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HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING BOARD OF YORK REGION: 2011 WORK PLAN FOR MAKING ENDS MEET IN YORK REGION

The Community and Health Services Committee recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Acting General Manager, Social Services and Lisa Gonsalves, Acting Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy regarding 'Making Ends Meet Initiative'; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated April 28, 2011, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council, as a member of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region, endorse the *2011 Work Plan* (outlined within section four of this report) in accordance with the Board's Terms of Reference.
2. All the governing bodies of the member organizations of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region be asked to endorse the *2011 Work Plan* as outlined within section four of the report.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the local municipalities and the Local Immigration Partnership, Community Partnership Council for information.

2. PURPOSE

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region ('the Board') is seeking Regional Council endorsement of its *2011 Work Plan*, as outlined within section four of this report. Regional Council approval of the work plan is a requirement of the Board's Terms of Reference. The Board's work will focus on making an impact to reduce economic vulnerability in York Region. The work plan sets out a process to develop a Community Action Plan that will advance the Board's 'priority area of focus': *Making Ends Meet in York Region* (see *Council Attachment 1*).

3. BACKGROUND

What is the Human Services Planning Board of York Region?

Regional Council approved the establishment of the Board along with a governing Terms of Reference in November 2009 (Report No. 3, Clause No. 4). The Board is a York Region led multi-sector collaborative of human service organizations/agencies/networks, community leaders and government advisor and resource members. Its mandate is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of human services in York Region through capacity building within the York Region human services sector and through collaborative advocacy. The Board is co-chaired by Regional Councillor John Taylor, Town of Newmarket and Susan LaRosa, Director of Education, York Catholic District School Board; David Cox, Director, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety, Southlake Regional Health Centre serves as Vice-Chair. A complete list of Board members can be found in *Council Attachment 2*.

The Board has had a busy and productive start-up year, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Human Services Planning Board of York Region: Chronology of Events

Chronology of Events/Milestones – April 2010 to April 2011	
April, 2010	• Regional Council appoints 24 Members to Inaugural Term (2010 to 2014) of the Board • Orientation of new Board Members • Launch of refreshed York Region Immigration Portal (www.yorkwelcome.ca)
May, 2010	• Introduction of new Board website area (www.york.ca/hspb)
June, 2010	• Full day Visioning Session where the Board developed the foundation for its Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles • Board endorsement and Regional Council approval and release of the <i>Community Collaborative Guide: Weaving Collaboration into a Tapestry of Change</i>. The creation and distribution of the guide was a way to share with the broader human services sector.

September 2010 - January 2011	• Board endorsement and Regional Council approval and release of the <i>Economic Analysis of Human Service Costs to 2031: Recommendations for Enhancing Human Services Planning in The Regional Municipality of York</i> • Board identifies priority area of focus: <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> • Board begins work on advancing <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> initiative using a Results Based Accountability model for community change
February – April 2011	• Target population, community results and indicator areas defined for <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> • Board endorses <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> Discussion Paper, 2011 Work Plan

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The process of identifying the Board's area of focus started with a broader examination of York Region through a social determinants of health framework

The Board began the process of identifying a priority area of focus by choosing a Social Determinants of Health framework. Social Determinants of Health are the economic and social conditions that shape the health of individuals and communities. The customized list of social determinants included:

- Income
- Housing
- Education
- Early childhood development
- Employment and training
- Access to health
- Social and community services/supports
- Food security
- Inclusiveness and integration

Under each social determinant area the Board looked at the current state of the environment, trends/future outlooks, assets, gaps, current/proposed programs/policies, and benefits of addressing the gaps.

The issue of economic vulnerability resonated with the Human Services Planning Board of York Region

All Board members came to the table with the intent of contributing to making a difference in York Region. The Board believes that they and the broader community can make a difference in finding solutions to address economic vulnerability in York Region. This area relates to families and individuals in York Region, many working and educated, that are continuously struggling to make ends meet. Some of the trends that we are seeing in this area include:

- **Growing low and moderate income population** – York Region experienced a 55 per cent increase in the low income population between 2001 and 2006 which was 2.5 times the percentage increase in the overall population. According to the 2006 Census, there were 112,165 people living in low income households. During the same time period children (under 18 years of age) living in low income households increased by 62 per cent, nearly four times the percentage increase of the total population of children in York Region.
- **Low income statistics capture only a segment of our population having trouble making ends meet** – While the 2009 Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-off (Before Tax) (LICO-BT) for a family of four in York Region's larger municipalities was \$35,573, research tells us that it takes more than this to make ends meet in York Region. According to a 2008 report prepared by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, "A Living Wage for Toronto", a family of four living in the Toronto area would need a gross annual household income of approximately \$65,000 to have a decent standard of living. This equates to two parents working full-time making \$16.60 per hour. The 2006 Census also revealed that close to 82,000 families and 28,700 individuals in York Region had annual incomes of \$70,000 or less, roughly equivalent to a living wage.
- **Low income population is concentrated in the south** – 83 per cent of York Region's low income population in 2006 lived in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.
- **Employment and education no longer guarantee escape from economic vulnerability** – According to the 2006 Census, 26 per cent of the low income families in York Region had two income earners and 56 per cent of the low income population (25-64 years of age) in 2005 had post secondary qualifications. Statistics show that for all immigrants, recent immigrants are the most vulnerable – with a 2005 low income rate of 34 per cent which is more than three and a half times higher than for established immigrants (10 per cent for those arriving prior to 1991). A 2009 Senate report on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness identified the increase in precarious types of employment (low wages, part time, little or no benefits) as a

significant factor in the failure of employment to serve as a safeguard against economic vulnerability.

- **Recent economic downturn exacerbating issue** – Evidence of the negative impacts of the recent economic downturn is the 106 per cent increase in Employment Insurance claims in York Region between December 2008 and 2009.
- **High cost of housing** – There was nearly a 50 per cent increase between 2001 and 2006 in the number of tenants and owners in York Region spending 30 percent or more (common affordability threshold) of their income on housing. Renters are being particularly hard hit with York Region having the third highest average rent (two bedroom apartment) in the Greater Toronto Area in 2009, driven in part by an extremely low vacancy rate and very limited new rental stock. Home ownership may also be moving out of reach for many given that the average resale price for all residential dwelling types in York Region in 2010 was \$493,451 (Toronto Real Estate Board - “Market Watch - December, 2010”).
- **Growing pressures on human service supports:** Many human service supports are seeing a considerable increase in demand. For example, 40 per cent more people turned to United Way’s 39 member agencies in 2009 than over the previous year. The subsidized daycare waitlist increased 23 per cent from January to December 2010 to 4,902 children and the Social Housing Waitlist added another 941 applicants between December 2008 and December 2010 and now represents 7,600 households.

Making Ends Meet in York Region for low to moderate income families and individuals to be the Board’s focus

The Board has agreed to focus its efforts on low to moderate income families and individuals. We know that even moderate income families (up to \$70,000 per annum) struggle to ensure a modest standard of living is achieved. This segment of our population is critical to York Region’s future economy, stability and community health. Providing supports to this group will serve as a preventative measure to help mitigate hardship and reduce the susceptibility of falling into a cycle of poverty.

The need for human service supports and housing options vary depending on one’s stage of life. Whether you are young or old will impact your needs and your ability to make ends meet. For example, young families with children, with both parents working in low wage employment, will need housing options that they can afford, as well as access to childcare and the ability to provide the necessities of life in order to thrive. Over the life cycle needs change, working families may require access to childcare at one point and access to elder care for their aging parents at another point.

As we grow older our income and health can change for the better or worse with impacts on our personal, economic and medical needs. Older residents require housing options

they can afford along with access to affordable health care, transportation, and other basic services in order to age at home in the community.

Focussing on supporting low to moderate income families and individuals struggling to make ends meet in York Region allows the Board to create opportunities to move some out of low income, and keeps others living on moderate incomes from falling into further economic hardship. A healthy, educated, employable workforce is critical to the economic future of York Region. By creating opportunities to help make ends meet, more families and individuals will be ready to contribute to York Region's future prosperity and able to thrive.

***Making Ends Meet in York Region* aligns with the Board's strategic framework**

The Board's Strategic Framework and Terms of Reference clearly set out its overall purpose and direction along with criteria for selecting work. The *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative aligns well with these directives as it:

- Will advance the Board's Vision, Mission and Mandate.
- Is broad-based, cross-sectoral in nature, an area that is of concern to all organizations and an area the Board can reasonably influence through collective action and advocacy.
- Has full-membership support.
- Is supported by empirical data and evidence.
- Is an area where a proactive preventive strategy has excellent potential to achieve results given that a significant portion of the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* population are educated and/or have jobs and therefore are in a good position to improve their circumstances.

Further, the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative was informed by and builds upon the proposed "Profile of York Region's Low income Population: 2006 Census", developed collaboratively by the York Region Social Data Consortium, also being presented at the May 11, 2011 Community and Health Services Committee meeting. The *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative will serve to advance and stimulate action on many of the 'Possible Solutions' listed in the Low Income Profile for addressing the needs of the economically vulnerable population in York Region

***Scoping Making Ends Meet in York Region* was a necessary first step to facilitating clarity in focus**

The Board is using a Results-Based Accountability model to help scope and define tangible results for *Making Ends Meet in York Region*. This model has been used successfully in many jurisdictions throughout North America to advance community change and is a best practice model for turning results into measurable action. Using the Results-Based Accountability model the Board has:

- Clearly defined the target population for the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative.
- Set two community results - the desired conditions of well-being envisioned for the target population.
- Identified the indicators that will be used to measure progress in advancing the community results.
- Looked at the past trend for each indicator and the likely forecast if nothing is done and understanding the root causes and forces at play.
- Identified a broad set of partners that have a role to play in contributing to advancing the community results.

Table 2 below sets out the Target Population, Community Results and Indicator Areas.

Table 2
Making Ends Meet in York Region:
Target Population, Community Results and Indicator Areas

Target Population	Low to moderate income families and individuals in York Region who are struggling to make ends meet. (A household income range of \$0-\$70,000 is being used to define low to moderate income for the purposes of this initiative. The upper range of \$70,000 is based on a family of four and therefore would scale up or down for larger or smaller households.)	
Community Results	<i>Affordable Housing: “A good mixture of safe and affordable housing options and programs throughout York Region for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet.”</i>	<i>Economic Self-Sufficiency: “A strong combination of employment and human service supports for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet.”</i>
Indicator Areas	1. Housing Options/Mix 2. Housing Affordability 3. Housing Programs and Waitlists 4. Housing Policy Decisions	1. Workforce Development 2. Income Levels & Financial Literacy 3. Food Security 4. Child and Elder Care

The Board's 2011 Work Plan

The Making Ends Meet in York Region discussion paper represents the start of the Board's journey together. It is a tangible demonstration of their commitment as a group of leaders to work beyond their own boundaries and arrive at creative and collaborative approaches.

The Board will commit to tangible changes in their own organizations and engage community partners to do the same. It is understood that no one organization or funder can achieve the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* community results on their own.

The goal is for social change to happen at multiple levels to have transformational effects. The Board will also engage broader community in solutions that will create the right conditions for innovative actions and policy change.

Board members will engage differently with their different constituencies. Each member has various strengths and areas of influence within different layers of the York Region community. All Board members including the Region will engage closely with their own organizations. Most will also engage strategic allies (e.g. other levels of government, community organizations) and still others the broader public. Together the Board will reach the full spectrum of community.

While specific actions will be identified in the next phase of the work plan, it is anticipated that activities will include: human service organizations reviewing their programs and services to see where they can align with a community result(s); education and awareness; bringing partners together to collectively advocate for systemic change in policy and funding and build capacity within the human services sector.

The proposed *2011 Work Plan* (see Table 3) starts with the Board's Member Organizations understanding of where they can have an impact on the community results and then engages the broader community to develop measurable actions. The Board will provide regular progress reports to Regional Council as key milestones within the work plan are achieved.

Table 3
Human Services Planning Board of York Region
2011 Work Plan
(May 2011 to January 2012)

Activity	Timeline
<i>Making Ends Meet in York Region Communication Tool Kit</i>	May 2011
Finalize a communication tool kit for Board Members to engage their governing bodies and organizations	
<i>Public release of Making Ends Meet in York Region</i>	May 2011
Public release of the <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> discussion paper including distribution to potential partners and stakeholders and the broader public through the York Region website	

Activity	Timeline
Endorsement by Member Organizations Member Organizations of the Board endorse the <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> initiative and develop individual action plans that will identify contributions to advance the community results	May to October 2011
Broader Stakeholder Engagement Engage other partners in discussions to build on the action plans and to advance the community results	October to November 2011
Build Community Action Plan - Build a Community Action Plan for <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> that includes collaborative advocacy and system wide capacity building based on Board Member Organization and stakeholder commitments and actions - Seek Council endorsement of Action Plan	December 2011 to January 2012
Mobilize Action - Share the Community Action Plan with the broader community and seek further contributions and commitments to advancing <i>Making Ends Meet in York Region</i> community results - Board begins implementation of Action Plan	January 2012 - onward

***Making Ends Meet in York Region* aligns well with Regional and Provincial human service directions**

The Board's direction is consistent with the emerging and pressing human services issues identified through the Community and Health Services' (C&HS) Multi-Year Plan and its goals. Through the C&HS Multi-Year Plan, the department can move forward through its own programs and in collaboration with the Board and others to act strategically regarding the needs of low and moderate income residents.

Making Ends Meet in York Region also aligns well with other Provincial and Regional policy initiatives such as the York Region Sustainability Strategy, Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy, Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy and Vision 2026.

The community results identified by the Board also support the Local Immigration Partnership initiative and the work of York Region's Community Partnership Council to develop an Immigration Settlement Strategy. The trends show that immigrants are over represented in the low income population and that many are educated and

underemployed. We also know that 35 per cent of newcomers face housing affordability issues. Actions taken by the Board and the community to advance *Making Ends Meet in York Region* will also contribute to the Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications at this time. Support to the Board is provided within the Community and Health Services Department's existing operating budget; this represents 0.16% (\$.651 million) of the Department's gross total operating budget.

Where additional resources may be required, Section 21 of the Board's Terms of Reference directs that: "The Board shall pursue additional resources and financial support from a variety of appropriate sources and through various appropriate methods in order to realize the vision and work plan."

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Striving to create healthy sustainable communities that are inclusive represents common ground for local municipalities, York Region and the Board. In taking a collaborative approach to addressing and contributing to the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* this Region will be in a stronger position to advance community results.

7. CONCLUSION

In accordance with the Board's Terms of Reference, the Board is seeking Regional Council endorsement of its *2011 Work Plan*, with the priority area of focus being *Making Ends Meet in York Region*. It is further being recommended that all Member Organizations of the Board, including York Region, be requested to both endorse the *2011 Work Plan* and develop action plans to deliver results.

This first step of engagement involves the Board members committing to tangible actions and creating a platform in order to show the community how they can make change, how they can contribute and how they can get involved. The better the Board is able to do this the more easily the conditions for change can be created throughout the region and innovation can occur.

The Board sees the trend of growing economic vulnerability as a threat to the long-term health of York Region's population and communities. In partnership with the broader community, the Board plans to take action to curb this trend. Leveraging the many strengths of York Region, the Board believes that the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative will serve to advance a legacy of healthy, complete and inclusive communities.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Acting General Manager, Social Services at Extension 2150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The two attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report - attachment 1 is bound and enclosed separately.)

Making Ends Meet in York Region

Growing number of
York Region residents subject
to economic vulnerability

High **housing costs** are
a major contributor
to growing economic
vulnerability

Employment *does not*
guarantee an escape from
economic vulnerability

Personal debt *climbing*
to precarious highs

York Region is in a position
of strength to **lead social**
innovation and build
a legacy of healthy
inclusive communities

What does it take to
"Make Ends Meet"
in York Region?

DRAFT

HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING BOARD OF YORK REGION (HSPB-YR)

Mandate

To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of human services in York Region through capacity building in the human services sector and collaborative advocacy.

Vision

A healthy and vibrant community enhanced through inclusive, collaborative and innovative human services.

Mission

To develop and implement system solutions which enhance community health and well being.

Seven Guiding Principles

Accountability and Transparency
Collaboration
Communication
Community Engagement
Creating a Healthy Community
Mindset of Sharing
Respect and Diversity

A Message from the Human Services

A significant and growing number of families and individuals in York Region are struggling to make ends meet. While the reasons are varied and complex, the common element is the growing gap between household income and the high cost of living in York Region.

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region (HSPB-YR) sees the trend of growing economic vulnerability as a threat to the long-term sustainability of the health and well-being of York Region's population and communities. The Board has made this area of challenge and opportunity its priority area of focus.

The backbone of a healthy community is a healthy population. A healthy population includes all residents being offered the opportunity to participate in society and live a good quality of life. A community's health can be jeopardized when a growing number of its residents are exposed to economic vulnerability: a situation in which families and individuals are struggling to stay housed and fed with no time, energy or resources to participate in society.

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region in partnership with the broader community plans to take action to curb this trend or 'turn the curve'. York Region is in an enviable position of starting from a position of strength. We have a strong, progressive and innovative human services system along with exceptional leadership across many sectors. In addition, many of our residents currently struggling to make ends meet have strong personal assets including post secondary education and qualifications. At the intersection of these strengths is an opportunity to help these residents and families enjoy a better quality of life while building stronger communities.

Planning Board of York Region

The HSPB-YR's work will focus on making an impact to reduce economic vulnerability in York Region. A key building block for the work is recognizing that success will depend on the collaborative efforts and contributions of the entire human services sector and broader community.

**We are pleased to share this discussion paper
and look forward to working with you
to make a difference.**

"This collaboration of leaders represents a proactive approach to responding to the unique and changing needs of our current and future residents. The board will also be an influential and united voice for meeting York Region's human services needs."
York Region Chairman and CEO
Bill Fisch

Member Organizations

Regional Government Sector:

Bill Fisch, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO),
The Regional Municipality of York

John Taylor, Regional Councillor, Town of Newmarket
and Co-Chair of the Human Services Planning Board
of York Region

Adelina Urbanski, Commissioner of Community and
Health Services, The Regional Municipality of York

Education Sector:

Susan LaRosa, Director of Education, York Catholic
District School Board (YCDSB) and Co-Chair of the
Human Services Planning Board of York Region

Ken Thurston, Director of Education, York Region
District School Board (YRDSB)

Hospital-based Healthcare Sector:

David Cox, Director, Human Resources and
Occupational Health and Safety, Southlake Regional
Health Centre and Vice Chair of the Human Services
Planning Board of York Region. Mr. Cox represents all
three York Region hospitals.

Community-based Healthcare Sector:

Colleen Zakoor, CEO, Canadian Mental Health
Association (CMHA) York Region

Isabel Araya, Executive Director, Vaughan Community
Health Centre (VCHC)

Non-Profit Community Investment Sector:

Daniele Zanotti, CEO, United Way of York Region

Community Safety Sector:

Chief Eric Jolliffe, York Regional Police

Children, Youth and Family Services Sector:

Sylvia Pivko, Executive Director, Blue Hills Child and
Family Centre and Co-Chair of the York Region Forum
for Children, Youth and their Families

Seniors/Healthy Aging Sector:

Wyn Chivers, Chief Executive Officer,
CHATS Community & Home Assistance to Seniors

Training-Education / Labour Market /

Business Community Sector:

Tina DiSimone, Dean, Faculty of Applied Arts and Health
Sciences, Principal of King Campus, Seneca College

Deborah Bonk Greenwood, President and CEO,
Vaughan Chamber of Commerce

Newcomer/Immigrant Support Services Sector:

Elizabeth McIsaac, Executive Director, Toronto Region
Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)

Patricia Cousins, Chief Executive Officer, Social
Enterprise for Canada (SEC). Ms. Cousins represents the
Welcome Centre Immigrant Services and its five lead
agencies.

Community and Social Support-Based Services Sector:

Kirsten Eastwood, Executive Director, Women's Centre
of York Region

Community Leader Members

Housing and Community Planning Sector:

Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services,
Town of Markham

Community Development Sector:

Bill Hogarth, Former Co-Chair, Human Services
Planning Coalition (HSPC)

Homelessness Sector:

Stephen Gaetz, Associate Dean, Research and Field
Development, Faculty of Education, York University

Faith and Homelessness Sector:

Rehana Sumar, Executive Director (Acting), Mosaic
Interfaith Out of the Cold (MIOTC)

Government Advisor and Resource Members

Sandy McMillan, Service Delivery Manager, Ministry
of Training, Colleges and Universities

Victoria van Hemert, Senior Director, Central Local
Health Integration Network

Catherine Campbell, Regional Advisor, Ministry
of Culture, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and
Immigration, Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion
(Sport and Recreation Branch)



For more information please contact:

The Regional Municipality of York
Community and Health Services Department
Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch
17250 Yonge St, 2nd Floor
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Attention: Program Manager, Human Services Collaboration
Phone: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 2103
Email: hspb@york.ca
Website: www.york.ca/hspb

Note:

This material has been prepared for specific use by the Human Services Planning Board of York Region and is shared as a discussion paper.

Organizations wishing to use any portion of the Making Ends Meet in York Region document are requested to:

Contact the Office of the Commissioner, York Region Community & Health Services Department, regarding the purpose for which this material will be used.

Use the following citation when referencing this document:

Making Ends Meet in York Region Discussion Paper – 2011, Human Services Planning Board of York Region, Newmarket, Ontario.

Please acknowledge that the Human Services Planning Board of York Region is providing a copy of its material for reference purposes only.

Introduction

The following story is based on the growing number of families and individuals facing an increasing gap between their income and the high cost of living in York Region. We have used 2006 Census data to develop the Making Ends Meet in York Region Discussion Paper which is based on information from 2005. The 2006 Census is the most recent detailed data on the social and economic characteristics of low to moderate income and provides consistent information to track trends. The absence of timely income data makes it difficult to assess the full impact of Canada's most recent economic recession, but it is reasonable to expect that the economic situation has impacted economic vulnerability in York Region. The Human Services Planning Board of York Region has made this area of challenge and opportunity its priority area of focus. This area of focus emerged from a broader examination of York Region through a social determinants of health framework: the economic and social conditions that shape the health of individuals and communities.

The customized list of social determinants used to develop this story include:

- Income;
- Housing;
- Education and Early Childhood Development;
- Employment and Training;
- Access to Health, Social and Community Services/Supports;
- Food Security; and,
- Inclusiveness and Integration.

A 2008 report by the Ontario Association of Foodbanks on the cost of poverty indicates that the Federal and Ontario governments are losing at least \$10.4 billion to \$13.1 billion a year due to poverty, a loss equal to between 10.8 to 16.6 per cent of the provincial budget.²

"A survey conducted by United Way of York Region last year [2009] found 40 per cent more people turned to United Way's 39 member agencies to access 100 programs than the previous year. 'These weren't repeats, but net new people,' said [Daniele] Zanotti [CEO, United Way of York Region]'. (The Toronto Star online, September 12, 2010)³

What does it take to 'Make Ends Meet' in York Region?

The financial figures in the table are from a 2008 report, "A Living Wage for Toronto"⁴, developed by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives to show what it takes for a family of four to live a "decent, but hardly generous standard of living"⁵ in the Toronto area.

Key assumptions:

- Two-parent household with two children
- One child is age four, and in child care; the other is age 12 and is not
- Both parents work full-time (37.5 hours/week x \$16.60/hr)

Points to Consider:

- The living wage analysis, by the authors' own admission is "quite conservative"⁶ in nature.
- Much of the expenditure data is sourced "from a Market Basket Measure that was designed to support a measure of poverty rather than as a measure of income required to support social, cultural, political and economic inclusion."⁷ The authors go on to conclude that "if anything, wages need to be even higher than \$16.60 an hour . . . to attain a desired, decent standard of living."⁸
- It is also pertinent to consider that while the living wage analysis is based

A 2008 Living Wage Calculation for the Toronto Area (Family of 4) Summary of Expenses and Income

Expenses	Annual	Monthly*
Food	\$6,557	\$546.42
Clothing and Footwear	\$2,504	\$208.67
Shelter		
Rent & utilities	\$14,751	\$1,229.25
Telephone	\$656	\$54.67
Insurance	\$213	\$17.75
Internet	\$447	\$37.25
Cable TV	\$840	\$70.00
Transportation		
Vehicle	\$6,573	\$547.75
Transit	\$1,248	\$104.00
Other		
Family vacation 1/yr. 2 weeks	\$2,000	\$166.67
Monthly family dinner & movie	\$1,800	\$150.00
Household & furniture	\$1,063	\$88.58
Personal care	\$618	\$51.50
Recreation	\$1,475	\$122.92
Communication not telephone	\$169	\$14.08
Reading and entertainment supplies	\$517	\$43.08
Other services	\$1,120	\$93.33
Education (adults)	\$1,000	\$83.33
Child care	\$9,140	\$761.67
Non OHIP medical	\$2,461	\$205.08
Contingency amount	\$2,206	\$183.83
TOTAL COST OF LIVING (rounded to the nearest 100)	\$57,400	\$4,783
Income		
Household employment income	\$64,783	
PLUS Universal Child Care Benefit	\$1,200	
Household Income	\$65,983	
MINUS Tax after credits	\$6,092	
Income after tax	\$59,891	
MINUS CPP and EI Contributions	\$3,981	
PLUS Child Tax Benefit	\$1,490	
Income after tax and transfers	\$57,400	
Living wage (\$16.60/hr x 2 people working fulltime – 37.5 hrs/wk)	\$16.60/hr X 2	

*Column of monthly values was added for this publication. Monthly values equal the annual value divided by 12.

on a family of four renting an apartment, affordable rental options are limited in York Region due to limited supply and extremely low vacancy rates (1.8 per cent in October 2010 – CMHC Fall 2010 GTA Rental Market Report)⁹. As a result, many families are required to purchase homes if they wish to live in York Region. This is reflected in our high ownership rate of 88 per cent as per the 2006 Census.

- Based on the premise of owning a home in York Region, in all probability it would take an annual household income of more than \$65,000 for a family of four when considering the following:
 - The average resale price for a townhouse in central Richmond Hill in October 2010 was \$428,190.¹⁰ This translates to a monthly mortgage payment of \$1,548* – that would reasonably climb to over **\$2,000/month** when factoring in property taxes, utilities, etc. This is higher than the \$1,229/month rental and utilities amount used in the living wage analysis.
 - The average resale price for all residential dwelling types in York Region in 2010 was \$493,451, 14.4 per cent higher than in the GTA at \$431,463.¹¹
- The bottom line is that the living wage analysis in all likelihood understates the household income that a family of four living in York Region would need to live a decent standard of living.
- How important is a living wage? As suggested by the authors of the living wage analysis, “The difference between meeting that target and falling far below it is the difference between participation and marginalization. It is the difference between survival and citizenship.”¹²
- Healthy communities are built by healthy populations that are fully engaged and participating in society. Healthy communities can never truly be realized or sustained when populations, or segments thereof, are continually struggling to stay housed and fed with no time, energy or resources to participate in society.

The Cost of Eating Well in York Region - 2010

This table sets out York Region’s specific weekly grocery costs based on the Ontario Nutritious Food Basket which is “a food costing tool that is used to measure the cost of healthy eating based on current nutrition recommendations.”

	\$/week
Family of 4 - (Man, Woman, 31-50 yrs, boy 14 yrs, girl 8 yrs)	\$169.40
Family of 6 - (Man, Woman, 31-50 yrs, 3 boys 17, 12, 10 yrs, girl 15 yrs)	\$231.59
Lone Parent Family of 3 - (Mother 31 yrs + 14 yr old boy + 8 yr old girl)	\$128.32
Lone Parent Family of 2 - (Father 50 yrs + 14 yr old boy)	\$111.25
Single male (31-50 yrs)	\$56.63
Single female (75 yrs)	\$41.89
Source: The Regional Municipality of York: Community and Health Services Department. The Cost of Eating Well in York Region – 2010	

* Based on a 5% down payment, a 5 year closed variable interest rate of 2.85% as posted on TDCanadaTrust.com on November 17, 2010, a bi-weekly payment of 773.90, and a 30 year amortization period.

Growing number of York Region residents subject to economic vulnerability

While York Region had the fifth highest median family income in Canada in 2006¹³, one in eight of its residents lived in low income households: a total of 112,165 people.¹⁴ Between 2001 and 2006, York Region experienced a 55 per cent increase in the low income population¹⁵ (two and a half times the percentage increase in the total population) at the very same time that the economy experienced strong growth. While the total number of children increased by 16 per cent between 2001 and 2006, the number of children in low income households increased by 62 per cent to 32,477.¹⁶

A geographical analysis reveals that in 2006 over 80 per cent of the low income population lived in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan. In fact, the low income rates in Markham (16.1 per cent) and Richmond Hill (15.8 per cent) are higher than the provincial and national averages of 14.7 per cent and 15.3 per cent respectively.¹⁷

The Facts:¹⁸

- In 2006, one in eight of York Region residents lived in low income households (112,165 people)
- In 2006, one in seven children (<18 years) lived in low income households (32,477) (jumps to one in five in Markham)
- In 2006, 26 per cent of total economic families*** with low income had two earners
- In 2006, the Low Income Rate for recent immigrants in Markham and Richmond Hill was 37 per cent while in Vaughan it was 29 per cent

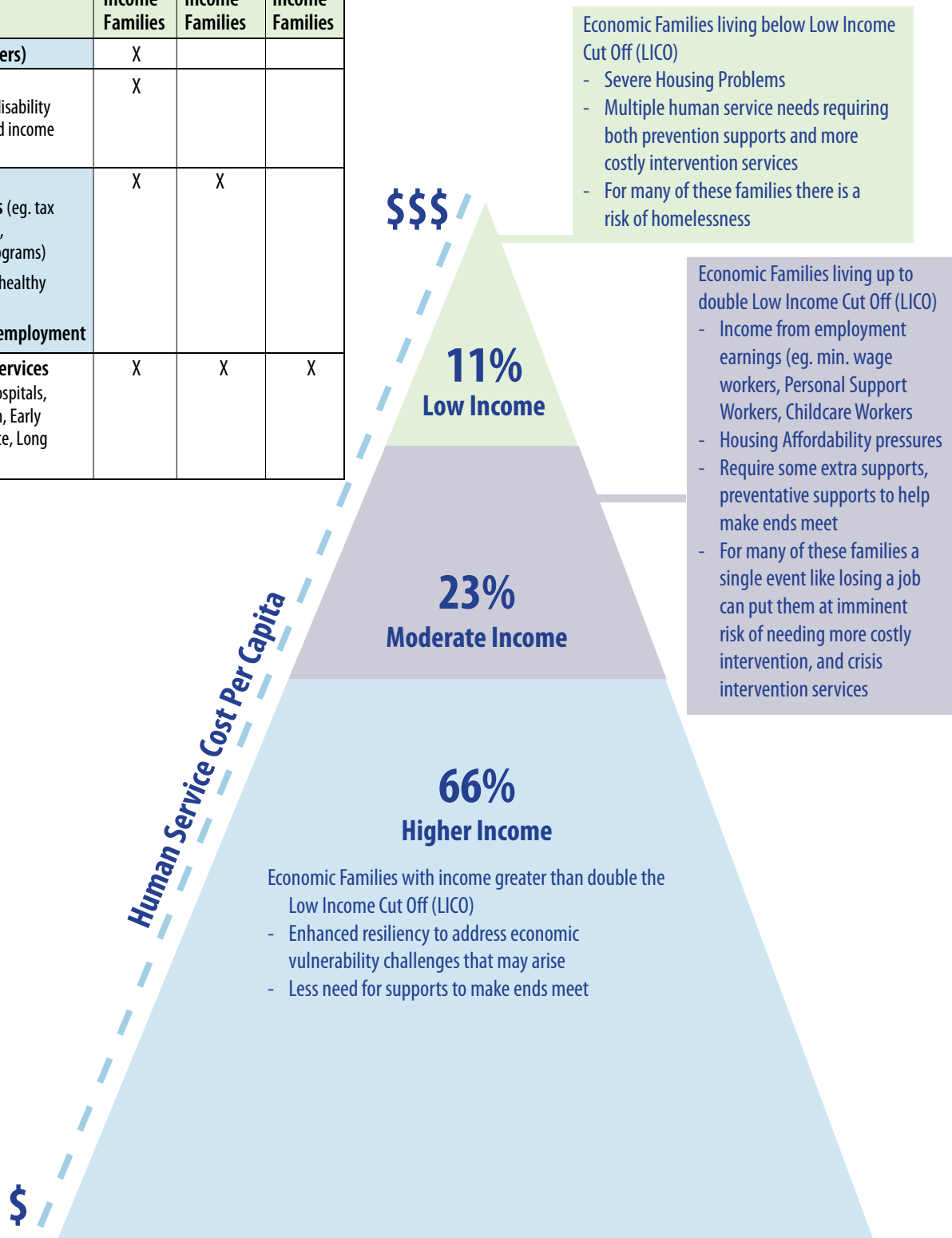
In an August 2010 York Region.com article, the Chair of the Newmarket Food Pantry, in discussing the significant increase in the number of new families using its services (many affected by layoffs and the expiration of employment benefits) stated that “these are people who have a house and have a car, but have no money to buy food. And you can’t look for a job if you’re going hungry.”¹⁹

*** “Economic Family” refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Foster children are included.

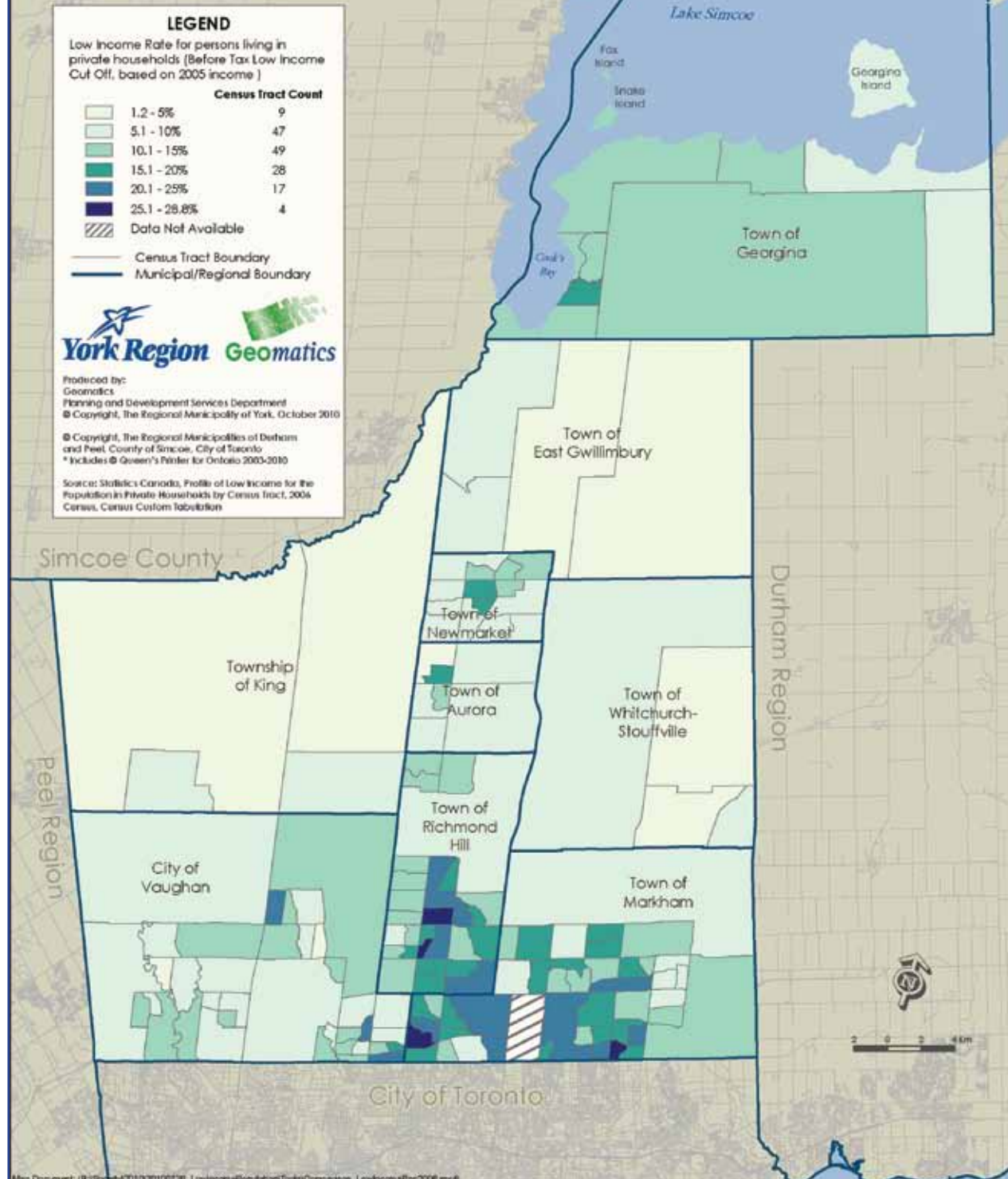
Economic Vulnerability in York Region - 2006

Economic Vulnerability and Human Service Support Type

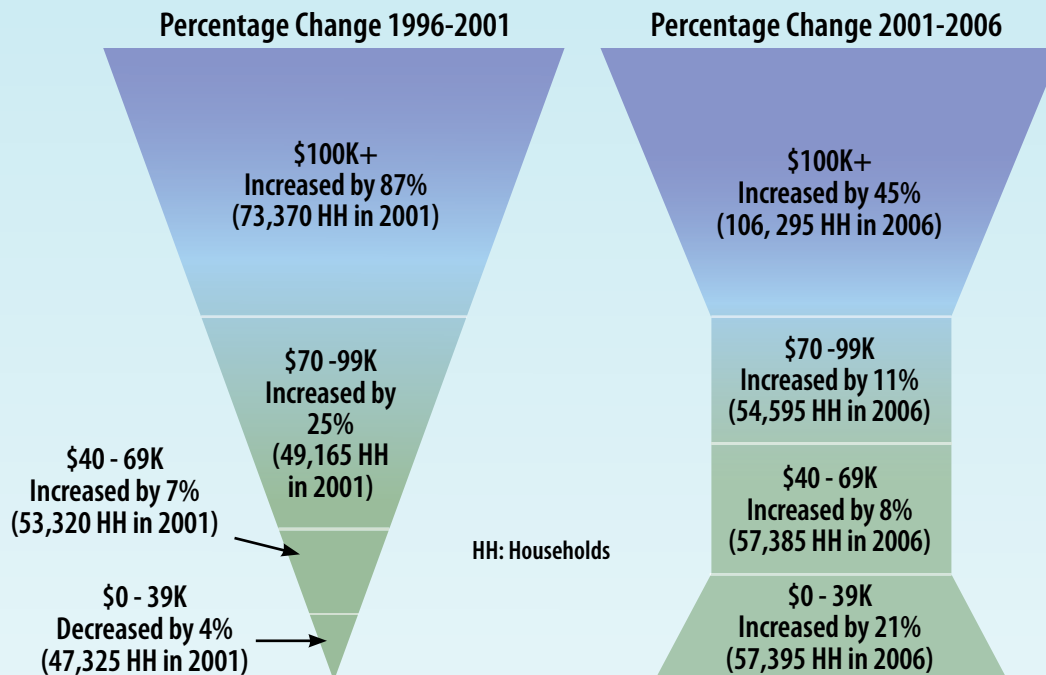
Human Service Support Type	Low Income Families	Moderate Income Families	Higher Income Families
Crisis Intervention (shelters)	X		
Intervention Supports (eg. Ontario Works, Ontario disability support program, guaranteed income supplement, food banks)	X		
Prevention Supports Income Subsidy Supports (eg. tax subsidies, childcare subsidies, homelessness prevention programs) Education Programs (eg. healthy foods, financial literacy) Supports for integration, employment	X	X	
Basic Universal Human Services Supports (eg. Education, Hospitals, Public Health, Transportation, Early Childhood Intervention, Police, Long Term Care)	X	X	X



Geographic Distribution of York Region's Low Income Population, 2006 Census



Income Groups Beginning to Polarize in York Region Patterns of Growth for Household Incomes



Observations:

- Growth in all income groups between 2001 and 2006
- Higher income earners and lower income earners growing at a faster rate than middle income groups
- Beginning to see imbalance and polarization between high and low income earners
- In 2006, there were nearly 115,000 households (approx. 42 per cent of all households) with gross household incomes of less than \$70,000

Factors Contributing to Income Polarization:

- Economic Conditions
- Housing Type and Affordability
- Lack of Employment Supports
- Occupation
- Education Levels
- Number of Income Earners/Household
- Lack of Human Service Funding

Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department using data from Statistics Canada 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation

Employment does not guarantee an escape from economic vulnerability

The percentage of low income residents aged 25 to 64 that were working full-time increased from 23 per cent in 2001 to 28 per cent in 2006.²⁰ In 2006, nearly two-thirds of the low income population aged 25 to 64 had some employment earnings.²¹

Also important to note is that 26 per cent of total economic families with low income had two earners.²²

In *From The Margins: A Call To Action On Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*, a 2009 Senate Report, indicates that “much of the evidence on the failure of employment to provide the anticipated route out of poverty focussed on the increase in precarious employment; this is defined as – ‘the shift in labour markets from full-time and more or less permanent jobs to those with at least some of the following characteristics: temporary, part-time, irregular hours, low wages, and few if any benefits.’”²³

According to a 2009 York Region Employment and Industry Report, while there has been sustained strength in full-time employment (approximately 75 per cent of jobs) there has also been strong growth in part-time employment over the past decade increasing from 16.5 per cent in 1998 to 20.2 per cent in 2009. The report attributes this increase, in part, to population growth which has generated an increased demand for service producing industries (e.g. retail trade).²⁴ We also know that segments of the labour force that worked in manufacturing and recently lost their jobs will need to acquire new skills to reach previous wage levels given that many of these old jobs will not return.

Who Can Make Ends Meet in York Region?

Living Wage (Family of 4 living in Toronto area – 2 parents – each working full time – 37.5 hrs/wk)	\$64,783 (\$16.60/hr x 2 earners)
Living Wage (Single Parent living in Toronto area working full time with one child in subsidized daycare)	\$31,435 (\$16.25/hr)
<i>Living Wage without subsidized daycare</i>	\$42,900+ (\$22+/hr)
Sample Wages in the GTA	
Single Person making minimum wage (\$10.25/hr x 37.5 hrs/wk x 52 weeks)	\$19,988
Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations (includes Personal Support Workers) – Avg. wage is \$15.15/hr	\$29,543 (37.5hrs/wk) \$23,634 (30hrs/wk)
Early Childhood Educators and Assistants – Avg. wage \$15.70/hr x 37.5 hrs/wk x 52 wks	\$30,615
Janitors, Caretakers and Building Superintendents – Avg. wage \$15.85 hr x 37.5 hrs x 52 wks	\$30,908
Nurse Aides, Orderlies and Patient Service Associates – Avg. wage \$17.40/hr x 37.5 hrs/wk x 52 wks	\$33,930
Activationist – \$24.50/hr x 59 hrs bi-weekly (Sourced from York Region Job Board)	\$37,583
Licensed Practical Nurses –Avg. \$23.40/hr x 37.5 hrs/wk x 52 wks	\$45,630

*Source: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Labour Market Information: Wages and Salaries for the Toronto Region. Accessed December 16, 2010, <http://www.labourmarketinformation.ca>

High housing costs: a major contributor to growing economic vulnerability, particularly for those residents in lower income jobs

York Region's rapid growth, which has been primarily accommodated through low density suburban development, has fuelled significant increases in housing values (highest average resale in the GTA in 2009).²⁵ While many York Region residents have enjoyed the appreciation in value of their homes, for many others it has created undue financial stress and hardship. Large numbers of York Region households pay 30 per cent or more of their income on housing costs; spending more than this can make it difficult to pay for food, clothing, education and transportation. In 2006, over 65,000 owned residences and 15,400 tenant-occupied residences paid more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. Compounding the issue is the severe shortage of rental units reflected by a persistently low vacancy rate and little new construction of rental stock. According to a 2004 Housing and Employment study²⁶, we also know that part of our workforce cannot afford to live here and therefore commute to the Region from other areas.

Myth Buster: A common perception regarding housing affordability in York Region is that residents are choosing to assume high housing costs relative to their incomes to live in a certain type of home or neighbourhood. The reality is that approximately 76 per cent of the total households in York Region that paid 30 per cent or more (above affordability threshold) of their income on shelter had incomes of less than \$61,000*.²⁷ This suggests that this is not a case of residents freely over-consuming housing but rather a case of low to moderate income households being forced into housing they cannot afford.

- Median monthly payment for an owner occupied dwelling in York Region in 2006 was \$1,463 – 25 per cent higher than the City of Toronto (\$1,175), 40 per cent higher than Ontario (\$1,046) and 74 per cent higher than Canada (\$839)²⁸
- A severe shortage of rental units has resulted in York Region having among the highest average rents in the GTA. The average rent for a two bedroom in 2009 was \$1,044 – only marginally lower than Toronto and Peel.²⁹
- Nearly 48 per cent of tenants spent more than 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs in 2006 (the highest in the GTA)³⁰

Based on the provincial definition of 'affordable housing' (does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households), for a unit to be considered affordable in Markham it would need to cost less than \$384,000.³¹ Given the high cost of housing in Markham, there is a limited amount of new housing stock under this price point. New unit ownership options would be primarily limited to the condominium market.

Personal debt climbing to precarious highs

A 2005 Statistics Canada report, *The Wealth of Canadians* indicated that at a national level, debt loads have been increasing significantly with the “lion’s share” attributed to home mortgages. Between 1999 and 2005, Canadian debt (three-quarters being mortgage debt) increased by 47.5 per cent. One of the chief contributing factors noted was the increase in the purchase price of residential real estate. It is reasonable then to surmise that given York Region’s high home ownership rates and expensive real

estate prices that high debt loads are likely to be an issue here, especially as lending rates begin to climb back up from current lows.³²

Economic vulnerability affecting certain groups more than others

According to the 2006 Census, the low income rate (before taxes) for the entire population of York Region was 12.7 per cent.³³ However, as presented in the table below, certain demographic groups within York Region have rates higher than the average.

Risk of Economic Vulnerability to Low Income by Population Group – 2006 Census

Demographic Group	Low Income Rate for Demographic Group	# of People Living in Low Income Within Demographic Group
Total Population	12.7%	112,165
Children under 18 years of age (in low income households)	14.8%	32,477
Recent Immigrants (landing between 2001–2006)	34.1%	15,790
Immigrants (landing between 1991–2000)	20.5%	26,670
Females	13.3%	59,965
People with Activity Difficulties/Reductions*	16.9%	22,980
Aboriginal People	19%	620
Unattached Individuals (15 yrs and over)	33.7%	16,080
Seniors 75+ (Senior Women 75+ :18% low income rate)	13.9%	4855
Lone Parent Economic Families (with children under 18 yrs)	31%	3,965 Families
Visible Minorities	19%	62,530
No knowledge of Official Languages	26%	9,185
Renters (Economic Family Households)	30.1%	6,095 Households

*Refers to difficulties with daily activities and the reduction in the amount or kind of activities due to physical or mental conditions or health problems.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001 and 2006 custom tabulations

A growing number of families and individuals are falling victim to a widening income gap: the gap between what they are earning and the actual income required to live a decent standard of living in York Region

There is a growing segment of our population, many of whom work full-time jobs, that are continually struggling to make ends meet. Further, many government programs and supports only apply to that segment of the population whose incomes hover around or below the low income cut-offs. However, the gap between the low income cut-offs and the actual income needed to enjoy a decent standard of living in York Region is significant and includes a growing number of working, educated families and individuals. Many of these individuals work in industries critical to our economy and communities including human and other support services, retail, etc. which are often associated with lower wages. Further, sectors such as support services will become increasingly vital to York Region as our population ages. What is being done to support the health and well-being of this segment of the population? Can we do more to ensure that these individuals, families and children are afforded equitable access to opportunity?

Economy taking its toll on York Region residents and services:

- 106 per cent increase in employment insurance claims between December 2008 and 2009^{34a}
- The Social Assistance Caseload in February 2011 was 5,991 cases, up 18.4 per cent (931 cases) over February 2009^{34b}
- Daycare Subsidy Waiting List at 4,902 families as of December 2010 – 23.2 per cent increase over January 2010^{34c}
- As of December 2010, there were 7,626 households on the social housing waiting list, a nearly 31 per cent increase over the past two years.^{34d}
- Applicants on the social housing waitlist without special priority status, can expect to wait years for housing. For instance, most non-senior “one-bedroom applicants won’t be offered housing until they are old enough to qualify for seniors housing.”³⁵

The inability to 'Make Ends Meet' in York Region stretches far beyond the low income cut-offs

The high cost of living in York Region is placing more and more families and individuals under financial strain. The 2009 low income cut-off (before tax) generated by Statistics Canada was approximately \$35,500 for a family of four and \$19,000 for an individual within our larger municipalities such as Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.³⁶ However, based on a living wage calculated for the Toronto Area in 2008, a family of four would need an income of nearly \$65,000 to enjoy a standard quality of living. The \$65,000 household income equates to two parents working full-time (37.5 hrs/wk) at \$16.60/hr.³⁷ Given that the analysis assumes the family is renting and that average apartment rental rates between York Region and Toronto are similar, it is reasonable to assume that the living wage would be generally applicable to York Region.

A 2008 living wage analysis for the Toronto area was calculated to be approximately \$65,000 for a family of four. This is nearly double the low income cut-off of \$35,500 for a family of four in York Region

2009 Low Income Cut-offs (Before-Tax)³⁸ (For Communities With a Population Between 100,000 and 499,999 People)

1 person	\$19,144
2 persons	\$23,832
3 persons	\$29,299
4 persons	\$35,573
5 persons	\$40,345
6 persons	\$45,504
7 or more persons	\$50,661

According to the 2006 Census, nearly 35 per cent of all households in York Region (close to 96,000 households **) had incomes of less than \$60,000. (Note: The \$60,000 value which is expressed in 2005 dollars equates to approximately \$65,000 in 2008 dollars when adjusted for inflation.)³⁹

** Household applies to a person or group of person who occupies the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad. The dwelling may be either a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone. Household members who are temporarily absent reference day (e.g., temporary residents elsewhere) are considered part of their usual household.

Additional Case Study from 2008 Living Wage Analysis

(Single Parent with one child)

The financial figures in the table are from a 2008 report, "A Living Wage for Toronto"⁴⁰, developed by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives⁴¹ to show what it takes **for a single parent with one child** to live a "decent, but hardly generous standard of living" in the Toronto area.⁴²

Some key assumptions/considerations:

- Calculations are based on a single parent household with one child under six years of age
- The individual does not own a vehicle and relies primarily on transit
- Note that while this budget incorporates a significant childcare subsidy – it is very likely that such a subsidy would not be available in York Region as the current subsidy waiting list contains over 4,902 families
- Without childcare subsidy, the living wage for a single parent increases to \$22+ /hr, demonstrating the critical importance of such social supports
- Finding an apartment in York Region for \$799.00/month (rent and utilities), particularly a two bedroom apartment, may be nearly impossible. (Average rent in York Region for a two bedroom apartment in 2009 was \$1,044)⁴³

**A 2008 Living Wage Calculation for the Toronto Area (Single Parent with one child)
Summary of Expenses and Income, With Child Care Subsidy**

Expenses	Annual	Monthly*
Food	\$2,770	\$230.83
Clothing and Footwear	\$1,628	\$135.67
Shelter		
Rent & Utilities	\$9,588	\$799.00
Telephone	\$656	\$54.67
Insurance	\$213	\$17.75
Internet	\$447	\$37.25
Cable TV	\$840	\$70.00
Transportation		
Vehicle	---	---
Transit	\$4,948	\$412.33
Other		
Family vacation 1/yr. 2 weeks	\$1,300	\$108.33
Monthly family dinner & movie	\$1,170	\$97.50
Household & furniture	\$691	\$57.58
Personal care	\$401	\$33.42
Recreation	\$959	\$79.92
Communication not telephone	\$110	\$9.17
Reading and entertainment supplies	\$336	\$28.00
Other services	\$728	\$60.67
Education (adults)	\$500	\$41.67
Child care	\$9,140	\$761.67
LESS Child care subsidy	-\$7,876	-\$656.33
Non OHIP medical	\$1,674	\$139.50
Contingency amount	\$1,209	\$100.75
TOTAL COST OF LIVING (rounded to the nearest 100)	\$31,400	\$2,616.67
Income		
Household employment income	\$31,435	
PLUS Universal Child Care Benefit	\$1,200	
Household Income	\$32,635	
MINUS Tax after credits	\$1,324	
Income after tax	\$31,311	
MINUS CPP and EI Contributions	\$1,927	
PLUS Child Tax Benefit	\$2,015	
Income after tax and transfers	\$31,400	
Living wage (\$16.15/hr fulltime)	\$16.15/hr	
Living wage (with no Childcare subsidy)	\$22.00+ /hr	

*Column of monthly values was added for this publication. Monthly values equal the annual value divided by 12.

York Region is in a position of strength to lead social innovation and build a legacy of healthy inclusive communities

York Region's location within the Greater Toronto Area has resulted in tremendous growth and prosperity over the past few decades.

This growth has allowed York Region to amass many assets including a growing and diversifying economy, a culturally rich and highly educated population, high quality housing, economic wealth, exceptional community facilities,

new infrastructure, and numerous services. York Region is also beginning an evolution of its urban structure which will involve the emergence of vibrant city centres and a robust transit system. York Region is in a strong position with significant capacity to deal with current and future challenges, capitalize on and create opportunities, and build a legacy of healthy, complete and inclusive communities.

"For a region to be great it must be great for all and that requires a strong infrastructure of social supports for the over 1 million residents who now call York Region home."⁴⁴ Bruce Macgregor, volunteer chair of the 2010 United Way Campaign and CAO of The Regional Municipality of York



Making Ends Meet in York Region Moving From Talk to Action

A “Turning the Curve” Workbook for York Region organizations, agencies, services, partners, funders and other stakeholders to advance the results

WORKBOOK Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Target Population

1.2 Community Results

1.3 Indicator Areas

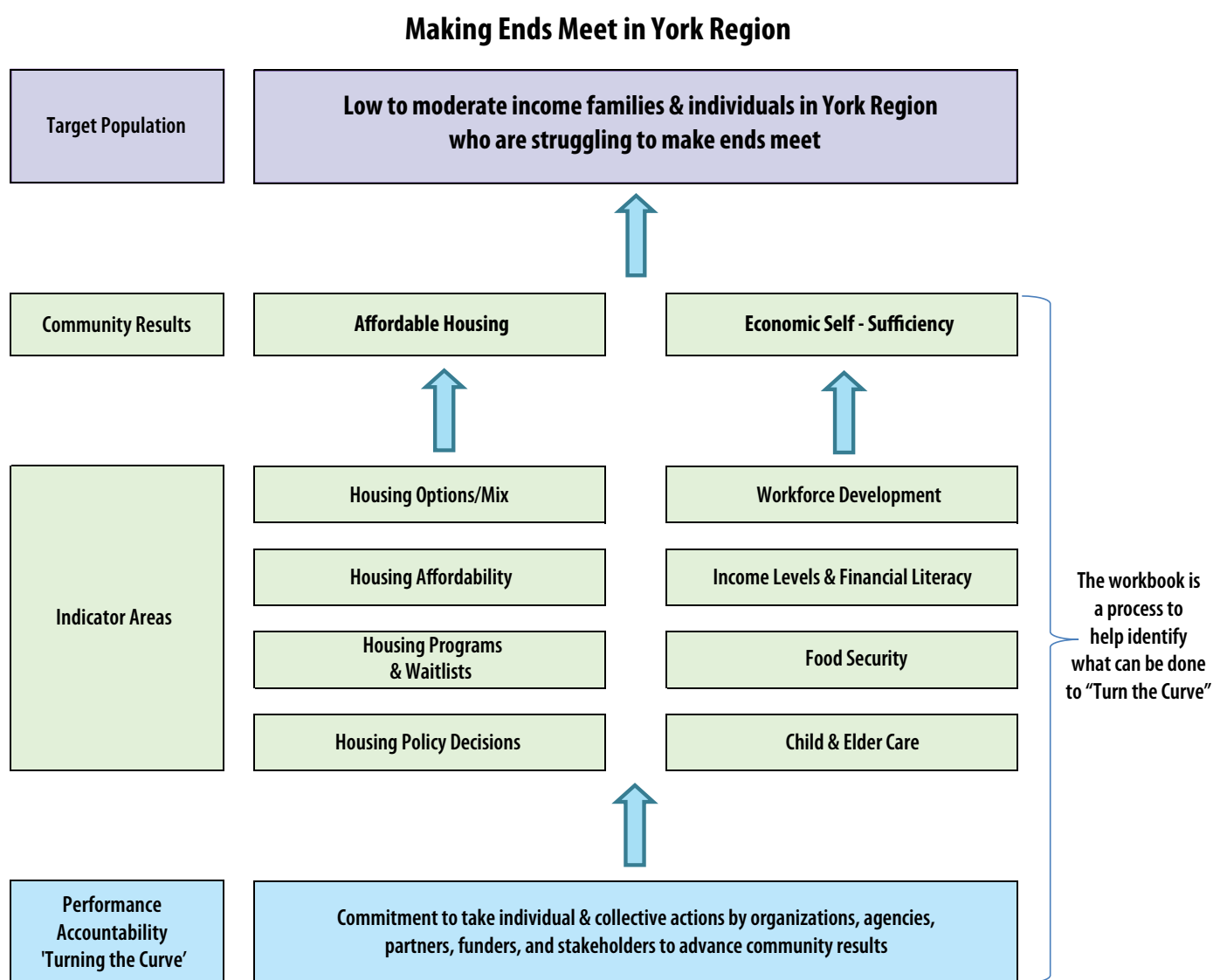
2.0 Discussion Guide for “Turning the Curve” on Community Results

**This workbook outlines the process to begin discussions
(in your organizations, agencies, services, programs)
to help identify what you can do to contribute to the
Making Ends Meet Initiative**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region (HSPB-YR) is using a Results-Based Accountability (RBA) model developed by Mark Friedman (Trying Hard is Not Good Enough)⁴⁵ to move the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative from Talk to Action. RBA is a disciplined way of thinking and taking action that can be used by entire communities.

RBA makes an important distinction between population accountability, or in our case, the community results (the ends) and performance accountability (the means). HSPB-YR has identified the community results, or the desired *Making Ends Meet in York Region* initiative results that the entire community – including public, non-profit and private sectors- need to share a responsibility in achieving. No one organization or funder can achieve the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* community results on their own. Moving forward there is a need to identify and engage all those who play a role in advancing the community results.



Making Ends Meet in York Region community results are about the **ends (a picture of the desired end state that may be difficult but will be possible to attain)** we want to achieve, while performance accountability is about the means to achieve these results. Performance Accountability aligns with and contributes to the community results, but is held at the program, agency, or service level and focuses on whether the clients or customers of the program or service are better off. The distinction between population accountability (*Making Ends Meet in York Region* community results) and performance accountability ensures the appropriate responsibility is attached to programs and services and there is not an expectation that one single program, funder or partner can produce large population level results. It will take all of us, as a community, focussing our efforts and investments on advancing the identified community results to impact change.

The process of moving from talk to action involves answering a set of key questions. As a first step, the HSPB-YR has:

- defined the Making Ends Meet in York Region target population,
- set the desired community results, and
- identified the indicator areas- to measure community progress in advancing the community results.

Ultimately, every partner, funder and stakeholder will have their own perspective in how well York Region is doing in the identified Making Ends Meet in York Region community result areas. The HSPB-YR will be looking to share insights gained and begin conversations about the result areas. This will include conversations about how we are currently doing and how we can do better in these result and indicator areas.

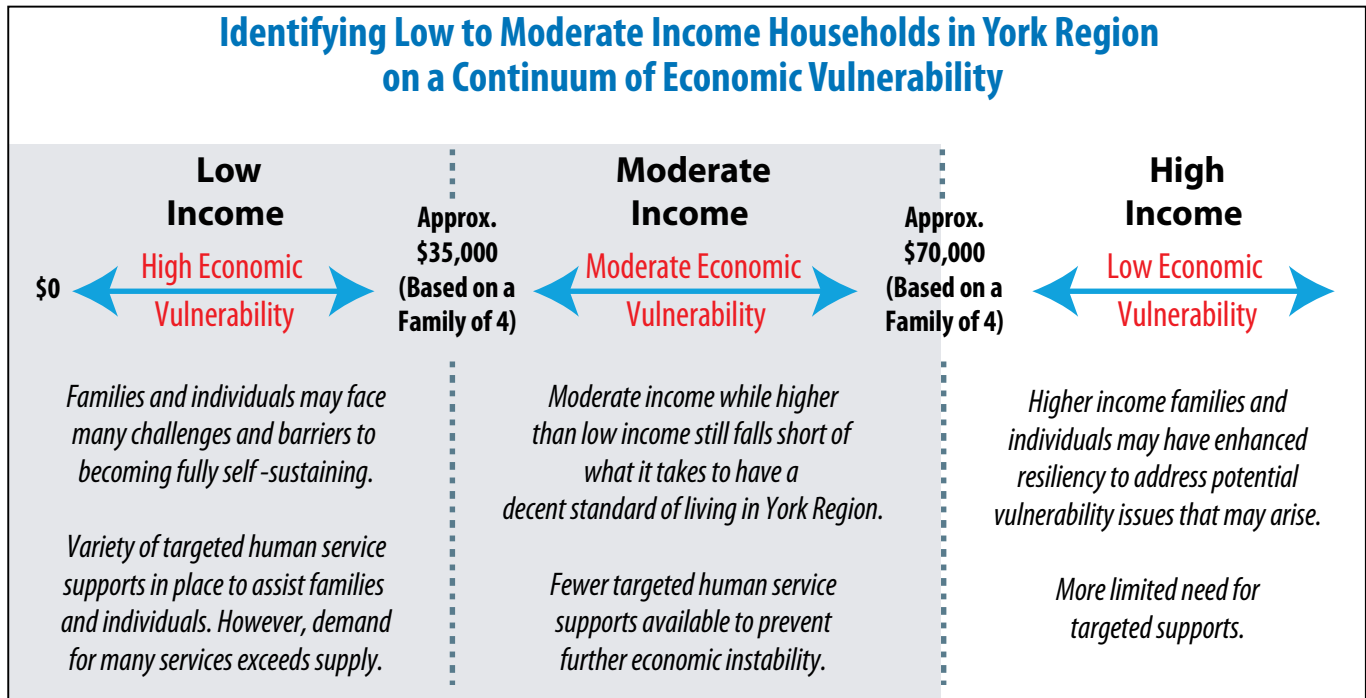
The HSPB-YR will also be looking to identify what we can do to impact the current indicator area trend. Where can we do better, both individually and collectively, to flatten the trend, slow the trend or turn the trend in a more positive direction?

RBA refers to this as “Turn the Curve” Discussions. The HSPB-YR members will be asking their own organizations and potential partners to look at actions they can take at an organizational level (e.g. performance accountability in program and service areas and funding) that can help to advance the community results as well as identifying ideas for broader collective action.

The following pages outline the defined target population, the desired community results and the identified indicator areas. The workbook is intended to provide guidance to potential partners to begin discussions around which community result they can contribute most directly to and where they may be able to “turn the curve” on the *Making Ends Meet in York Region* community results.

1.1 Making Ends Meet in York Region Target Population

The HSPB-YR has defined the Making Ends Meet in York Region target population as: low to moderate income families and individuals in York Region who are struggling to make ends meet. Low and moderate income households are outlined on the following Continuum of Economic Vulnerability chart.



Notes about the Continuum of Economic Vulnerability:

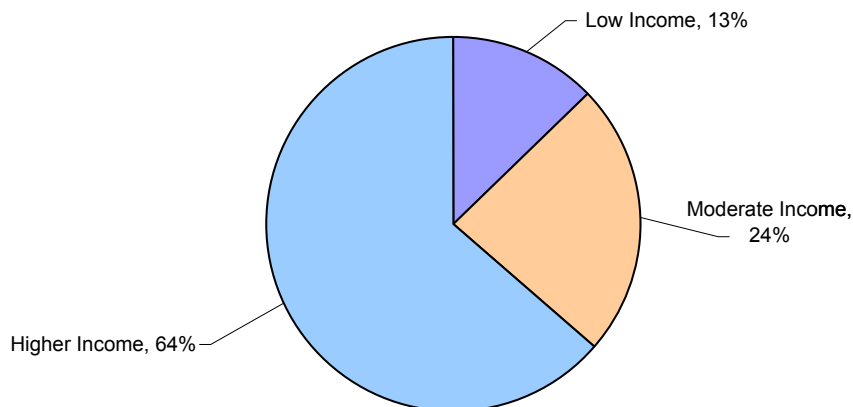
- The moderate income range on the continuum is based on the segment of the population living above Low Income Cut off- Before Taxes (LICO-BT) and up to double LICO-BT. Double LICO-BT has been used as the upper limit of the moderate income range as it is in-line with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives research on a living wage for a family of four in the Toronto area.
- Specifically, the upper limit of \$70,000 was chosen for the moderate income category based on two pieces of information; the amount of LICO-BT (2009) for a family of four, which is \$35,573 and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives identification of \$64,783 (2008) as a wage for a family of four 'to live a decent but hardly generous standard of living'.
- \$70,000 represents double LICO-BT (2009) for a family of four.
- The amount of income representing double LICO-BT would adjust up or down depending on family size.
- The upper limit of \$70,000 is intended to be flexible in nature and used for framing and discussion purposes.

2009 Low Income Cut-offs (Before-Tax)³⁸ (For Communities With a Population Between 100,000 and 499,999 People)

1 person	\$19,144
2 persons	\$23,832
3 persons	\$29,299
4 persons	\$35,573
5 persons	\$40,345
6 persons	\$45,504
7 or more persons	\$50,661

When thinking about low to moderate income families and individuals, here are some demographics.

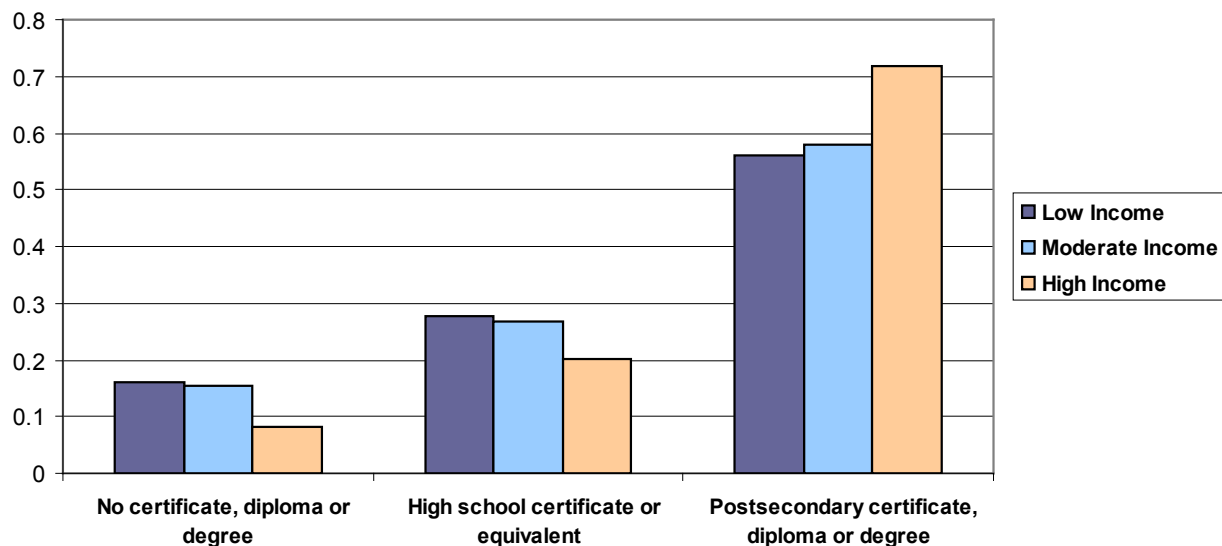
Population in York Region by Income Status



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation

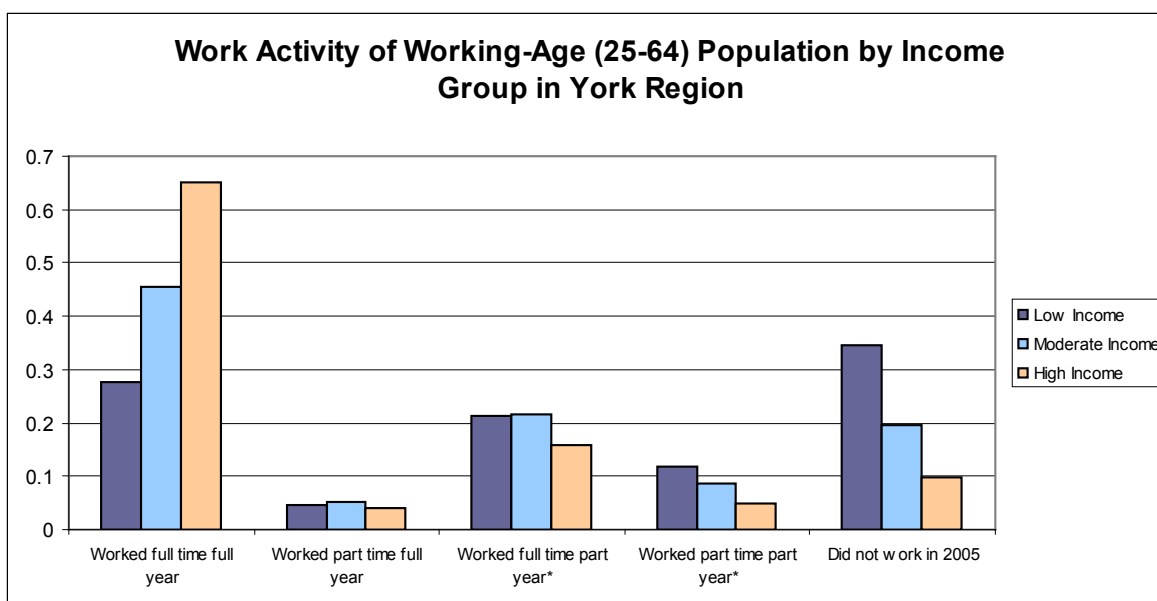
	Total		Low Income		Moderate Income		Higher Income	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total-Age Groups	885,835	100%	112,170	13%	209,075	24%	564,595	64%
Under 15 years	177,190	100%	25,970	15%	47,350	27%	103,865	59%
15-24 years	126,190	100%	17,665	14%	30,160	24%	78,350	62%
25-64 years	494,870	100%	57,835	12%	103,815	21%	333,235	67%
65 and over years	87,585	100%	10,700	12%	27,750	32%	49,145	56%

**Educational Characteristics of Working Age (25-64)
Population by Income Group in York Region**



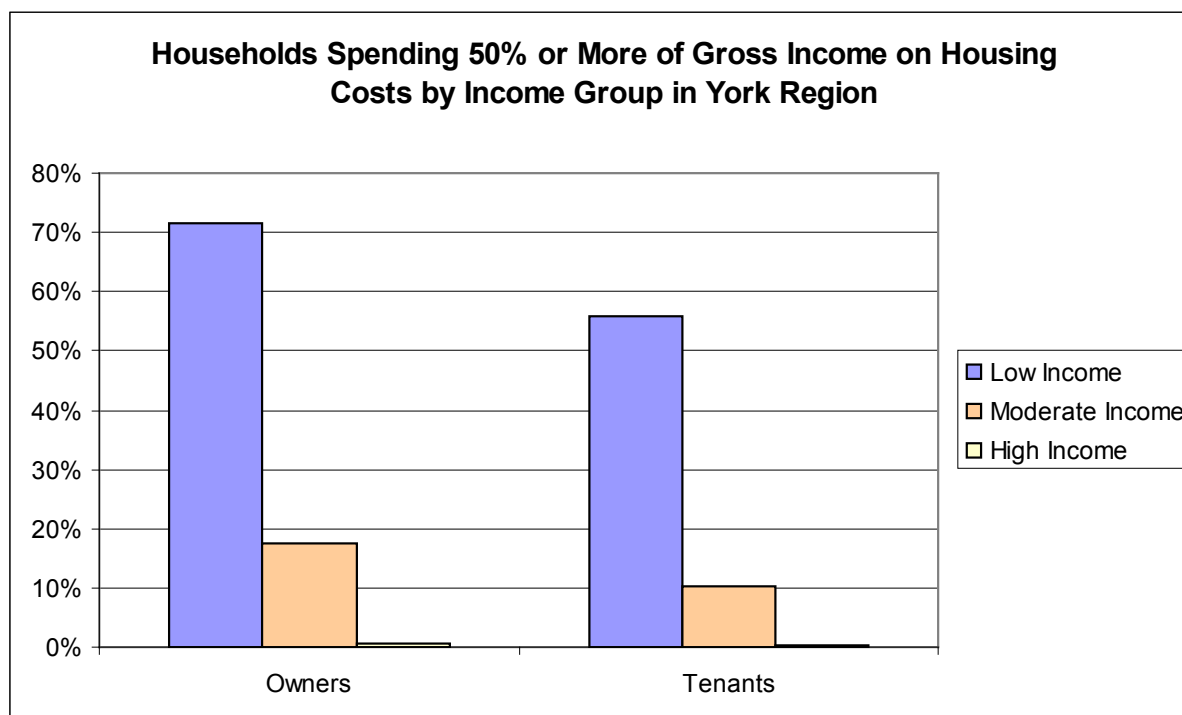
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation

Total Working Age (25 to 64) Population in York Region	Total	Low Income		Moderate Income		High Income	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	494,875	57,830	100%	103,805	100%	333,235	100%
No certificate, diploma or degree	52,460	9,295	16%	15,940	15%	27,220	8%
High school certificate or equivalent	110,430	16,070	28%	27,685	27%	66,680	20%
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	331,985	32,460	56%	60,190	58%	239,340	72%



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation

Total Working Age (25 to 64) Population in York Region	Total	Low Income		Moderate Income		High Income	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total - Work activity in 2005	494,875	57,830	100%	103,805	100%	333,235	100%
Worked full time full year	280,190	16,065	28%	47,140	45%	216,985	65%
Worked part time full year	21,800	2,625	5%	5,300	5%	13,880	4%
Worked full time part year*	87,225	12,285	21%	22,335	22%	52,600	16%
Worked part time part year*	32,430	6,875	12%	8,840	9%	16,715	5%
Did not work in 2005	73,230	19,985	35%	20,195	19%	33,050	10%



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation

Spending 50% or More of Gross Household Income on Housing						
	Low Income		Moderate Income		High Income	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owners	14,355	71%	8,245	17%	1,090	1%
Tenants	3,395	56%	715	10%	15	0%

1.2 Making Ends Meet in York Region Community Results

In setting the following community results the HSPB-YR asked:

- What changes do we want to focus on in our community to help families and individuals with low to moderate incomes make ends meet?
- Collectively, how can we support families and individuals in York Region with low to moderate incomes make ends meet?

The HSBP-YR believes that together as a community we can contribute and have an impact in two areas:

Community Results	Affordable Housing	Economic Self-Sufficiency
	"A good mixture of safe and affordable housing options and programs throughout York Region for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet."	"A strong combination of employment and human services supports for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet."

1.3 Making Ends Meet in York Region Indicator Areas

In setting the indicator areas the HSPB-YR considered the following questions:

- If we are successful in advancing the community results, what conditions have changed?
- What will help families to thrive? What would help low to moderate income families and individuals to be in a better position to make ends meet?
- As a community where do we need to focus our efforts and investments to help low to moderate income families and individuals make ends meet?
- What indicators will we measure at a community level (population level) to show how we are doing on advancing the community results?

Once the indicator areas were identified we considered the following question:

What is the baseline or trend for each of these indicators?

By developing a baseline for the indicators we can understand how we are currently doing on these indicators. Can we take action that will impact this trend or “turn the curve” on these indicators?

“Turning the curve” refers to the community, through organized and focussed action, being able to do ‘better’ than where we are headed if we do not do anything. By engaging in “turning the curve” discussions, HSPB-YR member organizations, community partners, stakeholders and funders can identify actions to flatten the current indicator trend, slow the current trend or turn the curve of the current trend in a more positive direction.

Many community conditions have a history of their own; they have momentum and may have been headed in the wrong direction for some time now. These conditions may be the result of complex issues and require multiple connected partnerships with focussed efforts aimed at turning the indicator curve

The HSPB-YR has chosen the following indicator areas to advance the community results. These indicators will help organizations, agencies, services, partners, funders and other stakeholders to see where they may be able to begin contributing to “turning the curve”.

The indicator areas are where, as a community, we need to focus efforts and investments with programs, services and funding.

COMMUNITY RESULT	Indicator Area	Description
<i>Affordable Housing</i> “A good mixture of safe and affordable housing options and programs throughout York Region for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet”	1. Housing Options/Mix - Diversity of Housing Tenure eg. Owned, rental, special needs, shelters, seniors - Diversity of Housing Type eg. Single detached, semi-detached, apartments, town-homes	Tracking number of owner households and number of tenant households or owner/tenant household split will help to understand if we are creating a broader range of affordable housing options. Tracking diversity of housing type will help to understand affordability options – housing diversity is important to address the needs of families, seniors, youth, new immigrants and single person households. Housing supply must reflect income diversity across the community, housing located closer to jobs, services, amenities, age friendly communities and aging in place.
	2. Housing Affordability - Households spending 30% and 50% or more of income on shelter	Spending 30% and 50% or more of income on shelter is an indicator of families and individuals who are having difficulty paying for other necessities; food, clothing, education, transportation.
	3. Housing Programs and Waitlists	Indication of ability to meet community need. Increase the supply of affordable ownership and rental housing. Examine further emergency and supportive housing needs. Increase the supply of accessible housing.
	4. Housing Policy Decisions - Policy for design of affordable housing - Second Suite development and implementation	Consider a human services perspective when designing and planning our emerging cities and corridors, for example; lighting, signage, design for age friendly, diversity of incomes, community safety, transit oriented development, mixed land uses, live-work opportunities, recreation and culture. Identify new housing targets in municipal Official Plans, including targets for housing type, tenure and affordability, and monitor results. Advocate for more capital funding, financial incentives and policy and program support for affordable housing.
COMMUNITY RESULT	Indicator Area	Description
<i>Economic Self-Sufficiency</i> “A strong combination of employment and human service supports for low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet”	1. Workforce Development	Ability to find and sustain employment related to individuals education and skill level (job/skill match). Stable employment can reduce the risk of economic vulnerability as well as supports for those in contract, insecure employment, min. wage jobs and precarious job situations. How can we assist to maximize earning potential to make ends meet?
	2. Income levels and Financial Literacy	As a community we have minimum wage positions and other low paying jobs –What can we do to support both low to moderate income families and individuals to make ends meet? Are there actions we can take to prevent further erosion of income levels? This measures levels of potential economic vulnerability and overall ability to make ends meet.
	3. Food Security	Helping those struggling to make ends meet access healthy food. Food security enhances individual well – being as it affects physical and mental health as well as learning ability.
	4. Child and Elder Care	Access to affordable childcare and elder care can help make ends meet and reduce family stress which will in turn enhance physical and mental health outcomes.

2. Discussion Guidelines for “Turning the Curve” on Community Results.

Key Questions for organizations, partners, services, agencies, programs, funders etc. . .

1. Which community result and indicator area do you most directly contribute to?

Which community result(s) and corresponding indicator area(s) best align with your mandate, program, service, etc.?

Community Result:

Indicator Area (s):

2. From your knowledge and experience, what is the indicator trend?

What is the change that you see in this indicator? Is it going up or down?

What is the story behind the indicator trend?

What are the root causes and forces at work? Understanding the story from your experience will help to understand what is going on in the community and what might work to do things better.

What are the implications associated with this trend?

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3. Partners

Advancing the community results will require contributions from a broad spectrum of partners, public, non-profit and private, from across and serving York Region.

The HSPB-YR will be engaging potential partners from across York Region that have a role to play in doing better. While no one agency or program can advance the community results alone, many partners coming together and aligning efforts can.

Who are the potential partners who have a role to play in doing things better?

Who are potential partners?

Potential partners include anyone with a role to play in advancing the Community Results.

Examples:

- human service organizations and agencies
- non-profit housing sector
- media
- business and financial community
- development and building industry
- all levels of government (programs and services)
- funders
- faith communities
- associations

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4. WHAT WORKS?

What action(s) is your organization currently taking to contribute to the community result(s) indicator areas?

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5. Best Ideas

What would work to do things better?

What can you do to “turn the curve” on the indicator area?

What has worked in other places/ best practices? Brainstorm 5 top ideas.

Consider no cost or low cost ideas and off the wall ideas.

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- (low cost, no cost)
- (off the wall)

6. Identifying Obstacles

By also identifying obstacles to action, the HSPB-YR will be able to propose areas for collective action to try and break down the obstacles.

- **What obstacles does your organization face in contributing to the Community Result(s)? eg. Are there partners that need to be brought together to affect change? Different sector participation that needs to happen? Funding priorities? Collective activities that need to occur before change can take place?**

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7. Where will you focus your efforts? Investments?

Identify your action plan? What are your next steps?

Action	Timeline	Budget	Responsibility
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

Consider the following criteria when choosing your action plan:

- Specificity of the Action: clear on the who, what, where, how
- Leverage of the Action: power to contribute to turning the curve on community results
- Values: Consistent with the community values
- Reach: feasible, affordable

Share Your Action Plan

It takes all of us, contributing to the identified community results to “turn the curve”. The Human Services Planning Board of York Region is interested in what you can do. Take a moment to share your action plan with the HSPB-YR.

Also, let us know if you would like to be placed on a contact list for future partner engagement.

Our email is: hspb@york.ca

or

Call the Human Services Collaboration Unit, Community and Health Services Department,
Regional Municipality of York: 905-830-4444 (ext. 2112)

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NOTES

NOTES

END NOTES

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So how are thousands of families and individuals earning below a living wage making ends meet in York Region...particularly in these current and changing economic times?

Are people being made to choose between paying the rent, hydro or putting food on the table?

Are residents choosing to go without dental care for themselves and their kids?

Are people being forced into sub-standard or crowded living conditions?

Are people working two or three jobs?

Are people staying on social assistance and forgoing a job opportunity in order to keep their health benefit card?

Are families using up all of their savings or going into debt?

Are parents forgoing saving for their retirement or children's education?

Are residents accessing the Homelessness Prevention Program or Rent Bank in an attempt to stay housed?

What does it mean for children within families that are having trouble making ends meet?

Is the increasing financial strain contributing to family stress, mental and physical health issues, poor educational performance, domestic violence, etc?

Are parents being forced to keep their kids out of sports programs because there is no way to pay the registration fee?

Are working families accessing food banks?

Human Services Planning Board of York Region (HSPB-YR) Member List - 2010-2014

Member Organizations

Regional Government Sector:	
Bill Fisch	Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), The Regional Municipality of York
John Taylor	Regional Councillor, Town of Newmarket and Co-Chair of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region
Adelina Urbanski	Commissioner of Community and Health Services, The Regional Municipality of York
Education Sector:	
Susan LaRosa	Director of Education, York Catholic School Board (YCDSB) and Co-Chair of Human Services Planning Board of York Region
Ken Thurston	Director of Education, York Region District School Board (YRDSB)
Hospital-based Healthcare Sector:	
David Cox	Director, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety, Southlake Regional Health Centre and Vice Chair of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region and representing all 3 York Region Hospitals
Community-based Healthcare Sector:	
Isabel Araya	Executive Director, Vaughan Community Health Centre (VCHC)
Colleen Zakoor	CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) York Region
Non-Profit Community Investment Sector:	
Daniele Zanotti	CEO, United Way of York Region

Community Safety Sector:	
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Children, Youth and Family Services Sector:	
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Training-Education/Labour Market/Business Community Sector:	
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Patricia Cousins	Chief Executive Officer, Social Enterprise for Canada (SEC) and representing The Welcome Centre Immigrant Services and its 5 lead agencies
Elizabeth McIsaac	Executive Director, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)
Community and Social Support Based Services Sector:	
Kirsten Eastwood	Executive Director, Women's Centre of York Region

Community Leader Members

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Faith and Homelessness Sector:	
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Government Advisor and Resource Members

Sandy McMillan	Service Delivery Manager, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities
Victoria van Hemert	Senior Director, Central Local Health Integration Network
Catherine Campbell	Regional Advisor, Ministry of Culture, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion (Sport and Recreation Branch)