AN EVIDENCE-BASED STANDARD FOR MEASURING THE
WELL-BEING OF TORONTO’S NEIGHBOURHOODS
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An Introduction to Urban HEART @ Toronto

Toronto has earned for itself a reputation as a city of neighbourhoods.

From Etobicoke to Scarborough, from North York to Downtown, a network of interdependent communities with distinct characteristics and unique identities shapes the personality of our city overall. We are well-known and well-regarded for the strength and diversity of this impressive mosaic.

In a city as connected as ours, neighbourhoods matter. They are the foundation of our common health and our shared prosperity. And so, if some neighbourhoods fall behind, the success of our entire city is put at risk.

This isn’t a new revelation. But until now, there hasn’t been a consistent way to check the pulse of our city.

That’s why Urban HEART @ Toronto is so timely. It measures how well Toronto’s neighbourhoods are doing in five main categories. A variety of indicators within these domains are presented using a coloured dashboard. Green shows us where local conditions are positive, while yellow and red point to conditions that need a closer examination.

A quick look at the Urban HEART @ Toronto dashboard tells us that every neighbourhood in Toronto has strengths and assets to build on — but there is troubling inequality in our city. Too many neighbourhoods are vulnerable and falling behind.

In fact, almost half of all of Toronto’s neighbourhoods are experiencing yellow caution indicators across all domains. This doesn’t necessarily mean these neighbourhoods are at risk — but they are revealed to be areas that are experiencing some issues of concern, and need a closer look to find out why.

Urban HEART @ Toronto is only a diagnosis. Solutions to the challenges facing our neighbourhoods will need to be developed using this information as a guide. But for the first time ever, there is an evidence-based standard for measuring the well-being of Toronto’s neighbourhoods. Now governments, funders, and community organizations can use a single, consistent tool for making smarter decisions about local funding and community resources — and ensuring our city of neighbourhoods thrives in every corner of Toronto.

This summary profiles some of the key information and findings included in Urban HEART @ Toronto. For more detailed information, please see the complete technical report at http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php
How to Use This Tool

The Urban HEART @ Toronto dashboard, and all of the indicators and data included within the domains, provide a simple and user-friendly tool for showing us what’s working — and what’s not — at a neighbourhood level.

It will give multiple partners from across all sectors the opportunity to target resources where they’re needed most, coordinate efforts, establish long-term action plans, and measure their progress over time.

This will enable collaborative priority-setting, planning, and investment decisions to be made across multiple sectors and among many different partners — all using strong, consistent, and reliable evidence.

It’s important to point out that the information contained in Urban HEART @ Toronto is presented as a resource for further consideration. Neighbourhoods are not given rankings because the indicators measured are often complex and inter-related. This information requires a closer look — both across all neighbourhoods and in relation to other local indicators — before any conclusions are made.

The reality of community-level health and well-being is more nuanced than what can be presented in a simple report card. Not all red indicators require immediate attention. Not all yellow indicators suggest a neighbourhood is at risk of falling behind.

What Urban HEART @ Toronto provides is a new resource of critical importance: a dashboard of indicators that tells us where we should look first, and what we should look at, in order to make the smartest decisions about priorities and strategies for strengthening Toronto’s neighbourhood.

For more information on using the Urban HEART @ Toronto tool, read the complete technical report at http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php
Urban HEART @ Toronto was adapted by the Centre for Research on Inner City Health (CRICH) of St. Michael’s Hospital from a World Health Organization tool for measuring health inequities in the developing world. CRICH convened 80 experts from more than 40 organizations — including community groups, academics, the private sector, and government — to develop a made-in-Toronto tool.

Urban HEART @ Toronto measures neighbourhood-level indicators of local health and well-being in five main domains: economic opportunities; social and human development; civic engagement; physical environment and local infrastructure; and, physical and mental health.

A set of 15 indicators most relevant to Toronto across these five domains was identified by experts from various sectors through a Delphi technique to assess how each of Toronto’s 140 neighbourhoods is doing. There are two types of indicators identified by the experts. **Required Indicators** best capture inequalities within the city. They will be reported every time the Urban HEART @ Toronto assessment is conducted. **Strongly Recommended** Indicators augment the information provided by required indicators. They can be selected by stakeholders based on unique goals at one point in time.

All of the indicators used come from various data sources that are reliable, readily-available, and will be consistently measured over time. Triangulation — that is, using different indicators from different data sources — minimizes the risk that a single data set with associated quality issues will unfairly classify a neighbourhood.

The original Urban HEART uses Millennium Development Goals to establish benchmarks and targets. However, in Canada and Toronto there are few established benchmarks and targets for health and social equity. The choice of benchmarks and targets is very important as they represent the standards and goals against which neighbourhoods’ progress is measured. The colour of each indicator means the following:

- **Red**  Below the benchmark
- **Yellow**  Higher than the benchmark, but below the target
- **Green**  Equal to or above the target

Benchmarks and targets are established for each indicator instead of generating a measure to be used for all indicators. A range of strategies for setting benchmarks and targets have been reviewed to identify the most appropriate ones for each indicator.

For more information on domains and indicators see page 22. For details on benchmarks and targets, see the complete Urban HEART @ Toronto technical report at [http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php](http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php)
Domain 1: Economic Opportunities

What We Measured

Urban HEART @ Toronto used three indicators to assess economic opportunities across Toronto’s neighbourhoods. We considered:

- Unemployment rate for individuals ages 15 and over
- Percentage of the population who are considered “low income” based on income tax data
- Individuals receiving some form of social assistance

Why It Matters

For any community to thrive, the people who live there need to be economically secure. That means having a job and making enough money that you’re not living in low income. Supporting the development of job opportunities and investments in human capital won’t eliminate poverty on their own, but they are necessary elements of any solution. When neighbourhoods experience high unemployment rates and elevated levels of poverty, the overall health outcomes of the community suffer too.

What We Found

- Unlike many cities where high rates of poverty are found in the urban center, in Toronto affluent neighbourhoods are mainly located in the downtown core.
- This affluent inner core area is surrounded by a “U-shaped” distribution of concentrated poverty.
- Unemployment rates are also much higher in the inner suburbs of Toronto compared to both downtown and central Toronto.
- A lack of economic opportunities — seen in terms of low income and high unemployment — is directly related to health outcomes. There is a particularly strong connection between diabetes rates and poor economic outcomes.

Domain Highlight: Unemployment Rate

Urban HEART @ Toronto looked at individuals age 15 and over who were unemployed and actively looking for work or who had been temporarily laid off. In January 2013, the city’s Economic and Development Committee approved the target of eliminating the gap between the city’s unemployment rate and the national rate by 2018.

The map on the right provides a visual picture of unemployment rates across Toronto’s neighbourhoods.
Domain 2: Social and Human Development

What We Measured
Urban HEART @ Toronto used three indicators to assess social and human development across Toronto’s neighbourhoods. We considered:

- Percentage of students who graduated from high school
- Proportion of residents who have college diplomas, trades certificates, university degrees, or other post-secondary program completion
- Levels of social and economic marginalization in neighbourhoods

What We Found
- Higher rates of high school and post-secondary school graduation are seen in the more affluent neighbourhoods of Toronto, especially those concentrated in the downtown core.
- Areas with the lowest levels of educational attainment have higher rates of residents living in poverty or relying on social assistance. Many of these are in the inner suburbs that surround the downtown core.
- Higher levels of marginalization are found in the inner suburbs. These are also highly connected with the indicators of economic opportunities domain.
- Many of the indicators of social and human development are also related to health. For example, lower levels of post-secondary education are closely linked with higher rates of diabetes.

Why It Matters
Getting a good education and going on to post-secondary school or training are key predictors of a healthy life. And when people feel connected to their community, the whole neighbourhood is better for it. But when people are marginalized by limited opportunities — and when residents experience social exclusion — there are increases in illness, poverty, and personal and family hardships.

Domain Highlight: Finishing High School
High school graduation rates are an important indicator of community well-being. Adults without a high school diploma, generally, earn less than those who graduate and often have fewer employment opportunities. Moreover, because a high school degree is a common prerequisite for entering post-secondary educational systems, leaving high school before graduating tends to limit a person’s future educational opportunities. In 2005, the Ministry of Education set a goal of 85% graduation rate by the 2010/2011 school year.

The map on the right provides a visual picture of the likelihood that a neighbourhood will achieve this goal.
Domain 3: Governance and Civic Engagement

What We Measured
Urban HEART @ Toronto used one indicator to assess the level of governance and civic engagement across Toronto’s neighbourhoods. We looked at the percentage of eligible voters in each neighbourhood who voted in the last municipal election.

Unlike in other domains where multiple indicators were examined, the municipal voting rate was the only readily available and reliable source of information available at a neighbourhood level.

Why It Matters
When individuals participate in the governance of their communities, they make their voices heard and can advocate for positive social change. While high rates of voter participation suggests that residents are engaged in their communities, low rates of voter turnout can mean residents feel disconnected to their communities, marginalized and see little benefit to civic participation. This can foster further disenfranchisement and lead to an unequal distribution of influence in a city.

What We Found
- Torontonians can be proud of their overall level of voter participation in local elections. When compared to other cities across Canada, voter turnout in Toronto was superior. Even the neighbourhoods with the lowest rates of participation in Toronto demonstrated higher levels than other municipalities across the country.
- Residents in Toronto’s downtown core had higher rates of voter participation than areas in the outer suburbs.

Domain Highlight: How Busy is Your Polling Centre?
Voting rates are an important indicator of civic engagement. Voting has been linked with the health of the democratic process. As political participation can influence public policy, the voices of those who don’t vote may not be heard.

The map on the right provides a visual picture of voter turn-out across Toronto. Areas in red represent neighbourhoods where 41.4% or fewer residents participated in the most recent municipal election. Areas that are green had turnout rates of 51.3% or higher.
Domain 4: Physical Environment and Infrastructure

What We Measured
Urban HEART @ Toronto looked at indicators related to physical and environmental infrastructure across Toronto neighbourhoods. We considered:
• Easy access to healthy, affordable food choices
• Pedestrian friendliness including sidewalks and frequent intersections
• Spaces for people to gather at low or no cost including community centres and places of worship
• Access to green space like public parks, trails and sports fields

Why It Matters
The surroundings of where we live have a strong impact on our well-being. For individuals and communities to thrive, we need to live in an environment that provides opportunities for healthy living. This means easy access to food, community and public spaces. Streets that are safe to walk on and outdoor spaces where kids can play. It also means places where residents can come together, meet their neighbours, and form strong community bonds. When these resources aren’t available, it can lead to higher levels of chronic disease, obesity, and other negative social issues.

What We Found
• When it comes to walkability, there is a sharp divide between downtown and the rest of the city. All of the neighbourhoods that are most walkable are located in the downtown core. The least walkable neighbourhoods are located in Etobicoke and Scarborough.
• There are high and mixed income neighbourhoods that do not score well when it comes to physical environment and infrastructure. It should be noted that, in neighbourhoods with high or mixed incomes, lack of infrastructure like community centres and low walkability scores will affect different people in different ways. For example, people with high incomes will have the means to drive to many destinations and can subscribe to private gyms.

Domain Highlight: How Walkable is Your Neighbourhood?
Increasingly, cities are becoming interested in promoting communities where residents can safely and quickly walk to the places they need to go. By looking at the proximity to services such as businesses, parks, schools, and other common destinations, Walk Score® assigns a numerical “walkability score” for each Toronto neighbourhood. These scores are being used to examine the links between man-made environments and common health issues such as physical activity, obesity, and diabetes.

The map on the right provides a visual picture of how walkable Toronto’s neighbourhoods are.
Domain 5: Population Health

What We Measured
Urban HEART @ Toronto uses four indicators to gain a snapshot of physical and mental health across Toronto’s neighbourhoods. We considered:
- Premature mortality rates
- Good or excellent mental health status
- Hospitalization rates for several chronic diseases (often referred to as “preventable hospitalizations”)
- Prevalence of diabetes

Why It Matters
The health and well-being of residents is one of the strongest indicators of social and economic equity within communities. Our chances of encountering diseases such as tuberculosis, or developing chronic conditions like diabetes or heart disease increase when we don’t have the resources necessary to foster well-being. These resources can include stable housing, safe streets, economic security, and healthy food. Moreover, these challenges are cyclical: poor health can, in turn, lead to lost wages, isolation, and increased difficulty taking care of ourselves and our families.

What We Found
- Across Toronto, as in most communities in the world, residents in neighbourhoods with lower incomes and higher rates of unemployment and social assistance have worse health outcomes. This was generally true across the population health indicators.
- The majority of neighbourhoods faring very poorly across population health indicators are also faring poorly across social and human development domain.

Domain Highlight: Premature mortality
Premature mortality rates represent the number of deaths among individuals under 75 years of age. This measure gives more weight to the death of younger people which are most often preventable. Researchers estimate that approximately 72% of deaths of people younger than 75 are avoidable, and among these, 65% are preventable. Thus, premature mortality rates provide a glimpse into how our city engages in disease prevention and health promotion.

The map on the right provides a visual picture of premature mortality rates across Toronto.
## Urban Heart Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood</th>
<th>N ID</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>Social Assistance</th>
<th>High School Graduation</th>
<th>Marginalization</th>
<th>Post Secondary Completion</th>
<th>Municipal Voting V1</th>
<th>Community Places for Meeting</th>
<th>Walk score</th>
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### Additional Information
- **Unemployment**
- **Low Income**
- **Social Assistance**
- **High School Graduation**
- **Marginalization**
- **Post Secondary Completion**
- **Municipal Voting V1**
- **Community Places for Meeting**
- **Walk score**
- **Healthier Food Stores**
- **Green Space**
- **Premature Mortality**
- **Mental Health**
- **Preventable Hospitalizations ACVH V1**
- **Diabetes**

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**Notes:**
- R, Y, G refer to different categories or data sets.
| Neighbourhood          | NID | Unemployment | Low Income | Social Assistance | High School Graduation | Marginalization | Post Secondary Completion | Municipal Voting V1 | Community Places for Meeting | Walk score | Healthier Food Stores | Green Space | Prematurity Mortality | Mental Health | Preventable Hospitalizations ASCH V2 | Diabetes R Y G |
|------------------------|-----|--------------|------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| **Domains**            |     |              |            |                   |                        |                |                          |                   |                             |            |                    |             |                      |               |                        |                 |                       |              |
| Economic Opportunity   | 28  | 24           | 26         | 27                | 28                     | 46             | 24                       | 28                | 22                          | 29         | 28                 | 23          | 24                   | 43           | 44                    |                 |                       |              |
| Social and Human Development | 156 | 62           | 57         | 55                | 87                     | 71             | 68.9                      | 45.7              | 35                          | 71         | 3.9                | 49.5        | 311.1               | 73.4         | 263.1                 | 8.5            |                       |              |
| **Neighbourhood Range**| 5.0-17.1 | 5.6-49.8 | 0.4-29.1 | 1.0-3.4           | 1.0-3.4               | 37-37.1        | 34.3-38.3                 | 34.3-39.9         | 32-39                        | 0.4-27.3   | 11.3               | 113.5       | 118.0-573.0          | 47.4-96.8   | 79-860.7              | 4.7-14.0       |                       |              |
| **East End-Danforth**  | 62  | 7.8          | 20.2       | 9.1               | 9.1                    | 5.3            | 2.0                       | 2.7               | 1.1                         | 8.5        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Economic Opportunity** | 28  | 6.0          | 11.7       | 5.0               | 9.1                    | 5.3            | 2.0                       | 2.7               | 1.1                         | 8.5        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Highland Creek**     | 102 | 8.6          | 16.6       | 5.1               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Forest Hill South**  | 101 | 7.0          | 8.2        | 5.2               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **High Park North**    | 88  | 7.8          | 16.5       | 4.9               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Kennedy Park**       | 124 | 11.8         | 28.4       | 11.1              | 12.5                   | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Kensington-Chinatown**| 78  | 10.1         | 39.9       | 13.6              | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Lawrence Park North**| 105 | 5.7          | 7.1        | 1.1               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Lawrence Park South**| 103 | 8.2          | 6.7        | 1.6               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Leaside-Bentinck**   | 56  | 7.6          | 5.6        | 1.4               | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Long Branch**        | 17  | 8.7          | 18.1       | 10.6              | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
| **Malvern**            | 132 | 15.0         | 23.1       | 11.3              | 9.2                    | 4.1            | 2.4                       | 4.1               | 1.3                         | 7.7        | 5.4                | 25.4        | 315.91               | 77.0         | 349.91                | 8.01           | 3                       | 3            |
## Urban Heart Matrix

### Neighbourhoods

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<td>5.0-17.1</td>
<td>5.6-49.8</td>
<td>0.4-2.91</td>
<td>Low/Ave/Hi</td>
<td>0.9-3.6</td>
<td>1.1-4</td>
<td>34-39.9</td>
<td>42-99</td>
<td>0.47-2.23</td>
<td>113</td>
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<td><strong>Population Health</strong></td>
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*Population Health: Low = 98, Ave = 16.1, Hi = 0.56; Economic Opportunity: Low = 98, Ave = 16.1, Hi = 0.56; Social and Human Development: Low = 113, Ave = 113, Hi = 113; Governance: Low = 113, Ave = 113, Hi = 113.*

*For further details on the domains and the matrix, please consult the Urban Heart@Toronto report.*
## Urban Heart Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood</th>
<th>N ID</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>Social Assistance</th>
<th>High School Graduation</th>
<th>Marginalization</th>
<th>Post Secondary Completion</th>
<th>Municipal Voting V1</th>
<th>Community Places for Meeting</th>
<th>Walk score</th>
<th>Healthier Food Stores</th>
<th>Green Space</th>
<th>Premature Mortality</th>
<th>Mental Health</th>
<th>Preventable Hospitalizations ACSCH V2</th>
<th>Diabetes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Range</td>
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<td>3.0-7.1</td>
<td>3.6-49.8</td>
<td>0.4-29.1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low/Ave/Hi</td>
<td>1.0-5.4</td>
<td>37.5-91.7</td>
<td>3.4-39.9</td>
<td>0.47-22.3</td>
<td>11.5-115.5</td>
<td>118.0-573.0</td>
<td>47.4-96.8</td>
<td>79.3-608.7</td>
<td>47.1-14.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Domains

- **Economic Opportunity**
- **Social and Human Development**
- **Governance**
- **Physical Environment & Infrastructure**
- **Population Health**

### Neighbourhoods

- **Steeles**
- **South Parkdale**
- **Old East York**
- **Oakwood-Vaughan**
- **Newtonbrook East**
- **Mount Pleasant West**
- **Mount Olive-Silverstone**
- **Mount Dennis**
- **South Steeles**
- **West Hill**
- **Tam O’Shanter-Sullivan**
- **The Beaches**
- **Thistletown-Beaumont Heights**
- **Thorncliffe Park**
- **Trinity-Bellwoods**
- **University**
- **Victoria Village**
- **Waterfront Communities-The Island**
- **West End**
- **West Humber-Clairville**
- **Westminster-Branson**
- **Weston**
- **West Don Mills**
- **West Toronto**
- **Wexford/Maryvale**
- **Willowdale East**
- **Willowdale West**
- **Willowridge-Martingrove-Richview**
- **Woburn**
- **Woodbine Corridor**
- **Woodbine-Lumsden**
- **Wychwood**
- **York-Eglinton**
- **York-South Clair**
- **York University Heights**
- **Yorkdale-Glen Park**

### Measures

- **Unemployment**
- **Low Income**
- **Social Assistance**
- **High School Graduation**
- **Marginalization**
- **Post Secondary Completion**
- **Municipal Voting V1**
- **Community Places for Meeting**
- **Walk score**
- **Healthier Food Stores**
- **Green Space**
- **Premature Mortality**
- **Mental Health**
- **Preventable Hospitalizations ACSCH V2**
- **Diabetes**

### Values

- **N**
- **ID**
- **Post**
- **22.1**
- **9.2**
- **73.5**
- **38.7**
- **29**
- **29**
- **2.15**
- **0**
- **57**
- **261.4**
- **61**
- **13.1**
- **37.5-91.7**
- **0.56**
- **7.6**
- **318.2**
- **3.48**
- **54**
- **54.1**
- **69.5**
- **373.4**
- **1.57**
- **2.7**
- **8.8**
- **60.3**
- **15.1**
- **Ave**
- **13.4**
- **80.0**
- **285.1**
- **50.9**
- **9**
- **2.6**
- **43**
- **44**
- **6.7**
- **0**
- **7**
- **2**
- **60**
- **9.4**
- **1**
- **3**
- **2**
- **6.8**
- **0**
- **9**
- **0**
- **9**
- **2.8**
- **86**
- **214.6**
- **64**
- **2.6**
- **10.4**
- **0.8**
- **1.8**
- **3.3**
- **1.6**
- **5.1**
- **0.4**
- **0.57**
- **8.4**
- **7.6**
- **214.1**
- **24.6**
- **513.6**
- **11.6**
- **5**
- **9**
- **8.8**
- **88**
- **201.3**
- **68.9**
- **3.9**
- **15.7**
- **4.3**
- **8.7**
- **6.5**
- **0.6**
- **5.1**
- **162.8**
- **11.0**
- **9.0**
- **268.3**
- **1.8**
- **0.77**
- **8.33**
- **2**
- **80.2**
- **44.2**
- **45.9**
- **7**
- **24**
- **1.4**
- **17.6**
- **70.3**
- **45.7**
- **22.7**
- **3.5**
- **3.1**
- **28**
- **14.6**
- **29.8**
- **11.6**
- **22.5**
- **2.15**
- **1.8**
- **19**

### Notes

- **N/A**
- **19**
Conclusion

Urban HEART @ Toronto paints a picture of a city where many people are doing quite well, but too many others are at risk of falling behind. It also reveals a picture of a city where people in each local neighbourhood are connected to — and depend on — the health and well-being of those around them.

Examining multiple indicators across several domains serves as a powerful reminder that assessing the success of our city involves a complex and interconnected matrix of individual factors.

While this rich source of data helps us to identify which neighbourhoods in our city need a closer look, that’s just the first step in building stronger neighbourhoods. The next step is for governments, funders, and community organizations to use this information to develop effective strategies for local renewal.

One of the key learnings from Urban HEART @ Toronto, and the relationship we can see between various indicators, is that it’s not effective to focus on a single issue. Every aspect of neighbourhood health must be considered and interpreted in relation to all other indicators. That’s why neighbourhoods across our city need a coordinated, comprehensive strategy for renewal that involves multiple aligned efforts.

The good news is that Urban HEART @ Toronto will enable this kind of collaboration among multiple partners, improving their ability to target issues and improve access to opportunities across all neighbourhoods. Ultimately, this tool will provide an evidence base that organizations can use to close the gaps between Toronto’s neighbourhoods and ensure Toronto meets its full promise: a city of thriving neighbourhoods, where every resident has the same opportunity for a healthy and successful life.
Acknowledgements, Partners

Partner Organizations
Centre for Research on Inner City Health (CRICH)/ St. Michael’s Hospital
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United Way Toronto
WoodGreen Community Services

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Nadine Segal, Toronto District School Board
Urban HEART @ Toronto measures neighbourhood-level indicators of local health and well-being in five main domains: economic opportunities; social and human development; civic engagement; physical environment and local infrastructure; and, physical and mental health.

The complete set of indicators is listed below. For more information on these indicators, see the full Urban HEART @ Toronto technical report at [http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php](http://www.torontohealthprofiles.ca/urbanheartattoronto.php)

**Economic opportunities**
- Unemployment rates (required)
- Percent of residents who are in low income (required)
- Percent of residents accessing social assistance (strongly recommended)

**Social and human development**
- High school graduation rates (required)
- Percent of persons 25-64 with post-secondary training and education (strongly recommended)
- Marginalization index that measures several indicators — like the proportion of residents who are single/divorced/widowed, and the number of people living in dwellings that need major repairs (required)

**Civic engagement**
- Municipal voting rates (required)

**Physical and mental health**
- Diabetes rates (strongly recommended)
- Premature mortality rates (required)
- Percent of residents who report very good or excellent mental health (required)
- Preventable hospitalization rates (required)

**Physical environment and infrastructure**
- Access to healthy food options (strongly recommended)
- Neighbourhood walkability score (required)
- Local parks and green spaces (required)
- Community space where residents can meet (required)
St. Michael’s
Inspired Care.
Inspiring Science.

Fully affiliated with the University of Toronto