

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
10 February 2020 / le 10 février 2020**

**Submitted on January 30, 2020
Soumis le 30 janvier 2020**

**Submitted by
Soumis par :**

Dr. / D^{re} Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health / Médecin chef en santé publique

Contact Person

Personne-ressource :

**Esther Moghadam, Director, Health Promotion / Directrice, Promotion de la santé
613-580-2424, x. 23789, Esther.Moghadam@Ottawa.ca**

Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2020-OPH-HPP-0001

**SUBJECT: OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
ONTARIO ON THE HEALTHY PARKS HEALTHY PEOPLE (HPPH)
CONSULTATION**

**OBJET : PRÉSENTATION DES OBSERVATIONS DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE
OTTAWA SUR LA CONSULTATION « SANTÉ DES PARCS, SANTÉ
DES POPULATIONS » AU GOUVERNEMENT DE L'ONTARIO**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive the Medical Officer of Health's submission to the Government of Ontario on the Healthy Parks Healthy People consultation and approve the recommendations contained herein.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa prenne acte des observations qu'a soumises la médecin chef en santé publique au

gouvernement de l'Ontario sur la consultation « Santé des parcs, santé des populations » et approuve les recommandations qu'elles contiennent.

BACKGROUND

On September 30, 2019, the Province of Ontario launched the Healthy Parks Healthy People (HPHP) Consultation as part of the commitments made in its [Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#). The Province was looking to collect input on how to best promote the link between nature and human health and to increase recreational opportunities for all Ontarians.¹ This consultation was open to the public and stakeholders until November 25, 2019.

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) recognizes the importance of nature for overall human health and supports residents' regular exposure to nature. Enhancing the health of the built environment and increasing nature exposure for improved population health outcomes is a cornerstone of OPH's 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities, as reflected in the strategic direction to *Influence the social and physical environments that support health and well-being* and the goal to *Support the design of vibrant, safe and inclusive communities with a focus on transportation, housing, food, and natural environments and greenspaces*.²

A [Response to Inquiry](#), listed on the Board of Health Agenda of September 16, 2019, provided a summary of past and current OPH initiatives related to nature, outdoor play and screen time.

Compared to the provincial and national average, Ottawa residents have higher rates of proximity to parks, visit local parks more often, and are more likely to visit green spaces at a distance from their homes.³

A 2017 snapshot of green space access in the Ottawa region.³

	Ottawa-Gatineau	Ontario	Canada
Have a park close to home*	93%	86%	87%
Visited a park close to home*	86%	85%	85%
Do not have green space close to home**	7%	14%	13%

Visited a green space not close to home**	78%	68%	71%
-------------------------------------------	-----	-----	-----

**“Close to home” as defined by Stats Can is within a ten-minute journey of home.

**“Not close to home” is defined by Stats Can as more than a ten-minute journey of home.

DISCUSSION

Through this Provincial consultation process, stakeholders were asked for input on all or any of nine specific questions. The Medical Officer of Health’s full submission can be found in attached Document 1. The following provides a summary of the recommendations contained therein.

OPH and other municipal partners, such as the Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services (RCFS) Department, are currently working to raise public awareness of the health benefits of nature and increase opportunities for residents to access greenspace, as well as contributing to healthy public policy development related to nature, health and the built environment. OPH’s work in the area of nature & health is based on best practices, evaluation and consultation.

Bringing multiple sectors together, such as public health, parks, recreation and conservation agencies, will be required for the HPHP movement to be impactful. Supportive policies and plans will need to be put in place to protect and expand greenspaces across the province. Barriers to nature exposure will need to be addressed. These include financial barriers, distribution of greenspace and sedentary lifestyles.

Ontario Parks could act as a catalyst for the HPHP movement by engaging a variety of partners to collaborate across the province and by leveraging work already being done locally.

Given the deadline for responding to this consultation, the draft submission was circulated to Board of Health Members for their review and feedback on November 20, 2019 and formally submitted to the Province on November 25, 2019. Through this report, the Board is being asked to formally receive the submission and approve the recommendations contained therein.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

RCFS contributed to the OPH response. Additional external consultation was not required to inform the development of the Medical Officer of Health's submission to the Province of Ontario's Healthy Parks Healthy People (HPHP) Consultation.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receive the submission for information and approving the recommendations contained therein.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 - Medical Officer of Health submission to the Government of Ontario on the Healthy Parks Healthy People consultation

DISPOSITION

This report is presented to the Board for approval of the recommendations outlined in the supporting document. OPH will continue to monitor any information related to the Healthy Parks Healthy People consultation and report to the Board of Health as needed.

¹ Government of Ontario. (2019) Consultation: Healthy Parks Health People. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-healthy-parks-healthy-people>

² OPH. (2019). Strategic Plan

³ Statistics Canada. (2017). Parks and greenspaces. Table 38-10-0020-01