

**Input into Terms of Reference for the
COL Official Plan (OP) Review Process, Jan 30, 2012
By the Healthy Communities Partnership Middlesex-London
Physical Activity Policy Action Team**

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Slide 1: Title Page

Good afternoon.

Thank you to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee for giving us the opportunity to make this brief presentation.

I am Bernadette McCall, Public Health Nurse at the MLHU & with me is Diane Szoller of the Thames Region Ecological Association. We are here representing the Healthy Communities Partnership Middlesex London, Physical Activity Policy Action Team.

In December 2010, a number of community stakeholders came together to form the Healthy Communities Partnership Middlesex-London. This was part of a provincial initiative to support **local** policy-focused activities that would help foster **healthy communities**.

During community consultations in 2011, **Physical Activity** was identified as a top local priority in London & Middlesex. *[from among 6 health priorities; including mental health, injuries, unhealthy eating, substance & alcohol misuse, tobacco use that were explored]*

Slide 2: Healthy Communities Partnership ML Members

Subsequently, the Physical Activity Policy Action Team was formed & began to explore policy opportunities that could increase physical activity levels in London & Middlesex.

Membership currently includes: 20 individuals from 16 different organizations & networks:

Alzheimer Society
Boys & Girls Club
Child & Youth Network –Healthy Eating Healthy Physical Activity
Fanshawe College
Heart & Stroke Foundation
Hutton House
La Ribambelle
London District Catholic School Board
London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy
Middlesex London Health Unit
Ministry of Health & Long Term Care
South West Stroke Strategy
Thames Region Ecological Association
Thames Valley District School Board
University of Western Ontario -
YMCA

Slide 3: A Healthy Community

What makes a community **healthy** is complex & includes many different factors:

The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement reads: Strong, liveable & healthy communities enhance social well-being & are economically & environmentally sound.

Municipalities need to consider the impact **land use planning and the built environment** have on people's **health**. Elements of the built environment, such as road design, location of greenspaces, availability of bike and pedestrian trails and access to grocery stores, all influence the health of residents and visitors. (*Simcoe Muskoka District HU, 2011*)

What Is an Active, Healthy Community?

An active, healthy community is a place where everyone can live safely and get involved in activities they enjoy. People feel connected and are quick to volunteer and help each other out. Everyone has easy access to safe places to be active. The community offers inviting and affordable public parks and playgrounds, trails and sidewalks, swimming pools, arenas, and libraries. Low-cost healthy food is readily available, both in local stores and schools. Province of Alberta

Slide 4: Health & Physical Activity - Recommendations

#1 With this in mind, we recommend that the concept of **health** be included in the Official Plan Terms of Reference in both the *Community Values* and *Vision*.

#2 We would also like to see that opportunities be enhanced for Londoners to engage in **physically active lifestyles** that are safe & health enhancing through changes in the built environment.

Slide 5: Health & Physical Activity

There is well established scientific evidence that regular physical activity is health enhancing & an important component in preventing many **adverse health conditions** such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes & osteoporosis. It also has positive **psychological & social benefits**.

The Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute states that, “Physical Activity is one of the most **cost-effective** ways to achieve the objective of having a healthier population, physically and mentally....”

Unfortunately, there has been an ongoing decline in physical activity levels for many years and London-Middlesex is no exception, with only 50% of the population (*by **self report***) being sufficiently active to meet the standards of Canada’s Physical Activity Guide. In fact, these levels may not reflect the true picture. We know from national studies, where **direct** measurements were taken, that physical activity levels are much lower than those obtained by self report.

(85% of Cdn adults & 93% of Cdn children & youth not being active enough to ensure long term health & well being)

Moving to **counteract this trend**, there is a growing body of research which shows that **community design** can influence how people travel and how physically active they are. For this reason we believe the current Official Plan review process is an excellent opportunity to further advance the work that has already been done in London to create an **environment** that is **more conducive to physically active lifestyles**.

The 2006 - 2010 City of London Official Plan has helped determine many positive land use decisions. We believe this can be augmented by introducing **objectives and policies in the new Official Plan** to further increase opportunities for Londoners to engage in safe, physically active lifestyles.

Slide 6: Health & Physical Activity

These 2 recommendations can be supported by:

- Introduction of a municipal physical activity charter
- Increased safe & active transportation options
- An enhanced multi-modal, accessible, interconnected transportation system
- Further development of the infrastructure to support safe walking & cycling
- Continued improvement of road design that works toward the safety of all users
- Providing recreation opportunities with sun protection

Slide 7:

The Healthy Communities Partnership recommends that the concept of **health** with a focus on **enhancing safe, physical activity options** be included in the scope of the Terms of Reference for the Official Plan review.

This recommendation coincides with, supports and builds on other COL official documents and plans. (*i.e. 2006 Official Plan, the City of London Strategic Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Bicycle Master Plan, and the Parks & Recreation Master Plan*).

We thank the Strategic Priorities & Policy Committee for considering this submission.

**City of London
Official Plan Review
Terms of Reference Submission
January 30, 2012**



**Healthy Communities Partnership
Middlesex-London
Physical Activity Policy Action Team**

- Alzheimer Society
- Boys & Girls Club
- CYN-HEHPA
- Fanshawe College
- Heart & Stroke Fdn
- Hufton House
- La Ribambelle
- London District Catholic School Board
- London Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy
- Middlesex-London Health Unit
- Ministry of Health & Long Term Care
- SW Stroke Strategy
- Thames Region Ecological Assoc
- Thames Valley District School Board
- University of Western Ontario
- YMCA

A Healthy Community

Strong, liveable & healthy communities enhance social well-being & are economically & environmentally sound.



Provincial Policy Statement 2005, Part IV

Health & Physical Activity

1. Include the concept of **health** in the *Community Values* and *Vision* for the City of London.
2. Opportunities be enhanced for Londoners to engage in **physically active lifestyles** that are safe & health enhancing.



Health & Physical Activity

- Physical activity IS health enhancing
- Counteract decreasing physical activity levels
- Community design can positively influence physical activity levels



Health & Physical Activity

- Introduce a municipal physical activity charter
- Support safe & active transportation
- Enhance multi-modal, accessible, interconnected transportation system
- Support safe walking & cycling
- Road design that works toward safety of all users, ages, stages
- Provide recreation opportunities with sun protection

**London
A Healthy Community**

