


A vertical blue bar on the left side of the slide features a close-up photograph of a water droplet falling into a pool of water, creating concentric ripples.

# Committed to Climate Action: *Harnessing Community Resources*

November 4th, 2023

Social and Ecological Justice Commission



Boozhoo  
Bienvenue  
Welcome



A visual symbol indicates to others that climate action is happening.

This symbol indicates that the user is working with the air, soil, and water to increase the life by decreasing the heat. Feel free to use it!



# Sustainability of the Land



*Think about who walked here before us....*

- [Chippewas of Georgina Island](#)
- other [Anishinabek](#) Nations,
- [Huron-Wendat](#),
- [Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nation](#).

*Think about the processes that occurred to uproot those peoples...*

- [Toronto Purchase](#)
- [Williams Treaties](#)

*Think about what we need to do for reconciliation...*

[Education Resources](#) on the Anishinabek Website.

Mno-waawiindandaa Anishinaabe [Giizhigad!](#)

[Let's Celebrate Anishinaabe Day!](#)

- The Anishinabek Nation is a confederation of 39 First Nations; 65,000 Anishinaabe
- Article 4 – Principles of Government Structure of the Anishinabek Nation
  - 4.1 The Anishinabek Nation Government shall be guided by the principles and way of life of the seven sacred gifts given to Anishinaabe, namely: Love, Truth, Respect, Wisdom, Humility, Honesty and Brave



# Agenda for the Afternoon

1:00 - 1:10 Welcome and Introduction

1:10 - 1:30 Eve Wyatt and Paul Dowsett, Toronto Home  
Retrofits: Spreading the Pocket Change

1:30 - 1:35 Gail Greer, Seniors for Climate Action Now!

1:35 - 1:45 Transform TO Municipal Strategies

1:45 - 2:20 Networking

2:20 - 2:30 Next Steps and Closing

# February - August, 2022 44th General Council Adopts Climate Objective

- climate strategy that accelerates reductions towards the goal of an 80% decrease in emissions by 2030
- with a commitment to measure, report and adjust based on learnings.







# Faith Communities Working on Climate - Shining Waters Region -

*What are the ways faith communities are the private sector and citizens in the ongoing climate crisis?*

An ask:


Build an interfaith movement to inform and support a local sustainable community.

# Changing the Narrative:

*What does  
“80% decrease in  
emissions by 2030”  
mean?*

The spreading effect  
of one action in our  
church communities.





# Toronto Home Retrofits: Spreading the Pocket Change Eve Wyatt and Paul Dowsett

*Our homes and buildings are vital to our wellbeing, social connectivity and economy — but they are also Canada's third-largest source of emissions.*





## Toronto Home Retrofits (THR):

- a not-for-profit organization that offers community groups across Toronto the support they need to green their homes by applying the Pocket Change model

## Pocket Change Project:

- Volunteer-run committee founded in 2017 in “The Pocket” (neighbourhood in the east Danforth area of Toronto)
- A community group of neighbours helping neighbours to reduce individual and collective carbon footprints.
- Offers a retrofit coordination service in Toronto’s east end which demonstrates a demand for retrofits, advice, and GHG reductions

# Community- Based Home Retrofits

Building on  
Pocket Change

Paul Dowsett and Eve Wyatt  
Toronto Home Retrofits  
For the Social and Ecological Justice  
Commission, November 4, 2023



# Today's Topics

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Why encourage home retrofits?

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What is the Pocket Change Project?

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Introducing Toronto Home Retrofits

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How can my community help?

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# Why Encourage Home Retrofits?





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## What is a retrofit?

A retrofit is an improvement that reduces your home's carbon emissions and energy use. These retrofits often make your home:

- More comfortable
- Less expensive to heat
- Healthier
- Kinder to the environment



# What do our homes have to do with the climate crisis?

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- Climate change is largely caused by burning fossil fuels, which emits greenhouse gases.
- Most of Ontario's houses are heated with gas ... a fossil fuel.
- Emissions from burning gas in homes are a significant part of communities' greenhouse gas emissions.\*
- Electrifying space and water heating and appliances can reduce your home's greenhouse gas emissions by +90%.
- ***We must reduce emissions from each of our single-family homes to meet our communities' and Canada's climate goals.***

\*Single family homes contribute 17% of Toronto's GHG emissions

# The goal: Replace gas with electricity

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## Space heating:

Heat pump



## Water heating:

Electric/Heat pump  
water heater



## Cooking:

Induction range/  
cooktop



## Dryer, fireplace,

**barbecue:**

Electric appliances



And air seal/insulate for **energy efficiency** where it is effective and feasible.



# Taking personal action helps people cope with climate anxiety



Reducing emissions from home space and water heating, cooking, and appliances



Reducing emissions from transportation and travel



Consuming less meat and dairy products

# Why do people begin this journey?

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- A home renovation or upgrade
- A failing heating or AC system
- An uncomfortable house- hot, cold, or drafty
- Concern about health effects of gas
- High utility bills
- Concern about climate change and future generations
- A combination of the above

# Every house is different ... all the questions can feel like an obstacle course!

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What type and size of heat pump? Do we need a backup?

Electric or heat pump water heater?

Should we insulate? How much? What kind? Interior or exterior?

Can I get rebates? How should I use them?

Do solar panels make sense for us?

What should we do first?

Where can we find reliable contractors?

Is this quote reasonable?



How does the  
Pocket Change  
Project help?





# The Pocket

- 1100 homes, 3500 people
- No through streets
  - Kids can play in the streets
  - Great for street parties
- A cohesive community with an active Pocket Community Association
- The Pocket Change Project, a committee of the PCA, addressing climate change through home retrofits, EVs, etc.





## Pocket Change: Neighbours helping Neighbours

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- Provides a supportive community of peers.
- Shares useful information - website, webinars
- Links homeowners with personal objective advice and coaching
- Celebrates successful projects



# Who are the Pocket Changemakers?

## 1- Early Adopters (first year, 10 homes)

- 12 climate-motivated homeowners

## 2- Inspired by neighbours (second year, 30 homes)

- Motivated by yard signs, word-of-mouth

## 3- Ready Recruits (underway, 100+ homes)

- Identified by survey
  - Aging furnace or A/C
  - Planning a renovation
  - Climate-concerned



We **have** reduced our  
home's carbon footprint.

FIND OUT HOW



# Results?

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Among 30 Changemakers:

- 15 homes with air source heat pumps
- 8 gas water heaters replaced with electric
- 13 homes air sealed and/or insulation improved
- 3 homes off gas entirely
- Projects continue...



# Introducing... Toronto Home Retrofits



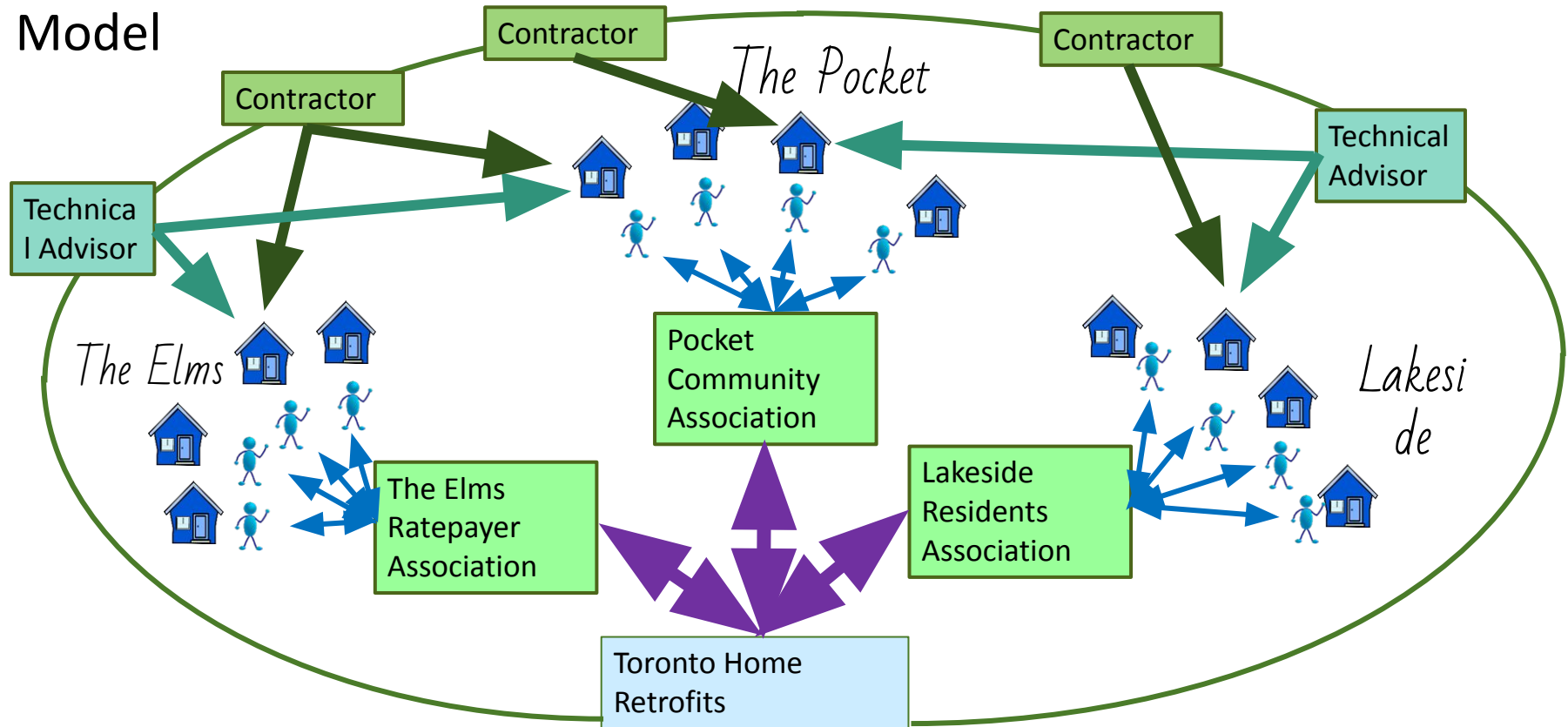
# Toronto Home Retrofits (THR) is...

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... a not-for-profit that is scaling up the Pocket Change model. THR will:

- **support Toronto community groups** helping their members to “green” their homes.
- **offer informative materials and a roster of advisors** to assist homeowners through the home retrofit.
- accelerate home retrofits in communities across Toronto to help meet TransformTO emissions reduction goals.

# The THR Model



How can my  
community  
help?







# Communities can

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- Show that retrofits are practical and benefit homeowners
- Encourage homeowners who are interested in learning more and motivate them to retrofit their homes
- Support homeowners during the retrofit with neighbour-to-neighbour support and shared experience
- Celebrate homeowner successes and community results





# Retrofit Support: the Ingredients

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The Leadership Team

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Technical Advice

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Communications -  
Staying in touch



# The Retrofit Leadership Team

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- Introduces and promotes the home retrofit project
- Engages interested homeowners
- Guides homeowners to general information and personalized audit and advice
- Stays in touch with homeowners; helps solve problems
- Cultivates a peer community of interested homeowners
- Celebrates and documents completed projects
- Liaises with THR to get resources and tech support



# Retrofit Leadership Team Roles



Project  
leader/manager



Communications  
coordinator



Events  
coordinator



Retrofit  
coordinators

# The key: Technical Advice

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- Homeowners want advice from a knowledgeable, trustworthy advisor
- The advisor can be
  - A committed energy advisor - this is beyond the energy audit
  - A specialist architect or engineer
  - A committed and technically-inclined homeowner
- The cost of advice (\$500-\$1000) is a sound investment:
  - Saves time
  - Helps select cost-effective actions
  - Helps ensure contract is good value



# The Advisory Service

Creates a personal roadmap for the homeowner and home (considering the energy audit, technical advice, cost)

Helps homeowners find qualified contractors and arrange contracts

Helps access financing and incentives

Answers questions and resolves issues







## Communications - Staying in touch with homeowners

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- Newsletter
- Retrofit Coordinator
- Social media:
  - Website
  - FB Page/Group
- In-person gatherings
- Neighbour-to-neighbour communications

# What we have learned

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- Keep the focus on reducing GHG emissions – electrifying space and water heating
- Tailor energy efficiency to the home's condition:
  - Air sealing (including duct sealing) is affordable and effective in older homes
  - Insulate where there are cost-effective opportunities or comfort issues
- Affordability is usually top of mind, and differs between homeowners
- Consider embodied carbon when choosing materials (e.g. avoid foam insulation)
- Each homeowner is on a journey, taking one step at a time
- Be patient - Leadership Team commitment is key

# Selected Community Resources

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- **Home Retrofit Forum Facebook group**- an information exchange community
- **Bulk purchase of induction stoves**, homeowner heat pump testimonials – Harbord Village Residents' Association/ Net Zero Carbon Project  
- [Harbordvillage.com/projects/netzero-carbon-project](http://Harbordvillage.com/projects/netzero-carbon-project)
- **Heat pump cost report and calculator**- Canadian Climate Institute <https://climateinstitute.ca/news/heat-pumps-lowest-cost-option-for-most-holds/>
- **Homeowner Heat Pump Testimonials** - Ontario Clean Air Alliance <https://www.cleanairalliance.org/heat-pump-testimonials/>
- **Pocket Change Project** – website includes webinars, retrofit stories, blogs, Retrofit Coach, newsletter signup <http://pocketchangeproject.ca>
- **Toronto Home Retrofits**- growing website will include reference information for homeowners <http://torontohomeretrofits.ca>

Join Us-  
If not for your  
sake, then do it  
for theirs.

info@torontohomeretrofits.ca

[torontohomeretrofits.ca](http://torontohomeretrofits.ca)





# Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!)

## Gale Greer

### SCAN!

- A social movement that informs and mobilizes seniors in an effort to prevent further climate catastrophes.
- Supports the lead of young people, and recognizes Indigenous Peoples' central role in addressing the climate emergency
- Started in Toronto just three years ago with 20 people, now with over 500!

### Gail Greer, Ph.D. - joyful environmental activist

- Taught sociology at Queen's in the 1980's and ran a business until retiring in 2009
- Recognized a mass social movement is needed to create a sustainable and just society
- Contributing analytical, research, and writing skills to Seniors for Climate Action Now!



Near Net Zero by 2030?!:  
Harnessing Community  
Resources

**Dr. Gail Greer - SCAN!**

“What Works in  
Mobilizing Seniors”



# First, What De-Mobilizes Seniors ...a few of MANY FACTORS....

## SLIDE 2

### A: Paralyzed by Guilt and Shame –

We have been sold the message by major polluters – We Are Guilty; all this happened on our watch; Even Greta Thunberg says it's our fault!

### B: War waged on us by Big Oil

- To keep us from taking collective action – a \$3.6 BILLION war has been waged against us over the last 50 years, by Big Oil,  
*“to mislead the public and prevent crucial action to address climate change.”*



SLIDE 3

C: Women's leadership has been STIFLED

**Mary Robinson**

- First Woman President of Ireland
- The Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice.



“If we took away barriers to women's leadership, we would solve the climate change problem a lot faster.”

D: Diminished Collective Power

We don't have the strength for GROUP collective action... of the tribe...except for church and social justice groups, and some unions.



# SLIDE 4

- Work with intact groups – people already in a group.
- Ask questions about their reality, interests and concerns , Listen and Empathize, Inform, and Drive toward Action Planning
- Don't fret family and friends by trying to convert them.



## SLIDE 5

- We ask questions of GROUPS, so they are co-creating a strategy, as they discuss with each other, for Action.
- Speak confidently. Think of everyone as your collaborators, co-conspirators, in the fight to save life on earth.





## SLIDE 6

- The people who willingly come to our Climate Conversations
  - are not looking for a lot more information:
  - They want to know – what can we DO, if it's not too late.
- Ask BETTER Questions. Prepare, before any encounter, your QUESTIONS.





## SLIDE 7

- OUR **asking** THEM questions communicates your confidence in them to do the right thing. **Telling** them suggests they won't be able to act until they know as much as you do.
- Affirm everything they do and say – sincerely, imaginatively. No arguments. No rebuttals.
- Lend them your positive energy and affection



## SLIDE 8

- Love. Empathize. Like them. Be likeable.
- Storytelling. The shortest route from one heart to another is telling our stories to each other.
- Seniors are in a stereotyped category and can be defensive.



SLIDE 9

**SCAN! IS OFFERING.....**

**Contact us at: SeniorsTalkClimate@gmail.com**



**SENIORS  
for  
CLIMATE  
ACTION  
NOW**

## A Climate Conversation For your Group

Online or In Person  
60 or 90 minutes friendly, conversational meeting  
We will come up with ACTION ideas, together, for tackling this crisis.

- ALL AGES WELCOME!
- Key Climate Crisis information
- What do we have going for us, together, to make an impact?
- What do we love enough to take action?
- Lets make a plan!

SCAN! calls for emergency climate action at all levels of government

**JOIN SCAN!  
GET  
INVOLVED**

SCAN! Website: [seniorsforclimateactionnow.org](http://seniorsforclimateactionnow.org)  
Contact for a Climate Conversation:: [SeniorsTalkClimate@gmail.com](mailto:SeniorsTalkClimate@gmail.com)

# OUR ASK

We would like you to commit to...

...holding a networking meeting in your church to which you invite

- Your mayor
- Your Councillors
- Your MPP
- Your MP
- Local
  - Engineers/Scientists
  - Contractors
  - Residents



Photo by [Brooke Cagle](#) on [Unsplash](#)





# Transform TO 2030 Goals by Sector

## Homes & Buildings

- All new homes and buildings will be designed and built to be near zero greenhouse gas emissions
- **Greenhouse gas emissions from existing buildings will be cut in half, from 2008 levels**

## Energy

- **50 percent of community-wide energy comes from renewable or low-carbon sources**
- 25 percent of commercial and industrial floor area is connected to low carbon thermal energy sources

## Transportation

- 30 percent of registered vehicles in Toronto are electric
- 75 percent of school/work trips under 5 km are walked, biked or by transit

## Waste

- **70 percent residential waste diversion from the City of Toronto's waste management system**
- Identify pathways to more sustainable consumption in City of Toronto operations and in Toronto's economy

# Serendipitous Story

About 4 years ago, before the pandemic, I and a few others formed a small group, in concert with our local TransformTO climate champion, to work on climate issues.

We:

- held one public forum online
- then discovered that there were others in south Etobicoke who had also just formed
- so we combined our groups and founded the Etobicoke Climate Action group
- then sponsored some online events during the pandemic

These Town Halls enabled partnerships to be formed with local groups, including church groups, which helped when advertising other online workshops we've held.

Brian McIntosh, Minister Bloordale United - Etobicoke Climate Action Group

# Networking Time: 1:45-2:20

From your experience

- Share whatever you want
- Help us consider other options to harness community energy for the climate crisis
- Help each other solve problems that block community engagement



Photo by [Brooke Cagle](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Your voice is welcomed!


Please email us at with input or question or answers:

- Susan Eagle at [eagle.susan@ymail.com](mailto:eagle.susan@ymail.com) or
- Esther Collier at [targetclimatechange@gmail.com](mailto:targetclimatechange@gmail.com)

Slideshow and chat notes will be shared on the Justice tab in the Shining Waters Region website, under Ecological Justice.



*Thank you for  
talking about  
climate!*



# Next Sessions

## March, April, and November, 2024

### **Near Net Zero by 2030?: Greening Grounds and Greenbelts**

Saturday, March 9, 2023 at 1 p.m. on Zoom

### **Near Net Zero by 2030?: Heat Pumps and Geothermal Loops**

Saturday, April 13, 2023 at 1 p.m. on Zoom

### **Near Net Zero by 2030?: Financing and Grant-Writing**

Wednesday, November 6, 2023 at 7 p.m. on Zoom





*Thank you and Farewell*