

Healthy Communities: *Township of Rideau Lakes*

2015



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 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 x) that guides the work of the HCP and the Municipal Healthy Community Initiative. The questions posed to participants were: what does a healthy community looked 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 Township of Rideau Lakes is doing to create a healthy community and make the “healthy choice, the easy choice” for the residents of their township. Rideau Lakes staff completed the Municipal Questionnaire and it was approved by Council on xxx.

RIDEAU LAKES SUPPORTS A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

MODULE 1: 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. Many have specific programs for the residents.

- Soccer field with a soccer program.
- Baseball diamond with baseball program
- Ice arena with a hockey and ice skating program
- Outdoor skating rink
- Public beach with a swimming program
- Community centre with dance, art, cards and fitness programs
- Running track
- Tennis courts
- Curling rink with a curling program
- Bike paths
- Walking trails with a walking program



There is some community interest in developing a lawn bowling pitch and a splash pad/wading pool.

Safety is taken seriously and the municipality ensures there is lighting, appropriate signage, enhanced police coverage for major events and ensures supervising staff have first aid training.

All facilities, playing fields, and parks are smoke free.

The municipality provides training for staff, to ensure all are able to participate in activities in a safe and meaningful way, which incorporates similar principles to those provided by:

- Parks and Recreation Ontario: High Five
- National Coaching Certification Program
- First Aid

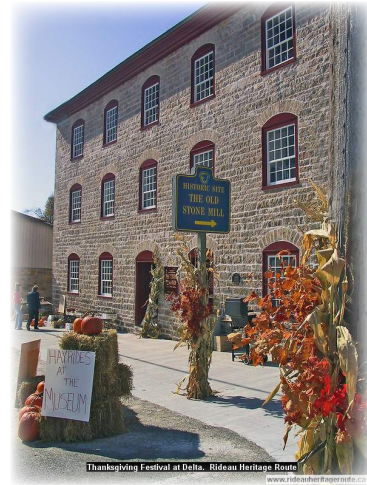
Reaching out to the Residents

Recognizing that children and adults have different interests the municipality provides specific programs for the following age 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

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

- Notices and brochures
- Website
- Social media
- Newspaper advertisement
- Notices at recreation facilities
- Notices included with program registration information
- 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 provide opportunities to create built environments that promote being physically active in a safe place. With new development, Rideau Lakes has several practices in place, and is developing or is interested in developing policies to further support physical activity as part of healthy living:

Current

- Shops that are accessible by walking or bicycle.
- Parkland or green space that is accessible by walking or bicycle.
- Using a percentage of development charges to support recreation.
- For the recreation department to have the opportunity to provide input on subdivision development plans.

Under Development

- Safe places to walk (e.g. sidewalks or walking paths)
- Bicycle paths

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.

Rideau Lakes has the following in place to promote active transportation:

- Bike lanes on roads
- Shared use paths or trails (* municipal policy)
- Lighting or traffic calming measures that enhance personal safety (*municipal policy)

Residents enjoy 3 km of shared use paths and bike lanes, 10.3 km of sidewalks, and 50+km of walking trails and paths within the township.

Section 3: OUTDOOR AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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

1. Maintaining a network of trails either by itself or in partnership for:
 - walking/hiking trails
 - trails for non-motorized used only
 - paddling trails.
2. Providing parks and playgrounds with an established system to repair and/or upgrade the parks/playgrounds
 - 10 parks
 - 7 playgrounds
3. Promoting parks and trail systems to residents
4. Creating a Parks Master Plan
5. Providing use of soccer pitches, ball diamonds or parks at no charge.



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 Rideau Lakes provides the following:

- municipally-run facilities in the community fully accessible to children, youth and adults with disabilities or special needs.
- an affordable, accessible policy that supports free use of facilities, reduced registration costs for families and where possible, free admittance where there is room in a program once the user fee structure has been met.
- Works with partners to provide facilities (F) or programs (P) for residents:
 - * With other municipalities F P
 - * With private sector P
 - * With sports organizations or other providers of physical activity programming F P
 - * With organizations that facilitate access to meaningful recreation P
 - * With Family and Children's Services P
 - * With Social Services P
 - * With Schools/school boards P
 - * With faith based organizations P
 - * With community service agencies P



MODULE 2: HEALTHY EATING

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

Section 1: HEALTHY EATING AT MUNICIPAL FACILITIES OR EVENTS

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 Rideau Lakes:

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

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 municipality provides access to municipal (non-bottled) water at no cost at municipal facilities and events.

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.

Rideau Lakes 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:

- Municipal zoning by-law structured to be permissive in allowing compatible large and small scale agriculture uses and supporting accessory uses across a variety of zones (e.g. zoning that allows: back yard chickens, farm gate sales, small scale value added production of agricultural goods in a general 'rural' zone, secondary dwelling permitted for season farm workers etc.).
- Municipal Official Plan includes designations and policies that protect both prime agricultural lands and specialty crop areas as applicable
- Providing municipal tax credits for agricultural properties
- Promoting green initiatives for water conservation (e.g., rain barrels or small scale irrigation systems)
- Development Charges by-law exemptions of agricultural related development
- Planning policies and zoning bylaws that allow value-added activity (e.g., washing, packaging) on agriculture land
- Running or providing financial or in kind support for farmers markets
- Zoning laws that permit farm stands or pick your own businesses
- Providing information to the public (e.g., providing information from or links to information developed by Local Flavours, Foodland Ontario and others) on local food
- Partner with volunteer hall board to operate a farmers market
- Supporting and promoting composting initiatives (e.g., distributing or selling at cost backyard composters, providing financial or in kind support to local organizations' composting initiatives)
- Supporting programs in the community that provide resources for accessing healthy foods through either funding, facility or other in kind contributions
 - * Good Food Box Program
 - * Food bank
 - * Seniors lunch program
 - * Community/group/organization provide free, by donation or minimal cost dinners

SUMMARY

The Municipality of Rideau Lakes has done much to create a healthy environment for residents. It provides many places and programs to encourage physical activity, through the municipality 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 municipality of Rideau Lakes 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 municipality going forward.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A big **thank you** to the following people who have contributed to the production of this report:

Development of the Healthy Community Asset Inventory Tool:

- Carole Chang, RD - Public Health Nutritionist, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Dr. Catherine Dickson - University of Ottawa
- Susan Dunfield - Manager of Community and Leisure Services, Township of Rideau Lakes
- Michael Dwyer - CAO, Township of Rideau Lakes
- Susan Healey - Communications Coordinator, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Richard Kidd - Reeve, Township of Beckwith
- Elaine Mallory - Director of Planning and Development, Township of Leeds and Thousand Islands
- Cassandra McGregor - Executive Assistant/EDC/Recreation, Township of Beckwith
- Nicole McKernan - Senior Planner, Town of Smiths Falls
- Elaine Murkin, RD - Manager, Healthy Living Department, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Suzanne Rivard - Community Member, Gananoque
- Dr. Paula Stewart - Medical Officer of Health, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, Chair of Healthy Communities Partnership: Lanark, Leeds & Grenville, Stewardship Committee
- Lois Dewey - Coordinator, Healthy Communities Partnership: Lanark, Leeds & Grenville

Completion of the Asset Inventory for the Township of Rideau Lakes:

- Susan Dunfield - Manager of Community and Leisure Services, Township of Rideau Lakes
- Michael Dwyer - CAO, Township of Rideau Lakes
- Michelle Jones - Supervisor, Properties & Environmental Services, Township of Rideau Lakes
- Brittany Mulhern - Manager of Development Services, Township of Rideau Lakes

Production of the Healthy Community Report for the Township of Rideau Lakes:

- Jodi Drummond - Production Specialist, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
- Dr. Paula Stewart - Medical Officer of Health, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, Chair of Healthy Communities Partnership: Lanark, Leeds & Grenville, Stewardship Committee
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