



**NOTE TO EDITORS:** Media availability at 10:00am | Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup> | Steelworkers Hall | 25 Cecil Street, M5T 1N1 | more below

## **Labour Day 2020** – Toronto Unions calling for “A Just Recovery for All” on over 130 TTC & York Region Buses as annual Labour Day Parade goes virtual

**Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>** - *Toronto & York Region Labour Council* has cancelled the annual Labour Day Parade due to ongoing health and safety concerns from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The labour movement is instead commemorating this historic day with a city-wide transit and digital ad campaign, and a celebratory virtual parade to be launched this Sunday featuring the wonderfully diversity of Toronto’s working people under the theme *Labour Day 2020: A Just Recovery for All*.

Virtual Labour Day Parade Trailer: [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#)

### ***Labour Day Parade***

This September marks the first time in nearly 150 years that union members and their families, friends and allies will not be marching through the streets of Toronto. The first mass parade took place during the Printers Strike in 1872, inspiring the creation of Labour Day as a national civic holiday to highlight workers’ rights and celebrate the contribution of union members to our society in Canada and the United States. <sup>1</sup>

“Working people have been on the streets on Labour Day for nearly 150 years, showing out pride in what we do and our ongoing struggle for social and economic justice. - says John Cartwright, President of the *Toronto & York Region Labour Council*. “But just because we can’t hit the streets, does not mean we won’t use our collective voice to hold our political leaders accountable for their response and demand a just recovery that puts people’s wellbeing first.”

### ***A Just Recovery for All***

This years’ theme, “*A Just Recovery for All*,” is a call to action for decision-makers at all level of government to tackle the deeply entrenched economic and racial inequality of our society.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Marsh, J. (2013, September 1). Origins of Labour Day. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/origins-of-labour-day-feature>

The pandemic exposed how continued underfunding and privatization of our public services, and the unsustainable economic model built on the backs of workers and the environment is a toxic recipe with deadly consequences.

“Every single day, our sisters and brothers are harmed by the indignity of structural and institutional racism. *A Just recovery for all* is not about repeating the mistakes of the past.” says Abdi Hagi Yusuf, Labour Council Secretary & postal worker

“COVID has devastated jobs and incomes of far too many people. We want a world that invests in our youth and our communities, creates resilience to safeguard against future crises, and, most importantly, allows ALL of us to live with respect and dignity.” Say Andria Babbington, Labour Council Vice-President & Hotel/hospitality worker

Inspired by the [Six Principles for a Just Recovery](#), the national pledge launched in June has been endorsed by hundreds of civil society groups in Canada and around the world. They enshrine the following as essential for a fair and sustainable recovery:

- Put people’s health and wellbeing first, no exceptions
- Strengthen the social safety net and provide relief directly to people
- Prioritize the needs of workers and communities
- Build resilience to prevent future crises
- Build solidarity and equity across communities, generations and borders
- Uphold indigenous rights and work in partnership with indigenous peoples

*A Just Recovery for All* continues the efforts of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council since its founding in 1871. For nearly 150 years, Toronto unions have joined with community activists to work for social justice and decent work for all; human rights policies at work and in broader society; a strong foundation of public services; fair labour laws and employment standards; and climate justice. In recent years the crucial need to regulate the gig economy has become a focus of the labour movement.

## ABOUT THE LABOUR COUNCIL

The Labour Council is the representative body of labour unions in Toronto and York Region with over 220,000 women and men who work in every sector of the economy. Their members include healthcare professionals, education and childcare workers, grocery store clerks, municipal staff, transit workers, firefighters and paramedics, amongst others, who stand on the front lines to keep our communities safe. Labour’s policy recommendations are built on decades of ongoing work that encompasses the lived experience of union members and their families, the knowledge of frontline workers, and the lessons from dealing with political decision-makers and working with community allies.

## MEDIA AVAILABILITY

**10am, Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Steelworkers Hall | 25 Cecil Street, M5T 1N1 |**

Available for media interviews:

- John Cartwright, President, Toronto & York Region Labour Council
- Carolyn Egan, President, Toronto Steelworkers Area Council to talk about manufacturing and a sustainable economy with good jobs for all
- Kingsley Kwok, OPSEU Hospital Local President to talk about Healthcare sector – Cantonese speaker for Chinese media
- Shelli Sareen, Secretary-Treasurer of UNITEHERE 75 to talk about hospitality sector
- Abdi Hagi Yusuf, Labour Council Secretary and CUPW Toronto Secretary-Treasurer to talk about recovery and the gig economy – based on Foodora drive

Note: The area is rich in labour history thanks to the city's original garment district and the many waves of migrants who made key contributors to our city's urban, industrial, economic, and population growth

## CAMPAIGN DETAILS

The campaign is organized by The Toronto & York Region Labour Council and sponsored by 39 individual affiliates representing workers across the public and private sectors.

### **Transit Ad Campaign**

Over 130 buses in Toronto and York Region will feature our “A Just Recovery For All” ads this September. Featuring the logos of the affiliates who sponsored the ads, they will be out in force for the entire month.

### **Virtual Labour Day Parade – Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>**

A pre-recorded digital variety special released this Sunday afternoon on our [YouTube Channel](#) and [Facebook Page](#) featuring an exciting mix of past parade footage, workers in action, thank you messages, musical performances, and more!

Trailer: [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#)

### **Digital Ad & Banner Drop**

On top of covering buses, our *A Just Recovery for All* messaging will be plastered on both the physical and digital highways – through a banner drop over a number of bridges, and a comprehensive digital media marketing strategy.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Website](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [DIGITAL ASSETS](#) including trailer, mock ads, release, background documents, etc.

## CONTACT

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