



Healthy Communities:

Town of Perth

2017



Prepared by:

Healthy Communities Partnership: Lanark, Leeds & Grenville



Healthy Communities Vision Lanark, Leeds and Grenville

*Healthy people in Lanark, Leeds & Grenville live,
learn, work and play in healthy communities*



All community members have the opportunity to make the choices that enable them to live a healthy life, regardless of income, education, or ability. Healthy community environments promote well being and quality of life and contribute to integrated community sustainability (cultural vitality, economic health, environmental responsibility and social equity).

Physical Activity

All community members have the necessary knowledge, interest, resources and opportunities to be physically active, including being active outdoors in nature.

Healthy Eating

All community members have food knowledge and skills, and access to local, safe, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food.

Mental Well Being and Resiliency

All community members are engaged and connected and have access to resources, and are able to cope with life's challenges within a safe, supportive community.

Substance/Alcohol Misuse Prevention

All community members have a responsible attitude towards alcohol and other drugs, and the community supports skills and knowledge for healthy decision making and risk reduction.

Tobacco Use/Exposure Prevention

All community members have knowledge about tobacco use, skills for risk reduction and have less exposure to tobacco smoke in public and recreation settings.

Injury Prevention

All community members have the knowledge and skills to prevent injuries, and a healthy environment in which to live, learn, work and play.

INTRODUCTION

Healthy communities are vibrant and connected. They support healthy choices and enhance learning, growth and development. Economic benefits include less school and workplace absenteeism, more innovation, and less use of the health care system. People are drawn to healthy communities.

The Healthy Communities Partnership (HCP) was formed in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville in 2010 to bring communities (e.g., geographic, population) together to mobilize organizations and leaders to develop policies and environments that promote healthy living. The Partnership developed the Municipal Healthy Community Initiative to celebrate what municipalities are currently doing to support a healthy community, and to provide a platform for municipalities to learn from each other.

The objectives of the Municipal Healthy Community Initiative are to:

- Introduce municipal councils and staff to the Healthy Communities Vision, and encourage them to endorse the Vision;
- Highlight what municipalities are currently doing to support a healthy community through the completion of the Healthy Community Asset Inventory Tool (HCAIT);
- Support and provide resources for the work municipalities undertake as they continue their journey towards a Healthy Community by building on current assets and initiatives;
- Track progress towards and celebrate the success of municipal activities to create Healthy Communities across Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville.

The HCP held focus groups across Lanark, Leeds and Grenville region to create the Healthy Communities Vision (page 2) that guides the work of the HCP and the Municipal Healthy Community Initiative. The questions posed to participants were: what does a healthy community look like to you, and how do we make the healthy choice the easy choice? Initial drafts of the Vision were shaped by many of these same organizations resulting in a “made in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville” statement of what a healthy community means to residents. Collectively there is much we can do to make the vision a reality, and many municipalities, organizations and individuals have already endorsed the Lanark, Leeds, Grenville Healthy Community Vision.

Staff from three local municipalities – Rideau Lakes, Beckwith and Smiths Falls – developed a Municipal Questionnaire to collect information on what municipalities are currently doing to support a health community.

This report celebrates the work the Town of Perth is doing to create a healthy community and make the “healthy choice, the easy choice” for the residents of their town. Perth staff completed the Municipal Questionnaire.

PERTH SUPPORTS A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Vision: All community members have the necessary knowledge, interest, resources and opportunities to be physically active, including being active outdoors in nature.

Section 1: PROGRAMMING AND FACILITIES

Facilities and Programs

The municipality has the following facilities in the community provided either by the municipality itself, in partnership, or privately. Some are in high demand (***), others in medium (**), and some in low demand (*). Many have specific programs for the residents.

- Soccer field *** with a soccer program
- Baseball diamonds *** with baseball/softball/t-ball program
- Indoor swimming pool *** with a swimming program
- Ice arena(indoor) ** with a hockey and ice skating/figure skating programs
- Outdoor skating rink **
- Running track ***
- Tennis courts **
- Curling club with a curling program ***
- Skateboard park **
- Bike paths **
- Walking trails ** with a walking program
- Splash pad/wading pool ***
- Volleyball courts ** with volleyball and badminton program
- Basketball courts ** with basketball program
- Toboggan Hill **
- Dance program
- Art program
- Football program
- Fitness classes
- Cards



Safety is taken seriously and the municipality ensures there is lighting and appropriate signage, supervising staff have first aid training, lifeguards are on duty at the swimming pool, and enhanced police coverage is provided for specific events.

Facilities, playing fields, and parks are smoke free.

The municipality encourages:

- Parks and Recreation Ontario: High Five
- and requires the following training of coaches and organizers to ensure all are able to participate in activities in a safe and meaningful way:
- First Aid



Reaching out to the Residents

Recognizing that children and adults have different interests the municipality provides specific programs for the following groups and ensures low income individuals and families are able to access programs.

- Young children (age birth to 6)
- Children age 7 to 12
- Youth age 13 to 18
- Adult and seniors
- Families
- Children, youth and adults with disabilities/special needs
- Intergenerational

A variety of methods are used to communicate information about recreation facilities and opportunities:

- Notices and brochures
- Website
- Social media
- Newspaper advertisement and community newspaper notices
- Notices at recreation facilities
- Notices included with program registration information
- Notices sent out by other agencies/partners
- Host a recreation event for seasonal recreation programs

Section 2: BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Part A: Land Use Planning

Land use planning around both new and existing developments provides opportunities to create built environments that promote being physically active in a safe place.

A Complete Streets approach includes elements for designing and maintaining streets with safe access for all users. The Town of Perth is planning to add the following elements of a Complete Streets approach in its policy for designing and maintaining streets:

- Specify that 'all users' includes pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, and motorists, of all ages and abilities
- Aim to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected street network for all users, not only motorists
- Recognize the need for flexibility: that all streets are different and user needs will be balanced
- Apply to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way
- Make any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions
- Direct the use of the latest and best design standards
- Direct that complete street solutions fit into the context of the community

With new development, Perth has many policies and practices in place to further support physical activity as part of healthy living:

Current

- Safe places to walk and/or cycle (e.g. sidewalks, walking paths or bicycle paths)
- Shops that are accessible by walking or bicycle
- Schools that are accessible by walking or bicycle
- Sport and recreation facilities that are accessible by walking or bicycle
- Parkland or green space that is accessible by walking or bicycle.
- Complete, mixed-use communities with good access to employment, shopping, education, recreational opportunities, and health care to help reduce car trips.
- Using a percentage of development charges to support recreation.

Part B: Active Transportation:

Policies and settings that promote active transportation (walking, biking, wheeling, etc.) have both the environmental benefits of reducing emissions and promoting physical activity during the commute to work or school and for leisure.

Perth has the following in place to promote active transportation:

- Linkages of trails, sidewalks and street crossing that connect to public institutions (i.e. schools, seniors centres, retirement homes), offices, commercial and multi-residential areas with signage (*municipal policy)

- Bike lanes (*municipal policy)
- Shared use paths or trails (*municipal policy)

Residents enjoy 40 km of sidewalks, and <10 km of shared-use paths and 6 km of walking trails or paths within the town.

Section 3: OUTDOOR AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Being outdoors in nature has been shown to have benefits for physical and mental health. The Town of Perth supports being outdoors in nature by:

- Maintaining a network of trails, either independently or in partnership, for:
 - * walking/hiking
 - * non-motorized used only
- Providing parks and playgrounds with an established system to repair and/or upgrade the parks/playgrounds
 - * 4 parks
 - * 2 playgrounds
- Promoting parks and trail systems to residents
- Hosting outdoor festivals and events



Perth is conducting a recreation feasibility study that will lead into a Recreation Master Plan.

Section 4: ACCESSIBILITY

It is important that opportunities for physical activity are available for all members of the community. Partnerships with other organizations help to leverage limited resources and connect individuals in the community with assistance in accessing physical activity.

To support accessibility Perth provides the following:

- Municipally-run facilities in the community fully accessible to children, youth and adults with disabilities or special needs.
- Works with partners to provide facilities (F) or programs (P) for residents:
 - * With other municipalities F
 - * With sports organizations or other providers of physical activity programming P
 - * With organizations that facilitate access to meaningful recreation P
 - * With schools/school boards P

HEALTHY EATING

Vision: All community members have food knowledge and skills, and access to local, safe, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food.

Part A: Healthy food choices

Healthy eating can be supported for those using municipal facilities or attending municipal events – including municipal employees, elected officials and members of the public.

In Perth:

- For residents, healthy food and beverage options are available at the following:
 - * Meetings with non-municipal employees
 - * Events that are open to the public
 - * Meetings for employees and elected officials
 - * Events for employees and elected officials
 - * In vending machines in municipal facilities
- For employees, workplace supports for healthy eating include:
 - * Refrigerator access
 - * Microwave access
 - * Suitable separate space for employees to eat a healthy lunch/snack
 - * Suitable break times for employees to eat a healthy lunch/snack
- For residents, the Town of Perth provides access to municipal (non-bottled) water at no cost at municipal facilities and events, and water bottle filler adapters are slated to be added to water fountains in municipal facilities.

Part B: Municipal plans and policies around local food systems

Locally grown and produced foods can play a key role in healthy eating as well as support the local economy and protect the environment by reducing the distance that food is transported.

Perth provides support with policy, projects, and support for the production, preparation, distribution and retailing of local food and management of food-related waste as follows:

- Providing financial or in kind support for community gardens
- Promoting green initiatives for water conservation (e.g., rain barrels or small scale irrigation systems)
- Working in partnership with other municipalities and organizations to develop a regional food hub to aggregate, distribute and market locally produced foods
- Running or providing financial or in kind support for farmers markets
- Permitting and supporting mobile vendors (e.g., mobile farmers' markets, mobile grocery stores, and produce carts) that provide access to local foods in underserved communities

- Providing a municipality-wide organic waste collection/composting program
- Supporting programs in the community that provide resources for accessing healthy foods through either funding, facility or other in kind contributions
 - * Community kitchen
 - * Food bank
 - * Cooking club
 - * Cooking classes
 - * Nutrition workshops (e.g., nutrition for expecting mothers, understanding nutrition labels, food shopping and eating on a budget, etc.)

SUMMARY

The Town of Perth has done much to create a healthy environment for residents. It provides many places and programs to encourage physical activity, through the town itself, in partnership, or privately with a strong emphasis on accessibility for all residents. It recognizes the value of healthy eating and the importance of supporting the local food system.

By endorsing the Healthy Community Vision the town of Perth has publicly affirmed its commitment to continue its work to make the “healthy choice the easy choice” for residents. The Healthy Community Partnership applauds this work and commits to support the town going forward.



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