

ENGAGEMENT

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EQUITY



TransformTO

USDN FELLOWSHIP 2016

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1. Overview

This report was prepared for TransformTO to support the development of the project's second engagement phase, which will inspire a broad range of Torontonians to help achieve 80 by 50 emission reduction goals. TransformTO identified a need to engage individuals that belong to groups that are typically disempowered due to their socioeconomic status, ethnic background, age, ability, or gender. This research gathered various studies, cases, and tools to develop a three-stage engagement framework that can help inform and empower Toronto's diverse communities.

Key scholarly articles on engagement practices across North America were collected to help identify some frameworks utilized in the activation, visioning, planning, and mobilization phases of various municipal projects. Additional interviews were conducted with 10 key local and international community engagement practitioners leading a diverse range of environment, education, and community engagement planning projects. The research was further strengthened through the 'Equity Engagement Survey' distributed via the USDN Portal, to reach a broader range of public sector practitioners.

1. Activation

Grow TransformTO marketing and communications tactics to help activate the interest of diverse groups and unusual suspects.

2. Revisioning

Illustrate technical information to cultivate localized understanding of climate change effects and potential actions.

3. Participatory Engagement

Include diverse groups to help inform community priorities building a support base to achieve 2020 and 2050 goals.

"Making Progress on climate change can be considered a matter of engagement, allowing people to acquire and process information share and debate opinions and beliefs, and take action"

(Wu and Lee, 2015)

2. Research Discussion

It is broadly recognized by scholars that engagement of a diverse groups in climate change conversations (see Ling et al., 2009) is essential to achieve better mitigation and adaptation strategies. Specifically, reaching out to groups that experience systematic barriers in their daily lives due to their economic status, ethnic background, age, or ability helps inform and offset potential burdens that arise from climate change mitigation actions. The delivery of an engagement process will be imperative to achieve the following objectives:

1. Understand how adaptation measures affect groups that face systematic barriers
2. Learn from localized experiences to inform the design and implementation of actions
3. Understand how climate mitigation actions can offer co-benefits that reach beyond carbon reduction and help enhance economic, social, and cultural equity in Toronto

Perspectives from groups facing systematic barriers are important and require careful consideration. TransformTO can help identify how climate change and climate change mitigation actions affect different stakeholders to find common themes. Gathering diverse perspectives will significantly strengthen the TransformTO action plan. The design of activities can serve as an empowerment tool, conducive to creativity and learning.

From an environmental justice perspective, climate change effects and mitigations actions should not systematically strike against certain groups. Adequate engagement frameworks can help create spaces for deliberation during activation, re-visioning, participatory engagement, and community mobilization stages.

TransformTO participants will be able to change their minds, learn new things, and be seen as equal. Ultimately, the complex implementation of climate change mitigation actions requires innovative solutions that can only emerge with the support of a diverse range of constituents, some who, at the moment, may be facing economic and social barriers.

Based on the 'Norm Activation Theory' (Gammelgaard, 2016), the three-stage engagement framework will address:

- Problem awareness – an individual's knowledge of the subject
- Ascription of responsibility – how responsible the person feels
- Outcome efficacy – the usefulness of action to alleviate needs
- Ability to help – a person's impression of how useful they could be

The engagement stages reported in the next section can help reduce systematic barriers to help diverse groups increase understanding and feel positive about changes necessary to achieve 2050 emission reduction goals.

3. Summary of Recommendations

Brand Activation

- Leverage stakeholder profiles that
- Develop **TransformTO** brand person
- Build on the project's credibility as
- Leverage social feelings on climate

Media Outreach

- Engage various media outlets in co
- Develop a database of journalists i
- Develop an ethnic media strategy v
- Avoid using the term "climate chan

Cross-corporate Collaboration

- Develop a database that identifies
- Identify key engagement players a
- When developing engagement act

include TransformTO advisors and committees
quality: **Expert, Efficient, and Socially Innovative**
it is validated by other important actors
change action while increasing brand visibility

conversations about the “**weird weather**”
interested in environmental issues + action
with key messages in various languages
age” in all mass media communications

related engagement activities in other divisions
cross the corporation for potential collaborations
ivities, reach out to potential interdivisional partners

Time Re-Frame

- Reframe current climate change pr
- Build a clear correlation between T with future scenarios
- Avoid scientific probabilities that a provided with adequate graphic su

Re-localization

- Conduct outreach in places where
- Identify relevant congregation spa
- Adopt a model of the neighbourho repurpose the scope of their work t

Visualization

- Use infographics to communicate l and the media
- Partner with academic institution t
- Use actions from the technical mo understand the relationship between

problems identifying issues that affect people's daily lives
 TransformTO thematic areas: waste, transit, and buildings

ask people to imagine distant future scenarios unless
 support

there is less community participation
 ces to re-localize outreach initiatives
 od ambassadors previously used by LiveGreen, and
 to become "conversation ambassadors"

key information about GHG emissions to both the public
 to develop a computerized visualization model
 modelling to inform future visual scenarios, helping people
 en carbon emissions and actions

4 Principles of Engagement

- Recognize the existence of systemic barriers to political participation of people from marginalized communities
- Elevate community expertise and co-design
- Blend technical knowledge and community wisdom
- Create opportunities for long-lasting engagement

Building Enthusiasm

- Build enthusiasm through low cost activities and dialogue across marginalized communities
- Partner with artists to develop other creative projects using recycling materials etc.

Dialogue + Literacy

- Create Toronto's version of Participatory Budgeting
- Develop a climate change story trail using data on extreme weather events throughout the city
- Empower Torontonians to make significant impact through experience through a TransformTO campaign

atic barriers that limit economic, social, cultural and
om diverse groups
ownership to include and integrate different views
community expertise through engagement methods
ng and ongoing discussions

t artistic interventions that can encourage deliberation
and non-marginalized groups
er interventions such as theatre forums, sculpting of

atory Emissions Budgeting
cker, where residents can help the city obtain important
that affect the daily lives of diverse groups
gnificant changes by sharing their knowledge and
forum that celebrates public initiatives

4. Activation

The first engagement stage seeks to address the lack of public understanding of climate change, specifically, in a localized context. If diverse groups of Torontonians are unable to fully understand the degree of urgency of this problem, implementation will face significant resistance across the city. Scholars recognize that there is a widening gap between public awareness of climate change, and the ways in which individuals see their behaviours as contributing to the problem (Schweizer, Davis and Thompson, 2013).

Additionally, it is broadly documented that for an average person, it is very difficult to adequately grasp information about the future, without relating it to a current, more tangible present (for example, Larsen, Gunnarsson-Ostling and Westholm, 2011; Parks and Theobald, 2013). An interview participant shared a very simple, yet straight forward strategy, to engage the public understanding by explicitly removing the words “climate change” from the conversation.

Referring to the “strange weather” is a more successful engagement practice and helps build with a diverse audience, given that this is a tangible phenomenon. While this is true for the general public, specific groups, including those experiencing systematic barriers, will face additional obstacles to access and process scientific information, in a manner that is relevant to their communities and to their daily experiences. TransformTO has an opportunity to level the playing field, by adapting a series of marketing communications strategies to be rolled out in the first stage of the project’s next engagement phase.

Brand Activation

The nature of TransformTO activities, specifically as they relate to interdivisional and non-for-profit partnerships, play a significant role in this process. If a successful branding is accomplished, organizations and divisions associated with the project, will have stronger motivation and see a huge benefit from working with the brand as it will help strengthen their own end goals. Borrowing from Hoeffler and Keller (2002) corporate branding framework, there are six useful ways to grow the TransformTO brand.



4.1 Leveraging Stakeholder Profiles

TransformTO works with diverse stakeholders: City of Toronto divisions, consultants, non-for-profit organizations, academics, and to some extent, the private sector. TransformTO users are experts in their fields and can become the primary brand promoters using a set of tailored messages. By developing a message directed to the non-for-profit sector, for instance, TransformTO will be able to reach groups who face engagement barriers and are typically unable to access this information. A tailored message for diverse front-line agencies includes simple GHG emission information, through infographics and other visuals. TransformTO also has a multidisciplinary advisory group that can also become a vehicle to raise awareness and increase brand presence, creating a sense of community for the project.

4.2 Brand Personality

If TransformTO was a person, what kind of personality traits would it possess? The interests that other jurisdictions have demonstrated for the project's technical modelling, make TransformTO an "expert" in the field of climate change action. Additionally, the project aims to uncover significant co-benefits from climate change mitigation actions, turning it into an "efficient" public actor in the environmental field. Lastly, TransformTO is endeavouring to implement engagement strategies that empower a diversity of groups to take action, showing "social innovation." These three traits are desirable and enable the City to engage a public that values innovation, efficiency, and social creativity. Nice to meet you TransformTO!

4.3 Credibility

Brands engender many reactions and judgments (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002), depending on how they are positioned and understood. Additionally, brands can be perceived in combination with the broader corporate image where they are situated. As a part of the City of Toronto, TransformTO can help leverage the strong credibility of the municipal agency. The specific position of TransformTO within the corporation, as a council directed project with specific actionable items, can help excite a variety of stakeholders, inviting them to participate and engage with the brand.

4.4 Social Feelings

Divided in two different sections, social feelings can be evoked through "social approval" and "self-respect" (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002). First, social approval relates to the positive feelings a brand can generate in people when they become active participants and brand ambassadors. In the context of environmental action, self-respect occurs when brand ambassadors take action to feel better about themselves by being part of the movement, increasing a sense of pride, accomplishment, or fulfilment (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002). These strategies help expand visibility for TransformTO, while allowing individuals to take ownership of the project and feel positive about their participation.

4.5 Media Outreach

Once TransformTO strengthens its brand personality and develops tailored messages, the organization can pitch story ideas to various media outlets. The ability for individuals to understand climate change messages, largely depends on how these messages are defined and by whom (Parks and Theobald, 2013). The media is a key actor that has a significant role to play, contributing to the dissemination of information and raising the relevance of an issues in the public sphere. To capture the media's attention, there needs to be a series of key messages that allow the receiving end to interpret the types of social, economic, or private actions required. Public projects that require engagement of diverse populations, can also utilize ethnic media outlets, building stories that involve a diversity of audiences in the debate.

4.6 Cross-Corporate Collaboration

To continue publicizing TransformTO messages, it is necessary to weave the second engagement phase with other divisions that have trusting relationships with diverse communities. The health promotion sector can become the most significant ally for TransformTO during the activation stage, integrating their knowledge and expertise on health and climate change.

TransformTO can also significantly benefit from learning about health burdens associated with climate change that are disproportionately felt by low socio-economic groups and ethnic minority groups. Adopting a systems- based framework to facilitate interdisciplinary and inter-sector collaborative action on climate change (Patrick et al., 2016), will help build public trust and support.

Other less evident partners, include the Municipal Licensing & Standards division, who are currently conducting a consultation to evaluate standards for rental apartment buildings. The results of this consultations will inform policy updates that can be of interest to TransformTO. During the next phase of the project, identifying key activities can enable TransformTO build on existing engagement plans, and contribute community engagement expertise to strengthen the process.

5. Re-visioning

There is widespread public confusion over what climate change actually means. This diffuses the sense of responsibility as the matter is both invisible – GHG Emissions –and unclear (Schweizer, Davis and Leigh Thompson, 2013). According to the ‘Awareness–Appraisal–Responsibility’ model of environmental engagement, individuals who recognize environmental threats are more likely to take action, but responsibility mediates the relationship between perception of threat and action (Forsyth, Vugt, and Story, 2015). To fully engage all Torontonians, it is necessary to narrow down the subject to a comprehensive time frame, showing a diversity of scenarios, while fostering a sense of ownership and interest for the topic.

Time Re-Frame

A time-lag in the process of climate change is further complicated by the public’s assumptions that the impacts of climate change do not affect urban areas (Ling, Hanna and Dale, 2009). Studies show that the general public has difficulty understanding projections and probabilities science used in climate change rhetoric (Maiback, Roser-Renouf and Leiserowitz, 2008). This argument was reinforced by interviews with participants from the planning, environmental, and humanities fields, all who advised that framing climate change mitigation efforts around a very distant future, foster public apathy and stall policy change. Through visualization projects, TransformTO can help localize climate change in real time and space, while encouraging support and environmental ownership.

Re-Localization

Place based outreach can support the activation and visualization stages by connecting strategies to places of relevance for diverse communities (Forsyth, et al. 2015, Schweizer and Leigh Thompson, 2013). The theory of place attachment suggests that people have a relationship with specific landscapes. Reaching out to diverse group on-site can help develop more meaningful conversations about local resources endangered by extreme weather events. Focusing on local sites that are highly valued by Torontonians, can help raise awareness about the importance of carbon emission reductions.

Geography

Based on data from the first engagement phase of TransformTO, there are stronger levels of participation downtown when compared to suburban areas in climate action conversations. Other jurisdictions experience this type of retention of information by usual suspects, mostly by privileged groups residing in wealthy neighbourhoods.

This can be addressed at a geographic scale, specifically during the activation phase. If certain areas of the city experience less participation, it would be beneficial to identify key congregation spaces as vehicles for TransformTO activation and re-visualization exercises. Public parks, for instance, can be utilized as platforms to chat about the “strange weather” and build face-to-face connections with marginalized communities.

To illustrate, Community Animators championed by LiveGreen Toronto helped equip marginalized groups with necessary skills to understand GHG emissions, while allowing the City to build networks within communities. Animators were assigned to specific districts in Toronto to disseminate information based on geographic needs.



Detroit Works Project

Place

Identify key spaces of congregation, where leaders who have built a degree of trust within their respective communities can help communicate TransformTO brand, legitimize climate action, and awaken curiosity for further engagement. Spaces such as spiritual or religious sites, educational institutions or cultural centres provide critical infrastructure for TransformTO's activation phase.

These spaces will allow TransformTO to construct a ‘free-learning’ area, awakening curiosity for people to actively participate in the next stage of the engagement strategy. Messages about climate change complexity and impacts resonate when they are nested in the cultural values and beliefs of the audience.

Case Study: Roaming Table

As part of ‘Detroit Works Plan,’ the City utilized a series of engagement methods, including a “roaming table,” to disrupt people’s everyday lives, outside banks, stores, in parks, and other public spaces. The strategy sought to reach out to unsuspecting audiences for their input. Community ambassadors also took the topic to commuters in public transit vehicles as a form of reaching diverse populations.

Digital Visualization

Scholars suggest that there is great value in visualizing local climate change in order to communicate the problem and enhance engagement and learning, containing sufficient realism to attract and retain interest (Sheppard, 2011). The project led by Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning based in UBC uses computer visualization to illustrate possible future scenarios. By employing GIS mapping, photographs, and explanatory diagrams, the scenario creates a spectrum of different climate change outcomes over three different periods.

The tool allows individuals to understand climate change locally, showing how extreme weather events can disrupt quality of life. Future scenario visualization can also help illustrate how climate actions can help create a positive future, motivating participants to strive towards a common objective grounded on the evidence from TransformTO technical modelling.

A study on a simulation scenario known as “my2050” in the UK, concluded that future scenarios foster an honest debate about choices and trade-offs to reach set emission reduction targets (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2016). It enables the public to visualize the type of climate actions necessary to achieve significant carbon reductions. The recommendations from the technical modelling are a great opportunity for TransformTO to distil scenarios down to a manageable set of possible local future options. Place-based attachment theory suggests that these types of scenarios raise the meaningfulness of climate change and make them more likely to be an integral part of individual’s daily lives.

Infographics

The use of graphics can foster a better understanding of technical information, communicating some immediate effects of climate change. Utilizing TransformTO existing infographics, can attract media outlets to engage in the conversations, helping reach diverse communities and eliminating literacy barriers.



Source: University of British Columbia

6. Participatory Engagement

Meaningful engagement in climate change conversations can be achieved by linking some technical expertise to particular insights that people ‘on the ground’ may have about sustainability issues (Burrage, 2010). Developing various engagement methodologies requires the willingness to explore creative outlets that can help increase public participation. Authentic forms of engagement can serve as both a means to support the project development process, but also as well as an empowerment tool.

Four main principles of participatory engagement adapted from Griffin, Cramer and Powers (2014), will ensure that the process is equitable and provides opportunities for deliberation. These principles can help uncover assumptions, build capacity, and help develop solutions to achieve engagement equity. Adopting the theory of environmental

citizenship (Corner and Randal, 2011), where public participation is a fundamental principle to achieve sustainability, can help TransformTO prioritize its next engagement phase.

First, TransformTO must recognize some of the profound challenges that race, ethnic background, age, ability and socioeconomic status represent in the engagement process. Participants of the Equity Engagement Survey, for instance, identified systematic discrimination as the third most salient barrier for the engagement of equity seeking groups.

An equity expert interviewed for this research, stated that knowledge about climate change burdens and potential mitigation actions, was appropriated by privileged groups. While these usual suspects also have an important role to play in climate

1

Recognize Challenges

- Competing Priorities
- Lack of financial resources
- Systematic Discrimination

2

Explore Community Knowledge

- Foster a sense of ownership
- Adopt an expansive view of community to include diverse groups

Based on Equity Engagement Survey

change dialogues, engagement platforms must help address power dynamics through specialized activities.

Second, the process can help elevate community expertise and foster a sense of ownership, adopting an expansive view of community that includes segments of society that are not openly included in consultations. This principle helps encourage marginalized groups to learn about climate change issues and take action.

Third, TransformTO has the opportunity of intentionally creating an approach that blends technical knowledge with community expertise. The acknowledgement that anecdotal information is a valid form of knowledge, will gear incredibly creative outputs contributing to climate change solutions. Power dynamics equalize when participants become the experts through creative activities, as recognized by interviewees for this project.

Lastly, participatory engagement involves ongoing conversations. Platforms that address this principle can significantly

help TransformTO maintain a continuous relationship with various communities. When subsequent phases of the modelling and engagement processes are rolled out, those who TransformTO continuously interacts with and learns from, will help shape the degree of implementation of the plan.

Some participatory engagement exercises for TransformTO include:

Community Learning and Dialogue

- Participatory Emissions Budgeting
- Story Mapping
- Own the Strategy
- Online Games

Building Enthusiasm

- Arts as a method of engagement
- Participatory workshops
- Arts Installations

“

The professionalization of many campaigning (and engagement) approaches, actually reinforces existing relations of power and inequality, rather than providing a space for them to be challenged.
(Corner and Randall, 2011)

”

3

Combine Expertise

- Blend technical knowledge with community expertise
- Use anecdotal knowledge through creative participatory engagement

4

Establish Ongoing Conversations

- Use different platforms to keep the momentum going
- Aim at maintaining a continuous relationship with participants and community members

Participatory Emissions Budgeting

Adapting participatory budgeting methods to evaluate carbon reduction actions, allows the public to prioritize in a very realistic way about possible futures. It encourages participants to weigh different priorities, and ultimately build a much deeper understanding about the types of trade-offs the City will undertake in wake of TransformTO recommendations.

PEB as a new form of dialogue

This activity can introduce the issue of climate change in a way that requires participants to trade off greenhouse gas emissions with other policy goals, fostering creative problem-solving.

“

Participation needs to be designed to produce an answer. When climate change is the explicit question, it gears biased results and draws participants that may already have a pro-environmental mentality. Using alternative engagement methods, such as PEB, allows participants to build sensitivity to climate change issues. (Cohen, 2012)

”

Case Study: Degrees of Change UK

An example of Participatory Emissions Budgeting:
www.degreesofchange.co.uk

The portal provides an imaginary £10,000.000 to be invested in a choice between 12 different carbon-reducing actions divided in two sections. Some actions are about improving UCL's infrastructure and others support behavioural change for students and staff. Participants spend their budget on activities that they believe should be prioritized at UCL.

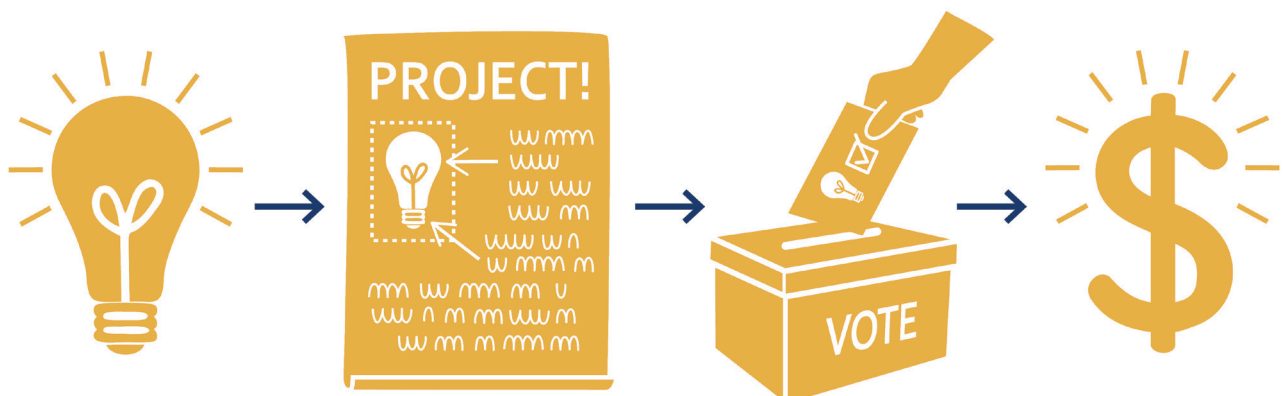


Image by Devi Lockwood

Own the Strategy

Publicizing current efforts led by Torontonians in their daily lives, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can help build powerful examples to follow. Using online platforms or developing an expo event, can also shed light on local heroes who undertake projects that make a difference in the city.



Photo: Keith Beaty /Toronto Star

Different types of knowledge exist within ethnic and aboriginal communities, who value resources differently, consuming less energy and water, as well as limiting car uses and other types of carbon generating activities. This dormant experience is very valuable to motivate and empower others to take action and reduce their carbon footprint.

Success cases help build awareness about the potential of individual contributions to help achieve 80 by 50 goals. As an added co-benefit, TransformTO can continue building its own brand by using social innovation as a way of reaching unsuspecting audiences.

Case Study: 430 McLevin Avenue

The 430 McLevin Av Condo has been publicized by major news outlets and celebrated by the City of Toronto. This case shows how the ingenuity of a building superintendent helped raise awareness about waste generation, encouraging residents to increase diversion rates at the Toronto condo. Cases like this should be widely celebrated and accounted for in TransformTO engagement activities.

“In our community, there is a deep tie to the environment that is so dismissed: People from different backgrounds feel a strong tie with the land.. We came from agrarian societies that support policies that protect the water, trees, and land, even with the costs associated. They understand the psychological benefits of preserving the earth, as well as the health benefits...That view is not well understood in the larger equity movement.”

- Gould, 2015

Games

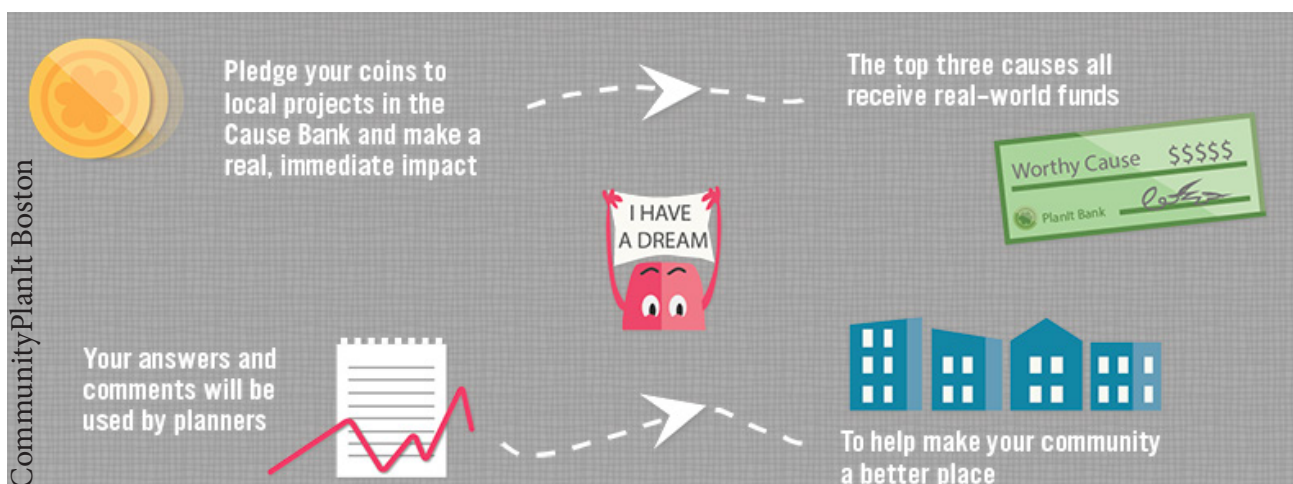
New online platforms merge participatory planning exercises with games. These activities cultivate a kind of procedural literacy that makes players aware of systems and how they can interact with them (Gordon and Baldwin, 2014).

Case Study: Greenovate Boston

The CommunityPlanIt platform was used by Greenovate Boston to engage residents in a visioning exercise to inform the city's climate action plan and advance climate change preparedness in Boston. Participants earned points, accomplished various obstacles, and provided significant feedback to develop the Climate Smart Boston initiative.

Games can help re-build trust between municipal agencies and the public, allow people to provide community feedback, and awaken interest from a variety of stakeholders.

These platforms are ideal to reach youths who are typically marginalized from traditional municipal planning processes. A complementary in-person meeting can serve as a form of deliberation for participants at the end of the game.



Art Interventions

There are many forms of art that can help TransformTO build enthusiasm and momentum. Citizens can be made aware of climate challenges in the City and potential opportunities to help develop a sustainable future.

Unsuspecting subjects who are unaware of the City's climate action projects, require a variety of interventions to learn about the topic and support the implementation phase. Collaboration with Universities and other potential creative partners can help the project generate new ideas and recruit potential artists to co-create these interventions.



Cree Artist Steve Cardinal
Photo by: Vancouver Arts Council

“Through art we reframe experience, offset prejudice, and refresh our perception of what’s possible so that it seems new and worthy of attention. Through humanistic interpretation, we share the civic effect. Interpretative skills can lead to informed judgments, appreciation of the historical context, and effective communication”

Doris Sommers - The Work of Art in the World

Workshops and Arts Installations

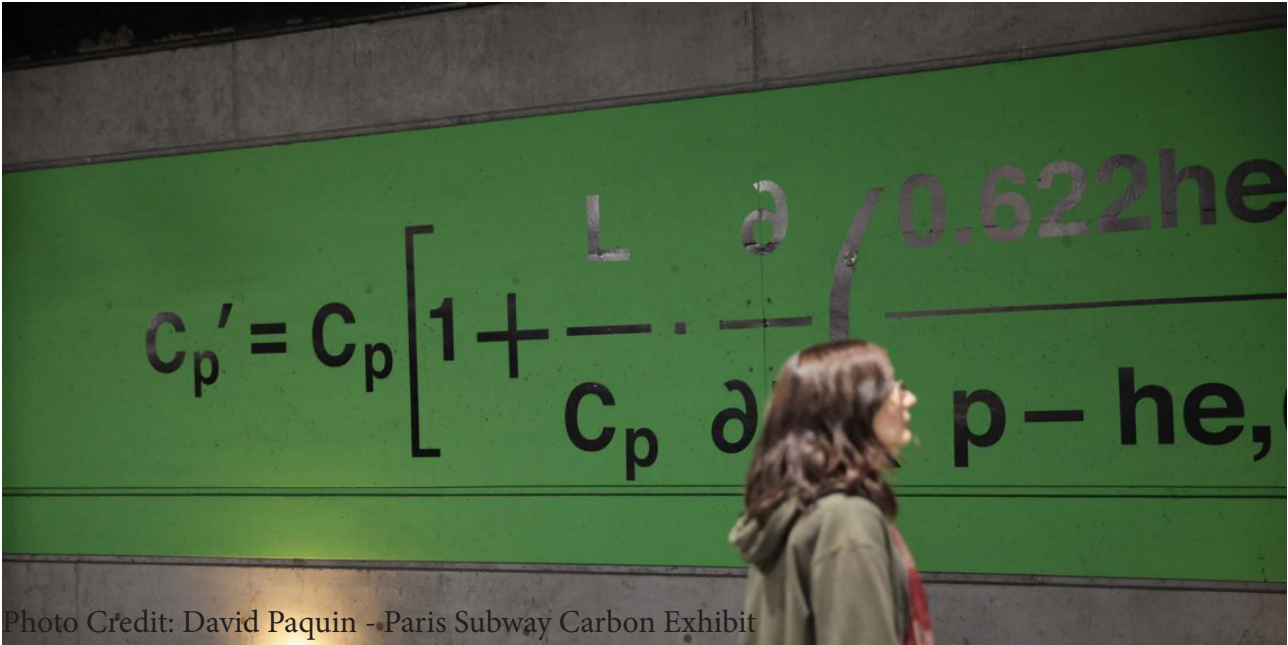


Photo Credit: David Paquin - Paris Subway Carbon Exhibit

The ArtCOP21 connects global communities to address the climate challenge through installations, plays, exhibitions and other cultural events: www.artcop21.com.

Participatory arts workshops can increase climate change literacy and help Torontonians better interpret the issue and relate it to their personal lives. This can also provide the necessary motivation to take small actions locally and spread the message across diverse communities.

Cree artists Steve Cardinal attached a giant dream catcher onto a large tent structure during a workshop, where people would collectively write dreams for their community.

Art installations can be also be thought provoking and serve as a vehicle for TransformTO to reach a very significant number of Torontonians in a socially innovative manner.

Artists can contribute to the co-creation of new engagement tools that are both surprising and innovative, developing the necessary platform for TransformTO to leverage the project's emission reduction messages to achieve a sustainable Toronto.

7. Overview First Engagement Phase



TalkTransformation

400 attendees during the TalkTransformation events held in Toronto

70 key stakeholders engaged at the Centre for Social Innovation

500 attendees at the TransformTO Conversations



Online Engagement

200 individual responses for the TransformTO workbook.

10,000 Website Visits

700 Newsletter Subscribers

1800 Social Media Connections



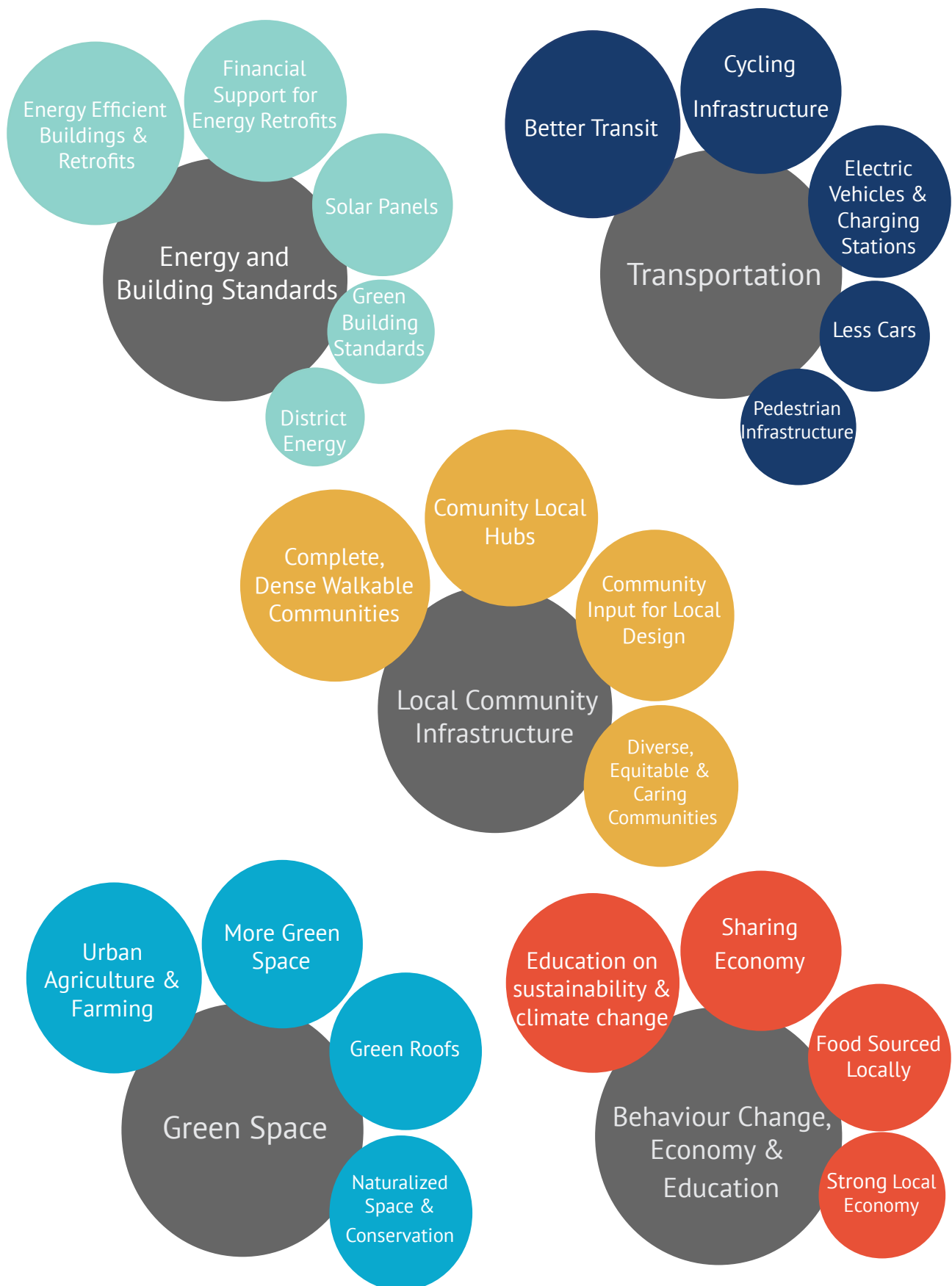
Outreach

700 residents engaged through outreach and community presentations.

TransformTO actively participated in various community meetings

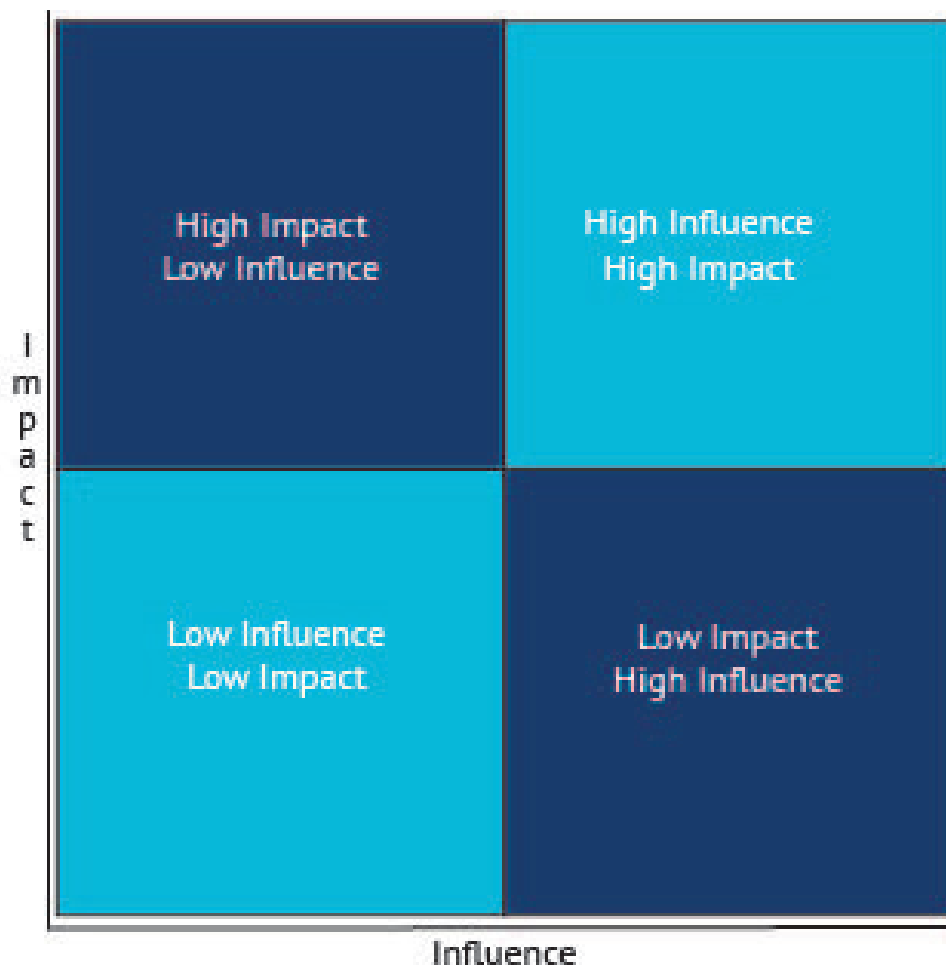
Key outreach at various community events

Engagement Highlights



8. Engagement Quadrant

The quadrant below helps TransformTO visualize the power dynamics among different stakeholders with relation to climate action, helping direct resources where they are needed the most. It also calls for the diversification of engagement methods, to reach groups using mechanisms that can be well understood by the diverging interests across the quadrant.



Engagement is not only a tool to gather inputs, it can also serve as a corrective measure that allows diverse groups to learn about climate change and contribute to the co-creation of climate actions for a sustainable future.



Eggcident, an Art Exhibit by Henk Hofstra



COP Paris 2015 Green Zone

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