



## Community Engagement & Active Transportation: Two Demonstration Projects in Toronto



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Clean Air Partnership (CAP) is a registered charity dedicated to improving air quality, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the impacts of air pollution and climate change. The Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT), a project of CAP, advances knowledge and evidence to build support for safe and inclusive streets for walking and cycling.

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# 1 Introduction

## Background

In April 2012, Toronto's Board of Health adopted the report, "Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto". This report identified the many health benefits associated with active transportation and actions that could be taken to create safer conditions for walking and cycling in Toronto. In response to this report, the Toronto Board of Health requested that the Medical Officer of Health and the General Manager of Transportation Services report back on a pilot program to implement actions identified in the report. Actions that were suggested in the report included, but were not limited to, reduced speed limits, traffic calming and the creation of safer intersections (<http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/pdf/roadtohealth.pdf>).

Toronto Public Health staff developed criteria to identify potential sites for the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects. Drawing on maps and data produced by Toronto Public Health and the City of Toronto, potential projects were reviewed on the basis of factors related to health, safety, equity, readiness and potential for innovation. Eligible projects were considered by advisors from Transportation Services and Toronto Public Health according to the following priorities: project and community readiness; potential for partnership building between Toronto Public Health, Transportation Services, and community partners; and health equity.

Four projects were identified representing different types of social and geographic communities with different built forms, health needs, patterns of walking and cycling, and potential priorities for intervention. Two of these four neighbourhoods, the Annex and Black Creek, were selected for the Healthy Canada by Design Coalitions Linking Action & Science (CLASP) project.

## The Annex

The Annex community boundaries, provided by the key informants, aligned with the City of Toronto's Ward 20 map with one exception. Harbord Street, between Ossington Avenue and St. George Street, is a major cycling corridor for residents in

### Site Selection Criteria

- ☒ High readiness
- ☒ Potential for high innovation
- ☒ Potential for high level of supporting evidence
- ☒ High walkability and bikeability, high rates of walking and cycling and/or injuries
- ☒ Low or mixed rates and risks for chronic disease (obesity, diabetes, air quality)
- ☒ Mix of income groups: Mainly higher income, low levels of children, higher than average level of seniors
- ☒ Land-use type: relatively homogeneous with high density low-rise homes
- ☒ Scale of intervention: area-wide (as in the entire neighbourhood)
- ☒ High potential to meet specific

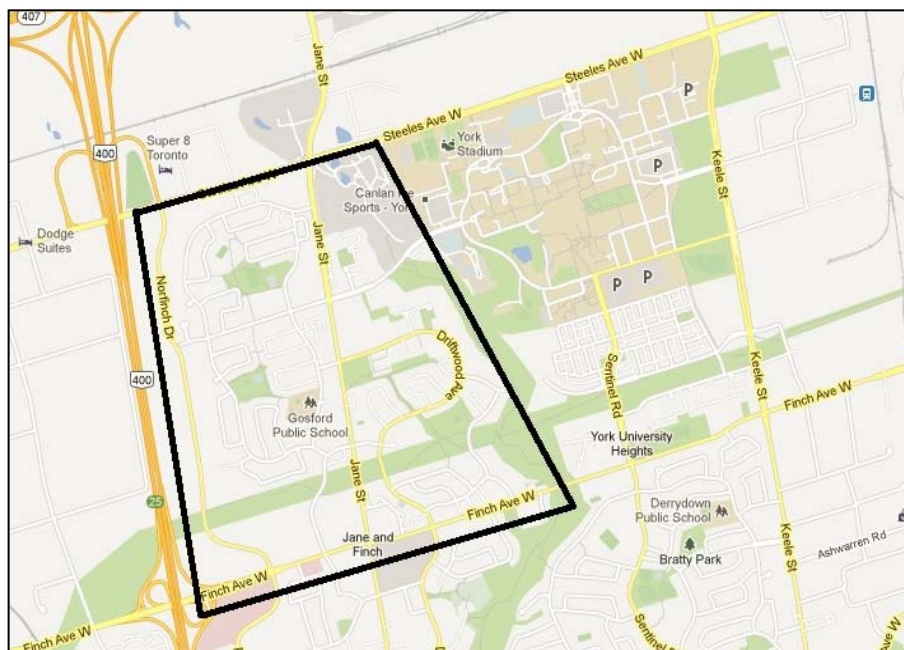


this neighbourhood so key informants felt that this stretch should be included in the boundary of the neighbourhood for this project. Therefore, for this project, the Annex community is bounded by Dupont Street to the north, Christie Street to the west, Harbord Street to the south, and St George Street to the east.

The Annex Residents Association has proposed to the City that an area-wide slow zone (including, potentially, bike lanes on Bloor Street, contra-flow bike lanes and reduced speed limits) should be created in a relatively wealthy residential and business area within this neighbourhood. The Annex Community Engagement Process focused on broadening community consultation beyond the proponents and considering potential interventions and designs.

### **Black Creek**

The Black Creek neighbourhood is bounded by Steeles Avenue to the north, Black Creek Drive to the east, Finch Avenue to the south, and Highway 400 to the west. One area of interest within this neighbourhood is the new Black Creek Community Farm located near Jane Street and Steeles Ave.



The Black Creek Community Farm is a new project taking an innovative approach to urban farming in a suburban City of Toronto priority neighbourhood. The farm, launched in spring 2013, expects to draw a large number of both local pedestrians and cycling and transit commuters. However, the site and surrounding neighbourhood present major challenges to safe active transportation. This project represents an opportunity to take a preventive approach to active transportation with a particular focus on equity and local pedestrian traffic, drawing on the principle that opportunities for area-wide active transportation should be considered with any major new development.

### **The Project Team & Objectives**

The Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) was invited to work with Toronto Public Health, Transportation Services, and community members in these two neighbourhoods to: share knowledge about the health and safety benefits of cycling and walking; discover feasible design options to improve cycling and walking in the chosen neighbourhoods; and gather information on community needs and preferences.

## 2. Project Steps

These two Active Transportation Demonstration Projects involved four steps:

- Training on the Green, Active & Healthy Neighbourhoods Model for project members from TCAT and Toronto Public Health with the Montreal Urban Ecology Centre (**MUEC**);
- Conducting and analysing key informant interviews;
- The development and organization of community workshops directed at identifying the needs and preferences of the two communities;
- Identify priority interventions for active transportation.

### 2.1 Training on the Green, Active & Healthy Neighbourhoods Model

MUEC provided training to the TCAT and Toronto Public Health project team on the community engagement methods used for their Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods model. (<http://www.urbanecology.net/green-active-and-healthy-neighbourhoods>). The MUEC model is a multi-year community engagement process developed by MUEC to produce a community active transportation plan. The plan represents a given community's ideas about how their neighbourhood could be improved for active transportation and provides the evidence that can be used by citizens to promote local improvements to the active transportation landscape. The training session includes best practice community engagement strategies including the development of successful workshops and the value of bringing decision-makers into the process at an early stage.

MUEC's model is a time intensive process; it can take about a year to fully implement the model and develop a community active transportation plan. The model includes an open-ended approach to identifying barriers and solutions for entire neighbourhoods. The Active Transportation Demonstration Projects being conducted in Toronto required the identification of specific interventions for implementation under a tighter timeline. As such, only certain aspects of the model could be applied to the Toronto neighbourhoods in this project.

To gather information about the current context related to active transportation in the Annex and Black Creek neighbourhoods, TCAT adapted the MUEC model into a more constrained method of identifying and interviewing key people in the community and at the City.

### 2.2 Key Informant Interview Analysis

The key informant interview analysis was based upon 15 interviews, conducted between April and June 2013, with key people considered to have significant local knowledge about active transportation in the two neighbourhoods. Six interviews were conducted for the Annex, five for Black Creek, and four were relevant to both neighbourhoods. The key informant interviews were semi-structured interviews conducted, in most situations, by both the TCAT facilitator and a staff person from Toronto Public Health. Each interview followed a Question Rubric that was



developed jointly by TCAT and Toronto Public Health. Each interview took between 40 minutes and 1.5 hours.

The Question Rubric, which is attached in **Appendix A**, was designed to:

- Gather information about the active transportation landscape in each neighbourhood;
- Collect ideas about specific interventions that could be used to improve the community for walking and cycling;
- Discover how community members become involved in making change in their respective communities and how this process differs, or does not differ, for different community members; and
- Determine whether the community would welcome demonstration projects as a potential outcome of this project.

Toronto Public Health Community Health Officers, who work closely with the communities selected, were consulted to help identify a diverse mix of key informants to be interviewed in each community. The key informants selected included one City Councillor, one Community Health Officer, and one Transportation Services staff person for each neighbourhood. In the Annex, one representative from the Business Improvement Association and one from the Annex Resident's Association were also selected, while in the Black Creek neighbourhood, one representative from the Everdale Community Farm and ten from the Everdale Steering Committee were selected.

For both communities, interviews were conducted with representatives from:

- CultureLink, a settlement organization with extensive experience encouraging cycling among new Canadians with diverse cultural, economic, and religious backgrounds;
- Toronto Cycling Think and Do Tank, a research partnership at the University of Toronto studying the behavioural aspects that empower residents to choose cycling as a form of transportation; and
- City of Toronto Community Engagement and Civic Engagement Departments.

### **Results of the Key Informant Analysis**

The goal of the key informant interviews was to gain insight into the landscape in both communities respecting active transportation, and to use the findings to inform the development, organization and promotion of the community workshops and to identify priority interventions for active transportation. The following is a summary of the findings from each site:

#### **The Annex**

- Automobile speed and congestion are significant barriers to walking and cycling;
- A lack of on-street bike lanes that separate cyclists from automobiles is a significant barrier to cycling;
- Insufficient bike parking;

- Problematic intersection design, poorly enforced crosswalks and hostile relationships between road users are also barriers;
- While many residents and business owners are starting to see the economic benefits of increasing walking and cycling to the community, many still believe the myth that fewer parking spots means fewer customers;
- There is a long history of activism around active transportation issues in the Annex, especially around cycling, but the streetscape remains unchanged.

#### Black Creek

- Automobile speed and congestion are significant barriers to walking and cycling;
- A lack of on-street bicycle lanes, shade, benches, beautification and lighting are also barriers;
- Those that do cycle use the sidewalk, interfering with pedestrians;
- Substantial distances between crosswalks cause people to cross mid-block;
- A “wind tunnel” effect on Jane Street;
- A lack of community knowledge about collision data and cycling and walking activity in the area;
- The design of the arterial roads in the area encourages speeding.

## 2.3 Walk Cycle Move Workshops – The Annex

A community workshop, branded **Walk Cycle Move: the Annex**, was held at Trinity St. Paul’s Church in the Annex on November 27, 2013 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. The purpose of the workshop was to explore community support for three initiatives identified during the key informant interviews that are at varying stages of City Committee or Council support:

1. Reducing speed limits to 30 km/hour on seven streets in the [Annex](#);
2. A ‘pilot project’ in 2014 where a curb lane on Bloor Street West between Bathurst and Spadina would be used to widen the sidewalks and perhaps create a bike lane;
3. The approval of the Environmental Assessment to study the installation of bike lanes on Bloor Street.



In addition, attendees were given the opportunity to bring forward other ideas for improving walking and cycling safety in the Annex outside of the three identified projects.

#### Partnership and Marketing

TCAT partnered with Cycle Toronto, a member-supported cycling advocacy organization on this workshop, and worked closely with Cycle Toronto’s Ward Captains for Wards 19 and 20 (the



wards that comprise the Annex) to increase workshop attendance. Cycle Toronto's Ward Captains are responsible for lobbying local City Councillors and businesses to support improved cycling infrastructure while building a broad-based coalition of supportive residents.

TCAT and Cycle Toronto's Ward Captains used a variety of strategies to attract people to the workshop. They:

- Shared the event on the TCAT and Cycle Toronto Facebook pages and Twitter accounts;
- Released public invitations through the local City Councillors' offices;
- Directed e-mail invitations to local business leaders;
- Produced and distributed a flyer and letter of invitation;
- Worked with Toronto Public Health's local Community Health Officer to complete outreach to populations who are normally not included in the planning process including children, students, and the elderly;
- Placed an advertisement on the cycling blog Dandyhorsemagazine.com.

### **Annex - Workshop Focus**

Twenty-six people participated in the *Walk Cycle Move: the Annex* workshop. They were divided into four groups and asked to participate in two activities in round table discussions:

- Activity 1 required each table to rank the three initiatives currently being considered by City Committee/Council from one (most important) to three (least important); and
- Activity 2 required participants to identify and discuss other ways walking and cycling safety could be improved.

### **Annex – Activity 1 Results**

All four groups chose bike lanes on Bloor Street as the most important of the three potential projects. There was a great deal of discussion of the value in all the initiatives, but given the issues of motor vehicle speed and the need for separation of cyclists from car traffic to improve safety, bike lanes on Bloor Street emerged as the most important of the proposed solutions. The other two projects (reduced speed limits and a pilot project to expand pedestrian space on Bloor Street) were tied for second place.

### **Annex - On-line Survey**

In addition, TCAT created an online survey (see **Appendix B**) to provide residents in the Annex with opportunities to provide feedback if they were unable to attend the *Walk Cycle Move: the Annex* workshop. The survey was designed to complement the workshop by having participants fill out questions related to both Task 1 and Task 2. The questionnaire was available on Toronto Public Health's website for the *Walk Cycle Move* project. A total of 28 responses were received between early November and December 12, 2013. Survey respondents also ranked bike lanes on Bloor Street as the most important intervention that the City could take to improve cycling safety in the Annex with 22 of the 28 respondents ranking it as #1.

### **Annex - Task 2 Results**

The workshop participants had a rich array of suggestions to improve safety in the Annex for walking and cycling. The following is a list of suggestions provided in no particular order.

### Cycling Improvements

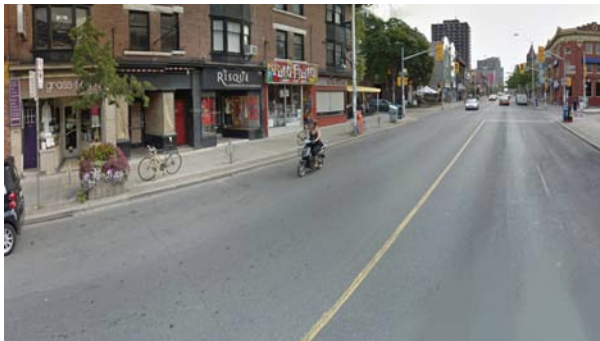
- Harbord/Hoskin bike lane ends abruptly at Queen's Park Crescent West creating a dangerous situation for cyclists;
- Extend the St. George bike lane north of Bloor Street West;
- Bike lanes on Dupont are needed;
- More contraflow bike lanes needed in the Annex on streets that have one way automobile traffic to make a continuous network for cyclists;
- Speed bumps on Palmerston Avenue designed to slow down traffic create an uncomfortable ride for cyclists;
- More bicycle parking needed, especially on busy retail streets such as Bloor Street West, at the public pool in Christie Pitts Park, and around subway stops;
- Review intersection safety to establish a priority list of what intersections could be improved to facilitate cycling safety;
- Curb cuts are needed between Albany Avenue and Howland Avenue near Barton Avenue as currently the curb prevents easy crossing for cyclists;
- Better winter maintenance on existing bike lanes, such as snow removal.

### Pedestrian Improvements

- Review intersection safety to establish a priority list of what intersections could be improved to facilitate pedestrian safety;
- Northeast intersection of Bloor Street and Christie Street is dangerous for pedestrians because of vehicle turning between the sidewalk and the pedestrian island;
- Pedestrian signals should be timed to be more responsive;
- Slower speed limits for vehicular traffic on Bathurst Street;

Dupont Street needs better streetscaping, such as more trees, to make it more appealing and comfortable for pedestrians.

### Exploring Options for Bloor Street in the Annex



What it looks like now (Photo Credit: Google Maps)



What it could look like (Credit: Car Martin, TCAT)



What it looks like now (Photo Credit: Nancy Smith Lea)



What it could look like (Credit: Jeremy Johnston, TCAT)

## 2.4 Walk Cycle Move Workshops – Black Creek

Two community workshops were convened in the Black Creek neighbourhood. Branded **Walk Cycle Move: Black Creek**, these workshops were held at the Driftwood Community Center on November 12, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and at the Oakdale Community Centre on November 18, 2013 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The purpose of the workshops was to explore community support for the installation of a Traffic Control Signal at Hullmar Drive and Jane Street to control traffic and facilitate safe pedestrian and cycling access to and from Black Creek Community Farm from the adjacent residential neighbourhood. In previous meetings, Transportation Services, Everdale, and the local City Councillor all agreed in principle that the Traffic Control Signal is a good idea for this location provided technical warrants are met and the budget secured. In addition, attendees to the workshop were given the opportunity to bring forward other ideas for improving walking and cycling safety in Black Creek.

### Black Creek - Partnership and Marketing

TCAT partnered with Everdale, the organization responsible for the creation and operation of the Black Creek Community Farm, on the organization of the workshops. The key informant interview analysis indicated that partnerships would be important in the Black Creek neighbourhood because many of the residents in the neighbourhood do not see active transportation as an important community issue compared to other issues such as job opportunities and gun violence.



Partnering with Everdale allowed TCAT to reach a wide variety of residents in Black Creek that would not have been reached otherwise. Through Everdale, a variety of strategies were used to attract people to the workshop:

- Everdale's extensive network of volunteers and staff members were informed;
- E-mail invitations were sent to other active organizations in Black Creek (e.g., AfriCan Food Basket, Action for Neighbourhood Change, Jane Finch Action Against Poverty, Jane and Finch Family and Community Center);
- The local City Councillor sent an invitation to residents via a Facebook cover photo;
- 1600 flyers were distributed to residential addresses in Black Creek;
- Flyers were distributed to Oakdale Middle School and Blacksmith Middle School to attract students;
- The event was promoted on the Radio through CHRY 105.5 (York) on October 31, 2013;
- It was promoted through the TCAT and Black Creek Community Farm Facebook pages;
- Flyers were posted at the office of all non-governmental organizations within the Black Creek neighbourhood between Steeles Avenue and Lawrence Avenue;
- Attendance was encouraged in a presentation to a local seniors group by Everdale a week in advance of the workshop; and
- Hot meals, prepared by volunteers at the Black Creek Community Farm, were offered at each workshop.

### **Black Creek - Workshop Focus**

Seventy-two people participated in the two *Walk Cycle Move: Black Creek* workshops. In each workshop people were divided into groups and asked to address two tasks in round table discussions:

- Task 1 required each table to indicate their support for a traffic control signal; and
- Task 2 required participants to have a group discussion about other ways walking and cycling could be improved in the Black Creek neighbourhood.

### **Task 1 Results**

There were a total of 72 people who attended the two workshops: 44 people at Driftwood Community Centre and 28 people at the Oakdale Community Centre. Support for the installation of the traffic control signal at Hullmar Drive and Jane Street was very high with 89% of the total number of workshop attendees in favour. The consensus was that the installation of the traffic control signal would be highly effective in creating a direct and safe route across Jane Street to Black Creek Community Farm from the residential neighbourhood to the west.

### **Task 2 Results**

During the group discussion, several ideas to improve walking and cycling were presented. These ideas included:

- Slower speed limits on arterial roads;
- More protected bicycle lanes on arterial streets, such as Jane Street;



- Better pedestrian access to the southern portion of the farm;
- More convenient opportunities for residents to take their bikes onto buses;
- Better landscaping and more benches on Jane Street;
- Incentives for employees cycling to work (e.g. bike purchase rebates; bike-related expenses reimbursement);
- More bicycle skills training and on-street community education programs.

### **Black Creek - On-line Survey**

As with the Annex, TCAT created an online survey (see **Appendix C**) to provide residents who were unable to attend either workshop with an opportunity to provide feedback. The survey was designed to complement the workshop by gauging community support for the traffic control signal and soliciting other potential ideas for how safety could be improved for pedestrians and cyclists in the community. The questionnaire was available on Toronto Public Health's website for the *Walk Cycle Move* project. The online survey results also supported the installation of the traffic control signal.

### Exploring Options for Jane Street in Black Creek



What it looks like now (Photo Credit: Google Maps)



What it could look like (Credit: Jeremy Johnston, TCAT)



What it looks like now (Photo Credit: Google Maps)



What it could look like (Credit: Jeremy Johnston, TCAT)

## **3.0 Outcomes and Accomplishments**

### **3.1 Relationship Building**

The community engagement process related to the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects required the development of a variety of partnerships between TCAT, Toronto Public Health, Transportation Services, and community members in the Annex and Black Creek neighbourhoods. Developing these relationships required facilitating contact with the appropriate people, explaining the purpose of the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects, and proposing a working relationship that would make the project a reality. Throughout this project there were several key partnerships that were developed and/or strengthened including:

- A strong working relationship between TCAT and Toronto Public Health;
- An expanded working relationship between TCAT and Transportation Services, including contacts in Traffic Operations for both Ward 20 (the Annex) and Ward 8 (Black Creek);
- The establishment of a strong working relationship between TCAT/ Toronto Public Health and Everdale; and
- An improved working relationship between TCAT/Toronto Public Health and the local Community Health Officers around the health impacts of active transportation investments.

### **3.2 Walk Cycle Move Workshops**

The *Walk Cycle Move* workshops were successful in gaining community feedback to gauge support for interventions under the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects. It was established that:

- The most support exists in the Annex for bike lanes on Bloor Street, but community members also have a series of other suggestions about how to improve neighbourhood safety for pedestrians and cyclists; and
- The most support exists in Black Creek for installing a Traffic Control Signal at Hullmar Drive and Jane Street.

### **3.3 Speed Limit Policy Review**

Transportation Services plans to complete a review of its current traffic calming policy in 2014. Currently, speed limits on a Toronto street can only be reduced to 30 km/hour if accompanied by traffic calming measures such as speed bumps. Transportation Services will be reviewing this policy in 2014 to see if speed limits can be justified without the addition of traffic calming measures. Toronto Public Health will collaborate with Transportation Services and share health evidence in support of slower speed limits to inform the review of the City's speed limit policy.



### **3.4. Active Transportation Plan for Black Creek**

TCAT, in partnership with the Toronto Cycling Think and Do Tank, mentored a group of nine students as part of an urban design course from September 6 to December 6, 2013 in the Urban Development (Master of Planning) program at Ryerson University to produce an active transportation master plan for Black Creek.

([http://tcat.ca/sites/all/files/SATP\\_Layout\\_Dec20\\_LoRes\\_002.pdf](http://tcat.ca/sites/all/files/SATP_Layout_Dec20_LoRes_002.pdf)) The purpose of the mentorship was to have the students produce a detailed plan to make cycling and walking more attractive, safe, and convenient for residents in Black Creek. Everdale and TCAT are involved in ongoing discussions to see if there are any opportunities for the students to present their work to the larger Black Creek community at upcoming community engagement workshops organized by Everdale in 2014.

TCAT will also continue to facilitate the discussion between the various stakeholders involved (e.g. Toronto Public Health, Everdale, Councillor's office, Transportation Services) to ensure that active transportation improvements in the area move forward. In its site plan application to the City, Everdale will include a traffic impact study to assess present and anticipated pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic volume in the area and determine if technical warrants are met to install a traffic signal. Everdale is supportive of the installation of a traffic signal to improve safe access to the Farm, particularly for seniors and children.

## **4.0 Barriers/Challenges**

The community engagement approach employed for these two projects represents a new approach for the City of Toronto as it allows residents to prioritize active transportation interventions that may not necessarily be aligned with the planned road reconstruction schedule or capital project improvement process. As such, various challenges were encountered and are outlined below.

### **4.1 Cultivating New Relationships with City Staff**

A key goal of the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects was to work with multiple stakeholders to support the consideration of feasible intervention options and to learn about the decision-making process for local infrastructure interventions that support active transportation. Senior staff in Transportation Services were briefed on the project and provided advice concerning the involvement of their local/area staff.

Although support for the project came from Senior Transportation staff some challenges emerged, including:

- Resistance from local/area staff to participate in key informant interviews when they perceived the project had not received prior approval by management within Transportation Services;

- Time constraints among Transportation Services staff involved in the project;
- Concern that community engagement would result in higher community expectations, which have a low likelihood of being realized if they fall outside of current Transportation Services priorities;
- Concern about the cost of implementing demonstration projects identified through community engagement for which there is no current budget;
- Concern that demonstration projects proposed by the community would not fit within the existing transportation engineering guidelines used by Transportation Services.

To begin addressing these complex issues, Toronto Public Health requested that TCAT not contact Transportation Services staff until public health staff addressed some of the concerns internally. Toronto Public Health developed two factsheets which provided the history of the project, the goals of the project, and the role of Transportation Services. Toronto Public Health also worked with the local Transportation Services Ward Managers to identify the most appropriate staff contacts to be interviewed. These steps helped to facilitate the relationship between TCAT and the Transportation Services staff.

## **4.2 Councillor Support**

It is vital to have Councillor support for projects such as these, which means that it is important to learn early on what interventions would and would not be supported by the local Councillor. During the key informant interviews, it became clear that local Councillors would not support all potential demonstration project ideas identified by community members. They indicated that it was useful to meet with them early on in the process to provide them with the opportunity to identify which community recommendations would be most appropriate and feasible based on their knowledge of the local community and City policies/standards.

## **4.3 Local Business Community**

The initial business contact in the Annex did not reply to the project team's initial e-mails and telephone calls. This created a significant barrier to success because local businesses form a vital part of the community and their views can often be distinct from those held by residents. To address this issue, the local City Councillor was asked to recommend a representative from the business community who subsequently responded quickly to the project team's request for an interview.

## **4.4 Funding to Implement Demonstration Projects**

There is presently no funding dedicated to the implementation of the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects in the City of Toronto. Securing funding for these projects within Transportation Services' budget presents a challenge due to fiscal constraint measures currently in effect at the City. There is the potential for the Active Transportation Demonstration Projects to be included in the 2015 Capital Budget transportation priorities, but there is no guarantee that funding will be forthcoming.

## **5.0 Lessons Learned**

The lessons learned from these community engagement projects can be grouped under four main headings: Project Implementation; Selecting a Community; Relationship-building with City Staff; and Relationship-building with Local Partners.

### **5.1 Project Implementation**

Maximizing possibilities for project implementation involves strategic thinking before engaging the community. Not all ideas brought forward have the potential to be implemented; implementation is a complex process that depends on a variety of factors including City timelines, budgets, politics, standards and priorities. The following lessons were learned:

- It is important to contact the local City Councillor early in the project to find out what initiatives he/she would or would not support;
- It is useful to scan local council documents to see if there are any initiatives related to walking or cycling on the radar which could be expanded and/or supported through the proposed project;
- It is important to contact the appropriate City staff responsible for active transportation to discuss demonstration projects that could actually be implemented and what would not be possible given their constraints;
- When meeting with City staff, it is necessary to discuss funding for implementation; it is important to know what opportunities exist for including the project in future Capital Budgets. The budget priority-setting process can sometimes take a year or more, and without previous approval, it is unlikely that a department will be able to provide financial support.

### **5.2 Selecting a Community**

Public interest in community improvement is vital to the success of an Active Transportation Demonstration Project so it is important to work with neighbourhoods that have expressed an interest in improving their community. It is also important to work with neighbourhoods where there is actually a strong possibility of making physical changes to the neighbourhood as demonstrated by current Council support or upcoming transportation priorities. Success is much more likely in neighbourhoods that have strong community organizations and leaders who can act as champions for improvements through outreach to, and coordination with, community residents who might otherwise not be interested in active transportation.

### **5.3 Relationship-Building with City Staff**

The success of an Active Transportation Demonstration Project can depend upon the support of various departments within local government. For these projects, it was important for the project team to understand the needs, perceptions, goals and constraints of the relevant departments before approaching the community. The following steps are recommended to

develop and maintain good relationships with staff in departments that could be affected by the project:

- Develop project communication materials (e.g., factsheets and backgrounders) that can be used to inform front-line staff and managers about the project in advance of any request for meetings. Follow up to ensure that project communication materials have been received.
- Meet with City staff in appropriate departments to introduce your project, identify your needs, and learn about any concerns or constraints they face at the onset of the project.
- Discuss with appropriate City staff the neighbourhoods being considered for community engagement and the interventions that might be proposed to the community for feedback.
- Use your existing contacts to help you identify other contacts. To start, this information can be requested of local Community Health Officers, City Councillor assistants, and department managers in City departments. If you already have a department contact, you could request this person to introduce you to the most appropriate people.
- Do your best to be inclusive of all relevant departments. However, understand that you could face situations where key stakeholders might not want to be involved and do not see the value in your project based on their job description. You cannot force interest.

## **5.4 Relationship-Building with Local Partners**

Gaining widespread community support and reaching out to community members who do not normally participate in land use and transportation planning processes requires the development of local partners who are trusted in the local community. By developing local partners in both neighbourhoods, the project team was able to disseminate information further into the community. It also provided more opportunities to attract participants to workshops that were planned. The following steps are recommended when developing relationships with the community:

- Identify the key players in the community who may have an interest in active transportation: begin with local non-governmental organizations;
- Ask community stakeholders who you should be speaking with to help gain community interest in your project;
- If you want to obtain representation from seniors, children, and new Canadians, organize meetings in their meeting places. For example, if you are interested in hearing from youth, arrange a community meeting in their school rather than at city hall.

## **6.0 Next Steps**

There are a number of key next steps to be undertaken in 2014 to ensure that these Active Transportation Demonstration Projects continue to move forward with implementation.

## **6.1 Toronto Public Health**

Toronto Public Health will discuss the results of the *Walk Cycle Move: Black Creek* and *Walk Cycle Move: the Annex* workshops with Transportation Services. The discussion will include consideration of the appropriate path to move forward the community's request for the Traffic Control Signal at Hullmar Drive and Jane Street in Black Creek and bike lanes on Bloor Street in the Annex. The discussion will take into consideration the availability of funding and Council approval. Toronto Public Health plans to report to the Board of Health on the four demonstration projects, including the TCAT projects. Transportation Services will be consulted in the development of the report.

## **6.2 Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT)**

1. TCAT was awarded a \$5000 Heart and Stroke Foundation Spark Grant in December 2013 to: disseminate the findings from our involvement in the CLASP project in 2014; and work with Toronto Public Health and Everdale to help facilitate implementation of the Traffic Control Signal or other community identified priority intervention for active transportation in Black Creek.
2. In 2013, the MUEC, in conjunction with TCAT, was awarded a four-year grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada to participate in the Active Neighbourhoods Canada initiative. Building on the Healthy Canada by Design CLASP community engagement work, and adapting MUEC's community engagement model, TCAT will work with four diverse communities across Ontario to collaborate with on active transportation projects. This project will be directed at developing active transportation plans with communities and decision-makers that can be used to foster action on active transportation in those communities.

## Appendix A: Question Rubric for Key Informant Interviews in the Annex and Black Creek

	Question	Construct	Probes
	<b>Active Transportation landscape</b>		
1	How would you define the boundaries of your community? ( <i>show the interviewee the map of the neighbourhood</i> )	Establishing for this project boundaries	What key roads serve as boundaries to your community? Why did you choose to define the boundaries as you have? Any key roads outside of these boundaries that are key for AT in your community?
1	Tell me a bit about walking and cycling in your community.	General transportation landscape	How do people generally get around in your community? Who is getting around by various modes? Why do you think people move around your community the way they do? (trip purposes, demographics, the design of the neighbourhood?) What is the historical/community context?
2	What are the biggest transportation issues facing this community? ... the biggest barriers to <i>Active transportation issues</i> (e.g., walking and cycling)?	Transportation priorities	Do people see walking and cycling as well as other transportation issues as part of the same issue? Considerations: Safety? Traffic congestion? Business considerations? Health? Recreation? Local decision making? Politics? Aesthetics/ Culture?
3	Is transportation a priority issue compared with other things going on in this community?	Transportation as a priority	Are there other issues that are 'hot topics' in the community at the moment? Is transportation seen as a key issue?
4	Who is involved or impacted by transportation issues in your community?	Key stakeholders	What groups are important for TCAT and Toronto Public Health to contact for interviews? Seniors, children, religious groups, students, business owners, apartment renters and home owners, etc.
	<b>Specific local needs</b>		
5	Is walking and cycling safe in this community? What might get more people walking or biking?	Health and safety	Built environment vs. other safety issues (road rules, user differences, safety equipment/helmets), health considerations, business interests, etc. Is traffic calming and/or reduced speed limits a major consideration in your community?
6	Are there specific areas in this community that would benefit from changes to streets to benefit pedestrians and cyclists? ( <i>show the interviewee the map of the neighbourhood</i> ) What kinds of changes are needed? (e.g., sidewalks, signs, speed limits, etc.)	Built environment issues	Can you think improvements (e.g., traffic calming, reduced speed limits, etc.)? Is anything already happening or proposed?  What statistics are needed to highlight the need for the changes you recommended?



	<b>Politics/policy landscape</b>		
7	How does your community get involved making the neighbourhood more inclusive of pedestrians and cyclists? Is the same procedure followed in every ward?	Policy and decision landscape	If someone wanted to make a change, how might they go about it? Who participates? Who decides? Is there a standardized process? Have you had residents contact you to make AT improvements? Can you identify or share relevant background documents, studies, or events related to making change happen?
8	Do different people in your community have different needs or interests when it comes to walking and cycling?	Equity	Whose voices are heard? How are different needs expressed and addressed? What groups should we specifically contact?
9	What makes it easy/difficult for you to be involved in making improvements to your streets for pedestrians and cyclists?	Policy barriers and opportunities	Have you encountered specific challenges or had particular successes? Are there specific policy changes you think would benefit the community?
	<b>AT demonstration projects</b>		
10	Do you think the community would welcome improvements to the streets to benefit pedestrians and cyclists (i.e., an active transportation demonstration project sponsored by Toronto Public Health)?	Readiness	What challenges and opportunities do you expect for this project? Do people think of transportation as a health issue? Could Toronto Public Health offer something new or help broker different interests? Are people interested in health promotion/health evidence?
11	Do you have any venue suggestions for the other two parts of the community engagement? ( <i>I will provide some background on the community engagement 'next steps'</i> )		Examples could include community centres, residents' associations, etc. Do the dates of early / late June, 2013 for Consultation Events and mid-September for Community Forum fit with your schedule?
	Do you have anything else to add?	Other	

## Appendix B: Walk Cycle Move: the Annex – online survey

The way we move around our neighbourhood from day to day affects our health.

Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation are working together to find ways to make the Annex neighbourhood safer for pedestrians and cyclists. We want to hear what you think.

The Annex neighbourhood boundaries are Dupont Street to the north, Avenue Road to the east, Christie Street to the west, and Harbord Street to the south.

Please respond to the survey questions based on your own experience with walking and cycling in the Annex neighbourhood. The survey will take approximately 3-4 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions about this survey please contact:

Ryan Anders Whitney  
Complete Streets Researcher and Coalitions Linking Action and Science for Prevention (CLASP) Facilitator  
Toronto Centre for Active Transportation  
[ryan.whitney@tcat.ca](mailto:ryan.whitney@tcat.ca)  
416-392-0160

- 1 Do you live in the Annex neighbourhood?
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 2 How do you get around the Annex neighbourhood (choose all options that apply)?
  - Walk
  - Cycle
  - Transit
  - Drive
  - Other (please specify):
  
- 3 What is your preferred mode of travel in the Annex neighbourhood (choose one)?
  - Walk
  - Cycle
  - Transit
  - Drive

- Other (please specify):

4 Which of the following do you think would improve walking and cycling in the Annex neighbourhood the most (choose all options that apply)?

- Reduce speed limits for motor vehicles on streets in the Annex
- More contra flow bike lanes on residential streets in the Annex so cyclists can legally ride in both directions on one way streets
- More pedestrian crossings
- More benches next to sidewalks for pedestrians to sit on
- More bicycle parking around subway stops
- Less motorized traffic on Bloor Street
- More bike lanes for cyclists
- Street landscaping to improve the visual appeal of the street (e.g., street art, landscaping, etc.)
- Allow rolling stops for cyclists at non major intersections with stop signs so that cyclists do not legally need to come to a complete stop
- Other (please specify):

5 Please rank the following proposed initiatives from most important (1) to least important (3) to improve walking and cycling in the Annex neighbourhood.

- Install bike lanes on Bloor Street in the Annex
- Reduce speed limits on residential streets in the Annex to 30 km/h from the current 40 km/h
- Expand sidewalk space on Bloor Street to create more space for restaurants and other businesses to have patios in the Annex as part of a summer pilot project in 2014

6 Please write any other recommendations you have to improve walking and cycling safety in the Annex neighbourhood

## Appendix C: Walk Cycle Move: Black Creek – online survey

The way we move around our neighbourhoods from day to day affects our health.

Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation are working together to find ways to make the Black Creek neighbourhood safer for pedestrians and cyclists. We want to hear what you think.

The Black Creek neighbourhood boundaries are Steeles Avenue to the north, Black Creek to the East, Finch Avenue to the south, and highway 400 to the west. One area of interest is the new Black Creek Community Farm located near Jane and Steeles.

Please respond to the survey questions based on your own experience with walking and cycling in the Black Creek neighbourhood. The survey will take approximately 3-4 minutes to complete.

Learn more about Black Creek Community Farm below:

<http://everdale.org/blackcreek/>

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions about this survey please contact:

Ryan Anders Whitney  
Complete Streets Researcher and Coalitions Linking Action and Science for Prevention  
(CLASP) Facilitator  
Toronto Centre for Active Transportation  
[ryan.whitney@tcat.ca](mailto:ryan.whitney@tcat.ca)  
416-392-0160

- 1 Do you live in the Black Creek neighbourhood?
  - Yes
  - No
- 2 How do you get around the Black Creek neighbourhood (choose all options that apply)?
  - Walk
  - Cycle
  - Transit
  - Drive
  - Other (please specify):

- 3 What is your preferred mode of travel in the Black Creek neighbourhood (choose one)?
- Walk
  - Cycle
  - Transit
  - Drive
  - Other (please specify):
- 4 Which of the following do you think would improve walking and cycling in the Black Creek neighbourhood the most (choose all options that apply)?
- Reduced speed limits for motor vehicles on Jane Street and Steeles Street
  - More pedestrian crossings
  - More benches next to sidewalks for pedestrians to sit on
  - Better street lighting near sidewalks to improve visibility after dark
  - Reducing automobile traffic and speed limits around schools to improve safety for children
  - More bike lanes for cyclists
  - Street landscaping to improve the visual appeal of the street (e.g., trees, street art, etc.)
  - Other (please specify):
- 5 Please rank the following proposed initiatives from most important (1) to least important (3) to improve walking and cycling to and from Black Creek Community Farm.
- Install a Traffic Control Signal at Hullmar Drive and Jane Street to stop the flow of traffic to allow pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross Jane Street and access Black Creek Community Farm.
  - Create a southern pedestrian entrance to Black Creek Community Farm (currently the only entrance to the Farm is off of Jane Street just south of Steeles Street).
  - Build a pedestrian bridge to connect Black Creek Community Farm to the parking lot at Black Creek Pioneer Village / York University.
- 6 Please write any other recommendations you have to improve walking and cycling to and from Black Creek Community Farm