

ADVANCING THE PROMISE FOR TORONTO'S CHILDREN

CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY REPORT CARD, TORONTO 2026

MUNICIPAL ELECTION EDITION
JUNE 2026



CAMPAIGN 2000
END CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that the land on which this work was carried out is the traditional and unceded territories of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and Métis Nation, and is home to Indigenous people of many nations. This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We hope to honour the spirit of the Dish With One Spoon agreement by working to build a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous communities in Toronto.

ABOUT SOCIAL PLANNING TORONTO


Social Planning Toronto challenges inequity in our city—through knowledge generation, debate, civic engagement, advocacy, and collaboration—to spark social and policy change.

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ADVANCING THE PROMISE FOR TORONTO'S CHILDREN: Child and Family Poverty Report Card, Toronto 2026

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Between 2022 and 2023,
1,800 more children
have fallen into poverty.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Advancing the Promise for Toronto's Children: Child and Family Poverty Report Card, Toronto 2026 draws on the latest available taxfiler data, from 2023, to reveal the growing and deepening experience of child poverty. One in four children in Toronto is growing up in poverty. The need for action is urgent. As Toronto residents prepare to head to the polls on October 26, this report offers an opportunity to examine child poverty trends, assess progress made to date, and identify the actions needed to reverse course.

2023 marked the third consecutive year of rising child and family poverty in Toronto, signalling a troubling trend. Between 2022 and 2023, child and family poverty increased by 0.4 percentage points to 25.7%. While this increase may appear modest, it represents approximately 1,800 more children who have fallen into poverty. At the same time, the depth of poverty has increased for all low-income family types, making it more challenging to meet their basic needs.

The report also confirms Toronto's unfortunate distinction as Canada's child and family poverty capital. Among large urban centres, Toronto's child poverty rate is the highest and is a full two percentage points above the next-highest rate, in Winnipeg. Child poverty exists in every ward, and concentrated pockets of poverty are spread across

the city, particularly in the northwest, in Scarborough, and throughout the downtown core.

In addition to the widespread prevalence of child and family poverty, disparities are prevalent among some population groups. Report findings show that half of all one-parent families live in poverty. This is almost triple the poverty rate of couple families. Further analysis using 2021 Census data show that Indigenous, racialized, immigrant, and newcomer children, as well as children in non-permanent resident households, continue to face disproportionately high rates of poverty. These disparities reflect long-standing systemic inequities, including discrimination in employment, housing, and access to services, which shape families' economic opportunities and stability.

These inequities are driven by multiple factors, including the rising cost of living, inadequate income supports, barriers to stable and well-paying employment, economic growth that has not benefited everyone, and limited access to affordable child care. These conditions have lasting impacts on children's health, education, and long-term opportunities, potentially reinforcing cycles of disadvantage across generations. While recent municipal initiatives have provided critical support, many of the most powerful policy levers to address these challenges

sit with the provincial and federal governments, including income supports and broad-scale investments in social infrastructure.

The government has a responsibility to uphold the inherent rights and well-being of Toronto's children, particularly those living in poverty, by ensuring they have what they need to thrive. The promise to Toronto's children is both implicit and explicit, reflected in the expectation that the government will deliver essential public supports, and in the public commitments made through poverty reduction strategies and other policy plans.

Addressing child and family poverty will require leadership and coordinated action from each level of government. This report outlines detailed recommendations for the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. With a systems-level and root-cause framing, these recommendations focus on three approaches to addressing child and family poverty:

1. **Ensure livable incomes and inclusive economic development practices.**
2. **Implement a rights-based approach to basic needs and affordability.**
3. **Renew the focus on poverty reduction and systemic inequality.**

There is also a role for every Torontonians to play. As the municipal election gears up and residents prepare to vote on October 26, they can ask candidates: **“What will you do to reduce child and family poverty in our city—and how will you make sure it actually happens?”**

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Child and family poverty is worsening, rising for the third consecutive year

- In 2023, one in four (25.7%) children aged 0–17 in Toronto experienced poverty.
- Between 2022 and 2023, child and family poverty in Toronto rose for the third consecutive year, increasing by 0.4 percentage points. This increase was in line with Ontario overall, but double the national increase of 0.2 percentage points.
- Approximately 1,800 more children were living in poverty in 2023, bringing the total to 119,690.
- Since the City of Toronto released its Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2015, child poverty has declined by 3.4 percentage points, from 29.1% in 2015 to 25.7% in 2023. Over this period, rates declined steadily between 2015 and 2020, coinciding with the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit in 2016, before rising each year between 2021 and 2023.

2. Toronto continues to hold the troubling distinction of being the child poverty capital among Canada's largest municipalities

- At 25.7%, Toronto continued to have the highest child and family poverty rate among cities and regional municipalities with populations over 500,000. Winnipeg (23.6%) ranked second, followed by the Region of Peel (21.7%).
- Toronto's child poverty rate was also significantly higher than the provincial (19.9%) and national rates (18.3%), as well as rates for other GTHA municipalities.

3. Half of all children in one-parent households live in poverty, and almost all children not in census families live in poverty

- In Toronto, half of all children in one-parent families live in poverty. The poverty rate of children in one-parent families (50.8%) was almost triple the rate of children in couple families (17.2%). The child poverty rate across all census families was 25.3%.
- Research consistently shows higher poverty rates for children in one-parent families headed by women+ compared to those headed by men+. ^{1,2,3}
- Almost all children (98.7%) not in census families experienced poverty in 2023. Although this group accounts for only 1.8% of all children living in low-income households, the poverty rate is concerning.

4. Low-income families are falling further below the poverty line, struggling to make ends meet

- Low-income one-parent families with two children experienced the deepest poverty. On average, these families lived \$16,899 below the poverty line for a family of three, an increase of \$10,507 since 2015, when the poverty gap was \$6,392.
- For one-parent families with one child, the poverty gap more than doubled between 2015 and 2023, increasing from \$7,168 in 2015 to \$15,155 in 2023.
- More recently, between 2022 and 2023, low-income couples with one child saw the largest increase in the poverty gap, falling an average of \$1,474 further below the poverty line. This was followed by one-parent families with two children, whose poverty gap increased by \$1,404.

5. Child poverty affects families in every ward, while concentrated pockets of poverty persist across the city

- Nine out of Toronto's 25 wards had a child poverty rate of 30% or more. Toronto Centre had the highest child poverty rate (36.1%), followed by Humber River—Black Creek (35.0%) and Scarborough—Guildwood (34.0%).
- Between 2022 and 2023, child poverty rates increased in 18 of Toronto's 25 wards. Etobicoke Centre saw the largest increase in child poverty, rising 1.3 percentage points from 18.6% to 19.9%.
- Forty-three census tracts had extremely high rates of child and family poverty—between 40.0% and 61.3%.

6. Child poverty continues to disproportionately affect Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant and newcomer children, as well as children living in households without permanent resident status

- The 2021 Census continues to provide the most up-to-date poverty rates for Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant children for the city of Toronto and other local communities, as previously reported in our 2024 Toronto Child and Family Poverty Report Card.
- Indigenous children and families in Toronto had a poverty rate of 20.4%, compared to 14.5% for non-Indigenous children. However, since the Census undercounts Indigenous peoples, this gap is likely larger.^{4,5}
- Racialized children in Toronto had almost double the poverty rate (17.8%) of non-racialized children (9.1%).
- Immigrant children in Toronto had a poverty rate of 21.0%, compared to 12.6% for non-immigrant children. By period of immigration, newcomer children had the highest rate of poverty at 38.1%. Children from families who do not have permanent residence had an even more alarming rate of poverty of 42.6%.

INTRODUCTION

As Toronto approaches its municipal election on October 26, there is an important opportunity to reflect on the well-being of children and families across the city, and to invite candidates to share their vision for a better, more equitable city. The City of Toronto plays a key role in shaping local conditions, and over the past few years, we have seen significant investments targeted at renters, the unhoused, and many others struggling with the cost of living in Canada's wealthiest metropolis. Yet, many of the most significant factors influencing child and family poverty—including income supports, affordable housing policies, and child care system changes—are shaped by provincial and federal policies and investments. For voters and candidates alike, the election provides an opportunity to examine how actions across all orders of government are affecting children growing up in Toronto today.

This report uses the most recent taxfiler data to examine poverty and inequality among children and youth under the age of 18 in Toronto. The data provide a clear picture of the economic circumstances facing families and reveal a concerning trend: child poverty remains persistently high, affecting one in four children, and has increased for the third consecutive year.

Across Toronto, families are facing complex and interconnected challenges shaping their daily realities. This context is important to understanding and interpreting the data laid out in the next sections of the report.

HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND LOW WAGES:

Unemployment has been on the rise in Toronto, with particular challenges facing some populations. As of February 2026, the city's unemployment rate stood at 8%, up from 6.4% in February 2023.⁶ Research consistently shows higher unemployment rates among marginalized groups, such as youth, immigrants and newcomers, people with disabilities, and Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities, reflecting the impacts of systemic discrimination and unequal access to employment opportunities.^{7,8,9,10} Low wages are also a major challenge. Ontario's minimum wage is now \$17.60 per hour, roughly \$10 less per hour than what a worker in Toronto needs to earn to cover their basic expenses and participate in their community.¹¹

INADEQUATE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Ontario's two main social assistance programs—the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW)—remain well below the cost of living. As of July 2025, the maximum income a single parent with one child can receive from ODSP and the Ontario Child Benefit is

\$2,036.91 a month (\$24,442.92 annually), representing just 65.4% of the Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-AT) for a two-person household. For a single parent with one child on Ontario Works that amount is even lower—just \$1,145.91 a month (\$13,750.92 annually), representing 36.8% of the poverty line.^{*12} While families may be eligible for additional federal benefits, these supports do not close the gap, leaving households well below the poverty line and entrenching poverty.

INCOME AND WEALTH INEQUALITY:

Canada is a wealthy country, and Toronto is one of its wealthiest cities, but prosperity is not shared equally. Nationally, income and wealth inequality has reached historically high levels. The income gap between high- and low-income households increased in 2025 as lower-income households were negatively affected by declining interest rates and slow gains in employment income. At the same time, the richest 20% of Canadians got richer—accounting for almost two-thirds of Canada's net worth—and low-income households are falling farther behind (the bottom 40% account for only 3% of Canada's total net worth).¹³ Locally, Toronto had the highest level of income inequality across the country.¹⁴ The cost of living has risen sharply through inflation and tariffs, and it is harder for working people and

people on social assistance to afford basic necessities such as food, housing, and transit.

RECORD-SETTING LEVELS OF FOOD

INSECURITY: According to *Who's Hungry Report 2025*, the number of children relying on food banks has increased by 154% since 2019, and children now make up one in four food bank users in Toronto. Nearly one in five (18%) households with children reported that their children went hungry at least once a week in the past three months.¹⁵

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CRISIS:

On average in 2025, almost 2,500 individuals per night used family shelters in Toronto.¹⁶ The waiting list for social housing in Toronto comprises 26,423 families.¹⁷ For families entering the private rental market, the average rent for a vacant one-bedroom apartment is \$2,020; for a vacant two-bedroom, which is typical for families, the average rent is \$2,567.¹⁸ Further exacerbating the challenge of finding suitable housing, data show much lower vacancy rates for more affordable units among all unit sizes.¹⁹ Housing is often the largest expense for families, and rising costs are placing increasing pressure on household budgets and contributing to housing instability and poverty.

* Calculations done by authors.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: For the past decade, reported incidents of intimate partner and family violence in Toronto have remained consistently high, ranging from approximately 17,200 to 19,300 annually.²⁰ This violence disproportionately affects women and children and contributes to housing instability, financial insecurity, and increased risk of poverty for families.

UNAFFORDABLE AND INACCESSIBLE

CHILD CARE: In 2025, approximately 17,600 children were on the waiting list for a child care fee subsidy.²¹ While the City had planned to offer 30,700 subsidies for child care in 2025, only 23,000 were administered.²² This gap is largely driven by lack of appropriate investment into the public and non-profit expansion of spaces to meet the promise of an accessible, affordable, and universal child care system as envisioned by the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care program. Limited access to affordable child care prevents parents from accessing and maintaining stable employment. This disproportionately affects women, who continue to take on a greater share of unpaid caregiving responsibilities.

UNEQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL

OPPORTUNITIES: Public Kindergarten to Grade 12 education plays a critical role in shaping children's long-term outcomes, yet students from low-income and marginalized communities face

systemic barriers to success. Family income is one of the strongest predictors of educational outcomes, with research showing that socioeconomic characteristics such as household income and one-parent status influence academic achievement.^{23,24} While public education is often described as the great equalizer, funding and resource constraints in Ontario limit school boards' abilities to provide the additional support needed to level the playing field for students living in poverty.

The findings laid out in this report come a decade after Toronto City Council unanimously adopted *TO Prosperity: Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy*, with the goal of ensuring "everyone has access to good jobs, adequate income, stable housing, affordable transportation, nutritious food and supportive services" by 2035. Halfway through the 20-year strategy, the continued prevalence of child poverty highlights the scale of the challenge and the need for renewed attention and action.

Since *TO Prosperity* was established in 2015, the City of Toronto has introduced and expanded several initiatives aimed at reducing poverty and supporting low-income residents, including:

- creating new purpose-built affordable and supportive housing, and protecting and preserving existing affordable homes;

- expanding protections and supports for tenants, including programs and regulatory frameworks to support renters to stay housed, be protected against illegitimate “renovictions,” and gain access to legal assistance, and to ensure landlords comply with safety standards including within multi-tenant homes (a.k.a. rooming houses);
- expanding investments in shelters, drop-in centres, and programs for unhoused residents;
- expanding child care spaces and subsidies;
- introducing the TTC Fair Pass Discount Program and fare capping that benefits low-income households the most and, in recent years, freezing transit fares for three consecutive years;
- making transit free for children 12 and under;
- expanding access to student nutrition programs toward the creation of a universal student food program;
- introducing a universal camp nutrition program;
- introducing an Inclusive Economic Development Framework to ensure economic benefits for communities that have not benefited from economic growth in the past;
- creating a Community Benefits Framework to provide economic and community-building benefits for local residents from development projects;
- increasing hours that libraries are open and offering enhanced programs on reducing seniors’ isolation, on financial empowerment, and on internet wi-fi hotspot lending;
- investing in programs for low-income families and youth, including the expansion of free recreation centres, enhanced spaces for youth in libraries and community centres, youth employment and youth violence prevention programs, and priority local registration for recreation programs in low-income neighbourhoods;
- supporting strategies that are Indigenous-focused, advance youth equity, and combat anti-Black racism;
- funding a trauma- and equity-centred approach to care in City-operated long-term care homes; and
- increasing funding for community organizations, food security, community development initiatives, and more.

These extensive efforts have provided important support to those living on low incomes. And yet, child poverty in Toronto continues to rise. Other levels of government must prioritize poverty reduction, and many of the most powerful policy levers—such as employment standards, income supports, and large-scale investments in essential public systems like child care, affordable housing, and health care—sit with provincial and federal governments. The next City Council will need to build on existing measures and continue advancing Toronto’s poverty reduction commitments, including advocating for meaningful action from senior governments in these key areas.

Toronto is an economic engine with significant resources and opportunities. However, these opportunities are not shared equally across the city. Nearly 120,000 children live in families experiencing poverty, underscoring the urgency of action and the public responsibility to foster children’s well-being and potential.²⁵ Using the most recent taxfiler and census data, this report provides a detailed picture of child and family poverty across Toronto—an issue that touches every ward, and one that mayoral and council candidates must confront as they present their vision for the city.

A Note on Data

This report draws on the most recent taxfiler data, based on 2023 incomes, providing an updated snapshot of children and families living in poverty in Toronto. However, updated data are not yet available for poverty rates among diverse sociodemographic groups. As a result, this report draws on income data for Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant families from the 2021 Census, as presented in our 2024 report, which remain the most recent data available at the census division level. Readers are encouraged to refer to the 2024 Toronto Child and Family Report Card, *Fighting for our Future*, for more in-depth examination of disparities across sociodemographic populations.

Throughout this report, the Low-Income Measure (LIM) is used to measure poverty. The LIM is often preferred to the Market Basket Measure (MBM)—Canada’s official poverty line—because it is a broad, comprehensive, and relative measure of poverty that is widely used. For more information about the data sources used in this report and a discussion on the differences between the LIM and the MBM, please see *Appendix: Data Sources and Measures of Poverty*, [page 91](#).



KEY FINDINGS

1. Child and family poverty is worsening, rising for the third consecutive year

In 2023, one in four (25.7%) children aged 0–17 in Toronto experienced poverty. Between 2022 and 2023, child and family poverty in Toronto rose for the third consecutive year, increasing by 0.4 percentage points. This increase was in line with Ontario overall, but double the national increase of 0.2 percentage points.²⁶

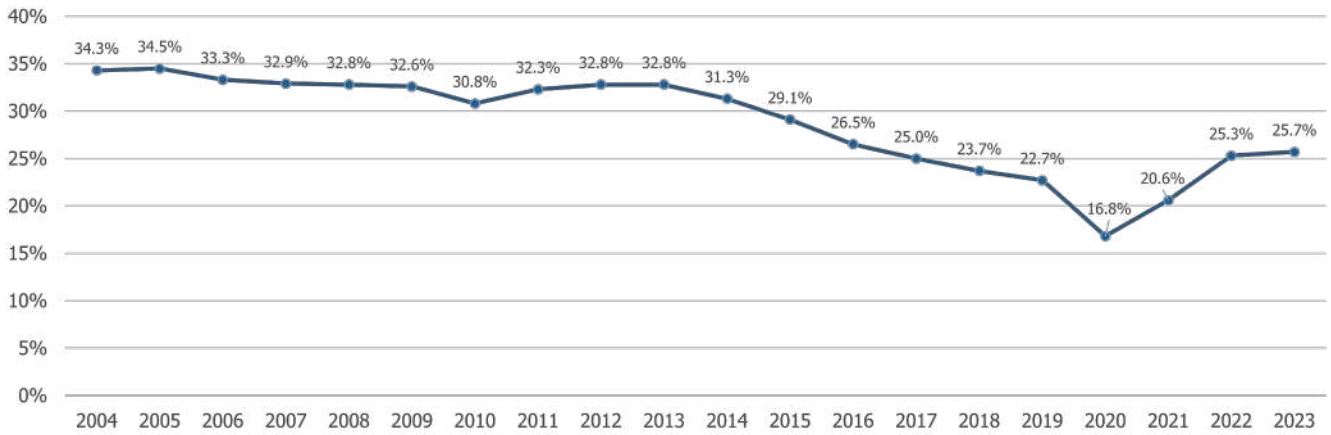
While this change may appear modest, it represents a meaningful increase in the number of children affected: approximately 1,800 more children were living in poverty in 2023, bringing the total to 119,690.²⁷

Since the City of Toronto released its Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2015, child poverty has declined by 3.4 percentage points, from 29.1% in 2015 to 25.7% in 2023. During this period, rates

declined steadily between 2015 and 2020, coinciding with the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit in 2016. The largest single-year decline occurred in 2020, when pandemic-related income supports led to a temporary and substantial reduction in child and family poverty.

Consistent with findings of our 2024 Toronto Child and Family Report Card, the wind-down of major COVID-19 income support programs in fall 2020 was followed by a sharp increase in child and family poverty in 2021, and an even more pronounced rise in 2022. Child poverty continued to increase in 2023, although at a slower pace. At the same time, high inflation—particularly in 2021 and 2022—compounded financial pressures for families by raising the cost of essentials such as food and housing. These poverty trends demonstrate that meaningful reductions in child poverty are achievable through government action, particularly in terms of income supports, and highlight the importance of sustained investment.

Figure 1: Child poverty rate, Toronto, 2004–2023



Source: Statistics Canada. (2006–2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2004-2023* [Data tables]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

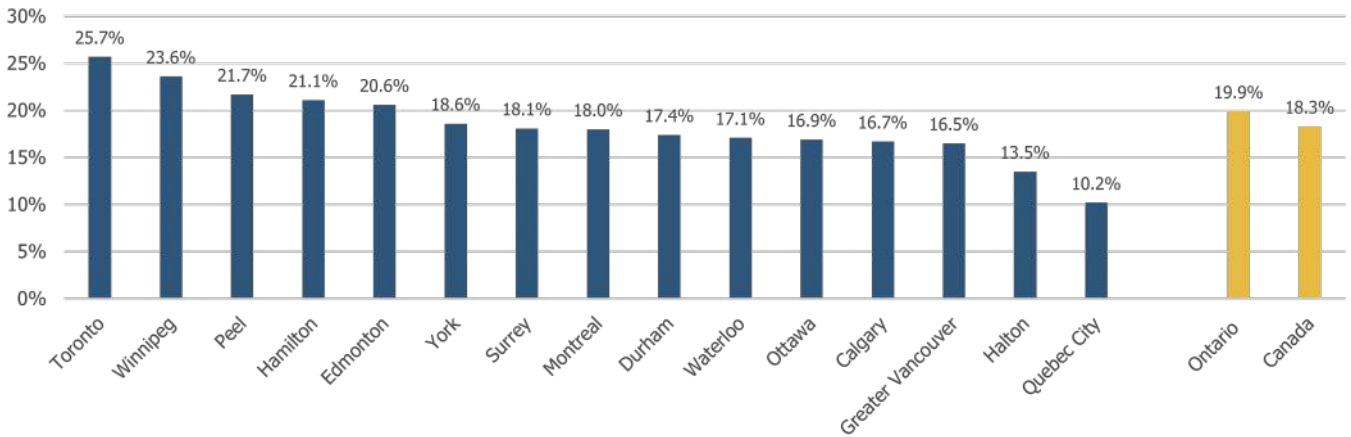


2. Toronto continues to hold the troubling distinction of being the child poverty capital among Canada’s largest municipalities

In 2023, 25.7% of Toronto children under the age of 18 lived in poverty. This was the highest child and family poverty rate among large municipalities in Canada. Winnipeg ranked second with a child poverty rate of 23.6%, followed by the Region of Peel (21.7%). Toronto’s child poverty rate was also significantly higher than the provincial rate (19.9%) and national rate

(18.3%), as well as other GTHA municipalities including the City of Hamilton (21.1%), York Region (18.6%), Durham Region (17.4%), and Halton Region (13.5%). Toronto’s rate was also higher than that of the major cities within the surrounding regional municipalities, including the City of Mississauga (22.8%) and the City of Brampton (21.6%) (not shown in graph).

Figure 2: Child poverty rate for large municipalities, Ontario and Canada, 2023



Note: “Large municipalities” refers to cities and municipalities with populations over 500,000. Data for Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Hamilton, Surrey, Calgary, Ottawa, and Quebec City are reported at the census subdivision level. Data for Peel, York, Durham, Waterloo, Greater Vancouver, Montreal, and Halton are reported at the census division level.

Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

3. Half of all children in one-parent households live in poverty, and almost all children not in census families live in poverty

In Toronto, half of all children in one-parent families live in poverty. The poverty rate for children in one-parent families was almost triple the rate for children in couple families. The child poverty rate across all census families[†] was 25.3%.

As noted in our 2024 Toronto Child and Family Poverty Report Card, there is a lack of publicly available data on child and family poverty among one-parent families headed by a woman+ or man+[‡] for the city of Toronto. However, research

[†] Statistics Canada defines a census family as “married couples or couples living common law with or without children, or one parent with at least one child living in the same dwelling” (p. 5). Statistics Canada. (2025, July 18). *Technical reference guide for the annual income estimates for census families, individuals and seniors. T1 Family File, final estimates, 2023*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/72-212-x/72-212-x2025001-eng.pdf?st=JhyDDz1H>

[‡] For the first time, the 2021 Census collected information on a person’s gender. Statistics Canada defines gender as “an individual’s personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman).” Statistics Canada explains that “[g]iven that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the

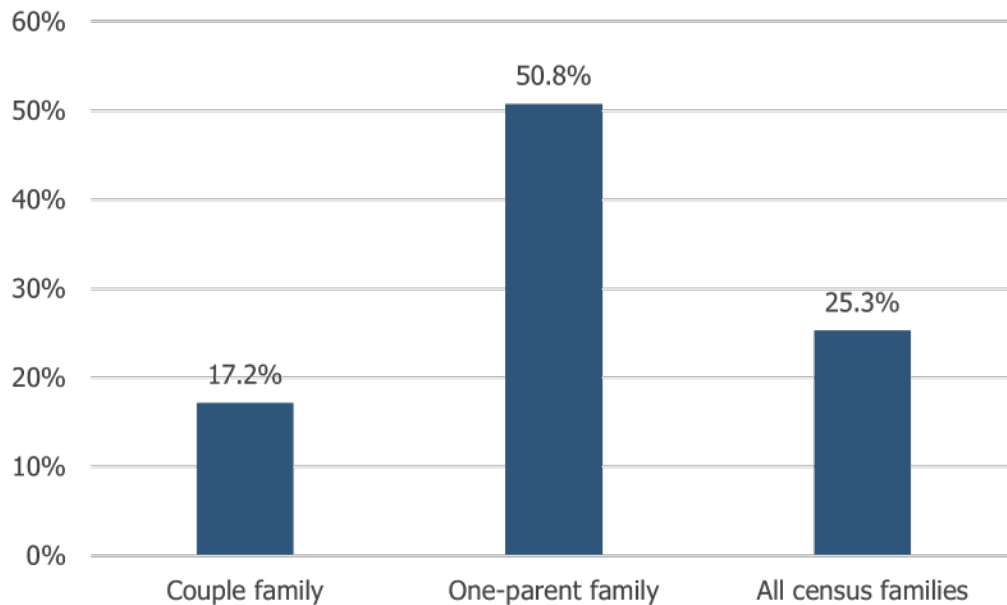
consistently shows higher poverty rates for children in one-parent families headed by women+ compared to those headed by men+.^{28,29,30} For one-parent families, particularly those headed by women+, high prevalence of poverty is driven by labour market barriers that limit access to stable employment and decent wages. These challenges are compounded by the high cost of child care and the difficulty of balancing caregiving responsibilities with work.

Children under 18 who are not part of a census family experience extremely high rates of poverty: 98.7%, representing 2,210 children in Toronto. Although this group accounts for only 1.8% of all children living in low-income households, the reported poverty rate is striking.

This category includes minors who have some reported income and live alone or with people who are not their parent, grandparent, married or common-law partner, or their own children, and therefore do not meet the census definition of a family. Taxfiler data provide limited insight into their living arrangements beyond this definition.

2021 Census data provide further information about children in non-census families in the city of Toronto: 72.8% live with relatives (other than

category ‘non-binary persons’ are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the ‘+’ symbol.”

Figure 3: Child poverty rate based on family composition, Toronto, 2023

Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

parents or grandparents), 23.3% live with non-relatives only, and 3.9% live alone.³¹ In the Toronto region (i.e., Toronto Census Metropolitan Area), the median after-tax household income for non-census families with children under the age of 18 was \$38,800 in 2020.³² While comparable data were not publicly available for the city of Toronto, older census data show lower median after-tax incomes for these households in the city of Toronto (\$18,880 in 2015) compared to the Toronto region (\$23,000 in 2015).^{33,34}

4. Low-income families are falling further below the poverty line, struggling to meet basic needs

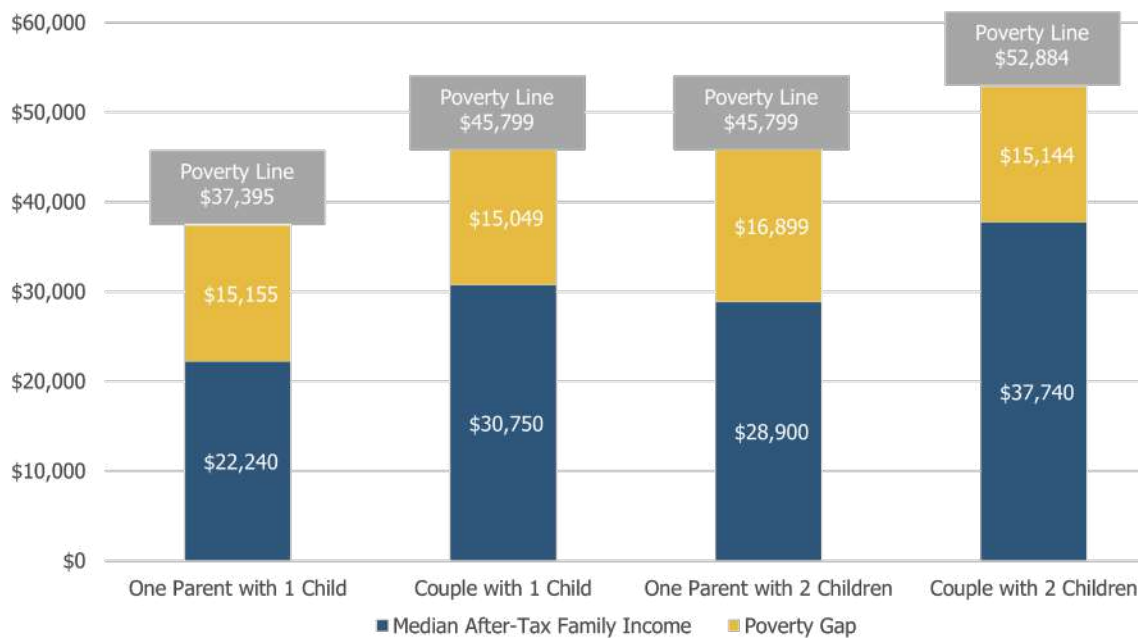
Many low-income families are also experiencing deepening poverty. The poverty gap captures the depth of poverty by measuring how far below the poverty line families fall, on average, highlighting the extent of financial hardship. Specifically, it refers to the dollar difference between the after-tax family income required to reach the poverty line—defined as the Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-AT)—and the median after-tax family income of families below that threshold, for each family type.

Figure 4 shows the poverty gap for four low-income family types in Toronto. One-parent families with two children had the largest gap, with a median after-tax family income that was \$16,899 below the poverty line for a family of three. This was followed by one-parent families with one child, whose median after-tax income was \$15,155 below the poverty line.

Figure 5 shows the poverty gap for low-income family types between 2015 and 2023. Since the adoption of the City's 20-year Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2015, the poverty gap has increased

significantly across all family types. Over this period, the poverty gap more than doubled for low-income one-parent families with one and two children, as well as couples with two children. Most recently, between 2022 and 2023, low-income couples with one child saw the largest increase in the poverty gap, falling an average of \$1,474 further below the poverty line. This was followed by one-parent families with two children, whose poverty gap increased by \$1,404.

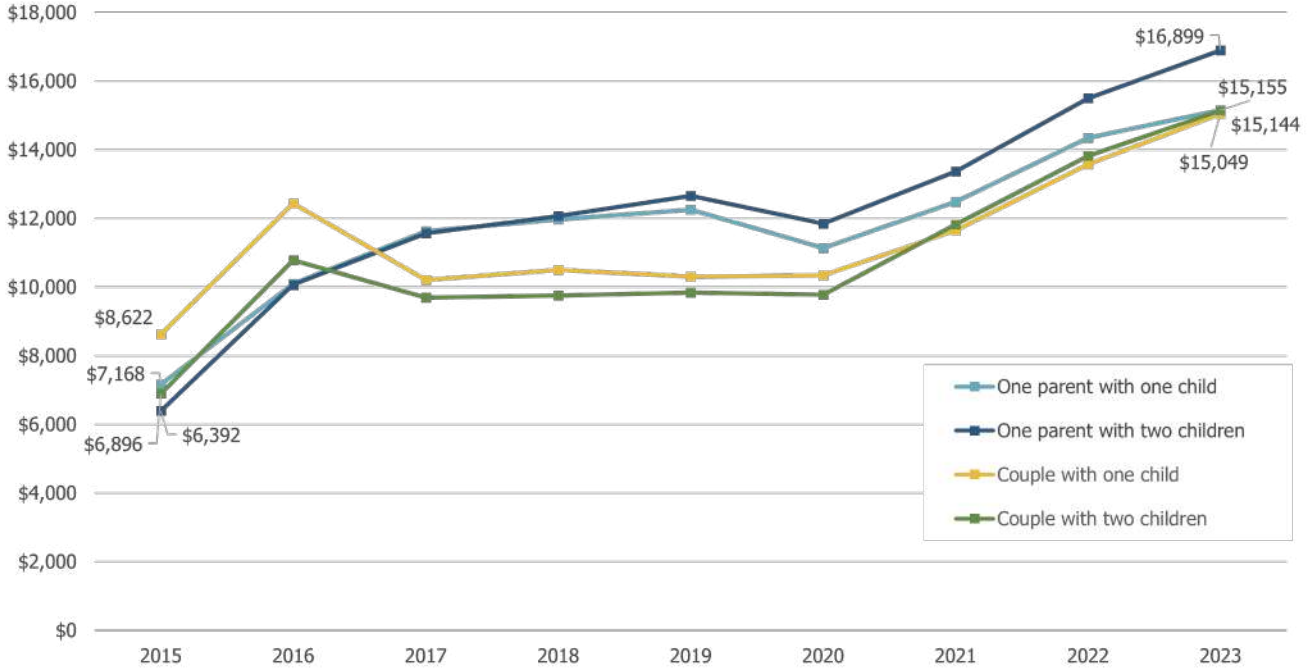
Figure 4: Depth of poverty by family type, Toronto, 2023



Sources: Statistics Canada. (2025). F-20: After-tax low-income status of census families based on the Census Family Low Income Measure (CFLIM-AT), by family type and family composition, 2023 [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Statistics Canada. (2025). Section 1 - The data. Table F. 2023: Thresholds for After-Tax Census Family Low Income Measure. T1 Family File, Final Estimates, 2023. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/72-212-x/2025001/sect1-eng.htm>

Figure 5: Depth of poverty by family type, Toronto, 2015–2023



Sources: Statistics Canada. (2017–2025). F-20: After-tax low-income status of census families based on the Census Family Low Income Measure (CFLIM-AT), by family type and family composition, 2015-2023 [Data tables]. Accessed through the Community Data Program. Technical Reference Guide, T1 Family File, Final Estimates, 2015–2023.

In practical terms, living in deeper poverty means that many families are struggling to meet their most basic needs, often having to choose between rent vs. food or food vs. transportation. Families living in deeper poverty face greater barriers to stability and improving their financial situations. It also means that incremental improvements to address income security and affordability aren't enough to make a difference in people's daily lives.

Together, these findings show that poverty in Toronto is deepening, the impact of which is especially significant for one-parent families, who are both more likely to experience poverty and to experience it more severely.

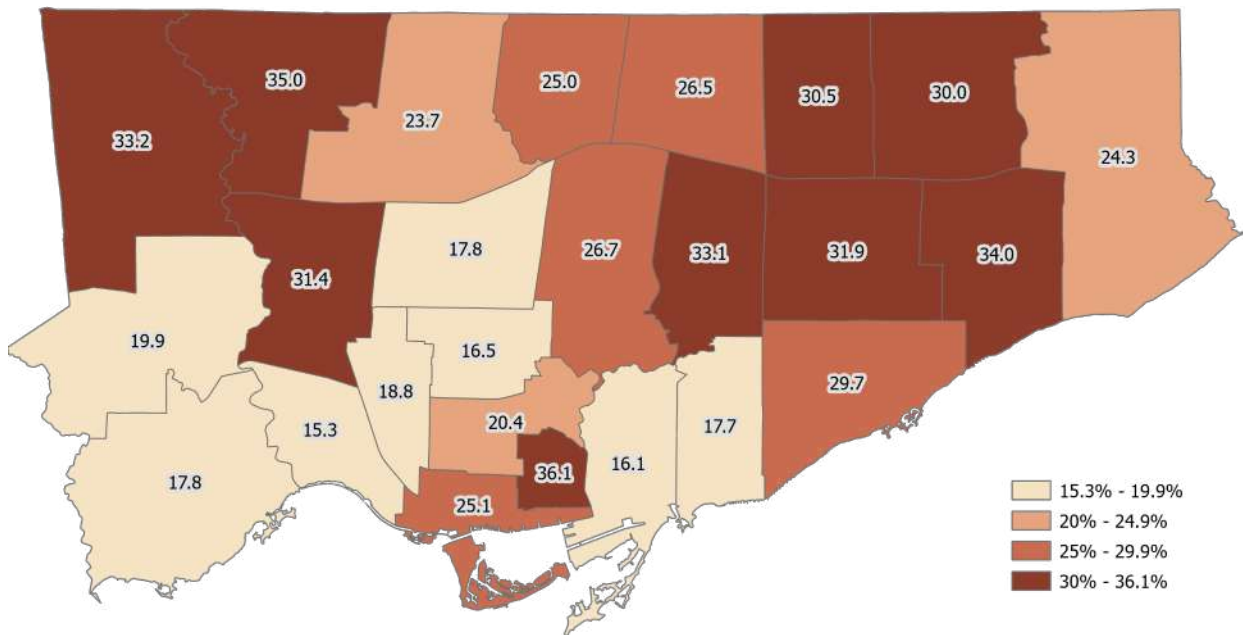
5. Child poverty affects families in every ward, while concentrated pockets of extreme poverty persist across the city

Families are struggling in every ward in Toronto (Figure 6). In fact, nine out of Toronto's 25 wards had a child poverty rate of 30% or more. Toronto Centre had the highest child poverty rate (36.1%), followed by Humber River—Black Creek (35.0%) and Scarborough—Guildwood (34.0%). Parkdale—High Park had the lowest child poverty rate (15.3%), followed by Toronto—Danforth (16.1%) and Toronto—St. Paul's (16.5%).

Between 2022 and 2023, child poverty rates increased in 18 of Toronto's 25 wards (Figure 7). Etobicoke Centre saw the largest increase in child poverty, rising 1.3 percentage points from 18.6% to 19.9%. This was followed by Don Valley East (up 1.2 percentage points to 33.1%), and Don Valley West and Humber River—Black Creek, both of which increased by 1.1 percentage points, to 26.7% and 35.0%, respectively.

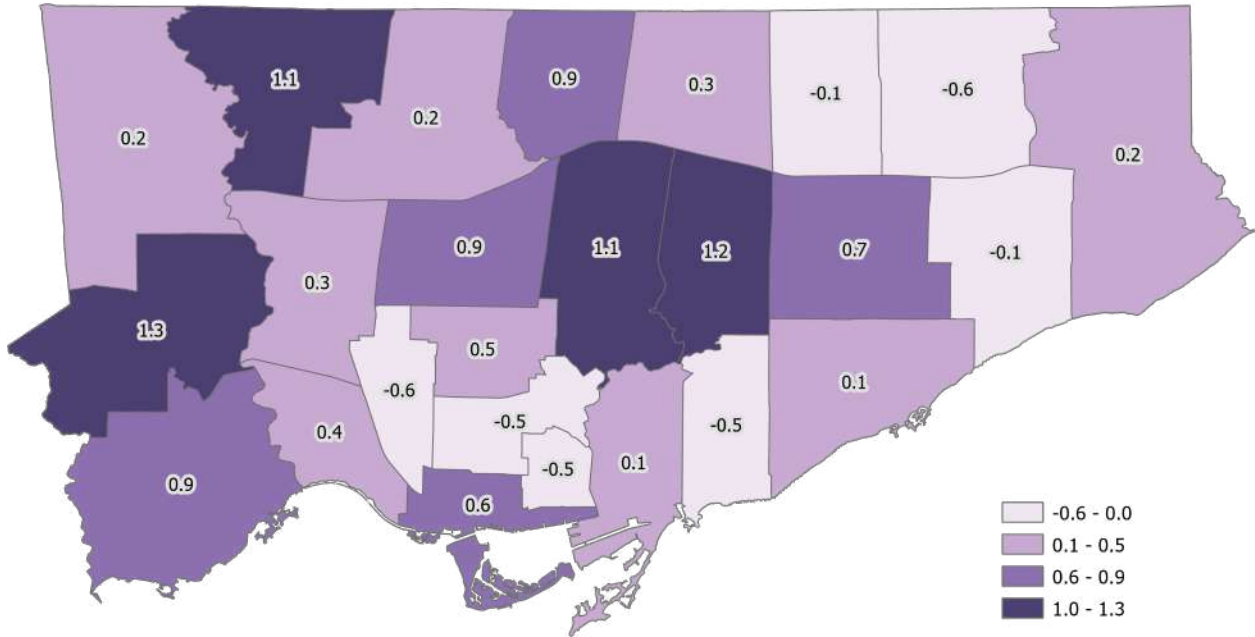
Analysis of poverty rates by census tracts—smaller geographical areas—reveals stark concentrations of extreme poverty across the city (Figure 8). Ward-level data can obscure these localized realities. For example, while the highest ward-level child poverty rate is 36.1% in Toronto Centre, the

Figure 6: Child poverty rate by ward, Toronto, 2023



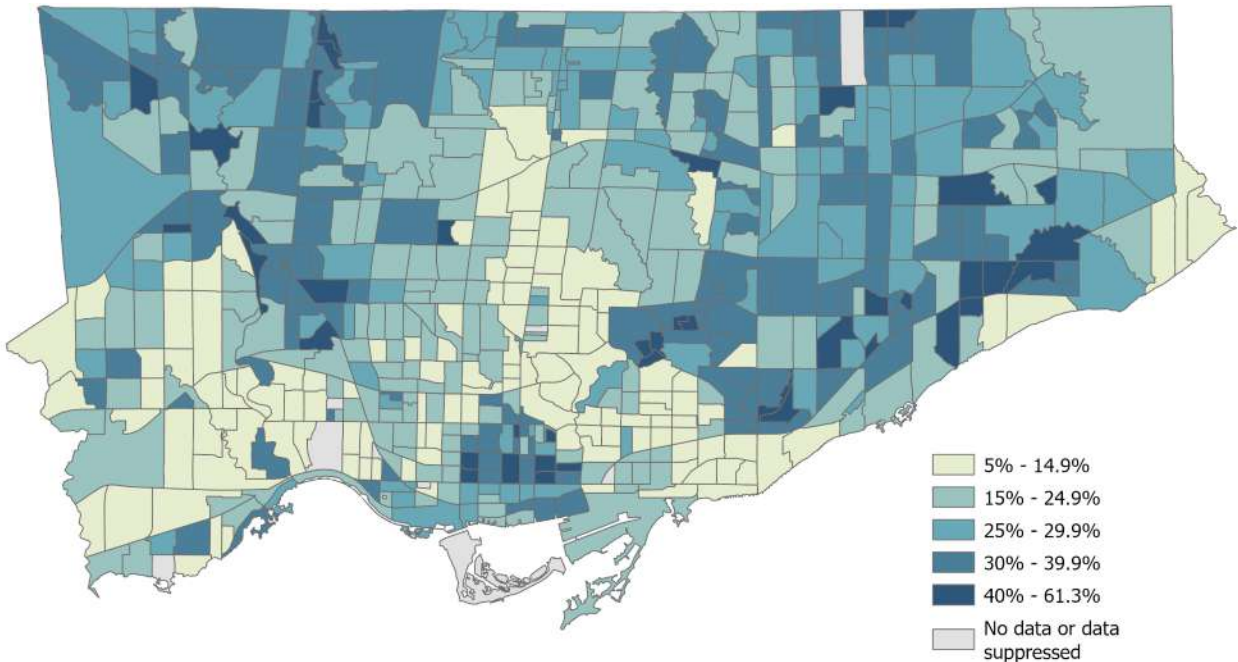
Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Centre for Housing and Income Statistics: Annual income estimates for census families and individuals (T1 Family File), custom tabulations* [Data set].

Figure 7: Percentage point change in child poverty rates by ward from 2022 to 2023, Toronto



Sources: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Centre for Housing and Income Statistics: Annual income estimates for census families and individuals (T1 Family File), custom tabulations* [Data set]. Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Figure 8: Child poverty rate by census tract, Toronto, 2023



Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

highest rate at the census tract level is nearly double, reaching 61.3% within Don Valley West.

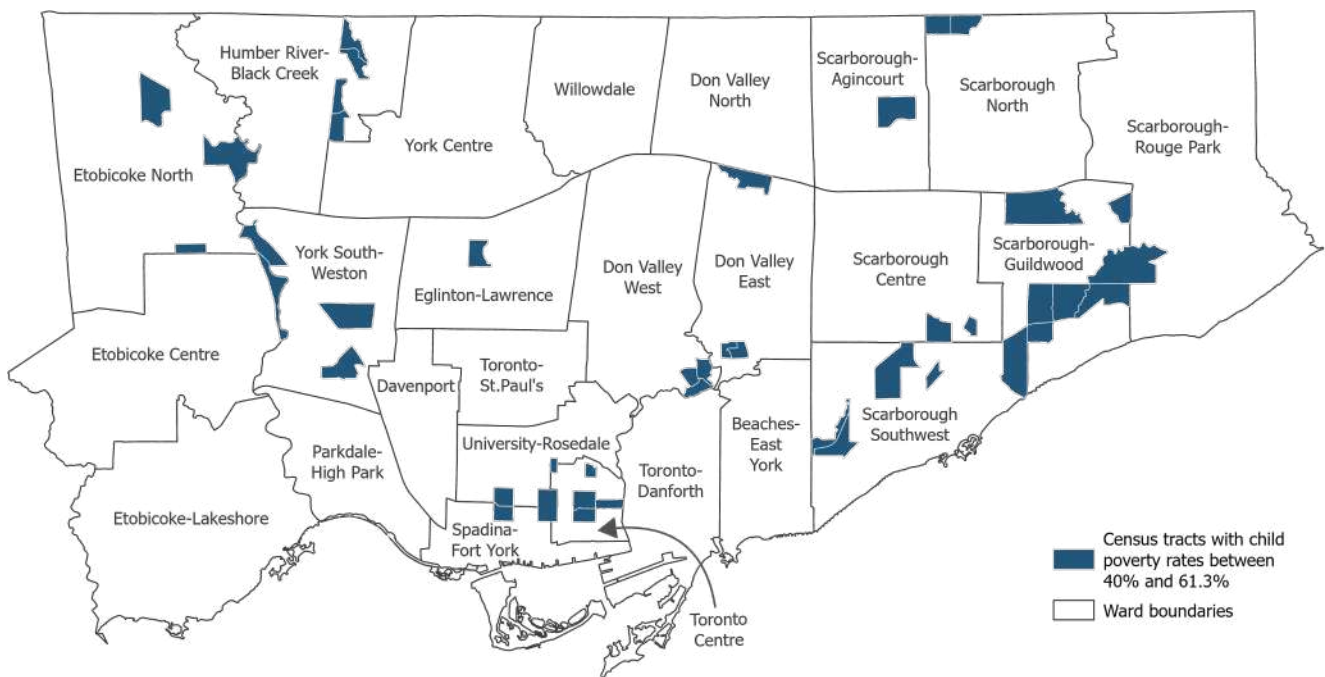
Many of the census tracts with the highest rates of child poverty are concentrated in Toronto's inner suburbs, particularly in the northwest area of the city and Scarborough, as well as within the downtown core.

to 43 census tracts. During this period, there were some shifts in the specific census tracts with extreme poverty. However, it generally followed a similar geographic distribution as it did in 2022.

The ward profiles in the following section include maps that break down child poverty rate by census tract, providing a more detailed view of how poverty is distributed within wards.

Figure 9 highlights the census tracts with extremely high child and family poverty rates—between 40.0% and 61.3%. In 2022, 40 census tracts had 40.0% or more of children and families living in poverty. In 2023, that number increased

Figure 9: Census tracts with the highest rates of child poverty by ward, Toronto, 2023



Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

6. Child poverty continues to disproportionately affect Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant and newcomer children, as well as children living in households without permanent resident status

This section summarizes the findings from our 2024 Toronto Child and Family Report Card, *Fighting for our Future*, which drew on 2020 income data from the 2021 Census and related research. The 2021 Census was conducted during a period of historically low poverty, resulting from widespread access to pandemic-related income supports. At the time of publication of this report, the 2021 Census provided the most up-to-date poverty rates for Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant children for the city of Toronto and other local communities, highlighting the persistent inequities and the impacts of systemic discrimination on marginalized groups.

However, these rates very likely underestimate current realities, given rising child poverty in Toronto and trends at the national level.

According to Statistics Canada's Canadian Income Survey, between 2020 and 2024, poverty rates increased among persons aged 15 and over for the overall population, Indigenous people, racialized individuals, immigrants, and people with disabilities.^{35,36} The data also confirm that these groups continue to experience higher rates of poverty than the overall population. Updated data from the 2026 Census currently underway will provide a current picture of child and family poverty at the local level.

The 2021 Census shows disproportionate impacts of child and family poverty for specific groups. While overall rates vary, Indigenous, racialized, immigrant, and newcomer children, as well as children living in non-permanent resident households, experience poverty disproportionately compared to other children. These disparities reflect the impacts of historical and ongoing colonization, racism, and other forms of discrimination that limit access to housing and economic opportunities.

INDIGENOUS FAMILIES

According to the 2021 Census, 20.4% of Indigenous children in Toronto experienced poverty, compared to 14.5% for non-Indigenous children (Figure 10).[§]

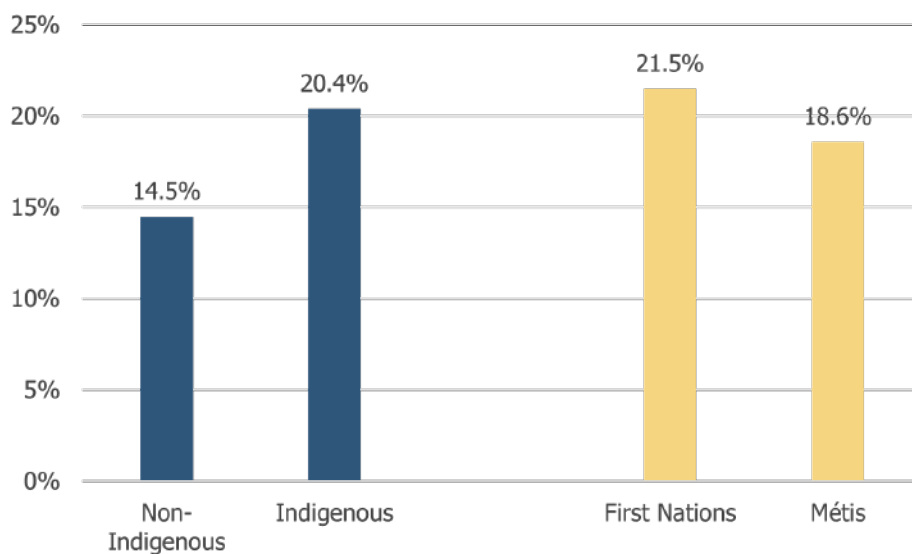
[§] Child poverty rates amongst Indigenous families were likely under-estimated. Research has shown that the Canadian Census undercounts Indigenous populations and underestimates the prevalence of poverty among urban Indigenous residents. (See Smylie, J., & Firestone, M. (2015). Back to the basics: Identifying and addressing underlying challenges in achieving high quality and relevant health statistics for Indigenous populations in Canada. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, 31(1), 67–87; and Rotondi, M. A., O’Campo, P., O’Brien, K., Firestone, M., Wolfe, S. H., Bourgeois, C., & Smylie, J. K. (2017). Our health counts Toronto: Using respondent-driven sampling to unmask census undercounts of an urban Indigenous population in Toronto, Canada. *BMJ Open*, 7(12), e018936–e018936.)

RACIALIZED AND IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

In 2020, racialized children in Toronto had almost double the poverty rate (17.8%) of non-racialized children (9.1%). Children from specific racialized groups, including Arab, West Asian, Black, Latin American, Korean, and Southeast Asian children, had even higher rates (Figure 11).

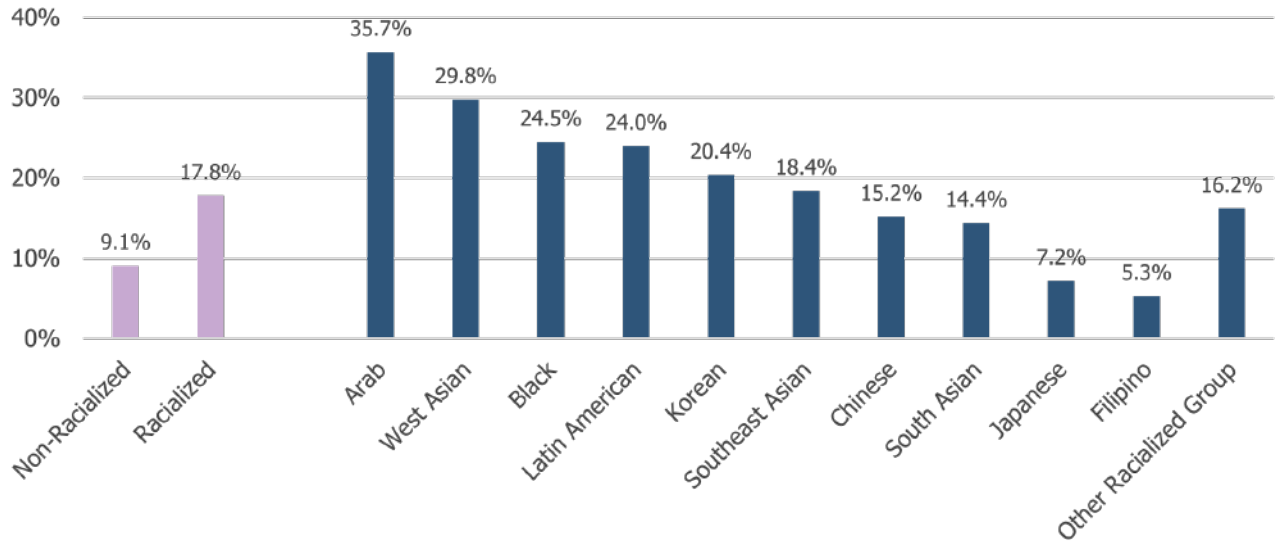
In 2020, immigrant children in Toronto had a poverty rate of 21.0%, compared to 12.6% for non-immigrant children (Figure 12). By period of immigration, newcomer children had the highest rate of poverty at 38.1%. Children from families who do not have permanent residence had an even more alarming rate of poverty of 42.6%.

Figure 10: Child poverty rate by Indigenous identity and specific Indigenous group, Toronto, 2020



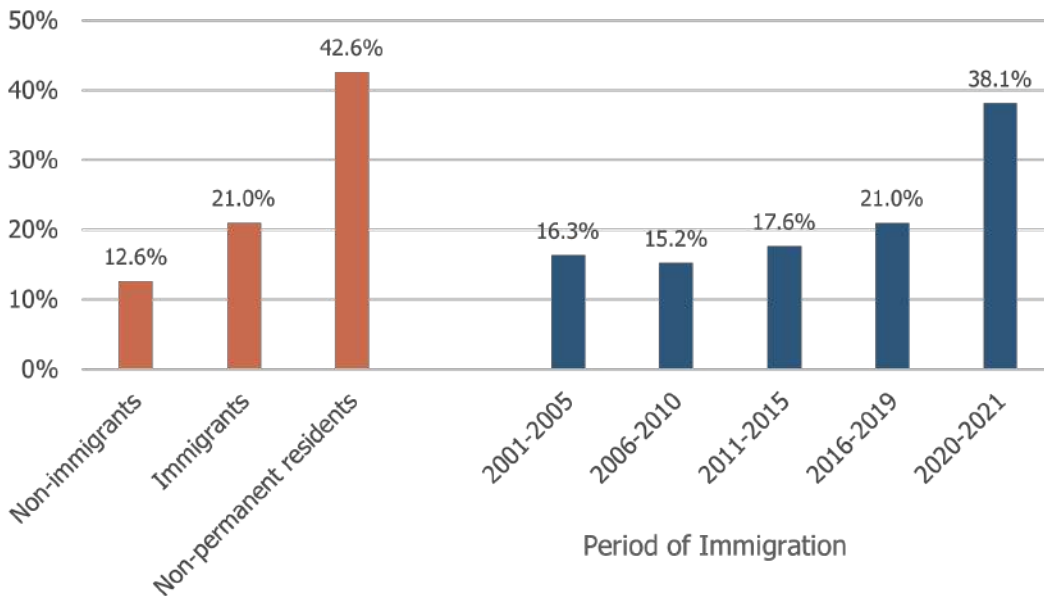
Source: Statistics Canada. (2024). *Catalogue No. EO3772-CPP-01-CDCSDDA-Part 3-Ontario: 2021 data* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Figure 11: Child poverty rate by racialized status and specific racialized group, Toronto, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. (2024). *Catalogue No. EO3772-CPP-01-CDCSDDA-Part 3-Ontario: 2021 data* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Figure 12: Child poverty rate by immigration status and period of immigration, Toronto, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. (2024). *Catalogue No. EO3772-CPP-01-CDCSDDA-Part 3-Ontario: 2021 data* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

According to the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability, an estimated 570,570 people aged 15 and older in Toronto have a disability, representing 24.6% of the population in this age group.^{¶37} National data show that people with disabilities experience poverty at nearly twice the rate of those without disabilities.³⁸ The link between poverty and disability is also reflected in rates of food insecurity. In 2025, 31% of food bank users in Toronto identified as having a disability, an increase from 25% in 2024.³⁹

¶ Data for people with disabilities in Canada are available for those age 15 and over. Data are not available for children under 15 with disabilities.

2SLGBTQ+ FAMILIES

While there are limited data on income and poverty rates among 2SLGBTQ+ families, emerging national evidence points to significant disparities. Data using the Market Basket Measure (MBM) show that transgender individuals have higher rates of poverty than their cisgender counterparts, while non-binary individuals face poverty rates that are more than double the national average.⁴⁰

Despite gaps in official statistics, available research points to the presence of poverty within 2SLGBTQ+ communities.⁴¹ 2SLGBTQ+ individuals are more likely to live in unaffordable housing than the general population and experience more employment precarity and earn less than the general population.^{42,43} National research also estimates that almost one in four homeless youth (aged 16–24) identify as 2SLGBTQ+.⁴⁴ These intersecting challenges make economic security challenging for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals.



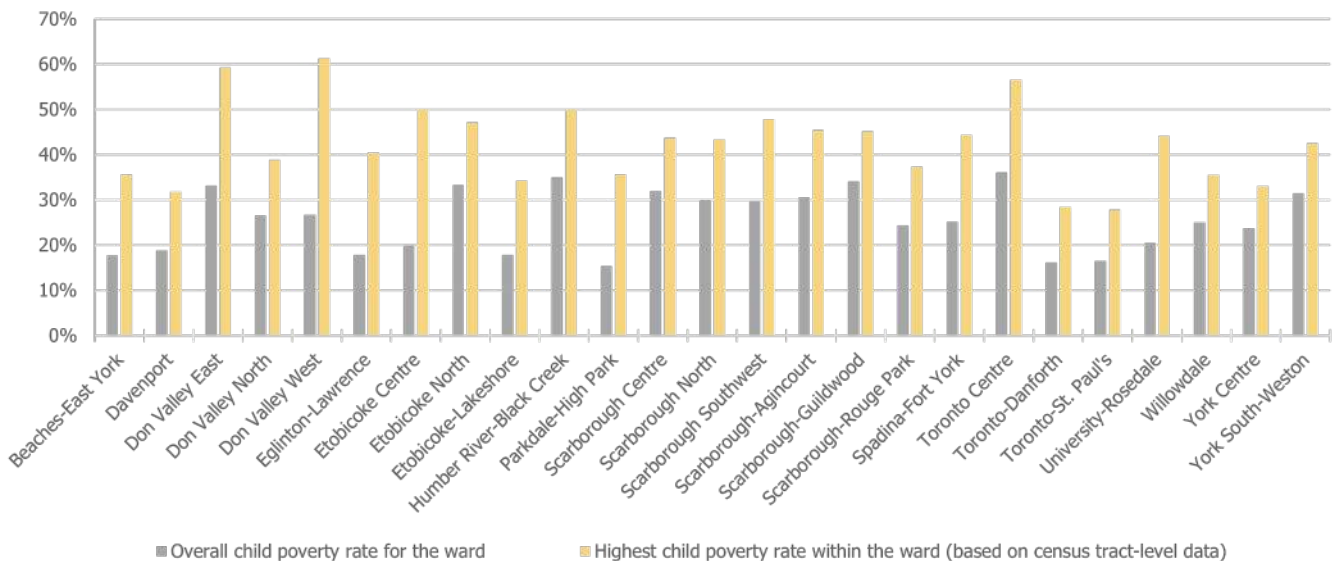
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY RATES FOR THE 25 CITY WARDS

Poverty affects children in every single ward in Toronto. This section of the report provides ward profiles for each of the City’s 25 wards. Each ward profile includes:

- a map showing the child poverty rates by census tract within the ward for children under the age of 18,
- a graph showing overall poverty rates for the ward and for the city of Toronto,
- the total percentage of children in the ward living in poverty,
- the highest child poverty rate within the ward based on census tract data, and
- a street map of the ward and an inset map showing the location of the ward in the city.

These profiles show how overall ward-level child poverty rates can mask areas within wards where a much higher share of children are living in low-income families. **Figure 13** highlights this by comparing each ward’s overall rate with the highest child poverty rate observed within the ward at the census tract level.

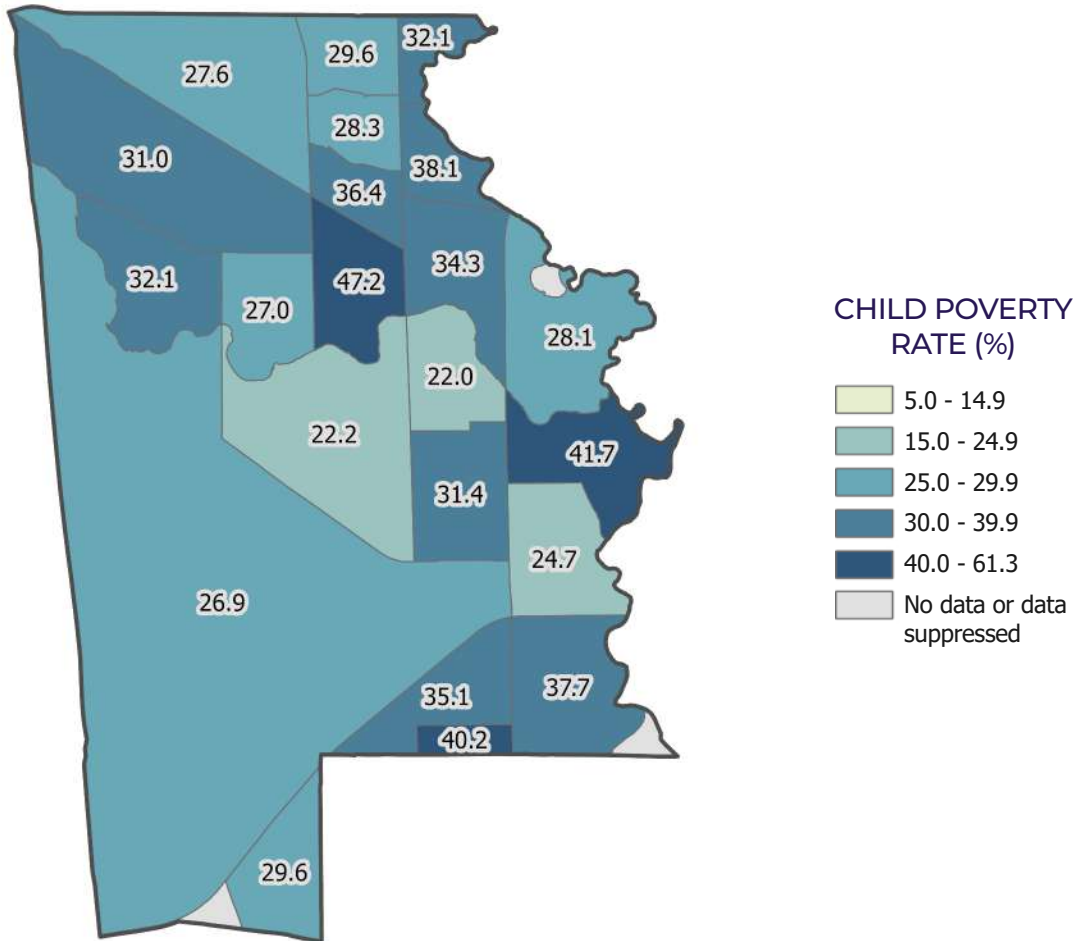
Figure 13: Overall child poverty rate for each ward & highest child poverty rate within each ward, Toronto, 2023



Sources: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Table I-13 - Individual data - After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants (census family low income measure, CFLIM-AT) for couple and lone parent families by family composition, 2023* [Data table]. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

Statistics Canada. (2025). *Centre for Housing and Income Statistics: Annual income estimates for census families and individuals (T1 Family File), custom tabulations* [Data set].

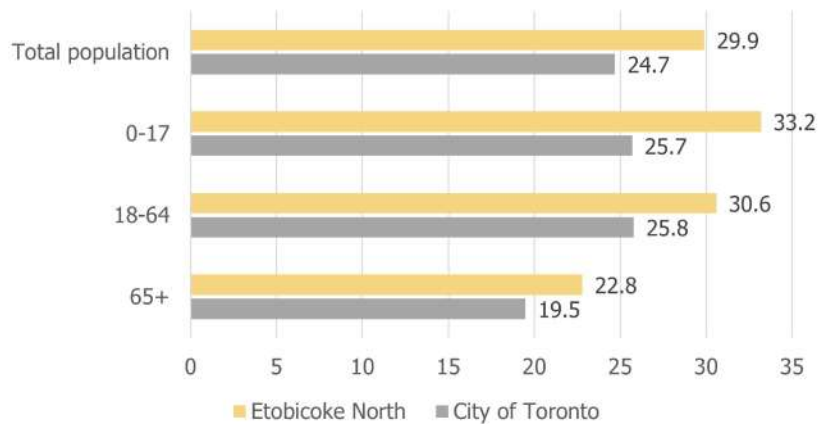
Etobicoke North: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



33.2%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

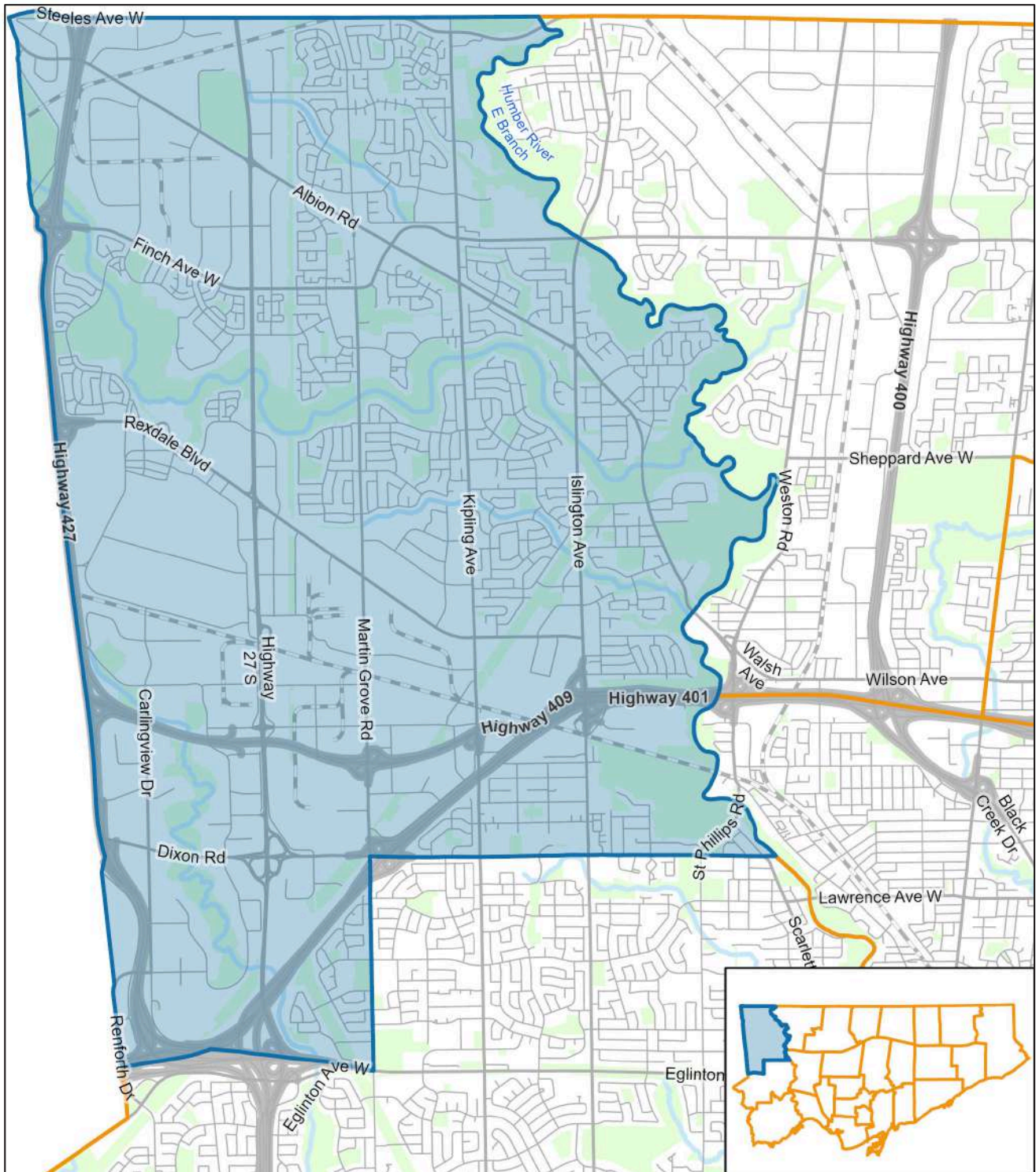
47.2%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

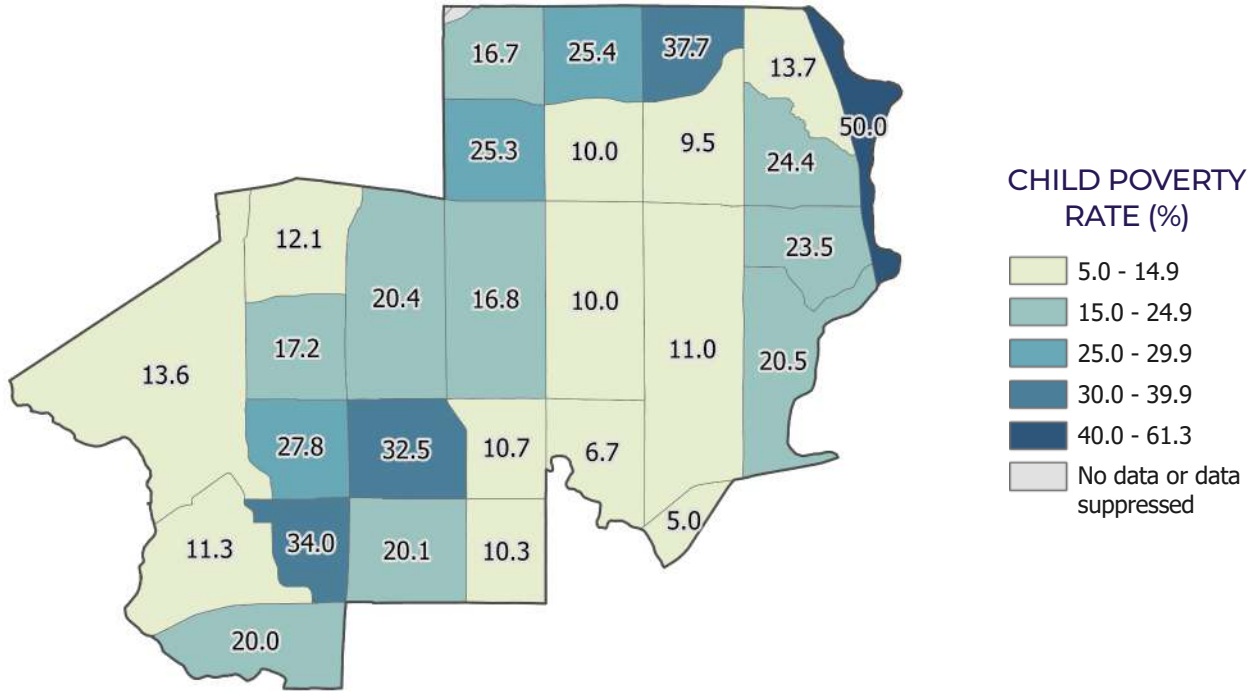
ETOBICOKE NORTH WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

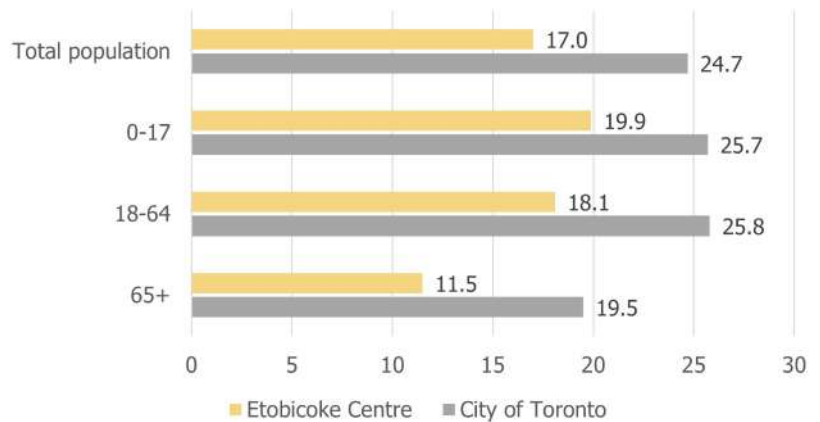
Etobicoke Centre: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



19.9%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

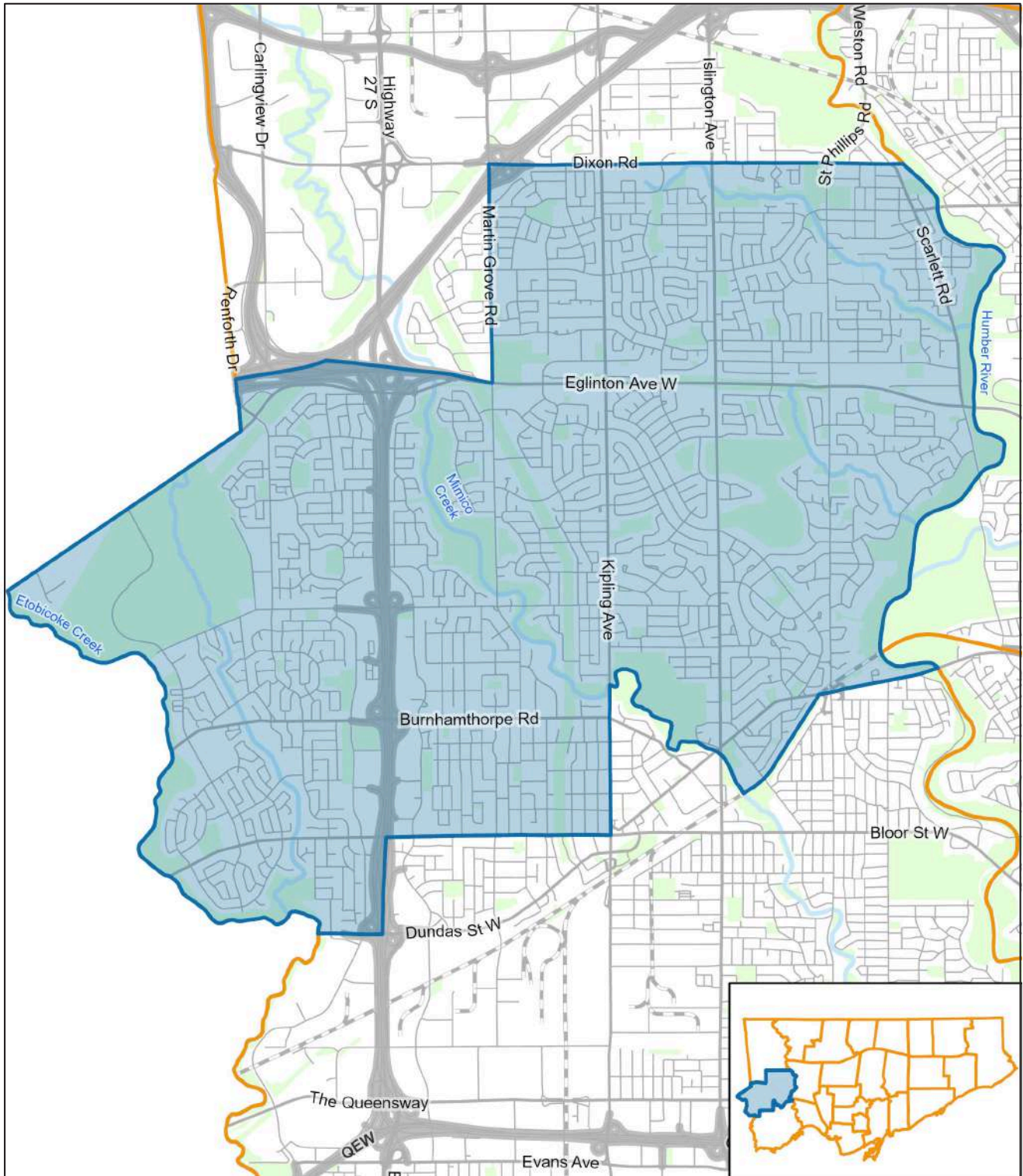
50.0%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



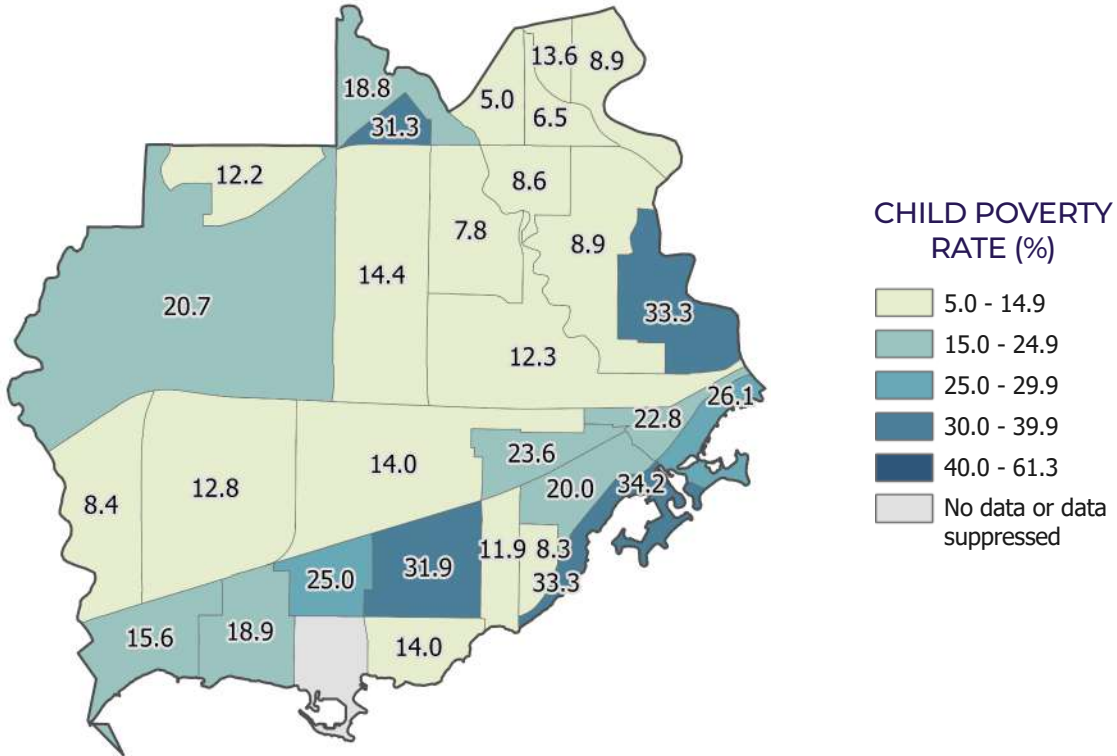
Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

ETOBICOKE CENTRE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.
 Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018.
 This map is for information purposes only.

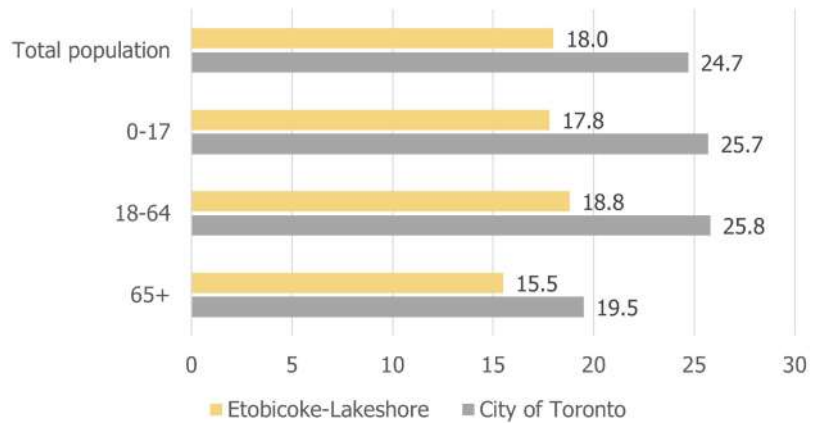
Etobicoke—Lakeshore: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



17.8%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

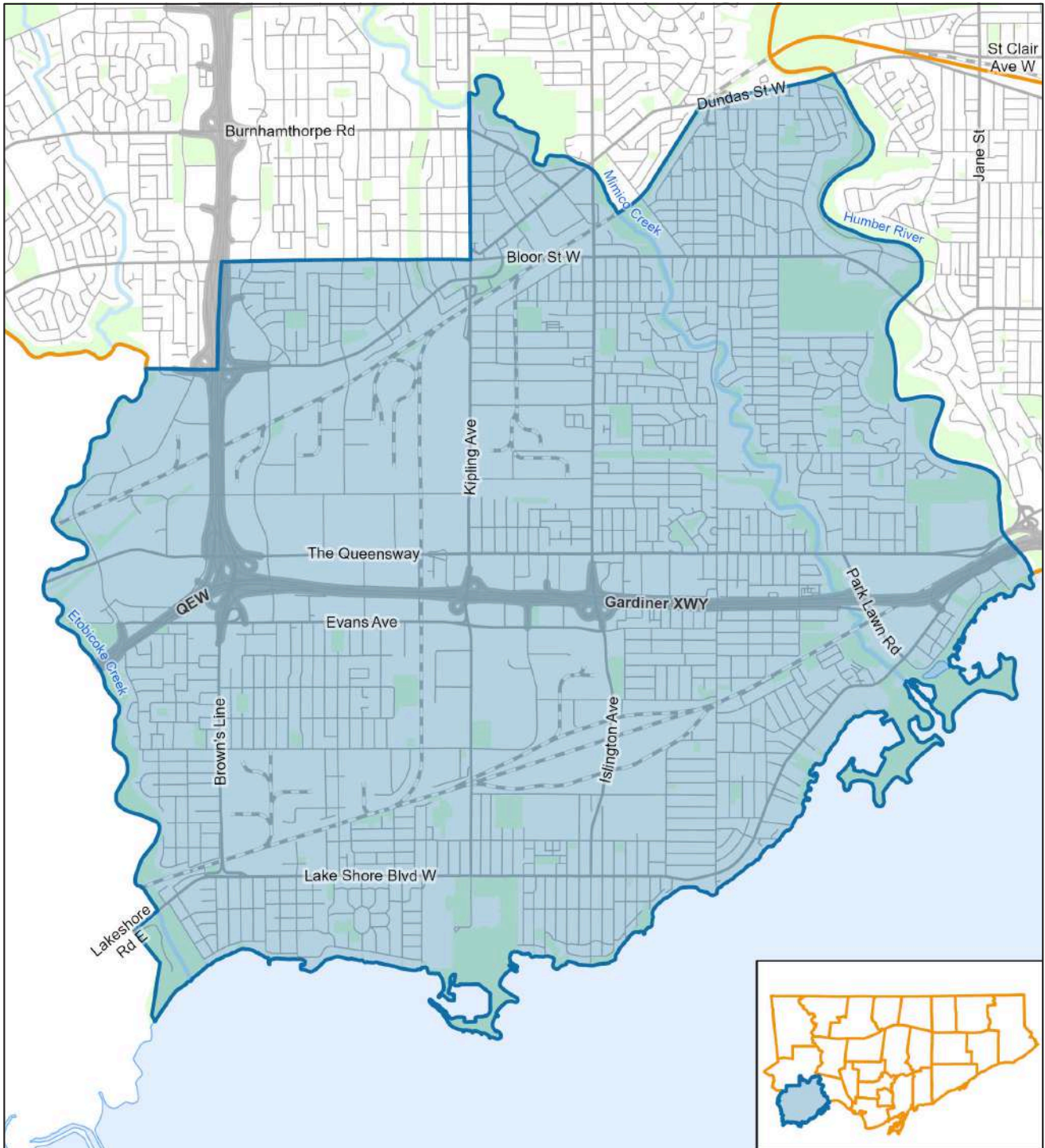
34.2%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

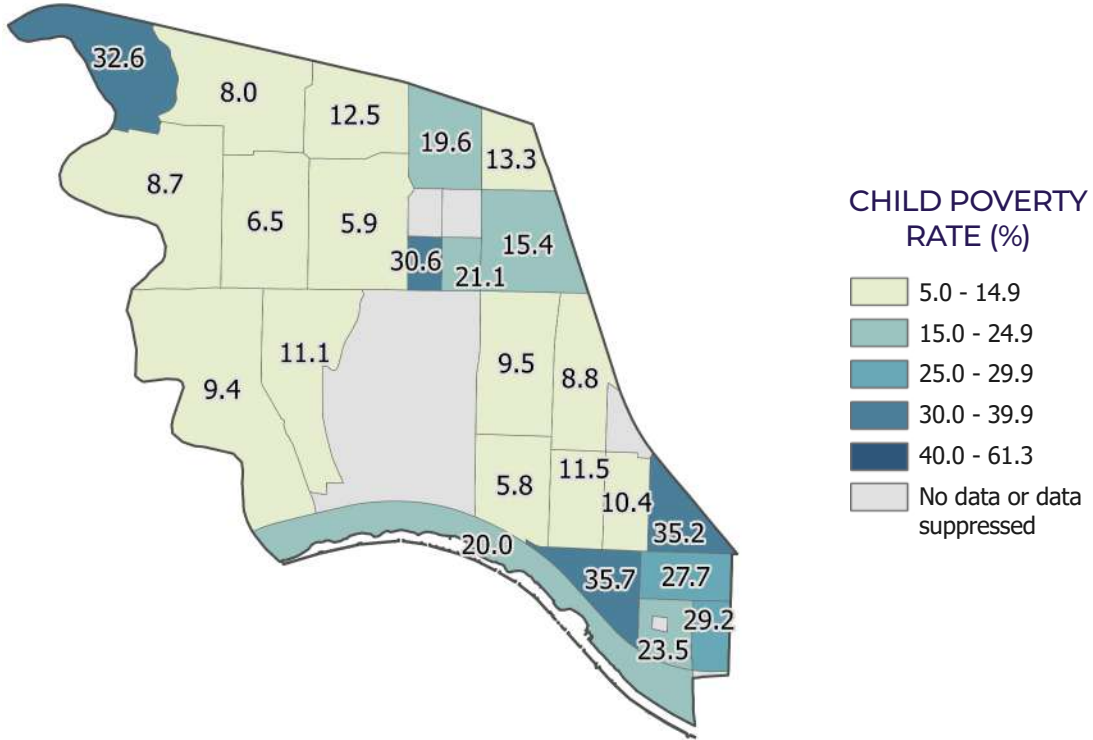
ETOBICOKE—LAKESHORE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

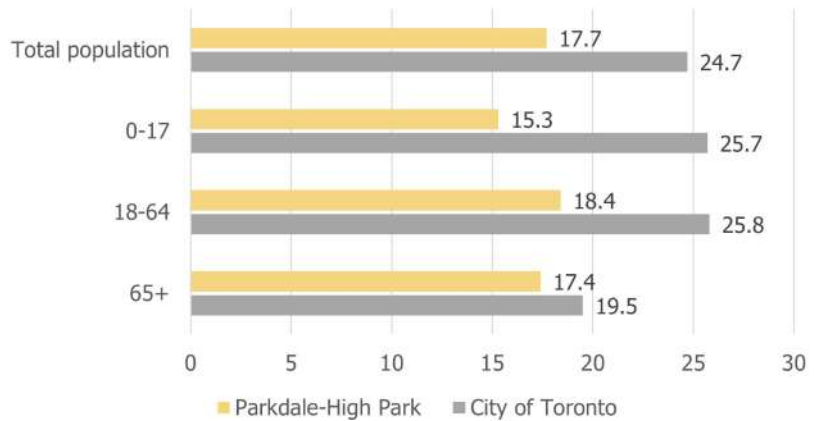
Parkdale—High Park: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



15.3%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

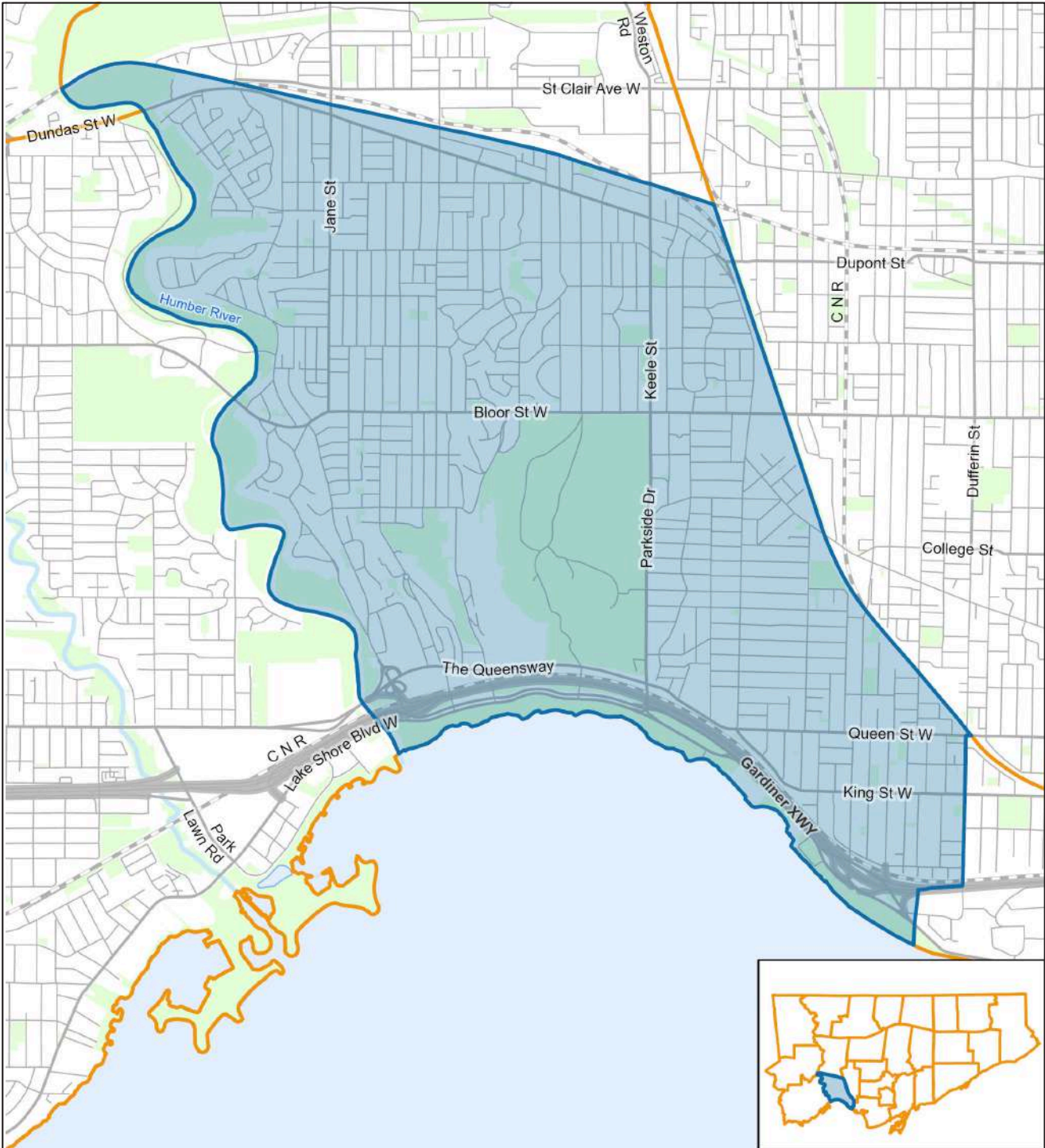
35.7%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

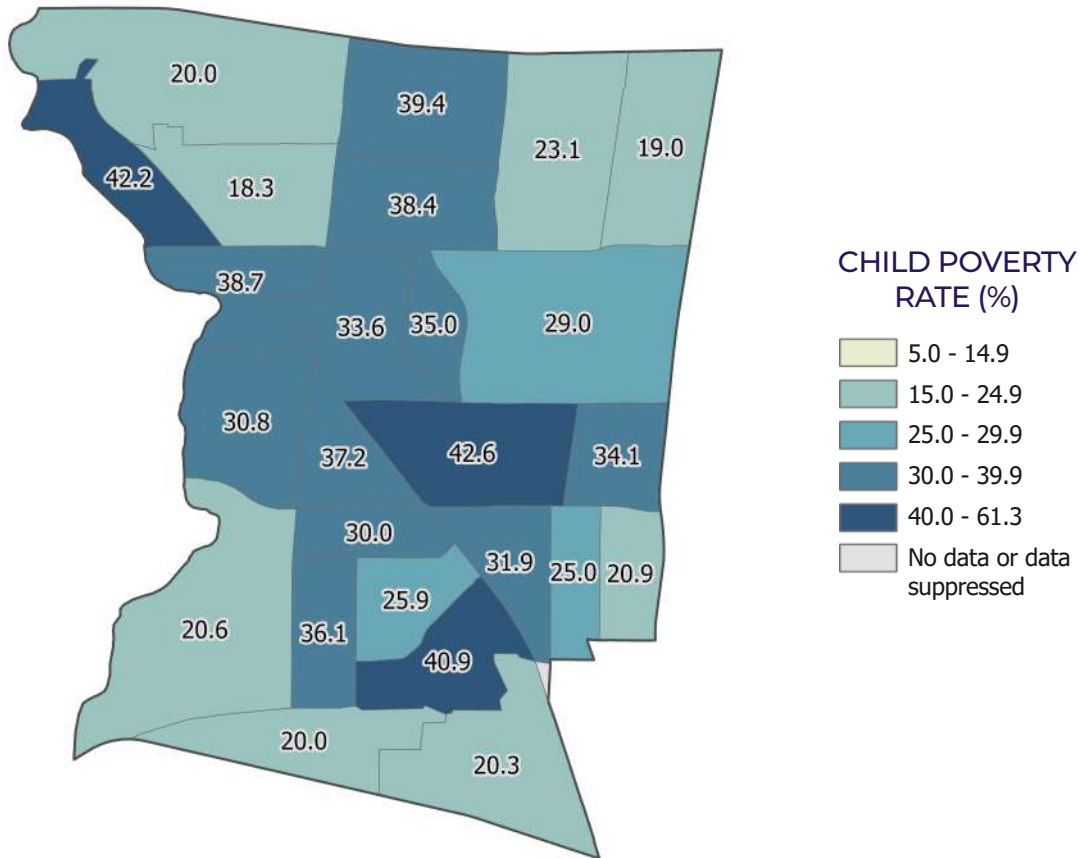
PARKDALE—HIGH PARK WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

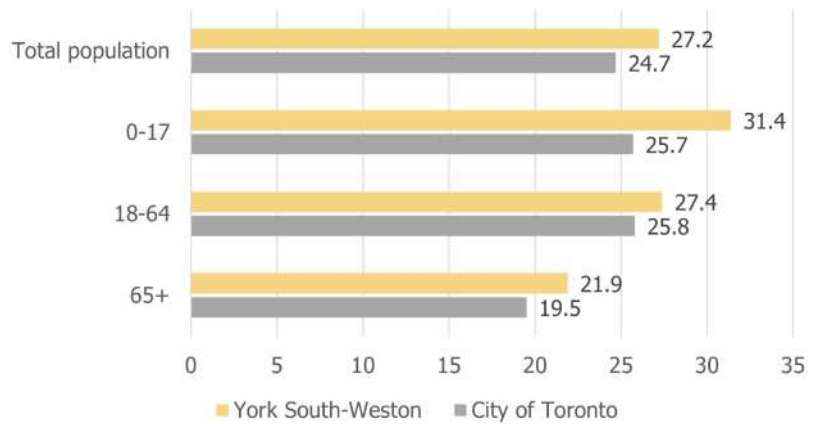
York South—Weston: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



31.4%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

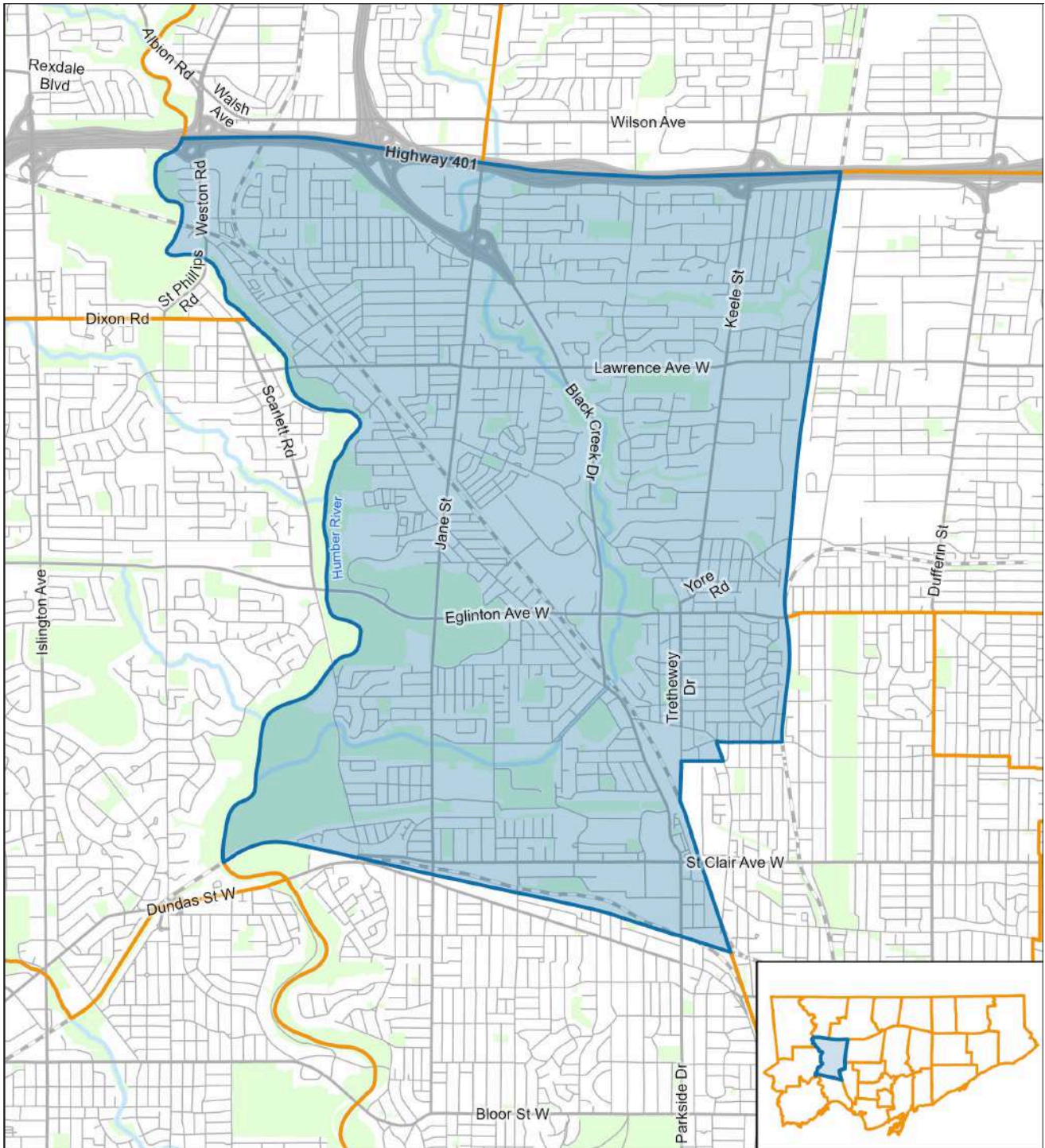
42.6%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

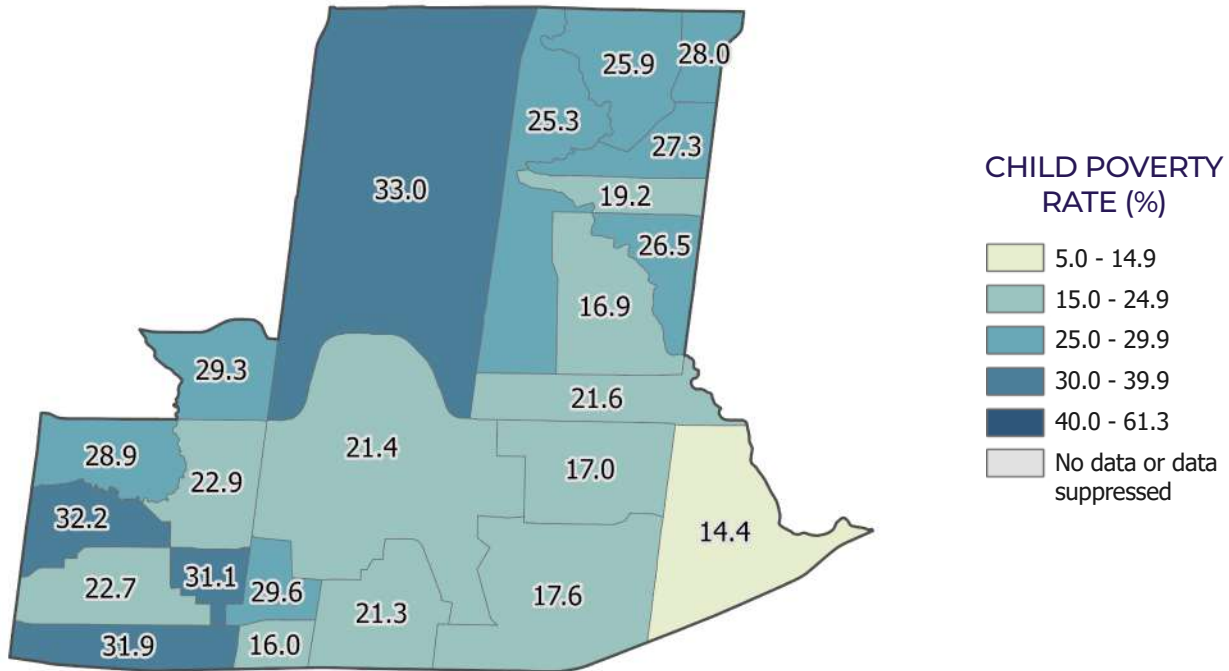
YORK SOUTH—WESTON WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

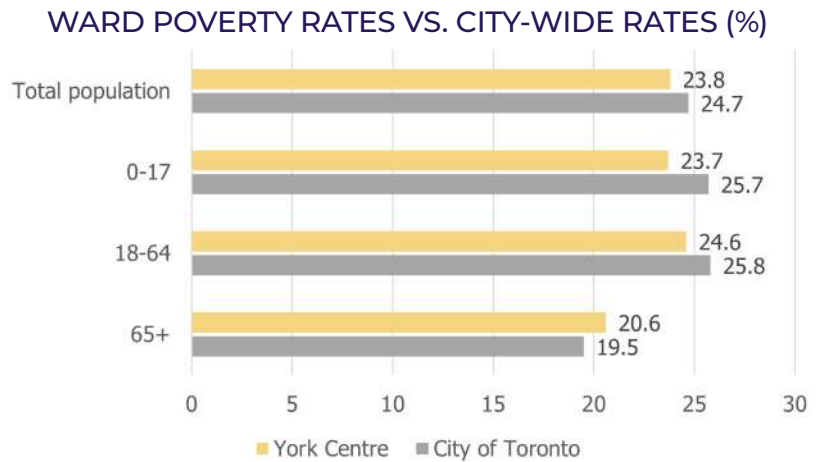
Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

York Centre: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



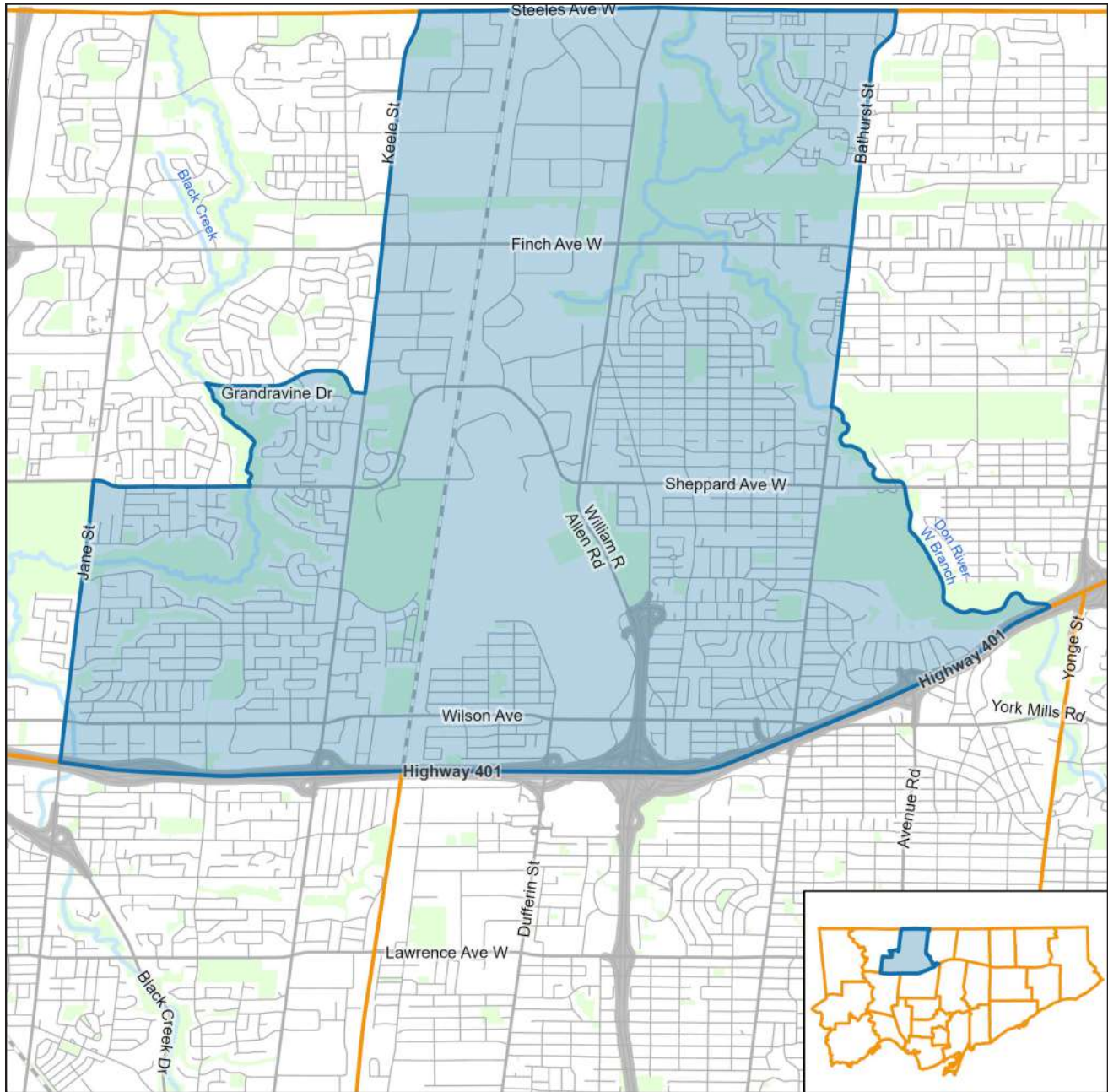
23.7%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

33.0%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

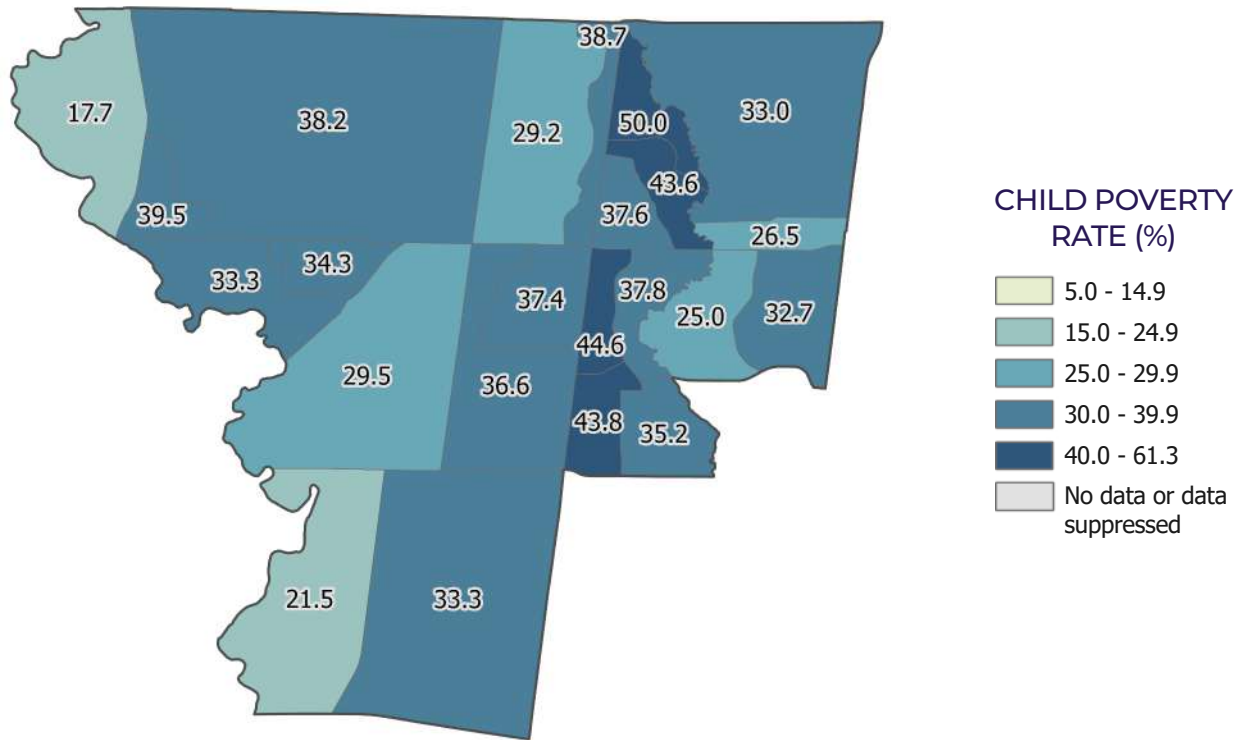
YORK CENTRE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

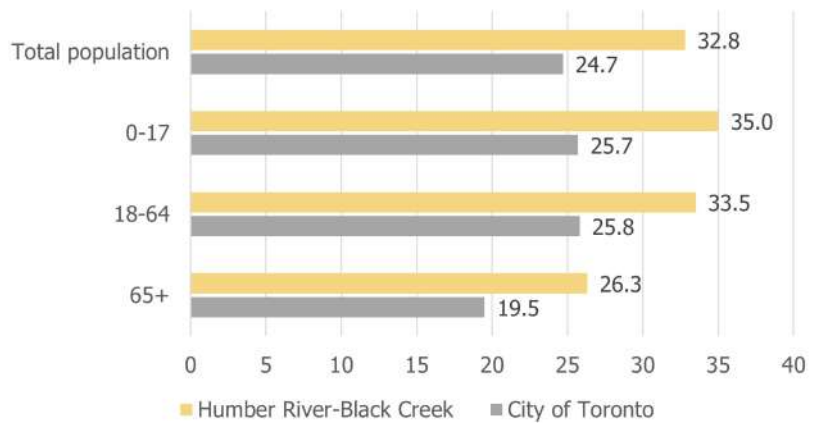
Humber River—Black Creek: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



35.0%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

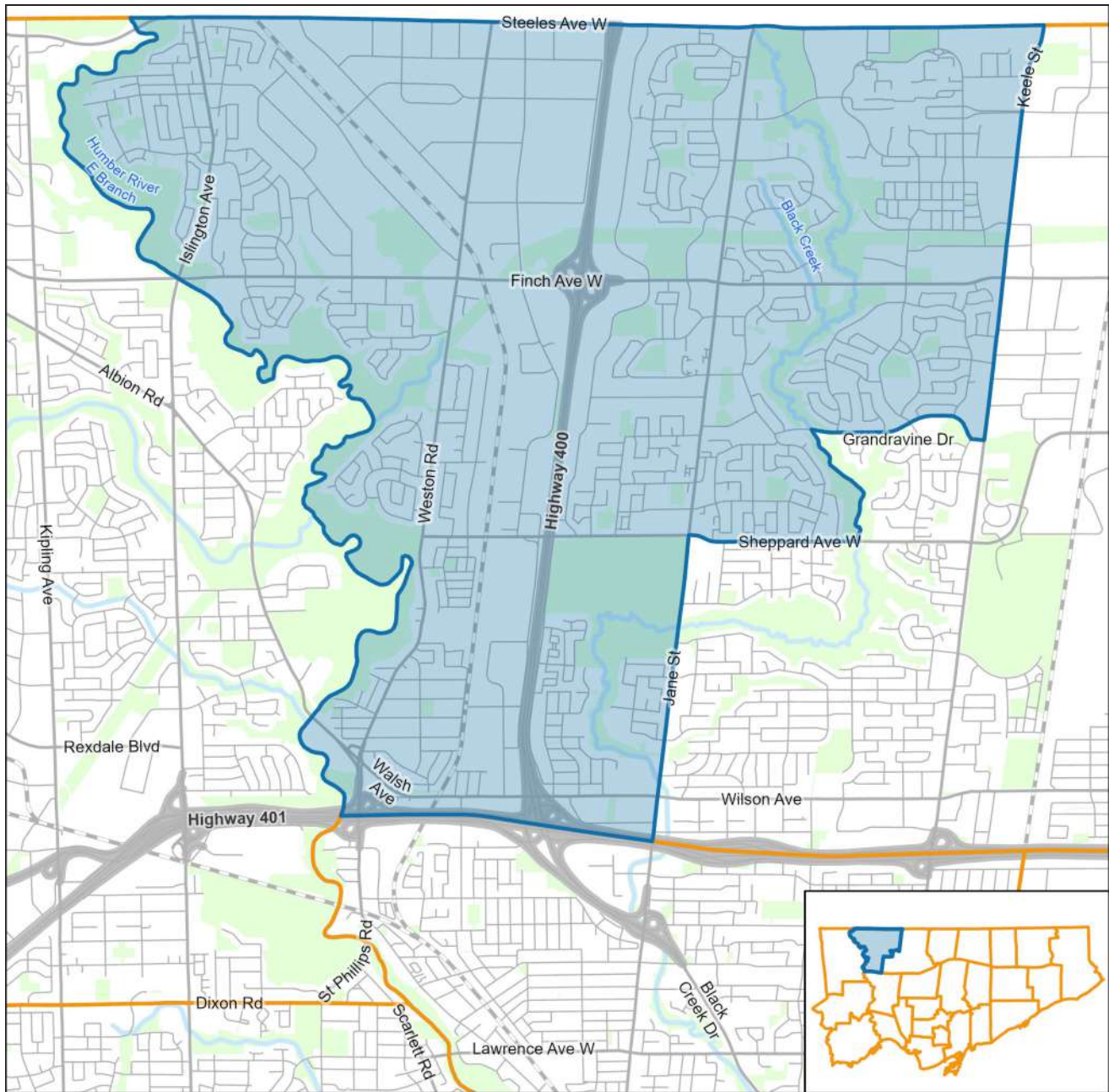
50.0%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

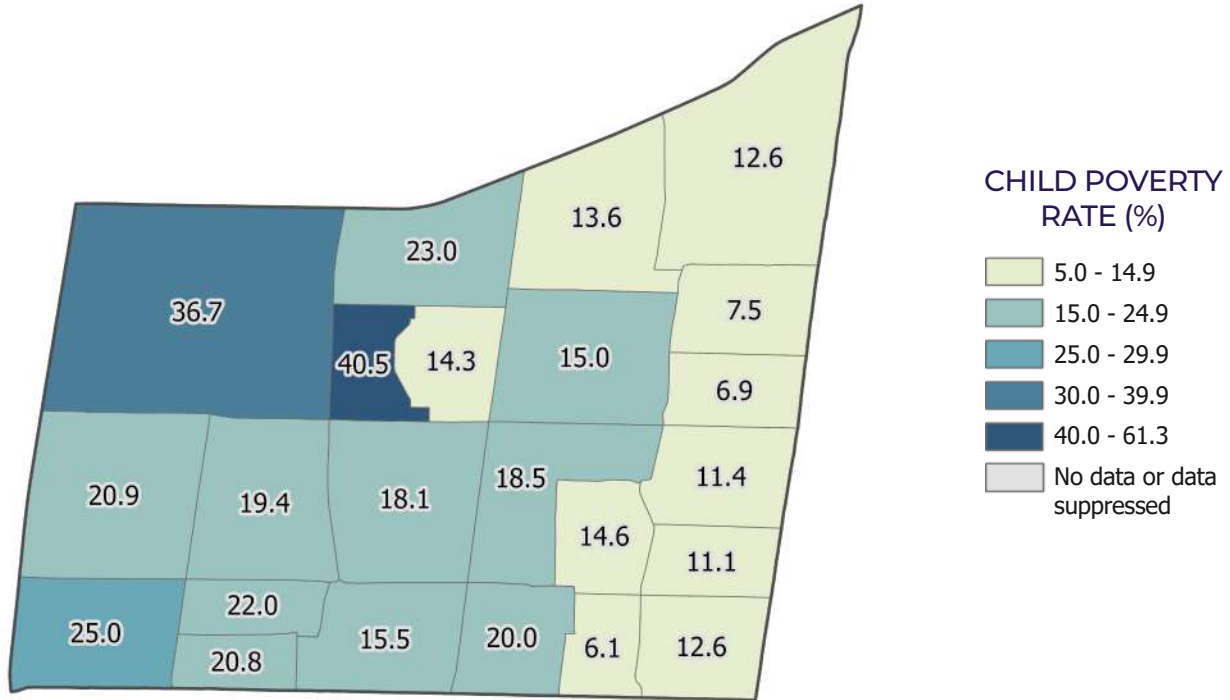
HUMBER RIVER—BLACK CREEK WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

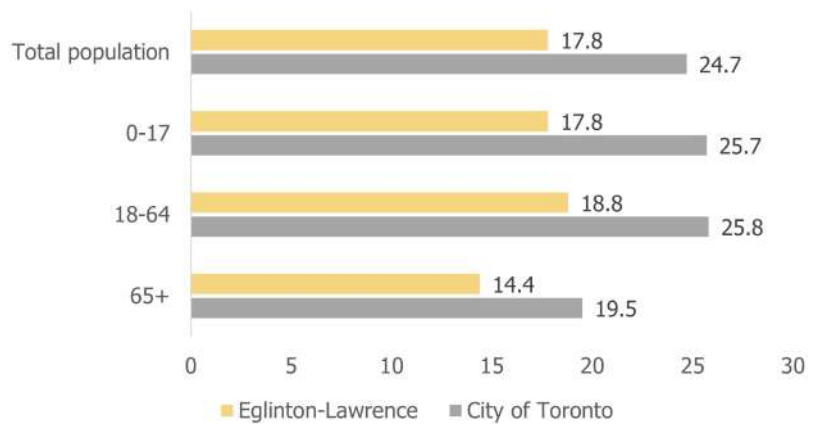
Eglinton—Lawrence: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



17.8%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

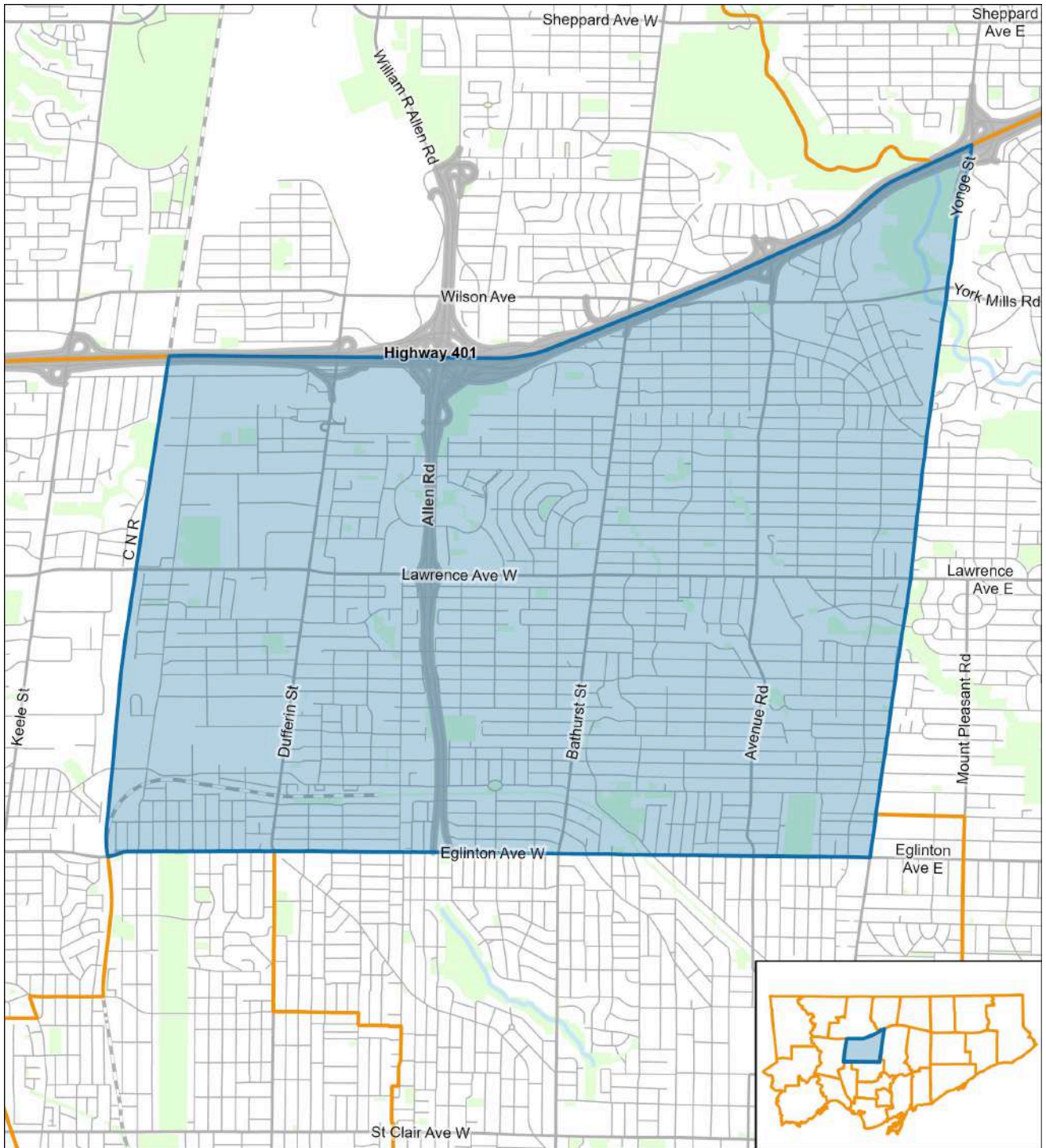
40.5%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

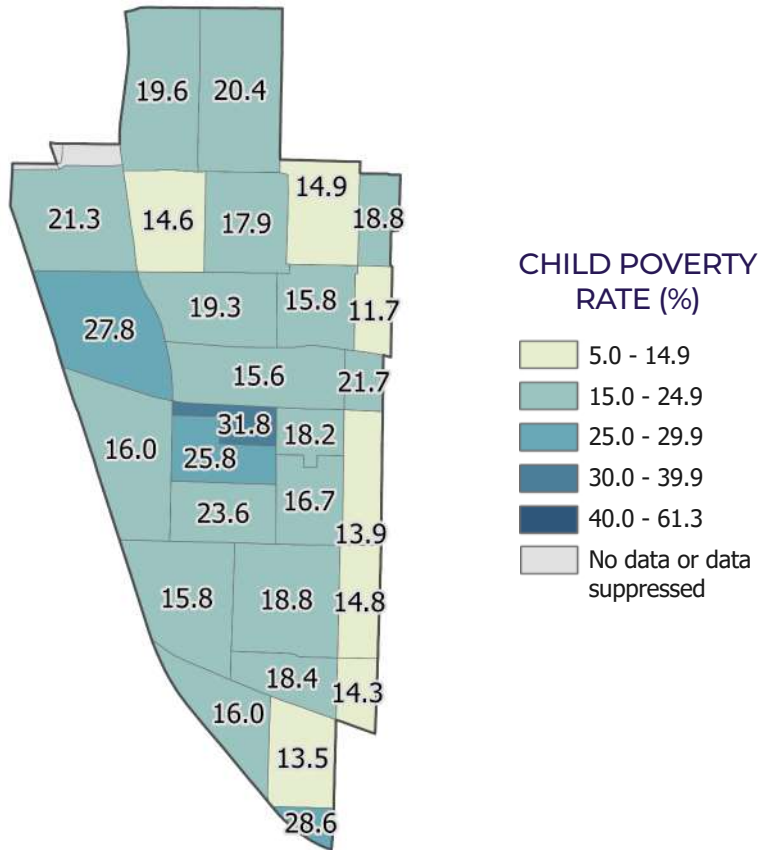
EGLINTON—LAWRENCE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

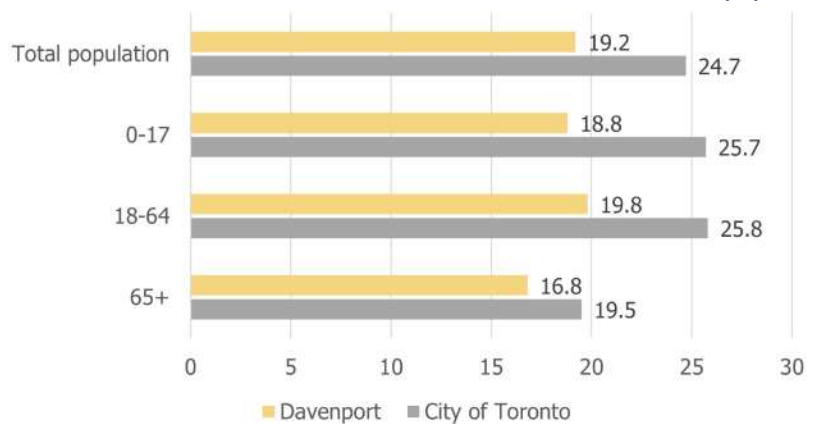
Davenport: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



18.8%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

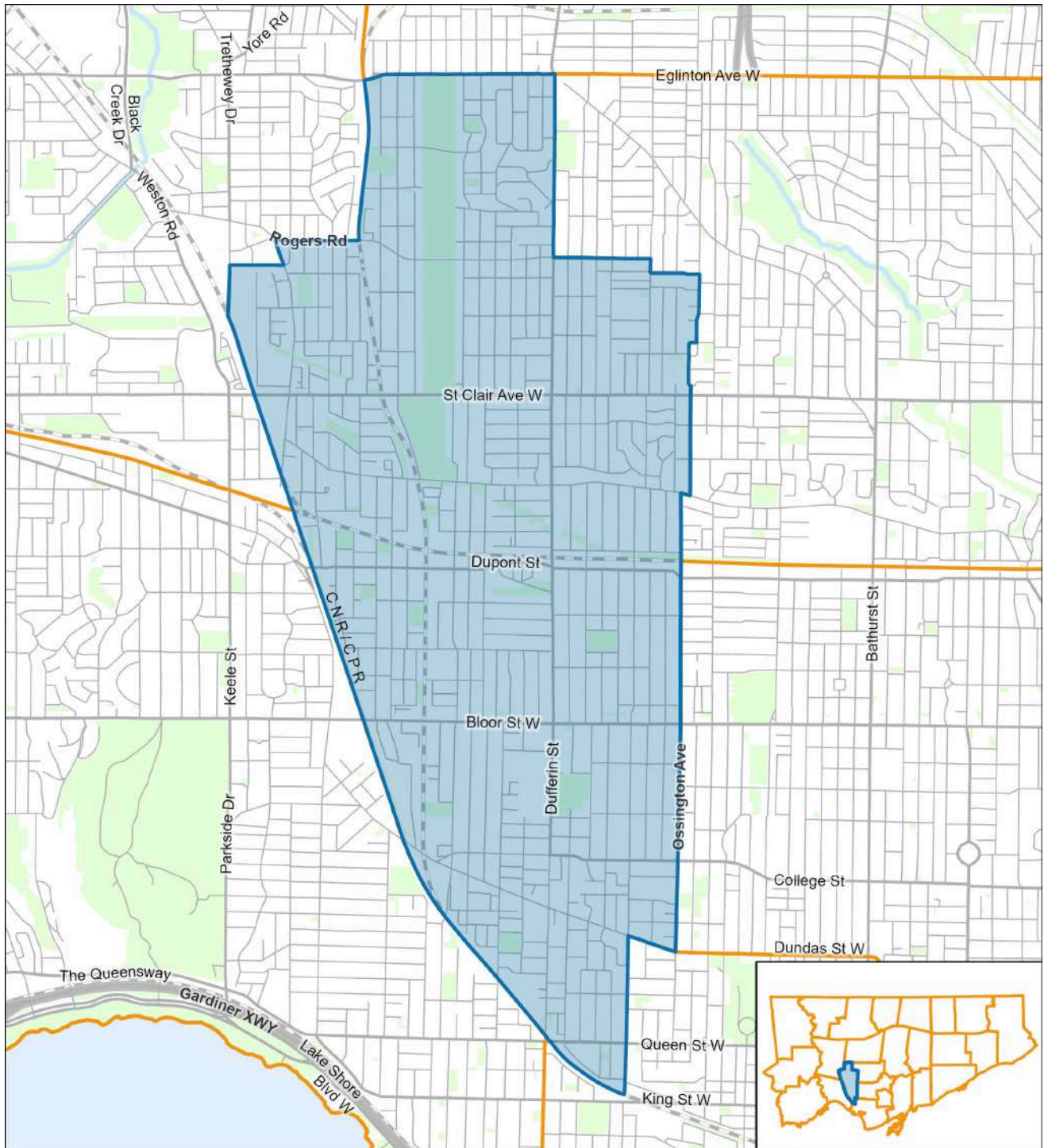
31.8%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

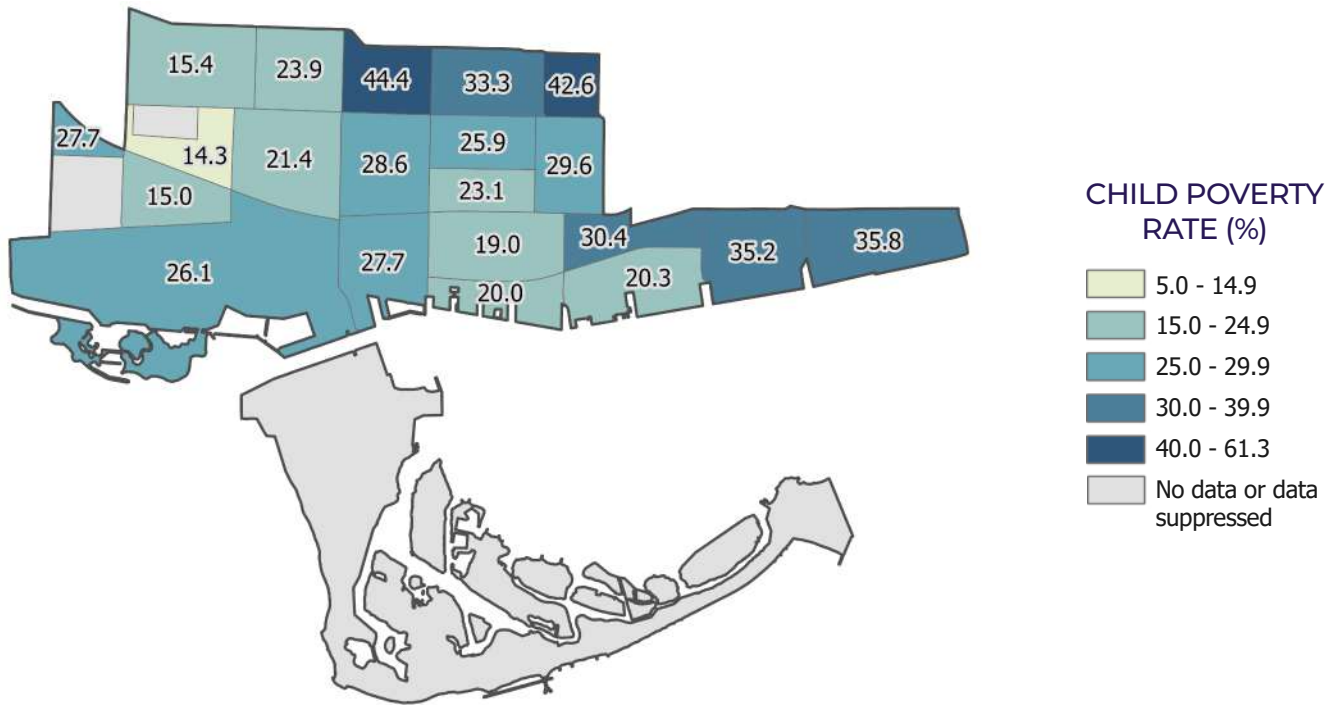
DAVENPORT WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

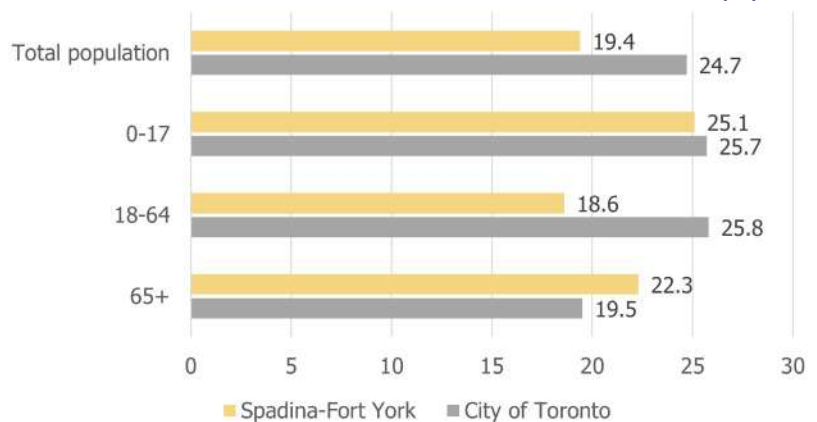
Spadina—Fort York: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



25.1%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

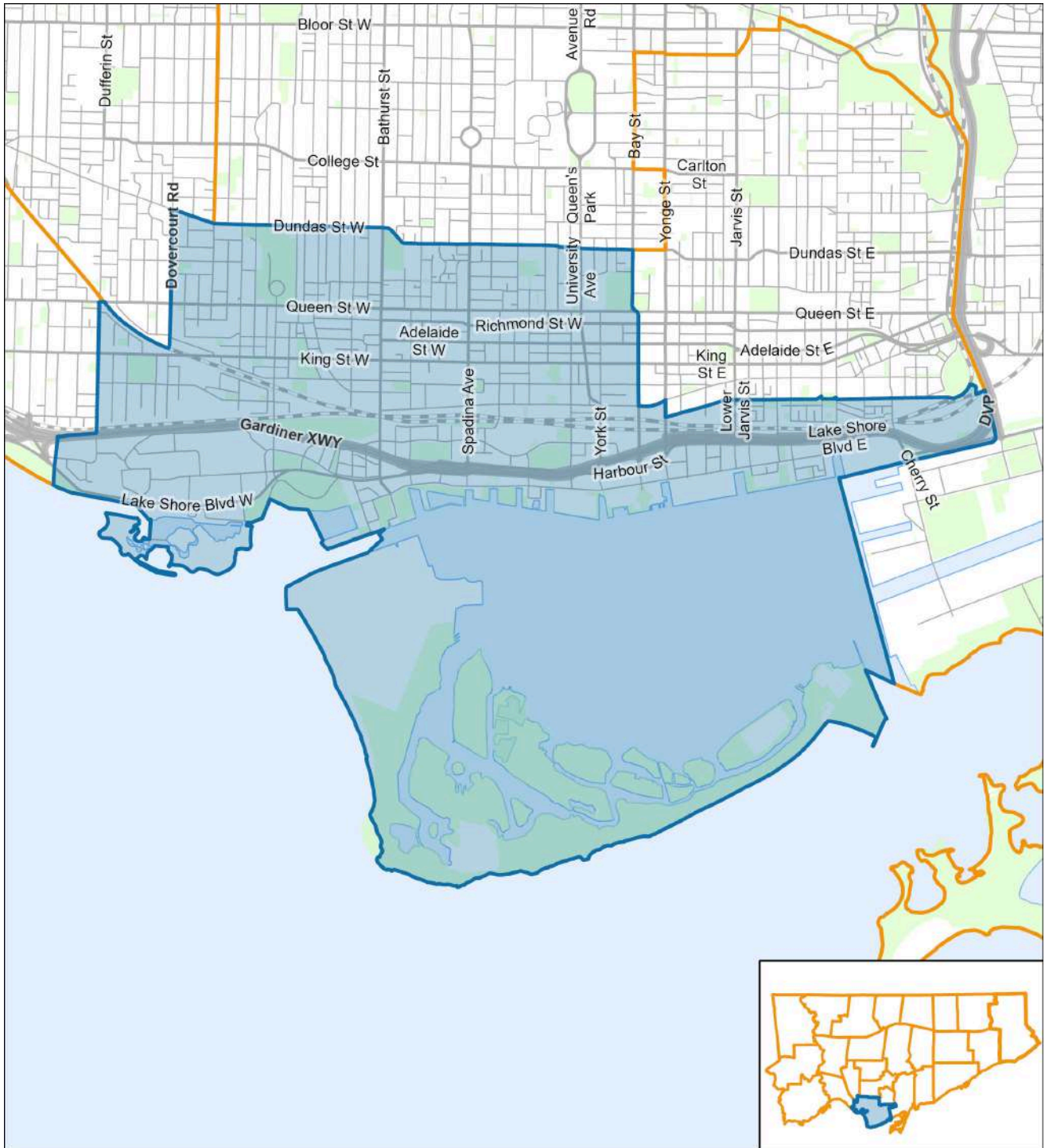
44.4%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

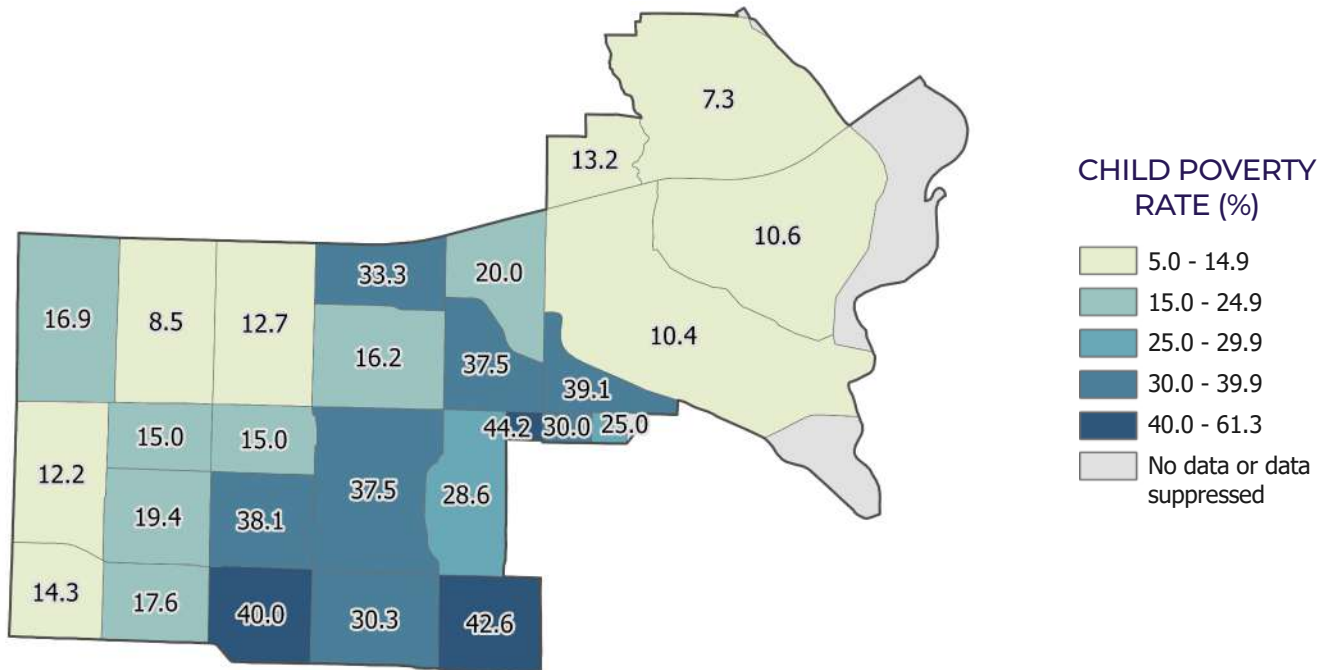
SPADINA—FORT YORK WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

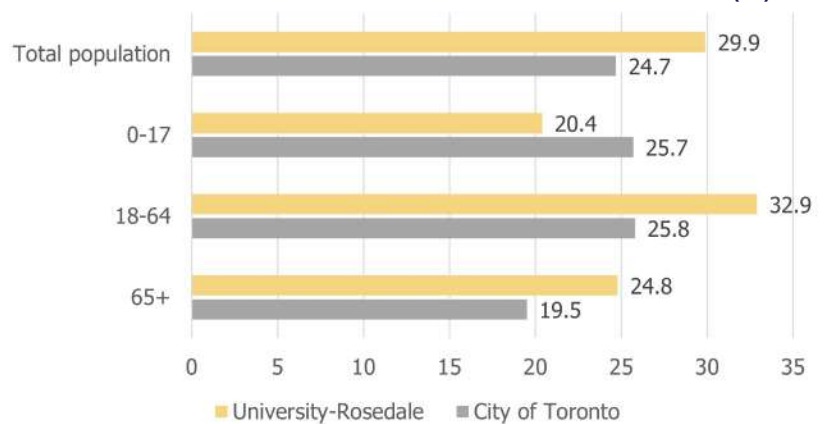
University—Rosedale: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



20.4%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

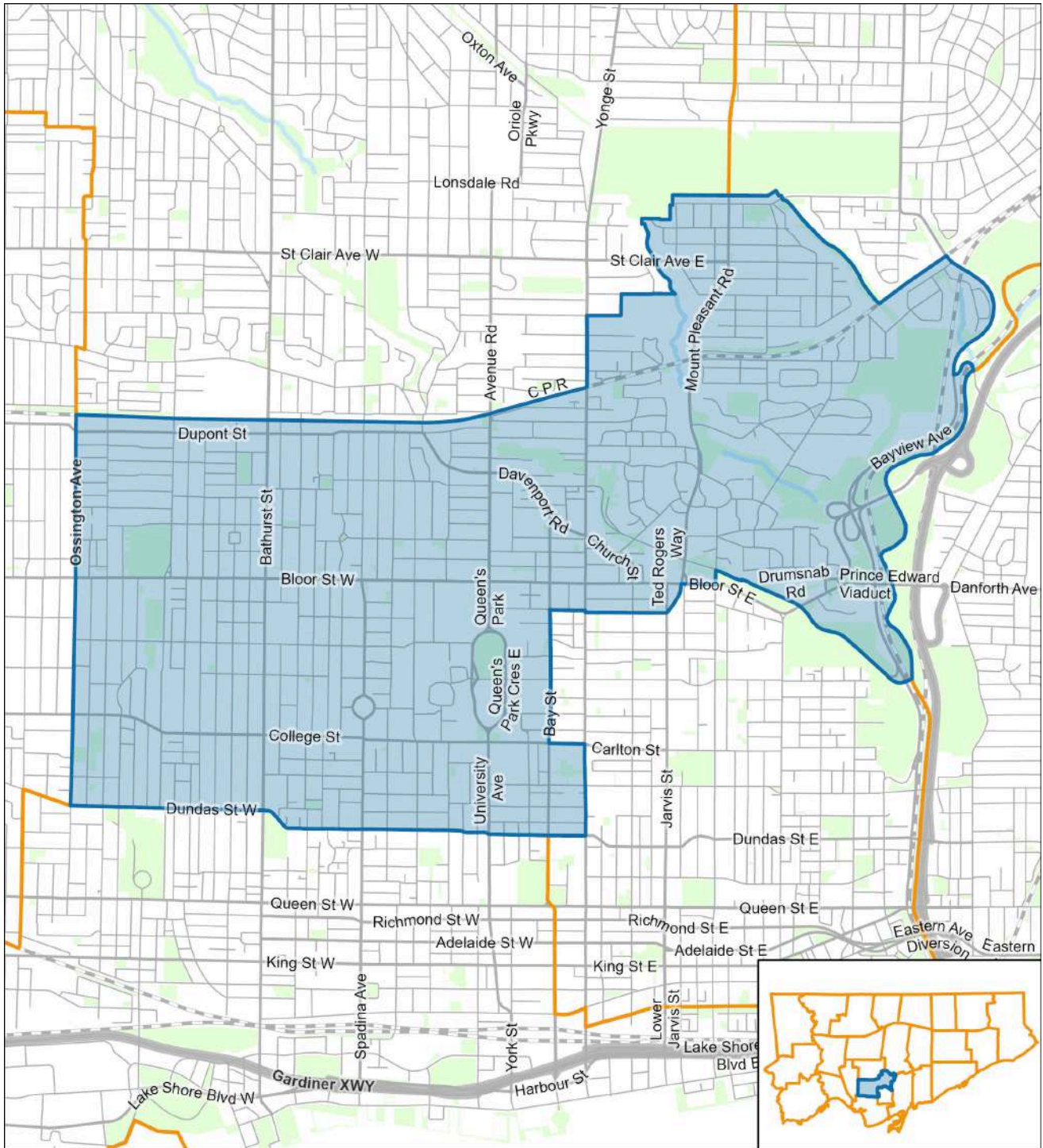
44.2%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

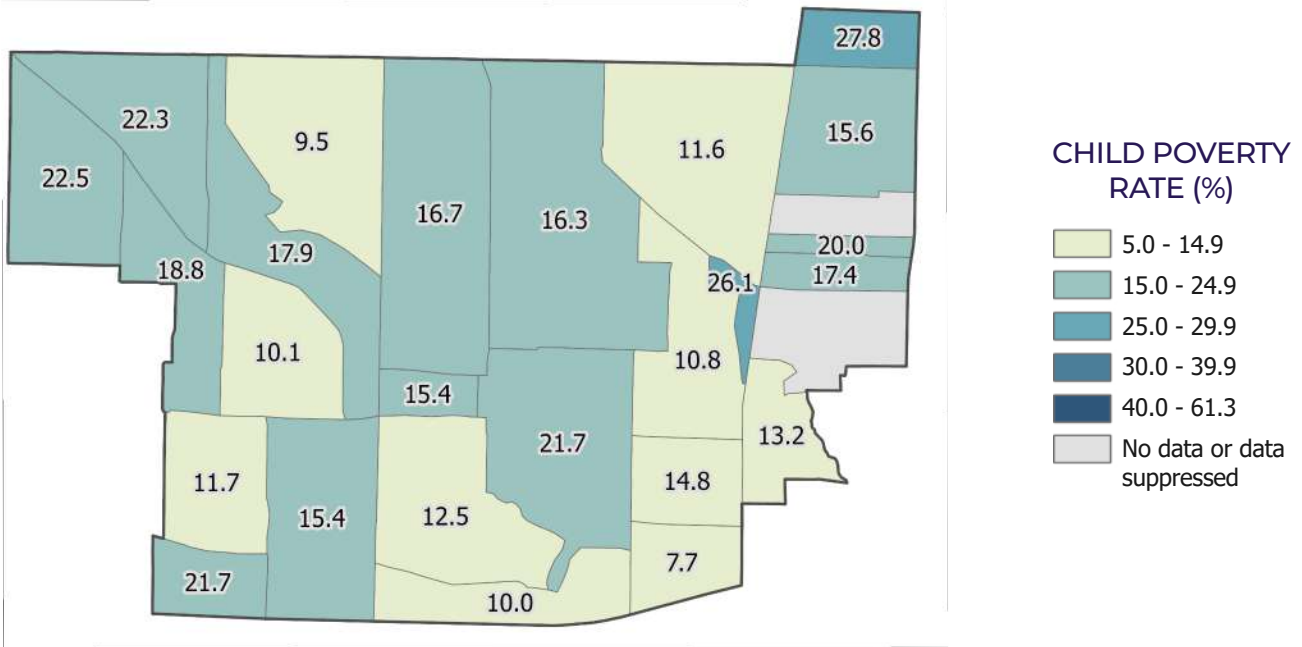
UNIVERSITY—ROSEDALE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

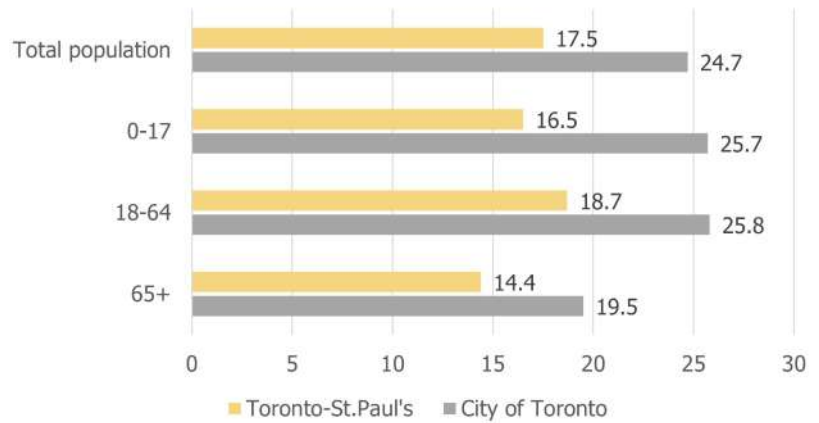
Toronto—St. Paul's: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



16.5%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

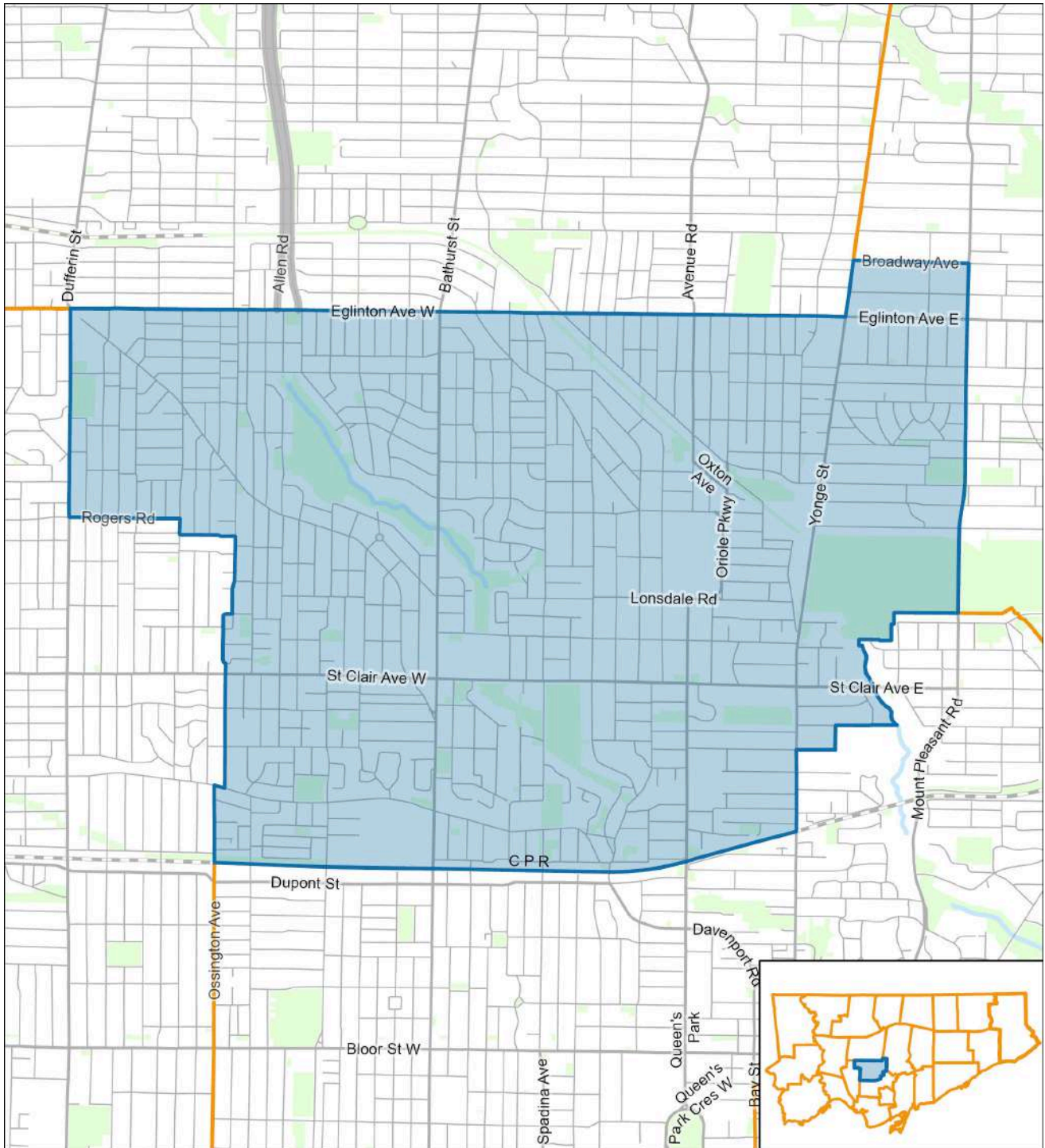
27.8%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

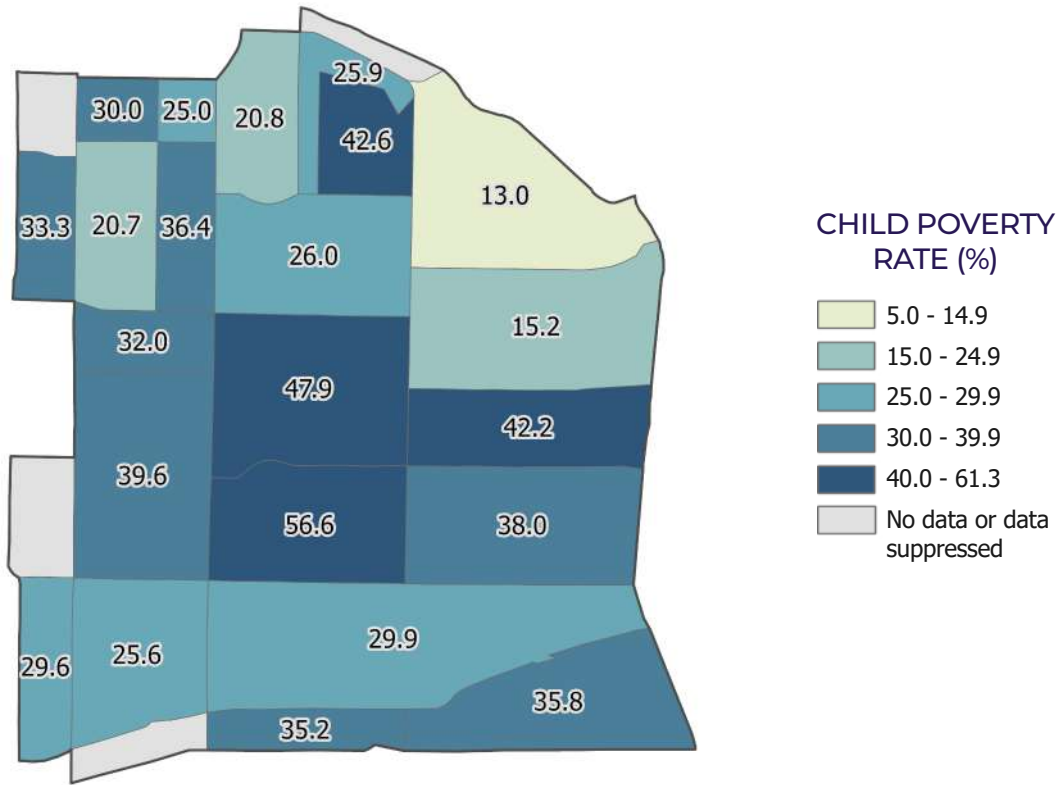
TORONTO—ST. PAUL'S WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

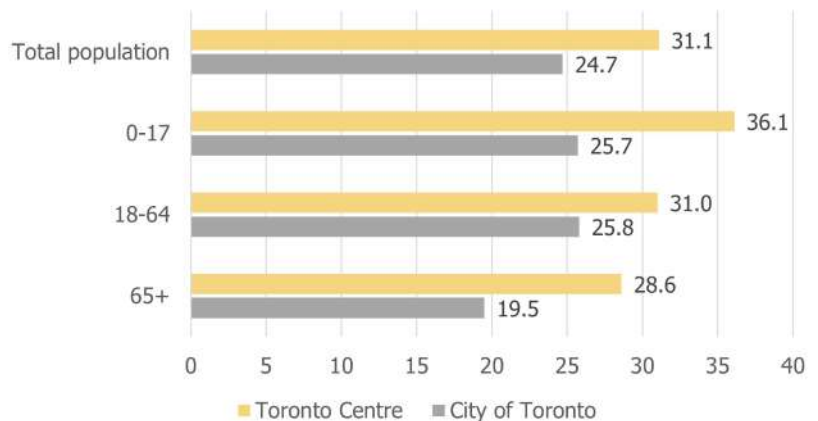
Toronto Centre: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



36.1%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

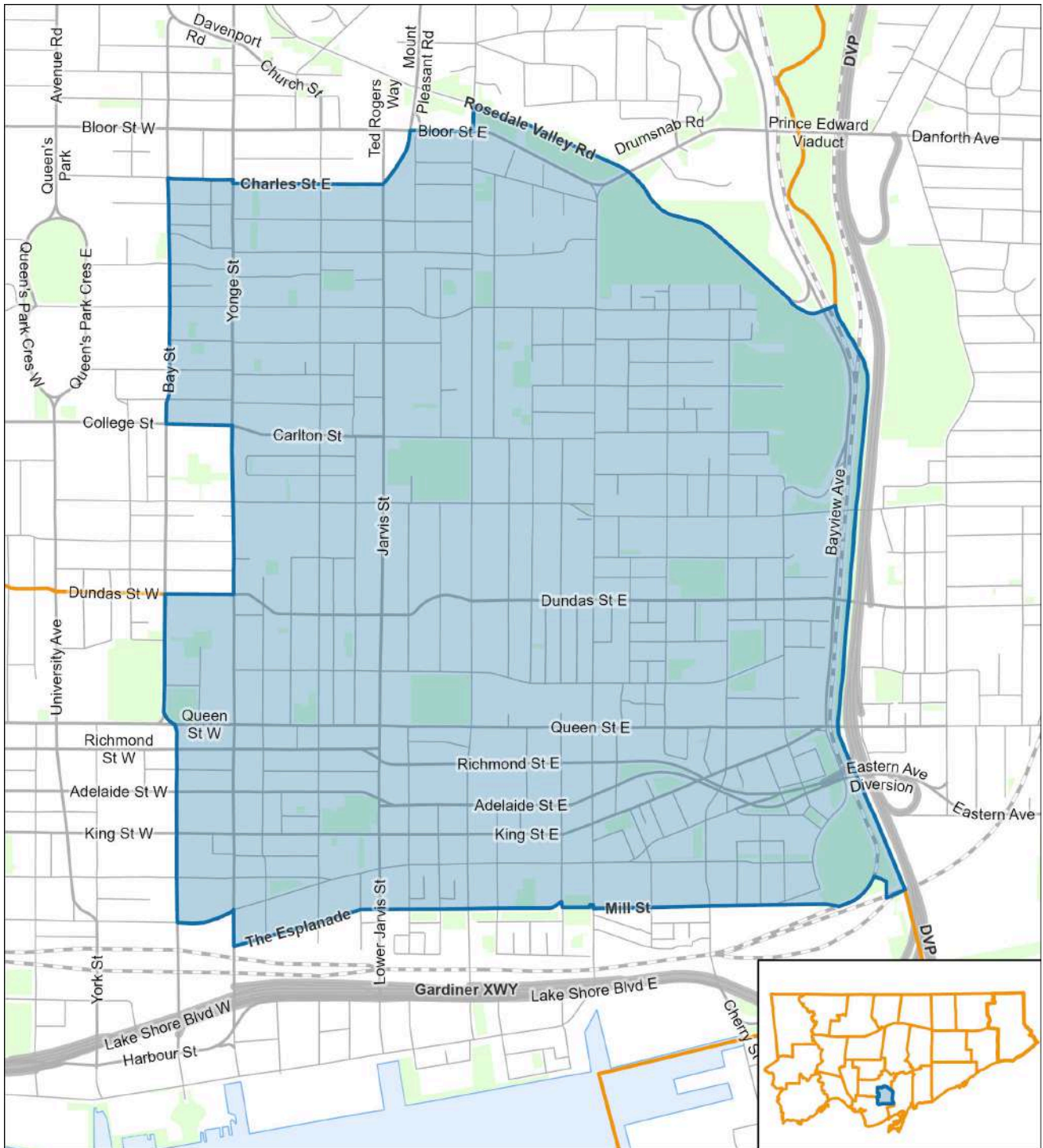
56.6%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

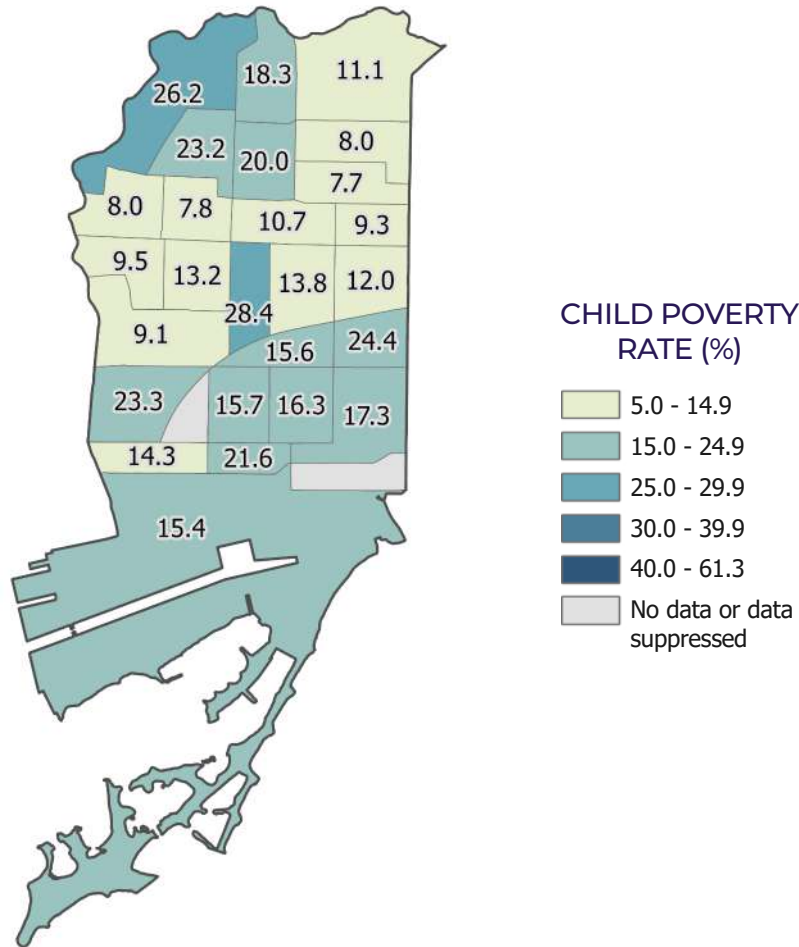
TORONTO CENTRE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

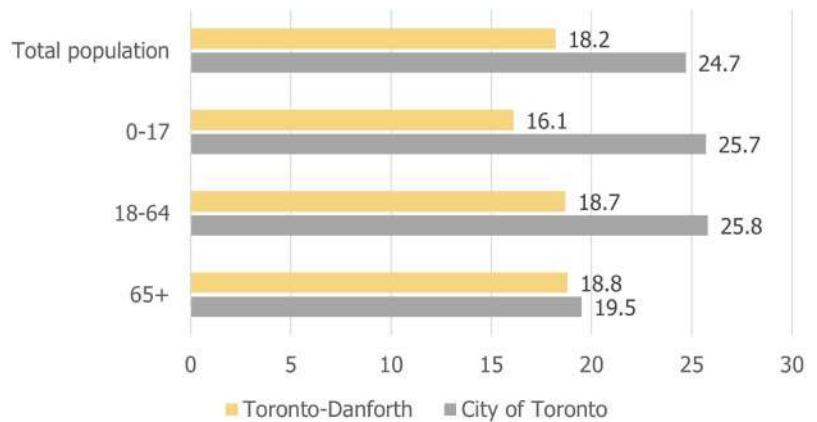
Toronto—Danforth: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



16.1%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

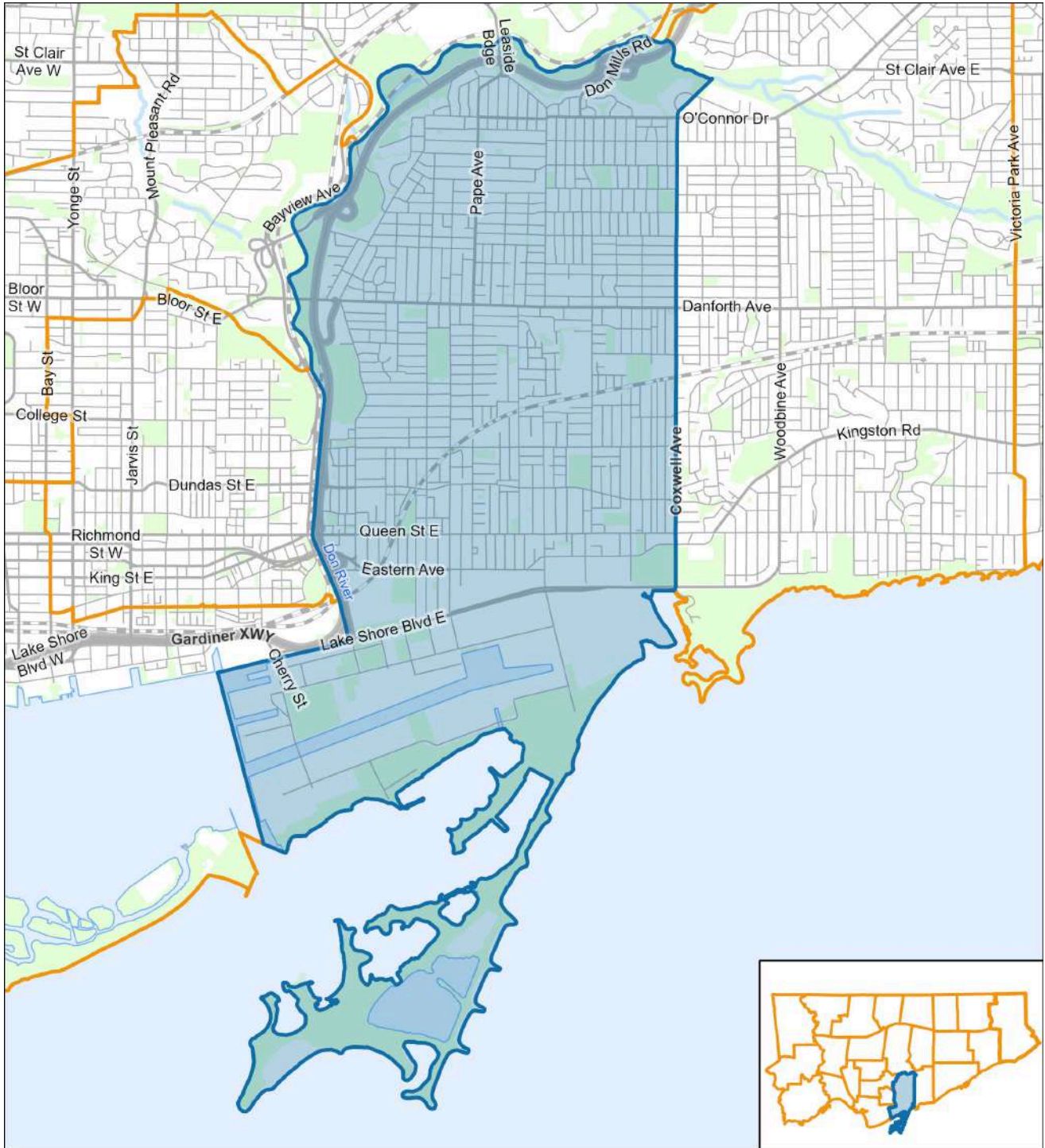
28.4%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

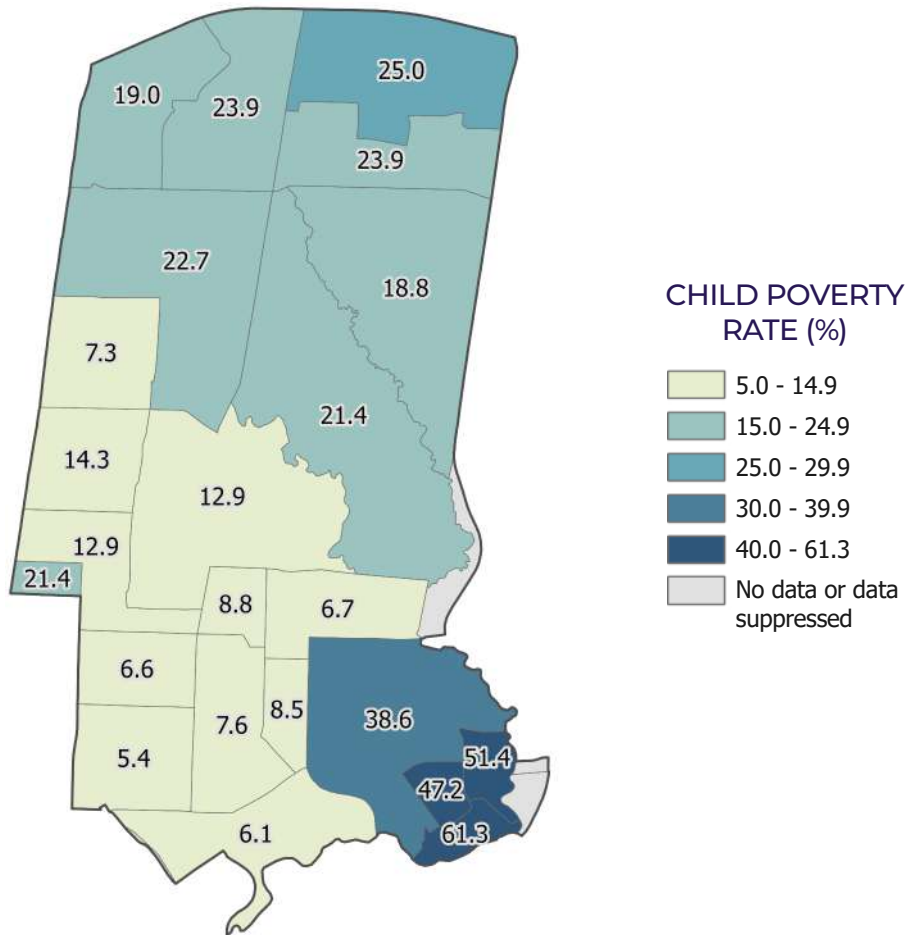
TORONTO—DANFORTH WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

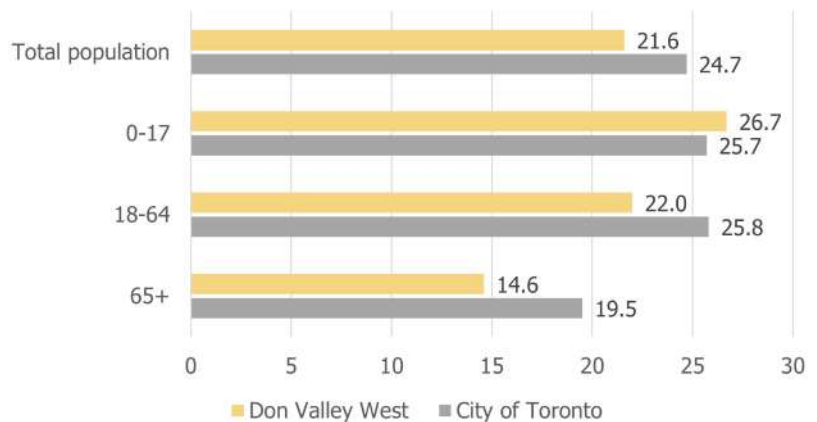
Don Valley West: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



26.7%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

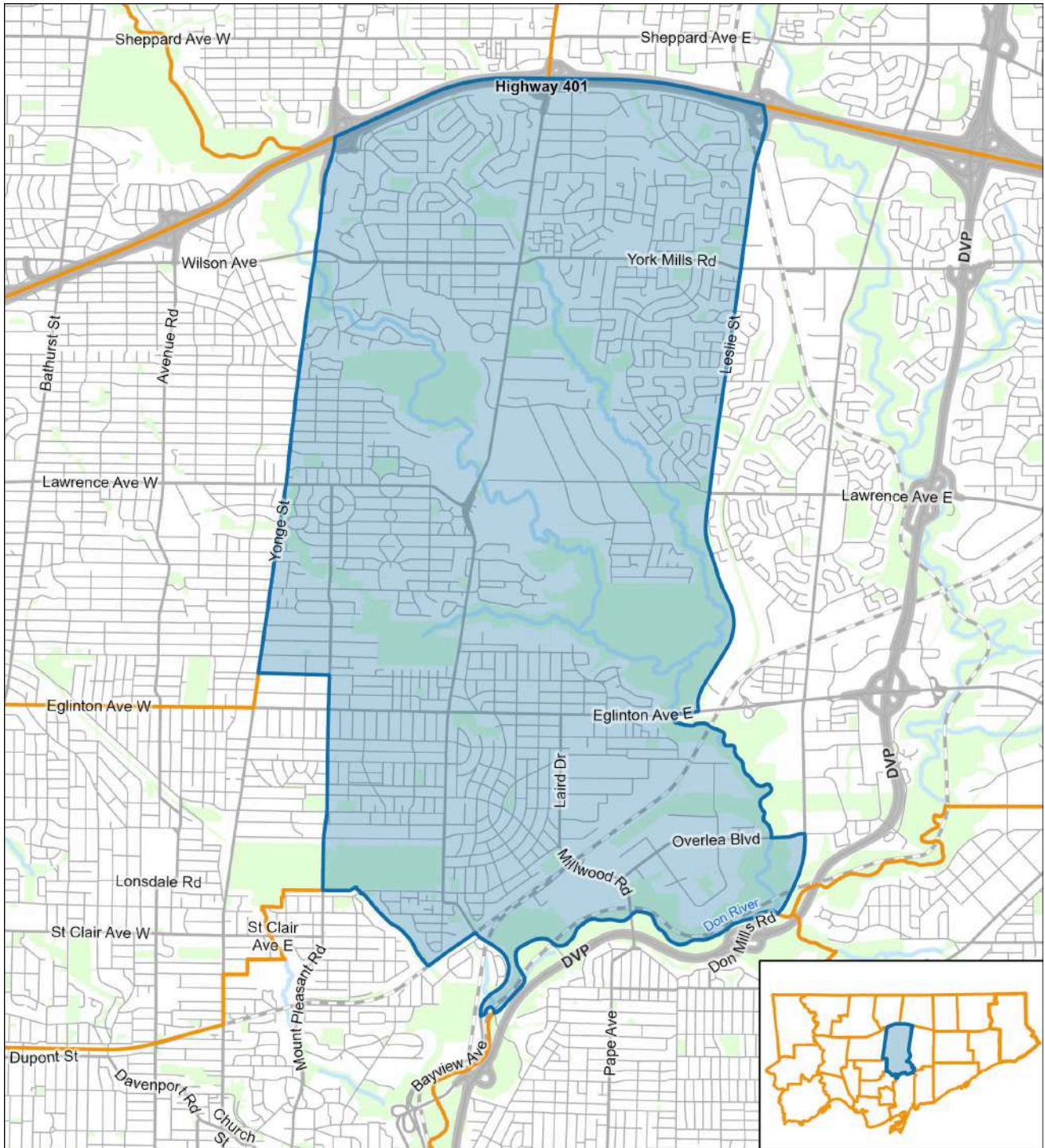
61.3%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

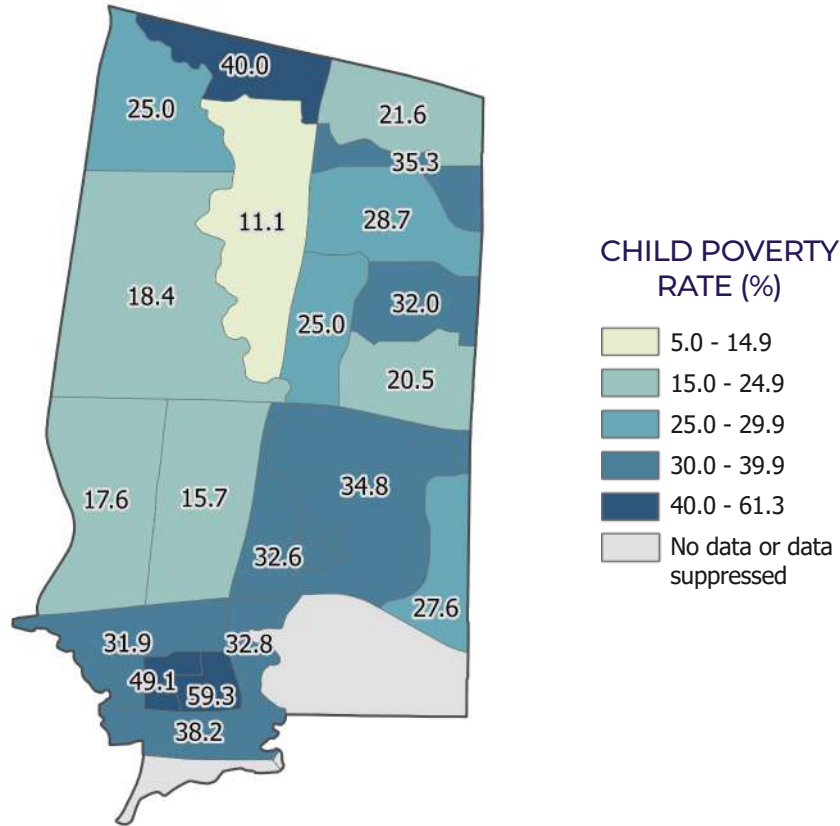
DON VALLEY WEST WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

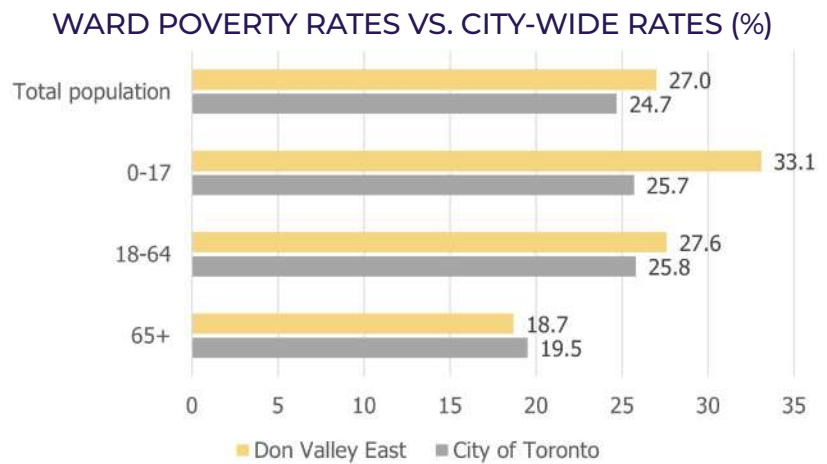
Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

Don Valley East: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



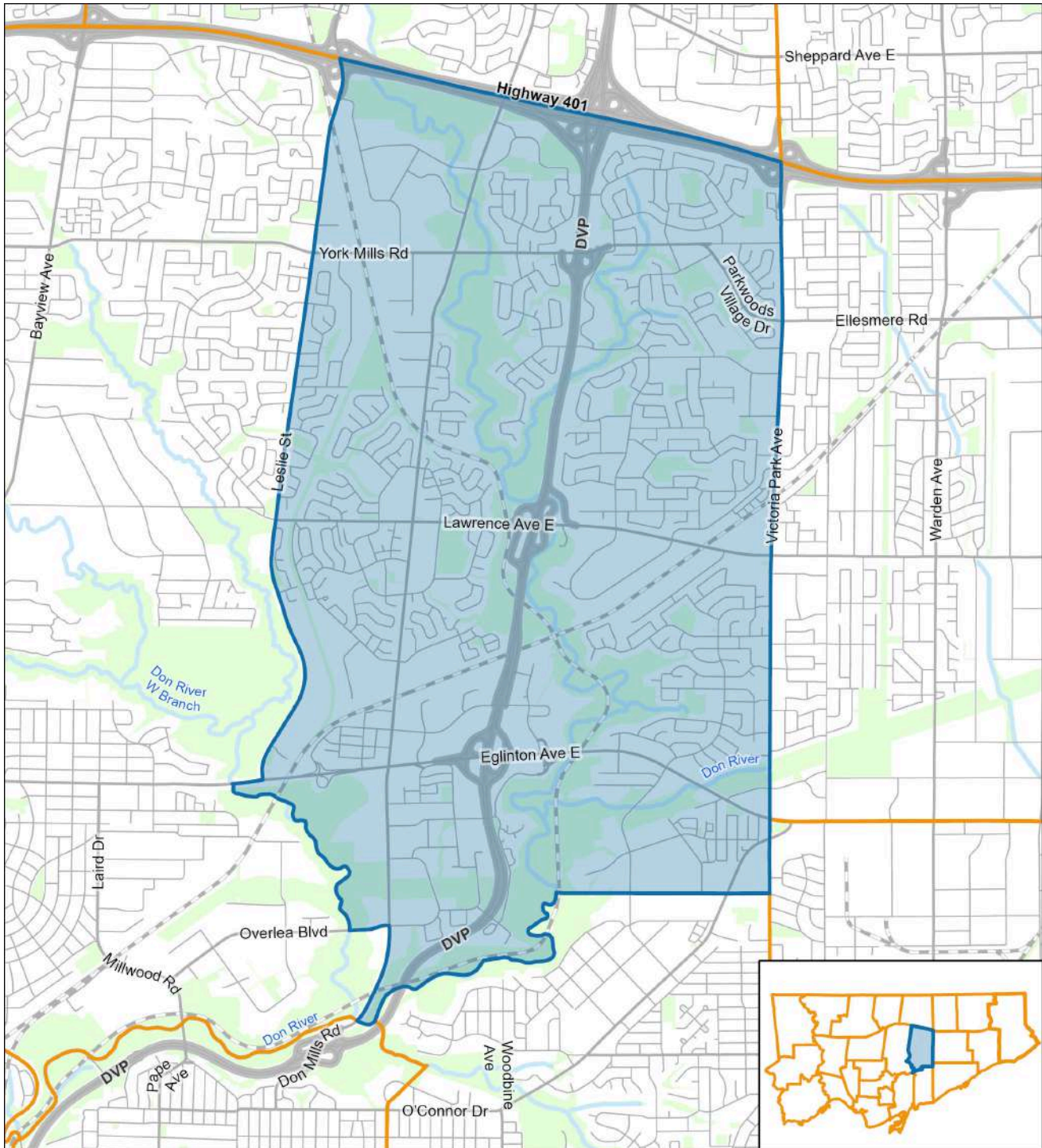
33.1%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

59.3%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

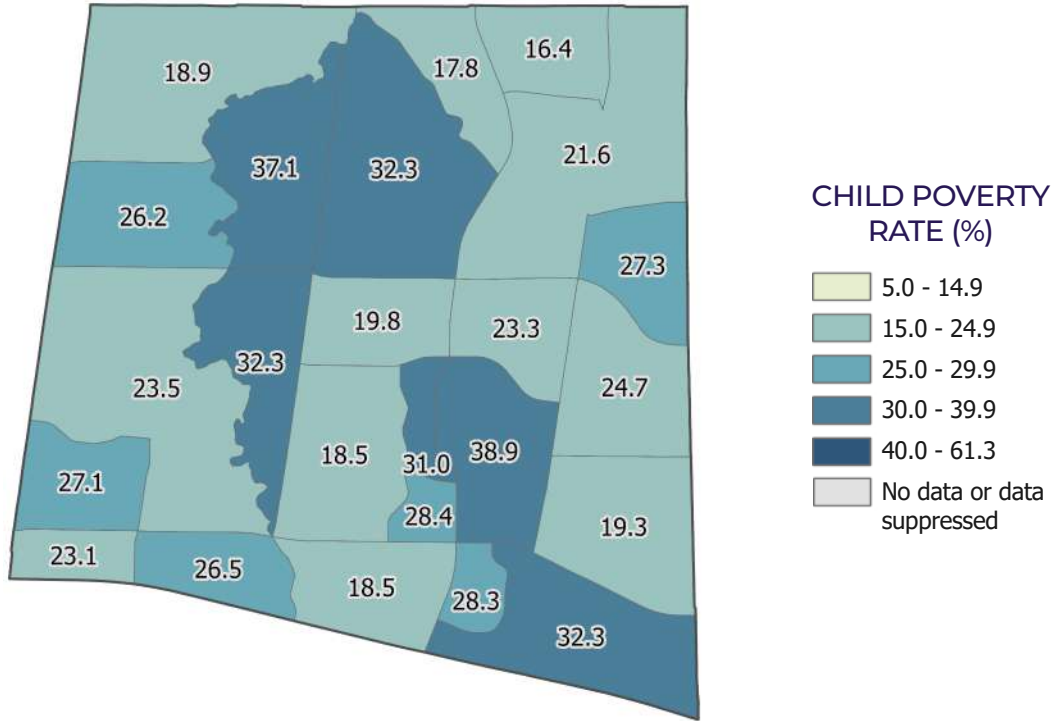
DON VALLEY EAST WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

Don Valley North: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



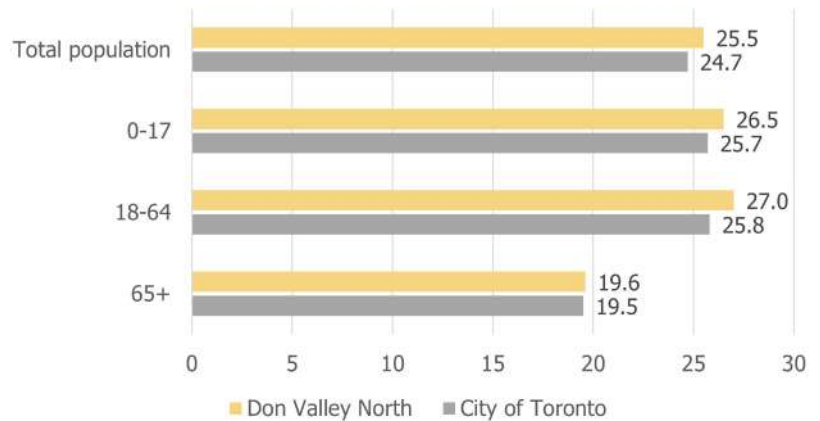
26.5%

OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

38.9%

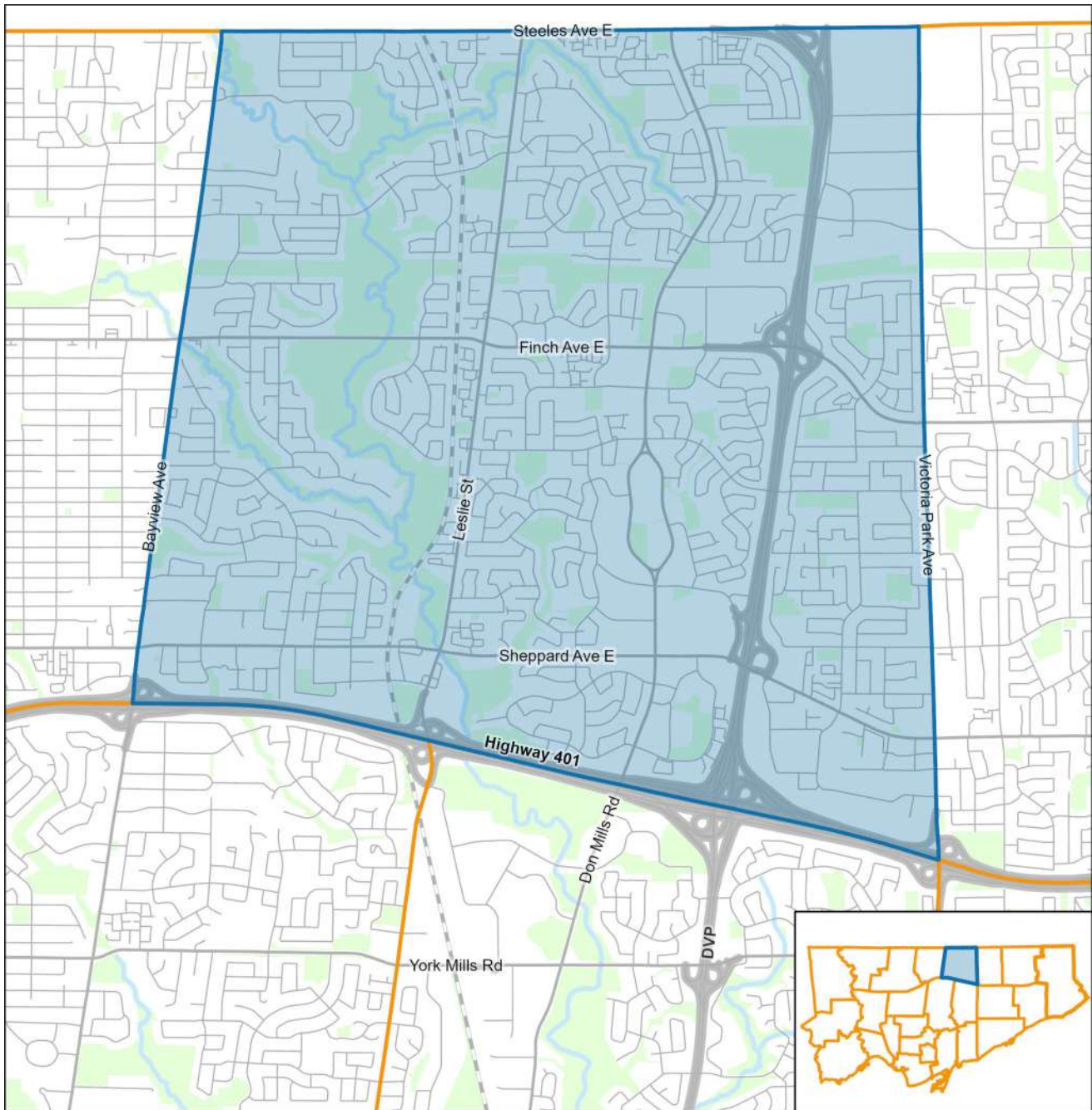
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

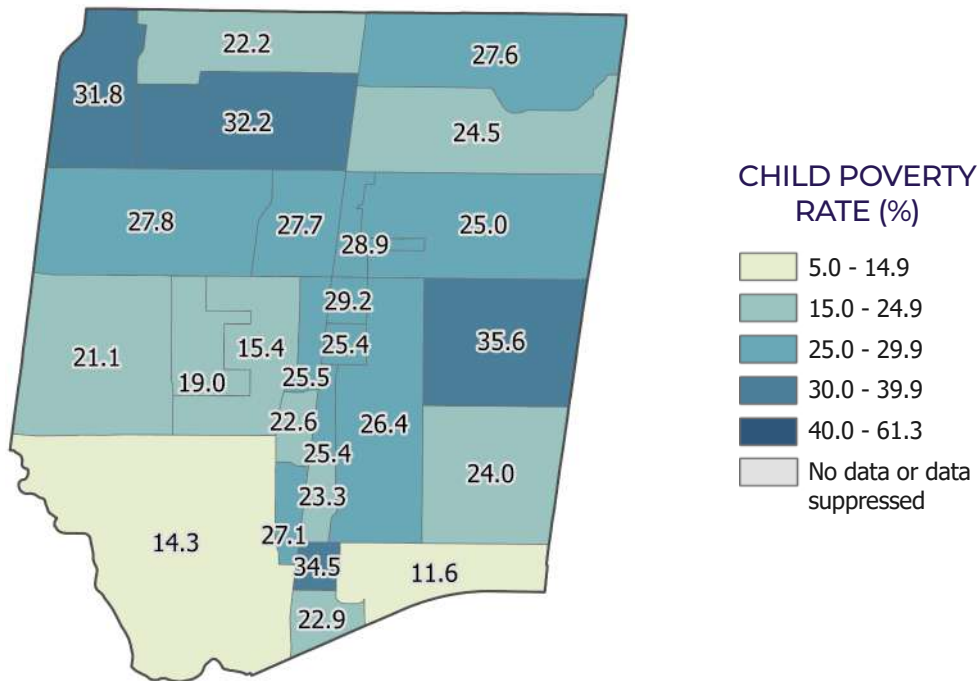
DON VALLEY NORTH WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

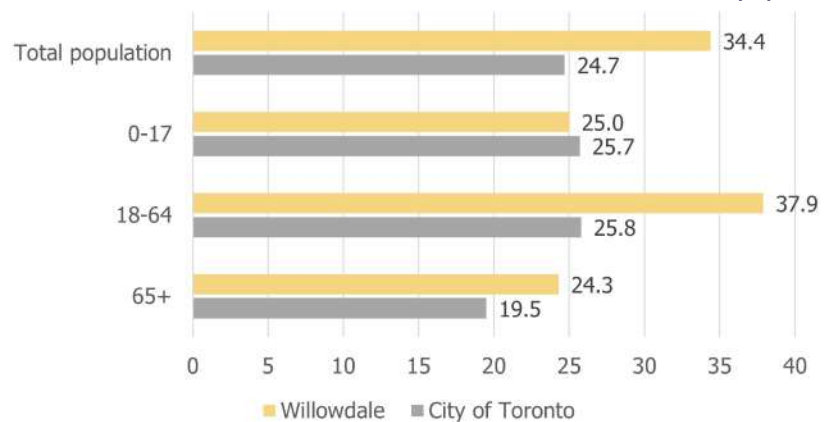
Willowdale: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



25.0%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

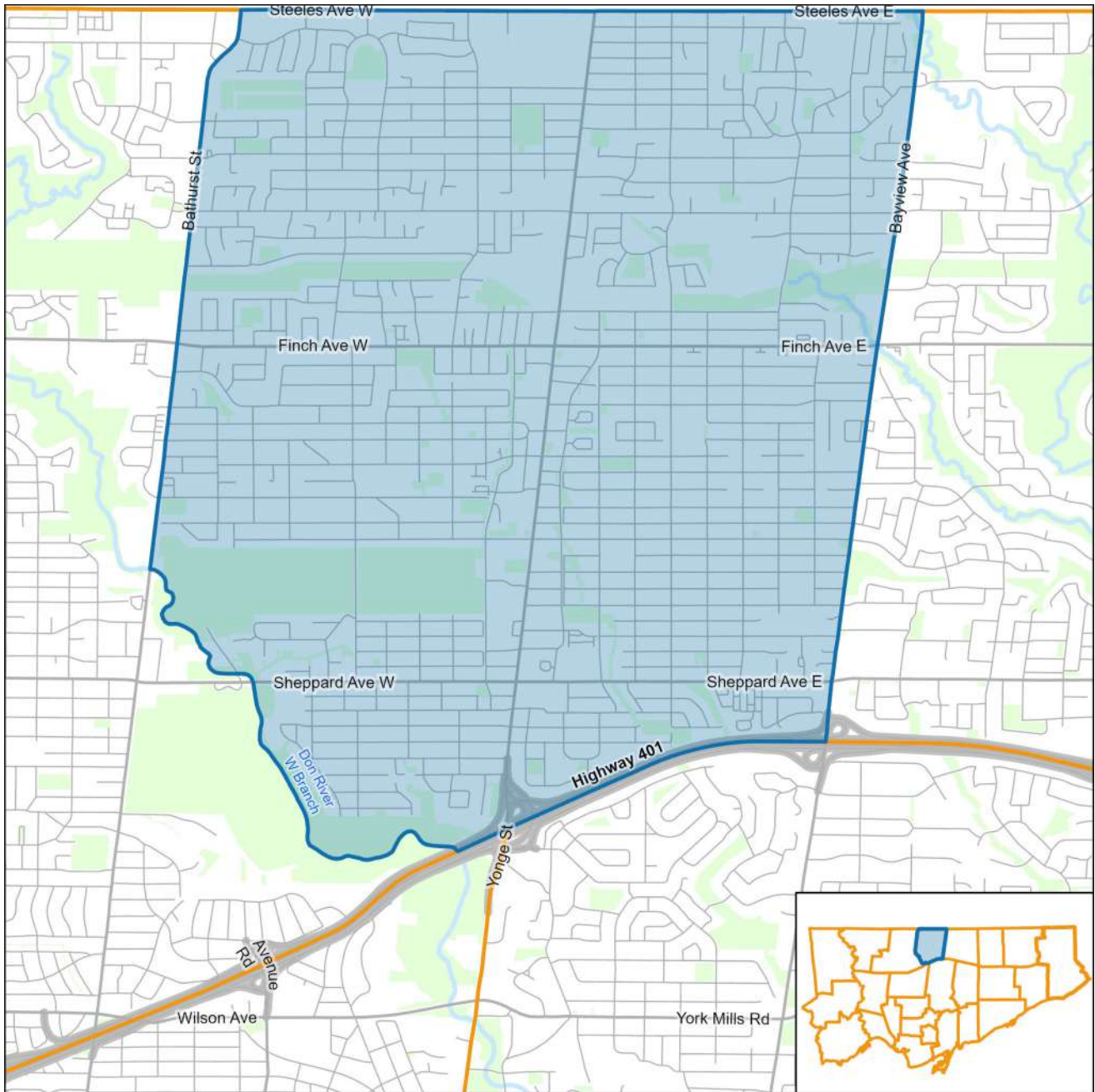
35.6%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

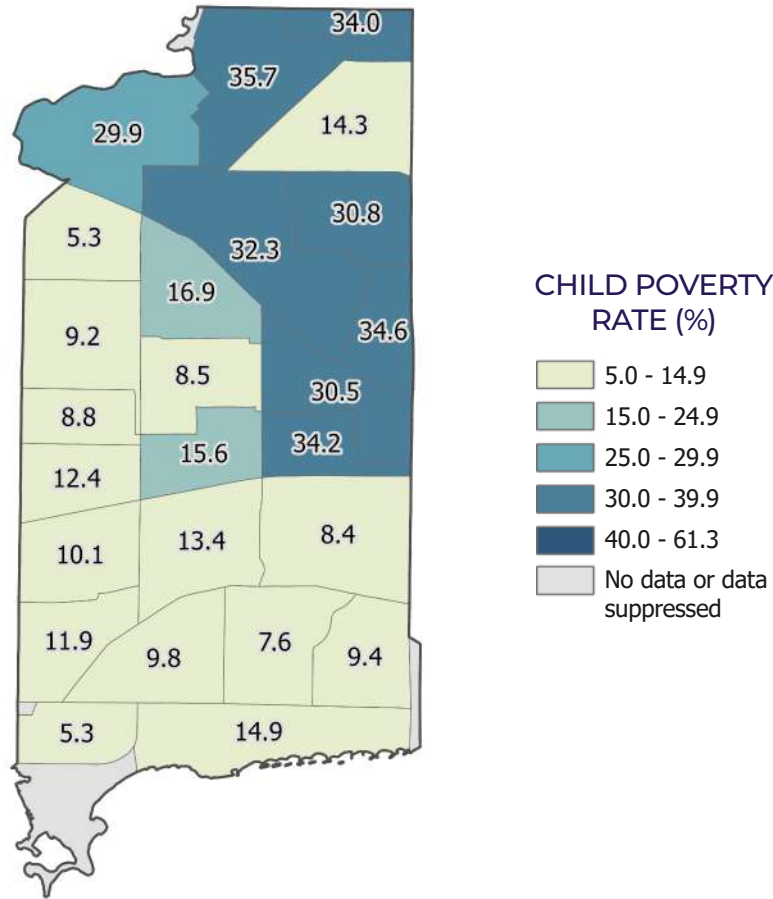
WILLOWDALE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

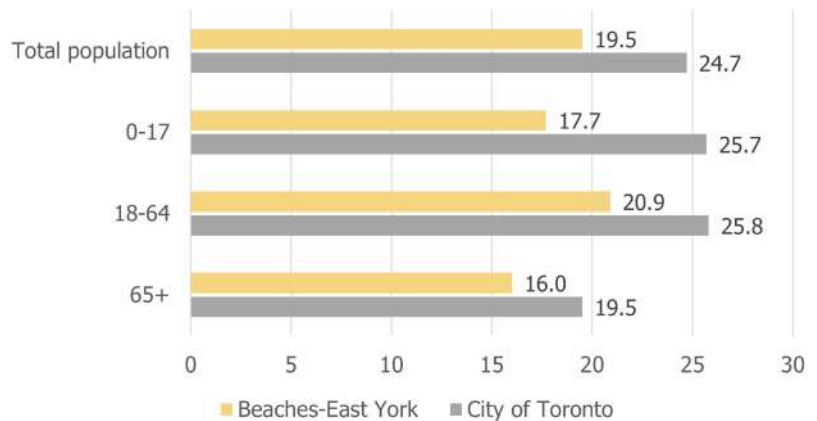
Beaches—East York: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



17.7%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

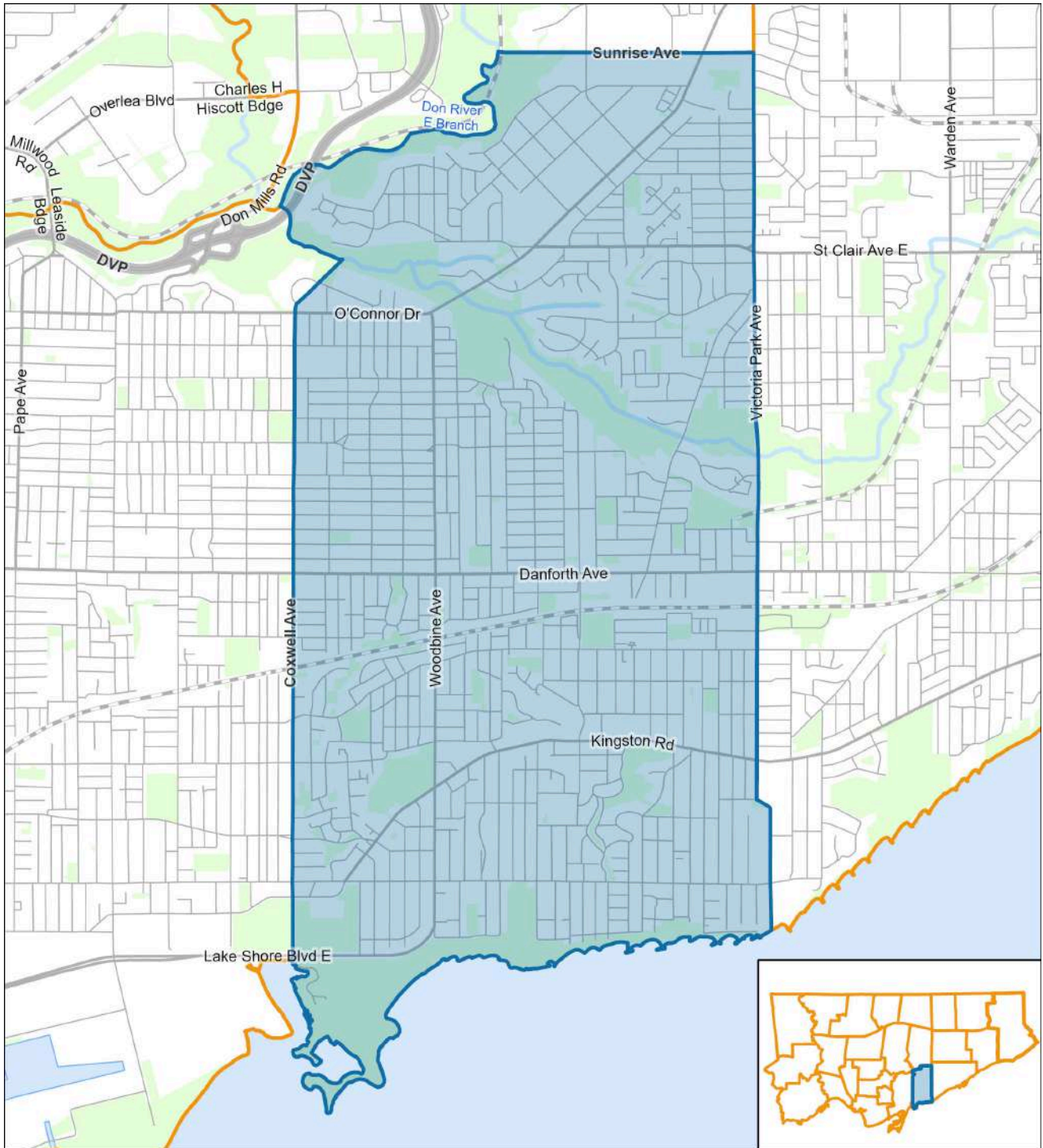
35.7%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

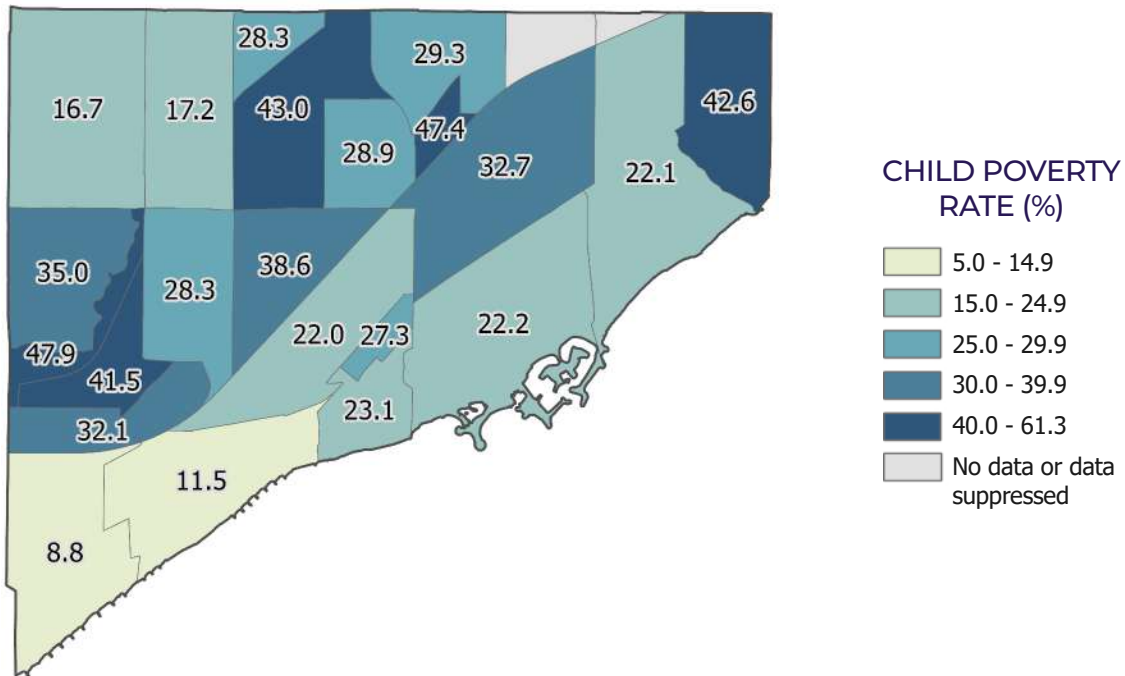
BEACHES—EAST YORK WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

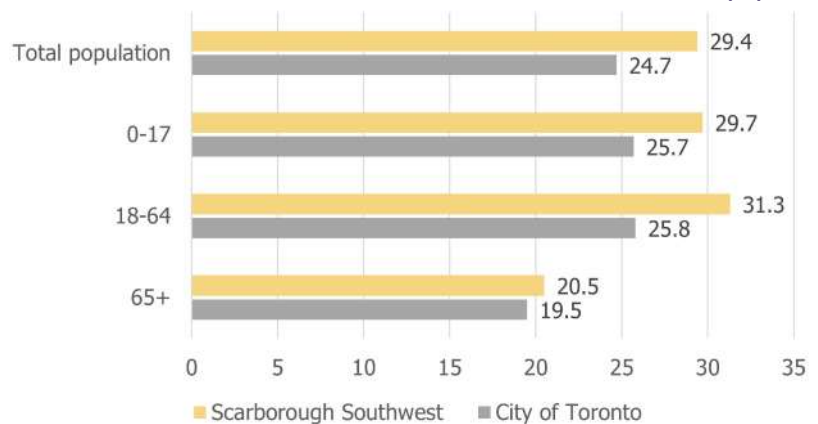
Scarborough Southwest: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



29.7%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

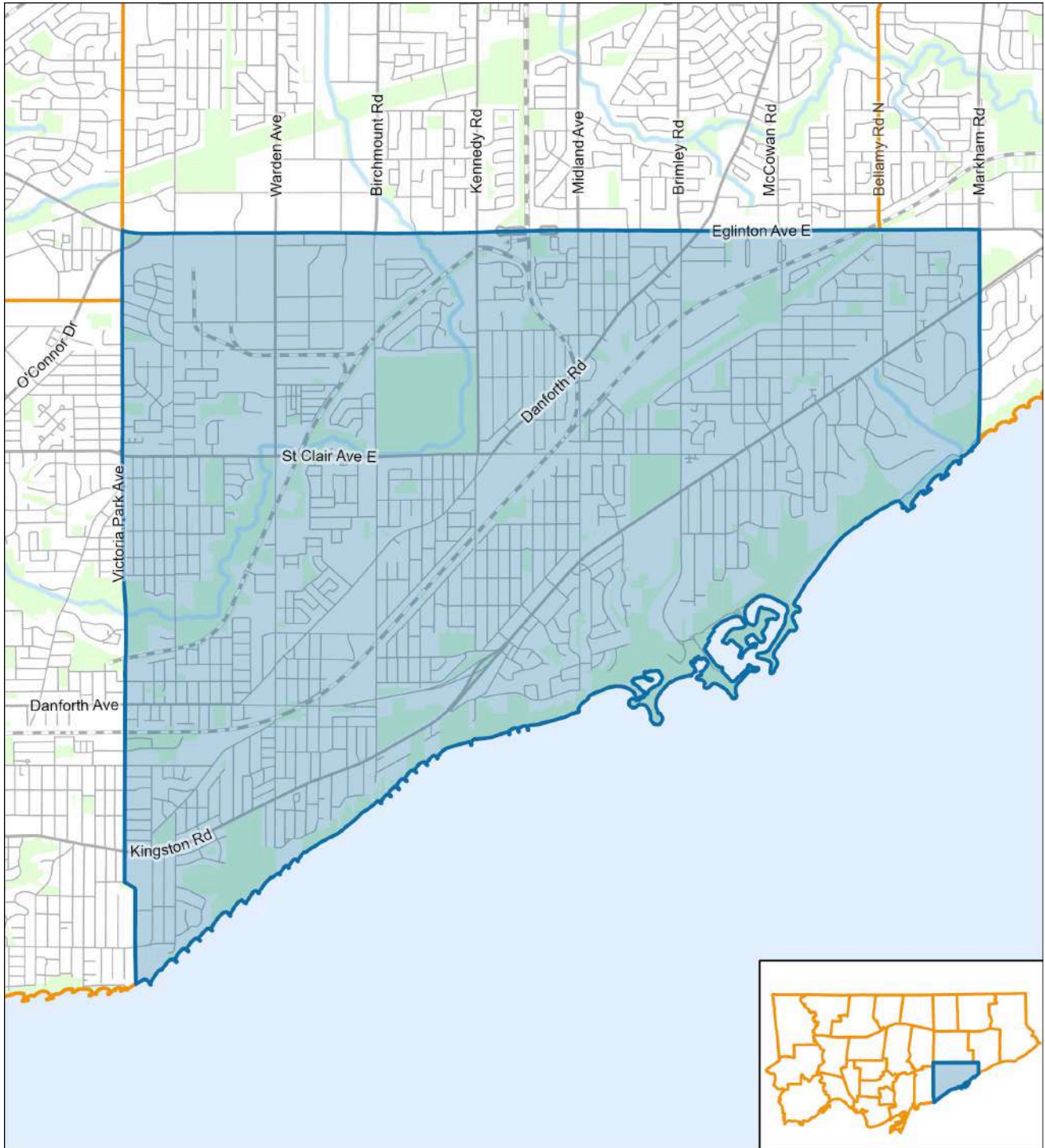
47.9%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

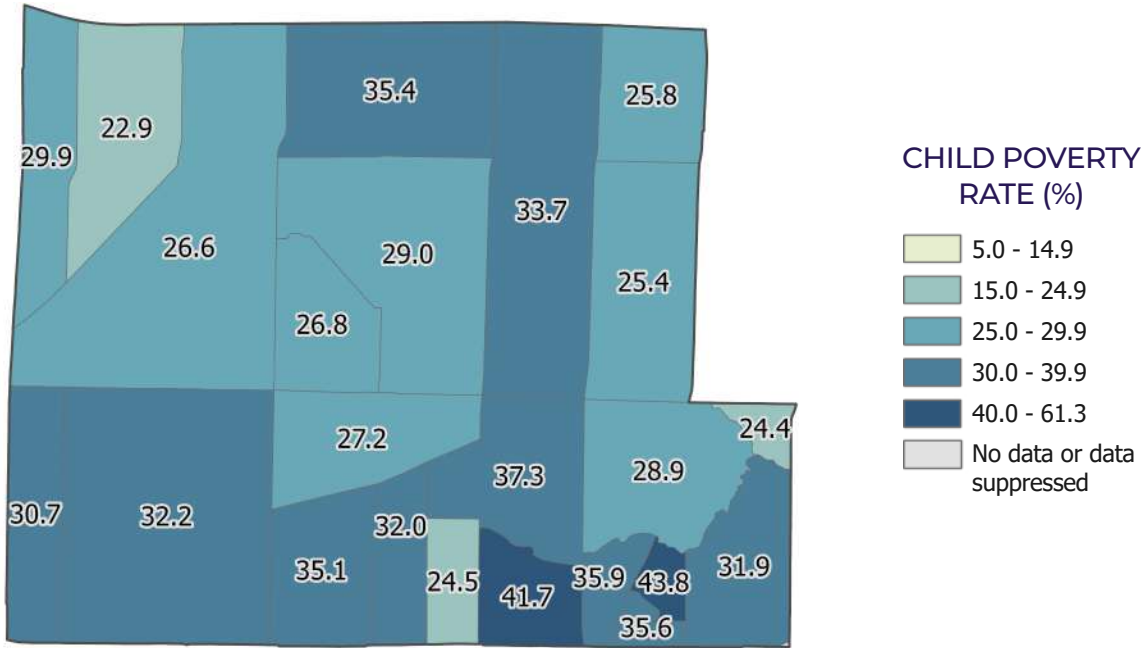
SCARBOROUGH SOUTHWEST WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

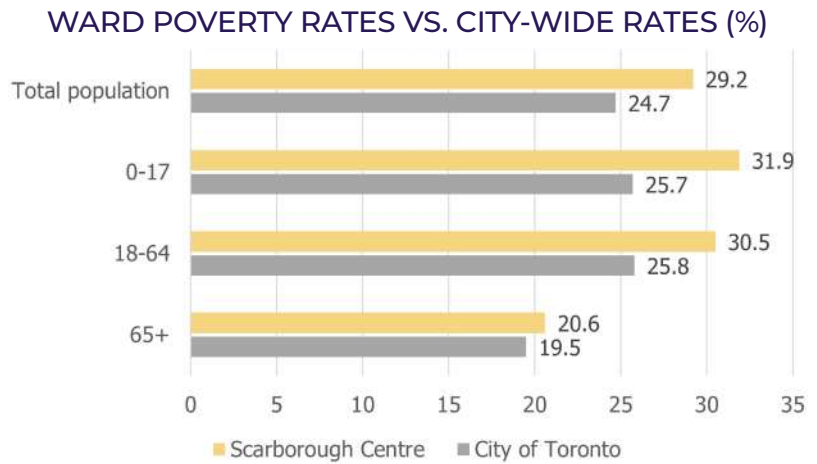
Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

Scarborough Centre: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



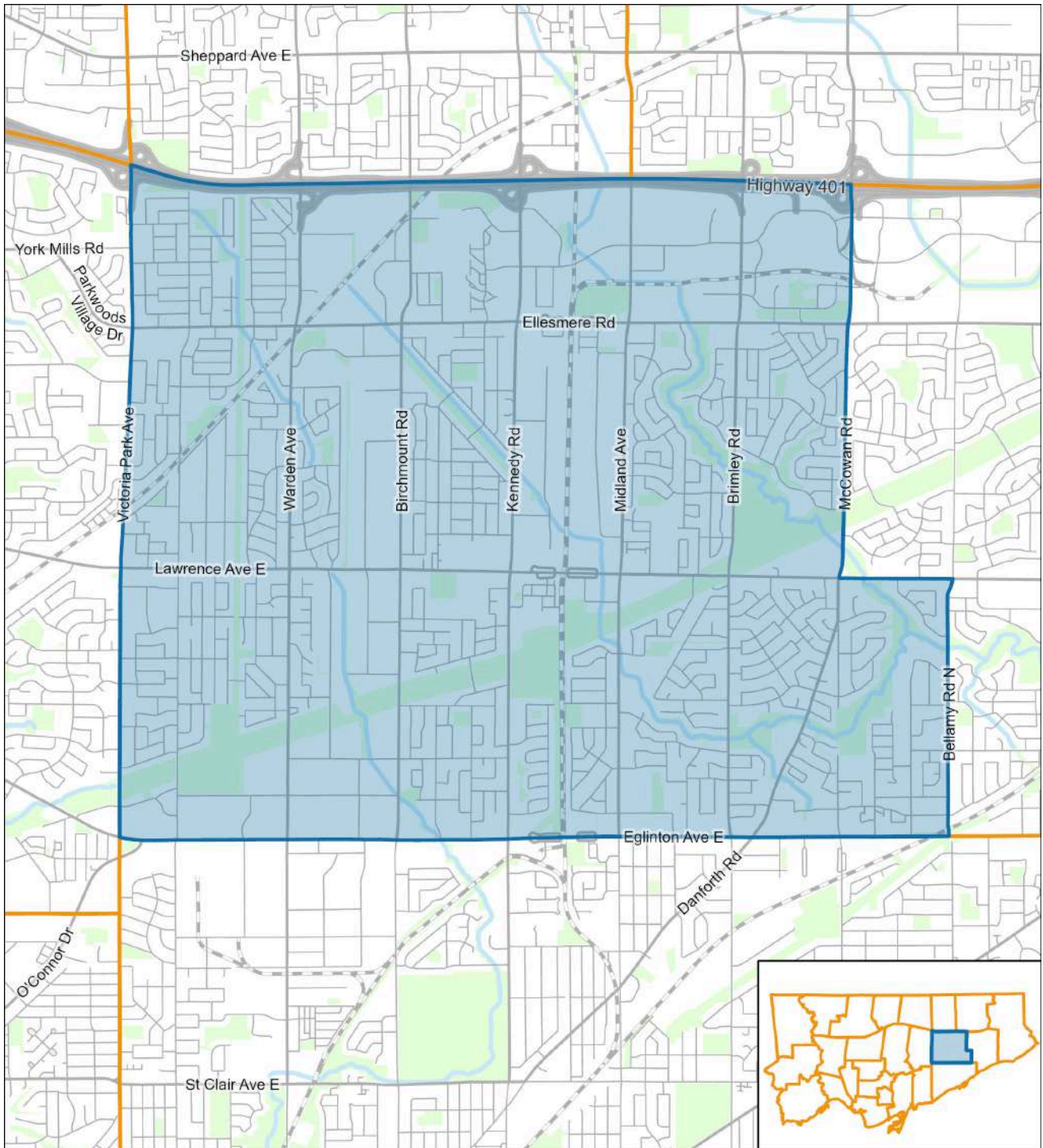
31.9%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

43.8%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

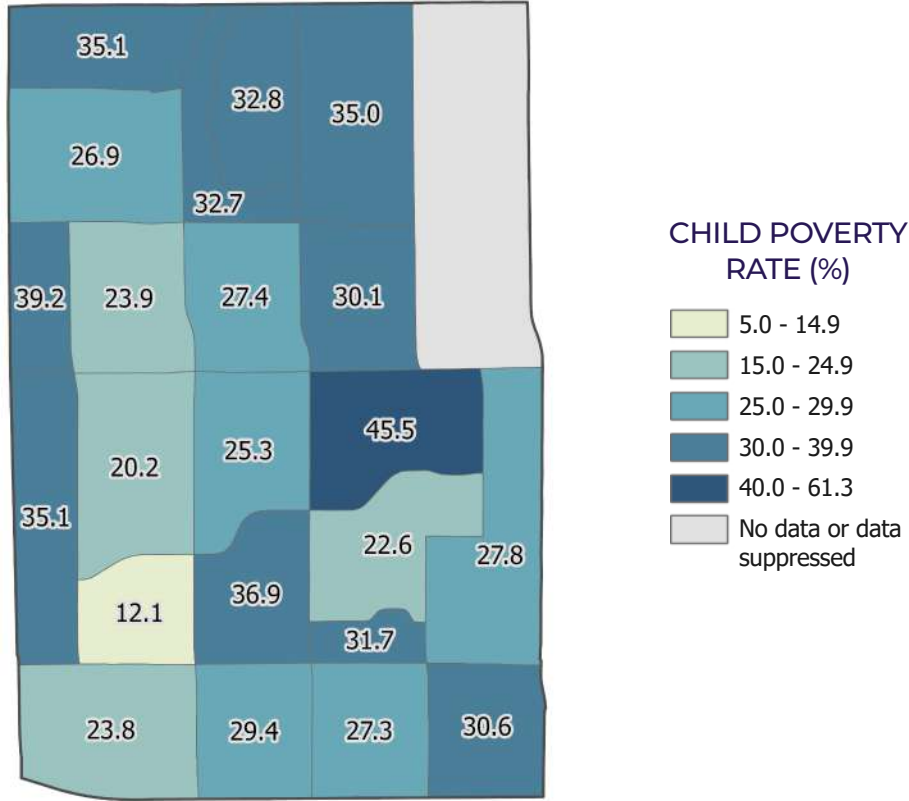
SCARBOROUGH CENTRE WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

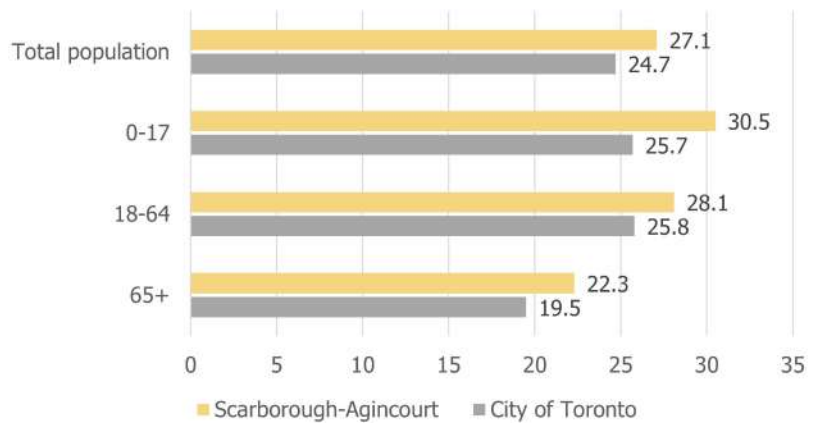
Scarborough—Agincourt: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



30.5%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

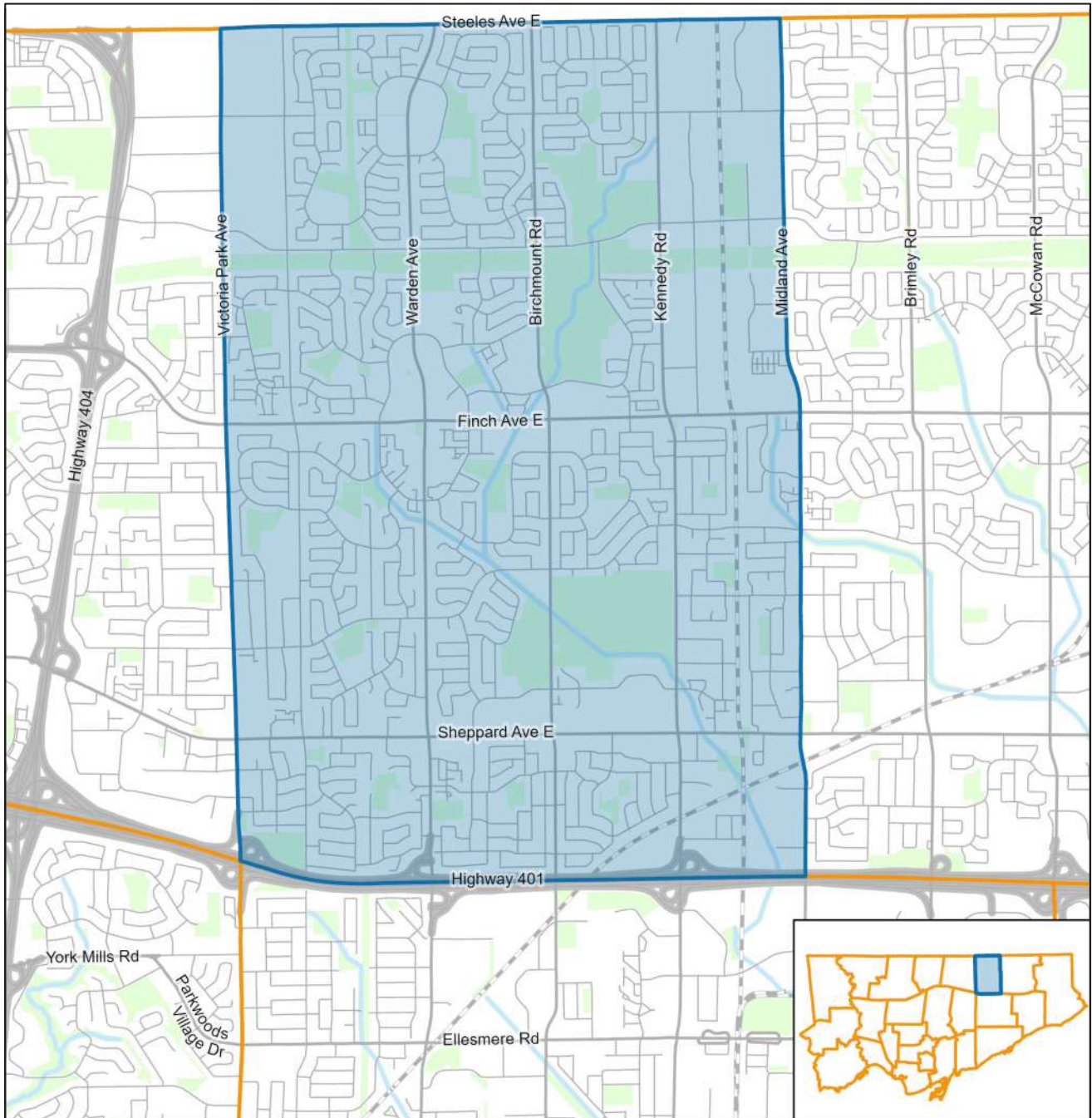
45.5%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

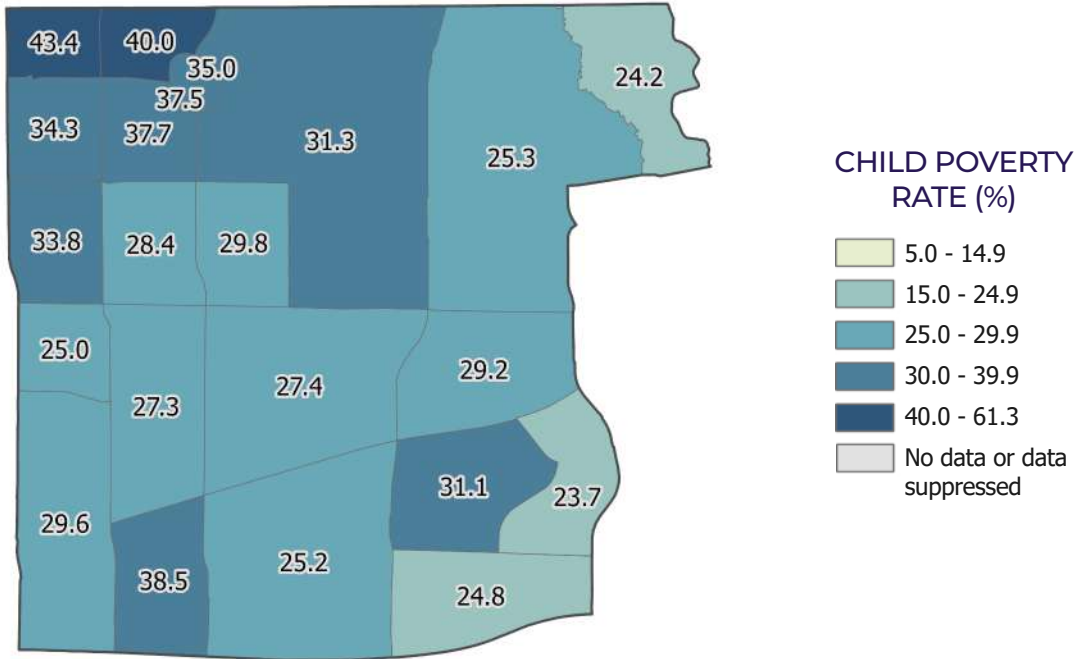
SCARBOROUGH—AGINCOURT WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

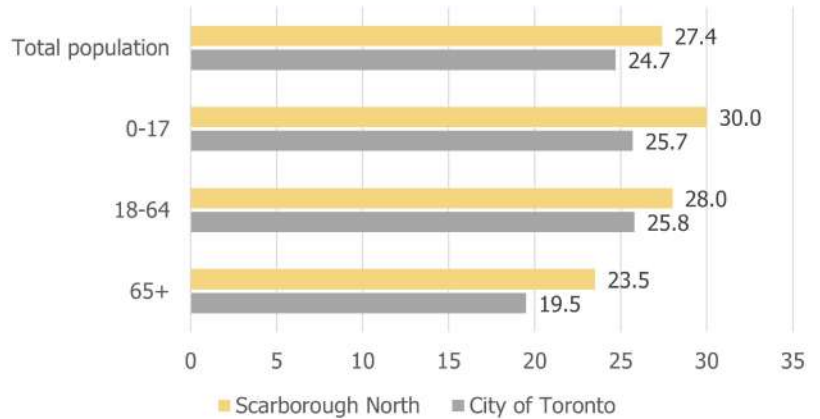
Scarborough North: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



30.0%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

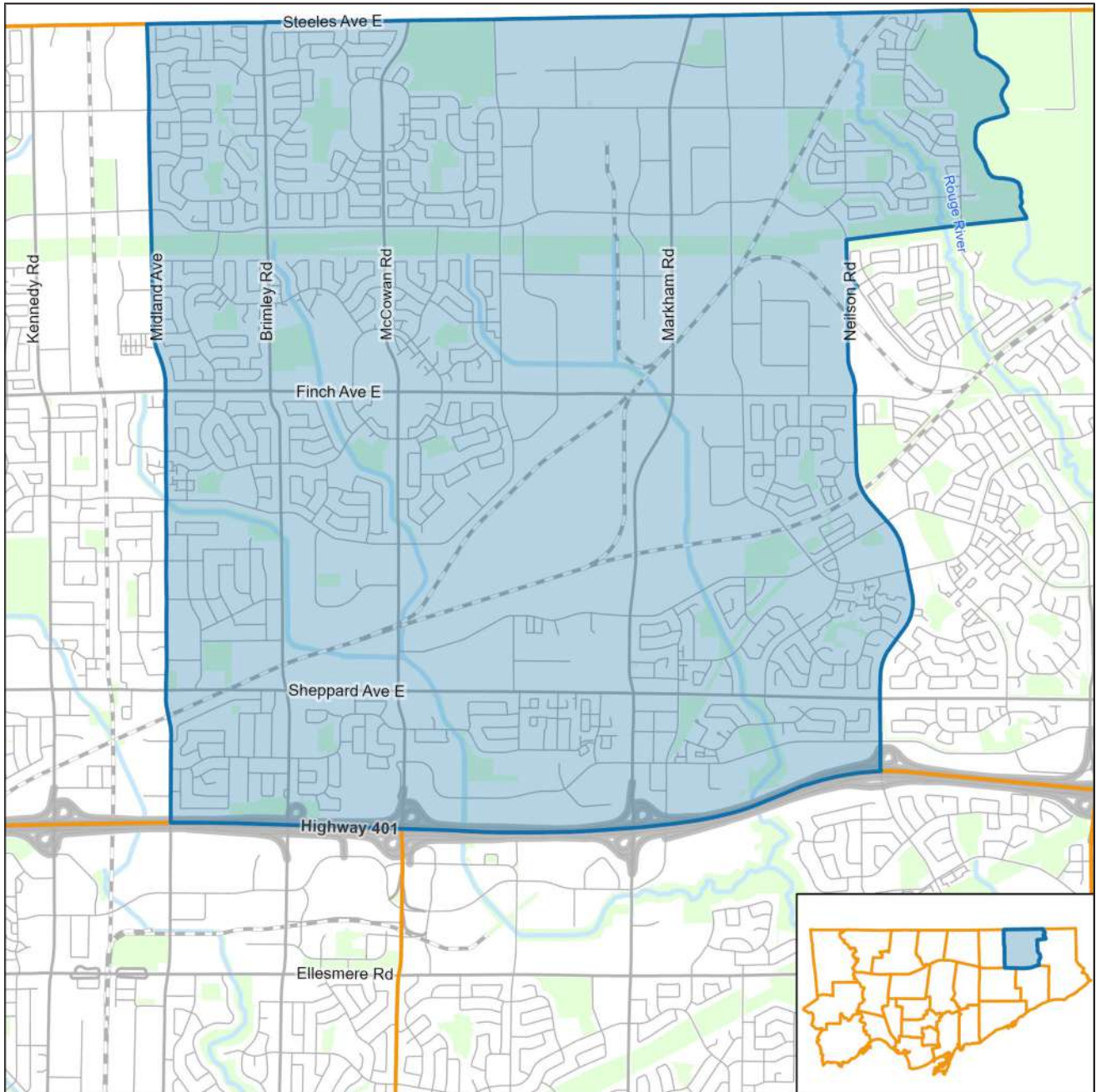
43.4%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

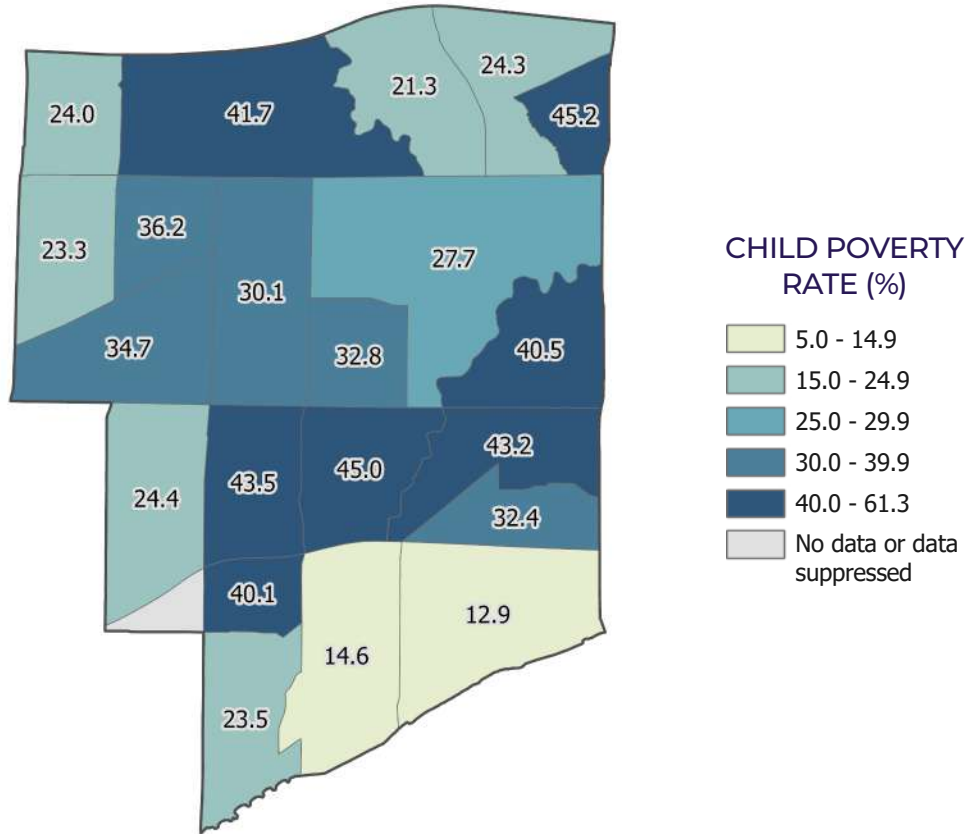
SCARBOROUGH NORTH WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

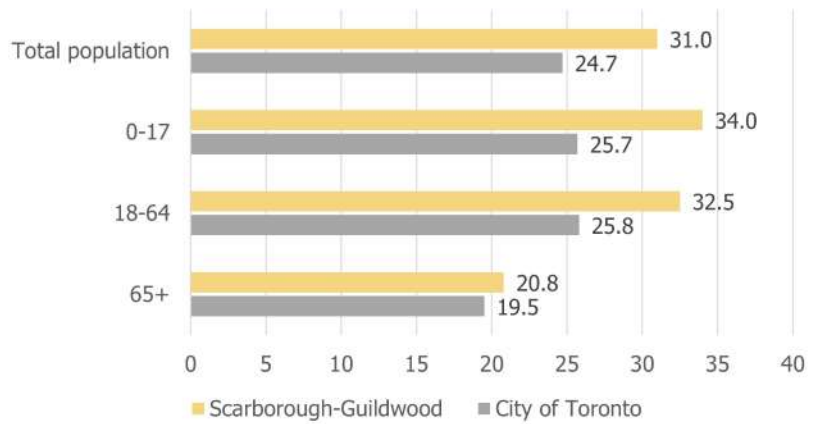
Scarborough—Guildwood: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



34.0%
OF THE WARD'S
CHILDREN (UNDER AGE
18) LIVE IN POVERTY

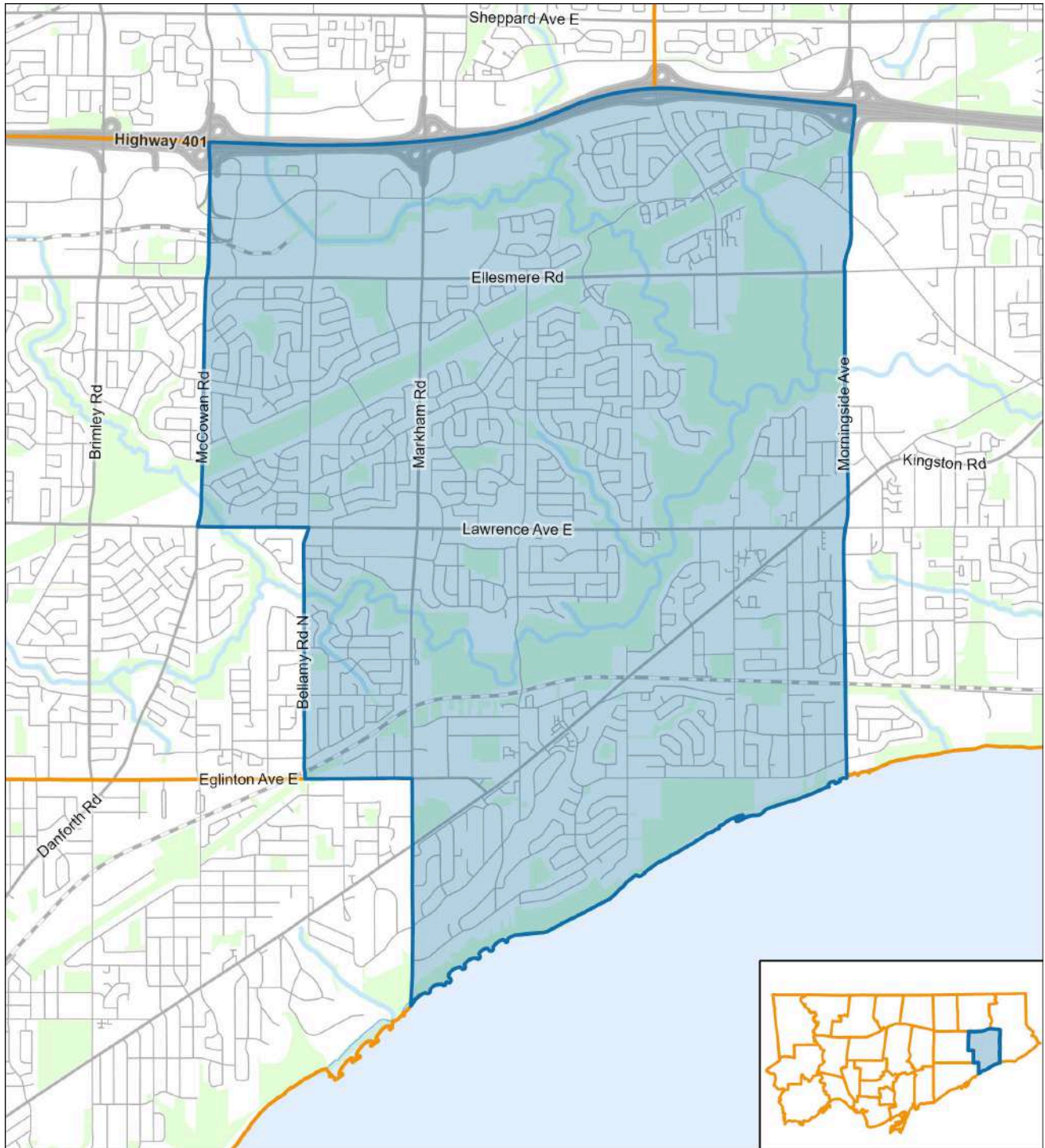
45.2%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY
RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

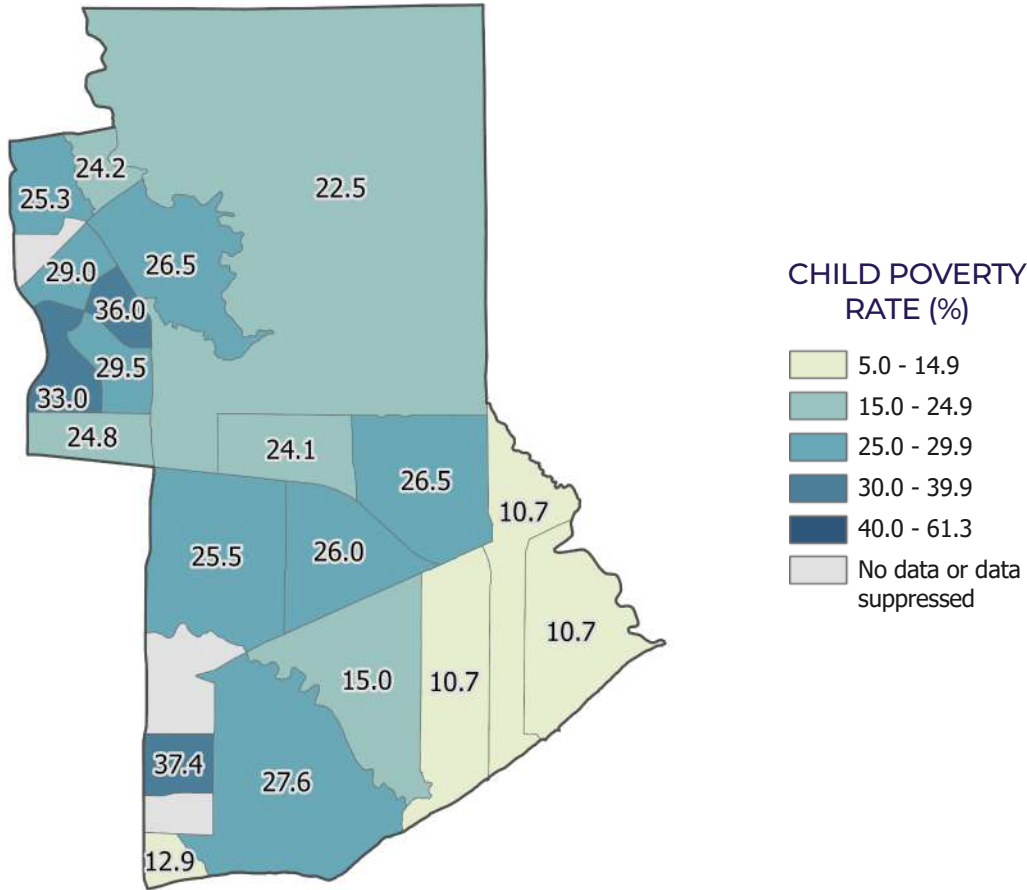
SCARBOROUGH—GUILDWOOD WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.

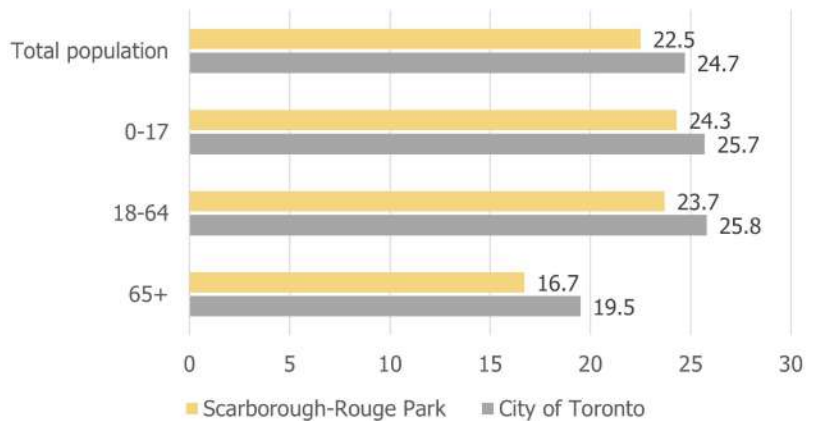
Scarborough—Rouge Park: Child and Family Poverty Ward Profile



24.3%
OF THE WARD'S CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 18) LIVE IN POVERTY

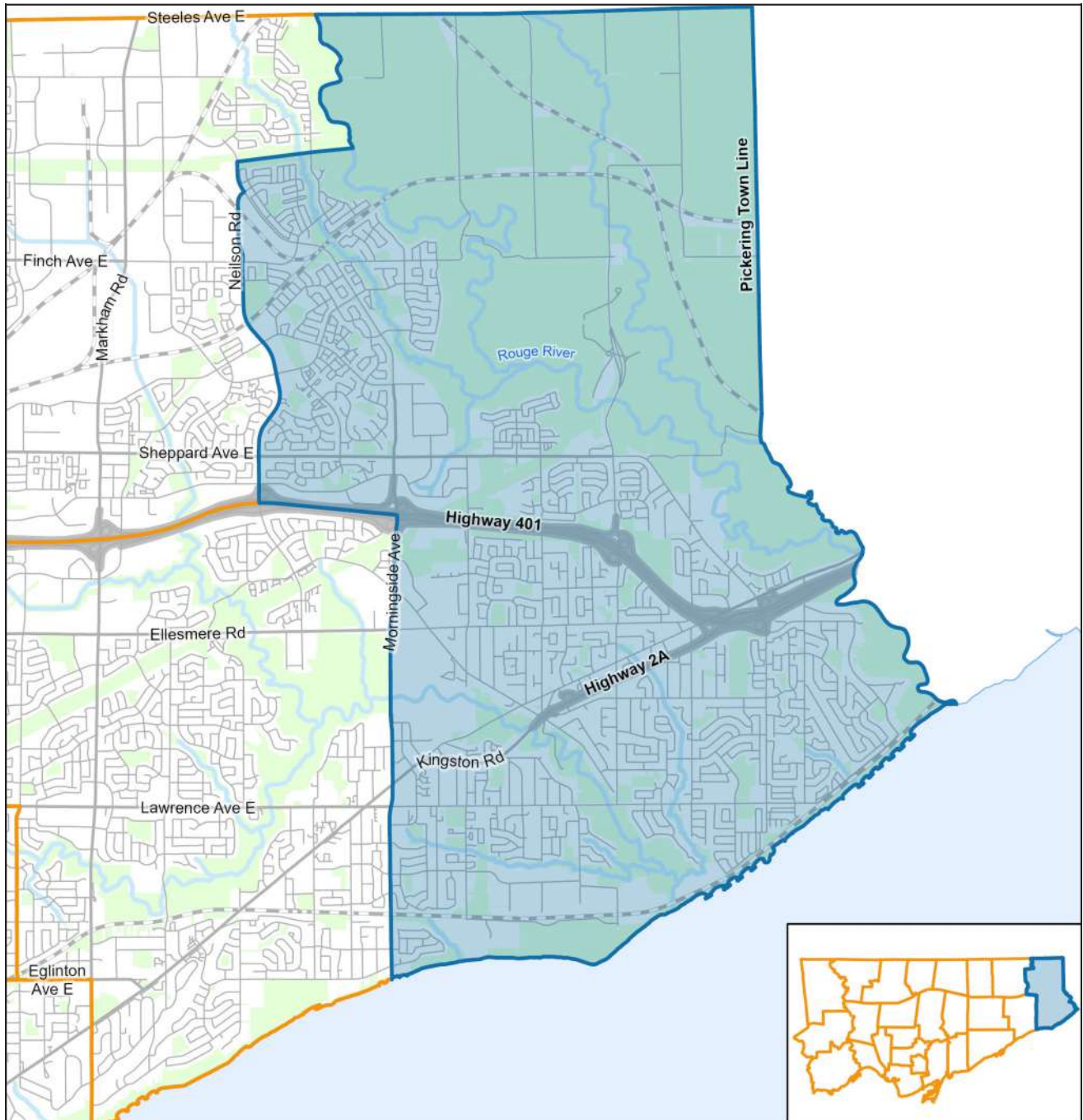
37.4%
HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE WITHIN THE WARD

WARD POVERTY RATES VS. CITY-WIDE RATES (%)



Child poverty map and chart produced by Social Planning Toronto using 2023 Statistics Canada T1 Family File data, as described in the *Data Sources and Measures of Poverty* appendix.

SCARBOROUGH—ROUGE PARK WARD



Source: Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, City of Toronto, reproduced with permission.

Note: The boundaries on this map are part of the City of Toronto's 25 municipal wards, effective December 1, 2018. This map is for information purposes only.



TAKING ACTION TO REDUCE CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

The findings in this report show that child and family poverty in Toronto continues to grow and is deepening, with significant inequities experienced across neighbourhoods and population groups. With the municipal election coming up in October, it is time to assess the state of child poverty and move forward with long-term, sustainable solutions.

Addressing child and family poverty will require coordinated action across all orders of government. Experience demonstrates that policy decisions at the federal and provincial levels can have significant impacts on families. This has been evident in federal income supports during the pandemic, which substantially reduced child poverty (although only temporarily), and by meagre ODSP and OW benefit levels that keep people in deep and persistent poverty. The City of Toronto also has a distinct role to play in reducing poverty and improving the daily experiences of low-income children and families through its policies, programs, and services. While the City has made significant progress in recent years to advance many initiatives within its scope, there remains a need to protect and expand these efforts.

All orders of government can make a significant difference in the lives of children and families living in poverty through three critical approaches:

1. **Ensure livable incomes and inclusive economic development practices.**
2. **Implement a rights-based approach to basic needs and affordability.**
3. **Renew the focus on poverty reduction and systemic inequality.**

The following recommendations outline the actions needed from each order of government to reduce child and family poverty and improve outcomes for children and families in Toronto. Together, they provide a roadmap for advancing meaningful and sustained progress.

Recommendations for Each Order of Government

1. Ensure livable incomes and inclusive economic development practices

A livable income—achieved through decent employment and adequate income support programs—can have one of the greatest impacts on poverty levels. Inclusive economic development ensures that the economy benefits everyone by, for example, creating decent jobs with adequate wages, reducing barriers to employment, improving economic opportunities to communities disproportionately affected by poverty, and supporting democratically controlled and community-owned infrastructure.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY OF TORONTO:

- **Maximize the potential of the recently launched Inclusive Economic Development Framework** to ensure Toronto's economy benefits more residents. The City of Toronto can do more as an employer, purchaser, builder, landowner, and funder to ensure that economic activity is more equitably shared. This includes improving access to decent employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for low-income residents, particularly women, youth, and those facing systemic barriers to work, providing sufficient funding to support living wage jobs within City-funded non-profit organizations, and expanding Toronto's fair wage policy.
- **Support the conditions for communities and workers to build wealth**, including through policies and programs that enable communities to own land, housing, and other infrastructure, and to have greater control over local economic decisions, such as how communities and local businesses can benefit from neighbourhood development. Examples of good practices in this area include community land trusts, worker cooperatives, credit unions, and non-profit and public ownership models.

Many of the **most powerful policy levers in poverty reduction** sit with **provincial and federal governments.**

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO:

- **Increase and index social assistance rates and other income supports** to better reflect the cost of living and reduce the depth of poverty. This includes:
 - **Immediately doubling Ontario Works (OW) rates** and indexing the benefit to inflation, recognizing that the majority of recipients rent in the private market.
 - **Doubling Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) rates**, taking into consideration the higher cost of living faced by people with disabilities. Despite now being indexed to inflation, ODSP rates still keep recipients living in poverty.
 - **Ensuring that all people in Ontario have access to social assistance** support regardless of immigration status and removing systemic administrative barriers that prevent them from accessing support.
 - **Modernize social assistance rules by combining basic needs and shelter allowances** into a standard flat rate that is consistent regardless of living situation, and invest in **“life stabilization”** supports such as housing, mental health services, substance use counselling, and intimate partner violence supports for social assistance recipients.
- **Raise Ontario’s minimum wage to \$20 or more** and move toward a living wage.
- **Strengthen labour protections and enforcement of the Employment Standards Act (ESA)** to prevent wage theft and protect gig workers, and reinstate 10 Personal Emergency Leave days (including 7 days of paid sick leave) in the ESA. Ontario should also provide for an additional 14 days of paid sick leave during declared pandemics.
- **Advance inclusive economic development** by, for example, investing in targeted workforce development and using procurement and infrastructure spending to create good jobs for communities facing systemic barriers (i.e., through community benefit agreements on publicly funded projects). Support community ownership of infrastructure as a key means of community wealth building.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA:

- **Invest \$5.2 billion to create a non-taxable Canada Child Benefit End Child Poverty Supplement (CCB ECPS)** targeted to families in deep poverty, as recommended by Campaign 2000. This would provide a maximum additional \$8,500 per year to a family with an earned income of less than \$19,000, with scaled reductions for additional children irrespective of age.[#]
- Implement Campaign 2000's recommendations to improve the Child Disability Benefit, beginning with **immediately doubling the amount of the Child Disability Benefit** as the first step to enhancing its adequacy, followed by creating a caregiver benefit modelled on the COVID-19 Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit, and working with families and caregivers of children with disabilities to ensure the benefit is providing the help needed. The Canadian government should ensure the benefits reach those with low incomes, have expanded criteria, are refundable, allow workers to keep earned income, and work towards ending disability poverty.
- Work cooperatively with provinces and territories to **develop a national housing benefit standard** that largely mirrors the design of Manitoba's Rent Assist program, as proposed by Maytree. This involves the development of a permanent, entitlement-based, portable housing benefit that would ensure that eligible households spend no more than 30% of their income on housing.
- **Address Canada's growing income and wealth inequality by more equitably distributing resources**, for example, by establishing a wealth tax on net wealth over \$10 million, reforming capital gains tax, increasing the corporate tax rate, and closing costly and regressive tax loopholes. Revenue generated through these measures must be invested into achieving the commitments to end child poverty and obligation to advance social and economic rights in Canada.

[#]The proposal for the CCB ECPS is further detailed on page 187 of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Federal Budget 2026: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/alternative-federal-budget-2026-summary/#poverty-and-income-security>

2. Implement a rights-based approach to basic needs and affordability

A rights-based approach recognizes that all individuals have the human right to have their basic needs met, including the right to adequate housing and shelter, to adequate food, to work, and other related economic, social, and cultural rights. It is about moving beyond temporary or charity-based responses toward ensuring that everyone has adequately funded, protected access to essential goods and services as a matter of dignity.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY OF TORONTO:

- Expand access to affordable, high-quality child care by **increasing the supply of primarily public and not-for-profit licensed spaces** in underserved and high-poverty neighbourhoods.
- **Establish permanent base funding for the Universal Student Nutrition Program**, and collaborate with the federal and provincial governments to provide additional meals and snacks throughout the school day, during before- and after-school programs, and at camps.
- Continue to **expand the supply of non-market and deeply affordable housing, with a focus on meeting the needs of low-income households and families with children**, including rent-geared-to-income, supportive, cooperative, and non-profit housing. This should include setting clear targets for new affordable and deeply affordable units for family-sized housing (two- and three-bedroom units).
- Continue to **protect and preserve Toronto's existing stock of affordable rental housing** by expanding programs that prevent the loss of low-cost units and support long-term affordability. This includes increasing investment in successful initiatives such as the Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition (MURA) program, as well as strengthening policies that support the long-term affordability of rental housing.
- Continue to **invest in housing stability and eviction prevention programs that have proven to help low-income households remain housed** and avoid families falling into deeper poverty or homelessness. This includes increasing investment in, and expanding access to, the Toronto Rent Bank, the Toronto Tenant Support Program (TTSP), and the Eviction Prevention in the Community program (EPIC).
- **Ensure that the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS) is adequately funded to improve and expand the emergency shelter system**, including sites for women, families, and youth that offer wraparound supports and pathways to more permanent housing.

- **Expand low-income and free transit programs**, including implementing free transit to children aged 13–17 to help families manage monthly and daily costs, continued implementation of the Fair Pass Transit Discount Program, and protecting and enhancing fare capping, which holds the greatest benefit for low-income transit users.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO:

- Join other jurisdictions in **signing a five-year Canada-wide early learning and child care agreement** with the Government of Canada.
- Continue to work with the federal government to ensure that the next five-year phase of **child care expansion is adequately funded to meet both operational and capital needs**. This includes supporting operators to reduce fees to no more than \$10 per day, expanding the supply of non-profit and public child care spaces, and investing in the long-term sustainability of the system through dedicated provincial funding.
- **Address workforce challenges within the child care sector**, including low wages, working conditions, and staff shortages, to ensure that more families can access reliable, high-quality care.
- **Provide adequate funding and infrastructure for before- and after-school, summer, and holiday care** to ensure access for every school-age child that needs it.
- **Conduct a comprehensive review of Ontario's funding formula for Kindergarten to Grade 12 education** to ensure that local school boards are adequately resourced to meet the diverse needs of their student populations and can address socioeconomic inequities that impact school success.
- **Increase non-market housing and reduce—and ultimately eliminate—the wait times for rent-geared-to-income housing** through a multi-pronged approach including constructing new affordable, deeply affordable, and supportive housing units, acquiring existing housing for conversion to non-market use, providing sustained funding for present and future RGI subsidies, and setting clear, time-bound targets to eliminate social housing wait lists.
- **Restore vacancy control and remove the 2018 rent control exemption and Above Guideline Rent Increases (AGIs)**, and retain rent control in perpetuity on all affordable units delivered with public funds, to strengthen tenant protections and housing stability for families.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA:

- **Adequately fund the next five-year phase of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program**, including both operational and capital funding, to ensure that the vision for \$10-a-day child care is achieved. In Ontario, the average cost sits at \$19 a day.
- **Ensure that the CWELCC program is built in line with its core principles:** expansion must occur through public and non-profit services, affordable parent fees should be delivered through a universal approach, supply-side operational funding should be put in place, child care workforce issues must be addressed, and commitments to high-quality child care must be upheld.
- **Adapt the National Housing Strategy, set to expire in 2027–2028, along with the new 2027–2037 National Housing Strategy being developed, to fully meet Canada’s obligations to realizing children’s rights to housing** as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Housing Strategy Act, setting clear, measurable, and outcomes-focused targets. The federal government should also embed the right to housing within Build Canada Homes, the federal agency dedicated to accelerating the construction of homes, particularly rental housing.
- **Ensure federally financed housing is deeply affordable for low-income families and responsive to the diverse needs of families with children.** Federal rental housing financing and co-investment funding should prioritize non-market development and require supported developments to include a sufficient number of units and a range of unit types that are affordable, satisfy universal design criteria, and meet the adequacy needs of diverse low-income families with children. Affordability should be defined as no more than 30% of gross household income.
- **Support more low-income families with the affordability crisis now**, for example, by expanding and making permanent the Groceries and Essentials Benefit.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA:

- **Increase investment in the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit** and commit to multi-year funding agreements beyond the 2028–2029 commitments to provide program stability and expand the reach of this effective portable benefit for preventing homelessness.
- **Increase investment in, and expand access to, student nutrition programs**, through the provincial Student Nutrition Program and the federal National School Food Program, to ensure that all children and youth have access to free, nutritious food at school.

3. Renew the Focus on Poverty Reduction and Systemic Inequality

The municipal, provincial, and federal governments each have their own poverty reduction strategy and play distinct yet complementary roles in reducing and eliminating poverty, as well as making targeted investments in areas where inequity is starkest. The commitments laid out in these plans must be renewed and strengthened to recognize the systemic causes of, and key contributors to, poverty, along with concrete plans to address each of them.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY OF TORONTO:

- **Develop clear, measurable targets on poverty reduction** by revisiting the 17 primary recommendations of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- **Regularly report to the public on progress and implementation** of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- **Strengthen the use and public reporting of disaggregated data** to better understand and address inequities in child and family poverty. While key income data are collected at the federal level, the City can play a critical role by improving the collection and use of service-level and administrative data, enhancing disaggregation where appropriate, and providing regular, transparent public reporting on outcomes.
- **Expand place-based investments in high-poverty neighbourhoods** through sustained, multi-year funding that increases access to affordable child care, transit, food programs, and community services.
- **Continue to support and invest in the Indigenous-led Toronto Indigenous Prosperity Action Plan** coordinated by Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council. Strategies and actions to reduce poverty must be grounded in reconciliation, recognizing that the disproportionate rates of poverty experienced by Indigenous peoples are rooted in historical and ongoing impacts of colonization and require solutions that respect Indigenous autonomy and sovereignty.
- **Fully fund and implement population-specific and equity strategies**, including the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, the Newcomer Strategy, and the Youth Equity Strategy, and ensure alignment with the Poverty Reduction Strategy. This includes committing dedicated funding, staffing, and regular public reporting on progress to ensure that these plans can have the impact they were designed to achieve.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO:

- **Commit to reducing poverty rates by 50% by 2028 and to eliminate poverty by 2031** based on the CFLIM-AT and aligned with our ask to the federal government. In addition, the forthcoming Poverty Reduction Strategy must include transparent, measurable goals for reducing deep poverty and poverty among marginalized groups, coupled with supporting indicators for housing, food insecurity, access to services, equity of outcomes, and other key measures. Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy must be grounded in human rights, and move beyond the "jobs first" approach of the last strategy to address the systemic causes of poverty.
- **Increase funding for non-profit and public organizations** that provide vital programs, services, and supports to directly support people living in poverty. Protecting and prioritizing funding for non-profit and public organizations is important to building Ontario's social infrastructure, ensuring equity, and delivering services without profit-driven motives.

WE RECOMMEND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA:

- **Replace the Market Basket Measure (MBM) with the Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-AT)**, calculated with annual taxfiler data, as Canada's official poverty measure. The CFLIM-AT is a broad, comprehensive, and relative measure of poverty. It is designed to measure what the Poverty Reduction Strategy seeks to achieve by way of its three pillars: dignity, opportunity, and resilience.
- **Update the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Poverty Reduction Act to commit to expedited targets of reducing poverty rates by 50% by 2028 and eliminating poverty by 2031** based on the CFLIM-AT. New targets should be set to reduce the number of people living in deep poverty, defined as 50% below their respective family size poverty line, by one third by 2028, measured by the CFLIM-AT.

WE RECOMMEND THAT ALL ORDERS OF GOVERNMENT:

- **Identify and collect additional disaggregated data on children not living in census families** to better understand their experiences of poverty and take action to improve their circumstances.
- **Ensure inclusive governance structures** that enable those families with lived/living experience, community organizations working with low-income families, and advocates to have a meaningful role in the design, implementation, and evaluation of anti-poverty strategies and initiatives. This includes strengthening the City of Toronto's Lived Experience Advisory Committee and the federal government's National Advisory Council on Poverty, while developing a comparable structure at the provincial level.
- **Commit to reducing child poverty through coordinated action**, recognizing that sustained progress requires aligned investments and policy action across governments. While each level of government has established its own poverty reduction strategy, greater coordination is needed to ensure shared goals, consistent measures of progress, and complementary investments. This includes setting common targets, aligning indicators and reporting, and coordinating funding and program delivery to maximize impact and avoid gaps or duplication.



CONCLUSION

Toronto is a wealthy city within a growing province and a prosperous country, yet child and family poverty persists at unacceptable levels and continues to rise. While poverty affects families in every part of the city, some communities continue to face disproportionately high rates of poverty, reflecting longstanding and systemic barriers. The persistence of concentrated pockets of extreme poverty highlights the depth of hardship experienced by many families and the urgent need for action.

In 2015, Toronto City Council adopted a 20-year Poverty Reduction Strategy to improve the lives of residents and reduce poverty across the city. This strategy has advanced important initiatives that have strengthened supports for residents living in poverty, but these efforts must go further to achieve meaningful and sustained reductions in child poverty. Addressing child poverty will

require a balanced approach that combines city-wide measures with targeted, place-based, and population-specific strategies.

While the City has an important role to play, it cannot address child poverty alone. Progress will depend on coordinated action across all orders of government, particularly in strengthening income supports and addressing the broader structural drivers of poverty.

The upcoming municipal election provides a critical opportunity to call for renewed commitment from the City of Toronto to reduce child poverty. The recommendations outlined in this report provide a clear path forward—one that, if pursued with urgency and collaboration from all levels of government, can lead to meaningful and lasting reductions in child poverty



APPENDIX: DATA SOURCES AND MEASURES OF POVERTY

This report uses two primary data sources from Statistics Canada: the T1 Family File (T1FF) for 2023 and prior years, and 2020 low-income data from the 2021 Census of Population. Social Planning Toronto accessed data for this report through its membership in the Community Data Program (CDP). The CDP is “a membership-based community development initiative open to any Canadian public, non-profit or community sector organization with a local service delivery or public policy mandate.”⁴⁵ It provides access to data that are not available publicly from Statistics Canada and other sources, as well as training and capacity building opportunities.

The findings of the current report first draw on taxfiler data from the T1FF. These data are collected from income tax returns and Canada Child Benefit (CCB) records. The 2023 T1FF provides the most recently available data on child and family poverty for the city of Toronto. There is a two-year lag in the data available from Statistics Canada, and thus the low-income rates reported here are based on 2023 data.

T1FF tables provide low-income rates for different family types and age groups using the Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-

AT). The Low-Income Measure (LIM) defines low income based on a threshold calculated at 50 percent of the national household median income and is adjusted for household size.⁴⁶ LIM thresholds are updated annually. As a relative measure of poverty, LIM is able to capture both household low income and income inequality, indicating whether people have the resources to participate in society. The LIM is widely used in studies of poverty in Canada and elsewhere and provides a measure of poverty consistent with our previous reports.

The T1FF includes LIM-AT data using census family income, hence it is referred to as the Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-AT). Statistics Canada defines a census family as “married couples or couples living common law with or without children, or one parent with at least one child living in the same dwelling.”⁴⁷ We use after-tax (AT) statistics, rather than before-tax (BT), because it accounts for the “redistributive effects of income taxes.”⁴⁸

The federal government has adopted the Market Basket Measure (MBM) as Canada’s Official Poverty Line.⁴⁹ However, the current report does not include statistics based on the MBM, as the

T1FF tables available for this project did not include the MBM. Instead, the team used the CFLIM-AT, as it is a widely used low-income measure. Access to CFLIM-AT data allowed for the presentation of child poverty rates over time at the local level, analysis of child poverty rates by family type, and comparison of child poverty rates for large municipalities.

T1FF data are also used to produce profiles for Toronto's 25 wards. Each ward profile includes a map showing child poverty rates by census tract (CT). Because census tract boundaries do not align with ward boundaries, some CTs span more than one ward. For these CTs, child poverty rates are either reported for full census tract or are coded as "No data or data suppressed." Partial census tracts were coded as "No data or data suppressed" if any of the following conditions were met:

- the partial census tract does not include residential areas (e.g., parkland, highways, commercial areas);
- the partial census tract includes few residences;
- less than 10% of the tract's child population falls within the ward; or
- the 2023 child poverty rate for the full census tract may not accurately reflect conditions within the portion of the tract located in the ward.

The report uses data from the 2021 Census of Population to support an intersectional analysis of child poverty in Toronto, as the T1FF does not include disaggregated data for many social groups. The Census is a more comprehensive survey, providing high-quality statistical information on smaller geographies and smaller population groups.⁵⁰ It is ideal for understanding disaggregated poverty trends. However, low-income data from the Census are based on 2020 household income. As a result, Census-based child poverty estimates are three years older than those derived from T1FF data. These data were collected during a period of historically low poverty rates, influenced by temporary pandemic-related income supports. Since then, poverty rates have increased, and no comparable large-scale interventions have been implemented. Accordingly, Census-based estimates likely understate current levels of child poverty and should be interpreted with caution. More up-to-date data will become available through the 2026 Census, which is being conducted this year; however, due to typical data release timelines, updated results are not expected until mid-2027 at the earliest.

There are some other important differences between the Census and the T1FF. Census data use households as the unit of analysis, which can include more than one family. In contrast, the T1FF uses the census family definition. As well,

the T1FF Census Family LIM includes income data for people living on reserves, in collective dwellings (e.g., nursing homes, prisons, and religious establishments), in the territories, and in rural and remote areas. These populations are currently excluded from the calculation for the Census-based LIM.⁵¹ Due to these differences, poverty rates are not comparable across these two data sources.

Low-income data pertaining to people with disabilities, particularly at the local level, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities are limited. In this report, we present the best available information on child poverty among these populations.

Throughout this report the terms “low income” and “poverty” are used interchangeably in reference to household income that falls below the LIM-AT or CFLIM-AT threshold, accordingly, based on the data source. The terms “child poverty” and “child and family poverty” are also used interchangeably in the report. We referred to cities and regional municipalities with populations over 500,000 as “large municipalities.” Child poverty/child and family poverty rates are based on the population under the age of 18.

Below are the thresholds for both the T1FF-based measure (CFLIM-AT) and the Census-based measure (LIM-AT).

Table 1: 2023 Census Family Low-Income Measure, After Tax (CFLIM-AT) thresholds by family size

Number of family members	After-Tax Census Family Low-Income Measure thresholds (dollar amount)
1 person	26,442
2 persons	37,395
3 persons	45,799
4 persons	52,884
5 persons	59,126
6 persons	64,769
7 persons	69,959
8 persons	74,789
9 persons	79,326
10 persons	83,617

Source: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Section 1 - The data. Table F. 2023: Thresholds for After-Tax Census Family Low Income Measure. T1 Family File, Final Estimates, 2023.* <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/72-212-x/2025001/sect1-eng.htm>

Table 2: 2020 Low-Income Measure, After Tax (LIM-AT) thresholds for private households of Canada

Number of family members	After-Tax Census Family Low-Income Measure thresholds (dollar amount)
1 person	26,503
2 persons	37,480
3 persons	45,904
4 persons	53,005
5 persons	59,261
6 persons	64,918
7 persons	70,119

Source: Statistics Canada. (2022). 2021 Census of Population. Table 2.4 Low-income measures thresholds (LIM-AT and LIM-BT) for private households of Canada, 2020. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/dict/tab/index-eng.cfm?ID=t2_4



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