



# HEALTHY CANADA by design

New Tools and Approaches to Promoting Healthy Communities



**WORLD CONGRESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**  
Vancouver, BC, September 8, 2010



Public health officials across Canada have taken notice of the **links between health and the built environment**, and have started to take action.

**However**, there have been few attempts to unite these efforts under a strategic, integrated network of analysis and action.







# HEALTHY**CANADA** by design



COALITIONS LINKING ACTION  
& SCIENCE FOR PREVENTION

An initiative of:

CANADIAN PARTNERSHIP  
AGAINST CANCER



PARTENARIAT CANADIEN  
CONTRE LE CANCER



## Our goals

Together, we are:

1) **Piloting different approaches** to translating the latest research in this field into state-of-the-art tools to support policy-makers and practitioners in creating healthier built environments.

2) **Exchanging knowledge**, lessons learned and looking for opportunities to adapt practices from one city or region to another.

3) **Cultivating the building of a cross-sectoral community of practice.**



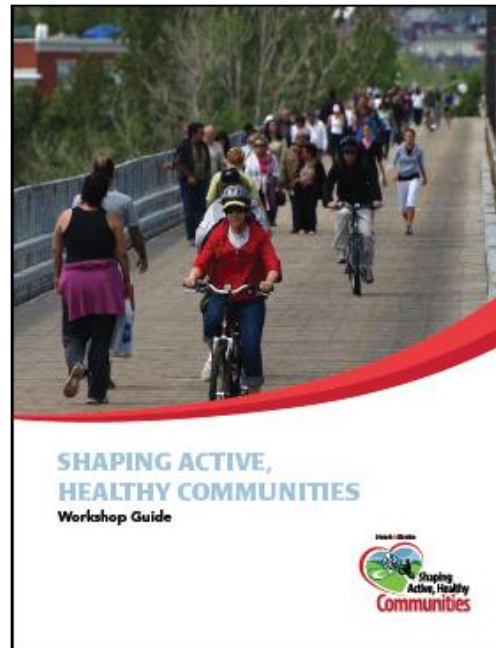
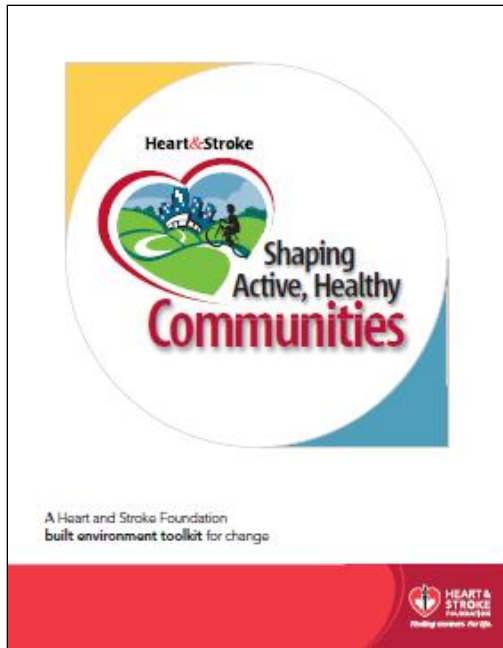




## Description of **Projects** under our CLASP initiative







HEART &  
STROKE  
FOUNDATION  
OF CANADA

FONDATION  
DES MALADIES  
DU CŒUR  
DU CANADA

*Finding answers. For life.  
À la conquête de solutions.*



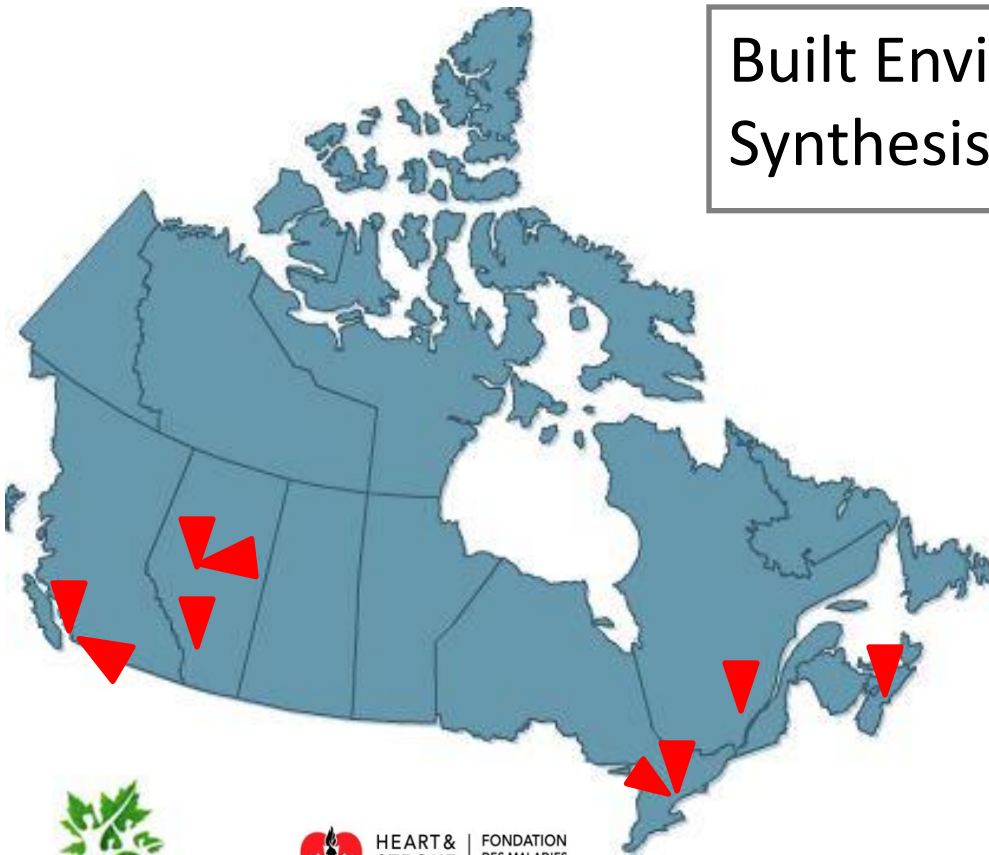
Shaping Active, Healthy Communities Workshop Guide  
& Template Powerpoint Presentation

[www.heartandstroke.ca/healthycommunities](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthycommunities)



# Heart and Stroke Foundation Activities

Built Environment Research  
Synthesis & Dissemination





Developing the content and criteria for a **health background study** to be implemented at the municipal and/or regional levels:

The framework will be developed with **input** from:

- Municipal planners
- Regional planners
- Local developers
- Public health staff





Working with municipal and regional planning departments to develop processes and policies that would facilitate the implementation of a **Healthy Development Index** tool:

Potential areas for **policy change** include:

- Municipal and Regional Official Plans
- Municipal and Regional Master Plans
- Selected Secondary Plans
- Zoning bylaw standards
- Traffic bylaws
- Urban design guidelines





Regional Official Plan amendment 24 (adopted April 2010):

**The Region will work with the area municipalities to:**

- 1) Raise **awareness** of the public health issues related to planning through public and private partnerships; and
- 2) Prepare an **assessment tool** to evaluate the public health impacts of developments as part of the approval process

Regional Official Plan amendment 25 (adopted February 2010):

**The Region may:**

- 1) Require **health impact studies** as part of the development application process; and
- 2) Develop **public health indicators** to analyze the effectiveness of the Official Plan's policies and serve as a basis for policy adjustments.



Inventorying, mapping and evaluating **community-based interventions** to promote greener, more walkable neighbourhoods:

- Produce a **map** of the location of the different interventions
- Conduct a **survey** of citizen and community groups;
- Administrate **environmental walkability audits** of the different neighbourhoods;
- Conduct **interviews** with key informants;
- Examine the **associations** between the extent of implementation of different interventions and citizen and community mobilisation around green neighbourhoods.





### Urban Environments & Health Inequalities **Report**



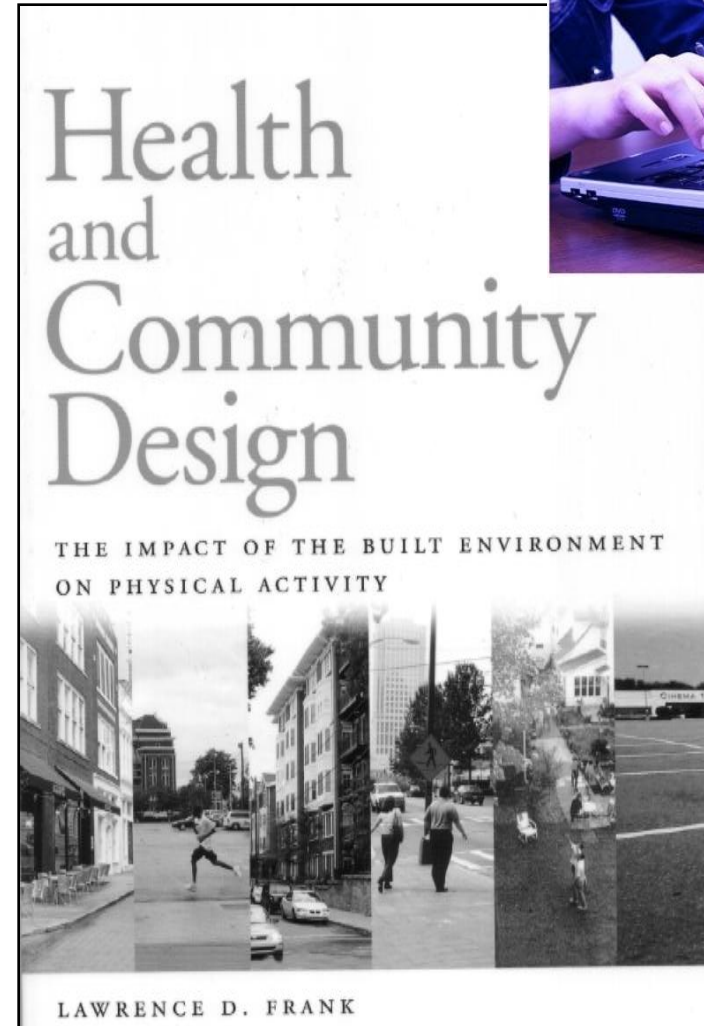
The Toronto Specific Report will:

- Explore relationships between socio- economic status, health outcomes, and the urban built environment in the City of Toronto
- Complement initiative already being undertaken by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)
- Provide new information about how socio-economic and health relationships are modified by the urban physical environment



### Software Tool

- Dr. Lawrence Frank of Urban Design 4 Health, LTD. (UD4H) will enhance a publicly accessible, already developed software tool (I-PLACE3S)
- Software tool can be used to evaluate the extent to which proposed land use and transportation options promote or hinder health
- “Enhanced” software tool will be built on Toronto-specific geo-coded data
- Pilot tests will take place in Greater Toronto and Metro Vancouver.





## Residential Preferences **Survey**

**Purpose:** to document demand for various types of residential community environments ranging from walkable to more auto-oriented environments in Greater Toronto and Vancouver regions.







Working with local governments to support them in **integrating a health lens** to their community planning projects and policies.

Internal **capacity building**, **organizational** learning and strategic planning.





Responsibility for healthy built environment work shared between Health Protection and Primary Care (Healthy Living/Healthy Community) with the support of the Office of the Medical Health Officer

➤ **Healthy Living/Health Protection**

- Healthier Community Partnerships
- Population Health Focus
- Community Development Approach

➤ **Health Protection**

- Recent Healthy Built Environment core program review →HBE strategy development
- Review of community plans, neighbourhood concept plans

✓ Healthy Canada by Design is supporting this transition





### 1) Building Internal Capacity

- ✓ Create info briefs on key issues for health & built environment – for municipalities & Fraser Health reference library for future HBE work
- ✓ Develop & implement an internal workshop to build Health Authorities's skills, capacity and roles in healthy built environment





### 2) Developing Capacity to work with Municipalities

- ✓ Develop a map that indicates which departments, when, and how Fraser Health can become involved in planning and decision-making processes, to contribute to policy development and decision making that supports positive health outcomes and rationale
- ✓ Participate in the current Official Community Plan and Neighbourhood Community Plan update process, (a) working relationship, (b) gain expertise, (c) inform development of the plans





### Collaboration with Vancouver Coastal Health and Metro Vancouver

✓ knowledge exchange project that will link researchers, planners, health authorities and others

**Vision:** To enable, support, and maintain the development of healthy, low-carbon, and equitable communities across British Columbia's Lower Mainland.

#### Objectives:

- **Encourage** the development of multi-scale tools and policies around healthy, sustainable land use and transportation planning.
- **Enable** knowledge translation and exchange between cross-disciplinary stakeholders.
- **Identify** opportunities, constraints, and gaps within related and pertinent research, practice and resources and provide support for collaborative work and projects.



### Structure

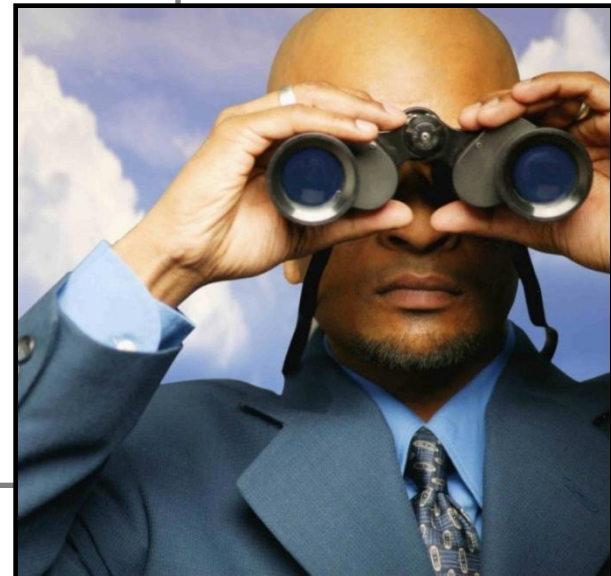
- Healthy Community Partnerships
- Health Protection

### Expertise

- Content
- Process

### Core Program

- Ongoing programmatic development and review





### Barriers

- Municipalities
  - Downloading of responsibility to municipalities
  - Potentially increased costs of development
- Health Authorities
  - Resources
  - Unclear role of HA in HBE

### Facilitators

- Education/advocacy
- Supportive structures
  - Human resources
  - Tools
  - Cross ministerial coordination and support





## Structure



## Population Health Team:

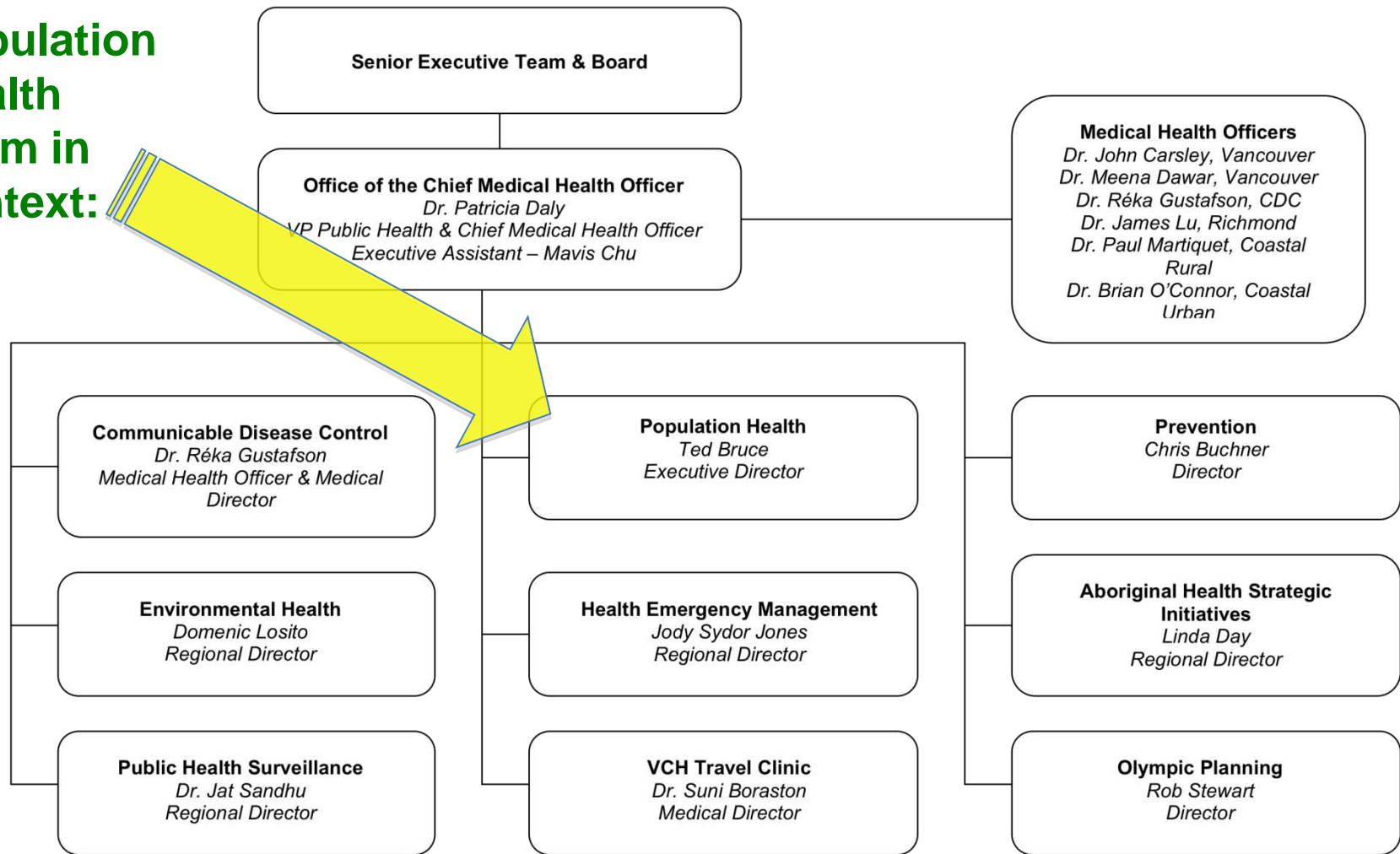


- **Reports to the Chief Medical Health Officer**
- **Works with a variety of partner organizations** to influence the creation of healthy public policies that support the health and well-being of our communities.



## Structure

**Population  
Health  
Team in  
context:**





## Activities

### 1) District of North Vancouver Official Community Plan

- Memorandum of Understanding with District of North Vancouver
- Health input and influence in each step of the plan-making process
- Involvement with different audiences - municipal staff, community

*contributed  
health  
information*



*- Medical Health  
Officer keynote  
speaker  
- participated in  
creating the  
vision*



*Health info and relevance was  
included in planning context  
papers & discussions with  
stakeholder groups*



*Further  
involvement to  
come as the  
process  
unfolds!*





## 2) Supporting Richmond's review of the City's Official Community Plan ...

- Medical Health Officer 'call to participation' in the planning process (news article, etc.)
- Public health perspective on public input and key issues in the plan - for reference on the City's website discussion forum for the plan: [LetsTALKrichmond.ca](http://LetsTALKrichmond.ca)
- Co – facilitated a planning policy session with local social service agencies
- Our participation is evolving with the planning process



Join the discussion  
[LetsTALKrichmond.ca](http://LetsTALKrichmond.ca)



## Activities in BC : Joint Project – VCH & FH



### Activities

- Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health have provided advice on the Regional Growth Strategy  
*land use → health outcomes*
- Knowledge exchange project that will link researchers, planners, health authorities and others (mentioned by Fraser Health earlier)





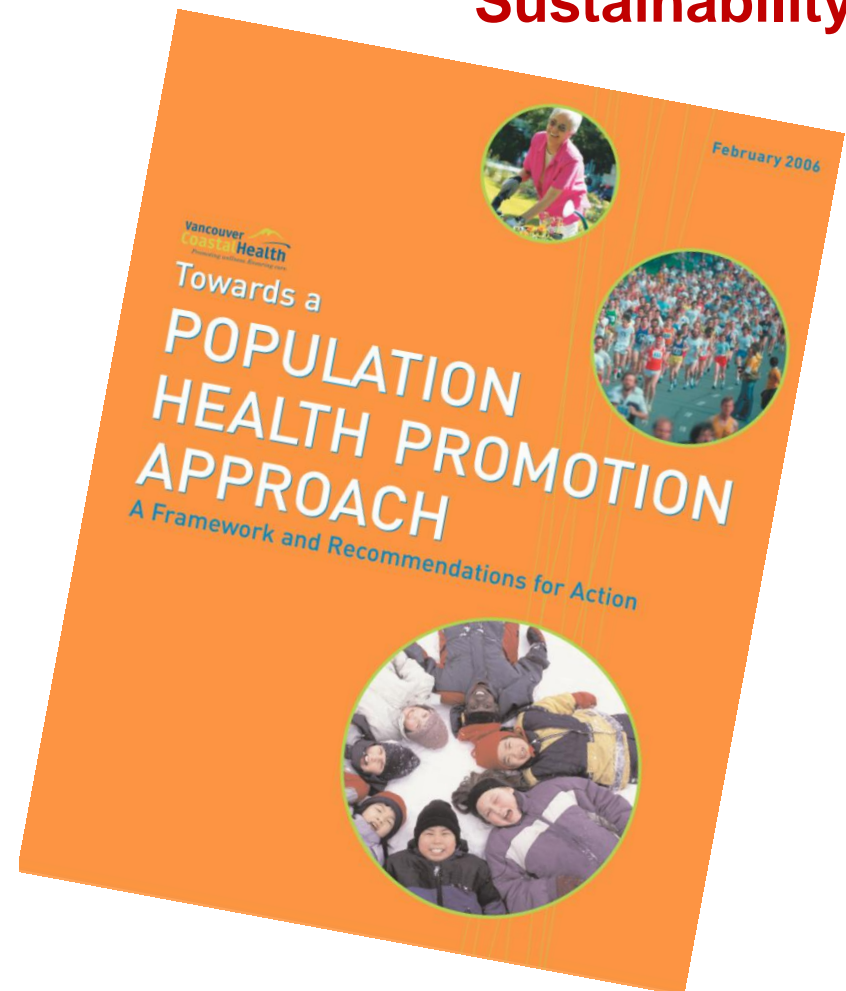


## How to sustain over the longer-term?

### 4 strategies...

1. Leadership
2. Partnership
3. Advocacy
4. Policy development

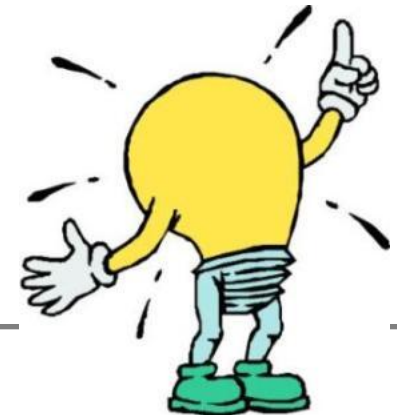
## Sustainability





## Lessons Learned

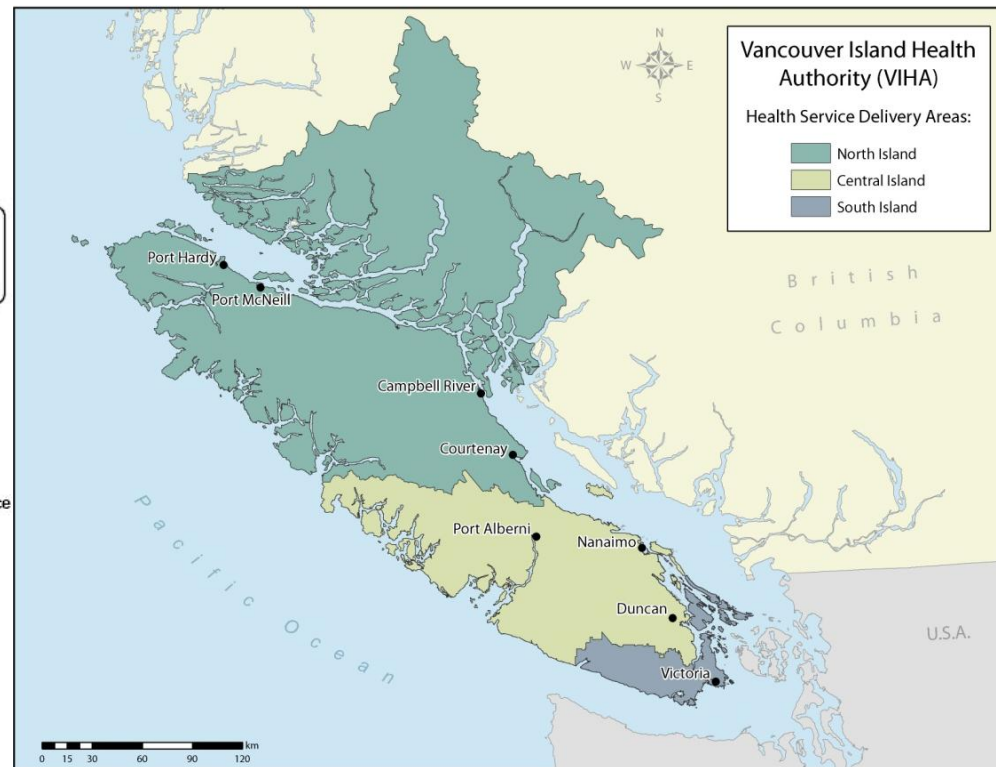
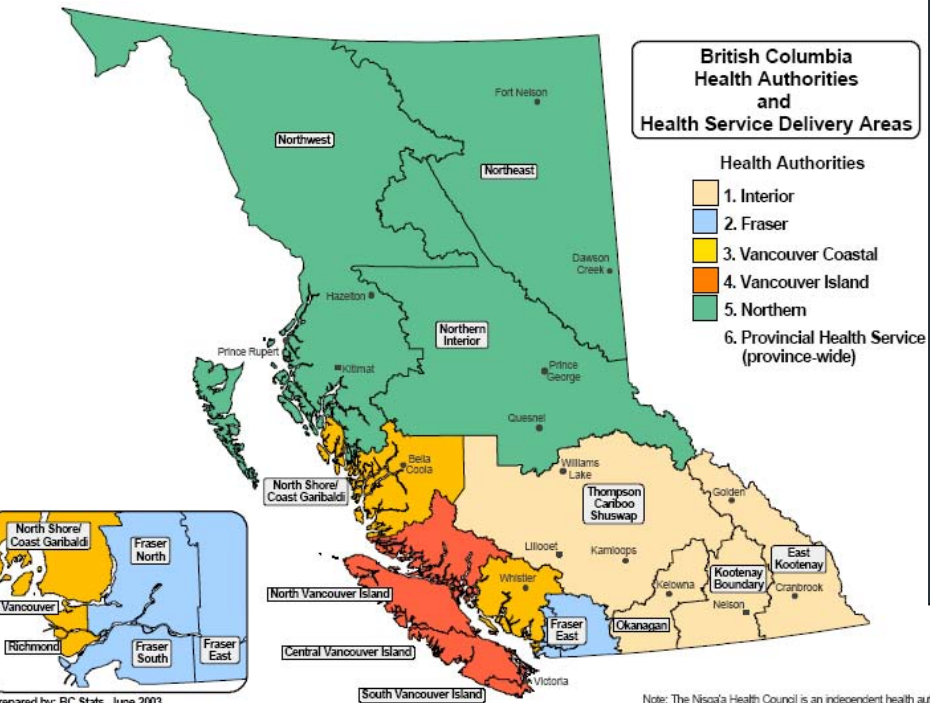
- Different audiences: elected, public and professional staff (planners). *We need to strategically determine 'the time' for each.*
- The scope of feedback is challenging.  
*What are our most important key messages?*
- Communities are using environmental lens.  
*We are adding health and equity.*
- The Public values health.  
*How to best work with that?*







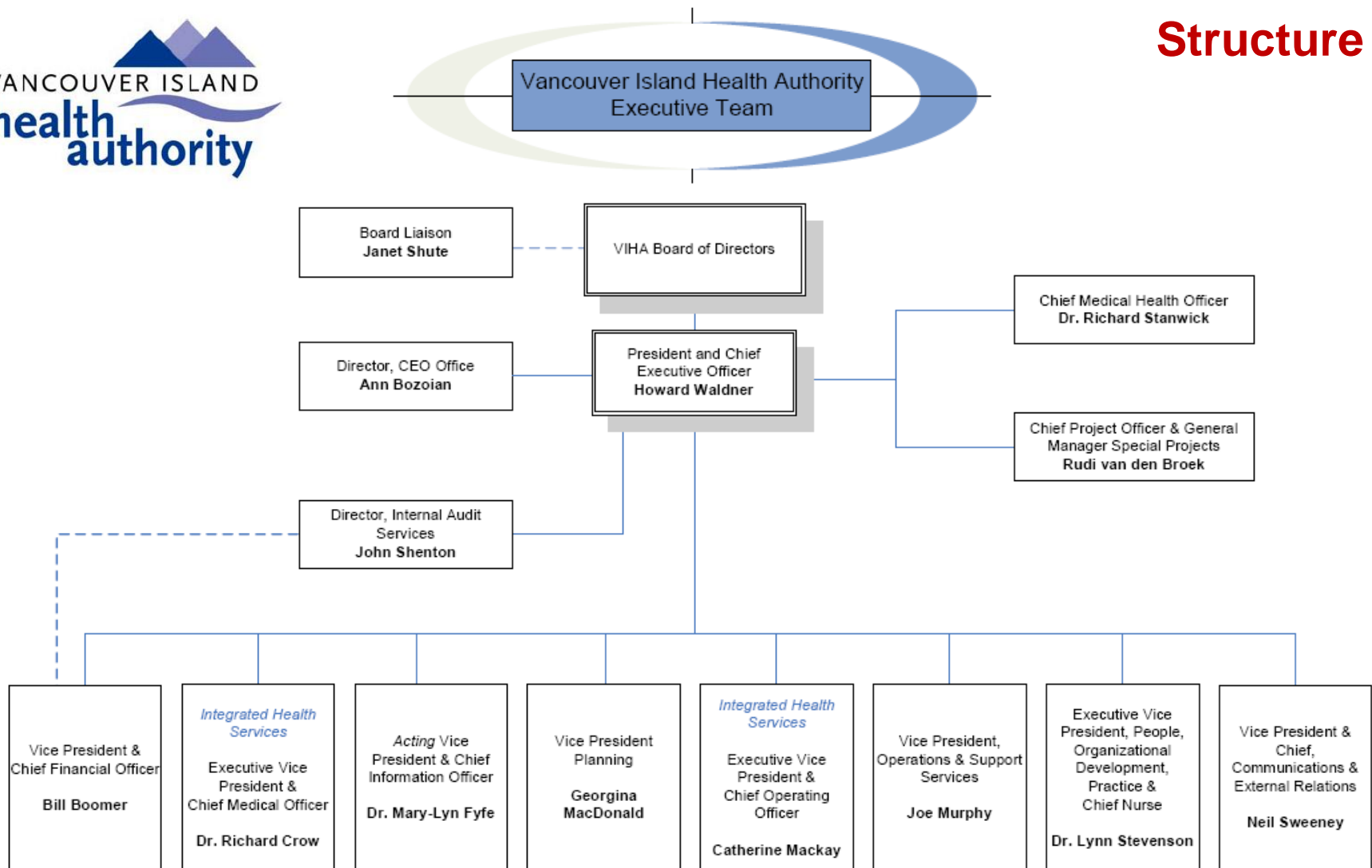
## Structure







## Structure





### Meeting with Municipal Planners – March 24, 2010:

- Planners already have a good understanding of healthy built environments
- Planners need help finding/interpreting scientific evidence
- Planners were interested in learning more about air quality and health
- Planners were interested in exploring opportunities to improve the built environment through the Hospital Campus Master Plan.





## Activities

### Project #1: Putting “health” back into Health Care Facility Planning

#### Main Objective:

➤ To document successes and challenges of the Patient Care Centre and Hospital Campus Master Plan.

#### Method:

➤ Semi-structured interviews of stakeholders.

#### Outputs:

- A set of considerations for future health care facility and campus development.
- Strengthened relationships with municipal/regional government staff and community partners.







## Activities

### **Project #2: Incorporating Air Quality and Health into Transportation Planning & Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategies**

#### **Objectives:**

- Teach planners how to incorporate air quality and health evidence into transportation planning and GHG management.
- Build and strengthen relationships with planners, air quality experts, and others.

#### **Method:**

- *“Air Pollution, Greenhouse Gases, and Population Health: Local Planning Implications and Actions”* Workshop
- Propose a method for on-going collaboration between health and planning





## Project #2 cont'd

### Outputs:

- Workshop presentations and discussion notes
- Greater understanding and depth of knowledge about intersection between air quality, transportation planning, GHG reduction strategies, and health.
- Terms of reference for collaborative group of planners and health professionals.







## Sustainability

- Build/strengthen relationships for ongoing collaboration with municipal and regional planning staff.
- Formalize mode/structure for collaborative work between planning and health.
- Continue to support regional government where necessary and when possible (e.g., Feedback on Regional Sustainability Strategy)



## Lessons Learned

- Many planners understand healthy built environment principles. Health could help by providing the evidence to help them rationalize and strengthen their policy recommendations to politicians and the public.
- Planners have a strong interest in working with health on healthy built environment issues, but are unsure about **how** we can work together.
- External groups find it difficult to navigate the health authority, and don't know what services or expertise are available. Likewise, health doesn't always know how to navigate regional governments or what expertise is available.
- Provincial and federal government staff are interested in opportunities to work with the health authorities as well as local and regional governments on healthy built environment issues.



## Lessons Learned

- The acute care culture, which drives the development of acute health care facilities, is not always respectful of the general community development approaches often used to create healthy built environments.
- Health has tended to approach healthy built environment issues as an expert instead of a participant – we sometimes forget that we also help shape the built environment.
- In general, health authorities aren't used to mitigating the diverse demands of the many external groups which is a central part of healthy built environment.



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**Alice Miro**

Project Manager, CLASP Initiative, Built Environment and Health  
| Responsable de projet, initiative CPAS, environnement bâti et santé

Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada |  
Fondation des maladies du cœur du Canada

Cel: 604.340.6828

[amiro@hsf.ca](mailto:amiro@hsf.ca)

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