



TO IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SPACES

VOTE ON
June 26

Affordable and equitable access to critical community services is key to ensuring Toronto is a liveable city for all residents.

We rely on strong public and nonprofit sectors to deliver essential services like child care, youth and senior programs, recreation, drop-in spaces, and food banks. But although they have kept their doors open for communities during the pandemic, organizations are struggling.

The upcoming mayoral by-election is an opportunity for you to vote for greater investment in community services, facilities, and spaces.

What's the Problem?

Essential Services Are in High Demand, yet Inaccessible

Free and subsidized community services offer a lifeline to low- and moderate-income households struggling to make ends meet, and demand is high.

Over **16,300** households are on the waitlist for a child care fee subsidy

While federal and provincial funding is improving access to child care for full fee-paying parents, the number of fee subsidies for low-income families has been frozen.

Residents face many barriers to access the City's recreation programs too. This year, the City increased recreation fees by 4.7%. There's limited program space, in part due to recreation staffing shortages. As well, the City's plan to replace its complicated online registration system has faced multi-year delays, with full replacement not expected until 2026. As demand ramps up, the City needs to do more to ensure equitable access to recreation.

Public and Community Spaces and Facilities Are Vital, but Access Isn't Equal

Community spaces such as community centres and green spaces provide meeting grounds for grassroots groups, locations for programs and services to operate, sites of civic participation, and much more.

Unfortunately, access to public spaces is not equitably distributed throughout the city. For example, park space per capita varies significantly by neighbourhood, and some neighbourhoods do not have adequate access to a community centre.



The Pandemic Has Devastated the Nonprofit Sector

Nonprofit organizations have ongoing challenges with securing and maintaining stable and sufficient funding, and the pandemic exacerbated this financial instability — 80% of Toronto nonprofits had increased costs while demand for their essential programs and services increased.

The pandemic has also taken a significant toll on the sector's workforce — three-quarters of organizations cite burnout and stress as a major factor in an unprecedented human resources crisis that is seeing organizations struggle to recruit and retain staff. The loss of human capital in the nonprofit sector is as devastating as the loss of nurses and other workers within our healthcare sector.



Critical Amenities and Investments Are Needed in Many Parks

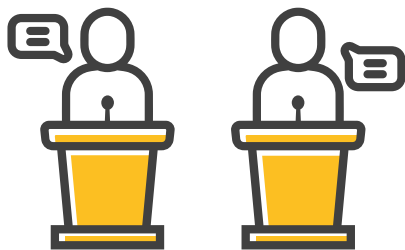
According to its own figures, the City isn't budgeting enough to keep the facilities in our parks in good repair. In addition, most park washrooms and drinking fountains are shut down over the winter months. While the City is improving access to park washrooms and fountains through the spring, summer and fall, only 55 of the City's over 170 park washrooms are open during the winter months.

Longer operating hours, gender-neutral facilities, and access to drinking water are among the improvements still needed for parks to be welcoming and accessible to residents.

Take Action!

1. Ask the Mayoral Candidates If They Will Commit to The Following Actions:

- Boldly invest in the expansion of nonprofit child care centres and actively work towards a publicly funded, licensed, universal child care system.
- Create more free spaces in recreation programs and ensure they are available to local children, youth, and adults who need them.
- Ensure geographic equity for parks and community centres across the city by prioritizing building new spaces in neighbourhoods with the least access.
- Support resident groups and the community sector with adequate space, facilities, and funding to respond to emerging community needs.
- Invest in parks to keep facilities in good condition, and expand access to critical amenities in public parks, including washrooms and water fountains, across the city and in all seasons.
- Increase core funding provided to non-profit organizations through the [Community Services Partnership](#) (CSP) funding stream to account for increased costs and demand for services.



2. Learn More About the Candidates

Check out [our election resources](#) and attend an event, such as a Mayoral Debate, to learn more about the election issues and where candidates stand.



3. Pledge to Vote

[Election day](#) is on June 26.

[Advance polls](#) are from June 8-13.

[Apply to vote](#) by mail from May 1-26.