panellists met for their second session at 918 Bathurst, an arts and education centre located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood, the edge of which matched the socio-economic profile of "City Two." As the panellists arrived, they began talking with one another about their conversations with friends and neighbours during the break. Several people were eager to pass around copies of newspaper clippings and reports they had found online and thought might be relevant. Far from being daunted by the complexity of the issue, the panellists were ready to share what had learned.

Once again, MacLeod welcomed the group and reminded them of their task. He reviewed what they had learned during their previous Saturday together. He also shared some of the feedback he had heard during a special Nuit Blanche installation based on Hulchanski's research that preceeded the panel. He then opened up the floor and invited the panellists to share what they had heard when they raised the topic of the panel with their colleagues, friends and family members over the break. The panellists had no shortage of anecdotes to share, and they relayed a wide range of opinions. Clearly the topic touched an important nerve. Finally, MacLeod set out the agenda for the day, which would include the final two Issues Panels and an extensive brainstorming exercise to begin identifying and sorting the many issues affecting changing household incomes.

### Concluding the Issues Panels

Trish Hennessy, the director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' (CCPA) income inequality project, spoke to the group about the changes in the labour market over the past 40 years. Hennessy identified globalization, technology, and the decline of

labour unions as important contributing causes to rising inequality. She also presented data showing that Canada's lowest income earners are falling behind. According to Hennessy, stronger unions, equal pay legislation, and the development of a jobs strategy focussed on youth employment are each essential to reversing the trend.

Judith Thompson, a prominent playwright, brought a different angle to the day's discussion. She explained to the panellists why she has always worked to frankly portray class divides on the stage — a decision that has often made members of her audience uncomfortable. From her first play about a struggling couple from the wrong side of the tracks, to her most recent play about a middle-class suburban woman trying to keep up appearances, Thompson has long chronicled the economic tensions in Canadian society. She also discussed the importance of the arts — typically funding is cut during economic downturns — in promoting a society's ability to reflect on itself and evaluate its priorities.

Following lunch, the panellists heard from the final Issues Panel. John Stapleton, principal of Open Policy, and John Tory, chair of Civic Action and the



former provincial PC leader, discussed economic competitiveness and changes to the province's social policies.

Stapleton used a series of graphs to show the decline in welfare payments and the difficulties Canadians have accessing employment insurance. The panellists were surprised to learn that many support programs have been around much longer than they assumed; Workers' Compensation Insurance, for example, is already more than a century old. Stapleton argued that despite the difficulty in doing so, Canada and Ontario must modernize and integrate their social support programs to better meet the needs of a modern economy.

John Tory drew on his extensive experience as a senior executive and political leader. He reminded the panellists that while corporations have important social responsibilities, they are principally accountable to their shareholders. But according to Tory, the divide between the interests of shareholders and society isn't as sharp as many assume. Good, successful businesses benefit enormously from the public investments that make possible a well-educated and prosperous society. Tory suggested two areas in which Toronto needs to do better to encourage enterprise: cultivating new entrepreneurs and quickly integrating skilled newcomers with foreign credentials into the Canadian economy.

After a lengthy question-and-answer session with Stapleton and Tory, the panellists completed a short group activity to cement what they had already learned. Panellists worked together to answer a series of questions about the roles of the various organizations that influence and implement public policy. They consistently expressed surprise at the wide range of actors and the complexity of their work.

### Identifying the Issues

With their learning phase complete, the panellists turned their attention to making sense of their own experience as Torontonians as well as what they had learned. In small groups, the panellists compiled a list of issues they felt were most significant. Every time a table of panellists decided on an issue, they wrote it on a card. Soon, the cards piled up into

stacks on the tables as the panel considered the broad range of factors influencing income inequality in Toronto. Each table chose a representative to present their list. Working together, they grouped their issues under seven broad themes, adding one "Wildcard" group of issues to catch those issues that didn't comfortably fit with the others.

### From Issues to Ideas

Next, each table was assigned a theme and given a corresponding stack of issue cards. The panellists were encouraged to join the table with the theme that interested them most or else to move from table-to-table over the course of the afternoon. For the next two hours, the panellists worked through the cards at each of the tables, debating the merits of each issue and cancelling out duplicates. Once they had worked up a revised list of issues at their table, they shifted gears and started thinking about how each issue could be addressed. Now they were into the heart of the exercise — asking questions and discussing with one another surprisingly technical subjects. Which level of government was responsible? Who should be accountable? When was it fair to impose a cost on many, when it would only benefit a few? The questions kept coming as the panellists dug into each issue. Otherwise mundane policy topics were examined with a real sense of urgency as each member of the panel contributed their ideas.

By the end of the afternoon, each group still had many issues left to cover. Representatives from each table took turns presenting their work to their peers from other groups. The panellists applauded one another as they shared their top results. Everyone was impressed with the volume of work they had accomplished — many recommendations were starting to take shape. MacLeod assured them they had made great strides and promised that they would receive typed-up results from the day by mid-week. This time their 'homework' was to review their work as well as any remaining issues, so that each group would arrive for the final Saturday ready to get on with the business of drafting and agreeing to their final recommendations.

## Session Three: December 3, 2011

The final session of the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel was held in a newly constructed Toronto Community Housing building in Regent Park, a downtown neighbourhood in "City Three" that is undergoing a significant transformation. The panellists arrived ready to get to work. They were keenly aware that they had only one more day to complete their recommendations.

MacLeod welcomed the group and explained the program for their third and final day. First, each table needed to finish working through its list of issues. Once the panellists at each table were comfortable that they had zeroed-in on the most important issues and had agreed amongst themselves how to respond, they needed to find the right language to express their ideas as concrete recommendations that could be included in this report. This was the game plan but before they got to work, MacLeod suggested that they take a moment to reflect on the process and their progress.

One panellist said that after two weeks, he was still frustrated by John Tory's comments and felt that business wasn't doing enough to provide good jobs and invest in the city. Another panellist replied, reminding the group that business shouldn't be expected to solve every problem. This started a spirited, friendly debate as the panellists discussed how to they would write their recommendations and strike the right tone. Above all they agreed that their report should be read as a constructive contribution and not as an explicit critique of either government or business. Their values pointed the way: they could be ambitious, but each panellist agreed that their principal goal was to draft recommendations that were realistic and achievable.

Back in their smaller groups, the panellists returned to their work from the previous meeting. This first exercise turned into many long hours as each group refined and revised their responses to the issues they had identified. With the long lists of outstanding issues now resolved, they were ready to start drafting their recommendations.

### Drafting the Report

While each table had broadly agreed to the issues they believed were most important and how they might be addressed, they still had to agree to the exact wording that would appear in this report. They also had to get the agreement of every other panellist before their recommendations would be accepted. Each table started by clustering their issues under a 'premise'. Each premise is a statement of concern drafted by the panellists so that the reader of the report will understand more exactly the issue or concern their recommendations are intended to address.

Now came hours of careful reflection and negotiation as the panellists refined their recommendations, and wrote their report in long-hand, page by page.

Periodically through the morning and afternoon, the moderator would call a time-out and invite each group to present their section for discussion and feedback. These presentations helped each group gauge how well their recommendations



were resonating with the panel, and providing an opportunity for each panelist to ask questions of the group.

Based on the feedback each group received they continued revising their recommendations. Occasionally, it became difficult to avoid duplication: Did a recommendation concerning after-school programs belong with the community development group or the education group? Could proposals for better public transit not also be considered an economic or environmental issue? These were important discussions, and the panellists were quick to realize that many public policies are closely inter-connected.

By mid-afternoon, several panellists agreed to form a new group to write a preable to their recommendations. Others moved between the different tables, helping to complete as many recommendations as possible.

At 4 p.m., it was time for each group to make their final plenary presentation. Work would continue by email for several weeks as the panellists further refined their recommendations, but for

the moment, it was time to take stock of what the panel had accomplished. Each group took a turn updating their earlier presentations, explaining changes they had made or new recommendations they had added — and earning applause from their peers.

A long and exhausting day was nearly done. Before the panel adjourned, MacLeod asked the panellists for their reflections on the process. They responded warmly, expressing only some regret that they didn't have more time together. David Hulchanski and Helen Walsh thanked the panellists for their work, and astonishing success in synthesizing so much material. They assured them that copies of their report would be sent to local politicians and community organizations, as well as to the media.

They also presented each panellist with a Certificate of Public Service recognizing each panellists efforts to represent the people of Toronto, and produce this report. With a sense of pride for their accomplishments, the panel adjourned its final deliberation.

# The Report

**What follows is the report of the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income. The first draft was written during the panel's final meeting. Subsequent drafts were sent to each panellist for comment and revision. In this way, it has been verified by the panellists as an accurate account of their findings and recommendations.**

**Who we are:** We are forty-four very different Torontonians. We live in different parts of the city, come from different backgrounds, and have had different life experiences. What drew us together? We care about our city and its future. We volunteered to participate in the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income. Among ourselves through spirited, respectful discussion we developed a comprehensive series of recommendations to address issues arising from increased income inequality in our city. Since the 1970s there has been a startling rise in the economic disparities that separate the city's households. This divide will have serious consequences for the quality of life of all Torontonians. It will affect our health, social cohesion, competitiveness, and the right to call Toronto one of the most liveable cities in the world.

We agreed upon the following values to guide our deliberations and shape our recommendations:

**Achievable and Sustainable:** We seek realistic recommendations that ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

**Inclusive and Equitable:** We support recommendations that take into account the needs of all Torontonians; recommendations should recognize the right and ability of all Torontonians to better themselves and participate more fully in their community.

**Healthy and Safe:** Our recommendations reflect the right of all Torontonians to live in healthy and safe communities.

**Visionary and Competitive:** Our recommendations recognize that all Torontonians have a role in creating a forward-thinking.





## Transit

**'City Three' lacks adequate access to rapid transit services.**

### We ask that government:

1. Respect Transit City's attempt to improve connectivity and mobility to and within "City Three."
2. Restore Transit City or produce a similar plan that significantly improves transit accessibility to and from 'City Three.' In the interim, work to urgently implement a bus-based rapid transit system. The creation of dedicated bus lanes is needed to enable residents of 'City Three' to better connect to employment hubs, health services, educational opportunities, as well as to social and cultural activities.
3. Immediately introduce a transit pass subsidy for low-income households.

**The current state of transportation connectivity in the GTA is grossly inadequate and will get worse as the region grows.**

### We ask that government:

4. Aggressively expedite the implementation of an integrated region-wide approach to transit and accelerate the roll-out of Presto to facilitate a 'single payment system' within a more regionally integrated transit system.
5. Provide commuters with more opportunities to combine car travel and public transit, such as through the expansion of car parks at transit hubs.
6. Encourage large corporations to provide shuttle services for employees to connect to rapid transit facilities when there are none within walking distance.
7. Use social media and web technology to promote transportation options such as carpooling and car sharing.

**Current TTC funding is not practical or sustainable.**

### We ask that government:

8. Collaborate more effectively to develop a predictable, long-term operational and capital funding model proportional

to population, including a dedicated portion of gas tax and differential development levies.

9. Create and empower a tripartite panel (public, private, and non-profit) to recommend alternative funding models such as public-private partnerships to finance transit construction and deliver transit services. Any alternative model must, however, ensure that transit remains under public control.
10. Act collaboratively to map out a strategy for transit's long-term sustainability in the interest of commuters who work in and need easy access to communities across the region.

**Inadequate funding for public transit is caused, in part, by a poor understanding of the impact that public transit has on the city's competitiveness, liveability, and inclusivity.**

### We ask that:

11. Influential entities such as the Conference Board of Canada and CivicAction make the case to government concerning the positive economic impact of good public transit.
12. Researchers compare the revenue and expenditure details of local transit providers to similar jurisdictions, share the results to highlight the funding gap that exists in the GTA, and create political pressure on all levels of government to increase transit funding.
13. The business community and transit authorities form partnerships to promote a public awareness campaign regarding the economic impact of investment in efficient transportation options.
14. Public agencies promote the accomplishments of local transit providers (e.g., service increases, ridership increases) with a view to establish and enhance public confidence.
15. Transportation service providers increase their professionalism among staff and improve communications between staff and customers.



## Taxation, Economy, & Employment

**Employment and labour policies do not adequately protect low-income earners.**

### We ask that government:

16. Adjust the minimum wage annually to match the rate of inflation.
17. Work to modernize employment insurance, public pensions, and other social supports to better reflect the needs of part-time, temporary, flexible, and contract employees.
18. Publicly recognize and applaud companies that enact living wage standards for their lowest paid employees.

**Current tax policies do not raise sufficient revenue to support the entire city's needs.**

### We ask that government:

19. Pursue new revenues at the municipal level in order to fund local infrastructure. For instance, increase the gasoline tax and reinstate the vehicle licence fee and use these and other new revenues to support public transit.
20. Create a more progressive income tax system, with higher marginal tax rates for high income earners in order to generate dedicated revenue that can be shared among Canadian cities.
21. Reduce property and business taxes for employers who hire youth, recently arrived immigrants, people with disabilities, and other disadvantaged groups.

**Many issues facing Torontonians pertain in equal measure to residents of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The current scope of Toronto's city government limits cooperation with its surrounding municipalities, and restricts the ability of all GTA municipal governments to provide more integrated services.**

### We ask that:

22. Mayors and regional chairs from the 416 and 905 municipalities establish a semi-annual summit to address and adopt a more coordinated approach to the issues of transportation, housing, health, and employment. Preliminary discussions could include ideas for greater service integration, revenue-sharing, and a common strategy for pursuing increased federal and provincial support.
23. Provincial and federal governments increase funding, on a consistent and dedicated basis, for the maintenance and improvement of municipal infrastructure across the GTA.

**The economic policies of the municipal, provincial, and federal governments do not adequately promote innovative entrepreneurial growth.**

### We ask that government:

24. Promote the growth of small businesses by developing property tax incentives that would encourage real estate owners to rent their premises to growing sectors of the small business sector, such as creative knowledge-based industries.
25. Increase funding to community organizations, earmarked for the purpose of assessing, approving, and providing small entrepreneurial business loans within the city.

## Community Development, & Services

**There is insufficient financial and administrative support from all levels of government for integrated community hubs, which draw together services, people, and information from across Toronto.**

### We ask that:

26. The school board optimize its facilities for use by community-based programs, services, and organizations.
27. City Hall, at minimum, maintain existing support for Toronto's library system.



28. In the longer term, the municipal government should develop a strategy that will ensure all libraries offer an equally high standard of services, though we recognize that branches vary in size and number of patrons.

**Residents feel discouraged about participating in civic life. Income inequality and lack of knowledge across cultures have eroded community cohesion in Toronto.**

**We ask that:**

29. The City develop and implement an engagement policy that will facilitate citizen participation in priority-setting, zoning, budgeting, and other aspects of municipal governance.

30. All levels of government fund and promote programs intended to foster cross-cultural exchange — including the promotion of cultural literacy and customs, as well as artistic expression.

31. The Toronto District School Board continue to broaden the range of cultural representation through the increased availability of cross-cultural curriculum, events, organizations, and extracurricular activities.

32. Media outlets and community organizations actively promote global issues that affect people from all levels of income — whether through the production of special events such as Toronto's Earth Hour or by covering important social issues like growing income inequality.

**Internationally trained professionals lack sufficient transition support services.**

**We ask that government:**

33. Strengthen support for organizations like the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), and other associations that seek to connect employers with internationally trained professionals and skilled labourers.

34. Increase provincial and federal funding for programs within professional organizations designed to provide retraining for internationally trained professionals.

35. Expand programs offered by community organizations and all levels of government, with increased funding for ESL support and technical training to meet demand.

**Cuts to school budgets affect arts funding more drastically than other programs, and this reduction in arts education disproportionately affects the cultural engagement of students who are unable to afford exposure to the arts through other means.**

**We ask that the school board:**

36. Continue funding programs such as music, dance, and visual arts regardless of economic pressure to limit or otherwise diminish the availability of these programs.

37. Continue to welcome and facilitate the assistance of various arts and culture groups, and support these programs by offering access to facilities, equipment, and funding.

**Residents lack easy and affordable access to commercial, social, cultural, health-care, and recreational programs and services.**

**We ask that City Hall:**

38. Use existing zoning by-laws, changing them where it is appropriate, to encourage mixed-use development and increase access to employment programs and services.

## Health

**Healthy food is inaccessible to many people in Toronto because of its lack of affordability and availability.**

**We ask that government:**

39. Work to identify food deserts and make reasonable access to fresh groceries an essential component of zoning and planning decisions, relating both to new residential developments and to the renewal of existing communities.

40. Support charitable and government funding agencies to provide seed funds to small grocers in underserved areas, on condition that they offer an appropriate range of healthy products.

41. Expand transportation and assistance programs for those who are not physically able to get to supermarkets.

42. Ask community organizations to expand community gardens and food markets in targeted areas.

43. Strongly encourage the proliferation of programs such as Food Share and Second Harvest.

44. Assist school boards to develop and implement healthy eating programs where food is provided by the schools and prepared by students, first in targeted areas and then expanded across the GTA.

**The programs available to the citizens of this city do not sufficiently encourage active living.**

**We ask that government:**

45. Strongly support revitalization programs to improve the walk-ability of our streets, particularly in “dead city” areas. All levels of government and public-private partnerships should be involved.

46. Invest in after-school programs that emphasize physical activity. Best efforts should be made to expand these programs in low-income areas so that more children can participate.

**Our healthcare system is focused more on treatment than on health promotion and well-being.**

**We ask that:**

47. Health-care professionals from various disciplines collaborate more effectively to educate patients and support their healthy living.

48. Health care professionals put greater emphasis on health promotion. Strategies should be holistic and include non-traditional health practitioners.

49. Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) create more family and community health centres, which better combine primary care with health promotion activities.

50. The province amend physician pay structures to provide incentives based on overall patient care and wellness

rather than the current fee-for-service model.

**Too few Ontarians have access to primary caregivers due to shortages of family doctors, nurse practitioners, and integrated community health services.**

**We ask that government:**

51. Partner with the Ontario Hospital Association, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and other professional associations to take aggressive action to expand residency programs for, and certification of, internationally educated doctors and other health-care professionals.

52. Develop incentive programs that encourage family doctors and nurse practitioners to work in underserved urban areas.

53. Immediately expand community health centres in “City Three” together with appropriate outreach programs.

54. Use the 2014 federal-provincial health accord as an opportunity to implement changes that will improve access for all.

## Immigration, Diversity, & Culture

**The current settlement process for newcomers lacks clarity and coherence, specifically with regard to the availability and location of programs and services; this results in confusion for people trying to access these important services.**

**We ask that the federal government:**

55. Provide more accessible, realistic, and honest information to newcomers about what they can expect in Canada. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning employment, bridging and training programs, legal issues, social services, and housing.

**Skilled and professional immigrants often find it difficult to obtain employment in their fields.**



#### **We ask that:**

56. Government increase oversight of private colleges and institutions to ensure that they meet professional and trade standards for education and accreditation.
57. Government require where possible that professional or trade accreditation is initiated prior to the newcomer's arrival, to ensure that newcomers receive appropriate and timely employment, avoid financial and emotional stress after arrival, and reduce duplication of required documentation.
58. Government encourage the development of more English as a Second Language (ESL) curricula geared to the specialized requirements of many technological and professional fields.
59. Businesses continue to deliberately mentor newcomers for the Canadian employment market, regarding the cultural and professional expectations of their new environment.
60. Employers develop a fair way to assess and value international work experiences and education in order to facilitate the employment of newcomers.

**The city thrives on cultural and linguistic exchange. It's a source of pride for all residents, who are committed to sustaining communication and participation throughout the city.**

#### **We ask that:**

61. Government actively promote the responsibilities that come with Canadian citizenship.
62. The Ministry of Education ensure that the relevant sections of elementary and secondary school curricula encourage students to study and embrace cultural and religious diversity and that these curricula model strategies for constructive dialogue for discussing cultural and religious differences.
63. School boards embrace cultural and religious traditions in an equitable way that promotes rather than discourages constructive dialogue about cultural and religious differences.
64. Police and local government officials engage in regular and direct dialogue

with a diverse range of residents and community groups.

65. Community organizations host and sponsor multicultural events and celebrations that are more accessible to residents from different backgrounds.
66. Local business communities and community organizations sponsor cultural walks, such as Move-In TO to motivate potential renters and homeowners to move into and explore other neighbourhoods.
67. The Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission examine the feasibility of requiring major Canadian media outlets to promote regional cultural events; meanwhile, media organizations should step forward to provide affordable assistance in advertising such events.

## **Housing**

**There is an insufficient supply of affordable housing in Toronto, which drives up prices for renting apartments and purchasing homes; as a result, mid- to low-income residents are increasingly vulnerable.**

#### **We ask that City Hall:**

68. Apply zoning and financial incentives to encourage high density, high-, mid-, and low-rise developments and redevelopment, including in-fill housing.
69. Intensify mid-level residential and commercial development on arterial roads as proposed by the "Avenue Study" to support vibrant communities.
70. Reduce "red tape" for mid-level residential and commercial development to encourage more mid-level density and provide services in proportion to the needs and density of the area.

**Too many residents of Toronto spend an unsustainably high percentage (i.e., more than 30%) of their annual income on housing. This spending trend creates precarious conditions for the physical health and financial well-being of individuals and communities.**



**We ask that government:**

- 71. Pass enabling legislation so that Toronto can implement inclusionary zoning requirements to mandate a proportion of affordable housing in all new developments.
- 72. Use varied incentives to motivate developers to create more affordable housing: offer HST rebates, waive or reduce development fees, provide bonuses for the development of height and density, grant interest free loans, and waive or reduce land-use application fees, park levies and hook-up fees.
- 73. In recognition of Toronto's Housing First foundation of city-funded services and programs, persuade private developers to support a revision of section 37 of the Planning Act to earmark a significant percentage of those fees earned from variations permitted in the height and/or density of zoning by-laws to a city-wide fund for repair and development of affordable housing across the city.

**The tight housing market in Toronto and restrictive zoning laws contribute to create economically segregated communities that foster isolation among their residents.**

**We ask that government:**

- 74. Rezone existing "tower-in-the-park" developments to encourage mixed-income housing, retail, and commercial developments to support a policy of complete communities.
- 75. Introduce a means-tested rent subsidy for low-income Toronto residents spending in excess of 30% of their gross income on housing — the threshold of "affordability" as recognized by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

**Too many Torontonians live in substandard and poorly maintained housing, creating stress and strain on families, as well as poor health outcomes for individuals and communities.**

**We ask that government:**

- 76. Pass enabling legislation so Toronto can implement inclusionary zoning requirements to mandate a propor-

tion of affordable housing in all new developments.

- 77. Promote and continue to invest in Toronto's Tower Renewal Program.
- 78. Rezone existing "tower-in-the-park" developments to encourage mixed-income housing, retail, and commercial developments to support a policy of complete communities.
- 79. Create a new municipal fund to be used when rental properties are found to be in violation of code. In such cases, tenants will continue to pay their rent but into the new municipal fund rather than to the landlord. Property renovations and repairs will be financed through this fund, and any remaining monies, less administrative fees, will be refunded to the landlord once the unit has passed inspection.

**Vulnerable populations are not adequately served by the current stock of housing in Toronto.**

**We ask that government:**

- 80. Establish partnerships to create more accessible housing for 'aging-in-place' that meets the needs of the city's aging population and respects the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- 81. Allow non-profit organizations to use their expertise and advocate for the creation of more affordable, accessible, and appropriately designed housing units, which would include such features within the unit as adjustable kitchen counter and cooking surface heights, in addition to basic mobility features such as suitable wheelchair access into the unit.

# Education & Equity

**Students do not consistently and accurately see their identities reflected in the curriculum content, delivery method, or in their instructors. We are also concerned with growing economic disparities between schools in different neighbourhoods.**

## **We ask that the Ministry of Education:**

82. Support current initiatives to address the dropout rates at the secondary level. We advise that data from existing studies concerning high school dropout rates be used to create community specific programming for elementary students to address these issues at an earlier stage.
83. Offer courses tailored to local schools, such as language and heritage classes and culturally-specific art and literature programs, to better reflect the diversity of different neighbourhoods.
84. Allow instructors with life and/or job experience to teach credit courses in secondary schools. Alternatively, instructors might be paired with teachers to serve as role models from different backgrounds and to provide more practical instruction and mentorship.
85. Continue to advance classroom strategies that encourage the development of innovation, critical thinking, creativity, and entrepreneurship in students K–12.

**Community spaces, elementary and secondary schools could be used more effectively to foster civic engagement.**

## **We ask that schools:**

86. Develop more after-school hubs such as 'Beyond 3:30,' the Lawrence Heights Middle School program featured in the Vital Signs report.
87. Offer weekend programming for families, and for adults and newcomers to conduct skills-based training.
88. Coordinate adult education and skills programming with colleges, businesses and community organizations, and trade associations that build on

existing adult education openings (e.g., TDSB/YMCA etc.).

89. Community organizations develop popular short courses and discussion opportunities on issues that affect the daily lives of citizens, such as the environment, transit, citizenship and health.

**There is a lack of educational equity. Although the curriculum is standardized, schools have uneven access to funds, fundraising capacity, extra-curricular activities, resources, and technology. "City One" schools have advantages that "City Three" schools do not.**

## **We ask that schools:**

90. Support efforts to identify areas of duplication of services and programs within the separate and public school boards and encourage the boards to work more closely together to provide programs and facilities to increase educational opportunities for students. In the long-term, we hope that the provincial government will explore the consolidation of the two publicly funded school boards (and consider the recent example set by Newfoundland) in order to provide equitable funding and resources for all students.
91. Press the provincial government to provide additional resources under its funding formula for schools in neighborhoods with pronounced socio-economic needs.
92. Create partnerships between groups of "have" and "have not" schools to collaborate for fundraising purposes in order to ensure that funds are allocated equally. This will guarantee that school-based extracurricular activities, music and art programs, and technology are accessible to all students equally.

**Too many students and families misjudge the range of job options available in today's job market. These misinterpretations are connected to the availability of educational choices. Less emphasis and prestige is placed on practical life skills, trades, and technical skills at the K–12 level.**

**Funding for skills-based courses is decreasing and the need is rising.**

## **We ask that schools:**

93. Work with industry partners to develop a series of compulsory credit "mini-courses" that allow students (grades 7–12) to explore technical skills and trades and to develop more practical life skills such as home maintenance, nutritional awareness, and financial literacy, including information about submitting tax returns, budgeting, and financial planning.
94. Actively promote employment and career opportunities with businesses and trade associations alongside university and colleges via fairs and school visits. Furthermore, we recommend that these groups partner with pre-existing courses and programs to create more co-op spaces for students interested in joining the next generation of skilled workers.
95. Encourage guidance counsellors, parents, and teachers to advise youth of the full range of job options (both knowledge and skills-based) to instill appreciation for all jobs, careers, and talents.
96. Make mandatory volunteer hours more meaningful and relevant by directing them to students' interests and career goals and provide better support and instruction for those offering the placements.
97. Extend "Take your kids to work day" beyond grade nine, so students will have ongoing opportunities throughout their high school careers to broaden their exposure to the workplace; businesses and community organizations should be encouraged to welcome students more enthusiastically, so students can visit the workplace of extended family members and friends as well as that of a parent or guardian.



## The Panel Members

Together, the members of the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income broadly match Toronto's demographic profile. Below you can read about each member, in his or her own words.

### **Andrea Albert**

I am a first-year student at the University of Toronto who has always been interested in the media and politics. I was born and raised in Toronto. I love travelling, music, social networks, and every other thing a nineteen-year-old could love. TV, movies, and fashion sidetrack my time, which should be more wisely used to read. I hope I can learn a lot from this and give my best input into the activities.

### **David Barry**

A resident of Toronto since I was a toddler, I grew up in northwest Etobicoke, though I was born in Saint John, New Brunswick. While attending the University of Toronto, I moved downtown, where I have lived ever since. While finishing my BA in political science and history, I became deeply involved in student journalism. Upon graduation, however, I returned to my first love of working with seniors (I volunteered at a nursing home while in high school and worked there part-time while in university to help pay for school). For the past thirteen years, I have worked in the recreation department of another nursing home, a small, family-owned facility. I currently reside in Riverdale with my partner of fourteen years, Alison. We share a passion for reading, attending cultural events (literary readings, opera, theatre, music concerts), and going for jaunts in our neighbourhood as well as adjoining parts of the city. I am also an avid baseball fan.

### **Mae Belvett**

I have been a resident of Toronto for more than 30 years and currently live in Scarborough. Presently, I am an admissions advisor for an academic institution

that offers graduate programs online, and I previously worked as a senior technical analyst at the Toronto Stock Exchange for more than 18 years.

### **Maize Blanchard**

I have been living in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood for more than 20 years. I am 60 years old. I'm a community activist with ACORN Canada, and a co-chair person of the organization. I also work with RTF and Jane-Finch on the Move.

### **Sandra Carter**

I was born in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1936. Most of my education was done in Minnesota. I taught at the University of Minnesota in the Department of Medical Technology (BS degree program) from 1964 through 1984. My husband and I moved to Toronto in 1984 and lived in an apartment at Keele and Bloor. In 1986, we bought our condo on Yonge at Davenport, and we still live there. I first volunteered at St. Christopher House in 1984, delivering Meals on Wheels. Then I began volunteering at the Kidney Foundation of Canada, which evolved into a full-time job. This was general office work and working with volunteers on various projects. From 1987 to 1996, I worked at the Michener Institute. I was production coordinator in the department of educational development. After retirement I started taking classes in ACT II Studio, which is part of Ryerson University's Continuing Education Department.

### **Helen Chang**

I was born in Seoul, South Korea. My family immigrated to Canada when I was a baby. I am now working as an operations



coordinator but plan to open my own business in the future. I have lived all over the GTA, and lived abroad as well. I love to travel, read, and spend time with friends and family.

#### **Roxana Chiriac**

I am a 21-year-old college student born and raised in Bucharest, Romania. At ten years old, I moved and settled with my family in Toronto, Canada, where I obtained my Canadian citizenship. I'm currently enrolled at Centennial College, where I completed my first degree in communications & media foundations, and I am now studying Journalism. My calling is to write. I aspire to be an author and journalist engaged in producing articles, books, scripts, novels, and photojournalism. My main focus is theology; however, my mission includes supporting and enhancing activist movements, non-profit organizations, and raising awareness and change against issues such as poverty, starvation, and exploitation, among other injustices. I believe and follow the teachings of Jesus, the Son of God. At the present moment I am trying to get [wocsee.com](http://wocsee.com), my website, off the ground.

#### **Marco Covi**

I am a graduate of the University of Toronto's environmental policy program. I am deeply involved in politics, especially as it pertains to Toronto and its well-being as a city. I was born and raised in Toronto and feel a personal connection to the plight of the immigrant working class in the inner suburbs, having grown up in an immigrant household and having lived in the west end (Jane/Sheppard) for half of my life. I am deeply passionate about social justice issues. I was a consultant for Klippensteins Barristers & Solicitors, working on international and domestic mining issues with Aboriginal communities. I hope one day to get my master's in urban planning, and I am deeply passionate about infrastructure and transit.

#### **Luisa R. Dourado**

I was born in Mozambique, Africa, and came to Canada in 1991. I moved to Toronto in 1993 and live in the Bathurst and St. Clair West area. I am passionate about community health-care issues and have volunteered for many non-profit organizations.

#### **Steve Frieswick**

Born in 1952, I moved to Toronto in 2002. I work as a teacher in outreach to the

immigrant community in west Toronto. I am passionately committed to bringing hope and a future to the immigrant community of the west end. I am a friend of Jesus.

#### **Avinash Garde**

Born and raised in India, where I studied to become an architect, I worked in Singapore before deciding to move to Canada a decade ago. Unlike a lot of foreign-trained professionals in other fields, I have been fortunate to prosper in my chosen profession. Along with my wife, who was born in Taiwan, I am proud to call Toronto home, a city whose population mirrors our own multicultural diversity. I am a self-professed political junkie and passionate about urban planning and urban design and its impact on our society and social policy.

#### **Stephen Gilmore**

I am a first-generation Canadian of Jamaican heritage, born and raised in Toronto. My childhood was spent in the relatively "new" neighbourhood of Don Mills at a time when Toronto was somewhat less diverse. I currently work for the Province of Ontario as an IT manager. My interests include music, photography, and martial arts, and I am the married father of a recent high school graduate.

#### **Manfred W. Gitt**

Born in Berlin, Germany, in 1933, I immigrated to Canada in 1953. After working for several years, in 1957 I enrolled in the School of Architecture at the University of Manitoba, where I obtained a bachelor of architecture degree in 1962. From 1962 to 1965, I worked in Winnipeg on residential and institutional projects. In 1965, I moved to Toronto, where I designed a number of residential, commercial, and institutional projects including the Guelph University Centre. Between 1969 and 1971, while living in Georgetown, Guyana, I developed a construction system for secondary schools and designed six schools based on that system. From 1976 to 1978, while living in England, I designed a new university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and in 1979, while living in Kaduna, Nigeria, I developed a master plan for the Nigeria Defence Academy. In 1982, I joined the Ontario Ministry of Government Services, where I held several positions until I retired as senior consultant, office & interior design, in 1998. I am married and have one son.

#### **Carol Gordon**

Born in Newfoundland, I currently live in North York with my husband, daughter, and son. I am a winner of the Governor General's Medal for Academic Achievement. My career is in financial services, and currently I am the vice president, audit services, at the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. I am a chartered accountant (CA) and a chartered financial analyst (CFA).

#### **Mario Granozio**

I was born and raised in Toronto by Italian immigrants. I have been living all my life on Montrose Avenue and College Street. Since 1956, I have seen many changes. I went to school up to grade 12 in the 905 area. Also at a young age my parents put me in Italian and music school. I now have the privilege of speaking Italian and Spanish fluently. Then I met my wife on holiday in Mexico in 1983. I married her and had a son in 1990. Since I finished school, I have been self-employed in four different businesses. I also owned and managed three properties for 20 years. I am currently on a five-year disability pension.

#### **Chris Green**

Born in Oakville, Ontario, in 1956, I moved to Toronto when I was 19 and have lived in various neighbourhoods of Toronto over the subsequent 35 years. I have worked in a group home, partnered a renovation company, and ended up in the engineering profession. I started my education at the University of Toronto in liberal arts, studying philosophy and sociology, but eventually switched to engineering to obtain my degree. I am now director of advanced engineering in an alternative fuels automotive company. I am a lucky husband, the proud father of two sons, and have been the servant to a number of dogs that I thought I was the master of. I am currently living in North Toronto.

#### **Parviz Habib**

I was born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, and am a mother of two adult sons. In 2009, I made Toronto my home after living in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I am a qualified community services worker with a passion for working with seniors.

#### **Karen Heisz**

I am a part-time secondary school science teacher with the TCDSB, and I volunteer with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Rouge Park, and my community

association. I am close to completing the Sustainable Urban Horticulture certificate program offered by the University of Guelph and believe that everyone can improve our city by creating and saving green spaces, planting native plants to improve biodiversity, and reconnecting kids to nature. I also love sewing, needlework, and gardening.

#### **Margaret Jackson**

(No biography submitted)

#### **Mina Ladewig**

I was born in Mexico City, the "Eternal Spring" city. I came to Toronto because I got married, and I have lived here for almost three years. I believe in communication and justice. I wrote a book about "The Tonalpohualli," better known as the Aztec calendar. I have a deep respect for Mayan and Aztec knowledge, and all kind of cultures. I finished a course about "Proficiency in Spanish Language and Culture" at Centennial College. I would like to have another career in organizational communication. My field is related to education and languages. I am a tourist guide as well; I can explain all the Mayan archaeological sites. I am very interested in self-development and improvement, motivation, and leadership. I love reading about the Vedic culture, especially the Bhagavad Gita and the Srimad Bhagavatam. I have two wonderful daughters: the eldest is a psychologist and the youngest a communicator. I know that family and values are the foundation of society, and we need to work hard to develop respect, equity, and understanding in a multicultural city.

#### **Vivian Low**

I am in my final year at Ryerson University for business management. I am a women's rights advocate and animal lover, I volunteer for the university's women's Centre, and I regularly attend events held by the Toronto Vegetarian Association. My interests include gaming and (writer) Alan Moore.

#### **Heather MacKay**

I am a transplanted Maritimer who came for a job, met and married my husband here, and stayed to make Toronto my home and to establish my family. I have a varied background in the private practice of law and now in a large public sector organization. My education encompasses degrees in science, business, and law. My passions

include eco-friendly gardening, gourmet cooking with local food, environmental and urban issues, and enjoying all this city has to offer! I had been looking for an opportunity to directly contribute to better my city, so when the invite came to our home for this panel's work, I was eager to volunteer. Working with my fellow citizens throughout this process has been an amazing experience. For me, it has demonstrated the capacity of citizens to grapple with tough issues, to provide thoughtful, holistic, and responsible recommendations that canvas a variety of approaches and ideas without getting bogged down with partisan political agendas or special interests. I hope we set an example for more effective citizen engagement going forward.

### **Richard ("Rick") Mackenzie**

I originally moved to Toronto from Ottawa in 1968 to attend the University of Toronto. Apart from a brief absence to complete my law degree in Ottawa, I have lived in Toronto ever since. I pursued a career in law, practising first with a couple of downtown law firms and subsequently with a few large Canadian companies. In 2010, I retired from the Bank of Montreal after 25 years of service, where I was vice president, law & associate general counsel, responsible for the bank's legal services on a global basis. I have subsequently focused on charitable activities and currently sit on the boards and related committees for the Canadian Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, and the Art of Time Ensemble. Through my work with the Red Cross I have become increasingly knowledgeable and involved in health-care issues affecting Canadians. While in Toronto I have owned three homes and currently live with my wife in an apartment near the Humber River. I have a strong interest in community affairs and remain an active supporter of the arts in Toronto.

### **Majid Mehdezadehjafari**

I am originally from Iran. I have been in Toronto for about two years. Before, I was educated in the United States. I am attending this program to learn. While I don't know if I have been useful, I hope that I have.

### **Ian S. Miller**

I was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec. After graduating from McGill University with a bachelor of commerce degree, I qualified as a chartered accountant in 1962. Over a 40-plus year career with IBM, Royal Bank of Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Bank of Nova Scotia, I

specialized in financial information systems. My personal interests include spending time with family — especially at our cottage — participating in community activities, public speaking via Toastmasters' International, and travelling the world. I am currently board chair of Newtonbrook United Church and a long-time member of the Silverview Community Association. With my wife, Edna, I have three children and seven grandchildren.

### **Jonathan Mousley**

I was born to immigrant parents and raised in the Don Mills area of Toronto. I currently reside near Don Mills and Sheppard and commute by subway downtown, where I work as a senior economist and manager with the Ontario government. I have long been active in the local community, serving as vice president of Don Mills Residents Inc., Toronto's largest residents' association. I am also chair of the new Don Mills Family Health Team, a growing non-profit interdisciplinary health team. It comprises several physicians, along with other health-care professionals, all working under one roof to deliver primary health-care services to the residents of Don Mills and area. I also serve as chair of Manantial Neighbourhood Services, a non-profit charitable organization that provides crisis intervention and newcomer integration services to Latin American immigrants in northwest Toronto. Manantial is particularly focused on serving the needs of youth and women victims of domestic and other violence, as well as providing leadership programs and activities for youth and seniors. I was also founder and chair of the first Heritage Conservation District in the Riverdale area of Toronto, where I used to live. I have an abiding interest in making Toronto a better city!

### **Roumiana Moutafova**

(No biography submitted)

### **Matthew Moya**

I am in my third year at Ryerson University, studying Business Technology Management. I hope to work towards an MBA after this is done, preferably overseas. In the future I would love to fulfill my childhood dream of becoming a high-school teacher. I am passionate about business management, and the opportunities that the Ted Rogers School of Management has presented me with endless possibilities. One of these opportunities is being a student in the school's Co-operative

Education Program, which has allowed me to experience working with the Allstate Canada Group, and the Toronto Transit Commission. I was born and raised in this wonderful city, and I hope to broaden my knowledge and understanding of it by always being involved in my community. I applied to join the Toronto Residents' Reference Panel to learn more about the city and the issues it faces today. These issues are becoming increasingly important to me because I'll soon have my own household income. By taking part in a panel like this, I hoped to listen to the opinions of others in the community and gain a fresh perspective of the city I call "home". Ultimately, I hope to participate in solving the issues that affect the most people.

### **Nadia Naqvi**

I am a 31-year-old Pakistani Canadian. I was born and raised in Scarborough and have lived there for almost all my life. I recently purchased my own home in North York just over a year ago. I completed my BA from the University of Toronto, focusing on employment relations and English. I am presently an HR manager for Home Depot and truly enjoy my occupation! My personal interests include lots of reading, eating, shopping, and spending time with my family and friends. I love the city of Toronto and feel very lucky to be Canadian. I look forward to finally getting more involved in the community and social issues and just being more informed of what's going on in our city!

### **Basil Onyenanu**

I was born 41 years ago in Nigeria and moved to Canada two years ago. I am married, have a degree in business administration, and love meeting people, reading history, and listening to the news. I also love music, sports activities, and charity work. I am an active member of Grace Covenant Chapel International in the department of prayer and usher.

### **Bob Papadopoulos**

I am a resident of Toronto (Leslieville) for more than 12 years and a self-employed professional engineer. I enjoy exercising and painting (oils and acrylics) during my spare time. My favourite book is *The Iliad* by Homer, and I can walk on my hands.

### **Maria Pinto**

I have been a resident of Toronto my entire life. My parents were both born in Italy and moved to Canada when they were young.

I am a first-generation Canadian and was raised in Etobicoke. I am currently enrolled at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario, in the urban and regional planning technician-GIS program. Additionally, I graduated from McMaster University with a bachelor's honours degree in human geography. I currently commute to Hamilton every day via GO train. I have been employed at Zellers as a floor associate since 2004 and in 2010–2011 worked as a receptionist at a dental office.

### **Portia Santucci**

I was born in Hamilton, Ontario, grew up in Ancaster, and then moved to Toronto to attend university at the University of Toronto. In 2002, I graduated with an honours BA in cultural anthropology and environmental science. Upon graduation I began working with recent immigrants and refugees in the GTA, which led me to earn a Teachers of English as a Second Language certificate. For several years I worked in every aspect of ESL teaching, including teaching for the Language International program, teaching international students and professionals, and working as a language coach for business executives. During this time, I was also studying traditional Chinese medicine at the Toronto School of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and in June 2011 I graduated with a diploma of acupuncture and certificates in herbal medicine and tui na massage. I currently work as a traditional Chinese medicine practitioner in both Toronto and Hamilton.

### **Bill Surgenor**

(No biography submitted)

### **Brandie Weikle**

I am a full-time working mother of two boys. I live in the west end and work for *The Toronto Star* as the parenting and relationships editor for the "Life" section and editor of *The Star's* parenting website, [parentcentral.ca](http://parentcentral.ca).

### **Cara Worthington**

I am a registered nurse, now retired, and have lived in Toronto since the early 1950s. After working at a few hospitals, I joined the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) and seemed to find my niche: a combination of nursing and social work, with a glimpse of the changes in immigration that were to transform the city. When my husband and I married, we moved to Willowdale, where we raised our three children, and have lived for 50 years. We were both involved

in community activities, such as Brownies, Cubs, Girl Guides, Home and School, and Ratepayers. We encouraged our children to play various sports and we were happy for our one daughter when she was selected for the Canadian Olympic team. I returned to nursing part-time, and also some teaching as the nursing profile began to change. Since retirement, I have been able to enjoy traveling and observing other cultures, always with a nurse's eye, and volunteer opportunities such as Hope Air, a charity that helps "getting Canadians to getting better" by flying clients from remote areas to larger medical facilities for treatment. I am still involved with our local Ratepayers, hoping to keep our part of Willowdale a liveable area for families. I enjoyed my participation in the group, and meeting the other interesting participants, and of course the staff from MASS LBP.

**Irene Yeomans**

I am 76 years of age and a mother of three, with nine grandchildren and one great-grandson. I am retired but am an active volunteer in my church community and I work with people who have low vision.



# Consenting Opinions

**At the conclusion of the program, each panellist was invited to submit a personal statement concerning any point of view or recommendation they wished to see included in the report. The following statements do not represent the views of the panel.**

**Heather MacKay**

Financial incentives for new development need to be scaled against a multifaceted set of criteria, which would ensure that development charges appropriately cover additional infrastructure burdens relative to increased residential density.

The municipal government would need to carefully design any incentive programs to encourage developers to expand the stock of affordable housing. Incentives policies used in other cities should be examined. These policies should also be targeted in a way that motivates developers to provide affordable housing for both middle- and low-income earners in both "City Two" and "City Three." Co-ordination of both planning and financial aspects across municipal departments would be crucial. In addition, the municipal government could examine whether some of its existing social housing budget might be leveraged to fund some portion of this incentive approach to conserve city revenues.

Concerning civic engagement, I would like to recommend that:

1. Municipal government and city staff establish better mechanisms for early and effective citizen engagement on significant civic initiatives, policy and program reforms, and budgetary planning.
2. Citizen panel processes such as the one from which this report arose — i.e., randomly selected "real" citizens vs. political insiders/special interest groups

— be adopted by government and used more regularly.

3. Hold public consultations at different hours of weekdays — i.e., meetings outside of 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
4. Use social media and digital survey tools more effectively to gather citizen feedback from other avenues.

**Richard MacKenzie**

Both of the following minority opinions are rooted in the "Inclusive and Equity" values expressed by the panel to guide its deliberations and shape its recommendations.

As a member of the group responsible for addressing issues relating to the "Economy, Taxation, and Employment," I found there to be insufficient time to debate and reach a consensus on many of the recommendations relating to this category of municipal challenges. While I agree with the premise that states, "Current tax policies do not raise sufficient revenue to support the entire city's needs," and the resulting recommendations, I would encourage the recommendations to go further. Recommendation #1 calls for the federal and provincial governments to create a more progressive tax system as the solution to generate more tax revenue that would ultimately be allocated down to the province's municipalities. Even if this is possible, I do not agree that it is either realistic or achievable for the municipal government to always look to other levels of government to solve its revenue shortfalls. While increased user fees and road tolls are two of several possible means of

raising tax revenue, the major source of city tax revenue remains property taxes. If Toronto needs additional revenue to meet its obligations, it should not hesitate to raise property taxes directly or indirectly through improvements to the market value assessment system. After all, property taxes represent another form of progressive taxation in that wealthy residents typically own more expensive homes and should be prepared to pay more in taxes for that privilege. I also think the market value assessment system should be improved so that the assessment cycle is shortened and people in older homes do not continue to benefit by paying taxes on a lower tax base when compared to people owning newer homes. Everyone should be treated equally.

Another part of the solution to the municipal government's funding requirements is its public sector employees. For many years now, municipal politicians have been buying peace by agreeing to wage and benefit settlements that are both excessive when compared to the private sector and unsustainable given Toronto's tax base. I would recommend that the city's management and unions equally recognize that they also bear responsibility for the city's financial problems and agree to adopt a more reasonable and constrained position in their future wage and benefit demands on the city and its taxpayers.

### On Education and Equity

There are a number of excellent recommendations made under each of the report's discussion points. I do have concerns, however, with several of the recommendations relating to changes to the city's public school curriculum and calendar involving cultural and religious diversity, traditional holidays, customs, and cross-cultural events. Studies on culture and religion are appropriate within a larger curriculum on world religion and culture, which should expose everyone equally to issues of diversity and multiculturalism. If the concerns expressed are that specific cultures and religions are not adequately represented within this curriculum, then it should be reviewed and improved. However, I do not think the public school system should be used to benefit certain religious or cultural groups at the expense of others.

### Cara Worthington

The need to maintain and grow the GTA as a more environmentally sustainable city remains urgent.

I would like to recommend that:

5. Government work to reduce gridlock and its attendant pollution by incentivizing drivers to take public transit. Drivers should be encouraged by incentives rather than dissuaded by penalties — although road pricing (as implemented in London, U.K.) might also be considered.
6. The City should immediately add more and safer bike lanes, making use of hydro corridors, parks, and neighbourhood routes, in addition to major roadways.
7. New transit should prioritize environmentally responsible alternatives, such as “hybrid” buses and streetcars, and use renewable fuel sources.
8. The City improve existing recycling and composting programs, and expand them to high-rises. We should prioritize reducing the amount of recyclable and compostable material currently diverted to landfill.
9. The City retain and expand incentives for the construction and maintenance of “green” roofs and green buildings; additionally, while the private sector promotes their design, installation, and maintenance services, Toronto Hydro should more energetically entice homeowners to install solar roof panels, where feasible, to contribute more green energy to the power grid.
10. We applaud recent amendments to the building code, which state new energy efficiency requirements, as well as rating systems such as the Toronto Green Development Standard and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), which urge developers to include energy-saving features in their buildings. I would also encourage the City to develop similar programs that could monitor the integration of new buildings within the city, considering such factors as the promotion of new parks, green spaces, and community gardens, and the protection of existing ones.

# About the Organizers, Advisers and Speakers

### Diaspora Dialogues

Diaspora Dialogues supports Toronto writers to create a lasting literature of Toronto that accurately reflects the incredible diversity this city enjoys.

Diaspora Dialogues supports the creation and presentation of new fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, and drama that reflect the complexity of the city, as seen through the eyes of its richly diverse writers. We use art and ideas to explore questions of our connected humanity, and our programs and events help encourage the creation of a literature — and audience — that is vibrant and inclusive.

Diaspora Dialogues aims to bridge cultures, communities, and art forms. We work almost exclusively in a partnership model, meaning that our work connects many organizations and festivals with culturally diverse writers and artists. We do this to expand access for programmers, audiences, and the writers and artists themselves.

Toronto — the world within one city — has tremendous stories to tell. Diaspora Dialogues is committed to bringing these stories to both the domestic and international stage.

### University of Toronto Cities Centre

Cities Centre is a multidisciplinary research institute established in February 2007 in response to one of the five major research priorities defined in the University of Toronto's “Stepping Up” plan. The mandate of the Centre is broad: to encourage and facilitate research, both scholarly and applied, on cities and on a wide range of urban policy issues, both in Canada and abroad, and to provide a gateway for communication between the University and the broader urban community.

The Centre exists to:

- Bring together faculty, professionals, and graduate students interested in

urban development, policy issues, and the quality of life in cities;

- Encourage interdisciplinary scholarly research on urban issues;
- Support research by providing academic staff and students with space, access to services and information, opportunities for collaboration, seminars and conferences, and graduate research internships;
- Disseminate ideas related to urban and community studies to other researchers and to agencies and organizations interested in urban matters by publishing books, reports, bibliographies, and research bulletins;
- Improve communications among researchers and between researchers and the broader urban community. The Centre's activities are intended to contribute to scholarship on questions relating to the social and economic well-being of people who live and work in urban areas large and small, in Canada and around the world.

### MASS LBP

Inspired by the successful precedent of Canada's first Citizens' Assemblies, MASS LBP was founded in 2007 to extend this model to a wide range of issues and jurisdictions. Since our inception, MASS has become a leading authority in Canada on public engagement and democratic innovation — generating new insights for government, industry, and the third sector.

MASS exists because people want a say and our clients want to make decisions that enjoy high levels of public and organizational understanding and support. Our experience has proven that the most successful engagement strategies create real opportunities for direct participation, hands-on learning, and crosscutting dialogue. This focus distin-

guishes us from more traditional forms of consultation and policy research.

In addition to designing and delivering innovative engagement processes, MASS speaks regularly to audiences about our work and emerging trends in responsible government, public systems design, and civic engagement.

MASS is based in Toronto, with associates in Vancouver, Ottawa, and London, UK.

## Advisory Board Members

### Helen Walsh

*Advisory board co-chair;*

*President, Diaspora Dialogues*

Diaspora Dialogues supports the creation and presentation of new fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, and drama that reflect the complexity of the city, as seen through the eyes of its richly diverse writers. We use art and ideas to explore questions of our connected humanity, and our programs and events help encourage the creation of a literature — and audience — that is vibrant and inclusive.

Diaspora Dialogues aims to bridge cultures and communities by telling stories of shared experience. Toronto — the world within one city — has tremendous stories to tell. Diaspora Dialogues is committed to bringing these stories to both domestic and international stages.

### Professor David Hulchanski

*Advisory board co-chair; associate director, Cities Centre, University of Toronto*

David Hulchanski's scholarship focuses on local and global trends in housing, poverty, and social welfare policy; human rights and social justice issues; and social and community development.

His current housing research is focused on homelessness, social and rental housing problems, and the housing experience of immigrants and refugees in Toronto. His human rights research includes discrimination and racism in the housing market and the social impact of "hallmark events," such as hosting the Olympics. Two major current research initiatives are: (1) Housing Experiences of New Canadians: Comparative Case Studies of Immigrants and Refugees in Greater Toronto and (2) Homelessness in Canada (local and national trends, politics and solutions). Professor Hulchanski's approach to applied social research is

multimethod, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, relying where possible on a participatory research process.

In 1997, he was appointed to the Faculty of Social Work's endowed chair in housing, the Dr. Chow Yei Ching Chair in Housing. During the 1980s, he was a professor at the University of British Columbia and the director of the UBC Centre for Human Settlements. He is the North American editor of the international research journal *Housing Studies*.

### Gillian Hewitt Smith

*Executive director and CEO,*

*Institute for Canadian Citizenship*

Gillian Hewitt Smith is the executive director and chief executive officer of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC), a national, non-profit organization that engages Canadians in citizenship through innovative programs, campaigns, and partnerships. Prior to joining the ICC, Gillian spent more than 15 years working in corporate communications and corporate affairs, most recently with the Royal Bank of Canada as senior advisor, corporate affairs and head of communications for RBC's Group Head, Strategy, Treasury and Corporate Services.

Gillian believes in active, engaged citizenship. To that end, she gives her time as a volunteer to numerous organizations, including the Art Gallery of Ontario and The Stephen Lewis Foundation. Gillian has served on the boards of the Performing Arts Information Service/Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, and Tapestry New Opera Works. A graduate of Queen's University, Gillian lives in Toronto with her husband, Paul G. Smith, and is stepmother to Arnaud.

### Sheila Block

*Director, Economic Analysis,*

*Wellesley Institute*

Sheila Block is director, economic analysis, at the Wellesley Institute, an independent non-profit research and policy think-tank. Sheila is an economist whose research interests include labour markets, public finance, and health policy. Sheila joined Wellesley Institute in 2010 after more than 15 years of advocacy and research for organizations such as the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. She has also worked both as a political advisor and public servant in the Ontario government.

### Israt Ahmed

*Community planner, Social Planning Toronto*

Israt Ahmed is the community planner for Scarborough for Social Planning Toronto and a partner in the Neighbourhood Change CURA.

### Mitzie Hunter

*CEO, CivicAction*

Mitzie brings a wealth of experience in strategic communications and planning along with her commitment to building strong communities. She is a seasoned executive with an extensive background in government relations, corporate branding and marketing, issues management, community and economic development, information technology, and partnerships from the corporate and non-profit sectors. Mitzie was the first chief administrative officer of Toronto Community Housing and was vice president, external relations, for Goodwill Industries of Toronto.

Mitzie is committed to building a vibrant city and is actively involved in her community. She is co-chair of the Neighbourhood and Housing working group for the 2011 Greater Toronto CivicAction Summit. Mitzie has held governance positions in numerous non-profit organizations, including co-chairing the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance Emerging Leaders Network and participating in CivicAction DiverseCity initiatives. She has also served on the board of directors of Housing Services Inc., a subsidiary of Toronto Community Housing, TVOntario, United Way, and the Yonge Street Mission. Mitzie is a graduate of the University of Toronto Rotman School of Management.

### Richard Joy

*Vice president, Public policy and government relations, Toronto Board of Trade*

Richard Joy works at the Toronto Board of Trade as VP, public policy and government relations. Prior to this, Richard was the director of municipal affairs and Ontario at Global Public Affairs, a leading Canadian government relations firm. Richard served as the senior policy advisor to the minister of municipal affairs and housing in the first term of the Dalton McGuinty government and was responsible for the public policy development for the City of Toronto Act. Richard has also served as executive assistant to George Smitherman, MPP (as GTA Critic), and Michael Gravelle, MPP (as Community and Social Services Critic), in

Opposition at Queen's Park.

At Toronto City Hall, Richard served two city councillor roles over a period that straddled the pre- and post-amalgamation of Metro Toronto, and has worked closely with former mayor Barbara Hall. Richard has a BA from Carleton University.

## Presenters: Day One

### Anne Golden

*President and CEO,*

*Conference Board of Canada*

Anne Golden, PhD, CM, OC, has long been recognized for her leadership in public policy, her academic work, and her varied leadership experience in business, not-for-profit, and government sectors.

Since 2001, she has been president and CEO of the Conference Board of Canada, the country's foremost independent not-for-profit applied research organization. Previously, she was president of United Way of Greater Toronto for 14 years. She earned national profile for her work as chair of both the Homelessness Action Task Force (1998) and of the Greater Toronto Area Task Force (1996).

Also noteworthy is her work on The Canada Project, the largest public policy project undertaken by the Conference Board of Canada, for which she co-authored Volume III: Mission Possible: Successful Canadian Cities (2007).

Golden was appointed as a member of the Order of Canada in 2003.

### David Hulchanski

(please see Advisory Board)

### Arjumand Siddiqi

*Assistant professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto*

Arjumand Siddiqi is currently assistant professor at the University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health and an associate member of the Canadian Institute of Advanced Research Program on Successful Societies. Her areas of research include the influence of income inequality and social policies on inequalities in schooling outcomes among the advanced market economies, and an emerging body of work to understand health inequities in Canada versus the United States. Siddiqi was formally assistant professor at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and a faculty

fellow of the Carolina Population Center. She was a member of the World Health Organization's Commission on Social Determinants of Health Knowledge Hub on Early Child Development and has consulted to several international agencies, including the World Bank and UNICEF. Dr. Siddiqi received her doctorate in social epidemiology from Harvard University.

#### **Michael Shapcott**

*Director, Affordable housing and social innovation, Wellesley Institute*

Michael Shapcott is recognized as one of Canada's leading community-based housing and homelessness experts. He has worked extensively in Toronto, in many parts of Canada, nationally and internationally on social innovation, the non-profit sector, civic engagement, housing and housing rights, poverty, social exclusion, urban health, and health equity.

Michael has worked on housing rights issues with the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. He is a founding member of the Canadian Homelessness Research Network. In 2005, Michael led the Wellesley Institute's Blueprint to End Homelessness in Toronto initiative, which, in turn, prompted the City of Toronto to prepare its official ten-year housing strategy.

He is co-chair of Canada's National Housing and Homelessness Network and is a founding member of the Housing Network of Ontario. He is co-author, with Jack Layton, of *Homelessness: The Making and Unmaking of a Crisis* (Penguin, 2008) and co-editor, with David Hulchanski, of *Finding Room: Policy Options for a Canadian Rental Housing Strategy* (CUCS Press, 2004).

#### **Dr. Michael Rachlis, MD**

*Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto*

Dr. Michael Rachlis practises as a private consultant in health policy analysis. He has consulted to the federal government, all ten provincial governments, and two royal commissions. In 1988, he was made a fellow of the Canadian Royal College of Physicians. He is also an associate professor (status only) with the University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Rachlis has lectured widely on health-care issues and has been invited to make presentations to committees of the Canadian House of Commons and the Canadian Senate as well as the

United States House of Representatives and Senate.

#### **Jeff Evenson**

*Principal, Connector, Canadian Urban Institute*

Jeff Evenson is principal of Connector — the strategy and engagement practice of the Canadian Urban Institute. His clients are municipal governments, agencies, boards and commissions, educational institutions, and public and private sector corporations. Jeff has more than 25 years' experience managing urban issues. He was chief of staff to two Toronto mayors and has worked as a community organizer at the neighbourhood level and as a political advisor to senior politicians at the provincial and municipal levels of government. He specializes in public engagement and participatory design of public policy, strategic issues management, communications, and project management. Jeff has a strong interest in the creative economy and sustainable urban development, the public realm, urban regions, and affordable housing. Jeff was born and raised in Toronto and did his graduate and undergraduate studies in politics at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

## **Presenters: Day Two**

#### **Judith Thompson, O.C.**

*Playwright; Professor, University of Guelph*

As a playwright, Thompson has done it all. She has won the Governor's General Award for Drama twice for *The Other Side of the Dark* in 1989 and *White Biting Dog* in 1985, and the Floyd S. Chalmers Canadian Play Award two times for *Lion in the Streets* in 1991 and *I Am Yours* in 1987. Numerous actors in her plays have won Dora Awards, and she has worked with such talents as Jackie Burroughs, Nancy Palk, Maggie Huculak, Tracy Wright, Graham Greene, and Lisa Repo-Martell over the years. The recipient of the 1988 Toronto Arts Award for Writing and Editing, Thompson has also won the Nelly Award for Best Radio Drama and was awarded the Order of Canada in 2005.

Since her first play, *The Crackwalker*, burst on the stage in 1980, Thompson has been recognized as one of the finest and most hard-hitting talents in contemporary theatre. A master of dialogue and charac-

ter, she has never shied away from graphic content or violent imagery if it worked for the play. She is currently a professor at the University of Guelph, where she teaches acting and playwrighting courses.

#### **Trish Hennessy**

*Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*

Trish Hennessy is a former journalist who, as director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' income inequality project, specializes in the growing gap between the rich and the rest of us. Trish has a BA in sociology from Queen's University, a BSW from Carleton University, and a master's degree in sociology from OISE/University of Toronto.

#### **John Tory**

*Chair, CivicAction*

John Tory is a lawyer, business leader, community activist, and broadcaster. He was formerly an elected representative serving as a Member of Provincial Parliament for Dufferin Peel Wellington Grey, as leader of the Ontario PC Party, and as leader of the Official Opposition in the Ontario Parliament.

Tory has served as a managing partner of one of Canada's biggest law firms, as principal secretary to Premier Bill Davis, and as associate secretary of the Ontario Cabinet. He was CEO of Rogers Media Inc. and then president and CEO of Rogers Cable, Canada's largest cable and internet service provider. He presently serves on the board of directors of Rogers Communications Inc. and a number of other companies.

Tory has an extensive background in volunteer community service. He served as volunteer chairman and commissioner of the Canadian Football League and has chaired fundraising campaigns for St. Michael's Hospital and the United Way. He also holds leadership positions in a wide range of charitable organizations ranging from autism to kids at risk, Canadian authors, and children with physical disabilities.

John Tory was a founding board member and is the voluntary chair of the Toronto City Summit Alliance, a highly respected city-building organization. He hosts a daily three-hour talk show on Canada's leading talk station, Newstalk 1010.

#### **John Stapleton**

*Principal, Open Policy*

John Stapleton worked for the Ontario government in the Ministry of Community and Social Services and its predecessors for 28 years in the areas of social assistance policy and operations. During his career, John was the senior policy advisor to the Social Assistance Review Committee and the minister's Advisory Group on New Legislation. His more recent government work concerned the implementation of the National Child Benefit.

He is a commissioner with the Ontario Soldiers' Aid Commission and is a volunteer with St. Christopher House and Woodgreen Community Services of Toronto. John was research director for the Task Force on Modernizing Income Security for Working-Age Adults in Toronto and was the co-chair of the working group associated with this project. He is undertaking an Innovations Fellowship with the Metcalf Foundation. He teaches public policy and is a member of 25 in 5.

John serves on the board of directors of the Daily Bread Food Bank, and he is the president of the Canadian Horseracing Hall of Fame.

## **The Toronto Residents' Reference Panel on Household Income**

A demonstration project produced by Diaspora Dialogues,  
the University of Toronto Cities Centre, and MASS LBP

Generously supported by the Metcalf Foundation

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