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PARTNERS TO ACHIEVE

CLEANAIR



## **Complete Streets Community of Practice**

### **2010 Declaration Strategy and Workplan**

**For GTA-CAC feedback  
October 22, 2010**

## **ABOUT THE CLEAN AIR PARTNERSHIP (CAP)**

### **About the Clean Air Partnership**

Clean Air Partnership (CAP) is a registered charity that works in partnership to promote and coordinate actions to improve local air quality and reduce greenhouse gases for healthy communities. Our applied research on municipal policies strives to broaden and improve access to public policy debate on air pollution and climate change issues. Our social marketing programs focus on energy conservation activities that motivate individuals, government, schools, utilities, businesses and communities to take action to clean the air.

Clean Air Partnership's mission is to transform cities into sustainable, vibrant, resilient communities, where the air is clean to breathe and greenhouse gas emissions are minimized.

### **About the Greater Toronto Area Clean Air Council (GTA-CAC)**

The Greater Toronto Area Clean Air Council promotes the reduction of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and increased awareness of regional air quality and climate change issues in the Greater Toronto Area through the collective efforts of all levels of government.

The Council identifies and promotes the most effective initiatives to reduce the occurrence of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the GTA, and their associated health risks. The goals of the Council are:

- To enable solutions to air quality and climate change challenges through a dynamic network that expands knowledge and enthusiasm, and encourages practical and successful policies and actions.
- To promote a better understanding of air quality and climate change problems and their implications for public health among policy makers and to improve their ability to address these problems in an economically effective way;
- To explore opportunities for joint initiatives to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the GTA; and
- To liaise with municipalities in the GTA and across Canada, organizations with compatible mandates, and communities within the region to share best practices for reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

## **ABOUT COMPLETE STREETS**

Complete Streets provide practical facilities for public transportation, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists so that users of all ages and abilities are able travel and coexist safely and efficiently. In some designs, plantings and medians provide coherent separations between vehicles and pedestrians to organize streets and ensure safe movement.

## The benefits of Complete Streets are many and varied<sup>1</sup>:

- **Complete streets make economic sense.** A balanced transportation system that includes complete streets can bolster economic growth and stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between residences, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- **Complete streets improve safety** by reducing crashes through safety improvements. One study found that designing for pedestrian travel by installing raised medians and redesigning intersections and sidewalks reduced pedestrian risk by 28%.
- **Complete streets encourage more walking and bicycling.** Public health experts are encouraging walking and bicycling as a response to the obesity epidemic, and complete streets can help. One study found that 43 percent of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels, while just 27% of those without safe places to walk were active enough.
- **Complete streets can help ease transportation woes.** Streets that provide travel choices can give people the option to avoid traffic jams, and increase the overall capacity of the transportation network.
- **Complete streets help children.** Streets that provide room for bicycling and walking help children get physical activity and gain independence. More children walk to school where there are sidewalks, and children who have and use safe walking and bicycling routes have a more positive view of their neighbourhood.
- **Complete streets are good for air quality.** Poor air quality in our urban areas is linked to increases in asthma and other illnesses. Yet if each resident in a community of 100,000 replaced one car trip with one bike trip just once a month, it would cut carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions by 3,764 tons of per year in the community. Complete streets allow this to happen more easily.
- **Complete streets make fiscal sense.** Integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities, and safe crossings into the initial design of a project spares the expense of retrofits later.

## Complete Street Policies

A Complete Streets Policy ensures that transportation engineers and planners routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users. There are about 130 municipal Complete Streets policies in the U.S. so far. Due to contextual limitations, not every street can or should offer full facilities for every mode, so it is important to define the exceptions granted when developing a Complete Streets policy.

## COMPLETE STREETS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

At the 2010 Clean Air and Climate Change Summit GTA-CAC jurisdictions committed to **Develop**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.completestreets.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/factsheets/>

**a Complete Streets Community of Practice that will work collaboratively to identify and implement strategies designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users.**

The Complete Streets COP will enhance the ability of GTA-CAC member jurisdictions and staff to support each other's efforts to develop and implement Complete Streets policies, practices and actions.

**Actions of the Complete Streets COP will include:**

**Activity # 1: Develop Network**

- Develop Strategy and Workplan and seek input from GTA CAC representatives
- Revise Strategy and Workplan based on feedback from GTA CAC representative
- Develop and distribute Complete Streets Invitation letter to recruit participants from GTA CAC jurisdictions
- Identify and recruit additional non-municipal stakeholders (government and non-government agencies) that have an interest and/or mandate relating to complete streets
- Develop contact list for Complete Streets COP participants

**Activity # 2: Develop Complete Streets Intranet**

- Develop a one stop location for all GTA CAC Complete Streets resources and activities and links to additional resources.
- Continually update Complete Streets Intranet with meeting documents and applicable resources

**Activity # 3: Develop Complete Streets COP Webinars**

- **Deliver 3 – 5 webinars** highlighting the actions, experiences, processes and lessons learned
- **December 2010:** Complete Streets 101
- **January:** Presentation from Waterloo, ON (adoption of a Complete Streets Policy) and Toronto, ON (development of a Complete Streets Policy)
- **March 2011:** Complete Streets Actions – Before and After Photographic Tour
- **April 2011 (at Complete Streets Forum)** – Lessons Learned Re: Moving from Policy to Implementation – Moving from Challenges and Barriers towards Solutions and Opportunities
- **June 2011** – Complete Streets Forum follow-up and Next Steps

**OUTCOME OF THE COMPLETE STREETS COP**

### **The Complete Streets COP will:**

- Increase awareness within departments, council and staff of the opportunities and benefits of Complete Streets policies and how complete streets can be designed and implemented;
- Share experiences, resources and lessons learned regarding the development and approval of Complete Streets Policies and how to move from policies to practices and actions;
- Facilitate inter-departmental collaboration between municipal departments;
- Facilitate collaboration between GTA and SWO CAC jurisdictions; and
- Document the development and adoption of Complete Streets Policies and Complete Streets actions within CAC jurisdictions.

### **COMPLETE STREETS COP PARTICIPANTS - BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **CAP staff**

- Develop COP strategy and workplans;
- Fundraise for Complete Streets activities;
- Develop COP recruitment materials
- Organize webinars
- Complete the summary of meeting activities and discussions;
- Develop evaluation strategy and questionnaires
- Track and monitor complete streets policies and actions in CAC jurisdictions
- Provide updates to CAC representatives on Complete Streets COP activities and outcomes

#### **GTA-CAC Members**

- Review and provide feedback on Complete Streets COP strategy, workplan and activities
- Recruit Complete Streets COP participant(s) and specific meeting participants; and
- Maintain on-going contact with Procurement COP participant.

#### **Complete Streets COP Participants**

- Attend and participate in Complete Streets COP webinars
- Support CAP staff and GTA-CAC members in identification of presentations and best practices;
- Review and provide feedback on Complete Streets COP strategy, workplan, actions and outcomes
- Complete webinar evaluations;
- Report to CAP on Complete Streets policies and actions progress, barriers encountered and learnings.