

START

How can I create a more active community?



No

1. FOCUS ON HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY

A commitment to support active living can be included in community planning documents, such as Official Community Plans, Transportation Master Plans and individual policies. Prioritizing active living by addressing accessibility, diversity and inclusion early with an assessment of existing policy is a great place to start.

Ex. 1: In 2017, the [Lower Columbia Healthy Communities Plan](#)² was created with support from BC Healthy Communities' PlanH program and the Columbia Basin Trust. The City of Trail and City of Rosland have both adopted the plan and are supporting active living with this helpful decision-making tool for local initiatives.

Ex. 3: [Kelowna On the Move](#)³ was adopted by the city in 2016. This pedestrian and bicycle master plan clearly articulates transportation mode-share targets and actions to support walking, wheeling and transit use.

Ex. 4: The BC Alliance for Healthy Living has many examples of processes undertaken by communities across B.C. to promote physical activity, including [webinars](#)⁴ and other resources.

Ex. 2: Creating an active built environment in rural areas and small population centres has unique challenges and opportunities for innovation. The [BC Centre for Disease Control Healthy Built Environment Linkages Toolkit](#)² has considerations for practice for communities of all sizes.

3. FOCUS ON EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There are some things that can only be learned from community members—especially the ones who are harder-to-reach or seldom-heard. Include these voices at the ground level of public engagement processes to address the concerns of those who are disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health, and who often have the least access to physical activity opportunities.

Ex. 1: The City of Surrey's [Parks, Recreation & Culture Strategic Plan](#)¹⁰ in 2018 created a blueprint for identifying the needs and opportunities for residents to be active and healthy. Their award-winning public engagement process ensured that diverse community voices were directly used to shape the plan.

Ex. 2: In order to improve mobility and transportation options for people of all abilities, the City of New Westminster implemented the [Wheelability Assessment Project](#)¹¹ in 2009, giving specific opportunities for more equitable conversations about streetscape design. If your community is seeking mobility-aid-user-led audit tools, consider using the [Stakeholders Wheelability/Walkability Audit \(SWAN\)](#)¹², developed by researchers at UBC and SFU.

Ex. 3: More questions? Check out the [PlanH Healthy Community Engagement Action Guide](#)¹³ for more resources to help local governments wanting to incorporate equity-focused strategies in their public participation practice.



No

Yes

Do we know who to partner with?

Yes

Are we designing our built environment to promote active living?

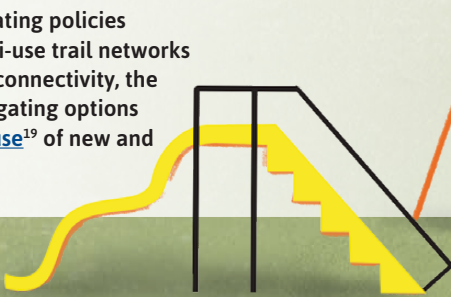
Yes

No

Are there active living programs available?

Yes

GREAT!
Share your story with us and others!
Email info@planh.ca



Ex. 1: The Town of Sidney created new [streetscape and urban design standards](#)¹⁷ to encourage shared spaces that are friendlier to people in the downtown area. This included improving the space between buildings, encouraging active transportation, and creating quality shared spaces.

Ex. 2: The City of Fort St. John updated its [Official Community Plan](#)¹⁸ in 2018, which now includes a Transportation Master Plan. In addition to creating policies encouraging multi-use trail networks as well as transit connectivity, the city is also investigating options for [multi-season use](#)¹⁹ of new and

existing recreation infrastructure, making healthy living more inclusive and accessible.

Ex. 3: For communities seeking guidance in building safe and effective infrastructure for active transportation, [B.C.'s Active Transportation Design Guide](#)²⁰ is a jam-packed resource. It will be updated to reflect evolving best practices, so check back frequently.

Has my community identified active living as a priority?

Yes

Do we have enough funding to support active community initiatives?

No

Yes

2. FOCUS ON FINDING FUNDING

Zoning bylaws and development guidelines are tools local government can use to incentivize and fund active living projects. If possible, stay informed about current cost-sharing programs between federal, provincial, and local governments. If not, leveraging relationships and partnerships to can offset costs to increase collective impact.

Ex. 1: Over 100 communities have received funding for cycling infrastructure projects across B.C. through the [Active Transportation Infrastructure Funding program](#)⁵. Municipalities and regional districts may also submit applications to the [Community Culture and Recreation Program](#)⁶, which provides funding for infrastructure projects to improve access to quality recreation opportunities.

Ex. 2: The [CleanBC Strategy](#)⁷ identifies a number of initiatives and actions to be taken by the province to double the proportion of trips made using active transportation. See a list of key pathways in the

CleanBC Strategy starting on page 12, with information on further focus areas to be funded.

Ex. 3: The City of Burnaby collects cash contributions-in-lieu from development applicants through the [Community Benefit Bonus Policy](#)⁸. The financial mechanism serves to enhance the livability of the city by allocating funds for future community amenities.

Ex. 4: Visit the PlanH website's [Other Funding Opportunities](#)⁹ page to learn about funding available to support local governments and their partners to build healthy communities.

Have we engaged our community?

No

4. FOCUS ON MULTI-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS

Connect with local health authorities; businesses and industry; and educational institutions to identify complementary goals related to physical activity; transportation; health; the natural, built and social environments; and the economy.

Ex. 1: The Tow Hill and Blow Hole Boardwalk Trail in Haida Gwaii is a great example of collaboration between BC Parks, the Haida Nation, local and regional governments, and other stakeholders to develop a unique opportunity for promoting physical activity. More examples from coastal B.C. can be found in this document celebrating [Active Coastal Communities Success Stories](#)¹⁴.

Ex. 2: Partnering with employers is a great way to reach adults in the wider community and increase their physical activity. The Canadian Cancer Society of B.C. and Yukon

developed [Healthy Workplaces](#)¹⁵, an initiative to help employers get people moving step-by-step. Visit their website to see real-life examples of workplaces on the move.

Ex. 3: The Town of Smithers and the Smithers Community Services Association jointly run the [Newcomers Recreation and Healthy Eating Accessibility Project](#)¹⁶. The project offers an extensive array of regular recreation opportunities to boost social connectedness and improve the health and well-being of newcomers to the area.



TIP

This tool is a conversation and thought starter, not a blueprint. Use your intuition to guide your answers and identify where your community can focus.

5. FOCUS ON COMMUNITY DESIGN

With enhanced healthy neighbourhood and housing design, greenspace, and active transportation networks, the built environment can positively impact the overall well-being of people of all ages and abilities from diverse backgrounds. Applying an equity lens in this area includes assessing which population groups might be benefiting more than others, and who might be unfairly burdened.



6. FOCUS ON PROGRAMMING

Life is full of action. Communities across B.C. can promote health through programs and services that make the active choice the easy choice. Recreation passes, bike share incentives and culturally diverse activities such as traditional dance all support people to gain the many benefits that come with an active lifestyle. Don't forget to evaluate the program to understand how residents get the most out of their built and natural environments.

Ex. 1: [HUB Cycling](#)²¹ is a not-for-profit that uses events, education, advocacy and research to encourage more people of all ages and abilities in Metro Vancouver to cycle. Their courses support people to gain riding experience and confidence, while making important social connections in a fun atmosphere.

Ex. 2: In the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, [recreation programs focusing on physical](#)

[literacy](#)²² such as "try it" days have created more opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to be active.

Ex. 3: Check out the [Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity & Recreation Council \(I-SPARC\)](#)²³ to find out about their work to develop sustainable programs that use sport, physical activity and recreation to promote healthy, active lifestyles for Indigenous people throughout

B.C. in communities, inclusive of First Nations, Métis Chartered Communities, Friendship Centres, schools, and organizations.

Ex. 4: [The ParticipACTION Community Better Challenge](#)²⁴ offers grants for local organizations to host physical activity events. Visit their website for more information on getting your community moving.



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Recommended Resources

The Active Communities Tool aligns with these guides:

PlanH Action Guide on Active Communities²⁵
Guide for local government action to create active communities across B.C.

Move. Commute. Connect⁷
BC Active Transportation Strategy

Active People, Active Places²⁶
BC Physical Activity Strategy



Want support or to learn more about improving health and well-being in your community?

Health authorities can support local governments by providing advice and expertise, resources for local government staff and elected officials to develop healthy public policy, community health profiles and opportunities to work together on joint healthy living actions. You may already have relationships with your health authority. If not, up-to-date contact information for your local health authority lead is available at www.planh.ca.

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Active Communities Tool

This tool is a conversation starter for local government staff looking for efficient and clear processes to successfully implement healthy community policies.



How to Play:

1. Begin at "START" in the top left corner.
2. Follow the road to the first question.
3. If your answer is "YES", follow the road to the next question. If your answer is "NO", follow the path and read the suggested action. There are examples and resources to explore.
4. Keep moving through the game on your way to an active community!

Active living can have broad community benefits, including the prevention of chronic disease, mental illness, falls and other injuries; improving social and community connectedness; reducing carbon emissions; increasing productivity; and improving overall quality of life.



Healthy People



Healthy Society



Healthy Environments

Local Government Tools for Healthy Communities