



# Building Complete and Sustainable Communities: Healthy Policies for Official Plans





Produced by:

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Cover photos courtesy of (counter clockwise from top left): Tanya Hill, Melanie Morrish, Louise Livingstone (Harvest Hastings), and Campbell's Orchards.

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This document has been influenced and adapted with permission, from the document **Healthy Community Design: Policy Statements for Official Plans (2010)** produced by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

Supplementary work examining best practices in healthy community design policy has also influenced the development of these planning policies. References are noted throughout the document. Policies and/or strategies that do not have a reference listed are those of the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit.

## Preface

Within the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit's Chronic Disease, Injury Prevention and Environmental Health programs, many of the health promotion and protection issues can be addressed, in part, by working in partnership with municipalities and other community partners toward creating an environment that enhances and sustains the health of citizens.

The health unit's Built Environment Working Group aims to support municipalities in creating healthy communities by:

- Collaborating with municipalities and community partners to achieve a shared vision of a built environment that promotes and protects health;
- Identifying evidence-based policies to guide municipalities, community stakeholders and the private sector in the planning and design of new development, and to encourage the revitalization of existing communities to be sustainable and supportive of the complete physical, mental and social wellbeing of citizens.

It is with these objectives in mind that the health unit offers the policy statements and implementation activities included in this document to municipalities as suggestions for Official Plans and other community planning initiatives. The health unit recognizes the diversity and the mix of rural and urban communities within its jurisdiction and has used this knowledge to design policies that should be considered within both settings. However, policy implementation may be more relevant in one setting than the other. Therefore, it is recommended that consideration be given to the content of this document as part of a comprehensive community assessment and community engagement process such as Official Plan Reviews, Council Strategic Plans and/or the development of Municipal Master Plans, to ensure alignment with the physical and social context of the community.



*Photo courtesy of Christine Fitzgerald*



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### **Land use Planning, Community Design & Health**

Where a person lives has as much influence on their health as how they live. Over the past few decades, extensive research has provided scientific evidence which demonstrates that communities can be built in ways that encourage or discourage healthy behaviours such as physical activity, injury prevention, healthy eating, and connecting with neighbours. (5) For example, shorter distances for daily trips are achieved in areas with higher building density and a greater mix of land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, office, community service/institutional) and most studies agree that these two elements of the *built environment* (density and mixed land uses) are positively associated with walking and cycling for utilitarian trips. (6)

Furthermore, research has shown the need for effective community *planning* and design to create supportive settings that promote the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of people, including: access to recreation, schools, employment, health and social care, strong social networks, access to nutritious food, clean air and water, and opportunities to engage in physical activity. (5) This can be achieved through the design of *complete communities*. *Complete communities* offer places to live, work, learn, and play at all stages of life. (7) This means safe, local access by active and public transportation to options for education, employment, housing, food, recreation, and services – for everyone regardless of age or physical ability. (8) A complete community approach also emphasizes *health equity* by acknowledging that inequities occur as a consequence of differences in opportunity, which result, for example in unequal access to health services, nutritious food or adequate housing, and as such, inequalities in health status arise as a consequence of inequities in opportunities in life. (9)

The policies and strategies listed in this document provide guidance to municipalities on how they can plan and design *complete communities* in the urban and rural areas of Hastings and Prince Edward counties and suggest opportunities for municipalities to provide leadership and engage communities in the design of healthy living environments.

### **How to Use this Document**

This document is comprised of five sections: 1) sustainable & accessible transportation; 2) access to active recreation in built and natural environments; 3) preserve and protect the local food system from production to waste management; 4) access & exposure to tobacco and alcohol products; and 5) social interaction & sense of community. Each section contains a policy goal, an evidenced-based rationale that makes the link between land use *planning*, community design and health, objectives related to each policy goal, and suggested policy statements that may be included in municipal Official Plans and/or other documents. A link to the relevant contents of the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 for each objective is identified. Italic words are defined in the glossary at the back of this document. Implementation strategies that require *municipal leadership* and *community*



*Photo courtesy of Judy Kozak*

# Introduction

Municipal decision makers have a role in *planning* and designing communities for optimal health. This role includes prioritizing funding for infrastructure improvements that support non-motorized modes of transportation (e.g. sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming measures, cycling networks), creating comprehensive transportation plans to ensure the safe movement of people and goods, engaging citizens to participate in the *planning* and design of their community, reviewing municipal by-laws to determine whether they encourage or discourage healthy behaviours, and enacting policy changes at the local level to create a healthy environment for all citizens. (1) Therefore, municipalities must ensure that *planning* decisions enhance and protect the health and wellbeing of all citizens. The Ontario Planning Act (2006) and the Provincial Policy Statement (2005) recognize the complex inter-relationship among these factors while offering clear guidance on the creation of healthy and complete communities. (2) Current provincial policy directs municipalities to:

- Build strong communities by managing and directing land use to achieve healthy, liveable, and safe communities;
- Plan public streets, spaces, and facilities to be safe and to meet the needs of non-motorized and motorized movement;
- Promote mixed land uses and increased densities;
- Increase support for transit and reduce automobile dependence;
- Provide for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation;
- Preserve all significant natural heritage features; and
- Create communities with places to live, work, learn, and play in close proximity to each other.

These principles are fundamentally aligned with strategies for improving the health of the population. (3) Municipalities must also comply with the requirement to develop municipal Official Plans and to review these plans every five years. (4) An Official Plan is a statutory document which sets out long-term land use policy for growth and development in a municipality. An Official Plan provides guidance for development over a minimum 20-year period while taking into consideration a wide range of social, economic, and environmental conditions that are important in building a healthy, safe, and sustainable community. An Official Plan usually includes a set of goals and objectives along with a corresponding set of specific land use policies and accompanying schedules. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to provide municipal staff, municipal elected officials, and other *community stakeholders* in Hastings and Prince Edward counties with Official Plan policies and implementation strategies to support the development of healthy and complete communities.



### *Land use Planning, Community Design & Health*

Where a person lives has as much influence on their health as how they live. Over the past few decades, extensive research has provided scientific evidence which demonstrates that communities can be built in ways that encourage or discourage healthy behaviours such as physical activity, injury prevention, healthy eating, and connecting with neighbours. (5) For example, shorter distances for daily trips are achieved in areas with higher building density and a greater mix of land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, office, community service/institutional) and most studies agree that these two elements of the *built environment* (density and mixed land uses) are positively associated with walking and cycling for utilitarian trips. (6)

Furthermore, research has shown the need for effective community *planning* and design to create supportive settings that promote the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of people, including: access to recreation, schools, employment, health and social care, strong social networks, access to nutritious food, clean air and water, and opportunities to engage in physical activity. (5) This can be achieved through the design of *complete communities*. *Complete communities* offer places to live, work, learn, and play at all stages of life. (7) This means safe, local access by active and public transportation to options for education, employment, housing, food, recreation, and services – for everyone regardless of age or physical ability. (8) A complete community approach also emphasizes *health equity* by acknowledging that inequities occur as a consequence of differences in opportunity, which result, for example in unequal access to health services, nutritious food or adequate housing, and as such, inequalities in health status arise as a consequence of inequities in opportunities in life. (9)

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*Photo courtesy of Judy Kozak*

*engagement* to achieve the objectives are also provided. Strategies that require *municipal leadership* are ones where the municipalities hold responsibility for directing action and implementation. Strategies involving *community engagement* are ones where opportunities exist to work collaboratively with citizens and *community stakeholders* in the implementation of policy and also where other agencies may take the lead in directing action and implementation with the involvement of the municipality.

It is important to note that there is no implied priority in the order in which the policies, objectives, and strategies appear. Some of the policies listed represent the minimum standards, and municipalities are encouraged, where possible, to go beyond the minimum standards to address specific community issues related to the topics presented in this document. The language used throughout this document was given careful consideration to reflect positive direction (i.e. shall, will, should).

The *built environment* has numerous crossover effects on various components of health. As a result, many of the policy goals included in this document have the potential to achieve multiple benefits to the community. Therefore, we have included some policies in more than one section of this document. This is identified by a footnote indicating where else that policy has been listed. Users of this document are encouraged to read all sections of this document to ensure the inclusion of a set of comprehensive policies to support the design of *complete communities* through their Official Plan and other documents.

Municipalities should assess these policies and implementation suggestions and determine the feasibility of including them in their Official Plan and other community *planning* initiatives. Municipalities are encouraged to use the concepts within this document when *planning* and are encouraged to adapt them to suit their particular needs and circumstances. This is by no means a complete list and should therefore be viewed as a starting point.

Achieving the goals identified in this document will require support and collaboration between municipal decision-makers, *community stakeholders*, the private sector (including developers), and citizens. This collaborative approach is one that supports a vision for a healthy community and fulfills the provincial policy requirements to create a healthy Ontario.



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Ronan

### ***Hastings and Prince Edward Counties***

The region of Hastings and Prince Edward counties is situated in south eastern Ontario and boasts a mix of small urban and rural municipalities. To the north of the region is Hastings County which is made up of 14 member municipalities along with the separated single tier municipalities of Belleville and Quinte West. The rural area of Hastings County has a population of 42,394 which includes the population centres of Bancroft, Deseronto, Madoc and Tweed along with many other vibrant towns and villages. (10) The Hastings County Official Plan may be described as a single tier plan that is jointly administered by two tiers of municipal government. The County administers the Official Plan and has approval authority for land severances and plans of subdivision and condominium, while the member municipalities are responsible for the implementation of the Official Plan as it relates to zoning by-laws, minor variances, site plan control and roads (Personal communication, B. McComb, October 11, 2012). Located along the highway 401 corridor are the urban centres of Belleville, population of 49,454, and Quinte West, population of 43,086, which have authority over the administration and implementation of their Official Plans. (10; 11) To the south of the region is the municipality of Prince Edward County, population 25,258, which is predominantly a rural municipality made up of several hamlets with small urban centres in Picton and Wellington. (12) Prince Edward County is a single tier municipality that administers and implements its Official Plan.

Agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism are the key industries within Hastings and Prince Edward counties. (13) Hastings and Prince Edward counties have key demographic characteristics that are distinct from provincial characteristics. The median household income in both Prince Edward County and Hastings County is below the provincial average. Prince Edward County's median income is approximately 13.5 percent less than the provincial average, while that in Hastings County is approximately 21 percent less. (14) Furthermore, the region has a greater proportion of adults over 55 years of age compared to the Ontario average of 25 percent. Hastings County has 29.8 percent of the population over 55, and in Prince Edward County, over one third of the population (38 percent) is over the age of 55. (14) Therefore, consideration for those living on a low income and those over the age of 55 years of age is necessary when engaging in community *planning*.





# Sustainable & Accessible Transportation



## Goal 1

**Reduce automobile dependency by encouraging, supporting and promoting active transportation infrastructure for residents of all ages and physical abilities.**

### Rationale

#### Environment

The transportation sector is a major source of air pollution in Canada. Transport Canada identified that urban passenger travel creates almost half of the greenhouse gas emissions of Canada's transportation sector, which in turn produces about one quarter of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions. (15) In addition, on-road transportation and engine idling contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and release CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, and hydrocarbons, which are the precursors to smog. (16) The Canadian Medical Association estimates that as many as 21,000 Canadians die each year as a result of air pollution. (17) High per capita vehicle miles of travel and number of vehicle trips is associated with higher levels of air pollutants that can have adverse respiratory health effects such as increased respiratory distress, asthma, increased risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, and mortality. (17;18) Reducing the number of vehicle miles travelled by designing communities to encourage walking, cycling, and public transit use will reduce traffic volume and result in a decrease in exposure to harmful air pollution. (19)

Automobile dependent communities require more land for roads and parking than those that are designed to include *active transportation* infrastructure. (20) Increased paved surfaces contribute to heat island effects, making it more challenging to manage the health effects of extreme heat events. (21) By reducing automobile dependency through effective community planning, fewer roads will be required allowing opportunity for more open/green spaces and urban forests. Open/green spaces and urban trees can reduce air temperature, remove air pollutants, provide shade to protect people from the sun's ultraviolet radiation, and reduce energy consumption related to cooling needs during extreme temperatures. (21) Furthermore, open/green spaces protect water quality by providing opportunities for water absorption and filtration. (16)



*Photo courtesy of Allison Phillips*

### Injury Prevention

Safety concerns keep one in five Canadians from walking or cycling. (22) Lack of lighting, inadequate traffic calming measures, and unsafe and poorly maintained infrastructure contribute to perceptions of insecurity and impact people's choice to engage in physical activity. (23) Therefore, design elements should enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages with the inclusion of features such as lit trails, way-finding systems (e.g. maps, directional signage), and dedicated pedestrian and cycling networks that are free from obstacles and obstructions to sightlines. (23)

The more people travel by car, the greater potential there is for motor vehicle-related injury among motorists and pedestrians. (24) Community design that increases density and reduces the distance between places of employment, education, recreation, and residency reduces the need for motor vehicle travel and makes transit use and *active transportation* more viable. This lowers the risk for injury and fatalities related to motor vehicle collisions. (25) Increased *active transportation* infrastructure improves the overall performance and safety of the transportation network through traffic calming, streetscape improvements, traffic speed reductions, vehicle restrictions, and road space reallocation. (26)



Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill

### Physical Activity

The majority of Canadians are inactive. (27) Physical inactivity and sedentary lifestyles contribute significantly to the population burden of chronic disease, disability, and premature death. (28) A community that is designed to encourage *active transportation* influences a person's capacity to be physically active. Land use planning practices that encourage high residential density and mix of utilitarian destinations increases walking behaviour by encouraging inactive people to make more utilitarian walking trips and those who are already active to become more active. (29) People are more likely to use active forms of transportation when they are connected by safe and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian and cycling routes. (30)

### Health Equity

A multi-modal transportation system that prioritizes accessibility provides more choice in transportation and results in more equitable access to community services, employment, healthy food options, and opportunities for *active recreation* by diverse populations. (31) Youth, seniors, people with disabilities, and people living on a low income are able to rely less on automobile transportation to maintain and enhance their quality of life. (31) Moreover, while everyone faces increased health risks due to air pollution, the risk is disproportionately greater for people with cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, people with diabetes, the elderly, pregnant women, and young children. (32)



## Objective 1.1

**Build compact neighbourhoods with a mix of land uses to support pedestrian and cycle environments.**



### Planning Policies

**1.1.1.** Land use designations and transportation master plans should prioritize patterns and densities that support active transportation, public transit, and pedestrian and cycling oriented development. (33)

**1.1.2.** A diversity of land uses will be provided such that schools, workplaces, public facilities and services, retail outlets, *healthy food outlets*, cultural and community spaces, and places of recreation are in convenient and safe walking and cycling proximity for residents.

**1.1.3.** Land use designations shall enable retailers of healthy foods such as supermarkets, small and mid-sized grocery stores, produce vendors, and farmers' markets to be located within convenient walking and/or cycling proximity from residences, workplaces, commercial and industrial areas, educational institutions, places of worship, and places of recreation.<sup>1</sup>

**1.1.4.** All employment lands are accessible and connected to residential areas and transportation corridors, and are supported by *active transportation* routes and/or networks, infrastructure, and public transit services. (33)

**1.1.5.** Development and/or design standards should be created so that new projects develop aesthetic, cultural, and safety features to support pedestrian and cycle friendly environments. (33)

**1.1.6.** Zoning by-laws should be developed to guide land use patterns and densities towards a more compact and intensified built form to encourage *active transportation* and public transit by providing connectivity within and among transportation modes for residents of all ages and abilities, including persons with disabilities. (33)

### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

*1.1.3.4 Appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.*

*1.1.3.7 New development taking place in designated growth areas should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and shall have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities.*

*1.6.5.4 A land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support the development of viable choice and plans for public transit and alternative transportation modes, including commuter rail and bus.*

*1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy efficiency and improved air quality through land use development patterns which: ...*

*b. promote the use of public transit and other alternative transportation modes in between residential, employment (including commercial, industrial and institutional uses) and other areas where these exist or are to be developed; ...*

*d. improve the mix of employment and housing uses to shorten commute journeys and decrease transportation congestion.*

<sup>1</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* as 3.2.1.

## Implementation Strategies

### Municipal Leadership

- Review and amend the zoning by-law to encourage land use patterns and densities towards more compact and intensified built form that models connectivity within and among transportation modes.
- Develop standards and guidelines for new and retrofit projects that support pedestrian scale streets, cycling routes, and streetscapes which are safe, convenient, and attractive, and that enhance the historical and cultural character of an area. (34)
- Review and amend policies and standards regarding parking management to ensure efficient use of land, compact form, and more walkable streetscapes. This includes reviewing and amending the zoning by-law requirements for off-street parking to set both maximum and minimum limits to the size of parking areas to reduce the amount of parking and to create a more compact physical form for the community. (35)
- Routinely conduct pedestrian and cycling route analysis and ensure on-site cycling infrastructure as part of the site and building design process. (36)

### Community Engagement

- Work with citizens and community stakeholders to conduct an audit of the municipality to identify strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and current and future initiatives related to active transportation, including creating pedestrian and cycling friendly environments and public transit. This includes auditing the design of vehicular driveways and ramps, including drive thru access points to minimize contact between cars and pedestrians. (37)



*Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill*

## Objective 1.2

**Design transportation routes that are safe for all users and accessible by all ages and physical abilities.**



### Planning Policies

**1.2.1.** Long-range transportation planning should ensure that community-wide access for all modes of transportation is considered with specific attention to *active transportation* and public transit. (33)

**1.2.2.** All roads shall be designed as *complete streets* to allow pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists of all ages and physical abilities to interact and move safely along and across municipal streets. (8)

**1.2.3.** To accommodate different types of roads that have different functions, *Complete Street Design Guidelines* should be developed to consider which elements are appropriate based on the function of the transportation facility and the adjacent land use context. (8)

**1.2.4.** Ongoing road maintenance, reconstruction, new road construction, and associated infrastructure shall have equal consideration for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists. (8)

**1.2.5.** The municipality should work in partnership with private developers, the province, adjacent municipalities, and/or the county to provide for a transportation system that integrates a range of travel modes to move people and goods. (8)

**1.2.6.** Guidelines and methodology will be considered to ensure the appropriate consideration of different types of traffic calming measures that can be used to reduce the speed of traffic and balance the needs of service providers such as emergency medical services and fire rescue. (38)

**1.2.7.** Design for roads, crossings and new developments will use *active transportation*, transit, and engineering best practice approaches that increase safety for non-motor vehicle road users and reduce traffic speeds without the need for enforcement. (33)

**1.2.8.** *Active transportation* routes and/or networks, both adjacent to roads and independent of the road system, will be kept clear and well maintained year round, including the winter months, to increase the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users.

### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

**1.1.1** *Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by: ...*

*f. improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.*

**1.5.1** *Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:*

*a. planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians and non-motorized movement, including but not limited to, walking and cycling.*

**1.7.1** *Long term economic prosperity should be supported by: ...*

*d. providing for an efficient, cost effective, reliable multi-modal transportation system that is integrated with adjacent systems and those of other jurisdictions and is appropriate to address projected needs.*

**1.2.9.** Rural roads and off road trails for non-motorized use shall be designed to accommodate safe cycling between communities and to promote opportunities for physical activity and cycling tourism.

### **Implementation Strategies**

#### **Municipal Leadership**

- Offer joint professional development opportunities to planners, engineers, and other municipal officials on the benefits, design, and implementation of complete streets. (8)
- Establish an internal cross-sector working group with representation from public works, transportation, and planning to assess current procedures and identify the necessary requirements to ensure the needs of all road users are considered in transportation projects. (8)
- Establish formal processes to integrate the use of multimodal level of service measures in all transportation planning and development initiatives to demonstrate how motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users interact.
- Establish and implement area wide traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, raised intersections, reduced lane widths, traffic circles, and speed humps to reduce traffic speed, improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users and reduce the amount of road space dedicated to automobiles. (39)
- Create requirements that define specific exceptions where accommodation of all road users is not required and ensure a rigorous approval process for all exceptions. (8)
- Develop an inventory of active transportation routes and networks, both adjacent to roads and independent of the road system and develop maintenance plans at the same priority as automobile routes and identify budgetary priorities to those active transportation routes.
- Institute methods to collect data and measure the effectiveness of the streets at serving all users. (8)
- Maximize pedestrian/motor vehicle segregation and ensure provision of appropriate signals or pedestrian grade separations.
- Collaborate with the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit to develop and implement a “Share the Road” program that includes educational messages and signage to remind drivers of the law to share the road with cyclists to increase the safety of those engaging in active transportation.

### Community Engagement

- Work with citizens and community stakeholders to conduct an audit of the municipality to identify strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and current and future initiatives related to active transportation, including creating pedestrian and cycling friendly environments and public transit. This includes auditing the design of vehicular driveways and ramps, including drive thru access points to minimize contact between cars and pedestrians. (37)
- Work with community stakeholders to promote a “Share the Road” program.



*Photo courtesy of Community Care North Hastings*



## Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments



### Goal 2

Ensure all residents have access to safe and healthy opportunities for active recreation in built and natural settings.

#### Rationale

##### Environment

The negative health effects of poor outdoor air quality are so well established that the Environment Canada Air Quality Health Index recommends that even healthy individuals restrict their physical activity levels on high smog days. (42) Considering the health benefits of physical activity and the research demonstrating the effective air cleaning qualities of trees, ensuring natural settings for *active recreation* is vital to further reduce cardiovascular and respiratory disease. (43) Clean air is also important for healthy pregnancies and healthy child development. (32; 44) Moreover, natural settings found in open/green spaces and urban forests help to mitigate extreme heat events by reducing large concentrations of paved surfaces which contribute to heat island effects. (21)

The presence of trees and structures to provide shade allows citizens to enjoy *active recreation* in outdoor settings while protecting them from the harmful effects of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. (45) Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Canada, and most skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun. (46)

##### Healthy Eating

The presence of healthy food environments throughout a community has the ability to reinforce healthy eating behaviours. (55) As such, strategies for creating environments that support healthy eating include the establishment of *healthy food outlets* in public facilities and spaces. (56) The inclusion of *community gardens* and *edible landscaping* on land adjacent to or near public facilities also supports healthy eating and *food skills* while contributing to *active recreation*. According to the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, gardening is the second most popular physical activity for Canadian adults. (57) *Community gardens* also foster cooperative relationships among neighbours who can work together to decide which foods to plant based on their cultural or taste preference. (58)



Photo courtesy of Wendy Piques

## Implementation Strategies

### Municipal Leadership

- Create and/or review the Transportation Master Plan to prioritize accessibility over mobility by including strategies to promote *complete streets*, *active transportation*, and public transit wherever possible, and to ensure safety for all transportation modes through the provision of bike lanes, wide sidewalks, smoke-free transit shelters, rest benches, etc.
- Include in long-range transportation plans a maintenance plan and budgetary commitments, particularly for the winter season, for community-wide safe routes to schools, municipal and commercial workplaces, public facilities and services, retail outlets, *healthy food outlets*, cultural and community spaces, and places of recreation.
- Establish a Municipal Active Transportation Advisory Committee with representation from a number of municipal departments and interested groups to ensure that policies and programs are responsive to the emerging needs of the community and to facilitate communication of grassroots concerns related to the accessibility, *walkability*, and *bikeability* of the transportation system.
- Develop a sidewalk policy that includes a *Sidewalk Priority Index* to identify and eliminate gaps in the pedestrian network and a *Pedestrian Crossing Priority Index* to identify gaps in crosswalk infrastructure. (40)
- Provide infrastructure and safety features that augment safety along designated routes to school from residential areas of the community (e.g. crosswalks, lighting, signage).
- Develop a zoning by-law that requires a minimum number of bicycle parking spaces at retail, institutional, employment, educational, and residential centres. (41)
- Ensure on-site bicycle parking spaces and infrastructure at all municipal buildings and outdoor facilities.
- Ensure development standards/subdivision standards provide convenient and direct access to adjacent uses through integrated pedestrian sidewalks, walkways, trails, and cycling paths.



*Photo courtesy of Elana Horowitz, Toronto Centre for Active Transportation*

### Community Engagement

- Work with citizens and *community stakeholders* to establish and promote an interconnected recreational, pedestrian, and cycling system within and between communities.
- Work with the school boards, school councils, and the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit to develop a *School Travel Plan*.
- Work with the school boards and school councils to improve the on-site infrastructure needed to support *active transportation* for school children. (33)
- Work with older adult community groups and older adults to improve *active transportation* and transit routes and to encourage on-site infrastructure needed to support *active transportation* for older adults (e.g. Seniors' Centres).
- Work with service agencies and citizens living on a low income to improve *active transportation* and transit routes in their neighbourhoods and encourage on-site infrastructure needed to support *active transportation* at service agencies (e.g. municipal services).
- Work with Downtown Business Associations to improve *active transportation* and transit routes in the downtown or village centre and to encourage streetscapes and on-site infrastructure needed to support *active transportation*.
- Work with *community stakeholders* to implement and promote programs that encourage residents to decrease their vehicle use such as Car-Free Sundays, Commuter Challenge Week, or Bike to Work days. (33)



Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish



## Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments



### Goal 2

Ensure all residents have access to safe and healthy opportunities for active recreation in built and natural settings.

#### Rationale

##### Environment

The negative health effects of poor outdoor air quality are so well established that the Environment Canada Air Quality Health Index recommends that even healthy individuals restrict their physical activity levels on high smog days. (42) Considering the health benefits of physical activity and the research demonstrating the effective air cleaning qualities of trees, ensuring natural settings for *active recreation* is vital to further reduce cardiovascular and respiratory disease. (43) Clean air is also important for healthy pregnancies and healthy child development. (32; 44) Moreover, natural settings found in open/green spaces and urban forests help to mitigate extreme heat events by reducing large concentrations of paved surfaces which contribute to heat island effects. (21)

The presence of trees and structures to provide shade allows citizens to enjoy *active recreation* in outdoor settings while protecting them from the harmful effects of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. (45) Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Canada, and most skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun. (46)

##### Healthy Eating

The presence of healthy food environments throughout a community has the ability to reinforce healthy eating behaviours. (55) As such, strategies for creating environments that support healthy eating include the establishment of *healthy food outlets* in public facilities and spaces. (56) The inclusion of *community gardens* and *edible landscaping* on land adjacent to or near public facilities also supports healthy eating and *food skills* while contributing to *active recreation*. According to the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, gardening is the second most popular physical activity for Canadian adults. (57) *Community gardens* also foster cooperative relationships among neighbours who can work together to decide which foods to plant based on their cultural or taste preference. (58)



Photo courtesy of Wendy Piques

### Injury Prevention

The *built environment* contains risks that can compromise the safety of people living within it. The design of play equipment and sport facilities influences risk for injury. For instance, playground equipment that meets current CSA standards and that reflects the various developmental abilities of children can reduce childhood injuries by as much as 49 percent. (47) In addition, taking steps to prevent crime through community design enhances perceptions of security and increases the likelihood that people will be active in outdoor environments. (48; 49) Crime prevention is enhanced by developing mixed use neighbourhoods as it provides residents with the security of “eyes on the street” both from ground floor shops and mid-rise apartment buildings above the shops. (50) Land use juxtapositions, street layouts, building and site design, transportation planning, and infrastructure improvements that enhance lighting, landscaping, and spatial planning to allow for activities in public spaces have impacts on the opportunity and incidence of crime. (51) *Crime Prevention through Environmental Design* (CPTED) offers strategies for *built environment* features that improve perceptions of security through designs that have a human scale, foster communication and social interaction, and creates a shared sense of ownership and responsibility. (52)

### Health Equity

Inequities exist in the availability of physical activity opportunities in Canadian communities and this affects the physical activity levels of different population groups. (60) For example, inequities in the availability of physical activity facilities (e.g. parks and playgrounds) may contribute to health inequities where physical activity levels and overweight patterns differ across income groups. (61) Research has consistently demonstrated a disparity in levels of physical activity between different *socio-economic status* populations. (48) In Canada, leisure-time physical activity is less prevalent among low *socio-economic status* populations and the quality of recreation facilities and access to these facilities tend to be poor in lower-income communities. (62; 63) By using non-stigmatizing approaches to alleviating financial barriers and by providing no-cost opportunities for unstructured activities through outdoor parks and playgrounds, basketball courts, gymnasiums, and drop-in centres, people living on a low income can have equitable access to opportunities for physical activity through *active recreation*. (64)

### Social and Mental Wellbeing

The provision of active and passive parks is an essential strategy for municipalities to promote the physical and mental health of residents. The presence of trees and natural settings is linked to reduced incidence of diabetes, cancer, stress, and a decrease in symptoms associated with attention deficit disorders, Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, stress, and depression. (43)

Furthermore, contact with nature is associated with positive cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development in children and provides important environments for fostering imagination, creativity, and social relationships. (59) Outdoor open/green spaces also provide spaces for people to meet, congregate, and develop social connections. People with strong social networks live longer and have a better quality of life. (16)





### Physical Activity

Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development for children and youth, and for continued good health throughout the lifespan. Physical activity reduces the risk of overweight, obesity, and of developing numerous chronic diseases. (28) By providing opportunities for *active recreation* alongside environments that support *utilitarian physical activities* such as *active transportation* and gardening, communities can reduce the health risks associated with obesity and inactivity. (53) Municipal recreation facilities (e.g. recreation centres, arenas, playfields, splash pads, parks, waterfronts, and marinas) are a foundational component of quality of life in many communities.

Access to open/green spaces, recreation and sport facilities, and age appropriate recreational programming encourages physical activity and social networking, and has been shown to have a positive effect on both physical and mental health. (1) Recreation facilities and programs provide safe, public spaces for physical activity and create a social environment that can strengthen a sense of community among people of all ages. Increased access to open/green space, major urban parks, and neighbourhood parks is associated with increased physical activity, particularly in children and adolescents. (54) The proximity of parks, playgrounds, and recreation facilities to residences is associated with higher levels of use and physical activity among a variety of populations. (29)



*Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill*

## Objective 2.1

**Ensure the provision of safe parklands, public spaces, open/green spaces and indoor and outdoor facilities for residents of all ages and physical abilities to meet, congregate and engage in structured and unstructured recreation.**



### Planning Policies

**2.1.1.** The municipality shall develop (or revise) a Parks Master Plan to ensure parks, open/green spaces, *community gardens* and multi-use recreational trails are planned as an interconnected system that provides access between residential developments, schools, workplaces, public facilities and services, retail outlets, *healthy food outlets*, places of worship, cultural and community spaces, places of recreation, and tourist associated areas.<sup>2</sup>

**2.1.2.** The municipality shall develop (or revise) a Recreation Master Plan to provide safe, affordable and quality recreation programs and facilities for all residents and visitors regardless of age, physical ability, and financial means. (33)

**2.1.3.** The Parks Master Plan and Recreation Master Plan shall include guidelines to plan and provide for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built, and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open/green space areas, trails and linkages, and where practical, water-based resources with particular interest to meet the needs of *vulnerable populations*. This includes providing an appropriate supply and distribution of community facilities and programs to meet the social, health, and recreation needs of existing and future residents in a manner that maximizes accessibility regardless of age, physical ability, and financial means. (65)<sup>3</sup>

**2.1.4.** Municipal parks, parklands, public spaces, open/green spaces, trails and linkages shall be designed to provide protection from sun exposure. (33)

**2.1.5.** A community-wide *Urban Forestry Master Plan* will be considered with particular attention to protecting the community's stock of existing trees, supporting the growth of new trees and expanding the tree canopy of the community. (33)

### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

*1.1.1. Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by: ...*

*g. ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs*

*1.5.1. Healthy, active communities should be promoted by: ...*

*b. providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water based resources.*

*2.1.2. The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features.*

<sup>2</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.12.

<sup>3</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.13.

**2.1.6.** Design standards will incorporate the design approaches of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design: natural surveillance (occurs by placing windows in locations that allow users to see or be seen), access to control (discourages access to an area, such as doors, shrubs, fences, gates, and other physical design elements that limit access), and territoriality (features that establish a sense of ownership or belonging, such as sidewalks, landscaping, porches, and other elements that establish boundaries between public and private areas). (66)

**2.1.7.** Design standards should be developed to support the creation of *neighbourhood hubs* to provide opportunities for recreation and social interaction.<sup>4</sup>

**2.1.8.** Design standards will be developed that require the use of natural and/or naturalized landscapes in new developments throughout the community including *edible landscapes*. (33)

**2.1.9** Development standards for new development should encourage the provision to provide residents with access to open/green space. (37)

**2.1.10.** Ensure neighbourhoods are designed to include meeting spaces and common areas and that address the needs of people of all ages and physical abilities. (33)

**2.1.11.** Ensure protection of spaces for *community gardens*. (35)<sup>5</sup>

**2.1.12.** Encourage community or urban agriculture, such as *community gardens* and rooftop gardens. (35)<sup>6</sup>

**2.1.13.** Consider including policies to permit *community gardens* and certain agricultural uses in appropriate land use designations, and particularly on vacant or underutilized lands, except lands designated for environmental protection and where the cultivation of crops might have negative impacts on existing natural features or might pose a risk to human health. (35)<sup>7</sup>



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*

## Implementation Strategies

### Municipal Leadership

- Establish a strategy to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.<sup>8</sup> This may include:
  - Conducting an assessment of existing parks, open/green spaces and other public meeting locations throughout the municipality, including mapping user trends and information regarding accessibility and developing a plan to address gaps.

<sup>4</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.11.

<sup>5</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* as 3.1.2 and *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.9.

<sup>6</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* as 3.1.3 and *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.10.

<sup>7</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* as 3.1.4.

<sup>8</sup> Some municipalities may find it more effective to develop one Parks and Recreation Master Plan versus two different Master Plans.

- Developing a level of service measurement tool and operational policies for managing and developing the municipal parks and recreation assets. (33)
- Conducting a community needs assessment/engagement process (including surveys, open houses, round tables, asset mapping, etc.) to gather information required to create a Park and Recreation Master Plan. (33)
- Creating an inventory of resource-based recreational activities and develop a plan to manage and/or finance the necessary resources. (65)
- Identifying *neighbourhood hub* locations to provide and/or enhance recreational opportunities. Incorporate the findings into the Recreation Master Plan. This is particularly important for providing accessible recreation opportunities in rural areas as residences are far from each other so a central location within walking distance is limited; however, the potential to provide recreational opportunities in one setting becomes feasible.<sup>9</sup>
- Ensuring compliance with the *Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment* in order to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings.<sup>10</sup>
- Engaging certified playground safety inspectors to assess the safety requirements of all municipal playgrounds to ensure playgrounds are designed to meet current *CSA Standards for Children's Play Spaces and Equipment*. Address the most serious hazard first: upgrade surfacing; improve hand rails; and eliminate strangulation hazards.



Photo courtesy of The City of Quinte West

- Develop strategies and/or policies to promote the use of appropriate safety equipment (e.g. helmets, lifejackets) in municipal recreation facilities.
- Establish policies (e.g. fee assistance or subsidy programs for low income participants, free universal programs, equipment trade-in programs, free transportation for youth) that reduce barriers to participation in physical activity, sport and recreation.
- Develop guidelines and procedures to support accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities and ensure access to recreational activities and quality physical education programs for *vulnerable populations*.
- Implement a community-wide signage and way-finding program for access to public parklands, public spaces, open/green spaces, and indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. (33)

<sup>9</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.

<sup>10</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.

- Consider promoting winter design features such as creating sheltered transition areas at building entrances, providing shelter or wind blocks in areas that serve as outdoor gathering spaces, creating public use spaces for winter use in areas that are sunny and balancing snow management with context sensitive design, aesthetics and traffic calming measures. (35)
- Develop an inventory of unsafe community features (e.g. lack of lighting, obstructed sightlines) and develop community safety initiatives to encourage more social interaction among neighbours.
- Consider applying the principles of CPTED to development in the community, and develop a system of reviewing new designs and developments for crime prevention design features. (35)
- Create development standards/subdivision standards that require design features (e.g. trees, shelters) that provide shade to protect people from sun exposure. (33)
- Review Parkland Dedication Policy to ensure that quality and adequate parklands and open/green spaces are being developed in new developments.
- To be consistent with the health enhancing nature of sport and recreation facilities, guidelines should be developed and implemented to ensure healthy foods are the dominant and affordable choice of foods sold in municipally owned sport and recreation facilities; and all parks, playgrounds, open/green spaces, and outdoor spaces should be designated as smoke-free areas.
- Develop and implement an evaluation plan to review the ongoing success of the food service nutrition standards in recreation facilities and spaces.
- Offer incentives, such as a *Neighbourhood Matching Fund*, to neighbourhood and citizens groups to support the development of citizen-driven initiatives that build capacity, social connections, and liveability. (67)<sup>11</sup>



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*

<sup>11</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.



## Community Engagement

- Collaborate with the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit to develop and implement a nutrition program requiring municipally owned sports and recreation facilities to meet minimum food service nutrition standards for all foods sold at said facilities. This includes developing nutrition guidelines and strategies to enhance the nutritional quality of foods offered in recreation centres and spaces.
- Work with recreation providers and sport associations to promote their role in establishing policies (e.g. fee assistance or subsidy programs for participants living on a low income, free universal programs, equipment trade-in programs, free transportation for youth) that reduce barriers to participation in physical activity, sport and recreation.
- Encourage and/or coordinate with other recreation/sport providers, community groups and school boards to ensure that all children and families have access and opportunities to participate in a wide range of recreation and physical activity programs throughout the year.
- Work with school boards to develop community agreements for the use of school property and/or facilities to accommodate recreational use, provision of safe playgrounds, public spaces, open/green spaces, and indoor and outdoor facilities for residents of all ages and physical abilities to meet, congregate, and engage in structured and unstructured recreation. This is particularly important in rural areas where the school property has the potential to become a *neighbourhood hub*.<sup>12</sup>
- Work with *community stakeholders* to sponsor and maintain natural environments and open/green spaces, including engaging partners in implementing components of the Urban Forestry Plan (e.g. designate and promote a community tree planting day)
- Develop *community stakeholder* partnerships to move forward with recreation projects identified in the Recreation Master Plan.
- Work with local police and community groups (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, Downtown Business Associations) to review and implement design strategies (e.g. lighting, visibility, supervision) to improve safety and security and implement *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* approaches.
- Engage *community stakeholders* in the development of a Recreation Master Plan that identifies strategies for the upgrading and retrofitting of community playground equipment that will take into consideration the ages and stages of childhood development and the minimum disability access requirements.



<sup>12</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under community engagement.

# Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management



## Goal 3

**Increase the accessibility, affordability, and availability of local, fresh, healthy foods through community design.**

### Rationale

#### Environment

Food is connected not only to individual health, but to the environment, the economy, and the sense of community. The ways that communities produce, access, prepare, and dispose of food is directly linked to the sustainability of those communities. (35) There are a number of municipalities in Ontario that are engaging in food system planning. Food system planning is:

*...the collaborative planning process of developing and implementing local and regional land-use, economic development, public health, transportation, and environmental programs and policies to: 1) preserve existing and support new opportunities for local and regional urban and rural agriculture; 2) promote sustainable agriculture and food production practices; 3) support local and regional food value chains and related infrastructure involved in processing, packaging, and distribution of food; 4) facilitate community food security, or equitable physical and economic access to safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate, and sustainably grown food at all times across the community, especially among vulnerable populations; 5) support and promote good nutrition and health; and 6) facilitate the reduction of solid food-related waste and develop or manage a reuse, recovery, recycling, and disposal system for food waste and related packaging.* (68)

Food system planning has the potential to: protect spaces for *community gardens*; provide greater opportunity for local food production, processing and sale; encourage the development of healthy community food sources; and protect agricultural land for food growing and production.



*Photo courtesy of Louise Livingstone, Harvest Hastings*

(69) Moreover, food system planning can decrease the distance that food travels. The concept of “food miles” – the distance that food items travel from the location where they are grown or raised to the location where they are consumed – has received an increasing amount of attention over the last decade. (70) Most literature on the issue has sought to make a correlation between the distances traveled by food items and the greenhouse gases emitted in their transport. Greenhouse gases are emitted through the burning of fossil fuels, and affect air quality and global climate change, which have an effect on human health.

A local food system can be described as the chain of activities involved in the production, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food within a region. A strong and diverse local food system provides many benefits to the communities it serves. It supports local farmers and contributes to the vitality and economic strength of rural communities. As well, it facilitates peoples’ access to a variety of locally grown and healthy foods, and encourages healthy food vendors within easy walking distance to where people live, learn, work, and play. Such a system, therefore, reduces vehicle emissions and demands on transportation infrastructure, while at the same time increasing levels of physical activity and improving the nutritional health of a community. (71)

A sustainable local food system not only makes nutritious food available, accessible, and affordable to all, it fosters economic growth, protects farmers and others working in the food system, while at the same time protects the environment.

### Health Equity

In Canada, high income does not guarantee good health, but low income is almost always linked to poor health and health inequities. (77) As a result, those living on a low income experience greater adverse health outcomes than those living with sufficient income. To put this into context, consider that in a 2008 review of income and health, the poorest fifth of Canada’s population experienced 63% more chronic conditions than the richest fifth. (77)

In Canada and elsewhere, low income and poverty are also associated with *food insecurity*. There is evidence to suggest that residents of lower income neighbourhoods have less access to healthy food choices than those in wealthier neighbourhoods (78), are more likely to experience *food insecurity* (79), and their diets are more likely to be calorically dense and nutrient poor. (80) There is an unequal distribution of food resources, as measured by the proximity of retail food outlets to residential areas, with “food deserts” (communities that do not have grocery stores in close proximity to where they live) being found more often in lower-income neighbourhoods. (81)

While decisions to eat a nutritionally balanced diet are complex, the impact of community design cannot be overlooked. Where land use planning decisions are made without consideration to those living on low incomes, they can contribute to the challenge of low income neighbourhoods losing grocery stores and having a disproportionately high concentration of fast food outlets. (82) Limited income compounded by lack of access to *healthy food outlets* makes choosing healthy foods a difficult proposition. A *built environment* and community design that provides options for purchasing nutritious food is more conducive to healthy eating than one that allows easy access to fast food outlets. (83) Moreover, fewer numbers of *healthy food outlets* located in low income neighbourhoods creates a greater burden for those living in these neighbourhoods as they may not be able to afford a vehicle, or may not be able to afford healthy food because of the cost associated with owning a vehicle. (82) Where community design ensures access to *healthy food outlets*, the option to choose healthy nutritious food is easier and individuals increase consumption of healthy foods, regardless of income. (80)



### Physical Activity

Increasing the accessibility of healthy foods through community design not only contributes to improved nutritional health of a community, but can also contribute to increased levels of physical activity. Specifically, the inclusion of *community gardens* in community design supports healthy eating and *food skills* while contributing to *active recreation*. According to the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, gardening is the second most popular physical activity for Canadian adults. (57)

### Healthy Eating

The food produced, distributed and sold within a region can play a major role in how well the dietary needs of the population are met. (72) Communities that have ready access to a sustainable supply of healthy, locally grown and produced foods are less vulnerable to external factors that can affect the nutritional quality and/or quantity of available foods. (73)

Access to healthy food is a key factor in enabling people to eat a healthy diet. (74) People are more likely to meet their nutrition needs when affordable *healthy food outlets* are easily accessible. (74) Research has found that living close to “fast food” outlets is linked with lower quality diets, obesity, and other health conditions, while living near a supermarket has been linked with eating more vegetables and fruit, healthier diets, and lower levels of obesity. (75) With diet related diseases such as obesity and diabetes proving resistant to traditional education approaches, and the consumption of low-nutrient high calorie “fast foods” on the rise (72), municipalities have the unique opportunity to improve the nutritional health of their communities by positioning the healthy food choice as the easy choice through community design.

### Social and Mental Wellbeing

Land use planning that works to increase access to healthy food can support mental wellbeing and foster a strong sense of community. With *community gardens* in particular, not only do they provide access to healthy food, but they also have the potential to strengthen community pride and ownership. (76) For example, planning policies that support *community gardens*, community based *agricultural food skills* programing, and *edible landscaping*, can bring community members together by providing opportunity for people to work together to decide which foods to plant based on cultural or taste preferences. (58) As well, neighbourhoods that have *community gardens* have the potential to be safer because they create meeting spots and increase the number of people outside on the streets. (58) In addition, the siting of *community gardens* and/or *mobile food vendors* in low income neighbourhoods increases social cohesion and neighbourhood safety. (35)



Photo courtesy of Joanna Mestre

## Objective 3.1      Ensure a strong, diverse, environmentally responsible and sustainable local food system.



### Planning Policies

**3.1.1.** Support the development of an environmentally sustainable and economically viable regional food system by encouraging farming operations to utilize sustainable agricultural practices which conserve and enhance the natural environment, protect surface and ground water quality and quantity and minimize impacts on adjacent land uses. (71)

**3.1.2.** Ensure protection of spaces for *community gardens*. (35)<sup>13</sup>

**3.1.3** Encourage community or urban agriculture, such as *community gardens*, and rooftop gardens. (35)<sup>14</sup>

**3.1.4.** Consider including policies to permit *community gardens* and certain agricultural uses in appropriate land use designations, and particularly on vacant or underutilized lands, except lands designated for environmental protection and where the cultivation of crops might have negative impacts on existing natural features or might pose a risk to human health. (35)<sup>15</sup>

**3.1.5.** Undertake a comprehensive development of guidelines to conduct an Environmental Site Assessment for sites that are known to be contaminated and/or potentially contaminated. *Community gardens* could be encouraged through the use of planters or other means that would avoid soil disturbance. This type of strategy could be used to enhance or beautify what are otherwise unsightly or underutilized vacant properties and could act as an excellent transitional or temporary use for sites that are being remediated over time using in-situ type methods. (35)

**3.1.6.** Institute community-wide composting programs and permit small-scale community-based composting initiatives in accordance with provincial standards. (84)

### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

*1.1.4.1. In rural areas located in municipalities: ...*

*e. locally-important agricultural and resource areas should be designated and protected by directing non-related development to areas where it will not constrain these uses.*

*1.7.1. Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: ...*

*g. promoting the sustainability of the agri-food sector by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts.*

<sup>13</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* as 2.1.11 and *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.9.

<sup>14</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* as 2.1.12 and *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.10.

<sup>15</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* as 2.1.13.

**3.1.7.** Establish guidelines that include the food producers, processors, and retailers as part of the Official Plan review process. (85)

**3.1.8.** Develop guidelines and permit secondary uses within agriculture areas that are supportive of farmers and the local food system. (85)

**3.1.9.** Provide opportunities to support local food, and promote the sustainability of agri-food and agri-product businesses by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts. (2)

### Implementation Strategies

#### Municipal Leadership

- Include food system language in future growth management plans. (71)
- Develop an education and awareness program for municipal management to facilitate ‘food system thinking’ (a way of seeing the bigger picture to develop solutions to food problems by seeing and leveraging their connections to other health, social, economic and environmental issues) by focusing on increasing their ability to see the bigger picture and their role to develop solutions related to health, social, economic, and environmental issues that impact the food system. (68)
- Embed ‘food system thinking’ by designating staff in all municipal departments to leverage what they can do to support a healthy, sustainable food system. (69)
- Establish a municipal and/or county Food Policy Council whose mandate is to develop, implement and monitor a local food system plan. (69)
- Consider providing land clearing and soil for new *community gardens*, along with ongoing water supply and annual support for rototilling and fertilizing. (35)<sup>16</sup>
- Identify appropriate locations for community and rooftop gardens as accessory uses for public and community facilities such as places of worship, schools, government facilities, and health/cultural/recreational institutions. (35)<sup>17</sup>
- Develop education and incentive programs to assist local food partners to reduce food waste throughout the food system from food growing to food retail and consumption. (84)



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*

<sup>16</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.

<sup>17</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.



- Develop an inter-jurisdictional and cross-sectional working group comprised of membership from municipal departments to develop internal policies related to local food procurements for all department purchases, including food served at municipal facilities and food provided at municipal functions. (68)
- Establish demonstration projects that highlight the economic success of sustainable agriculture practise and the local food system. (84)
- Establish the food system as a priority in the local labour force and identify training needs and requirements. (85)
- Consider zoning by-laws that would restrict the location and number of fast food outlets in new developments surrounding youth and child oriented land uses. This would apply to new uses. It could define the parameter where specific uses can be located (based on, for example, the density, the nature of facility use, the impact on the neighbourhood, the proximity of other similar uses, etc.). (86)
- Explore opportunities throughout the municipality for community/urban agriculture initiatives as well as opportunities for retailers of healthy foods in rural and urban neighbourhoods.



Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill

### Community Engagement

- Foster and achieve a sustainable food system to meet the current and future needs of residents by working with *community stakeholders* that represent diverse sectors (e.g. agriculture, economic development, business) and food stages (e.g. food production, processing, distribution, access, consumption, and waste management) to develop a local food system plan. This includes working with Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit. (69)
- Collaborate with local food system stakeholders to support local food initiatives and promote the local food system.
- Work with *community stakeholders* to identify gaps, best practices and infrastructure needs in the local food system, particularly the identification of *community garden* sites. (85)

## Objective 3.2 Ensure that healthy food is accessible to all residents.



### Planning Policies

**3.2.1.** Land use designations shall enable retailers of healthy foods such as supermarkets, small and mid-sized grocery stores, produce vendors, and farmers' markets to be located within convenient walking and/or cycling proximity from residences, workplaces, commercial and industrial areas, educational institutions, places of worship, and places of recreation. (33)<sup>18</sup>

**3.2.2.** The number of retailers of foods that are primarily of low nutritional value, such as fast-food restaurants and convenience stores, shall be limited based on community size and density of retailers of healthy foods, such as supermarkets, small and mid-sized grocery stores, and farmers' markets such that the availability and accessibility of healthy foods is greater than unhealthy foods. (35)

**3.2.3.** Land use designations shall encourage the establishment of retailers of healthy foods such as supermarkets, small and mid-sized grocery stores, and farmers' markets and shall restrict the establishment of retailers of foods that are primarily of low nutritional value, such as fast-food restaurants and convenience stores, within walking proximity from facilities frequented by children and youth, especially elementary and secondary schools.

**3.2.4.** A range of human services including affordable housing, subsidized daycare, employment and income supports will be supported to ensure all residents have adequate incomes to afford healthy food after paying fixed expenses. (71)<sup>19</sup>

**3.2.5.** Municipalities shall engage key stakeholders and support food system planning as a means of supporting and enhancing the local food system.

### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

*1.1.4.1. In rural areas located in municipalities: ...*

*e. locally-important agricultural and resource areas should be designated and protected by directing non-related development to areas where it will not constrain these uses.*

*1.7.1. Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: ...*

*g. promoting the sustainability of the agri-food sector by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts.*

<sup>18</sup> Also listed in *Sustainable & Accessible Transportation* as 1.1.3

<sup>19</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* as 5.1.3.

## Implementation Strategies

### Municipal Leadership

- Through GIS mapping undertake comprehensive assessment of the location and density of healthy and unhealthy food establishments. (87)
- Establish a process for fast-tracking development approval for supermarkets and/or other retailers of healthy foods in underserved rural and urban areas. (33)
- Integrate direct public transit routes, and *active transportation* routes to *healthy food outlets* into all transportation planning.

### Community Engagement

- Engage *community stakeholders* in identifying opportunities for retailers of healthy food in underserved rural and urban neighbourhoods and in developing a plan to support and encourage these retailers to locate there. (33)
- Work to identify direct public transit routes and *active transportation* routes to *healthy food outlets*, in order to identify gaps and develop a seasonal maintenance plan.



### Objective 3.3 Increase the capacity of residents to grow and share fresh food.



#### Planning Policies

**3.3.1.** To enable the community to integrate opportunities for community/urban agriculture all land use designations shall permit *community gardens*, *edible landscaping*, and roof top gardens as accessory uses for community facilities such as places of worship, schools, health, cultural, and recreational institutions. (33)

**3.3.2.** A community wide Parks Master Plan shall incorporate a network of *community gardens* to ensure access by all residents as a means for *active recreation*, access to locally grown produce, and to foster community spirit. (33)

**3.3.3.** Establish a policy framework for regulating *community gardens*. Ensure that this policy:

- defines *community gardens* as gardening which is undertaken by a community or group of individuals for not-for-profit purposes;
- encourages *community gardens* to be located on publicly-owned properties;
- permits *community gardens* on all land use designations, except where the cultivation of crops might have negative impacts on existing natural features or where the cultivation might pose a risk to human health; and
- limits *community garden* activities to seasonal crop growing activities, such as cultivation of flowers, fruits and vegetables, but not livestock. (35)

**3.3.4.** Land for use as *community gardens* shall be designated in all new residential developments in addition to parkland dedication.

**3.3.5.** Provide infrastructure (e.g. raised beds, water, rain barrels, top soil, and compost) to support garden start-up as well as for existing *community gardens*. (35)

**3.3.6.** Develop guidelines for permitting the keeping of rabbits, bees, and hens in urban residential areas. (35)

#### Provincial Policy Statement 2005

*1.1.1. Healthy liveable and safe communities are sustained by: ...*

*b. accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long term needs.*

*1.7.1. Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: ...*

*g. promoting the sustainability of the agri-food sector by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts.*



**3.3.7.** Ensure community education and outreach programs are available to highlight the importance of *agricultural food skills* and support the use of urban agriculture initiatives. (35)

**3.3.8.** Work with community groups, farmers, and residents to remove barriers and encourage the establishment of year round permanent and/or satellite farmers' markets, sidewalk produce stands, and farm stands in 'hub areas' of the community, particularly in rural areas such as community centres, schools, parks, churches, and corner stores.

**3.3.9.** Land use designations shall encourage small-scale food processing facilities and distribution centre(s) for locally produced food as a means of encouraging local food production and distribution and reducing transportation needs. (33)

**3.3.10.** The following uses will be considered as agriculture-related uses:

- Agricultural research and training - provided that the use is related to and will benefit the agricultural industry, the use will assist in the furthering of knowledge of the agricultural sector of the economy, and the use will assist local farmers through training and the identification of improved methods and procedures;
- Agricultural storage and processing - involving the storage and processing of crops and/or livestock that are predominantly from the surrounding area;
- Farm related tourism establishments - such as machinery and equipment exhibitions, farm-tours, petting zoos, hay rides, sleigh rides, processing demonstrations, pick your own produce, farm theme playground for children, and small scale educational establishments that focus on farming instruction (which may include limited residential accommodation);
- Farm vacation homes (with 5 to 6 rooms);
- Farm and Estate wineries - where wines are produced and may include storage display, processing, wine tasting, storage, hospitality room, administrative facilities, outdoor patio area, an on-site restaurant, dining facility, commercial kitchen, banquet hall, retail facility, or other amenity; and
- Seasonal home grown produce stands. (88)



*Photo courtesy of Louise Livingstone, Harvest Hastings*

**3.3.11.** Infrastructure such as distribution and/or processing centres for local foods, agricultural product warehouses, abattoirs, *incubator kitchens*, and other agriculturally-related commercial, industrial, and/or institutional facilities and activities that build local food self-sufficiency will be considered and an assessment plan developed. (33)

### Implementation Strategies

#### Municipal Leadership

- Develop a *community garden* application process.
- Ensure a municipal Parks Master Plan includes a system-wide process to retrofit and/or integrate *community gardens* into appropriate municipal parks. (33)
- Strike a task force to identify opportunities throughout the municipality for community/urban agriculture including those listed as agriculture-related uses. (33)
- Review municipal food procurement policies and set targets for local food procurement to increase the purchase of local food. (85)
- Establish the local food system as a priority for the labour force and identify specific training needs and requirements. (85)
- Set targets for *community garden* sites in new developments.
- Provide access to safe and accessible community cooking facilities to support the development of *food skills* and sharing of culinary traditions.<sup>20</sup>
- Establish taxation incentives or other incentives for new agri-food start-up businesses.
- Conduct feasibility studies for local food and farming businesses. (85)
- Identify and map soils suitable for food production.



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*

<sup>20</sup> Also listed in *Social Interaction & Sense of Community* under municipal leadership.

### Community Engagement

- Collaborate with local food partners and economic development agencies to support secondary agriculture uses such as farm tours and culinary tourism.
- Work with farmers to identify opportunities to support transitions to more diverse and ecological growing methods. (84)
- Work with local agriculture groups to complete mapping of local food distribution systems including farmers' markets and roadside stands.
- Work with *community stakeholders* to develop a community education and outreach program to develop gardening skills and to highlight the importance of community/urban agriculture and how it can be integrated into public and private spaces. (33)

## Access & Exposure to Tobacco and Alcohol Products



### **Goal 4** Limit access to and concentration of tobacco products and alcohol outlets

#### **Rationale**

##### Alcohol Use

Reducing alcohol-related harms will help create a healthier and safer community. (97) Alcohol misuse can cause harms including: violence, addiction, criminal activity, injuries and death (e.g. due to violence, vehicle crash injuries etc.). (98) The consumption of alcohol can also contribute to chronic diseases such as cancers, cardiovascular disease and mental illnesses. (97) These harms impact the community by eroding the public's sense of safety and wellbeing, and burdening enforcement, health and social service providers. (97; 98) Research shows that rates of alcohol-related harms increase in the population as alcohol consumption rates increase. (97)

Reducing the physical availability of alcohol through limitations on the number and placement of outlets will result in reductions in alcohol-related problems. (99) Therefore, addressing *alcohol outlet density* by limiting the availability and concentration of both on-premise and off-premise outlets will help to reduce harms related to alcohol misuse. Special attention should be paid to planning policies and zoning by-laws in order to protect residential areas and areas used by children and youth (e.g. schools, parks). (35)

##### Environmental Tobacco Smoke

The harm associated with second-hand smoke is well documented and has resulted in a complete ban in Ontario on smoking in indoor spaces used by the public and workers, as well as a number of outdoor spaces (e.g. schools, entrances to health care facilities, entertainment venues). (89; 90) There is also increasing evidence of the harm caused by second-hand smoke in outdoor environments leading to the call for an expansion of the existing outdoor smoking ban. (91) Research has shown air quality in an outdoor environment, such as a patio, is significantly affected when cigarettes are smoked, where the particulates that cause cancer and heart disease quadruple. (92) Smoke-free outdoor areas that are equipped with disposal units designed for tobacco refuse will reduce the environmental impact from packaging litter and the highly toxic and soluble chemicals in cigarette butts. (93)



Smoke-free areas in and around the places where people live, work, learn and play promotes positive role modeling for children, helps to de-socialize the use of tobacco products, helps to prevent second-hand smoke from drifting into indoor areas, and protects nearby individuals in outdoor environments.

Tobacco use is the single most significant cause of preventable disease and death in Canada, resulting in 13,000 deaths per year in Ontario alone. (94) Recommendations to limit the concentration of tobacco outlets, limit access and availability to tobacco outlets, and protect areas that children and youth frequent from incompatible land uses via planning policies and zoning by-laws have been made. (35) Though Official Plan policies are typically silent on the control of tobacco retailers, zoning measures offer creative ways for communities to influence public health and welfare at the local level, by reducing the availability of a harmful consumer product. (95) As with licencing, zoning by-laws could be used in a number of ways to reduce tobacco product availability:

- Prohibit tobacco sales along certain access routes to schools that are designated “safe routes”;
- Prohibit retailers from selling tobacco within x metres of a school or other youth-oriented facility;
- Prohibit tobacco retailers from locating in residential zones;
- Limit the proximity of tobacco retailers to each other; and
- Restrict the location of tobacco retailers to particular zones in a community, perhaps those zoned “light industrial.” (96)



### Health Equity

Some people carry a larger burden and face greater barriers than others in trying to achieve good health. (100) Tobacco use contributes to inequalities in health as studies show that mortality and smoking prevalence decreases as educational achievement increases. (101) As a result, smoking is likely to have a greater impact on lower *socio-economic* groups thus perpetuating disparities in health. (102) In addition, tobacco retail density surrounding schools is linked to youth access where the higher the density of tobacco retailers that surround a school, the more likely youth smokers are to buy their own cigarettes. (103)

With respect to harms related to alcohol misuse, the negative effects of high risk drinking cross all sectors of the population, but exert greatest pressure on the young, those living in low-income households and those having relatively little education. (104; 105) While consumption of alcohol tends to be related to accessibility, harms related to alcohol misuse are disproportionately more pronounced within lower *socio-economic status* groups. (105; 106)



**Objective 4.1**      **Create smoke-free municipal spaces to protect health and air quality where residents live, work, learn and play.**



**Planning Policies**

**4.1.1.** Identify sensitive land uses, such as public spaces and facilities where there is a concentration of children and youth, and identify the importance of protecting them from incompatible uses that may cause adverse health impacts, such as tobacco retailers and establishments serving tobacco (e.g. on outdoor patios).

**4.1.2.** Amend municipal zoning by-laws that prohibit and/or restrict the number of tobacco retailers and establishments from specified distances of sensitive and child and youth land uses.

**Implementation Strategies**

**Municipal Leadership**

- Establish municipal by-laws and organizational policies which prohibit smoking in the areas/locations in a variety of public and private settings including parks, playing fields, playgrounds, *community gardens*, restaurant/bar patios, entrances to all public/private buildings, and trails (3 metre radius) to ensure protection from any exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. (35)
- Consider creating zoning by-laws to: prohibit tobacco sales along certain access routes to schools that are designated “safe routes”; prohibit retailers from selling tobacco within x metres of a school or other youth-oriented facility; prohibit tobacco retailers from locating in residential zones; limit the proximity of tobacco retailers to each other; and restrict the location of tobacco retailers to particular zones in a community, perhaps those zoned “light industrial”. (96)
- Develop policy requirements for smoke-free outdoor municipal workplace properties to ensure municipal staff and visitors are protected from any exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke.

**Provincial Policy Statement 2005**

*1.5.1. Healthy, active communities should be promoted by: ...*

*b) providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources.*

- Provide smoke-free, single and multi-unit social and affordable housing options in municipally owned and operated properties for residents of all ages to protect them from drifting second-hand smoke and to support individuals to quit smoking and families to live tobacco free. (33)
- Consider implementing development incentives for private developers who make a commitment to make their multi-unit housing 100% smoke free. (35)

### Community Engagement

- Work with the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit to monitor the location of tobacco retailers and establishments serving tobacco, with particular emphasis on child and youth land uses.
- Work with the health unit to develop short form wording, set fines, access health unit enforcement resources, develop public education campaigns, and develop a joint enforcement plan.
- Engage in education and enforcement of enacted by-laws in collaboration with the health unit's tobacco control team staff.



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*



**Objective 4.2: Create an environment that reduces harms related to alcohol misuse.**



**Planning Policies**

**4.2.1** Identify sensitive land uses, such as public spaces and facilities where there is a concentration of children and youth, and identify the importance of protecting them from incompatible uses that may cause adverse health impacts, such as alcohol retailers and establishments serving alcohol.

**4.2.2.** Develop guidelines for acceptable *alcohol outlet density* within the community to reduce harms related to alcohol misuse.

**Implementation Strategies**

**Municipal Leadership**

- Use planning policies and zoning by-laws to ensure acceptable alcohol outlet density. (35)
- Consider developing a zoning by-law requiring minimum separation distances (e.g. 1 km) between alcohol outlets in general, in specific zones, or adjacent to specific zones (e.g. school).
- Develop a map of on-premise and off-premise *alcohol outlet density* in the community.

**Community Engagement**

- Work with the health unit to monitor the location of alcohol outlets and establishments.

***Provincial Policy Statement 2005***

*1.5.1. Healthy, active communities should be promoted by: ...*

*b) providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources.*

# Social Interaction & Sense of Community



## Goal 5

Increase social interaction to sustain the wellbeing of residents through community design.

### Rationale

#### Crime Prevention

Community planning and design has an important role in enhancing people's perceptions of security from crime. (16) *Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)* includes strategies to deter criminal activity by encouraging natural surveillance, limiting access to certain areas through design features such as shrubs, fences, and other design elements, and by creating design features that establish a sense of ownership and boundaries between private and public areas. (66)

#### Social and Mental Wellbeing

Feeling connected to one's community is associated with lower stress, improved overall health status and lower mortality rates. (16) By fostering supportive social environments that respect culture, social justice, diversity and personal dignity, mental health can be promoted within a community. (107)

*Social capital* is commonly referred to the "glue" that ties people together within a community.

(108) It is characterized by the degree of citizen involvement in a community, the degree to which people know and trust their neighbours, and the number of social interactions and transactions that people have as they go about their daily business. (107)

#### Health Equity

Mixed housing communities that integrate affordable housing can provide opportunities for aging in place as people move through their life cycle. Mixed housing can also prevent concentrations of poverty, which is associated with crime, health disparities, and environmental health risks. (112) Finally, mixed housing has the potential to decrease *food insecurity*. *Food insecurity* is linked in part to where a person lives and is more prevalent in low income neighbourhoods and where social housing is located. (76) This is particularly the case since *food deserts* are found more often in lower income neighbourhoods. (81)



Photo courtesy of Karen Brintnell

*Social capital* is increased by:

- Providing access to open/green spaces that are designed to influence the quality of social interactions experienced by residents. (59)
- Creating walking and cycling friendly environments to allow greater opportunities for neighbours to interact. (107) Social capital can be undermined when there are more single-occupant vehicles on the road and fewer pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and carpoolers. (109)
- Designing neighbourhoods with mixed land uses where residents are more likely to know and trust their neighbours and have greater civic and social participation. (110) *Complete communities* that provide proximity to neighbours, workplaces, schools, and services have been shown to promote neighbourhood cohesion and social capital. (111) Children are more likely to engage in active outdoor play when parents perceive communities as safe with high levels of neighbourhood cohesion. (49)



*Photo courtesy of Melanie Morrish*

**Objective 5.1**      **Support complete neighbourhoods and mixed housing to meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.**



**Planning Policies**

**5.1.1.** Provide mixed neighbourhoods that balance residential, commercial, and institutional development and that reduce the need for residents to commute long distances to work, school, shops, and services. (33)

**5.1.2.** Allow for mixed and non-traditional housing arrangements to support residents of all ages (e.g. universal design, secondary unit, multiple housing types within neighbourhoods). (33)

**5.1.3.** A range of human services including affordable housing, subsidized daycare, employment, and income supports will be supported to ensure all residents have adequate incomes to afford healthy food after paying fixed expenses. (71) <sup>21</sup>

**5.1.4.** Adopt affordable housing targets and standards that are integrated into mixed-income neighbourhoods within complete communities. (33)

**5.1.5.** Housing for older adults and supportive housing for people with other special needs shall be located wherever possible, in proximity to transit routes, medical, social service and community facilities, open/green spaces, recreation facilities, and shopping areas. (113)

**5.1.6.** Create a community environment that minimizes the incidence of crime and enhances perceptions of security by applying the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* within the site design and development approval process.

**5.1.7** Encourage a sense of place through built form, cultural planning, and by promoting features that help define character, such as cultural heritage resources. (2)

**5.1.8** Ensure neighbourhoods are designed to include meeting spaces and common areas that address the needs of residents of all ages and physical abilities. (71)

**Provincial Policy Statement 2005**

*1.1.1. Healthy liveable and safe communities are sustained by: ...*

*b. accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long term needs.*

*...*

*f. improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.*

*2.6.1. Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.*

<sup>21</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* as 3.2.4.



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- Work with municipal accessibility committees and building officials to ensure that buildings and public spaces are in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Assess and adopt a series of practices that help to facilitate the development and maintenance of an adequate supply of safe, affordable housing at a cost that does not compromise a resident's ability to meet other basic needs.
- Work with other municipal departments to locate institutional uses in areas where they would be easily accessed by residents living on a low income.
- Provide access to safe and accessible community cooking facilities to support the development of *food skills* and sharing of culinary traditions.<sup>27</sup>
- Consider providing land clearing and soil for new *community gardens*, along with ongoing water supply and annual support for rototilling and fertilizing. (35)<sup>28</sup>
- Identify appropriate locations for community and rooftop gardens as accessory uses for public and community facilities such as places of worship, schools, government facilities, and health/cultural/recreation institutions. (35)<sup>29</sup>
- Identify *neighbourhood hub* locations to provide and/or enhance opportunities for recreation and social interaction. Incorporate the findings into a Recreation Master Plan. This is particularly important for providing accessible recreation opportunities in rural areas as residences are far from each other so a central location within walking distance is limited; however, the potential to provide recreational opportunities in one setting becomes feasible.<sup>30</sup>
- Ensure compliance with the *Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment* in order to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings.<sup>31</sup>



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Ronan

<sup>27</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* in 3.3 under municipal leadership.

<sup>28</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* in 3.1 under municipal leadership.

<sup>29</sup> Also listed in *Preserve and Protect the Local Food System from Production to Waste Management* in 3.1 under municipal leadership.

<sup>30</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* under municipal leadership.

<sup>31</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* under municipal leadership.

- Offer incentives, such as a *Neighbourhood Matching Fund*, to neighbourhood and citizens groups to support the development of citizen-driven initiatives that build capacity, social connections, and liveability. (67)<sup>32</sup>

### Community Engagement

- Partner with the local police service to review and implement appropriate design strategies (e.g. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) to increase safety and prevent crime in the community. (33)
- Work with local affordable housing groups to identify housing needs within the community.
- Work with key stakeholders to engage community members of all ages in the art of gardening by promoting and supporting the use of *community gardens* (e.g. link with youth and older adult centres/groups).
- Work with school boards to develop community agreements for the use of school property and/or facilities to accommodate recreational use, provision of safe playgrounds, public spaces, open/green spaces, and indoor and outdoor facilities for residents of all ages and physical abilities to meet, congregate, and engage in structured and unstructured recreation. This is particularly important in rural areas where the school property has the potential to become a *neighbourhood hub*.<sup>33</sup>



*Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill*

<sup>32</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* under municipal leadership.

<sup>33</sup> Also listed in *Access to Recreation in Built and Natural Environments* under community engagement.

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## Glossary of Terms

**Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment** – Provincial standards that remove barriers in public spaces and buildings which make it easier for people living with disabilities, seniors and families to access the places where they work, travel, shop and play. (114)

**Active Recreation** - a physical activity that a person voluntarily undertakes in their leisure time for the purpose of mental and/or physical satisfaction. It is often associated with fun and play. (115)

**Active transportation** – any non-motorized human powered mode of transportation, such as walking or cycling.

**Agricultural food skills** - the skills involved in growing and harvesting one's own food.

**Alcohol outlet density** – An alcohol outlet is a place where alcohol may be legally sold either at an on-premise outlet where the buyer consumes the alcohol there (such as a restaurant or bar) or at an off-premise outlet (such as beer stores, liquor stores, wineries, wine outlets in grocery stores). The density refers to the number of both on-premise and off-premise outlets within a given area.

**Bikeability** – the degree to which a community or neighbourhood is easy and safe for riding a bicycle, determined by factors such as the presence or absence of cycling lanes, pathways, road design, traffic conditions, land use patterns and safety issues.

**Built environment** – buildings, products, spaces and infrastructure that is created and modified by people.

**CSA Standards for Children's Play Spaces and Equipment** – are standards which provide requirements for public-use playspaces and play equipment intended for use by children aged 18 months to 12 years which applies to public-use playspaces and play equipment found in schools, parks, child-care facilities, institutions, multiple-family dwellings, private resort and recreation developments, restaurants, and other areas of public use. (116)

**Community engagement** - the process of working with and through groups of people affiliated by geography, special interest, or situation to address issues affecting their own wellbeing.

**Community garden** – a piece of land gardened collectively by a group of people

**Community stakeholder** – a person, group or organization that is not only affected by, but can also directly affect the actions of a community.

**Complete communities** – are communities that meet the daily living needs of residents by providing a mix of jobs, housing, schools, recreation, open/green space, local shops, and services and which have options for active and public transportation.

**Complete streets** – streets that are designed to enable comfortable and safe access by pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, and motorists, of all ages and abilities.

**Complete Street Design Guidelines** – provides guidance to municipal staff on how to incorporate Complete Streets concepts into the planning, design, and construction of streets, including reconstruction of existing streets.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** – an approach to deterring criminal behaviour by creating a built environment through environmental design that influences offender decisions before a criminal act occurs.

**Edible landscaping** – the use in landscaping of plants that produce food instead of commonly used ornamental plants.

**Food insecurity** – the absence of food security. Food security occurs when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (71)

**Food skills** - the skills involved in the planning, selection, preparation and storage of healthy foods.

**Health equity** – is the absence of avoidable differences in health outcomes among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically. (117) Health inequities are the disparities in health outcomes that are unjust and systemically related to social inequality and marginalization (118), therefore equity in health means that peoples' needs guide the distribution of opportunities for wellbeing.

**Healthy food outlets** – places where healthy food choices can be obtained that are generally open to the public, including grocery stores, specialty stores, restaurants, and farmers' markets.

**Incubator kitchens** - a shared commercial kitchen where food products can be prepared in a licensed kitchen without the producer having to own and operate a commercial kitchen on their own.

**Mobile food vendors** - vendors who sell food items from mobilized vehicles, such as carts or trucks, which can travel to different locations instead of a store front location.

**Municipal leadership** – leadership by the municipal sector.

**Neighbourhood hubs** – provides in one location, preferably a place where residents naturally go, a range of activities (e.g. walking trails, playground, sports fields, skating) as part of a continuum of support for all ages and physical abilities.

**Neighbourhood Matching Fund** – a resource that supports neighbourhood groups interested in undertaking projects that address a community need and that build community capacity. Municipal funds may be matched by the community's contribution of volunteer labour and donations of materials, supplies, services or cash. (119)

**Pedestrian Crossing Priority Index** – a system to determine priorities for crosswalk infrastructure to ensure that crosswalk infrastructure is installed, improved and maintained where gaps have been identified.

**Planning** – the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and wellbeing of urban and rural communities. (120)

**School Travel Plan** – an action plan to address the barriers to active school travel. (121)

**Sidewalk Priority Index** – a system to determine priorities for sidewalks to ensure that identified gaps in the sidewalk and pathway networks are constructed, improved and maintained in all seasons.

**Socio-economic status** - a descriptive term for a person's position in society, which may be expressed by income, educational level attained, occupation, and value of dwelling place.

**Social capital** – the resources that individuals can access through their relationships within a social group such as social support and ability to undertake collective action for mutual benefit. (108)

**Urban Forestry Master Plan**- a strategy developed to ensure the sustainable future of an urban forest. Urban forestry includes all trees amidst urban development (e.g. trees in planters to tree lined city/village streets)

**Utilitarian physical activities** – engaging in physical activities that serve a practical purpose; for example walking to get from one place to another.

**Vulnerable populations** - sub-populations or a group of people that suffer the burden of illness and distress greater than other residents (e.g. children, older adults, people with mental health issues, people living with a disability and people or families living on a low income.)

**Walkability** – the degree to which a community or neighbourhood is friendly to walking, determined by factors such as the presence or absence of sidewalks, trails or other pedestrian right-of-ways, road design, traffic conditions, land use patterns and safety issues.

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**Health Unit**



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