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TO: Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit

DESTINATAIRE : Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa

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FILE NUMBER: ACS2021-OPH-MOH-0007-IPD

SUBJECT: Ottawa Public Health Collaboration with Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development on the New Official Plan

OBJET : Collaboration de Santé publique Ottawa avec Planification, Infrastructure et Développement économique sur le nouveau Plan officiel

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to update the Ottawa Board of Health on the ongoing collaboration between Ottawa Public Health (OPH) and the City of Ottawa's Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development (PIED) department, in view of the New Official Plan being [tabled at Council](#) on October 27, 2021.

BACKGROUND

Two OPH staff, a senior planner and a specialist in environmental health, have been co-located with PIED's Official Plan and Climate Resiliency teams for the past two years. Although OPH has been providing public health input in planning initiatives for years, both departments identified co-location as an opportunity to concentrate efforts, foster deeper collaboration, and facilitate embedding a public health perspective in the new Official Plan and actions flowing from the Climate Change Master Plan.

The Board of Health has received past updates on this collaboration and the development of the draft Official Plan. At its meeting of September 16, 2019, the Board of Health received a report on the New Official Plan, including a PIED presentation of [the high level policy directions of the 5 Big Moves](#), as well as a subsequent presentation and backgrounder at its meeting of November 30, 2020.

DISCUSSION

OPH 2019-2022 Strategic Plan:

OPH's commitment to advancing healthy built environments is reflected in its 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, through Goal 2 "Healthy Communities by Design." This goal recognizes that the built environment can shape our health for the better and commits OPH to promoting community planning that positively impacts people's physical, mental and social health. This work advances healthy public policy and a "health in all policies" approach by making a positive impact on the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and play. The Official Plan and evolution of the built environment are important levers for advancing these goals.

Official Plan:

The Ottawa City Council will be considering the adoption of a new Official Plan, which is the primary document that guides planning for Ottawa's growth and redevelopment for the next 25 years. The development of the new Official Plan is the culmination of a series of reports and directions that have been previously approved and adopted by Committee and Council. Public health collaboration began at the outset of this process. OPH informed the Ottawa Next, Beyond 2036 scenario-based study, which sought to identify the challenges of unknown futures. Subsequently, the Official Plan Discussion Paper "The Building Blocks for a Healthy Ottawa" provided a health evidence review to inform the development of the new draft Official Plan. Next, the 5 Big Moves were developed to identify the major shifts that would need to be reflected in the new Official

Plan, including one focused on resiliency. This directed that public health, environmental, climate and energy resiliency be embedded into the framework of our planning policies. The Preliminary Policy Directions expanded on the 5 big moves, including the policy directions needed to achieve healthy communities and 15-minute neighbourhoods.

Co-location of OPH staff with PIED has facilitated translation of evidence and deep integration of health perspectives in the development of Official Plan policies. As a result, the new Official Plan goes much further in promoting health. It includes a Strategic Directions Section 2.2.4 called “Healthy and Inclusive Communities”, which lays out the policy intent statements that advance health and well-being. Additionally, healthy communities considerations influenced policies throughout the Official Plan, informed by collaborative dialogue with staff and engagement with stakeholders and the public. This includes policies related to equity, mobility, housing, urban design, school facilities, health protection and safety, climate change mitigation and adaptation, parks and greenspaces, and building resiliency to the impacts of extreme heat. In addition, the healthy, walkable 15-minute neighbourhood is a cornerstone for the new Official Plan. OPH also supported public and stakeholder engagement on the Official Plan throughout the consultation process.

Climate Change Resiliency:

The OPH staff co-location with PIED has informed the Official Plan’s Strategic Directions section 2.2.3 which provides policy intent regarding Energy and Climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as supported advancing the priority actions in the Climate Change Master Plan. Public health perspectives are also helping integrate a health and equity lens to the Climate Resiliency Strategy, including in the sectoral working groups for the City Climate Change Health Vulnerability Assessment, by developing surveys on climate change adaptation and supporting public outreach. OPH was instrumental in organizing and developing Urban Heat Island maps to establish local evidence that informed the Climate Resiliency Strategy and Official Plan policies to reduce the urban heat island effect and help protect against extreme heat.

Innovation through Collaboration:

In addition to the co-location for work on the Official Plan, OPH has advanced health through the built and natural environment for a number of years by providing public health input on initiatives such as secondary plans and community design plans, development applications, environmental assessments and City guidelines.

OPH/PIED collaboration reflects an innovative approach in Canada to advance health through the built environment. This model has facilitated deep engagement and deliberation of policy alternatives by having public health practitioners, who are experts in healthy communities planning as well as climate and environmental issues, collaborate with City colleagues to shape policies that advance population health and resiliency. This has helped bridge inter-disciplinary silos. Collaboration is reflected in the innovations found in the new Official Plan, building on the long history of planning ideas in Ottawa, but also moving beyond, through new concepts and new imperatives.

NEXT STEPS

The New Official Plan will have a ripple effect by guiding many other City plans, policies, guidelines and decision-making. This will support more ambitious healthy community outcomes. The co-location of OPH staff with PIED will continue to support ongoing participation and contribution to City Master Plans, Local Plans, guidelines, Climate Change Master Plan activities, the Climate Resiliency Strategy, and other opportunities to advance health outcomes. This work will continue supporting awareness-building of health impacts and maturation of this inter-disciplinary collaborative model, helping build new bridges and foster new opportunities.

For more information about the City's draft Official Plan, visit [Ottawa.ca/NewOP](https://ottawa.ca/NewOP)

For more information about healthy built environments, visit [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/HealthyCommunities](https://ottawapublichealth.ca/HealthyCommunities)

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