



NEWS RELEASE

“MICROTRANSIT” KEY TO REDUCING CLIMATE POLLUTION FROM CARS

TORONTO, December 5, 2016 — A fast-growing transportation trend called “microtransit” which includes ride-sharing services could cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from personal transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) by almost 6 per cent, according to the first- ever study of microtransit in the region. The study’s savings projections indicate that in the next 5 years microtransit in the GTHA could reduce emissions equivalent to taking 25,000 cars off the road. Today in Toronto, MaRS and The Atmospheric Fund are convening key stakeholders to discuss how to put this research into practice in the GTHA.

Microtransit refers to shared public or private sector transportation services that offer fixed or dynamic routes and schedules in response to consumer demand. While forms of microtransit such as commuter shuttles have been around for many years in select global pockets, a rise in sharing economy services like Lyft Line and UberPOOL, which allow a passenger to share a ride with others nearby, has unlocked opportunities to use them at large scale. The study identifies key factors that will speed adoption of microtransit and fills a research gap on the sector’s emission-reducing potential.

Transportation is the single-largest source of GHG emissions in Ontario and requires multiple strategies to achieve deep reductions, including active transportation, mass transit, and electric vehicles.

The new study was commissioned by The Atmospheric Fund and Co-op Carbone and undertaken by MaRS Discovery District. The complete study can be downloaded [at this link](#).

KEY FINDINGS:

- Deploying microtransit applications in the GTHA can reduce greenhouse gases from personal vehicles by almost 6% over five years
- Microtransit applications can offer practical, cost-effective, and environmentally beneficial solutions to urban transportation challenges
- By capitalizing on existing vehicle assets and road infrastructure, and leveraging the growing acceptance of transportation-based shared services, microtransit can form an important part of the Ontario government’s near-term activity on climate change

QUOTES:

“Transportation is a major source of GHG emissions in our region. While transit will play a critical role in reducing emissions in the long term, microtransit has the potential to reduce emissions quickly and cheaply while also tackling gridlock, saving money, and improving air quality.”

– **Julia Langer, CEO, The Atmospheric Fund**

“The transportation that people use to get around cities is about to change dramatically. Microtransit could be the start of a shift away from individual car journeys to on-demand shared transport. This study shows the first steps we can take to build that future in a way that substantially reduces greenhouse gas emissions.”

– **Joe Greenwood, Director, MaRS Data Catalyst**

ABOUT THE ATMOSPHERIC FUND

[The Atmospheric Fund](#) ([@Atmospheric Fund](#)), or TAF was founded in 1991 by the City of Toronto. TAF's mission is to invest in urban low-carbon solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. To date, TAF has invested more than \$50 million, helping Toronto shave more than \$60 million from its energy bills, and contributed to a city-wide reduction of GHG emissions to 24% below 1990 levels.

ABOUT MARS DISCOVERY DISTRICT

[MaRS Discovery District](#) ([@MaRSDD](#)) in Toronto is one of the world's largest urban innovation hubs. MaRS supports promising young ventures that are tackling key challenges in the health, cleantech, finance & commerce, as well as work & learning sectors. In addition to helping startups launch, grow and scale, the MaRS community is dedicated to cross-disciplinary collaboration, commercialization of discoveries and driving ideas to impact.

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