

CivicAction

Greater Toronto CivicAction • Alliance

CivicAction is a multi-sectoral coalition of thousands of civic leaders committed to acting collectively to tackle tough issues and big opportunities facing the Greater Toronto region. CivicAction's Greater Toronto Summits bring leaders from all walks of life together to assess the region's strengths and challenges and to identify priority areas and opportunities for attention. In the periods between Summits, CivicAction takes a role in incubating innovative initiatives designed to galvanize action in these priority areas.

CivicAction's current initiatives are aimed at: making the Greater Toronto region flourish through environmental action and innovation (Greening Greater Toronto – greeninggreaterontario.ca); creating a leadership landscape that better reflects the region's diversity (DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project, in partnership with Maytree – diversecitytoronto.ca); and connecting and supporting rising city-builders (the Emerging Leaders Network – elnonline.ca).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Collective Leadership on Tough Issues and Big Opportunities	2
CivicAction Steering Committees	4
Recommendations & Civic Actions	7
Proceedings	
• Economy	13
• Jobs & Income	16
• Transportation	20
• Immigration	23
• Diversity	26
• Environment	28
• Housing	31
• Neighbourhoods	33
• Arts & Culture	35
• Pan/Parapan Am Games & Youth	38
• Endnotes	40
Appendices	
• More Good Ideas	43
• Acknowledgements	44
• Delegates	49



COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP ON TOUGH ISSUES AND BIG OPPORTUNITIES

2

CivicAction is unique. No other organization convenes leaders from across the Greater Toronto region and from every sector to collectively tackle our shared social, economic and environmental issues. CivicAction breaks boundaries between sometimes competing people and groups, bringing them together to agree on and pursue goals that advance us all. We are motivated by the belief that government alone can't solve all of the issues we face: the best solutions to complex civic challenges are created when traditional players as well as the "unusual suspects" are at the table.

When over 1,000 regional leaders from business, government, non-profits, labour and academia came together at CivicAction's Greater Toronto Summit 2011, they were following in the footsteps of thousands of others who, since 2002, have worked together to identify and respond in innovative ways to our region's strengths, challenges and opportunities.

The Summit was an exhilarating two days that included intense discussions on ten pressing issues. These discussions focused on proposals emerging from year-long pre-Summit consultations and were informed by 94 guest speakers and documented by 170 volunteer note-takers and facilitators. Beyond developing ideas on specific issues, the Summit gave people an opportunity to share their hopes for the future of the Greater Toronto region. They described a future in which:

- our economy is strong, having built on our diversity and educational and industrial strengths;
- we have homes and jobs for all, with narrowing income gaps and robust neighbourhoods;
- people and goods move easily, using efficient transit, roads and paths for walking and biking;
- newcomers can fully deploy their talents and skills, are rewarded appropriately and are better represented in the leadership ranks of all aspects of life in the city region;
- the collective value of the arts and culture sector is recognized, supported and celebrated;

- our air, water and lands are clean and healthy, enabling our physical and economic prosperity; and, overarching all of these aspirations,
- we think and act like a region, with each of us recognizing that we have a role to play in our future success.

In keeping with our tradition of collective leadership and our renewed commitment to thinking and acting regionally, we also used the Summit as an opportunity to ask regional leaders what CivicAction and others can do to support and encourage cross-sectoral regional collaboration. The discussions surfaced a number of ideas:

Share what we've learned about

collaboration: Capture what has been learned from CivicAction projects and examine its process of collaboration – from who is invited to participate to what constitutes a successful collaboration. This would serve theoretical research purposes as well as provide practical guidance to others embarking on collective civic leadership activities here, across the country and internationally.

Facilitate opportunities for people to

work across sectors: Explore cross-sectoral exchanges, online matching of interested leaders with collaborative projects, and other potential mechanisms to build relationships between regional leaders and to enhance future sharing and collaboration.

Expand the culture of volunteerism:

Responding to the provincial Partnership Project's recommendation that social media, recognition awards and other mechanisms be used to encourage volunteerism, Summit participants proposed a tax credit tied to volunteerism and a business version of the high school 40-hour community service program in which employees would get paid leave to meet a similar mandate. This would also allow for more knowledge exchange between businesses and non-profit organizations.

Embed CivicAction across the region:

Continue to build CivicAction's regional network. One idea was to incubate satellites (i.e. CivicAction Peel, CivicAction Etobicoke) or to partner with regional organizations that could host their own Summits, building a regional process that would feed into a larger Summit.

This document is a summary of the social, economic and environmental issues discussed at the Summit and the key recommendations that it produced. For each issue, we have noted relevant challenges and strengths and the specific actions that should be taken by governments, business, non-profits and others – either acting alone or in collaboration with other sectors – to help us all make progress.


As the summary of recommendations and next steps, or “civic actions”, on the next five pages show, CivicAction is committed to helping drive progress on all of these issues. Where existing organizations have the mandate and capacity to lead, CivicAction will inform and support their work, using our networks and convening experience to help incubate new efforts where that is desirable. Where there is an unresolved issue with no obvious home, we will work with partners to create needed initiatives.

We should be proud of the many great things happening in the Greater Toronto region, but recognize that there is much more to do. We must each look for our own opportunities to be part of a collective leadership that thinks and acts regionally in advancing the region. In the words of our founding Chair, David Pecaut:

“A city [region] that is filled with civic entrepreneurs practicing collective leadership will be able to face any challenge and do all kinds of great things on economic issues, social issues, education, the arts, the environment, leveraging the richness of our diversity and much, much more.”¹



John Tory, Chair



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On behalf of the CivicAction Board of Directors

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The Boston Consulting Group

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Deputy Chief, Executive Command,
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John Tory

Chair, CivicAction

Carol Wilding

President & CEO, The Toronto Board of
Trade



CIVICACTION STEERING COMMITTEES



A Note on CivicAction's Founding and 2011-15 Steering Committees

After nearly nine years of developing innovative solutions to address complex urban challenges, CivicAction has become vital part of the public policy landscape. CivicAction's impact to date owes much to its Founding Steering Committee members – a dedicated group of leaders who have guided our work since 2003. We thank them for their determination and vision, and for their continued support of CivicAction.

We also thank and welcome the members of our new 2011-15 Steering Committee, who will help set and guide our post-Summit agenda and lay the groundwork for the Greater Toronto Summit in 2015 and interim review in 2013. We look forward to working with the following regional leaders and their partners and networks to move the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 recommendations forward:

FOUNDING STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

* Serving on 2011-15 Steering Committee

David Pecaut (1955-2009)

Founding and Former Chair,
Toronto City Summit Alliance
(now CivicAction)

John Tory*

Chair, CivicAction
Co-Chair, DiverseCity

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Community Foundation

Jill Black

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Company Ltd.

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Capital Corp.
Chairman, Maytree

Ann Buller

President & CEO, Centennial
College

Geoff Cape

Executive Director, Evergreen

John Cartwright

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Regional Labour Council

John Cassaday

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Entertainment Inc.

Michael Clemons

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Co-Founder, Ace Bakeries

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Former CEO, Canadian Urban
Institute
Former Mayor, City of Toronto

John Davies

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Institute of Technology and
Advanced Learning

Hon. William Davis

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CEO, United Way York Region

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS & SELECTED CIVIC ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THEM

Readers are invited to add and build on these civic actions at www.civicaction.ca/our-community. In addition to continuing DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project, Greening Greater Toronto and the Emerging Leaders Network, CivicAction will focus its efforts on Economy, Jobs & Income, Transportation and Immigration, as set out below, and support actions to advance other recommendations.

The Greater Toronto region has major commercial advantages, including its costs of doing business and advanced education levels, but the jobless rate is high at 8.5% and annual economic growth is projected to stagnate at 2% per year.

Economy

Recommendations

- 1) CivicAction should consult and work with leaders and organizations playing significant roles with respect to economic development in the region to determine how best to increase and leverage regional economic co-operation.
- 2) Enlist broad support to identify and promote the most promising industry areas.
- 3) Build a unique regional brand and ambassadors to promote it.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will collaborate with the Toronto Board of Trade and other leaders and organizations playing significant roles with respect to economic development in the region to determine how best to increase and leverage regional economic co-operation.**
- The Toronto Region Research Alliance is working with industry, government and research organizations to drive regional cluster research and promotion in several key areas.

The Greater Toronto region weathered the economic crisis better than many places, but many of our residents live in poverty (e.g., one in four in the City of Toronto, many of them visible minorities) and our training and employment programs haven't responded to the changing world of work.

Jobs & Income

Recommendations (full list and details on pages 16-19)

- 1) Governments must update and better coordinate policies and programs for labour market development and income assistance to reflect the new realities of work and living in low income.
- 2) Business has a clear interest in having a fully accessible and productive workforce and must play a bigger role in efforts to reduce poverty and improve regional labour force development.
- 3) A major awareness campaign is needed to inform the public about the profound impacts of recent changes in the labour market, poverty and income inequality in society.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction and United Way Toronto will establish a business panel to respond to the Social Assistance Review Commission launched by the Province of Ontario and will help identify opportunities to increase awareness of labour market and poverty issues among business and the public.**
- The Mowat Centre Employment Insurance Taskforce is examining Canada's support system for the unemployed to develop an Ontario proposal to modernize Employment Insurance.



Metrolinx's "The Big Move" regional transportation plan will attack our congestion-related commute times and illnesses by putting over 80% of Greater Toronto region residents within two kilometres of rapid transit. To ensure that these dramatic improvements to our transportation infrastructure are made, we need more vocal support from our region's leaders and an "adult" conversation about how we will top up the Province's \$10 billion pledge and pay the \$40 billion balance.

Transportation

Recommendations

- 1) Governments should explore and commit to long-term funding tools designated for transit and transportation, including a federal-provincial funding agreement.
- 2) Leaders from every sector must help drive broad public support for the regional transportation plan and stimulate informed public discussion of financing tools.
- 3) Metrolinx, with support from its municipal and other partners, should create a significant and continuing public information campaign and consultations to engage public support and input.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will collaborate with the Toronto Board of Trade and other partners to support and inform Metrolinx's communications efforts and broaden public and political support for implementing and funding the regional transportation plan.**

The Greater Toronto region has been a magnet for new immigrants, who are key to our future prosperity, but the last decade has seen 17% fewer immigrants coming to the region and those who do come generally earn much less than those Canadian-born.

Immigration

Recommendations

- 1) Our governments must work much better together to attract and settle immigrants and to provide adequate and predictable funding for essential settlement services.
- 2) Create a multi-sectoral mechanism to lift public dialogue and forge better public and private policy and programs on immigration, economics and citizenship in the city-region context.
- 3) Create a model for one-stop business development support centres for self-employed and entrepreneur newcomers that can be delivered regionally.
- 4) Create an independent annual summary of immigration related economic and social policy indicators.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will work with a range of service providers, business and government leaders to identify potential ways to improve coordination between all levels of government and to propel the public discourse on immigration.**
- **CivicAction will convene leading researchers, organizations and individuals to explore opportunities for leveraging research and data on immigration, particularly as it relates to the social and economic health of the Greater Toronto region.**
- Maytree and the Metcalf Foundation have jointly commissioned a research study on immigrant self-employment and entrepreneurship to begin to inform thinking on related policies, programs and supports.



The region's racial and cultural diversity is a strategic advantage – our residents collectively speak over 100 languages - but only 14% of our leaders (and less than 5% of large company boards and top executives) are visible minorities.

Diversity

Recommendations

- 1) Continue CivicAction and Maytree's DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project.
- 2) Educate and encourage investors to press corporate boards to set diversity targets and report publically on their progress.
- 3) Leverage procurement processes to advance diversity goals.

Civic Actions

- **Building on the success of DiverseCity initiatives to date, and with the renewed financial support of the Province of Ontario, CivicAction and Maytree have extended their DiverseCity Project until 2013.**
- The Canadian Board Diversity Council is working with board chairs and nominating committees to encourage more diversity on corporate boards. As a complement to that effort, the Council will execute an advertising campaign targeted at shareholders, governments, employees, media and consumers.
- In partnership with the Canadian Board Diversity Council, Maytree's Diversity in Governance Awards will continue to present a corporate award for excellence in diversity and governance.
- Supplier diversity is being expanded by DiverseCity's partner, the Diversity Business Network, and new industry-led projects including the Legal Leaders for Diversity Initiative (50 corporate general counsels who have pledged to promote diversity internally and through their legal services procurement).

The Greater Toronto region is breathing cleaner air, using less water and diverting more waste, but is struggling to manage commercial waste and stormwater, control sprawl and traffic congestion, and protect forests, wetlands, and the 63% of our native plant and animal species at risk.

Environment

Recommendations

- 1) Develop a regional strategy to reduce and divert commercial waste.
- 2) Expand energy conservation programs to address electricity and gas use, and explore opportunities for district heating.
- 3) Reduce water consumption and improve stormwater and flood risk management by making the environmental and financial case for water consumers and municipalities.
- 4) Launch a multi-sectoral effort to green corporate and vacant lands.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction has renewed the mandate of Greening Greater Toronto, which successfully launched the *Race to Reduce* office building energy efficiency challenge in May.**
- **The City of Toronto and CivicAction are launching a regional multi-sectoral action group to help protect our residents, infrastructure and organizations from the risks associated with increasing extreme weather events, such as flooding.**
- **CivicAction will meet with key waste supply chain stakeholders to explore the development of a regional strategy to reduce and divert commercial waste.**
- **CivicAction will support the efforts of Credit Valley Conservation, Toronto and Region Conservation, Evergreen, Ontario Power Generation and other groups that are working with businesses and institutions to increase natural vegetation cover on corporate green spaces and vacant lands.**
- **CivicAction will explore with municipalities ways to accelerate progress on reducing water consumption.**



Recent government stimulus programs put \$500 million into Greater Toronto region housing, but other funding agreements have expired and almost 1 in 5 Greater Toronto region households struggle with finding and keeping an affordable home, with almost 90,000 people on two to 21-year social housing waiting lists.

Housing

Recommendations

- 1) The federal government should create a national housing strategy.
- 2) The federal and Ontario governments should renew the government housing programs that expired in March 2011. [In July 2011, the federal government announced a new national Affordable Housing Framework for 2011-2014 including \$1.4 billion in cost-shared funding. Housing funding for Ontario will be available once Canada and Ontario announce the signing of a bilateral agreement later this summer.]
- 3) Establish a multi-sector leadership group to develop a regional housing strategy.
- 4) Maintain and make the Toronto Regional Housing Data Bank a permanent resource.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will work with partners including the City of Toronto Affordable Housing Office and Social Housing Services Corporation to create a regional leadership group.**
- **CivicAction will work with these and other partners including the new Regional Strategic Resource Centre (ReSRC) initiative at MaRS to identify a permanent home for the Regional Housing Data Bank.**

The Greater Toronto region is celebrated for its many vibrant and unique neighbourhoods, but growing concentrations of poverty threaten the health and vitality of many – in 2006, 46% of low-income families lived in higher poverty neighbourhoods in Toronto, up from 18% two decades earlier.

Neighbourhoods

Recommendations

- 1) Create more opportunities and places for residents to meet and engage in community development.
- 2) Develop innovative opportunities for private sector investment in under-invested neighbourhoods.
- 3) Develop and maintain a comprehensive neighbourhood revitalization and community building best practice case book and a virtual community research hub to facilitate knowledge exchange.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will help to bring business voices and models to neighbourhood development conversations being led by United Ways (UWs) and frontline organizations across the region.**
- The United Ways across the region continue to work with partners to engage neighbourhood residents in community building. Examples include:
 - Currently, UW Toronto is examining the concentration of poverty in high-rise towers and will work with partners to build on investments in resident engagement and neighbourhood revitalization.
 - Through its Strength Investment Fund, UW York Region will continue to identify and invest in new and promising collaborative community solutions.
 - UW of Peel Region, in partnership with the Mississauga Summit's youth leadership and advisory councils, is creating opportunities for community members to lead change.
- The Centre for City Ecology is developing tools to map neighbourhood level initiatives. This work could serve as the basis for a neighbourhood revitalization and community building best practice case book and virtual knowledge exchange.



The Greater Toronto region's 8,500 arts and culture organizations and 150,000 staff generate about \$9 billion for the region's GDP, but lack an industry-wide voice and mechanisms to collaborate on common concerns like revenue and audience diversification, data collection and governance.

Arts & Culture

Recommendations

- 1) Establish a steering committee comprised of representatives from a diverse range of arts organizations from across the region to move the sector towards greater collaboration and perhaps an enduring formal structure.
- 2) Establish an independent research and policy centre focused on issues affecting the arts and culture sector.

Civic Actions

- **CivicAction will work with Business for the Arts and other partners in creating a leadership group to advance sectoral collaboration and create a framework for the establishment of a cultural policy think tank to inform cultural industries and funders of evolving artistic approaches and global best practices relating to creating, sustaining and disseminating arts products and services.**
- In May 2011, Toronto City Council unanimously endorsed the recommendations of the "Creative Capital Gains" Action Plan for Toronto, recognizing the economic case for investing in the arts and the City's important leadership role in promoting this sector regionally and internationally.

The 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games provide an incredible chance to engage youth in building their communities. The challenge is for all of the players involved to identify and leverage opportunities for youth activity and leadership.

Pan/Parapan Am Games & Youth

Recommendations

- 1) Build awareness and buy-in through a multi-faceted public information and engagement campaign that includes the voices of youth and engages them through existing networks and organizations.
- 2) Provide youth with access to sport, leadership development, influence, and jobs, apprenticeships and volunteer roles; set clear measurable targets.

Civic Actions

- The Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan Am Games, with support from CivicAction and a range of organizations, will use the unique opportunity presented by the Games to highlight the power of youth leadership through a series of both professional and voluntary engagement opportunities.



PROCEEDINGS





The recession was an important call to action to maintain and enhance the Greater Toronto region's competitiveness, economic prosperity and quality of life. Consultations with regional business and other leaders surfaced eight major economic concerns, three of which were prioritized for deeper investigation at the Summit: regional economic co-operation; cluster building; and better leveraging our immigrant talent advantage (the last is discussed on pages 23-25).

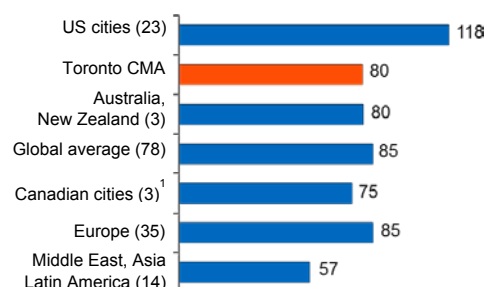
Challenges

Our region weathered the recession better than most, but the nascent recovery is leaving many people behind. We face significant economic challenges, unfamiliar new markets and other concerns, including the following:

- our jobless rate is above the national average at 8.5% (as of March 2011), with consumer bankruptcies and social assistance dependency rising (especially for immigrants);²
- projections suggest a long period of low economic growth, with rates of 2% per year.³
- cities such as São Paulo, Shanghai and Mumbai will have growth rates more than double ours and increasingly compete for investment, businesses and talent;
- our GDP per capita, productivity and productivity growth significantly lag behind American cities (Figure 1); and
- we lag in our ability to innovate; our venture capital investment and patent registrations fall behind most North American centres.⁴

Marketing and economic growth of the Greater Toronto region are also inhibited by the following:

Figure 1: Productivity GDP per worker (\$000s CAD, 2004)



1. Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver

Note: Labour productivity defined as GDP per worker, not GDP per hour worked; currency converted at PPP.

Source: The Boston Consulting Group, based on data from the Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity.

Lack of regional economic co-operation:

Most people, businesses, potential investors and visitors assess our offerings and challenges as a region – from education to quality of life to transportation to immigrant integration to tourism. Despite this, much of our economic development is municipality-specific. Understandably, municipalities compete for non-residential developments to generate new property tax revenue, but their economic development efforts are generally localized and fragmented, and often duplicative. Efforts to co-operate regionally⁵ have not always enjoyed cross-sectoral support or high profile champions to drive well-defined common objectives. As a result, our regional leaders have been constrained, unable to effectively discuss and advocate on the most important issues that affect our economy.

Not fully leveraging our networks and industry strengths: The lack of regional economic co-operation also impedes the development of a strategy to agree on and leverage our key clusters to promote

the region and our most promising industries. There are other obstacles to this as well:

- early stage businesses in some of our most promising sectors often have trouble accessing capital, particularly in the crucial \$500,000 to \$2 million range; this drives them to more welcoming funders in Boston and other city regions;
- insufficient attention has been paid to attracting and retaining talent in areas like high-tech and clean-tech development, biomedical research, and financial management and investment banking; and
- we have yet to fully leverage our diversity and all of the talents, networks and resources it brings.

Cluster-based approaches to economic growth are increasingly being acknowledged as a key way for regions to compete for investors, customers and talent in global markets. Singapore, Kitchener-Waterloo, Boston and North Carolina's Research Triangle have all used clustering strategies to successfully generate growth, innovation and commercialization in targeted sectors. They are creating a legacy of advanced knowledge, increased productivity and efficiency, and research facilities.

Strengths

Leaders from all sectors increasingly recognize that our lack of co-ordination and a unifying regional vision and brand is hurting us in the global competition for talent, investment and tourism, but that we also have several unique strengths that have propelled our economic growth over the last decade, such as:

- a high quality of life (Figure 2);
- low costs of doing business;
- an extremely diverse and growing population (we are the most "global" city in the world (Figure 3)); and
- advanced education.

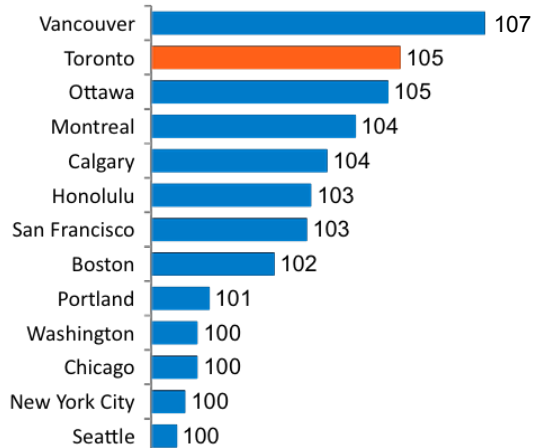
The region also enjoys a diverse economy with several successful and expanding sectors:

- third-largest financial services centre in North America;
- the TSX is the world's seventh largest stock exchange and the leading stock exchange for clean-tech companies;

- third largest centre for film and television production in the world; and
- the region also excels in advanced technologies, ranking third in North America for biotechnology as well as for information and communications technology.⁶

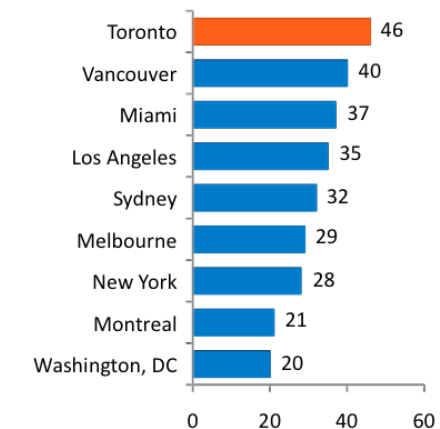
These strengths provide the foundation for building clusters that we can expand and market internationally, with two nascent initiatives doing just that: the Toronto Financial Services Alliance and the Ontario Bioscience Industry Organization. These are all promising steps towards developing a

Figure 2: 2009 Quality of life ranking index; Toronto vs. major Canadian & U.S. cities



Note: Base city New York = 100.
Source: The Boston Consulting Group, based on data from the Toronto Region Research Alliance, Mercer 2009.

Figure 3: Foreign Born Population as % of Total



Note: Figures shown for Toronto CMA, foreign born population in 2006 for Canada, 2005 for U.S.
Source: The Boston Consulting Group, based on data from Statistics Canada, Australian Bureau of Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau.



comprehensive strategy to identify, build and support clusters in the Greater Toronto region.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Consult and work with leaders and organizations playing significant roles with respect to economic development in the region to determine how best to increase and leverage regional economic co-operation.

The Summit saw widespread support for enhancing regional economic co-operation, but little consensus on how to do this. Pre-Summit consultations suggested creating a regional investment promotion agency to build and market the region's brand, and a regional multi-sectoral economic co-operation council to develop a regional economic development strategy. The Summit concluded that creating new entities would be premature and possibly not the most efficient use of resources: there was a strong preference for trying to repurpose existing resources and institutions before committing to new ones.

Instead, the Summit recommended engaging leaders from all sectors to develop a shared vision of regional economic co-operation and to determine how success could be measured and, perhaps most importantly, how to get all of the necessary players to co-operate. It was suggested that these conversations be convened by a neutral organizer like CivicAction and involve governments, business, chambers of commerce, labour, youth and others contributing to the broad spectrum of economic development.

2. Enlist broad support to identify and promote the most promising industry areas.

The Summit saw strong support for targeting key sectors for cluster promotion in the Greater Toronto region. To generate broad buy-in and awareness, the Summit recommended identifying clusters through consultations going beyond the private sector to include post-secondary institutions, the advanced research and non-profit communities, and cultural and other opinion leaders. Given their central role in creating the financing, educational, quality of life

and other conditions necessary for new businesses and clusters to succeed, governments would need to be involved. However, government wasn't seen as the appropriate driver of these consultations.

Based on innovation, growth potential, global demand and local institutional and research support, six possible areas for initial focus stand out:

- biomedical, biotech and life sciences;
- information and communications technology (ICT);
- financial services;
- clean tech;
- renewable energy; and
- advanced manufacturing.

Horizontal innovation clusters, such as ICT, that are common to multiple industries and can advance additional priorities such as immigrant integration, sustainability and social innovation, should also be considered.

These cross-sectoral consultations would consider how to encourage clusters from the bottom – from rounding out our “venture eco-system” to expand seed funding, smart capital, and incubators to cultivate entrepreneurialism and risk-taking. They would also determine how to drive clusters from the top, for example, by attracting large multinationals to base their headquarters in the region, increasing large scale investment and domestic markets.

3. Build a unique regional brand and ambassadors to promote it.

Summit delegates suggested that we develop a unique regional brand that every private, public and non-profit organization can rally around. While other regions may share our cluster areas, none can match our cultural diversity. Just as the VQA has elevated the profile (and sales) of Ontario wines, a Greater Toronto regional brand would highlight the region's unique value proposition and facilitate the job of potential ambassadors.

See the related backgrounders, *Towards a New Model for Economic Co-operation Across the Toronto Region*, and *Economic Cluster Strategy for the Toronto Region: Matching Capital to Innovation*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaaction.ca/publications



The Greater Toronto region is the economic engine of Canada and its success depends as much on people as it does on business development strategies. The region weathered the recession comparatively well, but the recovery is still leaving many behind.⁷ To ensure that our residents achieve their potential, the hundreds of people involved in pre-Summit working groups, roundtables, and Summit breakout discussions came to the same conclusion: we need to better align our income security, employment services and workforce development systems to foster success and provide opportunities for all.

Challenges

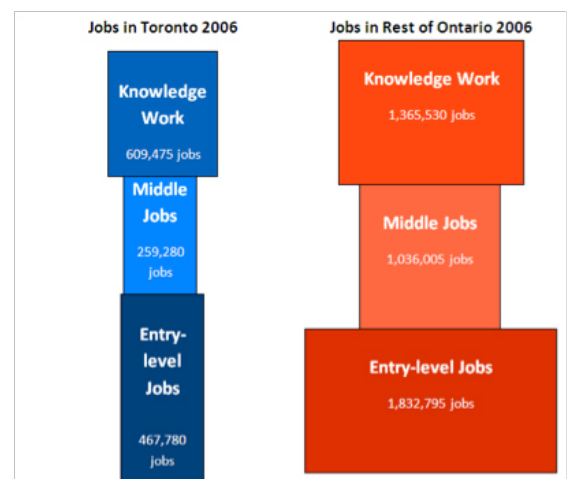
Currently, there is a serious disconnection between the supply and demand sides of our labour market: many employers lack skilled workers, while post-secondary graduates often have difficulty establishing careers and highly educated newcomers resort to working low paying survival jobs. Additional challenges face racialized⁸ groups and youth attempting to access the labour market. A number of factors exacerbate this disconnection:

- the continuing shift from manufacturing to a service and knowledge-based economy: job growth is primarily in highly paid and entry-level jobs, polarizing incomes and increasing inequality across the region (Figure 1);
- full-time employment and job security are being replaced by precarious work and just-in-time hiring;
- as baby-boomers retire, net labour force growth will depend predominantly on immigrants, many of whom are not being well-integrated into the labour market; and
- despite our dynamism, we trail behind other major cities in productivity growth and workplace training.⁹

These trends, coupled with the rising costs of living in the region, have made it more difficult for many to earn a liveable income. In 2008, the most recent year for which figures are available, 10.3% of Greater Toronto region residents lived in poverty, compared to 9.2% for the rest of Ontario. The Greater Toronto region makes up 42.8% of Ontario's population, but has 48% of those living in poverty.¹⁰ Poverty is most acute in the City of Toronto, where as many as one in four residents (25%) fall below the Low Income Cut-Off line.¹¹

The face of poverty has also become increasingly racialized. In the Greater Toronto region, 19.5% of people from racialized groups live in poverty.¹² In Ontario, though racialized groups account for roughly 26% of the population, they represent 41% of those in low-income households,¹³ experience higher levels of unemployment and earn less than the rest of Canadians.¹⁴

Figure 1: Distribution of Jobs by Skill/Sector Categories; Toronto and the Rest of Ontario, 2006



Note: Size of boxes to scale, for comparison's sake.

Source: Zizys, Tom. "An Economy Out of Shape: Changing the Hourglass." Toronto Workforce Innovation Group. 1 Apr. 2010.

Canada's "social safety net," designed in the mid-1960s to support Canadians through hardship, is no longer achieving its stated objective, as the assumptions it was based on no longer hold true:

- a full-time job no longer guarantees an adult a decent living;
- growing numbers of people work in part-time and precarious positions; and
- most working-age adults who might not have worked in the past, such as lone parents and people with disabilities, increasingly can and want to be part of the labour force.

Without changes, those who lose their livelihoods will continue to face serious challenges trying to find new jobs and rebuild their lives, let alone play meaningful and active roles in our society.

Strengths

The Greater Toronto region has a diverse and dynamic economy, the preservation of which should, along with our commitment to Canadian social values of equality and inclusion, motivate us to proactively address labour market and income security issues.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. All levels of government should act decisively and urgently to better align and coordinate policies and programs for labour market development and income supports.

The Summit highlighted the need for governments to map and better coordinate income supports and social assistance systems with other social policy areas such as labour force development, Employment Insurance (EI), and programs to help meet the needs of longer-term unemployed Canadians. The work of the Mowat Centre Employment Insurance Taskforce and Ontario's new Social Assistance Review Commission will contribute to better alignment and coordination.

2. The Province of Ontario should further modernize its income support and social assistance systems to assist people who are at the low end of the income spectrum and labour market, help buffer periods of unemployment and provide baseline income for the most vulnerable. These systems must be further updated

to reflect the new realities of increasing low-wage, part-time and precarious contract work. We should help people escape poverty and contribute to society, and avoid trapping them on welfare. Three areas that warrant immediate action are:

a) **Increase asset limits:** People receiving social assistance should be allowed to keep small windfalls and protect some savings to avoid destitution and welfare dependence. At present, a single person applying for Ontario Works assistance must have no more than \$592 in assets.¹⁵ This makes it hard to fund a job search, let alone meet their living needs. Summit consultations supported calls for an increase in asset limits to \$5,000 for single people and \$10,000 for families (including Registered Retirement Savings Plans and Tax Free Savings Accounts).

b) **Delink housing and drug and dental benefits from social assistance:** These often-crucial benefits are available only to people receiving social assistance. Losing them when one rejoins the workforce, especially if taking a low-paying job without benefits, can be devastating. They could be delinked by creating a new portable housing benefit and providing drug and dental benefits on a needs basis by better coordinating the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan, the Trillium Drug program, the Children in Need of Treatment program and other initiatives.

c) **Coordinate provincial programs with the Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB) to better help people transitioning from welfare to work:** The federal WITB provides low-income people in or rejoining the workforce with a refundable tax credit that phases out as their income increases. The Province of Ontario has yet to fully leverage the WITB and should join Quebec, Nunavut and British Columbia in coordinating its own social assistance programs with the WITB.

3. Establish a business panel to engage with and respond to Ontario's Social Assistance Review Commission and to identify opportunities to increase business and public awareness of labour market and poverty issues. Given the private sector's interest in having a fully accessible and productive

workforce, the Summit called on business to play a bigger role in offering its perspective and support efforts to reduce poverty and improve regional labour force development as well as income support and social assistance systems. Past experience has shown that, unless business is informed and engaged, it is hard to make progress on addressing these issues.

4. The Ontario government, business and labour need to work together to increase the effectiveness of employment standards and regulations in order to ensure workplace fairness and security.

With 37% of our workforce now in part-time, contract or self-employed jobs,¹⁶ we need to ensure that decent wages, benefits, working conditions and job security are not just available to those in traditional full-time jobs. The provincial government should review and update the Employment Standards Act and other labour laws, regulations and employment benefits. Employers can play their part by extending standards to all forms of work and collaborating to identify and promote best practices and greater compliance.

5. Create business leadership groups to devise actions that will address challenges posed by the changing structure of the labour market as they relate to employment practices, including skill mismatches, the growth of precarious work and declining benefits.

Employment practices like just-in-time hiring and the use of contract, part-time and temporary workers are on the rise. While there may be immediate cost benefits of such practices for businesses, we cannot ignore their negative impact on employees (and by extension, employers) over the longer term. Many believe that it is possible for companies to invest in their workforces and adopt better, people-centred employment practices while still turning a healthy profit. Summit consultations called for more demonstrable business leadership around employment practices to set an example for other employers. One idea which stood out was to establish business leadership groups that could deliberate on specific issues, identify areas for collaboration, develop and test potential common solutions and promote their adoption by the wider business community. Such groups could investigate a variety of issue areas including:

- a) **Changing hiring and employment practices to reduce precarious working arrangements:** Some companies are already proving that good employment practices do not necessarily compromise profits. Businesses could work together to identify ways to reverse the trend towards precarious, part-time and just-in-time hiring and develop alternate and more stabilizing employment practices that could be adopted in a range of industries and business settings.
- b) **Providing benefits and other supplements at a low cost to self-employed workers:** Affordable products and services to buffer the risks of self-employment could bring distinct benefits to individual workers and their families, especially for low-income earners. Pooled health insurance to protect people from destitution in times of ill health and low-cost personal pension products that maximize the benefits of saving for retirement are two areas that could be explored.
- c) **Increasing access to high quality, affordable early learning and child care to allow parents at all income levels to work:** Businesses should consider the opportunity to invest in their employees by establishing early learning and child care supports. There is a strong business case for such investments: improved recruitment and retention of employees; reductions in absenteeism; increased productivity; and, overall improvements in employee wellness, morale and loyalty.¹⁷ In cases where organizations are too small to implement this independently, they could explore pooling resources or establish programs that support employees in finding high quality, affordable child care.

6. Improve the design and effectiveness of and access to training and employment support programs.

Government should take a more active leadership role in the development of training programs to ensure they achieve and sustain good results. Programs should be supported with up-to-date labour market data and designed to provide individuals with the relevant skills necessary to access meaningful work and a livable income. Particular attention to training for those receiving EI or social



assistance, as well as racialized groups, newcomers and youth, will offer much needed support to working-age adults at the low end of the labour market. The government could also increase accountability and learning by improving data collection and measurement of training results.

Businesses, too, can take greater leadership by making more investments in training their workforces. Among OECD nations, Canada is ranked 14th for its level of employer investment in workplace training.¹⁸ At the same time, employers are reporting that individuals are entering the workforce with inadequate “soft skills” including communication and problem-solving needed on the job.¹⁹ Increasingly, employees are unable to meet the needs of employers, compromising income, productivity, career advancement and overall economic well-being. There is therefore a clear need for training that supports personal and professional growth and provides employees with access to decent career paths.

7. Conduct more research on and consider developing a regional workforce planning partnership to help address skills mismatches between labour market needs and labour force supply.

An investigation into the viability of a partnership between governments, employers, non-profit organizations and educators is an important step towards addressing the skills mismatch and the just-in-time hiring practices that have characterized our labour market over the past decade. Properly resourced, such a partnership could serve a number of purposes including: provide a regional forum for co-ordination among sector councils; identify workforce talent gaps; work with employers to forecast key skills to help ensure post-secondary educational programs match employers’ needs; and, analyze workforce to career pathways.

While past government-led attempts at workforce planning have yielded limited results, the prospects for success would be improved by starting with a facilitated dialogue among the stakeholders to first understand the value each can contribute.

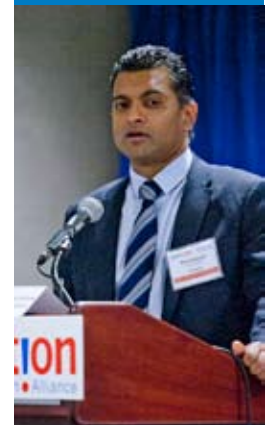
It will also be important to consider whether existing population-specific intermediaries such as the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council

(TRIEC), Partnership to Advance Youth Employment, Job Opportunity Information Network, a disability network, or others can be built upon to tackle this complex question. Among other things, workforce intermediaries will be well placed to advocate that government and business reduce specific employment barriers for racialized groups, newcomers and youth and create a regional dialogue to better understand and improve the effectiveness of programs aimed at reducing poverty within these groups. To date, efforts to address barriers to these groups accessing employment have been hindered by both a lack of data and limited government willingness to facilitate public access to the data that is available. We should encourage the federal government to increase public access to labour force data disaggregated by specific demographic groups, including racialized groups, newcomers and youth.

8. Devise and deliver an information campaign to increase awareness about the profound impacts of recent changes in the labour market, poverty and income inequality in society.

There is widespread misunderstanding about the experiences of those living in poverty and on social assistance. To challenge pervasive stigmas and foster dialogue, there is an urgent need for a wide-ranging communication strategy or public education campaign. Raising awareness would cut through the clutter of the income and social assistance systems and change the negative and blaming tone of public dialogue on these issues. One suggestion was the creation of a “users’ guide” to illustrate the complexity of the system and help make the case for change to a wide range of audiences. By fostering a better understanding of the realities of those on social assistance, we can build a wider coalition of public support for the creation of a modern income and social assistance system.

See the related backgrounders, *Income Security: Collective Responses for a Prosperous Toronto Region* and *People and Prosperity: Planning for a New World of Work*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaction.ca/publications





There is no way to sugar-coat our transportation crisis. If we do not invest in long-term, comprehensive regional transportation and transit improvements shortly, the quality of life for residents of the Greater Toronto region, as well as our economic prosperity, will be in serious jeopardy: costs of congestion will soar from \$6 billion to \$15 billion per year by 2030;²⁰ smog will contribute to tens of thousands of premature deaths;²¹ and we will see worsening social outcomes for people who are aging, live with low incomes, or live in areas underserved by transit. This future is barreling towards us like a freight train.

Challenges

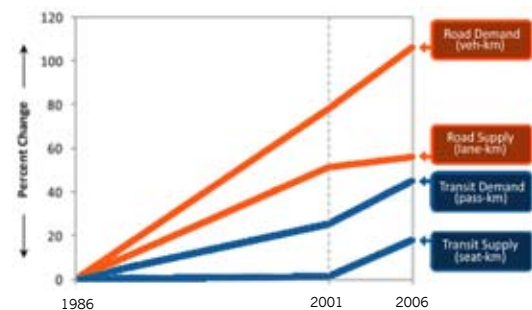
Few people have not confronted the traffic jams, crowded subways and lack of active transit options that characterize our transportation system, and the data

backs up their frustrations:

- since 1990, the growth in demand for roads and transit in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) has been about double the growth of supply²² (Figure 1);
- the performance of the region's transportation system has deteriorated noticeably in the last 20 years – the Greater Toronto region now has the longest commute times of any city region in North America;²³ and
- these negative trends in transportation performance are accelerating,²⁴ going from bad to worse at an increasing rate (Figure 2).

The GTHA's population is poised to increase 49.5% by 2036,²⁵ so these trends and costs will only accelerate.

Figure 1: 1986-2006 GTHA Transportation Demand and Supply Trends*



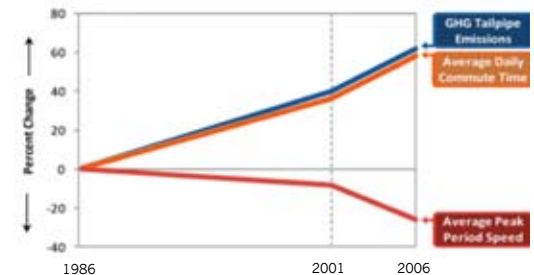
*The data points are graphed for 1986, 2001 and 2006 only, to show changes in net trends before and after 2001. Travel fluctuations between these points are not shown; for example, transit supply in seat-km increased in the years following 1986 but then declined to 2001, showing a negligible net gain over the 15-year period. Similarly, road travel demand has fluctuated above and below the trend lines, reflecting economic conditions (with a downward fluctuation in 2008/9 for example), but the overall trend continues to climb.

Source: IBI Group, based on Transportation Tomorrow data and GTHA road/transit data sources.

Strengths

In 2008, Metrolinx, the provincial agency charged with coordinating GTHA transportation planning and delivery, unveiled The Big Move. This regional plan will create a comprehensive rapid transit network to put over 80% of

Figure 2: 1986-2006 Transportation Performance Trends*



*As noted for Figure 1, trend fluctuations between the three data points are not shown, in order to emphasize the changes in the overall net trend lines before and after 2001.

Source: IBI Group, based on Transportation Tomorrow data and model runs.

GTHA residents within two kilometres of rapid transit and make region-wide improvements to roads, highways and pedestrian and cycling facilities.²⁶ Unanimously approved by Metrolinx’s Board of Directors (then made up of GTHA mayors and regional chairs), the plan promises to decrease average commute times and tailpipe emissions, integrate transit fares, triple the length of rapid transit lines and introduce leading edge information systems to inform travel choices.

The Big Move is a living plan, built to flex and evolve as circumstances change, without sacrificing its original objectives and costs. In the spring of 2011, the plan was altered to accommodate changed City of Toronto transit priorities but, even so, retains key regional projects (several of which are already underway), including the Eglinton-Scarborough Crosstown. The Province has committed to pay just over \$10 billion of the plan’s projected \$50 billion capital cost (in 2008 dollars), but we are short \$40 billion to keep the plan on track.

The Summit issued a strong call for federal, provincial and municipal governments to resolve their political and jurisdictional challenges and work with Metrolinx to implement the regional transportation plan in a holistic way that will serve the interests of the entire region. Better political and public dialogue is needed to broaden awareness

of the need to implement The Big Move and to identify and galvanize support for an acceptable mix of sustainable sources to fund its implementation.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Governments should explore and commit to long-term funding tools designated for transit and transportation, including a federal-provincial funding agreement.

Canada is the only OECD country without a long-term national plan for transit and transportation. Summit participants called for a federal-provincial strategy and long-term funding designated for transit and transportation. Recognizing the government’s fiscal constraints, they suggested a diverse portfolio of funding sources, but agreed that the federal government should make a long-term commitment of \$1-2 billion per year designated to help fund GTHA transit and transportation.

CivicAction has identified 12 potential funding sources²⁷ for consideration. Political and government leaders should join in the growing debate about these and other potential funding sources and help drive the discussion towards a consensus that Metrolinx can rely on when creating its long-term investment strategy, due in June 2013. Our consultations suggest that people are open to considering new funding options, but need to be informed about each

Figure 3: Potential sources for additional GTHA transit/transportation funding

Source	Net Additional Revenue to GTHA
1. Road Tolls on GTHA Freeways (400 series highways and municipal controlled-access highways)	\$1 – 2 B/year
2. Regional Gas/Diesel Fuel Tax	\$1 – 2 B/year
3. Commercial Parking Levy	\$1 – 2 B/year
4. Regional Sales Tax	\$1 – 2 B/year
5. High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes or Express Lanes on GTHA Freeways	\$400 – 800 M/year for Express Lanes \$200 – 400 M/year for HOT Lanes
6. HST Revenue from Gas/Diesel Sales Tax (Revenue dedicated partially or fully to GTHA transit)	\$400 – 600 M/year
7. Central Area (C.A.) Congestion Levy on private vehicles entering Planning District 1, 6:30 am–6:30 pm Monday – Friday	\$250 - \$500 M/yr
8. Vehicle Registration Fee (Varies with vehicle GHG emission levels; replaces existing provincial single-value fee)	\$200 – 400 M/year
9. Value Capture Levy (Provides revenue from higher property values/taxes in areas served by higher-order transit)	\$50 – 100 M/year
10. Utility Bill Levy	\$50 – 100 M/year
11. Employer Payroll Tax in Areas with Higher-Order Transit Service	\$40 – \$80 M/year
12. National Federal-Provincial Transit Strategy (Similar to Ontario’s former funding formula, but based on a national federal/provincial agreement for steady, long-term funding)	\$1 – 2 B/year

Source: Irwin, N. & Bevan, A. (July 2010). Time To Get Serious: Reliable Funding Sources for GTHA Transit/Transportation Infrastructure. Prepared for CivicAction.

option's likely effectiveness and impacts; the options that seem the least popular are those that are least understood²⁸ (Figure 3). Summit participants suggested that residents will consider paying more through one or more of these options if the funds are earmarked for transit and transportation and the overall funding burden is shared equitably.

2. Leaders from every sector must help drive broad public support for the regional transportation plan and stimulate informed public discussion of financing tools.

Metrolinx may be the logical driver of a mass public information and consultation campaign, but business, labour, academic and non-profit leaders must support it by making clear that improving regional transit and transportation is crucial to the success of their people and organizations. Strong, informed and committed multi-sector leadership will bolster public

The Summit suggested that Metrolinx promote a **'region-building transit brand'** to engage influential city-builders, employers and other audiences and to create a sense of collective ownership of the regional plan, highlighting how it will bring about the following:

- a) **Economic benefits:** Outline the benefits for each demographic. For example, business owners will gain more cost-effective transfers of goods and improved employee mobility, while seniors will have easier access to rapid transit.
- b) **Regional connectivity:** People will have expanded and faster options to move between their homes, jobs, schools and other pursuits in an integrated regional system.
- c) **Social concerns:** Safer, more reliable transportation, better quality of life and more equitable access are unifying themes that most drivers, transit riders, residents, pedestrians or cyclists will appreciate.
- d) **Environment quality:** Implementing the plan will reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, helping to reduce global warming and improve public health.

decision makers working to advance the regional transportation plan and give Metrolinx another source of innovative thinking on everything from effective communications to new financing tools.

3. Metrolinx, with support from its municipal and other partners, should create a significant and continuing public information campaign and consultations to engage public support and input.

There won't be broad support for implementing the regional transportation plan, let alone funding it, until GTHA residents appreciate how much it will benefit them individually and what their role is in bringing about the improvements. Metrolinx and its partners should bring the plan to life through the media and ongoing regional and targeted information campaigns, painting a picture of the planned improvements and responding to the question 'what's in it for me' when it profiles the benefits.

An informed public can help planners and decision makers as they evaluate transportation plans. Summit participants suggested that past transportation planning has lacked transparency, accountability and credibility. Metrolinx could avoid this by presenting the region with: its long-term strategic plan, presented in writing and visually; an assured statement of upfront and projected costs; annual reporting mechanisms; comprehensible metrics for evaluation; and an open discussion of taxpayer return-on-investment.

Metrolinx and its partners must facilitate ongoing forums to inform, receive and respond to feedback from residents, workers, employers and travelers as the transportation plan is implemented. Informing and listening to the public will also make it easier to engage people in a productive debate about funding options. The United Kingdom's Transport for London and the Utah Transportation Authority are but two examples of how to successfully generate public awareness and public support for tough funding decisions.

See the related backgrounder, *Keeping on Track: A Reality Check*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaaction.ca/publications



Canada receives approximately 250,000 immigrants annually, with the majority choosing to settle in the Greater Toronto region, where almost half of the population is foreign born. With a highly educated and diverse population, region's labour pool is an important asset and a crucial contributor to our prosperity. As our population ages, we will continue to rely on immigration as a key source of talent to maintain our workforce and ensure economic growth.

Challenges

Despite our need for immigration and for newcomers to be productively engaged in the economy, evidence continues to show that we underutilize the human capital of immigrants. The point system means that prospective immigrants are selected based on criteria such as education and language skills, yet many recent immigrants are unable to obtain jobs that match their foreign experience and education.

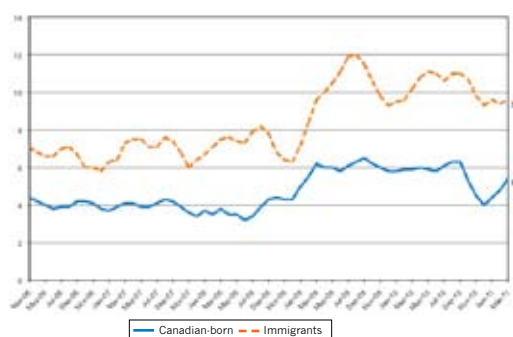
Although 53.1% of immigrants living in the Greater Toronto region who arrived since 2001 had a university certificate, diploma, or degree (compared to 33.6% of region residents born in Canada),²⁹ immigrants face much higher unemployment rates – a gap that widened during the recession – and earn less. In March 2011, the unemployment rate of Canadian-born people in the Greater Toronto region was 5.4%, compared to 9.6% for immigrants, and even worse for recent immigrants arriving in the last five years: 14.2%³⁰ (Figure 1). Between 2001 and 2006, university educated Canadian-born workers earned \$61,904.40 on average while immigrants with similar educational attainment earned only \$20,143.70.³¹ These troubling trends are worsening, with more recent cohorts

of immigrants falling further behind³² (Figure 2).

Immigrant entrepreneurs can play an important role in economic development. In the United States, 40% of publicly traded venture-backed companies operating in high-tech manufacturing today were started by immigrants.³³ Many immigrants in the Greater Toronto region and the rest of Canada are turning to entrepreneurship or self-employment and earning higher incomes than their employed counterparts³⁴ but lack supports to bring their ventures to scale.

The gap between the labour market outcomes of immigrants and those of Canadian-born people generates significant economic and social costs and threatens our social cohesion. As we compete with other city regions across Canada and internationally for talent, we must reduce barriers to employment, support entrepreneurs and facilitate the full social and economic integration of newcomers.

Figure 1: Unemployment rate of 25-54 year olds by immigrant status, Toronto CMA, 2006-2011



Source: Toronto Immigrant Data Employment Initiative (TIEDI), March 2011 Labour Force Update, <http://www.yorku.ca/tiedi/doc/lfs201103.pdf>

Strengths

With more of the world's economic growth shifting to emerging markets, immigrants from those markets settling and working in Toronto will be an increasingly important asset. The diverse language skills, international experience, access to and understanding of international markets that newcomers bring enrich our region's human capital and differentiate us from our global competitors. While Toronto surpasses most city regions in integrating large numbers of newcomers, there remain

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Our governments must work much better together to attract and settle immigrants and to provide adequate and predictable funding for essential settlement services.

Reflecting our current constitutional arrangement, the federal government must take more leadership in order to foster a truly national and well coordinated immigration strategy. Its goals should be to help eliminate siloed policies and programs, improve international collaboration, and establish clarity for the nation's economic goals and the role and value of immigration in achieving them.

But a call for more shared authority and decision-making was also evident in our Summit discussions. Empowering provincial and municipal governments to play a bigger role, not just in settlement policies and programs but also in defining and setting the priorities for immigration attraction and selection to help meet the region's specific economic needs, will be critical in the new global economy. As a starting point, the federal and provincial governments should create an appropriate instrument to ensure adequate and predictable funding of essential settlement services and to enable effective input on selection policy.

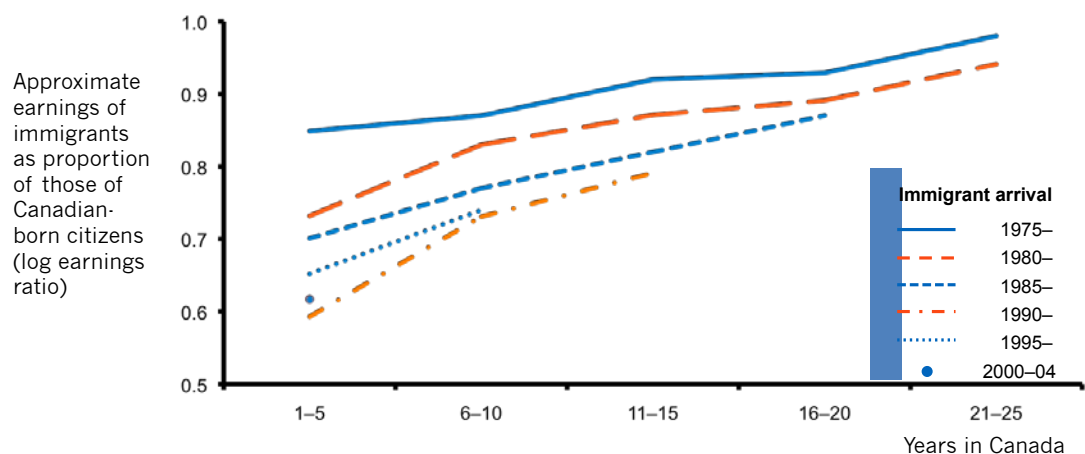
“The big challenge that Canada faces and communities around Canada face is around talent: how to get it, how to retain it and how to make use of it in a fuller sense.”

- Fred Morley, The Greater Halifax Partnership

significant opportunities to help newcomers realize their full potential.

The Greater Toronto region is still the top destination for newcomers in Canada. However, we are losing out to other city regions in Canada: there has been a 17% decrease in the number of immigrants choosing to settle here over the last decade.³⁵ We need to take action to reverse this trend now.

Figure 2: Earnings of Male Immigrants by Number of Years in Canada Relative to Canadian-Born Citizens



Note: Full-time, full-year workers aged 16-64

Source: The Boston Consulting Group, based on data from the 2006 Census, Statistics Canada.

2. Create a multi-sector mechanism to lift public dialogue and forge better public and private policy and programs on immigration, economics and citizenship in the city-region context.

Summit discussions called for non-political leadership to convene multiple stakeholders to craft and execute a holistic regional immigration vision and strategy. The vision would articulate the value proposition for immigration – economic, social and cultural – and how selection policies, funding levels, program delivery and evaluation need to be shaped to ensure that immigration works for immigrants and for the Greater Toronto region. Any strategy will need to recognize and work to resolve the differences and tensions between economic and social goals for immigration, foster an approach to newcomer integration that balances economic growth with social inclusion and well-being, and promote mutual responsibilities – and benefits – for newcomer and Canadian-born residents alike.

There are currently some processes underway to improve the quality of, and fill gaps in, immigrant services, including the new Local Immigration Partnerships. These need to continue but must take a much more deliberate and strategic approach that identifies barriers to be addressed, including time limited access and eligibility for services, and is effectively evaluated. The development of a common vision and coordinated strategy for immigration in the region would bring significant benefits to this work.

3. Create a model for one-stop business development support centres for self-employed and entrepreneurial newcomers that can be delivered regionally.

At a more practical level, a new frontier for newcomer economic integration involves devising and delivering business development and support services for self-employed and entrepreneurial newcomers. Many initiatives to help immigrants find their way into employment are already running successful programs, like TRIEC and DiversityWorks. These need to be continued across the Greater Toronto region and expanded, because, at present, the needs of self-employed or

entrepreneurial newcomers are not being adequately addressed, to the detriment of our economy. The time is right to establish a range of services, including: business development and incubation; legal supports; mentoring, connecting and network building; and, facilitating access to capital. Ideally, these services should be delivered regionally, potentially through a one-stop-shop model.

Access to capital is particularly challenging for many newcomers wishing to establish start-ups. In addition to a regional one-stop business support service, innovative funding options need to be developed. A tax credit for private or non-profit investors to fund newcomer start-ups could help encourage investment, while a more complex but higher impact solution would be to establish an administered venture capital fund targeting immigrant business start-ups.

4. Create an independent annual summary of immigration related economic and social policy indicators.

Our universities abound with excellent researchers and specialist research centres focused on immigration related issues and community organizations serving immigrants also produce useful data and materials. But access to these stores of knowledge is limited for the average person, business and community organization, and, where available, the research is not presented for non-specialist audiences. More needs to be done to aggregate and make information easily and readily accessible for a wide variety of audiences and through engaging interfaces. An annual summary could foster more public accountability on how our immigration dollars are spent and the outcomes the investments yield. It could also highlight key data to help communicate the value of immigration, such as the number of patents filed by newcomers and small business success, and bring together an accessible set of key indicators on social integration and mobility that can be easily tracked and measured over time.

See the related backgrounder, *Our Greatest Strength, Our Biggest Challenge: Immigration and Economic Growth*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaction.ca/publications



The Greater Toronto region is known globally for its unmatched ethnic, racial and cultural diversity. With a population that speaks over 100 languages, traces its origins to almost all parts of the world, and maintains ties with multiple external markets, our diversity is one of our greatest assets. Having marketplaces, workforces, and leadership that include individuals from diverse backgrounds allows us to draw on new ideas, expertise, capabilities, and the connections that stem from different perspectives and experiences.

To fully benefit from this diversity, however, we need it reflected at our leadership and decision-making tables. Currently, only 14.5% of Greater Toronto Area (GTA) leaders are visible minorities, even though 49.5% of the population identifies as visible minority.³⁶ Progress is being made in the public and non-profit sectors and we must now also leverage the opportunities to diversify corporate leadership and supply chains.

Challenges

Many corporations, organizations and individuals are striving to obtain the benefits of diversity in leadership, but progress has been patchy. A 2011 study by Ryerson University for DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project found that, among the largest GTA-based companies, only 2.8% (down from 3.3% in 2010) of board directors and 5.3% of top executives were visible minorities. Almost 75% had no visible minorities among their top executives and nearly 80% had no visible minorities on their boards.³⁷

In addition, small and minority-led businesses have a hard time cracking the supply chains of large companies. This is a missed opportunity, since

these businesses often have tremendous expertise and networks that larger companies may cultivate for future opportunities, locally and globally. Furthermore, by 2031, visible minorities will comprise 63% of the Toronto census population,³⁸ becoming the visible majority and a key market.

Strengths

In 2008, CivicAction and Maytree created DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project. It responded to a call at CivicAction's 2007 Summit for a strategy to diversify the leadership of the Greater Toronto region to better reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of our population. DiverseCity's eight initiatives are helping diverse, under-capitalized leaders to emerge, leveraging their leadership so that the region is better-positioned to recruit and mobilize the best talent, gain access to new markets and networks, innovate, and inspire future generations of leadership. In short, to accelerate prosperity.

Opening access to networks and building new relationships can strengthen institutions and have a transformative impact. Since 2008, DiverseCity has:

- facilitated more than 570 appointments to public and non-profit boards;
- trained more than 100 candidates and campaign managers for municipal elections;
- identified 300 diverse spokespeople, resulting in 600+ media stories;
- connected more than 600 corporate executives from 75+ organizations;
- equipped 75 city-builders from across the GTA to address social and economic challenges; and
- prepared 50 regional trainers to run leadership dialogues.

This award-winning collaborative initiative, which has engaged hundreds of organizations and companies, is making the benefits of diverse leadership better known across the region, but there is more to be done.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Continue CivicAction and Maytree's DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project.

Summit delegates noted the accomplishments of DiverseCity and other diversity-focused initiatives in the Greater Toronto region and encouraged their continuation and expansion. They emphasized the need to advance and promote the business case for leadership diversity in the corporate sector and the ways in which this can be achieved. Continuing to build the fact base linking diversity and performance and creating a circle of informed business champions for leadership diversity were two options suggested at the Summit.

2. Educate and encourage investors to press corporate boards to set diversity targets and report publicly on their progress.

Recent research shows that the more diverse a company's senior management is, the better the company is likely to perform.³⁹ In fact, board diversity and capital market success have been shown to be significantly correlated.⁴⁰ Other evidence shows that a company's environmental, social and governance performance, including the diversity of its governance bodies, affects whether the company is perceived as forward-thinking and well-managed, and therefore a good investment.⁴¹ To take advantage of these performance and investor benefits, it is in the self-interest of shareholders to press businesses to set board diversity goals and to track their progress in their annual reports.

DiverseCity, the Canadian Board Diversity Council, and other organizations working at the intersection of diversity and corporate leadership should develop resources to show the economic and social benefits of increased racial and ethnic diversity on boards and share it with their board candidate pools and executive leaders.

These organizations can also help to bridge better connections between board nominating committees and experienced and talented visible minority leaders by supplying lists of exceptional senior executives from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds who have the capacity and desire to serve on corporate boards.

3. Leverage procurement processes to advance diversity goals.

When TO2015 introduced the first-ever Pan/Parapan Am Games diversity procurement policy, it received acclaim and highlighted the gains that American and European companies have made from diversifying their supply chain processes. Canadian corporations should follow suit by embedding diversity criteria in their supplier selection processes, such as asking whether suppliers track board and executive diversity and have diversity policies or programs in place. For example, RBC included a focus on supplier diversity among its top priorities in its 2009-2011 Diversity Blueprint.⁴² When proposals are submitted to RBC, suppliers are asked to include information about diversity in their hiring and promotion policies.⁴³

Canadian corporations will also advance diversity and expand their procurement options by building closer relationships with and strengthening the capacity of visible minority-led businesses. They may mentor individual smaller companies or support umbrella organizations such as the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council, WEConnect Canada and the Diversity Business Network, which are working to promote supply chain diversity more generally by: communicating the benefits of supply chain diversity; highlighting best practices; and encouraging corporations to build relationships with diverse suppliers.

See the related backgrounder, *Return on Investment: The Value of Diversity in Corporate Leadership*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaaction.ca/publications



CivicAction’s Greening Greater Toronto initiative has been working since 2008 to identify and take advantage of the highest potential opportunities to improve the region’s environment. With significant progress made towards driving down commercial building energy use, greening procurement and generating corporate investments in community emission reductions projects across Canada, Greening Greater Toronto has identified current challenges and new opportunities to move forward on.

Challenges

The Greater Toronto region is in better environmental shape now than it has been in recent years but, according to The Living City Report Card released by Greening Greater Toronto and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority in January 2011, we need to make substantial improvements to sustain our economic, social and environmental health.⁴⁴

We’re breathing cleaner air, using less water and diverting more waste from our homes, but we’re struggling to manage stormwater and commercial waste, control sprawl and traffic congestion, and protect our forests and wetlands (Figure 1).

As our region’s economy recovers and our population continues to grow, we need to build and sustain our region differently. We need to identify and seize the opportunities available through our growth while protecting the health of residents and ensuring that the region remains a flourishing place to live, work and invest in the long term.

Through months of research and consultation with Greening Greater Toronto’s Task Force and dozens of

experts, Greening Greater Toronto identified four areas that, although challenging, have great potential to improve the region’s environmental health: commercial waste, energy, water and biodiversity. Transportation is also a key area and is addressed in a separate chapter of this report.

Commercial Waste: Where there is waste, there is inefficiency and unrealized potential in the value of discarded goods and materials. The commercial sector generates more than 60% of the waste going to our region’s landfills, but there is little data about its composition and sources. While some large landlords have made significant progress in better managing their buildings’ waste,

Figure 1: The Living City Report Card

	Indicator	Progress	Current condition vs. target
Air Quality	SO ₂	↑ Much better	C – moderate action required
	VOC ¹	↗ Better	D – major action required
	PM _{2.5} ²	↗ Better	C – moderate action required
	NO _x	↗ Better	D – major action required
Carbon	CO ₂	↗ Better	D – major action required
Waste	Residential diversion	↗ Better	C – moderate action required
	IC&I ³ diversion	↔ No change	D – major action required
Water	Quality	↔ No change	C – moderate action is required
	Quantity	↗ Better	C – flood management F – Stormwater management
	Consumption	↗ Better	C – moderate action required
Land Use	Food security	N/A ⁴	B – minor action required
	Agriculture	↘ Worse	C – moderate action required
	Urban forest	N/A ⁴	C – moderate action required
	Green buildings	N/A ⁴	N/A ⁵
	Greenspace	↗ Better	C – moderate action required
Biodiversity	Intensification	↗ Better	B – minor action required
	Fish	↔ No change	C – moderate action required
	Terrestrial plants & animals	↘ Worse	C – moderate action required
	Natural Cover	↘ Worse	B – moderate action required

1. Volatile Organic Compounds 2. Particulate Matter 3. Industrial, commercial & institutional 4. Not reported on previously 5. Grading criteria being developed

Source: Greening Greater Toronto and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, 2011, with in-kind support from The Boston Consulting Group, http://www.thelivingcity.org/lcrr/LivingCityReportCard_web_r1.pdf

landlords do not have direct financial incentives to do so, as the costs are passed on to their tenants within general operating costs. Tenants do not have a clear sense of the amount of waste they're generating, the costs they are incurring and the best practices for reduction and diversion available. The region also lacks the capacity to process some commercial waste – particularly organic waste – that could be diverted.

Energy: Reducing demand for energy is critical in order to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. There has been more awareness and action on energy efficiency and conservation in recent years, but the lack of consistent data on energy use and energy measurement standards makes it difficult for people and organizations to understand and address their energy use. Many conservation efforts focus on decreasing electricity use, which reduces our need for coal-fired power, but we need to expand our attention to include natural gas, a large source of carbon emissions in the Greater Toronto region.

Water: Living on the edge of Lake Ontario, we often take water quantity and quality for granted. Canada's per capita water use is among the highest in the world,⁴⁵ and staggering amounts of infrastructure investment and energy are needed to treat and distribute the region's water. A less understood, but in many ways more urgent, water issue is stormwater and flood risk management. Stormwater run-off is the single greatest factor affecting water quality and the health of our rivers, but stormwater controls exist in only 23% of the region's urban areas.⁴⁶

Biodiversity: The region's natural ecosystem, which provides many benefits, is under threat, with 63% of plant and animal species at risk. Increasing the quality and quantity of the natural vegetation cover that sustains the distribution and population of our plants and animals is a major challenge. Corporations own a significant portion of land in the region and much of it is vacant, paved over or covered with manicured lawns that discourage natural habitat.

Strengths

The Summit endorsed the overarching belief held by Greening Greater Toronto's community of leaders that our region is perfectly positioned to flourish through environmental action and innovation and that such measures will contribute to our social and economic prosperity. Investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and green technologies can be leveraged to spur economic development by funding early innovation, incorporating training

"If you're an organization and you create garbage, it's inefficiency... you're buying things twice. Everyone wants to get rid of inefficiency and (the Town of Markham's zero waste policy) is one way to do it."

- Claudia Marsales, Town of Markham

opportunities for young people and members of marginalized communities and purchasing from local suppliers. Mega projects are powerful, but so are smaller projects that can be aggressively expanded and repeated, proving (and improving on) new technologies or approaches (see also the Economy chapter on pages 13-15 of this report).

The Summit supported the move to create more and better bridges between governments, businesses and communities that can be used to leverage the leadership and resources of businesses, the wisdom and ingenuity of communities and the investment and planning priorities of governments. Greening Greater Toronto's Greening Canada Fund, managed by Green Power Action, is one example of the virtuous circle that can be created by connecting private capital to community sustainability projects to produce long-term efficiency gains and cost savings.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Develop a regional strategy to reduce and divert commercial waste.

An effective regional strategy needs to be informed by and responsive to

the interests of organizations at each stage of the waste chain, including product manufacturers, commercial waste generators, waste haulers, companies that can use waste for other business opportunities, and our municipal and provincial governments. The strategy should incorporate such tools as awareness and education, internal procurement policies to reduce packaging, accountability (manufacturer life cycle responsibility), allocation of costs (through green leases and waste metering), waste processing capacity and public policies (for example, requiring reporting of waste or eliminating subsidies for waste dumping).

2. Expand energy conservation programs to address electricity and gas use, and explore the opportunities for district heating.

Greater efforts are needed to develop and implement a standardized way to measure and monitor energy use by offices, industrial operations and other institutions, and to use this energy data to articulate and promote the business case for energy efficiency. Greening Greater Toronto is working with office building landlords and tenants to measure and reduce their electricity and gas use through its Race to Reduce challenge. Residents also need to better understand how they can influence their households' energy use (and costs) and be provided with incentives to reduce their gas and other energy consumption.

The Summit also considered ways to increase use of alternative heating technologies. The City of Toronto, for example, will allow its properties to be used for geothermal energy installations. District heating, common in many European cities, was also discussed, and its proponents were encouraged to share data demonstrating its benefits over conventional generation and distribution.

3. Reduce water consumption and improve stormwater and flood risk management by making the environmental and financial case for water consumers and municipalities.

Water consumption has dropped nine percent in recent years.⁴⁷ Further reductions may be achieved by expanding public awareness of its

environmental and financial costs by measuring water consumption and alerting residents and organizations to the amounts of water they consume and the effects of their high consumption. This can be helped through: redesigned water bills; installing smart water meters; pricing water at its true cost, particularly for industrial consumers; using more stormwater to offset drinking water use for non-drinking water purposes; and seeding ideas to reduce water use in the school curriculum to help drive inter-generational change.

To improve our water quality and quantity, municipalities need to initiate and continue planning and investment in stormwater infrastructure development and flood risk management, including providing residents with incentives to reduce the water they send into sewers through downspouts and driveway runoff and to install back flow valves on properties at risk of basement flooding.

4. Launch a multi-sectoral effort to green corporate and vacant lands.

A leadership group of conservation authorities, Ontario Power Generation (a biodiversity leader), the Canadian Business and Biodiversity Council and Wildlife Habitat Council, developers and other corporate landowners should be convened to explore opportunities to increase natural vegetation cover on corporate green spaces and vacant lands.

This effort could create an inventory of existing programs that improve biodiversity and identify the full range of benefits that greening additional lands will generate, including stormwater management and conserving drinking water and energy use. The group could also recommend appropriate funding and incentive mechanisms to encourage investments in naturalizing green spaces (financial incentives, tax credits or carbon offset credits, for example) and changes to municipal bylaws that may inhibit naturalization efforts.

See the related backgrounder, *Flourish Through Environmental Action and Innovation*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaaction.ca/publications





All orders of governments have agreed that affordable housing is essential in creating strong, healthy and prosperous communities, but Canada remains the only OECD country without a national housing strategy, and the development of new safe, secure and affordable housing has not kept pace with the Greater Toronto region's needs.

Challenges

CivicAction heard from hundreds of leaders about the importance of ensuring safe, secure and affordable housing and about the important intersections between housing and employment, health and education. It became clear that we needed a shared evidence base for the region to support dialogue among governments, the private sector, non-profit organizations, academics, community agencies and other housing stakeholders.

In January 2011, in collaboration with CivicAction's Neighbourhoods and Affordable Housing Working Group, the City of Toronto's Affordable Housing Office and Toronto Community Housing created the Toronto Regional Housing Data Bank,⁴⁸ a pilot project summarizing regional statistics and trends on housing, poverty and other indicators. Among other things, the Data Bank revealed the following:

- almost one in five Greater Toronto region households (322,415) struggles with finding and keeping an affordable home;⁴⁹
- twenty-six percent of owners and 46% of renters pay too much for housing, devoting more than 30% of their income to basic housing costs;⁵⁰
- the high cost of housing forces many low and moderate-income people to choose between paying rent and buying food;⁵¹
- many affordable units in high rise rental towers are aging and

need repairs,⁵² vacancy rates are decreasing⁵³ and wait lists for social housing are growing;⁵⁴ and

- almost 90,000 people are on Greater Toronto Area (GTA) wait lists for social housing, and they face a two to 21-year wait.⁵⁵

On March 31, 2011, two key housing programs expired: the federally-funded Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program and the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments). These programs are essential for providing low- and moderate-income residents with health and safety home renovations, housing allowances, first-time home buyer assistance and new rental housing. They also boost the economy, create jobs, reduce social housing wait lists and improve housing conditions. **As noted below, new federal funding was announced in July.**

Strengths

Various governments have created comprehensive plans and partnered with non-profit organizations and private developers to create affordable and well-maintained homes. In the last two years, the federal and provincial governments directed more than \$500 million of economic stimulus funding to housing in the Greater Toronto region. These investments support the repair and renovation of more than 1,000 social housing buildings. These funds are also creating more than 2,200 affordable homes and assisting more than 800 low- and moderate-income households to buy their first home.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. The federal government should create a national housing strategy.

Putting in place a national housing strategy

will confirm the centrality of housing to our economic and social well-being and encourage bolder leadership across Canada on issues of housing and homelessness.

2. The federal and Ontario governments should renew the government housing programs that have recently expired.

In July 2011, the federal, provincial and territorial governments renewed their commitment to housing with the announcement of a \$1.4 billion combined investment toward reducing the number of Canadians in housing need under a new Affordable Housing Framework for 2011-2014. Though the two existing programs will be discontinued, a bilateral agreement between the federal government and the Province of Ontario is to be announced this summer. CivicAction is encouraged by the government's renewed commitment and looks forward to further measures from all orders of government, the private sector and civil society to address the critical challenge of housing in the Greater Toronto region.

3. Establish a multi-sector leadership group to develop a regional housing strategy.

The private and non-profit sectors must join with governments in identifying and leveraging opportunities to expand affordable housing. Governments play a crucial role in providing financing, approvals and a supportive planning environment, but we also need leaders from business, labour and academia to develop, fund and advocate for affordable housing innovations.

CivicAction's consultations indicated the power of bringing a multi-sectoral regional lens to the related issues of housing and neighbourhoods. York Region has put this model to work; the York Region Human Services Planning Board convenes developers, faith communities, all orders of government and academics to discuss and advance housing, health and other pressing social issues.

A regional housing leadership group facilitated by a non-partisan convenor would stimulate broader discussion aimed at creating a common vision, coordinated action and advocacy on housing issues, and connect the dots with transportation, jobs and neighbourhood and economic development. The group would surface the

shared interests of the City of Toronto and the rest of the Greater Toronto region and address common obstacles to affordable housing development such as uneven zoning laws and fees and red tape. This group could also:

- ensure that housing is on every government's agenda and that the region's housing policy needs are understood;
- press for expanded federal and provincial funding and programs and the development of a national housing strategy;
- develop incentives to attract more private sector developers and create financial tools to enable low- to moderate-income households to purchase homes affordably;
- identify and align obstructive municipal policies, such as zoning bylaws that affect parking, economic activity, secondary suites, the use of section 37, and inclusionary zoning;
- improve public awareness about the need for safe, secure and affordable housing and reduce NIMBYism and the stigma associated with people who live in and need social housing; and
- support Greater Toronto Summit 2011 actions and recommendations relating to neighbourhoods (see pages 33-34).

4. Maintain and make the Toronto Regional Housing Data Bank a permanent resource.

Summit participants roundly endorsed making the Data Bank a permanent resource, citing its significant value in maintaining a fact base for research, decision making, advocacy, and public awareness and education.

It was suggested that an advisory group be appointed to expand the Data Bank and find it a permanent "home." In future, the Data Bank could include building costs, success stories, promising practices and a bibliography of other resources, as well as a summary of housing policies across the region, to highlight inconsistencies requiring attention. To broaden the Data Bank's impact, it was also suggested that it be made available online and promoted to new but related audiences such as business improvement associations.

See the related background, *Housing for Everyone: An Affordable Housing Agenda for the Toronto Region and the Toronto Regional Housing Data Bank* prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaction.ca/publications





Throughout this report we talk about the pressing issues facing our region and the need to deal with these in a coordinated way. But, at its heart, our region is also one of unique neighbourhoods and communities where people engage first-hand with these larger issues. Healthy neighbourhoods are the foundation of resilient individuals and communities, which in turn underpin a region's ability to compete globally. While the Greater Toronto region is celebrated for its vibrant neighbourhoods, recent evidence suggests that the health and vitality of many neighbourhoods is at a dangerous tipping point, threatening our social and economic fabric.⁵⁶ To reverse this trend, we need to tend to the grassroots as well as the grassstops.

Challenges

Over the last three decades, the Greater Toronto region has become increasingly geographically segregated along socio-economic and ethno-cultural lines.⁵⁷ In 2005, more than one in every four City of Toronto families lived in low-income conditions⁵⁸ and, in 2006, 46% of low-income families lived in higher poverty neighbourhoods in Toronto (in particular in high-rise housing), up from 18% two decades earlier.⁵⁹ Meanwhile, residents are increasingly disengaged from planning their communities. The Province's *Places to Grow*, a powerful and unique growth plan that promises to focus vibrant growth in existing municipalities, involves complex planning processes that present challenges to engagement at the neighbourhood level.⁶⁰ Without action to reverse the poverty trend and reduce planning complexity, the social and economic future of our region may be compromised.

Strengths

The Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force, Toronto's Regent Park redevelopment and Peel Region's resident engagement efforts are all reminders of the power of an engaged civil society. We must continue to find ways to bring key stakeholders together to create a good mix of jobs, economic activity and appropriate and accessible social and physical infrastructure. These are, of course, big issues that require strategic, coordinated, region-wide action as we have called for throughout this report, but at the same time a local lens is needed to address specific challenges in specific neighbourhoods. Bringing multi-level, multi-partner perspectives to the challenges and potential opportunities of a particular geographic area⁶¹ – known as a place-based approach – results in solutions that from the outset are engrained in the community (so more sustainable), and fosters stronger resident engagement and social networks.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Create more opportunities and places for residents to meet and engage in community development.

Endorsing a place-based approach to neighbourhood revitalization, the Summit suggested that community building start with resident voices. In general, community life is greatly enhanced when residents have places to interact with each other in casual encounters and formal programs. However, many neighbourhoods, especially high-rise communities, lack social and recreational spaces or have facilities that are in such disrepair that they cannot be used.

Several recent initiatives are paving the way to expand community spaces and conversations. The Intergovernmental Committee on Economic Development has mapped growth in the creation of community spaces in the City of Toronto that serve as spaces to promote interactions, including community hubs and extended schools.⁶² New United Way Toronto research suggests developing positive relationships between tenants and with landlords into collaborations with governments, agencies and business to improve community economic and social life, as it is doing in high-rise communities through its Action for Neighbourhood Change initiative. Peel Region and United Way of Peel Region are also embarking on a similar project to map assets and support resident leaders in high need communities. Similar partnerships can be launched in other neighbourhoods and high-rise communities where social and recreational spaces either do not exist, are inadequate, or where social disorder is pronounced.

2. Develop innovative opportunities for private sector investment in under-invested neighbourhoods.

The private sector has an important role to play in neighbourhood renewal, not just as a funder, but as a partner and investor in local economic development. Small and medium sized businesses can support neighbourhood revitalization through local economic development by providing goods and services and creating new jobs. Larger businesses can help them develop through things like mentorship to improve capacity and investment partnerships to provide access to capital. Innovation hubs or centres can also help to spur development and support for entrepreneurs and social enterprises.

Private sector investment and a partnership in Regent Park involving the Daniels Corporation, RBC, Tim Hortons, Sobeys and Toronto Community Housing offers an excellent model, albeit one of larger scale private sector investment than most communities could attract. This experience will help build an evidence-based business case that can be replicated on a different scale in other parts of the region. Models to create sustainable partnerships such as these need further exploration and

piloting, and would complement the development of regional industry and horizontal clusters recommended in the economy section of this report.

Businesses and communities cannot do it alone. Governments at all levels must create the conditions to enable business investment in community development. As the source of most planning policy, the Province can further demystify the planning process with language that will be more easily understood and used, and create policy statements supporting community development that will lead municipal regimes to follow suit. Creating new, affordable spaces for small-scale economic development and commercial activities, for example, will require amendments to municipal zoning regulations to permit diversified land use in residential areas and tax or other incentives to promote private sector investment. Governments can also help to develop and test new tools, such as capital release and micro lending, social hiring and the innovative application of Section 37⁶³ funding for the development of commercial hubs.

3. Develop and maintain a comprehensive neighbourhood revitalization and community building best practice case book and a virtual community to facilitate knowledge exchange.

Neighbourhoods, local and region-wide actors, community-based researchers, academic research centres, planners, funders, investors and governments are all generating valuable information, knowledge and learning that could be leveraged widely if effectively shared. While attempts to do this were made in the past, a lack of resources and collaboration prevented a sustained effort. There are many organizations with mandates to facilitate knowledge exchange – Social Planning Toronto, the Centre for City Ecology, the Cities Centre and the United Ways across the region, to name a few – and which could instigate a renewed effort to develop, maintain and disseminate a comprehensive best practices interface.

See the related background, *Every Place Matters: Investing in Complete Neighbourhoods and Communities*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaaction.ca/publications





The Greater Toronto region is home to approximately 8,500 arts and cultural organizations, employing over 150,000 people and generating about \$9 billion for the nation's GDP.⁶⁴ Arts and culture are not just important to economic development and employment opportunities; they are also a fundamental building block to a healthy and vibrant society. Summit participants believe we can build on our existing strengths and increase the profile of our arts and culture sector, making it a core pillar of our identity both domestically and abroad.

Challenges

More than 200 artists, arts and culture administrators, funders and educators took part in pre-Summit Working Group meetings, regional roundtables and individual consultations. They acknowledged that every arts organization is struggling individually with these and other pressing issues:

- organizations need to grow revenue and diversify funding sources in the face of declining government support;
- smaller and medium sized organizations need to repair and renew facilities; and
- all organizations need to foster audience growth and development in an increasingly diverse region.

They also agreed that these struggles could be lessened, and greater results achieved, if they collaborated more on virtually every issue they face.

Yet, collaboration remains a big challenge for the sector. It will take time to build trust and recognition of mutual interest among organizations that compete for funds and audiences.

CivicAction – Breaking Boundaries: Time to Think and Act Like a Region

Further, even once trust is developed, it will be complicated to get such a large number of organizations to align around common goals and speak with a unified voice. Scarce resources alone may deter many from committing to sector-wide efforts, as they instead focus their limited time and funding on running core businesses, developing future audiences and providing outreach efforts to fill the void left by declining arts education in schools.

Strengths

The large number of people and organizations involved in the Greater Toronto region's arts and culture sector speaks to its power and potential to make change if its resources are aligned. It is a very positive sign that so many appear ready to pursue greater collaboration among arts and cultural organizations and with other sectors.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Establish a steering committee comprised of representatives from a diverse range of arts organizations from across the region to move the sector towards greater collaboration and perhaps an enduring formal structure.

There was strong consensus at the Summit that the Greater Toronto region can be the world's leading cultural capital. It was suggested that the arts and culture sector adopt this vision and ensure that every person in the Greater Toronto region can see themselves in it, in particular those in business and education due to the key roles those sectors play in regional economic development and the cultivation of artists and audiences.

It was agreed that any collaboration should include representation from

organizations of all sizes and across all disciplines. Both for-profit and non-profit business representatives would also be key players in any collaboration, not just as funders, but also as active partners in determining and pursuing a path. Finally, it was agreed that a collaborative body would not necessarily need to be a new organization and could be housed in an existing arts service organization.

Establishing a regional steering committee to research and propose an action plan for the sector and relevant

“This is not an ‘us and them’ situation. None of us can afford to be divided.”

- Jeff Melanson, Canada’s National Ballet School

partners would be an important first step towards sustainable collaboration. Among other things, this committee could consider facilitating greater sector-wide collaboration (proposed during the pre-Summit consultations); perhaps developing a campaign or event with a single area of focus as a starting point, and later transforming the platform that emerges into a formal structure for future collaboration.

The Summit suggested a number of specific and pressing issues and opportunities that could anchor an initial campaign by sector and related leaders. The following are all ideas that could be driven or carried out by individual groups or sub-sectors, but that will only achieve their full potential with significant collaboration across the sector:

- **establish the independent research and policy centre** referred to below;
- **establish a region-wide arts and culture summit:** in the spirit of the Canada Arts Summit, the summit would regularly bring together leaders to discuss sector-wide challenges and practical solutions to address them;
- **create and launch a sector-wide brand to promote arts and culture in the Greater Toronto region to local residents and visitors:** this could be modelled on VQA Ontario, a powerful over-arching brand created by the

vintners in the late 1980s to help market their individual labels;

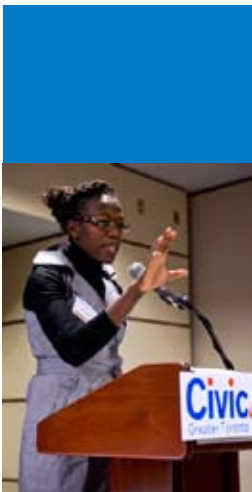
- **develop new audiences:** Summit participants proposed several ways to target and gather data about the arts interests of newcomers, students, tourists or other demographic groups: building on programs like the Toronto Public Library’s Museum and Arts Pass, a Greater Toronto region **“Arts Pass”** to provide access to all types of art as well as free public transportation to exhibits and shows; **“Culturalicious,”** an arts version of the popular Toronto restaurant promotion; and a program like Big Brothers and Big Sisters, in which experienced patrons expose the next generation to arts and culture or established arts organizations and artists mentor newer ones;
- **build the balance sheet of arts organizations:** develop a creative industry social venture fund and strategic partnerships to encourage more business involvement in the arts and to offset declining government support; and
- **incubate a sector-wide “Big Bang” event:** this would be aimed at bringing artists together with sports, cultural and other organizations to foster long term relationships and collaboration. The first of these events could be held at the Pan/Parapan Am Games – “PanAmania!”

If this initial collaboration proves successful, the committee should consider establishing a formal structure to facilitate ongoing collaboration within the sector on marketing, advocacy and other activities. There was considerable appetite during the Summit proceedings to consider a more enduring body.

2. Establish an independent research and policy centre focused on issues affecting the arts and culture sector.

While many organizations have a wealth of information about the size and economic impact of the sector, this is not systematically shared for broad use. Creating a mechanism for organizing and providing access to information like this would help the larger arts ecosystem to:

- better communicate with the general population as well as funders and



The **Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance** has a stated goal of doubling audience participation in the arts by 2020. It engages in marketing, research, advocacy and policy work on behalf of the arts and culture sector in Greater Philadelphia. The Alliance conducts its own research and partners with third party researchers. It publishes the results of its extensive research to make its region's population, lawmakers and civic leaders aware of the social and economic impact of the arts and culture sector. The Alliance is also very active in policy and advocacy efforts, which are informed by its research and analysis.⁶⁵

- policy makers;
- track relevant trends and highlight gaps needing attention; and
- identify more effective ways to reach out to new and broader demographics.

The sector would benefit also from a centralized source of data, best practices and research into the wider issues affecting arts and culture, including: international, national,

provincial and municipal cultural policy agendas; the impacts of social, economic and technological changes; and the potential for public-private partnerships and alternate funding models in the wake of diminishing government resources.

There are numerous organizations with mandates to gather information relating to their organization, genre or the sector at large, including the Creative Trust, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts, Business for the Arts and individual arts organizations, to name a few. Any one or more of these could initiate an effort to create a sector-focused research and policy centre. There was a strong preference for such a centre not to be government-funded, at least initially, but instead to acquire resources through secondments, member contributions and other means.

See the related background, *Arts & Culture: Vision and Value Through New Collaborations*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaction.ca/publications





The Pan/Parapan American Games (“the Games”), coming to the Greater Golden Horseshoe in 2015, presents an incredible opportunity for the Greater Toronto region to advance the value of sport, spur economic development and engage residents, particularly youth, in a unique, world class experience - the largest multi-sports event ever held in Canada.

Challenges

TO2015, the Games’ organizer, has four short years to create the Games and, in keeping with its mandate and vision, to achieve several tasks related to youth:

- motivate youth who are not regularly active or perhaps cynical about the Games to get active and involved;
- create distinct programming and delivery to attract youth to Games-related initiatives;
- coordinate many different internal and external agendas and programs so that the engagement process is not derailed; and
- unify the 17 municipalities involved in a shared effort that will offer equal opportunities to all Greater Toronto region youth.

Strengths

The Games’ scale and influence is expected to have an impact in the years leading up to 2015 and leave a legacy for years to come. As youth will inherit this legacy, they should play a role in its shaping. TO2015 is off to a good start, with a youth engagement strategy supported by community consultation that includes initiatives such as: establishing a youth advisory council; convening major youth and sports organizations to collaborate on a signature youth program; and encouraging existing youth programs to add a Pan/Parapan Am lens to their

initiatives. Through these and other initiatives, TO2015 seeks to work with youth to:

- create meaningful engagement for youth, such as inclusion in decision making;
- define the value proposition and spread the messages; and
- create TO2015-led actions to launch a truly lasting legacy with targeted benefits to young people.

The Summit strongly endorsed TO2015’s intention to engage youth in the Pan/Parapan Am Games, urging that this start immediately and continue throughout the planning and implementation, and continue after the Games. In working to involve youth and others, the Summit recommended that TO2015 pay particular attention to the region’s neighbourhoods (including priority neighbourhoods), its vast range of ethno-cultural groups, newcomers, those at-risk of social and economic exclusion and young people who are not pursuing an education.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

1. Build awareness and buy-in through a multi-faceted public information campaign that includes the voices of youth and engages them through existing networks and organizations.

Widespread familiarity with and buy-in to the Games’ value proposition will help TO2015 engage youth and other Greater Toronto region residents. To accelerate public awareness, Summit participants suggested that TO2015 should deliver a widespread information campaign highlighting the social, economic and environmental gains the Games will produce for youth and other parts of the community, and the opportunities for them to be engaged.

TO2105 can leverage social media to create and spread the story of the Games, particularly among younger demographics. In addition to promoting TO2105 messages, social media provides an equal-opportunity vehicle for youth and others to use text and videos to tell their own stories – what’s in it for them, their future and their community – and to help fuel others’ imagination and interest in a narrative that will counter the current preoccupation with costs.

Social media alone will not be enough: TO2015 needs multiple ways to generate and showcase the Games story from many diverse perspectives. Leveraging the region’s schools, colleges and universities and its plethora of active youth networks, youth-led and youth-serving organizations is crucial. Working with these groups will ensure that youth from a diverse set of geographic and cultural communities and interests are intentionally and properly reached, help prevent duplication, avoid exclusion and increase the community’s sense of active partnership in the Games and ownership in its city region-building legacy.

2. Provide youth with access to sport, leadership development, influence, and jobs, apprenticeships and volunteer roles; set clear measurable targets.

The Games will clearly spur youth sports and activity, but the Summit recommends that youth also be engaged through what the YMCA calls their “head, heart, feet and soul.” In schools, the Games can be built into geography and math programs, not just gym classes, and we must think more broadly about youth engagement opportunities in our communities as well.

The Summit recognized the Games’ tremendous potential to affirm the value of sport – some suggested supporting sport as an essential service or creating an annual Luminato of sports – and to surface some of the obstacles now inhibiting greater sports involvement. Many financial, infrastructure shortage and other barriers exist for athletes in our region. Para athletes in particular can face the high costs of specialized equipment and feel challenged by the persistent stigma that wheelchair athletes are not “real athletes.”

The Summit recommended that TO2015 implement a social hiring policy that targets diverse groups of youth for employment, training and volunteer opportunities and that would be binding for contractors and sub-contractors, as well as TO2015 itself. Youth can bring social media savvy to marketing and branding, pitch and execute on ideas for entrepreneurial ventures, contribute strength and ingenuity to construction, and serve as energetic and diverse ambassadors. One table at the Summit suggested taking 500

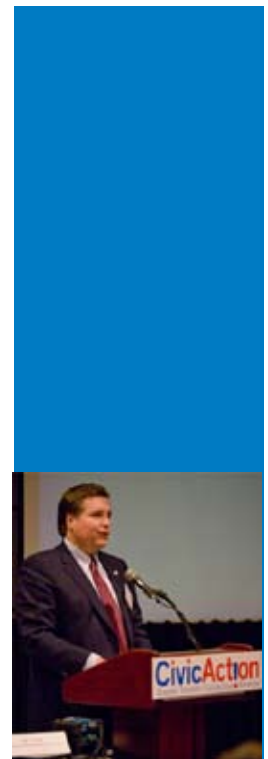
“One measure of success is the impact these Games will have on our children and youth.”

- Ian Troop, TO2015

Greater Toronto region youth to the next Games in Mexico to spur their thinking about the possibilities for 2015. Youth should be recognized and rewarded for their contributions, but the key legacy of developing employment and training opportunities will be obtaining real skills development and experience that will prepare them for future employment and education.

As well as making an explicit commitment to engage youth in all aspects of the Games, the Summit called on TO2105 to measure its success. From tracking the number of youth serving as volunteers, in paid roles and at decision-making tables, to monitoring levels of youth physical activity and participation in the Games and pre-Games programs, it is important that we hold ourselves accountable when it comes to youth engagement.

See the related backgrounder, *Youth Engagement: The Pan/Parapan Am Opportunity*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Summit 2011 at: www.civicaction.ca/publications



Please note: all hyperlinks were checked and active as of July 22nd, 2011.

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The Summit discussions surfaced many good ideas for action in addition to those detailed in the main body of this report. Some of these ideas are ready for uptake by individual or groups of organizations, but others require more thought and development. A selection is included here to stimulate further collaboration and partnerships.

Economy

- Tell the regional story through mass media to inspire more regional thinking and action.
- Leverage youth and business methods and tools for cross-boundary co-operation (e.g. digital media).
- Create peer-to-peer networks to foster mentorship within economic clusters.

Jobs & Income

- Increase the capacity of small and medium sized companies to invest in their workforces (i.e., training, child care provision, health and other benefits) with tax incentives or tax relief on pooled resources.
- Produce a short guide that:
 - explains how claw-backs and marginal effective tax rates affect people receiving social assistance as they start working; or
 - demonstrates the return on investment of various supports, such as expected outcomes and anticipated savings over the long term.

Transportation

- Foster a greater sense (and reality) of public ownership of transportation with a community investment bond.
- Set up information kiosks in public places or conduct a mass postal campaign to explain the regional transportation vision, value proposition and progress being made on implementing it.
- Develop education modules for primary and secondary schools to prepare the next generation for future planning needs and discussions.

Immigration

- Offer incentives to employers to hire newcomers, such as employer tax credits or relief programs.
- Expand micro-lending across the region.

Diversity

- Corporate boards should make one new diverse appointment for every three retiring directors.
- Publish and promote SMEs who qualify as “diverse suppliers.”

Environment

- Launch a packaging innovation competition to reduce waste.
- Develop a “green lottery” program to help engage the public in biodiversity issues and raise funding to naturalize private green space.
- Launch a public incentive campaign to install back flow valves on properties at risk of basement flooding.

Housing

- Seed 30+ small local housing projects that are organized at a regional level but reflect local realities and needs.
- Create an initiative (“the home school”) involving secondary school and/or college and university students that provides them with an opportunity to learn, contribute their skills and teach others about housing issues.

Neighbourhoods

- Create more learning partnerships between academic institutions and community agencies.
- Establish a business neighbourhood ‘adoption’ program to promote sustained local investment and community partnerships.
- Stimulate more private sector investment in neighbourhoods by telling the positive stories.

Arts & Culture

- Establish creative labs throughout the region – spaces where professional and amateur arts practitioners can go, work and make easy connections with each other. This is a focus of Artscape, among others, and can draw from the successful shared space and service models launched for social innovators by the Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto and for community agencies by Community Door in Peel Region.

Pan/Parapan Am Games & Youth

- Develop a Youth Ambassadors Program for the Games that goes beyond athletes to include a much wider representation of young voices and experiences.
- Host a youth summit leading up to the Games.



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Unless otherwise noted, all titles given are as they were at the time of the Summit.



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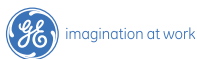
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