



People Engaged ★ Places Defined ★ Progress Driven

# Official Plan officiel

Une collectivité qui s'engage ★ Un plan précis ★ La route du progrès

## Planning for a Healthy Community: Recommendations for the Official Plan Process

March 5, 2004

*Developing a single, up-to-date  
Official Plan that fosters sustainable growth,  
economic development and a high quality of life  
to attract people and investment.*

*Élaborer un seul Plan officiel à jour qui favorise  
la croissance durable, le développement économique  
et une qualité de vie élevée afin d'attirer  
des gens et des investissements.*

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## Contents

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A.	Defining healthy community .....	1
B.	The city endorses Healthy Community principles .....	1
1.	Linking Sudbury's Healthy Community to the Official Plan .....	2
2.	Citizen engagement is fundamental to a Healthy Community .....	3
C.	Citizens have identified twelve Healthy Community determinants for the City of Greater Sudbury .....	4
D.	Policy development suggestions by determinant .....	5
1.	Citizens engaged in their community through local decision-making processes .....	5
2.	Accessible, utilized recreation programs and facilities for all residents ...	6
3.	Prosperous community with abundant employment opportunities .....	7
4.	Accessible health care and fitness to improve individual well-being .....	9
5.	Preservation of our natural assets through environmental stewardship principles .....	10
6.	Sound municipal infrastructure with quality service delivery .....	11
7.	A community that is inclusive, diverse and tolerant .....	12
8.	Social support available for all challenged citizens .....	12
9.	A unified city with proud citizens .....	13
10.	A safe city in which to live .....	14
11.	Superb educational opportunities accessible to all residents .....	14
12.	Compelling community vision with strong leadership at all levels .....	14

## **A. Defining healthy community**

A Healthy Community embraces a broad vision of health, one that recognizes balanced economic, environmental and social development enhances human health. Like a three-legged stool, a Healthy Community recognizes that social, economic and environmental planning is integrated and interdependent, and therefore achievable only when each is in harmony with the others. Signature attributes of a Healthy Community include an abundance of employment opportunities, clean air and water, quality infrastructure, green space and recreational opportunities, supportive social networks, quality education facilities, engaged citizens, and safe, liveable neighbourhoods.

## **B. The city endorses Healthy Community principles**

The Healthy Community Implementation Plan clearly demonstrates citizens' desire for a locally-designed and implemented Healthy Community. The Corporation of the City of Greater Sudbury also endorses Healthy Community principles through its mission...

“WE PROVIDE EXCELLENT ACCESS TO QUALITY MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND LEADERSHIP IN THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY.”

...and its values, goals, and strategic priorities:

“IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES MOVEMENT BY SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORKS AND A HEALTHY COMMUNITIES IMPLEMENTATION MODEL.”

## 1. Linking Sudbury's Healthy Community to the Official Plan

Local government has a strong influence on its Healthy Community status through regulatory controls and the provision of programs and services to its citizens. Support for recreational facilities, planning for parks and open spaces, attracting/assisting industry that creates jobs for citizens, and supporting health facilities, health programming, social networks, arts and cultural activities, etc., all contribute to a Healthy Community.

Official Plans are important documents that reflect the community's vision for future land-use development. While Official Plan policies therefore address primarily physical changes expected to occur over the projected planning period, Greater Sudbury's Official Plan should also acknowledge the link between physical design, quality of life, and the overall health of the community. In Sudbury, citizens connect their quality of life to first, their neighbourhood, and second, the broader community we define as the City of Greater Sudbury. Official Plan policies must therefore support positive **physical** changes that create unique, liveable, and healthy neighbourhoods featuring interactive and mutually supportive networks to enhance a shared sense of place/belonging, but which also seamlessly integrate into the larger urban network.

The Official Plan should also recognize that "community" can be broadly or narrowly defined, encompassing entire political boundaries or small, locally defined neighbourhoods. In Greater Sudbury, for example, Azilda, Garson, Gatchell, the Flour Mill, Val Caron, Coniston, and a number of other familiar settlement areas are important community symbols, irrespective of amalgamations and political changes that have occurred over the past 30 years. In this respect, the City of Greater Sudbury is very much a "Community of Neighbourhoods", each offering an interesting mosaic of cultures, unique geography, and diverse social and economic characteristics. These, in turn, have historically been interwoven together to shape the City of Greater Sudbury community, where common concerns and values transcend the local neighbourhood planning unit.

Planning policies and available implementation mechanisms need to uphold Sudbury's Healthy Community vision, both on a micro-level—i.e, neighbourhood or established settlement area—and across the entire City of Greater Sudbury. For example, Community Improvement provisions as permitted within section 28 through 30 of the Planning Act, where various innovative incentives can be utilized to enhance degraded areas or for ...**"any other environmental, social, or community economic development reason,"** provide real opportunities to effect change and promote Healthy Community values. Likewise, provisions under Section 37 that allow increased height or density in return for facilities and/or services that nurture a

Healthy Community are permitted. Several other mechanisms both within the Planning Act, such as parkland dedication or parking provisions, and other legislation, such as development charges, are available for judicious use to support Healthy Community principles.

## **2. Citizen engagement is fundamental to a Healthy Community**

Local government cannot achieve its Healthy Community goals without the support and active engagement of its citizens. A Healthy Community is truly a collaboration of community stakeholders with a common objective to improve the quality of life of residents. Indeed, building partnerships with groups, organizations and individual citizens with a keen interest in community affairs—i.e., a multi-sectoral approach—is fundamental to Healthy Community planning.

Residents are integral to the process of defining, solving and implementing solutions to identified problems/issues. Local government must therefore engage citizens and value their input. Likewise, citizens must know that their participation is meaningful and will help shape community policies. Citizens should therefore be empowered as active participants in municipal decision-making, from local neighbourhood planning through to municipal council policy formation.

Community Action Networks (CANS) are one method for enhanced citizen engagement. CANS are community-based, proactive, problem solving citizen groups, representing the three Healthy Community sectors, that can provide locally-based and locally-endorsed solutions for community enhancement. These are developed within annual work plans that are subsequently implemented locally or with the assistance of various City departments/representatives.

## C. Citizens have identified twelve Healthy Community determinants for the City of Greater Sudbury

Various determinants of Healthy Communities exist, however, all Healthy Communities strive to balance economic, environmental and social development concerns within a comprehensive framework. Through a Healthy Community planning and visioning process as part of the Healthy Community background report, citizens of the City of Greater Sudbury believe that decision-making within our City should be founded on the following:

1. **Citizens engaged** in their community through local decision-making processes.
2. **Accessible, utilized recreation programs and facilities** for all residents.
3. **Prosperous community** with abundant employment opportunities.
4. **Accessible Health Care and Fitness** to improve individual well-being.
5. **Preservation of our Natural assets** through environmental stewardship principles.
6. **Sound municipal infrastructure** with quality service delivery.
7. A community that is **inclusive, diverse, and tolerant**.
8. **Social support** available for all challenged citizens.
9. A **unified city** with proud citizens.
10. A **safe city** in which to live.
11. **Superb educational opportunities** accessible to all residents.
12. **Compelling community vision** with strong leadership at all levels

These determinants support the notion that good planning contributes to Healthy Communities; likewise, Healthy Communities embody good planning principles. For this reason, it is recommended that wherever possible, policies contained within the City of Greater Sudbury's new Official Plan incorporate the Healthy Community concept, as identified above by the twelve determinants, as a fundamental planning principle to guide future land-use development. This can be summarized by the following planning objective:

**The City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan recognizes the link between the physical design of communities, health and quality of life. It is the intent to develop a community where adequate community and human services for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are provided through opportunities for employment, recreation, learning, culture, physical and emotional well-being.**

**Further, the policies within this Plan are intended to support and promote the concept of Healthy Community by maintaining and enhancing the environment, providing/supporting a range of community services and housing options, and facilitating a strong economy.**

## **D. Policy development suggestions by determinant**

The final format and content of the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan is presently undetermined. With provincial approval of the final document expected in early 2006, the planning process remains in its preliminary stages, and a number of background studies are underway concurrently. The Healthy Community report was the first background study to be commissioned and completed; the intent was to provide a foundation for Official Plan policy development that reflects Healthy Community principles identified by citizens and subsequently endorsed by Council.

Ideally, “Healthy Community” will be a major theme weaving its way throughout, and linking the various chapters contained within, the final Official Plan. A separate Healthy Community chapter that provides greater emphasis and clarity is also possible.

Listed below are suggestions, ideas, and recommendations for policy development by determinant to promote the Healthy Community concept. Note that several of the following items may have application within one or more of the twelve determinant categories but are only listed once for brevity. A number of these policy suggestions may also be found in existing official plans and secondary plans, but they are listed here in order to provide a full range of options for inclusion within the new official plan.

- 1. Citizens engaged in their community through local decision-making processes**
  - ▶ Recognize that citizen engagement is an essential component of local decision-making. Continually seek ways to increase citizen participation in civic affairs.
  - ▶ Use CANs as key partners in Community Improvement Planning activities as

permitted under Sections 28-30 of the Planning Act.

- ▶ Ensure the City continues to support specialized citizen groups such as Earth Care Sudbury, Greater Sudbury Lake Improvement Advisory Panel (GSLIAP) etc., that contribute valuable volunteer resources to enhance Sudbury's position as a Healthy Community.
- ▶ Ensure the policies of the Official Plan have regard for the expressed desires of citizens as documented within the final reports of various Official Plan background and technical studies.
- ▶ Permit non-profit groups and individuals to use public buildings for cultural, recreational or social services.

## **2. Accessible, utilized recreation programs and facilities for all residents**

- ▶ Through recommendations contained within the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, ensure the City works with local school boards to maximize potential uses of school yards and surplus buildings for recreational uses. Further, consider acquiring surplus school sites for leisure, parks and open space purposes where feasible.
- ▶ Consider land acquisition to provide leisure and parkland services in under serviced areas.
- ▶ Ensure the Official Plan has regard for relevant recommendations and policies of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- ▶ Provide parkland dedication policies that clearly support Healthy Community principles.
- ▶ Encourage the development industry to provide additional parklands and green space over and above the 5% permitted under the Planning Act.
- ▶ Permit shared-used facilities throughout the city where feasible, which may include the use of community facilities and school sites for offices, service clubs, and residential uses provided all uses can be adequately accommodated.
- ▶ Plan for and provide bike paths and linked “greenway” trail systems throughout the city.



- ▶ Allow use of utility corridors for secondary purposes such as parks, pedestrian and bike trails and other recreational uses with minimal environmental impact.
- ▶ Provide secure bicycle parking facilities in new developments and existing City facilities where public use is anticipated.
- ▶ Preserve city-owned lands within designated “greenbelt” or waterfront areas.
- ▶ Encourage private recreation and leisure development.
- ▶ Ensure opportunities for public access to all major water bodies in the City.
- ▶ Develop policies and practices that ensure safe and convenient walking routes throughout the city.

### **3. Prosperous community with abundant employment opportunities**

- ▶ Planning policies should facilitate economic development and have regard for the recommendations of the economic development strategic plan “Coming of Age in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Economic Development Strategic Plan for Greater Sudbury 2015”.
- ▶ Evaluation criteria employed by the City when assessing economic development related applications should have regard for the goals and objectives outlined within “Coming of Age in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Economic Development Strategic Plan for Greater Sudbury 2015”.
- ▶ Policies that position the City of Greater Sudbury as the retail, commercial, mining and mining research, manufacturing and industrial centre of northern Ontario should be developed.
- ▶ Policies need to continue to encourage exploration and intensification of mining operations in the City of Greater Sudbury.
- ▶ Continue to designate appropriate areas such as the Sudbury Igneous Complex, all mineral offsets, and other known deposits as a Mining Reserve where the primary use shall be for mining and mining-related activities. Other uses such as forestry, wildlife management, recreation, etc., which do not preclude future extraction, may also be permitted.
- ▶ Permit new mining and mining-related uses, where not pre-zoned, subject to appropriate planning, environmental and site remediation studies, and amendments as required under the zoning bylaw.

- ▶ Permit new pits and quarries within the industrial mineral reserve subject to the City's review and applicable provincial legislation.
- ▶ Promote value-added processing of local raw material mining output.
- ▶ Where compatible, encourage the location of wealth creating businesses in close proximity to existing communities.
- ▶ Consider policies to promote "employment areas" in designated fully-serviced locations and along major corridors. Examples of permitted uses within Employment Areas include offices, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, r&d facilities, ancillary retail operations to primary uses, and restaurants and small scale retail or business services stores to service tenants/workers of these districts.
- ▶ To encourage strong linkages between the private sector and major educational/ health care institutions, and to further promote economic development, permit businesses working in joint ventures, strategic alliances, and other business partnerships with major institutions, to locate within designated institutional zones.
- ▶ Locate non-compatible wealth creating businesses, such as heavy industrial uses, within designated industrial park sites that are appropriately buffered and separated from existing residential areas.
- ▶ Support home-based businesses as part of a viable economic development strategy.
- ▶ Encourage a broad range of development projects, in particular residential, in the Metro Centre and use applicable legislative tools available under the Planning Act to encourage development.
- ▶ Use Community Improvement Provisions of section 28-30 of Planning Act for environmental, social, or community economic development improvements.
- ▶ Support further development of the "power centre concept" at the existing Kingsway/Barrydowne Road location, in recognition of its role as a visitor attraction for north-eastern Ontario and local expenditure leakage inhibitor.
- ▶ Recognize that arts, culture, heritage and libraries are integral to healthy communities, and that the support, preservation and promotion of these are

fundamental in attracting and retaining skilled, entrepreneurial individuals to the community.

- ▶ Recognize the economic benefit of tourism development, and support related development such as attractions, resort hotels, marinas, lodges, campgrounds, etc, subject to proper planning controls.
- ▶ Recognize the recreational and economic value of hunting and fishing and attempt to preserve such activities within the City.
- ▶ Recognize that forest-related processing dependent on forest resources as a legitimate use of land in the City, subject to zoning regulations.
- ▶ Ensure sufficient land reserves for manufacturing uses in strategic locations- i.e., Industrial Lands Strategy.
- ▶ Ensure policies are contained within the Official Plan that preserve and enhance the agricultural resources of the City.
- ▶ Recognize the Sudbury airport as an economic driver for the community which provides important linkages to global markets, and support initiatives to intensify development of the airport property and surrounding lands.

#### **4. Accessible health care and fitness to improve individual well-being**

- ▶ Encourage residents to lead active lifestyles by promoting appropriate programs and infrastructure to facilitate overall well-being of the population.
- ▶ Continue efforts to attract health care professionals to the community, particularly in areas identified as under serviced.
- ▶ Promote policies that support the growing health care needs of the elderly, such as seniors' apartments, assisted living complexes and nursing homes.

#### **5. Preservation of our natural assets through environmental stewardship principles**

- ▶ Environmentally sound transportation alternatives to the automobile should be encouraged, such as an interconnected system of walking and bike trails to

facilitate resident movement.

- ▶ Ensure environmental stewardship, enhancement and regeneration with respect to land, water and air.
- ▶ Ensure planning policies have regard for land-use related recommendations of Earth Care Sudbury's Local Action Plan, 2003.
- ▶ Consider watershed and sub-watershed planning in the development approval process.
- ▶ Restrict land-uses through zoning provisions where groundwater quality is threatened.
- ▶ Identify and preserve Environmental Policy Areas, such as Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA's), Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) and Endangered, Threatened, or Vulnerable Species habitats. Acquire such areas as parkland where there is no other means to protect them through development planning processes.
- ▶ Locate urban development in areas with suitable topography, soil and drainage conditions, and avoid hazardous lands or environmentally sensitive areas.
- ▶ Permit rural or scattered residential development subject to certain conditions, including private water and sewage availability, frontage on public roads, minimum lot size, etc.
- ▶ Ensure minimum lot sizes and water frontage requirements for new waterfront properties to minimize environmental impact and maintain rural character.
- ▶ Minimize environmental conflicts between natural resource uses and other uses, and encourage adherence to environmental quality standards in all natural resource operations.
- ▶ Agricultural reserve areas need to be identified and protected. Recommendations of the Agriculture background study need to be incorporated into the Official Plan policies.
- ▶ Minimize shoreline and shoreline vegetation destruction within water body developments and encourage natural vegetative buffers along shorelines wherever possible.

- ▶ Implement relevant planning and land use recommendations of the Lake Water Quality Initiative process.
- ▶ Protect, in conjunction with federal and provincial agencies and the NDCA, unique or sensitive wildlife habitats such as deer yards, fish spawning areas, and waterfowl breeding locations. Ensure that development plans seek to conserve existing wildlife habitats.
- ▶ Continue land reclamation and tree planting activities.
- ▶ Retain trees and major woodlots, whenever possible, as one method of visually enhancing the physical landscape of the City.
- ▶ Work with various agencies to maintain and enhance public lands within the City to meet the Healthy Community objectives.
- ▶ Prohibit uses within Sensitive Areas, identified as significant because of their ecological, geological, archeological, or historical importance.

## **6. Sound municipal infrastructure with quality service delivery**

- ▶ Support the concept of “complete neighbourhood planning” in new neighbourhoods, where a baseline level of services and facilities are provided to serve the needs of residents and enhance their quality of life.
- ▶ Permit small-scale retail, service and office uses within neighbourhoods that serve the needs of neighbourhood residents, subject to compatible built form, location on exterior roads, and which present minimal noise, parking or other adverse impacts on local residents.
- ▶ Recognize the value of existing neighbourhoods as physically stable areas and that proposed developments within these neighbourhoods must be consistent with this objective.
- ▶ Encourage design excellence and holistic approaches to enhance the character of neighbourhoods and which support the principles of Healthy Communities.
- ▶ Concentrate major public investments in designated growth areas to conserve land, physical, and financial resources.
- ▶ Convenient and accessible public transportation, including provision for shuttle buses where warranted, should be available to all residents.

- ▶ Implement recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan that promote Sudbury as a Healthy Community.
- ▶ The concept of development infilling through the creation of new lots should be encouraged in serviced areas wherever possible to minimize costly new infrastructure requirements. Infilling may also be encouraged in rural settlement areas where satisfactory private sewage disposal and potable water resources are available. Projects that demonstrate such principles can be encouraged through incentives provided through the Planning Act and other legislation.

## **7. A community that is inclusive, diverse and tolerant**

- ▶ Ensure cultural heritage and historical resources within the City of Greater Sudbury are identified and preserved.
- ▶ Promote the enhancement of cultural heritage and historical resources within “community improvement plan” areas designated under the Planning Act.
- ▶ Ensure that identified cultural heritage and historical resources are considered within public sector capital planning projects
- ▶ Seek out and support public/private sector partnerships that enhance culture, inclusiveness, and diversity.
- ▶ Preserve and document significant archaeological resources.
- ▶ Encourage policies that meet the needs and requirements of all age groups, including youth and seniors.

## **8. Social support available for all challenged citizens**

- ▶ Ensure the designation of lands for a variety of residential housing types that satisfies the full range of housing and affordability needs of residents.
- ▶ Encourage public sector housing initiatives such as group homes, non-profit and co-operative housing.
- ▶ Use bonusing and density provisions as permitted within the Planning Act to promote public sector housing and innovative development/redevelopment proposals containing an affordable housing component.

- ▶ Recognize the need to work cooperatively with social agencies and organizations to identify social needs and develop planning policies that foster a healthy, caring community.
- ▶ Ensure Official Plan policies have regard for the recommendations contained within the Human Services Plan being prepared by the Social Planning Council.
- ▶ Consider designation of surplus public lands for social housing initiatives and/or to meet the housing needs of seniors.
- ▶ Ensure basic food services and living necessities are located in close proximity to all public sector housing initiatives.
- ▶ The design and construction of public buildings and outdoor facilities shall have regard to the needs of the physically disabled as identified within the City's Accessibility Plan. Barrier free design should be encouraged.
- ▶ Encourage the use of under utilized space, such as churches, schools, community centres, etc., for child day care facilities as a means of facilitating employment participation in the work place.

## **9. A unified city with proud citizens**

- ▶ Recognize that volunteers and non-profit agencies enhance community spirit and pride, and measures to encourage these activities, such as the provision of public facilities at no charge, are supported.
- ▶ Use community improvement policies of the Planning Act to celebrate the cultural diversity of Greater Sudbury and further build community wide support for its multi-cultural heritage, such as in previous community improvement projects implemented in the Donovan and Flour Mill.
- ▶ Promote physical linkages between outside settlement areas and the city core as a means of fostering unity and the sense of one community.

## **10. A safe city in which to live**

- ▶ Locate buildings close to streets to reduce walking distances.
- ▶ Design streets, buildings, and public places with due regard to public safety—i.e., Crime prevention through environmental design—as well as for

encouraging accessibility by pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

- ▶ Provide a safe walking and cycling environment for all citizens with linkages and corridors between neighbourhoods.
- ▶ Provide parking areas in close proximity to work place locations and residential settlement areas.
- ▶ Ensure public gathering places are designed in such a way to provide good sight lines from adjacent facilities.
- ▶ Separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic wherever feasible.
- ▶ Wherever possible, encourage the location of walking and bike trails near activity or residential areas where surveillance is likely. Use lighting where necessary to improve user safety.

## **11. Superb educational opportunities accessible to all residents**

- ▶ Work with the City's post secondary institutions to promote new construction and ongoing expansion of facilities and buildings in both on-campus and off-campus locations.
- ▶ In partnership with Sudbury's education sector, identify opportunities for, and support, lifelong learning for all residents.

## **12. Compelling community vision with strong leadership at all levels**

- ▶ Decisions and actions taken by Council and City staff, including public investments and service delivery, should be guided by the policies contained within the Official Plan that are predicated on the principles of a Healthy Community.
- ▶ Recognize the need to work cooperatively with major educational and health care institutions to forge a common strategic vision and develop policies to support a Healthy Community.
- ▶ Promote the concept of a "City of Neighbourhoods" with active neighbourhood centres and problem solving at the local level.
- ▶ Develop policies to promote inclusiveness and safety while fostering a sense of community for all ages, income, cultures, and social groups.



- ▶ Identify capital plan projects by neighbourhood to increase citizen involvement in budgetary process.
- ▶ Consider the use of public incentives as permitted under Section 37 of the Planning Act, such as additional development rights—e.g., height and density bonuses— to owners/developers that propose outstanding projects to further the City’s Healthy Community goals with clearly defined community benefits. Approved developments must constitute good planning and be generally consistent with the objectives and other policies of the OP.
- ▶ Appropriate use of other legislative measures—e.g., Site Plan Control, Community Improvement Areas (Section 28-30, Planning Act), Ontario Heritage Act (Section 39) to conserve heritage properties, Development Charges Act, etc.—to promote Healthy Community principles within the planning process.
- ▶ Use “Holding” provisions as permitted under the Planning Act to ensure certain Healthy Community conditions are met prior to lifting of this provision and subsequent property development. Examples of conditions may include: parks and open space requirements, recreational and community services/facilities, transportation and servicing improvements, environmental improvements and/or remediation, measures to sustain natural heritage areas, preservation of heritage buildings, etc.
- ▶ Ensure the policies of the OP have regard for the expressed desires of citizens and the final reports of various background studies comprising part of the Official Plan process.