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Transport Canada Transports Canada

Urban Transportation Showcase Program

Annual Reviews 2006-2008

Canada

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COVER IMAGE CREDITS
Background image collage with pictures from (left to right): the Greater Toronto Area municipalities and the City of Hamilton, Region of Waterloo, City of Whitehorse, Halifax Regional Municipality, TransLink, and City of Winnipeg.

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Program Objectives

Urban transportation presents a significant opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to cleaner air. Municipalities play a key role in their ability to affect and influence transportation emissions. The benefits to be gained are considerable, with urban passenger travel accounting for almost half of the greenhouse gas emissions of Canada's transportation sector. To achieve these benefits, Transport Canada's Urban Transportation Showcase Program (UTSP) supports innovative municipal demonstration projects that improve sustainable transportation options. The demonstration projects work to increase the availability and attractiveness of transit, cycling, walking and ridesharing, and support Canadians in changing their travel behaviour.

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

Measurement of results is a key component of all demonstration projects. Using performance measures such as transit ridership, operating costs and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, the projects establish baseline data, set targets and monitor results. The UTSP program will conclude in March 2009.

SHOWCASES

The UTSP Showcases employ innovative technologies, infrastructure improvements and creative marketing approaches to shift behaviour from driving alone to sustainable modes of travel. The resulting benefits include improved air quality, less traffic congestion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, more efficient travel, and increased pedestrian and cyclist safety.

The Showcases that were underway during 2006 and 2007 are supported by $28.5 million in UTSP contributions, with another $74.1 million committed by project organizers and more than 40 municipal, provincial, institutional and non-governmental partners. These six Showcases are listed below with more detailed profiles provided in the following pages.

In addition, two other innovative and inspiring Showcases are in the early stages. One is taking place in Gatineau and Montreal (Société de transport de l'Outaouais and Société de transport de Montréal) where they are demonstrating ways to improve the quality of services offered to commuters and testing the ability of hybrid diesel-electric buses. The other is in Quebec City where efforts are being made to strengthen the transit service and intermodal connections – including offering free bus routes with services provided by electric mini-buses. Initial results from these two Showcases are not yet available and will be shared in the next UTSP annual review.

MetroLink: Innovation Towards Integrated Bus Rapid Transit

Lead organization:
Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia

This Showcase makes 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, premium design buses, community outreach, and enhanced pedestrian and cycling access to stations.

Smart Commute Initiative

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

This Showcase creates a regionally coordinated system of non-profit transportation management associations that work with and provide resources to employers to improve and promote sustainable commuting choices to their employees.

Whitehorse Moves

Lead organization:
City of Whitehorse, Yukon

This Showcase works 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.

Sustainable Region Showcase for Greater Vancouver

Lead organization:
TransLink, British Columbia

This Showcase demonstrates 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 a household-based travel marketing program.

iXpress: Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Project

Lead organization:
Region of Waterloo, Ontario

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

WinSmart

Lead organization:
City of Winnipeg, Manitoba

This Showcase focuses on one of the most heavily travelled transportation corridors in Winnipeg and features technology demonstrations such as the installation of GPS technology in buses and a biodiesel fuelling station, projects to make transit, walking and cycling more competitive modes of transportation, and approaches to increase trucking efficiency.

Information Network

The UTSP Information Network helps 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 from 2006-2008 included: the Dutch Consulate, TransLink, Canadian Urban Transit Association, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Greater Vancouver Regional District, Simon Fraser University, Transportation Association of Canada, Association for Commuter Transportation of Canada, Sustainable Alberta Association, and Bike to Work Victoria.

Learning Events

Since 2003, Transport Canada has supported 73 sustainable transportation learning events such as presentations, workshops, discussion panels and trade shows. Over the past two years, 25 learning events have brought together over 2,200 professionals.

A sampling of events supported during 2006-2008 includes:

- A session on “Making Urban Transportation Sustainable: Case Studies in Integrated Planning & Implementation” at the World Planners Congress in Vancouver
- Sponsorship of the Canadian Urban Transit Association International Youth Summit on Sustainable Transportation in Montreal
- A webinar on Engaging Businesses Successfully in Workplace TDM Programs
- Presentations on the Region of Waterloo Showcase and Smart Commute Initiative at MTO’s Ontario Sustainable Transportation Forum (TransForum)
- Sponsorship of the first Association of Commuter Transportation of Canada (ACT Canada) TDM Summit held in Calgary
- Travel support for non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives to attend the first Canadian NGO Roundtable on implementing sustainable transportation projects at the ACT Canada TDM Summit
- Sponsorship of the 2007 International Walk 21 Conference in Toronto
- A webinar on Youth and Transportation Planning

Award Programs

The UTSP provides financial assistance to two national awards that recognize sustainable transportation leadership and innovation. The award winners in 2006 and 2007 are listed below. Links to more information, including award submissions, are available at www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

- **Transportation Association of Canada's Sustainable Urban Transportation Award**
  Nominated in 2005 and awarded in 2006, the Regional Municipality of York, Ontario, was recognized for the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation's Viva Fast Forward to a Sustainable Future. Nominated in 2006 and awarded in 2007, the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, Ontario, took the honours for their joint submission entitled "Smart Commute 404-7 Program, Markham and Richmond Hill: Reducing Traffic Congestion is Just Good Business".

- **FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Award in sustainable transportation**
  The 2006 award went to the City of Vancouver, British Columbia for the Southeast False Creek Sustainable Transportation Strategies. In 2007, the two winners that were declared were the Regional Municipality of York, Ontario, for the Viva Bus Rapid Transit Project and the City of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, for their Innovative Public Transit System.

Case Study Library

The UTSP has developed a library of over 60 sustainable urban transportation case studies and issue papers. Most are Canadian examples but some profile international projects also. For each initiative, case studies document the context, objectives, actions taken, results, and lessons learned. Among the 12 new case studies added in 2006-2007 and 14 added in 2007-2008 are:

- TransLink Parking Tax
- Link Between Health and Sustainable Transportation
- Tax Mechanisms to Promote Sustainable Transportation
- School Transportation Management
- Multimodal Bridges
- Ebay Transportation Demand Management Initiatives
- Community Based Social Marketing
- Parking Management
- Markham Land-Use Guidelines and Development Fees
- Analysis of HOV Lanes in Canada
- Rural Communities and Sustainable Transportation

Other Projects

Transport Canada supports other work that furthers the objectives of the UTSP. Here is an overview of activities from the past two years.

- **Development of the Urban Transportation Emissions Calculator**
  The Urban Transportation Emissions Calculator (UTEC) was developed as a simple, user-friendly tool for estimating annual greenhouse gas and criteria air contaminant emissions from passenger, commercial, and urban transit vehicles. The primary input to the calculator is vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) for road vehicles and passenger kilometres travelled (PKT) for rail vehicles. Other inputs relating to average travel speeds, expansion factors and vehicle fuelling characteristics can be modified from default values. For more information, see www.tc.gc.ca/utsp.

- **Report on "Building Capacity for Sustainable Transportation Planning"**
  This report recognizes capacity as a priority issue for the incorporation of sustainable transportation principles into long-range transportation planning. Coverage of the report included a Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Briefing entitled "Strategies for Sustainable Transportation Planning" that was distributed to 600 sector members and an article in *Plan Canada* magazine, published by the Canadian Institute of Planners in December 2006.

- **Outreach for the Information Network**
  Postcards profiling the first six UTSP Showcases were each distributed to over 1,000 target group members from the UTSP database. A postcard was distributed every three to five months to coincide with the addition of new information on the UTSP website related to that showcase. Starting in 2006, Information Network resources were also promoted at booths during association conferences such as the Association of Commuter Transportation for Canada, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the Canadian Institute of Planners. An advertisement profiling the Information Network Case Study Library appeared in *Forum* magazine, published by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Website

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 including:

- Links to research reports on sustainable transportation topics
- The Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Resource Centre, which provides information about TDM, 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
- The Image Bank, with downloadable photos illustrating sustainable urban transportation
- The Urban Transportation Emissions Calculator (with 25,000 visitors in the first year)

Since its launch four years ago, the Information Network has seen a steady rise in visits and web hits. It has grown from 40,000 visitors in 2004 to almost 160,000 in 2007.

LESSONS LEARNED

The UTSP demonstration projects provide an opportunity to share valuable lessons learned, particularly from the introduction of innovative approaches and technologies. Here is a brief summary of the lessons drawn from the six UTSP Showcases profiled in this review.

New technologies can uncover issues with existing technologies. Due to the complicated and overlapping nature of many systems, the introduction of new technologies can reveal unexpected impacts on or anomalies in existing systems. Recognizing the likelihood of such occurrences in schedules and budgets may help reduce the negative impacts.

Partnerships are crucial to success but require close coordination and communication. Partnerships create potential for a project to grow in scale and increase the likelihood of the project's acceptance within the community. Managing implementation through a variety of partners can be challenging with each agency, department or organization containing its own set of processes and requirements. Mutual respect and goodwill among multiple partners can go a long way in supplementing well-defined agreements.

Phasing or staging can overcome barriers but are not always possible. A phased approach to extensive projects can help spread costs over several years and overcome staff or contractor shortages. Staging new infrastructure can also allow road users, enforcement and maintenance personnel, and the general public time to gain experience and comfort before additional changes are made. When the various projects or project elements are interrelated, however, this can be difficult to achieve.

Implementation often takes longer than anticipated. Pilot projects are the learning ground, allowing each subsequent implementation to become more accurate in planning, scheduling and monitoring.

Prepare to address pent-up demand. The introduction of new infrastructure or services that prove popular can create public expectations of additional system improvements in the immediate future. Planning for success in the long-term budget process will show a commitment to meeting these expectations.

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SHOWCASE PROFILE

MetroLink: Innovation Towards Integrated Bus Rapid Transit

Lead Organization: **Halifax Regional Municipality**
UTSP Contribution: **$4.1 million**
Total Project Cost: **$12.3 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2007**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Province of Nova Scotia
- Ecology Action Centre

Residents in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) are not only getting around quicker since the launch of the first MetroLink bus in 2005, they are doing so in comfort. Equipped with high-backed seats including arm and foots rests, task lighting, climate control that provides a pleasant temperature year-round, and carpeted walls and ceiling to dampen sound, the low floor MetroLink buses make commuting a pleasant experience.

This new **premium express bus service** provides three limited-stop, direct routes to downtown Halifax and Dartmouth from two major commuter areas. The Portland Hills and Sackville lines operate a full service day Monday to Friday while the Woodside (a.k.a. Windmill Corridor) line operates during peak hours on weekdays only.

Transit priority signals on bus-only lanes combined with instant communication to the traffic signal controller in mixed traffic to allow MetroLink buses to get through intersections ensure speedy travel on roadways. These features have been installed at over 14 congested intersections to allow MetroLink buses more direct progress. To help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all MetroLink buses are fuelled with biodiesel.

Cyclists can take advantage of easy-to-use **bike racks** mounted on every MetroLink bus or park their bikes with confidence at the terminals. Completion of the **Donegal Drive/ Colby Village bikeway and trail** connection in 2006 provides a vital link that is well used by local residents to access the Cole Harbour Station. Consideration is being given to construction of additional bikeway and trail connections on other routes.

Spacious **Park'n'Ride** lots complete with security monitors are wheelchair accessible and include designated carpool parking spaces. Solar powered lights illuminate the distinctive, enclosed **MetroLink shelters** that feature clear side panels for full visibility both inside and out.

RESULTS

Evidence of the MetroLink's popularity clearly showed itself when the Portland Hills Terminal Park'n'Ride lot filled to capacity within a few weeks of opening, requiring an expansion from 175 to 230 spaces in 2006. When the Sackville Terminal lot also filled to capacity after its introduction, the available space was increased to accommodate 315 vehicles.

Passenger counts tell a similar story. One year after introduction of the program, ridership increased to 2683 passengers per weekday, a 49% jump over the program start. MetroLink was a large factor in the 9.4% increase in overall ridership experienced by Metro Transit during the first half of 2006. In comparison, the national average increase in ridership during this time period was approximately 3.5%.

An extensive rider survey found that 30% of MetroLink passengers formerly drove or rode as a vehicle passenger and on average riders using the Park'n'Ride lots have reduced their personal vehicle trip distance by 12.4 kilometres. An equal number of passengers walked to the MetroLink Terminals as drove (30% for each). Daily emissions savings has been calculated at 41% for greenhouse gases.

Introduction of the express bus service has also influenced surrounding land use. Development has increased around the MetroLink stations, and real estate agents are using proximity to the service as a selling feature.

With the successful launch and operation of the three MetroLink express bus lines and amenities, the Showcase officially reached completion in the spring of 2007. The program's success has led to numerous requests for presentations along with tours of the service provided to other municipalities considering their own BRT service.

Sharing Success

MetroLink's proven results in increasing ridership has led to numerous requests for presentations along with tours of the service from other municipalities considering their own bus rapid transit service.

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

SHOWCASE PROFILE

Smart Commute Initiative

Lead Organization: **Greater Toronto Area municipalities and the City of Hamilton, Ontario**
UTSP Contribution: **$2.5 million**
Total Project Cost: **$7.9 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2007**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- Region of York
- Region of Halton
- Region of Peel
- Region of Durham
- City of Hamilton
- City of Mississauga
- City of Toronto

Following the official launch of the Smart Commute Initiative in 2005, the main components of the program for the regional Smart Commute Association have been the development of nine local transportation management associations (known as Smart Commutes), branding and promotion of the Smart Commute name and model, outreach to workplaces, development of ridematching and emergency ride home programs, and creation of a toolkit for the various Smart Commutes to offer workplaces. Each of these efforts is working to reduce the number of employees commuting in single occupant vehicles.

The first two **transportation management associations** to offer services to local employers included the new Smart Commute 404-7 (Markham and Richmond Hill) and the previously existing but rebranded Smart Commute North Toronto, Vaughan. Since the spring of 2006, workplaces in Durham, Halton, Hamilton, Central York (Newmarket and Aurora), Northeast Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon now have access to a local Smart Commute.

To assist the various Smart Commutes in their outreach to employers, the regional association has created a **toolkit** containing a series of templates and modules on branding and business planning, recruitment strategies, marketing and outreach including website development, commuter choices and services such as the carpooling and ridematching, and a guide to creating an emergency ride home program. Updates to the toolkit include the addition of modules on cycling and walking, telework, shuttles, vanpooling, and alternative work hours.

The local transportation management associations have the flexibility to tailor programming from the toolkit and to create new marketing and outreach programs. For example, Smart Commute 404-7 established a lunchtime shuttle service late in 2006 to help alleviate midday traffic congestion and Smart Commute Mississauga implemented a Carpool and Win promotion starting in 2007.

A flagship service for the Smart Commute Association is the carpooling and ridematching program called **Carpool Zone**, which was launched in November 2005. Introduction of route-based matching capability has propelled Carpool Zone to the forefront of ridematching services around the world. Reaching out to a wide variety of employees, the online service is fully navigable in English, French or simplified Chinese text.

The **Smart Commute website** is a key starting place for new and prospective transportation management associations, and provides easy access to all services and resources provided by the regional association. Enhancements keep the site fresh and valuable, such as the ability for employees at participating workplaces to register online for the emergency ride home program.

To enable monitoring and comparison of results across the different employers and local Smart Commutes, the regional Smart Commute Association created a set of **data collection templates** for employee baseline and follow-up surveys. Region-wide commuter attitude surveys were conducted in 2005-2006 and again in 2006-2007. Employee commuting surveys were also completed with a total of 40 worksites.

RESULTS

Outreach to employers through the Smart Commute Initiative has been significant with commitment secured and sustainable transportation programming put in place at more than 200 worksites with over 145,000 employees by completion of the Showcase in the spring of 2007.

In less than three years, 240 promotional and outreach events took place involving Smart Commute – from conferences to networking breakfasts to transportation fairs. Many journalists now turn to the Smart Commute Association regarding traffic issues in the greater Toronto Area and Hamilton.

By the spring of 2007, more than 6,000 users had registered with the ridematching service resulting in more than 500 carpools. A user satisfaction survey found that 85% of users are satisfied with the service overall and would recommend Carpool Zone to friends and colleagues

The Smart Commute Initiative to shift commuter behavior successfully avoided an estimated 17,517 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and 76 million vehicle kilometres travelled in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton over the life of the Showcase. These savings are based on measurements derived from four key sources: events, Carpool Zone user survey results, employer follow-up surveys, and employer vehicle counts.

Beyond UTSP

Since completing the Showcase program in the spring of 2007, the Smart Commute Initiative has become a full-fledged, ongoing program of Metrolinx (Greater Toronto Transportation Authority), the provincial body tasked with planning for and enhancing the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton transportation system.

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

SHOWCASE PROFILE

Whitehorse Moves

Lead Organization: **City of Whitehorse**
UTSP Contribution: **$700,000**
Total Project Cost: **$2.7 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2007**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- City of Whitehorse
- Yukon Territorial Government
- Yukon Council on Disability
- Yukon Energy Corporation
- Northern Climate Exchange
- Yukon Electrical Company Ltd.
- Main Street Yukon
- Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon
- Rotary Clubs of Whitehorse
- Cycling Association of the Yukon
- Riverdale Community Association
- Skookum Asphalt

With this program, the City of Whitehorse has shown that promoting and encouraging active transportation and transit is not the sole domain of large urban centres. Since its launch in 2004, Whitehorse Moves has demonstrated how a smaller, full service urban city of 21,000 people can effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector and remove barriers to walking and cycling.

With all infrastructure completed early in 2006, the City spent most of its final year promoting, collecting data and putting some final touches to the projects.

Continuous cycling lanes and multi-use trails leading to and within the downtown along with a new pedestrian and cycling bridge across the Yukon River made **active transportation** a practical and appealing option for more residents. Other pathway improvements included a lighted stairwell directly connecting the upper escarpment neighbourhoods, one of two main residential areas, to the downtown.

As a means of **traffic calming**, a roundabout was constructed as an alternative to signal lights and stop signs at the intersection of two arterial roadways within the downtown core. This served to improve traffic flow from side streets and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety. Two arterial roadways that serve as major connection routes through and to the downtown core were selected for road diets. Reducing these four vehicle lanes to two through traffic lanes with a centre dual left turning lane allowed the introduction of bike lanes.

Installation of new **bus shelters and signage** and new **bike parking stalls** along with the planting of trees and shrubs along one of the main arterial roadways within the downtown core have improved the travel experience for all users.

Brochures, advertisements, displays at trade shows and participation in public workshops and meetings all helped to spread the word about sustainable transportation and new infrastructure in Whitehorse. Copies of a new **commuter cycling map**, transit information and a new downtown walking map produced by the Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon were distributed widely. Online versions of the transit and cycling maps can be found on the City's website.

The **Wheel 2 Work Whitehorse** initiative encouraged commuters to cycle to work throughout the summer from May to September 2006, and offered prizes and support to participants. Cyclists could track their results online and see how they fared against the 238-kilometre "Haines to Haines" bike relay race, a famous event for those living in the Yukon and Alaska. Participants were encouraged to ride whatever suited their situation and set their own goals, whether it was once a week or more. Residents could read profiles in the local newspaper on individual participants, quite possibly their neighbours or co-workers, and become inspired to join in.

Other components to the Whitehorse project included a **carpool program**, an **anti-idling policy** developed in 2005 for municipal employees and a **bicycle fleet** for internal use within the downtown core that included new locks, helmets and saddle bags/baskets.

RESULTS

Based on the City's 2006 annual citizen survey, 30% of cycling and walking commuters in downtown thought that cycling was safer. Residents also thought the trails and paths leading to downtown have improved significantly, with 76% reporting in the 2006 survey that the trails leading to downtown were good or excellent compared with 48% in 2002 and 2004. Overall, commuting by bike or foot between April and October increased between 2004 and 2006.

Although the percentage of households using transit declined in 2006, transit ridership overall increased approximately 16% against 2004 as a result of those who use transit using it more often. Roundabouts were initially controversial but 67% of respondents in 2006 thought they were effective. Regarding the reduction in vehicle lanes, 58% of respondents thought the changes were good or excellent while 24% thought the changes were poor.

Quantifiable reductions of greenhouse gas emission include 78 tonnes CO_2 offset through increased transit use and an estimated 12 tonnes of GHG through Wheel 2 Work Whitehorse.

While the Whitehorse Moves Showcase concluded in the spring of 2007, momentum created by the program will continue to influence future transportation decisions and creation of the City's Sustainability Plan. The commuter multi-use trail and cycling network has been greatly enhanced and will continue to evolve under the City's new Trail Plan.

Keeping up Momentum

While the Whitehorse Moves Showcase concluded in the spring of 2007, momentum created by the program will continue to influence future transportation decisions.

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

SHOWCASE PROFILE

Sustainable Region Showcase for Greater Vancouver

Lead Organization: **South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority / TransLink**
UTSP Contribution: **$8.8 million**
Total Project Cost: **$30.9 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2009**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- TransLink
- Metro Vancouver
- Province of British Columbia
- Cities of Burnaby, Vancouver, Surrey and New Westminster
- Coast Mountain Bus Company
- BC Rapid Transit Company
- Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)
- The Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design
- BC Ministry of Transportation
- Greater Vancouver Gateway Council
- Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition
- Socialdata Canada

The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (formerly the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority) is working on a package of six urban transportation projects with the tongue-in-cheek title "Six in the City". The Showcase features three major capital projects including the Main Street Corridor transit and pedestrian priority project, transit villages and the Central Valley Greenway. Other projects include the TravelSmart household marketing pilot project, a regional goods movement efficiency project, and a hybrid bus demonstration project.

Over the past two years, activities on the **Main Street Corridor Transit and Pedestrian Priority Project** have focused on the installation of bus shelters and real-time electronic displays along with sprucing up the route with street furniture and landscaping. Delays resulting from a civic strike in Vancouver in 2007 mean some of the benches, bike stencil markings (sharrows), and bike racks will be completed in the summer of 2008. The introduction of transit signal priority at 18 locations started in the spring of 2008 and will help keep transit moving and on schedule. Representing a first for TransLink, a public art plan was approved that outlines a framework for implementing artwork along the corridor. By late fall of 2008, Vancouver residents will be enjoying the selected artwork as they travel the route.

Upgrades to the **Broadway/Commercial Transit Village** on the Expo Skytrain line will be phased in due to significantly higher cost estimates, which will avoid having to scale back plans. The first phase of construction will start in the summer of 2008. Land acquisitions have challenged implementation of the **Surrey Central Transit Village**, resulting in a reduction in project scope. Despite this setback, the partners are committed to pursuing the long-term vision beyond the dates of the UTSP program.

Cyclists and pedestrians in Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster are eagerly watching progress on the 22-kilometre **Central Valley Greenway** (CVG). Phasing will now be used in the New Westminster portion to ensure full connectivity in spite of budget gaps. Burnaby and Vancouver were able to secure additional funding through the Provincial Government's Cycling Infrastructure Partnership Program. People are already walking and cycling on the greenway, during promotional events such as the Better Environmentally Sound Transportation CVG Ride, the World River's Day CVG Ride, and the World Urban Forum tour.

The **TravelSmart** individualized marketing project offered customized resources and assistance on transit, cycling and walking to households in six neighbourhoods. The project successfully wrapped up after completion of a baseline travel survey followed by marketing and outreach to participating households, which included bike delivery of maps, information pamphlets, umbrellas, pedometers and other items. Travel ambassadors provided individual support to households through telephone calls and home visits plus transit stop-specific schedules upon request. Changes in travel behaviour were identified through a follow-up survey. Preliminary survey results were available in the spring of 2007.

In the first phase of the **Regional Goods Movement** project, an inventory of best practices in goods movement was completed in 2006 along with an environmental scan and scoping study of current freight methods and their contribution to regional, provincial and national economies. The second phase is underway to develop an overall freight strategy for Greater Vancouver started early in 2007. It will include a forecasting tool to evaluate potential strategies for alleviating bottlenecks.

Vancouver residents had their first chance to ride diesel-electric **hybrid buses** during testing in 2006, after which they were placed into regular service. Neighbourhood residents shared their perception of the hybrid buses, including noise and emission levels, in a survey.

RESULTS

Preliminary results for the TravelSmart household marketing project point toward success, reporting an average 8% reduction in car trips across the six pilot neighbourhoods. Initial findings indicate the hybrid buses performed well in terms of fuel efficiency, fuel costs and emissions. For the remainder of the projects in the Showcase, baseline data has been established for future evaluation of results.

Dealing with Rising Costs

Faced with escalating costs for capital projects, a phased approach is being introduced for some initiatives while others seek additional funding from other sources to avoid scaling back plans.

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

SHOWCASE PROFILE

iXpress: Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Project

Lead Organization: **Region of Waterloo**
UTSP Contribution: **$3 million**
Total Project Cost: **$9.2 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2009**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- Region of Waterloo
- City of Waterloo
- City of Kitchener
- City of Cambridge
- University of Waterloo
- Wilfrid Laurier University
- Grand River Hospital

Transit riders in the Region of Waterloo have been enjoying a quick and comfortable ride since the launch of the iXpress bus service in 2005. Providing a fast, limited-stop and direct service along a 37-kilometre route, the iXpress connects the communities of Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo and offers commuters an attractive alternative to driving. Running between the Conestoga Mall in Waterloo and the Ainslie Street Bus Terminal in Cambridge, this direct express service links major destinations such as universities, regional hospitals, shopping malls and downtown districts, and connects riders to other Grand River Transit bus routes.

Since 2006, transit riders have benefited from a number of enhancements to the service including **real-time information displays** using the global positioning system at iXpress stations, **bike racks and lockers** at selected locations, and an online trip planner. Ridership can now be measured through an **Automatic Passenger Counting system** that was installed on 15 iXpress buses and 19 non-iXpress buses in the beginning of 2008. **Transit signal priority measures** at selected intersections help buses move along the route more quickly.

In 2007, traveller information was improved. Monitors at the iXpress stations display real-time information and next station announcements with the same information announced on iXpress buses. Riders can also use a **text messaging service** or an interactive voice response telephone system to find the scheduled arrival times for the next three buses at any bus stop. Locating the best travel option for transit is easily done 24 hours a day with the introduction of a **web-based trip planner**.

The final six **iXpress stations** were completed in 2006, with all 13 stations designed to promote access to transit by walking, cycling or connecting bus routes. Improvements to sidewalks, stairs and crossings make access easier for pedestrians while cycling is being encouraged through a Bus'n'Bike program. Post and ring bike racks have been installed at selected stations, with additional **bike racks and lockers** under consideration at other locations. Local events featuring the bus/bike rack demonstration unit helped to increase awareness and rider comfort with using the bike racks that are available on all buses.

A **community-based social marketing program** promoted the iXpress service as well as cycling, walking, carpooling and telecommuting to households surrounding the Ainslie station. Participating households in this pilot project received customized resources and assistance to help them switch from driving to transit and other sustainable methods of travel.

With the addition of evening and weekend service in 2007, the iXpress now runs Monday to Friday every 15 minutes during the morning and afternoon rush hour periods and every 30 minutes during the midday. The addition of evening and weekend service includes 30-minute frequencies on Saturdays and Sundays. With ridership continuing to steadily increase, midday frequency Monday to Friday is being increased to 15 minutes in September 2008.

Extensive promotion of iXpress continues through displays, distribution of printed schedules, and advertisements in the Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge communities.

RESULTS

Popularity of the iXpress service continues to exceed expectations, with daily boardings surpassing targets in the first two years of operation. In September 2007, average daily boardings reached 5,700. A rider survey found that the number of people switching from car travel to the iXpress increased from 13% in 2006 to 19% in 2007.

The environmental impact of the express route is equally impressive. It's estimated that during the first year alone, the iXpress service resulted in 1.5 million fewer km of personal automobile travel, which offset 500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

Results from the community-based social marketing program include a 40% increase in transit use with participating households along with a 5% increase in walking, 35% increase in cycling and a 1.6% decrease in driving.

To allow sufficient time to monitor and evaluate the full impacts of the transit technologies on travel behaviour and production of greenhouse gas emissions, this Showcase has been extended until March 31, 2009.

Easy Go

The EasyGO traveller information system makes it easier for transit riders by providing real-time arrival information for the next two buses on displays installed at the stations. Flat panel displays at the two main transit terminals indicate both schedule and real time information for the service.

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

SHOWCASE PROFILE

WinSmart

Lead Organization: **City of Winnipeg**
UTSP Contribution: **$7.99 million**
Total Project Cost: **$13.1 million**
Completion Date: **March 31, 2009**

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

- City of Winnipeg
- Province of Manitoba
- University of Manitoba Transport Institute
- Resource Conservation Manitoba
- The Centre for Sustainable Transportation

The Pembina corridor in Winnipeg is one of the fastest growing and most heavily travelled routes in the city. Connecting downtown with the University of Manitoba and running through a variety of residential neighbourhoods, commercial developments and industrial zones, the 15-kilometre Pembina Highway continues south of the city as the primary U.S. trade route.

Officially launched in November 2006, the WinSmart Showcase involves a suite of initiatives focused on the Pembina Highway corridor that can be grouped into three key areas: technology demonstrations; making transit, walking and cycling more competitive modes of transportation; and increasing trucking efficiency.

A pilot project to provide a biodiesel blend (B10) to selected municipal fleet vehicles is removing internal barriers by making it more readily available at a **biodiesel re-fuelling station**. Infrastructure for the station was installed in November 2007.

Transit improvements include implementation and testing of GPS technology and other methods to pinpoint the location and progress of each bus on the road. This technology will then provide transit users with real-time bus departure information. The technological enhancements, which will be phased into the Winnipeg transit fleet during the summer of 2008, will help keep buses on time and increase the reliability of transfers.

Winnipeg Transit's **Park and Ride** system will be expanded to include a new lot at the existing Manitoba Hydro headquarters near Pembina Highway. This will accommodate transition of approximately 2,000 employees who will be working out of the new head office under construction in downtown Winnipeg.

Pedestrians are finding their way around downtown a little easier with the installation of 91 **wayfinding signs** in 2007. Plans are underway for information kiosks that will display "You Are Here" maps, highlight key downtown destinations, and provide information on and directions to the weather-protected walkway system in downtown Winnipeg.

Walkers and cyclists are benefitting from upgrades and new sections added to the **multi-user path** that connects The Forks, a popular tourist destination downtown, with Pembina Highway. To be completed in the fall of 2008, the path helps improve connectivity to important destinations like the University of Manitoba.

A **community-based travel marketing pilot project** is providing individualized assistance and resources to households in a selected area along the Pembina Highway corridor. Employing a successful model used elsewhere, including Vancouver and Region of Waterloo, the Winnipeg project has identified over 800 households that want to switch from driving alone to walking, cycling, riding transit or carpooling, or choose these modes more often. A follow-up survey in the fall of 2008 will determine changes in travel behaviour.

Innovative freight practices are being identified and promoted, ranging from trip scheduling, load matching, idling reduction, and operation and maintenance programs to driver training. Industry representatives and others heard an introduction to the freight initiatives and potential applications at a seminar held in January 2008.

A **truck routing program** aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through better trip planning and routing, including the creation of a digitized road map to enable delivery fleet managers to use computerized routing models that minimize travel distances. The digitized map is now capable of routing, with origins and destinations to be incorporated once the participating freight companies are selected. The capabilities of the truck route network model have been demonstrated to and discussed individually with company representatives.

In a complementary effort, an **e-commerce project** is being piloted to reduce customer travel to large retail chains and make efficient deliveries using scheduling and load matching. As a first step, an on board automated tracking system called Otto Link has been installed in an urban delivery vehicle. Once functional, the technology will be extended to other companies within the working group.

RESULTS

With the recent launch of this Showcase, results are not yet available but will be reported in the next review.

The Pembina Corridor

The WinSmart Showcase focuses on the 15-kilometre Pembina Highway corridor in Winnipeg – one of the fastest growing and most heavily travelled routes in the city.

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

Canada

Transport Canada Transports Canada