

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

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CITY STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS CONGRUENT WITH PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health:

- 1) Receive report No. 009-16 re: City Strategic Investments Congruent with Promoting and Protecting the Health of our Community; and*
- 2) Submit a letter to City of London Administration supporting specific Strategic Investments in the 2016 – 2019 Multi-Year Budget for the City of London that are relevant to the Middlesex London Health Unit's mandate.*

Key Points

- The City of London is engaged in a multi-year budgeting process which includes proposed strategic investments that are congruent with public health interests in promoting and protecting the health of our community through healthy community design, road safety, active transportation and addressing the social determinants of health.
- From a process perspective, there are many positive aspects of this multi-year budgeting exercise including robust community engagement; the lack of discussion of opportunities for disinvestment may hamper the City's ability to meet its budget targets and maximize its impact.
- Many of the strategic investments proposed in the City budget are relevant to the Middlesex-London Health Unit's mandate and have the potential to benefit current and future generations, including those in: Building a Sustainable City; Strengthening our Community; and Growing our Economy.

Background

The mission of the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) is to promote and protect the health of our community. It does this through its many programs and services under the Ontario Public Health Standards. The MLHU promotes healthy community design by supporting built and natural environments that are conducive to physical, mental and social well-being. Urban planning that supports complete and integrated communities where individuals of all ages have a sense of belonging and are able to engage in physically active lifestyles is an important means of sustaining and improving overall health. The MLHU has been active in providing recommendations for various municipal plans and projects, including the draft London Plan, London's Downtown Plan, Cycling Master Plan, and the Shift Rapid Transit initiative.

The MLHU promotes road safety through several initiatives. As a member of the London-Middlesex Road Safety Committee, the MLHU has supported the development and current implementation of the London Road Safety Strategy (LRSS). The MLHU is the lead organization for 3 of the 38 action items set out in the LRSS; Share the Road education, distracted driver education campaign and the Active and Safe Routes to School program.

Active transportation is an important means of increasing physical activity with corresponding health, safety, environmental and economic benefits. The MLHU is a member of the Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) partnership whose goal is to improve children's health, safety and the environment through

comprehensive health promotion strategies. These strategies include the overarching program, School Travel Planning, which promotes safe and active forms of travel to and from school.

Addressing the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), such as education, income, poverty, mental health and addictions, is integral to the health of every Londoner. MLHU addresses these determinants through its programs, services, community partnerships and dedicated staffing. The MLHU has been involved in the Child & Youth Network priority areas – Make Literacy a Way of Life, End Poverty, Healthy Eating & Healthy Physical Activity and Creating a Family-Centred Service System. The MLHU is also playing a lead role in the Mayor’s Task Force on Poverty and is providing leadership in a community-wide drug strategy.

City of London Strategic Investment Recommendations

MLHU staff reviewed the 2016 – 2019 Multi-Year Budget for the City of London and recommend that consideration of several strategic investments be supported since they are congruent with promoting and protecting the health of our community through healthy community design, road safety, active transportation and addressing the social determinants of health. See [Appendix A](#) for this list, and the full list of the City’s business cases for strategic investments [here](#). Other strategic investments seem to have significant value as well, but are not as closely tied to the MLHU mandate.

Conclusion/Next Steps

The Multi-Year Budget for the City of London 2016 – 2019 is an opportunity for strategic future investments that support the City of London Strategic Plan, is congruent with the MLHU mission and will benefit current and future generations of Londoners.

This report was prepared by Bernadette McCall, Alyssa Penny, and Emily Van Kesteren, Public Health Nurses, Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention.



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