

Introduction

This report seeks to build on two previous reports that have identified recreational challenges in the former City of York. The first report was developed in 1997 by For Youth Initiative and is entitled *Meeting the Challenge: A Framework for Addressing Social-Recreation Issues for Ethno-Cultural Youth in the City of York*. The second report is a *Recreation Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study*, which was conducted in 1999 by the City of Toronto Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department. This study investigated the viability of developing accessible recreation centres in Toronto with a focus on developing recreational opportunities in areas considered to be most in need. The results of the priority-setting portion of the study identified the former City of York as the second highest priority area. It also outlined feasible areas for building a recreation centre and described the recommended facilities.

The essence of this report, *Thinking about Tomorrow's Space Today: Youth Recreational Programming in the Former City of York*, was inspired by *Meeting the Challenge's* position that '[recreation] should not be viewed as a luxury, rather as an investment in the community and in the future of youth.' In consideration of the many stakeholders that share this view, the recommendations in this report were generated as a result of multiple meetings between service providers, youth, and stakeholders in the form of a Community Committee. This collaborative approach was considered to be the most effective means to achieving the goals of investigation of space and asset mapping.

In our society, youth are only present when their presence is a problem, or is regarded as a problem. The category "youth" tends to be focused on when they are perceived as dressing strangely, breaking rules, engaging in violence and challenging the law. In contrast, it is vital that youth are focused on and consulted when assessing the state of the community and its needs and advocating for change. Therefore, the first major objective of this report was to work with youth to identify and examine the issue of space availability for youth recreational programming in the former City of York, specifically in York South-Weston, Wards 11 and 12. As such, while it is important to acknowledge the benefits that a community recreation centre can provide to residents, there are two interrelated issues that need to be addressed and form the basis of this report:

- 1) The development of a community centre is a long-term investment and vital resource for the community. However, in light of the City's uncertain and unfulfilled promise for a new centre, sustainable short-term solutions addressing the immediate needs of youth should be implemented.

2) It is necessary to investigate existing resources in this community in an effort to develop enhanced partnerships, strategies and recommendations as to how to more effectively utilize these existing facilities. It is essential for decision-makers to support existing facilities and agencies serving youth in Wards 11 and 12 with reliable financial support, adequate space in which to offer activities, and to support the engagement of interested youth.

The second major aim of this research was to work with youth to assess recreational needs in hopes of supporting and encouraging youth engagement and satisfaction with recreation opportunities, programs, facilities and staff.

Methodology

Data on Space

To determine the availability of physical space in both Wards, qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used. Prior to the commencement of this research study, a small group of service providers and City staff began meeting to discuss the lack of youth-friendly space and programs in Wards 11 and 12. This group organically grew into a community committee that participated in the planning, implementation and evaluation of this initiative. The first meeting was held early in 2004, and the members began to identify prominent youth issues and concerns in the Wards. The discussions also revolved around the need for creating realistic solutions to some of the identified problems.

The researcher/facilitator for this project worked with the committee to gain insight into community activities, facilities and potential opportunities for space sharing. More specifically, the committee members provided information on the history of the area, prominent youth issues, gaps in service provision, lack of facilities, needs, and exploration of existing facilities or possible surplus space. The partners also worked to engage in a comprehensive analysis of existing facilities in this area and youth-friendly sites that are equipped to house youth programs. This process was important in building support and fostering a sense of ownership among the community members and stakeholders. Special thanks go to the members of the Community Committee:

City of Toronto, Community Development Officer (CDO) for York
City of Toronto, Parks and Recreation
City of Toronto, Parks and Recreation Access & Equity Department
Community Action Resource Centre
Community Social Planning Council of Toronto- York Office
For Youth Initiative Youth Advisory Committee and staff
Local youth and community members
Toronto Community Housing Corporation
Toronto District School Board
Toronto Public Library- Maria Shchuka Branch
urbanArts
Toronto Police Services- 12 Division
Toronto Police Services- Community Police Liaison Committee

In order to assess the space as well as programs and services that are offered in Wards 11 and 12, committee members provided an in-depth list categorizing all agencies and services currently existing. In addition to this, based on the information gathered, asset maps (located in Appendix H) were created to illustrate the geographical locations of all spaces. The asset maps were prepared for two reasons: 1) to visually display all available space in Wards 11 and 12 in hopes that the maps will assist agencies in locating each other as well as encourage partnerships among them and 2) to clearly illustrate the lack of youth-specific space compared to spaces held by others such as Parks and Recreation and Toronto District School Board. For the purpose of this report, the spaces were categorized in the following headings:

- Agencies with youth-specific services
- Community agencies, including those with youth programming, ethno-specific, and legal services
- Child care centres
- Libraries
- Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
- Toronto District Catholic School Board (TDCSB)
- Parks and Recreation
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation, residential buildings
- Faith-based facilities

Key informants and focus group participants were asked to provide their opinions and perspectives regarding the space availability in their Ward.

Data on Youth Needs

Key Informant Interviews, Focus Groups & Surveys

An evaluation of youth needs was generated from consultations with service providers, policymakers, and youth via key informant interviews, focus groups, and surveys. The surveys provided a broad range of information, critiques, recommendations, and an overview of the needs of the community. Furthermore, the survey gave the research some insight into youth interests in the past, present, and future. In tandem with the surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions provided the research with the depth it required. The informants and focus group participants, using their experiences and intimate knowledge of the community, shed light on issues that lay under the foundation of survey results. In other words, these interviews and focus groups were conducted to probe beneath the surface of the numbers provided by the survey. The templates located in Appendices C, D, and E offer an overview of questions guiding the key informant interview guide, focus group discussions and surveys.

Key Informant Interview Participants

The key informants included the following service providers, community members and city staff:

- Longstanding community members
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- City of Toronto, Parks and Recreation Department
- City of Toronto Councillors and staff
- For Youth Initiative
- Toronto District School Board
- Community Social Planning Council of Toronto
- Community Action Resource Centre

Focus Group Participants

There were four focus group discussions conducted to investigate the needs of youth in York South-Weston. Recognizing the unique issues facing female youth, two female-specific focus groups were conducted (n = 4 each). The female youth were between the ages of 14 to 20 inclusive. Furthermore, youth in the area were invited to participate in a third focus group of which all 15 participants were male youth. The ages of this group range from 13 to 17 inclusive. The last focus group was comprised of 10 youth-aged service providers from a local youth-based agency. The ages of the service providers ranged from 17 to 24 inclusive.

Surveys

The Measure

The measure was created under the guidance of the Committee and was based on the findings of past literature on youth. The demographic questions explored the participants' age, gender, the length of time they have been living in the community, and whether or not they had any children. The question, "To what ethno-cultural group(s) do you belong?" was removed from the survey administered to local high schools whereas the question "are you a parent?" was taken out of surveys administered to middle schools.

The survey asked participants to rate and choose from lists on what, where, and how they engage in activities, along with gathering a sense of what youth perceive as their present and future recreational needs. With respect to "what you like to do and what you have done in the past month during your spare time?" the options 'drink alcohol' and 'take drugs' were excluded from the high school administered surveys. However, to capture some related data, high school

participants were asked if they would take part in drugs/alcohol counselling if offered at a local community centre. Furthermore, when surveys were distributed to high school students, a question pertaining to where youth have gone to get information was added to the survey.

Survey Participants

A community sample of youth ages 13 to 24 inclusive was taken from two local high schools, one middle school and a Toronto District Library Youth Advisory Group. Approximately 600 surveys were administered in total. Teachers of two local high schools administered 370 surveys to students in grades nine through twelve, and 220 surveys were administered by teachers to students in grades seven and eight. The remaining 10 surveys were administered by the researcher to students at a Toronto Public Library Youth Advisory Group. Four hundred and ninety-two surveys were returned from which four hundred and two surveys were complete enough and satisfied the age range of 13-24 year olds, in order to be included in the analysis. The return rate was 68%. Of the participants that completed the survey, 16 were parents. The number of female respondents between the ages of 13 to 15 inclusive was 141, between 16 to 18 years of age inclusive was 61, and 19 to 24 years of age inclusive was 7. The number of male respondents between the ages of 13 to 15 inclusive was 118, 16 to 18 inclusive was 66, and 19 to 24 years of age inclusive was 9. The number of females between the ages of 13 to 24 inclusive was 209 whereas there are 193 males represented in this sample.

Assessment of the Literature

Before we begin our discussion on tomorrow's space, it is important to critically consider the various reports and studies that provide a valuable context for today's space. We will begin by providing insight into our holistic view of the term *recreation*. The review will then consider the plethora of evidence pointing to a positive relationship between the provision of recreational facilities and the overall well-being of youth. Finally, while mindful of this relationship, we will examine recent information on the socio-economic conditions of Wards 11 and 12 and the recreational needs of the youth population in these Wards.

Perhaps part of the difficulty in securing adequate space for recreation is rooted in the ambiguity around the term itself. Among the numerous studies on this issue, very few offer an author's perspective on what defines recreation. For the purpose of this report, our view of recreation - as it relates to youth - is one that shares Margaret Cargo's vision in her studies of Vancouver's Board of Parks and Recreation youth programs in West Vancouver:

First recreational services are viewed as a vehicle to build participation for, and to implement programs that address the broader educational and social determinants of youth health, well-being and quality of life. This approach requires inter-sectoral collaboration between those governing bodies that are responsible for the delivery of education, health and recreation-based programs. Second, the [Vancouver] blueprint signals a shift from a largely top-down social planning process where there is a tendency to view young people as objects and recipients of programs, to a more bottom-up approach where youth work in partnership with adults and community agencies to design, plan and implement programs for youth. (Cargo, 1996, p. 2)

According to Cargo, the public's expectations of recreational services have shifted beyond the provision of physical activities to include their social, educational and health concerns as well as providing expression through the arts and culture.

The heart of this report was inspired by the belief that faithfully meeting the needs of basic social infrastructure "such as access to public space, is essential for creating a healthy and cohesive community" (City of Toronto & United Way of Greater Toronto, 2002, p.3). Increasingly, more research reveals that when youth are involved in arts and recreation programs, the result is well-rounded, fully engaged citizens, and healthy and safe communities.

But it is primarily in arts and recreation activities that youth can relate to their peers, experience increased self-esteem, connect with positive role models and other likeminded youth, expand their imagination, acquire

skills, and interact socially. Through arts and recreation, adolescents also give back to their own communities by using their time well, avoiding anti-social behaviour, learning teamwork and collaboration, and having the freedom to explore individual strengths, weaknesses and likes. (Laidlaw Foundation, 2003, p.25)

Further, in her article entitled, *Making the Case for Youth Recreation*, Dr. Gina Browne (2003) pointed to evidence that identified recreation programming as an effective recovery strategy for restoring self-esteem. In fact, the article states there are numerous external benefits of youth recreation in terms of reducing health care and education costs, increasing social cohesion, and reducing crime. (Browne, 2003, p.3) In 1997, For Youth Project, hereinafter referred to as For Youth Initiative, completed a report entitled *Meeting the Challenge: A Framework for Addressing Social Recreation Issues for Ethno-Cultural Youth in the City of York*. The author of this report, Grebanier, asserts:

The provision of social-recreational programs is one means of strengthening individuals and the community by teaching positive attitudes and values that can be used in a variety of situations... When a person feels good about themselves, they can operate more effectively and productively in our communities, families, and schools. (p.17)

As documented in the *Meeting The Challenge* report, recreation must be seen as a form of prevention and an investment in community – *not* as a luxury. Similarly, a recreational forum held in 2002 by the Laidlaw Foundation, entitled *Action Speaks Louder!*, resulted in many ideas and strategies for mobilizing support and action for enhanced recreational programs and infrastructure. Participants stated:

Investment in recreational opportunities for youth pays for itself. In the short term, low-income families who have access to recreational services leave social assistance in greater numbers and reduce their need for a broad range of social and health services. Over the longer term, recreational opportunities for youth result in stronger school attendance and achievement records and higher academic, social and interpersonal competence, and is a strong predictor for success in higher education and subsequent careers. (Laidlaw, 2003, p.27)

The socio-economic conditions of York South-Weston Wards 11 and 12 have also been the subject of a number of reports and studies. *Poverty by Postal Code*, a 2004 report produced by the United Way, demonstrates a high level of poverty in this region. In the report, it was stated that the former City of York has experienced a major shift in the number of neighbourhoods with 'moderate' poverty to 'high' poverty. Although York only saw a 10% increase in the number of families, it saw a 54% increase in the number of 'poor' families. The difference between York and other municipalities is that for the last two decades, there has been an

intensification of neighbourhood poverty from moderate to high levels. By 2001, the former City of York had 12 high poverty neighbourhoods, which went up from 2 in 1981. (United Way, 2004, p.38)

These startling statistics around the rising number of families living in poverty should be contextualized in the growing racialization of neighbourhoods like those in Wards 11 and 12, and the discriminatory practices behind the unequal distribution of City resources. In a report entitled *Canada's Creeping Economic Apartheid*, Grace-Edward Galabuzi (2001) suggests that the over-representation of racialized groups in poor neighbourhoods not only compromises the quality of living conditions, but also "...may impede the opportunities of future generations by limiting access to networks" (p.126). Galabuzi's (2001) concern for youth caught in this cycle of poverty highlights the urgency behind confronting the needs of youth and increasing the levels of social service provision in York South-Weston.

The Toronto Star demonstrates this urgency in a recent article entitled, *Black students still poorly served: Study* written by Andrew Duffy on October 3, 2004. The article reveals that unreported research from the Toronto District School Board identifies Caribbean immigrants as having the highest risk of failing to complete high school. The article goes on to state that black youth continue to be poorly served by the school system. Researchers found that there is a serious relationship between neighbourhood income and achievement, where 39% of the students in low-income neighbourhoods were at-risk, compared to 11% in neighbourhoods with the highest income. It is interesting to note that 41.9% of youth ages 15 to 24 in the riding of York-South Weston are not attending school, compared with the Toronto-wide average of 32.2%. As outlined above, Wards 11 and 12 have seen a dramatic increase in poverty levels from moderate to high and the large population of youth from a Caribbean background reiterates the urgency to address issues such as a lack of safe space and programs for youth in the Eglinton-Keele area.

Amrita Gill's (2004) *Youth Recreation Facilities: Summary Report on Data Availability and Accessibility* investigates the availability, quality and adequacy of recreational facilities and identifies neighbourhoods that are considered to be at-risk, based on the percentage of youth (15-24 years of age) not attending school, percentage of population with less than a grade nine level education, high percentage of visible minority and newcomer groups, and low levels of household income in the City of Toronto. (Gill, 2005, p.13)

Using the demographics from the 2001 Canadian Census, Gill lists fifty-five neighbourhoods with an above average percentage of youth from the 140 neighbourhoods in the GTA. Those neighbourhoods found in York South-Weston include Brookhaven-Amesbury ranking twenty-sixth, Mount Dennis ranking twenty-eighth, Keele-dale-Eglinton West ranking thirty-seventh and Rockcliffe-Smythe falling in fifty-third place. (Gill, 2005, p.9) Therefore, four of the eight major

neighbourhoods in Wards 11 and 12 contain extremely high proportions of youth.

Maple Leaf is second on the list of the top twenty neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of youth not attending high school. (Gill, 2005, p.14) Mount Dennis, also in York South-Weston, has a total of 44% of youth not attending school and ranks as eighth highest. Weston is in tenth place, followed by Beechborough-Greenbrook. With respect to the number of twenty year olds and older with the highest education level being less than grade nine, Keelesdale-Eglinton West ranks sixth with 28%, followed by Maple Leaf with 27% and Rustic also with 27%. (Gill, 2005, p.16) Brookhaven-Amesbury falls in nineteenth place for neighbourhoods with a high percentage of a visible minority population. Under the category of households that fall below the low-income cut-off rate, Rustic falls in eighth place with 39%. (Gill, 2005, p. 24) Lastly, Rockcliffe-Smythe and Weston rank eighteenth and twentieth in the same category, both with 29%. (Gill, 2005, p.25)

All of these statistics clearly demonstrate that the region of York South-Weston contains numerous neighbourhoods that are considered to be at risk, where the general lack of recreational facilities for youth is compounded by racial disparities, income disparities and the status of newcomer and/or immigrant youth.

In For Youth Initiative's *Meeting the Challenge* report, Grebanier (1997) found that there are no fully equipped community centres in the former City of York where youth can meet on a regular basis or engage in social-recreational activities. Similarly, in the *Torontonians Speak Out on Community Values and Pressing Social Issues* report by United Way in 2003, a section was developed to investigate the most pressing social issues in the different communities of Toronto. The York community members stated that youth have nowhere to go resulting in an increasing number of youth left to hang out in malls, parking lots, and subways or on the streets. (United Way, 2003, p. 34) Frequently, it was also stated that older youth tend to be left out of many programs, which appears to be the case in York. Most programs target children and the programs that do target youth, are limited in hours of operation and do not involve skill building and leadership training. Aside from competitive sports, there is a lack of access to music and arts skill building. (United Way, 2003, p. 35)

In 1997, For Youth Initiative identified the issue of youth at risk and the factors affecting and causing risk producing behaviour. FYI established an understanding that all youth are at some level of risk, where the degree of risk is determined by factors such as individual traits, family, peers, school and community. *Meeting the Challenge* also documents ample research suggesting that youth involvement in social, physical and recreational activity and youth engagement in the community leads to a reduction of risk overall.

One of the major findings was the need for more programs for youth because of a lack of public programs provided for this age group. The second major finding was that adults and community organizations need to formally or informally consult with young people when deciding what programs they are going to implement. Community needs assessments and consultations would allow for diverse youth of many backgrounds to decide what interests and engages them. Compared to other age groups, youth have a disproportionate number of recreation programs specifically developed for them. Research has proven that recreation positively influences youth and prevents most youth from high-risk behaviours. (Grebanier, 1997, p.3)

Similar findings are found with the 2005 Vital Signs Report, produced by the Toronto Community Foundation (TCF). This report found that "Involvement in sports and recreation is considered key to young people's healthy physical and social development. Yet while children and youth account for over 80% of registrants in City recreation programs, only 9% are over the age of 12" (TCF, 2005, 11). The report also makes the connection that youth face a number of risks that increase their vulnerability to being involved with or being a victim of crime. Recent changes in high school curriculum, such as the elimination of Grade 13, acts as a barrier for many youth to complete their high school education. This in turn impedes their ability to attend college or university and secure employment. In fact, "Youth unemployment is at a ten-year high and stands at twice the city average" (TCF, 2005, 11). Thus, many of Toronto's youth are facing multiple barriers that include completing school, accessing recreation, and finding meaningful employment.

At the same time, the youth of Wards 11 and 12 have experienced an overall decline in the community use of schools and city owned spaces. In May 2002, the City of Toronto, in collaboration with the United Way of Greater Toronto, produced a summary report of survey findings on this issue. This report has established that since the mid-90's when the Province of Ontario introduced Bill 160, the school system has undergone detrimental cuts to funding, which has made it very difficult for community groups to access space in local facilities suitable for recreation programs. (City of Toronto, 2002, p. 3) In addition, after amalgamation the City of Toronto faced Provincial downloading of responsibilities and service delivery and has suffered severe fiscal restraints. Community groups are indeed feeling the effects of a lack of access to space and decreased funding to their organizations. As such, the introduction of user fees, high rental costs and the implementation of fees for City permits in order to access facilities (e.g. local schools) has contributed to the loss of many valuable community-based programs. (City of Toronto, 2002, p. 3)

Similarly, the 2003 Laidlaw Youth Recreation Forum participants felt that schools are the key providers of recreational facilities, programs and skill development. The participants stated that, "Shrinking access to school facilities has a huge

impact on a broad range of organizations including the schools themselves, municipal recreation programs and community organizations. Using existing school facilities is an efficient use of public resources” (Laidlaw, 2003, p. 27).

With amalgamation in January 1998 came assurances that more attention would be given to much-needed social services in the former City of York. One of these promises included a new community centre. The process began in August 1999 when the City of Toronto, with the aid of a consultant, examined the best location for a new centre. The outcome of this research was a consultation with community stakeholders that resulted in a report entitled *Recreation Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study*. Based on this needs assessment, the former City of York was ranked as the second highest priority following an investigation using the following criteria:

- ✓ Existing and future supply of municipally-staffed indoor recreational space
- ✓ Availability of indoor recreational space for municipal programming (schools, program hours available (including Parks and Recreation program hours)
- ✓ Existing supply of non-municipal indoor recreation facilities
- ✓ Availability of interim solutions

Although the former City of York was identified as high in need for a recreation centre, over the last decade funding tended to be allocated to other priority areas. In an effort to divert funding away from a police firing range and into building recreation centres, Stephanie Hanson of the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) stated in a *Globe and Mail* article, “...there are neighborhoods in this city that do not even have a community centre...We believe that building recreation facilities is more important than building shooting ranges for the police” (Barber, 2004, A15). Furthermore, in a *Toronto Star* article Anna Haas commented, “Toronto is a city in dire need of program and service funding within areas like the former City of York, which is overlooked by council as a high-needs area and is a neighbourhood that has no community spaces, let alone youth spaces” (Haas, 2004, p. A17).

In 2004, when the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department implemented a series of consultation sessions across the GTA as part of its ReActivate TO! Campaign, the former City of York was not included in the process. After much lobbying from community organizations (Community Social Planning Council, Community Action Resource Centre and For Youth Initiative) a session was added in July 2004 to gather York residents’ opinions and advice on how to improve their services. Results indicate that York residents emphasized the following expectations of Parks and Recreation:

- A fully functioning community centre in York
- Lower priced, affordable programs
- Making York more of a higher priority area

- To make parks and garden space more welcoming, clean, and user-friendly
- Free programming for low-income areas, for youth, seniors, and pay as you go programs
- Increasing the number of resources and facilities for all residents but especially for youth to hangout

York residents felt that the following should be done to improve Parks and Recreation programs and services:

- Have programs that are reasonably priced
- More liaison and networking with community groups to market Parks and Recreation services and programs
- Address issues related to the use of public space within Wards 11 and 12
- Create flexibility in the use of facilities shared in the community
- Provide affordable permit fees to community organizations for the use of facilities

In its entirety, the literature clearly demonstrates that the residents of the former City of York need and deserve a community recreation centre, yet after decades of advocacy, the promise for a centre has yet to be realized. It is evident that recreation will remain the least important domain to receive substantial funding from government in order to fund more pressing public issues. (Gill, 2005, p.27) Municipalities need to develop a long-term strategic plan for recreation that includes ways to finance recreation infrastructure as well as programs. This involves partnerships with the community-based and private sectors. (Slack, 2003, p.23) Recreation and culture are the first to suffer cutbacks in the era of globalization and privatization. However, "...investment in youth programs will bear long-term dividends, by securing and enriching our collective future. The choice is ours. If we care for our future, we must invest our time, effort and money in our youth, now" (Gill, 2005, p. 27).

Data Analysis

Space Availability

Collectively, data gathered from the interviews and surveys suggest that the question of whether or not there is enough space available in Wards 11 and 12 to adequately meet the recreational needs of the community – specifically youth – does not produce a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. On the one hand, the data suggests that in a region supporting approximately 113, 580 individuals – approximately 21, 470 of them youth - (see Appendix A), it is both offensive and discriminatory that Wards 11 and 12 do not have a single recreation centre and only 95 community facilities inadvertently scattered through out both areas (see Asset Maps and summary chart in Appendices F, G. and H).

On the other hand, the data also indicates that historically the former City of York has had to adapt to limited and inadequate social service provisions and in this context resourceful community members are quick to identify a relatively abundant amount of underutilized space that remain inaccessible to the community. Overall “[t]here is some space here and there in York, but the space is underutilized and cannot support the population... I think space is always going to be an issue. There is always going to be a need for space” (TCHC representative). For the purpose of this report, any and all discussions to follow on the barriers to and utilization of space will be mindful of the indisputable reality that the growing population in Wards 11 and 12 have *NEVER* been provided enough space and as such, should be considered a priority in the eyes of Toronto City Council for improvement in all areas of community development, and especially in the provision of adequate community space.

The collection of youth voices gathered together for this report identified the following five major barriers to accessing adequate space to engage in structured and unstructured community activities:

- 1) Scarcity
- 2) Location & transportation
- 3) Funding & permit fees
- 4) Adequate supervision and
- 5) Unfriendly to youth-specific programs as well as to youth in general

Data from the key informant interviews with service providers, local government representatives and community members identified similar concerns and provided the basis for two more barriers addressing:

- 6) The “political minefield” behind advocating for and securing community space.

7) The sub-standard conditions of current facilities.

The following section will elaborate on each of these barriers as they have been addressed in the context of the interviews and focus group discussions, as well as in light of the survey results displayed in Appendix B.

As mentioned earlier, the scarcity of space in the former City of York has been identified as rooted in the historical neglect of community needs.

... [I]n the city of York there has historically been under-servicing which pre-dates to pre-amalgamation of the different cities into the one city eight years ago. So there are a lot of underlying issues in terms of lack of services and space here. There are many social issues in the City of York that still need a lot of attention and aren't getting a lot of the resources. (City of Toronto, Staff)

The present day impacts of this history have not escaped the perceptions youth have on their day-to-day realities. For example, some of the youth expressed their frustration around the obvious inequity in resource allocation between Wards. The focus group from For Youth Initiative (FYI) seemed particularly informed on the availability of space in other areas of the city and the scarcity of space in York South-Weston. "There are so many programs in Jane and Finch and although the York area is a high risk area for youth, there are no programs... They need something of their own" (Youth Voice, FYI). Additionally, these youth passionately expressed their frustration around what they perceive as a misallocation of monies in their Ward in favour of local corporate interests.

You know how much they're investing in sidewalks... they're putting up nasty lamps, like we need those or something like that! ... They have spent so much money making those poles that say 'Eglinton West', and they have a revolving ball! Is that supposed to give you community pride? Community pride would be a recreation centre. And you can fix the sidewalks we have to walk down, to get to the community centre. But right now they're investing in businesses. (Youth Voice, FYI)

This thoughtful reflection on the City's misdirected efforts towards improving the quality of the area's appearance before improving the quality of life for the men, women, youth and children that live there, resonates in the hearts of youth as they struggle to escape invisibility and search to legitimize their value in the community through legitimate community spaces.

The asset maps, located in Appendix H, were created by the community committee in an effort to assist community members in locating the few community spaces available. In doing so, it became increasingly apparent that the random and inaccessible locations of these spaces would emerge as an issue in the interviews. "Location is a hassle... people would rather go to an agency that is on a street front and not hidden like FYI is" (Youth Voice, FYI).

Some of the other youth echoed this concern as they noted that they find the current facilities available to them “hard to get to,” “too far,” and “too expensive to travel to by TTC.” While this may be misunderstood by their adult counterparts as apathetic, “...it is interesting that youth don’t want to have to travel to things” (City of Toronto, Staff), the reality is that the “TTC is more expensive now... even the students’ TTC passes are expensive and this combines with other stuff...” (City of Toronto, Staff). These comments were only reiterated in the survey results when “don’t have a ride” appeared as the most popular option (240 respondents) selected by youth in response to the question, “What stops you from doing one of the things you like to do in your spare time?” As such, the accessibility of potential locations for new space and the impacts of TTC fare increases on the youth population are vital issues in need of exploration before implementing both short and long term solutions to the lack of recreational services in York South-Weston.

Along with discussions on scarcity and location of space comes the issue of staffing or supervision of that space. Excluding responses from the Parks and Recreation representatives, data generated from the informant interviews and focus group discussions reveal a need for qualified staff (i.e. social workers, teachers, youth workers and custodians) to lead programming and ensure the overall safety and well-being of program participants. “There is the ultimate question of we will not run an activity here if we don’t have the proper supervision- when there is the supervision, we provide it. So it is limitless in terms of having the opportunity [to provide programming] but it’s finding the personnel to supervise these activities” (Local School Principal). There is a perception among certain high school students that there is a lack of interest in their needs. “...there is not enough interest from the teachers... a lack of teacher interest in this type [ethno-specific] of program” (Youth Voice, FYI). While the scarcity of space needs to be addressed, respondents recommended that the provision of staffing for potential programming in existing underutilized facilities could be alleviated through increased funding and community partnerships.

Facilitating positive and constructive community partnerships among stakeholders can bring organizations with the capacity to offer space together with those organizations able to provide qualified staff. For example while the respondent from the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) described his struggle to fill programming space with qualified supervisors (“For me programming space is not an issue. What is an issue for me is staffing”), the Parks and Recreation representative pointed to his abundance of staff and lack of appropriate space (“... as for Parks and Recreation, it is the opposite. Staffing is not a problem. We have the staff... we do not have the space.”) This presents a unique opportunity to combine their resources as part of a short-term solution to the current lack of facilities and programs.

“There needs to be better coordination of services and programs... an asset map is a good idea to identify where people are and what is being done.”

The TCHC representative was particularly enthusiastic about offering their space to the community. “TCHC has undergone many changes – they are looking at their use of space and they are looking into offering more space to a broader population. [In the past], they had closed their doors to people that did not live in TCHC housing.” (TCHC Representative).

It is important that all stakeholders involved continue to nourish this spirit of cooperation and the potential for partnership. “There needs to be better coordination of services and programs... an asset map is a good idea to identify where people are and what is being done” (City of Toronto, Staff). Existing community agencies could only benefit from the opportunity to network, share best practices and create partnerships in the interest of maximizing their resources.

Almost every discussion on space availability led to hostile comments about user-fees, permits and the lack of funding. In response to their feelings on user fees, all of the youth identified this as a strong deterrent from participation in current programming. In fact, this question brought out negative reactions like, “I hear money... money that makes me stay home,” “that [user-fees] make me not want to try out” and even “that [user-fees] make me want to sleep and get fat.” While most youth associate the burden of user-fees with the organization or program itself, service providers and community workers clarify that this deterrent is one that works in tandem with the larger socio-economic barriers experienced by the newcomers and immigrants of Wards 11 and 12. “York tends to have some cheaper housing and that often times draws in new immigrants and newcomers...I think that there are socio-economic factors that can prevent people from participating in things that are not free” (City of Toronto, Staff).

However, both local Councillors passed over any discussion on the socio-economic conditions of their Wards and redirected the onus of inadequate community space on the school board’s permit fees. “...I think that schools could play a big role but they are not...[the] school board’s responsibility should be recreation – they shouldn’t be charging. I hope the schools agree to it” (Local Councillor). Finally, and in turn, an interview with the local school principal notes that “...the school system was withdrawing a lot of services due to budget cuts which had an even greater impact on a place like the old City of York because they didn’t have the infrastructure from a Parks and Recreation point of view” (Local School Principal).

“... the school system was withdrawing a lot of services due to budget cuts which had an even greater impact on a place like the old City of York because they didn’t have the infrastructure...”

All of this considered, it is evident that the issue of funding for space is one that requires a holistic exploration of the needs and assets of all the stakeholders involved. In fact, this discussion on funding for space paints a picture of the political minefield in which these issues are embedded.

I think we have facilities that should be used. It's better than sitting empty but there is a cost that comes with it and whose going to fund it? Who's responsible for providing it? The municipalities or the board? It's a political field that I don't want to get into but from my personal point of view, we do have facilities that can be part of an overall philosophy or overall programming that needs to be considered. (Local School Principal)

Although there seemed to be a consensus among respondents that the limited spaces available are drastically underutilized, specifically within the school system, discussions on penetrating the bureaucratic tape that currently seal the doors of schools after classes can be characterized as bleak or disheartening. As mentioned above, Councillors point to the school board. Educators and service providers incriminate government cutbacks. "They [the school board] lost access to eleven schools because of the cutbacks to the school system. So you have a community that is already marginalized, and experiencing further marginalization because of the continued cutbacks" (City of Toronto, Staff). Youth blame themselves. "...we have places we can go and play in the community...they [adults] don't want us to go out there with guns and stuff" (Youth Voice, Male Focus Group). For as long as decision-makers fail to acknowledge their role in the underutilization of available space and their power to change this reality, local youth will internalize this neglect with feelings of rejection and isolation.

Among the ninety-five miscellaneous community facilities located in Wards 11 and 12, the asset maps indicate that only six offer youth-specific programming. "...I think it's clear and unarguable that there is a lack of space for youth in the City of York" (City of Toronto, Staff). Further, data generated from the informant interviews and focus group discussions with youth suggest that the majority of the spaces available are just not youth-friendly. "They will give you space but the space is not where you want to go... If the building is for youth then its fine but if it's not for youth, you may be treated based on how you dress" (Youth Voice, FYI).

... If the building is for youth then its fine but if it's not for youth, you may be treated based on how you dress."

Although the literature review clearly outlines “youth” as the number one priority in the list of community needs specific to York South-Weston, most facilities are still ill-equipped (via funding, qualified staff and accessible space) to serve youth. “Physical space is there, just not accessible to us. Even when there are programs that are available – they are not really based on youth needs. There is not a lot of youth staff present to protect youth needs” (Youth Voice, FYI). In this light, both short and long terms solutions towards fulfilling the recreational needs of Wards 11 and 12 should be mindful of the necessity for youth-friendly spaces and the benefits of facilitating youth-driven, youth-led programming.

In its entirety, data from the surveys, interviews and focus group discussions collectively point to community access to the abundance of spaces in schools as the most immediate solution to the current crisis around space.

One of the best short-term solutions is to have schools open to the community... If all gyms were made available and affordable across Toronto, we wouldn't be having half of the issues that we are currently having... a lot of barriers would be eliminated... If the three-levels of government would collaborate, it's do-able. (Youth Voice, FYI)

Unfortunately, access to these spaces requires programs to have the funding to pay a number of fees. “The school board has implemented \$48 per hour for custodian fees... pre-amalgamation, there used to be some free things, and now that does not happen... schools are built by communities and should be open to communities” (Service Provider). In addition to this, the survey results list “school” as the fourth most preferred location for youth to spend their spare time following “mall,” “friend's house,” and “movies.” Schools are perceived as comfortable, familiar, safe and even empowering spaces for youth to engage in structured and unstructured activities. Denying youth access to these spaces – spaces that are in good physical condition and in accessible locations – is reflective of the apathy of government decision-makers towards the well-being of their politically powerless youth population.

Youth Needs

The former City of York neglected its youth and this has been perpetuated post-amalgamation. Social service providers, local government representatives, community advocates and youth themselves unanimously point towards fulfilling the needs of youth as their number one priority. “...[S]tatistics do indicate that there is a need for youth in this area today to have opportunities and for someone to guide them along so that they will have a vision of where they want to be years from now” (Local School Principal). The grounds for targeting youth as a priority are alarming. “...[M]ore youth are dropping out of school, increasing levels of violence, increasing hopelessness”(Youth Voice, FYI).

According to the participants, there have also been increases in the number of teenage parents, incidents of vandalism, fighting, and bullying.

...[Y]outh are growing up without a safe place to go and York is so under-resourced that there isn't anywhere for them to go in the evenings, on a consistent basis. Something has to be done about this right away or the issues in this community are only going to become worse – more disillusionment. (Youth Voice, FYI)

As this report has already established, these issues are contextualized within the low socio-economic conditions of a community that has been historically under-served and denied resources. "I'm sure that if you drive by here at 7 p.m., you'll see youth with their knapsacks standing there because there isn't anywhere to go" (Youth Voice, FYI). Before and in addition to the arrival of the long awaited recreation centre, there are gaps, barriers and needs among the youth population that require immediate attention and short-term solutions.

Even when there are programs that are available – they are not really based on youth needs. There is not a lot of youth staff present to protect youth needs."

The short-term recommendations that will be offered in this report were based on a scope of questions and concerns that materialized from an in-depth analysis of the data. This section will provide an overview of the needs of youth participants based on results from the survey, focus groups discussions and informant interviews. It is important to note that these results are far from inclusive and thus should not be grounds for neglecting to conduct a more comprehensive and representative needs assessment of the youth of Wards 11 and 12 in the future. With this in mind, youth participants have identified the following seven areas of consideration when evaluating existing programs/facilities available in the former City of York:

1. Structured versus unstructured activities
2. Sports
3. Cultural activities and the arts
4. Programming for female youth
5. Employment
6. Social education
7. Youth-led programming

In its entirety, this section will not only address existing gaps in services, but also confront some the misperceptions around the needs of youth in this area.

Do the youth of Wards 11 and 12 need more structured or unstructured activities? According to the data results, the answer to this question is fairly straightforward; they need more of both. They need more of everything. Overall, the structured activities are limited and the unstructured activities are simply

absent. “People don’t tend to facilitate unstructured activities. Probably that [unstructured activities] is one of the big needs in this area...As much as there is a need for recreation/training space, there is a great need for space to hangout” (City of Toronto, Staff). Youth participants not only expressed their preference for unstructured activities, they suggested that the provision of space to “hang out” would be in the interest of their overall safety and well-being: “...they [youth] would much rather hang out, so they hang out on the streets or in stores as opposed to going to recreational places, its more like they are just looking for a place to hang out... so a lot of youth just hanging on the street then will create a lot of problems” (Youth Voice, FYI).

In spite of this, the idea of facilitating unstructured activities was not well received among the adult participants and actually provoked a response that presented a strong contradiction in perceptions of this issue. “I wouldn’t want to see kids hangout for the sake of hanging out. I think there is a danger to that and there are perceptions that are associated to that...If you are going to have a hangout spot for 1000 kids – we are asking for trouble” (Local School Principal). While both Councillors expressed similar sentiments around the possibility of unstructured activities, the youth and youth workers noted that these reactions are reflective of a rather unfounded and unjust tendency to incriminate young people in general as “dangerous” trouble-makers. “Many facilities are run by adults who discriminate against youth because they stereotype them as being disruptive or have had a negative experience and generalize... Once there is a stigma and fear around youth programs, facilities close their doors” (Service Provider).

Consequently, youth are at risk of internalizing these stereotypes and decision-makers are able to redirect their responsibility for the youth population onto the youth themselves.

“The bulk [of programs] that are offered are purely sports-based and it’s rare to have anything beyond that... Youth of colour need more than basketball programs...”

There is a similar conflict of opinions when comparing youth perceptions on the type of activities they need with those of their adult counterparts. “We have enough sports – we need cultural activities – painting, dance – it would be great if we could combine sports and other culturally-related activities” (Youth Voice, FYI). More often than not, youth participants expressed their frustration with the saturation of basketball in their community and their lack of culturally sensitive activities and exposure to the arts. “The bulk [of programs] that are offered are purely sports-based and it’s rare to have anything beyond that... Youth of colour need more than basketball programs” (Youth Voice, FYI). This participant also advised that among the number of sports that could be offered, very little consideration is made into the cultural identities of the youth participants. “For example, in the past, a certain service provider would offer ball hockey programs...in an area where there was a high population of Somali youth...

these youth would have been engaged by soccer. Culture is not taken into account” (Youth Voice, FYI). Although all of the respondents agree that physical activity and sports are important and valuable, the youth participants felt that there should be a balance between sports activities and those relating to culture and the arts.

Unfortunately, many of the adult participants appeared misinformed on this issue. “They [youth] need indoor basketball. We have free hockey and baseball in that area but youth are not accessing... I don’t think there is much need for arts and culture. I don’t think there is an interest” (Local City Councillor). While members of the male focus group and results from the survey did list sports as a popular interest, this Councillor’s belief that youth are not interested in the arts and culture completely contradicts the results of the data collection in this report. During the focus group discussion, youth voiced their preference for mural painting, graffiti, dance, music, singing, alternative dance, plays, writing, crafts, field trips, and culturally-specific programming (i.e. a Caribbean group). The survey reiterated youth interest in the arts when “Arts Programming” ranked as the fifth most popular option, in a list of fourteen, outlining youth interest. Beyond an obvious need for programs involving the arts and culture, these results also point to a gap in communication between youth and the service-providers and decision-makers of the former City of York. In this light, future planning around community development, particularly youth-specific programming, should incorporate a comprehensive community consultation process that includes sufficient youth representation.

Among the list of gaps in services, many of the participants (youth and non-youth alike) identified a critical lack of programs and activities addressing the needs of female youth.

There needs to be more programs created to meet the needs of female youth. Due to culture, dynamics between males and females and various other reasons, many young women are excluded from existing programs and facilities... beyond recreation, females have certain needs, such as sex education, that cannot be addressed in the presence of males. There is often no protection for females, or staff knowledge about the needs of females. (Youth Voice, FYI)

In addition to this, the young women in the female focus group expressed their concerns around their safety when considering the location of a program, the need for safe space (free from intimidation from male youth), frustration with the amount of violence between the male youth, and concerns around the inability of others to respect the gender-specific traditions of different cultures. “...They wouldn’t accept certain things like if you are Muslim and have to wear certain clothing... They will look at you different” (Youth Voice, Female Focus Group). Lastly, the survey results note that overall, the male respondents were more likely to find activities they enjoy during their spare time than the female respondents. As such, the cultural, emotional, social, and physical needs of young women are

crucial issues to consider when addressing the level of services provided for youth in wards 11 and 12. Further, outcomes should include the development, implementation and dissemination of activities that would attract a culturally rich and diverse population of young women.

Skills training programs and employment services for youth were also listed as high priorities among the various concerns outlined in the data results. "Help with employment is a high need...resume writing skills, job hunting...We have lost an employment centre in this area and many similar services have been lost in the former City of York over the past few years" (Youth Voice, FYI). Similarly, the survey results revealed a strong interest in employment services and a desire among youth to have money to put towards other types of community activities. The focus group discussions echoed these points as youth requested services that would assist them in preparing for employment as well as services that would actually employ them. "If they [agencies] would invest in...making more jobs...[young] people could work here..." (Youth Voice, FYI). It is important to note that the absence of employment training and employment opportunities places the young people of the former City of York in a significant disadvantaged social location, relative to other regions in the GTA, that will only worsen in this community's struggle to contain the growing number of families living in poverty.

"Youth are not part of these lead roles in the activities they participate in... If you have a program geared towards youth, there needs to be youth involved in the process around the program. The youth voice is not being heard and not a lot of effort is being made to hear it"

Also included in the data results were suggestions for programming that would focus on social education. "[Youth need] social education, so that they feel they have options, they can learn social skills, prepare them for the workforce" (City of Toronto, Staff). This rather broad area of concern includes health and sex education, parenting classes, leadership and mentoring programs and other activities centered around building life skills. "...We are looking at a more holistic approach where it is not just the physical aspect of things but also the social aspect of things" (TCHC Staff). Another participant added, "...health and healthy sexuality education is severely NEEDED and should be a high priority" (Youth Voice, FYI). Social service providers agreed that this type of programming is particularly useful among the growing number of youth coming from immigrant/ newcomer families or single-parent homes. According to participants, many youth in Wards 11 and 12 have to juggle a lot of responsibilities at home and problem-solve through many day-to-day adult concerns at an early age. These youth play valuable roles as baby-sitters/ caregivers, translators, house-keepers, and income earners in an effort to keep their families healthy and functional. As such, it is important to create programming

where youth are able to find expression for stress they may experience, the anger or isolation they may be feeling and/or the boredom they are fighting.

In its entirety, the most important message this report has established is the value of including the voices of youth in political process and program development.

Youth are not part of these lead roles in the activities they participate in...if you have a program geared towards youth, there needs to be youth involved in the process around the program. The youth voice is not being heard and not a lot of effort is being made to hear it. (Youth Voice, FYI)

Participants agreed that youth will not feel comfortable accessing facilities unless there is youth representation in the staff and the political process.

We need in every agency that provides programming to youth, a youth council that will meet once a month to create programming, advocate for different issues in their community, for things that we need, for grants, space, accessibility, programming, resources, to create programming, anything we need for them. (Parks and Recreation Representative)

The possibility of representation and a diverse Youth Council will resolve the lack of communication between decision-makers and the youth population they serve. It is important that all stakeholders involved are creating opportunities that will empower youth to successfully shape their futures and embrace their present reality with hope and enthusiasm.

The Recreation Centre

“If we mobilize the people in our community, we can raise the voices loud enough to say you know what, we pay tax dollars like everyone else. We’re not begging. We’re asking for what is rightfully ours” (Youth Voice, FYI).

The frustration and resentment among the youth of wards 11 and 12 only flourishes as the wait for a recreation centre continues with no end in sight.

The former City of York needs a community recreation centre. This is one of the only communities in Toronto that doesn’t have one. The City of Toronto itself conducted a feasibility study approximately ten years ago and identified the former City of York as the second highest priority for a community centre, second only to St. Jamestown, who has recently received one. Ten years later, it is time for the residents of York to receive what is rightfully theirs. (Youth Voice, FYI)

Although their desperate calls for a community centre comparable to those existing in neighboring regions like North York or Regent Park were actually acknowledged and legitimized by the results of this feasibility study, the promise of a centre has yet to be realized.

Discussions generated from the informant interviews and focus groups indicate that the residents and service providers of these wards have not forgotten the alarming results of that study. In fact, the injustice behind the continued absence of adequate recreational facilities has community members of the former City of York feeling isolated and neglected by their local decision-makers. “North York has quite a few recreation centres that act as the hubs for the community. The City of York has lacked one... it is important that the community here be perceived on an equal footing” (Local School Principal). Many of the youth participants expressed a similar awareness of the discrimination behind the City’s apathy and disregard towards the well being of their community.

If we had that in the City of York and the youth actually see that we have facilities... they would feel so worthy and it would fill up their self-esteem and maybe hopefully wipe out that sense of hopelessness and say you know what? The people in positions of power care about our well-being... to actually put money and funding into programs for us you know? (Youth Voice, FYI)

These insightful remarks reveal the extent to which youth are internalizing the lack of services and facilities in their area. Without the capacity to navigate through the political minefield protecting decision-makers from community confrontation, many youth are left to blame themselves.

On the issue of the absent recreation centre, both of the local Councillors redirected the responsibility towards planners, builders and those responsible for releasing the funds. “It was poor planning – they have promised one big one and it has taken so long – we could have at least delivered on small, much needed one, for now” (Local Councillor). At the same time, both Councillors also expressed enthusiasm for a future that included a new centre and even expressed their commitment to bringing this vision to fruition. “My role is making sure we get the money and the new community centre... Once funds have been procured and building starts, it should take no more than two years until completion” (Local Councillor). In consideration of the ten years the community has already waited, perhaps this two-year timeline will seem acceptable and even reasonable. However, under the terrible risk that two-years will actually translate into another ten, it is crucial that City Council implement sustainable and viable short term solutions that will meet the recreational and social service needs of the community, specifically the youth population.

This report has already established a number of conflicting perceptions on the kind of services youth require and consequently, has identified the need for a comprehensive community consultation process that will ensure that planning and development will meet the needs of the community as well as involve their

visions of the future. It is important to note that while the suggestions on the kind of services a new recreation centre should provide included in this report should be taken seriously, it is not an inclusive picture of the ideal just the beginnings of one. "...if you did build a community centre in York...it should have that sense of initiative like this is mine...let's make something beautiful out of it" (Youth Voice, FYI).

Again, a community consultation on the purpose and vision of the new recreation centre is vital to the success of the programs it will offer and the sense of pride and ownership over the centre the community will have.

When asked to list their expectations of the potential recreation centre, participants quickly produced a rather detailed vision. The following table was constructed to capture the full range of suggestions offered in the survey, interviews and focus group discussions as well as highlights the points of consensus among the different groups of participants. Overall, the participants shared a vision of a centre that will be inclusive and accessible to the entire community. While there was some concern that the new recreation centre may be disruptive to the success of existing programs, most of the participants agreed that the centre would be a positive addition to the community. Further, many participants suggested that the population of the former City of York will quickly outgrow the new recreation centre and thus the centre should be considered one of many solutions to the lack of resources, community space, and social service provisions in Wards 11 and 12.

Table 1: Community Expectations of Youth Programming and Space

Youth	Service Providers & Community Members	City Staff (including Councillors)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employment services ✓ Space for all the different agencies ✓ Homework tutors ✓ Basketball court ✓ Pool ✓ Soccer ✓ Daycare services ✓ Farmer’s market ✓ Healthy food ✓ Running track ✓ Offer subsidies for lower-income families ✓ Have graffiti on it ✓ Rooms for workshops ✓ Job opportunities for youth ✓ Lounge area ✓ Dance studio ✓ Vending machines ✓ Computer room (access to internet & printers) ✓ Classes for immigrants ✓ Access to turntables & recording studio ✓ Parenting classes ✓ ESL programming ✓ Youth-friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gyms ✓ Daycare facilities ✓ Workout gym ✓ Rooms for workshops and programs ✓ Dance studio ✓ Recording studio ✓ Pool ✓ Legal services ✓ ESL programming ✓ Volunteer programs ✓ Medical centre ✓ TTC accessible ✓ Satellite locations ✓ Mentoring/ leadership programs ✓ Access to social workers & counselors ✓ Soundproofed rooms for programs sharing facility space with other agencies ✓ Separate youth entrance into facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Volunteer programs ✓ TTC accessible ✓ Central locations for community agencies ✓ Satellite locations

Conclusion

“I think it starts with a small group like this... we need to make sure that what is coming out of research, we need to implement. It’s also beneficial that with the research, it needs to get funnelled out to the City just to let them know that we are not sitting idly by. We are going to take action!” (TCHC Representative).

The authors of this report hope that the important themes established here will inspire and mobilize community members to advocate for change. The urgency for more funding, youth-driven programming and a community recreation centre is indisputable and demands immediate public attention. This report has determined that the growing population in the former City of York has NEVER been provided enough space and therefore should be considered a priority in the eyes of Toronto City Council and funding bodies for improvement in all areas of community development, but specifically in the provision of adequate community space. At the same time, participants have agreed that there are immediate and viable solutions to this crisis if they are able to access the relatively abundant amount of underutilized space in these wards, especially within the school system.

Finally, the short and long-term solutions offered below are mindful of the numerous questions and concerns generated from the Community Committee, interviews, focus group discussions and survey results. All things considered, while it is important that the promise of a community recreation centre is fulfilled, it is equally as essential that decision-makers financially support and take direction from youth, existing programs, community workers and service providers. It is crucial that the voices of youth living in the former City of York are involved in decision-making processes and action is taken based on their needs and interests. Most of all, we will have to work carefully to identify and create public spaces and ideas that are based on a sustained effort to bring all young people into civic, social, and economic arenas of their communities as lifelong learners, workers, and change agents.

Recommendations

Short-term Solutions

- 1. Access space immediately in public schools**
 The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need immediate access to existing space available in public schools after classes. The reality is that existing spaces tend to be scarce and sub-standard. Schools are under-utilized, and could take a stronger more active role in the community. We call on the Toronto District School Board, in collaboration with all levels of government, to open schools doors and offer FREE space for youth-led, youth-specific programming.
- 2. Organize a community conference involving youth**
 The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need opportunities to participate in debates, policy development and legislative practices that are constructed in terms of their needs. We call on Toronto City Council, Parks and Recreation Department and the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto to provide adequate funding for a community conference that will, i) be inclusive of youth and supportive of youth playing lead roles in organizations, ii) encourage agencies to share best practices, iii) facilitate networking and community partnerships, and iv) consult the community on the development of the new recreation centre.
- 3. Build Partnerships**
 The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need existing agencies and all levels of government to create productive community partnerships to coordinate their resources and increase the effectiveness of current programming. Partnership building can facilitate enhanced access to space, opportunities for resource sharing and advocacy.
- 4. Increase program funding and eliminate user fees**
 Current and new youth programming need immediate support. We call on City Council, community agencies and relevant funding bodies to remove user-fees for youth participants in City of Toronto Parks and Recreation programs. We also call on Toronto City Council and relevant funding bodies to provide immediate funding to existing youth-specific programs to increase their longevity, sustainability, effectiveness and reach.
- 5. Establish community based program space in multiple locations**
 The youth of Wards 11 and 12 require access to programs in multiple locations that are safe and youth-friendly. The presence of smaller sites spread throughout the community in TCHC buildings, schools, storefronts and other types of space increases accessibility.

6. Develop inclusive programming that meets the needs of female and racialized youth

The youth of Wards 11 and 12 require inclusive programs that will meet the needs of racialized youth in a community rich in diversity. Program staff need to be reflective of communities served and programs themselves must be youth-driven, youth-friendly and dynamic to meet the changing needs of youth. Programs are also required that address the needs of under serviced young women. We call on City Council, community agencies and relevant funding bodies to create, implement and disseminate youth-led, youth-driven programs that will attract and support young women and racialized youth.

Long-term Solutions

1. Accelerate the building of a community recreation centre in York South-Weston now!

This outstanding need has been well documented and researched by the City of Toronto and community agencies for over a decade. We call on all levels of government to accelerate all the remaining processes needed to secure the land and allow for the actual building of a centre to begin. Acknowledging that the building of the centre will take approximately two years until completion, action needs to occur now!

2. Consult with community to inform the planning, development and implementation phases of the community centre's construction

The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need a community recreation centre that meets the needs of all community members, including youth. We call on Toronto City Council, Parks and Recreation, Community Social Planning Council of Toronto and local community agencies and groups to facilitate a comprehensive community consultation upon confirmation that the centre will be built. This consultation will generate input from the community as to the type of structure built (blue print), the services and programs offered, as well as staffing and community representation. This process will also foster a sense of community ownership and ensure that community members are involved in the planning and development of the centre from the start.

3. Involve youth in decision making and community development processes

The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need a strong and equal voice in political processes and program development. We call on Toronto City Council to support the Community Committee and participation of local youth on this committee to ensure youth involvement in the decision-making process around future space investigations and program development.

4. Engage in community advocacy through yearly deputations at City Hall and other opportunities to impact policy

We urge Community Committee members and the broader community to participate in yearly deputations at Toronto City Hall to strongly advocate for the development of a community centre and satellite spaces for youth programming.

5. Establish core funding for youth-driven initiatives

The youth of Wards 11 and 12 need a long-term financial commitment from funding bodies to foster youth-based resources in the region. We call on Toronto City Council and relevant funding bodies to provide core stable and long-term funding for youth-driven, youth-led programs.

**APPENDIX A:
WARD 11 AND 12 POPULATION STATISTICS**

Table 1: Population by Age Group

Age Group	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
Less than 5	4,210	7.8	4,470	5.3
5 – 9	4,075	7.6	4,430	5.7
10 – 14	3,355	6.3	3,770	5.9
15 – 19	3,230	6.0	3,555	6.2
20 – 24	3,715	6.9	3,845	5.9
25 – 34	8,655	16.1	9,540	13.1
35 – 44	8,980	16.8	10,550	16.8
44 – 54	5,995	11.2	7,430	13.8
55 – 64	4,485	8.4	5,075	8.3
65+	6,890	12.9	7,325	19.0
Total	53,590	100.0	59,990	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 2: Mother Tongue Groups

Language	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
English	22,380	41.8	30,530	50.9
Italian	8,955	16.7	3,140	5.2
Spanish	4,360	8.1	4,480	7.5
Portuguese	3,920	7.3	3,615	6.0
Vietnamese	1,270	2.4	2,465	4.1
Tagalog	775	1.4	735	1.2
Chinese	730	1.4	975	1.6
Urdu	625	1.2		
Persian	380	0.7		
Punjabi			575	1.0
Korean			630	1.0
Polish	365	0.7	990	1.7
Others	8,230	15.3	10,485	17.5
Single Response	51,990	97.0	58,620	97.7
Multiple Response	1,600	3.0	1,370	2.3
Total	53,590	100.0	59,990	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 3: Ethnic Origin Groups

Group	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
Italian	11,655	21.8	4,155	6.9
Portuguese	4,180	7.8	4,105	6.8
Jamaican	3,540	6.6	3,855	6.4
Canadian	2,835	5.3	4,185	7.0
East Indian	2,495	4.7	2,295	3.6
Chinese	1,345	2.5	1,955	3.3
Spanish	1,330	2.5	1,415	2.4
Vietnamese	1,235	2.3	2,165	3.6
Filipino	1,085	2.0		
Somali			1,165	1.9
English	1,020	1.9	2,380	4.0
Others	14,330	26.7	19,560	32.6
Single Response	45,050	84.1	47,235	78.7
Multiple Response	8,505	15.9	12,750	21.3
Total	53,555	100.0	59,985	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 4: Families by Type

Type	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
Couples with children	7,380	49.4	7,615	47.0
Couples without children	3,825	25.6	4,260	26.3
Lone-Parent	3,745	25.0	4,335	26.7
Total	14,950	100.0	16,210	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 5: Families by Number of Children

Type	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
Under 6 years of age	4,970	24.8	5,445	25.6
6 – 14 years	6,555	32.6	7,100	33.4
15 – 17 years	1,975	9.8	2,065	9.7
18 – 24years	3,475	17.3	3,505	16.5
25+	3,105	15.5	3,145	14.8
Total	20,080	100.0	21,260	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 6: School Attendance of population aged 15 – 24

Type	Ward 12		Ward 11	
	2001 number	%	2001 number	%
Not attending school	2,520	36.2	3,100	41.9
Attending school full time	4,080	58.7	3,810	51.5
Attending school part time	355	5.1	490	6.6
Total	6,955	100.0	7,400	100.0

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

Table 7: Labour Force/Employment

Type	Ward 12	Ward 11
	%	%
Unemployment rate	7.6	8.1
In the labour force	61.7	62.8
Employed	57.0	57.7
Unemployed	4.7	5.1
Not in the labour force	38.3	37.2
Incidence Low Income-Economic Families	28.7	25
Incidence Low Income-Unattached individuals	48.4	48.2
Total Immigrants	56.4	51.5
Non-Immigrants	41.7	46.3
Non-Permanent Residents	1.9	2.2

City of Toronto Website, Ward Profiles: Information derived from Statistics Canada's 2001 Census Semi-Custom Profile. Available online: www.statcan.ca

APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

Table 1: Spare Time

Options	# of youth that chose this activity	Gender		By age		
		Female	Male	13-15	16-18	19-24
Watch TV	393	222	171	228	145	20
Listen to music	377	199	178	240	122	15
Hang out with friends	355	184	171	215	117	23
Go to a shopping mall	301	187	114	174	105	22
Play sports	261	105	156	167	79	15
Read	165	110	55	109	50	6
Draw/sketch/paint	157	88	69	108	46	3
Go to a house party	147	105	42	81	59	7
Work	141	70	71	83	50	8
Attend dances	129	74	55	86	35	8
Play a musical inst.	116	69	47	76	35	5
Study	109	58	51	72	34	3
Volunteer	100	61	39	54	46	0
Attend a Rave	34	14	20	23	10	1
Drink Alcohol	4	1	3	3	1	0
Take Drugs	3	1	2	3	0	0
Other	308	156	152	195	97	16

Table 2: Spare Time Over the Past Month

Options	# of youth that chose this activity	Gender		By age		
		Female	Male	13-15	16-18	19-24
Listened to music	393	218	175	241	138	14
Watched TV	381	202	179	250	118	13
Hung out with friends	370	196	174	239	117	14
Went to a the mall	322	182	140	206	103	13
Read	243	145	98	172	65	6
Studied	241	135	106	168	67	6
Played sports	235	87	148	145	80	10
Worked	206	105	101	131	67	8
Went to a house party	187	101	86	109	67	11
Drew/sketched/painted	183	107	76	132	48	3
Played a musical inst.	148	82	66	116	29	3
Volunteered	123	71	52	87	34	2
Attended dances	96	47	49	64	26	6
Attended a Rave	22	6	16	12	9	1
Drank Alcohol	9	2	7	8	1	0
Took Drugs	2	0	2	2	0	0
Other	353	183	170	235	108	10

Table 3: Barriers to Participation

Options	# of youth that chose this barrier	By age		
		13-15	16-18	19-24
Ride	240	168	65	7
Parents will not allow	205	152	49	4
Too expensive	186	111	66	9
Transportation	138	99	36	3
Information about activity	116	83	31	2
Not of interest	111	79	28	4
Too late	106	64	39	3
Friends not interested	85	53	31	1
Safety/security concerns	68	46	17	5
Not easily accessible	65	42	21	2
Lack of Equipment	57	44	12	1
Lack of Clothes	52	34	18	0
Cultural/religious reasons	47	31	16	0
Afraid	36	29	7	0
Other	357	236	108	13

Table 4: Preferred Location for Participation

Options	# of youth that chose this location	Gender	
		Female	Male
Mall	229	148	81
Friend's house	216	128	88
Movies	181	97	84
School	112	62	50
Local recreation centre	78	40	38
School playing field	76	46	30
All ages club	53	29	24
Arcade	50	8	42
Local area hangout	45	23	22
Youth drop-in centre	44	19	25
Parks	42	22	20
Other	372	193	179

Table 5: Youth Interest

Options	# of youth that chose this activity	Gender		By age		
		Female	Male	13-15	16-18	19-24
Sports	262	119	143	177	73	12
Pizza and movie nights	252	144	108	170	73	9
Fitness & wellness svcs.	147	79	68	87	50	10
Recreation programs	131	75	56	88	37	6
Employment Services	127	72	55	86	39	2
Arts programming	121	78	43	75	43	3
Leadership programs	115	68	47	71	38	6
Drug and alcohol prog.	91	37	54	80	11	0
Comm. kitchen svcs.	83	58	25	58	21	4
Personal Counselling	53	32	21	28	24	1
Sexual health counsel.	52	30	22	25	25	2
Comm. gardening svcs.	40	28	12	26	13	1
Legal services	38	24	14	28	9	1
Other	383	200	183	237	132	14

Table 6: Where Youth go to get Information

Options	# of youth that chose this resource	By age		
		13-15	16-18	19-24
Friends	213	118	86	9
Parents	190	119	63	8
Schools	134	79	49	6
Family members	79	53	23	3
Doctors	68	33	29	6
Coaches	50	28	20	2
Counsellors	24	8	13	3
Religious institutions	10	6	4	0
Helpline	6	4	2	0
Other	376	240	123	13

APPENDIX C
TEMPLATE OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Could you begin by telling me a bit about what your role is as _____?
2. What programs do you wish, if any, our community could provide but do not due to space/time restrictions?
3. From your perspective, what recreational services do you feel youth in this area require? (remember, recreational does not only mean athletic, it also includes, art programs, skill building sessions, pre-employment training, etc.)
4. Do you feel that youth in this ward have enough physical space to carry out the activities they may want? Do you feel you have enough space to carry out the activities you want?
5. a) Do you feel that these facilities welcome everyone equally? (language, race, culture, gender, sexual orientation etc. b) if either one of the above mentioned issues are highlighted more than others, probe further (ex. gender specific programming, programs created in a particular language, programs that celebrate diverse traditions etc.)
6. Where do you feel the most need is for youth-friendly space in this area- in what area of recreation, the library, employment centers? Structured or Unstructured activities, Arts, Camp, Culture, Language, etc.?
7. You might be aware that the city has allocated some funding towards a new community centre in this area, what would you like seen offered/included in this facility?

APPENDIX D

TEMPLATE OF THE FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Demographic Information

We would like to be familiar with the youth population in wards 11 and 12 of the Former City of York to help us understand your needs. Please help us by completing the following questions. Once completed, this information is strictly confidential. Please do not identify your name anywhere on this form to further ensure confidentiality.

- a) Gender: _____
- b) Age: _____
- c) Are you currently in school or involved in any continued education?
- Yes
 - No
- d) Are you a parent?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, how old are your children? yrs, yrs, yrs.
- e) How long have you lived in this community?
- Under 6 months
 - 6 months- 2 years
 - 2 years- 4 years
 - 4 years +
- f) How long have you lived in this province? yrs.
- g) How long have you lived in Canada? yrs.
- h) What language do you primarily speak in your home? _____
- i) To what ethno-cultural group(s) do you belong? (e.g. African, East-Asian, South Asian, European, South East Asia, West Asian/Arab, First Nations etc)
- j) To the best of your knowledge, you would estimate your household income to be
- Less than \$20,000
 - \$21,000- \$40,000
 - \$41,000- \$60,000
 - \$61,000- \$80,000
 - \$80,000+
- k) What is your usual way of travelling around Toronto
- 1) By Public Transit 2) By Car 3) Walking

Focus Group questions:

1. Which facilities do young people use and why do you think they use them?
Which other facilities are you aware of in the city?
2. How do you feel about the current “recreational” facilities available to youth?
(remember, recreational does not only mean athletic, it also includes, art programs, skill building sessions, pre-employment training, etc.)
3. Do you feel that youth in this ward have enough physical space to carry out the activities you may want- in other words, with all the activities you would like to do, is there space offered to you to carry out the activities?
4. Are the current facilities (recreation, the library, employment centers etc.) easily accessible (transportation, safe, inviting etc.) & are the program relevant to youth?
5. a) Do you feel that these facilities welcome everyone equally? (language, race, culture, gender, sexual orientation etc.) b) If either one of the above mentioned issues are highlighted more than others, probe further (ex. gender specific programming, programs created in a particular language, programs that celebrate diverse traditions etc.)
6. Where do you feel the most need is for youth-friendly space in this area- in what area of recreation, the library, employment centers? Structured or Unstructured activities, Arts, Camp, Culture, Language, etc.?
7. a) If you had all the resources in the world, what types of facilities would you like seen in this ward and where? b) Now, if these dreams had to become a reality, imagine everything offered in one building- what would you like seen offered/included in this facility?
8. Past research suggests that there are a variety of programs for children and seniors, but there are gaps in service provision for 13-24 yr olds- would you agree? Where do you think the gap is the greatest- for what age range? Females or males? Minorities? Etc.
9. When I say the word ‘user fees’ how does that sit with you? Do you feel that this is a concern for youth?

Appendix E

TEMPLATE OF SURVEY GUIDE

For Youth Initiative Participant Information Letter

Finding out what Youth think the Prominent Youth Issues are in York
(Wards 11 & 12)

Researchers: Seema Aggarwal, Primary Researcher/Facilitator, For Youth Initiative (FYI), Community Volunteers, Assistant Researcher(s)

Supervisor: Shahina Sayani, Executive Director of FYI, phone: (416) 653-3311

FYI is a by youth for youth initiative that aims to creating healthy communities by increasing life-chances of youth at-risk. They accomplish this through the provision of empowering programs and services that are youth-driven, inclusive, and accessible.

One of the purposes of this project is to increase youth-friendly safe space in the Former City of York. In order to fulfill this goal, a Community Committee will be formed that will examine the current space and facilities available to youth along with providing short-term solutions to access issues. It is our goal to provide an in-depth youth perspective since we think it is essential for young people to speak on issues that affect their lives. In order to do this, we are distributing brief surveys so that we can find out how young people feel about youth issues with regards to access, safe space, facilities and so on. Questions ask about your feelings about the availability, accessibility, flexibility, sensitivity, and adaptability of community services, facilities, and spaces.

This is your chance to share your thoughts and opinions about what you think the prominent youth issues are in your community. Your experiences will be shared with the Community Committee, and could impact the committee's future direction and decisions. Your answers, along with answers from other surveys, will be part of a report given to the Trillium Foundation. This report intends to advocate for a new youth centre in the Former City of York. Participation in this survey is voluntary.

Your name will not be attached to any of your answers to ensure that what you say is anonymous. Also, when we discuss the results of the study we will only talk about general themes, we will never discuss specific answers made by individuals, and the researchers are the only ones that will be examining the data. Once all the surveys are complete, we will summarize the information and present the findings to the Trillium Foundation and we will communicate the findings back to you. Please feel free to call us if you would like to speak to us about the results of this study in more depth.

Demographic Information

We would like to be familiar with the youth population in wards 11 and 12 of the Former City of York to help us understand your needs. Please help us by completing the following questions. Once completed, this information is strictly confidential. Please do not identify your name anywhere on this form to further ensure confidentiality.

- a) Gender: _____
- b) Age: _____
- c) How long have you lived in this community?
 - Under 6 months
 - 6 months- 2 years
 - 2 years- 4 years
 - 4 years +
- d) How long have you lived in this province? _____ yrs.
- e) How long have you lived in Canada? _____ yrs.
- f) What language do you primarily speak in your home? _____
- g) To what ethno-cultural group(s) do you belong? (e.g. African, East-Asian, South Asian, European, South East Asia, West Asian/Arab, First Nations etc.) _____
- h) To the best of your knowledge, you would estimate your household income to be
 - Less than \$20,000
 - \$21,000- \$40,000
 - \$41,000- \$60,000
 - \$61,000- \$80,000
 - \$80,000+
- i) What is your usual way of travelling around Toronto
 - 1) By Public Transit
 - 2) By Car
 - 3) Walking

Please tell us how you feel about recreation. Using the options provided, circle or check the items which relate to you.

1) Whenever I have spare time, I can always find fun things to do. (Circle one)
 1 2 3 4 5
 None of the time Rarely Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

2) What do you most like to do in your spare time? (Select all that apply)

Item	Check here (√)
Hang out with friends	
Listen to music	
Watch TV	
Play sports	
Go to a shopping mall	
Go to a house party	
Attend dances	
Read	
Draw/sketch/paint	
Play a musical instrument	
Work	
Study	
Drink alcohol	
Volunteer	
Take drugs	
Other (poetry, youth group etc.)	

3) What activities have you done in the past month?

Item	Check here (√)
Hung out with friends	
Listened to music	
Watched TV	
Played sports	
Went to a shopping mall	
Went to a house party	
Attended dances	
Read	
Drew/sketched/painted	
Played a musical instrument	
Worked	
Studied	
Drank alcohol	
Volunteered	
Took drugs	
Other (poetry, youth group etc.)	

4) What often stops you from doing one of the things you like to do in your spare time? (Select all that apply)

Item	Check here (√)
Don't have a ride	
The activity is too expensive	
Friends don't like to do what I like to do	
Parents won't let me do the activity	
Can't get to the activity	
Can't always find out where or when the activity is happening	
Other _____	
Activity is past the time when I have to be home	
Don't have the right equipment	
Afraid	
Don't have the right clothes	
Activity is not easily accessible	
You have safety/security concerns	
Cultural/religious reasons	
Activities of interest are not available	

5) Where would you prefer to go in order to participate in many of your favourite activities? (Circle no more than three options)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| a) Youth drop-in centre | d) School | g) Friend's house | j) Arcade |
| b) School playing field | e) Mall | h) All ages club | k) Parks |
| c) Local recreation centre | f) Movies | i) Local area hangout | l) Other |

6) What programs or activities would you participate in at a local Community Centre? (Select all that apply)

Item	Check here (√)
Employment Services	
Personal Counselling	
Sports	
Pizza and movie nights	
Recreation programs	
Leadership programs	
Legal services	
Sexual health counselling	
Fitness and wellness services	
Community kitchen services	

Community gardening services	
Arts programming	
Other (please specify)	

7) Where have you gone to get information? (regarding education, personal health etc.) (Circle no more than three options.)

- a) Parents c) Coaches e) Schools g) Family members i) Counsellors
 b) Friends d) Doctors f) Helpline h) Religious institutions j) Other _____

APPENDIX F: SUMMARY TABLE

Table 1: Facilities by Category

Category	Number of Spaces	Corresponding Map
Youth Specific	1	Map 1
Community Serving	19	Map 2
Child Care	18	Map 3
Library	4	Map 4
Toronto District School Board	29	Map 5
Toronto Catholic District School Board	11	Map 6
Parks and Recreation	13	Map 7
Toronto Community Housing	17	Map 8
Faith-Based	10	Map 9
<hr/>		
Total	122	

NOTE:

The above facilities are reflective of those identified and discussed amongst the community committee as being located in Wards 11 and 12. Any agency, organization, childcare facility or available programming space not captured in the asset maps was in no way intentionally left out. All efforts were made by the researcher and community committee to ensure an accurate listing. Specifically, the faith-based facilities identified in asset map 9 represent those brought forth by the Toronto Police Liaison Committee of 12 division as having available space for programming. Spaces designated for senior services were not listed.

APPENDIX G
Categories and Listings of Facilities in Wards 11 and 12

Category: Agencies with youth specific services (Asset Map 1)

Name, Location and Phone Number	Space/Program Description
1. For Youth Initiative (FYI) 1652 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W3 416-653-3311	By youth for youth agency focused on increasing access to social services, education, recreation, economic and cultural opportunities for youth, particularly ethno cultural youth. They participate in advocacy efforts and help to create opportunities for youth to voice their needs in community decision-making processes. Program areas include life skills, recreation, community development, cultural production, and female-specific.

Category: Community agencies, including those with youth programming, ethno-specific services, and legal services (Asset Map 2)

Name, Location, and Phone Number	Space/Program Description
1. Anduhyun 1296 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4R3 416-243-1464	Crisis intervention program for Native community, emergency shelter, second stage housing and counselling for Native women and children. Has licensed childcare and second-stage housing for women.
2. Black Inmates and Friends Assembly 2518 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 1T1 416-652-3131	Provides culturally sensitive discharge planning and reintegration services for individuals who have been incarcerated. Also provides a preventive program including socializing and recreation for youth entitled "Reclaiming Our Youth" (ROY).
3. Broad African Resource Centre 1672 Jane St Toronto, ON M6E 4V5 416-781-2365	Open to all immigrants and refugees, including youth and families with a focus on African communities
4. Community Action Resource Centre 1652 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W3 416-652-2273	Information and referral to government and social services. Assistance in filling out government forms; Outreach to Portuguese speaking community; Newcomer settlement program for Eritrean and Somali communities in collaboration with Somali Immigrant Women's Association and Eritrean Canadian Community Centre; Community development activities; voicemail for those without a telephone, clothing exchange, free internet access, children's drop-in, recreational programming, commissioner of oaths available.
5. Community Social Planning Council of Toronto-York Office 1652 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W3 416-652-9772	Facilitates active citizen involvement in analysis of social issues, development of social policies, encourages and assists public and private organizations and community groups to develop social policies and services etc.
6. Cross Edge Community Network 2638 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 1T7 416-652-3636	General reception and settlement services, general counselling, job search, skills training etc

<p>7. Frontlines 1844 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 1V8 416-244-7017</p>	<p>Drop-in centre that offers services and programs to youth and groups in the neighbourhood of Weston.</p>
<p>8. Islamic Social Services and Resources Association 2375 St. Clair Ave West Toronto, ON M6N 1R9 416-767-4439</p>	<p>Provides information and referral services, individual, family and youth counseling, support groups, liaison with Children's Aid Society and other agencies, community education, workshops, community development, visiting program for seniors, sick children and new mothers, homework programs, youth groups, social and recreation programs.</p>
<p>9. Learning Enrichment Foundation 116 Industry St Toronto, ON M6M 4L8 416-769-0830</p>	<p>Agency focused on community economic development through services such as employment services, skills testing, employment counselling, job placement, and training programs (including early childhood assistant, elder care/family support, food service industry, computer skills, woodworking, industrial skills and forklift). Offers pre-apprenticeship training in carpentry, electrician, and plumbing. Provides training enterprises for at risk youth as well as settlement services. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes offered. Also provides childcare centres in various satellite locations throughout Wards 11 and 12.</p>
<p>10. Macaulay Child Development Centre, Ontario Early Years Centre 48 Regent St Toronto, ON M6N 3N9 416-653-3270</p>	<p>Services provided for parents or caregivers of children birth-6 years. Services include: early learning and literacy programs, parent/caregiver and child drop-ins, pregnancy and parenting groups and programs, and information on other early years programs.</p>
<p>11. Oromo Canadian Community Association 761 Jane St Toronto, ON M6N 4B4 416-767-8784</p>	<p>Offers Oromiffa heritage language program, translation and interpretation services, assistance with immigration processes orientation, provides referrals, provides counseling for women, sports and recreation programs for children, and social and cultural activities.</p>
<p>12. Somali Immigrant Aid Organization Toronto 1778 Weston Rd, Ste 105, Toronto, ON, M9N 1V8 416-243-1988</p>	<p>Immigration and sponsoring issues, translation and interpretation, job training, health and nutrition information etc.</p>

<p>13. Somali Immigrant Women's Association 1652 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W3 416-656-7492</p>	<p>Services for Somali immigrant women and their children include: settlement services, information /referral to social, government and community services, client support services, informal culturally appropriate counseling, orientation to Canadian life, form filling, translation /interpretation, life skills support, support groups for women experiencing violence, culturally sensitive support for families and children in crisis, seniors and youth support, mediation services to resolve family conflicts, school disengagement, and community capacity building</p>
<p>14. Syme-Woolner Neighbourhood and Family Centre 2468 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 5E2 416-766-4634</p>	<p>Offers a variety of services including: information and referral assistance, help filling out forms, support around tenant issues, free legal information, an annual income tax clinic, assistance in resume writing, and Job Search Workshops (JSW) -- in partnership with Community MicroSkills Development Centre. Participants are able develop computer skills, participate in CAP (Community Access Program) -- free Internet access. Offers programs such as an adult drop-in, youth drop-in, women's support program, HIV/AIDS harm reduction program. Performs outreach to injection drug users and to homeless people. Participates in community development, advocacy, provides opportunities to volunteer, and to write in the agency's newspaper.</p>
<p>15. Toronto Foundation for Student Success 2 Trethewey Dr, 4th Fl, Toronto, ON M6M 4A8 416-394-6880</p>	<p>Mission includes assisting students to benefit physically, emotionally and intellectually from each school day through nutrition. An arm's length charitable foundation of the Toronto District School Board that provides nutrition programs including breakfast, snack and lunch programs.</p>
<p>16. urbanArts Toronto 19 John St Toronto, ON M9N 1J2 416-241-5124</p>	<p>Works with all ages, cultures and levels of artistic experience, from beginners to seasoned professionals. Professional artists from many fields lead programming in music, dance, visual arts and theatre. They work to bring a love of the arts, artistic experiences and learning to people right in their own neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>17. York Community Services 1651 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W2 416-653-5400</p>	<p>Community-based charitable organization offering a broad range of primary health care, legal services, counselling, housing help and community support programs to residents of the former City of York in Toronto. Services are targeted to families at risk, primarily single mothers and low-income families, newcomers and refugees, adults with developmental and/or mental health difficulties and seniors and the frail elderly - with the overall goal of building healthy families, individuals and communities.</p>
<p>18. York Hispanic Centre 1652 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W3 416-652-3636</p>	<p>Offers services in the following areas: settlement, referral, counseling, translation and interpretation, form filling, skill training, assistance in finding housing, and employment searching. Provides English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, Spanish as a Second Language Classes educational workshops, family violence prevention programs, support groups, programs for children, youth, women and seniors, cultural heritage programs, community development projects, and social and recreational programs including theatre and community gardening. Through Legal Aid Ontario a legal clinic is offered and opportunities for student and volunteer placement are available.</p>

<p>19. Yorktown Child and Family Centre 21 Ascot Ave Toronto, ON M6E 1E6 416-394-2424</p> <p>*Not shown on Asset Map 2.</p>	<p>Services include: Community Parent Education (COPE) for parents of children birth-6 years, early years services in the home, school and community, early intervention and treatment including individual and family counselling, on site Toronto Preschool Speech and Language Services, Reconnecting Program (for immigrant youth and parents), Daryeelka Qokska (family support and education program for Somali community), and Here to Help (group program for children and their mothers exposed to woman abuse). Other programs include Finding Solutions group for parents of adolescents, outreach and consultation to schools, community centres, parks and recreation, school-based programs, and Stop the Violence presentations to schools. Offers various services throughout the West end of Toronto in multiple satellite locations.</p>
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* Source: Information adapted from <http://www.211Toronto.ca>.

Category: Child Care Centres (Asset Map 3)

Name, Location, and Phone Number	Service Description
1. Anduhyaun Day Care 1296 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4R3 416-243-1464	Capacity 44
2. Brookhaven Childcare Centre 70 Brookhaven Dr North York, ON M6M 4N8 416-249-6587	2-1/2 - 12 years, capacity 74
3. Ernie Boccia Creative Child Day Care Centre Harold and Grace Baker Centre, 1 Northwestern Ave Toronto, ON M6M 2J7 416-653-6305	3 months-5 years, capacity 46
4. Falstaff Child Care Centre 10 Falstaff Ave Toronto, ON 416-392-5688	Birth-5 years, priority given to City of Toronto employees. Operated directly by the City of Toronto. Provides integrated program for children with developmental, physical or emotional disabilities, capacity 75
5. Happy Day Child Care Centre 676 Jane St Toronto, ON M6N 4A7 416-769-1289	2-1/2 - 9 years, capacity 56
6. Hollis Child Care Centre 1 Hollis St Toronto, ON M6M 4N1 416-392-5686	Birth-5 years, priority to City of Toronto employees, integrated program for children with developmental, physical or emotional disabilities, capacity 57
7. Jubilee Day Care 55 Emmett Ave Toronto, ON M6M 2E4 416-248-1112	18 months-12 years, integrated program for children with developmental or emotional disabilities, capacity 77
8. Just Kids Child Care Services 1695 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W7 416-654-9944	18 months-5 years, capacity 67
9. Lambton Park Child Care Centre 50 Bernice Crescent Toronto, ON M6N 1W9 416-762-5177	3-1/2 - 5 years, capacity 40
10. Macaulay Child Development Centre, Jane Street Child Care Centre 610 Jane St Toronto ON M6S 4A6	6 months-5 years, integrated program for children with developmental, physical or emotional disabilities, capacity 62

<p>11. Macaulay Child Development Centre, Regent Street Child Care Centre 48 Regent St Toronto, ON M6N 3N9</p>	<p>18 months-10 years, integrated program for children with developmental, physical or emotional disabilities, capacity 73</p>
<p>12. Pinetree Weston Day Care Centre 1234 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4P4 416-247-8134</p>	<p>Birth-12 years, also nursery school program, capacity 95</p>
<p>13. Royal Day Care Centre 1737 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 1V5 416-249-9115</p>	<p>18 months-10 years, temporary or emergency care available, capacity 105</p>
<p>14. Storybook Child Care Centre 1855 Jane St Toronto, ON M6N 2T7 416-241-5233</p>	<p>3years- 8years, capacity 70</p>
<p>15. Superkids Day Care Centre 1149 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6N 3S3 416-767-3960</p>	<p>18 months-5 years, capacity 49</p>
<p>16. Tender Loving Care Child Learning Centre, Cross Street Branch 44 Cross St Toronto, ON M9N 2B9 416-248-5401</p>	<p>18 months-12 years, capacity 60</p>
<p>17. Trimbee Infant Child Careu Centre 30 Denarda St Toronto, ON M6M 5C3 416-392-3705</p>	<p>Birth-18 months, priority to City of Toronto employees, capacity 10</p>
<p>18. Weston Village Child Care 69 William St Toronto, ON M9N 2G6 416-245-3585</p>	<p>18 months-9 years, capacity 46</p>

* Source: Information adapted from <http://www.211Toronto.ca>.

Category: Libraries in Wards 11 and 12 (Asset Map 4)

Name and Location
1. Amesbury Park 1565 Lawrence Ave West Toronto, ON M6L 1A8 416-395-5420
2. Evelyn Gregory 120 Trowell Ave Toronto, ON M6M 1L7 416-394-1006
3. Mount Dennis 1123 Weston Rd Toronto ON M6N 3S3 416-394-1008
4. Weston 2 King St Toronto, ON M9N 1k9 416-394-1016

Category: Toronto District School Board (Asset Map 5)

Name and Location	Type of School
1. Amesbury 201 Gracefield Ave Toronto, ON M6L 1L7 416-395-2000	Middle School
2. Bala Avenue Community School 6 Bala Ave Toronto, ON M6M 2E1 416-394-2210	Elementary School
3. Brookhaven 70 Brookhaven Dr Toronto, ON M6M 4N8 416-395-2110	Elementary School
4. CR Marchant 1 Ralph St Toronto, ON M9N 3A8 416-394-2268	Middle School
5. Charles E. Webster Public School 1900 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3X7 416-394-2250	Elementary School
6. Cordella Avenue Jr. Public School 175 Cordella Ave Toronto, ON M6N 2K1 416-394-2258	Elementary School
7. Dennis Avenue Community School 17 Dennis Ave Toronto ON M6N 2T7 416-394-2311	Elementary School
8. George Anderson Public School 30 George Anderson Dr Toronto, ON M6M 2Y8 416-395-5000	Elementary School
9. George Syme Community School 69 Pritchard Ave Toronto, ON M6N 1T6 416-394-2340	Elementary School

10. Gracefield Public School 177 Gracefield Ave Toronto, ON M6L 1L7 416-395-2490	Elementary School
11. HJ Alexander Community School 30 King St Toronto, ON M9N 1K9 416-394-2359	Elementary School
12. Harwood Jr. Public School 50 Leigh St Toronto, ON M6N 3X3 416-394-2350	Elementary School
13. Kane Middle School 300 Kane Ave Toronto, ON M6M 391 416-394-3033	Middle School
14. Keele Dale Jr. Public School 200 Bicknell Ave Toronto, ON M6M 4G9 416-394-3050	Elementary School
15. Lambton Park Community School 50 Bernice Crescent Toronto, ON M6N 1W9 416-394-3070	Elementary School
16. Maple Leaf 301 Culford Rd Toronto, ON M6L 2V4 416-395-2670	Elementary School
17. Pelmo Park Public School 180 Gary Dr Toronto, ON M9N 2M1 416-395-2750	Elementary School
18. Portage Trail Community Junior School 100 Sidney Belsey Crescent Toronto, ON M6M 5H6 416-395-4620	Elementary School

T H I N K I N G A B O U T T O M O R R O W ' S S P A C E T O D A Y

<p>19. Portage Trail Community Middle School 100 Sidney Belsey Crescent Toronto, ON M6M 5H6 416-394-4333</p>	<p>Middle School</p>
<p>20. Rockcliffe Middle School 400 Rockcliffe Blvd Toronto, ON M6N 4R8 416-394-3100</p>	<p>Middle School</p>
<p>21. Roselands Jr Public School 900 Jane St Toronto, ON M6N 4E2 416-394-3110</p>	<p>Elementary School</p>
<p>22. Silverthorn Jr Public School 55 Ypres Rd Toronto, ON M6M 1P1 416-394-3124</p>	<p>Elementary School</p>
<p>23. Weston Memorial Jr. Public School 200 John St Toronto, ON M6N 1K2 416-394-3150</p>	<p>Elementary School</p>
<p>24. Frank Oke 500 Alliance Ave Toronto, ON M6N 2H8 416-394-3158</p>	<p>Secondary School</p>
<p>25. George Harvey Collegiate Institute 1700 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W5 416-394-3180</p>	<p>Secondary School</p>
<p>26. Nelson A Boylen Collegiate Insitute 155 Falstaff Ave Toronto, ON M6L 2E5 416-395-3270</p>	<p>Secondary School</p>
<p>27. Weston Collegiate Institute 100 Pine St Toronto, ON M9N 2Y9 416-394-3250</p>	<p>Secondary School</p>

28. York Humber 100 Emmett Ave Toronto, ON M6M 2E6 416-394-3280	Secondary School
29. York Memorial Collegiate Institute 2690 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 1T9 416-394-3000	Secondary School

Category: Toronto District Catholic School Board in Wards 11 and 12 (Asset Map 6)

Name and Location	Type
1. Immaculate Conception 23 Comay Rd Toronto, ON M6M 2H4 416-393-5281	Elementary School
2. Maison Montessori de Toronto Alternative 116 Cornelius Pkwy. Toronto, ON M6L 2K5 416-397-2000	Elementary School
3. Our Lady of Victory 70 Guestville Ave Toronto, ON M6N 4N3 416-393-5247	Elementary School
4. Santa Maria 25 Avon Ave Toronto, ON M6N 4X8 416-393-5368	Elementary School
5. St. Bernard 12 Duckworth St Toronto, ON M6M 4W4 416-393-5061	Elementary School
6. St. Fidelis 9 Bannerman St Toronto, ON M6L 2S5 416-393-5358	Elementary School
7. St. Francis-Xavier 53 Gracefield Ave Toronto, ON M6L 1L3 416-393-5271	Elementary School
8. St. Matthew 18 Lavender Rd Toronto, ON M6N 2B5 416-393-5240	Elementary School
9. St. John the Evangelist 23 George St Toronto, ON M9N 2B4 416-393-5244	Elementary School
10. Archbishop Romero 99 Humber Blvd Toronto, ON M6N 2H4 416-393-5555	Secondary School
11. Chaminade College 490 Queens Drive Toronto, ON M6L 1M8 416-393-5509	Secondary School

Category: Parks and Recreation (Asset Map 7)

Name and Location	Phone Number	Space Description
1. Amesbury Community Centre 1507 Lawrence Ave Toronto, ON M6L 1A8	416-395-0145	1 large gym, 1 large multipurpose room, 4 small multipurpose rooms, outdoor basketball court, outside tennis court
2. Amesbury Sports Complex 155 Culford Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4K6	416-395-6655	Bocce courts, ice rink, swimming pool, splash pad, outdoor basketball court
3. Bala Ave Community School 6 Bala Ave Toronto, ON, M6M 2E1	416-394-2210	1 large room
4. Centennial Recreation Centre West 2694 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 1T9	416-395-6040	Swimming pool, multipurpose room, 1 large gym
5. Chris Tonks Arena 2801 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 5B4	416-394-2733	Ice rink, outdoor soccer field, outdoor baseball field
6. Falstaff Community Centre 50 Falstaff Ave Toronto, ON M6L 2C7	416-395-7924	1 large gym, computer room, 3 multipurpose rooms, outdoor basketball court, outdoor tennis court
7. George Harvey Collegiate Institute 1700 Keele St Toronto, ON M6M 3W5	416-394-3180	3 gyms (1 large gym splits into two gyms, 1 small gym), swimming pool, auditorium
8. Harwood Hall 85 Cayuga Ave Toronto, ON M6N 2G4	416-394-2797	1 large multipurpose room, kitchen, 2 small multipurpose rooms
9. Keelesdale Jr Public School 200 Bicknell Ave Toronto, ON M6M 4G9	416-394-3050	1 large gym
10. Mount Dennis Community Hall 4 Hollis St Toronto, ON M6M 4M9	416-394-2747	Multipurpose room
11. Rockcliffe Middle School 400 Rockcliffe Blvd Toronto, ON M6N 4R8	416-394-3100	1 large gym (large gym splits into two), cafeteria, outdoor soccer field
12. Weston Collegiate Institute 100 Pine St Toronto, ON M9N 2Y9	416-394-3250	1 large gym (large gym splits into two), swimming pool, auditorium
13. Weston Youth Centre and Boxing Gym 206 Queens Dr Toronto, ON M9N 2H7	416-249-6444	Unknown

Category: Toronto Community Housing Corporation, Housing Buildings (Asset Map 8)

Name and Location	Space description
1. Community Housing Unit 6 1901 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 3P1	CHU office
2. DeMarco 2 DeMarco Blvd Toronto, ON M6L 2W1	Unknown
3. Downsview 30 Falstaff Ave Toronto, ON M6L 2C9	Unknown
4. Eagle Manor 1901 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 3P1	Recreation room
5. Humber Blvd 121 Humber Blvd Toronto, ON M6N 2H6	Recreation room
6. Jane/John Best 1570 Jane St Toronto, ON M9N 2R7	Unknown
7. Jane/Woolner 190 Woolner Toronto, ON M6N 1Y3	Recreation room
8. Lawrence 1620 Lawrence Ave West Toronto, ON M6L 1C1	Unknown
9. Lawrence 1622 Lawrence Ave West Toronto, ON M6L 1C1	Unknown
10. Mt. Dennis Apts 101 Humber Toronto, ON M6N 2H5	Recreation room
11, Outlook Manor 55 Outlook Toronto, ON M6N 4Y3	Recreation room
12. Silverthorn Place 600 Rogers Rd Toronto, ON M6M 5G2	Recreation room
13. Tedder 720 Trethewey Dr Toronto, ON M6M 5A5	Recreation room
14. Trethewey 710 Trethewey Dr Toronto, ON M6M 5A4	Recreation room

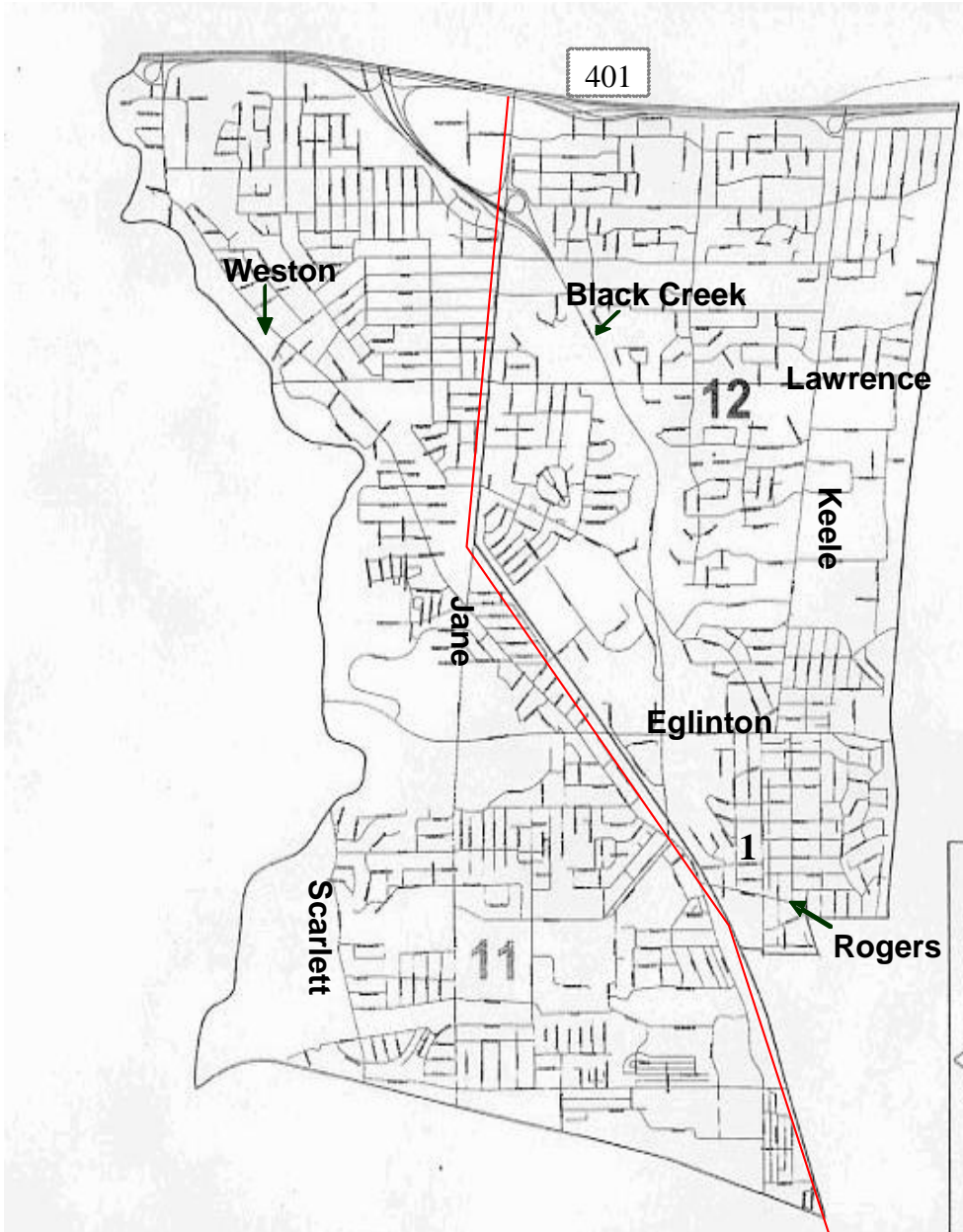
15. Trimbee Court 30 Denarda St Toronto, ON M6M 5C3	Gymnasium, art room, kitchen, craft room, weight room
16. Weston/Bellevue 5 Bellevue Crescent Toronto, ON M9N 1G5	Meeting room, recreation room, security office, 1 spare room
17. York Square 2468 Eglinton Ave West Toronto, ON M6M 5E2	Gym, art room, kitchen/craft room, weight room

Category: Faith-Based facilities in Wards 11 and 12 [Those identified by the Toronto Police Liaison Committee with available space (Asset Map 9)]

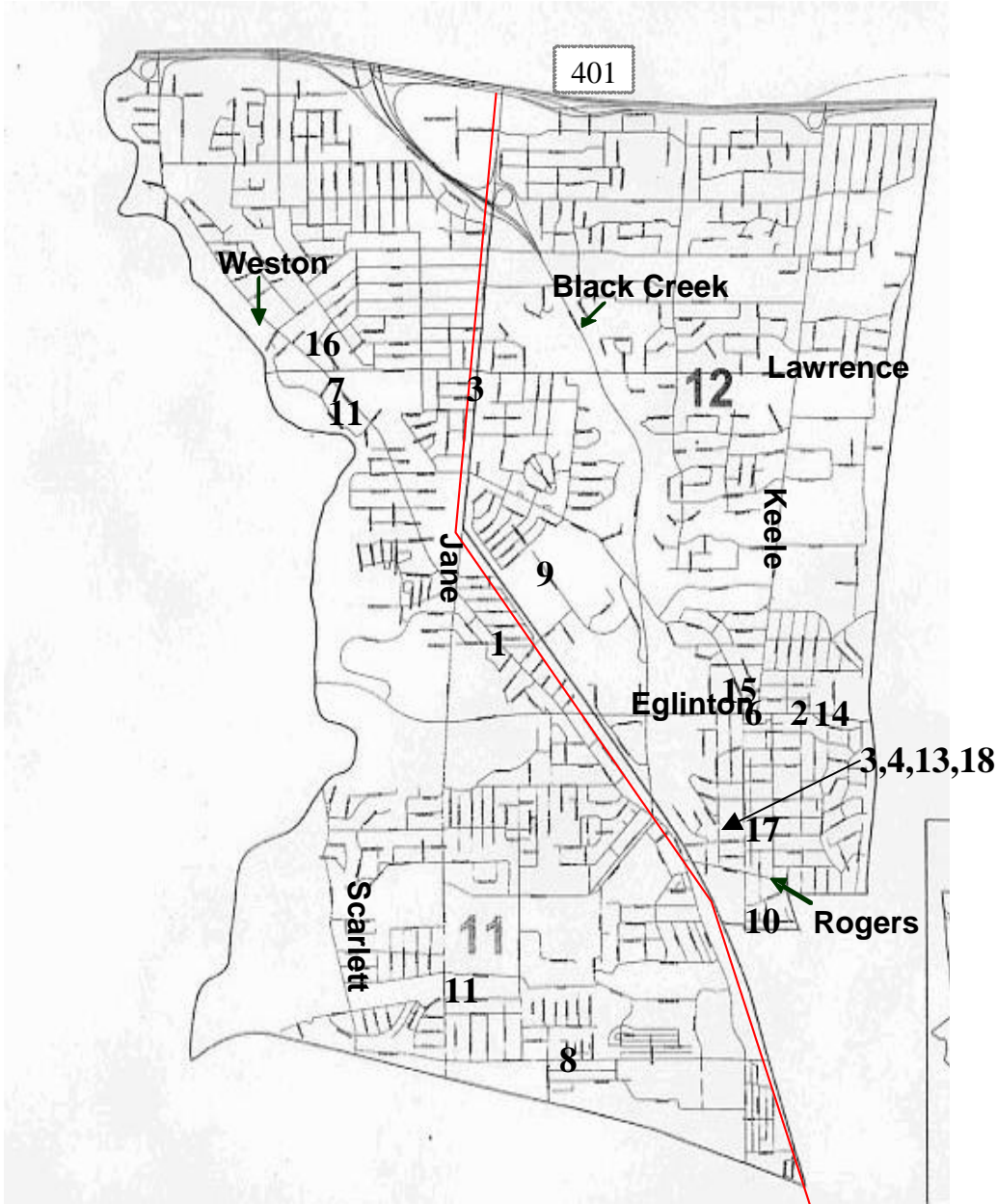
Name and Location	Phone Number
1. Bethel Apostolic Church 1831 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 1V9	N/A
2. Bethal Born Again Church of Jesus Christ 1182 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4P4	416-614-9997
3. Church of the Advent 40 Pritchard Avenue Toronto, ON M6N 1T3	416-763-2713
4. Ebenezer Gospel Tabernacle 42 Denison Rd. East Toronto, ON M9N 1B7	N/A
5. Ethiopian Tewahedo Church 23 Denison Rd. East Toronto, ON M9N 1B6	416-248-2835
6. Grace Ministries 1736 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 1V9	416-781-2940
7. International Gospel Church 1181 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4P5	N/A
8. Mount Dennis Baptist Church 1272 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M6M 4R1	416-243-0055
9. Trinity Temple 46 Denison Rd. East Toronto, ON M9N 1B7	416-243-9502
10. Weston Park Church 1871 Weston Rd Toronto, ON M9N 1V9	416-241-3861

Appendix H: Asset Maps

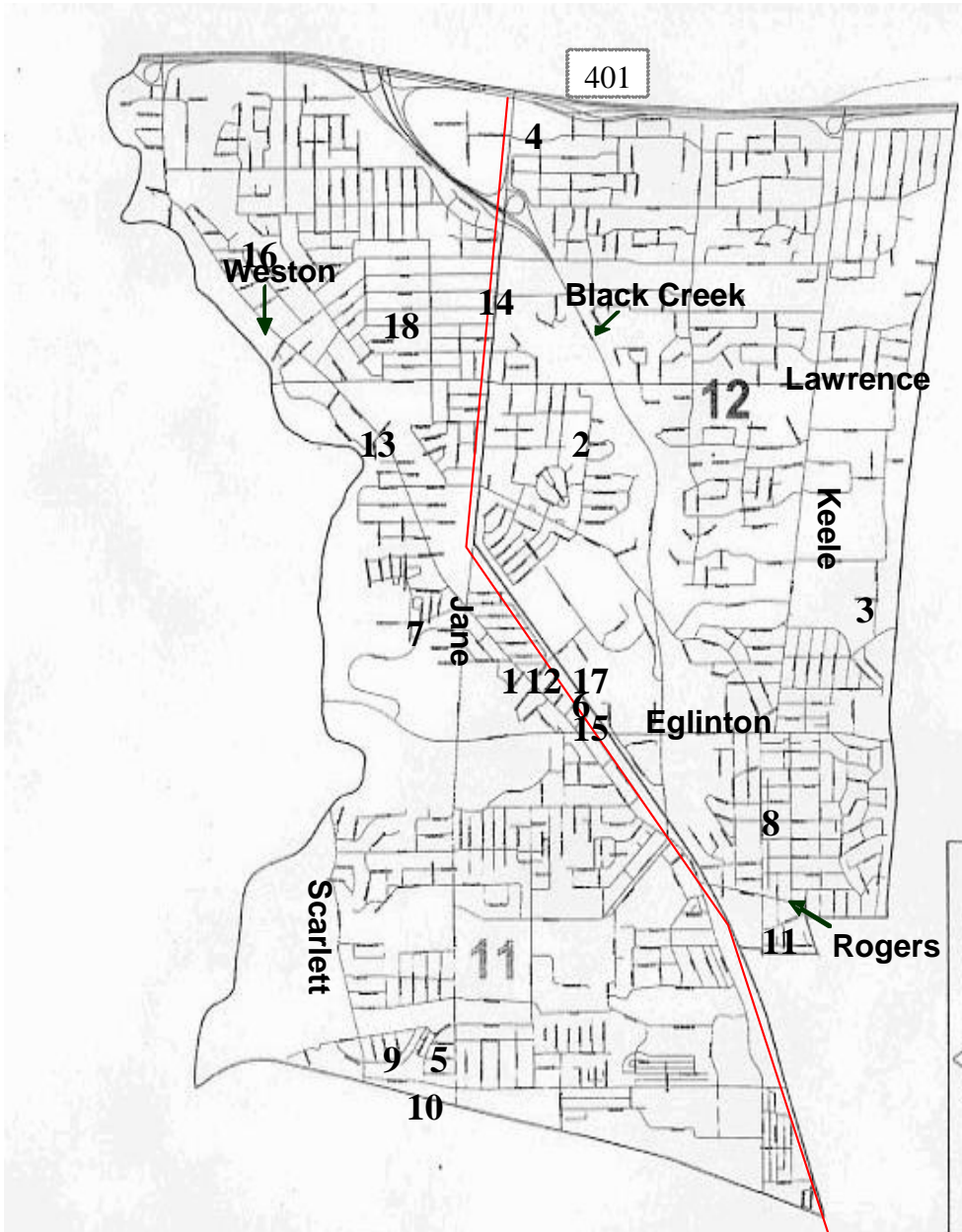
MAP 1: YOUTH SPECIFIC FACILITIES IN WARDS 11 & 12



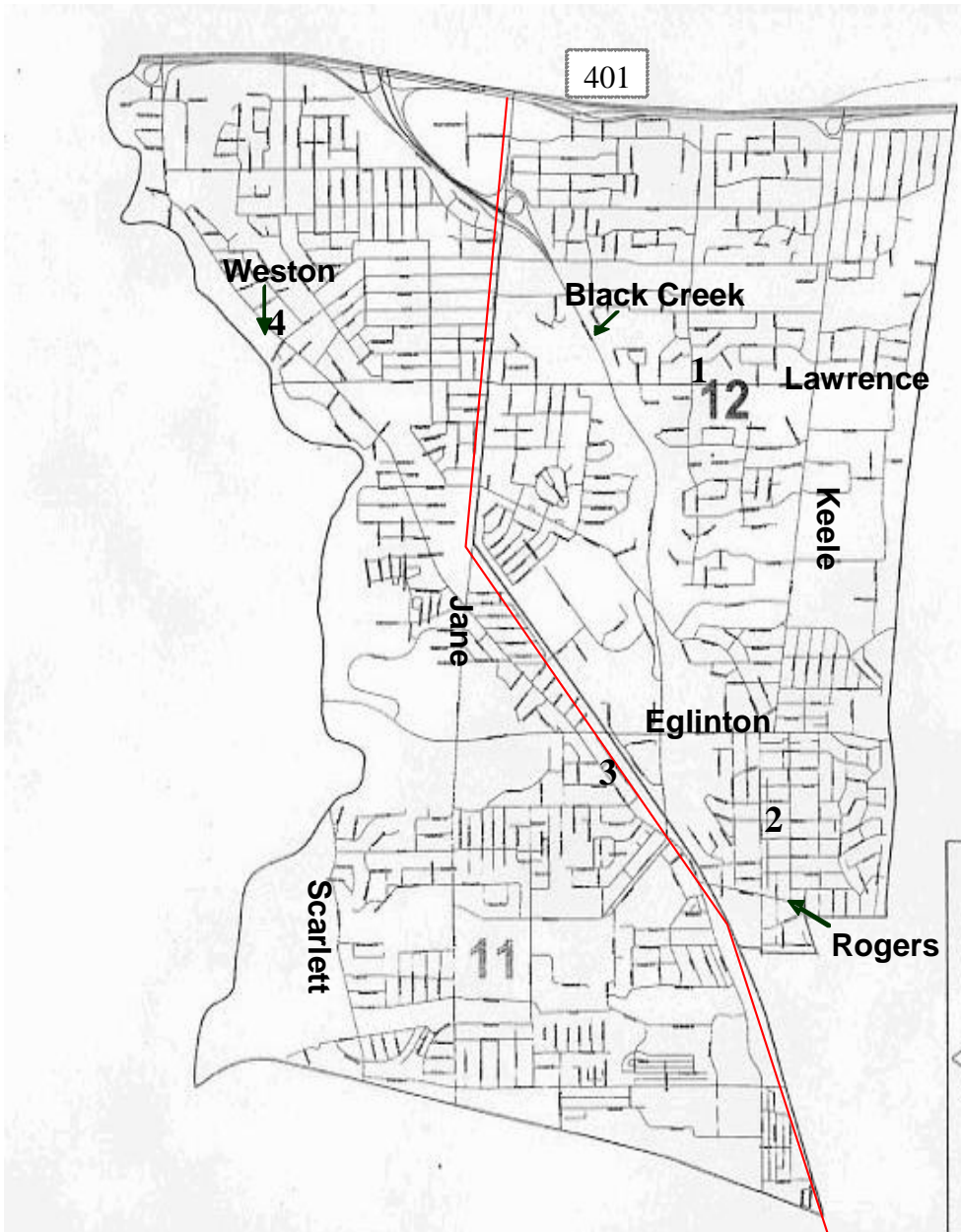
MAP 2: COMMUNITY AGENCIES INCLUDING THOSE WITH YOUTH PROGRAMMING, ETHNO-SPECIFIC SERVICES, AND LEGAL SERVICES IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-18)



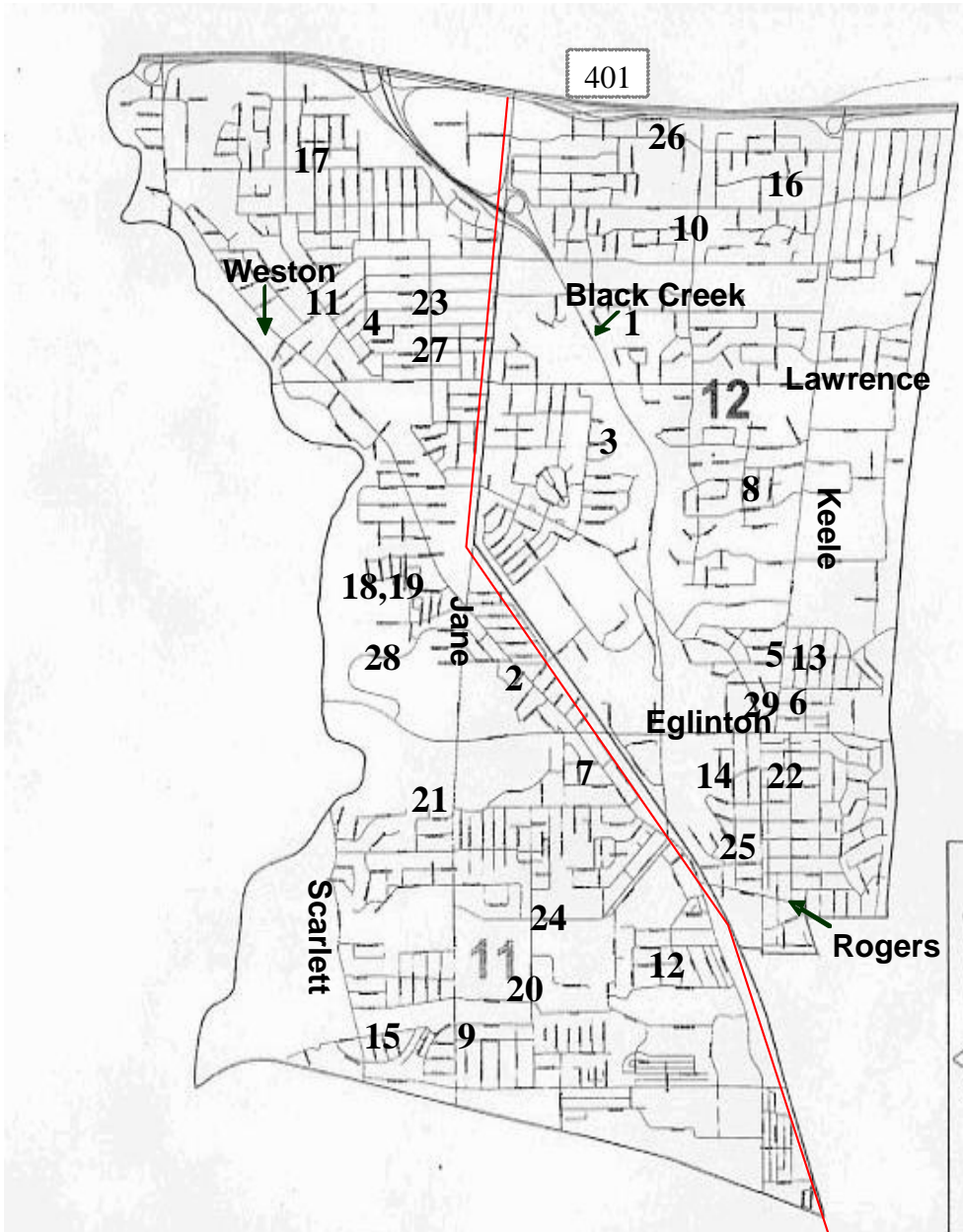
MAP 3: CHILD CARE CENTRES IN WARDS 11 & 12
(1-18)



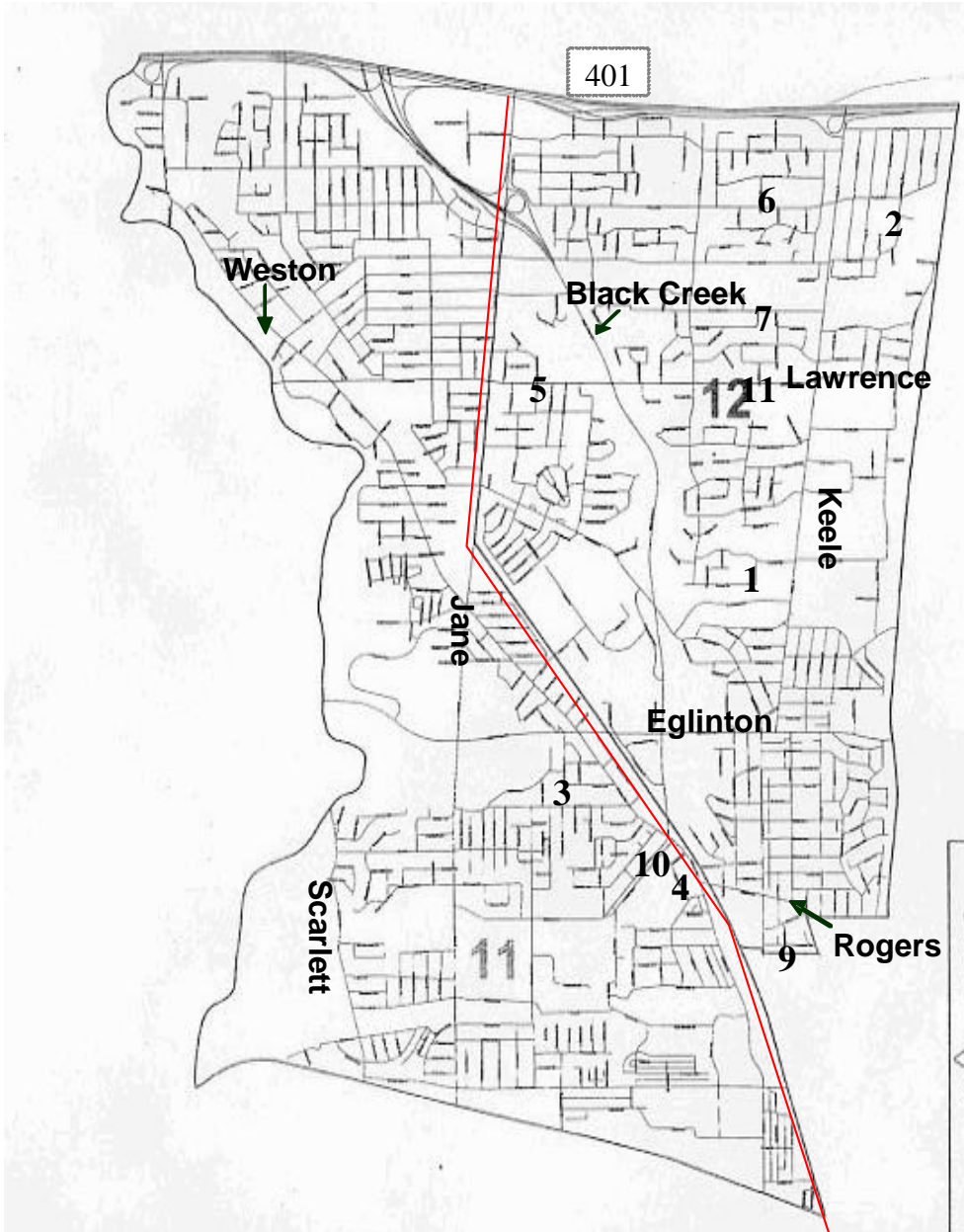
MAP 4: LIBRARIES IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-4)



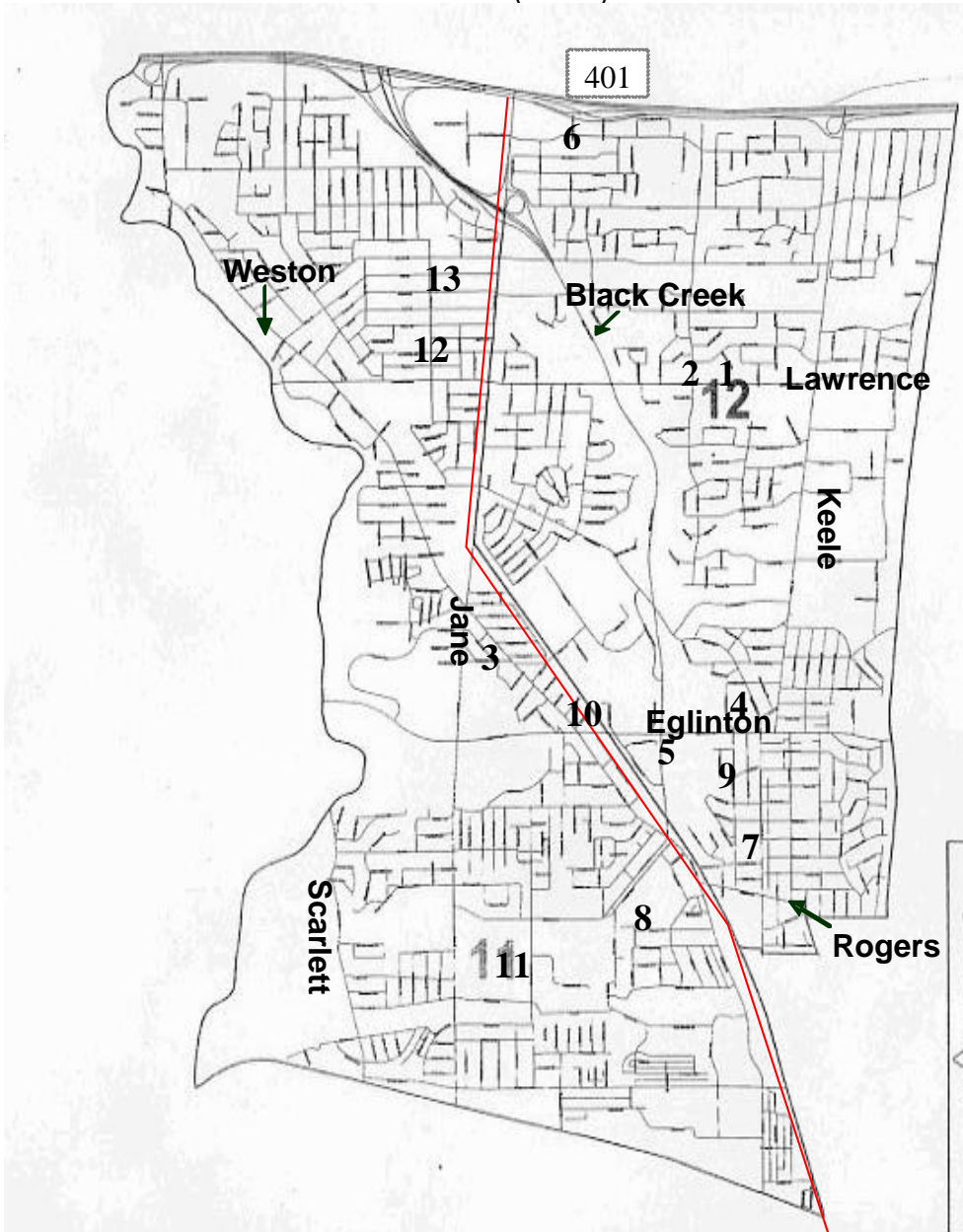
MAP 5: TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-29)



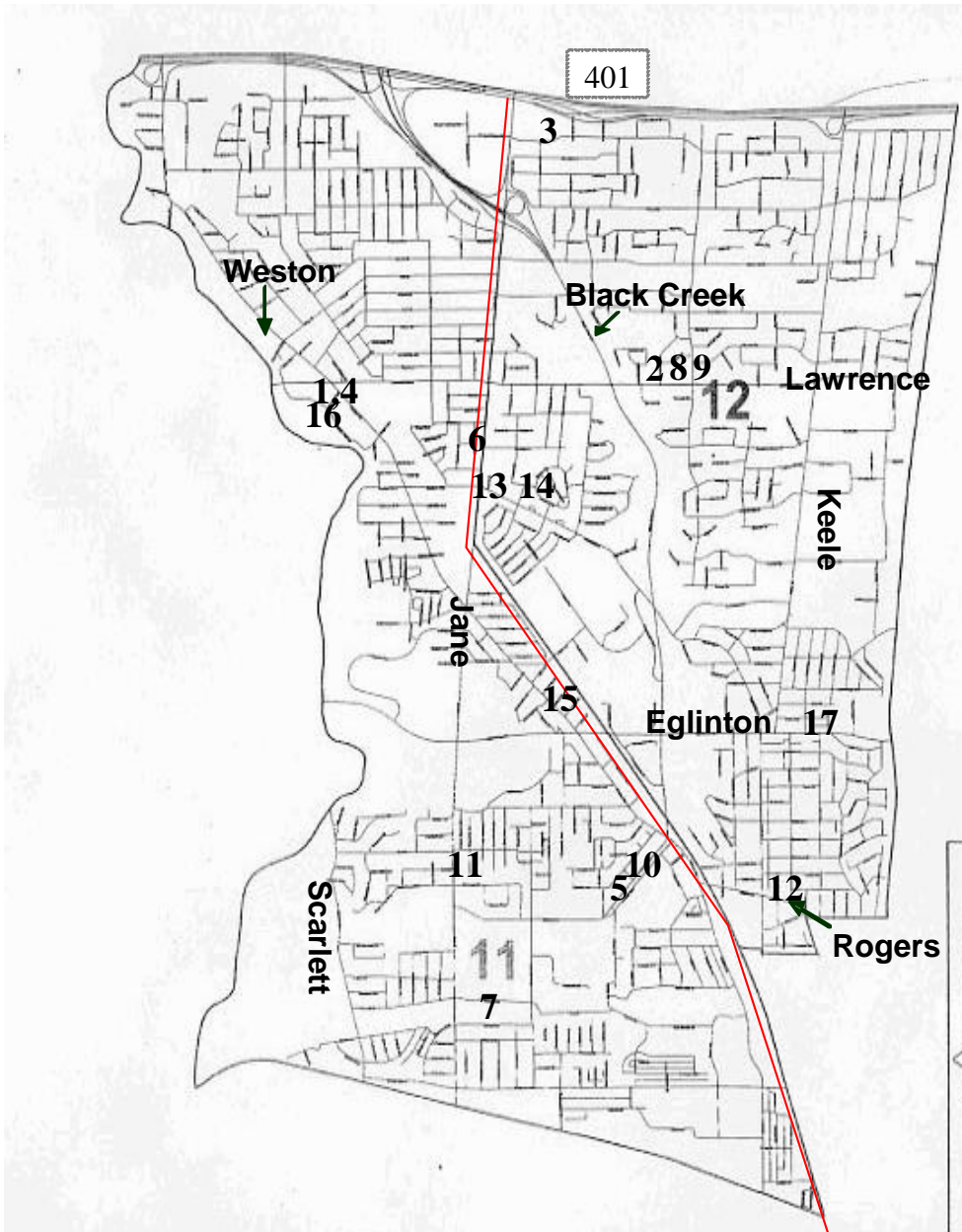
MAP 6: TORONTO DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD FACILITIES (1-11)



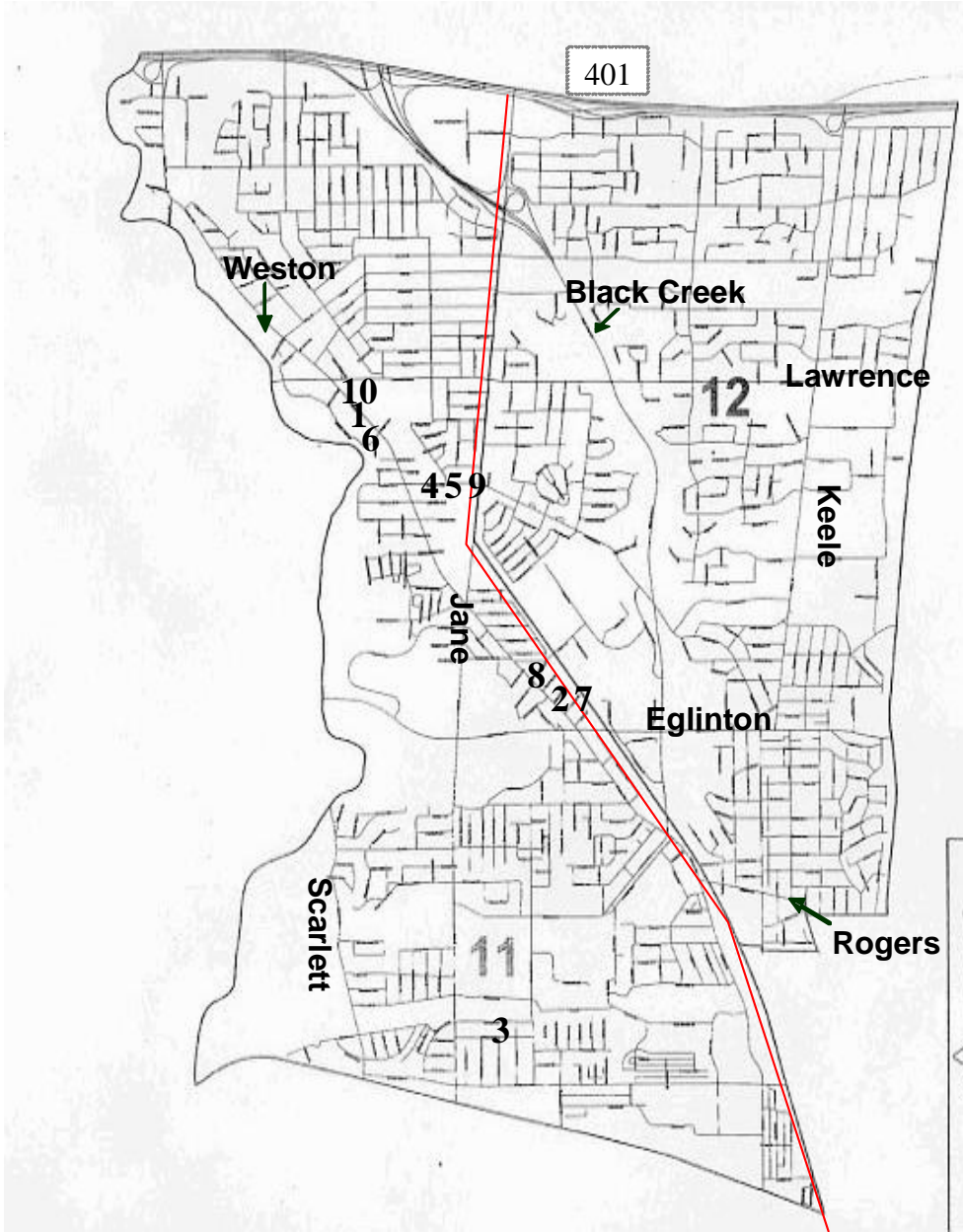
MAP 7: CITY OF TORONTO, PARKS, FORESTRY AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-13)



MAP 8: TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION FACILITIES IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-17)



MAP 9: FAITH BASED FACILITIES IN WARDS 11 & 12 (1-10)



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