Title: Planning for Healthy Communities - A Planner's Prescription

Focus: Planners play a critical role in creating the conditions for health and well-being through built and natural environments in Canada. For example, the design of our communities influence how physically active we are, how we travel through our communities, how socially connected we are, the kinds of food we have access to, how exposed to the natural environment we are, how much we are exposed to air pollution, and ultimately, how we experience health and wellness. Over the last decade, there has been a growing body of evidence, resources, and guidelines to support planners in both understanding the links between health and the built environment, as well as the planning approaches that can advance health-promoting physical environments.

The Canadian Institute of Planners Healthy Communities Committee developed this annotated bibliography as a resource for planners looking for a bird's eye view of resources exploring connections between health and the built environment, as well as implications for planning. The resources can provide planners with a better understanding of how the built environment is a foundation for health and well-being, and the role of planners in building healthy, vibrant and livable communities. It also provides inspiration for the ways in which planners can engage with the public health sector through applying approaches such as health impact assessments, and the inclusion of health metrics and outcomes.

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Title	Author(s)	Publication Date	Relevance to Planners	Scope
Designing Healthy Living; The Chief Public Health Officer's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2017	Public Health Agency of Canada	2017	This report highlights the enormous potential that changes to the built environment can have on the health of Canadians through a comprehensive review of the evidence. It identifies rising rates of chronic diseases linked to unhealthy living and mediated by the built environment. The report reviews the potential for community design features to influence behaviour and health outcomes. It explores designing for active neighbourhoods, access to healthy food, supportive environments for mental health, and design features for specific populations such as children and older adults. Planners are encouraged to take a multi-sectoral approach and consider health as an important outcome. The report calls for more research and standardized data collection as well as systematic evaluations of community design impacts on health.	**Evidence**: Health and Built Environment Linkages
Healthy Canada by Design	Various authors: Canadian Journal of Public Health	2015	This supplementary issue of the Canadian Journal of Public Health provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Healthy Canada by Design coalition. This was a 5-year funded project by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer which involved health officials, planners, engineers, non-governmental organizations and academics from across Canada who sought to develop innovate approaches for promoting physical activity and reducing chronic diseases through community design.	**Evidence:** Journal supplement
Healthy Built Environment Linkages: A	Provincial Health Services	2014	The toolkit provides a framework linking community design, planning and health through a review of the	**Evidence**: Health and Built Environment

[Toolkit for Design, Planning, Health](#)	Authority - British Columbia		evidence. It is a foundational document that seeks to facilitate conversations between planners and public health, help apply health evidence to planning issues, inform built environment decision-making, and orient users to the peer-reviewed literature. Pathways tracking planning practices with health outcomes are described. Planning principals reviewed are as follows: healthy neighbourhood design; healthy transportation networks; healthy housing; healthy food systems; and healthy natural environments.	Linkages
[Working with local governments to support health equity through the built environment: A scoping review](#)	Zupancic, T. & Westmacott, C. Habitus Research for the BC Centre for Disease Control	2016	This report examines 16 review articles and 37 Canadian empirical studies published on health equity and the built environment since 2010, and is supplemented with additional literature related to local government intervention options. For each of the five features described in the [HBE Linkages Toolkit](#), this resource presents a review of the evidence, recommendations for action, and a table summary of the referenced studies.	**Evidence**: Health and Built Environment Linkages with a focus on Health Equity
[FACT SHEET: Supporting Health Equity Through the Built Environment](#)	BC Centre for Disease Control	2017	This fact sheet is based on [Working with local governments to support health equity through the built environment: A scoping review](#). For each of the five features described in the [HBE Linkages Toolkit](#), this resource presents evidence-based planning principles to support health equity through the built environment.	**Evidence**: Health and Built Environment Linkages with a Focus on Health Equity
[The Grocery Gap: Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters](#)	PolicyLink and The Food Trust	2010	This American report presents a summary of research related to food deserts and their impacts on communities. The four key findings include: accessing healthy food is a challenge for many Americans; better access corresponds with healthier eating; access to healthy food is associated with lower risk for diet-related	**Evidence**: Health and Built Environment Linkages with a Focus on Food Access

			chronic illnesses; and healthy food retail in underserved communities creates jobs and helps to revitalize low-income neighbourhoods. The report also includes a section on implications for policy. The bibliography includes 132 studies - approximately half peer-reviewed and half grey literature.	
The Impact of Green Space on Health and Air Pollution in Urban Communities	The David Suzuki Foundation	2015	This report reviews the evidence of the impacts green spaces in urban areas have in reducing air pollution and heat islands. It finds that there are significant benefits to health through the filtration of pollutants and through cooling effects during heat events.	**Evidence:** Greenspace in Urban Areas and Health
Global Change and Public Health: Addressing the Ecological Determinants of Health	Canadian Public Health Association Discussion Paper	2015	The first two chapters of this report address the context for thinking about the ecological determinants of health, while chapters 3 to 5 identify the challenges we face, the main ecological changes, the social forces behind these changes and their health implications. Chapter 6 and 7 turn from a review of the past and troubling health implications for declining ecological functions to consider reason for finding hope for the future. Chapters 8 and 9 describes an agenda for action.	**Evidence:** Review of the Ecological Determinants of Health and an Agenda for Action
Health Impact Assessment of Transportation and Land Use Planning Activities	Metro Vancouver		This guidebook describes the process of conducting Health Impact Assessments (HIA), which is a structured approach that can inform planners of the potential health-related outcomes of a planning activity before it is implemented, as well as opportunities to minimize negative health impacts and enhance health benefits. Steps include screening, scoping, assessment & analysis, and recommendations & reporting. The guidebook is supported by a toolkit with templates to inform a health impact assessment. Planners can use this HIA guide as a	**Health Impact Assessments:** How-To Guide for Planning

			tool for identifying how to improve community health and well-being.	
The State of Health Impact Assessment in Planning	American Planning Association	2016	This review provides an overview of the Health Impact Assessment process and its application in planning, as well as a snapshot of they have been carried out in a number of American jurisdictions.	**Health Impact Assessments:** How to Guide for Planning
Healthy Communities Practice Guide	Canadian Institute of Planners		This guide support planners in understanding their role in advancing healthier communities, including a framework describing the interconnected elements. It also provides a number of case studies. Further resources can be found on the Canadian Institute of Planners healthy communities' website.	**Practice Implications:** Framework and Case Studies
Community Planning with a Health Equity Lens: Promising Directions and Strategies	Haber, R. for the National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health	2011	This evidence review highlights initiatives from Canada and around the world that aim to incorporate health equity outcomes into community planning processes. A table outlines actions and impacts of the planning processes studied, the social determinants of health they address, and the challenges and successes of these processes. The review identifies six methods for applying an equity lens to planning processes: involve community members; target specific populations; monitor and evaluate outcomes; use equity-focused tools; use policy levers; consider how different social determinants of health intersect.	**Practice Implications:** Community Planning Practices that Incorporate Health Equity Considerations
How to Create and Implement Healthy General Plans: A Toolkit for Building Healthy, Vibrant Communities	ChangeLab Solutions and Rami + Associates	2012	This toolkit provides an overview of the various stages in which health could be integrated during the development of a general plan. It includes a discussion of engagement strategies as well as suggested policy language.	**Practice Implications:** frameworks for General Plans

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Comprehensive Healthy Community Assessment/Audit Report	Ontario Public Health Association Built Environment Workgroup	2012	This report presents a summary of the process undertaken by the Ontario Public Health Association's Built Environment working group to advance implementation of a systematic approach to incorporating health considerations into planning processes. The group aimed to identify existing tools that influence planning decisions and recommend best approaches for influence/relationship building based on consultation with Ontario planners. Note: no detail relating to the tools themselves are provided in this summary.	**Practice Implications:** Community Planning Practices that consider Community Health in Decision-Making
The Case for Healthy Places: Improving Health Outcomes Through Placemaking	Project for Public Spaces	2016	A case is made for the substantive role that placemaking has on physical, mental, and social health. The report reviews the evidence and analyzes placemaking in five areas: social support and interaction; play and active recreation; green and natural environments; healthy food; and walking and biking. The report provides principles and approaches that planners could integrate in ensuring that land use and transportation planning contribute to placemaking through promoting physical activity, reduced inequities, social interaction, and civic engagement.	**Practice Implications & Evidence**: Focus on Healthy Placemaking
Info Packet: Planning & Zoning for health in the Built Environment	American Planning Association	2016	This info packet is a compilation of resources for planners about the connections between health and the built environment as well as resources and case studies to support integration of health considerations into planning.	**Practice Implications & Evidence**: Health and Built Environment Considerations for Planners
Healthy Streets Evidence Review	Toronto Public Health	2014	This report reviews the evidence about how complete street design elements impact active lifestyles and	**Practice Implication & Evidence**: Focus

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			contribute to health.	on Streets
City of Calgary Nose Creek Area Structure Plan	City of Calgary	2015	This area structure plan, led by staff at the City of Calgary, incorporates Calgary's first City-initiated health impact assessment (HIA) tied to a policy plan. The goal of the plan and HIA were to develop a health-focused community. Healthy Planning Principles and Policies are included throughout the typical sections of an area structure plan with an introductory section focused on Healthy Communities, and details regarding the HIA process are included in the Appendix.	**Practice Implications & Health Impact Assessments:** Health Impact Assessment as a Component of Area Structure Plan
Healthy community design: policy statements for official plans	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit	2014	This document provides suggested policy statements for Official Plans. Statements are categorized according to ways in which the built environment affects community health: Environment; Injury and Safety; Physical Activity; Sun Safety; Food Access; and Social Cohesion and Well-being. Each section includes a goal statement, rationale, objectives, planning policies, and implementation activities. The document provides a strong potential starting point for discussions between public health and planning professionals.	**Practice Implications & Evidence:** Policy Statements to Support Healthy Communities
Building Healthy Places Toolkit: Strategies for Enhancing Health in the Built Environment	Urban Land Institute	2015	This resource includes evidence-based recommendations and strategies as well as best practice strategies aligned around three categories: physical activity; healthy food and drinking water; and healthy environment and social well-being. Schematics illustrate how the recommendations can be applied in different real estate typologies and sectors. Sidebars and case examples are included with stories from developers who have worked to incorporate these concepts into their projects. Synergies with existing certification programs are also	**Practice Implications & Evidence:** Review of Placemaking Evidence and Practice Implications

			highlighted.	
Healthy Development Assessment User Guide	Region of Peel	2016	This guide is a tool for assessing planning and development proposals to evaluate their health-promoting potential. The assessment tool identifies criteria and considerations related to the following core elements of the built environment: density; service proximity; land use mix; street connectivity; streetscape characteristics; and efficient parking. Evidence is not directly cited in this guide as it builds on previous reports developed by/for Region of Peel.	**Practice Implications:** Policy and Development Health Assessment Tool
Physical Activity: Built Environment Approaches Combining Transportation System Interventions with Land Use and Environmental Design	Community Preventiveness Services Task Force	2016	Built environment interventions to increase physical activity create or modify environmental characteristics to make physical activity easier or more accessible. The report summarizes a systematic review of the literature and concludes with a listing of topics for which a mix of policies on transportation and land use/environmental design measures can be reasonably be expected to increase physical activity.	**Practice Implications & Evidence:** Focus on Increasing Physical Activity
Protecting Health: Air Quality and Land Use Compatibility	Halton Region Health Department	2009	This discussion paper provides air quality and land-use compatibility suggestions for inclusion in the Halton Regional Official Plan review process. It includes a review of other jurisdictions on avoiding conflicts between sensitive land uses.	**Practice Implications & Evidence:** Air Quality, Public Health and Planning
Clean Air Hamilton	Clean Air Hamilton	ongoing	The Clean Air Hamilton website is dedicated to improving air quality in the City of Hamilton. The website includes a number of resources to support initiating research on air quality; providing information and advice to all levels of government; and encouraging emission reductions from	**Practice Implications & Evidence:** Air Quality and Planning

			all sources in Hamilton.	
[Municipal Heat Response Planning in British Columbia, Canada](#)	BC Centre for Disease Control	2017	Extremely useful for small and medium sized municipalities, this guideline provides a framework for collaboration between municipalities and health authorities to understand public health vulnerabilities related to heat waves and develop an extreme heat / climate change adaptation plan/strategy. Best practices and British Columbia strategies are being reviewed against three critical steps recommended, preparedness, emergency response and long term strategies. For long term planning, recommendations to include in heat adaptation planning, such as increasing tree canopy, are being implemented.	**Practice Implications:** Guideline to municipal heat response plans
[Health in All Policies: Framework for Country Action](#)	World Health Organization	2014	The provision of health services account for only a small percentage of people's' health. A "Health in all Policies" approach involves other sectors considering the health impacts of their policies. Planners, as part of a Health in all Policies approach, should consider the health consequences of policies as the built environment is a key determinant of health and well-being.	**Framework**: Health in All Policies
[Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places](#)	Urban Land Institute	2013	This framework provides an overview of ten principles that can provide a new approach for building healthy communities around the world: put people first; recognize the economic value; empower champions for health; energize shared spaces; make healthy choices easy; ensure equitable access; mix it up; embrace unique character; promote access to healthy food; make it active. A web-based overview can be found [here](#).	**Framework:** Healthy Places Principles

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Healthy City Strategy – Four Year Action Plan 2015-2018 (Phase II)	City of Vancouver	2015	Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy addresses built environment within the context of an overall strategy for improving public health in the city. The Phase II Action Plan recommends 19 priority actions and provides a summary table of goals, targets and indicators. For several of the actions, the report refers to existing City strategies or commits the City to specific outputs.	**Framework & Metrics**: City-Wide Strategic Plan Including Healthy Built Environments
Metrics for Planning Healthy Communities	American Planning Association's Planning and Community Health Center	2017	Metrics are recommended that planners can integrate into planning processes. The report focuses on 5 domains: 1) active living, 2) healthy food system, 3) environmental exposure, 4) emergency preparedness, and 5) social cohesion. For each domain, additional information is provided about how equity is interwoven. The metrics identified in this report leverage existing indicator systems, indexes, interactive maps, and literature about social determinants of health, and, therefore, the direct evidence behind the chosen metrics is not always included here.	**Metrics:** Metrics Linking Health and the Built Environment
Policy on the Built Environment and Health	The Canadian Medical Association	2013	This policy statement provides an overview of the Canadian Medical Association's perspective on how the built environment affects health, and how multiple sectors can have a positive impact.	**Position & Policy Statement**
Position Statement: Community Design, Physical Activity, Heart Disease and Stroke	Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada	2011	This position statement from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada provides an overview of key health issues associated with the built environment	**Position & Policy Statement**

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The purpose of this annotated bibliography is to provide an introduction to health and the built environment to inspire and support planners seeking resources in this area. It is not intended to be a comprehensive overview of all white papers and peer-reviewed literature. However, if you are aware of other resources or themes you would like us to explore, please contact HCC Chair, Olimpia Pantelimon at olimpia.pantelimon@shaw.ca.

The Healthy Communities committee is a volunteer committee established by the Canadian Institute of Planners to promote the planning and development of healthy communities across Canada. Within the context of planning practice, a healthy community is one where a strong positive relationship is established between human health and the built and natural environments, including, but not limited to transportation, infrastructure, social planning, community design, and the development of sustainable communities.