

NEIGHBOURHOOD CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT

Let's #TransformTO Together!



! IMPORTANT

COVID-19 INFORMATION

- Ensure that you follow local and provincial COVID-19 guidelines in place to reduce virus spread. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is strongly recommended to host virtual meetings. If you choose to host an in-person meeting, do so outdoors and ensure you and your participants follow public health recommendations, including staying home if sick, maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres/six feet, practicing hand hygiene, etc. [Learn more](#)
- Recruiting through door knocking and face-to-face interactions is not recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic. The best way to find other people to join your initiative may be through your existing contacts, such as family, neighbourhood friends, neighbourhood groups, resident associations, school groups, etc. Use alternate methods to contact people such as telephone, emails, social media, local advertisements etc. and follow current public health advice.

We would like to acknowledge GreenBloc Vancouver, Greenovate Boston, Sustainable Cleveland, Portland State University, Climate Outreach, and Carbon Conversations; the toolkits they created provided ideas and inspiration for this document.

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2020

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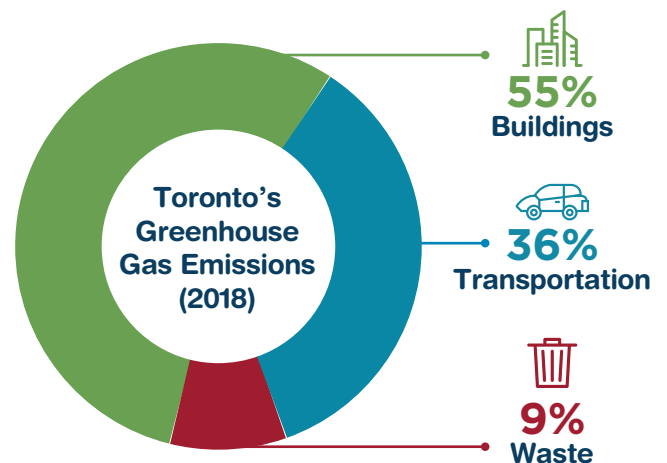
INTRODUCTION

In July 2017, Toronto City Council unanimously approved TransformTO, Toronto's ambitious climate action strategy. The City's vision for a low-carbon future is one that not only reduces our emissions, but one that achieves multiple community-wide priorities including poverty reduction, good quality jobs, healthy communities, and increased resilience to extreme weather.

The TransformTO strategy includes short and long-term actions to meet the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets of 65 per cent by 2030, and net zero by 2050, or sooner.

Meeting these targets will require big changes in how we live, work, build, travel, and more.

Toronto's community-wide GHG inventory consists of all direct and some indirect GHG emissions from three major sectors - buildings, transportation, and waste.



TransformTO GOALS:

100% 

of all new buildings will be built to produce near-zero GHG emissions by 2030

100% 

of all existing buildings will have been retrofitted to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050



We will have advanced towards a zero waste circular economy by 2050

100% 

of all vehicles in Toronto will use low-carbon energy by 2050

At least **30%** 

of total floor space across Toronto will be connected to low-carbon heating and cooling energy by 2050

75% 

of trips under 5km will be walked or biked by 2050

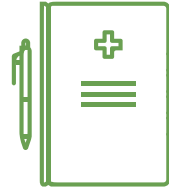
GUIDING PRINCIPLES:



Advance social equity



Protect low-income residents



Improve public health



Enhance and strengthen the local economy



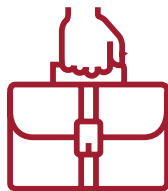
Contribute to poverty reduction



Improve affordability particularly for vulnerable population



Create resilient communities



Maintain and create good quality local jobs

RESIDENT PERCEPTIONS

In 2018, the City commissioned a survey to capture residents' perceptions on climate change and to better understand their willingness to take action in the community.

Survey highlights:

- 78% of respondents are concerned about climate change in Toronto
- 92% agree that climate change threatens personal health and wellbeing
- 82% believe there is a link between climate change and extreme weather events
- 91% agree that everyone needs to reduce their emissions.

While these survey results are encouraging, the survey also found that 48% of residents don't know what they can do to address climate change. Further, nearly a quarter of people expressed a feeling of helplessness in that they believe there is nothing a resident can do that will make a difference. The thought of making individual lifestyle changes to address the global issue of climate change is overwhelming for many.



78%

are concerned about climate change and its effects on Toronto and the GTA



82%

recognize that there is a link between climate change and extreme weather events



92%

agree that climate change threatens personal health and well-being



91%

agree that everyone needs to reduce their emissions, myself included

However...



48%

don't know what they can do to address climate change

NEIGHBOURHOOD CLIMATE ACTION CHAMPIONS

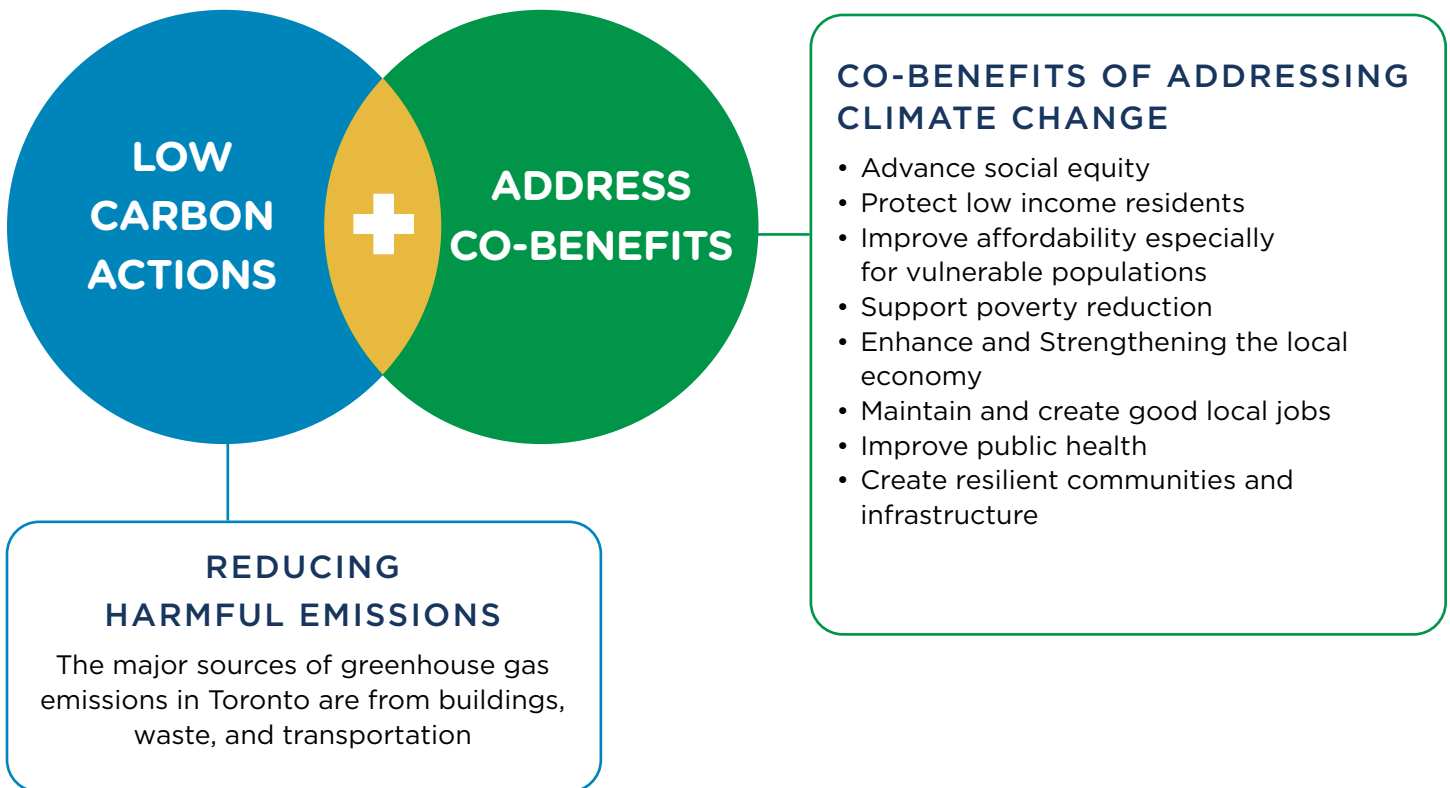
The Neighbourhood Climate Action Champions program was created to cultivate local neighbourhood leaders to inspire, motivate, educate and encourage residents to undertake community-focused climate actions together. Your role is to empower neighbourhood residents to reduce the carbon footprint of their neighbourhood by developing innovative local climate action projects that support the diverse values and needs of the community.

This toolkit will help guide you to inspire neighbourhood-based climate action.



CLIMATE ACTION ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

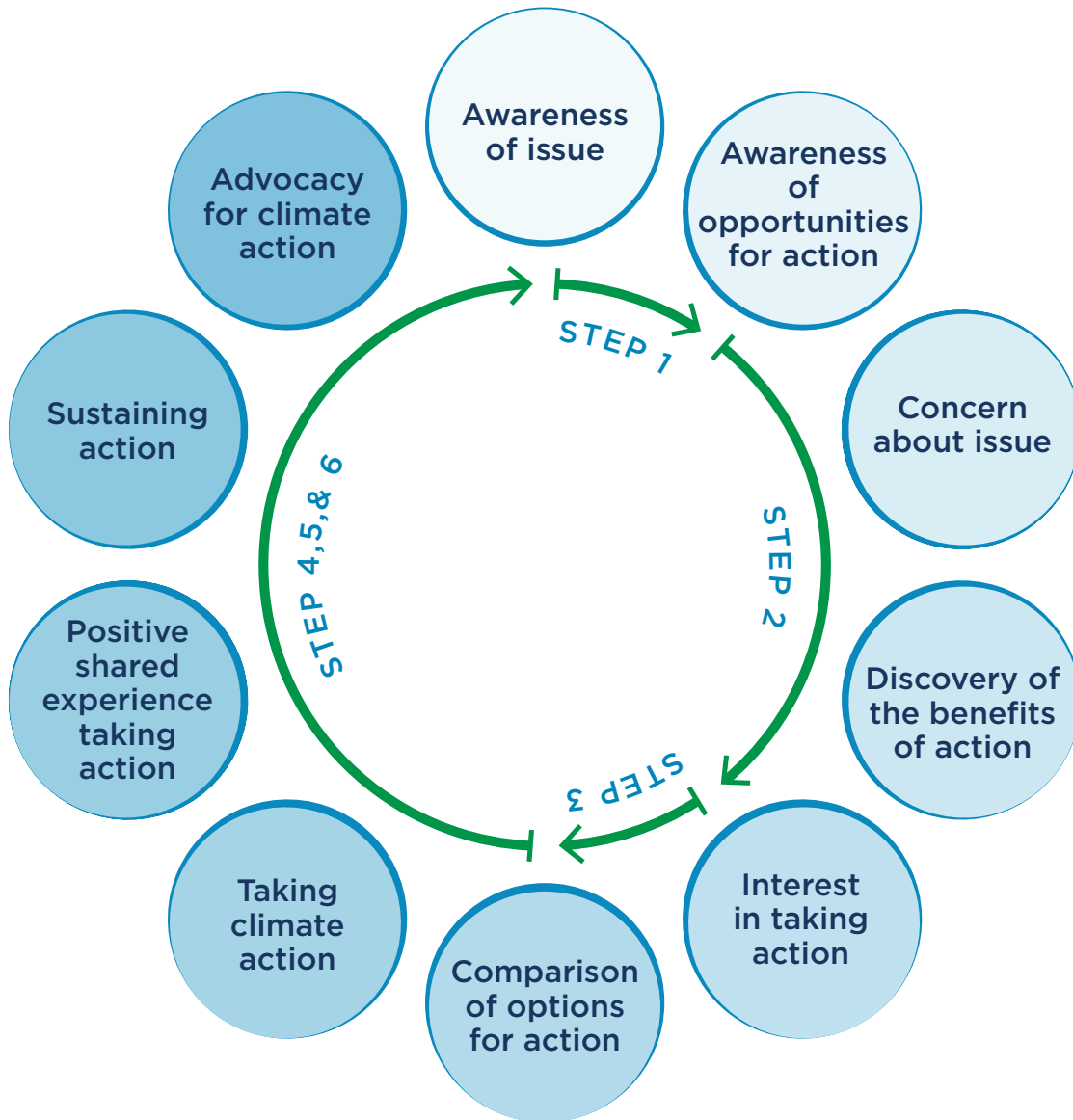
When designing and delivering climate action projects, it is important to remember that the actions taken should reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our city and deliver co-benefits such as improved health, equity and prosperity. They should also reflect TransformTO's Guiding Principles.



THE FRAMEWORK: 6 STEPS OF RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

The climate action team at the City of Toronto have adapted the Experience Design cycle, used in design fields to shift a user into new behaviours, as a framework

for climate action engagement. This toolkit consolidates the stages of the cycle into six steps for neighbourhood engagement and climate action.



- STEP 1:** Recruit and Organize a Neighbourhood Group
- STEP 2:** Educate and Discuss Climate Change
- STEP 3:** Identify Neighbourhood's Needs and Priorities
- STEP 4:** Develop Neighbourhood Climate Action Projects/Initiatives
- STEP 5:** Create a Project Evaluation Plan
- STEP 6:** Project Implementation, Progress Measurement, and Evaluation



YOUR ROLE AS A NEIGHBOURHOOD CLIMATE ACTION CHAMPION

Through TransformTO, the City has set ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to meet by 2050. The only way to reach these targets is if everyone, including individuals and neighbourhoods, businesses and the City government, take action to reduce their carbon impact. While the City provides information and tips on how to take action on climate change, behaviour change is more likely to happen if the message comes from a neighbour or friend¹.

Your role as a Neighbourhood Climate Action Champion is to start conversations and bring neighbourhood members together to lower your community's carbon footprint as a group. When people see their peers, friends, or neighbours engage in a certain behaviour, they are more likely to do the same.

AS A NEIGHBOURHOOD CLIMATE ACTION CHAMPION YOU WILL:

- **COMMUNICATE** and educate residents about environmental and climate-related topics and issues. Lead constructive and interesting conversations about the challenges of climate change and potential solutions.
- **COLLABORATE** with residents to develop neighbourhood-focused climate action projects that reflect the diverse values and needs of the community.
- **CONNECT** and inspire a broad group of neighbourhood residents to take part in climate action to reduce their carbon footprint.
- **CONTRIBUTE** to advancing the City's TransformTO climate action strategy and reducing local greenhouse gas emissions.



Engaging people in your community will be a fluid process. It will not necessarily follow the linear steps proposed below. Each Champion's journey will be different.

The following sections of the toolkit are meant to provide guidance to help you successfully engage your neighbourhood residents in climate action.

¹Whitmarsh, L., & Corner, A. (2017). Tools for a new climate conversation: A mixed-methods study of language for public engagement across the political spectrum. *Global Environmental Change*, 42, 122-135. doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2016.12.008



STEP ONE

RECRUIT AND ORGANIZE A NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP

It may be challenging - and rewarding - to find residents in your neighbourhood to join you in climate action. People may not think they have the time or commitment to engage in something new. Recruiting through door knocking and face-to-face interactions is not recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic. The best way to find other people to join your initiative may be through your existing contacts, such as family, neighbourhood friends, neighbourhood groups, resident associations, school groups, etc. Use alternate methods to contact people such as telephone, emails, social media, local

advertisements etc. and follow current public health advice. Begin with the people you know and then move on to engaging the broader community. It is important to be inclusive and reach out to all members of your neighbourhood. Everyone has a part to play in climate action.

START RECRUITING

Meet virtually with your friends or other interested residents to talk about climate change, the needs of your community, and generate ideas for action. Then, when you've gotten some positive feedback and know that people may be interested in

meeting to talk further, plan a virtual kick-off meeting to engage even more people in your neighbourhood.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have included sample social media posts that you can share with your networks to help spread the word. We also have sample flyers which you may be able to display at your local community centre, library, schools, elevators, or a shared bulletin board in your community.

WHAT TO SAY

To help you pitch your initiative to others, here's a sample script that you can customize to suit your own style:

“Hi, my name is [NAME], and I live in your neighbourhood. I am working with the City of Toronto as a Climate Action Champion in our community and my role is to bring together residents who want to do something about climate change. The goal is to create neighbourhood-focused projects that address climate change and benefit our community in other ways as well. If you are interested, I am holding a drop-in event/webinar [at the park/community centre/library] on [DATE] and it would be great if you could join us. I have a few ideas, and I'd like to hear your ideas as well. Here is my contact information. Thanks for taking the time to listen. Have a great day and I hope to hear from you.”

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

As you recruit people to join your group, make sure you also take the time to learn more about your community. A good neighbourhood champion knows their neighbourhood well. Don't assume that you understand your neighbourhood's needs and priorities. Listen. Make sure you are connected to what's going on in your neighbourhood already:

- Subscribe to your local councillor's newsletter and attend any community events they may be hosting (virtually or in-person). Don't be shy to email your councillor's office to ask to be connected to other similar organizations or events in your neighbourhood.
- The City's Let's TransformTO website will be launching soon. You will be able to learn about other local environmental organizations in your area.
- Connect with your local community centre, or any key agencies in your neighbourhood, to ask if there are other environmental groups in your community.
- Read your local community paper to find events already taking place in your neighbourhood.
- Check out [Toronto's Neighbourhood Profile Map](#) to learn more about the demographics of your neighbourhood.



STEP TWO

EDUCATE RESIDENTS AND DISCUSS CLIMATE CHANGE

At this time, please ensure that you follow local and provincial COVID-19 guidelines in place to reduce virus spread. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is strongly recommended to host virtual meetings. If you choose to host an in-person meeting, do so outdoors and ensure you and your participants follow public health recommendations, including staying home if sick, maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres/six feet, practicing hand hygiene, etc. [Learn more](#)

Once you have gathered some participants from your neighbourhood - the more the merrier - it is time to host your kick-off meeting!

AT THE END OF STEP 2 YOU WILL HAVE:

- Created a network of people who are interested in neighbourhood-based climate action
- Connected with other environmental organizations in your community
- Educated the group about the basics of climate change
- Talked about the City's TransformTO strategy and net-zero emissions target
- Discussed what climate change and climate action means to each person
- Generated ideas that will reduce emissions and benefit your community

THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR MEETINGS

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- When sending a meeting invitation, remember to include both the meeting link and call-in number, in case your participants cannot access the meeting via a computer.
- If you have a large group and want to host a web meeting, you may want to host several smaller meetings instead. A maximum of 10 participants will make it easier for everyone to participate and have a chance to speak.

IN-PERSON MEETINGS (WHEN ALLOWED)

- Prepare a sign-in sheet to collect names/contact information and keep track of who attended.
- Provide nametags to help people get to know each other

Remember to send a follow-up email after each meeting with some notes and next steps.

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR KICK-OFF MEETING

5 MINUTES: WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Who you are and why we are here

- Introduce yourself and your role
- Give three reasons as to why you are here i.e. why climate action is important to you
- Give a brief introduction to the Neighbourhood Climate Action Champions program

KEY MESSAGE:

“I am part of a growing group of concerned community members who are being supported by the City of Toronto to start conversations like this one in neighbourhoods across the city. The goal is to increase understanding of risks we are facing from climate change, provide an opportunity to share ideas, and work together to take action in our neighbourhood.”

TIP: Make your introduction personal. Talk about why you are excited to be a leader and why are you hosting this meeting. Be brief, though. Try to limit it to three short statements.

10 TO 15 MINUTES: PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

Who are you, where do you live, how did you find out about today?

**10 MINUTES: CLIMATE SCIENCE & CLIMATE CHANGE
IN TORONTO - THE BASICS**

It is important to explain the science and background behind climate change so everyone is on the same page, but do it in a way that's easy to understand and accessible to all. Some participants might be interested in the detailed data, however, most want to know what it means for them personally. Your job is not to perfectly convey all the details of the science, economics, etc., but create a sense of relevance and possibility.

Please use the Basics of Climate Science presentation and refer to the facilitator notes.

20 MINUTES: TransformTO STRATEGY

- Run the Let's TransformTO Together video

Please use the TransformTO presentation and refer to the facilitator notes.

30 MINUTES: DISCUSSION - CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLIMATE ACTION

- Encourage people to talk about what climate change means to them and how it has impacted their lives
- Discuss what it means to take part in collective climate action and what outcomes each person would like to see
- Use the **REAL TALK** strategy, outlined below, to lead the discussion

10 MINUTES: CLOSING DISCUSSION - RECAP WITH THE GROUP:

- Discussions about climate action
- What are the next steps
- What happens at the next meeting and set next meeting date
- Encourage participants to recruit interested friends/ neighbours to attend the next meeting
- Finally, ask each person to respond to a few questions: what did you like about this meeting and what are you most excited about?

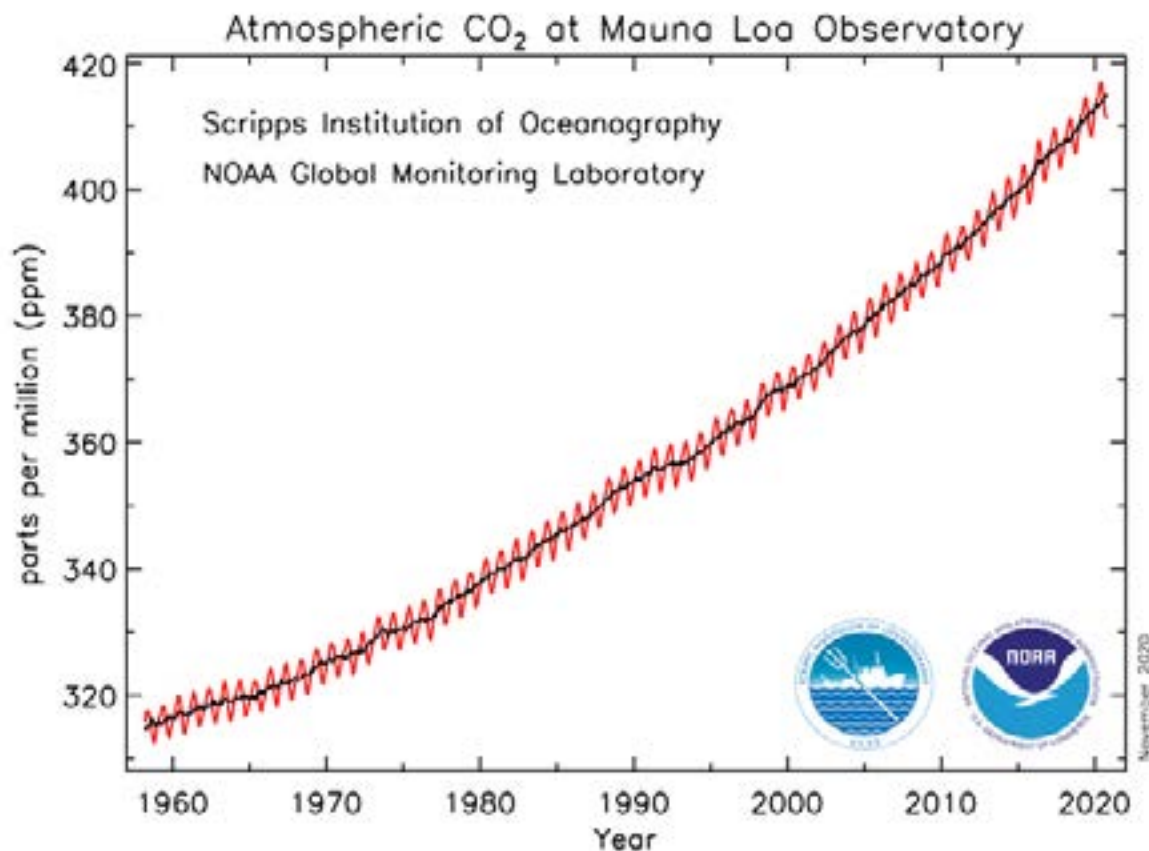


HOW TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE SCIENCE

There are a number of ways to talk about climate change. Different groups will have varying levels of knowledge and experience with climate change. We've compiled a few best-practices from leading climate change communication organizations to help you tailor your approach.

TRANSLATE SCIENTIFIC DATA INTO CONCRETE EVIDENCE

While we provide background information and data that supports the existence of climate change, some people may interpret the data differently. The example of the famous “Keeling Curve”, below, was used by the Center for Research on Environmental Decisions to illustrate this concept².



THE KEELING CURVE

²Center for Research on Environmental Decisions. (2009). *The Psychology of Climate Change Communication: A Guide for Scientists, Journalists, Educators, Political Aides, and the Interested Public*. New York.

They mention that while the scientific community is alarmed by the increase of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere from 1958 to 2006, the general public may view it as a slow increase and that climate change is not an urgent concern. The Keeling Curve may not motivate people to take action as the threat of climate change seems to be a distant risk.

Your goal is to try to turn the data into something memorable and impactful. It may be more effective to share your personal climate change experiences or talk about how daily life may be disrupted by climate change as it can evoke strong feelings in people.



TIPS FOR POSITIVE CLIMATE CHANGE CONVERSATIONS

“A ‘successful’ climate change conversation does not have to include dramatic moments of revelation, where someone who was initially skeptical about the problem suddenly changes their position.”
- Climate Outreach, UK

Talking about climate change and why you are concerned can be a challenge when the person you are talking to doesn't seem to care. You might find it helpful to let your conversation naturally lead to climate change by first talking about a different topic you have in common with that individual. One of the key tools to inciting behaviour change is to inspire individuals with personal experiences and positive examples rather than focusing on the need for people to stop doing things they enjoy. Instead of dwelling on what could happen if we don't do anything to address climate

change, try to focus on the solutions and actions we can all take.

The following are some core messages and topics that help engage people in talking about climate change:

- **EXTREME WEATHER:** Addressing climate change means protecting the things we love (nature, outdoors, community, property)
- **HEALTH:** The things that we can do to reduce climate change are also good for our health (healthy eating, cycling, walking more often, etc.)
- **MAKING TORONTO EVEN BETTER:** We can create jobs, save money, cut waste and pollution by accelerating the shift to clean, renewable energy and energy efficient buildings, and products and services.

Climate Outreach, a UK based organization, suggests following these REAL TALK tips in their [#TalkingClimate Handbook](#)³ when having conversations about climate change.

R

RESPECT YOUR CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER AND FIND COMMON GROUND

- Find out what you have in common with the person you are talking to and show them that you respect their concerns, priorities and values. Many people feel blamed and judged when they talk about climate change, which is likely to make them defensive or withdraw from the conversation.

E

ENJOY THE CONVERSATION

- If you enjoy yourself, you are far more likely to be authentically engaged with, and connected to, the person you are talking to. They are more likely to feel positive about the conversation too.

A

ASK QUESTIONS

- Ask open-ended questions which cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Give the person space to reflect on what they think, what they are worried about and what solutions they believe in.

L

LISTEN, AND SHOW YOU'VE HEARD

- Stop talking! Concentrate on genuinely listening to what the other person is really trying to say – and take the initiative to confirm that you've understood them correctly.

T

TELL YOUR STORIES

- Rather than lecturing your conversational partner about your own views, ask what climate change means to them. Give them the space to reflect on their own experiences and views on the issue.

A

ACTION MAKES IT EASIER (BUT DOESN'T FIX IT)

- Taking some kind of action on climate change can make conversations easier to start – and make it feel less overwhelming. People make decisions about their behaviour partly based on what others they respect and trust are doing, so your actions will influence others. That said, you may still struggle with the size of the problem, and it can help to acknowledge that.

L

LEARN FROM THE CONVERSATION

- See your conversation as a way to learn about how others think about climate change, about the topic itself - and about how to have a good conversation. Every climate exchange is a small experiment!

K

KEEP GOING AND KEEP CONNECTED

- Every climate change conversation you have is valuable. Keep having climate conversations, and seek community with others to support you!

To read more about the principles above, check out The [#TalkingClimate Handbook](#) by Climate Outreach.

³Webster, R. & Marshall, G. (2019) The #TalkingClimate Handbook. How to have conversations about climate change in your daily life. Oxford: Climate Outreach



CARBON CALCULATORS

Carbon calculators can be used to educate people who are new to the concept of carbon emissions and can help to inspire people to make lifestyle changes to reduce their carbon footprint⁴. These calculators measure the carbon emissions resulting from an activity or a set of activities⁵. There are many types of calculators that are publicly available and free to use. The simplest calculators provide emission values based on only energy-related activities. More complex calculators can allow for inputs of lifestyle or consumption behaviours such as food and travel⁴. There may be some variances between the results from different calculators as they provide estimates to help guide people on ways they can reduce their carbon emissions⁴.

You may want to hold a meeting after the kick-off to introduce carbon calculators to your group for more discussion around climate action. The objective of this activity is for neighbours to understand their results at both the individual and the neighbourhood level, so they will be ready to set personal and collective goals

and targets. We suggest that you ask members of your group to complete a carbon calculator during a meeting or on their own time and bring in their results for discussion. Make sure everyone is using the same carbon calculator so that the results are consistent. Break into groups, if possible, or ask each participant to discuss the following:

- If they found anything surprising about their result?
- What were their challenges and successes in calculating their carbon footprint?
- What did they become more conscious about as a result?

Here are a few examples of carbon calculators you can use:

[Project Neutral](#)

[CarbonZero](#)

[Carbon Tree](#)

[CoolClimate](#)

At the end of this exercise, ask each person to pledge to take ONE climate action before the next meeting.

⁴Mulrow, J., Machaj, K., Deanes, J., & Derrible, S. (2019). The state of carbon footprint calculators: An evaluation of calculator design and user interaction features. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 18, 33-40. doi:10.1016/j.spc.2018.12.001

⁵Wiedmann, T. and Minx, J. (2008). A Definition of 'Carbon Footprint'. In: C. C. Pertsova, *Ecological Economics Research Trends: Chapter 1*, pp. 1-11, Nova Science Publishers, Hauppauge NY, USA.



STEP THREE

IDENTIFY NEIGHBOURHOOD'S NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

After you have hosted your kick-off meeting (or two), it is time to bring the neighbourhood group together again to discuss how the community can take climate action together. Your primary role is to build a warm and inviting environment for conversation.

You are now at the point where you can lead your neighbourhood in designing and implementing one or more climate action projects! From this point forward, the toolkit will only provide a list of suggested activities as there are many different ways to support your group through this process. Feel free to have discussions over several meetings and incorporate your own creative activities. Each neighbourhood's understanding of

climate action will be different and it is not a race to see which neighbourhood can design and implement their project the fastest. It is important for you to cater your engagement to the demographics of your neighbourhood. Some neighbourhoods may need more time to understand how climate change affects them, whereas others may be ready to take action. Remember the **REAL TALK** format when facilitating discussions.

AT THE END OF STEP 3 YOU WILL HAVE:

- Potential meeting activities
- Discussed how climate change has impacted your community in the past and how it may affect your community in the future
- Identified your neighbourhood assets, needs/concerns, and priorities
- Discussed how your neighbourhood may be improved through action

The following are a few examples of discussions and activities for this step.



DISCUSSION

CLIMATE CHANGE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Ask participants to answer these questions individually and then share their thoughts:

- 1.** Do you think climate change and climate issues are relevant to residents of our neighbourhood?
- 2.** What other issues are important to our neighbourhood? What areas of concern or opportunity would resonate the most with your neighbours when it comes to climate change (e.g. health impacts, extreme weather, cost savings, waste, etc.)?
- 3.** What are the demographics of your neighbourhood? Do you think that their interest in climate change might differ based on age, background, gender, etc.?
- 4.** What changes in climate, or impacts of climate change have you seen in your neighbourhood over the past few decades? How have these changes impacted community life and individuals' lives?



ACTIVITY

IDENTIFY NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSETS, NEEDS, AND PRIORITIES

Break into groups or ask each person to fill out the following chart.
A printable chart is available in the resources folder.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSETS

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEEDS/ CONCERNS

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSETS:

What are your neighbourhood's greatest strengths? These can be physical assets (e.g., buildings, parks, rivers, homes, businesses, etc.) or practices and values (e.g., strong sense of family, caring about the outdoors, gardening knowledge going back generations, individual skills and talents, strong community organizations, cultural assets, etc.).

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEEDS/ CONCERNS:

What are the issues or concerns that residents care most about and that community organizations are mobilizing around (e.g., education, cultural heritage, economic development, community spaces, health, transportation, climate change, etc.)?

NEIGHBOURHOOD PRIORITIES

NEIGHBOURHOOD PRIORITIES:

Rank the top five neighbourhood priorities based on assets and needs. Think about how each priority may be addressed through climate action.

Ask each group/person to share their top five neighbourhood priorities, why each priority is important to them, and how they think each priority may be improved through climate action. Note any patterns that emerge from the discussions.

Results from this activity will be revisited in the next step to help develop neighbourhood climate action projects and initiatives.

STEP FOUR

DEVELOP NEIGHBOURHOOD CLIMATE ACTION PROJECTS/ INITIATIVES



Community projects are a great way to get residents involved in climate action. By engaging your neighbours in a common project, you can create a greater sense of community among residents who care about their neighbourhood and also feel accountable for their actions. This is a critical step towards sustaining climate action. As we know from evolutionary psychology and behavioural science, behaviour change is a shared or social experience; it is something we experience with each other⁶.

⁶Boyd, R., Richerson, P. J., & Henrich, J. (2011). The cultural niche: Why social learning is essential for human adaptation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108(Supplement 2), 10918-10925. doi:10.1073/pnas.1100290108

AT THE END OF STEP 4 YOU WILL HAVE:

- Reviewed neighbourhood goals and targets
- Developed an agreed upon collaborative project or one or more smaller projects/initiatives
- Created a list of specific tasks that will move the project(s) forward
- Assigned clear roles, responsibilities and timelines for action
- Developed a high level project budget and identify any resources or supports needed

It's a good idea to hold regular meetings with your group as you continue to plan and move towards implementing your project. Please see the list of potential meeting activities below. If you need assistance, City staff are always here to provide support!

POTENTIAL MEETING ACTIVITIES

The following are a few examples of discussions and activities for this step. Feel free to break up the meeting into several shorter meetings and incorporate your own creative activities. Remember to follow the **REAL TALK** format when facilitating discussions.



DISCUSSION

TransformTO AND YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

As a brief warm-up discussion, ask participants to use one or two words to describe what they love about living in their neighbourhood.

The TransformTO strategy sets out seven long-term low-carbon goals and eight guiding principles. After reviewing your neighbourhood assets, needs, and priorities from the last group activity, discuss the following:

Which of the TransformTO goals and guiding principles do you think community members might relate to most? Why? Share some specific community stories around these issues.

Note any patterns that emerge from the discussions.

BRAINSTORM CLIMATE ACTIONS PROJECTS

When brainstorming about potential climate action projects, consider projects that can be quick-wins, such as a one-time event, and others that can be sustained over a longer period of time. Consider projects that inspire individuals to adopt new behaviours, behaviours that will become a “new-normal”.

To help your group get started, you will find a list of project ideas for inspiration in Appendix A. Note that these ideas are just suggestions and we encourage each group to come up with their own innovative ideas.

Please feel free to contact the City’s Live Green Toronto team if you need help reaching out to speakers, getting resources and funding, or need any other assistance.

LIVE GREEN TORONTO CLIMATE ACTION CAMPAIGNS

Throughout the year, the City’s Live Green Toronto team hosts various climate action events and campaigns. Consider creating a community project around one of these city-wide campaigns and encourage your neighbourhood to participate. It could be an easy way to start working together. We will provide you with more details as each campaign is launched. [View a list of current Live Green Toronto events.](#)



ACTIVITY

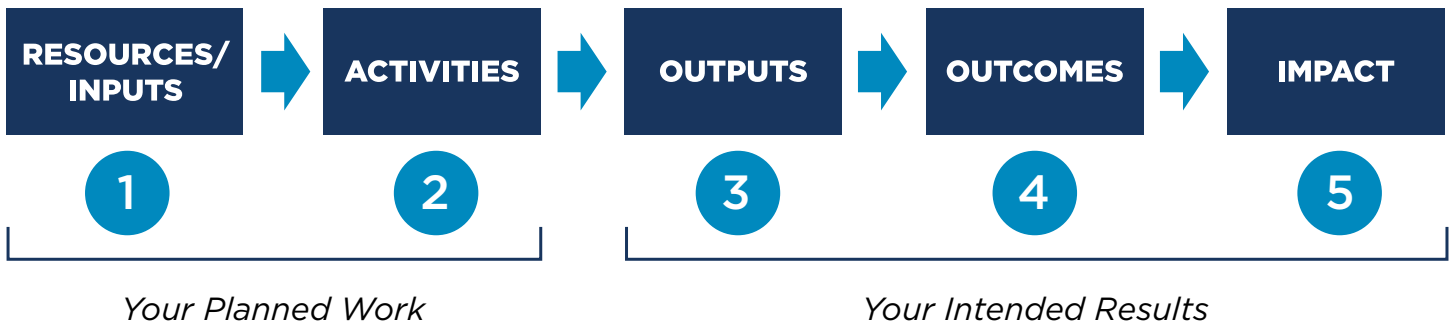
CREATE LOGIC MODELS TO HELP VISUALIZE PROJECT IDEAS AND FEASIBILITY

Once your group has come up with a list of potential projects, your group can decide which projects to move forward with. A logic model is a great tool to use during the planning phase as it will help you to visualize each project and understand what it is, how it will work, and what you are trying to achieve.

Logic models are described as a series of “if-then” relationships: if resources are available for the program, then program activities can be implemented; if program activities are implemented successfully, then certain outputs and outcomes can be expected⁷.

DEFINE YOUR TARGET: WHO ARE YOUR ACTIVITIES FOR?

FOCUS ON TANGIBLE OUTPUTS



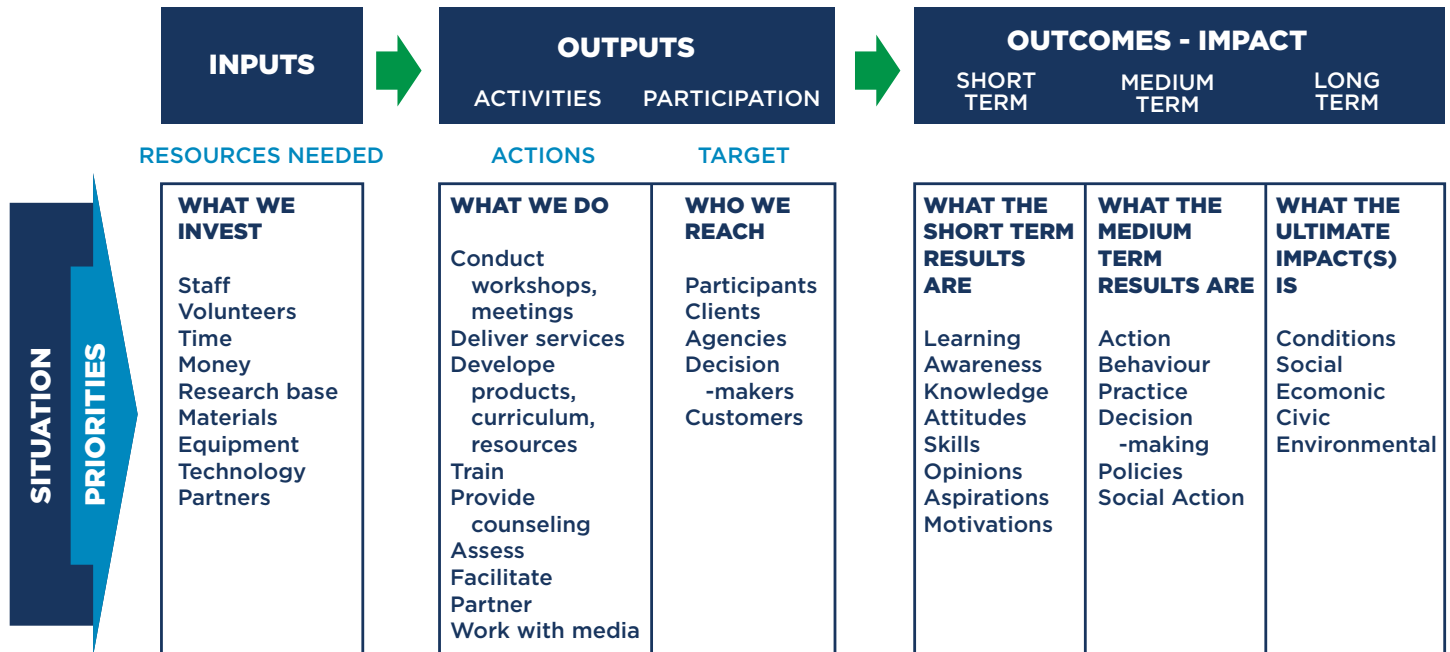
(Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Logic Model Development Guide)

⁷Innovation Network, Inc. (2010). Logic Model Workbook. Retrieved from https://www.innonet.org/media/logic_model_workbook_0.pdf

TO PREPARE A LOGIC MODEL, DISCUSS AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR EACH PROPOSED PROJECT:

1. What is your project trying to accomplish? (outputs & outcomes)
2. How will your project accomplish these goals (activities)
3. Who is the target audience for your project?

Example of a logic model:



(Source: University of Wisconsin Extension, Program Development and Evaluation)

It may be easier to think about the expected outcomes of a project first, and then move from right to left in developing your logic model.

A blank logic model template is provided in the resources folder.

Logic models can also be used to create your project evaluation plans⁷. For example, if one of your project outcomes is to increase community involvement, you may consider developing a spreadsheet to track attendance to see which outreach methods have had positive results and which methods need to be improved. More details on how logic models can be used for your evaluation plan can be found in Step 5.

You can read more and use [Innovation Network's Logic Model Workbook](#) to help you develop logic models for your projects. You can also learn more about Logic Models by viewing the webinar on [Project Evaluation Learning Session with Michael Prosserman](#).

After your group has created logic models for each project idea, look at each model and decide on the projects that best address the priorities of your neighbourhood and are also the most feasible based on the capacity of your group, your timelines and budget etc.

ACTIVITY

ASSIGN TASKS AND CREATE A TIMELINE FOR YOUR PROJECT

Once your group has decided on the projects to move forward with, the group should identify and assign specific tasks, roles/responsibilities, resources, and deliverables. If there are multiple projects, break up participants into multiple working groups. A timeline should be created for each individual project, as well as an overall timeline with all projects. Below is a sample project timeline.

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	DUE DATE	NOVEMBER				DECEMBER			
			W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
Research										
Collect Data										
Write Report										

There are also many [free templates](#) you can download and online work management applications that can help you track work and collaborate on projects and tasks.

CREATE A BUDGET FOR YOUR PROJECT

Create a simple budget for your project so your group will understand the costs and resources needed. Be sure to include all the resources that will be needed from beginning to end, and where the items will be sourced.

To minimize your project costs, think about using resources that are already available in your neighbourhood, such as donated items, tools you can borrow, or skills from your neighbours. If some of your needs can't be found within your neighbourhood, try reaching out to local businesses for in-kind donations, such as gifts of products, time, and services. For example, a local garden store may be able to provide seeds, seedlings, and soil, or a local graphic designer may be able to design an art piece for your project. Avoiding new purchases is already a great first step into taking climate action and reducing your carbon footprint!

You may also want to partner with other neighbourhood groups, businesses, and organizations that may be able to provide additional financial support. Groups and organizations outside of your community may also be able offer to help with their expertise.

The City of Toronto provides a number of grants and incentives to support community-based environmental projects. [Learn more.](#)

Below is a sample budget table with sample categories to consider.

BUDGET CATEGORY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS/ ACTIVITIES/ITEMS	PLANNED BUDGET	FUNDING SOURCE
Materials & Supplies			
Communications			
Equipment			



STEP FIVE

CREATE A PROJECT EVALUATION PLAN

Monitoring your progress and evaluating your success is an important process that will help you determine the impact your project has had on the community, and identify what contributed to your success and those that can be improved⁸. Measuring the progress of your project can provide valuable information on the effectiveness of your neighbourhood's actions and help to guide future decisions.

STEP 5 INVOLVES:

- Creating an evaluation plan for each project
- Modifying your projects to ensure that they can be sustained in the long-term

⁸ Zarinpoush, F. (2006). Project Evaluation Guide for Nonprofit Organizations: Fundamental Methods and Steps for Conducting Project Evaluation. Retrieved from http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide_final.pdf

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Before you can evaluate your project, you need to collect data. Collection methods you can use include: ⁹

- Surveys (pre project, post project, or other points in time)
 - Quantitative (Scales i.e. 1 worst to 5 best)
 - Qualitative (Written responses / testimonials)
- Interviews with participants, clients or staff
- Focus group discussions
- Intake forms, activity reports, progress reports
- On-site visits

PROGRESS INDICATORS

To measure the progress of your neighbourhood towards meeting its goals, you will need to establish metrics or “indicators” and track your progress over time. The indicators you choose should be measurable and observable characteristics. When choosing your indicators, good questions to ask and answer include: “What is the outcome we’re looking for? How will we know if it has been achieved? What tangible results will we be able to see?”⁹

The indicators that your neighbourhood selects can be designed to reflect the values and priorities of your neighbourhood. Tracking and reporting on progress will likely require a community effort, which will bring more people into the process and help sustain community involvement.

Here are some examples of progress indicators which may apply to your project:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

To assess if your group’s outreach activities have been successful, you may consider developing a spreadsheet to track attendance at neighbourhood events over time and note how the events were promoted. This will allow your group to examine which outreach methods were the most effective and what you can improve upon.

COMMUNITY BEHAVIOURS:

To determine if there is an increase in the number of residents engaged in sustainable behaviours, you may want to select indicators such as the number of residents that report bike commuting, purchasing primarily local products, or weatherizing their homes. You can distribute a survey or questionnaire to measure behaviour change of participants before and after your project. See Appendix B for sample surveys.

⁹ Innovation Network, Inc. (2005). Evaluation Plan Workbook. Retrieved from https://www.innonet.org/media/evaluation_plan_workbook.pdf

NEIGHBOURHOOD ATTRIBUTES: If your goal is to improve the physical characteristics of your neighbourhood, you may choose to select indicators such as the number of bike repair hubs, community gardens, or community composting sites.

CARBON REDUCTION: If your neighbourhood sets specific carbon reduction goals you may choose to select indicators such as electricity, natural gas or gasoline consumption. Neighbourhood residents can be provided with a survey or questionnaire before and after the project is implemented to measure changes in consumption.



ACTIVITY

USING LOGIC MODELS FOR EVALUATION

If you created logic models for your projects in Step 4, revisit them to help form your evaluation plan. Using the outcomes from your logic model, you can create an evaluation plan similar to the sample, below. You may also want to measure progress through the use of a spreadsheet, survey, and online data collection program.

OUTCOME	INDICATORS to measure success (increase or decrease)	METHOD to collect data (surveys, interviews, observation)	WHO collects data? (staff, volunteers, teachers)	WHEN to collect data? (end of project, pre/post, every 2 months)	QUESTIONS to learn if you are achieving this outcome
EXAMPLE: Sense of belonging in their community	50% increase	Survey	Volunteers	Pre/Post	Did target audience experience the behaviour change?
EXAMPLE: Engagement in class	40% increased attendance	Interview	Program staff	End of Program	Did attendance in class increase?

(Source: Epic Leadership - Program Design and Evaluation 101)

A BLANK EVALUATION PLAN TEMPLATE CAN BE FOUND IN THE RESOURCES FOLDER.

The [Innovation Network Evaluation Plan Workbook](#) provided questions you should ask when conducting evaluations:

1. IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION (WHAT DID YOU DO? & HOW WELL DID YOU DO IT?):

- Are you performing the services or activities as planned?
- Are you reaching the intended target population?
- Are you reaching the intended number of participants?
- Is it leading to the products you expected?
- How do the participants perceive these services and activities?

2. OUTCOMES EVALUATION (WHAT DIFFERENCE DID YOU MAKE?):

- Did the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, or awareness of your target audience change in the ways you sought?
- What results did you achieve?
- What is your project accomplishing among your target audience?



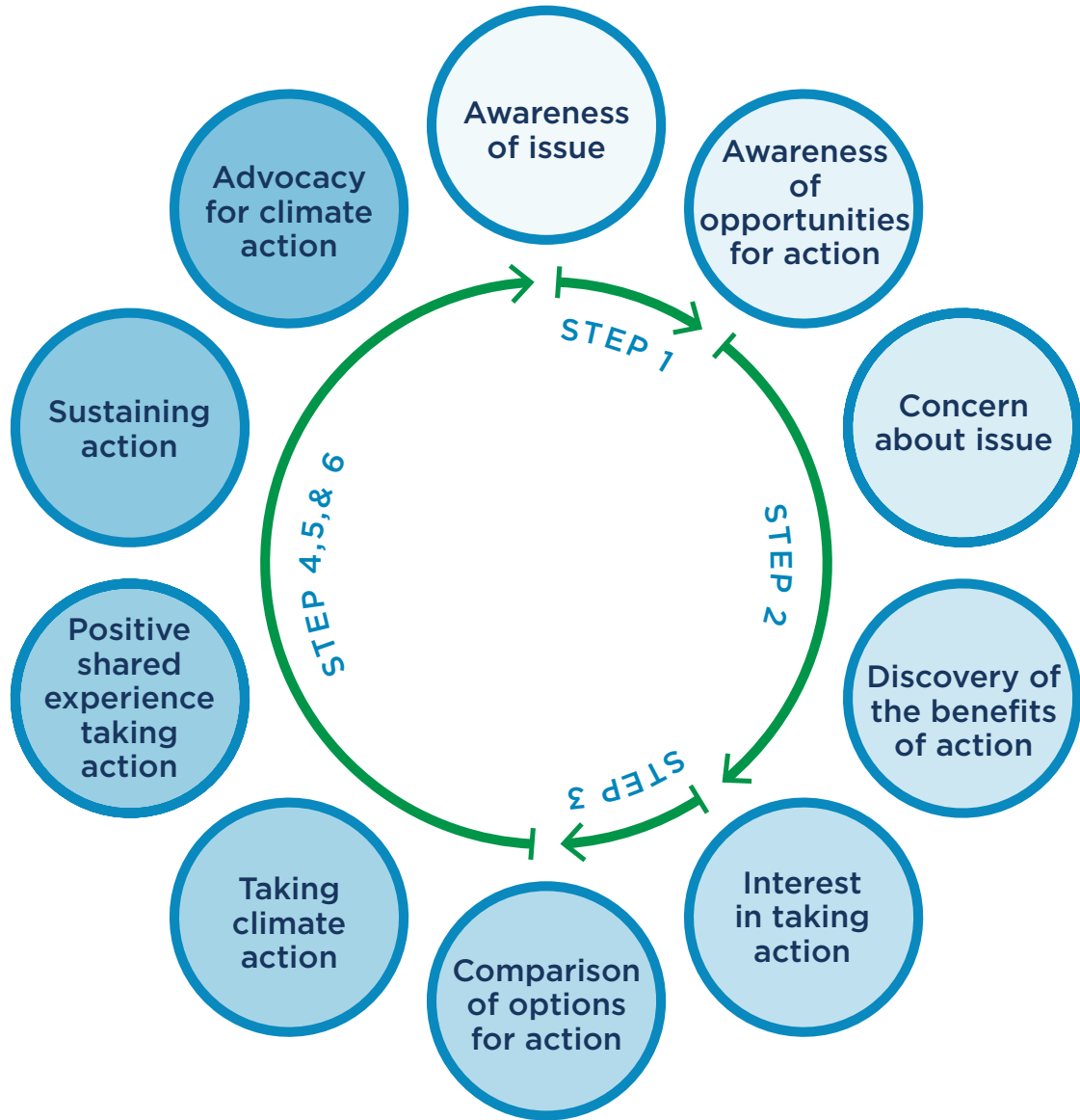
STEP SIX

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, PROGRESS MEASUREMENT, AND EVALUATION

Congratulations! Once you have reached this step, you and your neighbours have begun to implement a climate action project/initiative in your community. Although much of the hard work may be done, it is important to measure your progress and evaluate your success.

Remember that the end of a project is not the end of climate engagement with your neighbours. As illustrated in the Experience Design cycle, it is likely to also be the beginning of making new connections and engaging with residents who were not

initially involved in the project. Please be sure to review all the steps in the toolkit and remember that continuous engagement with your community may involve revisiting some of these steps in the future.



STEP 1: Recruit and Organize a Neighbourhood Group

STEP 2: Educate and Discuss Climate Change

STEP 3: Identify Neighbourhood's Needs and Priorities

STEP 4: Develop Neighbourhood Climate Action Projects/Initiatives

STEP 5: Create a Project Evaluation Plan

STEP 6: Project Implementation, Progress Measurement, and Evaluation



THANK YOU TO OUR CLIMATE ACTION CHAMPIONS

Climate change is a global issue and it is understandable that people may feel overwhelmed by its challenges and not know what they can do to help. Even on a local scale, the need for our city to reach net zero emissions by 2050 seems very distant and may not be a priority for some people. Toronto's TransformTO strategy was designed to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and also improve our health, grow our economy, and improve social equity. It is likely that at least one of the principles from the strategy, besides reducing emissions, is a priority for the residents in your neighbourhood.

The Neighbourhood Climate Action Champions program was created to help build connections between the needs and priorities of each neighbourhood and how they may be advanced through climate action. We hope that this toolkit has provided you with the information and tools you need to get started on climate engagement in your community.

Your work as a local climate leader is key to helping the City reach the TransformTO goals as you are educating, motivating, and inspiring your neighbours to take action on climate change.

Whether your project is big or small, it's important to know that every little bit helps and will contribute to a better Toronto in its own way!

Thank you for your commitment to help create more vibrant, connected, and greener communities in our city. We cannot fight climate change alone, it is collective action that will make a difference.

LET'S TRANSFORMTO TOGETHER!





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[Live Green Toronto](#)

[TransformTO](#)

[City of Toronto - Environmental Grants & Incentives](#)



APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CLIMATE ACTION PROJECT IDEAS

Note that the ideas, below, are simply suggestions and we encourage each group to come up with new and innovative project ideas.

Please feel free to contact Live Green Toronto if you need help reaching out to speakers, getting resources and funding, or need any other assistance.

QUICK AND EASY

1. CLIMATE ACTION WEBINAR/EVENT

Organize an educational event about climate action and help people understand why it's important. Invite a larger group of residents from your community and share what you have already learned as a part of this program. Together you can generate even more project ideas.

COST: \$0 - \$100 for advertising, preparing the presentation and handout materials

TIME: 1 - 1.5 months to plan and advertise the event

2. WASTE REDUCTION WORKSHOP

Invite a waste reduction expert from one of Toronto's local neighbourhood organizations to speak about waste. This workshop can include some basic waste sorting activities, conversations about food waste and idea sharing about reducing barriers to proper waste management.

COST: \$0 - \$500 for speaker fees, materials for the workshop and advertising

TIME: 1 - 1.5 months to plan and advertise the event

3. CYCLING CLINIC

Invite a bike repair expert to showcase basic bike repair and maintenance skills. Participants can bring their own bikes to practice and participate in an organized community ride at the end of the event.

COST: \$0 - \$500 for workshop fees and advertising

TIME: 1 - 1.5 months to plan and advertise the event

MEDIUM-SIZED PROJECTS

1. COMMUNITY GARDENING PROJECT

Create or update a community garden in your neighbourhood. Partner with a local community group, business association or school that has space for a garden. Apply for a grant or find gardening resources and tools within your community. Host a launch event to raise awareness about the connection between local food and climate change.

COST: \$1,000 - \$5,000 for gardening tools, plants and event advertising

TIME: 4 - 8 months to find community partners, secure a location, purchase gardening supplies and host a launch event

2. ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKSHOP

Organize educational workshops to encourage behaviour change at home and improve household energy efficiency. Invite an expert (or two) to speak about energy efficiency best-practices and low-cost home energy upgrades.

COST: \$200 - \$5,000 for speaker fees, energy-efficiency toolkits for participants and event advertising

TIME: 4 - 8 months to find speakers, organize and host the workshops

3. CLIMATE ACTION ART INSTALLATION

Hire a local artist to create climate action art for your community. Organize a launch event and invite the community to learn about the significance of climate change.

COST: \$1,000 - \$10 000 for art creation, installation and launch event

TIME: 3 - 12 months to select an artist, create and install the art piece, organize a launch event

LONG-TERM PROJECTS

1. COMMUNITY RE-USE HUB OR SHARING LIBRARY

Create a sharing library for your community. Find a location and organize a donation drive for used tools and other items. Secure volunteers or staff to supervise the library and run workshops on re-use and refurbishing.

COST: \$1,000 - \$10,000 for staffing; workshops and tools

TIME: 12 months to launch, ongoing after that point

2. YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Design an ongoing program that educates and engages youth from your neighbourhood in climate action. Partner with a local agency to host regular training sessions, design the curriculum, and recruit youth to participate.

COST: \$5,000 - \$20,000 for program design, training, curriculum development and delivery, seed funding for youth projects

TIME: 6 months to launch, ongoing after that point

3. RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY PROJECT

Coordinate a renewable energy project in your community, such as installing solar panels or geothermal energy systems. Partner with local community agencies and a renewable energy organization to find a suitable public location for your project and apply for funding (and/or fundraise). Once the project is installed, host a launch event for your community.

COST: \$10,000 + for the renewable energy project design, installation and launch event

TIME: 12 months for planning, funding application and installation



APPENDIX B

SAMPLE ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR SURVEYS

The surveys below were adapted from The Carbon Conversations Workbook by Rosemary Randall and Andy Brown.

The star rating (*) for each action below represents the amount of emissions the action will reduce. The more stars, the more emissions that action will save.

HOME ENERGY		STAR RATING	I WAS ALREADY DOING THIS	I'M PLANNING TO DO THIS IN THE FUTURE	I DON'T DO THIS, OR I DON'T PLAN ON DOING THIS
1.	Read meters monthly to check how much energy you're using	**			
2.	Install a smart thermostat	**			
3.	Turn off lights when they're not in use	*			
4.	Turn all appliances off standby	*			
5.	Turn the room thermostat down by 1 degree	**			
6.	Turn the thermostat down by 3 degrees	***			
7.	Take short showers instead of baths	**			
8.	Run the washing machine at 30 or 40 °C and only when full	*			
9.	Dry clothes outdoors instead of in tumbler drier	*			
10.	Run the dishwasher at 55 °C and only when full	*			
11.	Replace any remaining incandescent lightbulbs with energy-efficient ones	**			
12.	Replace any light fittings that can't take LED or CFL bulbs	**			

13. Draught-strip all external doors and windows	***			
14. Insulate hot water pipes	*			
15. Insulate an uninsulated loft	****			
16. 'Shrink-wrap' all single-glazed windows for winter	**			
17. Insulate solid walls internally by dry-lining	****			
18. Insulate solid walls externally	****			
19. Insulate underneath the ground floor	**			
20. Choose high-performance, double- or triple-glazed windows and doors	***			
21. Replace front and back doors with high-performance, insulated doors	*			
22. Install solar panels for hot water	***			
23. Install a ground-source or air source heat pump	****			
24. Install a low-water use shower and spray taps	*			

TRANSPORTATION		STAR RATING	I WAS ALREADY DOING THIS	I'M PLANNING TO DO THIS IN THE FUTURE	I DON'T DO THIS, OR I DON'T PLAN ON DOING THIS
1.	Take the bus/streetcar/train to work instead of the car	****			
2.	Find a travel partner & share your commuting	***			
3.	Walk or cycle the children to school	**			
4.	Walk or cycle to work every day	***			
5.	Walk or cycle to work in the summer or when weather permits	**			
6.	Work from home one or more days per week	***			
7.	Combine car trips together	**			
8.	Trade down to a smaller more efficient car	****			
9.	Halve your car mileage	*****			
10.	Set up or join a car share scheme	**			
11.	Use the car only in emergencies	****			
12.	Reduce flights by 75%	****			
13.	Stop flying altogether	*****			

WASTE & CONSUMPTION		STAR RATING	I WAS ALREADY DOING THIS	I'M PLANNING TO DO THIS IN THE FUTURE	I DON'T DO THIS, OR I DON'T PLAN ON DOING THIS
1.	Avoid disposable items	*			
2.	Shop for items that will last	*			
3.	Buy second-hand items, where possible	*			
4.	Buy goods made from recycled materials	*			
5.	Get items repaired, or repair them yourself!	*			
6.	Use items until they are worn out	*			
7.	Avoid buying heavily packaged items	*			
8.	Recycle everything that can be recycled	**			
9.	Reduce total amount of waste by 50%	**			
10.	Buy all food locally	***			
11.	Eat only seasonal fruit and vegetables	**			
12.	Cook vegetarian meals at least twice each week	*			
13.	Reduce meat consumption by 50%	***			
14.	Reduce food waste by at least 50%	**			
15.	Compost all food waste	*			

