

# 2018-2028

## Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy: Community Action



Awareness. Inclusion.  
Access. Opportunity.

We must **ALL WORK TOGETHER** as a  
community to **ELIMINATE POVERTY** in Peel.

# Table of Contents

Message from the Chairs ..... 1

Executive Summary..... 3

Poverty and Income Disparity in Peel..... 4

Who We Are..... 6

Our Approach ..... 8

Highlights of the 2012 – 2015 Strategy ..... 10

Peel Poverty Reduction Committee Timeline..... 12

2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy..... 14

Enabling Strategic Actions..... 23

Shared Measurement Approach ..... 23

Alignment of Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy to Other Strategies..... 25

How We Will Work Together ..... 28

Peel Poverty Reduction Committee Governance..... 29

Summary ..... 30

Summary Glossary ..... 31

Acknowledgments ..... 33

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“Poverty and inequality are hurting our community. We need to work with the community to identify how it impacts people and how each of us can fight local poverty in all its forms. The second Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy provides the right partnerships, strategy and momentum to help us with that mission”

~ Daniele Zanotti, President & CEO United Way Greater Toronto

## Message from the Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (PPRC) members, we are pleased to present Peel’s Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2028. This ten-year plan builds upon the first community led 2012 Poverty Reduction Strategy. It represents a culmination of continuous dialogue, collaboration, and advocacy between residents, advocacy organizations, labour, non-profit and public sector organizations, as well as regional and municipal government representatives.

Since the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee was created in 2008, we have seen some important changes to legislation, policies and programs. Our collective is proud to have played an important role in achieving both local and provincial changes that are making a difference in the lives of Peel residents. As the second largest region in the Greater Toronto Area, Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga continue to be a diverse, growing and prosperous region to live in. However, for 12.8% of the population living in poverty, making ends meet is still a continuous struggle. Compounding this unacceptable challenge is the rise of precarious and unstable employment, changes in the types of jobs available, rise of low-income neighbourhoods, long wait lists for many services and, the high cost of housing, transportation and food, which are all contributing to the complex, changing nature of poverty. PPRC members join with others in saying this is not acceptable and therefore we must continue to work together to mitigate the impact, reduce and ultimately eliminate poverty.

We know that poverty is more than income which is why the refreshed Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy focuses on three priority areas: income security, economic opportunity and well-being and social inclusion. Any successful effort to reduce poverty must confront its complexities and acknowledge that poverty affects people differently. Our Strategy boldly frames the conversation and goals within the context of human rights and equity. But poverty also has economic consequences and impacts all of us. Our communities cannot achieve full prosperity if we do not support those most vulnerable and provide meaningful opportunities for all residents. Long-lasting change is possible and we encourage you to join us in these efforts.

We want to recognize and give a special thank you to all our partners for their sustained commitment to building a prosperous home for all Peel residents. Together, we will continue on this journey to build a strong, thriving and inclusive region for all Peel residents.

Sincerely,



*Anita Stellinga*

**Anita Stellinga**

Regional Executive, GTA Integration  
United Way Greater Toronto



*Sonia Pace*

**Sonia Pace**

Director of Community Partnerships,  
Human Services. Region of Peel





## Region of Peel, Model Employer Program

The Region of Peel serves approximately 1.4 million residents in Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga. The Region of Peel’s vision is that it is a Community for Life, with a mission that strives to create a healthy, safe and connected community. The Region of Peel provides back bone support to the Poverty Reduction Committee, which raises awareness, advocates, tracks poverty and keeps it on the region’s political, social, and economic radar. The Region of Peel currently hires individuals on social assistance for six months, providing mentoring placement in full-time living wage jobs. This program helps individuals ladder up to future employment and provide job search support to ensure candidates are successful. The program demonstrates how a regional government serves as a model to create equitable opportunities, sustainable economic growth and inclusive community wealth.

~ Best Practice in Peel

## Executive Summary

*“...Poverty is about income, but also about the inability for individuals and families to live independently, focus on wellness and be involved in community life.”*

The Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy is a comprehensive multi-year plan to mitigate and reduce the impact of poverty on residents in Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. The Strategy builds on the work of the first ever Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy, created in 2012 and focused on Economic Opportunities, Income Security, Affordable and Accessible Transportation, Food Security, and Affordable and Accessible Housing. As a result of the collective efforts, programs and initiatives such as the Affordable Transit Program, Peel Food Charter, Peel Community Benefits Network, and work on Living Wage were created in Peel.

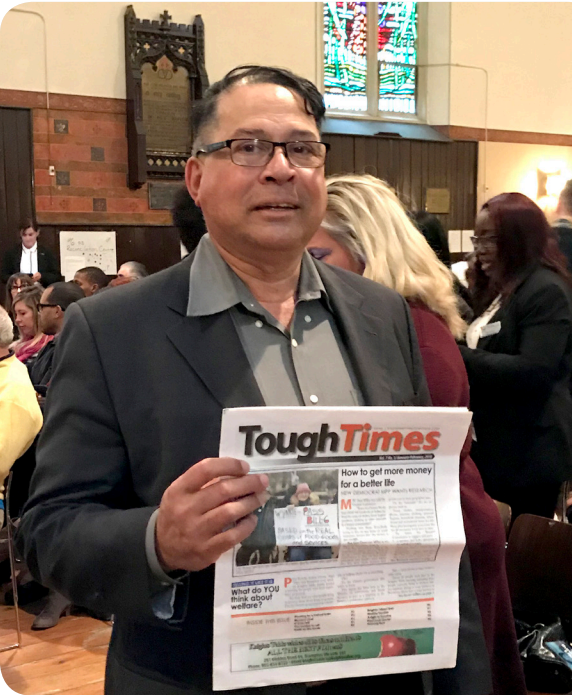
Co-chaired by United Way of Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel, the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (the Committee or PPRC) is a collaborative network that includes residents, people with lived experience, poverty reduction advocates, academia, regional and local government, non-profit organizations and public sector organizations working together to address poverty. The Committee believes that central to addressing poverty is an acknowledgement that core needs are human rights.

The refreshed 2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy focuses intentionally on three priority areas, namely, Income Security, Economic Opportunity, and Well-being and Social Inclusion and includes goals, outcomes and strategic actions to be accomplished in the next 10 years. It also acknowledges the complex and multi-faceted nature of poverty, as evidenced by wait lists for affordable housing, the number of individuals and families using shelters and food banks or accessing subsidized programs as well as increasing precarious employment and income disparity. To achieve the strategic goals, the Committee will identify connections with other system plans; draw on the work of other stakeholders who address poverty in the community and partner with a diverse range of organizations and individuals to move this action plan forward. Finally, we will use a shared measurement approach for tracking and monitoring the progress.

Achievement of the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy requires everyone working together to successfully make progress on the actions and outcomes outlined in the plan, therefore strategic actions and/or outcomes from the Strategy will be aligned with, and addressed at various sub-groups created within the organizational structure of the Committee.

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*“I Served can I be served?”*

~ Senior Peel resident





# Poverty and Income Disparity in Peel

Peel region, comprised of Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga is the second largest municipality in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)<sup>1</sup>. With a population of more than 1.4 million residents, Peel has grown into a prosperous economic and diverse region for most of its residents. Underlying this rapid growth however, are signals that not all residents have been experiencing its benefits in the same way. According to the 2017 Opportunity Equation report, in 1980, low-income neighbourhoods made up only 2% of all neighbourhoods in Peel but by 2015, over half (52%) of neighbourhoods are low-income. This was calculated from census data using census tract average individual income from all sources, before tax. This increase was primarily at the expense of middle income neighbourhoods, which dropped from 86% in 1980 to 43% in 2015<sup>2</sup>. In other words, the gap between the rich and poor has grown.

Growth in income inequality in Peel also has significant impact on the social-economic well-being of those individuals and families experiencing it. Income has been described as an important social determinant of health<sup>3</sup>. Inequalities in income may lead to certain groups having more difficulty affording basic needs such as food and housing. Inequalities in income may also lead to individuals and families having different access to support or different health-related behaviours, which make them more or less likely to have poor health<sup>4</sup>.

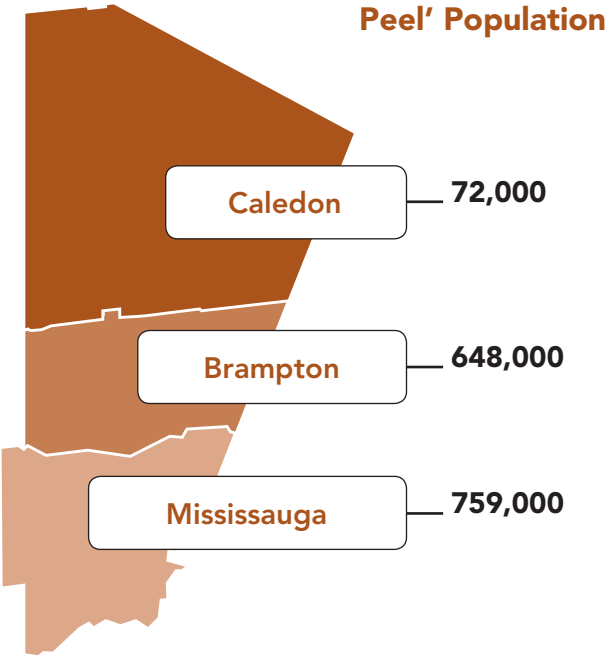
*“Peel Individuals and families experiencing poverty struggle because of limited access to income, support, and resources. Poverty is about income, but also about the inability for individuals and families to live independently, focus on wellness and be involved in community life.”*  
~ Poverty Reduction Strategy 2012-2015

Poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional issue which has social and economic impacts, not just for those who experience it, but for all members in a community. Until recently, there was no official definition or measure of poverty in Canada. The Low-Income Measure (LIM) was used to help communities capture the potential number of people struggling to make ends meet. Poverty and low-income have often been used interchangeably and for the purposes of this report, this is the case. In 2018, the Government of Canada released its first ever National Poverty Reduction Strategy, OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL - CANADA'S FIRST POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY report which includes an official definition and measure of poverty. It defines poverty as “the condition of a person who is deprived of the resources, means, choices, and power necessary to acquire and maintain a basic level of living standard and to facilitate integration and participation in society”<sup>5</sup>. Canada's official poverty line will reflect the combined cost of a basket of goods and services that meet the basic standard of living of individuals and families (Market Basket Measure).

<sup>1</sup> Region of Peel (2018) Community for Life; 2017 Annual Report to Our Community. *The Regional Municipality of Peel, Ontario, Canada. For the year ended December, 2017.* Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <http://www.peelregion.ca/strategicplan/2017-annual-report.pdf>  
<sup>2</sup> United Way Toronto & York Region (2017). *The Opportunity Equation in the Greater Toronto Area: An Update on neighbourhood income inequality and polarization.* Retrieved: November, 2017 from: [http://www.unitedwaypeel.org/reports/Opportunity\\_Equation\\_Update-sm.pdf](http://www.unitedwaypeel.org/reports/Opportunity_Equation_Update-sm.pdf)  
<sup>3</sup> Mikkonen, J., & Raphael, D. (2010). *Social determinants of health: The Canadian facts.* Toronto: York. University School of Health Policy and Management  
<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization (2008). *Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health.* Retrieved: July, 2018 from: [http://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/final\\_report/csdh\\_finalreport\\_2008.pdf](http://www.who.int/social_determinants/final_report/csdh_finalreport_2008.pdf)  
<sup>5</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada (2018). *OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CANADA'S FIRST POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY.* Retrieved: August, 2018 from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/poverty-reduction.html>

While the social and economic well-being of Peel residents depends on individual or family income, income is only one aspect of poverty. The rise of precarious and unstable employment, a rapidly increasing population, high cost of housing and food have all contributed to the complex, changing nature and definition of poverty in Peel. These changes have also had a greater impact on Peel's fastest growing demographics, putting them at higher risk of experiencing poverty. These populations include but are not limited to racialized (visible minority) communities, recent immigrants, single parent families, unattached seniors, singles, persons with disabilities, and families with young children.

**15.5%** of racialized (visible minority) populations  
EXPERIENCED POVERTY in 2016





# Who We Are

The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee was created in 2008 following a local commitment to further the work that began with the Region of Peel's *2005 Strategic Review of Poverty in Peel*, and the 2008 announcement by the Province of Ontario that would develop a provincial poverty reduction strategy. After extensive consultations and discussions with community members, the Committee developed the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy (PPRS) 2012-2015.

The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (PPRC) is co-chaired by the United Way of Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel. The Committee primarily consists of representation from community groups and organizations, Regional and Municipal governments, the education and health care systems and local residents. To achieve its goals and outcomes, the Committee engages and collaborates with its partners in order to make progress towards achieving its strategic actions. Over the course of the Strategy, the Committee developed strong relationships with partners across numerous sectors, including but not limited to:

- All levels of government
- Boards of Trade
- Community residents
- Community groups and organizations
- Education
- Food
- Health
- Housing
- Labour
- Justice
- Transportation



## VISION

The Region of Peel is a livable community for all individuals and families

## MISSION

To create a Peel community where everyone works together to build a poverty free future

## VALUES

### People Centered

Individuals and families are at the centre of PPRC's work. We ensure that the voices of these people are heard and included in decisions that are made

### Participatory

PPRC acknowledges that residents and private, public and non-profits sectors have a role to play; collaboratively, all stakeholders work to achieve positive sustainable results for the community

### Inclusive

PPRC raises awareness about how poverty affects individuals and groups differently and advocates for policies that address systematic barriers, accessibility and inequities

### Value Added

PPRC builds on the work and experiences of networks, collaboratives, organizations, and people with lived experience

### Accountable

PPRC is accountable to the community to ensure that our efforts result in positive changes



# Our Approach

The Committee uses a collective impact framework to work with community partners, create multi-sector partnerships and disrupt systems to reduce and mitigate poverty in Peel region. This model is also used by Cities Reducing Poverty, Tamarack Institute; a network of cities across Canada that are mutually committed to exploring the extent to which communities are substantially reducing poverty. Within that context, the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee has taken on many core roles, including:

## Influencers

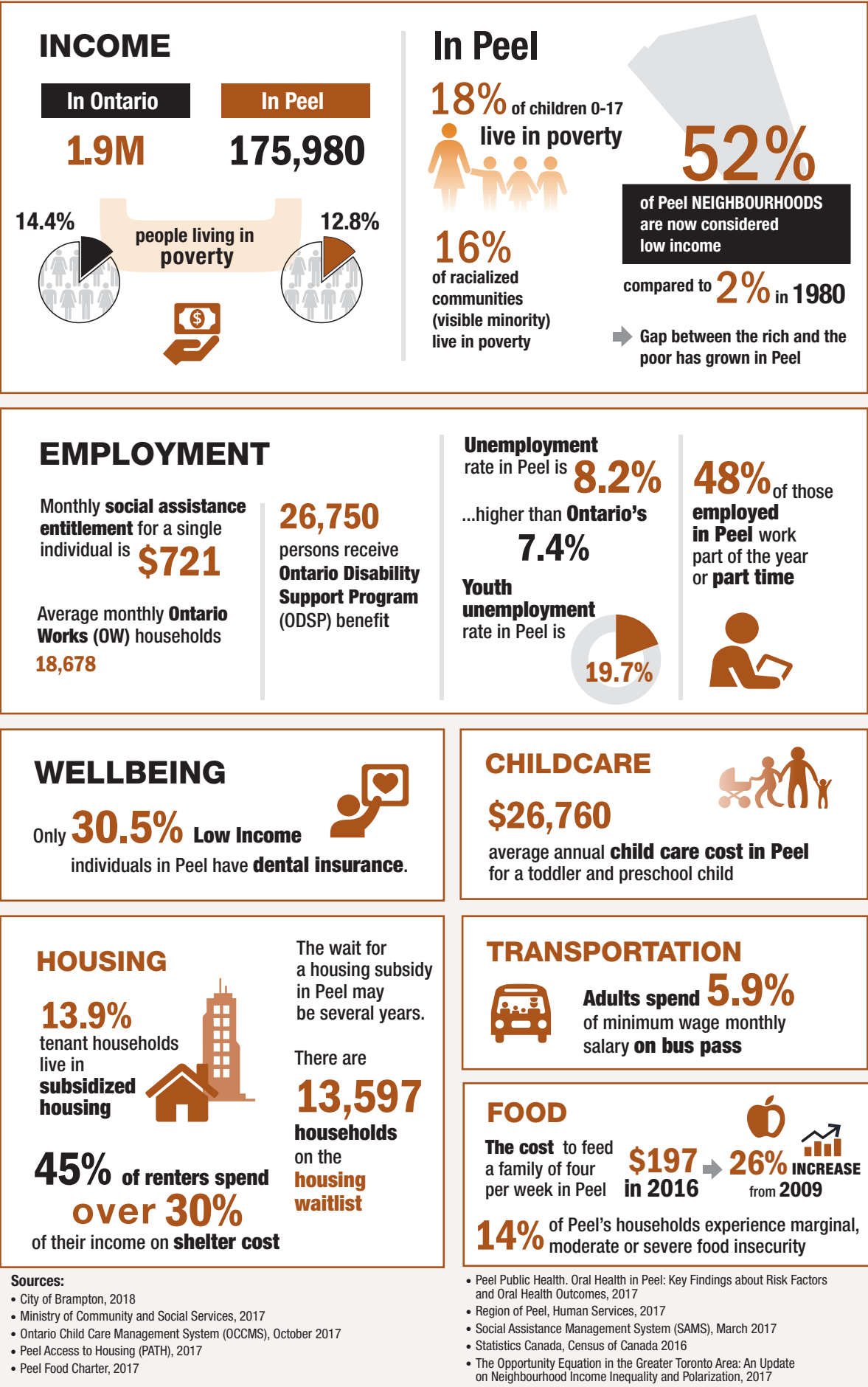
- Influencing system change and mobilizing efforts that address systemic barriers
- Building strategic partnerships with influential stakeholders across multiple sectors
- Mobilizing efforts that address systemic barriers

## Advocators

- Advocating for policies and changes that lift people out of poverty and move people to well-being and prosperity
- Enabling groups and individuals to challenge the status quo in making progress against poverty

## Innovators and Educators

- Ensuring people with lived experience of poverty play an important role advancing the committee’s work
- Encouraging innovative solutions to addressing poverty
- Building awareness that allows people to see their role in poverty reduction
- Measuring and reporting on community impact



# Highlights of the 2012 – 2015 Strategy

The Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy (PPRS) 2012-2015 was the first of its kind in Peel region. The community driven strategy identified five areas that significantly impact people’s ability to get ahead, including Economic Opportunities; Income Security; Affordable and Accessible Transportation; Food Security; and Affordable and Accessible Housing. In addition, it focused on creating awareness about poverty in Peel and advocating for investments that mitigate and reduce the number of people experiencing poverty in Peel. The following are some accomplishments of the previous strategy.



## Affordable Transit Pilot

During consultations, residents expressed concern about the increasing cost of bus fare and the difficulty in getting to and from important appointments such as job interviews and medical appointments. The Committee advocated for and supported the Affordable Transit Pilot for 250 people receiving social assistance. The pilot, sponsored by the Region of Peel and MiWay (Mississauga) Transit, ran from September 2014 to December 2015. Based on the evaluation results, \$6 was generated for every \$1 invested in the Affordable Transit Pilot. A phase two pilot was expanded to include low-income residents in Mississauga. Similar to the first pilot, evaluation results suggested that having affordable access to transportation can have a positive effect on

social determinants of health and allow residents to more fully participate in the community. In 2018, the program became permanent in Brampton and Mississauga; eligible applicants now receive 50% off their local monthly transit pass.

## Peel Food Charter

Currently, food insecurity is a pressing problem in Peel with 14% of households experiencing marginal, moderate or severe food insecurity. Between 2009 and 2016 the cost to feed a family of four per week in Peel increased from \$156.15 to \$197.13. In response, the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee launched the Peel Food Charter, developed with input from over 800 individuals and organizations to create a clear vision for food security in our community. The Peel Food Charter articulates that food security exists when all people, at all times of their lives have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The Food Charter identifies 12 goals under the following six themes:

- Agriculture and Economy
- Community Engagement and Decision Making
- Education and Awareness
- Empowerment and Sustainability
- Equity and Justice
- Health and Well-being



The Peel Food Charter will be used to inform the work of the emerging Peel Food Action Council.

## Community Benefits Agreement

In 2014, the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee identified Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) as a framework to advance economic opportunities in Peel. This community-based initiative is designed to create employment and training opportunities and other benefits for community residents through the procurement process for large public sector projects. In 2017, the Committee formed the Peel Community Benefits Network and recently signed a Community Benefits Framework Agreement with Metrolinx for the Hurontario Light Rail Transit (HuLRT). The construction of the HuLRT is set to commence in 2019.

## Living Wage Initiative

The Living Wage initiative began in 2014. Unlike a minimum wage, a Living Wage reflects the true cost of living in a specific city, town or region and takes into account wages, annual expenses, and income from government transfers and taxes. The Living Wage is one tool to alleviate poverty and get families out of severe financial stress by providing basic economic security. As of 2018, the hourly living wage calculation in Peel is \$16.69. This is based on a family of four people, including two adults working full-time and two young children below the ages of seven. A launch of the campaign will occur following the launch of the 2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy. This includes identifying and engaging employers who pay their employees a living wage. PPRC is a member of the Ontario Living Wage Network.

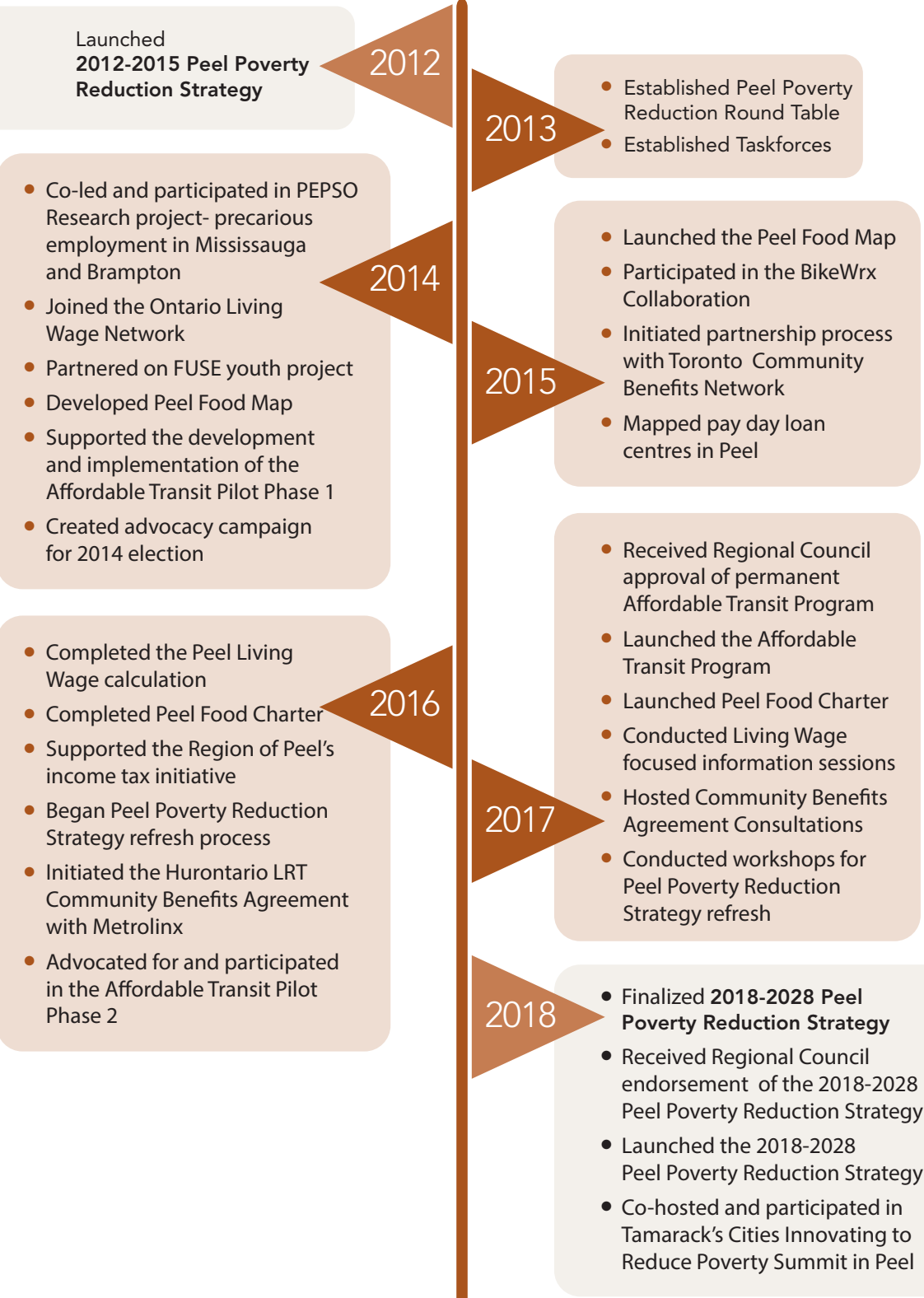


“Poverty is a Political Decision”

~ John ISH Ishmael



# Peel Poverty Reduction Committee Timeline



## Tough Times

Tough Times is the only social justice newspaper in Peel. It seeks to be informative and constructive about issues affecting people trapped in poverty. Circulating 10,000 copies six times a year in Peel Region, its target audience is people who are homeless, using soup kitchens, food banks, families who are struggling, plus individuals and organizations who try to help them, faith groups, labour unions, politicians, service clubs, business, and the general public. Tough Times is financed by selling advertising. Most staff members volunteer. Tough Times is available in public libraries and in public buildings throughout Peel. Past issues can be found at <http://toughtimestabloid.wordpress.com>

~ Best Practice in Peel



# 2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy

## Selecting Priority Areas

Although policy strides were made between 2012 and 2018, many of the issues which were identified in the 2012-2015 Strategy still exist. Given the changing nature of work and demographics in Peel, a range of approaches were used to inform the refreshed Strategy. This included an extensive jurisdictional scan; review of several research reports<sup>6,7,8,9</sup> and consultation reports on a range of related issues such as social assistance and housing; assessing the impact of the previous priority areas; and facilitated workshops with key stakeholders and residents, including those with lived experience, to develop outcomes and approaches.

The process of refreshing the Strategy underscored the importance of understanding the root causes of poverty and acknowledges that solutions must also address systemic barriers that may be contributing to higher rates of low-income in Peel. As such, the Committee became more intentional about selecting priority areas and determined that the duration of the Strategy should be ten years in order to successfully accomplish outcomes and strategic actions.

The Committee believes that central to addressing poverty is an acknowledgement that core needs are **human rights** as articulated in the following statement created by the Committee during the process of refreshing the Strategy:

“Access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing; access to affordable and accessible transportation; access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food, and access to quality health care and education are basic human rights. We acknowledge that systemic barriers and discrimination can cause marginalized, racialized, immigrant, and newcomer communities to be disproportionately affected by poverty. We must work together as a community to eliminate poverty in Peel.”

~ Peel Poverty Reduction Committee



<sup>6</sup>United United Way Toronto & York Region (2017). The Opportunity Equation in the Greater Toronto Area: An Update on neighbourhood income inequality and polarization. Retrieved: November, 2017 from: [http://www.unitedwaypeel.org/reports/Opportunity\\_Equation\\_Update-sm.pdf](http://www.unitedwaypeel.org/reports/Opportunity_Equation_Update-sm.pdf)

<sup>7</sup>Government of Canada (2016). Towards a Poverty Reduction Strategy- A Backgrounder on Poverty in Canada. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/backgrounder.html>

<sup>8</sup>Government of Ontario (2017). Basic Income Consultation- What We Heard. Retrieved: November 2017 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/basicincome>

<sup>9</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Realizing Our Potential: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2014-2019). Retrieved: July 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/realizing-our-potential-ontarios-poverty-reduction-strategy-2014-2019-all>

## 2018-2028 Strategy Priority Areas and Goals

The Committee will identify key indicators related to poverty and intentionally monitor the successes within each priority area. These population-level measures are intended to assist the Committee in gauging and reporting on the socio-economic health of the region. The indicators will be tracked over time and reported on regularly over the next 10 years of the Strategy.

### Income Security



Equitable and inclusive access to income that results in adequate income security for Peel residents.

### Economic Opportunity



- a) Stable, non-precarious employment opportunities and
- b) Reduced systemic barriers including inequitable access to stable non-precarious employment and high-quality education for marginalized and equity seeking groups.

### Well-being and Social Inclusion



Equitable and inclusive access to essential supports and services that meet the needs of Peel residents and their human rights.

“The amount of money provided on social assistance has to increase to reflect basic housing needs”

~ Peel Poverty Reduction Committee Member





Priority Area #1: Income Security

Income security increases the ability of individuals and families to thrive and contribute to the social and economic well-being of the community. Income security includes broad safety net programs delivered by federal, provincial or municipal governments to address low-income and related needs. It includes access to programs including Employment Insurance, Child Tax Benefit, Canada Pension Plan, Savings, Workplace Safety related benefits, and Veteran’s programs.



Goal Equitable and inclusive access to income that results in adequate income security for Peel residents



*Fatima is a single parent; new to Canada, and in need of income support. She has two young children; one of her children lives with a physical disability. She finds being on social assistance challenging and difficult to navigate the social system for programs that will assist her and her family in getting out of their current situation.*

~ Case scenario

.....  
“Subsidies from one program add to income and disqualify people for another program”

~ Poverty Reduction Committee Member

	Short Term (1-3 Years)	Intermediate Term (4-7 Years)	Long Term (8-10 Years)
Desired Change (Outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased awareness about tax programs or benefits available to residents experiencing income inequality</li><li>Increased access to income supports available to residents experiencing income inequality</li><li>Increased awareness about the impact of income inequality among stakeholders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved affordable banking options for low-income individuals and families such as short term loans, credit and bank accounts that offer reduced interest rates and increased savings programs</li><li>Increased use of payday loan map (tool) by stakeholders to inform income based program planning and development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decreased percentage of people below poverty line due to access to income programs such tax and social assistance benefits</li><li>Greater advocacy that eliminate barriers to increased savings and participation in government programs such as Registered Education Savings Plans(RESPs) and subsidy programs</li></ul>
Strategic Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Partner with stakeholders to pilot financial literacy initiatives</li><li>Mobilize community partners to influence and advocate for the elimination of barriers to increased savings and participation in government programs such as RESPs and subsidy programs</li><li>Organize speaker series and information sessions about income inequality</li><li>Advocate for Peel’s area municipalities to implement stricter regulations on pay day loan lenders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Partner with financial institutions to create affordable and accessible banking options including short term loans, credit and bank accounts that offer reduced interest rates and increased subsidized programs for low income families</li><li>Promote the use of the pay day loan map to inform income security programs and initiatives among stakeholders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advocate for the expansion of policies that increase access to income programs for residents, including basic guaranteed income and access to subsidized programs</li><li>Leverage provincial and federal income security strategies to empower residents experiencing poverty to achieve economic and social inclusion</li></ul>

Priority Area #2: Economic Opportunity

Economic opportunity is access to stable employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for all Peel residents. Economic opportunity is not only about job creation, but also about the impact of the changing nature of the labour market, the impact of technology and climate change on current and future jobs.



- Goals
- Stable, non-precarious employment opportunities
  - Reduced systemic barriers, including inequitable access to stable non-precarious employment and good quality education for marginalized and equity seeking groups



*Matthew is a racialized youth in grade 12, trying to find a summer job but does not have much work experience. He is worried about not being able to help his family. His dad works two part-time jobs after losing his full-time position to automation. His mom stays at home caring for his younger sister. Matthew would like to attend college next year but is concerned about his grades and the cost of tuition..*

~ Case scenario

*“Employers do not listen to what skills people have and to help them develop their skills when they do not fit neatly in a box could be valuable, but the individual does not believe they have useful skills”*

~ Social Assistance Review Participant

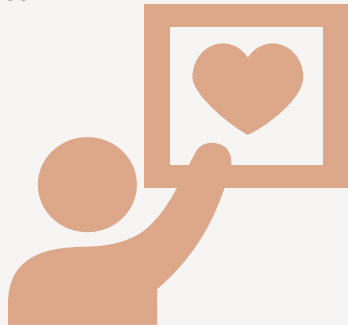
	Short Term (1-3 Years)	Intermediate Term (4-7 Years)	Long Term (8-10 Years)
Desired Change (Outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased presence of Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) tied to economic opportunities for marginalized and equity seeking groups in Peel</li><li>• Increased number of Living Wage employers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater advocacy to decrease systemic barriers to stable non-precarious employment for marginalized and equity seeking groups</li><li>• Increased education and training opportunities that create a pathway for successful employment in the future</li><li>• Improved education and integrated community-based programs that increase the level of achievement and success for students of marginalized</li><li>• Increased understanding of the impact of the changing labour market on Peel's work force</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased entrepreneurial, micro-lending and social enterprise opportunities</li></ul>
Strategic Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead the creation of the Peel Community Benefits Network for publicly funded capital projects</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders to implement CBA with targets and outcomes for marginalized and equity seeking groups</li><li>• Create a Living Wage campaign that promotes living wage and recognize Living Wage employers</li><li>• Partner with anchor institutions to promote the purchase and procurement of food that are locally grown and produced, as well as goods and services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with Peel district school boards to develop and implement school and community based programs that increase the level of achievement and success for students of marginalized and equity seeking background</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders to promote, develop and implement equity and inclusion tools that ensures employment practices are fair and free of prejudice for marginalized and equity seeking groups</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocate for good public and private sector jobs</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders to pilot micro lending or social enterprise opportunities</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders to apply poverty reduction lens to the education system that create a successful pathway to future good jobs for students</li><li>• Mobilize anchor institutions to apply poverty reduction lens in their organizations' hiring processes</li></ul>



Priority Area #3: Well-being and Social Inclusion

Poor mental and physical health prevents residents from fully participating in activities at home, work, and school and community life. Social inclusion and access to equitable and inclusive supports and services increase well-being for individuals, families, and communities. Essential supports and services are required to create well-being and social inclusion including:

- Safe, affordable and accessible housing
- Safe, affordable and flexible childcare
- Affordable, accessible and connected transportation
- Physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food
- Integrated programs, services and supports that meet the needs of Peel residents



Goal Equitable and inclusive access to essential supports and services that meet the needs of Peel residents and their human rights



*Jeff and Maria, along with their two young kids, live in a low-income neighbourhood in Peel. Both have minimum-wage jobs and are struggling to pay for housing, food and public transportation. Due to Maria’s medical condition they are on a wait list for accessible housing. Maria and Jeff are frustrated at the lack of programs to assist them to get ahead.*

~ Case scenario

.....

*“I am a tough, strong woman, but some days I have reached my limit, and somewhere through my son, I get the strength to keep on trying to get out of here and give him a better life, and I will never stop till I get there, but for most, it’s too late, their self-esteem has been shattered and for some irreparable”*

~ Anonymous

	Short Term (1-3 Years)	Intermediate Term (4-7 Years)	Long Term (8-10 Years)
Desired Change (Outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased partnerships with housing stakeholders to remove barriers that prevent people from accessing and moving from the emergency shelter system to stable, affordable and accessible housing</li><li>• Increased awareness about new transit initiatives such as Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Affordable Transit Program (ATP)</li><li>• Increased awareness of and access to food programs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved regulations on inclusionary zoning</li><li>• Improved access to integrated social, health and housing programs and services that enable residents to move out of poverty</li><li>• Increased innovative, affordable and flexible child care programs for parents who are precariously employed or in training</li><li>• Increased awareness among consumers and institutions about opportunities to buy locally produced food</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased use of poverty reduction tools to ensure housing, childcare and other service providers eliminate accessibility and affordability barriers</li><li>• Increased partnership with stakeholders to create awareness that ensures that transit systems are accessible, affordable and publicly funded</li><li>• Increased understanding of social issues among Peel residents</li><li>• Increased mobilization of residents to advocate for themselves</li></ul>

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*“Unfortunately, because of the inability to find stable jobs, there are an increasing number of people in the area relying on OW. Thanks to OW for making people out there still survive”*

~ PEPSO Participant

Strategic Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with housing systems, such as Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan (PHHP) and Peel Alliance to End Homelessness (PAEH) to address homelessness</li><li>• Advocate for increased use of inclusionary zoning regulations</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders to develop and implement tools that ensure housing, childcare and other providers eliminate accessibility and affordability barriers</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders and advocate for more accessible, seamless transit systems region wide</li><li>• Work with stakeholders to ensure that residents are aware of the impact of private/ public partnerships for new transit initiatives such as the LRT</li><li>• Promote Peel Food Map to ensure access and use by residents and the food sector</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with child care systems and service providers to pilot an innovative, affordable and flexible childcare program</li><li>• Partner with stakeholders and advocate for ongoing consistent investment in transit to ensure transit systems remain publicly funded</li><li>• Advocate for policies that support Peel's agriculture and food businesses</li><li>• Explore social capital and community engagement models that build community resilience, belonging and connection</li><li>• Advocate for, support and promote integrated access that includes social and healthcare programs such as community hubs, pharma care, and dental care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with housing stakeholders to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent people moving from the emergency shelter system to affordable stable housing</li><li>• Partner with childcare stakeholders to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent people from accessing affordable and flexible child care programs</li></ul>
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## Enabling Strategic Actions

### Over the next 10 years the Committee is committed to:

- Creating a link between poverty and social determinants of health that address poverty stigmas
- Conducting research and analysis on income inequalities in Peel
- Conducting research and analysis that results in the creation of a neighbourhood action strategy on income disparities
- Utilizing research on technology changes, its impact on the labour market to inform; and create an action strategy to address technology advancement
- Developing a communication reporting tool such as a dashboard that informs community and stakeholders about poverty reduction progress/pulse in Peel

## Shared Measurement Approach

In recognition of the collective impact framework that guides this work, and to align the efforts of PPRC, a shared measurement approach will be developed to track the progress of PPRS goals. This work will be carried out through a Research, Policy and Evaluation workgroup. Below are examples of possible measures that the Committee will monitor and report on.

### Income Security

- Average time (months) spent in receipt of Ontario Works
- Prevalence of low income
- Prevalence of children 0-17 in low income
- Percentage of neighbourhoods considered low income
- Percentage of visible minority or racialized groups living in poverty

### Economic Opportunity

- Unemployment rate
- Youth unemployment rate
- Percentage of those employed who work part of the year or part-time
- Low Educational Attainment
- Postsecondary Education

### Well-Being and Social Inclusion

- Average wait time for subsidized housing
- Household shelter costs
- Homelessness Point-in-Time Count & Registry
- Supportive Housing Waitlist
- Shelter usage
- Average annual child care cost
- Foodbank usage
- Food Security index Source or Cost to feed a Family of 4 in Peel
- Percentage of salary spent on monthly bus pass
- Percentage of low income families with dental insurance





## WellFort Community Health Services

WellFort Community Health Services is a value-based community health organization in Peel region that is funded to provide free services, including, primary health care, support and treatment for HIV and Hep C, oral healthcare, diabetes education and community development services, to individuals and families who traditionally face barriers in accessing health care. WellFort is committed to providing inclusive, accessible and sustainable care to its priority populations. During the 2018 Ontario Provincial election it held a non-partisan democratic engagement Vote PopUp event. The Vote PopUp aimed to increase democratic engagement by providing a safe space for people, regardless of their immigration status, to engage with the democratic process, to consider what's most important to them in the elections, and to experience the voting process through simulated voting stations. As a result, newcomers to Canada (first-time voters) and infrequent voters engaged in the process, and were motivated to participate in coming and future elections as their civic duty. Those familiar with the election process were not left out; it was an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to engage in democracy.

~ Best Practice in Peel

## Alignment of Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy to Other Strategies

Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy provides a holistic approach to addressing the complexity of poverty in Peel, and cuts across several strategies locally. The Committee works in alignment and in collaboration with other system plans in the community to address poverty. Given the complexity of poverty, the Committee draws on the work of other stakeholders who are addressing poverty in the community, as well as partner with stakeholders to move its action plan forward.

### Child Care and Early Years Programs and Services Plan

The Region of Peel will finalize and submit its Early Years and Child Care Program and Services System Plan in 2019. This plan will provide a clear roadmap of priorities for the early years and child care system that is informed by children, parents and caregivers, service providers, and community partners. This plan will reflect the Region's commitment to support the ability of accessible, affordable, high-quality and responsive Early Years and Child Care programs and services for children and their families in Peel.

### Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan

The Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan (PHHP) was created in 2013 in response to the need for emergency, transitional, and affordable housing in Peel<sup>10</sup>. The PHHP was refreshed in 2018 and the PHHP: 2018-2028 strategies include:

- Transforming the delivery of programs through the creation of a new service model to prevent homelessness, divert people from shelters and match people with the right services
- Increase capacity for affordable housing development and reduce cost of development
- Encourage the market to produce purpose-built rental and affordable home ownership through a modest program of tools and incentives
- Maintain existing social and affordable housing stock and leverage existing private stock to create more and varied affordable housing options
- Expand the supply of supportive housing and support provided to existing tenants

### Peel Alliance to End Homelessness

*Peel Alliance to End Homelessness* is a collaborative effort from agencies across Peel Region working together to end homelessness in our communities<sup>11</sup>. Its mission is to "work collaboratively to improve the coordination of the homelessness system of care in Peel Region by implementing a care approach particularly for those experiencing chronic homelessness" through:

- Common Assessment - system coordination and the collection of real-time homelessness data
- Enumeration - Point-in Time (PiT) count to track progress towards ending homelessness
- Coordinated Access - Support system integration by introducing a system of care (integrated system response) for homelessness services
- Advocacy - Advocate for housing policy changes, increased accountability, planning integration and local best practices

<sup>10</sup>Regional Council Report (2018). Peel Housing and Homelessness: Needs Assessment, Targets and Revised Plan

<sup>11</sup>Peel Alliance to End Homelessness (2018). Retrieved: April, 2018 from: <http://www.20khomespeel.ca/>



Peel Youth Charter: Peel Region Youth Violence Prevention

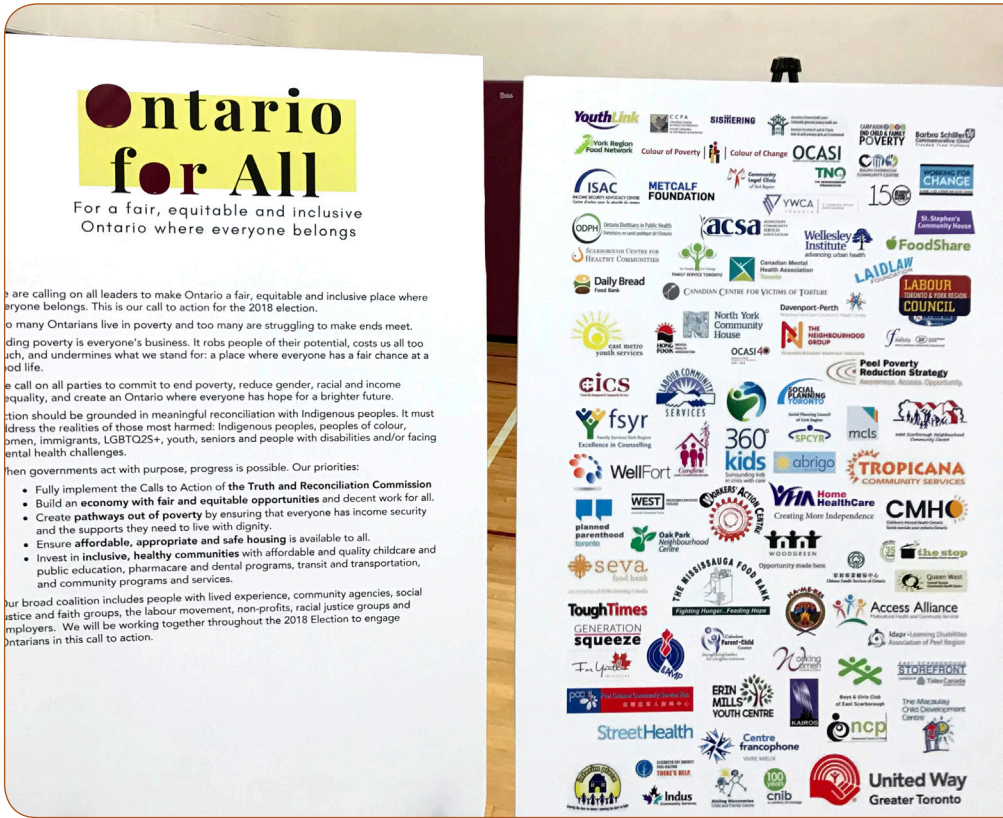
Peel Region Youth Violence Prevention collaborates with other agencies in Peel to reduce and prevent youth violence. The Peel Youth Charter is the foundation for a safe and supportive environment for all youth in the region. It demonstrates the commitment of all individuals and organizations in the region that sign it and hang it on their walls to ensure the safety, health, education and future employment of all youth in Peel<sup>12</sup>.

Diversity Charter

The Diversity Charter aims to foster inclusiveness and equity in Peel Region. It was developed with the vision that everyone who lives, works and plays in Peel Region can participate in and engage with their communities in meaningful ways. Its goal is to promote social justice at all levels; from our political institutions to our health and education systems, from our businesses to our service delivery mechanisms and our communities<sup>13</sup>. The Committee supports and has signed this document.

Region of Peel Strategic Plan 2015-2035

The Region of Peel’s Strategic Plan is a 20-year plan, launched in 2015 to create a community for life for the residents of Peel, while working with the community to create a healthy, safe, and connected community. The plan’s focus is on improving in the areas of: *Living - people’s lives are improved in their time of need; Thriving - communities are integrated, safe and complete; and Leading - government is future- oriented and accountable*<sup>14</sup>.



United Way Greater Toronto

United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) is a charity dedicated to fighting local poverty in all its forms, working with communities in Peel, Toronto and York Region. Together with its partners, UWGT creates opportunities for a better life for everyone across its region. As the largest non-governmental funder of social services in the region, United Way Greater Toronto mobilizes people and resources to support a network of agencies that help people when and where they need it most<sup>15</sup>.

Health Equity Strategy

Health equity is an important pillar of public health practice in Ontario and this is emphasized in the new Ontario Public Health Standards, which came into effect on January 1, 2018. Recognizing that opportunities for health starts long before people need health care, the Region of Peel-Public Health is working in partnership with others to improve the health and well-being of Peel residents.



<sup>12</sup>Peel Youth Violence Prevention (2007) Peel Youth Charter. Retrieved: April, 2018 from: <http://www.voice4peelyouth.ca/charter/Charter.pdf>  
<sup>13</sup>Regional Diversity Roundtable (2018). Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel. Retrieved: April, 2018 from: [http://dicharter.rdrpeel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/DI\\_Charter\\_English.pdf](http://dicharter.rdrpeel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/DI_Charter_English.pdf)  
<sup>14</sup>Region of Peel (2015) Imagine Peel: Strategic Plan 2015-2035. Retrieved: April, 2018 from: [http://pathways.peelregion.ca/images/corporate\\_services/Corporate%20Strategy%20Office/2015-2035\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_Summary\\_-\\_Flat\\_for\\_web.pdf](http://pathways.peelregion.ca/images/corporate_services/Corporate%20Strategy%20Office/2015-2035_Strategic_Plan_Summary_-_Flat_for_web.pdf)  
<sup>15</sup>United Way Greater Toronto (2018). Retrieved: April, 2018 from: <https://www.unitedwaygt.org/what-we-do>



## How We Will Work Together

Peel Poverty Reduction Committee continues to play an important role in raising awareness about poverty in Peel among stakeholders and residents. PPRC supports strategies that address poverty and advocates to all levels of government for investments in programs and services that mitigate the impact of poverty on families and individuals.

The 2018-2028 Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy will be guided by the Collective Impact model, an approach used to address complex change such as poverty reduction. The Collective Impact framework contains five conditions including the development of a common agenda; using shared measurement to understand progress; building on mutually reinforcing activities; engaging in continuous communications and providing a backbone to move the work forward .

Although this multi-stakeholder Committee is co-chaired by the United Way Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel, it takes all members, including various sectors and collaborative networks, municipal staff and elected officials, people with lived experience and poverty advocates working together, to successfully achieve the actions and outcomes outlined in the Strategy. The strategic actions and/or outcomes in the 2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy will be aligned to the various tables in the organizational structure, including but not limited to:

### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will provide oversight of the entire Strategy. Representation includes key sector leaders, as well as leads from other tables such as the lived experience, systems and implementation taskforce tables.

### Implementation Taskforces

The Taskforces will design and implement the Strategy’s action plans. The three taskforces will represent the three priority areas.

### Lived Experience Roundtable

The Lived Experience roundtable will support the goals of the Committee and implementation of strategic actions. They will promote and expand awareness of the issues, serve as champions for the Committee, and provide ongoing feedback on issues facing people with lived experience.

### Systems Roundtable

The Systems Roundtable will identify opportunities for collaboration between sectors, support the Committee and support implementation of strategic actions.

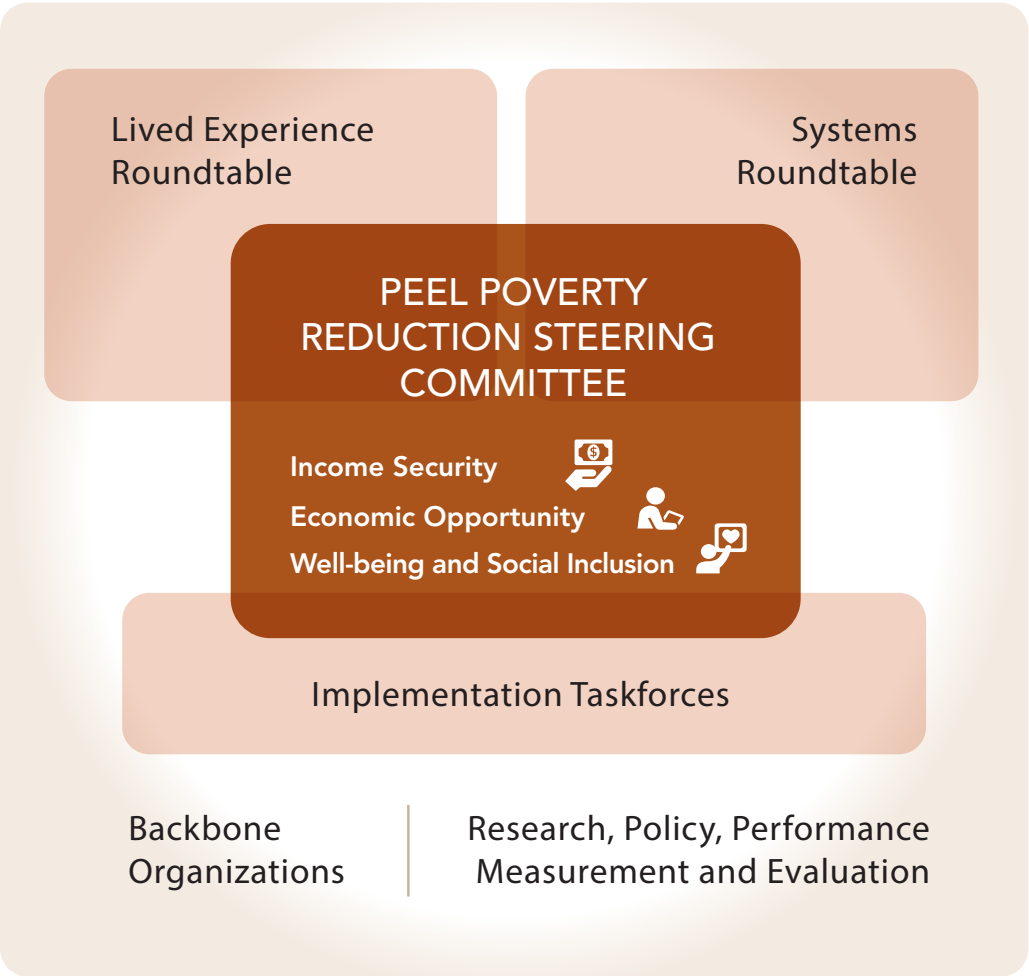
### Backbone Organizations

The Backbone Organizations will ensure the Committee is sustainable, increases its capacity, and achieves its goals. The United Way of Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel currently provide backbone support for the Strategy.

## Research, Policy, Performance Measurement and Evaluation

The Committee recognizes the importance of evidence-informed decisions and access to quality research and data to supports its work. The Committee will engage stakeholders as needed to develop and/or expand Peel specific research on poverty, analyze and monitor relevant population and performance data, and evaluate strategic actions.

## Peel Poverty Reduction Committee Governance



.....  
“For the sake of those experiencing poverty, and for the community as a whole, we must therefore diligently work together to eradicate it”

~ Darcy M

# Summary

The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee will continue to work with community partners and residents to make Peel region a livable community that is free of poverty for all residents and families. The Committee achieves these goals by being people-centred, inclusive, and accountable and not duplicating efforts. The Committee effects change through a collective approach by forming partnerships across sectors, influencing change at all levels, advocating for policies that lift people out of poverty, building awareness, mobilizing the community, encouraging innovative solutions, and challenging the status quo.

Poverty is multi-faceted and complex and it affects specific populations differently. Compounding the challenges is systemic barriers and discrimination, shrinking middle class neighbourhoods, increased precarious and unstable employment, as well as significant disruptions in the labour market as a result of advancements in technology and climate change. Beyond some of the accomplishments and strides the Committee has made with the Affordable Transit Program, Peel Food Charter, Community Benefits Agreements, and Living Wage, the Committee is committed to continuous progress against reducing poverty over the next 10 years.

The Committee believes that core needs such as access to housing, transportation, nutritious food, health care and education are basic human rights. As such, a human rights lens will be a cornerstone of the 2018-2028 Poverty Reduction Strategy focused on Well-being and Social Inclusion, Income Security, and Economic Opportunity.

In order the make positive strides and progress in all priority areas, outcomes and strategic actions, the Committee sends everyone one message:  
***“We must work together as a community to eliminate poverty in Peel”.***



# Glossary

- Anchor Institution:** Enterprises such as universities and hospitals that are rooted in their local communities by mission, invested capital, or relationships to customers, employees, and vendors<sup>17</sup>.
- Adequate Income:** Reflects belief about the amount of resources needed to achieve a particular standard of living<sup>18</sup>.
- Food Security:** When people have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food that meets their dietary needs<sup>19</sup>.
- Health equity:** Means that all people can reach their full health potential and should not be disadvantaged from attaining it because of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, social class, socioeconomic status or other socially determined circumstance<sup>20</sup>.
- Immigrant:** refers to a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this group<sup>21</sup>.
- Income Security:** Adequate income reflects belief about the amount of resources needed to achieve a particular standard of living<sup>22</sup>.
- Micro lending:** The program supports low-income individuals and families who are seeking to start their own business by providing financial literacy training, entrepreneurial mentoring and skills development and life skills support<sup>23</sup>.
- Precarious Employment:** is a broad term defining employment/remuneration that is uncertain, low-income, and has limited social benefits and statutory entitlements. In some cases it is used synonymously with non-standard employment, but in others it refers to work that has an element of contingency<sup>24</sup>.
- Racialized:** The process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life<sup>25</sup>.
- Social Determinants of Health:** Complex set of factors that influence or determine the level of health of populations. They include income and social status; social support networks; education and literacy; employment/working conditions; social environments; physical environments; personal health practices and coping skills; healthy child development; gender; and culture; biological and genetic endowment; and health services<sup>26</sup>.
- Social enterprises:** Enterprises that use business strategies to achieve a social or environmental impact. While generating revenue they also expressly intend to create positive outcomes, and measure their results accordingly<sup>27</sup>.
- Social Inclusion:** Based on notions of belonging, acceptance and recognition and entails the realization of full and equal participation in economic, social, cultural and political institutions. It is about recognizing and valuing diversity; it is about engendering feelings of belonging by increasing social equality and the participation of diverse and disadvantaged populations<sup>28</sup>.
- Systemic barriers** restrict or limit access to resources or opportunities such as employment, education, health social services etc. Systems should be created so that they do not create systemic barriers this includes physical, organizational culture or policies, practices, and decision making process<sup>29</sup>.
- Visible Minority (racialized):** refers to whether a person belongs to a visible minority group as defined by the *Employment Equity Act* and, if so, the visible minority group to which the person belongs. The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour”. The visible minority population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>17</sup>United Community-Wealth.Org (2018). Overview: Anchor Institutions. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://community-wealth.org/strategies/panel/anchors/index.html>  
<sup>18</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>  
<sup>19</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>  
<sup>20</sup>National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. (2013). Let's talk: health equity. Antigonish, NS: National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, St. Francis Xavier University; 2013. Retrieved : August 2018 from: [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/74737/E89383.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/74737/E89383.pdf)



<sup>21</sup>Statistics Canada (2018) Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016: Immigrant. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop221-eng.cfm>

<sup>22</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>

<sup>23</sup>Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (2018). Microlending for Women in Ontario Program. Retrieved: August 2018: <http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd/english/economic/entrepreneurs.shtml>

<sup>24</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>

<sup>25</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>

<sup>26</sup>Government of Canada (2018). What makes Canadian Healthy or Unhealthy? Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health/what-makes-canadians-healthy-unhealthy.html>

<sup>27</sup>Government of Ontario (2017) Amplifying the impact of Ontario's social enterprise community: An Action Plan towards a Common approach to impact measurement. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: [https://carleton.ca/3ci/wp-content/uploads/IMTF\\_Final-Action-Plan\\_-April-13-2017\\_Accessible.pdf](https://carleton.ca/3ci/wp-content/uploads/IMTF_Final-Action-Plan_-April-13-2017_Accessible.pdf)

<sup>28</sup>Government of Ontario (2018). Income Security: Roadmap for Change. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>

<sup>29</sup>Ontario Human Rights Commission (2018). Policy primer: Guide to developing human rights policies and procedures. Retrieved: July 2018: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-primer-guide-developing-human-rights-policies-and-procedures/4-preventing-reviewing-and-removing-barriers>

<sup>30</sup>Statistics Canada (2018) Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016: Visible Minority. Retrieved: July, 2018 from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop127-eng.cfm>

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  - Peel Poverty Action Group

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