

Healthy Community Development Checklist

This checklist is designed to assist developers, landowners, planners, consultants, and municipal staff to integrate healthy community principles into land-use planning proposals. It is intended to identify best practices that complement, not replace, applicable planning policies, regulations, standards or required technical studies.



Together, we build healthy communities.



Bruce County Planning

Tel: 226-909-5515

Website: <https://www.brucecounty.on.ca/land-use-plan>

Email: bcplwa@brucecounty.on.ca



Grey County Planning

Tel: 1-800-567-4739

Website: <https://www.grey.ca/government/land-use-planning>

Email: planning@grey.ca



Grey Bruce Public Health

Tel: 519-376-9420

Website: <https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Environment/Healthy-Communities>

Email: publichealth@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

A healthy community...

- is designed to support and enhance the health, well-being and quality of life of its residents. Well-designed communities provide opportunities for physical activity, create spaces that encourage social interaction, and are accessible, inclusive, clean, and safe for people of all ages and abilities.
- incorporates elements of the natural, social and built environment. This includes considerations such as: safe, affordable, adaptable housing; safe and active transportation options; access to nutritious food; the availability of shade, parks and other green spaces; air and water quality; protecting and respecting natural spaces for plant and animal species.



When communities offer welcoming, safe and well-maintained built and natural environments, the social environment is strengthened. Residents and visitors are more likely to develop a stronger sense of community, pride in place, and feelings of belonging and inclusion. These environments can also contribute to improved actual and perceived safety, enhanced mental health and well-being, and greater opportunities for civic engagement and participation.

Financial and Market Benefits

Increased property value: Homes that allow flexibility to age in place, are near parks, trails and walkable shops sell for more.

Faster sales: Buyers prefer well-planned, walkable neighbourhoods over car-dependent sprawl.

Lower layout costs: Compact, mixed-use designs reduce the length of new roads and utility lines needed.

Easier approvals: Sustainable, community-friendly plans face less pushback from local boards and citizens.

Awards/grant opportunities: Healthy Community design strengthens applications for development awards and recognition programs (e.g., Community Improvement Plan grants, Green Development Program, etc.).



Long-Term Project Success

Brand reputation: Green and active designs build trust and make future projects easier to launch.

Reduced risk: Mixed-use spaces adapt well to changing market demands over time.

Built-in resilience: Eco-friendly green spaces manage stormwater better and protect against extreme weather.

Healthy Community Development Checklist

Incorporate the following features into proposed developments to support healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities.

Neighbourhood Design

- ☐ Walkability through continuous, accessible sidewalks and safe pedestrian crossings.
- ☐ Public spaces and gathering areas that encourage social interaction and community connection.
- ☐ Seating, shade, lighting and other streetscape amenities to support people of all ages and abilities.
- ☐ Playgrounds and recreational spaces include natural elements, shade areas and seating for caregivers.
- ☐ Opportunities to improve access to healthy food, such as community gardens and proximity to food retailers, have been considered.

Community Safety and Social Connectivity

- ☐ Development incorporates Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, including clear sightlines and appropriate lighting.
- ☐ Public spaces, pathways, parks and building entrances are designed to maximize visibility and perceived safety.
- ☐ Public spaces include features that support year-round use, including weather protection.
- ☐ Public and shared spaces are designed to foster informal interactions and strengthen social connections among residents.
- ☐ Potential barriers to participation, accessibility, safety and inclusion have been identified and addressed through the design process.



Housing

- ☐ A mix of housing types are proposed to meet the needs of diverse households and income levels.
- ☐ Affordable housing options have been incorporated, where feasible.
- ☐ Housing includes adaptable, accessible, or aging-in-place design features.
- ☐ Housing is designed to support occupant comfort and resilience through adequate heating and cooling systems.
- ☐ Energy-efficient building materials (insulation, heating/cooling systems, windows, etc.) have been included, where feasible.



Transportation Networks

- ☐ Development supports existing, planned or future transit infrastructure.
- ☐ Safe and connected active transportation routes are provided and integrated with surrounding networks.
- ☐ Streets are designed using a complete streets approach that puts people first, while accommodating vehicles.
- ☐ Traffic-calming measures and reduced vehicle speeds are incorporated where appropriate, particularly near schools, parks and community destinations.
- ☐ Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure has been included in site design, with appropriate charging capacity and infrastructure provided to support current and future EV use.

Accessibility and Inclusion

- ☐ Universal Design principles have been incorporated throughout the development.
- ☐ Housing supports Age-Friendly principles and allows for aging-in-place.
- ☐ Accessible entrances, pathways, parking spaces and amenities meet or exceed minimum requirements and are clearly identified.
- ☐ Rest areas, seating and other supportive features are provided throughout public spaces.
- ☐ Wayfinding and navigation features accommodate people with diverse sensory, cognitive and mobility needs.

Natural Environments and Sustainability

- ☐ Native and naturalized trees, shrubs, vegetation and climate-resilient landscaping are incorporated into site design.
- ☐ Existing mature trees and natural features are retained and protected, where feasible.
- ☐ Development minimizes impacts on natural features, including woodlands, wetlands and unique species habitats.
- ☐ Tree canopy targets or enhancement measures have been considered.
- ☐ Sustainable construction practices and materials have been considered.

Climate Resilience/Protection

- ☐ Stormwater management and flood resilience measures have been integrated into the design.
- ☐ Green infrastructure measures (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, permeable surfaces) are incorporated.
- ☐ Consideration of sustainability features, such as those identified by Grey County's Green Development Program.
- ☐ Water conservation measures are incorporated.
- ☐ Waste diversion, recycling and organics collection facilities are convenient, well-maintained and accessible.
- ☐ Climate-resilient retrofits have been considered (e.g., green infrastructure, low-impact development, flood protection, extreme heat and water conservation measures, such as heat pumps, rain-harvesting systems, rain gardens, water-conservation practices, and greywater-reuse infrastructure).