



Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign

Campaign Launched at Manayunk Regional Rail Station

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FactSheet # 1

The Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign, or MTAC, is a Philadelphia-first educational initiative by Clean Air Council to help improve and preserve the environment and quality of life in Philadelphia's Manayunk community.

By decreasing the use of the car in Manayunk, even by what at first glance might seem like small amounts, traffic congestion can be reduced and air quality improved. Other benefits can be realized as well, such as averted auto crashes that cause personal injury, death, and property damage. Overall, MTAC holds the promise of an improved quality of life for Manayunk residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Need for the Campaign:

History Perspective: Manayunk was settled by immigrants in the early 1800s as an industrial center, manufacturing a variety of goods. The availability of water with the completion of the Manayunk Canal, provided a means of transportation and power. With the help of Main Street trolleys, and a stop on the Pennsylvania Railroad, the town flourished. During its heyday, Manayunk was a magnet for hard-working middle class people. The population was very close knit and took great pride in the neighborhood. The twentieth century brought a decline in transportation services, the Great Depression, two World Wars, and a decline in the need for the community's goods and services, resulting in decay and a growing instability in Manayunk's economic infrastructure.

The Manayunk renaissance began in the 1980's. Vacant mills and factories were converted to apartments, new restaurants, bars, or entertainment centers. Chic boutiques and galleries sprang from the decaying ruins making Manayunk one of Philadelphia's "Hot Spots." There are approximately 30 restaurants and over 65 boutiques and galleries in the relatively short commercial stretch of Main Street Manayunk. The parking problem had gotten so severe as to prompt the Philadelphia City Council to adopt an ordinance preventing future restaurant conversions or expansions in the area.

Special events such as the annual First Union US Bicycle Race, Canal Days, Main Street Stroll, the Arts Festival, the Indian Summer Festival, and Second Sundays, tend to overtax the available parking and affect the surrounding residential community.

Concurrent with the recent economic revival, Manayunk also went through a social transition in the late 1980s and 1990s, losing much of its historic cohesiveness and sense of community. This transition has resulted in an obvious decline in community well-being sparked by an ongoing struggle between the commercial strip on Main Street and the residential areas. As a result of the changing nature of Manayunk, the neighborhood has attracted a more transient population whose life styles and lack of investment in the neighborhood often clashes with the residents whose families have lived in the same homes in some instances for several generations.

Some Statistics:

- The center of Philadelphia is 7-10 miles from Manayunk.
- According to the Philadelphia Planning Commission, approximately 10,000 people live in Manayunk consisting mainly of white, white-collar residents, a majority of which are employed in center city.
- Half of the population is between the ages of 25 and 45.
- 65% of the population is single.
- Only a quarter of the total number of households are occupied by two or more persons.

The Campaign:

Traffic congestion hurts the economy and quality of life in the historic Manayunk community. The community of Manayunk like many other places in this country is profoundly affected by today's over-reliance on the auto. That there are too many cars impacts on both the livability of the residential areas and the viability of its Main Street commercial district.

The Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign's goal is *to reduce the number of automobile trips in the Manayunk community of Philadelphia by at least 5%.*

Over the course of the next two years, Clean Air Council will conduct a number of educational workshops in Manayunk to explore the advantages of strategies to reduce automobile travel. This empowerment

Clean Air Council is a membership-supported non-profit environmental organization dedicated to protecting everyone's right to breathe clean air. The Council works through public education, community advocacy, and oversight of the government to ensure enforcement of environmental laws.

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will result from voluntary alteration of habits people may have about using their cars.

M-TAC's Educational Program is designed to:

1. Raise **Awareness** of the seriousness of Manayunk's transportation-related problems.
2. Increase **Acceptance** among persons in Manayunk that action on the part of individuals can contribute to solving these problems.
3. Change **Attitudes** towards automobile use.
4. Encourage individuals in Manayunk to take **Action** to alter their travel behavior.
5. Help implement solutions to improve the availability of transportation **Alternatives**.



Passengers at Manayunk Regional Rail Station, were treated to free coffee and breakfast as part of the campaign launch.

The Launch:

On April 19th, 2001, while also celebrating International Car Free Day, Clean Air Council and the Manayunk Neighborhood Council launched the Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign.

Passengers travelling on SEPTA's R6 line were thanked for using an alternate mode of transport to the automobile, with free coffee and breakfast on the platform of Manayunk train station. The event was a great success, with many grateful rail passengers showing interest in the campaign!

For more information about the campaign and upcoming workshops, contact: Dennis R. Winters at (215) 567-4004 ext. 233, or by email at dwinters@cleanair.org