

# TORONTO NEIGHBOURHOODS RESEARCH NETWORK

September 25, 2006

Inaugural Meeting, University of Toronto Faculty Club

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Sharon Kirkpatrick, Department of Nutritional Sciences, UofT  
Mat Krepicz, City of Toronto, mkrepicz@toronto.ca  
Hugh Lawson, Toronto Community Housing, hugh.lawson@torontohousing.ca  
Harvey Low, City of Toronto, hlow@toronto.ca  
Richard Maaranen, University of Toronto, richard.maaranen@utoronto.ca  
Susan MacDonnell, United Way, smacdonnell@uwgt.org  
Robert Murdie, York University, murdie@yorku.ca  
Sylvia Novac, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, UofT, sylvia.novac@utoronto.ca  
Brenda Ross, Centre for Urban Health Initiatives, brenda.ross@utoronto.ca  
Sarah Wakefield, University of Toronto, sarah.wakefield@utoronto.ca  
Alan Walks, University of Toronto, awalks@utm.utoronto.ca  
Beth Wilson, Community Social Planning Council, bwilson@cspc.toronto.on.ca

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## **PARTICIPATING GROUPS**

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### ***Centre for Urban Health Initiatives***

[www.cuhi.utoronto.ca](http://www.cuhi.utoronto.ca)

Jim Dunn, Sarah Wakefield, Miriam Diamond, Brenda Ross, Alexis Kane Speer, Teri Hason

- health opportunity structures: the effects of neighbourhoods on health behaviours
- Intensive Research on Neighbourhoods and Health Initiative (IRONhI) with St. Michael's, focusing on six neighbourhoods in Toronto
- studies on food security and health; urban agriculture and health; neighbourhoods and health
- Health database: [www.TorontoHealthProfiles.ca](http://www.TorontoHealthProfiles.ca)
- Miriam Diamond is looking at the effects on chemical on health
- recently published "Making Toronto Streets" by Paul Hess and Beth Milroy, available from the website at [www.cuhi.utoronto.ca/research/Toronto%20Streets%20Report%20Sept%202006.pdf](http://www.cuhi.utoronto.ca/research/Toronto%20Streets%20Report%20Sept%202006.pdf)
- Upcoming talk on healthy neighbourhoods October 4 at University College

### ***Centre for Urban and Community Studies***

[www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca](http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca)

### ***Community University Research Alliance***

[www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/cura/](http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/cura/)

David Hulchanski, Richard Maaranen, Bob Murdie, Larry Bourne, Sylvia Novac, Philippa Campsie

- Community University Research Alliance: research partnership with St. Christopher House, focusing on west-central Toronto neighbourhoods
  - CUCS will soon become part of U of T's Cities Centre
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### ***City of Toronto, Social Policy and Analysis***

**[www.toronto.ca/demographics](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics)**

Harvey Low, Mat Krepicz

- tracking FCM (Federation of Canadian Municipalities) Quality of Life indicators, using census data and some qualitative data; for more information, see [www.sustainablecommunities.ca/Tools/Assessments\\_and\\_Indicators/Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_Reporting\\_System.asp](http://www.sustainablecommunities.ca/Tools/Assessments_and_Indicators/Quality_of_Life_Reporting_System.asp)
- focus on 13 priority areas, including participation in a subgroup on guns and violence; tracking youth indicators, working with the Toronto District School Board and Parks & Recreation, developing annual indicators (see [www.toronto.ca/demographics/sntf.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/sntf.htm))
- participating in the CURA project
- StatsCan is developing neighbourhood indicators of its own

### ***St. Christopher House***

**[www.stchrishouse.org/](http://www.stchrishouse.org/)**

Rick Eagan

- St. Chris is a multi-service agency in west-central Toronto
- participating in the CURA project with CUCS at the University of Toronto

### ***Toronto District School Board***

**[www.tdsb.on.ca](http://www.tdsb.on.ca)**

Rob Brown

- working on secondary achievement indicators, Grade 9 cohort study
  - demographic information for 300,000 studies
  - GIS capabilities
  - Learning Opportunities Index maintained since the early 1960s, formerly the Inner-City Index
  - Dr. Brown also working with researchers at OISE on time structures
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***CERIS: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement***

**<http://ceris.metropolis.net>**

Bob Murdie

- The Metadatabase provides the following information for a large number of databases related to immigration and ethnicity: database type, database format, key database information, geographic coverage, data collection, access policies, contact information. For more information, go to [http://ceris.metropolis.net/frameset\\_e.html](http://ceris.metropolis.net/frameset_e.html) and click on Metadatabase.

***Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing***

**[www.mah.gov.on.ca](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca)**

Lisa Altieri

- participating in Guns and Gangs task force
- interested in urban affairs and neighbourhoods, citizen engagement
- the Ministry is hoping to increase its research capacity

***Community Social Planning Council***

**[www.socialplanningtoronto.org](http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org)**

Beth Wilson

- research on housing and community spaces

***Council of Agencies Serving South Asians***

**[www.cassa.on.ca](http://www.cassa.on.ca)**

Andalee Adamali

- part of the Alternative Planning Group with three other agencies together with Hispanic Development Council, Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, and African Canadian Social Development Council
  - particular research interest in immigrant seniors and their needs
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***Department of Nutrition, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto***

**[www.utoronto.ca/nutrisci/](http://www.utoronto.ca/nutrisci/)**

Sharon Kirkpatrick

- conducting a study of nutrition within low-income families and single households in Toronto
- co-research is Valerie Tarasuk

***Toronto Community Housing***

**[www.torontohousing.ca](http://www.torontohousing.ca)**

Hugh Lawson

- TCHC houses about 164,000 people or 6% of the population of the city
- conducts ongoing evaluations and maintains a database

***United Way***

**[www.unitedwaytoronto.com](http://www.unitedwaytoronto.com)**

Susan MacDonnell

- after several years of not conducting research, is preparing a new research agenda for the next few years
- participant in the Toronto City Summit Alliance (see [www.torontoalliance.ca](http://www.torontoalliance.ca))
- interested in growing income gaps and its implications
- also interested in best practices in neighbourhood revitalization, not just indicators of negative trends
- may have access to data from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)

***Ryerson University, Faculty of Business, Regionomics***

**[www.regionomics.com](http://www.regionomics.com)**

Murtaza Haider

- interested in the construction and real estate businesses, focusing on access by low-income households to shelter, with the goal of helping the construction industry meet the needs of this group
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## Toronto Neighbourhoods Research Network

Meeting #1, 25 September 2006

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- studied the housing needs of the urban poor in Montreal at McGill; Toronto has much less rental housing compared to Montreal
- database on housing sale prices over a 10-year period; cannot share raw data, but can do number-crunching on trends
- database on housing built in Toronto
- currently tracking construction projects in Toronto
- database also maintained by the Centre for Commercial Activity, Usha George (formerly of the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto)

### *Other groups not represented at the meeting that may participate:*

- Wellesley Institute (formerly Wellesley Central Health Corporation), <http://wellesleyinstitute.com/>
  - Toronto Public Health, [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health)
  - Access Alliance, Multicultural Community Health Centre, [www.accessalliance.ca](http://www.accessalliance.ca)
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## HOW THE NETWORK WILL FUNCTION

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### *Name*

- Toronto Neighbourhoods Research Network met with general approval

### *Contacts (co-chairs)*

- James Dunn, Inner City Health Research Unit, St. Michael's Hospital, jim.dunn@utoronto.ca
- David Hulchanski, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, UofT, david.hulchanski@utoronto.ca

### *How best to share information*

- Members of the network need to know who has what data
- Not too much paper
- A webpage can be made available on the CUCS website, including a discussion forum, with help from City of Toronto staff, links to each participating agency or department
- Pool expertise on developing indicators and indexes
- Hardest information to get is that from the federal government

### *Frequency, timing, format, and location of meetings*

- Four times a year, not in summer
  - Monday mornings at 9:30 (until noon) is usually good for most people
  - One hour for updates and admin, 1½ hours for presentations and discussion
  - Location will shift: Faculty Club is available, space also at United Way (spring only), TCHC boardroom (near Rosedale Station), City of Toronto
  - **Meetings set for November 27, 2006; March 5, June 11, and September 24, 2007**
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***Next meeting: November 27, 2006***

***Location: UofT Faculty Club, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 9:30 to noon (coffee 9:15)***

Topic: indicators and indexes

Presentations: United Way, City of Toronto, Toronto District School Board, Centre for Urban Health Initiatives, Community University Research Alliance (CURA-UofT)

Special invitee: representative of the Atkinson Foundation

Presenters to send a one- or two-page summary to David Hulchanski in advance

Location: 41 Wilcocks Street (2 blocks north of College St., one building east of Spadina Ave.)

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