

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY
COMMUNITY ISSUES & SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND ALDERMEN

1990 July 09

RE: ADVANCEMENT OF BURNABY HEALTHY COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Community Issues & Social Planning Committee recommends the following for approval by Council:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council authorize the hiring of a resource person on contract to assist with coordination of the Healthy Community implementation actions, as outlined in Section 5.0 of this report, to be funded through the second \$15,000 grant the Municipality received under the Provincial Strengthening the Family program.
2. THAT Council be requested to authorize the expenditure of \$503, to be funded through the \$15,000 Strengthening the Family grant, for the printing of 500 copies of the "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 1990 June 27, the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee received a staff report regarding advancement of Burnaby's Healthy Community initiatives. The Committee considered the following recommendations from that report:

1. THAT Council be requested to authorize the hiring of a resource person to assist with coordination of the Healthy Community implementation actions, as outlined in Section 2.1 of [the] report, to be funded through the second \$15,000 grant the Municipality received under the Provincial Strengthening the Family program.
2. THAT Council be requested to authorize the expenditure of \$503, to be funded through the \$15,000 Strengthening the Family grant, for the printing of 500 copies of the "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report.
3. THAT a copy of [the staff] report, "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby", and a letter of appreciation from the Chairman of the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee be sent to people who attended the three Healthy Community workshops in the fall of 1989.

This report provides a summary of Burnaby's past Healthy Community initiatives, a brief background statement on the Healthy Communities concept, an overview and discussion of the "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report and recommendations for advancing Burnaby's Healthy Community initiatives.

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- DIRECTOR FINANCE
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2.0 BURNABY'S HEALTHY COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

On 1989 March 13, Burnaby Municipal Council adopted a resolution to undertake a Healthy Community Project (Appendix 1, attached). To this end, Council authorized the expenditure of \$15,000, which the Municipality had received through the Provincial "Strengthening the Family" Initiative, to hire a consultant to coordinate the project.

The project was overseen and directed by a Council appointed task force consisting of Aldermen Sawicki and Begin and School Trustee Jones. Staff from the Health and Planning & Building Inspection Departments assisted the task force, as required.

U.B.C. Centre for Human Settlements were selected as consultants for the project. They conducted their work between 1989 September and 1990 February. The main thrust of their efforts was to explore options available to assist Burnaby in becoming a healthier community. To learn the views of various sectors within the local population, the consultants organized three community meetings. Sixty-three people attended, representing Council and other elected bodies, Municipal departments, citizen and business groups, and human service agencies. From a review of information obtained through the workshops and other material, the consultants proposed a generalized "game plan" for the Municipality to adopt in advancing its Healthy Community Initiatives.

The Community Issues & Social Planning Committee received the consultants' report, "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby", at its meeting of 1990 February 28. To assist it in assessing the consultants' recommendations, the Committee sought and received two staff reports on the matter. The Committee is now in a position to present its conclusions and recommendations to Council.

3.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES CONCEPT

The Healthy Communities concept emerged from a changing understanding throughout the world of the meaning of health. Until recently, health had been widely regarded as meaning the absence of disease. Health professionals and others sought to broaden this conception, recognizing that housing, pollution levels, income, and numerous other factors affect the health status of a community. This broadened concept of health was reflected in the following definition put forward by the World Health Organization:

Health is seen as a resource for everyday life, a dimension of our "quality of life", and not the object of living; it is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities.

In 1985, the World Health Organization initiated a "Healthy Cities" project in Europe. Twenty-five European cities were chosen to participate in the project. These cities identified a range of health goals for their jurisdictions, which they are currently seeking to meet.

The Canadian Healthy Communities Project was initiated in 1988. Funding was provided by the Canadian Institute of Planners, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the Canadian Public Health Association. A national project office was opened in Ottawa and a Coordinator and support staff were hired. From its inception, the Canadian project differed from the European project in one fundamental way. Rather than limiting participation in the project to a given number of cities, as was done in Europe, participation in the Canadian project was open to all interested communities. The National Healthy Communities Office identified the following requirements for a community wishing to join the Canadian Healthy Communities movement:

1. A council resolution of political commitment to a broad public-policy approach to health;
2. A commitment to an interdepartmental and intersectoral strategy;
3. A commitment to full community participation in the Project;
4. A commitment to sharing information derived from the Project with other participating municipalities;
5. A commitment to undertaking an evaluation process for local projects.

The "inclusive" nature of the Canadian project is reflected in the name given to the project (i.e. "Healthy Communities" rather than "Healthy Cities"). This choice of names underscores the belief that the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities concept is relevant to all communities, regardless of size.

Additional background on the Healthy Communities concept is provided in the newsletter, "Understanding Healthy Communities" contained in Appendix 2, attached. The newsletter was prepared by U.B.C. Centre for Human Settlements and was distributed to participants in the three Healthy Community workshops held in Burnaby last fall.

4.0 OVERVIEW OF CONSULTANTS' REPORT

As indicated, the Burnaby Healthy Community project was overseen and directed by a Council appointed task force, consisting of Aldermen Sawicki and Beglin and School Trustee Jones. U.B.C. Centre for Human Settlements, the project consultants, were engaged with Burnaby over a 6 month period between 1989 September and 1990 February. Their efforts consisted of three main steps: a) researching and documenting available information on the Healthy Communities concept and projects, b) designing, organizing, and conducting three community consultation workshops aimed at identifying Healthy Community priorities for the municipality, and c) developing recommendations for Burnaby to undertake in advancing its Healthy Communities Initiatives.

The Healthy Community Project Task Force, staff, and the consultants participated in a special meeting with Council in 1990 January to review preliminary findings and conclusions of the project. Following this special meeting, the consultants finalized the project report, "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby," which they submitted to the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee in February.

In their report, the consultants examined three optional Healthy Community approaches for Burnaby:

- a) **Policy Approach** - This approach involves efforts to improve the consistency of decisions made by Council, appointed bodies, and staff through the use of policies, guidelines, and criteria that explicitly take the health impacts of decisions into account.
- b) **Planning Approach** - The planning approach could be pursued at a municipal-wide or neighbourhood level or on an issue-specific basis. The planning approaches generally require a much greater investment of finances and other resources than the policy approach.
- c) **Project Approach** - This approach involves actions which address one or more Healthy Community issues in a non-comprehensive manner. Examples of Healthy Community projects from other municipalities include development of an all seasons recreational park in Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec and initiation of a KidsPlace Project in Edmonton.

A key conclusion of the research was that Burnaby is already pursuing several actions which could be considered as "Healthy Community" pursuits. Examples include work regarding housing, social planning, the environment, and public participation processes. Another conclusion was that a policy approach would be the most appropriate for advancing Burnaby's Healthy Communities Initiatives, at present. Therefore, rather than recommending that Burnaby pursue a comprehensive planning or project approach, the consultants recommended that a policy approach be adopted.

The "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report contains seven specific recommendations. These include adopting Municipal policies which are consistent with the Healthy Communities concept, supporting the Municipality's existing Healthy Communities efforts, and raising Council's and staff's awareness of Healthy Communities principles. The list of recommendations is presented in Appendix 3, attached.

The consultants also suggest six actions to implement the project recommendations, which can be summarized as follows:

- a) Form "Healthy Burnaby" Staff Working Group.
- b) Initiate Council/staff education and awareness program.
- c) Coordinate preparation of health impact statements.
- d) Develop recommendations for Healthy Community policies.
- e) Form Healthy Community Advisory Committee.
- f) Plan program of future Healthy Community activities.

A discussion of the above recommendations and proposed implementation actions is presented in Section 5 below.

5.0 DISCUSSION

It is believed that the consultants' conclusions, recommendations, and proposed implementation actions are basically sound. It is further believed that the consultants' efforts represent a good first step in assisting Burnaby in becoming a healthier community. An important outcome of adopting a "policy" approach as recommended by the consultants, is that it should elicit some valuable information for the future update of Burnaby's Official Community Plan. In particular, the policies developed should serve to strengthen the Health and Social Planning sections of the O.C.P..

The policy approach to implementation would likely involve a substantially lower commitment of finances and other resources than the planning or project approach options. Nonetheless, a considerable amount of time and effort would still be required to ensure that implementation of the policy approach proceeded smoothly and effectively. The concern is that given other work program priorities, staff would not be able to do justice to the implementation process. As a result, momentum would be lost and the future Healthy Community efforts could be abandoned due to lack of interest and leadership.

Given these concerns, it is recommended that Council authorize the retention of a resource person on contract to assist with the initial phase of implementing Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives. The intention is that the resource person assist in implementing Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives, not direct the implementation. In essence, the resource person should function as "an extra pair of hands" for the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee and staff. If Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives are to succeed, it is essential that they be "owned" by the Committee, Council, staff and, ultimately, the broader community.

It is proposed that Provincial "Strengthening the Family" program monies be used to fund the retention of a resource person. The Health Department received its second \$15,000 grant under the Strengthening the Family program late last year. These funds are shown as revenues in the Health Department's 1990 Annual Operating Budget and have not, as yet, been earmarked for any projects. Given that Strengthening the Family monies were used to fund the first phase of Burnaby's Healthy Community activities, and that Healthy Community Initiatives are consistent with the theme of strengthening the family, the Committee believes a strong case can be made for using Strengthening the Family monies to fund the next phase of Burnaby's Healthy Community project: the preliminary implementation efforts.

Some of the specific activities the resource person could assist with include:

Forming and supporting a "Healthy Burnaby" Staff Working Group - The "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report recommends that a Staff Working Group be established to coordinate implementation of Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives. The resource person could play a key role in supporting the efforts of this group.

Coordinating Council and Staff Education Efforts - As indicated, in order for Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives to succeed, the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee, Council, staff and, ultimately, the broader community will need to assume ownership of the Initiatives. The challenge to be faced is that the Healthy Community concept tends to be vague and difficult to comprehend. This challenge could likely be overcome through retention of a resource person who has the time, resources, knowledge, and skills to coordinate an education program on Healthy Communities for the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee, Council and staff.

Assisting Staff in Coordinating Preparation of Health Impact Statements - To prepare the proposed health impact statements, each Municipal department would need to examine the health consequences of its policies and practices. As part of the staff education program, the resource person could provide department heads and senior staff with information about the health impact statements. The resource person could also assist staff in coordinating the collection and analysis of the returned information.

Developing Recommendations for Healthy Community Policies - Using information from the health impact statements and other sources, the resource person could assist with developing recommended Healthy Community policies. These efforts would be preliminary only however, with the more detailed policy development occurring after the resource person's contract had expired. These detailed policy development efforts would be coordinated by the Healthy Community Staff Working Group, with the recommendations being forwarded to the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee for approval.

Forming Healthy Community Advisory Committee - As indicated, the "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report recommends that a Healthy Community Advisory Committee be formed. The Advisory Committee would represent community groups, business organizations, and other local groups in advising the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee on Healthy Community issues. While acknowledging that public participation is essential for a successful Healthy Community strategy, it is recommended that establishment of the proposed Advisory Committee not be considered for at least one year. This would allow time for the Municipality to start to "get its own house in order" before reaching out to the broader community. The Community Issues & Social Planning Committee believes it would be appropriate for the resource person, as part of his/her mandate, to provide recommendations to the Staff Working Group and/or the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee concerning the Advisory Committee or other public participation mechanisms.

Planning Program of Future Healthy Community Activities - As with the Healthy Community Advisory Committee Issue discussed above, the resource person would be in a position to recommend a program for future Healthy Community activities for Burnaby. These recommendations should be developed near the end of the resource person's term, being based on an assessment of progress made on the other Healthy Community Initiatives, perceived community interest and support, and other relevant factors.

As noted, the aim of the above "policy" approach will be for the Municipality to "get its own house in order" before developing a public participation component. The Community Issues & Social Planning Committee believes this approach is reasonable. We are concerned, however, that community groups and other non-Municipal representatives who participated in the Healthy Community workshops last fall have not been informed of progress made on Burnaby's Healthy Community Initiatives. It is therefore recommended that Council authorize the expenditure of \$503, to be taken from the \$15,000 Strengthening the Family grant, for the printing of 500 copies of "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby". The Committee proposes to send a copy of that document, this report and a letter of appreciation from the Committee Chairman to people who attended the fall workshops. The remaining copies of "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" would be distributed to community groups, service providers and interested members of the public.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby" report has provided a useful framework for guiding the Municipality's preliminary efforts to implement a Healthy Community strategy. If, as proposed, a resource person is retained and the "policy" approach to implementation is pursued, the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee believes the Municipality has a good opportunity to succeed in accomplishing its initial Healthy Community objectives.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman D.R. Corrigan
Chairman

Alderman F.G. Randall
Vice Chairman

Alderman R.G. Beglin
Member

Alderman Egon Nikolai
Member

Alderman J.M. Sawicki
Member

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APPENDIX 1

NOTICE OF MOTION

ALDERMAN G. BEGIN

ALDERMAN J. SAWICKI

INITIATIVES FOR STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY
-COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health has given this Municipality a grant of \$15,000 to be devoted to Strengthening the Family activities, and

WHEREAS healthy families flourish best in healthy communities, and

WHEREAS the Municipality of Burnaby prides itself on the high standard of health and safety provided to its citizens, and

WHEREAS the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion states "The fundamental conditions and resources for health are peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable eco-system, sustainable resources, social justice and equity, " and

WHEREAS Burnaby Council can play an important role in ensuring a Healthy Community by their actions and cooperation with others in such areas as parks and recreation, community planning, protection of the environment, provision of social services, roads and transportation, education, housing, and

WHEREAS there is a strong national and international movement underway to support the project of Canadian Healthy Communities endorsed by the Canadian Institute of Planners, the Canadian Public Health Association and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

Council approve, in principle, the expenditure of the aforesaid funds, on a project to promote a HEALTHY COMMUNITY,

and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

the committee designated by Council, Alderman Sawicki, Alderman Begin, School Trustee, Carol Jones, be authorized to prepare the Terms of Reference and hire a consultant to carry out an overview assessment of Burnaby as a "Healthy Community" and to identify areas for possible further study and Municipal Action.

and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

the Municipality of Burnaby become a participant in the Canadian Network of Healthy Communities.

Understanding Healthy Communities

Burnaby has just embarked on an exciting new endeavour called the **Burnaby Healthy Community Project**. This innovative project offers local residents, community and business groups, municipal staff and elected representatives the opportunity to work together to tackle serious issues.

One of the first steps in this innovative project is to hear what people active in the community such as yourself feel are major challenges to creating a healthier Burnaby. That is why you have been invited to attend one of three upcoming workshops entitled "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby."

This brochure has been designed in preparation for the workshop, to help you understand this new concept -- the healthy community -- and what other cities and towns in Canada are doing about it.

Prepared on behalf of the Healthy Community Committee of Council

Members: Aldermen Gary Beglin and Joan Sawicki, School Trustee Carol Jones

October, 1989



In order to understand what is meant by the term "healthy community," it is helpful to look at the roots of the healthy community movement. . .

Determinants of health expanded...

In the mid-1970s it was recognized that the existing health care system was unable to address many of the health care needs of society. To put it simply, cough syrup would not cure us of respiratory problems caused by air pollution. All too often the causes of ill health lay outside the control of the medical profession.

For...environmental and behavioural threats to health, the organized health care system can do little more than serve as a catchment net for the victims.

In a 1974 book called A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians, Marc Lalonde, federal Minister of Health and Welfare,

promoted the idea that our environment and behaviour as well as human biology and the health care system determine the state of our health. At about this time we were also reminded that, despite the availability of universal medicare,

...those who report poor health are more likely to be poorer, less well-educated or unemployed.

While not a new idea, attention to factors which affect health, like income, provided early health promotion advocates with a powerful argument for expanding the definition of "health."

TORONTO, Ontario --

The City of Toronto's Healthy Toronto 2000 project is one of the better known healthy city projects in Canada. It came about when it was realized that much that will promote or enhance health lies "beyond health care."

Actual work on the Healthy Toronto 2000 project began in 1986. "Vision" workshops were held where participants were asked to describe what a healthy Toronto would be like in their view. Residents felt that the quality of the physical environment was one of the major challenges to building a healthier Toronto.

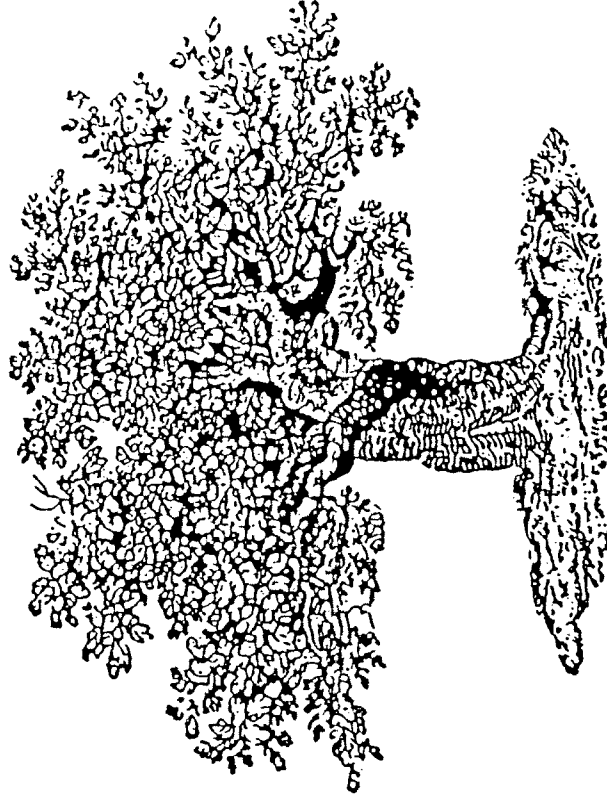
Work culminated in the unanimous adoption of the Toronto Board of Health's report "Healthy Toronto 2000" in February 1989. This strategic report outlines a two part healthy city strategy.

The first part is a city-wide health strategy with four broad health goals: 1) reduce inequities in health opportunities in Toronto; 2) create physical

environments supportive of health; 3) provide social environments supportive of health; and 4) advocate a community-based health services system.

The second part is a healthy city strategy for the Department of Public Health: 1) increase health expectancy among the people of Toronto; 2) create healthful environments and protect the people of Toronto from health hazards; 3) enable the people of Toronto to develop health promotion skills and achieve their health potential; 4) plan for health and furnish health data for the people of Toronto; and 5) promote and foster the Healthy City initiative in all aspects of City life and government.

A multi-departmental group, the Healthy City Workgroup, has been responsible for the project. Recently, City Council approved a budget to establish a Healthy City office with three full time staff who will coordinate the City's health initiative. The workgroups will be responsible for implementing many different recommendations of the "Healthy Toronto 2000" report.



Changing definition of health...

Instead of referring to health as the absence of disease, we now connect health with wellness. Health is seen as a positive concept: it is something to work toward, not something to prevent or treat. The World Health Organization (WHO) has grappled with the idea of expanding our definition of health, and proposed the following:

Health is seen as a resource for everyday life, a dimension of our "quality of life", and not the object of living; it is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities.

This new definition of health clearly places the responsibility for achieving health in the hands of not only the medical profession but other organizations as well. For example, those of us dealing with income assistance, waste management, and traffic safety issues, to name just a few, have a real impact on health.

This expanded definition also implies that, if health is a social issue, then social issues must also be seen as health issues. Matters previously overlooked or deemed outside the mandate of single issue departments and organizations have become relevant; they may now be viewed in the context of a healthy community.

The Mayor and City Administrator decided to "get our own act straight first" and "demonstrate that the City is serious about what it proposes before getting public input."

DARTMOUTH, Nova Scotia

The City of Dartmouth joined the Canadian Healthy Communities Project in September 1987. The Mayor (a doctor) and the City Administrator provided the initiative to join. It is hoped that the healthy community project will enhance quality of life by involving the municipality and its citizens in ensuring that health is an explicit factor in political, social and economic decision making.

Dartmouth is unique from other municipalities involved in the Canadian Healthy Communities Project. The Mayor and the City Administrator decided to "get our own act straight first" and "demonstrate that the City is serious about what it proposes before getting public input." A number of initiatives were undertaken: requiring

municipal department heads to generate health impact statements for their departments and review departmental plans and priorities in view of these statements; the development of a paper recycling program; the sponsorship of a pilot project encouraging people to compost organic waste; the establishment of an affirmative action capital plan; the evaluation by City purchasing staff of the environmental soundness of City material and equipment purchases; the creation of a City properties non-smoking program; and the pursuit of action against negligent landlords of inadequate rental buildings.

After cleaning up their own shop, Council wants to invite the public to play a bigger role in helping Dartmouth become a healthier place to live.

Health - individual or community responsibility?

At first this new definition of health was aimed at individuals. We all remember "Participation" campaigns where the fit 60 year old Swede was held up as an example of what the 30 year old Canadian was not! These approaches to health promotion are necessary, but they are not sufficient to produce health in its broadest sense. Advertising campaigns encouraging us to be responsible for our health are limited in their ability to deal with fundamental determinants of health, such as poverty or air quality. For example, what is the likely impact of a fitness campaign on the health of an isolated single mother trying to raise kids on public assistance? What is the likely impact of such campaigns on a person who breathes freeway air polluted by other people? Actions under the healthy community banner are intended to provide us with a means of addressing these and other issues.

What is unique about the healthy community idea is that, for the first time, communities are now seen as a resource for actions promoting health.

VANCOUVER ISLAND --

The Capital Regional District (CRD), composed of nine municipalities with 270,000 people, joined the Canadian Healthy Communities Project in September 1987. The Victoria Medical Health Officer and the CRD Board provided the initiative to join. A broad approach is taken to the issue in that health for individuals is seen as dependent largely on environmental, social and economic factors.

Initially, the CRD wanted to reach an understanding of what a healthy community is. To do this, an invitation-al conference was held in September 1987.

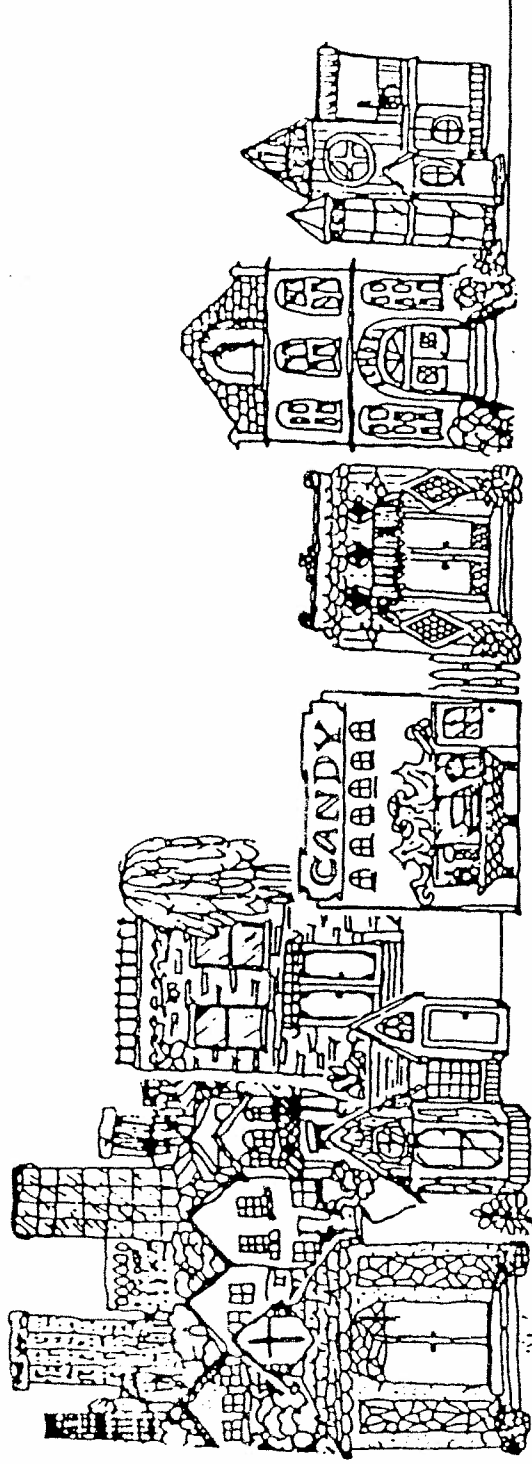
Participants decided that a healthy community should have: 1) a strong "community" focus; 2) a sustainable environment; 3) a reduction of inequities in health, housing, nutrition, education, and employment; 4) an effective, supportive social service program; 5) a diverse.

preventive support program, and 6) a well-maintained, comprehensive data base for planning and evaluation.

The next stage consisted of the transformation of the strategic directions and recommendations of the conference into an action plan. The result of this work, "Healthy Capital Regional District 2000," was submitted to the CRD in March 1988. A wide array of action-oriented recommendations were suggested for the CRD, the member municipalities, and communities.

One of the recommendations was to appoint someone to be responsible for community waste management. They also decided to form a group called "Happy Kids in the Future."

Much of the action in 1989 has involved further public consultation, formation of a permanent CRD Healthy Communities Advisory Group, and implementation of specific goals.



What is a healthy community?

Interest in the healthy community concept increased in the mid-1980s. A number of conferences and meetings in Canada and around the world explored topics like "Beyond Health Care". A 1986 document, Achieving Health for All, produced by the federal health ministry, recommended three health action strategies:

- **fostering public participation** in processes and decisions which affect health;
- **coordinating healthy public policy** so that professionals in all public policy areas become aware of their interest in and responsibility toward health in their communities; and
- **strengthening community health** by improving links between services and the communities they serve, particularly the disadvantaged.

During this period the terms "healthy cities," and later, "healthy communities," were coined to provide some direction and focus for these new ideas. Building a healthier Burnaby will likely involve all three of these strategies.

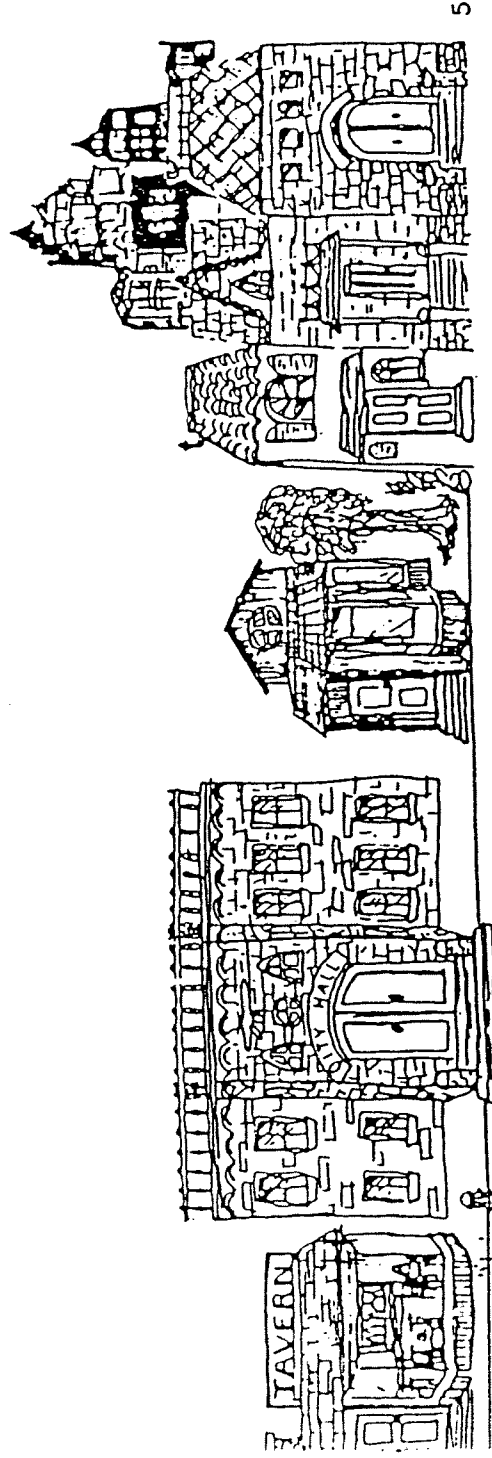
SAANICH, B.C. ...

As one of the participating municipalities in the Healthy Capital Regional District (CRD) 2000 project, Saanich has made considerable progress in its endeavor to become a "healthy community." A Council resolution to become part of the Healthy Communities Project was passed in February 1988. To begin, an advisory committee with two aldermen and two school trustees was set up to review a draft of the CRD Healthy 2000 report (see CRD box).

Like Dartmouth, the committee felt that some immediate steps should be taken. In January 1989, all municipal department heads were supplied with the six major characteristics of a healthy community as defined in a draft of the Healthy CRD 2000 report and asked to comment on their department's past and future impact on the "healthy community." The advisory committee also requested Council to

address immediately the issue of affordable housing in the community (or lack thereof).

The Healthy Saanich 2000 Committee has decided to focus much of the healthy communities work on the continuing development of the next Community Plan and future Local Area Plans. A series of 12 community workshops is being used to help residents determine their concerns, their visions, and preferred actions to achieve a "healthy" Saanich. The local cable TV station has been used to provide information and to develop programs for later viewing at schools and colleges. A youth workshop, similar to Edmonton's KidsPlace, was held during the summer. This fall or next spring, a large-scale interview of Saanich households will be undertaken to find out exactly what people think of how Saanich is "working" and of where and how improvements might be made.



One definition of a healthy community has been proposed by Trevor Hancock and Len Duhl. In their view, a healthy community is one which is:

continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.

A common reaction of those first introduced to the healthy community concept is the charge of "fuzziness." This is understandable given the wide range of activities promoted under the label "healthy community." Like heart health programs, dog control, recycling, and childrens programs. Clearly, the term "healthy communities" means different things to different people and permits under its name a great diversity of activity.

A simple definition of a healthy community is "a social ideal to be strived for." It will probably never be reached, but at least it indicates the direction we should try to move in.

In this respect, the term "healthy communities" is like "sustainable development" or "community economic development." The term healthy communities evokes vision and a call to action to do something about serious, multi-dimensional problems. It may provide a catalyst for Burnaby to do something about some pressing local issues.

Community interest in environmental issues provided the incentive for local residents to become involved.

ROUYN-NORANDA, P. Q.:

Rouyn-Noranda is part of a healthy communities network in Quebec called "Villes et Villages en Santé." In April 1987, this small Quebec town (approx. 24,000 pop.) was the first Canadian municipality to declare its participation in the Canadian Healthy Communities Project. Participation emerged from community consultation which was part of the development of a long-term planning strategy. Community interest in environmental issues provided the incentive for local residents to become involved.

A healthy communities committee was formed comprised of citizens, representatives from

municipal departments, and city council. It first carried out a community consultation program which directly reached one-quarter of the population and over 35 community groups.

Following this, a community forum was held. This forum formulated six action plans with recommendations to promote the reduction of noxious smelter emissions; to develop a botanical garden; to provide activities for pre-teens; to set up neighbourhood quality of life committees; to complete a solid waste recycling project; and to create a new "all seasons" recreational park. Further initiatives included the development of a "Healthy Communities Boutique" in a shopping centre to disseminate and receive information on the project.

From fuzziness to reality...

EDMONTON, Alberta
Encouraged by the Edmonton Board of Health, the City of Edmonton has decided to explore the Canadian Healthy Communities Project.

At the outset, a consultation conference was held to introduce the healthy communities concept and make quick assessments of Edmonton's health status. It was decided that Edmonton was a "fairly healthy community" but that some inequities existed in terms of healthy living and working conditions across the city. A Think Tank was set up to determine what to do with the concept: it quickly decided that the Edmonton Board of Health (a provincial government department) was rightfully responsible.

Recognizing the "fuzziness" of the concept and the potential difficulty in attracting both public and political support, the Board of Health shifted to concrete demonstration initiatives. Work has been carried out on a Food Policy Council, formed to address

various aspects of the food supply system, and, most importantly, on a KidsPlace Project. KidsPlace involved an in-depth survey of low income children's opinions on everything from food to playground safety. As a result, a number of actions, including the upgrading of street lighting in certain neighbourhoods and the improvement of pedestrian safety, were taken. This project attracted considerable positive attention from the media and from parents.

Recently the planning process has come to a standstill. Political enthusiasm has waned, and staff feel that the city is too large to coordinate successful public participation, particularly for such a new, "fuzzy," "motherhood" concept. The Board of Health is attempting to keep the healthy communities concept alive inside the departments by creating a unified plan with a single objective and outside them by issuing regular newsletters.

Work has been carried out on a Food Policy Council formed to address various aspects of the food supply system, and most importantly, on a KidsPlace Project.

Momentum continues to gather around the notion of healthy communities. In 1985 the World Health Organization launched a European project called "Healthy Cities." Over 25 cities are participating in the effort to achieve a range of health goals.

A similar effort, called the "Canadian Healthy Communities Project," was initiated in 1988. Its aim is to promote the healthy community concept and to facilitate the sharing of information among interested communities. Burnaby is a member of the Canadian Healthy Communities Project.

A wide range of activities is being pursued by cities, towns and villages across the country (see the boxes). Efforts have included: development of healthy community plans which lay out policies and goals for municipal health strategies; the inclusion of health within the terms of reference of established planning processes such as official community plans and local area plans; the organization of departmental staff education programs; and the initiation of specific activities such as KidsPlace in Edmonton.

So what does this all mean for Burnaby? Burnaby Council has already taken the first step by sponsoring the Burnaby Healthy Communities Project, and by taking some specific actions such as requiring refineries to submit five-year environmental plans. You and your organization are already working to make Burnaby a healthier place to live, in your own way.

But this is not enough! What is needed is a new way of linking our strengths in an effort to tackle some of the complex issues facing us in the 1990s and beyond. The Burnaby Healthy Community Project offers this opportunity. The upcoming workshops will be instrumental in charting the course we will use to work towards a healthier Burnaby!

The term healthy communities evokes vision and a call to action.

VANCOUVER, B.C. --

The Vancouver Health Department has been working on a healthy community process for several years. While not yet a participant in the Canadian Healthy Communities Project, a proposal to join will go to Council shortly.

Organizers determined that, in order to promote the idea of a healthy community, municipal staff must understand the concept and its implications. A series of workshops, seminars and other educational efforts aimed at informing public

health workers about the new orientation of health at the community level was implemented.

In addition, three separate "communities" are participating in healthy community planning in Vancouver. In Mount Pleasant, a citizens' group was formed to take responsibility for their own healthy community activities. A Health Department community worker provides assistance. The group has decided not to develop a Mount Pleasant Healthy Community Plan that will "sit on a shelf." Instead, the group is first planning activities to celebrate the community's multi-cultural character.

In Kitsilano, a more formal approach is being taken. Representatives of the Health Department may be involved in the Citizens' Planning Committee for the Kitsilano Local Area Plan. Hopefully, this approach will assist in integrating health matters with other issues normally addressed in a local area plan.

In the West End, the Health Department is in the early stages of establishing a committee, made up of municipal staff and community representatives, with the mandate to develop a Healthy Community Plan.

APPENDIX 3BURNABY HEALTHY COMMUNITY PROJECTRECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- * Council reaffirm its commitment to "work towards a healthier Burnaby";
- * Burnaby adopt a policy supporting this commitment. A proposed declaration would be as follows: "Burnaby undertakes to work to enhance the health of all Burnaby residents by ensuring that health is a consideration in land use, social and economic decision-making";
- * Burnaby implement a program of staff and Council education and discussions regarding the healthy community concept to enhance awareness within the organization of the opportunities for a municipal role and to facilitate implementation of the recommended strategy;
- * Burnaby follow the policy approach to building a healthier community as described in the implementation plan;
- * Council consider the merits of proceeding with either an issue based plan or a healthy community project following implementation and evaluation of the usefulness of the policy approach, as recommended above;
- * Council consider reviewing or expanding upon existing municipal actions in the following two high priority healthy community challenge areas: housing and transportation; and
- * The Community Issues & Social Planning Committee (or other Committees as deemed appropriate) recognize the material generated at the workshops as a valuable source of information to assist in ongoing priority setting and other activities.

Source: U.B.C. Centre for Human Settlements "Working Towards a Healthier Burnaby", 1990.