SMART FREIGHT CENTRE

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Smart Freight Centre research partnership receives major funding award

The Smart Freight Centre is delighted to announce that a new research initiative entitled "CLUE: City Logistics for the Urban Economy", has received a major funding award from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Research projects funded by NSERC Alliance Grants must be supported by partner organizations that provide funding or in-kind resources, participate in project research activities, and mobilize the knowledge produced by the project. The CLUE research collaboration is supported by three universities, six private-sector partners, four public sector partners and two non-governmental organizations. Congratulations and thanks to all who contributed to its success.

The Smart Freight Centre, a centre of excellence for goods movement, is a collaborative network established in 2019 by the Region of Peel, McMaster University DeGroote School of Business, the University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute and York University Lassonde School of Engineering.

CLUE is a four-year, $11 million collaboration between 10 academic researchers at those three universities and the CLUE Partnership. It will be led by Dr. Matthew Roorda, Professor, Civil & Mineral Engineering, University of Toronto and the Chair of the Smart Freight Centre, together with Smart Freight Centre leaders Dr. Elkafi Hassini, Professor, DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University and Dr. Peter Park, Associate Professor, Lassonde School of Engineering, York University.

To date, urban transportation planning policies have focussed predominantly on the movement of people, not the movement of goods. However, that is changing rapidly as government agencies cope with increasing numbers of delivery vehicles that are contributing to congestion on urban roads; conflicting with automobiles, pedestrians, and cyclists; and competing for curbside parking with other vehicles.

Meanwhile, the industry is being challenged by customers' growing expectations, congestion, automation, a driver shortage and challenging and sometimes dangerous driving conditions in the context of vulnerable road users. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased recognition of the importance of supply chain resiliency and has led to fast and potentially permanent shifts toward e-commerce and home delivery.

CLUE will fill major knowledge gaps about the Canadian urban freight system through the execution of 24 projects organized under four broad themes:

- Theme 1: Freight Data Warehouse (FDW), Data Collection and Data Science Applications
- Theme 2: Logistics Network Design for New E-commerce Delivery Models
- Theme 3: City Logistics Pilot Studies
- Theme 4: Safety, Environment and Labour Force Dynamics

CLUE will provide industry and policy makers with knowledge and decision support tools to help them develop the new and innovative policies required to ensure that Canadians are supported by a resilient and sustainable goods movement industry.

About the Smart Freight Centre

The Smart Freight Centre, a centre of excellence for goods movement, was established in 2019 with seed money from the Region of Peel. It is a collaborative network between McMaster University DeGroote School of Business, the University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute, the York University Lassonde School of Engineering and recently, Ryerson University.

Its mission is to improve the economic vibrancy of business, environmental sustainability, and quality of life for residents of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area by providing innovative evidence-based research, decision support, advocacy, training, and trend monitoring in order to coordinate transportation infrastructure, land development, regulation, technology tools, and resources that improve goods movement activities. The goal is to evolve the Smart Freight Centre into a formal network between governments, academics, and industry that work on goods movement issues of regional significance.

About the CLUE Research Collaboration

CLUE partners supporting the project include public sector partners the Region of Peel, York Region, City of Toronto and Transport Canada; private sector partners Bosch Corporation, CHET, Esri Canada, Geotab Inc., Gatik, ShipperBee; non-governmental organizations The Atmospheric Fund and the Pembina Institute; and the University of Toronto, McMaster University and York University.

About NSERC Alliance Grants

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada's NSERC Alliance grants encourage university researchers to collaborate with partner organizations, which can be from the private, public or not-for-profit sectors. These grants support research projects led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams that will generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results to create benefits for Canada.

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