



## Healthy Canada by Design CLASP Toronto Project

# Learning by doing: Influencing built environment policy through active transportation demonstration projects

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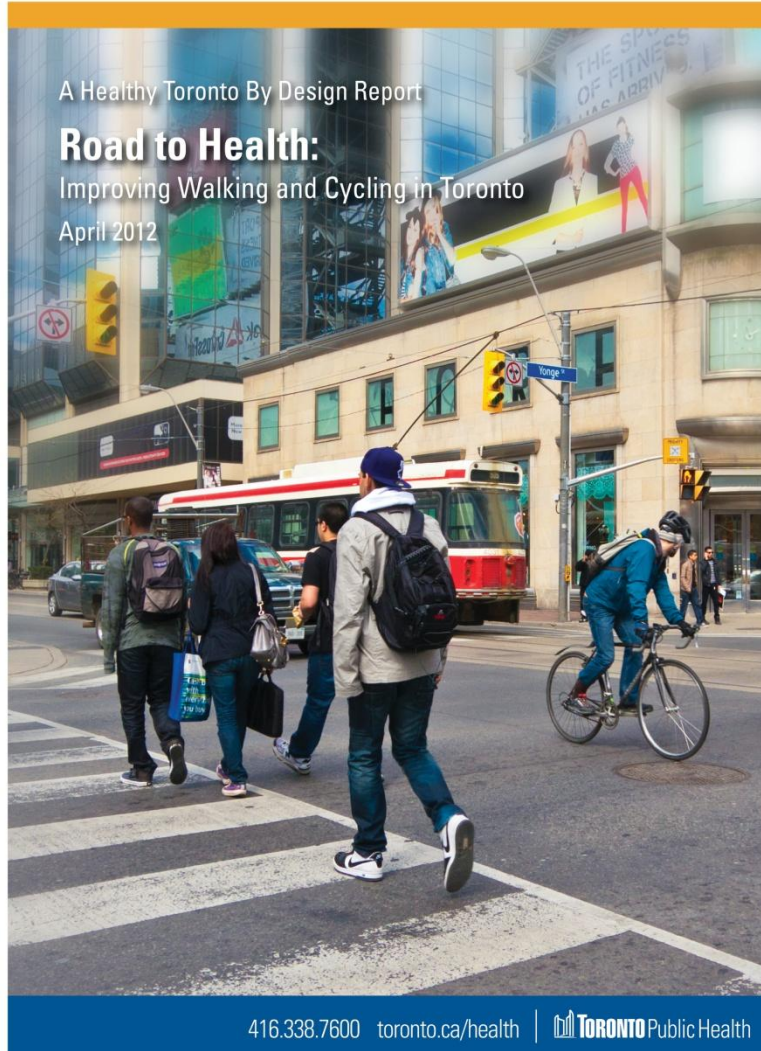
## Phase One

- Residential Preferences Survey
- Software Tool

## Phase Two

- Work in Partnership with TCAT to engage the community in active transportation

# A Healthy Toronto by Design Report: Road to Health: Improving Walking & Cycling in Toronto



- Active Transportation (AT) as means to improve health in Toronto
- Benefits of walking and cycling
- Collisions, injuries and fatalities and their costs
- Distribution of health benefits and risks
- Strategies to increase walking and cycling in Toronto

# Benefits of Increasing Walking & Cycling



Photo: Parent, Worldneighbourhoods.com

- Walking & cycling rates of 12% and 6% would prevent 100 more deaths per year
- Save additional \$400 million
- 5% of total capital spent on walking/cycling projects

## In 2012 the Toronto Board of Health requested:

“A pilot program, including measures identified in this report, such as reduced speed limits, traffic calming, safer intersections, etc. in selected residential neighbourhoods, as identified through public outreach and consultation and an evaluation of public safety and transportation needs”





# Active Transportation Demonstration Projects

## Goals:

- To demonstrate that Active Transportation interventions are feasible and effective
- To build strong partnerships and work together to improve active transportation in Toronto



## Three objectives:

1. Work collaboratively with Toronto Public Health and City of Toronto's planners and engineers to identify built environment policy processes that would benefit from increased community engagement.
2. Look at promising practices and tools developed through CLASP 1 to develop a nine-month action plan for one-two community engagement pilots, centred around cross-sector collaboration and linked to current policy development opportunities.
3. Implement the action plan, evaluate and document.

## Eligibility

- High readiness
- Innovativeness
- Strong evidence base
- Low walkability and/or bikeability
- High rates or risks of chronic disease
- Low safety

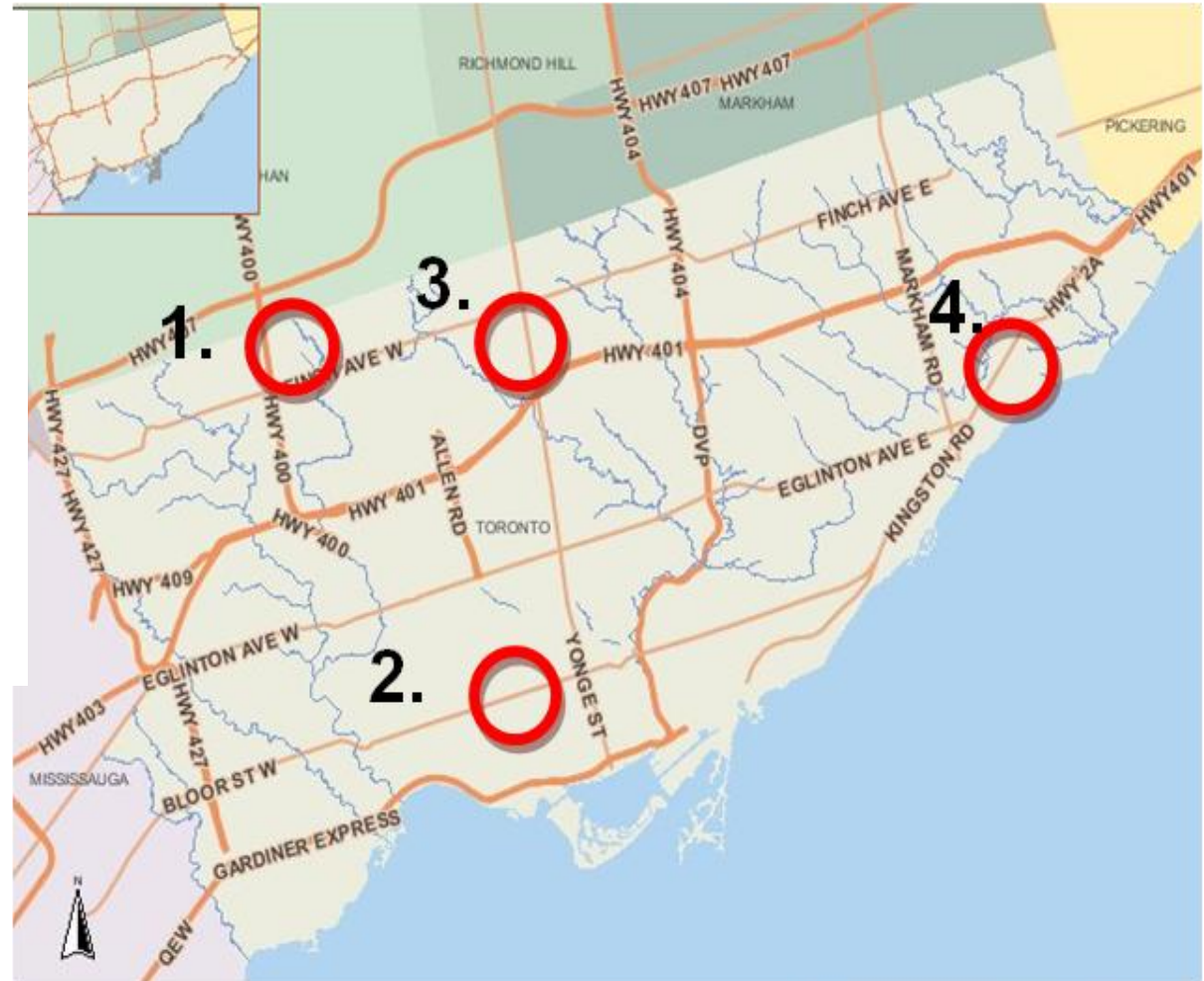
## Selection

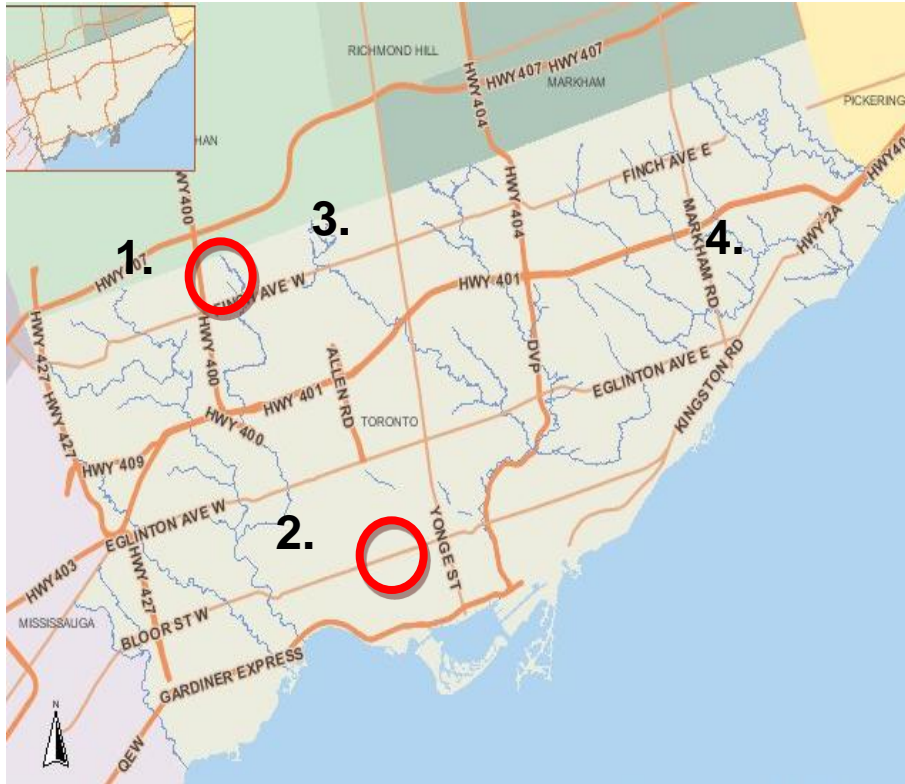
- Mix of social and income groups
- Mix of community types and project scales
- Potential to include interventions identified in BOH request



# Project Sites

1. Black Creek
2. Annex
3. North York Centre
4. Cliffside





Credit: Toronto Public Health

- 1. Black Creek**
  - Suburban high-rise neighbourhood
  - Culturally diverse
  - Low walkability
  - High rates of obesity/diabetes
- 2. Annex/Harbord**
  - Urban medium to high density
  - Mixed income (near U of T)
  - High rates of walking/cycling
  - Mixed rates of chronic disease

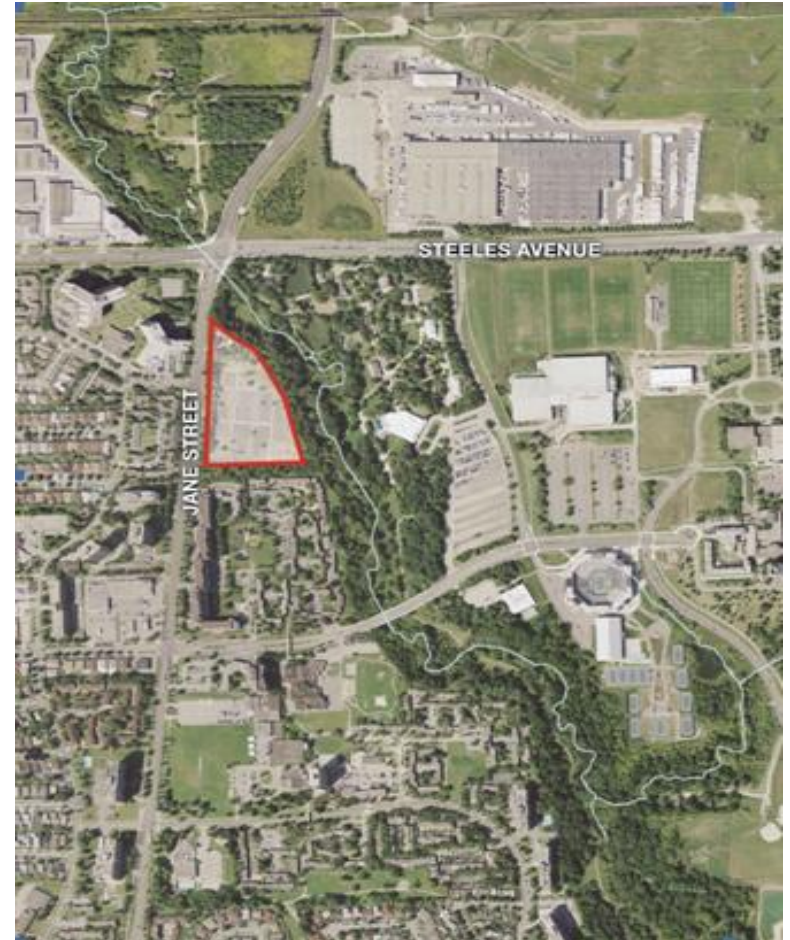
- Key Informant Interviews
- Meetings
- Community Workshops
- Online Survey



Black Creek Farm, Toronto  
Photo: Ryan Anders Whitney



# Black Creek



## Issues

- Traffic speed & volume
- Distances between crosswalks
- Cyclists use sidewalks
- Lack of benches, shade, landscaping and poor lighting

## Potential interventions

- New pedestrian crosswalk, landscaping/beautification, shade, benches
- Traffic control signal at Hullmar and Jane

# Black Creek: Exploring solutions



Source: Google Maps



# Black Creek: What it could look like



Source: Jeremy Johnston (TCAT)

## Challenges

- Signal costs \$150,000
- Data is needed to justify the signal
- Next steps are unclear
- Landscaping, benches and shade need to be initiated with separate divisions and TS

# The Annex



Photo: Jacklyn Atlas (TCAT)

## Issues

- Speed and traffic congestion are major safety issues for cyclists and pedestrians
- Lack of on-street bike lanes are major barriers to safe cycling
- Problematic intersections and crosswalks
- Hostile relationships between road users

## Potential interventions

- Locals would like to see bike lanes on Bloor, lower speed limits, traffic-calming with parked cars, contra-flow bike lanes on side streets, better enforcement, intersection and crosswalk design
- In terms of prioritizing, bike lanes on Bloor received overwhelming support



# The Annex: Exploring solutions



Photo: Nancy Smith Lea (TCAT)

# The Annex: What it could look like



Source: Jeremy Johnston (TCAT)



## Challenges

- Despite overwhelming, longstanding support for bike lanes, little has happened
- Competing interests in the re-allocation of the road

- Install a signal outside the farm
- Install bike lanes on Bloor
- Establish a Demonstration Project Program with a funding mechanism

## It takes time, but it's worth it.

- Takes time to build relationships
- Different ideas of success
- Competing priorities
- No “cookie-cutter” solution
- Change via influence
- Long-term commitment



Finch Hydro Corridor, Toronto  
Photo: Ryan Anders Whitney

