

## Healthy Built Environments

PROMOTING EQUITY . ACCESS . DESIGN FOR ALL AGES



### WHY LINK COMMUNITY DESIGN, PLANNING AND HEALTH?

The rate of chronic disease such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease is rising in Interior Health. Much of this increase is attributable to physical inactivity, tobacco use, and unhealthy diets, and is preventable. Community planning and design can influence the health of the population and reduce chronic disease.

## HOW CAN INTERIOR HEALTH SUPPORT HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES:

Interior Health has created a Healthy Built Environment (HBE) Team to facilitate efficient response to land use referrals from a healthy communities perspective. The health perspective includes five major domains of healthy community planning; healthy neighbourhood infrastructure, healthy transportation networks, healthy natural environments, healthy food networks and healthy housing. Members of the HBE Team provide review for drinking water and sewerage systems, healthy neighbourhood design, healthy transportation design and healthy natural environments. They also facilitate input from other IH portfolios and professionals on issues including tobacco reduction and community nutrition.

The HBE Team can help to support creation of healthy public policy by sharing our understanding of healthy built environments and helping to find solutions that work for each unique community in the BC interior.

## WHY IS COLLABORATION IMPORTANT?

All levels of government play a role in building healthy communities and creating conditions that promote well being.

- Building healthy communities is complex and involves multiple stakeholders; institutions, government agencies, organizations and community members.
- Focusing and combining resources can result in positive changes and meet the challenge of building healthier communities.

## WHY DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON HEALTH PROMOTING POLICY AND ENVIRONMENTS?

### HEALTH

- One in three British Columbians is living with at least one chronic disease.
- 50% of adults and 91% of children and youth do not get the recommended levels of physical activity.
- 26% of Canadian children are overweight or obese.

### ENVIRONMENT

- Clean air, water and natural environments are pillars of a healthy community.
- Stormwater, sewage, and sustaining ecosystem functions are critical issues for drinking water source protection in urban watersheds.

### ECONOMY

- Government, business, households & individuals feel the impact from chronic diseases:
  - Government – people with chronic disease consume approximately 80% of BC Health Care budget.
  - Business experience lost productivity & higher insurance costs.
  - Households and individuals experience out-of-pocket expenses & lifestyle impacts.