



January 11, 2012

Dear Mayor Ford and all Members of Toronto City Council

We are writing with serious concerns about the proposed cuts to the Community Partnership and Investment Program (CPIP) and other important community services.

Important Considerations re: Proposed Cuts to Community Services

1. AIDS and Drug Prevention Investment Programs – the 10% cost savings have been found but have not yet been recognized in the Budget process and frontline services are left at risk.

The Toronto HIV/AIDS Network needs to draw to your attention that the proposed budget demands for cost savings of 10% from the AIDS and Drug Prevention Investment Programs, will be met for 2012 without any need for a direct cut. 10% cost savings are already identified with the transfer of these programs from 100% City funded, under the Community Partnership and Investment Program (CPIP), to 25% City funded, under Toronto Public Health, where the program will be cost-shared with the Province, costing the City only 25% and 75% from the Province.

We ask that these cost-savings be acknowledged and therefore, the 10% cut no longer apply to the AIDS and Drug Prevention Programs.

10% cuts for 2012 = cuts to community services that DO NOT need to be made.

In addition to the fact that the savings have already been identified, it is NOT fiscally responsible to cut services that will cost City residents more in the short and long-term.

- It saves money and lives to help avoid HIV infections -- HIV/AIDS is costing Canadians \$1.3 million per each new diagnosis of HIV (JoAnn Kingston-Riechers, PhD, Institute of Health Economics, University of Alberta for the Canadian AIDS Society, *The Economic Cost of HIV/AIDS in Canada*, 2011).
- It saves money to support community agencies that, in turn, provide programs that help people living with HIV in their efforts to become independent, build capacity, educate others and contribute to their communities.
- A 10% cut will directly affect youth now and for their futures: "A 10% reduction in Drug PCIP will mean that three fewer projects will be funded and approximately 7,000 fewer youth at risk of substance misuse will be reached." (*City Budget 2012, Toronto Public Health Operating Budget Analyst's Notes*).

2. Proposed Cuts to Community Services, Housing & Shelter

The proposed cuts are staggering in their impact upon a wide range of vulnerable communities and individuals in neighbourhoods across the City including:

- Community Partnership and Investment Program (Social Development, Finance & Administration): “Equivalent to a reduction of approximately 83 programs/ projects, which also reduces 6,000 volunteer opportunities in 2012”. These and other community service cuts will directly impact residents living with poverty, disabilities, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, and chronic illnesses; residents who are newcomers, from the City’s ethno-cultural communities and lesbian, gay and trans communities; children, youth and seniors.
- Housing and Shelter programs - reductions include to:
 - projects in the Homeless Initiative Fund, which serves people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to connect to the services and housing they need
 - the Affordable Housing Office thereby reducing the City’s role and capacity to broker housing options in Toronto
 - shelter services with 3 shelters being closed outside of the downtown core that serve women and men, most who are 50 or older and/or with mental health issues
 - the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Program that affects not only basic quality of life but increases health risks for people with HIV/AIDS and other residents already more vulnerable to complex health problems

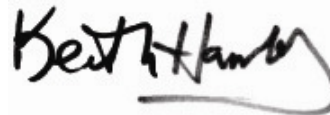
Why would we weaken an already over-burdened system?

As City Council you have choices about how you direct the funds now available to you. Fiscal responsibility includes not setting in motion social, health and economic problems for the future. Please choose not to increase the burdens and barriers to health and basic needs for food, shelter and income faced by many individuals and communities, and not to severely undermine the City’s community sector, working hard in its critical role to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in our City.

Sincerely,



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Co-Chairs, Toronto HIV/AIDS Network



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The Toronto HIV/AIDS Network (THN) facilitates HIV/AIDS planning, collaboration and innovation to improve access to programs and services for people from diverse communities living with, affected by and at risk of HIV/AIDS.

cc: Joseph P. Pennachetti, City Manager