

Wed. May 11th | Ward 18 Talks: The Environment – TransformTO

Open space summary – vision of Toronto in 2050

- more density, working from home, reduced car ownership, a “comeback” of corner stores and localized centres
- more trees and bike lanes, pedestrian boulevards
- roads reclaimed by greenspace, interconnected regional transit
- more bike infrastructure and secure bike parking
- more backyard farming
- green infrastructure, sustainable energy, a transformed economy where innovation hubs support stable incomes
- increased public transit
- beautiful city, people wanting to walk through it, bikes themselves are transformed
- narrower roads, though cars not necessarily obsolete
- wider sidewalks, integrated street lanes (for hoverboards, rollerbladers, e-bikes), composting in parks for dog poop
- Vertical playscapes with edible gardens where children could go after school to learn how to grow food, while enjoying the playscape; Retrofitted suburbs with more pedestrian bridges, crosswalks, and frequent transit
- buildings deeply retrofitted, no planes (within carbon budget)
- bike highways
- government subsidized solar panels, water permeable roads to mitigate extreme flooding
- increased greenery in the city, density, visible surface water in the city (canal systems like in Europe), stormwater ponds
- OVERALL THEME: beautiful, livable city

Four themes:

- 1.) Green infrastructure
- 2.) Built form (green buildings/design)
- 3.) Sustainable transportation
- 4.) Economy

GROUP 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Summary of Discussion – Green Infrastructure

Identified Problems:

- 1) People don't properly use existing diversion programs;
- 2) Lack of healthy trees;
- 3) Too little green space and dog space in high-density neighbourhoods.

Suggestions to City of Toronto:

- 1) More education and better communications about proper waste disposal; create local home hazardous waste depots;
- 2) Make it easier to plant trees in community spaces; invest in more city tree maintenance; make it harder for people to destroy trees;
- 3) Insure that all new developments include adequate local green space and dog space.

Next Steps:=

- 1) "SWAP meets" to keep unwanted items out of waste stream;
- 2) Create a program for individuals and community groups to adopt and care for trees;
- 3) Find ways to create community engagement at the beginning of development.

GROUP 2: BUILT FORM**Summary of discussion – Built Form****Identified Problems:**

- 1) Over-reliance on fossil fuels for construction/maintenance of buildings and infrastructure & built form encourages waste;
- 2) Less rainfall which may endanger new green infrastructure;
- 3) Scale of construction (thinking too large).

Proposed Solutions:

- 1) Encourage rooftop solar installations along with green roofs, especially on large roof areas where only solar may be appropriate (community centres, schools, shopping malls, parking garages);
- 2) Install community rainwater catchment systems/storage in parks and new civic buildings, including water features around city, possibly fed via permeable road surfaces/parking lots.

Related Brainstorming:

- 1) Encourage wood construction (instead of concrete), smaller scale affordable housing (smaller footprints), even temporary buildings with reusable materials;
- 2) Build laneway housing to encourage density in residential areas;
- 3) Incorporate rainwater catchment in new residential buildings;
- 4) Use/share rail corridors for alternate modes of transport (walking, cycling).

Suggestions to City:

- 1) Encourage interest-free loans for residential solar investments
- 2) Use tax system to encourage green infrastructure
- 3) Expand "Eco-Roof Incentive Program" & "Toronto Green Standard" for residential builds, retrofits, renovations and redevelopments
- 4) Amend Section 42 to mandate more green space

- 5) Demand more of the corporate/business sector to make green investments to promote innovation
- 6) Use city resources to actively promote solar & green investments in construction sector
- 7) Find solutions for objections to laneway housing (smaller firetrucks?)
- 8) Actively investigate best practices/successful innovations around the world

Next Steps:

- 1) Community members could actively promote City green initiatives (incentives, grants or other funding)
- 2) Advocate for solar infrastructure where practical
- 3) Promote laneway housing to encourage creating value and providing affordable housing

GROUP 3: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Summary of discussion – Sustainable Transportation

Identified problem:

Car dependency as a result of automobile-centric planning leads to greater GHG emissions in the transport sector, thus contributing to climate change. Additionally, inadequate transit to suburban areas (fastest growing population) and smaller town areas discourages getting out of cars.

Proposed solution: invest in alternate methods of transportation to increase sustainability; car and bike share networks, shuttles to town clusters/cottage country, more bus systems to parks (Parkbus), cycling infrastructure, intermodal transit options

Related brainstorming:

- 1) Autosshare programs should be less expensive and less complicated
- 2) 3 point transportation plan
 - 1- getting around within the city
 - 2- getting around between cities (ex. GO networks)
 - 3- getting around regional areas
- 3) Goal: net zero GHGs, municipal planning should take into consideration carbon budgets
- 4) Community should participate in lobbying efforts with the city to get greater transit funding from the province
- 5) General agreement that there needs to be more cycling infrastructure and snow clearing on bike lanes in the winter

Suggestions to the City of Toronto:

- 1) Establish bus service to provincial/national parks and rural/remote areas, shuttle service to cottage country and increased support for carpooling

- 2) Ensure transit investments provide adequate and accessible service (address equity aspect)
- 3) Implement differential road tolls on highways (such as the Gardiner expressway) to generate revenue for transit; ensure this is done in a transparent way and that the public is well informed on the purpose of road tolls
- 4) Lobby the province/Metrolinx for greater regional transportation
- 5) Reinststate the vehicle registration tax!
- 6) Support schools in disseminating information on sustainable transportation – children and parents learning together
- 7) Increase secure bike parking / covered bike parking shelters
- 8) Support intermodal transit – designate one subway car per train for bikes to accommodate those with longer commutes

Next steps:

- 1) Community needs to be active in calling 3-1-1 when snow isn't cleared on bike lanes in the winter – in order to guarantee cyclist infrastructure is adequately maintained.

GROUP 4 : ECONOMY

Summary of Discussion - Economic enabling of individuals and small businesses to pursue social and environmental goals

Identified problems:

- 1) Job/income insecurity results in a lack of personal resources so that people are forced to work away from home/community, and often on tasks they do not feel are important and they are not passionate about.
- 2) Rising taxes and competition from big chains/franchises makes it challenging/difficult for people to create new small businesses and/or social enterprises to address social and environmental problems.

Proposed solution:

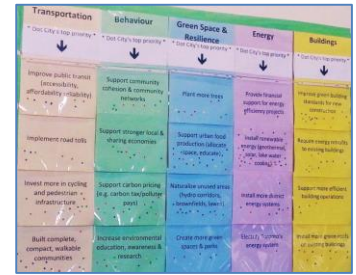
- 1) Implement personal income security (e.g. guaranteed minimum income) so people can be more creative and collaborative to problem-solve key social and environmental issues. Simplifying basic income support mechanisms will free up resources.
- 2) Make it easier for creative/new small businesses to compete.
- 3) Make it possible for people to work from home but still qualify for benefits (e.g. pension, sick leave benefits).
- 4) Foster complete communities to reduce transportation requirements, and to reduce built space (e.g. homes are empty during the day, offices empty at night but if more people worked from home, only one building would be required).

Suggestions to City of Toronto:

- 1) Create opportunities for people or organizations to submit proposals for grant funding to create jobs that further a social or environmental goal. Grants should be renewable based on productivity and merit, providing a degree of longer term security. Don't give money to companies to create jobs, provide money to people/organizations to create jobs & provide services instead.
- 2) Impose higher taxes on big chains/franchises (e.g. Starbucks) so that taxes on small independents can be lowered to foster entrepreneurial creativity.
- 3) Support more innovation hubs like CSI (Centre for Social Innovation), or similar resources in libraries, to foster a new local economy and collective problem-solving.
- 4) Map resources/services in each neighbourhood to identify the resources/services that are missing, which reduce its walkability score. Use tax discounts or zoning bylaws to favour small businesses that fill in gaps in neighbourhoods.
- 5) Create a competition for pilot project grants as a first step.

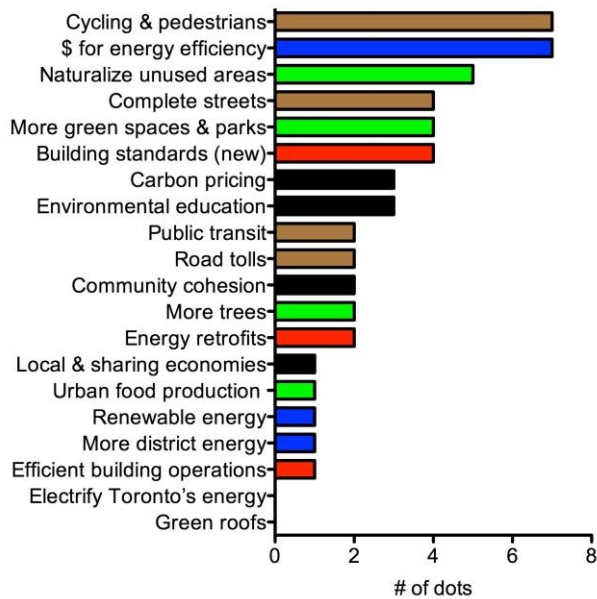
“Dotmocracy” interactive results

All participants were given 5 dot stickers to place on a sign showing suggestions the City has heard so far during the TransformTO consultation process. The distribution provides feedback on the top priorities for the Ward 18 community.

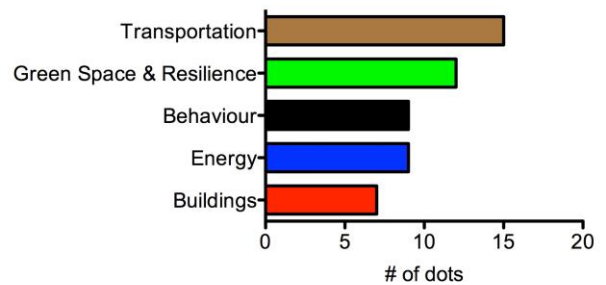


Participants identified ‘**Transportation**’ as their top priority category. Their top two action priorities were to ‘**invest more in cycling and pedestrian infrastructure**’ and ‘**provide financial support for energy efficiency projects**’.

Ward 18's top priority for City (May-11-2016)



Ward 18 Dots/category (May-11-2016)



Ward 18 Dots for actions by category

