

# Jane Finch Initiative Ideas Booklet: Climate Action



**This is one of 12 booklets that summarizes the Jane Finch Initiative Ideas Report. Booklet topics:**



- Arts & Culture
- Climate action
- Community Service Facilities
- Heritage
- Housing
- Inclusive employment opportunities
- Inclusive entrepreneurship opportunities
- Land use, built form, and urban design
- Mobility: getting around
- Parks & public spaces
- Resources, partnerships and governance
- Social development

**The Jane Finch Initiative is a resident-informed project to plan for the future of the area- so that residents, local groups and businesses are supported as the area changes over time with the opening of the Finch West Light Rail Transit.**

# Climate Action -

**Vision for the future: Buildings, streetscapes, parks, open spaces and infrastructure are all designed to support achieving net zero emissions, climate adaptation and resilience by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, supporting biodiversity and reducing vulnerability to extreme weather.**

Our climate is changing. In Toronto, we are anticipating fewer but more intense rainfall events in the spring and summer, more heat waves in the summer, and winters that are generally warmer and milder. To adapt to these changes within the Jane and Finch area, we will need to design buildings, infrastructure and landscapes to be resilient to new weather patterns.

## **1. Encourage new development to build better and plan for net zero emissions.**

Roughly 90% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Toronto are the result of burning fossil fuels to heat buildings and move us around. However, Ontario's electricity grid is over 90% emissions free; therefore Toronto's most direct path to net zero emissions is electrification of both buildings and transportation. The City of Toronto leads by example by ensuring all new City-owned buildings achieve net-zero emissions now. Increasing mode-share of public transit, cycling and walking is the top priority when it comes to reducing emissions related to transportation.

### Ideas

- Encourage development to meet or exceed the highest performance level of the Toronto Green Standard (TGS) and achieve zero emissions.
- Encourage applicants to pursue local energy solutions in their developments through feedback on the Net Zero Emissions Strategy that is required as part of the development application process.
- Encourage low-carbon heating and cooling in new developments through the use of renewable thermal energy sources, such as wastewater heat, at both the building and district-scale.
- Encourage the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in existing buildings and in public parking areas.

## **2. Encourage the retrofit of existing buildings.**

A key climate action strategy is to effectively improve, repair, enhance and reuse existing structures, rather than wasting their materials by adding them to landfill and then using new materials to build.

- Encourage deep retrofits, including electrification, of existing buildings as a condition of new construction on-site.
- Implement strategies to increase the diversion of waste from landfills within multi-unit residential buildings, which typically have much lower rates of recycling and composting compared to single family houses.

### **3. Design streets and public spaces for adaptation and resilience and to support biodiversity.**

Both public and private outdoor spaces can help fight climate change by planting trees and gardens and by creating safe and comfortable spaces for people to be outside during heat waves. Toronto's urban forest is a critical component of the city's green infrastructure. The Tree Equity Score is a description of the tree canopy gap with an equity lens. The tree equity score can help cities assess how well they are delivering equitable tree canopy cover to all residents. To mitigate the impact of extreme weather, plans also need to be in place to both manage stormwater to reduce flood risk and to mitigate heat. Biodiversity and seasonal movement of migrating species can be supported by creating habitats, planting a variety of non-invasive species, including on rooftops, and designing buildings to be bird friendly.

- Design a public realm network that is transit-supportive by providing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that encourages active transportation.
- Require development to plan for extreme weather through the integration of green infrastructure including adequate soil volume for new trees, retention of 100 per cent of rainfall and snowmelt.
- Plan for streetscape improvements to provide adequate soil volume for each tree, as informed by design standards developed by the City, including the Toronto Green Standard.
- Plan streetscape improvements to minimize urban heat island impacts by providing opportunities for shade, maximizing the use of soft landscaping and the use of reflective surface materials.
- Encourage development to incorporate biodiversity where possible through building design and landscaping.
- Identify parts of the study area that are more vulnerable to extreme heat and/or with low tree equity and prioritize these areas for investment in trees on both public and private land.
- Plan to for the incorporation of green infrastructure in the design of parks and streets and in improvements to other aspects of the public realm.

# Jane Finch Initiative

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**We want to hear what you think of these ideas – are we on the right track? What's missing? What could be better?**



Send us an email us at [janefinch@toronto.ca](mailto:janefinch@toronto.ca).



Find out more about the Jane Finch Initiative at [toronto.ca/janefinch](https://toronto.ca/janefinch), or scan the QR code below.



Give us a call at 416-338-0775.

