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TORONTO  
**ARTS**  
FOUNDATION

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2018

# ARTS STATS

WHY THE **ARTS** MATTER



#TOArts



I just can't  
imagine life  
without the arts.

— Toronto resident

## ARTS STATS

In 2013, Toronto Arts Foundation and Leger began a partnership to explore public opinion about the arts. What has emerged in the last five years is a better understanding of the deep appreciation Torontonians have for the arts.

Art Stats 2018 shows us that most Torontonians are optimistic about their city and believe the arts add to their quality of life. While they may be concerned about transit and housing and many worry about taxes and crime, almost all Toronto residents recognize the value of living in a city that supports the arts. The arts matter to Torontonians.

From neighbourhood galleries, to vibrant street festivals, arts in the parks and concerts downtown – Torontonians are drawn to the arts and the way in which they connect us to each other and inspire our communities.

Torontonians support the arts because they make our city unique, reflect our diversity, and engage us with new ideas. As we approach another municipal election, arts supporters will be looking to their mayoral and city council candidates to stand up for the arts.

We hope that our fourth Arts Stats booklet helps generate discussion about the many ways Torontonians are connected to and care about the arts.

Margo Charlton  
Research & Impact Manager  
Toronto Arts Foundation

Claire Hopkinson, M.S.M.  
Director & CEO  
Toronto Arts Foundation

# KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ **85%** of Torontonians think our city has a great arts scene, with **65%** specifying it's because the arts reflect the diversity of the city's residents.
- ▶ Nearly **90%** of respondents believe that the arts make Toronto a better place to live, with **71%** specifying it's because the arts engage people with new ideas.
- ▶ **49%** say that arts matter because they raise awareness of social issues and bolster the economy.
- ▶ **77%** would like to see more opportunities to attend the arts in every Toronto ward.
- ▶ **80%** of Torontonians connect to the arts through attending events, donating, participating, volunteering or pursuing their own arts practice. **38%** are linked to the arts through a family member.
- ▶ **71%** of respondents indicated that they are interested in art that explores social and political issues, but above all else, they are looking for events that are both entertaining and unique.
- ▶ Over **80%** of Torontonians think the City of Toronto needs to better support arts initiatives, such as after-school arts programs and arts in public spaces.
- ▶ Civic leaders would do well to voice support for the arts because the majority of Torontonians want their mayoral and city council candidates to be arts supporters (**71%** and **65%** respectively).

# CONNECTING

“While there are many wonderful events happening throughout the year, it’s through summertime events that I feel most connected to Toronto as a living, breathing, animated entity.

— *Toronto resident*

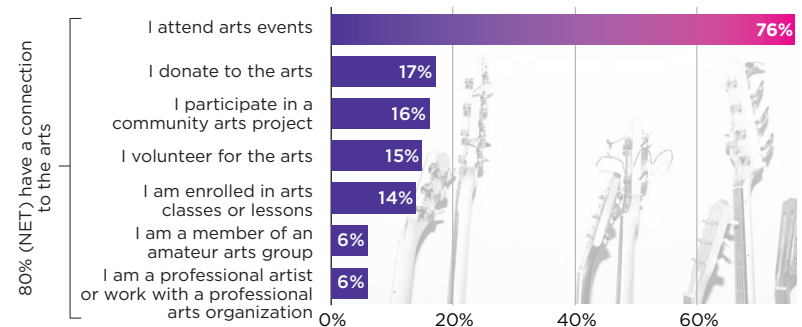
## What’s your connection to the arts?

**80%** of Torontonians connect to the arts with **76%** attending arts events.

Many Torontonians attend both ticketed (62%) and free (60%) arts events. Attendance by those making less than \$40,000/year drops to 47%, underscoring the issue that cost is a barrier to attending the arts.

Other connections involve more hands-on experiences, such as participating in community arts projects (16%) or taking arts classes or lessons (14%).

### Personal connections to the arts





The arts expand  
one's perspective,  
helping you think  
about things outside  
of your everyday life.

— *Toronto resident*

# ENGAGING

“ [The arts] encourages people to be creative in their thinking both when participating or just viewing artistic impression, [which is] very important in a diverse city like Toronto.

“ The next generation sees creative expression as a fundamental part of a full life. [My generation] didn't have that opportunity and it's wonderful to see.

“ I live in downtown Toronto and walk everywhere. Public art, parks, festivals make each walk a discovery walk.

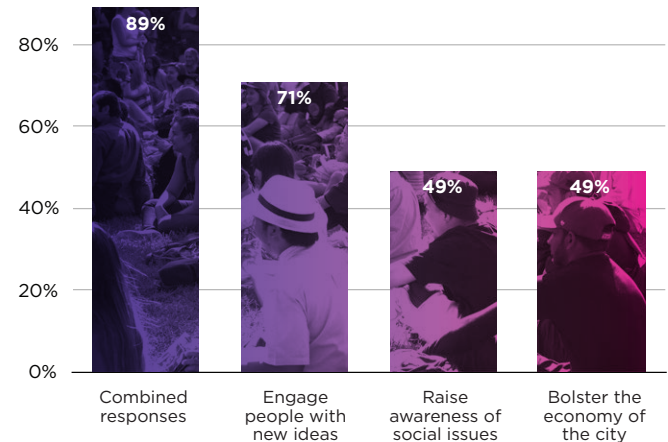
— *Toronto residents*

## What do arts do for the city?

**89%** of Torontonians think the arts make Toronto a better place to live.

They believe this because they think the arts engage people with new ideas (71%), raise awareness of social issues (49%), and bolster the city's economy (49%).

How the arts make Toronto a better place

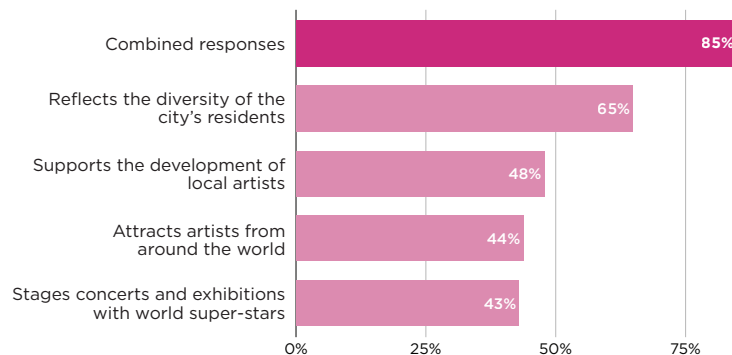


# What makes Toronto's art scene great?

**85%** of Torontonians agree that the city has a great arts scene.

More than anything else, respondents believe Toronto has a great arts scene because it reflects the diversity of the city's residents (65%). Nearly half (48%) say it's because there's development support for local artists, and four-in-ten believe the city's arts scene is great because it not only attracts local artists, but stages concerts and exhibitions with world renowned super-stars.

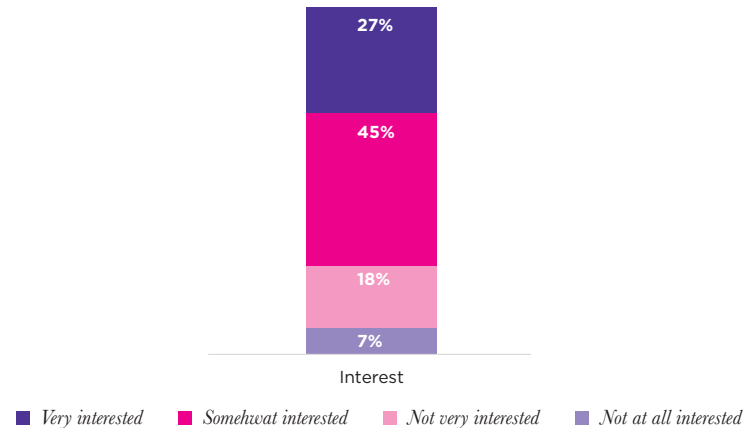
Why Toronto has a great arts scene



# What kinds of art interests you?

When attending an arts event, *seven-in-ten* Torontonians are interested in work that explores social and political issues.

Interest in art that explores social and political issues

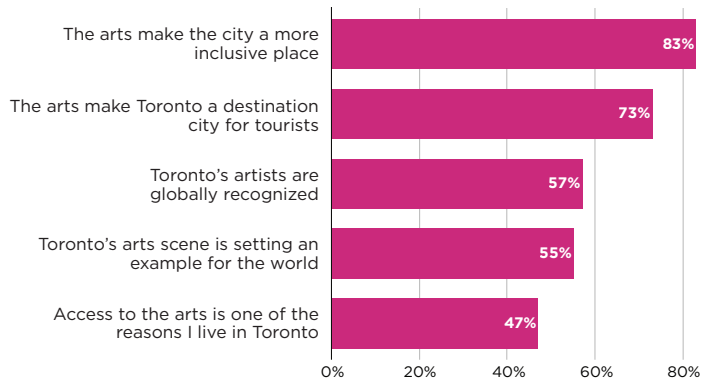


# Is arts access important to you?

Access to the arts is one of the reasons why nearly 50% of respondents live in Toronto, particularly for those living in central and downtown Toronto (62% vs 41% in other areas surveyed).

For most Torontonians the arts not only make Toronto a more inclusive place (83%), they also make it a destination spot for tourists (73%). Roughly six-in-ten agree that the city's artists are globally recognized (57%) and that its arts scene sets an example for the world (55%).

Torontonians agree that:



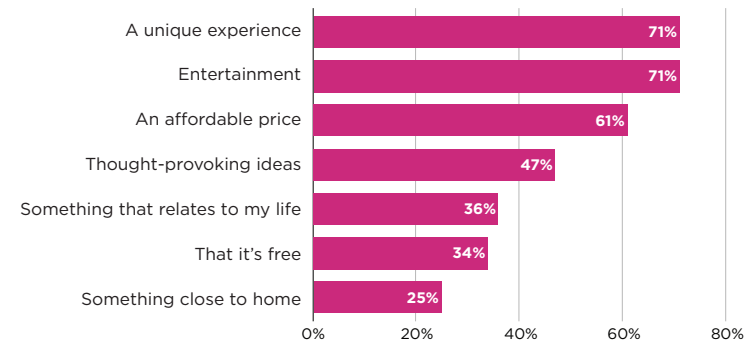
# What are you looking for at an arts event?

**61% of attendees want to experience the arts at an affordable price.**

Affordable arts events are something most respondents look out for, regardless of how much their household makes.

When attending an arts event, seven out of ten respondents are looking for an entertaining and unique experience. For others, it also needs to be thought-provoking (47%) and/or relatable (36%).

Main things Torontonians are looking for at an arts event:



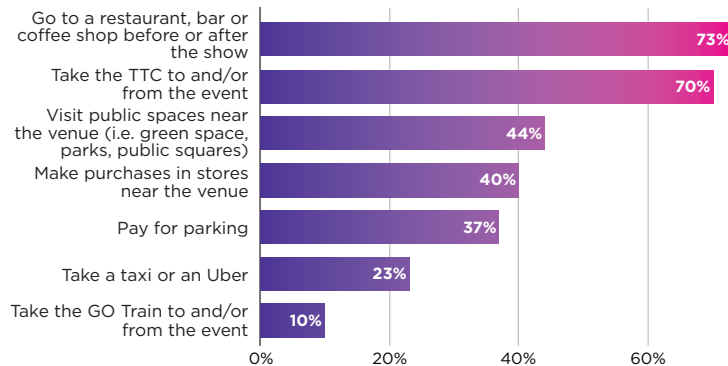


# What are the spin-off benefits?

**73%** of respondents who attend arts events usually end up doing something else, like going to a restaurant, bar, or coffee shop either beforehand or afterward.

Attendees come for the arts but many end up visiting public spaces near the event such as parks, public squares or green space (44%). They also make purchases at nearby stores (40%).

## What else do Torontonians do when they go to an arts event?



# ENVISIONING

“Transit-wise, we are finally making headway. We have a long way to go, but we are making progress. This contributes immensely to access to arts and overall affordability of the city.

“We are becoming a more inclusive city ... and it becomes apparent and seen within the arts.

“The ‘arts’ in all their forms enrich my life. They take me out of the mundane and into the realm of ideas.

— *Toronto residents*

“We need to be preparing the city for the future rather than clinging to the past.

— *Toronto resident*



# Is the city headed in the **right direction**?

Nearly half of Torontonians (**49%**) say that in their opinion the City is heading in the right direction.

Optimistic people point to strong civic leadership, support for arts and culture, and improved public transportation as reasons to be positive.

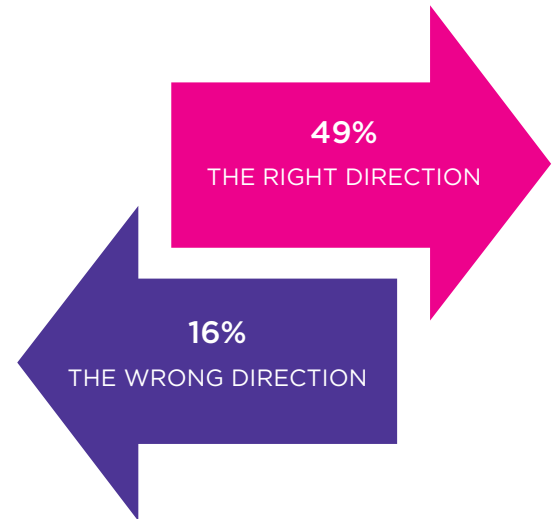
Respondents who believe their city is heading in the right direction also tend to have a connection to the arts (52% vs 34% among those who do not) and attend arts events (52% vs. 40% among those who do not).

Those who think Toronto has a great arts scene tend to be those who believe Toronto is heading in the right direction (93% vs. 74% among those who believe it's headed in the wrong direction).

Not everyone is optimistic. Thirty-five percent, for example, do not have a clear sense of where the city is going or whether it's getting better or not, and a further 16% think the city is heading in the wrong direction.

Problems with traffic, housing, and leadership are cited as reasons to not be positive about the future.

Torontonians believe the city is heading in:





# SUPPORTING

“

The arts provide a forum for alternative thinking and the release of imagination.

“

People gather for many reasons, whether it is sports, the arts or food. The “coming together” breaks down the barriers of prejudice and biases that divide and isolate people.

— *Toronto residents*





# Would you be concerned if there were cuts to the arts?

**If the City of Toronto reduced support for the arts, levels of concern would be quite high.**

The greatest concern would be for cuts to high profile ventures such as museum and heritage sites, large arts organizations, and film and entertainment industries.

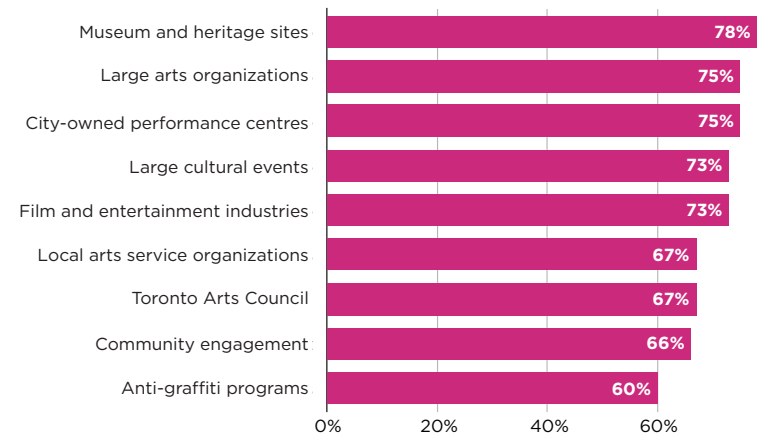
However, 67% would be concerned if there were cuts to Toronto Arts Council's granting to artists and arts organizations. In addition, cuts to Local Arts Service Organizations in Scarborough, Etobicoke, North York, and East York, plus city-wide anti-graffiti programs, would be seen as a concern to approximately six-in-ten respondents.

If cuts to the arts happen, levels of concern are statistically higher among those with a connection to the arts, those who attend arts events, and those who believe Toronto is headed in the right direction.

There are also several items where households making <\$40K per year would express higher levels of concern for cuts to the arts, relative to households making \$40K+ per year:

- ▶ museum and heritage sites (92% vs. 78%),
- ▶ major cultural events (85% vs. 72%), and
- ▶ community engagement (80% vs. 65%).

**Torontonians would be concerned if support was reduced for:**



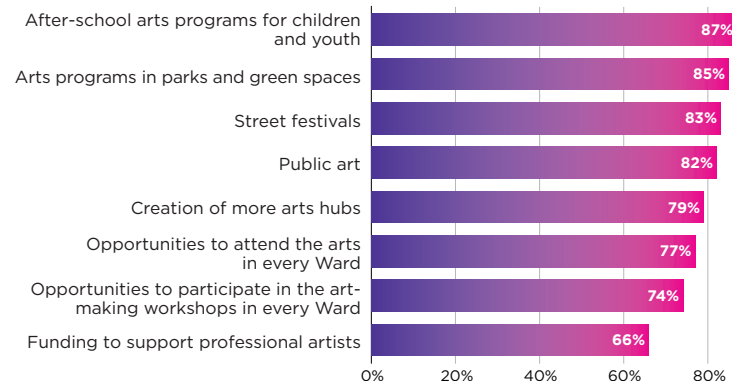
# Should the City of Toronto provide **more support** to the arts?

**80%** think the municipal government should provide more resources for the arts.

At least seven-in-ten also expressed the need for more opportunities to attend the arts and participate in art-making workshops in every Ward in the city.

With respect to age, millennials (18-34) are statistically more likely to believe the city needs to better support public art (87% vs. 74% for respondents 55+) and the creation of more art hubs (87% vs. 71%). They're also more likely to believe the city needs to up the support to its professional artists (74% vs. 56%).

## Torontonians want more support for:



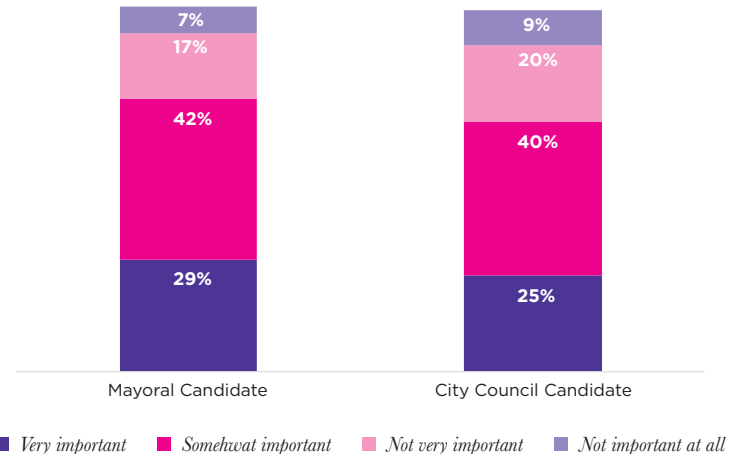
# VOTING

“The arts entertain me, but they also move me, challenge me, comfort me, connect me. Most often, I view or attend arts with others, so that the arts are part of my social and community network. I feel as if I am a better person in myself and in my community when I am able to enjoy paintings, sculpture, photography, dance, and all kinds of music. My soul is nourished by art, and that is very important to living a full and happy life.

— *Toronto resident*

## Does supporting the arts matter? Does it affect your **vote**?

Importance of a candidate supporting the arts

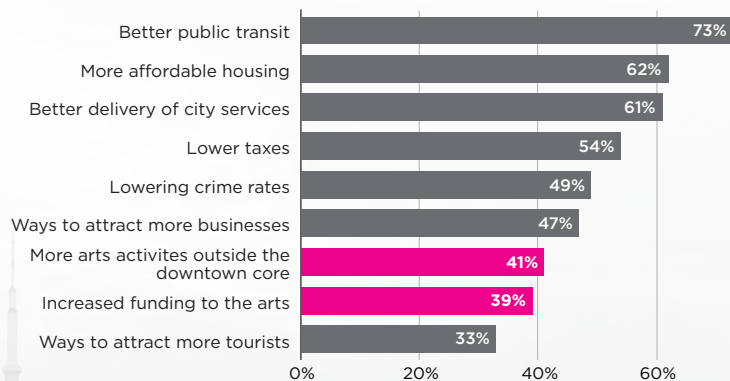


**71%** of respondents say it is important to them that mayoral candidates support the arts.

65% say it is important that city council candidates in their ward do the same. This is especially true of respondents who believe Toronto is headed in the “right” direction.

When thinking about electing a mayor and city councillor, residents must consider a number of issues that face the city. It is not surprising that the top areas of concern for voters are: transit, housing, city services, taxes, crime, and attracting businesses. Of those who plan to vote in the next election, 54% would vote for a candidate who supports the arts in some way, be it through support for more arts activities in neighbourhoods outside the downtown and/or increased funding for the arts.

#### I will vote for a candidate who supports:



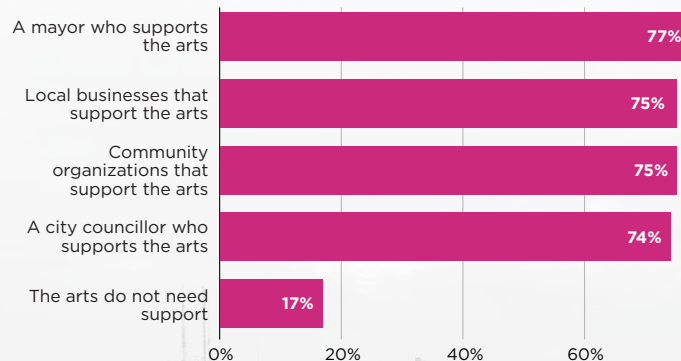
## Seven-in-ten Torontonians would support a mayor or city councillor who supported the arts.

Those who believe it's important that a mayoral or city council candidate running in their ward be supportive of the arts are twice as likely to support such candidates.

The same proportion also agree that they would support community organizations, local businesses, and/or companies that are arts supporters. Fewer than two in ten (17%) believe the arts do not need any support.

In all cases, support is more likely to be found among those with a personal connection to the arts, those who attend arts events, and those who believe Toronto is headed in the right direction.

#### I would support:





# Methodology: Public Opinion Survey

## QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

An on-line survey of 500 Torontonians was completed between April 13-19, 2018, using Leger’s online panel, LegerWeb.

The margin of error for this study was +/-4%, 19 times out of 20.

In order to qualify, a respondent’s postal code needed to begin with the letter M.

## ABOUT LEGER’S ONLINE PANEL

Leger’s online panel has approximately 400,000 members nationally and has a retention rate of 90%. Respondents profile for this survey:

Region	Household Income
32% Central Toronto/Downtown	18% Under \$40K
Toronto/East York	31% \$40-\$80K
29% North York	37% Over \$80K
20% Etobicoke, West Toronto, York	Education
19% Scarborough	63% University
	20% Some College
	14% High School or Less
Age	
32% Under 34	
17% 35-44	
18% 45-54	
15% 55-64	
19% Over 65	

## QUALITY CONTROL

Stringent quality assurance measures allow Leger to achieve the high-quality standards set by the company. As a result, its methods of data collection and storage outperform the norms set by WAPOR (The World Association for Public Opinion Research). These measures are applied at every stage of the project: from data collection to processing, through to analysis. We aim to answer our clients’ needs with honesty, total confidentiality, and integrity.

## QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- In addition to collecting statistical data, respondents had an opportunity to share their ideas via written responses to the following questions:
- ▶ Why are the arts important to you? Please share a story of how the arts make living in the city better for you.
  - ▶ Why do you believe the City of Toronto is headed in the right direction?
  - ▶ Why do you believe the City of Toronto is headed in the wrong direction?



# Acknowledgements

Arts Stats 2018 is a publication of Toronto Arts Foundation compiled by Margo Charlton (Toronto Arts Foundation) and Patrick Ryan (Leger).

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## Photo Credits:

Cover: Ensemble Jeng Yi, by Sean Howard

p. 6-7: The Long Exposure Festival, by Sean Howard

p. 15: Christie Pitts Film Festival, by Diana Maclean Photography.

Photo courtesy of Toronto Outdoor Picture Show

P. 25: Children's artmaking workshop and exhibition tour of The "C"  
Word: A Look at the Role of Craft in Contemporary Art, organized by the Doris McCarthy Gallery, 2012.

p. 33: Regent Park Film Festival. Photo courtesy of Regent Park Film Festival

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TORONTO ARTS FOUNDATION



Regent Park has  
a film festival  
and I'm so  
happy to be able  
to see films from  
local artists ...  
This is why I  
love Toronto.

— Toronto resident



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