HKPR Toolkit for Land Use Policy and Planning

Table of Contents

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Purpose

This document is intended as a guide for staff when reviewing municipal plans and policy documents. It is intended for internal staff use only, not for an external audience. However, it may be shared with other public health colleagues as a resource, upon request.

Introduction

Chronic illnesses have a significant impact on mortality and disability rates both in Canada and globally. Ontario's population is currently grappling with elevated rates of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer, while physical activity levels and the consumption of nutritious food remain low. These health concerns and unhealthy behaviors are further aggravated by compounding social issues, including poverty, unaffordable housing, and food and income insecurity. (1) Additionally, there are increasing health risks to our population due to projected changes to the climate in HKPR, including increased risk of heat illness, Lyme disease and West Nile virus, skin cancer, food and waterborne illnesses and worsening of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. (2)

Emerging evidence strongly indicates that the planning, design, and construction of our communities can play a crucial role in promoting healthier lifestyles and behaviors, leading to a reduction in chronic diseases and conditions and protection from environmental hazards such as climate change. Various policy tools to achieve this goal lie within the purview of municipal authorities, encompassing areas such as planning, transportation, parks and recreation, and housing. HKPR District Health Unit can support municipalities in shifting towards healthier community design by actively participating in the municipal Official Plan reviews and providing a health perspective on other municipal planning documents.

The current and draft (2024) Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) provide direction for boards of health to engage in community and multi-sectoral collaboration with municipal, health, education and other relevant partners to develop healthy public policy and promote healthy built, natural and social environments. This direction can be found within the comprehensive health promotion and health hazard standards and is informed by the foundational standard of health equity. Focusing on interventions that address policy, supportive environments and social determinants is likely to have greater population impact than individual-level interventions.

Public health agencies have been called upon by various organizations to work on land use planning issues to prevent diseases and protect health through healthy community design. (4-7)

Reviewing and providing input on municipal policies and plans present opportunities for HKPR District Health Unit to contribute to creating communities where individuals of all ages and abilities can thrive, be healthy, and build resilience. The purpose of this tool is to support HKPR staff in their work on advocating for policies that support the development of healthy and vibrant communities for both present and future residents.

Health Equity

There are many populations who are at greater risk of poor health due to inequities in the social determinants of health. Using an equity lens in built environment planning is important to address and ensure that plans and actions do not exacerbate existing inequities. Two overarching planning principles support health equity through the built environment:

1. Create opportunities for vulnerable or priority populations to participate in planning and decision-making processes. This is critical for addressing structural barriers to the social determinants of health, and individuals have lived experience that can help identify potential sources of inequity and actions to address them.
2. Consider the unique needs of vulnerable populations when planning interventions to the built environment. For example, consider doing health equity impact assessments as part of a planning process. (8)

Additional Considerations for Practice

The HKPR Mental Health Promotion (MHP) Framework (mhp-framework-report_hkpr-district-health-unit_final_may2024-2.pdf) details public policy that equitably supports population mental health and well-being. Policies that influence social, economic, and environmental determinants of mental health and well-being include policies related to: land use planning, housing, food supply, transportation, safe urban design, access to green spaces, access to recreation facilities and the environment. Consider alignment with the MHP Framework during policy and planning review.

The BC Toolkit includes three Considerations for Practice which have 'significance across all areas' of built environment planning and should be incorporated when commenting on policy and planning reviews. Refer to the Toolkit for full details on each consideration. (9)

1. Social well-being (sense of belonging and connectedness in our community). Planning and design can help increase social well-being through:
   a. Street connectivity and active transportation
   b. Quantity and quality of green spaces
   c. Perceptions of safety
   d. Place making public art and heritage conservation
   e. Community engagement

   See link for image of 4 attributes of great public spaces - Sociability: Public Spaces as an Antidote to Isolation (pps.org)

2. Economic co-benefits (e.g. stronger local economic and cost savings for individuals)
   a. Economic benefits of complete and compact neighbourhoods
   b. Economic co-benefits of active transportation

  c. Economic co-benefits of green space
3. Small & medium sized communities (have different opportunities and challenges than urban areas – smaller tax base, can also be highly innovative)
  a. Safety concerns about active transportation
  b. Limited public transportation options
  c. Access to recreational facilities and green spaces
  d. Access to nutritious food
  e. Exposure to environmental hazards

Healthy Community Design and Transportation Systems

Rationale

Evidence shows that people have better health when they live in communities that are designed to support day-to-day healthy choices, such as being physically active, eating healthy food, and engaging in positive social interactions. (9)

Healthy Communities:

- ✓ Are compact, complete communities, where all people can safely prioritize and promote active transportation for work, school, retail, healthy food, trails, recreation, and social destinations.
- ✓ Design connected routes for active transportation and support multiple modalities.
- ✓ Can improve physical, mental, and social health and well-being.
- ✓ Increase use of active transportation and less reliance on cars, which can have positive economic and environmental impacts for the community.
- ✓ Consider the aesthetics of road and pathway networks.

Objectives:
1. Create compact and complete neighbourhoods through mixed land use and efficient planning.
2. Enhance connectivity with efficient and safe networks.
3. Ensure equitable access to natural spaces and greenspace.
4. Encourage community participation in the planning process

Healthy Community Design and Transportation Systems

Objective 1 - Create compact and complete neighbourhoods through mixed land use and efficient planning.

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
"Urban sprawl" can negatively impact the environment, financial, social, health and well-being of a community	❑ A zoning bylaw/policy to support mixed and non-traditional housing arrangements for residents of all ages. which also fosters aging in place. ❑ Mixed density, residential, commercial, and institutional development should be within proximity to retail, recreational centres, parks and public spaces ❑ Crime Prevention Through Community Design Principles integrated into new neighborhood development. ❑ Prevent the negative effects of sprawl through developing vacant or underutilized land in a neighbourhood ❑ A bylaw/policy to ensure housing for older adults and others with special needs, wherever possible, is in proximity to transit routes, medical, social service and community facilities, open/green spaces, recreation facilities, and shopping areas	❑ Create a zoning by-law/policy to ensure the creation of complete neighbourhoods when new developments are being considered. ❑ Create a bylaw/policy to allow older adults and those with special needs to *age in place.* ❑ Create a bylaw/policy that supports /incentivizes new development that utilizes vacant land within an urban boundary, is directly beside and connected to existing development, includes mixed uses to provide access to amenities. ❑ Comment on aspects of Crime Prevention through Community Design that would benefit the development. ❑ Comment on aspects of development that would create a complete community and allow older adults to age in place and other residents to continue to live in their current neighborhood.	Physical activity Social connection Mental Health Promotion Nutritious eating Social, environmental, and economic resilience Health equity Age-Friendly Climate change mitigation

Distance is a common barrier to active transportation	❑ A policy to support the development of walkable communities	❑ Develop a policy that facilitates the development of compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use neighbourhoods to support active transportation; as well as, reflecting unique characteristics and qualities of a place, such as its history, physical traits, natural environments, patterns of human behavior and seasonal variations. ❑ Work with citizens and community partners to establish and promote an interconnected recreational, pedestrian, and cycling system within and between communities. ❑ Work with equity seeking groups to improve active transportation and transit routes and to encourage on-site infrastructure needed to support active transportation for all.	Physical Activity Mental Health Promotion Social Connection Health Equity Age-Friendly Economic benefits of compact communities and AT infrastructure Community Engagement Climate change mitigation
Access and exposure to tobacco products, cannabis and alcohol	❑ The Municipality should develop minimum distance requirements between all locations that sell alcohol/cannabis and minimum distance requirements between alcohol/cannabis outlets or production facilities and other land uses that would be incompatible such as schools, youth facilities or housing developments ❑ Zoning bylaw/policy emphasizing the needs of lower income neighbourhoods and equity-seeking groups as a priority.	❑ Develop guidelines for acceptable alcohol/cannabis outlet density within the community to reduce harms related to misuse. ❑ Consider developing a zoning bylaw requiring minimum separation distances between alcohol outlets and cannabis outlets and production facilities in general, in specific zones, or adjacent to specific zones (e.g. schools).	Substance Use Prevention (SUP)
Healthy Community Design and Transportation Systems **Objective 2:** Enhance connectivity with efficient and safe networks.			
Public Health Concern	**Does the document include the following policies or actions?**	**Recommendations if policy/action not evident**	**Co-benefits**

The built environment contains risks that can have negative effects on the safety of people living & moving within it. Risks include crime, unsafe play areas, motor vehicle collisions. To minimize risks, design elements of the built environment should ensure safety for all.	❑ Is there engineering and development bylaws/standards to improve transportation safety for all users? ❑ Is there a current Transportation Master Plan that prioritizes the needs of vulnerable road users? ❑ Is there an Active Transportation Master Plan? ❑ Is there a Trails Master Plan? ❑ Is there a Complete Streets Policy? ❑ Is there a Walk/Bike friendly Designation? ❑ Is there Accessibility for all?	Update bylaws/standards to address: ❑ Roads, crossings and new developments to use active best practices for traffic calming that reduce traffic speeds without the need for enforcement. ❑ All streets should include well maintained: sidewalks, extra wide road shoulders for walking, cycling and /or pedestrian trails and walkways for all users, regardless of age or ability. ❑ Active transportation networks should safely connect to on and off-street routes/trails to provide access throughout the community with easy transitions between other modes of travel. ❑ Develop and update an Active Transportation plan that considers region wide initiatives and priority routes as well as infrastructure improvements such as wider road shoulders or bike lanes; paved shoulders on rural roads; connected network that links settlement areas, transit, education, employment and service areas. ❑ Ensure development standards/subdivision standards provide convenient and direct access to adjacent areas through pedestrian paths, sidewalks, trails, and cycling paths. ❑ Creating a compact street grid makes a neighborhood safer for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists and encourages active transportation. ❑ Maximize safety and minimize vandalism by including street lighting, clear sight lines and designs that promote natural observation. ❑ Traffic calming and control measures should be integrated into the road network to protect pedestrians and cyclists with an emphasis on	Physical Activity Age-Friendly Injury Prevention/Road Safety Economic benefits of compact communities and AT infrastructure Social connection and well-being Climate change mitigation Mental Health Promotion

		school zones and areas frequented by individuals at higher risk (e.g. seniors' residences). ❑ Apply for a walk or bike-friendly community designation to identify areas needing improvement.	
	❑ Is there a zoning by-law for bicycle parking?	❑ Develop a zoning by-law that requires a minimum number of bicycle parking spaces at retail, institutional, employment, educational, recreational and residential centres.	

Address neighbourhood aesthetics to promote and protect mental health and well-being through landscaping, greenspace, urban art, street furniture	❑ Are there policies in place to enhance local heritage and culture? ❑ Amenities to support users?	Enhance local heritage and culture by: ❑ recognizing the importance of built heritage resources such as downtowns and villages ❑ promoting local events and festivals ❑ implementing policies on acquisition of public art and its placement in areas that will foster interaction and create a community gathering space/social hub ❑ adopting policies that encourage or provide incentive for street closures for the purpose of community or neighborhood street festivals or events ❑ Promote inclusion of street furniture including shaded accessible sitting areas, street lighting, bicycle racks, and low-level greenery to create a vibrant, safe, and accessible pedestrian environment.	Social connection Age-Friendly Sun Safety Physical activity Mental Health Promotion
	❑ Does the Municipality have a policy for snow removal?	❑ Snow removal should be prioritized in areas with increased pedestrian activity and on school routes. ❑ Consideration for snow removal on AT routes and paved trails.	Physical activity Health Equity Road safety

Healthy Community Design and Transportation Systems
Objective 3: Ensure equitable access to natural spaces and greenspace.

Public Health Concern	**Does the document include the following policies or actions?**	**Recommendations if policy/action not evident**	**Co-benefits**

Parks and greenspace are important for promoting and protecting physical, social and mental health	❏ Parks/greenspace proposed in new developments ❏ New residential development - Proposed parks/trails/greenspace within walkable/bikeable radius of all units	❏ Develop policies that ensure equitable and safe access to parks and green spaces e.g. located near schools, seniors' centres, residential developments, lower income neighbourhoods ❏ Ensure safe connectivity between parks and where people live and at walkable and bikeable distance ❏ Consider ongoing park/trail maintenance as part of new development and facilities to support user experience (splash pads for cooling, accessible benches, shade, water stations and washroom access).	Climate change adaptation Social Connection Mental Health Promotion Age-Friendly Sun Safety
	❏ Parks/Recreation Master Plan is in place ❏ Policy in place that requires land in the amount of 5% of land proposed for development (or cash in lieu) be conveyed to the municipality for parks or other public recreational purposes as per the Planning Act	❏ If there is no such policy, recommend that one be developed. ❏ If there is one, there may be opportunity to refer to it to be used to develop or enhance parkland	

Accessibility for all regardless of age, ability, income, race, gender etc.	❑ Locations are accessible and convenient for all ages (e.g. by transit, safe active transportation options)	❑ Ensure parks, trails and greenspace can be accessed safely by transit or active transportation ❑ Ensure parks and greenspaces are designed for all ages, abilities, cultures and incomes.	Health equity Social Connection Age-Friendly Mental Health Promotion
❑ **Healthy Community Design and Transportation Systems** ❑ **Objective 4:** Encourage community participation in the planning process			
Public Health Concern	**Does the document include the following policies or actions?**	**Recommendations if policy/action not evident**	**Co-benefits**
Effective and meaningful climate adaptation and built environment planning requires engaging people who are most at-risk of experiencing negative health outcomes.	❑ Is there a policy in place for public input into municipal policy development and land use planning? ❑ Are there Municipal Advisory Committees that address the way the community is designed (e.g. active transportation, trails, parks advisory committees) with representation from several municipal departments, interested community groups, and individuals impacted by the changes?	❑ Create ways to increase public knowledge and provide opportunities for public participation in planning processes from all population groups, particularly at-risk populations. ❑ Establish Municipal Advisory Committees with representation from several municipal departments, interested groups and individuals impacted to ensure that policies and programs are meeting the needs of the community and to encourage communication of concerns related to accessibility, connections and safety.	Age-Friendly Health Equity Community Engagement Mental Health Promotion

Healthy Natural Environments

Rationale

A healthy natural environment includes and protects green spaces and natural elements. Natural features are incorporated into the built surroundings and accessible to all people including children, low-income residents and people with chronic conditions or disabilities. Land use decisions can promote health by incorporating benefits of the natural environment. There are many co-benefits of promoting a healthy natural

environment. For example, a park with trees cools and filters the air, promotes physical activity and mental health and provides access to nature (9). Public beaches are free resources that provide a place for physical activity and to cool off when it is hot.

Many aspects of healthy natural environments contribute to climate change adaptation. Tree canopies promote adaptation to climate impacts such as extreme heat, poor air quality and extreme precipitation by providing shade, contributing to better air quality and stormwater management and helping reduce the urban heat island effect. Careful community planning and design can reduce exposure to air pollution. Vegetation can clean a significant amount of air pollutants such as particulate matter and ground-level ozone, both identified as climate-related health hazards. (9)   Accessibility to natural areas for people of all ages is important for health and is discussed in section 1.

Objectives:

1. Build community adaptive capacity to address present and future health impacts of climate change, with particular attention to those most at-risk.
2. Reduce exposure to environmental health hazards, including air pollution, solar radiation.
3. Ensure safe drinking and recreational water.

Healthy Natural Environments
Objective 1 - Build community adaptive capacity to address present and future health impacts of climate change, with particular attention to those most at-risk.

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Exposure to extreme heat Urban heat islands	☐ Providing shade and sun protection in public spaces through trees or other shade structures ☐ Urban tree canopy policy ☐ Bylaw about temperature control in rental housing ☐ Bylaw about heat mitigation measures in office buildings, commercial shopping centres, industrial uses, institutions ☐ Actions that address climate change mitigation (reduce greenhouse gas emissions)	Build resiliency to the impacts of extreme heat and increase environmental cooling by: ☐ Increase number of trees and expanding greenspace across the built environment. ☐ Provide shade, through trees or built shade structures in parks, playgrounds, (10) open spaces, streets, transit stops, walking and cycling networks; prioritize neighbourhoods/areas that have low coverage of tree canopy. This is an excellent resource on designing for shade. Could be shared with municipality if appropriate. ☐ Develop urban tree canopy policy. ☐ Create policy for tree protection, preservation and replacement.	Active living/physical activity Social Connection Mental Health Promotion Reduced exposure to solar radiation Improved air quality Stormwater management Protection against flooding Recreation/tourism Climate change mitigation

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
		❑ Conduct regular shade audits to assess existing tree canopy and identify areas for further planting. ❑ Develop bylaw that states maximum indoor temperatures in rental housing. ❑ Develop bylaw about heat mitigation measures in buildings where people work, learn, shop, play. ❑ Create development standards that require new developments to include shade and sun protection. ❑ Install electric vehicle charging stations in public places (e.g. libraries, parks, municipal parking lots).	
Exposure to ticks and mosquitoes that carry diseases (VBDs)	❑ Plan to maintain parks, trails and other greenspace to reduce exposure to insects ie. Trimming and grass cutting	❑ Develop a plan and maintenance schedule for brushing in parks and along trails to reduce tick habitat ❑ Develop standing water bylaw to reduce mosquito breeding habitat	Physical activity Prevention of vector-borne diseases
Flooding – can lead to mould, impact drinking water, lead to unsafe food, mental health concerns	❑ Is development planned on a flood-risk zone or flood plain? ❑ Are there policies that limit development on floodplains? ❑ Is there up to date mapping of flood-risk areas	❑ Mitigation strategies in place to address flood risk e.g. green infrastructure, stormwater management. ❑ Update flood plain mapping. ❑ Update land-use bylaws to restrict new or expanded development on flood plains. ❑ Conduct risk assessment for development proposed on areas of potential flood risk.	Mental Health Promotion Food and waterborne illness Indoor air quality

Healthy Natural Environments

Objective 2: Reduce exposure to environmental health hazards, including air pollution, solar radiation

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Air pollution worsens respiratory illness, esp among young and older people	❑ Anti-idling bylaw in place	❑ Develop anti-idling by-laws to reduce air pollution and improve air quality.	Climate change mitigation Climate change adaptation Health equity Physical activity Recreation/tourism Improved cardiovascular and respiratory health
	❑ Zoning bylaw identifies minimum separation distance between major highways/arterial roads and outdoor areas where vulnerable groups live, work or play (e.g. outdoor play areas	❑ Establish bylaws that identify minimum separation distances between major highways/roads and schools, long-term care facilities, daycares and other facilities where vulnerable groups live, work and play.	

	associated with childcare facility, school, park, long-term care facility) ❑ Trees/vegetation included in development plans (e.g. neighbourhoods, subdivisions, transit hubs) ❑ Tree preservation by-law in place	❑ If above is not possible, provisions for opaque screen or buffer that consists of a contiguous row of shrubs and trees or a hedge between outdoor play area and roadway. ❑ Plant and place trees strategically to reduce air pollution and stormwater runoff, add aesthetics.	Stormwater management
	❑ Open-air burning bylaw in place to reduce air pollution in residential areas	❑ Develop open-air burning bylaw.	
Exposure to solar radiation increases risk of developing skin cancer	❑ Policies or plans in place to provide shade in parks and public spaces	❑ Plant trees to provide natural shade areas in outdoor recreation fields, playgrounds and municipal facilities. ❑ Design parks, playgrounds, green spaces, trails and public spaces to provide shade through natural and built features. ❑ Create development standards that require new developments to include shade and sun protection.	Adaptation to extreme heat Active living/physical activity Improved air quality Skin cancer prevention
Other environmental hazards	❑ Does proposed development risk human exposure to environmental hazards such as radon, industrial uses, noise, busy roadways?	❑ Recommend minimum separation distance of 500 m from highways and busy roads, or if less, mitigation measures in place such as dense vegetation planting or walls. ❑ Consider adoption of National Building Code recommendations Parts 5, 6 and 9 as part of local municipal Building Permit process related to new housing construction.	Health equity Mental Health Promotion Healthy housing
Facilities requiring inspection prior to opening (food premise, personal service setting,	❑ Does the proposal indicate there will be commercial activities that include any of the facilities listed?	❑ Advise proponent that operators must notify public health for inspection prior to opening according to the appropriate regulation. ❑ Refer to Appendix A for further details and sample comments.	

seasonal trailer park or campground, rec camps)			
Healthy Natural Environments **Objective 3: Ensure safe drinking and recreational water**			
Public Health Concern	**Does the document include the following policies or actions?**	**Recommendations if policy/action not evident**	**Co-benefits**
Protection from waterborne illness in drinking and recreational water	❑ Increasing tree cover and vegetation ❑ Reducing hard surfaces (pavement) ❑ Source water protection ❑ Protection of recreational water quality (public beaches)	❑ Storm water management plans consider projected changes in frequency and severity of storm events associated with climate change. ❑ Policies encourage green infrastructure into storm water management e.g. green roofs, porous pavement, rain gardens, bioswales to reduce runoff, especially in areas near public beaches. ❑ Source water protection strategies in place to protect water resources. ❑ Consideration for minimizing paved/hard surfaces, which contribute to runoff and retain heat.	Climate change mitigation and adaptation
	❑ Will development be on municipal water and sewers? If not, how will these services be provided?	❑ Per PPS 2020 &2024: Municipal sewage and water services are the preferred form of servicing settlement areas. Where these are not available, planned for or feasible, private communal sewage and water services are preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development. Where neither municipal nor private communal services are available, planned or feasible, individual on-site sewage and water services may be used provided site conditions are suitable. ❑ Advise that Small Drinking Water Systems (more than one residence on system) require inspection by either public health or MOECP depending on size of system. Refer to Appendix A for further details and sample comments.	

		❑ Advise that the operator is required to notify public health for inspection prior to opening. ❑ Refer to Appendix A for further details and sample comments.	

Healthy Housing

Rationale

We spend most of our time in our homes: we eat, sleep, socialize with friends and family, and often even work from home. While housing is considered a basic human right, not all housing is created to meet the same standards. Differences in housing, such as quality, accessibility, and affordability all have impacts on the health of the people who live there. These impacts can positively or negatively affect our health, over the short- and long-term. Consider, for instance, how living in a stable and affordable home that provides a warm, safe and healthy environment can support health. These factors all describe aspects of healthy housing, which can promote good nutrition, healthy behaviours, and healthy relationships. Healthy housing can foster good mental and physical health, and improved quality of life. (9)

Healthy housing supports healthy living by protecting people from health hazards inside and near the home. Poor housing may be more likely to have mould due to dampness when it is humid or after heavy precipitation. Exposure to air pollution from sources such as busy roadways increase risks of lung cancer and can worsen conditions such asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and cardiovascular disease. Pollutants that are outside eventually work their way indoors, so outdoor air quality affects indoor air quality. Children and older adults, especially those with pre-existing respiratory or cardiac conditions are especially susceptible to adverse affects of exposure to poor indoor air quality. (2) Road traffic is cited as a top source of environmental noise, especially for urban residents. Chronic exposure to noise is associated with health effects that are believed to arise from biological stress, including cardiovascular cognitive and mental health impacts. (11)

Healthy housing is safe, affordable and accessible to all. The following principles are associated with planning and design for healthier housing and should be applied with consideration of the unique social, economic and environmental factors of each community.

Objectives:

1. Prioritize affordable, adequate housing options for all populations through diverse housing forms and tenure types.
2. Provide specialized housing options to support the needs of marginalized populations.
3. Site and zone housing development to minimize exposure to environmental hazards.

Healthy Housing

Objective 1 - Prioritize affordable, adequate housing options for all populations through diverse housing forms and tenure types

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Housing continues to become less affordable, putting certain populations at increased risk of being under-housed. Lack of housing supply or types of housing available in a community could force individuals to leave their community as housing needs change.	❑ Mixed income housing ❑ Mixed housing types ❑ Complete (8-80) neighbourhoods ❑ Affordable housing units	❑ Prioritize a variety of housing forms and mixed income housing developments to increase access to local, affordable, and diverse housing options, which helps people stay in their communities longer and improves their ability to afford other basic needs such as health care and nutritious food, while decreasing stress. ❑ Provide affordable housing options for people of all ages, abilities and socioeconomic status. Adopt affordable housing targets and standards that are integrated into mixed-income neighbourhoods within complete communities. ❑ Work with developers to provide incentives for provision of affordable units within a development (e.g. CKL Affordable Housing Targets Program) ❑ Create housing for older adults and supportive housing for people with other special needs, wherever possible, in proximity to transit routes, medical, social service and community facilities, open/green spaces, recreation facilities, and shopping areas	Mental Health Promotion Access to nutritious food Age-friendly Health Equity

Healthy Housing

Objective 2: Provide specialized housing options to support the needs of marginalized populations

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits

Lack of specialized and safe housing for individuals with disabilities could further impact their health and wellbeing.	❑ Supportive housing for individuals with mental and physical disabilities ❑ Access to safe housing for marginalized comminutes	❑ Invest in supportive housing for people with mental illness, to help improve their health and increase their social support networks. ❑ Prioritize access to permanent and safe housing for people who are homeless to reduce their use of emergency services and provide better access to the healthcare services needed to take care of existing illness and diseases and stay healthy. ❑ Implement programs that help to upgrade or retrofit housing to allow people with physical disabilities, particularly seniors, to continue living independently in their homes.	Mental Health Promotion Chronic disease prevention Health equity Injury prevention

Healthy Housing
Objective 3: Site and zone housing developments to minimize exposure to environmental hazards

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Exposure to environmental hazards such as radon, air pollution which can lead to lung cancer. Proximity to noise in dense, busy and industrial areas can result in mental and physical health problems.	❑ Does the development serve populations that are more vulnerable to poor air quality (young children, older adults, people with chronic cardio or respiratory illnesses)? ❑ Is there adequate separation distance between proposed development and environmental hazards (e.g. industry, busy roadways, railways)	❑ Ensure that housing developments are located a safe distance from busy roadways. ❑ If development includes facilities that serve populations more vulnerable (e.g. school, long-term care facility) recommend minimum separation distance of 500 m from highways and busy roads, or if less, mitigation measures in place such as dense vegetation planting or walls ❑ Consider adoption of National Building Code recommendations Parts 5, 6 and 9 as part of local municipal Building Permit process related to new housing construction.	Chronic disease prevention Mental Health Promotion

Healthy Food Systems

Rationale

A sustainable food system delivers community food security and nutrition to ensure that economic, social, and environmental bases for future generations are not compromised. It is critical to supporting nutritious diets and creating healthy communities. The way food is produced, distributed, processed, and sold within a region impacts food choices and nutrition related health outcomes. Communities that have access to a sustainable supply of healthy, and locally grown and locally processed food are thought to be less susceptible to external factors that can influence the nutritional quality and/or quantity of available foods. (4)

Ensuring community food security, a key outcome of sustainable food systems, requires that a variety of elements be addressed. (12)

• Availability means that a diverse food supply and adequate food infrastructure is in place. Ontario's agricultural lands are a finite and shrinking resource, making up less than five percent of all provincial land, and is currently being lost at a rate of 319 acres per day. (13) These losses are not sustainable, and it's vital that Ontario has a strong, viable and sustainable supply of food products grown, harvested, and processed locally. (14) Policies must be in place to encourage farmers to grow food. Unsupportive policies related to protection of farmland can make it difficult for farmers as they will be competing with developers. Evidence demonstrates there is sufficient land designated for needed urban growth in southern Ontario to meet current housing needs and for the next 30 years. (15)

• Accessibility ensures that everyone has physical access to adequate and acceptable food. Evidence indicates that compact, complete communities facilitate economic growth, sufficient land use, opportunities for recreation, and access to food. Unsupportive local food system policies can encourage sprawled development that will fragment and isolate farm communities, reducing access to food.

• Affordability means everyone has adequate income to purchase foods that meet cultural and personal preferences. Polices are needed to establish measures that require developers to build diverse housing types that Ontarians can afford. Inflation, supply chain disruption, and climate-related events in recent years have highlighted the urgent need for both affordable housing and the protection of farmlands. Reduction in availability of affordable housing will add to the growing problem of food insecurity: the inability to afford food due to inadequate or insecure income. The proportion of Ontarians living in food insecure households continues to rise since monitoring of this problem began in Canada in 2005. (16)

• Acceptability ensures that the food system meets cultural preferences and needs. To ensure a sustainable food system, the unique role and inherent rights of Indigenous peoples must be recognized, which includes access to traditional lands.

Healthy Food System

Objective 1 - Increase equitable access to and affordability of healthy food options for all residents

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Healthy and local food is accessible to community.	❑ Zoning bylaws supporting availability of healthy and local food ❑ Healthy and local food sale/ procurement ❑ Support for addressing food insecurity and poverty	❑ Zoning supports healthier choices and limits unhealthier choices (e.g., drive-thru) ❑ Farmers markets are accessible in neighbourhoods (benefits to consumers and producers by providing market access to locally grown vegetables, fruit, etc.), ❑ Community gardens and opportunities for urban agriculture/food production are incorporated into neighbourhoods. **Distribution /Access:** Encourage distribution of local, healthy food by: ❑ Limiting the location and/or density of fast-food outlets, in particular location of drive-throughs and proximity to residential and school zones. ❑ Increasing access to affordable healthy choices, particularly in areas where access to healthy food is limited. Examples of initiatives to address "food deserts" include: zoning and financial incentives to stores in underserved areas (e.g., permits for convenience stores conditional on availability of vegetables and fruit, grants to buy refrigerators for fresh produce, zoning by-laws to allow for street vendors with healthy food choices, etc.). ❑ Zoning for Community Food Hubs where food literacy can be enhanced and the local food system developed. ❑ Local procurement policies for food offered and sold in City or municipal-owned facilities and programs (e.g.,	Healthy eating/chronic disease prevention Health equity Mental Health Promotion Climate change adaptation and mitigation

		recreation centres, childcare centres, summer camps, long-term care).	
		❑ Encourage the provision of grocery stores, retail food venues, small to medium-sized food stores, mobile food vendors or other food sources as part of a complete community. Encourage the provision of temporary and permanent farmers markets/pop-up markets (e.g., zoning by-laws).	
		❑ Plans for future subdivisions/developments that include a review for access to healthy local food.	
		Consumption:	
		❑ Zoning for Community Food Hubs and sites for food festivals/events and farmers' markets.	
		❑ Encouraging businesses that sell local food.	
		❑ Healthy and local food availability in City-owned facilities/public institutions.	
		❑ Engage in poverty reduction efforts including partnerships with organizations such as the Poverty Reduction Roundtables.	

Healthy Food System
Objective 2: Protect agricultural land and increase the capacity of local food systems

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Local food system is sustainable and agricultural land is protected	❑ Protection of agricultural land ❑ Support for urban and semi urban agriculture ❑ Protection of farmer's markets	❑ Increase the mix of land use and connectivity to food retail services that provide culturally appropriate foods, especially for produce. ❑ Enable local farmers' markets to build permanent or temporary market infrastructure through zoning allowances and/or bylaws.	Healthy eating/chronic disease prevention Climate change mitigation

		☐ Provide space and capacity supports for residents to grow food in urban/semi-urban settings.	
		☐ Protect existing agricultural land in and near urban/semi-urban settings; for example, by placing zoning restrictions on the size of housing located on agricultural land.	
		☐ Enact zoning bylaws which incentivise appropriate use of agricultural land and de-incentivise non-agricultural uses	

Healthy Food System
Objective 3: Improve community scale infrastructure to support the local food system

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Local food producers, growers, retailers not having appropriate supports available in community to enhance their operations.	☐ Investment in development of local food processing infrastructure ☐ Support for local food tourism ☐ Zoning bylaw support for different types of retail to access local food i.e. farmer's markets, mobile markets	☐ Policy, by-laws, infrastructure, technology to support local/regional processing, storage, procurement, and food-related businesses. ☐ Supporting infrastructure to facilitate processing of local, healthy foods (e.g., food hubs, incubator kitchens, commercial kitchens, community bake ovens) Encourage distribution of local and healthy food by: ☐ Zoning for Community Food Hubs where food literacy can be enhanced and the local food system developed. ☐ Support for culinary tourism (e.g., restaurants selling local food). o Local procurement policies for food offered and sold in City or municipal-owned facilities and programs (e.g., recreation centres, childcare centres, summer camps, long-term care). ☐ Encourage the provision of grocery stores, retail food venues, small to medium-sized food stores, mobile food vendors or other food sources as part of a complete community.	Healthy eating/chronic disease prevention Climate change mitigation

		❑ Encourage the provision of temporary and permanent farmers' markets/pop-up markets (e.g., zoning bylaws)	

Healthy Food System
Objective 4: Support community-based food programs

Public Health Concern	Does the document include the following policies or actions?	Recommendations if policy/action not evident	Co-benefits
Residents not having access to appropriate local food literacy related programs and initiatives.	Support for local food and food literacy programs i.e. school gardens, community kitchens	❑ Design civic facilities to support local food programs; for example, by including kitchen space and ovens. ❑ Provide shared cooking, eating and storage space for community programs in mixed income housing developments. ❑ Support community and school gardens by incorporating garden space into landscape design and parks planning, including water sources, tool storage sheds and accessible gardens (with raised beds). ❑ Collaborate with educators to ensure maximum use and benefit of school gardens. ❑ Offer community grants to support local food programs and services, or allow the addition of food supports as a secondary asset within existing grant opportunities	Healthy eating/chronic disease prevention Food literacy Mental Health Promotion
Public Health Concern	**Does the document include the following policies and actions**	**Recommendations if policy/action not evident**	**Co-benefits**
Food waste creates negative economic, environmental, and social impacts	Waste Management	❑ Ensure wasted food is minimized (e.g., citizen education/awareness, supporting local gleaning programs, sustainable waste management policy and practices). ❑ Support the municipalities in their development and implementation of land protection policies that prioritize the importance of returning nutrients to farmland.	Environment

Environmental Health Areas of Interest re: Municipal Planning

Drinking water and sewage systems

For new multi-lot developments, our recommendations should be consistent with recommendations in the PPS (proposed 2024), which state (section 3.6):

- Municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety. (In PPS 2020, section 1.6.6.2)
- Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available, planned or feasible, private communal sewage services and private communal water services are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety. (In PPS 2020, section 1.6.6.3)
- Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services or private communal sewage services and private communal water services are not available, planned or feasible, individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts. (In PPS 2020 section 1.6.6.4)

Elsewhere in the PPS (2024) speaks to rural areas:

Section 2.5 When directing development in rural settlement areas in accordance with policy 2.3, planning authorities shall give consideration to locally appropriate rural characteristics, the scale of development and the provision of appropriate service levels.

Small Drinking Water systems
Refer to chart for what falls under HPPA/public health and OReg 319/08 vs OReg 170/03 which is covered by MECP.

- If a residential development is on municipal drinking water system it falls under 170
- Seasonal campgrounds and trailer parks fall under 319 – must have 60 consecutive days when they are closed. All others fall under 170
- If a seasonal trailer park is expanding (adding number of sites available) it is recommended that they have another inspection or at least notify public health. Their sampling schedule, number of samples required could change depending on number of sites available

Sample comments

New operations where the public has access to drinking water will require a drinking water assessment for either Ont. Reg. 319/08 (inspected and enforced by public health) or Ont. Reg. 170/03 (inspected and enforced by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks).

An HKPR PHI is available to provide information and support in the planning stages to ensure the system complies with applicable regulations. The proponent is strongly encouraged to contact inspections@hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577 x5006 to speak with a PHI early in the planning process.

An HKPR District Health Unit Public Health Inspector is available to consult on drinking water, recreational water and food premises by email inspections@hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577 x5006 if needed. The proponent is encouraged to speak with a PHI early in the planning process.

No concerns, as the plans indicate the development is to be serviced by private communal drinking water and wastewater facilities which will be regulated by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Food Premises

- Operator must notify public health prior to opening to be inspected
- OReg 493/17

Sample comments

If a food premise is established, Food Premises O. Reg. 493/17 requires the owner/operator to notify public health for inspection prior to opening.

The proponent is encouraged to contact inspections@hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577 x5006 during the planning of the facility for support to ensure it will be compliant with requirements in the regulation.

Personal Service settings

- Includes salons, tattoo parlours, barbershops

Sample comments

If a personal services setting is established (e.g. salon, tattoo parlour, barbershop) O. Reg. 136/18 requires the owner/operator to notify public health for inspection prior to opening.

The proponent is strongly encouraged to contact inspections@hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577 x5006 during the planning of the facility for support to ensure it will be compliant with requirements in the regulation.

Recreational water

- Swimming pools and spas (hot tubs)

Sample comments

If a swimming pool or hot tub is to be built/installed, O. Reg. 565 applies and requires the owner/operator to notify public health for inspection prior to opening.

The proponent is strongly encouraged to contact inspections@hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577 x5006 during the planning of the facility for support to ensure it will be compliant with requirements in the regulation.

Recreational Camps

- Must notify public health 14 days prior to opening; notify of any changes to contact info/location; notify of outbreaks or suspected outbreaks
- Must submit camp safety plan to public health
- Public health inspects: drinking water, food premise
- OReg 503/17

Stormwater management

From the PPS (section 3.6): Planning for stormwater management shall: ... b) minimize, or, where possible, prevent or reduce increases in stormwater volumes and contaminant loads; c) minimize erosion and changes in water balance including through the use of green infrastructure; d) mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment; e) maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces; f) promote best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency, and low impact development;...

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