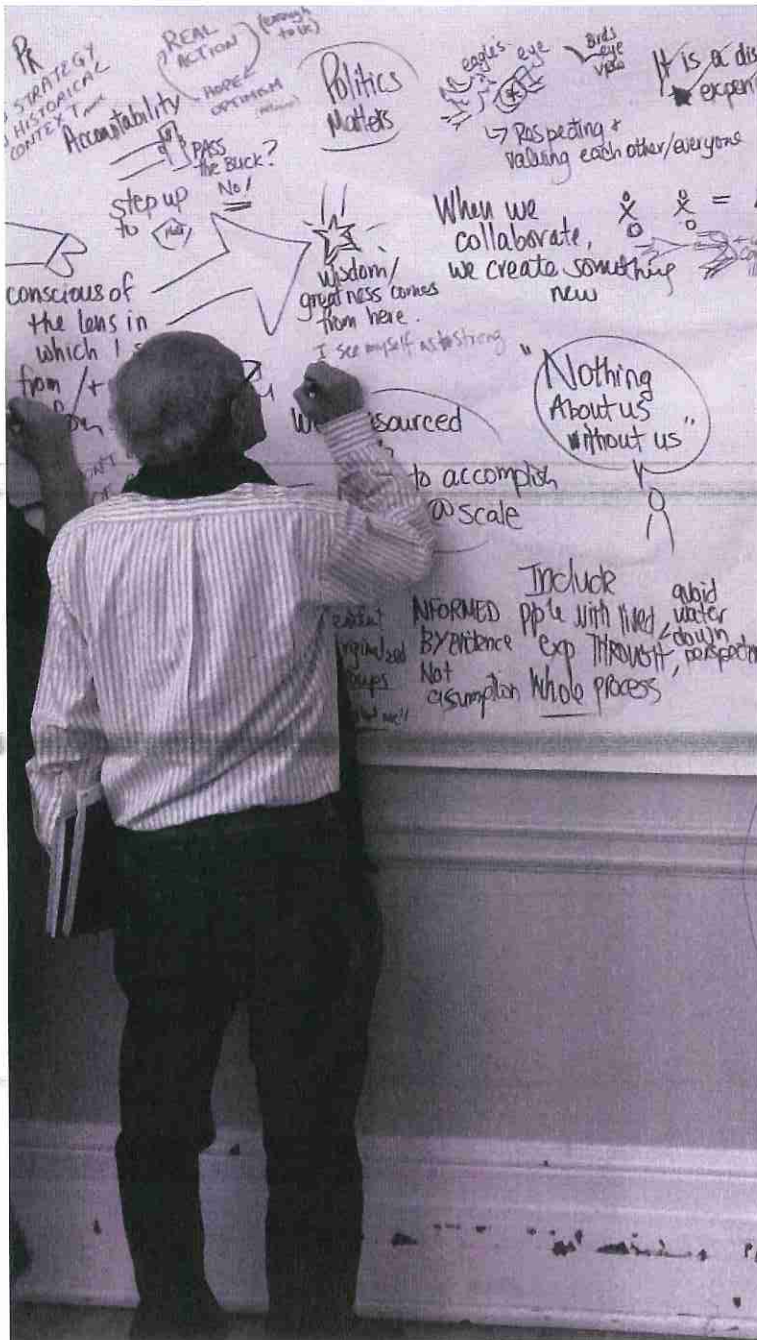


# TO PROSPERITY: TORONTO POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ACCOUNTABILITY TABLE CONVERSATION GUIDE



## TO PROSPERITY: TORONTO POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

Close to 2,000 Toronto residents participated in public meetings, community conversations, and online questionnaires that shaped TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy, which City Council unanimously approved on November 4, 2015.

Residents who participated in this broad and inclusive community engagement process, many of whom have lived or are currently living in poverty, offered concrete ideas for how to address complex poverty issues. Many of these ideas are included in TO Prosperity as proposed actions to improve housing stability, service access, transit equity, food access, and the quality of jobs.

Residents also discussed ways to make city government more responsive to their needs. Here, a strong consensus emerged about the need to continually involve residents in planning and decision-making processes. As a response, TO Prosperity's Implementation and Accountability Structure will include a Lived Experience Advisory Group.

City staff are now inviting residents and communities to participate in the creation of this Lived Experience Advisory Group.

## DISCUSSION

City Council approved the creation of a Lived Experience Advisory Group. To be meaningful and effective, this Advisory Group must be designed by the people it is meant to include - you. Please use the following questions to guide your discussion:

**What should be the key functions of the Lived Experience Advisory Group?**

**How should people be selected to participate in it?**

**How should it work? How often should it meet, where, and who should attend meetings?**

**How should this group interact with other individuals, City committees and community groups?**

**What supports will be needed to carry out this work?**

Before jumping on these questions, please take a moment to review guiding principles identified in the previous phases of this community engagement process. Feel free to add new principles to this list and point out what these principles should mean in practice. You may also find it helpful to read about how your answers will inform the next steps of this process. The next pages of this guide include a two-page overview of TO Prosperity.

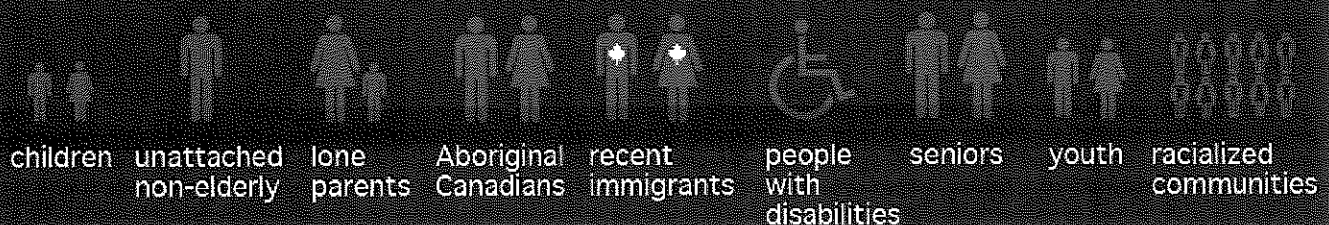
# DISCUSSION

## guiding principles

Poverty reduction planning and decision-making processes must:

- put people who have lived or are currently living in poverty at the core
- recognize that gender, race, sexual orientation, status, age, and abilities influence how people experience poverty
- respond to the diverse needs of individuals and groups at the table
- provide residents the power-building supports necessary to engage effectively
- require sensitive behavior from those who carry institutional power at the table
- be directly connected to community through multiple channels and activities
- promote continuous and clear communication that is easy to access and understand
- be self-renewing, allowing new voices and new leadership to emerge

### SOME TORONTONIANS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO LIVE IN POVERTY







## NEXT STEPS

- 1 City staff will summarize ideas and proposals generated through this engagement process
- 2 Summaries of the answers to each question will be posted at [toronto.ca/toprosperity](https://toronto.ca/toprosperity) and distributed to the Poverty Reduction Strategy email list
- 3 Residents will be invited to discuss the implementation details of the most popular proposals
- 4 City staff, community partners, and residents will work together in the creation of a Lived Experience Advisory Group that responds to the requests of residents living in poverty

## RESOURCES

Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy puts forward a vision to create a city where everyone has access to good jobs, adequate income, stable housing, affordable transit, nutritious food, and supportive services. To achieve this vision, the strategy focuses on six issue-areas:

### housing stability

Toronto residents living with low incomes cannot afford safe and adequate housing without sacrificing other basic needs. TO Prosperity recommends actions such as more money for repairs to social housing, better enforcement of housing standards, and provision of more housing allowances.

### service access

The City provides many vital services, but not all residents find the services they need when they need them. Actions in TO Prosperity include the development of flexible child-care models and easy-to-navigate registration processes for City programs.

### transit equity

An affordable and reliable public transit system connects people to jobs, services, and civic life. The strategy focuses on making transit more affordable for low-income residents and improving services in the city's inner suburbs.

### food access

Nutritious food makes children healthy, adults vigorous, and communities vibrant. TO Prosperity recommends actions aimed at reducing hunger in our city, and increasing access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food across the city.

### quality jobs & livable incomes

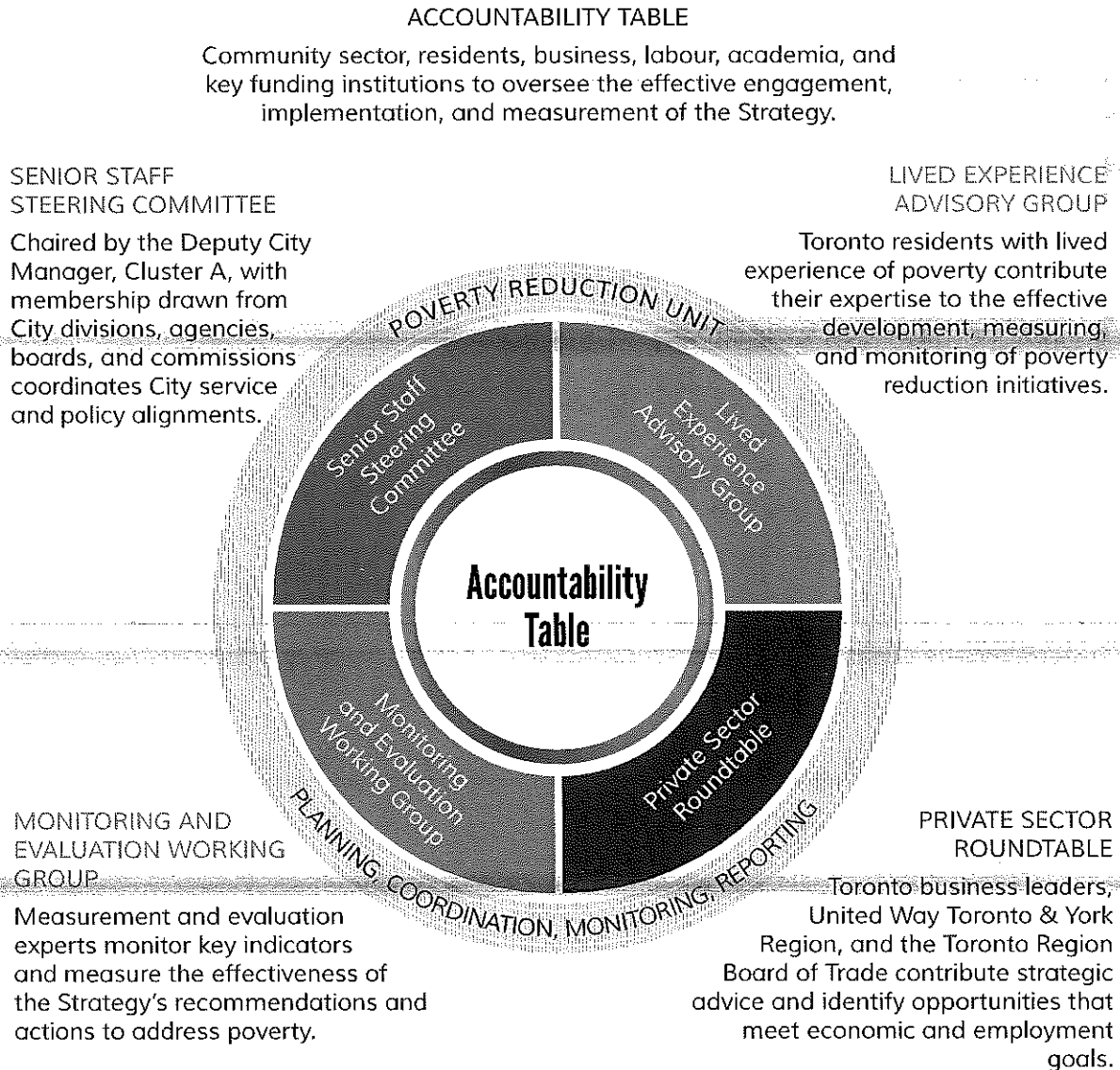
Over the past 20 years, job quality in Toronto has increasingly declined while income supports have been reduced and become harder to access. TO Prosperity puts forward actions aimed at improving the quality of jobs and income supports, and creating employment opportunities for low-income groups with high unemployment rates.

### systemic change

It takes work to build a prosperous and inclusive city. Residents, community and business partners, labour, and other orders of government will all need to participate, but the City of Toronto can, should, and will lead the way. TO Prosperity includes actions required to make poverty reduction part of the day-to-day business of the City government.

## IMPLEMENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

The diagram below outlines the basic Implementation and Accountability Structure approved by City Council. Much remains to be built. While this round of consultation focuses on the creation of the Lived Experience Advisory Group, participants are most welcome to discuss the structure as a whole, and share their thoughts and suggestions.



Please submit responses by April 1st, 2016 to:  
 mail: City Hall, 14th Floor, East Tower, Attn: Poverty Reduction  
 fax: 416-392-4976  
 email: [opendialogue@toronto.ca](mailto:opendialogue@toronto.ca)

Additional resources are available at [toronto.ca/toprosperity](http://toronto.ca/toprosperity), including the option to answer these questions online.