

THE ANNUAL SNAPSHOT ON OUR CITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE

A SPECIAL REPORT PRESENTED BY



TORONTO'S **VitalSigns**[®] 2015 Report

ONE PLACE, ONE PEACE: IN IT TOGETHER



Photo: Michael Salem

For Toronto, this was a record-breaking year.

We hosted the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, a spectacular series of events around the GTHA and beyond. The Games were a big win for Canada: our athletes won 385 medals. And a big win for Toronto, too: a civic “aha!” moment when we realized what we can achieve together.

The Games also helped us see our city through others' eyes. Visitors and international media gave us top marks for our quality of life. Toronto's green spaces got the nod and our concerts and museums, galleries and festivals won ovations.

And last year, we smashed tourism records. Toronto is also a beacon for immigrants — just over half of us are foreign-born. All of this international attention adds up: Toronto's economy continues to grow and,

for the seventh year running, The Economist has declared Toronto as the fourth most livable city in the world.

Yet, almost 20 years after amalgamation, Toronto remains tenaciously divided. The gap between the richest and the rest is the second largest in Canada, and after 25 years of steady growth, income inequality in our city is increasing at twice the national average. We're becoming more polarized geographically, too, as shown by debates on the Gardiner, “carding”, and subway-versus-LRT.

How do we transcend these divisions and move forward?

By wholeheartedly rejecting the divided city and embracing a new vision. By seeing ourselves as a city where 140 diverse neighbourhoods pull together.

We must become “One place.”

“One place” is a new way of thinking, working, and living together. As “One place” we will devise city-wide solutions to city-wide problems. Like traffic, affordable housing, and health. As “One place” we will deliver a more effective response to those most at risk. Like seniors, young people, and the working poor.

How will we know when Toronto is getting it right? When “One place” leads to “One peace.” When we have peace of mind because

our youth feel optimistic about the future, because we can make a good life for our families, and we can age with dignity.

In fact, Toronto is already getting it right in many ways. With the 2015 Games, people came together to do something good for the entire city and the physical and social legacies will endure long after this summer.

Toronto is uniquely positioned to build the inclusive and sustainable city of the future. A model for cities everywhere.

And who will build the “One place” that will offer “One peace”? People like you.

From this day forward, you are the “One.”

John Barford
Chair, Board of Directors

Rahul K. Bhardwaj
President & CEO

Toronto's Vital Signs[®] Report 2015 is available on Toronto Foundation's website: www.torontofoundation.ca

The Report

Established in 1981, Toronto Foundation is one of 191 Community Foundations in Canada. We are a leading independent charitable foundation dedicated to connecting philanthropy to community needs and opportunities.

Our annual Toronto's Vital Signs[®] Report provides essential information and inspiration for philanthropists at the Foundation and other stakeholders across sectors working to improve the quality of life of our city. The Vital Signs model is now replicated in 75 communities around the world.

We hope this Report will help you better understand your city and what role you might play in making Toronto the best it can be. To find out more about us please visit www.torontofoundation.ca. And to access the full Toronto's Vital Signs[®] Report with citations, go to www.torontosvitalsigns.ca. Special thanks to George Brown College, our Lead Research Partner, and the many other individuals, organizations, and institutions that contribute to the Report.



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 TORONTO FOUNDATION
 The Art of Wise Giving™ 

YOUR GUIDE FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

As you read through this Report, consider the Vital Questions posed throughout. We have lots to be proud of, but there are also things we need to think about in order to shift some troubling trends.

- Ask yourself: • What issues do you care about? • What data surprises you?
 • How can I get involved to make a difference?

Visit the Community Knowledge Centre: www.ckc.torontofoundation.ca – showcasing more than 260 profiles of made-in-Toronto solutions addressing issues highlighted in this Report.



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DEMOGRAPHICS

The city of Toronto (or "Toronto") has a population of **2,808,507***.

More than half (**51%**) of Toronto residents were born outside of Canada.

The Toronto Region (or "Region") has a population of **6,055,724***.

Almost half the population of the Toronto Region resides in the city of Toronto.

Greater Toronto Area (or "GTA") has a population of **6,546,519****.

Almost **1 in 5** (18.1%) Canadians live in the GTA.

Our population continues to age. Toronto Region's proportion of **seniors increased 24.8%** between 2001 and 2014. The number of seniors will grow from 1 in 7 Canadians now to about **1 in 4** by 2036.

*Population figures are post-census estimates.
 **Projections predict a rate of growth of 1.6% annually 2014-2019.

HOUSING

What does it cost to call Toronto home?

Toronto's housing market is "severely" unaffordable. House prices have tripled since the 1970s, and it is now the 13th least affordable of 86 global cities with populations over 1 million.

3x more

- The city is the most expensive place to rent in Canada. An average two-bedroom apartment rents for \$1,264. Almost half of Toronto households rent, and 43.5% of renter households spend more than 30% of pre-tax income on rent (considered the cut-off for affordability).
- Close to 80,000 Toronto households are waiting for affordable housing.

WORK

What are the workforce trends we should watch?

- Toronto's job numbers are increasing. Overall employment grew 1.5% in 2014 with 20,850 jobs added. But almost 1 in 4 jobs is part-time.

The youth unemployment rate reached a high of **21.65%** in 2014.

Youth unemployment has hovered near 20% for more than a decade. For recent immigrant youth in the city, the unemployment rate was **24.1%** last year.

- Precarious employment is rising. 22.7% of Toronto workers 25-65 yrs. were precariously employed last year, in jobs that are temporary and contract (a 17% increase since 2011).

GETTING AROUND

How does Toronto's transportation compare?

Traffic in Toronto is the 8th most congested in North America, and 2nd most congested in Canada. The most congested mornings and evenings are on Thursdays. Thursday evening congestion nears 80%.

The Region boasts the 2nd longest round-trip commute – 66 minutes – of any North American city. Only New York City fares worse.

Among 22 Canadian cities, Toronto is the 2nd most walkable, and cycling volumes have tripled on some downtown streets. With new bike lanes installed, Richmond and Adelaide streets average more than 4,200 cyclist trips per weekday.



GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

What does Toronto's income inequality look like?

- At 31%, Toronto's household income inequality growth rate over 25 years was more than double the national rate (14%).
- Two working parents with 2 young children need to each earn at least \$18.52 per hour just to make ends meet in Toronto. And the number of children living in low-income families increased by over 10,000 between 2010 and 2012 to 29%.
- There were more than 890,000 visits to Toronto food banks.

SAFETY

Just how safe is Toronto?

The rate of violent crime declined 1.8% in Toronto (from 1,005 violent crimes per 100,000 persons in 2013 to 987 in 2014).

Incidents of stabbings in the city jumped dramatically in 2014. There were 815 stabbings, a 36% increase from the 599 the previous year.

- The youth crime rate for the Region decreased 44.9% between 2004 and 2013. It stands at 1,496 per 100,000 youths charged; that rate is 48% lower than the national average.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

What are our biggest health challenges?



41.6% of us (12 yrs.+) report being at least moderately active during leisure time. However, 50.7% of adults report being overweight or obese, up from 46.2% in 2013.

- Self-reported diabetes rates in Toronto have increased by almost 43% since 2003.
- 7 in 10 Torontonians say they are in very good or excellent mental health, however 22.8% of the population (15 yrs.+) report that most days are "quite a bit" or "extremely" stressful.

LEADERSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING

Are Torontonians connected, engaged, and represented?

- Almost 7 in 10 Torontonians 12 yrs.+ (68.9%) feel a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their local community, however only 56.6% of millennials (age 20 to 34), say they do.
- Average life satisfaction in Toronto is 7.8 out of 10, placing us last (tied with Vancouver and Windsor) among Canadian cities.



Representation on City Council still does not reflect the diversity of Toronto's population.

Visible minorities make up 49% of Toronto's population, but in both the 2010 and 2014 municipal elections, visible minorities were elected to only 6 of 45 positions.

ENVIRONMENT

How is Toronto's urban environment doing?

- Toronto has 445.67 hectares of publicly accessible green spaces per 100,000 people. The amount of airborne particulate matter removed annually by our urban forest is equivalent to the amount released by over 1 million automobiles each year.
- At any one time Toronto has about 3 days' worth of food available. A border closure or key failure in US agriculture would leave our city unable to adequately feed its population.
- Toronto came in at 12th out of 50 global cities on overall sustainability (ranking People, Planet and Profit pillars). On the Planet pillar, we ranked 9th (including energy consumption, recycling, and air and water qualities).



ARTS AND CULTURE

How do Torontonians contribute to, and benefit from, the city's exciting cultural and sport scene?

- Arts and culture contributes \$11.3 billion annually to Toronto's GDP. The 2014 World Pride Festival directly contributed \$313 million to Toronto's GDP.
- Attendance at City-funded or -programmed cultural events reached 19 million last year. And 71% of Torontonians attend a cultural location, or an arts-related event, program or place on a regular basis.



Courtesy of Manifesto

- The Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games were the largest multi-sport event in Canadian history, with more than 7,000 athletes competing and 20,000 volunteers helping to put it on. Canadian Pan Am and Parapan Am athletes won a combined 385 medals.

LEARNING

What trends exist around education in Toronto?

87%

of Toronto elementary schools had teacher-librarians last year, and 82% had a health and physical education teacher.

- Licensed and regulated childcare spaces in Toronto can accommodate fewer than 20% of our children under 12 yrs. And 1 in 5 of our publicly funded elementary schools have no before- and after-school programs.



Photo courtesy of Peter Bragg

- Torontonians possess more higher education degrees per 100,000 population (45,875) than residents of other global cities like Los Angeles (24,100), London (31,698), and Amsterdam (42,030).



ECONOMIC HEALTH

Toronto's economy continues to grow, though slowly. The city's GDP grew by **3.12% in 2014**.

Construction activity continues to be strong.

Toronto has the most **high- and mid-rise buildings** under construction of any North American city, and is 2nd only to New York City for major buildings under construction.

The Region smashed 2 tourism records in 2014. We recorded the highest-ever number of overnight visitors, **14.3 million**, including the highest-ever number of overseas visitors, and hotel room nights sold.

There were **21% fewer business bankruptcies** in the Region last year (368 vs. 466 in 2013).

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THE GIFT OF STABILITY

Community-led, privately funded scholarships foster new generation of leaders

Jason Spanish has a simple dream: sauces. He dreams of sauces.

Spanish is a practical guy. The 21-year-old has just started his first semester in culinary school at Humber College; he already works as a cook at Oliver & Bonacini's Auberge du Pommier and at R & D in Kensington. He's a full-time apprentice, working towards his Red Seal, but he's not fantasizing about owning his own restaurant or running his own kitchen. No, he wants to be the guy doing sauce at R&D. Once he has sauce figured out, he'll work on becoming a sous chef and then upwards from there.

His pragmatism might have hit a typical, early snag: money. The apprentice program covers the cost of his tuition, but culinary school has other, significant expenses. His teachers and co-op advisers at Yorkdale Secondary School urged him to apply for a new scholarship offered by a local philanthropic family. He won, and the \$5,000 went to knives, tools, a sharpening set, a pasta roller, uniforms and books.

"I wouldn't have any of this stuff. This scholarship has already given me a big boost in the industry," Spanish says. "It's just helped me so much. I feel very, very blessed for that. It changed my life — I'll say that. If it wasn't for this, I'd probably be struggling. Now when I go to work, I don't really stress. I'm comfortable. That's very important to be successful, and I don't know if I'd feel that same way if I didn't have this."

He's not the only recent high-school grad in Toronto to feel blessed. Spanish was one of nine

recipients of \$5,000 awards given out to students at Downsview Secondary School, John Polanyi Collegiate and Yorkdale last year. The donor family, who prefer to keep their name private, has committed to providing these scholarships for at least the next 20 years — a whopping \$900,000 in funding for graduates from some of Toronto's most high-needs schools.

The family's generosity is already inspiring similar initiatives, some from unlikely sources. Downsview Secondary School teacher Will Wallace was part of that school's scholarship committee, mostly handing out \$50 and \$100 prizes to graduates. The announcement of three new \$5,000 awards at Downsview shook him into action.

"It's incredible what they're doing. That's in a different league from what's available to many, many students. It's huge," says Wallace. "When we [the teachers at Downsview] heard about this, we said, this family has put their money where their mouth is and they acted. If teachers are really interested in making an impact, then we need to act, too."

And so the One City Scholarship Fund was born. The scholarship is open to any graduating student in the Toronto District School Board, but focuses on students coming from neighbourhood improvement areas and graduating from schools high on the TDSB's Learning Opportunities Index — a board-wide tool for determining which schools have students facing the greatest external challenges to education (based on income of the area, the education level of parents, and the number of lone-parent families). In short, it looks for exceptional students from exceptionally difficult situations.



"Some of these students, in spite of everything, have found a way to excel," beams Wallace.

"What we're saying is the city needs these kids to succeed. They've figured something out that this city needs. They've been handed a raw deal and they still succeed. We need to support those kids."

While Wallace and the One City Scholarship Fund are motivated by a desire to help kids, they're also looking to rewrite the persistent storyline in Toronto that inequality is an inevitable, structural obstacle and can never be addressed.

"We can change the narrative," Wallace says. "If we are going to be a city that takes the next step into the future, we need to have a more equal city, where opportunity is available to all, where talent is not wasted. We are one city, and

we are responsible for each other. We want to support these kids

not only because they deserve a fair shake, but also because the city needs them to succeed. They are strong in ways that we don't really understand, and we need to support them for the strength of our city."

The One City Scholarship, currently supported by teachers' fundraising efforts, has reached its modest goal of \$5,000. Wallace explains the group hopes to start an endowment at Toronto Foundation to provide eight recipients \$10,000 per year for up to four years of post-secondary education, though admits it's unlikely that the first scholarships will be that large.

Whatever the size of the first incarnation, Wallace's passionate message remains clear. "We need to say to these kids, 'Yes, this is your city. Grab it. Take it. Go with it.'"

Your City. Your future.

Do we have a high quality of life here in Toronto? Answer: It depends.

For some of us, the city is a welcoming and supportive place to live. For others, life here is challenging. And increasingly, for many of us, the future is very uncertain.

So what can you do?

Toronto's Vital Signs Report is a place to start. What it reveals is of interest to all of us as residents and especially, those of us who are looking for opportunities to take part in building a better city.

If you care about Toronto, consider taking the next step:

- 1 Read the full Toronto's Vital Signs Report at www.torontosvitalsigns.ca
- 2 Learn about the charities working on solutions to the issues addressed in Toronto's Vital Signs: www.ckc.torontofoundation.ca
- 3 Explore how philanthropy is working to build a better Toronto: www.torontofoundation.ca
- 4 Follow us on twitter at @Toronto_Fdn and our CEO at @CEO_TorontoFdn and join the conversation.