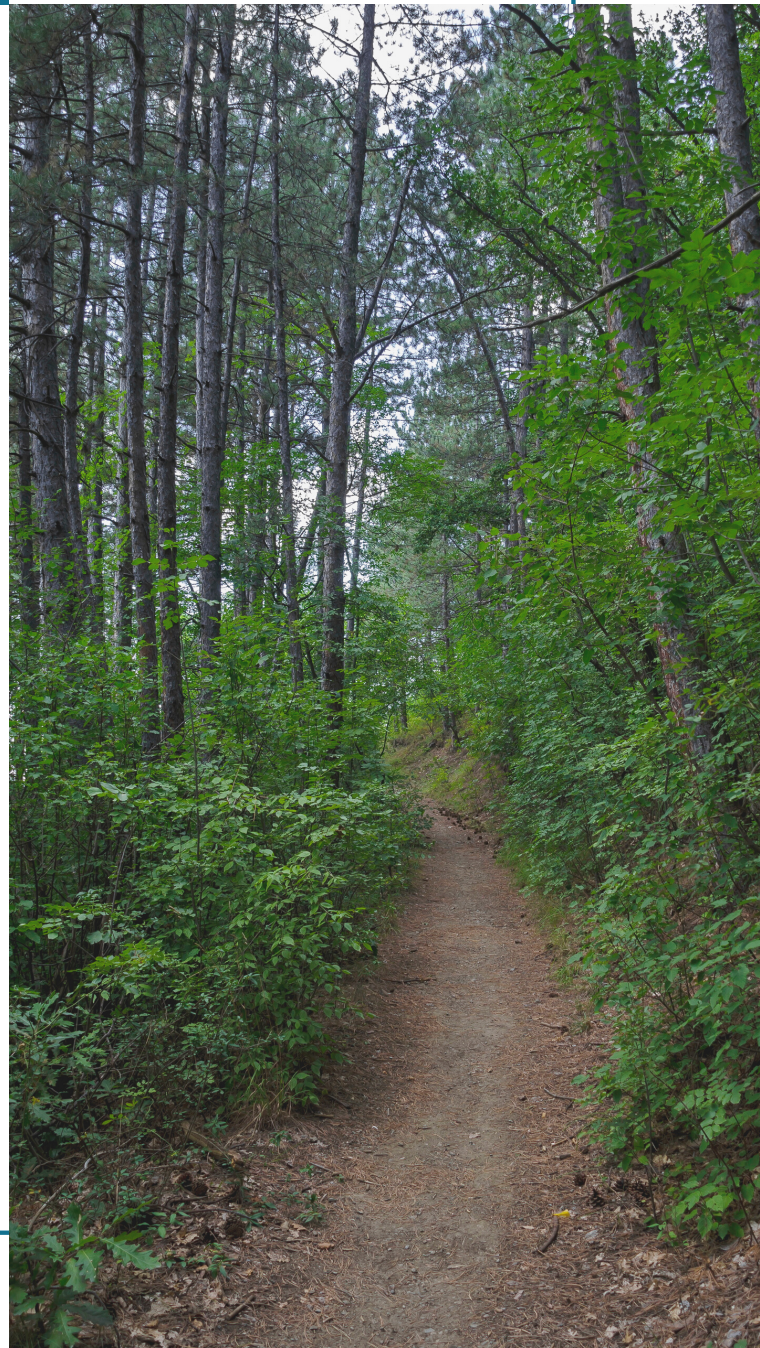


MAY 2021

SEGUIN TOWNSHIP
OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW:

LIVEABILITY AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Report by:
Skelton, Brumwell & Associates Inc.



WHAT IS LIVEABILITY AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES?

The support for increasing livability and promoting a healthy community through the built, natural, and social environments can be encouraged through Official Plan policies. Liveability and Healthy Communities are key goals of Seguin Township.



IN THIS REPORT

In this report, the relevant Provincial policies and municipal documents, including the Township's Strategic Plan and the existing Township OP are reviewed and summarized to form a basis for this discussion.

PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario provide direction on specific issues. Seguin's Official Plan must conform to the PPS which sets out the following policies:

Healthy & Sustainable Communities

Provincial policy supports the permitting and facilitation of all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements, and all forms of residential intensification, including second units.

The Province promotes direct development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are, or will be, available to support current and projected needs.

The Province supports higher densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service

facilities, and support the use of active transportation.

Provincial policy recognizes the need to establish development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

The Province contends that the planning of public streets, spaces and facilities must ensure safety, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity. Planning should provide for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources. Additionally, development and land use patterns should be constructed in such a manner as to conserve biodiversity.

PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

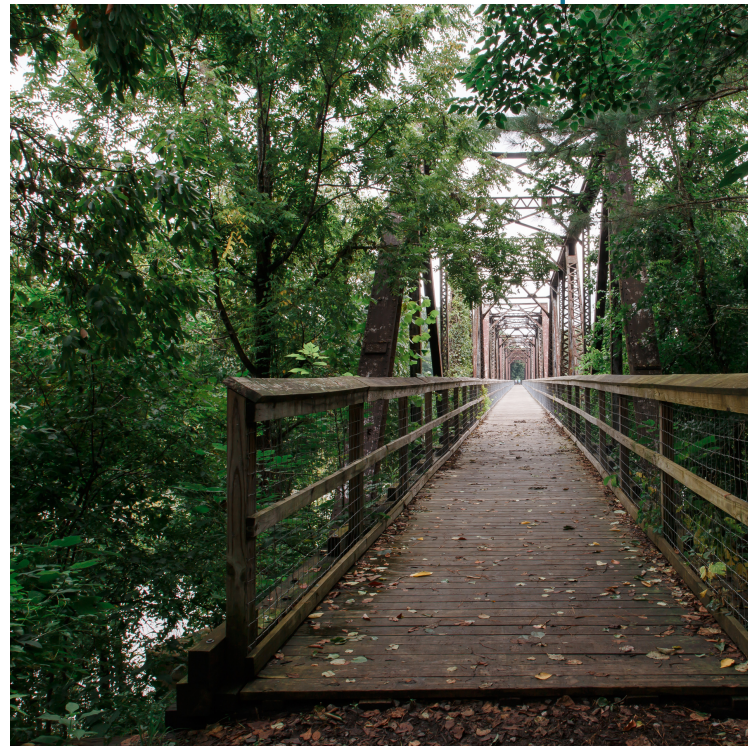
Supply

The Province favours an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area. This includes the maintenance at all times of the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years through intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development.

Ontario believes that, where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

Attainability

The Province promotes the establishment and implementation of minimum targets for provision of housing that will be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Second units and inclusionary zoning policies will support provision of attainable housing units.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Seguin Township strives to deliver access to safe and healthy homes as well as quality outdoor spaces in order to provide residents with the necessary amenities for physical activity. Seguin has become a desirable place to live, play and work.

The Township's Strategic Plan (2019-2022), is designed to align with Community Development Plans and sets forth the advancement of Seguin Township in its efforts to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Seguin. The Township understands the significance of environmental quality and connectivity to residents for enhanced liveability and sets out the following objectives:

- *"Continue to advance strategies to improve community aesthetics and livability."*

- *"Continue to connect community members to the natural and cultural environment through programming and stewardship initiatives."*

The Township recognizes the importance of Community Prosperity through its stated second goal of the Strategic Plan. Community Prosperity in Seguin is set to be improved through housing and public space changes as identified by the following objectives:

- *"Explore opportunities to increase the supply of housing and the range of housing choices in Seguin Township"*
- *"Make a Council decision on the Wellness Centre (Pool/Recreational Centre)."*

The Townships goal is to form objectives and policy directions that commit to increase the liveability and health of the Seguin community.

CURRENT OFFICIAL PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Although the current Official Plan does not specify a specific Liveability and Healthy Communities policy approach, it does provide several other policies that promote objectives that help to meet the goals of encouraging healthy community initiatives in the Township. These policy sections that contribute to Liveability and Healthy Communities include Housing, Transportation Build Environment Connectivity to Natural Environment" and "Public Spaces

Housing

There are a number of policies within Settlement Areas (Section A.2.4) that are applicable to housing. Because this section is most applicable to housing, the goal of the Settlement Areas in Seguin Township is pertinent: "It is the goal of this Plan to protect and enhance the character of existing Settlement Areas and to maintain them as diverse, liveable, safe, thriving and attractive communities." (Section A.2.4) In this section there are two objective that stand out in regards to housing, and these objectives are:

"h) To ensure Settlement Areas are compact, pedestrian-friendly, with a mix of housing

types, community facilities, commercial uses and open spaces.

j) To encourage the use of surplus public lands for affordable housing where the site is appropriate for such a use and where the use would be compatible with adjacent uses."

Section B of the Official Plan, which focuses on general development policies, includes housing topics that can be found in Sections B.7 through B.10, including: Group Homes (B.7), Home Occupations and Industries (B.8), Garden Suite Dwelling Unit (B.9), and Secondary Dwelling Unit (B.10). Section B.12 Subdivision of Land is also relevant to the provision of lots for new housing.

OFFICIAL PLAN CONTINUED...

Section C Land Use Designations has more detail on Settlement Areas that are applicable to housing needs in Seguin Township. The intent of housing in settlement areas have the following objects:

"b) encourage the provision of a range of housing types to accommodate persons with diverse social and economic backgrounds, needs and desires based on servicing capability of the Township;

c) ensure that Settlement Areas permit a variety of complementary and compatible land uses including special needs housing, community facilities, schools, commercial and small-scale employment uses, and open space areas;" (Section C.2.1.1.b-c)"

Additionally, in Section C.2.1.3.1 Residential Development and Density "it is a policy of this Plan that new growth be directed to the existing Settlement Areas of the Township. [...] The Township goal to maintain its rural and small Community character."

It is also mentioned in Section C.3.1.3.1 Residential Development Policies that in Shoreline Areas, residential development shall consist primarily of single detached dwellings on separate lots.



Transportation

The Official Plan encourages active transportation networks or trails and shared roadways that are safe and accessible to all people. The intent is to connect people and places in order to promote healthy lifestyles.

Section E of the Official Plan sets out the strategies the Township will implement in order to integrate active modes of transportation. The objective of this section that is pertinent to multi-modal transportation is:

“b) establish an integrated transportation system that safely and efficiently accommodates various modes of transportation including rail, automobiles, trucks, cycling and walking.”

The Township has numerous trails and corridors systems including snowmobiling, ATV's, walking, biking, and skiing (Section E.3). The goal of the Township's is to protect, improve and expands the trail and corridors systems to increase the linkage of outdoor spaces in the Township of Seguin.

OFFICIAL PLAN CONTINUED...

In order to accomplish the creation, upgrading and expansion of the active transportation network (or trails) and shared roadways, the Township has instated various practices (Section E.3.2). During road improvements and new road construction, consideration will be given to ways to further improve the active transportation system, including the creation of on-road active transportation corridors. Reconstruction of major connecting roadways will incorporate the development of wider shoulders that promote various active transportation options.

Section D of the Official Plan includes an Employment Corridor Area Overlay (D.6) which “supports a range of existing employment uses and has certain locational attributes as an employment corridor that would lend itself to the establishment of appropriate new employment uses.”

Build Environment Connectivity to Natural Environment

The Official Plan currently addresses Waterfront Design policies in Section B.3 which identifies lakes as public domain and for the built environment to be designed in a way that connects people and such places. A process such as this ensures a successful lake community and excels and providing both a healthy build and natural environment for all people.

OFFICIAL PLAN CONTINUED...

Public Spaces

In Section F.1.5 Design Guidelines sets out guidelines for the design of new development, including public realms that are of importance to the Township of Seguin. The primary focus is on the organization of buildings and relationship of any building to the public realm, and not necessarily the design of individual structures. It is important to recognize the lake, roads, sidewalks, and parks as public domain in order to give the community a feeling of ownership and a sense of belonging to that place.



OVERVIEW OF POLICY ISSUES REPORT

The intent of the scoping exercise was to identify the key policy areas that will require in-depth attention as part of the review.

The sections below were highlighted in the report as key policy areas which included Liveability and Healthy Communities. This does not mean that this is the only opportunity to incorporate Liveability and Healthy Communities, but instead areas that can be improved.

A.3.2 Settlement System

- Review opportunities to provide for appropriate rural growth, attainable housing, increased housing accessibility.
- Review opportunities (mixed housing types, smaller lot sizes, and smaller frontages) to broaden housing opportunities/choices; create attainable housing; provide for environmentally friendly housing.
- The community has clearly identified a need to review settlement structure and housing policies to increase the availability of housing, to stimulate the creation of diverse housing opportunities and to achieve housing attainability.
- Determine interest in possible servicing of Humphrey and Rosseau.

B.10 Secondary Dwelling Unit

- Review opportunities to provide for appropriate rural growth, attainable housing, increased housing accessibility. Consider merit of not having second dwelling size limitations.
- Review applicable legislative developments and broaden opportunities to increase housing choices and opportunities. Housing is a key issue in the community. Availability of additional housing choices and opportunities is dependent on multiple approaches and the appropriate encouragement of additional dwelling units is one of the routes to increasing housing supply and choices.
- Review issues with second dwellings in lakeshore areas.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following are comments received to date regarding Liveability and Healthy Communities

LD, Website Public Forum, August 24, 2020

1. "Seguin Township has a good mix and choice of housing. Additional affordable housing choices should be made available. Ideally these would be situated in areas with easy access to local amenities."
2. "I agree that residential development in settlement areas should occur through intensification, infill, and redevelopment opportunities."
3. "To retain the character of a community while intensification and new development occurs, the Township should develop guiding principles for complete communities and integration of land uses. The principles should not discourage investment, instead they should focus on a long-term vision of a community that is accessible, inclusive, and sustainable."
4. "The idea of establishing a minimum target for a housing

units within settlement areas (e.g., targets for units that are accessible to seniors, larger families, and people with disabilities) may be too prescriptive. Some developers may only meet the minimum, when MORE accessible housing could be accommodated. Instead, the Town should follow guiding principles to make reasonable decisions based on the best evidence available at the time the planning decision is made."

Ann MacDiarmid, Website Public Forum, January 25, 2021

"I really want to see Seguin make it easier for more types of multiple unit housing such as duplexes, townhomes, grannies suites in both settlement areas and in rural areas."

"we also must make it easier for rural subdivision of lots to smaller sizes and on many types of roads."

"Additionally, it is vitally important that we make Seguin attractive for investors, developers and others to build more housing. It has to be easy, welcoming and not over prescriptive. Let's allow creative solutions to our housing needs."

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following are comments received to date regarding Liveability and Healthy Communities

"Guiding principles are a start, but the municipality will need to go further and drill down to zoning. Council approved urban design guidelines will be helpful. In thinking about special character areas, such as Rosseau, such tools as the Ontario Heritage Act (heritage conversation districts) may come in handy to manage the existing character where there are unique aspects and special qualities including matters of scale, built-form, landscape, open space qualities, public realm ... the great part about districts is that they do allow sensitive infill and intensification to occur without freezing development. They are also known to perform quite well from a property values perspective and the municipality can use heritage as a way to promote culture and tourism."

4. Should the Township consider establishment of a

minimum target for a housing units within settlement areas which will need to be attainable? Should the Township consider policies establishing targets for a minimum number of units which are: designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, designed to accommodate larger families, and designed to be age-friendly?

"Absolutely. With the current exodus of people from larger urban centres, Seguin needs to be proactive and take some bold steps to capitalize on the opportunities at play. This would certainly help in maintaining a competitive edge for the municipality in both the short and long term, building the tax base/revenue generation and addressing the needs of a broader demographic, diversity and inclusion, aging-in-place for the existing population, et al. When young people can no longer afford the expensive costs of living and/or real estate in larger urban centres, they seek new opportunities and places to live ... what better way for Seguin to pave the way and welcome them through a range of housing options and choice!"

Continued on next page...

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Continued...

5. Please provide any other comments you may have for consideration in the development of new policies.

"Growth can be accommodated if it is planned for and executed really well. But the devil is in the details. Being deliberate about growth is key - a vision for what you want connected to the bigger picture, robust planning policies, zoning and urban design guidelines will be instrumental. Equally important will be Council's commitment to implementation, making sound decisions in the broader public interest without cherry picking the principles that really matter."

Cliff Vankoughnett, Letter Via Email, May 26, 2020

"Through this review process it would be nice to see lake access considered for non-lake residence when developing new lakeside plans of

subdivision. Maybe some sort of policy that obligates land developers (or anyone who subdivides a certain number of lots) to provide a public access point for other Seguin residence not just those who own waterfront property. This would likely not be necessary on a lake that already has public access. It would be a big benefit to those who cannot afford waterfront property in assuring all taxpayers have access to all (or as many as possible) lakes in their rate paying area. Maybe it is possible that a lakeside developer can create access on a municipal road allowance of it is not feasible right at the plan of subdivision site. This would be a great way to show permanent residence who will never afford lakefront that the municipality is considering them as well as the waterfront owners."

Ann Macdiarmid, Letter Via Email, May 26, 2020

"Economic growth for Seguin Housing In keeping with the More Homes, More Choice Act 2019, I really want to see us make Seguin attractive for investors to build attainable homes for as many people as possible. With no public sewer and water, this means that we will likely need to use backlot properties that require wells and septic. I believe some of

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Continued...

the lot size issues are addressed in the Provincial Policy Statement 1.1.4 and 1.15. Let's see if we can Make the lot size restrictions go away as much as possible Make more lands in more types of locations available for urban development F.10(d) in both the settlement and rural areas Make it easier to build multi-unit housing throughout the township – likely not on lake front Make it possible to add self-contained housing units (little apartments) over garages, in basements and create grannie suites Increase the overall housing supply and mix What can we do to make “youth retention” in Seguin a priority?"

Howie Johnson, Steering Committee SharePoint Site, July 22, 2020

For years, Seguin Township has struggled with the issue of derelict/unmaintained/unsightly properties. We lag behind other municipalities and townships in this regard. Due to a lack of authority to act,

these properties exist over the objections of citizens and lake associations. These few properties present Seguin in an unfavourable light, and do not represent the way citizens view their Township. They fall short of environmental, visual and socially acceptable standards. We need to develop a method to address those few selected properties and to establish a standard for the future. We should address the issue in the Official Plan Review on a 'site specific' basis. One method to address this would be to develop a template By-Law with remedial action, which would become 'site specific' and actionable under 3 conditions: 1) The situation is identified by multiple complaints or is supported by a petition. 2) The property is an environmental, health or safety concern. 3) The property does not conform to the Environment, Visual and Social standards of the Township's 'Environment First' principles. This approach has 3 advantages. 1) It avoids a 'broad brush' approach by addressing only specific properties. 2) The template is ready and easily engaged by Council when a complaint meets the criteria. 3) Council and Staff are equipped with legislation to address offending properties. I think this will set a standard through which our Township views itself and is viewed by others and is consistent with 'The Natural Place to Be'."

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PAPERS

This intent of this section of the paper is to provide context on the newest research and policy making information in order create an Official Plan that will provide policies of best practice.

The two “healthy community” research papers discussed in this section are:

1. The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) has created a report “Policy on Healthy Communities Planning” that promotes the conditions by which communities can improve by increasing prosperity, and social and health equity
2. Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) collaborated with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) to create the “Planning by Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook.” This report analyzes links between public health and land-use planning in order to explore strategies for healthier communities

While housing and transportation policies have a large impact on the prosperity of a liveable, healthy community, additional key policies also require careful consideration. The intent is to provide more opportunity to integrate several improvements to current policies as well as to include additional policies in the Official Plan. The two healthy community research papers have been summarized and formatted into four major policy sections: housing, transportation, public spaces, and connectivity of the natural and built environment. How these four sections can promote liveability and healthy communities is discussed in-depth.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PAPERS CONTINUED

Housing

Recognition is given to the critical role affordable, adequate housing plays on an individual and communities physical, mental, and social health. Best planning practices portray the benefits of high-density, multi-use neighbourhoods that promote social interaction and inclusion. The updated Official Plan should focus on mixed housing type neighbourhoods that are safe, accessible, aesthetically pleasing, well-serviced and inclusive.

Transportation

The updated Official Plan should include an encouragement for active and public transportation

infrastructure that is universally accessible, safe, affordable, and takes into account local climate conditions. The streets should be designed to accommodate the safe cohabitation of all road users, with particular attention to the safety and comfort of the most vulnerable in both rural and urban contexts. It should be a goal to ensure that streets, paths and trails that are well-connected, maintained and able to safely accommodate different modes of transportation while effectively addressing any congestion issues. From a liveability perspective, streets should be constructed not only to ensure safety but also vibrancy.

Connectivity of the Natural and Built Environment

New and updated plans should recognize the importance of preserving and regenerating natural environments for health and well-being by promoting active lifestyles by ensuring an adequate distribution of well-designed green spaces, increasing the connectivity of green spaces, and improving access to natural environments in an equitable manner.

Urban agriculture should be promoted in order to help ensure access to an adequate supply of healthy food. Vegetation on roofs and ground surfaces should be encouraged to help eliminate urban heat islands.



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PAPERS CONTINUED

Public Spaces

Official Plans addressing the requirements of healthy communities should include the design of public spaces and neighbourhoods promoting safety, social connection, accessibility, and well-being, while limiting opportunities for crime and victimization.

Planning for a rich public realm is promoted, composed of public spaces that are:

- Human scale
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Culturally appropriate
- Safe
- Accessible to all citizens

Public spaces that take into consideration the above list are thereby creating socially inclusive and cohesive communities. This plan should ensure that the public has year-round access to services and facilities providing safe active and passive places to engage in healthy physical activity, to be outside, connect socially, and build a sense of community.



SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Official Plan will be based on your vision and ideas from the community. You know what you want the future of the community to be. You also know where the current challenges and constraints are. We need your input to ensure that the policies we develop achieve your objectives and respond to your vision and needs.

The following are examples of directions and suggestions intended to facilitate and stimulate discussion.

Direction #1

The Township should encourage areas of greater housing mix that range in price and type to meet the needs of the broader population, for current and future residence.

Policy Opportunities

- Permitting and facilitating multiple unit housing, secondary suites, infill, and redevelopment;
- Identify how to promote housing intensification that facilitate compact form and uses land efficiently without being too prescriptive;
- Encouraging the development of Complete Communities which are mixed-use neighbourhoods that support people of all ages and abilities and is in locations that help individuals live nearer to where they work.
- Providing for innovative forms of servicing and housing provisions to increase the supply of housing both within and outside settlement areas.

SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Direction #2

The Township should provide opportunities for multiple-mode of transportation and encourage active-modes of transportation throughout Seguin.

Policy Opportunities

- Establish connectivity of residential areas to other amenities;
- Walking and cycling infrastructure to be developed throughout the town that is safe, and maintained year-round;
- Reduce reliance on cars by providing all daily needs within close proximity to residential development areas.

Direction #3

Build Environment Connectivity to the Natural Environment

Policy Opportunities

- Ensuring that nature and open spaces are connected and accessible to all residence;
- Right of water access promoted to the public – including those who do not have waterfront homes;
- Provide opportunities for innovation to combine nature within the built environment. A few examples that encourage connectivity: green roofs and gardens, south facing windows, and tree planting.



SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Direction #4

Public Spaces

Policy Opportunities

- Township needs to enhance areas for public spaces that is accessible by the whole community;
- Providing pedestrian level urban design guidelines such as pedestrian scale lighting in order to enhance street life and creating a strong sense of place;
- Playground refurbishment and/or development for activity spaces for children.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Both the North Bay and Parry Sound District Health Unit and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit have provided excellent resources that can assist in guiding the Official Plan Review by providing approaches and policies dealing with Age Friendly Communities and Healthy Community Design. These documents are attached for reference and discussion.



HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans

April 2014

THOUGHT PROVOKING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you think that the Township has an appropriate mix and choice of housing to accommodate all needs? If not, what additional housing choices should be made available and where?**
- 2. Do you agree that residential development in settlement areas should occur through intensification, infill, and redevelopment opportunities?**
- 3. How do you think the character of a community can be retained while intensification and new development occurs? Should the Township consider development of guiding principles for complete communities and integration of land uses?**
- 4. Should the Township consider establishment of a minimum target for housing units within settlement areas which will need to be attainable? Should the Township consider policies establishing targets for a minimum number of units which are: designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, designed to accommodate larger families, and designed to be age-friendly?**
- 5. Do you think there are aspects of the built environment that create the feeling of being either connected to or removed from nature?**
- 6. Do you think it is possible to integrate new land-use transportation concepts (i.e., inclusion of multi-modal transportation to streets) to existing land use conditions?**
- 7. Please provide any other comments you may have for consideration in the development of new policies.**



HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans

April 2014

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HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans

PREFACE

This document provides a series of suggested policy statements and implementation activities related to land use, community design and public health. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) offers these suggestions for policy direction in the hope that municipalities adopt them as part of their Official Plans, activities and programs to improve the health of their residents.

Given the diversity and the mix of rural and urban communities within the District of Muskoka and County of Simcoe, these suggestions have been developed to be as versatile as possible. The health unit suggests that incorporating the content of this document should be part of well defined strategies and community engagement processes so that it can fit the physical and social context of the community.

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HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans

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HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans



Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns. Efficient land use and development patterns support sustainability by promoting strong, livable, healthy and resilient communities, protecting the environment and public health and safety, and facilitating economic growth.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, Part V, 1.0 Building Strong Healthy Communities)

This Plan is about building complete communities, whether urban or rural. These are communities that are well designed, offer transportation choices, accommodate people at all stages of life and have the right mix of housing, a good range of jobs, and easy access to stores and services to meet daily needs.

(Places to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006, Office Consolidation June 2013, p.13)

INTRODUCTION

Municipalities in Ontario face many challenges in planning for growth and development, including: working with changing population projections; developing land for a variety of uses; building to suit the needs of the population; protecting the environment; and planning for economic prosperity and a sustainable future. At the same time, municipalities must ensure their planning decisions protect the health and well-being of their residents.

Land use decisions and the way communities are designed have multiple impacts on people's physical health as well as on their mental health and well-being. The physical form of a community affects the quality of the air they breathe, the types of physical activity choices they make and how they interact with their neighbours. It defines the character of a community, impacts real estate values and tax revenues, impacts the cost of providing services, and influences the community's ability to attract business and residents.

Emerging evidence also demonstrates that the built environment can have even greater health impacts on vulnerable populations including people with lower socioeconomic status, children, youth, the elderly, and people living with disabilities. These differences in health impacts are known as health inequities and they can result from unequal conditions or access to places to live, work, learn, shop for healthy foods, access safe places to play, or access transit or active transportation networks. The built environment affects the overall health of the community in the following ways:

- **Environment** – Community design and transportation planning can impact the quality of our air and water. Vehicle use and distances travelled all influence the amount of vehicle emissions, which are prime sources of air pollution affecting air quality and health. Lower income neighbourhoods may be disproportionately exposed to higher levels of air pollution which can lead to further health impacts on this segment of the population. The design and layout of the built environment impacts water supplies and watersheds and should ensure enough greenspace to allow for a natural and safe hydrological system and ecosystem preservation. Community design also impacts the amount of land taken out of agricultural uses, or its natural state, both of which influence the health of residents.
- **Injury and Safety** – The incidence of fatal and non-fatal injuries as a result of traffic crashes is closely related to vehicle kilometers traveled, automobile speed, traffic volumes, and the design of roadway networks, particularly where vehicles interact with non-motorized transportation modes. Research links these characteristics of travel to the distribution of land uses. Alcohol-related harm is also influenced by the built environment and alcohol outlet density.
- **Physical Activity** – The built environment can either facilitate or constrain the ability of residents to be physically active for either utilitarian or recreational purposes. For example, neighbourhoods that are designed for automobile dependency reduce the viability of active transportation, particularly for children, youth, seniors and others who may be economically or physically disadvantaged, thereby decreasing the overall physical activity levels of the community, and thus its well-being. This may

HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans



contribute to increased rates of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers in the population, as well as other negative impacts on mental health and well-being.

- Sun Safety – Skin cancer from exposure to ultraviolet radiation is increasing. Communities that are designed with sun safety in mind and that provide residents with natural and manmade structures for shelter from the sun can decrease health risks associated with sun exposure.
- Food Access – Access to safe, nutritious, affordable and personally acceptable food is considered a key component of health equity and contributes to residents' overall health, lowering their risk of many chronic diseases. Land use planning can have a profound impact on whether or not residents have ready access to sources of safe and healthy foods. Along with access, land use planning must also consider the protection and conservation of local food production capacity for the long-term sustainability of the local food system.
- Social Cohesion and Well-being – Certain characteristics of the built environment such as a range of housing types, proximity to neighbours and the availability of places to gather can influence how residents feel about themselves and their connection to the community. These characteristics can also have a profound impact on the cohesiveness of a community and the creation of social capital. People's mental health and overall capacity to "age in place" are both health considerations that are influenced by the level of social cohesion in a community.

Over the past decade, several key policy documents related to land use, development and growth planning in Ontario have come into effect. Two of these — the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) and the Places to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006, amended 2012), provide clear direction on the creation of healthy and complete communities. The underlying principles within these policy documents are supportive of a municipal vision that addresses the importance of the health of the public.



HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

Policy Statements for Official Plans

These provincial policies are also closely aligned with the goals of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Building Healthy Communities initiative. Under this initiative, the health unit is working with partners to:

- 1 Act as a catalyst for change through programs, people and partnerships to achieve a shared vision of a built environment that promotes and protects health.
- 2 Provide strong public health leadership and expert health advice to key stakeholders to influence the design of new and existing communities to be sustainable and supportive of the achievement and maintenance of optimal health.

These goals provided the impetus for the creation of this policy guide in 2010. The purpose of this guide was to provide municipal elected officials, planners, engineers, and other stakeholders and partners in Simcoe Muskoka with suggestions for Official Plan policies and implementation activities to assist municipalities in creating healthy and complete communities while also meeting the provincial policy expectations. This policy guide was updated in 2014 to reflect changes in knowledge and practice in the area of policy statements for Official Plans. The guide has five sections that are based on key health issues impacted by the built environment: Environment; Injury and Safety; Physical Activity and Sun Safety; Food Access; and Social Cohesion and Well-Being. Each section contains an overall health related goal and rationale, a number of related objectives, suggested Official Plan policy statements to help achieve the objectives and a variety of suggested activities for implementation of the policies. Many of the concepts and principles within these sections overlap and it is recommended that municipalities review each section closely for supportive and inter-related policy suggestions.

There are many other procedural, organizational structure, and regulatory mechanisms available to municipalities that can be used to support the Official Plan recommendations defined here. Some of the implementation activities described for each of the sections fall between Official Plan policies and associated work programs. These have been included because of the importance for municipalities to make progress and to see meaningful change in fulfilling the direction and intent of the Official Plan policies. The intent has been to provide suggestions that are closely aligned to typical land use planning activities seen in various municipalities. It will be up to each municipality to consider these suggestions and determine the most effective approach to including them in Official Plans and other municipal planning documents and strategies. Municipalities are encouraged to use the concepts within this document and to freely adapt, amend or revise the wording to suit their particular needs and circumstances. This is by no means a complete list of potential policies and implementation activities and should therefore be viewed as a starting point.

Policies and Implementation Activities

Environment

Goal Statement:

Protect and conserve the natural environment to ensure residents can breathe clean air, drink safe water and have access to nature and greenspace, and to help mitigate extreme weather events.

Rationale: Clean air, safe water and access to nature and greenspace are critical to the health of the community, making it essential that these resources be protected and conserved. Exposure to environmental pollution can result in increased illness, chronic disease, hospitalization and death. Individuals and families living in lower income neighbourhoods are more likely to live close to highways or industrial zoned land, which exposes them to even higher levels of outdoor air pollution and increased risk of illness and disease.

Additionally, as the effects of climate change increase, the risk and severity of extreme weather's affect on community health also increases by impacting air and water quality, limiting the availability and accessibility to safe and potable water, increasing the incidence of infectious disease and damaging essential community infrastructure. As a result, communities must also be developed in a sustainable manner that supports community resiliency to extreme weather.

Objectives

- EN 1** Ensure land use designations and zoning bylaws have a positive impact on health and protect the environment.
- EN 2** Promote renewable energy systems, conserve energy and protect air quality.
- EN 3** Decrease reliance on motor vehicles and provide the necessary infrastructure and social climate to support active modes of transportation and transit.
- EN 4** Incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies to protect the built and natural environments.

Environment

Objective 1

EN 1 - Ensure land use designations and zoning bylaws have a positive impact on health and protect the environment.

Land Compatibility Rationale: Children living in communities with higher levels of traffic-related pollution have lung function growth approximately 10 per cent slower than children in communities with less air pollution.¹ Seniors are also vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution. Estimates indicate that by 2026, the 65+ age group will experience a 74 per cent increase in premature mortality due to air pollution. Additionally, smog-related cardiac symptoms account for three times more emergency room visits than respiratory symptoms.²

Close proximity of residential and other sensitive areas to non-compatible uses could result in adverse health effects. Exposure to noise can introduce or aggravate stress-related health outcomes including those on the cardiovascular system, immune system, sleep, task performance, behaviour and mental health.³ Periods of odour nuisance often go together with headache, nausea, sleep disturbances, a loss of appetite and stress.⁴

Major facilities and sensitive land uses should be planned to ensure they are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other to prevent or mitigate adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term viability of major facilities.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.2.6.1)

/// Planning Policies (Land Compatibility)

- EN 1.1** Land use designations shall consider impacts on community health especially for vulnerable populations (e.g. children and seniors) when located adjacent to high traffic, trucking and highway corridors.
- EN 1.2** Proposed residential development shall be compatible with neighbouring uses including industrial and commercial emissions, nuisance noise and odour impacts. Proposed development shall consider water resource protection.
- EN 1.3** Agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas shall be protected through land use designations and transportation planning to sustain the economic viability of agriculture within the community.
- EN 1.4** Water resources shall be protected through the implementation of water protection strategies.

/// Implementation Activities (Land Compatibility)

Short term

- i) Review existing zoning bylaws and where necessary amend to include guidance pertaining to nuisance noise, odour, and other adverse health effects.

Medium Term

- i) Establish municipal policies for residential areas, park space and athletic fields/venues to ensure sufficient distance away from traffic corridors.
- ii) Work with community groups to implement and promote programs that encourage residents to dispose of hazardous waste products safely and properly.

Long Term

- i) Form a land use advisory committee focused on community and environmental health to work with council and staff to ensure land use designations support positive growth and development of the community.

Environment

Greenspace Rationale: The protection and conservation of greenspace minimizes the effects of heat islands which drive up cooling and refrigeration energy consumption and generation. Greenspaces also provide vital ecosystem services. Urban trees can reduce air temperature thereby reducing ozone formation and removing air pollutants.⁵ Greenspaces protect water quality by providing opportunity for water absorption and filtration.⁶

In addition to the environmental benefits, forest ecosystems can support healthy communities by increasing physical activity, improving cardiovascular and respiratory health, preventing cancer and reducing stress.⁷

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

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 2.1.2)

/// Planning Policies (Greenspace)

- EN 1.5** Design standards shall be developed that require the use of natural and/or naturalized landscapes to improve air and water quality throughout the community.
- EN 1.6** A community-wide Urban Forestry Management Plan shall be developed to maximize the environmental and community health benefits of having healthy trees, with particular attention to protecting the community's stock of existing trees, supporting the growth of new trees and expanding the tree canopy in the community.

/// Implementation Activities (Greenspace)

Short term

- i) Promote and increase public awareness of the environmental and health benefits for supporting tree and forest restoration.
- ii) Develop tree cutting and/or tree conservation bylaws.

Medium Term

- i) Conduct an assessment of existing greenspace and identify opportunities to increase the amount of and access to greenspace.

Long Term

- i) In consultation with community groups and foresters, develop an Urban Forestry Management Plan; determine restoration initiatives as well as the infrastructure and budgeting needs required to meet tree planting and conservation targets.
- ii) Develop a partnership framework to assist the municipality with implementing the Urban Forestry Management Plan.



Environment

Objective 2

EN 2 - Promote renewable energy systems, conserve energy and protect air quality.

Rationale: The most significant sources of air pollution and human generated greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario are energy consumption, energy generation and transportation. Electricity generation produces a significant share of nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide emissions. These contribute to smog, acid rain and the formation of fine particulate matter which all reduce air and water quality.⁸ Numerous studies show that poor air quality contributes to premature death, cardiovascular disease, cancer, stroke, asthma and other respiratory diseases.⁹

Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns which:

promote compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors;

promote the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas;

focus major employment, commercial and other travel-intensive land uses on sites which are well served by transit where this exists or is to be developed, or designing these to facilitate the establishment of transit in the future.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.8.1)

/// Planning Policies

- EN 2.1** A compact urban form shall be developed that incorporates mixed land uses and promotes active transportation, transit use and trip reduction.
- EN 2.2** Opportunities shall be provided to use or develop renewable energy sources through design regulations and land use and zoning requirements.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Establish municipal policies to promote and incorporate energy efficiency and water conservation strategies.

Medium Term

- i) Conduct a community outreach program to facilitate dialogue and develop partnerships with local groups focused on environmental issues, energy and water conservation and renewable energy.

Long Term

- i) Work with local stakeholders to develop policies and implementation guidelines for sustainable building practices for municipal and private development projects.



Environment

Objective 3

EN 3 - Decrease reliance on motor vehicles and provide the necessary infrastructure and social climate to support active modes of transportation and transit.

Rationale: Motor vehicle transportation is the primary contributor to air pollution. On-road transportation and engine idling contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and release carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide hydrocarbons, which are the precursors of smog.¹⁰ Health impacts from air pollution include respiratory problems, asthma and increased risk of heart attack.⁹ Transportation activities can also increase the outdoor levels of ozone and particulate matter. Ozone irritates the respiratory tract and eyes and results in chest tightness, coughing and wheezing. Fine particulate matter can penetrate deep into the respiratory system triggering a heart attack or stroke.¹¹

Land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on:

a) densities and a mix of land uses which:

1. efficiently use land and resources...

3. minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency;

4. support active transportation;

5. are transit supportive, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.1.3.2)

Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: providing for an efficient, cost-effective, reliable multimodal transportation system that is integrated with adjacent systems and those of other jurisdictions, and is appropriate to address projected needs to support the movement of goods and people...

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.7.1)

/// Planning Policies

- EN 3.1** The zoning bylaw shall develop patterns of land use that ensure appropriate separation of incompatible land uses and those that negatively impact pedestrian-oriented development.
- EN 3.2** Transportation master plans, environmental assessments and road designs shall be based on a complete streets design perspective.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Implement a safe routes to schools program that includes improvements to walkways, crossings, signage and traffic calming to encourage more walking and cycling by school-aged children.
- ii) Provide wayfinding signage at key destinations throughout the community (such as commercial and retail areas, places of worship, parks, schools, civic buildings, etc.) and end of trip facilities such as bike racks to encourage and facilitate active forms of transportation.

Medium Term

- i) Retrofit/purchase transit vehicles that allow for storage/transport of bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs, etc.
- ii) Conduct community-wide walkability and bikeability audits with resident groups to identify priority projects to improve active transportation throughout the municipality.
- iii) Develop and implement a program to provide seating and weather protection at all transit stops to facilitate use by seniors, persons with mobility issues, expectant mothers and people traveling with small children.

Long Term

- i) Review the municipal Transportation Master Plan. Work with community partners to establish and promote an interconnected trail, sidewalk and bike lane system within and between communities.

Environment

Objective 4

EN 4 - Develop climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies to protect the built and natural environments.

Adaptive Design Rationale: Climate change refers to any change in climate over time as a result of natural changes or from human activities.¹²

As the climate changes, the natural and built environment also changes. For instance, there can be increased incidences of water-borne diseases when water sources become contaminated during extreme weather events (e.g. flooding); decreased quantity of water from drought; threat to food safety (e.g. more food spoilage due to higher temperatures) and changing weather patterns may lead to a rise in infectious diseases in new and existing areas. In addition, higher temperatures cause increased air pollution, which leads to declining air quality.¹³ As a result, municipalities need to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies to protect the built and natural environments in response to climate change.¹²

Planning for sewage and water services shall:

b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:

1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;

3. protects human health and the natural environment;

c) promote water conservation and water use efficiency.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.6.6.1)

/// Planning Policies (Adaptive Design)

- EN 4.1** Community infrastructure shall be designed to take into account the potential impacts from climate change to minimize damage, with a preference toward practices of better stewardship and protection of nature, naturalized areas, greenspaces and water resources.
- EN 4.2** Requirements for low impact development techniques shall be integrated into subdivision and site plan regulations and storm water management plans.

/// Implementation Activities (Adaptive Design)

Short term

- i) Conduct a vulnerability risk assessment of the community and of all infrastructure to develop and support climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- ii) Update storm water management plans and strategies to address projected changes in frequency and severity of storm events.

Medium Term

- i) Maintain, restore and expand greenspaces and areas of nature through a variety of community programs, adapted regulations and development incentives.
- ii) In consultation with stakeholders, develop municipal climate change adaptation and mitigation plans.

Long Term

- i) Work with community groups to advocate for the redevelopment of Ontario's Building Code to include strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.
- ii) Work towards increasing use of energy efficient and water conservation technologies.

Environment

Extreme Heat Mitigation Rationale: Both sensitive and healthy individuals can develop heat-related illness from prolonged exposure to high temperatures. Heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and even death may occur. Individuals with diabetes, respiratory and cardiovascular disease are more susceptible to the effects of extreme heat.¹⁵

Solar energy absorbed by building materials and the urban heat effect contribute to higher temperatures. As the temperature increases, the demand for energy for cooling goes up, thus increasing greenhouse gas emissions.¹³ The temperature and quality of storm water run-off can be impacted by thermal pollution as water flows over low albedo and impervious surfaces (i.e. dark roofs and asphalt).¹⁵ Trees and other vegetation provide shade and help to dissipate heat by increasing the evaporation potential of an urban area.¹⁵

Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns which:

promote compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors;

promote the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas;

focus major employment, commercial and other travel-intensive land uses on sites which are well served by transit where this exists or is to be developed, or designing these to facilitate the establishment of transit in the future.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.8.1)

/// Planning Policies (Extreme Heat Mitigation)

- EN 4.3** Incorporate vegetation and tree planting in new, existing, and future developments to increase areas for shade and assist with dissipation of heat.
- EN 4.4** Develop an urban forestry plan and associated implementation program to increase the health of the urban forest and expand the tree canopy throughout the community.

/// Implementation Activities (Extreme Heat Mitigation)

Short term

- i) Review existing emergency plans and amend to include heat response strategies and plans.

Medium Term

- i) Develop bylaws and landscaping guidelines to increase vegetation and tree planting in new, existing and future developments to increase areas of shade, mitigate the effects of heat islands and contribute to the sequestration of greenhouse gases.

Long Term

- i) Work with community groups to develop and support water conservation technologies and strategies.



Injury and Safety

Goal Statement:

Create a physical environment that is safe for all residents.

Rationale: The built environment contains risks that can compromise the safety of people living and moving within it. Risks include such things as crime, unsafe play areas and motor vehicle collisions. To combat such risk, design elements of the built environment should enhance safety for persons of all ages, resulting in safer and healthier communities.

Objectives

- IS 1** Design roads and transportation networks that support all users.
- IS 2** Improve road safety by reducing automobile dependency, while creating a safe environment for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- IS 3** Manage alcohol outlet locations and density to create a healthier and safer environment.

Injury and Safety

Objective 1

IS 1 - Design roads and transportation networks that support all users.

Rationale: Road and street design influences the behaviour of transportation users, such as vehicle speed and traffic volume, thereby affecting the safety of those within the transportation network.²¹

Road design affects the walkability of neighbourhoods. It also affects the placement and viability of active transportation infrastructure, and the development potential of adjoining property.

Pedestrians and cyclists are more likely to be killed than motorists. Safe road design produces lower incidence and severity of vehicle-pedestrian collisions.²²

A key objective of road design is to control mean vehicle speed. Reduced speed lowers the injury risk for both motorists and active transportation users.²³

The transportation system ...will be planned and managed to:...

- b) offer a balance of transportation choices that reduces reliance upon any single mode and promotes transit, cycling and walking;*
- c) be sustainable, by encouraging the most financially and environmentally appropriate mode for trip-making;*
- d) offer multi-modal access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural and recreational opportunities, and goods and services;*
- e) provide for the safety of system users.*

(Places To Grow – Growth Plan 2006, 3.2.2.1)

/// Planning Policies

- IS 1.1** Roads, crossings and new developments shall use active transportation and engineering best practices for traffic calming and target speed designs that reduce traffic speeds without the need for enforcement.
- IS 1.2** All streets shall include well maintained infrastructure (i.e. sidewalks, extra wide road shoulders for walking and cycling, and/or pedestrian trails and walkways) for all users, particularly the most vulnerable users: children, youth, the elderly and those with special needs.
- IS 1.3** Cycling and walking networks shall be developed that integrate safe on and off street routes to provide connectivity and access throughout the community and easy transitions between other modes of travel.

/// Implementation Activities

Short Term

- i)** Create an active transportation committee to raise awareness and assess the community's transportation needs, including safety provisions, and have them report back to council.

Medium Term

- i)** Develop or revise existing engineering and development standards to improve transportation safety for all users.

Long Term

- i)** Update the zoning bylaws to address changes necessary for the improvement of safe active transportation networks and support transit-oriented development patterns.

Injury and Safety

Objective 2

IS 2 - Improve road safety by reducing automobile dependency, while creating a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Rationale: The more that people travel by car the greater the potential for motor vehicle-related injury for road users and pedestrians.¹⁶ Increasing density and reducing the distance between places of employment, recreation and residential area reduces vehicle travel, thus lowering the risk for injury and fatalities related to motor vehicle collisions.¹⁶ Automobile-use reduction also makes transit and active transportation more viable.¹⁷ Active transportation networks become safer as they become more prevalent.¹⁸

Where active transportation networks intersect with the automobile network, pedestrians and cyclists are at greater risk for injury.¹⁹ Through planning and engineering, safety features can be incorporated into active transportation networks to minimize these risks. Active transportation networks should be designed and built to accommodate vulnerable populations such as children or the elderly, thereby helping to maximize accessibility and minimize injury for all users.

Appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.1.3.4)

Healthy, active communities should be promoted by: Planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.5.1)

/// Planning Policies

- IS 2.1** Development patterns shall maximize opportunities for active transportation and the potential for efficient transit.
- IS 2.2** Design standards shall include necessary infrastructure to provide for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists.
- IS 2.3** Road design and transportation planning shall be done within a complete streets design framework. Active transportation infrastructure shall be developed that is accessible, connected to the street system and linked to various uses in the community.
- IS 2.4** Traffic calming and control measures shall be integrated into the road network to protect pedestrians and cyclists, with an emphasis on school zones and areas frequented by other vulnerable populations (e.g. seniors' residences, parks, etc.).

/// Implementation Activities

Short Term

- i)** Conduct an audit of community accessibility and safety related to active transportation, walkability and transit to identify strengths, weaknesses and challenges. Use this information to plan for future initiatives.
- ii)** Set maximum and minimum limits to the size of designated parking areas to reduce the amount of parking and create a more compact physical form for the community.
- iii)** Conduct a walkability audit and a cycling audit to identify needs related to pedestrian and cycling safety. Designate high-priority areas for safety upgrades and/or the removal of hazards.

Injury and Safety

Population and employment growth will be accommodated by:

d) reducing dependence on the automobile through the development of mixed-use transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly urban environments.

(Places To Grow – Growth Plan 2006, 2.2.2.1)

A land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support current and future use of transit and active transportation.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.6.7.4)

Municipalities will ensure that pedestrian and bicycle networks are integrated into transportation planning to:

a) provide safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians and bicyclist within existing communities and new development.

(Places To Grow – Growth Plan 2006, 3.2.3.3)

Medium Term

- i) Create transit-supportive residential and employment density targets relative to new developments and in-fill, especially in downtown areas. Amend the zoning bylaw to provide for the achievement of these targets.
- ii) Amend subdivision and site plan regulations to require active transportation-oriented connectivity between neighbourhoods and districts throughout the community as part of overall transportation system planning. Provide systematic upgrades to roads and intersections that augment safety for non-vehicle users. Prioritize these upgrades along pedestrian or cyclist routes, especially those that are used by vulnerable populations such as seniors, those with special needs and/or school children.
- iii) Work with local police to review and implement appropriate design strategies (e.g. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) to increase safety and prevent crime in the community. Within areas intended for nighttime use, upgrade security with lighting and improved visibility.

Long Term

- i) Work with local groups and stakeholders to create a comprehensive long-term transportation plan that addresses roads, active transportation and the development of public transit.
- ii) Collaborate with stakeholders and community groups to improve the quality and features of public space to have the broadest appeal.



Injury and Safety

Objective 3

IS 3 - Manage alcohol outlet locations and density to create a safer social environment.

Rationale: Municipal governments bear significant costs for alcohol misuse. Beyond financial costs are the substantial negative health and social affects resulting from alcohol-consumption.^{24,25} Increased alcohol outlet density is associated with increased rates of violence within neighbourhoods.²⁶

Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

c) Avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014 1.1.1)

/// Planning Policies

- IS 3.1** The municipality shall develop minimum distance requirements between all locations that sell or serve alcohol, and minimum distance requirements between alcohol outlets and other land uses that would be incompatible, such as schools, youth facilities or housing developments.

/// Implementation Activities

Short Term

- i) Utilize available spatial analysis and mapping of alcohol-related land use to assist in the improvement of community security and the reduction of alcohol-related harm.

Medium Term

- i) Amend or create municipal bylaws to establish minimum distance requirements between all new and existing alcohol outlets and between all new alcohol outlets and schools, playgrounds, youth facilities and residential areas.

Long Term

- i) Collaborate with the Liquor Control Board to ensure alcohol availability is managed in a socially responsible manner throughout the community, especially within higher risk residential areas.



Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Goal Statement:

Create a physical environment that provides opportunities for safe daily physical activity for all.

Rationale: Community design has a significant impact on an individual's ability to be physically active.²⁷ Recent patterns of land use and development have increased our dependence on vehicular travel which has impacted the amount of time people spend being physically active. Where we put our buildings, how we separate them from streets by vast areas of parking and how we link them with street networks dedicated primarily to vehicular movement all affect the ability of residents to use their own human powered energy to move around their community without the aid of a vehicle. Communities should be built with fewer barriers to non-motorized transportation so that it is practical and safe and therefore chosen more frequently. Tangible elements of the urban environment such as the built form, open space, and public areas and their relationship to one another, should be organized and designed to support daily physical activity for people of all ages and socioeconomic status.

Objectives

- PA 1** Ensure a built environment that supports and promotes safe active transportation as a priority travel option.
- PA 2** Provide greenspaces, places to play and gather, and recreational facilities and opportunities for all.
- PA 3** Ensure natural and built shade features are available at outdoor public spaces.

Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Objective 1

PA 1 - Ensure a built environment that supports and promotes safe active transportation as a priority travel option.

Rationale: Physical inactivity, sedentary lifestyles, overweight and obesity increase the risk of chronic diseases (e.g. heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers). Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Simcoe Muskoka.²⁸ However, moderately intense physical activity (e.g. walking and cycling) performed on most days of the week reduces the risk for heart disease and can improve health in many ways.²⁹ People living in moderate-to-high density neighborhoods with a mix of services within walking distance are 2.4 times more likely to get 30 minutes of daily physical activity.³⁰ Increased landuse mix, street connectivity and residential density are effective strategies to facilitate active transportation.^{30,31} Compact community design minimizes the length and number of vehicle trips and supports use of active transportation and transit.³² Affordable and integrated transportation systems can facilitate linkages within and between urban and rural settings and reduce barriers such as infrastructure deficits, social equity issues, and access to employment.^{33,34}

Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:
a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014 1.5.1)

Transportation systems should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and are appropriate to address projected needs.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014 1.6.7.1)

/// Planning Policies

- PA 1.1** Land use and development shall be planned using a complete streets approach considering the needs of all users - pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities, and shall give priority to street connectivity and active transportation infrastructure.
- PA 1.2** Land use designations of the zoning bylaw shall support a vibrant downtown centre (or local business development district) with a combination of mutually supportive land uses that facilitate active transportation.
- PA 1.3** Areas that are zoned for mixed use shall provide for a synergistic mix of complementary uses that expand the diversity of experiences and options available to residents. (e.g. easy access between retail, employment, residential, public, social and health services, education and recreation uses). These uses shall be within a walkable site arrangement.
- PA 1.4** Development standards shall be created so that new projects develop aesthetic, cultural and safety features to support the pedestrian environment, especially in the downtown centre.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Establish an Active Transportation Advisory Committee consisting of municipal and public stakeholders whose purpose is to provide input and make recommendations to council related to active transportation infrastructure.
- ii) Incorporate active transportation users' needs into transportation planning and design by setting goals for pedestrian and bicycle levels of service and include pedestrian and bicycle access in-route analysis when planning transportation projects.

Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Medium Term

- i) Develop a complete inventory of trails and pedestrian and cycling networks. Use this information to identify gaps and determine potential active transportation routes.
- ii) Review and amend the zoning bylaw for off-street parking to set both maximum and minimum limits to the size of parking areas to reduce the amount of parking and create a more compact physical form for the community.

Long Term

- i) Identify and plan formal pedestrian routes and cycling networks with direct connections between major origins and destinations (shops, schools, food destinations, offices, jobs and community services).
- ii) Create development standards focused on making places safer and more appealing to pedestrians, with design features such as links between parking and pedestrian walkways, adequate pedestrian-oriented lighting, street furniture and shade features to support active transportation, physical activity and sun safety.
- iii) Require active transportation infrastructure for all new developments (e.g. dedicated bike lanes, bicycle parking, sidewalks on both sides of the road, trails).



Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Objective 2

PA 2 - Provide greenspaces, places to play and gather, and recreational facilities and opportunities for all.

Rationale: Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development for children and youth, and for continued good health throughout the lifespan. Physical activity, even at moderate levels, reduces the risk of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers.³⁵

Access to nature, open spaces, recreation facilities and age appropriate recreational programming encourages physical activity and social networking and has been shown to have a positive effect on physical and mental health.³⁶

1.5.1 Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:

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

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014 1.5.1)

/// Planning Policies

- PA 2.1** The municipality shall provide spaces for active and passive parks that enhance access to recreation and nature as an essential component for physical and mental health and well-being, and shall make this a priority in land use decisions.
- PA 2.2** The municipality shall develop (or revise) a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to ensure safe and accessible parks and recreation facilities, including natural areas and trails, are available to all residents regardless of age, physical ability and financial means.
- PA 2.3** Access to shade shall be provided at municipal facilities and buildings and within greenspaces (parks and play grounds), recreation areas and along trails.

/// Implementation Activities

Short Term

- i) Engage residents in a community needs assessment to gather input from people of all ages, abilities and socioeconomic status to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- ii) Conduct an assessment of neighbourhood accessibility to recreational facilities, greenspaces (parks and play grounds), trails and natural areas by active transportation means.

Medium term

- i) Develop stakeholder partnerships to move forward with recreational projects identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- ii) Develop partnership agreements between the municipality, schools, private sector and the community for the shared use of school grounds, municipal facilities and private and public spaces for low and no cost recreational use.
- iii) Implement a community-wide signage and wayfinding program for improved access to recreation facilities, recreational areas, parks, greenspaces and trails.
- iv) Select sites for parks and recreation facilities so as to increase access to natural areas.

Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Long Term

- i) Develop a Level of Service (LOS) measurement and operational policies for managing and developing the community's recreational assets as described by the Official Plan.
- ii) Use findings from community needs and accessibility assessments to inform the development of active transportation and transit infrastructure as part of the Transportation and Active Transportation / Cycling Master Plans. Ensure this includes connector routes (dedicated paths, sidewalks, trails) to recreational facilities, greenspace, natural areas and trails from residential areas, schools, workplaces and shopping districts to allow greater access by a wider cross section of the population.



Physical Activity & Sun Safety

Objective 3

PA 3 - Ensure natural and built shade features are available at outdoor public spaces.

Rationale: The ultraviolet portion of solar radiation is a human carcinogen for skin cancer.³⁷ Melanoma skin cancer rates have increased in Ontario.³⁷ The provision of shade (either natural or constructed) can be an effective means of reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) and its associated health risks, such as skin cancer, and should be an essential element when planning for and developing city facilities, parks and public spaces.³⁸

Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.1.1)

/// Planning Policies

- PA 3.1** UVR/sun protection development standards shall be created that require new developments to integrate UVR/sun protection features and landscapes.
- PA 3.2** Municipal outdoor spaces shall be designed to include natural and/or constructed shade features to protect residents from UVR/sun exposure.

/// Implementation Activities

Short Term

- i) Implement UVR/sun protection development standards in new development areas and new municipal outdoor spaces.

Medium Term

- i) Seek community input to assist with implementing the UVR/sun protection development standards in existing municipal parks, recreation sites and outdoor public spaces.

Long Term

- i) Develop an urban forestry strategy that addresses natural shade considerations throughout the community.



Food Access

Goal Statement:

Increase the availability of healthy food for all residents.

Rationale: Access to safe, nutritious, affordable and personally acceptable food contributes to residents' overall health, lowering their risk of many chronic diseases. Land use planning can have a profound impact on whether or not residents have ready access to sources of safe and healthy foods such as grocery stores, farmers' markets and community gardens.³⁹ Healthy food locations that are accessible by transit or are within walking/biking distances of neighbourhoods are particularly supportive of residents meeting their nutritional needs.⁴⁰ This is particularly important for lower income areas where research demonstrates an association between food deserts, lower income neighbourhoods and access to fresh groceries.⁴¹

Protecting and conserving agricultural land and water is essential for food production and a sustainable food system that meets the health and nutrition needs of residents. A sustainable food system provides a fair living for growers and processors, and promotes local self-reliance and environmental sustainability.⁴² A region with a diverse agricultural economy linked to local food needs and markets will be more sustainable in the long term, with lower environmental costs, reduced demands on transportation infrastructure and potentially higher food quality that helps serve local nutrition objectives.⁴⁰

Policies that enhance food access and support a healthy local food system that includes food production, processing, distribution, marketing/retail, consumption and waste disposal components contribute to the long-term health and well-being of a community.

FA 1 Ensure that healthy food is available in every neighbourhood.

FA 2 Protect and conserve land and water for use in the growing and production of food as part of a sustainable local food system.

Food Access

Objective 1

FA 1 - Ensure that healthy food is available in every neighbourhood.

Rationale: People are more likely to meet their nutrition needs when healthy, affordable and safe food sources are within easy reach.⁴⁰ Residents in neighbourhoods without a retailer of healthy foods, often turn to more expensive, less healthy processed foods from nearby convenience stores and fast food restaurants. Households that lack income and access to transportation are affected more than others.³⁹ People with restricted mobility are particularly vulnerable.⁴³

Municipalities have an important role to play through developing land use policies that allow for grocery stores and community food initiatives (community gardens, community food centres, farmers' markets) within easy reach of neighbourhoods. Municipalities can provide expertise in garden planning and design, access to land, a safe water supply, tax relief, insurance coverage and gardening materials such as soil, water, compost and tools.⁴⁴ Municipalities can also ensure there are safe and convenient pedestrian, bike and transit connections between neighbourhoods and food destinations. This is particularly supportive of residents with restricted access to transportation.^{3,4}

Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

e) promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.1.1)

Planning Policies

- FA 1.1** The zoning bylaw shall include mixed-use zones to facilitate the inclusion of small and medium sized food retailers, such as grocery stores, mobile food vendors and farmers' markets close to new and existing residential areas, particularly those areas that are underserved.
- FA 1.2** The zoning bylaw shall allow urban agriculture initiatives such as community gardens, edible landscaping and roof top gardens in residential, commercial, and institutional designations (e.g. health, cultural, and municipally owned facilities, places of worship and schools).
- FA 1.3** Land use designations shall allow for the development of small-scale food processing facilities and distribution centres (e.g. community kitchens, food co-ops and community food centres).

Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Conduct a community food assessment to identify neighbourhoods that are underserved by healthy food retailers and develop a plan to increase food retailers in these areas.
- ii) Conduct an assessment of neighbourhood accessibility to healthy food retailers via pedestrian, bike and transit connections and develop a plan to increase access.
- iii) Strike a community task force to identify and develop opportunities for community agriculture initiatives.
- iv) Work with local growers and other interested stakeholders to develop a community food centre that supports increased access to food and foods skills for local residents.



Food Access

Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

*h) providing opportunities to support local food, and promoting the sustainability of agri-food and agri-product businesses by protecting agricultural resources, and minimizing land use conflicts;
(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.7.1)*

Medium Term

- i) Establish a process for fast-tracking development approval for small and medium sized food retailers, such as grocery stores, mobile food vendors and farmers' markets in underserved areas.
- ii) Engage the community task force in developing an education and outreach program to highlight the importance of urban agriculture and how it can be integrated into public and private spaces.

Long Term

- i) Offer incentives to:
 - small and medium sized food retailers to locate in underserved areas;
 - encourage the formation of grower co-ops, incubator kitchens and/or other economic development initiatives related to local food.
- ii) Engage and enable local vendors and growers to provide healthy foods for residents in municipally owned facilities through procurement policies, requests for proposals, tenders and food purchasing contracts.
- iii) Establish community access to kitchen facilities in municipally owned buildings for food skills education, community kitchen programs, small-scale food processing and food distribution.



Food Access

Objective 2

FA 2 - Protect and conserve land and water for use in the growing and production of food as part of a sustainable local food system.

Rationale: Ontario agricultural lands are in decline and the province is nearing its capacity for self-sufficiency in food production. It is estimated that by 2036, Ontario may fall short of its population's food producing requirements by up to 1,267,000 hectares.⁴⁵

The food produced, distributed and sold within a region can play a major role in how well the dietary needs of the population are met.⁴⁰ Communities with ready access to a sustainable supply of healthy, locally grown and produced foods are less vulnerable to external factors that can affect the food supply.⁴⁶ Municipalities can make zoning bylaw decisions to protect and conserve land and water required for a sustainable local food system.

Opportunities to support a diversified rural economy should be promoted by protecting agricultural and other resource-related uses and directing non-related development to areas where it will minimize constraints on these uses.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.1.5.7)

Prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.

Prime agricultural areas are areas where prime agricultural lands predominate. Specialty crop areas shall be given the highest priority for protection, followed by Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands, and any associated Class 4 through 7 lands ...

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 2.3.1)

/// Planning Policies

- FA 2.1** Land use designations and transportation plans shall protect and conserve local agricultural food production capacity by restricting the fragmentation of agricultural lands, protecting areas of agricultural importance and potential, and preserving rural and cultural landscapes.
- FA 2.2** The zoning bylaw shall allow for a diversity of agricultural uses such as greenhouses, orchards and locally oriented market gardens requiring a variety of farm sizes, including smaller farms.
- FA 2.3** Land use designations shall allow for small-scale home industries and home occupations, including food-based enterprises that are supportive of agricultural activities.
- FA 2.4** The zoning bylaw shall allow for the development of distribution and/or processing centres (such as a regional food hub) and agricultural product warehouses that support the collection, distribution and marketing of local food products.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Strike a community task force to undertake a community food system assessment identifying challenges and opportunities to strengthen the local food system.
- ii) Identify specialty crop and class 1, 2, 3 agricultural lands and assess the impact of competing interests such as mineral aggregates and urban development on food production capacity.
- iii) Identify land with potential for food production such as conservation areas and make it available for small-scale farm use.

Medium Term

- i) Develop an education and outreach program for developers and residents to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of protecting and conserving farmland as part of a sustainable local food system.

Long Term

- i) Develop a long-term food systems strategy that addresses all aspects of a sustainable local food system.

Social Cohesion & Well-Being

Goal Statement:

Create a physical form within communities that encourages social interaction, promotes social capital, and sustains the well-being of all residents.

Rationale: The physical environment is one determinant of a person's overall health. Health is described by the World Health Organization as: "...a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."⁴⁷ Community design impacts physical and mental health and well-being through the role it plays on a person's sense of belonging to their community, their connection to nature, their social networks and their feelings of safety and security. Planning and design decisions can influence the social and economic characteristics of a neighbourhood, which can disproportionately impact individuals who are disadvantaged because of their age, socioeconomic status, education, gender, culture or other qualities.⁴¹

Objectives

- SC 1** Create complete neighbourhoods that include mixed densities and affordable housing options for people of all ages and socioeconomic status.
- SC 2** Provide public spaces, parks and greenspaces where residents can meet, connect and congregate for social interaction.

Social Cohesion & Well-Being

Objective 1

SC 1 - Create complete neighbourhoods that include mixed densities and affordable housing options for people of all ages and socioeconomic status.

Rationale: Feeling connected to one's community is associated with lower stress, improved overall health status and lower mortality rates.⁶ Complete communities that provide proximity to neighbours, workplaces, schools and services can promote neighbourhood cohesion and increase social capital.^{48,49} Mixed housing communities that integrate affordable housing can provide opportunities for those with lower incomes and for aging in place as people move through their life cycle.⁵⁰

1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate-income households...

b) permitting and facilitating:

1. all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements; and

2. all forms of residential intensification, including second units, and redevelopment in accordance with policy 1.1.3.3;

c) directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will

/// Planning Policies

- SC 1.1** The zoning bylaw shall facilitate and support implementation of recommendations in the municipal housing strategy and shall allow for mixed and non-traditional housing arrangements to support residents of all ages (e.g. universal design, granny flats, multiple housing types within neighborhoods, etc.) and shall consider the needs of lower income neighbourhoods and vulnerable populations as a priority.
- SC 1.2** Land uses shall be arranged to facilitate the development of compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use neighbourhoods that fulfill most ordinary human needs including those of transportation; as well as, reflecting unique characteristic and qualities of a place, such as its history, physical traits, natural environments, patterns of human behavior and seasonal variations.
- SC 1.3** Municipalities shall actively seek opportunities to increase public knowledge and provide opportunities for public participation in planning processes from all segments of the population, particularly vulnerable populations and those living on lower income.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Hold consultations, focus groups and/or key informant interviews with residents, stakeholders and vulnerable populations to identify the housing needs within the community and then develop a strategy to address the identified needs.

Medium Term

- i) Work with the economic development department and/or local business associations to develop strategies that match jobs to existing residents' skills and employment needs.

Social Cohesion & Well-Being

be available to support current and projected needs;

d) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed; and

e) establishing development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.4.3)

Long Term

- i) Develop an economic development plan that includes strategies to make business growth and expansion more attractive and feasible, such as zoning for mixed-use and live-work areas.



Social Cohesion & Well-Being

Objective 2

SC 2 - Provide public spaces, parks and greenspaces where residents can meet, connect and congregate for social interaction.

Rationale: Creating indoor and outdoor public spaces within a community that enables individuals to meet and congregate provides opportunities for social integration. Research shows that people with strong social networks live longer.⁶ It also shows that exposure to the natural environment is associated with feelings of well-being in individuals.³⁶ Designing communities where residents have access to greenspace can result in physical and mental health benefits.

Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:

- a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;*
- b) planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;*

(Provincial Policy Statement 2014, 1.5.1)

/// Planning Policies

- SC 2.1** Open space and park areas shall be provided within the built environment that are easily accessible to all residents and that are particularly located near schools, seniors' centres, workplaces and residential developments, with priority given to lower income neighbourhoods.
- SC 2.2** Neighbourhoods shall be designed to include municipally managed meeting spaces and common areas that address the needs of all residents and consider health equity and access issues in the design of these spaces.
- SC 2.3** Community security and safety features that impact social interaction and increase physical activity shall be considered through design review processes, and shall include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.
- SC 2.4** The parks system shall be designed and developed to provide opportunities and programming for a range of uses for all ages.

/// Implementation Activities

Short term

- i) Engage residents in a community mapping exercise to identify common meeting locations in the community and develop a plan to address areas without safe common spaces.
- ii) Develop recreation, cultural and community-based programming in public park areas, particularly in lower income neighbourhoods, to make parks more actively used by all community members and to foster a sense of belonging and community cohesion.

Medium Term

- i) Work with police and community groups to review and implement design strategies to increase safety in public areas to facilitate greater use and opportunities for social interaction, particularly in lower income neighbourhoods.

Long Term

- i) Conduct a health equity impact assessment on new development proposals to better understand health equity issues related to land use and utilize this information to mitigate unintended health equity impacts.

Glossary



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

Active transportation infrastructure - facilities and resources to encourage and support non-motorized human transport, such as trails, sidewalks, cycling lanes, footpaths or bridges, bike racks, benches, rest areas, and the signage, markings and dividers relative to the same.

Adaptation - actions, initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects.

Alcohol outlet - any premise on which alcohol is legally sold for immediate or future consumption, including but not limited to off-premise locations (all styles of LCBO, wine outlets, beer stores) and on-premise locations (bars, restaurants, nightclubs).

Alcohol outlet density - the number of physical locations in which alcoholic beverages are available for purchase in a community either per area, road mile or population. Some areas may choose to include square footage or capacity in density calculations.

Adequate supply - when supply equals the demand (e.g. supply of smoke-free housing meets the demand for it).

Adverse effect - means one or more of:

- a) impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it;
- b) injury or damage to property or to plant or animal life;
- c) harm or material discomfort to any person;
- d) an adverse effect on the health of any person;
- e) impairment of the safety of any person;
- f) rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for human use;
- g) loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; and
- h) interference with the normal conduct of business.

Built environment – human-made surroundings that create the setting for all human activity, including those places where people live, work, learn, play and rest. These settings range from small rural communities, to busy urban streets and neighbourhoods, to bustling downtowns, and all places in between.

Community garden - a publicly accessible garden where people share the basic resources of land and water; can be on public or privately-owned land, and is managed by a group of community members, organizations and/or government agencies.

Complete community - a community that meets the daily living needs of its residents by providing a mix of jobs, housing, schools, recreation, open space, local shops and services, and has options for active transportation and transit.

Complete streets - a design concept wherein built environment features are designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel. On complete streets, safe and comfortable access for pedestrians, bicycles, transit users and the mobility-impaired is an integral planning feature.

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

Glossary



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

Food desert - a socioeconomically disadvantaged area with relatively poor access to affordable, healthy food retailers such as supermarkets.

Food system - all of the processes that are a part of providing food to people including the growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of food and food packaging.

Health inequities - unfair and avoidable or modifiable differences in health status experienced by various individuals or groups in society due to unequal access to key factors that influence health, for example, income, education, age, gender, race, employment and social support.

Incubator kitchen - a shared-use commercial kitchen where local food entrepreneurs can prepare their food products in a fully licensed and certified environment, often with technical, business development and other assistance.

Mitigation - activities that reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted to our atmosphere

Regional food hub - an organization that actively manages the collection, distribution, and marketing of food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail and institutional demand.

Social capital - the ways and degree to which people interact with their neighbours, the relationships they form within their community and the amount of time they spend engaged in civic endeavors, volunteer work or other community activities.

Urban agriculture - covers a range of activities that focus on growing food in or around cities, towns or smaller communities. Some examples include backyard gardens, beehives, berry patches, community gardens, container gardening, edible landscaping, greenhouse agriculture, herb gardens, urban farms, orchards, rooftop gardens, schoolyard gardens, vineyards and small-scale poultry raising.

Utilitarian physical activity - physical activities that serve a practical purpose; for example walking to get from one place to another.

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

Vulnerable populations - populations who are at risk of health inequities due to their income, education, age, gender, race, employment or social support.

Resources

This document is just one of many resources available to support the creation and implementation of healthy community design policies.

Other useful resources include:

Backgrounders and Reports

Active Design Supplement: Promoting Safety (2012). John Hopkins Centre for Injury Research and Policy, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Society of Public Health Education www.centerforactivedesign.org/promotingsafety.

Active Transportation Beyond Urban Centres: Walking and Bicycling in Small Towns and Rural America, Rails to Trail Conservancy www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/ourWork/reports/BeyondUrbanCentersReport.pdf.

Aging in Place: A State Survey of Livability Policies and Practices (2011). Nicholas Farber, JD, and Douglas Shinkle, National Conference of State Legislatures. www.assets.aarp.org/rqcenter/ppi/liv-com/ib190.pdf.

Best Practices in Local Food: A Guide for Municipalities (2013). The Ontario Municipal Knowledge Network www.omkn.ca/Best-Practices/Beneficial-Reports.aspx.

Creating Walkable and Transit-Supportive Communities in Halton.(2009). Halton Region Health Department www.halton.ca/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=18644

Evaluating Non-Motorized Transportation Benefits and Costs (2012). Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute www.vtpi.org/nmt-tdm.pdf.

Healthy Communities, Sustainable Communities (2007). Ontario Professional Planners Institute www.ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/Healthy-Communities/2007/Healthy-Sustainable-Communities-2007.aspx.

Health Equity and Community Design, Planning Healthy Communities Fact Sheet Series – No. 3, Healthy Canada by Design CLASP www.cip-icu.ca/_CMS/Files/FACTSHEETS-Equity-FINALenglish.pdf

If Health Matters: Integrating Public Health Objectives in Transportation Planning (2011). Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute www.vtpi.org/health.pdf

Limiting Alcohol Availability – Helping Municipal Governments Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms [www.carbc.ca/Portals/0/Community/Municipal/1LimitAvail\(e\).pdf](http://www.carbc.ca/Portals/0/Community/Municipal/1LimitAvail(e).pdf)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning: A Guide to Best Practices (2014). Todd Litman, Robin Blair, Bill Demopoulos, Nils Eddy, Anne Fritzel, Danelle Laidlaw, Heath Maddox, Katherine Forster Victoria Transport Policy Institute www.vtpi.org/nmtguide.doc.

Planning by Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook (2009). Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and Housing and Ontario Professional Planners Institute www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6737.aspx.

Promoting Public Health through Smart Growth: Building Healthier Communities through Transportation and Land Use Policies and Practices. Smart Growth BC www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/Portals/0/Downloads/SGBC_Health_Report_FINAL.pdf.

School Zone and Nutrition: Courses of Action for the Municipal Sector. Public Health Agency of Canada www.aspq.org/documents/file/guide-zonage-version-finale-anglaise.pdf.

The Impact of the Built Environment on the Health of the Population: A Review of the Review Literature (2007). Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Libraries/HU_Library/BHC_LitReview.sflb.ashx.

Resources

Checklists

Public Health in Land Use Planning & Community Design — Land Use Checklist, National Association of County & City Health Officials (U.S.) - www.naccho.org
Sustainability Checklist for Rezoning and Development Permit Applications (Port Coquitlam) – www.portcoquitlam.ca

Websites

Active Living By Design – www.activelivingbydesign.org
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals - www.apbp.org
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; CPTED Ontario – www.cptedontario.ca
Complete Streets for Canada - www.completestreetsforcanada.ca
Canadian Institute of Planners - www.cip-icu.ca/web/la/en/default.asp
Change Lab Solutions – www.changelabsolutions.org
Driven to Action: Stopping Sprawl in Your Community – www.davidsuzuki.org
Ontario Professional Planners Institute – www.ontarioplanners.ca
Preventing Excessive Alcohol Consumption: Regulation of Outlet Density - www.thecommunityguide.org/alcohol/outletdensity.html
Shaping Active, Healthy Communities – www.heartandstroke.com
Walkable and Livable Communities Institute - www.walklive.org
Victoria Transport Policy Institute - www.vtpi.org

Books

Lopez, Russell, P. (2013) The Built Environment and Public Health
Jackson, Richard J. (2011) Designing Healthy Communities
Dunham-Jones, Ellen (2001) Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs
Gehl, J (2010) Cities for People

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We would like to extend our gratitude to the residents of the community for their contributions to making North Bay an age-friendly city. We would also like to thank the members of the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay. Without the tireless efforts of these individuals this Action Plan would not be possible.

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- Maureen Bruce-Payne, North Bay Golden Age Club
- Wendy Carew, North East Local Health Integration Network
- Lilly Couchie, North Bay Indian Friendship Centre
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- Debbie Hewitt Colborne, North Bay Regional Health Centre
- Kathy King, Nipissing University / Canadore College
- Nora Long, Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
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- Yvonne Taylor, YMCA of North Bay

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1.0 Project Background

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out an Age-Friendly Action Plan for the City of North Bay. An Age-Friendly Action Plan considers a community's current strengths and weaknesses in aspects of community life that are important to older adults. It also recommends actions and an implementation strategy to help make the community a better place to live, work, play, and learn at every stage of life.

The world is currently in the midst of a significant shift in its demographic makeup. The global population aged 65 years or older is growing faster than any other age group¹. Largely due to the aging of baby boomers and ever-increasing life expectancy, the number of seniors in Canada now exceeds the number of children, and this senior population could double over the next 25 years^{2, 3}.

In 2011, the City of North Bay was home to a growing population of more than 9,000 adults aged 65 and over, accounting for 17% of the population. The City recognizes that it is increasingly important for communities to do their part in addressing the needs and challenges facing an aging population, including tackling such issues as housing, health care, accessibility and community services. In light of the diversity of lifestyles, incomes, health statuses and needs of older adults, the City also recognizes that these community-level actions can improve the quality of life for citizens of all ages and abilities.

The City partnered with the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit to meet this opportunity through the development of an Age-Friendly Community Action Plan. With funding from the Government of Ontario, the City retained MMM Group Limited, a WSP company, to assist with the preparation of the Plan. The City also formed an Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee, with Council-

¹ World Health Organization, 2002. Active Aging: A Policy Framework

² Statistics Canada, 2011.

³ National Seniors Council, 2014. Report on the Isolation of Seniors

approved Terms of Reference, to guide the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

This Age-Friendly Community Action Plan builds on current municipal plans and policies, many of which have age-friendly components. In addition, the Age-Friendly Community Assessment Report prepared by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit in 2013 established a strong foundation for this project. It identifies the age-friendly vision and goals developed during a broad consultation process, reviews the City's current age-friendly practices and opportunities for improvement, and sets out specific actions and an implementation plan to help ensure the vision is achieved. While the City will be leading the initiatives in the implementation plan, there will be a need to collaborate with institutional and community partners to implement the recommendations.

1.2 What is an Age-Friendly Community?

As the world's population grows older, the World Health Organization (WHO) has stressed the importance of building age-friendly cities and promoting active aging in communities. As a concept, active aging refers to the capacity for individuals to continue to participate fully in their communities throughout all stages of life, regardless of age or ability. It is influenced by economic, social, and physical factors.

Recognizing the breadth of these issues, the WHO launched its Age-Friendly Cities Initiative in 2006. This program encourages municipalities to enhance and improve their services, structures, programs and built environments for older populations. The companion Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide, which is discussed in more detail in Section 1.4, has helped many municipalities to assess their own age-friendliness by examining elements such as transportation, housing and community services.

The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS) has built on the WHO's work to provide municipalities with additional resources to make community improvements through the age-friendly lens. Age-friendly community planning is the current wave of planning for municipalities, providing benefits to not only older adults, but also young families with children, and persons with disabilities. The OSS Age-Friendly planning process is discussed in Section 4 of this report.

At its core, an age-friendly community is one that ensures aging residents at all levels of ability are supported, respected and encouraged to participate in



"An age-friendly community encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age."

community life. For example, in an age-friendly community, public buildings have accessible entryways including push-button accesses and level surfaces. Aging residents have strong social networks and have the ability to participate in a variety of affordable and inclusive community programs. In an age-friendly community, aging residents have a range of affordable transportation options which could include a network of trusted volunteer drivers or a safe and efficient public transit system. Older residents also have access to a range of affordable health, community support and home care services. Through community attributes such as these, residents are able to “age in place,” staying in their homes, neighbourhoods, and communities for as long as they wish to do so.

Planning for an age-friendly community will allow for informed decision-making regarding all aspects of a community, including land development, transportation planning, parks and open space, and social services, ensuring that community investments are implemented as needed.

1.3 Community Profile

North Bay has a population of 54,000 people, with a larger regional trading area of approximately 112,000 people. The North Bay Census Agglomeration includes The City of North Bay, East Ferris Township, Bonfield Township, and the Municipality of Callander.

The seniors’ population in North Bay is growing as a result of natural demographic shifts and migration. Between 1991 and 2011, North Bay’s population of adults aged 65 and over increased by nearly 40%. As illustrated in Figure 1 and Table 1, this cohort is significant compared with the population of younger adults and children.

North Bay’s population is also slightly older than the Canadian average, with approximately 17% of the population aged 65+ compared to 15% nationwide. This cohort has specific needs that must be met to ensure that they can continue to fully engage and participate in all that this community has to offer. The needs of older adults in North Bay will change as they age, making it vital to consult with, and plan for, this demographic now and into the future.

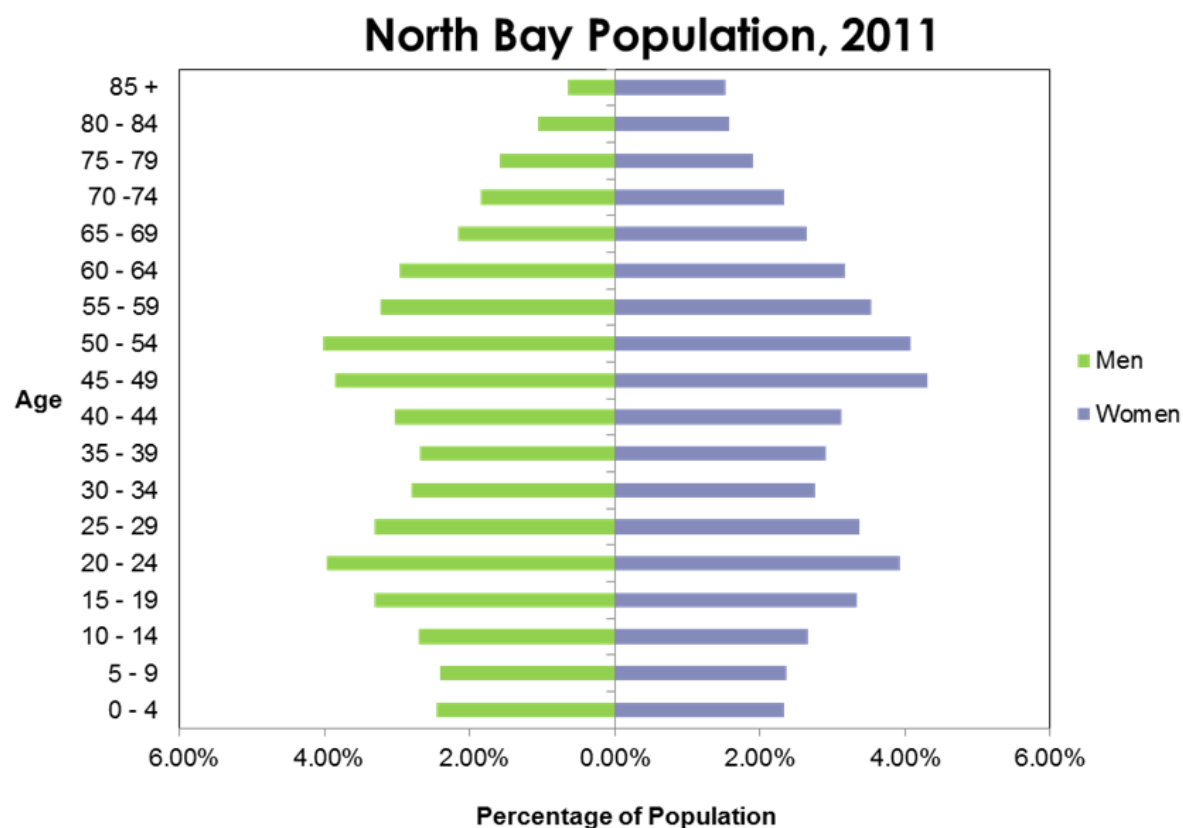


Figure 1: North Bay Population Pyramid

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011

Table 1: North Bay Age Distribution, 2011

Age groups	Both sexes	Males	Females
0 to 14	15%	16%	14%
15 to 29	21%	22%	21%
30 to 49	26%	26%	25%
50 to 64	21%	21%	21%
65 and over	17%	15%	19%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011

1.4 Age-Friendly Community Dimensions

The WHO's Age-Friendly Cities Guide sets out a framework to help municipalities examine their community through the eyes of its aging residents. The Guide highlights eight interconnected dimensions that are illustrated in Figure 2 and summarized in Figure 3. These dimensions provide the framework for this Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.

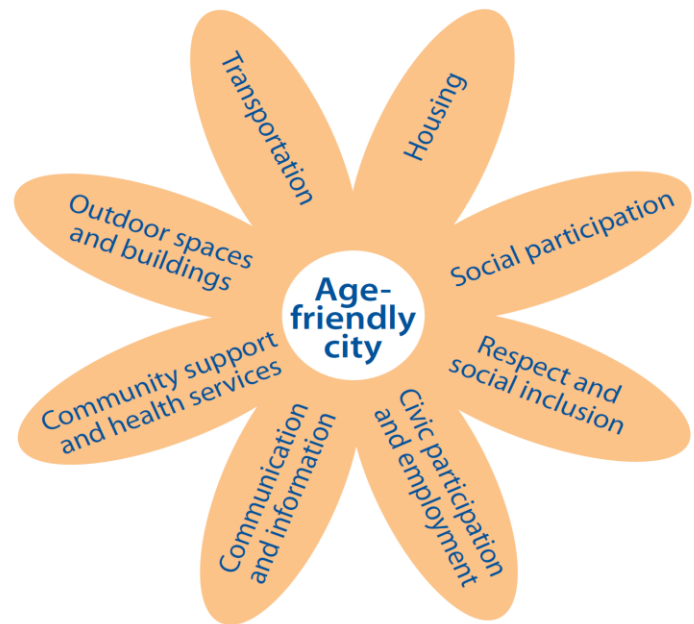


Figure 2: Age-Friendly Community Dimensions (WHO, 2007)



Figure 3: Summary of Age-Friendly Community Dimensions



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The condition, quality and design of the physical environment including parks, sidewalks and buildings, have a significant influence on the mobility, independence and quality of life of aging residents.



Transportation

As people age, there is a tendency to rely more on public transportation. The availability of accessible transportation options aids in the ability of aging residents to participate in the community and increases access to community and health services.



Housing

Appropriate housing structure, location, design and a wide variety of available housing choices can have a significant impact on the independence of aging residents. Appropriate housing can allow people to age in place comfortably within the community.



Social Participation

The ability and opportunity to actively participate in social, cultural and recreational pursuits has a positive influence on the physical and mental well-being of aging residents.



Communication & Information

Access to and the wide distribution of clear, relevant information is essential for aging residents to be able to maintain strong social ties and community connections.



Respect & Social Inclusion

Aging residents should continue to be respected for their roles and contributions to the community. The provision of outreach to aging residents and opportunities to participate in community life can help to mitigate isolation.



Civic Participation & Employment

Aging residents offer a variety of skills, knowledge and experiences that can provide benefits to the community. Aging residents should be able to contribute to their communities through paid and unpaid employment for as long as they would like to or are able to do so.



Community Supports & Health Services

In order for aging residents to successfully age in place, the community should offer sufficient good quality and accessible healthcare and community programs and services. Doing this will allow residents in the community to receive appropriate care.



2.0 Municipal Policy Influences

During the process of developing the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan, a variety of municipal policies and plans were reviewed. Specific aspects of each of these documents that relate to age-friendly communities are described below. These policies demonstrate strong support at the municipal level for developing an age-friendly city, and their priorities are reflected in this Age-Friendly Community Action Plan. The detailed policies are summarized in **Appendix A**.

2.1 City of North Bay Official Plan

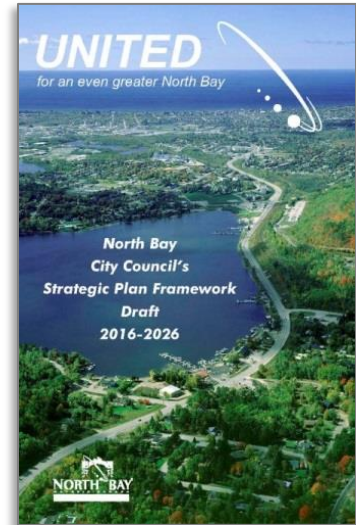
The Official Plan (2012) sets out a policy framework for land use planning for the City of North Bay. It articulates a vision of North Bay as a city where individuals and families can enjoy a safe, healthy and secure quality of life. Its guiding principles include promoting a suitable supply and range of housing types, complemented by efficient public transit, and active transportation, access to facilities and services for employment, education, health and social care, sports recreation, culture and parks. It acknowledges the need to support seniors as a means of promoting socio-cultural sustainability.



The Official Plan includes a variety of policies that specifically address the outdoor spaces & buildings, transportation, housing, community supports and health services dimensions of the WHO framework.

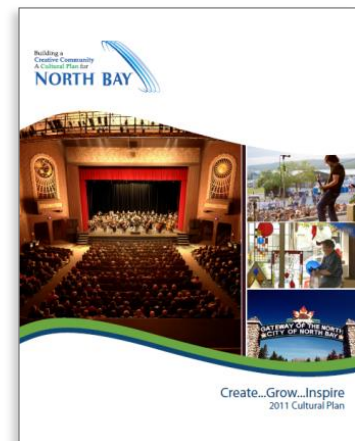
2.2 City Council's Strategic Plan Framework

A Draft Strategic Plan Framework was developed beginning in January 2016, with the overall objective of making North Bay a better place to live, work, play and learn. It is based on the key values of Integrity and Trust; Community Focus; Respect; Excellence, and Stewardship. In addition, "age-friendly" is identified as a specific priority for improving North Bay as a place to live and play.



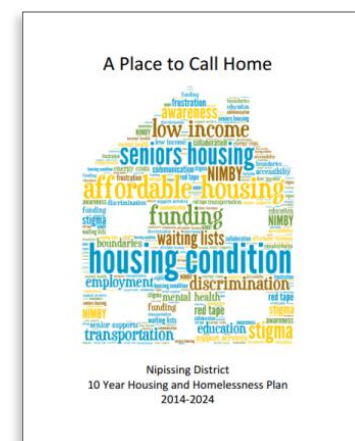
2.3 Building a Creative Community: A Cultural Plan for North Bay

The Cultural Plan for North Bay was developed in 2011 to recognize the increasingly important role of culture in growing local economies and enhancing quality of life. It articulates the value of culture as a tool for celebrating diversity and fostering inclusion, and of encouraging citizens' active participation in cultural life. It recommends various actions that support improvements in the outdoor spaces & buildings, social participation; communication & information, and respect & social inclusion dimensions of the WHO framework. These include strengthening festivals and events, addressing cultural facilities gaps, and building a vibrant downtown and Waterfront Park.



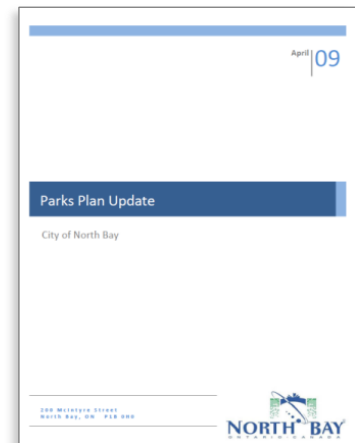
2.4 Nipissing District 10-Year Housing & Homelessness Plan

This plan was developed in support of a vision of acceptable, safe and affordable housing that meets the needs of citizens in Nipissing District. It was endorsed by Council in December 2013. It includes strategies and an implementation plan through 2024 that address the housing, transportation and community supports elements of the WHO framework, including improving housing stability and affordability, and sustaining and expanding the housing portfolio.



2.5 Parks Plan Update

The City of North Bay completed this report in 2009 to assess its progress since the completion of the 1991 Culture, Recreation and Parks Master Plan and bring about new strategies for improvements. The report notes that socio-demographic trends affect the way people spend their time, and influence the demand for park facilities and community leisure programs. The report includes an action strategy addressing the outdoor spaces & buildings, social participation, and respect & social inclusion dimensions of the WHO framework. These include increasing the mix of park spaces, developing streetscape design guidelines, and working with various recreation providers to ensure a wide range of activities is offered in North Bay.







3.0 Age-Friendly Community North Bay, Ontario: Seniors Focus Groups Report

In 2013 the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit prepared an Age-Friendly Community Assessment Report (NBPSDHU Report). It provides a baseline qualitative assessment of North Bay's age-friendliness. Eight focus groups, involving a total of 63 participants aged 55 to 85+, were consulted. Approximately 75% of participants were female, and three focus groups involved only female participants.

The WHO framework was used to guide focus group discussion and to analyze responses by theme. Although participants generally considered North Bay to be age-friendly, the study identified strengths and challenges in each of the WHO dimensions and provided recommendations to address them.



The following paragraphs provide a summary of the major strengths, concerns, and recommendations that were provided by the eight focus groups who contributed to the NBPSDHU Report.

3.1 Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Seniors in the focus groups were asked to describe what it was like for them to get fresh air, run errands or visit. They were also asked to provide feedback about entering buildings. Participants identified many walkable destinations, and described intersections with countdown walking lights as being safer; however, some seniors wish there was more time to cross. Good street lighting at night improved feelings of safety when walking after dark. Concerns were raised about the inconsistent network of sidewalks, including sudden drops in sidewalk curbs. Automatic doors, signage identifying the location of washrooms, and the availability of accessible washrooms with grab bars are important for many seniors. Some

seniors expressed concern regarding the lack of ramps in some buildings, long line-ups in stores, and aisles that are too close and cluttered.

Recommendations provided for this dimension included enforcing barrier-free parking; improving road conditions, especially in the winter; having better signage for public washroom locations; and increasing the number of automatic doors, lifts, ramps, and elevators. Another recommendation was to improve visibility through better lit streets, walkways and parking lots, and painting steps and curbs where changes in the pavement occur.

Recommendations to improve outdoor spaces and buildings included improving road conditions, signage, and street lighting.

3.2 Transportation

Focus group participants indicated that public transportation was generally accessible, on time, and priced fairly. Additionally, many participants appreciated when businesses or health care centres made special transportation arrangements to increase access for seniors, such as the free bus to the Metro grocery store for seniors on Tuesdays. Concerns regarding public transportation included the limited number of bus stops, which often lack benches and are too small to accommodate walkers; the high cost of a bus pass; limited and inconvenient bus routes, and difficulty climbing onto buses. Concerns expressed regarding the Para Bus included the inconvenience of having to book two days in advance, the lack of available vehicles, and the punctuality of the buses.

Recommendations related to transit included increasing the number of medical shuttles and Para Bus vehicles, providing more benches and larger bus shelters at bus stops, and having a discounted bus pass for seniors.

Participants raised various concerns related to driving, including the lack of availability and enforcement of accessible parking spaces, poor road conditions, and poor snow removal. Roads in North Bay were identified as lacking appropriate signage, including visible traffic lane markings, particularly at night.

Recommendations concerning road conditions included reducing the speed limits in residential areas, having signs indicating "Seniors on Foot", providing more designated bicycle paths, and clarifying whether scooters and motorized wheelchairs are considered vehicles or pedestrians.

3.3 Housing

Participants raised significant concerns regarding the housing options available in the North Bay region. Many agreed there are insufficient affordable housing,

retirement homes, and one-to-two bedroom bungalows available in North Bay. Many also raised independence as a priority hampered by the lack of availability of services such as Home Care. Other concerns expressed included long wait times for nursing home beds, and the absence of pet-friendly living options.

Recommendations provided for this dimension included improving the availability of affordable housing; increasing the availability, accessibility, and knowledge of services that promote independence, such as grocery-delivery and snow removal; and allowing pets in retirement homes.

Recommendations to improve housing included providing more affordable housing and increasing the availability of home support services.

3.4 Social Participation

Participants were asked to describe various forms of seniors' social events that are available in North Bay. Many described area events as being accessible, convenient, and affordable. Seniors living in retirement homes were more likely to attend events by having greater access to, and awareness of, events that are often held in their residences. However, seniors who live outside of a retirement home found access more difficult. Certain event locations, such as churches, lack transportation options and are sometimes not accessible for individuals with mobility challenges. Affordability was also mentioned as a barrier to participation for many respondents.

Recommendations provided for this dimension included better advertising for activities and events, including personal invitations for seniors at risk of isolation, and increasing the accessibility of certain event locations. More specific recommendations included "seniors' darts", and having religious services come to the "ONR building" every Sunday.

3.5 Communication & Information

Many seniors in the focus groups confirmed that local papers, bulletins, newsletters, radio, and word-of-mouth as being good sources of information regarding community activities and events. The presentation and location of the information were also considered important for communicating information. Font size, font colour, and background colour all impact the legibility of text materials. Some seniors also found certain websites, such as the City website, difficult to navigate. Many experienced challenges finding information in general.

Participants recommended that text materials use a minimum 14-point font size and appropriate fonts and background colours. Other recommendations included a seniors' page in the local newspaper and computer training courses.

3.6 Respect & Social Inclusion

Participants in the focus groups felt generally positive regarding the level of respect and social inclusion of seniors in the region. Local businesses, organizations, and public agencies were described as being respectful and helpful to seniors. Specific examples included restaurants that are inclusive to wheelchair users and the availability of motorized scooters in some department stores. Participants did not appreciate feeling dismissed and disrespected by individuals, through the use of 'pet names,' condescending or rude behaviour.

Recommendations for improvement in this area included improving seniors' ability to advocate for themselves. To increase event and activity participation, more outreach and notice for community activities and events is needed, and events should ensure seniors may bring a friend.

3.7 Civic Participation & Employment

Participants in the focus groups identified numerous volunteer opportunities in the community, with the majority of the volunteer positions occurring in the health care and religious environments. Many agreed that volunteer opportunities should be as easy to access as possible, such as being accessible by transit and scheduled during the day time to increase safety. However, participants also noted a lack of volunteer opportunities for seniors with cognitive disabilities, and difficulty finding out what volunteer activities are available to seniors. A key recommendation was to increase the knowledge of volunteer opportunities available to seniors and improve marketing targeting this population.

3.8 Community Support & Health Services

Participants' experiences with the community and health services available to older adults in North Bay frequently indicated issues regarding the availability and affordability of good quality, appropriate and accessible care. Specific concerns included accessing specialists, difficulty accessing transportation to out-of-town appointments, and the lack of family doctors. Concerns regarding the hospital included parking affordability, long wait times, and insufficient staff and volunteers.

Recommendations for improvement for this dimension included increasing transportation options for out-of-town appointments, having more medical specialists, having a 24-hour walk-in clinic, providing more facilities for assisted living, such as a hospice, and implementing a buddy or check-in system.

Appendix B includes a detailed table of the specific Age-Friendly strengths and challenges that were identified in the NBPSDHU Report.



4.0 Approach, Vision, and Direction

4.1 Project Approach

The development of the North Bay Age-Friendly Community Action Plan followed the process developed by the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, entitled *Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning*. This process involves four steps in two main phases, as illustrated in Figure 3.

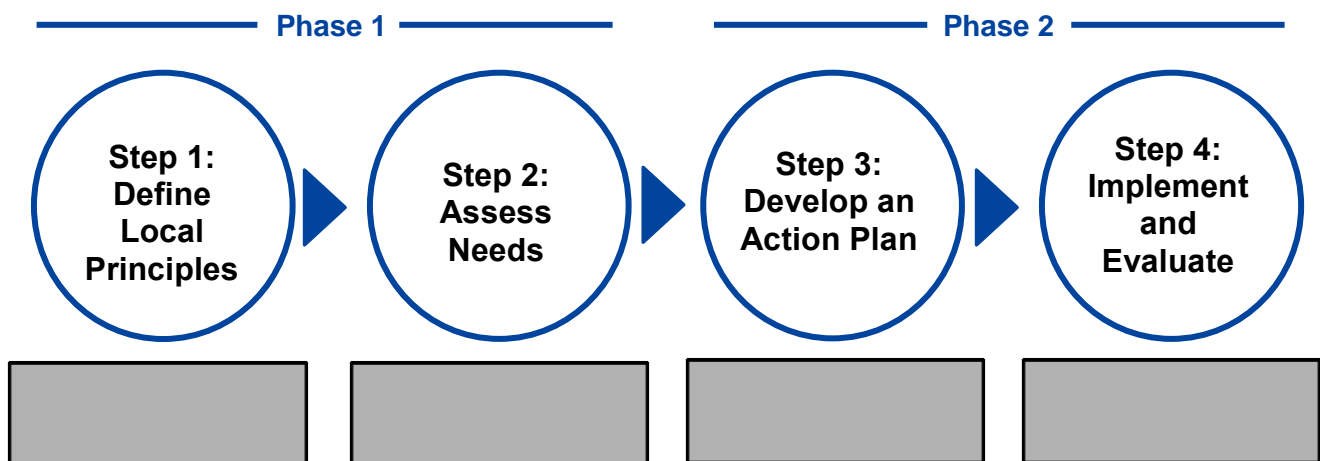


Figure 4: Age-Friendly Community Planning Process

This planning process was implemented in North Bay using a comprehensive approach. Information on needs and opportunities was collected in a wide variety of ways, including WHO and OSS evaluation materials, an Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay established to guide the project, and a comprehensive community engagement strategy. In particular, without the knowledge and insight provided by North Bay residents through the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay and the community engagement events, the plan would not be possible. More information on the community information to date is provided below.

Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay

The Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay was formed at the outset of the project and was closely involved in the development of the plan. The Committee's mandate was to provide their expertise and experiences regarding age-friendly communities and services, and raise public awareness and interest in creating an age-friendly city.

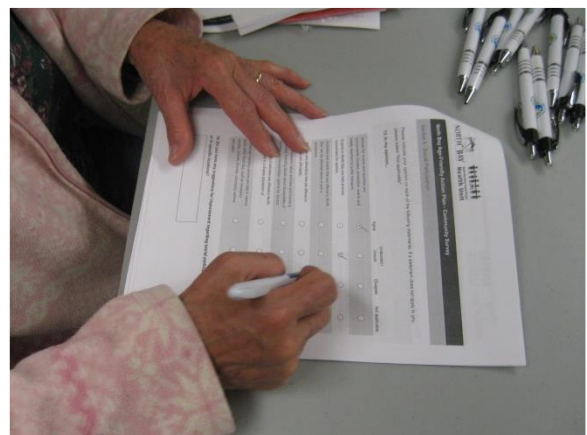
Committee members were strategically identified to ensure a broad range of knowledge and experience, and included representatives from government and non-profit service agencies, advocacy groups, cultural organizations, and the community at large. Committee members were instrumental in increasing community participation in the project and ensuring a broad range of public input was incorporated into the Action Plan.



Committee members, along with additional community representatives, participated in a Visioning Workshop early in the project, which established a vision and guiding principles for the project and began the process of identifying the highest priority needs and opportunities to make North Bay a more age-friendly city. The Visioning Workshop also included a Community Audit in the winter, in which Committee members and the Mayor visited several public buildings in downtown North Bay on foot, in a wheelchair and with various mobility aids to identify potential barriers specifically for the Outdoor Spaces and Buildings dimension. Details on the Visioning Workshop are provided in **Appendix C** to this report.

Community Survey

The community survey was the first major engagement opportunity for North Bay residents. It was launched online for a four-week period in April and May 2016. Paper copies of the survey were also made available through community partners and Committee members during this time. Copies of the survey were also provided at the North Bay Seniors' Expo.



The survey sought input on all eight WHO dimensions of age-friendly cities. The survey was based on the WHO's Community Dimension checklists, with the addition of some tailored questions specific to the City of North Bay. It invited respondents

to indicate what community services and features were age-friendly, and what could be improved. A copy of the survey and a summary of the results are provided in **Appendix D** of this report.

In total, 235 respondents completed the survey, providing valuable insight into residents' needs and perspectives regarding age-friendly planning.

North Bay Seniors' Expo

As a component of this project, the North Bay Seniors' Expo took place on June 11, 2016 at the North Bay Golden Age Club. It opened with a prayer ceremony led by a representative of the North Bay Indian Friendship Centre, and an introductory presentation by local dignitaries and Committee members on the role and importance of Age-Friendly planning. It also featured 23 exhibitors from a variety of government agencies, community organizations and businesses serving seniors, as well as performances by line dancers from the North Bay Golden Age Club and a Zumba demonstration by YMCA staff. This public event had two major objectives:

1. To provide an opportunity for seniors to learn more about age-friendly communities and the services and opportunities offered by local businesses and organizations; and
2. To help the Committee gain insight into the needs to be addressed in the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.

As part of the Seniors' Expo, participants were invited to complete the Community Survey and take part in a World Café to provide input on how to address the City's age-friendly challenges. The World Café format consisted of four tables, each

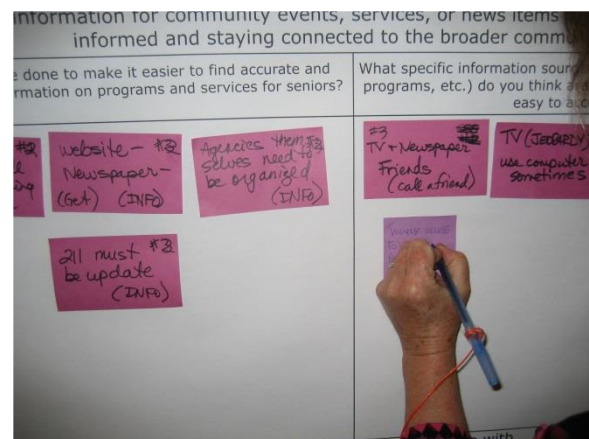
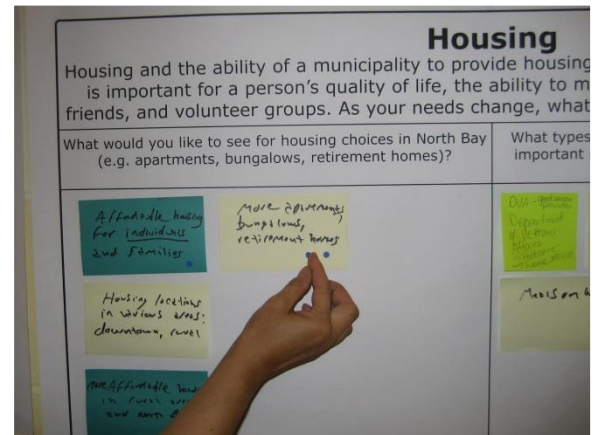


facilitated by a member of the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay, in which participants briefly discussed two of the eight WHO age-friendly community dimensions. Facilitators recorded responses on sticky notes, which were then posted on display boards where all Expo participants could view the questions and responses. If readers agreed with a response, they could place a sticky dot on it to indicate its importance. Readers could also add sticky notes with responses of their own. The Committee considered all responses in developing the Action Plan.

Approximately 80 people attended the event and provided comments that were carried forward into the development of the Action Plan. The comments from the World Cafés are listed in **Appendix E**.

Community Audit

To assess North Bay's current strengths and challenges in the Outdoor Spaces & Buildings and Transportation dimensions, a Community Audit was undertaken. The audit involved visiting a variety of public and community spaces in North Bay on two occasions in March and June 2016, identifying assets and opportunities for improvement in each case. Examples of the findings are shown on the following pages.



Outdoor Spaces & Buildings - Strengths



Accessible waterfront path enjoyed by all ages



Seating provided in downtown plaza, Main Street & Fraser Street

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings - Strengths



Inclusionary signage, North Bay Area Museum, 100 Ferguson Street

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings – Opportunities for Improvement



Push button located too far from the automatic door it opens

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings – Opportunities for Improvement



Snow banks and standing water blocking sidewalk access, McIntyre Street

Transportation - Strengths



Bus shelter and seating provided at City Hall

Transportation - Strengths



Crosswalk with signage and accessibility features, Main Street

Transportation – Opportunities for Improvement



Seating not provided at bus stop, Cassells Street

Transportation – Opportunities for Improvement



Sidewalk not provided to a pedestrian destination,
Josephine Street & McKeown Avenue



Pedestrian crosswalk not marked with eye-level signage, Main Street

4.2 Vision and Direction

Vision

A vision statement describes an ideal state or purpose which a community can work together to achieve. It is an important element of age-friendly planning, as it identifies community priorities and helps set the overall direction for an action plan.

Informed by comments and feedback from residents during the public engagement process, the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay worked together to set out the following vision for an age-friendly North Bay:

"The City of North Bay is an age-friendly community where older adults are empowered to be independent, socially engaged, and actively contributing to our community."

Goals

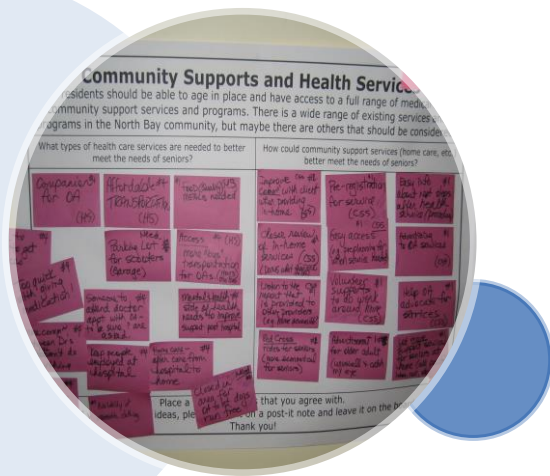
Goals support the vision statement by providing clear actions that will be taken to achieve the vision. With input from local residents, the City of North Bay worked collaboratively with the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay to develop the following age-friendly goals:

1. City of North Bay residents will understand the meaning of, and need for, an age-friendly community.
2. Seniors will be recognized and supported in the community through opportunities for social interaction, volunteering and employment.
3. Seniors and their caregivers will have a centralized and easily accessible source for information.
4. The City of North Bay, organizations and service providers will communicate their information in a variety of methods.
5. Residents of all ages will have access to a range of affordable and accessible housing.
6. All residents will have access to a safe, accessible, affordable and efficient transportation system to meet their daily needs and participate in community activities.
7. The City of North Bay's physical environment, including streets, open spaces and public buildings, will be designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities.

8. Local businesses will respect the unique needs of seniors and persons with mobility devices, and work to accommodate them.
9. Areas of community, City, and provincial responsibility for improving age-friendliness are clearly defined.







5.0 Action Plan

The North Bay Age-Friendly Community Action Plan has been developed based on best practices in age-friendly planning, a range of background research, and extensive input from community members throughout the plan development and public engagement process. This information and knowledge forms the basis for the specific recommendations and actions to be taken to achieve North Bay's age-friendly vision and goals.

This Age-Friendly Action Plan is structured according to the WHO's eight dimensions of age-friendly communities: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion; Communication and Information; Civic Participation and Employment; and Community Support and Health Services.

Each dimension is presented in the following format:

Summary: A short introduction to the dimension and its role in making North Bay a more age-friendly community, as well as aspects of this dimension that were assessed during the age-friendly planning process.

Existing Community Accomplishments: A summary of the features, programs and services currently available in this dimension for older adults in North Bay.

Current Challenges: A review of common issues and concerns identified during the public engagement process.

Potential Future Improvements: Recommended actions to be taken to address the opportunities for improvement. These are discussed in more detail in Section 9, Implementation.

5.1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The design, condition and quality of the outdoor environment and public buildings can have a significant impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older residents.

Safe, accessible and well-maintained public spaces and buildings have a positive influence on residents' health and quality of life, by making it easier to move freely around the City to access services and take part in community activities. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: are sidewalks and pathways in North Bay well maintained and free of obstructions? Are there enough appropriately marked pedestrian crossings? Do buildings have ramps, automatic doors, benches and accessible washrooms?

Existing Community Accomplishments

- There are numerous outdoor spaces, including the Waterfront and the area around the Public Library, that are considered clean, pleasant and safe.
- Paths and walking trails, such as the Kate Paceway and the waterfront path, are well-maintained and accessible from many areas of the City.
- Many new crosswalks in the City include push buttons and audible pedestrian signals.
- The City of North Bay Official Plan supports the development of public spaces that are accessible and pedestrian-friendly year-round.



- The City of North Bay Parks Plan Update recommends improving the City's mix of park spaces, developing streetscape design guidelines, and ensuring new infrastructure is fully accessible.

Current Challenges

- Many areas of the City need pedestrian infrastructure improvements, including better sidewalk surfaces, lighting and maintenance.
- Crosswalks are not always well-marked, particularly downtown on Main Street. At numerous locations, including Cassells Street, Lakeshore Drive and Algonquin Avenue, signalized crosswalks are limited in the time provided to cross.
- There are limited accessible public washrooms, both in municipal parks and commercial spaces, particularly downtown.
- More seating is needed in indoor and outdoor public areas.
- Many buildings lack accessibility features, such as automatic doors and entrance ramps, particularly in the downtown area.

Potential Future Improvements

- Develop maintenance and lighting standards and an implementation plan for pedestrian facilities to promote safety, visibility, and accessibility for seniors throughout the year.
- Develop and carry out an implementation plan to increase accessible public washrooms in City facilities, including the south waterfront, Kate Pace Way, and other parks.
- Recognize and support businesses who offer accessibility features and public washrooms, particularly those in the downtown area and near transit transfer points, by facilitating access to grant funding and advertising opportunities.
- Develop a bench dedication program to improve seating provision on City streets and in parks. Explore opportunities for matching funding from North Bay Transit at bus stops.

5.2 Transportation

The availability and accessibility of transportation has a major impact on social participation and access to health and community services for older residents.

Affordable, accessible and safe transportation, including public transit, permits residents of all ages and abilities to take part in community life. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: are all areas of the City served by the transportation system? Are transportation stops and pick-up/drop-off points safe and clearly marked? Is transportation service affordable, and does it operate on time? Is priority seating available for seniors?

Existing Community Accomplishments

- Signage in the City is generally visible and clear.
- The City and its Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee are developing a snow removal plan to ensure year-round accessibility of bus stops, City sidewalks and parking spots for accessible vehicles.
- An accessible on-request transit service, Parabus, is available for residents who may not be able to drive or use the main transit system.
- City buses are clean and accessible and provide priority seating, and good information is available regarding transit routes and service.
- The City of North Bay Official Plan includes a commitment to improve the speed and reliability of transit service.



- Free or low-cost transportation services are available through non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross and the North Bay Indian Friendship Centre, and by some businesses including the Metro grocery store. A transit fare discount for seniors and persons with disabilities is also available.

Current Challenges

- The City needs more dedicated cycling infrastructure, to accommodate older cyclists and discourage all cyclists from riding on sidewalks.
- There are numerous barriers to transit use for older residents. Many areas of the City are not accessible by transit or have limited hours of transit service. In addition, many transit stops are located far apart and do not offer seating.
- Parabus is oversubscribed and therefore not flexible enough to meet users' needs.
- There is a need to provide and enforce more accessible parking and to provide more and safer drop-off and pick-up zones.
- Winter snow and ice clearance must be improved to ensure sidewalk surfaces, visibility, and access to businesses, bus stops and crosswalks are appropriate for pedestrians and scooter/wheelchair users.
- Many transportation options are unaffordable for seniors on fixed incomes.

Potential Future Improvements

- Develop a cycling infrastructure implementation plan, including both on-road routes and pathway connections with consideration being given to the increasing prevalence of e-bikes and motorized scooters.
- Develop an action plan to improve transit frequency and hours of service to underserved areas. Through the Age-Friendly process, Northgate Mall, Canadore College/Nipissing University, Redbridge, Feronia and Thibault Hill were identified as areas where service could be improved. Plan to include seniors use of transit through education and promotion.
- Make North Bay Transit a more appealing choice for seniors. For example, work to ensure all North Bay Transit bus stops provide seating and bus shelters and are located at major destinations. Ensure accessibility features are well publicized to increase the potential that existing Parabus users will use the main transit system.
- Work with organizers and venues to provide transit shuttle service from major transit transfer points for community events.

- Review zoning provisions for accessible parking and drop-off areas to ensure they are appropriate and respected during the municipal site plan approval process.
- Develop a municipal winter maintenance plan that prioritizes pedestrian visibility and accessibility.
- Explore fare options that may increase transit affordability for seniors, including timed transfers and weekly free seniors' days.
- Support existing community-based and non-profit transportation services by assisting with promotion and grant funding.



5.3 Housing

The availability of appropriate housing can have a major impact on the quality of life of older residents and the opportunity for them to age in place within their communities.

Access to safe, affordable and accessible housing is critical to the well-being of all residents. As residents' housing needs can change over time, it is important that a range of housing choices and support services be provided throughout the city, to allow people to live independently for as long as possible and remain part of their communities as they age. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: is enough accessible and supported housing available to meet the needs of older residents? Are housing options in North Bay well-located with respect to community services and other destinations? Are home maintenance services available to help people stay in their homes?

Existing Community Accomplishments

- Various retirement residences, assisted living options and long-term care facilities are available in North Bay, including Seniors' communities such as Castle Arms or the Woodlands, retirement residences such as Barclay House (64 units), The Empire (152 bachelor, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom units) or Marina Point (40 existing apartments, 80 existing suites and 114 apartments under construction),



as well as supportive housing operated by the Physically Handicapped Adults' Rehabilitation Association (PHARA).

- An affordable housing project in the form of a 16-unit townhouse development located at the corner of Marshall and Prince Edward Streets, proposed by the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services has received Council approval. Construction of the first phase is anticipated in Summer 2016.
- Home support services are offered through the North East Community Care Access Centre and northeastheathline.ca, by organizations such as VON, Paramed, the Red Cross, Blue Sky and other private service providers.
- The City of North Bay Official Plan and City Council's Draft Strategic Plan Framework support the development of a variety of housing types, including seniors' housing within walking distance of transit and services.
- The Nipissing District 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan recommends improving the provision of home retrofit and support services to help older adults stay in their homes. It also recommends increasing the range of affordable housing options and developing more accessible social housing units. Since implementing the Nipissing District 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan in 2014, the DNSSAB has invested approximately \$5.5 million in strategies to prevent homelessness, improve housing stability, and increase housing affordability and options along the housing continuum. This includes the development of 260 new affordable housing units. Part of this investment has been geared towards senior citizens and has been funded by the three levels of government.

Current Challenges

- There is a shortage of safe, affordable rental housing options appropriate for older adults.
- There are not enough affordable assisted living and long-term care options for older adults to meet the demand.
- There are not enough accessible housing options to meet the demand, and limited support for renovations or retrofits.
- There are not enough affordable and well-coordinated supports for seniors continuing to live in their own homes, including lawn care, meal preparation, shopping assistance and personal care.

Potential Future Improvements

- Implement the recommendations of the Nipissing District 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to improve the range of available home support services and housing options for older adults.
- Advocate at the provincial level for the development of new affordable assisted living and long-term care facilities in North Bay.
- Work with the local development community to identify ways to support the provision of more affordable rental units in the City, particularly those located close to transit and services, and with single-level layouts and other accessibility features. Should the provincial Promoting Affordable Housing Act, introduced in May 2016 as Bill 204, become law, this may be supported by municipal inclusionary zoning policies.
- Work with local contractors to identify ways to facilitate and promote affordable home maintenance and retrofit services in the City. Possible initiatives may include a volunteer program for students, a work experience program for apprentices, or a volunteer-coordinated group purchasing program for maintenance services.
- Develop a print and online directory of non-medical home support services, including shopping, meal preparation, cleaning, yard work and snow removal, provided in North Bay by verified contractors.



5.4 Social Participation

Opportunities for social participation and support are crucial for health and well-being at all stages of life.

Social participation includes getting involved in social, recreational, cultural and spiritual pursuits. It benefits both individuals and the community at large, by allowing older people to exercise competence and enjoy respect and supportive relationships. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: are activity venues conveniently located and accessible? Are activities affordable and appealing to a diverse population? Is good information provided on events and activities? Is there outreach to people at risk of social isolation?



Existing Community Accomplishments

- A variety of activities that appeal to older adults are available in North Bay, including LivingFit, Stand Up, the Young at Heart fitness group at the North Bay Golden Age Club, fitness programs offered through the North East Local Health Integration Network, as well as social and cultural events. These are held in a variety of accessible locations.
- Organizations such as the Golden Age Club, North Bay Rising Stars, Legion, Seniors at Risk Network of North Bay and District, Stay On Your Feet (SOYF) Nipissing/Parry Sound, North Bay Public Library, and various places of worship and charitable organizations offer opportunities for seniors to access social activities and interaction.
- City Council's Draft Strategic Plan Framework and the Parks Plan Update identify the provision of a range of recreation facilities and activities as an age-friendly priority.
- The Cultural Plan for North Bay recommends strengthening cultural and community events and addressing gaps in the provision of cultural facilities.

Current Challenges

- Events geared to seniors are not always well advertised or promoted.
- There is a need for more low-cost fitness and social activities, including transportation, for seniors on limited incomes or who do not live in seniors' residences.
- Some venues used for seniors' events, particularly places of worship, are not fully accessible.

Potential Future Improvements

- Support the development of peer mentor or buddy systems within seniors' organizations and social networks to encourage information sharing about events and opportunities.
- Foster partnerships between English- and French- language seniors' organizations to increase the range of activity options and promote the development of social networks.
- Explore the development/enhancement of co-op or work experience programs for students in fields such as fitness, art, music or culinary arts to provide affordable classes for seniors.
- Support continuing education initiatives for seniors in post-secondary institutions.
- Review existing municipal parks plans to identify opportunities to provide informal sports facilities geared to seniors, such as shuffleboard or bocce. Consider making equipment available on loan from the North Bay Public Library.
- Work with municipal departments and local school boards to improve access to schools, community centres and parks in off-peak hours for affordable, accessible, and age-friendly events.
- Work with organizations that support local recreation programming to encourage participation by seniors (e.g. senior discounted admission fees).

5.5 Respect and Social Inclusion

Respect for the roles and community contributions of aging residents can help reduce isolation and improve the well-being of seniors.

Fostering awareness of the needs and contributions of older people throughout the community can help them be treated with greater respect and help them participate more fully in community life. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: are older people recognized for both their past and present contributions? Are service staff courteous and able to accommodate age-specific needs and preferences? Do schools promote interaction and respect between children and older people?



Existing Community Accomplishments

- There are opportunities for seniors in North Bay to be recognized for their past and present contributions, including through public installations such as the downtown Pergola, where a leaf may be purchased.
- Outreach programs such as the Golden Age Club's RUOK ("Are you okay?") telephone service are available to promote the safety and well-being of seniors who live alone.
- The City of North Bay Official Plan acknowledges the importance of supporting seniors to ensure social sustainability.

Current Challenges

- There is limited outreach to older adults at risk of social isolation.
- Businesses and service providers should more regularly consult older adults on issues that affect them, and adapt services accordingly.
- There is a perception that the North Bay community could show more respect for older residents, their needs, and their capabilities.

Potential Future Improvements

- Promote targeted outreach to isolated seniors in the development of social activities and advocacy programs.
- Develop mechanisms for seniors to advocate on important issues in North Bay. Consider holding periodic open forums on seniors' priorities.
- Explore opportunities for intergenerational activities, including visiting programs, buddy programs and reading programs, between local schools and seniors' residences and organizations.
- Encourage the development of recognition programs for residents of all ages, including youth and seniors, who have made outstanding community contributions.
- Support educational programs and materials that encourage intergenerational respect, increase awareness of social isolation, and combat elder abuse and age discrimination.



5.6 Civic Participation and Employment

Older residents offer a variety of skills, experience, and knowledge, and should have the opportunity to use them in paid or voluntary work for as long as they would like to do so.

As individuals and the community can benefit from the continued active participation of older residents, barriers to civic participation and employment should be minimized. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: is a range of flexible paid and voluntary options available to older workers? Are the positive qualities of older employees recognized and promoted? Are training and workplace adaptations available for older people?



Existing Community Accomplishments

- Various volunteer activities are available, particularly in the North Bay Regional Health Centre, Big Brothers/Sisters, the Gathering Place, the Crisis Centre, and through religious communities.
- Many seniors currently volunteer, and many more indicated an interest during the Age-Friendly public consultation.
- Volunteers are regularly recognized for their contributions by the organizations for which they volunteer, through activities such as annual recognition events.
- City Council's Strategic Plan Framework prioritizes talent retention and volunteer engagement.

Current Challenges

- Many residents are not aware of the available volunteering, employment and training opportunities in North Bay.
- There are a variety of barriers to volunteer participation among older adults, including physical limitations, costs to participate or to obtain documentation

such as police record checks, transportation requirements, and the need for respite care.

- There is a perception that employers do not provide a wide range of job opportunities for older adults, and that employers do not value the potential skills and contributions of older employees.

Potential Future Improvements

- Promote a central directory of information regarding volunteer opportunities within the City of North Bay, including information on accessibility features or cost reimbursement programs that may be available.
- Explore opportunities to hold volunteer and employment fairs and training seminars targeting seniors.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and local institutions to communicate the positive qualities of older workers and to identify paid and volunteer positions suitable for seniors with or without disabilities.
- Develop an Age-Friendly Business designation to recognize businesses that accommodate older employees through flexible work arrangements, job sharing, physical accommodations and other features of a supportive work environment.



5.7 Communication and Information

Access to clear, relevant information is crucial for older residents to maintain their health, quality of life and community connections.

Through proper communication of programs, services and opportunities, older residents are able to maintain their independence and participate fully in community life. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: is information on public programs easily accessible in a variety of formats? Is printed information easy to read and telephone information provided slowly and clearly? Is public internet access and computer support for seniors widely available?



Existing Community Accomplishments

- Printed and online editions of local newspapers, such as the North Bay Nugget and BayToday.ca, are popular and trusted resources for community information.
- Websites such as NorthEasthealthline.ca and NorthEastCSS.ca, telephone services such as Ontario 211, and publications such as the North Bay Sport and Culture Guide provide good information regarding community programs and services of interest to seniors.
- Seniors currently access information through a wide range of channels. The internet and social media, and flyers or bulletins are the most popular, but word of mouth, newspapers, television, and radio are also common sources of information.



Current Challenges

- There is a need for better publicity of events, activities, and services geared to seniors, including more centralized, easy-to-find listings. The City's website was described as difficult to navigate.
- Although many seniors are comfortable using the internet and automated telephone systems, there is a need to ensure these are not the only sources of information.
- A full range of information and services should be provided in both English and French.

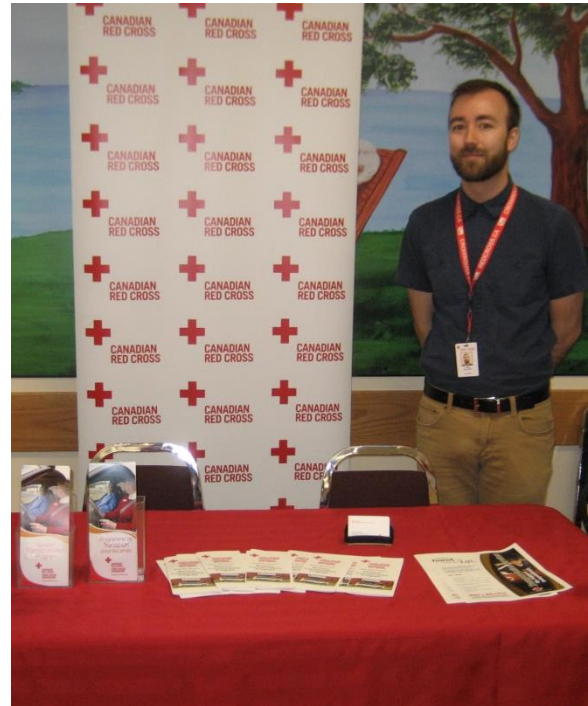
Potential Future Improvements

- Provide a user-friendly webpage on the City's website geared to seniors, and provide seniors-specific bulletin boards in selected City buildings, libraries and seniors' centres. Ensure these listings are well promoted to organizations interested in providing or receiving the information, and that they are updated regularly.
- Develop a plan to communicate the services and events available for seniors in North Bay. For example, produce and distribute a municipal booklet listing services and events of particular interest to seniors. Include a fridge magnet listing key phone numbers, including City of North Bay customer service and Ontario 211, in large print.
- Promote education initiatives for advertisers and front-line customer service staff in providing quality customer service for seniors (e.g. how to produce clear written materials and communicating effectively with older customers, including those who may have challenges).
- Help seniors access the increasing range of information available online. For example, consider ways to provide basic computer training to older adults.

5.8 Community Support and Health Services

To maintain their health and independence, aging residents should have access to a full range of health and support services in the community.

Appropriate community services will allow residents to remain at home longer, benefiting individuals and the city as a whole. A range of questions were considered in assessing this dimension, including the following: are services conveniently located and accessible by all means of transportation? Are appropriate preventive and home care services available? Is health service delivery coordinated and administratively simple? Are economic barriers to health services minimized?



Existing Community Accomplishments

- The North Bay Regional Health Centre provides a wide range of general and specialized care. It is currently developing a new strategic plan for 2017-2019.
- Organizations such as the Community Care Access Centre provide coordination and referral services for local residents.
- Health and community service buildings are generally accessible for clients of all ages and abilities. A new downtown facility for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit is currently under construction.
- Financial and transportation support programs are available to help residents access health services outside North Bay when required.
- City Council's Strategic Plan Framework identifies access to a broad spectrum of health services as a priority.

Current Challenges

- Access to health services is often impeded by long waiting lists and limited staff and appropriate specialists, particularly in fields such as dementia care and mental health.

- There is a need for better coordination between health care providers.
- Home care services, respite care and hospice care should be more available and affordable.
- Many residents find it difficult to access centralized and well-coordinated information regarding available programs and services.

Potential Future Improvements

- Work with the provincial government, North East Local Health Integration Network, and local health and community services organizations to identify staffing and specialist requirements to provide quality care to seniors.
- Promote awareness of available health and community services and organizations to support seniors, their care partners, and family.
- Advocate for funding to support more affordable home care, day programs and respite care in the North Bay community for seniors.
- Support the development and implementation of complementary age-friendly strategies, such as the Senior Friendly Hospital initiative by the North Bay Regional Health Centre, the Stay On Your Feet program offered through the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, and the Dementia Strategy.







6.0 Implementation

The North Bay Age-Friendly Community Action Plan will need the interest, effort and participation of individuals, businesses, community organizations and all levels of government to make the vision a reality. The recommended actions for implementation focus on the issues that were identified as the highest priorities during the community engagement process, as well as those items that can be directly implemented or supported by the City of North Bay. The actions are organized according to the WHO's eight community dimensions.

The implementation of the Action Plan will be led by the City of North Bay's Community Services Branch, which will facilitate initiatives by a wide range of community actors and partners.

The Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay has been instrumental in the development of the current Action Plan. The City intends to maintain the Committee's momentum to continue working towards a more age-friendly North Bay, and to expand its membership. In particular, the City intends to develop new Terms of Reference for the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating

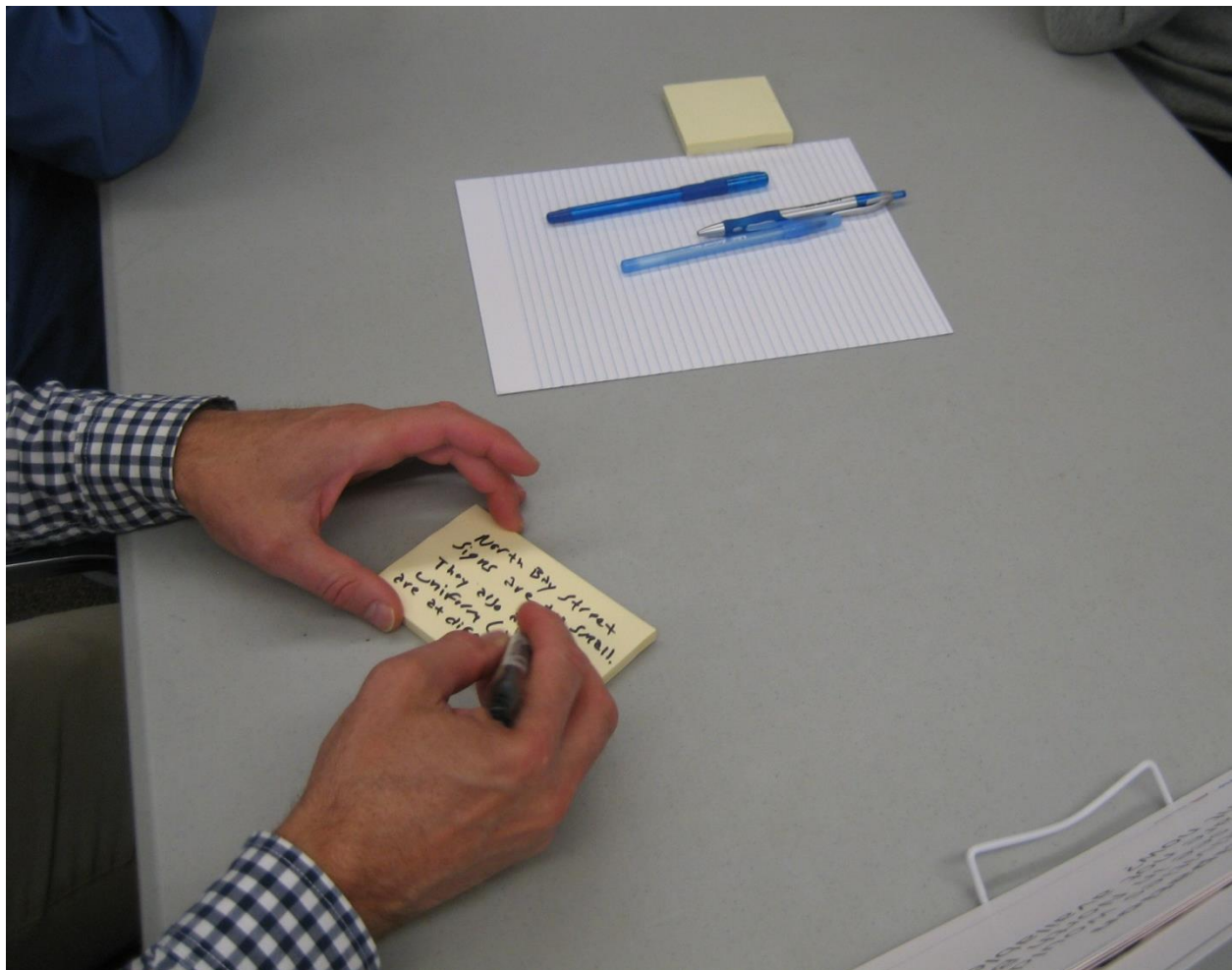
Committee of North Bay. These Terms of Reference will guide the Committee to work with the City and the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, and will also support the creation of specific Working Groups to assist with the implementation of this Action Plan. Implementation will rely on the active participation of community organizations, partner agencies and service providers, and will require a high level of outreach and collaboration, as illustrated in Figure 4.

The North Bay Age-Friendly Community Action Plan will need the interest, effort and participation of individuals, businesses, community organizations and all levels of government to make the vision a reality.

This implementation strategy provides a framework to guide future, more detailed decision-making and planning within the City government and its interested partners. The Action Plan is intended to inform other municipal plans, policies, and decisions from an early stage.

Each table of Action Items in this section identifies an Action Lead and Potential Partners whose involvement is essential. It also identifies the timing of implementation: 1-2 years for short-term actions, 3-5 years for medium-term actions, and 5+ years for long-term actions. While the City is shown as the Action Lead on all initiatives, there will be a need to work collaboratively with Potential Partners such as the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, the Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay, its Working Groups, and community and institutional partners to implement the Action Items.

It is recommended that the City undertake a progress review of this Action Plan every year or every two years. This review will act as a “reality check,” allowing the community to see which actions have been taken, which goals have been achieved, and whether there should be any changes to the plan in light of community priorities and available funding opportunities.



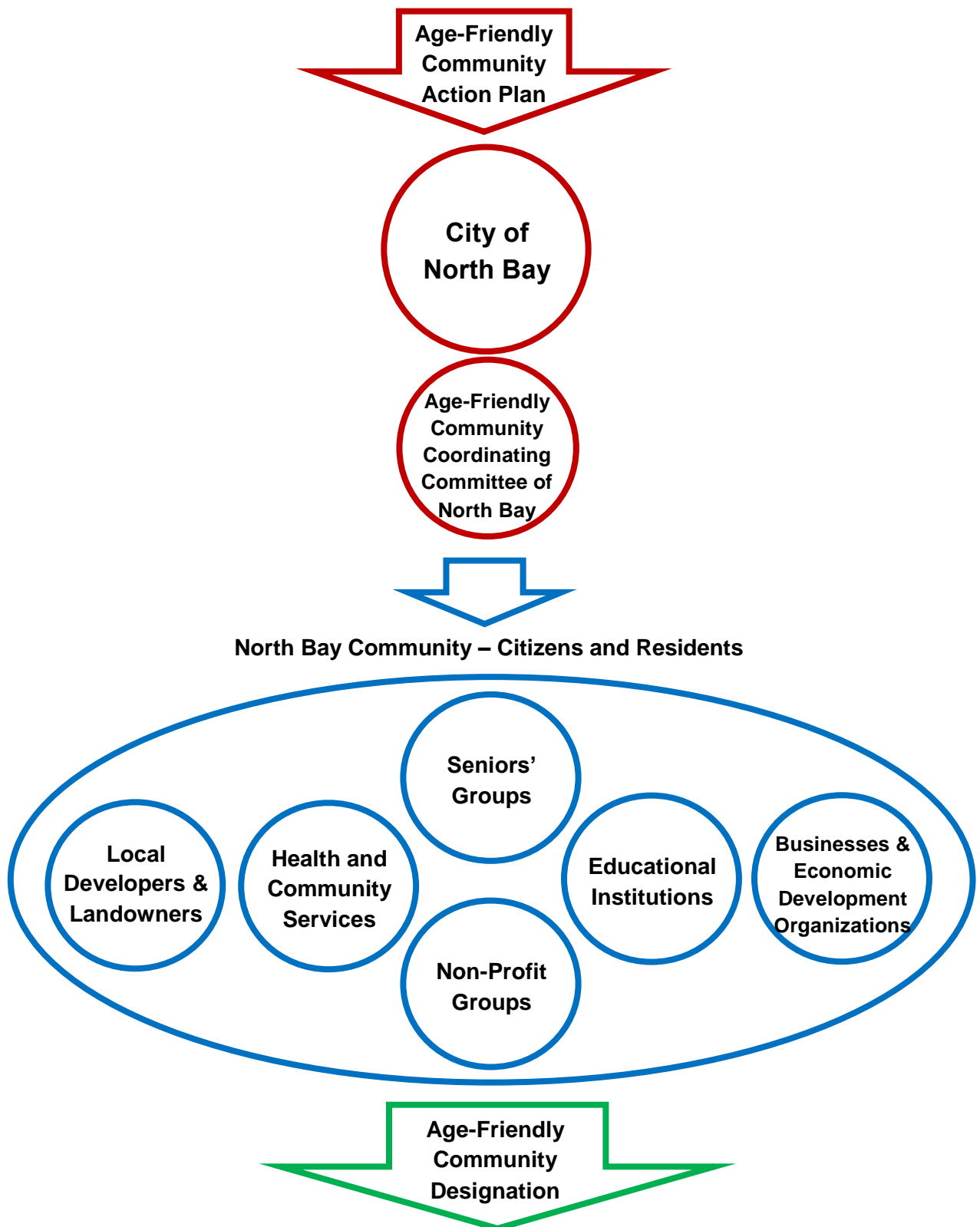


Figure 5: Implementing the Age-Friendly Action Plan



6.1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
1.1 Develop maintenance and lighting standards and an implementation plan for pedestrian facilities to promote safety, visibility, and accessibility for seniors throughout the year.	Short term	City of North Bay Public Works and Services Department	Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee	Reduction in number of complaints and injury reports associated with City pedestrian facilities
1.2 Develop and carry out an implementation plan to increase accessible public washrooms in City facilities, including the south waterfront, Kate Pace Way, and other parks.	Medium term	City of North Bay Public Works and Services and Parks, Recreation and Leisure departments	Local charitable/service organizations	Number of new public washrooms installed
1.3 Recognize and support businesses who offer accessibility features and public washrooms, particularly those in the downtown area and near transit transfer points, by facilitating access to grant funding and advertising opportunities.	Medium term	City of North Bay Economic Development Department	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce, local businesses	Number of businesses recognized for offering accessibility features and/or public washrooms
1.4 Develop a bench dedication program to improve seating provision on City streets and in parks. Explore opportunities for matching funding from North Bay Transit at bus stops.	Medium term	City of North Bay Public Works and Services, Transit & Parabus, and Parks, Recreation and Leisure departments	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce, local charitable/service organizations	Number of new benches installed



6.2 Transportation

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
2.1 Develop a cycling infrastructure implementation plan, including both on-road routes and pathway connections with consideration being given to the increasing prevalence of e-bikes and motorized scooters.	Medium term	City of North Bay Planning Services Department	City of North Bay Public Works and Services Department, Cycling Working Group, Transportation Committee	Increase in the number and distance of cycling facilities on City streets. Development of specific policies providing clarity on the use of e-bikes and motorized scooters in North Bay.
2.2 Develop an action plan to improve transit frequency and hours of service to underserved areas. Through the Age-Friendly process, Northgate Mall, Canadore College/Nipissing University, Redbridge, Feronia and Thibault Hill were identified as areas where service could be improved. Plan to include seniors use of transit through education and promotion.	Medium term	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department	Postsecondary institutions, hospital	Number of new evening / weekend trips on existing routes; number of new routes or route extensions
2.3 Make North Bay Transit a more appealing choice for seniors. For example, work to ensure all North Bay Transit bus stops provide seating and bus shelters and are located at major destinations. Ensure accessibility features are well publicized to increase the potential that existing Parabus users will use the main transit system.	Medium term	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce, local businesses	Number of accessible buses; number of new transit benches and shelters
2.4 Work with organizers and venues to provide transit shuttle service from major transit transfer points for community events.	Short term	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce; event organizers and venues	Number of events offering shuttle service
2.5 Review zoning provisions for accessible parking and drop-off areas to ensure they are appropriate and respected during the municipal site plan approval process.	Short term	City of North Bay Planning Services Department	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department; Red Cross and other transportation providers; local developers	Integration of reviewed guidelines into development approvals process
2.6 Develop a municipal winter maintenance plan that prioritizes pedestrian visibility and accessibility.	Long term	City of North Bay Public Works and Services Department	Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee; retirement homes; business owners and North Bay Downtown Improvement Area; local school boards	Reduction in number of complaints and pedestrian injury reports associated with City streets and pedestrian facilities in winter
2.7 Explore fare options that may increase transit affordability for seniors, including timed transfers and weekly free seniors' days.	Short term	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department	City of North Bay Financial Services Department	Number of new affordable fare options available; number of new transit users making use of these options

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
2.8 Support existing community-based and non-profit transportation services by assisting with promotion and grant funding.	Short term	City of North Bay Transit & Parabus Department	Red Cross; First Nations communities; other community partners	Number of City-facilitated grants received by community-based or non-profit transportation providers; number of new City-supported advertisements promoting community-based and non-profit transportation



6.3 Housing

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
3.1 Implement the recommendations of the Nipissing District 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to improve the range of available home support services and housing options for older adults.	Long term	DNSSAB	North East Local Health Integration Network	Varies
3.2 Advocate for the development of new affordable assisted living and long-term care facilities in North Bay.	Long term	City of North Bay Planning Services Department	City of North Bay Economic Development Department, North East Local Health Integration Network, DNSSAB	Number of new affordable assisted living and long-term care units developed in the City
3.3 Work with the local development community to identify ways to support the provision of more affordable rental units in the City, particularly those located close to transit and services, and with single-level layouts and other accessibility features.	Long term	City of North Bay Planning Services Department	Local developers and landowners, Veterans Affairs Canada, DNSSAB	Number of new affordable rental units developed in the City
3.4 Work with local contractors to identify ways to facilitate and promote affordable home maintenance and retrofit services in the City. Possible initiatives may include a volunteer program for students, a work experience program for apprentices, or a volunteer-coordinated group purchasing program for maintenance services.	Medium term	City of North Bay Building Services Department	Local school boards, Canadore College, DNSSAB, contractors and tradespeople, North East Local Health Integration Network, Veterans Affairs Canada, community support services	Number of retrofits completed through the volunteer initiative or group purchasing program
3.5 Develop a print and online directory of non-medical home support services, including shopping, meal preparation, cleaning, yard work and snow removal, provided in North Bay by verified contractors.	Short term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	North East Local Health Integration Network; City of North Bay Economic Development Department	Number of service inquiries resulting from the directory



6.4 Social Participation

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
4.1 Support the development of peer mentor or buddy systems within seniors' organizations and social networks to encourage information sharing about events and opportunities.	Medium term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	North Bay Golden Age Centre	Number of seniors matched in a peer mentoring relationship
4.2 Foster partnerships between English- and French-language and Aboriginal seniors' organizations to increase the range of activity options and promote the development of social networks.	Medium term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	North Bay Golden Age Centre, North Bay Indian Friendship Centre	Number of new joint activities between English- and French-language seniors' organizations
4.3 Explore the development/enhancement of co-op or work experience programs for students in fields such as fitness, art, music or culinary arts to provide affordable classes for seniors.	Medium term	Canadore College, Nipissing University; professional training & certification programs	Local seniors' organizations	Number of new classes and activities offered to seniors through the program
4.4 Support continuing education initiatives for seniors in post-secondary institutions.	Medium term	Canadore College, Nipissing University, CTS Canadian Career College	Local seniors' organizations	Number of new classes and activities offered to seniors through the program
4.5 Review existing municipal parks plans to identify opportunities to provide informal sports facilities geared to seniors, such as shuffleboard or bocce. Consider making equipment available on loan from the North Bay Public Library.	Medium term	City of North Bay Parks, Recreation and Leisure Department	North Bay Public Library	Number of new recreation facilities provided
4.6 Work with municipal departments and local school boards to improve access to schools, community centres and parks in off-peak hours for affordable, accessible, and age-friendly events.	Medium term	City of North Bay (various municipal departments)	Local school boards; YMCA; community groups	Number of new events or activities scheduled for schools and City facilities
4.7 Work with organizations that support local recreation programming to encourage participation by seniors (e.g. senior discounted admission fees).	Medium term	YMCA	Local community organizations and recreation providers	Number of new users making use of reduced admission rates



6.5 Respect and Social Inclusion

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
5.1 Promote targeted outreach to isolated seniors in the development of social activities and advocacy programs.	Short term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	North East Local Health Integration Network; North Bay Golden Age Club	Number of at-risk seniors contacted
5.2 Develop mechanisms for seniors to advocate on important issues in North Bay. Consider holding periodic open forums on seniors' priorities.	Medium term	City of North Bay City Clerk	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce	Creation of mechanisms for seniors to advocate
5.3 Explore opportunities for intergenerational activities, including visiting programs, buddy programs and reading programs, between local schools and seniors' residences and organizations.	Short term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	Local school boards; North Bay Golden Age Club	Number of intergenerational events undertaken
5.4 Encourage the development of recognition programs for seniors who have made outstanding community contributions.	Short term	Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay	CARP (formerly the Canadian Association of Retired Persons); Cultural Roundtable; Municipal Heritage Committee; North Bay Indian Friendship Centre	Implementation of regular recognition programs
5.5 Support educational programs and materials that encourage intergenerational respect, increase awareness of social isolation, and combat elder abuse and age discrimination.	Medium term	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	North East Local Health Integration Network; Seniors at Risk Network; local school boards, Canadore College, Nipissing University, North Bay Public Library, Indian Friendship Centre	Number of materials produced and distributed



6.6 Civic Participation and Employment

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
6.1 Promote a central directory of information regarding volunteer opportunities within the City of North Bay, including information on accessibility features or cost reimbursement programs that may be available.	Short term	Ontario 211	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit; local community organizations	Number of volunteer inquiries resulting from the directory
6.2 Explore opportunities to hold volunteer and employment fairs and training seminars targeting seniors.	Medium term	City of North Bay Economic Development Department	City of North Bay Parks, Recreation and Leisure Department; North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce; local businesses and community organizations	Number of new events and seminars targeting older adults
6.3 Work with the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and local institutions to communicate the positive qualities of older workers and to identify paid and volunteer positions suitable for seniors with or without disabilities.	Medium term	Yes Employment Services, DSSAB	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce; local businesses	Number of new positions identified
6.4 Develop an Age-Friendly Business designation to recognize businesses that accommodate older employees through flexible work arrangements, job sharing, physical accommodations and other features of a supportive work environment.	Medium term	North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce	Local businesses	Number of businesses recognized



6.7 Communication and Information

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
7.1 Provide a webpage on the City's website geared to seniors, and provide seniors-specific bulletin boards in selected City buildings, libraries and seniors' centres. Ensure these listings are well promoted to organizations interested in providing or receiving the information, and that they are updated regularly.	Short term	City of North Bay Communications Department	City of North Bay Information Services Department; North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit; North East Local Health Integration Network; local businesses and community organizations	Number of website visitors
7.2 Develop a plan to communicate the services and events available for seniors in North Bay. For example, produce and distribute a municipal booklet listing services and events of particular interest to seniors. Include a fridge magnet listing key phone numbers, including City of North Bay customer service and Ontario 211, in large print.	Short term	City of North Bay Parks, Recreation and Leisure Department	City of North Bay Information Services Department; North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit; North East Local Health Integration Network; local businesses and community organizations	Number of inquiries resulting from the directory
7.3 Promote education initiatives for advertisers and front-line customer service staff in providing quality customer service for seniors (e.g. how to produce clear written materials and communicating effectively with older customers, including those who may have challenges).	Medium term	Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay	Canadian Hearing Society; CNIB (formerly the Canadian National Institute for the Blind); Literacy Nipissing; Alzheimer Society; North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce; North Bay Downtown Improvement Area; Nipissing University, Canadore College	Number of initiatives undertaken or materials distributed
7.4 Help seniors access the increasing range of information available online. For example, consider ways to provide basic computer training to older adults.	Medium term	Age-Friendly Community Coordinating Committee of North Bay	Canadore College, Nipissing University, Golden Age Club, local school boards, North Bay Public Library	Number of new programs or sessions offered



6.8 Community Support and Health Services

Action Item	Timing/Priority	Proposed Lead	Potential Partners	Performance Indicator
8.1 Work with the provincial government, North East Local Health Integration Network, and local health and community services organizations to identify staffing and specialist requirements to provide quality care to seniors.	Short/Medium term	City of North Bay	North East Local Health Integration Network, Health Force Ontario, North Bay Regional Health Centre	Increased number of specialists who support older adults' needs servicing the North Bay area
8.2 Promote awareness of available health and community services and organizations to support seniors, their care partners, and family.	Medium term	North East Local Health Integration Network	Community Care Access Centre; North Bay Regional Health Centre, Red Cross; other local advocacy organizations, charitable organizations and service providers	Number of means of communication used to promote services; number of new telephone inquiries or visits to thehealthline.ca
8.3 Advocate for funding to support more affordable home care, day programs and respite care in the North Bay community for seniors.	Medium term		Alzheimer Society of Sudbury-Manitoulin North Bay and Districts; Dementia Network of North Bay; other local advocacy organizations and service providers	Number of new programs or service hours funded
8.5 Support the development and implementation of complementary age-friendly strategies, such as the Senior Friendly Hospital initiative by the North Bay Regional Health Centre, the Stay On Your Feet program offered through the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, and the Dementia Strategy.	Medium term	North East Specialized Geriatric Centre	Nipissing/Temiskaming Sub-LHIN Regional Hub	Implementation and continuation of complementary strategies



7.0 Summary and Next Steps

Through the preparation of the North Bay Age-Friendly Community (AFC) Action Plan, residents of North Bay were invited to view the City and its potential from an age-friendly perspective. Residents identified a wide range of existing age-friendly assets, but also numerous opportunities for improvement. The AFC Action Plan responds to these opportunities and sets out a road map for addressing them.

For the vision articulated in this Action Plan to become a reality, municipal departments, businesses, institutions, community organizations and residents in North Bay must commit to seeing and addressing issues through an age-friendly lens. Working together to implement the actions recommended in this plan will address the community's main age-friendly priorities and respond to the current challenges. Everyone in North Bay has a role to play in making the City a great place to live, work, play and learn for people of all abilities, at every stage of life.

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Having completed the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan, the City of North Bay can also apply to join the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Membership in this network will allow the City to access a global network of experts on aging, stay informed about developments and best practices in age-friendly planning, and share its progress with other member communities. More information on the application process is available at <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/membership/>.

Glossary

Action Item	An initiative recommended in this Age-Friendly Action Plan to make North Bay a more age-friendly community
Proposed Lead	An organization, usually a City of North Bay department, responsible for initiating and coordinating efforts to implement an Action Item
Potential Partner	An organization identified in this Age-Friendly Action Plan whose involvement is essential to implementing an Action Item

Acronyms

DNSSAB	District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board
NBPSDHU	North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
NE LHIN	North East Local Health Integration Network
OSS	Ontario Seniors' Secretariat
WHO	World Health Organization



Appendix A: Municipal Policy Review



Appendix B: Seniors Focus Groups Report Summary



Appendix C: Visioning Workshop Summary



Appendix D: Community Survey and Results



Appendix E: World Café and Poster Board Comments – Seniors' Expo, June 11, 2016