

STAFF REPORT:

Planning & Building Services Committee



REPORT TO: Mayor and Members of Council
MEETING DATE: April 6, 2009
REPORT NO.: PL.09.32
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding, Operation Safe, Strong and Clean, Grey Bruce Health Unit
PREPARED BY: Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP
Senior Policy Planner

A. Recommendations

THAT Council does receive Planning Staff Report #PL.09.32, “Memorandum of Understanding, Operation Safe, Strong and Clean, Grey Bruce Health Unit” for information purposes; and

THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Grey Bruce Health Unit upon the Director, Planning & Building Services and Town solicitor’s recommendation to do so.

B. Background

On February 26, 2009, Staff met with Bob Graham and Bev Middleton of the Grey Bruce Health Unit (GBHU) to discuss the GBHU’s “Operation Safe, Strong and Clean” (OSSC) (Attachment 1). This meeting provided an opportunity to review the recently completed six-month pilot project undertaken between the GBHU and the City of Owen Sound involving healthy community development. The GBHU indicated that the objectives of the project were to:

- increase opportunities for alignment and collaboration;
- identify and create opportunities for innovative approaches to health and wellness;
- incorporate health and wellness into municipal planning and operations;
- influence a culture that supports community health and well-being;
- support and facilitate initiatives to promote public health; and
- report and document results, lessons and recommendations for translation to other communities.

The meeting also was a venue to discuss a possible collaborative agreement between the GBHU and The Blue Mountains Planning & Building Services Department pertaining to a build environment plan review commenting process, similar to the six-month pilot project undertaken in the City of Owen Sound.

Discussions with Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services, City of Owen Sound, has revealed that the City found the pilot to be advantageous in promoting public health and wellness and to implement provisions of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

related to healthy communities. As a result of this six-month pilot project, the City of Owen Sound has continued on with Operation Safe, Strong and Clean and its partnership with the GBHU.

The GBHU is proposing a collaborative partnership between GBHU and the Town, primarily the Planning & Building Services Department, in an effort to deliver on its mandate, the provisions of the PPS as they relate to building strong and healthy communities. It is proposed that a dedicated GBHU staff person work directly with the Planning & Building Services Department to provide comments on planning applications which will help ensure that the *Ontario Public Health Standards 2008* (OPHS) as well as the provisions of the PPS related to healthy communities are being addressed at a land use planning level. It is anticipated this staff person will be work directly from the municipal building approximately 7.0 hours per week. A work space will be provided without computer support. As this will be a formal partnership between the Grey Bruce Health Unit and The Blue Mountains, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted by the GBHU that is being reviewed by the Town's solicitor. This partnership will be for a six-month time period with a review to be conducted after that.

Synergies exist between the *Provincial Policy Statement* and the *Ontario Public Health Standards* in terms of policy direction. The *Provincial Policy Statement* provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS also provides policy for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural environment. The Ontario Public Health Standards establish requirements for fundamental public health programs and services, which include assessment and surveillance, health promotion and policy development, disease and injury prevention and health protection. The OPHS outline the expectations for boards of health, which are responsible for providing public health programs and services that contribute to the physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of people living in Ontario.

As the PPS guides land use planning and the OPHS outlines expectations to boards of health within Ontario, this agreement will have positive effects for both the Town and the Health Unit. Each jurisdiction will have the opportunity to learn from each other and exchange information in terms of how policies relating to land use planning, health communities and public health are intertwined across disciplines.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Operation Safe, Strong and Clean is in keeping with the Town's Strategic Plan, namely:

1. *Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.*

D. Environmental Impacts

Operation Safe, Strong and Clean will support the concept of healthy communities by encouraging and promoting environmentally sound land use planning objectives when making recommendations.

E. Budget Impact

Staff time to: meet with the GBHU dedicated staff liaison person; circulate planning application to the Health Unit for comment and review time.

The 7.0 hour office space requirement can be met within Town Hall and no additional expenses are anticipated in this regard.

F. Attachments

1. DRAFT Memorandum of Understanding Between the Grey Bruce Health Unit and the Town of The Blue Mountains.
2. Operation Safe, Strong and Clean - Owen Sound Alignment Project, July 2008.

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

THE GREY BRUCE HEALTH UNIT

and

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

**Pertaining to Operation Safe, Strong and Clean
and Land Use Plan Review of the
Built Environment**

June 1, 2009

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

THE GREY BRUCE HEALTH UNIT

and

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

PREAMBLE

Healthy Community Development in Grey and Bruce Counties

The built environment is increasingly identified as an issue of emerging public health importance. Evidence confirms the built environment has direct impact on health and wellness. Changes and improvements to the built environment are proven to benefit individual and community health.

Health Promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over and improve their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and realize aspirations, to satisfy needs and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the object of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyles to well-being. The Ottawa Charter for Health Protection (World Health Organization, 1986), the most widely and used health promotion document in the world, outlines five action strategies:

- building healthy public policy;
- creating environments for health;
- strengthening community actions;
- developing personal skills; and
- reorienting health services.

The Ottawa Charter asserts that building healthy public policy should be on the agenda of all sector policy makers, at all levels. Policy makers are directed to be aware of the health consequences of their decisions and to accept responsibility for health.

Evidence indicates that while medical and lifestyle choices do affect health, by far the greatest influences involve how communities and societies are organized to support health.

The layout of cities, towns and neighbourhoods, or the built environment, have a direct link to the level of physical activity of community members, air quality and social connectedness. Other indicators of healthy communities include access to affordable housing, healthcare, education, employment and nutritious food.

The health of individuals and communities is significantly influenced by complex interactions between social and economic factors, the physical environment and individual behaviours and conditions. These factors are referred to as the determinants of health, and together play a key role in determining the health status of the population as a whole.

The determinants of health include:

- income and social status;
- social support networks;
- education and literacy;
- employment/working conditions;
- social environments;
- physical environments;
- personal health practices and coping skills
- healthy child development;
- biology and genetic endowment;
- health services;
- gender; and
- culture.

Research on the determinants of health indicates that how we live, work and play is linked to chronic diseases such as cancers, cardiovascular and diabetes.

The role of public health in addressing the determinants of health to impact the overall health of communities is reflected in the new *Ontario Public Health Standards* (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 2008). These standards are built upon a Foundational Standard that advises “public health not only acknowledges the impact of the determinants of health but also strives to influence broader societal changes that reduce health disparities and inequities by coordinating and aligning its programs and services with those of other partners” (p18).

Healthy Communities is a growing world-wide movement. *Healthy Communities* are based on the following principles:

- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. Social, environmental and economic factors are important determinants of human health and are inter-related.
- People cannot achieve their fullest potential unless they are able to take control of those things that determine their well-being.
- All sectors of the community are inter-related and share knowledge, expertise and perspectives, working together to create a healthy community.

A *Healthy Communities* process involves wide community participation, broad involvement of all sectors of the community, local government commitment and the creation of healthy public policies.

The role of municipalities in addressing community health is reflected in the *Provincial Policy Statement* (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). The *Provincial Policy Statement* provides direction on matters related to land use planning and development and is built on the

fundamental principle that “strong, liveable and healthy communities enhance social well-being and are economically sound” (p2).

The health unit proposes a collaborative partnership with each jurisdictional municipality and planning department in an effort to build strong and healthy communities. These partnerships can collectively address the *Provincial Policy Statement* and the *Ontario Public Health Standards* and enhance our shared commitment to excellence in protecting and promoting health and preventing disease and injury.

Through positive impact on the built, natural and social environments that affect the health of the population, the health unit strives to address epidemiological evidence and issues related to our populations at risk.

Statutory Framework

The following statutes, policies and information sources are directly relevant to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will come into effect on June 1, 2009:

- *Health Protection and Promotion Act R.S.O.1990, c.H.7 (HPPA)* and regulations made under that Act.
- *The 2008 Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) and Protocols.* (Boards of Health (BOH) and Medical Officers of Health (MOH), as cited in Table 1 of the OPHS 2008, have duties and responsibilities as specified in other applicable Ontario Laws).
- *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13.*
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing *Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).*
- Scientific/academic and grey literature or in reviews of best practices evidence related to the built environment and the impacts to public health/determinants of health.

Purpose

- To incorporate health and wellness into municipal planning and operations.
- To influence a culture that supports community health and well-being.
- To support and facilitate initiatives to promote public health.

Definitions

Definitions per the OSSC

“Built Environment” is defined by Health Canada as: “... part of the overall ecosystem of our earth. It encompasses all buildings, spaces and products that are created, or at least significantly modified by people. It includes our homes, schools and workplaces, parks, business areas and roads. It extends overhead in the form of electric transmission lines, underground in the form of waste disposal sites and subway trains and across the country in the form of highways.

The built environment contains ‘the basic services that are needed to keep a society running’, otherwise know as infrastructure. Infrastructure is seen as essential to health and includes services delivered physically (roads, communications, provision of drinking water mains, sewage systems and so on), and utilities such as electricity and gas. Furthermore, the built environment can include

broad features of urban layout, such as cityscapes (building heights, shapes and overall density) and streetscapes (width, tree cover, housing density and the diversity of building uses). Provision of transport facilities for road, rail, tram, bicycle, pedestrian, air and sea traffic forms a key component of infrastructure.” (*Health Canada website, 1997, as cited in Victoria State Government Department of Human Services, 2001*) (p26).

“Geographic Team” means multi-disciplinary teams of health unit staff assigned to provide programs and services within eight defined geographic areas within Grey and Bruce Counties.

Definitions per the HPPA

“Board of Health” means a Board of Health established or continued under the HPPA.

“Health Unit” means an area that, by or under any Act is the area of jurisdiction of a Board of Health.

Other Terms

For the purposes of this MOU, the following terms have the following meanings:

“Medical Officer of Health” (MOH) means a Medical Officer of Health of a Board of Health and includes an employee of the Board acting under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health.

Application

- Circulation of municipal land use plan and/or notice of public meetings and other circulations/documents shall be forwarded to the Grey Bruce Health Unit for review and commenting.
- Health Unit staff shall identify features of the built environment that will be commented on through a land use plan review process to meet the needs of priority population(s).
- The features of the built environment that will be commented on shall be chosen based upon evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention in scientific/academic and grey literature or in reviews of best practices.
- Reference to applicable provincial legislation, policies and scientific/academic and grey literature shall be quoted in public health commenting.
- The commenting process shall occur primarily in a checklist and form letter format with detailed site-specific commenting provided on an as-needed demand.
- Health Unit liaison staff shall be available to consult/meet with member municipalities, including key municipal staff and community partners, to complete the identification of relevant governmental and organizational policies and identify aspects that guide healthy land use planning/development.

- Health Unit staff shall be available to attend pre-consultation meetings with planners and developers to discuss and implement healthy community development parameters prior to submission of applications.

PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

General

Issues of Mutual Support

Health Unit Geographic Areas shall utilize dedicated staff in a liaison role to work directly with the Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains Planning & Building Services Department staff or other municipal staff as required, and to ensure that together both the Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Grey Bruce Health Unit can build healthy, strong communities.

Assigned staff shall be available to work from the Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains municipal office to enhance effective communication between both organizations.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND SIGNATURE

Signed on behalf of:

Dr. Hazel Lynn, Medical Officer of Health
Grey Bruce Health Unit

Dated at _____ this ___ day of _____, 2009, with effect as of the ___ day of _____, 2009.

Mr. Chris Munn, Director of Health Protection
Grey Bruce Health Unit

Dated at _____ this ___ day of _____, 2009, with effect as of the ___ day of _____, 2009.

Ms. Ellen Anderson, Mayor
Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains

Dated at _____ this ____ day of _____, 2009, with effect as of the ____ day of _____,2009.

Mr. Stephen Keast, Clerk
Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains

Dated at _____ this ____ day of _____, 2009, with effect as of the ____ day of _____,2009.

**OPERATION SAFE STRONG CLEAN
OWEN SOUND ALIGNMENT PROJECT**

JULY 2008



Prepared by:

**Jennifer Croft, Health Promoter
Grey Bruce Health Unit**

**Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services
City of Owen Sound**



Owen Sound

Introduction

In November 2007, the Directors of Health Promotion and Health Protection from the Grey Bruce Health Unit initiated a meeting with the City Manager from the City of Owen Sound to discuss opportunities for collaboration between the two organizations. In February 2008, a six-month pilot project commenced between the City and the Health Unit to promote alignment and collaboration in order to influence healthy community development and the health impact of municipal policy and decision making.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Increase opportunities for alignment and collaboration.
- Identify and create opportunities for innovative approaches to health and wellness.
- Incorporate health and wellness into municipal planning and operations.
- Influence a culture that supports community health and well-being.
- Support and facilitate initiatives to promote public health.
- Report and document results, lessons, and recommendations for translation to other communities.

Context/Background

Throughout the past few decades, there has been a gradual reorientation of both municipal and public health operations to support a level of readiness for collaboration between the two sectors.

Healthy Community Development

The *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* (World Health Organization, 1986) asserts that building healthy public policy should be on the agenda of policy makers of all sectors, at all levels. Policy makers are directed to be aware of the health consequences of their decisions and to accept their responsibility for health. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) emphasizes that policy and decision making impacts many of the determinants of health; the determinants of health include:

- Income and Social Status
- Social Support Networks
- Education and Literacy
- Employment/Working Conditions
- Social Environments
- Physical Environments
- Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills
- Healthy Child Development
- Biology and Genetic Endowment

- Health Services
 - Gender
 - Culture
- (PHAC, 2003).

The *Ottawa Charter* underscores that the fundamental conditions for health can only be ensured by coordinated action between governments, health and other social and economic sectors, nongovernmental and voluntary organizations, local authorities, industry and the media. Five action strategies are outlined in the Charter:

- Building healthy public policy;
- Creating environments for health;
- Strengthening community actions;
- Developing personal skills; and
- Reorienting health services.

Public Health and Healthy Community Development

The role of public health in addressing the determinants of health in order to impact the overall health of communities is reflected in the new guiding document for Public Health services in Ontario, *Ontario Public Health Standards* (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, 2008). These *Standards* are built upon a *Foundational Standard* that advises “public health not only acknowledges the impact of the determinants of health but also strives to influence broader societal changes that reduce health disparities and inequities by coordinating and aligning its programs and services with those of other partners” (p18). Furthermore, the *Standards* assert that “the quality and scope of local partnerships shall be an essential indicator of success for boards of health in achieving and maintaining the leadership role required to create the conditions necessary for effective change” (p20).

The Grey Bruce Health Unit

The Grey Bruce Health Unit is developing a healthy community approach to address the underlying determinants of health utilizing a more community-driven stance to planning and delivery of programs and services. In 2003/04 the Health Unit considered various scenarios for the organizational structure of the Health Unit. The criteria for selection of a structure included accessibility and delivery of programs and services to all residents across the vast geographic area, as well as cost effectiveness, efficient operation and staff accommodation. The resulting structure consists of two centralized offices with staff allocation to eight geographic teams.

The interdisciplinary geographically-based teams were formed in 2005; the teams are aligned with municipal boundaries and include Public Health

Inspectors, Public Health Nurses, Public Health Dieticians, Social Marketers, Health Promoters, Parent Support Workers, Youth Workers, Dental Hygienists, Dental Educators, Environmental Technicians, and Program Assistants. Goals and strategies to meet provincially mandated programs are planned by program-based teams for regional implementation; the geographically-based teams implement the planned strategies in a geographic area to meet the unique needs and priorities of that particular community.

In 2007, a steering committee was formed to lead a strategic operation entitled *Operation Safe, Strong and Clean*. The role of this committee is to provide support, leadership, information and research to the geographic teams. Two pilot projects were initiated by the committee. A built environment pilot project was established to build relationships with community planners and to provide opportunity to comment on healthy community development. The second pilot, an opportunity for alignment between the Owen Sound geographic team and the City of Owen Sound is the basis for this report.

Healthy community development is further supported at the Grey Bruce Health Unit by the *2007-2010 Strategic Action Plan*. Objectives of the healthy community strategy are:

- Influence local policy-makers to address the social determinants of health.
- Develop and implement Safe, Strong and Clean community initiatives through the geographic team model.
- Raise awareness of climate change and impacts on environmental health.
- Regularly report to the community on rural health challenges in Grey Bruce and strategies for ameliorating these problems.
- Support local initiatives that promote healthy and sustainable environments including built, natural, social and cultural environments.

Municipalities and Healthy Community Development

The role of municipalities in addressing community health is reflected in Ontario's *Provincial Policy Statement* (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). The *Provincial Policy Statement* provides direction on matters related to land use planning and development. The *Policy Statement* is built on the fundamental principle that "strong, liveable and healthy communities enhance social well-being and are economically and environmentally sound" (p2).

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) is the recognized voice of the Province's planning profession and provides vision and leadership on key planning issues. OPPI has demonstrated commitment to the *Provincial Policy Statement* and to creating and fostering healthy communities in the release of its 2007 position paper *Healthy Communities, Sustainable Communities*. This report focuses on the links between public health and land use planning with an

emphasis on the importance of urban design, active transportation and green infrastructure.

The City of Owen Sound

The City of Owen Sound conveys its commitment to healthy community development in its 2008 *Strategic Plan*. Within the *Health Strategic Initiatives* component of the *Strategic Plan* the City outlines:

- The City should promote the objectives of “Healthy Communities” through program and facility development; and
- The City should play an advocacy role identifying and promoting health needs in the community.

Actions within these strategies include:

- The development and maintenance of recreation, sport and culture programs and facilities;
- The adoption of a corporate philosophy for healthy living;
- Enhanced accessibility to City programs, services and facilities; and
- The development of partnerships with a variety of community organizations.

The *City of Owen Sound Official Plan* provides the framework to guide the development of the City over the next 20 year planning horizon. Understanding the connection between the built form and healthy communities, the policies of the *Plan* promote health, safety and quality of life for its residents. Components of the *Plan* incorporate policies that aim to promote a healthy community across many aspects from transportation and storm water management to urban design policies.

Owen Sound Alignment Project

In February 2008, a Health Promoter from the Health Unit and the City’s Director of Community Services established a partnership to promote collaboration, coordination and resource development for healthy community development between the Health Unit and the City.

Objectives of the Project

The objectives of the alignment project were to:

- Increase opportunities for alignment and collaboration.
- Identify and create opportunities for innovative approaches to health and wellness.
- Incorporate health and wellness into municipal planning and operations.
- Influence a culture that supports community health and well-being.
- Support and facilitate initiatives to promote public health.

- Report and document results, lessons, and recommendations for translation to other communities.

Key Elements

Several key elements were required to achieve the objectives of the pilot:

- Comprehensive understanding of the roles and responsibilities across programs and departments of both organizations.
- Comprehensive understanding of organizational structures, processes, and culture across both organizations.
- Understanding of existing links between the Health Unit and the City.
- Understanding of potential or desirable links between the Health Unit and the City that did not previously exist.
- Understanding of barriers preventing desired links between the Health Unit and the City.
- Understanding of barriers to policy and decision making regarding healthy community development.

Summary of Activities

Initiation of the pilot project:

- A liaison was established between a Health Promoter from the Health Unit and the City's Director of Community Services. The City provided a workspace including telephone, computer and internet access.
- City council and directors were introduced to the Health Promoter and informed of the purpose of the pilot.
- The members of the Health Unit's geographic team for Owen Sound were informed of the purpose of the pilot and the potential implications for the geographic area.
- Health Unit staff from the Owen Sound geographic team were interviewed by the Health Promoter to identify scope of role, existing links with the municipality, desired links with the municipality and desired changes in municipal policies and practices.
- Key municipal staff were interviewed by the Health Promoter to identify scope of role, existing links with the health unit, desired links with the health unit and understanding of the health impact of municipal policies and practices.
- Municipal documents were made available to the Health Unit, including organizational structure, strategic plan, official plan and relevant bylaws and policies.
- Health unit documents were made available to municipal staff, including organizational structure, programs and services, strategic plan, and *Ontario Public Health Standards*.

- Potential collaborations between the two organizations were identified and priorities for action were established.

Activities during the pilot project:

- Regular meetings were conducted between the Health Promoter and the Director of Community Services to facilitate collaborations and alignment between the two organizations and to advance identified action items.
- Regular meetings of the Owen Sound geographic team were conducted to communicate project updates and to identify potential interdisciplinary priorities for collaboration. Municipal personnel were invited to attend geographic team meetings in accordance with meeting topics.
- Presentations were provided to City Directors, City Council and the Board of Health to inform about the pilot and initial progress.
- The Health Promoter was present two days per week at City Hall to encourage communications and interactions with City staff regarding opportunities for health perspective on City activities and undertakings.

Towards Evidence Informed Practice (TEIP)

Towards Evidence Informed Practice (TEIP) is a project created by the Heart Health Resource Centre to increase the use of evidence based practice in health promotion programming. In April 2008, the Grey Bruce Health Unit received funding to pilot-test the tools developed by the TEIP project to maximize the uptake of evidence for programming. The funds provided for the services of a consultant to guide and implement the process.

Through the TEIP process, several areas of required evidence were identified to support healthy community development. It was recognized that evidence could be used to strengthen partnership development, enhance access and equality, support transportation programs and policies, and support healthy land use planning and development. The TEIP project focused on evidence to support the question “what comments should public health professionals provide municipalities related to land-use planning and development to promote healthy communities?”

Recommendations for next steps following the TEIP project include:

- Identify features of the built environment that will be commented on through a land use plan review process to meet the needs of priority population(s); the features of the built environment that will be commented on shall be chosen based upon evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention in scientific/academic and grey literature or in reviews of best practices.
- Consult/meet with member municipalities, including key municipal staff and community partners, to complete the identification of relevant

- governmental and organizational policies and identify aspects that guide healthy land use planning/development.
- Develop position papers and secure Board of Health endorsement on various aspects of population health and health promotion as related to the built environment in order to ensure consistency in message and approach to all municipalities.
 - Develop a committee with representation from each Health Unit program and including potential municipal partners to develop templates to guide planning comments.
 - Develop a knowledge transfer strategy for increasing knowledge, awareness and understanding of all health unit professionals on the link between land-use planning and the development of healthy communities.
 - Develop a communication/promotion strategy to increase awareness and support of municipal values (including council, planning staff, engineers, developers and the public at large) regarding the link between land-use planning and the development of healthy communities.

Summary of Project Outcomes

In addition to the specific outcomes of the pilot project (see Table 1) the alignment project resulted in several positive achievements:

- A mutual vision for healthy community development was formed incorporating organizational visions from both the City and the Health Unit (see Appendix A).
- A mutual awareness was acquired regarding organizational cultures, organizational structures, organizational mandates, strategic plans, governance and decision making.
- A general understanding of barriers to policy and decision making regarding healthy community development was formed by the Health Promoter.
- A general awareness of the health impact of municipal policy and decision making in its diversity was formed by the City Director of Community Services.

Table 1: Project Outcomes

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Continuing Progress and Future Explorations</i>
<p>To increase opportunities for alignment and collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas for all City meetings are circulated to the Health Promoter for identification of potential health impacts and opportunities for collaboration. • Direct alignments have been facilitated between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City Bylaw enforcement & PH Tobacco enforcement; ○ PH Youth team & City Library youth coordinator & City councillors; ○ Farmer's Market & PH inspector; ○ Farmer's Market & Needle Exchange Program; ○ City Community Services, City Library & PH injury prevention program; ○ PH Chronic Disease Prevention Team & City parking committee; ○ PH Chronic Disease Prevention Team & City Recreation Advisory Committee; ○ PH Tobacco program & City Recreation Advisory Committee; ○ City Public Works & PH environment programs; ○ City Public Works & PH needle exchange program; ○ Chronic Disease Prevention & City health & safety committees; ○ PH emergency planning & City Chief Building official & City Fire Chief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignments that are currently in progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City Bylaw enforcement, City Police Services, City business licensing & PH tobacco enforcement & PH inspectors. ○ City Bylaw enforcement, City clerk & PH rabies program.
<p>To identify and create opportunities for innovative approaches to health and wellness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in TEIP evidence protocol resulted in evidence to support land use planning and development comments, with implications for process and protocols for commenting, and strategies for communication and knowledge transfer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City has raised the opportunity to explore the development of a healthy community coalition, including corporate and non-governmental partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Owen Sound geographic team was briefed by the City Director of Community Services on City decision making process and timelines for effective interjection. 	
To incorporate health and wellness into municipal planning and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health Unit is providing comments on land use planning and development within the City. • The City has added the Health Unit to distribution lists for development and review of Official Plan and Master Plans. • The City is working with PH Tobacco program to explore policy regarding smoke-free recreational spaces. • The City is working with PH safe water program regarding the development of Blue Flag beaches. • The Health Unit has been invited to attend meetings regarding the development of a Transportation Master Plan for the City. • Participation in the TEIP evidence protocol identified areas requiring further evidence to support policy development and collaborative processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a healthy communities checklist to support incorporation of healthy community development in municipal strategic and official plans. • Explore the alignment of animal licensing with vaccination for rabies. • Explore the opportunity to consult with new businesses prior to construction or renovations. • Explore the opportunity to align business and taxi licensing with compliance to Smoke Free Ontario Act. • Explore a policy with respect to mandating wiring for generators in all new or renovated public buildings.
To influence a culture that supports community health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City workplace wellness programs are being supported by PH Chronic Disease Prevention Team. • The City is exploring banning the use of water bottles within City meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore incorporating sensitivity training regarding social determinants of health in City staff training opportunities. • Explore policies and procedures supporting access and equity for transportation, recreation, culture provided by the City.
To support and facilitate initiatives to promote public health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mayor and a City Councillor attended and supported the development of a youth coalition. • Linkages formed with a community poverty initiative, Campaign 2000. • Linkages formed with Métis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore formal linkages between the youth coalition and City council and Recreation Advisory Committee.

	<p>Nation of Owen Sound.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health Unit was invited to support the development of bike lanes at a public meeting. • The Health Unit is providing a health perspective to parking issues being explored by a committee of the City. 	
<p>To report and document results, lessons, and recommendations for translation to other communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly reports to Operation Safe Strong and Clean Committee, Program Planning and Leadership Committee and Owen Sound Geographic Team. • Presentations to City Directors, City Council and Board of Health. • Presentation to Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa) conference and scheduled presentation for Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) conference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary presentations will be made to the City Directors and Council, and the Board of Health in the Fall 2008.

Successes and Challenges

Conditions for success

Success of the pilot project can be attributed to the following factors:

- Support for and endorsement of the concepts of healthy communities and community partnerships by the leaders of both organizations, including decision makers and senior staff; both organizations committed physical and human resources to the project.
- A readiness for collaboration for healthy community development exhibited by both organizations, as demonstrated in their strategic plans and facilitated by provincial policies and direction.
- The relationship and mutual trust formed by the direct liaison was significant to ensure ongoing communication and collaboration.
- A physical presence of the Health Promoter was a key component to ensure the health perspective was spontaneously incorporated in City planning and decision making.
- The designation of specific coordinating roles ensured that staff members across both organizations were aware of a channel of information to successfully communicate and collaborate between organizations.
- A comprehensive understanding by the geographic team, as supported by the Health Promoter, of the health impact of municipal planning and decision making was integral in being able to credibly answer “What does public health have to do with this?”
- An aligned vision and mutual understanding of the definition and components of a healthy community ensured a common purpose throughout the pilot (see Appendix A).
- A comprehensive view of healthy community development allowed a holistic approach to impacting the various interrelated components of a healthy community.
- Ongoing communication in the form of meetings, presentations and informal conversations ensured that key stakeholders in both organizations remained informed and connected to the progress of the pilot.

Challenges

Challenges that could be addressed to enhance future collaboration between the two organizations:

- Housing the pilot in the City’s Community Services department meant minimal filtering of awareness and understanding of the health impact of municipal planning and decision making beyond the level of that department and the established collaborations. This lack of understanding and awareness sometimes lead to mistrust of the Health Unit’s intentions and initial resistance to cooperation.
- Awareness of organizational cultures, organizational structures, organizational mandates, strategic plans, governance and decision

making did not ubiquitously filter beyond the level of the liaisons and their immediate reporting relationships.

- Existing organizational structures and processes across both organizations were not always readily adaptable to opportunities emerging from the project; for example, interdisciplinary and cross-department/cross-program collaborations were cumbersome to coordinate.
- The brief duration of the project offered examples of the health impact of municipal planning and decision making, however a paradigm shift throughout all levels of municipal planning and decision making to incorporate a health perspective will require sustained collaboration and knowledge transfer between the organizations.
- The scope of the pilot project did not address stakeholders beyond the Health Unit and the municipality. Municipal planning and decision making is influenced by the interests of corporate and private citizens. Corporate and citizen readiness for healthy community development must be addressed through education and awareness identifying that providing options to optimize public good can also enhance personal interests. Understanding of the interests of corporate and private citizens would allow for promotion of the relevant benefits of healthy community development to encourage public support.
- Limited access to academic evidence restricts the ability to inform and support policy recommendations and strengthen potential for municipal implementation.
- A comprehensive and holistic view of healthy community development is often unwieldy and presents challenges to keeping informed of evidence and best practices with respect to all components of a healthy community.
- The health impact of the built, natural and social environment is a relatively new concept to public health and not all public health professionals are knowledgeable or confident regarding the association to their area of expertise.
- Staff time dedicated to the project was in addition to existing work assignments. In the case of the Health Unit, time was specifically allotted to the project resulting in suspension of other work assignments. In the case of the City, time allotted to the project was in addition to existing work assignments.
- The lack of physical presence of the Health Promoter following the completion of the pilot project resulted in the absence of a physical reminder for ongoing communication and collaboration.

Recommendations

Resources and Supports

Prior to further alignment with municipalities, the Health Unit in collaboration with municipal partners, must complete several steps to encourage and support healthy community development in order to avoid repeating the challenges as identified in the Owen Sound pilot.

The Health Unit, in collaboration with municipal partners, must consider developing:

- A communication strategy to increase awareness, support and commitment to healthy community development from municipal staff and decision makers, and corporate and private citizens.
- A knowledge transfer strategy to enhance awareness among both public health and municipal staff members regarding the connection between built, natural and social environments and health. Opportunities for joint education between public health and municipalities should be explored.
- A strategy to monitor, analyze and interpret evidence to support project planning, implementation and evaluation for healthy community development.
- A strategy to monitor trends and network with other communities to enhance awareness of best and promising practices with respect to healthy community development.
- Strategies and position papers with respect to each component of healthy communities to ensure a consistent and credible approach across all municipalities.

Collaboration and Alignment with Municipalities in Grey and Bruce Counties

To enhance effectiveness of alignment efforts, the Health Unit and the collaborating municipality should consider:

- Support and endorsement for the concepts of healthy communities and community partnerships from within the municipality.
- Identification and agreement to the procedures and objectives of the liaison prior to its establishment.
- Commitment to sustained collaboration and knowledge transfer to ensure a pervasive shift in incorporating a health perspective in municipal planning and decision making.
- Designation of specific coordinators from each organization to promote a relationship of mutual trust and to clarify communication channels between organizations.

- Support for coordinators from both organizations to have a comprehensive understanding of their own organization, including organizational structures, processes and culture.
- Support for coordinators from both organizations to be aware of existing linkages between the two organizations and be prepared to identify and support potential linkages.
- Support for coordinators from both organizations to be forthright in identifying and acknowledging barriers to collaboration and to policy and decision making regarding healthy community development.
- Support for coordinators from both organizations to endorse and encourage organizational strategies to overcome barriers.
- Provision of coordinators from each organization with time specifically dedicated to the project and with reference to the role in job descriptions/work assignments to ensure significant support for collaborations.
- Provision of physical space for the health unit representative within the municipality to promote regular collaboration and communication and to allow for spontaneous incorporation of a health perspective in municipal planning and operations.
- Direction for decision makers, senior staff and front-line staff to support and enable collaborations.
- Facilitation of access to all departments in the municipality to increase awareness and understanding of the health impacts of planning and decision making and to increase trust and cooperation.
- Facilitation of communication between the Health Unit and all municipal departments to promote increased awareness of organizational cultures, organizational structures, organizational mandates, strategic plans, governance and decision making.
- Exploration of collaborations with corporate and non-governmental partners to sustain a holistic approach to healthy community development and examine the feasibility of a healthy community coalition.
- Identification and securing of funding opportunities to support and enhance opportunities for healthy community development.

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Appendix A
Healthy Community Vision



Health Unit—vision

We envision Grey Bruce as a community where all people value and take responsibility for a healthy and safe environment.

**A HEALTHY
COMMUNITY ...**

Provides all people with the ability to make choices in a community that offers opportunities for access to: affordable housing, transportation, healthy and nutritious foods, recreation, education and employment, medical and social services, clean air & water and a safe environment within an inclusive and socially cohesive atmosphere.

**City of Owen Sound—
vision**

To be a community of choice for all, distinguishable by its authenticity, natural amenities, diversity and community spirit.