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program objectives

Urban passenger travel creates almost half of the greenhouse gas emissions of Canada's transportation sector, which in turn produces about one quarter of Canada's national total. To reduce these emissions and to contribute to other outcomes such as cleaner air, Transport Canada's Urban Transportation Showcase Program (UTSP) supports innovative municipal demonstration projects that can attract Canadians to sustainable transportation options. The program's objectives include:

- To develop, demonstrate and measure the effectiveness of integrated strategies, tools and practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from urban transportation
- To evaluate the effects of these strategies on other policy objectives that support the creation and sustainability of strong cities (e. g. smog reduction, congestion relief, improved public transit services)
- To establish a comprehensive Information Network that will proactively build awareness of successful strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support sustainable urban transportation

The UTSP emphasizes the measurement of benefits. Demonstration projects must identify performance measures (e.g. transit ridership, operating costs, greenhouse gas emissions), establish baseline data, set targets and monitor results. The program will continue through 2009 so the projects can be fully implemented and evaluated.

The UTSP Showcases demonstrate and evaluate integrated approaches to making urban transportation and land use more sustainable. Through the coordinated application of innovative technologies, infrastructure improvements and demand management, Showcases promote a modal shift away from single-occupant motor vehicle use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address other urban challenges such as air quality, traffic congestion, and pedestrian and cyclist safety.

s h o w c a s e s

The five Showcases that were underway in 2005 are supported by \$19.1 million in UTSP contributions, with another \$48.6 million committed by project organizers and more than 30 municipal, provincial, institutional and non-governmental partners. These five Showcases are listed below, with more detailed profiles starting on page 8. Additional information and updates are available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

Three other innovative and inspiring Showcases are scheduled to begin in 2006. One is in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and two are in the province of Quebec. Among other interesting components, these Showcases will include alternative fuelling stations, dedicated bus lanes, and a new downtown wayfinding system for pedestrians and other traffic. Additional information and updates are available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.



Sustainable Region Showcase for Greater Vancouver

Lead organization: Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority, British Columbia

This Showcase is demonstrating six sustainable transportation strategies: transit and pedestrian priority measures, hybrid buses, a major active transportation corridor, transit villages at SkyTrain stations, goods movement policy and household-based travel marketing.



Whitehorse Moves

Lead organization: City of Whitehorse, Yukon



This Showcase is working to reduce automobile use by completing active transportation networks, making roads safer and more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, enhancing transit services and promoting sustainable transportation behaviours.





iXpress: Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Project

Lead organization: Region of Waterloo, Ontario

This Showcase is integrating a new high-quality express bus service that serves major regional destinations with advanced transit technologies, improved multi-modal access to transit nodes and innovative community-based marketing strategies.



Smart Commute Initiative

Lead organizations: Greater Toronto Area municipalities and the City of Hamilton, Ontario

This Showcase is creating a regional system of non-profit transportation management associations that work with the private sector and general public to improve and promote sustainable commuting choices.



MetroLink: Innovation Towards Integrated Bus Rapid Transit

Lead organization: Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia

This Showcase is making transit and active transportation more attractive for Halifax residents by creating a new express bus service in two corridors. The project features transit priority measures, comfortable buses, community outreach and enhanced multi-modal access to stations.



Participants report that the valuable information and resources they gather at learning events helps them make transportation more sustainable in their own communities. More information on learning events, including presentations, proceedings and contacts, is available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

i n f o r m a t i o n n e t w o r k

Since 2003, the UTSP Information Network has helped urban transportation practitioners share information, resources and findings related to Showcases and other innovative sustainable transportation projects across Canada. The Information Network supports learning events, disseminates information on Showcase initiatives, sponsors sustainable transportation awards programs, maintains a library of case studies, and offers other resources at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

Information Network partners have included the Association for Commuter Transportation of Canada, l'Association québécoise du transport et des routes, Canadian Urban Transit Association, Ecology Action Centre (Halifax), Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Forum of Federations, InfraGuide, Moving the Economy, Pollution Probe, Sierra Club of Canada, Smart Growth Canada Network, Transportation Association of Canada, Vélo Québec, York University and other federal departments.

l e a r n i n g e v e n t s

Over the last three years, Transport Canada has supported 48 sustainable transportation learning events such as presentations, workshops, discussion panels and trade shows. In the last year, 25 learning events brought together more than 1,000 professionals to share information on the Showcases, leading Canadian case studies and other topics. Events in 2005-2006 included:

- A panel presentation on the UTSP at the Association for Commuter Transportation 2005 International Conference in California
- A session detailing the UTSP and highlighting the Whitehorse Moves Showcase at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2006 Sustainable Communities National Conference in Ottawa
- The National Sustainable Urban Transportation Programs and Initiatives Information Day involving federal departments and key non-governmental associations in Ottawa
- Workshops on "Strategies for Sustainable Transportation Planning" in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax
- The Bus Rapid Transit North American Forum at the Canadian Urban Transit Association 2005 Fall Conference in Vancouver
- A session entitled "Moving Towards Sustainable Transportation: Progress, Problems and Promise" at the Transportation Association of Canada 2005 Annual Conference in Calgary

award programs

The UTSP provides financial assistance to two national awards that recognize sustainable transportation leadership and innovation. Links to more information including award submissions are available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp. The 2005-2006 award winners are summarized below:

- The Transportation Association of Canada's Sustainable Urban Transportation Award went to *Promoting Sustainable Transportation Through Site Design: A Proposed Recommended Practice* by IBI Group for the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers. This guide recommends site design practices that can be applied through the land development process to promote the use of more sustainable transportation. Policy makers and professionals who are involved in the planning, design and approval of non-residential developments can use it to identify and incorporate features that make sites more accessible to travel modes other than single-occupant vehicles.
- The FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Award in sustainable transportation went to the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority's U-Pass Program. The U-Pass gives unlimited travel on the area's transit systems to more than 60,000 students at Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia. Transit is now the leading mode of transportation to and from both universities, with automobile traffic at both sites decreasing by 10% and greenhouse gas emissions reduced by about 21,000 tonnes per year.

case study library

The UTSP has developed a library of 41 sustainable urban transportation case studies from across Canada. For each initiative, case studies document the context, objectives, actions taken, results, and lessons learned. The 11 new case studies added in 2005-2006 included:

- Reclaiming Streets for People: Sidewalk Cafés in Downtown Halifax, Argyle Street
- Transportation for Young People
- Traffic Calming in Canadian Urban Areas
- You Can Clear the Air – Sending TDM Back to School
- Car Sharing in Canada: Making More Sustainable Personal Travel Choices
- Southeast False Creek Transportation Study: Sustainable Transportation for a Sustainable Community

o t h e r p r o j e c t s

Transport Canada supports other work that furthers the objectives of the UTSP. In 2005, it commissioned *Strategies for Sustainable Transportation Planning: A Review of Practices and Options* (available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp), a project that analyzed Canadian and international urban transportation plans and held a series of six workshops with practitioners from the provincial, municipal, non-profit, consulting and academic sectors across Canada. The principles and options suggested in the final report led to a national briefing on the subject by the Transportation Association of Canada.

w e b s i t e

The Information Network pages at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp offer information on Showcase initiatives (including descriptions, progress reports, images and sample promotional materials), learning events, sustainable transportation awards and case studies. The site also offers several other resources:

- Links to research reports on sustainable transportation topics
- The Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Resource Centre, with information including what TDM is, who is doing it and what results have been achieved
- The TDM Database, with profiles and results for 92 international projects
- The Urban Transportation Directory, with extensive Canadian and international web links

In its second full year of operation, the Information Network website received more than 105,000 visits. The site averaged 26,000 hits per month in 2005-2006, twice the rate of the previous year.

l e s s o n s l e a r n e d

The following paragraphs summarize key lessons reported by the five active Showcases in 2005-2006. Other conclusions that may help Canadian communities pursue sustainable transportation solutions are available on the Showcase pages at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

Partnerships are invaluable. Effective and mutually beneficial partnerships are based on recognition and respect of the jurisdictional authority and interests of each stakeholder. Joint initiatives can yield greater results than separate efforts, particularly when the goal is attracting the attention of media and the general public.

Effective marketing can drive behaviour change. Effective and engaging marketing strategies, such as developing a unique brand and promoting it through multiple channels, can accelerate the early uptake of new services. Individualized marketing approaches have generated very positive responses from the public.

Advanced transit technologies can be challenging. Implementing sophisticated transit priority, automated vehicle location and passenger information systems requires substantial time and effort, especially to resolve the details of technology standards and specifications. The smooth implementation of transit priority systems also requires staff training and communication to ensure that bus operators understand how the technology works and have reasonable performance expectations.

Sustainable transportation projects can motivate spin-off initiatives. Sustainable transportation projects can create opportunities for supportive programs:

- Highly visible infrastructure improvements can spur new development or improvements to nearby properties.
- Marketing of new transportation services can provide an opening for more general education about energy conservation and emission reductions.
- Increased awareness among elected officials can build political support for regulatory changes that limit vehicle idling or require bicycle parking in new developments.

f o r m o r e i n f o r m a t i o n

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showcase profile

Sustainable Region Showcase for Greater Vancouver

Lead Organization: Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority, British Columbia

UTSP Contribution: \$8.8 million

Total Project Cost: \$30.9 million

The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (GVTA, also known as TransLink) is working with the Greater Vancouver Regional District and several municipal and non-profit partners to carry out six integrated projects to reduce urban transportation greenhouse gas emissions. The Showcase features three major capital projects:

- A transit and pedestrian priority project in the busy Main Street corridor is making sidewalks and crossings safer for pedestrians, offering new shelters and real-time information for transit passengers, and giving buses priority at traffic signals to reduce delay and increase reliability. Construction began in September 2005, with some elements already completed and the rest scheduled for late 2006.
- The Central Valley Greenway, a 22-kilometre walking and cycling route, will link downtown Vancouver to Burnaby and New Westminster. Environmental studies and most of the design are now complete, and construction of some portions has started.
- Areas around the Surrey Central and Commercial Drive/Broadway SkyTrain stations are being redesigned to make land use and circulation systems more supportive of transit. Consultation and initial plans are complete.

The Showcase also includes three other projects:

- Travel Smart is a transportation choice marketing program targeting individuals who are interested in reducing their motor vehicle use. Implementation of the project in six neighbourhoods began in September 2005, and by February 2006 the individualized marketing process had been initiated with over 1,300 households.
- As part of a larger bus technology demonstration project, TransLink has retrofitted two buses with diesel-electric hybrid engines. Testing of the hybrid buses, in parallel with other natural gas, bio-diesel, clean diesel and conventional diesel buses, began in September 2005.
- Goods movement planning tools including a policy strategy, information base and computer model are being created through a comprehensive intermodal transportation study. A merger of this project with the Greater Vancouver Inter-Modal Freight Initiative incurred some delays, but terms of reference have been finalized and a consultant has been retained to complete the work.

For more information: www.tc.gc.ca/utsp and
www.translink.bc.ca/Plans_Projects/Urban_Showcase



Six projects are located across Greater Vancouver



Transit village location at
Surrey Central SkyTrain station



Planned pedestrian and
transit priority improvements at a
Main Street intersection



Part of the Central Valley Greenway



Hybrid bus in service

showcase profile



Whitehorse Moves

Lead Organization: City of Whitehorse, Yukon

UTSP Contribution: \$700,000

Total Project Cost: \$2.4 million

The City of Whitehorse is implementing several related projects to improve active transportation connections, enhance pedestrian and cycling safety, and calm traffic along major arterials and at key intersections.

A number of infrastructure projects to support sustainable travel modes were completed in 2005-2006, including the Two Mile Hill Bike Path and the Puckett's Gulch Stairs and Airport Trail. The opening of the new Rotary Centennial Pedestrian Bridge over the Yukon River was followed by a 35% increase in trail use on both sides of the river. The new Robert Service Way Roundabout initially caused some confusion for drivers and cyclists, but was well received after an intensive campaign to educate users about the new traffic calming feature.

Lane markings on 4th Avenue, a major downtown arterial, were repainted to make the street more pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly. The two-way, four-lane street was reconfigured to offer one through lane in each direction, a shared centre left-turn lane, and bicycle lanes. It was also streetscaped to add trees and shrubs, bike racks and bus shelters. Public reaction to the reconfiguration led City Council to reverse the work over a one-block segment only, where a minor road widening will permit the future reintroduction of dedicated bicycle lanes.

A new on-line carpool ridematching service was launched in 2005, and a bicycle commuting map was developed with several partners. Showcase organizers conducted public education and outreach over the year through brochures and utility bill inserts, public lectures and workshops, and advertising in radio and newspapers. General information on climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions was mixed with program-specific education and promotions. Other transportation demand management measures have not yet started.

The results of a trail user intercept survey showed increasing rates of cycling and walking into downtown. Bicycle travel times on some downtown routes have been reduced by three to six minutes, and a public opinion poll found that 77% of Whitehorse citizens now view walking and cycling to downtown as good or excellent, compared with 47% in 2004.

For more information: www.tc.gc.ca/utsp and www.whitehorse.ca



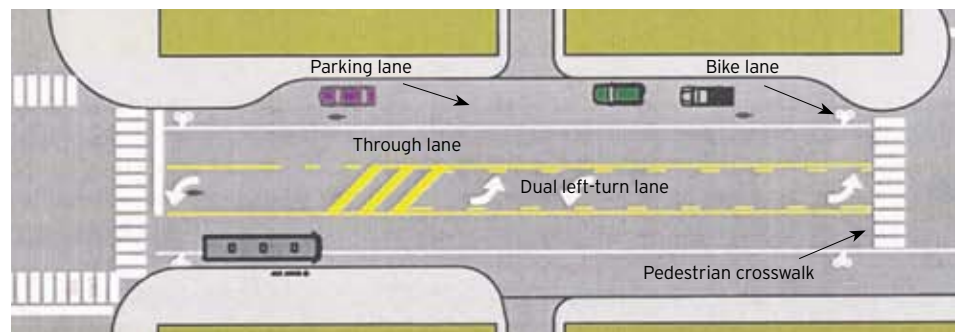
One of Whitehorse's many commuter cyclists



Reconfigured 4th Avenue with dedicated bike lanes and reduced traffic lanes



Downtown racks designed by local artists



4th Avenue anatomy



Rotary Centennial Pedestrian Bridge under construction

showcase profile



iXpress: Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Project

Lead Organization: Region of Waterloo, Ontario

UTSP Contribution: \$3 million

Total Project Cost: \$9.2 million

iXpress is a new, limited-stop express bus service serving the Region of Waterloo. By using existing roadways in a 33-kilometre corridor, it links the downtown areas of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge as well as several universities, hospitals and shopping malls. The service was launched in September 2005, and the implementation of additional elements is ongoing. It operates on weekdays from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with 15-minute frequency in peak periods and 30-minute frequency at other times.

Seven of thirteen stations were constructed in 2005-2006, with amenities including new shelters, seating, lighting, bike racks and customer information. Eight new iXpress buses feature special branding, and transit priority measures have been implemented at 17 intersections to minimize delay for iXpress passengers. Work is ongoing to implement an automated vehicle location system that will enable more advanced transit priority methods at these intersections, as well as real-time passenger information systems that will be integrated with a web-based trip planner.

Integration with active transportation is a focus of iXpress. Pedestrian improvements including ramps and markings have been made at the Grand River Hospital and Conestoga Mall stations. Bicycle racks are available on all buses and at selected stations, promoted by an extensive "Bus 'n' Bike" awareness and education campaign.

The iXpress launch was accompanied by a significant marketing campaign involving print and radio ads, an iXpress page on the Grand River Transit website, and the distribution of newsletters and timetables. All sign posts, stations and buses incorporate the special iXpress logo and colour scheme. A community-based social marketing project is underway.

There has been a steady increase in iXpress ridership, from 2,500 daily riders after the launch to 3,500 in February 2006. Surveys of iXpress riders have revealed that 20% are commuting to work and 26% are commuting to school. Surveys also show that 15% choose to use iXpress rather than a car.

For more information: www.tc.gc.ca/utsp and www.grt.ca



Ribbon-cutting at the launch event



Passengers boarding at Wilfrid Laurier University



ixpress buses feature bike racks



Hospitals are among the major destinations served by ixpress



ixpress stop with passenger shelter, seating, lighting and bike racks

showcase profile



Smart Commute Initiative

Lead Organizations: Greater Toronto Area municipalities and the City of Hamilton, Ontario

UTSP Contribution: \$2.5 million

Total Project Cost: \$7.9 million

Municipal governments across the Greater Toronto Area and the City of Hamilton have joined together to develop and promote a network of commuter options initiatives. The regional Smart Commute Association and several local transportation management associations (known as Smart Commutes) are now working to improve sustainable commuting choices and reduce single-occupant vehicle use. The various Smart Commutes and their governmental, non-governmental and private-sector partners are identifying sustainable transportation needs in each community, and developing and promoting new services that encourage more efficient use of the existing transportation system.

The Smart Commute Initiative was formally launched in June 2005. By March 2006, two transportation management associations were offering services to local employers: the new Smart Commute 404-7, and the previously existing but renamed Smart Commute North Toronto, Vaughan. Smart Commute Mississauga and Smart Commute Brampton-Caledon had also been formed and were recruiting employer participants. Planning was underway for additional Smart Commutes in Hamilton, Halton, Durham, Newmarket and Toronto.

To help local efforts, the regional Smart Commute Association developed a toolkit that included a feasibility and planning study template, a manual with communication standards, a website template, an employer business case and recruitment strategy, and a guide to creating an emergency ride home program. The toolkit helped local Smart Commutes to contact more than 2,500 employers with more than 100,000 employees, and to sign up almost 30 medium and large employers.

A cornerstone of the Smart Commute Initiative is the Carpool Zone ridematching service. It was launched in November 2005 at the same time as new high-occupancy vehicle lanes were opened on Highways 403 and 404. An intensive promotional campaign for Carpool Zone led to significant radio, television, Internet and print media coverage. In its first three months of operation, Carpool Zone attracted almost 1,500 users and led to the creation of 65 carpools.

In 2005-2006, the Smart Commute Association conducted a region-wide attitude survey of 1,000 commuters to establish a project baseline and to support marketing efforts. The survey found that 50% of respondents commute alone in their cars and that three-quarters of them have free parking at work. Employee commuting surveys were also completed with six employers in four different Smart Commutes. These surveys provide a baseline measurement of commuter characteristics, transportation choices and personal willingness to switch travel modes.

For more information: www.tc.gc.ca/utsp and www.smartcommute.ca



Cycling event at York University held by Smart Commute North Toronto, Vaughan



The Region of Peel supports two Smart Commutes



Smart Commute North Toronto, Vaughan named Toronto's "Bicycle-Friendliest Suburban Business" in 2005



Smart Commute combats congestion in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton



Carpool Zone ridematching website

showcase profile



MetroLink: Innovation Towards Integrated Bus Rapid Transit

Lead Organization: Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia

UTSP Contribution: \$4.1 million

Total Project Cost: \$12.3 million

MetroLink is a new express bus service connecting downtown Halifax to the suburban communities of Sackville (via the 22-kilometre Windmill Corridor) and Cole Harbour (via the 10-kilometre Portland Corridor). Both corridors opened in 2005-2006, with ridership increases and customer surveys confirming the benefits to riders.

MetroLink was conceived as a premium customer service. The 20 new and distinctively branded MetroLink buses operate with a ten-minute frequency in peak hours and feature high-back seats, sound dampening, air conditioning and bike racks. Two free park-and-ride lots at the major terminals operate at capacity, with the Portland Hills lot being filled after just a few days. Terminals also feature bicycle lockers, and new bikeway connections help cyclists travel between MetroLink stops and nearby destinations.

Transit signal priority systems at 20 busy intersections allow approaching MetroLink buses to minimize delays by advancing or extending green lights. Six queue jump lanes at three intersections allow buses to advance to the front of traffic. Together with the limited-stop service, these measures have reduced transit travel time for Sackville commuters to downtown Halifax by 52%, from 54 to 26 minutes.

Showcase organizers are collecting a significant amount of data. Their efforts have shown that Halifax-area commuters have flocked to MetroLink, meeting ridership projections for the project's third year in only the first year of operation. Transit ridership in the Portland Corridor has grown by almost 19%. Even more impressive is the fact that over 20% of MetroLink riders are new to transit, which shows that car users can be enticed to leave their vehicles behind if attractive, competitive options are available.

One reason for MetroLink's success is an innovative and comprehensive marketing campaign that won recognition from the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Canadian Public Relations Society. Promotional tools included 30,000 direct mail flyers, a free ride promotion for transit pass purchasers, and advertisements in print and electronic media. Over one-third of MetroLink riders found out about the service through media ads and stories.

For more information: www.tc.gc.ca/utsp and
www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/MetroLinkMainPage.html



The terminal at Portland Hills



Inside a MetroLink bus



All MetroLink buses have bike racks



MetroLink routes



A station in downtown Halifax

