

Press release  
For immediate release

## **Towards Healthier Neighbourhoods across Canada 10 years of transforming communities through participatory planning**

**Montréal, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020** – Now more than ever, Canadian municipalities must take action to create healthy and resilient communities. With this in mind, the Active Neighbourhoods Canada network is proud to unveil our new platform, which reports on the impact we've had over the last decade in 24 Canadian neighbourhoods, using participatory planning. [IMPACT.ParticipatoryPlanning.ca](https://IMPACT.ParticipatoryPlanning.ca) shares outcomes and resources that speak to the capacity of communities to transform their environment.

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC), The Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) at Clean Air Partnership and Sustainable Calgary have worked together over the last 10 years to create a movement to advance active and engaged communities through the Active Neighbourhoods Canada network. This ambitious project engaged close to 6,000 residents and 65 partner organizations in co-designing 24 neighbourhoods across 3 provinces.

### **An innovative approach that is making its mark**

The Active Neighbourhoods Canada network piloted, refined and scaled up an innovative approach to participatory urban planning, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Ten years ago, this was the first intervention-based project supported by PHAC to address the links between the built environment and public health. In 2017, Theresa Tam, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, stated that active built environments "improve public health and prevent disease" in her [\*Designing Healthy Living\*](#) report.

Participatory planning, or co-design, engages diverse voices in re-imagining neighbourhood design and building communities that meet the needs of the citizens who live there. This has resulted in community transformations in Québec, Ontario and Alberta in which health, physical activity and social connection are promoted.

## Neighbourhoods focused on health and resilience

The pan-Canadian experience of the Active Neighbourhoods Canada Network shows many communities are actively looking for solutions to create climate-friendly and healthy neighbourhoods. Thousands of users have downloaded the tools and resources available on our bilingual portal. "On these solid foundations, our wish is to launch a new phase of the network to facilitate equitable access to healthy built environments. This is an opportunity to contribute collectively to achieving the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals that Canada has committed to achieve by 2030 - including the creation of sustainable cities and communities", claims Véronique Fournier, Executive Director of the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre.

## Reach of the Active Neighbourhoods Canada network

- **5,993** residents involved in 24 green, active and healthy neighborhoods across 3 provinces
- **14,000** People reached through conferences, courses, workshops and webinars
- **82,000** website visits (from 2094 cities across 166 countries) on the bilingual platform [ParticipatoryPlanning.ca](https://ParticipatoryPlanning.ca)
- **8,200** downloads of our co-design tools
- **1** flagship portal for professionals and decision makers

Full project report at: [impact.ParticipatoryPlanning.ca](https://impact.ParticipatoryPlanning.ca)

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## Requests :

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## About Active Neighbourhoods Canada

Active Neighbourhoods Canada is supported by [Montreal Urban Ecology Centre \(MUEC\)](#), [The Centre for Active Transportation \(TCAT\)](#) at Clean Air Partnership, and [Sustainable Calgary \(SC\)](#), and it has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.