

## 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](http://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.

# RECOMMENDATIONS & CIVIC ACTIONS



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.

