

May 2015

## Wellbeing Toronto V.2

### **What is Wellbeing Toronto?**

Wellbeing Toronto (WT) was launched in 2011 and is constantly being updated with new data, features, and functionality. It is a web-based measurement and visualization tool that helps evaluate community wellbeing and quality of life across the city's 140 neighbourhoods. Using geographic information software, Wellbeing Toronto allows users to select, combine and weight (emphasize) the significance of a number of indicators that monitor neighbourhood wellness. The results appear instantly on easy to read maps, tables and graphs. This free tool supports decision making and seeks to engage citizens and businesses in understanding the challenges and opportunities of creating and maintaining healthy neighbourhoods.

### **Where is the tool located?**

Wellbeing Toronto is located on the City's website at [www.toronto.ca/wellbeing](http://www.toronto.ca/wellbeing). The main landing page has [videos](#) and [FAQs](#) to assist you in using this tool.

### **Where is the data from?**

The available data has been collected from a variety of internal and external sources, including several City Divisions, Statistics Canada, Agencies, Boards and Commissions and other Non-government organizations. Users will have access to City operational metrics data such as fire, crime, voter participation, local employment, recreation program registrants, health and social services; socio-demographics information including age, sex, income and education; and infrastructure service data such as the locations of recreation centres, police stations, parks, libraries and schools.

### **How old is the data and how do I use the *Reference Periods*?**

You will notice that the data are categorized by Domain Type (e.g., Housing, Civics), and also by Reference Period. Data are updated about once a year on average as we receive updates from source providers. Since the time-stamps on data are not consistent, we have organized datasets by "Reference Periods (RF)". Each RF contains data *around* that time period. For example, the 2011 RF will have data between 2010 and 2012. Time-series RFs are also provided (e.g., 2006-2011) that filter which indicators can be statistically compared over time (those that cannot be compared over time, do not appear on the pick-list). To date, there are almost 250 data sets to choose from. The data has been grouped into the following indicator domains:

Civics	Culture	Economics
Education	Environment	Health
Housing	Recreation	Safety
Transportation		

### **How is the data "OPEN" and what are some of the ways I can analyze the data?**

All data is available for export to CSV and EXCEL formats through the DATA button in upper-right corner. By the way, all datasets are linked to the City's Open Data portal as well ([www.toronto.ca/open](http://www.toronto.ca/open))

In terms of analyses, the purpose of WT is to determine quality-of-life at the neighbourhood level. While some argue that the data are “old”, the purpose in WT is to see where patterns exist among the variables and how those patterns appear geographically across Toronto. This “picture” is less prone to aged-data. If you need the most up-to-date data, please see the most recent reports on the City’s Demographics’ page ([www.toronto.ca/demographics](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics)). Users can use WT to determine for example:

- 1) Which neighbourhoods face the greatest challenges in housing affordability, safety, or employment?
- 2) Which indicators are better correlated with others (e.g., Which ones show a strong spatial or statistical relationship between health and crime for youth? Etc.) If more sophisticated analyses is required, users can export the data for use in another tool such as SAS or SPSS.

### **What’s the difference between Raw Values and Scale Values?**

WT provides *both raw and scaled data*. Since we allow users to create their own indices (mapping/weighting several indicators together at once), the data has to be standardized to allow such combinations). A scale or score is a number between 1 and 100 that represents a low amount of something (1) or a high amount of something (100). Scores are calculated from raw numbers (e.g., the # of trees in a neighbourhood, number of collisions etc.) using a formula. Scaling the raw numbers to scores thus allows them to be added together to create a composite index. It is also referred to as a Scaled Value. Hint – If you wish to compare individual indicators to others (to see which ones correlate better with others), it is best to use raw numbers. If you wish to tell a simple story on how many seniors live in which neighbourhood, just use the raw numbers.

### **Tweeting about Wellbeing Toronto?**

Follow conversations with the hash tag #WBTor

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