

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



Healthy Communities

Where you live affects your health. Community design can influence our lives in many ways. Healthy communities strive for a strong economy, a clean environment and a healthy population.

Communities protect and promote residents' health when they provide: opportunities for physical activity and recreation; options for sustainable transportation; access to healthy foods; a safe physical environment; infrastructure and buildings designed for people of all ages and abilities; clean air, safe water and a protected natural environment.

The way a community is designed can influence residents' access to healthy choices and opportunities (e.g., clean air and water, fresh food markets, grocery stores, recreational facilities, trails, parks, etc.) and unhealthy choices (e.g., air pollution, access to alcohol, tobacco, fast food).

DID YOU KNOW?

- When communities are designed to accommodate cars, the result is more vehicles on the road. More vehicles increase both air pollution, and the risk of motor-vehicle injuries and deaths.
- Fewer people walk or cycle in neighbourhoods that are spread out and car dependent which adds to air pollution. This contributes to poor health.
- Access to fresh healthy foods at neighbourhood grocery stores and farmer's markets increase the chance that people will choose healthy food.
- Greenspace is critical to good air quality and reduces the impact of extreme heat, climate change and protects water.
- Access to open spaces and public gathering places can increase personal well-being.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675

york.ca/healthybuiltenvironment

19-5254


York Region

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



You make a difference when you. . .

- Get to know your community. Walk or cycle more often and use your car less
- Eat local, healthy food. Buy fresh food at your local farmers' market
- Reduce your carbon footprint by conserving energy at home and on the road
- Speak with your neighbours about community issues. Discuss ways to solve problems
- Participate on a municipal or community committee
- Learn more about your municipality's official plan and how it affects your community

Municipalities show leadership when they. . .

- Plan for compact, mixed use land development. Reduce distances people need to travel to jobs, shopping, schools and recreation
- Regularly maintain and upgrade sidewalks, trails and walkways so these are safe and convenient year-round
- Provide a variety of housing and transportation options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities
- Include energy conservation, climate-resiliency and healthy community design policies in official plans
- Build where infrastructure, roads and services already exist

BE AN ACTIVE PARTNER WHERE YOU LIVE, LEARN, WORK AND PLAY.
Participate in building healthy communities!