Grey Bruce Public Health

Healthy Development Checklist

- "This amenity area will be age friendly and accessible by providing efficient access that promotes safety and provides site furnishing." We would further recommend that units support aging in place, by exhibiting no-step entrances and single floor living amenities.
- "The project proposes possible trails in the rear portion of the property which provide opportunities for active recreation. Depending on the site conditions, the trails may be able to connect to other parts of the Dundalk community such as nearby schools and employment lands." In addition to providing transportation linkages, we would also recommend the inclusion of traffic calming measures to promote active transportation which are outlined below.

Transportation and Injury Prevention

To promote pedestrian safety and active transportation within the development, we highly commend the proposed installation of bike racks, sidewalks, and pedestrian crosswalks. Grey Bruce Public Health would recommend additional pedestrian and cycling safety measures such as sidewalks with sufficient grading along Ida Street, bicycle lanes, bike racks at all four buildings, and access from the development to local amenities such as the County Rail Trail, nearby Eco Park and Elementary school to foster opportunities for active transportation. Additionally, reduced speed limits and traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps/humps and pedestrian crossovers for children and older adults to safely cross roadways to the courtyard amenities, would also help to prevent injuries. The elements of complete street design are important for building active communities by reducing automobile dependency and encouraging active forms of transportation. We would advise proponents for the project implement recommendations from within the Grey Bruce Complete Streets Guide. Grey Bruce Public Health also recommends additional accessible parking spaces given this development targets older adults

We recommend reviewing the elements of Age-Friendly Communities to ensure outdoor spaces are designed to be accessible to a wide array of ages and mobility levels. For example, including accessible ground floor units with private outdoor space, bench seating along the sidewalks and in common areas, such as the communal open space or open green spaces, will make outdoor spaces more useable and safer for residents with reduced mobility. Also, adequate lighting should be installed in the open green space, on community buildings, in parking areas, the gravel trail, and along the sidewalks/roadways to ensure safety.

Rationale: Pedestrians and cyclists are at a high risk of road traffic injury. Safe connections for active transportation within urban and rural areas make communities healthier and more livable. Communities that are designed with active transportation infrastructure that prioritize pedestrians and cyclists while reducing automobile dependency support daily physical activity. Additionally, falls are the most common injury in people 65 years and older. Falls can be prevented with built environments that are safe, accessible, and maintained.

Healthy Environments

Community design can greatly influence the wellbeing of residents. Physical and mental health can be promoted by providing opportunities to engage in green space, physical activity, and positive social interactions. Neighbourhood aesthetics, influenced by elements like landscaping, proper indoor waste and recycling storage, and street furniture, can also help to support mental health and wellbeing. Thus, we commend the inclusion of landscaping and shade trees in the site plans, particularly along the development road and in the communal courtyard space. We do note concern relating to buffer distances from the

municipal wastewater treatment facility and other facilities located within the Eco Park. Although nuisance odours do not constitute a health hazard, they can impact on the quality of life of residents.

We also commend the inclusion of play structures, natural and built shade shelters and the variety of seating options. We would suggest the inclusion of natural and synthetic loose parts (natural: stones, tree logs, sticks, water, and synthetic: plastic crates, tires, tubes, blocks) with the proposed play structures, along with seating and shaded areas to promote children's physical literacy, creativity and socialization. Furthermore, allotting space for a community garden is recommended to promote social cohesion and time outdoors.

Climate change is impacting the health of communities through the means of more extreme heat days, precipitation, and extreme weather events which put people at risk of illness and death. We commend the inclusion of natural and built shade structures in the courtyard area, as these protect residents from heat and sun and to facilitate social cohesion and time outdoors. Features that reduce air pollution, water pollution, and urban heat islands, including porous and light-coloured pavement materials and planting trees and shrubs should also be considered due to the co-benefits for human and environmental health. We do note that the development would require the re-alignment of a watercourse, and that there is potential concern about development within hazard areas. Additionally there appears to be limited information on a stormwater management plan. Given that climate change is expected to increase both the frequency of storm events and quantity of precipitation, we would recommend that additional thought be given to these issues.

Rationale: Moderately intense physical activity such as walking and cycling has health benefits, including the potential to reduce cardiovascular disease by as much as 50 percent. Shade is one of the most effective strategies to reduce skin cancer-causing ultraviolent radiation exposure from the sun. Increased severe storm occurrence and more frequent precipitation are imminent, predictable impacts of climate change, and new development presents an opportunity for proactive mitigation and adaptation.

Potential Groundwater Impact

Gey Bruce Public Health notes concern with the development's underground parking in an area below the groundwater table. This requires dewatering during construction phase and may also require dewatering once the property is developed introducing the possibility of groundwater seepage and/or flooding. Water ingress is a leading cause of mold issues in residential settings. Additionally, we would highlight the risk of injury to residents if there were a flash flood or significant groundwater seepage. It is also understood that the site location is both an area of significant groundwater recharge, and is in the municipal wellhead protection area. We would recommend that input be sought from the risk management official of the drinking water source protection committee relating to the wellhead protection zone. We would also suggest that additional consideration be given to the seemingly complex and linked stormwater and groundwater issues of this site. To reduce any likelihood of adverse impacts to the development and groundwater we recommend adopting the recommendations of the Hydrogeological Assessment Report.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. Grey Bruce Public Health is pleased to be working in partnership with local municipalities and counties to develop policies and environments that support healthy communities. Should further questions arise, do not hesitate to contact us using the details below.

Sincerely,

[redacted], Public Health Manager
Grey Bruce Public Health
[redacted]

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Grey Bruce Public Health
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