

Recommendations Summary

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION – ACTION AND OPPORTUNITY IN THE GTHA

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SUBMITTED TO:

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ABOUT DUNSKY

Dunsky Energy Consulting provides strategic analysis and counsel in the areas of energy efficiency, demand-side renewable energy and sustainable mobility. Based in Montreal, we support our clients across North America through three key services: we assess opportunities (technical, economic and market), design strategies (programs, policies and regulatory) and evaluate performance.

Dunsky's team of experts and analysts is wholly dedicated to helping our clients build a sustainable energy future.



INTRODUCTION

The mandate of The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) has been expanded to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). To inform its regional strategy, particularly its grantmaking priorities, TAF wanted to better understand the opportunities, challenges, and needs of stakeholders across its new service territory. To this end, TAF retained Dunsky Energy Consulting and the Clean Air Partnership to provide TAF with the necessary context, including, information regarding global best practices, insights from GTHA stakeholders, and actionable recommendations that reflect the needs of GTHA stakeholders and help accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reductions across the region.

The strategic recommendations presented in this report are grounded in the insights gained through:

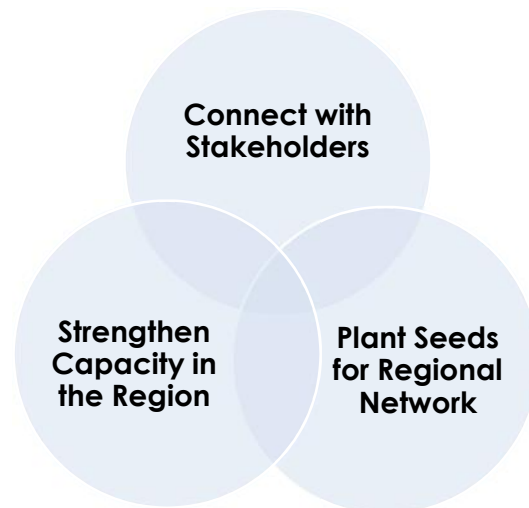
-) **Global Best Practices Review:** A jurisdictional scan involving desk research and interviews with seven regional metropolitan areas and cities (with multiple boroughs): Metro Vancouver, Greater Boston Area, City of New York, Portland Metropolitan Area, Greater London, Greater Stockholm Area, and Metropolitan Melbourne.
-) **GTHA Landscape Assessment:** Interviews with 20 GTHA stakeholders – representing thought leaders, municipalities and implementers – from across the region.
-) **Focus Group Sessions:** The stakeholder interviews – along with key insights from the jurisdictional scan – were used to develop a set of draft recommendations. Four focus group sessions were held across the region – in Burlington, Vaughan, Pickering, and Toronto – to test the validity of the insights and receptivity toward draft the recommendations. A total of 53 attendees participated in the focus groups.
-) **Development of a Network Map:** An initial set of stakeholders were surveyed via a web-based instrument to identify a) which GTHA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction stakeholders they had worked with in the past, and b) any missing organizations. Data was input into Kumu – a data visualization platform.

During the same time as the research and interviews were taking place, TAF developed a GHG Emissions Inventory for the region, and the preliminary results were used to guide the final recommendations. The first draft of the inventory report, which is subject to review and comment by regional stakeholders, is available [here](#).

This report summarizes the strategic direction and recommendations that the Dunsky team has developed to support the development of TAF's regional strategy. A more detailed background report is available on request. Please contact Ian Klesmer at TAF for additional information about the report.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Dunsky team recommends that TAF’s initial regional strategy focus on supporting near-term (2018-2020) activities to **CONNECT** with stakeholders, **STRENGTHEN CAPACITY** in the region, and plant the seeds for a **REGIONAL NETWORK**. These near-term activities will help build on the existing foundation in the region to enable structural GHG emissions reductions over the long-term.



WHY THIS STRATEGIC DIRECTION?

TAF has a number of existing relationships with organization working within the GTHA, but we found that TAF (and the services it offers) is relatively unknown. Thus, as a first step, it seems necessary for TAF to create more of a presence in the GTHA by establishing connections and buildings relationships.

In addition, in other jurisdictions we found that having sufficient capacity – in the form of funding, expertise, human resources, and champions – was particularly important to the success of local and regional initiatives. Also, having a network of regional actors – not necessarily a centralized governance model, but a structure that facilitates planning, coordinated action, and knowledge transfer – can help to build structural change and drive outcomes over time. And while we heard from GTHA stakeholders that there is a lengthy list of people and organizations working in the sustainability space (100+), as well as a number of existing efforts underway (primarily municipal with support from community groups), we found that GHG reduction projects currently have relatively limited impact due to their size and target area. There is also limited linkage and coordination among stakeholder groups, especially beyond the local level.

It became clear through our research and conversations that, in order to overcome barriers to action in the region, there needs to be an initial push to address capacity constraints and make GHG reduction-related activities a political priority. Also, helping to strengthen linkages and ultimately developing a regional network will help facilitate knowledge transfer and unlock larger, regional projects to maximize impact over the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes recommended actions for each element of the strategic framework – 1) Connect with Stakeholders, 2) Strengthen Capacity, and 3) Plant Seeds for a Regional Network – along with a suggested timeframe.

1. CONNECT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Recommendation 1: **CONTINUE TO BUILD AWARENESS OF TAF**

Timeframe:
2018

Based on the finding that there is limited knowledge of TAF within the GTHA, raising awareness of the organization's mandate, services offerings, and success stories is needed to ensure maximum uptake of available programming. The outcome of this effort should be new and strengthened connections with stakeholders, increased awareness of TAF's mandate and services, receptivity toward TAF involvement, and new and compelling grant applications from across the region. This is a near-term activity that TAF can continue to undertake in 2018.

Focus on potential grantseekers: TAF's top priority should be to engage with and build awareness among grantseekers in order to attract new GHG initiatives.

Regional Governments and the City of Hamilton: TAF should first target regional governments and the City of Hamilton as they have the potential to become important regional voices as well as relatively more capacity, and have already offered to put TAF in contact with lower-tier municipalities. Once connected, TAF should then engage municipalities throughout the GTHA.

Build links with other regional actors to broaden TAF's presence: These include organizations with broad regional mandates and large membership bases, as well as established groups working within the regions. These groups can help TAF identify the next tier of outreach and help disseminate information from TAF to their membership, either by helping to organize meetings and presentations, or by promoting TAF's information through their events and communications.

Reach out to a diverse range of stakeholders: TAF should ensure that it is reaching a mix of stakeholder groups, including the regular suspects (e.g. environmental NGOs) as well as stakeholders whose work could be effectively aligned with GHG reduction actions (e.g. health organizations).

Prioritize direct communications with grantseekers and potential champions: We recommend setting up individual meetings with champions (or potential champions) within regional/municipal governments; building relationships with staff and councillors that can be leveraged into opportunities to engage with councils.

Given the size of TAF’s new service territory, webinars, contribution to newsletters, and email groups are also needed to help broaden the reach of TAF’s messaging. There is also the potential to introduce virtual hubs and video conferencing; however, these methods are contingent on the technology being available to both TAF and potential stakeholders. Many stakeholders, particularly local governments, are constrained in their ability to use certain communications platforms due to information technology rules. These rules differ by stakeholder, so we recommend an initial assessment of the opportunities *and* potential constraints.

Recommendation 2: **CONTINUE TO BUILD FAMILIARITY WITH REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER NEEDS**

Timeframe:
2018 to 2020

The landscape assessment and focus groups were informative and allowed the Dunsky team to develop an initial strategic direction and set of recommendations to inform TAF’s regional strategy. However, we recommend that TAF continue to build familiarity with regional stakeholder priorities and needs in the near term and on an ongoing basis.

Map out priority issues in each GTHA region and major municipality: Detailed knowledge of the key issues being faced, and addressed, in each of the GTHA constituent jurisdictions will help TAF:

- 1) Communicate with key actors
- 2) Highlight cross-cutting and common themes across the region
- 3) Identify gaps in GHG reductions efforts that TAF can help address

The review could include an assessment of Terms of Council Priorities and other related municipal documents, and interviews with representatives from different constituencies.

Collect information systematically across the GTHA regions: TAF should consider each of its outreach engagements as “listening and learning” opportunities. Within the outreach strategy there should be a systematic process to collect stakeholder information (priorities, projects, relationship, etc.) and track this data and information in a database. This will help organize TAF’s information gathering and outreach activities, draw connections (e.g. similar priority issue in different areas/groups), and monitor success going forward. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software may assist here, although CRM implementation and operationalization can be time consuming and resource intensive in the early phases.

Prepare background issue dossiers before engaging with municipalities and stakeholders: This will ensure that TAF is aware of the key issues and relevant information regarding how its service offerings link to the priorities of the stakeholders and local area. We also recommend connecting with staff before engaging with elected officials. Staff is able to provide context for current priorities as well as local insight with respect to potential sensitivities regarding issues such as transportation or GHG reduction, which can be politically contentious.

Recommendation 3: **SUPPORT COORDINATED COMMUNICATIONS**

Timeframe:
2018 to 2020

We know through our work and experience that climate change and reducing GHG emissions is not widely seen as a high-priority issue. Even where the issue does resonate, many stakeholders have limited bandwidth to focus on issues beyond their core mandate. As a result, an important communications approach is to meet stakeholders where they are, and speak to the co-benefits that link their priorities to climate change mitigation. For example, health advocates may be more likely to engage in conversation around ways to reduce air pollution or improve active transportation options. Poverty reduction advocates may be more likely to join forces on initiatives that reduce energy bills and improve comfort and health outcomes. Opportunities to increase local jobs are more likely to resonate with economic development agencies and politicians.

Support key champions to engage in focussed and strategic communications: Communications support – in particular, accessing professional communications advice to improve public receptivity to climate actions – was identified by 77% of focus group attendees as very important or important. They felt that there are too many messengers, sending too many messages to a disengaged public, highlighting the need for coordinated communications.

Build local actors' communications capacities: Through its outreach activities and increased familiarity with stakeholder needs and priority issues, TAF will build knowledge that can support the development of communications messaging and materials that resonate with local stakeholders, policy makers, and the general public. That said, we do not necessarily recommend that TAF take on the role of designing and implementing a communications strategy. Considering its capacity constraints and areas of expertise, TAF should consider how it might support key champions by providing targeted support to build communications capacity at the local level. Examples may include helping stakeholders engage communications specialists, and testing messaging through local media channels. Once developed, this information can also be incorporated into TAF's communications and outreach materials.

Help establish links between local issues and GHG reductions: The landscape assessment and focus group sessions found that, with the exception of municipalities, stakeholders have difficulty linking priority issues to GHG reductions (municipalities have internal reporting structures in place to ensure all programming is related to priority issues). We suspect more in-depth and nuanced conversations with these stakeholders, and with others in the community (e.g. social advocates, health professionals, faith-based groups), will help establish the top issues of importance and connections to climate change. As a first step, we recommend TAF include in its outreach strategy a goal of developing a short-list of priority issues that are GHG reduction co-benefits based on available research and initial conversations with non-municipal stakeholders.

Apply newly acquired familiarity with GTHA region to help build coordinated campaigns: This could lead to the development of targeted working groups and sub-networks within the region that can eventually be scaled up and possibly linked to other issue areas. TAF's role may not be that of a convener, but it could decide to find ways to support this effort in the form of providing a facilitator, space, etc.

2. STRENGTHEN CAPACITY

Recommendation 1: **CONTINUE FUNDING INITIATIVES IN THE GTHA**

Timeframe:
2018 to 2020

The research findings focused attention on the need to build capacity in the region, but also identified “shovel-ready” projects in need of immediate funding. While it may seem obvious, we recommend TAF continue to seek out well-developed projects that meet its funding criteria, and to highlight regional initiatives within its corporate communications strategy. This will help build awareness of TAF and its services in the GTHA and facilitate on-the-ground learning.

Recommendation 2: **DIRECT SUPPORT TO HELP ADDRESS IDENTIFIED CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS**

Timeframe:
2018 (Q3) to 2020

Lack of capacity both within municipalities and non-profit organizations was identified as a challenge to advancing low-carbon initiatives. We have broken down the specific needs and recommended actions by stakeholder group. Regardless of the stakeholder, the results from the focus groups suggest that grantseekers prefer direct interaction with (and support from) granting agencies.

Prioritize and establish a dedicated support stream for municipalities: Among all TAF grantseekers, municipalities have the greatest capacity to develop and implement projects in the near term. Moreover, TAF’s assistance should seek to help municipalities leverage other sources support at the national and provincial levels.

In addition to political support, which is addressed in Recommendation 3, municipalities face two key human resource-related capacity constraints:

- Insufficient resources to identify and respond to funding opportunities
- Insufficient resources and/or expertise to implement projects

Establish strategic partnerships that enhance municipalities’ fund-seeking capacity: TAF could provide stopgap capacity support to take advantage of the current funding opportunities; however, this would be resource intensive (i.e. would likely require additional staff). We do think that TAF should play some type of coordinating role considering its familiarity with funders and granting opportunities. TAF could also consider a strategic partnership with agencies or organizations that can directly support GTHA municipalities. In particular, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities could be engaged through the new Transition 2050 program and staff support programs that will be available in 2018.

Help develop implementation capacity: TAF should facilitate the development of capacity within the region that specifically supports implementation activities. One idea would be to provide seed funding to explore partnerships with other municipalities/organizations, and then prioritize

projects that include partnerships and/or demonstrate capacity to implement projects. TAF can also advance knowledge transfer by requiring (or encouraging) dissemination of information – via workshop or webinar – as a component of its granting process. Another option would be to support and/or coordinate a series of workshops on project development and implementation.

Support skills and human resource capacity in not-for-profit organizations: Not-for-profit organizations in the region play a number of distinct roles – such as advocating, convening, researching and implementing – and thus capacity building requirements in this sector are varied. Regardless of the organization’s role, we recommend partnering with those that have proven success in their area of focus. Additionally, many not-for-profits focus on numerous environmental issues; one of which may be GHG reduction. We would recommend partnering with organizations whose mission includes reducing GHG emissions, or where GHG reduction is at least a priority issue.

Focus on building capacity in organizations with (or with the potential for) regional reach: While some not-for-profits transcend lower tier municipal boundaries, few transcend regional municipal boundaries. While we would recommend partnerships with organizations with GTHA reach, these are few. As such, supporting capacity building in region-specific organizations to allow them to take their programming across the GTHA is advised at this stage.

Start by addressing human resource constraints, followed by skills: The primary capacity gaps in the not-for-profit sector entail skills and human resource development. Not-for-profits often have insufficient staff resources to do their work, where staff is often on temporary, project-based contracts. Because of human resources constraints, staff is unable to develop the skills they need to advance meaningful GHG reduction projects. We recommend addressing human resource constraints in the not-for-profit sector in the short term, followed by skills constraints.

Clearly communicate to grantseekers that capacity support is available: In addition, we heard from a number of interviewees that TAF should examine how grants are currently scored so that projects that do not result in direct GHG reductions (e.g. projects that focus on capacity building or media/outreach) have a greater chance of success. Based on conversation with TAF staff, this seems to be an issue with how grant opportunities are communicated as TAF already has a process in place for supporting these types of activities. We recommend refining communications materials and direct outreach to potential grantseekers so that it is clear, for example, that capacity building activities tied to discrete GHG reduction opportunities are currently eligible for funding. Also, TAF’s grant applications process is more straightforward than many other funders’. This needs to be communicated clearly. This will be especially important in the GTHA where stakeholders identified a need for support related to leadership development, human resource development, and skills development; activities that may not have direct GHG reduction impacts.

Cultivate relationships with business associations: TAF’s regional GHG inventory highlights the significant contribution of GTHA businesses and industry to regional GHG emissions. However, the commercial and industrial sector is considerably fragmented and difficult to engage. Using business associations as a conduit to their membership would ease the burden of engagement. Organizations such as the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, for example, has a stated goal to “work with government and the business community to achieve the government’s environmental objectives while maintaining or enhancing the competitiveness of our businesses.” While it is outside of TAF’s mandate to directly fund industry through the granting program, developing partnerships with industry associations who have similar GHG reduction goals is recommended. To note, TAF can fund industry associations as they are commonly incorporated as not-for-profits.

One of the key findings from the global best practices review was that fostering local leadership was an important component of successful climate and other regional initiatives. This includes political leadership as well as developing local leaders within a community. This finding was echoed in the GTHA landscape assessment and focus group sessions.

Foster local political champions that drive action within and between municipalities: We heard that there is a lack of political leadership, and that elected officials have difficulty making connections between reducing GHG emissions and other priorities such as transportation, livability, and job creation – priorities which have greater resonance with community members. This leads to risk aversion, and a de-prioritization of GHG reduction activities.

Political leadership can be a response to demand from constituents; it can also be developed through political collaboration and friendly competition within a coalition of mayors as we saw in the cases of the Greater Boston’s Metro Mayors Coalition and Metro Vancouver’s Climate Action Committee.

Look to efforts that are underway: TAF is currently supporting a municipal leadership development project with the Clean Air Partnership. This project could lay the groundwork for a second phase that creates a network of leaders across the GTHA. At this stage, it is too early to tell what types of approaches are needed to support or create municipal political leadership. We recommend that TAF wait for the findings of this project before developing specific strategies.

Support community leadership development: In the focus group sessions respondents reinforced the idea that elected officials respond strongly to public demand. To foster leadership at the community level, there is a need to first build demand for action at the local level. In some cases, the climate action frame will be compelling enough for constituents to develop projects and demand action from their local officials and municipalities. In other cases, GHG reductions will be secondary to more pertinent co-benefits such as transportation, economic development, and job creation.

Leverage coordinated communications efforts: Work done in relation to coordinated communications can help build a contingent of spokespeople from different constituencies who are calling for action on, for example jobs or health, which aligns with a strategic common ground (e.g. transition to a clean economy). Influential spokespeople and/or groups, in turn, help build pressure for political action that resonates with elected officials.

Look for opportunities to support community leadership programs: There are examples of community engagement programs that foster local leadership. The City of Boston’s Climate Ready Boston Leaders Program was an outreach pilot program that trained almost 70 leaders in 2017 who will now host workshops in their communities to discuss Climate Ready Boston’s neighborhood resiliency plans and encourage community members to engage.¹ We believe it is beyond the scope of TAF’s mandate and capacity to initiate community leadership programs; however, it should consider supporting – or even actively promoting – projects that seek to foster local leaders across the GTHA.

¹ See: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/environment/climate-ready-boston-leaders-program>

3. PLANT SEEDS FOR A REGIONAL NETWORK

Recommendation 1: **ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH KEY REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS**

Timeframe:
2018 to 2020

Pursue partnerships with regional organizations: TAF should seek strategic partnerships with regional organizations for a variety of reasons.

- There are a number of organizations with regional mandates already operating within the GTHA; TAF can leverage their regional experience and expertise, and avoid duplication of efforts.
- TAF has limited capacity to engage in outreach efforts across the entire GTHA. Strategic partnerships can help TAF reach potential grantseekers more efficiently through established networks (e.g. partner events, newsletters, etc.).
- These regional organizations may not focus directly on GHG reduction activities, but there are a number of potential partners with related mandates or mandates that can be linked to the co-benefits of GHG reduction activities. These are important partners to engage regarding coordinated communications.
- Establishing partnerships with regional actors can help advance other recommended action areas. For example, they can help foster leadership by developing regional champions and lay the groundwork for a more formal regional network down the road.

Be strategic in terms of the network and support services that these partners bring: Based on the project team's experience in the region, an initial list of potential partnership prospects has been developed using the following criteria: an established and credible presence in the region; ample organizational capacity; ability to facilitate engagement with new audiences; commitment to GHG reduction opportunities; and a preceived willingness to collaborate.

To evaluate potential alliances, we recommend prioritizing strategic fit with potential partners as opposed to operational or cultural fit. While some of the identified organizations have preexisting relationships with TAF, we do not recommend prioritizing only those organizations because important players would be missed, limiting TAF's inroads in the region. That said, we appreciate that the development of new partnerships can take considerable resources. Considering TAF's existing capacity, starting in 2018 we recommend pursuing relationships with the top three recommended partners, and as resources allow, seek to initiate relationships with other key regional stakeholder groups.

Recommendation 2: EXPLORE, WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS, THE FEASIBILITY, STRUCTURE, AND IMPACT OF A REGION-WIDE NETWORKED APPROACH

Timeframe:
2019 to 2020

Lay the groundwork for a regional network cross the GTHA: Currently, there is no obvious governance body that could coordinate GHG mitigation activities for the GTHA. We have seen in other jurisdictions that networked approaches have been important factors in advancing regional efforts (e.g. Melbourne Greenhouse Alliance, the Fund for Our Economic Future). We are not recommending that TAF focus its initial efforts on building a formal network across the GTHA; however, we do suggest that partners in the GTHA explore how to establish a network focused on building capacity and support as well as project implementation. The Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change may be interested and well placed to help advance such an effort.

A key consideration is the structure of the network – what should it look like? As we found through the global best practices research, there are three main types of networks: centralized, de-centralized, and distributed. Creating a centralized regional structure is not recommended as the time and burden to develop such a body would be significant. Also, centralized efforts can lend themselves to bulky decision-making, especially in areas as diverse as the GTHA. In addition, it is not clear where the body’s mandate would come from or what incentive there would be for municipalities and local stakeholders to join.

In terms of GHG activities in the GTHA, there might be one or more organizations providing overall direction and support; however, the ideal network structure would most likely be decentralized or distributed (or possibly a combination of layers). In a decentralized network, individual stakeholders are connected to a broader network via nodes. In a distributed network there are no coordinating hubs or nodes; all stakeholders are interconnected. Distributed networks benefit from lower (or shared) administration, and all stakeholders have access to the same information. On the other hand, nodes in a decentralized network can have a more targeted focus and specialized skill set based on the needs of the sub-set of stakeholders, while still allowing for coordination across the entire network.

Building the infrastructure for a regional network is seen as a longer-term play. In the short term we see a role for TAF in exploring, with regional partners, the feasibility, possible structure, and impact of a region-wide networked approach. Of particular interest and relevance as a model for this work is the Melbourne Greenhouse Alliance. As a first step, beginning in year two of its cultivation strategy, TAF could convene municipalities, strategic partners, and other relevant actors (e.g. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change), to discuss experiences and outcomes from other jurisdictions.

EVALUATING SUCCESS

Recommendation 1: **DEVELOP AND MONITOR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS BASED ON THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK NETWORKED APPROACH**

Timeframe:
2018 (Develop);
2018-2020
(Monitor)

Evaluation is an important component of TAF's regional cultivation strategy. Unfortunately, through the global best practices review and discussions with stakeholders, we were not able to collect very meaningful insights regarding evaluation metrics. When stakeholders were asked to suggest metrics of success, most responded with metrics related to project impacts (e.g. community-wide and neighbourhood Vehicle Kilometers Travelled).

Begin by defining success: To ensure that TAF's regional strategy and programming is efficient and effective, TAF should begin to define what success looks like in two, five and ten years, and develop corresponding metrics. Initial metrics should be defined in the first quarter of 2018. This will ensure that the right data and information is being collected, and that regional efforts can be monitored for efficiency and effectiveness. Partnerships may need to be established to collect and track data, and ideally, this information will be accessible to TAF's partners.

Develop metrics that correspond with the strategic framework: We recommend that TAF develop metrics, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), that correspond to the strategic framework – i.e. Connect with Stakeholders, Strengthen Capacity, and Plant Seeds for a Regional Network. There will be overlap between the elements, but it should be clear which activity area is the primary focus of the metric and thus the performance assessment. For example, number and strength of linkages between organizations is a "network" metric. It can inform or be strengthened by capacity building activities, but it assesses TAF (and the region's) efforts with respect to strengthening the regional network. A list of suggested metrics is provided in the table below.

Table 1: List of Network Building and Capacity Building metrics for TAF’s short-term (2018-2020) efforts in the GTHA

Connect with Stakeholders (Awareness & Receptivity)	Strengthen Capacity	Regional Network
Number of regional stakeholders reached through TAF’s outreach activities	Number of municipal political leaders engaged	Number of stakeholders actively participating in network activities
Growth of TAF’s GTHA social media subscriber list	New public statements by municipal political leaders	Number of new linkages between organizations in the GTHA (local, regional, inter- and intra-sector)
Number of people engaged through regional events and meetings	Enhanced common understanding of regional GHG reduction opportunities and co-benefits	Diversity of players
Number of grant and loan enquiries and applications	Amount of funding disbursed by TAF	Number and strength of TAF’s strategic partnerships
Number of informal focus group sessions	Amount of funding received from other sources	
Number of invitations extended to TAF to participate in regional activities	Number of skills development sessions	
Number of project information sessions (knowledge transfer)		
Customer Relations Management (CRM) outputs (if CRM software is used to track stakeholder, priorities, etc.)		
Tonnes of GHG emissions reduced		
Co-benefits (e.g. jobs created, health care cost savings)		

CONCLUSION

TAF's new mandate creates an exciting opportunity to engage with new stakeholders and build or enhance its partnerships across the GTHA. Based on TAF's prior experience and successes, it can help strengthen efforts that are currently underway in the region and unlock significant new GHG emissions reductions at the local municipal and regional levels.

The findings of the research point to a number of areas where TAF could provide support. We have been strategic in the recommendations, focusing on the next three years (2018-2020) and building blocks for longer-term success: **Connect with Stakeholders; Strengthen Capacity, and Plant Seeds for a Regional Network.**

The strategic directions and recommended actions are based on what we see as important elements in other jurisdictions, and what we heard was needed in the GTHA. There is great potential to unlock new GHG emissions reduction opportunities at the regional level, as evidenced by the research, and as we heard, stakeholders are very receptive to engaging with TAF and supporting its efforts in the GTHA. Interviewees at home and abroad told us they look to TAF's model and work for inspiration, and they will no doubt take note of the new strategies TAF will deploy to enhance capacity and interconnection, and reduce climate impacts in this important metropolitan area.

