This report outlines the details of the Built Environment Forum held in Edmonton, Alberta in January 2011. Stakeholders discussed the relationship between the built environment and health, and identified the key policy priorities. Recommendations were identified through content analysis of presentations, workshop outcomes and discussions.

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Primary Author
• Kaitlyn Hill, Practicum Student, Alberta Health Services (AHS)

Built Environment Forum Planning Committee
• Kerry Coupland, Alberta Health Services
• Nira Lalji, Public Health Agency of Canada
• Genevieve Montemurro, Public Health Agency of Canada and University of Alberta
• Laura Nieuwendyk, Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention
• Rosanne Prinsen, Alberta Centre for Active Living
• Shandy Reed, Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention
• Kate Zhang, Public Health Agency of Canada
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Executive Summary

Details of the Forum
The Built Environment Forum was a one-day workshop attended by 50 experts and stakeholders, including academic researchers, transportation engineers, urban planners, architects, civil service representatives, community programmers and government representatives. The forum aimed to provide participants with an opportunity to hear how experts in various fields understand the link between health and the built environment, and to develop recommendations to address population health concerns arising from the built environment.

The following five recommendations were identified by participants as policy priorities within Alberta. While these themes and respective recommendations were discussed in small groups, the following recommendations have been expanded to include comprehensive information, methods, and practices presented throughout the entire workshop, and were created as possible ‘next steps’ or future methods that Alberta may want to implement.

Recommendations Regarding Economic Incentives & Taxation
1. Economics, pricing, and incentives can influence consumer choice. As such, concepts like Environmental Pricing Reform, may be valuable mechanisms to shift public demand and development of less healthy environments.
2. Density-based property tax, subsidized transit fares, or gas emissions tax should be considered as possible cost-based interventions in Alberta.

Recommendations for Public Education & Advocacy
1. Public support is required for policy and practice advancements. As such, education and awareness campaigns, highlighting the link between the built environment and health, are needed to generate community interest.
2. Media and social network campaigns targeted to the needs of communities may provide a modern modality for knowledge exchange.
3. New mechanisms and techniques to engage the public, such as the use of photovoice, may be more effective in piquing interest about the built environment.

Recommendations on Zoning and Land-Use
1. Forums for relevant sectors to advise the development of provincial and municipal plans should be considered to ensure that plans meet the needs of all stakeholders.
2. Health authorities should be included in municipal planning decisions to provide a population health lens and to advocate for healthy development.
3. Alberta-specific considerations, including a large agricultural industry, distinct rural land-use needs, and an aging population, are important considerations that are presently under-addressed. Therefore, strategies should be tailored to the Alberta context to best meet provincial needs.
4. The Municipal Government Act could be strengthened with the inclusion of a clearly articulated health perspective.
5. Further consideration of zoning to regulate food environment surrounding schools and recreation facilities is needed.

Recommendations to Promote Active Transportation
1. New developments should be planned to support active living, including active transportation, as the primary means of travel.
2. Existing communities should be evaluated for the feasibility and potential impact of retrofitting options.
3. Addressing community identified barriers to active transportation, including active school transport, as both social and infrastructural determinants of active living, may increase the prevalence of active transportation.
4. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) show promise for application in Alberta. Existing projects in Edmonton should be considered pilots for other urban Alberta municipalities.

Recommendations to Promote Collaboration
1. Recognizing and understanding that collaboration in built environment initiatives is iterative could better prepare stakeholders and community partners for the collaborative process.
2. Given broad jurisdiction in the built environment, policy change is needed at multiple levels to adequately facilitate initiatives. This will require government involvement at a federal, provincial, and municipal level.
3. Engaging stakeholders with diverse goals and mandates can be challenging; therefore identification of common elements between these goals and mandates between sectors may create a foundation for collaboration.
4. Stakeholder consultation and opportunities to network between sectors is needed to build strong working partnerships.

Two other themes that emerged from the day’s discussion: sustainability and environmental concerns, as well as community engagement. While these two themes weren’t discussed in the same detail as the previous themes, some salient suggestions were made. When discussing sustainability and environmental concerns, it was consistently noted that due to the shared goals and current synergy between the environmental sustainability movement and health promotion through the built environment, there is an opportunity for built environment programs to capitalize on the existing momentum to increase and influence awareness of the general public.

Discussions of community engagement revolved around the need to encourage the community itself to lead, own and sustain built environment initiatives over time. Further, it is the community that best understand how they will use land and amenities, thus their consultation should be used when examining land-use and zoning by-laws. Communities can be engaged through activities such as focus groups and town hall meetings.
1. Background

Definition of the Built Environment

The term *built environment* as a field of practice, describes the design, construction, management and use of human-made surroundings as an interrelated whole, as well as their relationship to human activities over time. It encompasses land-uses, transportation systems, buildings, parks, road systems, trails, housing, workplaces and schools \(^1\).

Purpose and Objectives for the Forum

The concept of the built environment as an influential factor of health is gaining recognition at a municipal, provincial, national and international level; but there remains a gap in our understanding of and communication between built environment stakeholders in Alberta. Recognizing that inter-sectoral collaboration may support systems-level change, the forum was a venue to begin a dialogue; to identify current activities in Alberta; to establish priorities, direction and action; as well as an opportunity to develop collaborative relationships.

The multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary format of the workshop was selected to highlight the complexity of issues surrounding the built environment, and the need for collaboration within and across sectors and organizations to make meaningful progress in creating healthy communities across Alberta. The overall goal was to provide an opportunity for sharing information on the built environment between stakeholders and sectors. The specific objectives of the forum were as follows:

1. gather information on current research and activities happening in Alberta around the built environment and health; and
2. identify the needs of built environment and health stakeholders, and researchers for the future.

With these objectives in mind, organizers invited stakeholders including academic researchers, transportation engineers, urban planners, architects, civil service representatives, grass roots and community program coordinators, and municipal, provincial and federal government staff from Alberta to participate in the forum. In addition, organizers invited guests from the Region of Peel in Ontario to share their experience of efforts to advance the built environment through development and consideration for health-related advancement. In total, 50 representatives were able to participate in the forum.

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2. Summary of Workshop Proceedings

The forum began with a keynote address from Mr. Tom Slomke and Ms. Gayle Bursey (Region of Peel, Ontario). Following the keynote address, a panel of five experts in the fields of engineering, planning, and health explored perspectives on the built environment and its effects on health and well-being. After the panel presentations concluded, there was a 30-minute question and discussion period. The afternoon portion of the forum started with seven presentations, using a Pecha Kucha format. Pecha Kucha is a Japanese term for the sound of “chit chat” and is a presentation format where speakers present 20 slides, each for 20 seconds. The format is designed to encourage concise, informative and engaging presentations. The day concluded with a workshop lead by the Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention (APCCP). Dr. Kim Raine and Mr. Ken Kyle, members of the Management Committee for the APCCP, facilitated the workshop. As part of the participatory element of the forum and using five participant-identified built environment policy priority areas, participants self-selected a policy area to discuss. In small groups, participants strategized action opportunities to advance the selected policy issue.

The agenda, Pecha Kucha presentation abstracts, SWOT analysis, and the summary of post-it notes can be found in Appendix A, B, C and D respectively.

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3 Dr. Kim Raine and Mr. Ken Kyle are both members of the Management Committee of the APCCP. Dr. Raine is the Co-Director of the APCCP, and is a Professor with the Centre for Health Promotion Studies at the University of Alberta. Mr. Ken Kyle is a consultant, and is the Advisor to the Management Committee.

4 The post-it notes are the compilation of ideas, suggestions and thoughts written down by the forum participants. Participants were asked to record what they believe to be the most important policy priority area related to the built environment in Alberta. These suggestions were compiled and grouped according to theme, by APCCP team members.
3. Keynote Speakers

3.1 Tom Slomke and Gayle Bursey

Mr. Tom Slomke (Director, Development Services, Region of Peel) and Ms. Gayle Bursey (Director, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Region of Peel) shared their experiences in efforts to advance the built environment in the Region of Peel. Historically, the Peel Public Health Department provided narrative commentary on development plans that were proposed to the Peel Planning Department for their approval. However, narrative commentary provided insufficient strength of evidence for the Planning Department to modify their decisions based on public health implications. As such, a quantifiable rationale for potential health implications was necessary, creating the impetus to develop the Peel Healthy Development Index (the Index).

The Index systematically evaluates development applications to determine potential health impacts and provides a health-based rationale to inform planning decisions. It appraises each project’s influence on the communities’ density, proximity to services and transit, land use mix, street connectivity, road network and sidewalk characteristics, parking and aesthetics, as well as human scale. The Index is currently being pilot-tested in communities across the Peel Region. Stakeholder consultation supported the use of the Index to inform healthy development, the establishment of cross-sectoral standards or understandings that facilitate joint action, and the use of policy to generate momentum among diverse stakeholders.

Partnership between the departments of public health and planning produced amendments to development plans and engineering standards. Modifications to the Provincial Policy Statement and the Transit Supportive Guidelines have been proposed.

Learnings, both from a public health and planning perspective, were noted. From a public health perspective, multi-sectoral collaboration was considered essential for success. Speakers noted that collaboration was iterative and based on available windows of opportunity, as well as national and local interest. Given the diversity of stakeholders, overall goals may also be iterative and continually revised in order to balance multiple, divergent mandates. From a planning perspective, shifts in cultures of practice are needed to influence current development standards. It may be complex to incorporate a health perspective in development planning, given competing mandates. However, tools, such as the Index, may add transparency to development decisions.

Given this, public health practitioners can encourage and reinforce collaboration by identifying and advocating for population health, providing rationales for decisions based on population health and supporting policy development to strategically promote healthy built environments.
3.2 Discussion and Questions for Keynote Speakers

The discussion focused on three topic areas: media involvement, active transportation and the divergent needs of urban and rural communities. Indeed, participants expressed concern regarding how to advantageously communicate with the media. Speakers noted that they were able to leverage their initiatives by carefully deciding when and how to contact the media, avoiding an artificial sense of urgency.

Although there was strong support for active transportation, challenges around active transport in a sprawled Albertan environment were of concern. As the Region of Peel is also dealing with urban sprawl, their current Active Transportation plan is linked with new developments, allowing advances in transportation and development to occur concurrently. Encouraging safety, including helmet use, among active commuters and individuals engaging in physical activity, was noted.

Health impact assessments were suggested as a valuable tool to meet divergent needs of urban and rural sites.
4. Panel Participants

This section outlines the presentations of the five panel experts: Dean Cooper, Ian Hosler, Olimpia Pantelimon, Gerry Predy, and David Thompson. Unless otherwise stated, all information contained in this section was obtained from the speakers’ presentations and PowerPoint slides.

4.1 Dean Cooper

Mr. Dean Cooper, transportation and planning engineer with Stantec Consulting, discussed his role on the Sustainable Transportation Standing Committee (STSC) with the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC). This collaborative committee is comprised of health professionals, engineers, and developers. The STSC is responsible for the following:

- promoting development and identification of evidence-based best practices for sustainable transportation in urban environments;
- supporting knowledge exchange regarding best practices;
- providing a forum for discussion; and
- identifying areas for future and further work to advance sustainable transportation.

With his expertise in sustainable transportation and development, Mr. Cooper is currently drafting a land-use concept plan with an Alberta municipality. Given the community’s interest in the principles of Smart Growth, this approach is being used as a theoretical framework for their development. Tailored planning to the unique circumstances and needs of individual communities was highlighted as a tenet of Smart Growth and emphasized as important for sustainable community growth. Although development planning needs to be community-specific, Mr. Cooper noted a common need among communities for robust research, capturing causal relationships between the built environment and health.

4.2 Ian Hosler

Mr. Ian Hosler is the Program Coordinator of Walkable Edmonton. The City of Edmonton is interested in advancing active transportation programming. Indeed, a number of senior plans have been passed, including a new transportation master plan (The Way We Move), a new municipal development plan (The Way We Grow), and a new people plan called “The Way We Live”. The Edmonton City Council has increased funding for active transportation projects as they have allotted five percent of the Transportation Department’s Capital Budget, excluding Light Rail Transit (LRT) planning/construction.

These successes required collaboration and expertise from transportation engineers, planners, community members and health practitioners. In Mr. Hosler’s experience, collaboration is essential in advancing the built environment for active commuters. Noting a transportation

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6 The municipality described by Mr. Cooper was not named, as the land-use concept plan is still being drafted. Mr. Cooper can be contacted at dean.cooper@stantec.com for further information.
7 Smart growth is a collection of land use and development principles that aim to improve our quality of life, preserve the natural environment, and save money over time. Smart growth principles ensure that growth is fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible, and recognizes the connections between development and quality of life.
culture of autocentricity, collaboration may also better support a shift in culture to normalize active transport.

4.3 Olimpia Pantelimon

Ms. Olimpia Pantelimon is the vice-chair of the Canadian Institute of Planners Healthy Communities National Affairs Committee (representing Alberta and Quebec), and a Senior Planning Advisor with Planning - Municipal Affairs, Government of Alberta. Her presentation introduced the Canadian Institute of Planners’ Healthy Communities Program. The Canadian Institute of Planners represents approximately 7000 professional registered planners across Canada, and has been dedicated to the advancement of responsible planning since 1919.

Based on previous initiatives in the 1980’s, the Canadian Institute of Planners National Affairs Standing Committee identified planning for Healthy Communities as a priority. This has evolved to the current program developed in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. The intent is to promote better planning, support networking for Healthy Communities research, champion promising projects for health and planning professionals, and ensure transfer of knowledge across Canada. Ms. Pantelimon also explained the Healthy Canada by Design initiative, which was presented at the Canadian Institute of Planners 2010 National Conference “Climate Change and Communities, A Call to Action” held in Montreal in October 2010.

4.4 Gerry Predy

Dr. Gerry Predy, a Senior Medical Officer of Health with Alberta Health Services (AHS), discussed system-level approaches to improve population health through built environment changes and enhancements.

In his experience, individual behaviour change is largely ineffective at producing population level improvements to predictors of disease prevention. As such, changing the built environment provides a macro-level approach to address the complex issue of health and disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) suggested that 14% of the burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and 31% of the disease burden caused by inactivity is attributable to the built environment. Dr. Predy suggested that these statistics may represent the positive predictive value that modifications to the built environment could have on the reduction of chronic disease.

While air, water, physical activity and dietary habits are all important aspects of the built environment that affect our health, less attention has been given to the impact of social interactions and social networks as other important mediators of health. People within the same social network often suffer from the same health burdens, as seen in rates of obesity and sexually transmitted infections. Given this identified relationship of the built environment on social networks, there may be an opportunity for the health system to address social environments. Indeed, AHS is currently developing a Built Environment Strategy, which may provide an opportunity to further consider social environments among other important contributors to health.
Although there may be an important role for health practitioners in advancing healthy development, outdated public health legislation in Alberta limits the effectiveness of current initiatives. Dr. Predy commented that legislation should be rewritten to allow health professionals more influence in planning and development. In order to further facilitate health system involvement, the National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health (NCCEH) suggests that health professionals advocate, collaborate, and enable the development of healthy communities (Table 1). The following table was created to synthesize Dr. Predy’s descriptions of how NCCEH’s strategies can be put into action.

### Table 1. NCCEH recommendations for public health practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advocate</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Enable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of active design guidelines for community plans.</td>
<td>Participate in land use and transportation planning.</td>
<td>Provide data on health status/health disparities to decision makers and planners in non-health sectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce air pollution through the promotion of active transportation.</td>
<td>Work with housing authorities, landlords and developers to maintain a supply of safe, affordable housing.</td>
<td>Conduct health impact assessments on planned developments and redevelopments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Educate the public about the impact of the built environment on health.</td>
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### 4.5 David Thompson

David Thompson, principal at PolicyLink Research and Consulting, discussed his work with Sustainable Prosperity\(^8\) and their approach to eliminating sprawl to improve health and the environment. The concept of Environmental Pricing Reform (EPR) was reviewed as a mechanism to shift development patterns.

Urban sprawl may increase physical inactivity, mental health concerns and vehicle collisions as well as reduce air quality. Despite knowledge of these poor outcomes, changes to development practice have been slow. Root causes of sprawl remain largely unaddressed. Traditional policy tools such as public education, zoning and bylaws have been ineffective at reining in sprawl over several decades. Existing, distorted price signals create incentives for suburban development and are one of the underlying causes of sprawl. As such, EPR is one strategy to reduce urban sprawl.

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\(^8\) Sustainable Prosperity (SP) is a national research and policy network, based out of University of Ottawa. SP works to protect Canada’s environment and enhance prosperity through research, policy and education on Environmental Policy Reform.
Environmental Pricing Reform is the process of adjusting market prices to include environmental costs and benefits. These price adjustments can reduce the price differential between urban and suburban dwelling, or could even be used to tilt the differential to favour urban dwelling, thereby mediating a current barrier for many individuals to be able to live in established urban environments, which are generally more health promoting. Shifts in the public demand for urban living would also shift planning towards the development of healthier communities. Three modifiable prices relevant to sprawl are development cost charges (DCC), property taxes and transportation costs. Development cost charges (DCCs) are charges paid by developers to compensate municipalities for infrastructure and maintenance costs of new developments. Adjusting DCCs to reflect the full cost of building suburban communities may discourage sprawl. Reducing the costs of inner city living, including the use of inner city amenities may encourage the public to choose higher density communities. Further, increasing costs for suburban residents to travel into the city may further discourage vehicle dependence. As another example, cities could implement parking charges for suburban shopping malls to encourage the use of more central amenities. Overall, pricing can act as an ally to healthy development by making healthy choices more cost efficient and therefore more appealing to the public.

4.6 Discussion and Questions for Panel Participants

Participants returned to their discussion of increasing the regulatory capacity of health practitioners at a municipal level to effect change in the built environment. Differing regulations for health authorities and municipalities in Alberta were seen as a challenge to innovative ideas regarding the built environment. Therefore, using municipal charters to provide standards or consistency were suggested as one approach to create a defined and operational role for health authorities. Participants reiterated the importance of collaboration given the complexity of change required in the built environment.

The discussion concluded with a suggestion that there may be an opportunity to learn from Environmental Pricing Reform initiatives in Vancouver, Toronto, Kitchener or Montreal.
5. Pecha Kucha Presentations

This section will describe the presentations provided in the Pecha Kucha format. Speakers included Erik Backstrom, Bev Esslinger, Laura Nieuwendyk, Don Schopflocher, John Spence, Olimpia Pantelimon and Susan Roberts. Appendix B provides the title and abstract for the presentations.

5.1 Erik Backstrom

As a senior planner with the City of Edmonton, Mr. Erik Backstrom discussed Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and how the City of Edmonton is incorporating these concepts into their planning strategy. The City of Edmonton’s Corporate Strategic Plan incorporates key TOD concepts: to improve livability, to transform urban form and to shift transportation modes.

TOD includes community design that is oriented around a transit station. As such, TOD theory suggests that housing, shops and employment within 400 metres or a five minute walk of transit service encourage active transportation and reduce vehicle dependence. Several health benefits from TOD were noted including increased active transportation, increased physical activity, increased quality of life, reduced vehicle use, decreased driving related injuries and improved air quality.

To provide high quality TOD, four components must be met:
1. Compact Development: Density of development provides greater accessibility to services and reduces commute distances.
2. Mix of Land-Uses: Integration of housing, employment, daily needs and recreation provides for a more complete community.
3. Connectivity: Streets, sidewalks and paths connect important destinations to make walking and cycling simple, convenient and comfortable.
4. Good Design: Streets, plazas and parks are designed to be interesting, accessible and vibrant to encourage their use and build social cohesion.

The City of Edmonton has employed TOD principles in several projects. Currently, the city is expanding the transit system and creating TOD Guidelines, which will help to determine parameters for the development of the existing and future transit stations in Edmonton. A new high-density community, Century Park, is being developed and will house nearly 5000 people within walking distance to shops and transit services. A Planning Academy course on TOD for the public describes the planning process and how citizens can effectively get involved in these plans.

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9 Pecha Kucha is a Japanese term for the sound of “chit chat” and is a presentation format whereby a speaker presents 20 slides, 20 seconds per slide, for a maximum of a seven minutes presentation.
5.2 Bev Esslinger

Ms. Bev Esslinger is the coordinator of a non-governmental organization called Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE). Throughout Alberta and in the greater Edmonton area, SHAPE encourages active transportation through programs, such as the Safe Routes to School initiative and School Travel Planning. Safety concerns prevent parents from allowing their children to actively commute to school. SHAPE promotes activities such as a walking school bus, where children are accompanied to by an adult to address safety concerns of active commuting.

SHAPE promotes several programs and ideas to encourage active school transport. Winter Walk Days encourage parents and children to explore active transportation in the winter months. A “take back the streets’’ initiative challenges parents to try active school transport or to educate their children on safe walking in an effort to reduce safety fears and weather concerns. Ms. Esslinger noted that increased activity, including active transport, facilitates social cohesion and community connectedness.

SHAPE is a resource and support that parents can use to become more familiar with the mental, social and health-related advantages of walking to school.

5.3 Laura Nieuwendyk

Ms. Laura Nieuwendyk, Project Coordinator with Community Health and the Built Environment (CHBE) project, presented on behalf of Dr. Candace Nykiforuk. The CHBE project worked with four Alberta communities to better understand how community environments influence physical activity and healthy eating.

A photovoice project, one part of the larger CHBE project, sought to understand how the perceptions of built and social environments affected physical activity and healthy eating. Photographs identified facilitators and barriers to walking, with community safety being a dominant theme. Indeed, barriers included fears of crime or illegal activities, poor path maintenance as well as a lack of sidewalks, and community aesthetics. Other identified themes were car culture, food environments, and the importance of socially inclusive spaces. The photovoice project reinforced existing knowledge and may provide a new, more convincing, modality with which to communicate this information to decision-makers.

5.4 Don Schopflocher

Dr. Don Schopflocher is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta and a co-investigator on the CHBE project. His presentation reported preliminary analyses of the CHBE project, which involved direct community observations.

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10 The four communities involved in the CHBE study were Medicine Hat and the Town of Redcliff, North Central Edmonton, Town of St. Paul, and the Town of Bonnyville.
Data was collected using the adapted Irvine-Minnesota inventory, which records 230 characteristics of the built environment along each segment of roadway in a community. These characteristics include community design factors, land use, transportation options, activity and eating options, as well as community aesthetics. A scoring system was developed by organizing items into specific domains, such as pedestrian accessibility, residential density, attractiveness and safety from crime and traffic. Homogenous item groupings and scores were developed that resulted in a total of 18 subscales.

Dr. Schopflocher and his colleagues then wanted to examine the relationships between built environment characteristics and the health of the individuals living in these same areas. Therefore, they linked CHBE data to survey data collected in 2009 by the Healthy Alberta Community (HAC) project, which took place in the same communities.

Four major findings were derived from data analysis:
1. Individuals with the highest level of physical activity lived within areas that had the highest pedestrian accessibility and the highest ratings for attractiveness of parks.
2. Individuals who reported high levels of active transportation also reported living in areas with a wide diversity of retail space and civic space. These same individuals also had a tendency to eat fresh fruits and vegetables. Many of these individuals lived in, or close to, downtown.
3. Individuals who reported having a high BMI were found to be in older neighbourhoods that had a diverse range of land use including industrial uses; individuals living in these neighbourhoods also tended to have lower incomes. High BMI was also associated availability of diverse recreation and fitness options.
4. These relationships are largest for the areas closest to individual’s homes.

Three more general implications were identified. First, a measureable relationship exists between features of the built environment and the health of individuals. Second, close proximity to physical environmental features appears to be of greater importance than has been previously reported. Third, Dr. Schopflocher cautioned that while detailed analysis can uncover unexpected relationships, these relationships are associations, and should be interpreted carefully.

5.5 John Spence

Dr. John Spence is an Associate Professor with the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta. His discussion centered on the relationship between the built environment, physical activity and obesity, by examining historical patterns.

Dr. Spence noted that historically humans participated in a hunting and gathering lifestyle, where caloric intake was uncertain. This led humans to evolve efficient biological, cultural and technological mechanisms to preserve their energy. The drive for efficiency has persisted, despite drastic shifts in our environment that have reduced opportunities for physical activity, increased opportunities to be sedentary and increased access to high
calorie/nutritionally poor food – potentially influencing current rates of obesity. The current environment also impedes our health by exposing people to stressors that may moderate how dietary intake and energy expenditure relate to weight.

Dr. Spence has also investigated the extent to which neighbourhood characteristics influence how we perceive our ability to be physically active in our immediate environments. Factors such as the presence of sidewalks and neighbourhood recreation facilities increased the likelihood of being physically active. Living in lower socio-economic neighbourhoods was linked to increased exposure to fast food and higher rates of overweight and obesity.

To conclude, Dr. Spence reported three general conclusions about the perceptions of our environment and health. First, small but meaningful associations have been found between aspects of the built environment and obesogenic behaviour. Second, household socio-economic status was also found to be an important correlate of physical inactivity and obesity risk. Third, perceptions of the environment may be more important than the actual environment.

5.6 Olimpia Pantelimon

Ms. Olimpia Pantelimon’s second presentation reviewed the Alberta Land-Use Framework. The framework outlines seven strategies to improve land-use decision making in Alberta. These include development of seven regional land-use plans, establishment of a land-use secretariat and seven regional advisory councils, management of developmental impact, development of a conservation and stewardship strategy, promotion of efficient land-use, establishment of a knowledge system and inclusion of Aboriginal peoples in land-use planning.

Based on these strategies, the framework identified three immediate priorities for action. The first is to introduce legislation that supports the implementation of the framework. The second is to develop metropolitan plans for the two major urban centres in Alberta, Calgary and Edmonton. The third is to develop regional plans for the Lower Athabasca and South Saskatchewan regions. These priorities were scheduled for implementation in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

The Government of Alberta has expressed commitment to address existing policy gaps in areas of provincial interest. These areas include the following: integration of values and priorities regarding surface and subsurface activities, fragmentation of agricultural lands, and consolidation of land-use functions with the development of transportation and utility corridors.

Ms. Pantelimon outlined the essential contribution of consultation with community, municipal and Aboriginal stakeholders in the development of the framework. A legislated requirement to review Regional plans at least every 10 years was implemented. In addition, a committee will publically audit the policies of regional plans at least every five years to assess the effectiveness of regional plans.
5.7 Susan Roberts

Susan Roberts, owner of Community Building Resources (CBR) and Coordinator for Growing Food Security in Alberta (GFSA), presented a series of models, pictures and quotations set to the music of Joan Baez “We Shall Overcome.” The presentation was a series of slides, which explored the challenges the built environment presents to achieving Food Security and Food Sovereignty in Alberta. The challenges presented included: restrictive and out-dated land use by-laws, transportation limitations, confining and restricted work and play spaces, and out-dated approaches to housing. The session also emphasized the importance of community to the built environment and organization who are making things happen in Food Security and Food Sovereignty in Canada and in Alberta.

The Pan Canada People’s Food Policy Project, Food Secure Canada and rural Alberta Communities are responding to the overwhelming challenges. The Community Building for Food Security approach used by GFSA is based on relationships and reciprocity. The presentation demonstrated examples of the GFSA Community Building approach which focuses on the key tenets of Community Building - Relationships, Action, Food and Fun (RAFF) and the ‘Thought About Food – Influencing Food and Policy’ Participatory Action project. Rural communities across Alberta have overcome some of the built environment challenges and found various ‘home grown’ solutions based on the GFSA Community Building for Food Security approach to achieve food security and food sovereignty in their regions. Some of these solutions include: an all-year round green house, community gardens, community kitchens, community dinners, Community Shared Agriculture, school to garden networks, farmers’ markets, food charters and food policy councils. Ms. Roberts provided several websites for further exploration (see Resources, pg. 29).
6. Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention Workshop

Who is the APCCP?
The Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention (APCCP) represents a broad range of community organizations, practitioners, policy-makers and researchers who have come together to coordinate efforts, generate evidence, and advocate for policy change in order to reduce cancer and other chronic diseases in Alberta. The key objectives of the APCCP are to increase the capacity among policy and decisions makers in Alberta; to provide leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of policy-related activities; and to enhance public acceptance of policy-related activities.

About the APCCP Workshop
The facilitated workshop, Exploring Policy Responses to Built Environment Challenges in Alberta, aided participants in identifying five priority areas for policy change, develop concrete policy‐relevant recommendations and identify opportunities for action in Alberta. The five priority areas were established through a process called dotmocracy. The facilitation and workshop was provided by Dr. Kim Raine, Co-Director, and Mr. Ken Kyle, Advocacy Advisor, on behalf of the APCCP.

In addition, APCCP team members began developing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis (SWOT) from the beginning of the forum until 12 noon, based on the presentations and discussions that ensued. This SWOT analysis was used to inform the afternoon workshop facilitated by APCCP.

Findings from two 2010 APCCP surveys, the Decision-Maker Survey of Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs and the Alberta Survey of Knowledge Attitudes and Beliefs, provided background information regarding public and decision maker support for changes to built environments. For instance, there was very strong support from Albertans and decision-makers for interventions that promote active transportation. Decision makers generally expressed support for policies and actions that facilitate active living; however, support was less clear for modifications to the food environment (Table 2). In most cases, both surveys included the same questions, and therefore have two separate survey results listed. However, there are a few instances where only one of the two surveys included the specific question.

Table 2. Albertan public and decision-maker support for built environment policy and action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Albertans (%)</th>
<th>Decision Makers (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Do you support:&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…implementing transportation policies designed to promote physical activity through safe routes, cycle facilities, adequate lighting etc?</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…enhancing the quantity and quality of green spaces in all neighbourhoods?</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 Dotmocracy is a simple method for recognizing points of agreement among a large number of people. In this example, participants were given green and red dots. The green was to indicate the most feasible change and the red, to identify the most important change.

12 Please note: The findings are preliminary and may be subject to minor adjustments following subsequent analysis process.
### Survey Questions

"Do you support:"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Albertans (%)</th>
<th>Decision Makers (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…changing the design of our neighbourhoods and communities to encourage informal physical activity in daily life?</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…changing building and community design standards to discourage sedentary activity?</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…banning all traffic in high-use pedestrian areas during peak hours to support active (walking, cycling) or public transportation?</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…zoning to increase the number of small grocery stores that people can walk to in every neighbourhood?</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…zoning to limit fast food restaurants per square kilometre?</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...zoning to restrict the supply of junk food near schools?</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.1 APCCP Priority Setting Activity

Between 8:30 and 12:00 noon, participants were asked to identify what they perceived as the top priority area for taking action to address issues in the built environment that have an impact on health. Each participant was asked to record their priority area on a post-it note. The post-it notes were collected and grouped according to common themes. Seven themes were identified. Appendix C provides a record of the post-it note content for each of the identified themes.

Once the priorities were grouped according to themes outlined, each participant was asked to assess the 7 priorities by assigning red and green stickers (red=importance, green=feasibility). Once the stickers were assigned, the number of red and green stickers for each priority was totaled to identify the top five priority areas. The top five rated priorities were in order of importance as follows:

1. Economic and Taxation
2. Public Education and Advocacy
3. Zoning and Land Use
4. Active Transportation
5. Multi-Ministry and Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

Participants were asked to self-select, according to their interest, one of the five priorities listed above, to work in small groups to discuss and develop action plans for moving the issue forward in Alberta. Participants were provided with a template to guide the action planning process. Policy-relevant recommendations and opportunities for action were identified for each of the top five priority areas. The following reflects discussions, recommendations and opportunities for action in each priority area as discussed in small groups during the workshop.
Priority Area 1: Economics and Taxation

Small Group Discussion
Price and taxation incentives to encourage development of, and dwelling in, urban environments were suggested. Indeed, the concepts of Environmental Pricing Reform (EPR) highlighted inverting the cost differential between suburban and urban dwelling, maybe a catalyst to shift demand and development. Similarly, EPR principles may be a valuable tool to discourage single-occupant vehicle use and encourage active transport.

Given the range of stakeholders involved and complexity of built environment concerns, a need to encourage innovation, collaboration and advocacy was established. Previous discussions on jurisdictional boundaries in Alberta were also discussed.

Recommendations and Opportunities for Action:

1. By fostering innovation across sectors, solutions to housing and transportation concerns can be identified. In conjunction, public education and advocacy are needed to ensure public engagement, leadership and ownership of initiatives.

2. With additional understanding of economic levers, returns on investment, and associated impacts for housing and transportation programs, more informed decision making at policy and practice level may be possible. To this end, the development of an inventory, inclusive of this information, was recommended.

Priority Action 2: Public Education and Advocacy

Small Group Discussion
Given the important role for policy and decision makers, government sectors and community leaders in creating sustained changes to the built environment, their engagement is essential. Clear, evidence-based rationale for modifications to the built environment may be critical in generating support from leaders. Similar to advancements in tobacco reduction, government led changes may be optimal in producing population level health improvements. Increased public support for government led initiatives may be achieved with media marketing and public service announcements that generate increased awareness of the community environment.

As developers are profit driven, there is a need to provide context and information regarding relationship between the built environment and physical, social and mental health. This association may create an opportunity to discuss common elements among the goals of development, health and government.
Recommendations and Opportunities for Action

1. Given the important role of government, developers and communities, their engagement should be actively pursued. Media and education campaigns targeted to the needs of each stakeholder group are suggested.

Priority Action 3: Zoning and Land Use

Small Group Discussion
Consideration for the unique characteristics of the Albertan population and landscape, including the differing needs of the rural and urban sites and large aging population, is necessary to identify Alberta’s land use needs. Policy support for the agricultural industry is of importance to many rural Albertans, and directly affects land use regulations. Further, suburban single-family housing may not be optimal in facilitating independent living for the aging population. Given that Alberta has many well-established neighbourhoods, work may need to focus on making existing neighbourhoods and communities healthier, while also ensuring new developments meet health goals.

Recommendations and Opportunities for Action

1. Health Impact Assessments were seen as objective and clear tools to inform land use and planning decisions.
2. The Municipal Government Planning Act (MGA) may be strengthened with the inclusion of health implications and health language to act as a foundation for collaboration between health authority and municipalities.
3. Creating a common definition of a “healthy community” that can be applied across sectors may be valuable. Although, this definition may require tailoring to meet the needs of individual communities, it should create a foundation for collaboration.

Priority Action 4: Active Transportation

Small Group Discussion
Allocation of funding towards active transport policy, programming, and infrastructure is needed to create more active communities. Indeed, increasing the connectivity of paths, trails, and overpasses may increase uptake of active transport. Development of operational design standards that remove barriers to use may increase the likelihood of new paths being used. Recognition that improvements in physical, social and mental health can be achieved through active living is needed at government and community levels.

Jurisdictional challenges regarding the built environment were revisited, with dialogue suggesting that changes to the Municipal Government Act may facilitate the work of front line planners or health professionals.
Recommendations and Opportunities for Action

1. Goal setting with defined timelines and outcomes was suggested. For example, increased shared modality travel over the next five years was recommended to improve physical and mental health, as well as reduce environmental burdens of vehicle use.

2. Provincial legislation, plans and building codes should be modified to support active living and active transportation, with the inclusion of end of trip facilities in most buildings.

3. Increasing active transportation representation in federal and provincial grant programs, in addition to increasing provincial funding allocation, may facilitate funding for new programs and infrastructure.

Priority Area 5: Multi-Ministry, Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

Small Group Discussion
Given the diverse jurisdiction of, and interest in, the built environment, there are a number of stakeholders and sectors that need to be involved in sustained changes to the built environment. As such, engaging stakeholders with diverse goals and mandates can be challenging. Stakeholder consultation and additional opportunities for stakeholders to meet were identified as a basis for future collaboration. Further, consultation to identify common elements between the divergent goals and mandates between sectors may create a foundation for future initiatives. To this end, defined leadership may facilitate built environment progress in Alberta. The potential role for Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Health Services to lead some aspects of built environment initiatives was considered.

The importance of using existing and ongoing initiatives in Alberta, as a foundation for future activities was highlighted. The work of Dr. Karen Lee was noted as particularly interesting to participants for further consideration, tailoring and adoption in Alberta.

Recommendations and Opportunities for Action

1. Mechanisms and opportunities to foster dialogue between stakeholders and sectors, including opportunities for all sectors to provide input into priorities and initiatives, is suggested.

2. Given an interest in Dr. Karen Lee’s work developing active design guidelines, a better understanding of her work, potentially with additional speaking engagements, may be fruitful.

3. Purposeful and carefully developed education opportunities between sectors to increase cross-sectoral understanding is needed.
7. Recommendations for Action

The following summary recommendations reflect both those priority areas discussed within the afternoon APCCP-facilitated workshop, as well as suggestions drawn from the information, ideas and concepts discussed by the keynote speakers, the panel and other presenters. These seven recommendations aim to create a comprehensive vision about policies or programs that need to be implemented in the near future, to see a change in the built environment and the health of Albertans.

7.1 Recommendations Regarding Economic Incentives & Taxation

1. Economics, pricing and incentives can influence consumer choice. As such, concepts like Environmental Pricing Reform, may be valuable mechanisms to shift public demand for healthier environments and for alterations to less healthy environments.
2. Density-based property tax, subsidized transit fare or gas emissions tax should be considered as possible cost-based interventions in Alberta.

7.2 Recommendations for Public Education & Advocacy

1. Public support is required for policy and practice advancements. As such, education and awareness campaigns highlighting the link between the built environment and health are needed to generate community interest.
2. Media and social network campaigns targeted to the needs of communities may provide a modality for knowledge exchange.
3. New mechanisms and techniques to engage the public, such as the use of photovoice, may be more effective.

7.3 Recommendations on Zoning and Land-Use

1. Forums for relevant sectors to advise the development of provincial and municipal plans should be considered to ensure that plans meet the needs of all stakeholders.
2. Health authorities should be included in municipal planning decisions to provide a population health lens and to advocate for healthy development.
3. Alberta-specific considerations, including a large agricultural industry, distinct rural land use needs, and an aging population, are important considerations that are presently under-addressed. Therefore, strategies should be tailored to the Alberta context to best meet provincial needs.
4. The Municipal Government Act could be strengthened with the inclusion of a clearly articulated health perspective.
5. Further consideration of zoning to regulate food environment surrounding schools and recreation facilities is needed.
7.4 Recommendations to Promote Active Transportation

1. New developments should be planned to support active living, including active transportation, as the primary means of travel.
2. Existing communities should be evaluated for the feasibility and potential impact of retrofitting options.
3. Addressing community identified barriers to active transportation, including active school transport, as both social and infrastructural determinants of active living, may increase the prevalence of active transportation.
4. Transit Oriented Development may show promise for application in Alberta. Existing projects in Edmonton should be considered pilots for other urban Alberta municipalities.

7.5 Recommendations to Promote Collaboration

1. Recognition that collaboration in built environment initiatives is iterative may better prepare stakeholders and community partners for the collaborative process.
2. Given broad jurisdiction in the built environment, policy change is needed at multiple levels to adequately facilitate initiatives. This will require government involvement at a federal, provincial and municipal level.
3. As engaging stakeholders with diverse goals and mandates can be challenging, identification of common elements between these goals and mandates between sectors may create a foundation for collaboration.
4. Stakeholder consultation and opportunities to network between sectors is needed to build strong working partnerships.

As mentioned previously, the topics of sustainability and environmental concerns, as well as community engagement were discussed during the day, but did not receive the same amount of attention as the previous five areas.

The most noted recommendation to address sustainability and environmental concerns, were to ensure that built environment and sustainability programs and initiatives use the attention drawn from one cause, to increase curiosity and awareness to the other. This could prove especially useful to upcoming built environment projects, as the sustainability ‘movement’ has gained considerable influence as of late.

Discussions of recommendations for community engagement revolved around gathering the input from the community members, and to empower these participants to create and maintain programs to foster true success. The importance of participatory action research, especially for initiatives with an evaluative component, is a useful means of engaging the public, gathering their ideas and opinions, and increasing overall confidence of the community in the project itself, and its facilitators.
8. Conclusions

This workshop provided an opportunity for stakeholders from government, research, community and corporate settings to build new relationships and share ideas and experiences with one another. Through structured and strategic dialogue, recommendations to promote population health were developed to promote active living, mixed land-use and healthy community development. Collaboration, public education and economic incentive programming were recommended for further consideration in the Alberta context.

While innovative and progressive ideas were explored through this workshop, there remains significant work to introduce and maintain programs and policies that will create healthy, sustainable and well-developed communities. The forum was able to provide a medium for dialogue around these issues. It is the hope of the organizers that the connections made through the forum are used in future interdisciplinary, collaborative work and that the content in this report is used as a basis for discussion around built environment issues, ideas and goals.

9. Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended By</th>
<th>Website Link</th>
<th>Description/Content Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.uphn.ca/CLASP/">http://www.uphn.ca/CLASP/</a></td>
<td>Urban Public Health Network-Canadian Partnership Against Cancer’s Coalitions Linking Action and Science for Prevention (CLASP) initiative aims to unite existing and emerging cross-sector efforts to promote healthy built environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.cip-icu.ca/">http://www.cip-icu.ca/</a></td>
<td>Canadian Institute of Planners work on behalf of planners and the planning profession, and serves as the national voice of Canada's planning community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Thompson</td>
<td><a href="http://steppinguphalifax.ca/about/the-physical-activity-strategy/">http://steppinguphalifax.ca/about/the-physical-activity-strategy/</a></td>
<td>Physical Activity Strategy for the Halifax Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.sustainableprosperity.ca/Home+EN">http://www.sustainableprosperity.ca/Home+EN</a></td>
<td>Network of concerned individuals from a wide range of professions who want to move Canada towards an economy that values our natural world and is positioned to compete in the global, greener economy of the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended By</td>
<td>Website Link</td>
<td>Description/Content Area</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Roberts</td>
<td><a href="http://www.acecommunities.ca">http://www.acecommunities.ca</a></td>
<td>ACE Communities: Active, Creative and Engaged Communities is an initiative of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) designed to get More people. More Active. More Often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca">http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca</a></td>
<td>The People’s Food Policy Project is a pan-Canadian network of citizens and organizations that is creating Canada’s first food sovereignty policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.foodsecurityalberta.ca">http://www.foodsecurityalberta.ca</a></td>
<td>Engaging Albertans in strategies to ensure secure access to adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate food for everyone produced in an environmentally sustainable way and provided in a manner that promotes human dignity (adapted from OPHA Food Security Workgroup 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Zhang</td>
<td><a href="http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/new-ally-redevelopment">http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/new-ally-redevelopment</a></td>
<td>Public health law &amp; policy: PHLP partners with government staff, advocates, and other community leaders to provide practical solutions to a wide range of public health problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix A: Workshop Agenda

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT FORUM AGENDA

**Tuesday, January 18, 2011**

Wild Rose Room, Lister Conference Centre, University of Alberta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 9:15  | **Keynote Address:** Lessons from Region of Peel on the Built Environment | Tom Slomke, Director, Development Services, Region of Peel  
Gayle Bursey, Director, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Region of Peel                                                                 |
| 10:15 | Networking Break                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |
| 10:30 | **Panel Discussion:** What are the opportunities to influence the built environment across sectors? | Dean Cooper, Principal, Stantec Consulting  
Ian Hosler, Walkable Edmonton Coordinator, City of Edmonton  
Olimpia Pantelimon, Senior Planning Advisor, Alberta Municipal Affairs  
Dr. Gerry Predy, Senior Medical Officer of Health, Alberta Health Services  
David Thompson, Principal, Policy Link Research and Consulting                                                                 |
| 12:00 | Lunch                                                               |                                                                                                                                          |
| 1:00  | **Short Presentations on the Built Environment (“Pecha Kucha” style)** | Erik Backstrom, Senior Planner, City of Edmonton  
Bev Esslinger, Coordinator, Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE)  
Laura Nieuwendyk, University of Alberta  
Don Schopflocher, University of Alberta  
John Spence, University of Alberta  
Olimpia Pantelimon, Alberta Municipal Affairs  
Susan Roberts, Community Building Resources and Growing Food Security in Alberta                                                                 |
| 2:00  | Networking Break                                                    |                                                                                                                                          |
| 2:30  | **What’s Next: Exploring Policy Responses to Built Environment Challenges in Alberta** | Kim Raine, Co-Director of the Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention (APCCP)  
Ken Kyle, APCCP Advocacy Consultant  
Building on morning sessions, participants will identify and prioritize opportunities for policy change and develop concrete action plans.                                                                 |
| 4:00  | Closing Remarks                                                     |                                                                                                                                          |
Appendix B: Pecha Kucha Abstracts

Drawing its name from the Japanese term for the sound of conversation (“chit chat”), it rests on a presentation format that is based on a simple idea: 20 images x 20 seconds. It's a format that makes presentations concise, and keeps things moving at a rapid pace.

Donald Schopflocher, University of Alberta
Title: Health and micro features of the built environment
Description: Detailed observations of the built environment in four Alberta Communities (from the Community Health and the Built Environment project) were brought together with survey results from individuals living in those communities (from the Healthy Alberta Communities project) to examine relationships between health and the built environment.

Erik Backstrom, City of Edmonton
Title: Transit Oriented Development
Description: Edmonton transforming its urban form by expanding the Light Rail Transit (LRT) network and encouraging development around LRT stations. This presentation will explain what transit oriented development is and how planning for it factors in physical activity and health.

Bev Esslinger, Safe Healthy People Active Everywhere (S.H.A.P.E.)
Title: The walk to school
Description: This presentation is about the walk to school...reminding us of the wonder of the walk. Children discover caterpillars crossing the sidewalk and many interesting things on their journey to and from school. Contrast that with the traffic congestion in and around schools as parents drop off and pick up their children. The goal is to encourage more students (and their parents) to walk or bike to school...it is healthier for them and the environment. Every step is a step in the right direction.

Laura Nieuwendyk, Policy, Location and Access in Community Environments (PLACE)
Title: Understanding Community Perceptions of the Built and Social Environment
Description: The presentation will highlight how residents from four Alberta communities (Town of Bonnyville, North Central Edmonton, Medicine Hat and Redcliff, and Town of St. Paul) perceive their community environments (including built and social). Resident perceptions will be highlighted by sharing their pictures and stories from a photovoice project.

Olimpia Pantelimon, Municipal Affairs, Government of Alberta
Title: Healthy Communities Committee, Canadian Institute of Planners
Description: The presentation will review the Alberta Land-Use Framework which outlines seven strategies to improve land-use decision making in Alberta. Three immediate priorities for action from this framework will be discussed along with relevant policy gaps in areas of provincial interest.
Susan Roberts, Growing Food Security in Alberta (GFSA) and Community Building Resources (CBR)

**Title:** Health and the Built environment - Overcoming challenges in Alberta through Community Building for Food Security

**Description:** Presented by Growing Food Security in Alberta (GFSA) and Community Building Resources (CBR) this presentation will outline the challenges the built environment presents to achieving Food Sovereignty in Alberta. The Solutions that are emerging through the pan Canadian People’s Food Policy Project, Food Secure Canada and rural communities’ efforts across Alberta will be highlighted.

John Spence, University of Alberta

**Title:** Physical inactivity and obesity in the 21st century: Is it time to rage against the machine?
## Appendix C: SWOT Analysis of Built Environment in Alberta

The following SWOT analysis synthesizes the key information and highlights of the Forum as observed by APCCP team members (Table 3). The acronym SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The APCCP’s identified strengths and opportunities focused primarily on the need and capacity to collaborate across sectors and to capitalize on the existing momentum of the sustainability movement. Conversely, the observed weaknesses and threats to fostering health promoting built environments, centered around the current planning and development structure, and the myriad of policy changes needed to position health as a priority in land use and development decision-making.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Region of Peel experience (tangible measure for healthy development, work done to outline/suggest roles for health stakeholders, etc.), public health impact assessment process (Healthy Development Index);</td>
<td>• Need to find an obvious common interest amongst varied stakeholders – Health is seen as having “come late to the party” = not yet a player at the table;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alberta is growing = new demands for development = new opportunities for change;</td>
<td>• Lack of infrastructure that mandates collaboration with health;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emerging research connecting Built Environment and health;</td>
<td>• Instruments/assessments still in development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multi-sectoral collaboration;</td>
<td>• Current Built Environment structure (sprawl, cars) = ↓ health;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Policy work needs to be done with researchers; evidence-based multidisciplinary strategies and tasks (we already or are on the road to having this).</td>
<td>• Lack of clear direction from health stakeholders on what they want from developers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Need policy that allows planners to say “no,” so far nothing allows “no” on the basis of health assessments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rules/policies cross multiple jurisdictions and sectors (e.g., Engineering).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flat development cost charges – e.g., Property taxes are not an economic incentive for change.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Community growth/population growth = new opportunities for developing and influencing;</td>
<td>• Labyrinth of policies which impact/influence the Built Environment and health – confusing, time-consuming, requires getting many different stakeholders on board;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developers want a level playing field (policy can help to create a level playing field);</td>
<td>• Safety vs. health (in this context are divergent interests, concerns);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrating safety and health;</td>
<td>• Shifting responsibility for change (provincial role? municipal role? National issue?);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mesh with sustainability/environment agenda (environment has momentum);</td>
<td>• Developers may not want to be seen as “pioneers” in these issues (want to know if others have done it already = can stall action);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Local action – e.g., walking school busses;</td>
<td>• Economic barriers (e.g., sprawl is cheaper);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New Alberta Health Act may include changes to the Public Health Act;</td>
<td>• Interference with marketplace;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunities to change incentives – align financial and health goals;</td>
<td>• Opposition from developers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National work is required (roadblocks, jurisdiction of Federal government);</td>
<td>• Centralization of municipal services (trend to isolate residential neighbourhoods and key community services are centralizing (residents have nowhere to walk to).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engineering standards are not actually ‘law’;</td>
<td>• Could change incentives (financial incentives to support with health goals).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: APCCP Priority Setting Activity (Post-It Notes)

Participants identified what they perceived as the top priority area(s) for action, to address issues in the built environment and health. Responses are grouped according to common themes. The bullet points were taken directly from participants and have not been edited for content or grammar.

1. Community Engagement/Democratic Decision-Making
   - Participative democracy – agree on the vision;
   - Foster discussion in the community about well-being and the paths to well-being;
   - We all know we should change. But no one wants to be first. They all want to be able to point to others saying: “see they do it – so should we!” We need some more people to be first and to develop some policies that will create positive change. Possibly provincial in nature so municipalities cannot be pitted against each other;
   - Facilitating more value-based discussion;
   - Most important priority for policy action to address build environment in AB: Introducing collaboration between people in the medical/public health planning and engineering disciplines at the undergraduate level in University;
   - What is the most important action regarding policy to address the built environment in Alberta? Build and rebuild good relationships with municipal-level “actors” in the built environment.

2. Sustainability Focus/Connect to Environmental Issues
   - Align policy and incentives with National Programs like Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Fund for Sustainable Development.

3. Active Transport
   - Advocate to our regulators on the importance of active transportation on our health in order to make a difference on the health status of our population. Urge support from our regulators to ensure collaboration with our provincial stakeholders to be innovators to set policy in this area that does not currently exist in literature;
   - Promote walking in my community;
   - Advocate for and establish policy for cities, towns, villages, and hamlets to have X km of trails for walking and biking for every X km of roads developed/existing.
4. Multi-Ministry Level/Cross-Sector/Discipline Communication and Cooperation

- Create a vehicle/mechanism for developing common understanding/awareness and decision making among valued stakeholders of built environment;
- Coordinated approach at moving this ahead at the provincial level;
- Provide a forum for regional stakeholders to discuss and plan an agenda/strategy for action;
- Have provincial government funding for groups who will advocate and educate regarding the importance of built environments which will promote public health;
- Have policies between departments (municipal, infrastructure, health, etc.) to work together. Make policies from top of government and direct downwards. Safety should not be in opposition to health. Safety and health must work (go) hand-in-hand;
- Establish a network of stakeholders who can influence built environment decisions. Then establish an appropriate communication/knowledge exchange mechanism;
- Multi-ministry collaboration for provincial policy changes on built environment;
- Stronger public health and planning legislation;
- In Alberta: ID key stakeholders across the broad range of potential partners and work to “build” champions within those sectors/organizations.

5. Public Education and Advocacy

- Educate and advocate;
- Public understanding and support for environment that supports health. How to fight – not in my backyard thinking;
- Citizens – advocate, collaborate, enable.

6. Zoning/Land-Use

- Zoning regulations regarding fast food near schools, in recreation arenas, etc.;
- Conduct policy GAP analysis on social servicing and land-use planning;
- Most important priority for policy action to address the built environment in Alberta: Walkability of a community with a destination purpose;
- An important policy action to address built environment in Alberta and policy to promote mixed land use: mixed use land → mixed accommodation →actives modes (health);
- Plan and build things properly at the beginning rather than address something as an afterthought. “Make it right” – Mike Holmes;
- Good side: Encouraging the development industry makes “complete” neighborhoods with mixed-use housing, mixed-use buildings, densification, and TOP development.

7. Economics/Taxation

- Align municipal development economic policies with the public health agenda/desired built environment;
- Advocacy for sprawl-preventing tax incentives starting at the municipal level.