

**Ward 17 Let's TransformTO Brainstorm for a
Sustainable City
Community Consultation Report
June 7, 2016; Dufferin/St Clair Library**

Welcome from Councillor Palacio

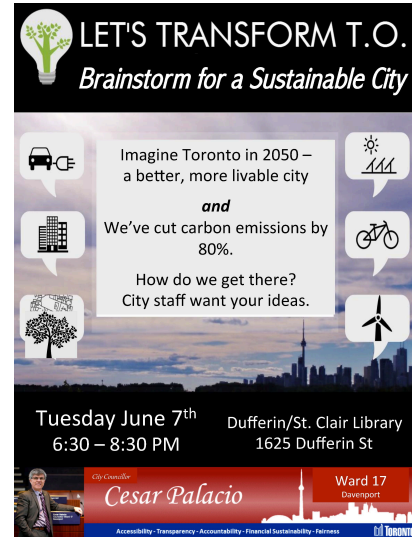
The meeting opened with a welcome from **Anthony Ferrari from Councillor Palacio's Ward 17 constituency office**. Anthony relayed Councillor Palacio's regrets that he was unable to attend the meeting due to an unexpected extension in City Councillor deliberations that day.

Anthony conveyed the Councillor's concern about the effects of Climate Change on Ward 17 including flooding during extreme weather events. To address this issue, a storage tank has been constructed under Charles Caccia Park to protect homes in this particularly low-lying area. Anthony also encouraged residents to take steps to protect their own properties by installing back-flow preventers, sump pumps, and improving drainage (for which the City offers [financial subsidies](#)). Anthony also described "[The Toronto Green Standard](#)", a two-tier set system promoting sustainable building design. Tier 1 is required for new construction in Toronto and Tier 2 is a higher, voluntary level with a financial incentive (partial refund on Development Charges).

Goals of TransformTO

Linda Swanston from the City's Environment and Energy Department, then presented the goals of the City's TransformTO initiative and its community consultation process. The City of Toronto's goal, like that of many megacities worldwide (e.g. [C40](#)), is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 levels by the year 2050. This ambitious target is needed to contain the world's temperature rise below 2°C ([IPCC 2014 Climate Change Report](#)). Although still 34 years away, Linda pointed out that policy decisions in the next 5 years are crucial to set Toronto on a low carbon pathway that will prevent our being 'locked-in' by long-term high carbon infrastructure.

Linda reported that Toronto is doing well so far, and has already almost reached its goal of a 30% reduction in GHG emissions by 2020. Ending the use of coal in electricity production in Ontario played a big role in this success, along with other relatively cheap and easy actions. To continue reducing GHG emissions to achieve the -80% goal will require big changes in the ways that Torontonians live, travel, work and consume goods and services in the City. TransformTO has an additional and loftier goal – it is seeking changes that will also create a more prosperous, healthy and equitable Toronto. To achieve the necessary transformative change, ideas and advice from the community are being sought in meetings like ours in Ward 17.



Community Consultation - Brainstorm for a Sustainable City

Paul Antze and Lee Adamson (residents of Ward 17) led the 14 participants from the community in a brainstorming session. The session starting with a visioning exercise, where participants imagined what Toronto in 2050 would look like after successfully reducing GHG emissions by 80% and creating a healthier, more prosperous and equitable city.

Here's the vision ...

- More green spaces, more trees, cleaner air
- Quieter, less noise pollution from vehicles
- More people walking, biking, and using transit
- Roadways not just for cars anymore, more space for pedestrians, bikes, and greenery
- A city of villages, where streets are 'complete' so people can walk to the shops and services they need, more small independent businesses
- Green laneways, green driveways/parking lots (e.g. permeable pavement), more green roofs
- High population density with more low-rise, fewer massive high rises
- Better transit, better train service to communities outside Toronto
- Energy retrofits for high rises and especially low income housing to increase energy efficiency and increase equity at the same time
- Better community housing for seniors, better accessibility

Participants were then asked to generate ideas about how Toronto could achieve the vision. Ideas were grouped into 3 discussion topics, and each one was discussed in turn as summarized below.

1. TRANSIT AND TRAINS

Identified problem:

Too much impermeable, non-green space allocated to gas-powered vehicles (i.e. roads, parking lots), congestion/traffic jams.

Proposed solution:

Energy efficient, clean, affordable, convenient transportation options downtown and to surrounding communities.

Brainstorming ideas:

- Recognize the need to pay for better transit, funds used are a critical investment for the future

- Change system for transportation development to peer-reviewed planning by qualified professionals, lock-in long term planning, remove susceptibility to election cycles and political interference
- Charge developers more to better recover costs of “externalities” including transit expansion for new residents in developments
- Impose downtown congestion road tolls (like those in London UK)
- Electrify transport to reduce GHG emissions
- Integrate transportation across regions to make travel time efficient and convenient
- Promote local schools and kids walking to school to end traffic congestion in school zones
- Provide free transit for older kids to reduce car use, promote transit habit
- Improve reliability of transit, create redundancy so transit problems are not so catastrophic (riders have route options)
- Increase construction curb-lane closure fees so companies have greater incentive to shorten closure times (to reduce impact on transportation)
- Increase train service to communities outside Toronto

2. TREES AND GREEN SPACE

Identified problem:

Too much impermeable, non-green space is unpleasant and unhealthy for people’s mental state, and also promotes flooding

Proposed solution:

Increase green space by creating pedestrian malls and community gardens, planting more trees, transforming paved courtyards, roofs and laneways into greener spaces.

Brainstorming ideas:

- Create pedestrian malls downtown, no cars allowed so creates room for green space and pedestrians
- Create a community hub on King Street, block cars but allow streetcars
- Big bank plazas are largely paved, make them green spaces
- Create more green roofs, rooftop parks, green laneways
- Mandate bigger set backs for new developments so there’s room for bigger sidewalks and green spaces, ensure they are constructed in such a way that trees can thrive
- Create more community gardens and urban farms for more locally sourced food
- Transform Earls Court Park into a community hub (e.g. like Wychwood Barns, which has the Farmer’s Market and the Stop’s greenhouse & gardens)

- Provide advice to property owners about whether a green roof is feasible on their building, whether they would qualify for the City's "[eco-roof incentive program](#)"; could enlarge program to include other aspects of energy efficiency etc. (advice from City 'green teams' would be paid for by the resident)
- Make planting a tree in front of all homes an expectation, use education, peer-pressure, and expand the [adopt-a-tree](#) program to include front yard trees

3. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Identified problems:

1. Lack of local businesses and green spaces create need to travel long distances for goods, services and recreation.
2. Run-down, energy inefficient buildings create 'ghettos'.

Proposed solution:

1. Use the built environment to reduce the need to travel to needed goods, services and recreation by promoting 'complete' communities.
2. Upgrade new and existing buildings to be more energy efficient and cheaper to maintain.

Brainstorming ideas:

1. Complete Communities
 - Goods, services and recreation facilities (including green spaces) need to be close to buildings where people live
 - Create multigenerational buildings that provide services and care for seniors, incorporate daycare and after school care programs (where seniors can volunteer time)
 - Mix market value and subsidized housing together to avoid ghettos
 - Promote small, local businesses with character, use tax incentives to draw businesses to neighbourhoods where their goods or services are needed, implement a tax regime to enable small businesses to compete
 - Create vibrant community hubs in neighbourhoods for health, fitness, creative arts, local innovation
2. Buildings
 - Require energy efficiency and energy generation on all new buildings
 - Enforce green standards for building renovations and when resurfacing driveways
 - Upgrade social housing to create employment, improve energy efficiency, and promote equity
 - Promote the use of white on rooftops (or convertible rooftop colours – white in summer, black in winter) to reduce energy costs

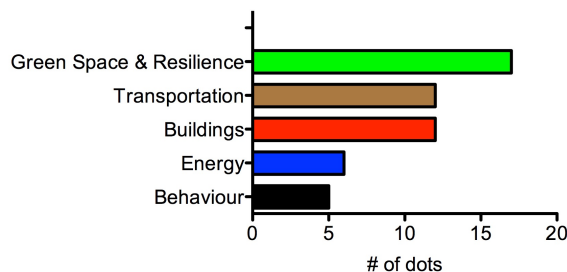
Ward 17 “Dotmocracy” interactive results

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 17 community.

Participants identified ‘**Green Space & Resilience**’ as their top priority category. Their top action priority was to ‘**Plant more trees**’ with ‘**Improve public transit (accessibility, affordability reliability)**’ and ‘**Require energy retrofits to existing buildings**’ tying for second place.



Ward 17 Dots/category (June-7-2016)



Ward 17's top priority for City (June-7-2016)

