

4 Create complete communities that integrate nature and the built environment



Complete communities support the well-being of each resident by providing a full range of housing, transportation, community infrastructure and open space opportunities. In order to create complete communities, TRCA needs to incorporate livability and sustainability into new developments, while supporting the transformation and retrofitting of existing neighbourhoods to reduce their environmental footprint and increase their resilience.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Greenspaces, green infrastructure, more sustainable developments, and community retrofits that benefit community members and reduce environmental impacts.
2. Optimal access to TRCA owned or managed greenspace
3. A strong sense of place for all communities that is grounded in environmental health and sustainability, and recognizes and celebrates natural and cultural heritage.
4. Existing and new communities are planned to integrate natural systems and achieve a less impactful (e.g. lower carbon) environmental footprint

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACHIEVED (2013 – 2017)

- Conducted technical reviews to facilitate development and infrastructure projects including the Spadina Subway Extension, Metrolinx Regional Express Rail, Highway 427 extension, redevelopments in Intensification Areas and in new employment areas (e.g., Vaughan, Caledon, Pickering).
- Supported member municipalities in integrating greenspace and green infrastructure into new and existing communities through initiatives such as retrofitting existing stormwater management ponds, terrestrial natural heritage system design, urban forest management and facilitating low impact development.
- Obtained City of Toronto and W. Garfield Weston Foundation support for Phase 1 of The Meadoway project that will transform portions of the Gattineau Hydro Corridor in East Toronto into vibrant, biodiverse public spaces.
- Initiated development of the next generation of TRCA watershed plans that demonstrate how watershed protection can be integrated into new development and redevelopments to achieve greater certainty for all involved.
- Supported municipal partners in addressing provincial requirements for hazards, watershed planning, and natural heritage in land use decision-making through developing guidelines and policies to inform their decisions.

PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

- Assist landowners and government partners to realize complete communities and environmental best practices in new developments and existing neighborhoods.
- Assess TRCA's development review process with member municipalities, industry and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to facilitate more timely reviews.
- Provide value-added advice to protect natural heritage, reduce risk from flooding and erosion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and restore habitats in the design of new communities and redeveloping areas.
- Work with industry, private businesses and municipal partners to integrate natural heritage, elements of the Trail Strategy for The Greater Toronto Region, and green infrastructure into the design of new communities, and the redevelopment of older communities, at the earliest stage of the planning process in order to achieve vibrant award winning public spaces and multiple community benefits.
- Engage with member municipalities, academic institutions, the development industry, and professional associations to deliver professional development programs, and conduct design charrettes and forums to achieve integrated sustainable community design in projects and plans.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Measuring TRCA's progress towards desired outcomes for this strategy will rely on existing information and, in some cases, new data. The land and vegetation cover data and trail mapping data collected by TRCA and member municipalities will allow TRCA to assess collective success in increasing the amount of greenspace and active transportation infrastructure passing through the jurisdiction. Projects including restored stream corridors and retrofitted ponds will be tracked in TRCA databases. The volume of permit reviews, and the number of individuals receiving training and certifications through TRCA education and engagement will be tracked and reported on. Understanding community health needs may require new partnerships with public health authorities, while assessing 'sense of place' will involve surveys with staff and stakeholders in the development process and direct input from community members.