



# GREENING our communities

through Live Green Toronto Grants



## PROJECT:

### Green Change Project

The overall goal of the Green Change project was to engage residents in activities that would significantly reduce their carbon footprints.



For more information on the Green Change Project, visit [janefinchcentre.org](http://janefinchcentre.org) or email [admin@janefinchcentre.org](mailto:admin@janefinchcentre.org).

### Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre

Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre is a community-based organization driven by passion, innovation and a commitment to social justice. The Centre works to create a healthy community—one that is strong, inclusive, diverse, and socially and politically active—through engagement and collaboration.

The residents of Jane/Finch’s many multi-residential buildings typically have low participation in the City’s waste diversion programs. A goal of the project was to improve waste diversion and other environmental initiatives in the community. The program had four themes: active green living, waste management, energy conservation and green economy. They worked with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to develop 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) challenges, and with Toronto Community Housing Corporation to educate 1,000 families on how to conserve energy and reduce waste.

To help ensure the success of the project, a “train-the-trainer” approach was used. Local residents were trained to become Green Change Agents who would be viewed as trustworthy and credible within the community. The training program gave participants a means to learn and share their environmental knowledge and experience. Participants learned how to measure, manage and track their own carbon footprints and connect, collaborate and inspire others.



“Green Change refreshed my community and helped us go green!”

Dwayne Wright, Green Change Agent and Eco-Entrepreneur



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In its first year, the Green Change project inspired residents to take a variety of actions that saved an estimated 2,250 tonnes of carbon emissions and 7.1 million litres of water.

The Jane/Finch Centre hosted and participated in many environmental events to help spread the word about the Green Change project. They celebrated Earth Hour at Brookview Middle School, held World Environment Day celebrations at the future site of the Centre for Green Change (a community environment hub), and set up information booths in the community during Earth Week. They also organized a '12 Days of Green Change' campaign to promote environmental stewardship and raise the profile of their initiatives.

Working with the TRCA, Green Change participants learned about storm water management through TRCA's Sustainable Neighbourhoods Action Plan (SNAP) program and Green Change Agents received honorariums to conduct surveys at 130 households.

The Jane/Finch Centre participated at CivicAction's Greater Toronto Summit and invited Majora Carter, a well-respected economic consultant and environmental justice advocate from New York City, to speak about improving environmental capacity through community development. Ms. Carter also spoke at Black History Month celebrations hosted by the Green Change project and the African Heritage Educators Network and was a prominent guest at a green jobs forum at York University, co-sponsored by the Green Change project.

2010 Community Investment Program Grant (\$25,000)



The Jane/Finch neighbourhood has some unique characteristics and challenges. It is one of Toronto's most diverse communities, boasting more than 80 ethno-cultural groups and more than 110 languages. In addition, the neighbourhood is densely populated with more than 250,000 people.

Over the course of the project, it became apparent that issues of food security, job skills and employment were primary concerns of many of the residents. Organizers learned that environmental issues cannot be properly addressed without also taking action on these other priorities.

"Thanks to the Green Change project, I am actively involved in taking care of our planet."

Janet Campbell, Green Change Agent



### What's next

The Green Change project has received funding from the Trillium Foundation to continue its initiatives. Partnerships have been forged with York University, Afri-can Food Basket and many others. Their next priority is to develop the Centre for Green Change into a self-sustaining social enterprise.