



PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DESIGN OPTIONS



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INTRODUCTION

More than 140 planners, health professionals, administrators, business people, government officials and community members came together at the two-day Community Summit held in Chatham, Ontario, October 8th and November 19th, 2009. The Summit was designed to bring together a range of stakeholders across various disciplines to collaborate on the principles of healthy communities and to work collectively toward their development in Chatham-Kent, Sarnia-Lambton and Windsor-Essex (referred to as the Tri-Counties area).

The purpose of the Summit was to support urban and rural community planning and development by providing an opportunity for learning and dialogue with key community leaders. Topics included the essential components for creating liveable and healthy communities that will facilitate active aging in place.

Although not explicitly expressed in this report, it must be made clear that a tremendous amount of community interest and support, commitment to future involvement and willingness to share knowledge were significant outcomes of the Summit.

Moving forward, it will be the task of our volunteers and champions to harness the motivation and collective interest needed as we begin to initiate real and permanent changes in our region.

Overview

October 8 - Understanding the Challenge: A Knowledge and Information Exchange

The first day of the Summit was a 'knowledge exchange' consisting of five presentations from recognized experts in the fields of health, housing, planning and geriatrics. The presentations highlighted trends, gaps, needs, issues, concerns and potential approaches to creating healthy communities.

Key themes that were discussed throughout the day included: aging populations, seniors' housing options, physical activity and walk-ability of neighbourhoods, quality of life, transit options, reinvesting in existing neighbourhoods, and community design and infrastructure.

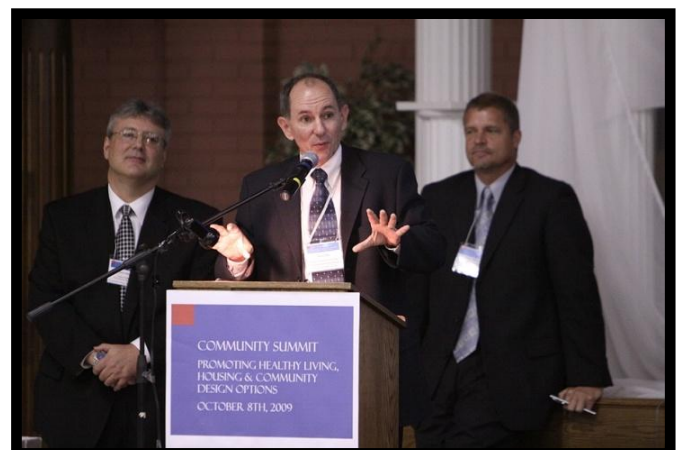
November 19 - Call to Action

The second day of the Community Summit was a results-oriented session with the goal of identifying practical approaches to building healthy communities. The day consisted of three roundtable discussions in six different working groups, as well as one large group discussion with all participants at the Summit.

Participants worked collaboratively to identify key principles of healthy communities, challenges and barriers to the process, and solutions aimed at creating affordable, liveable, healthy homes and communities in Southern Ontario.

“We need innovative ideas that address the need for a range of options, creating a healthy living environment for all residents, especially our increasingly aging population.”

~ Summit facilitator



Goals

The goals of the two-day summit were:

- >> To heighten awareness, interest and commitment towards emerging approaches to designing and developing healthy communities
- >> To provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange and facilitated discussion with key community leaders in Southern Ontario
- >> To identify and explore critical concepts and components that must be in place to develop liveable and healthy communities

Desired Outcomes

1. Engage developers, decision-makers, designers and community planners about healthy communities
2. Position developers, decision-makers, designers and community planners to become leaders in the development of healthy communities
3. Demonstrate how planning can be used as a tool to encourage and develop healthy, age-friendly communities
4. Set in place an ongoing, sustainable structure for continued collaboration
5. Formulate concrete proposals for action

Approach

The approach to the Community Summit emphasized that developing healthy communities is all about collaboration, integration and linkages. Creating healthy communities requires a broad and holistic approach which integrates the efforts of a host of stakeholders across a wide range of subject areas, and eliminates silos that sometimes act as barriers between individuals and organizations.

Summit participants were encouraged to look for and highlight areas of potential synergy in the development of healthy communities.

The Community Summit spanned three jurisdictions (Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent, and Sarnia-Lambton), each having unique characteristics and its own vision for development. At the same time, it is evident that greater cooperation and coordination among stakeholders across the entire region will result in greater opportunity for achieving meaningful and effective results in creating healthy communities. The Community Summit Regional Leadership and Partnership Committee intended to enhance collaboration and integration, while recognizing the existing governance structure of each jurisdiction.





SUMMIT SUMMARY

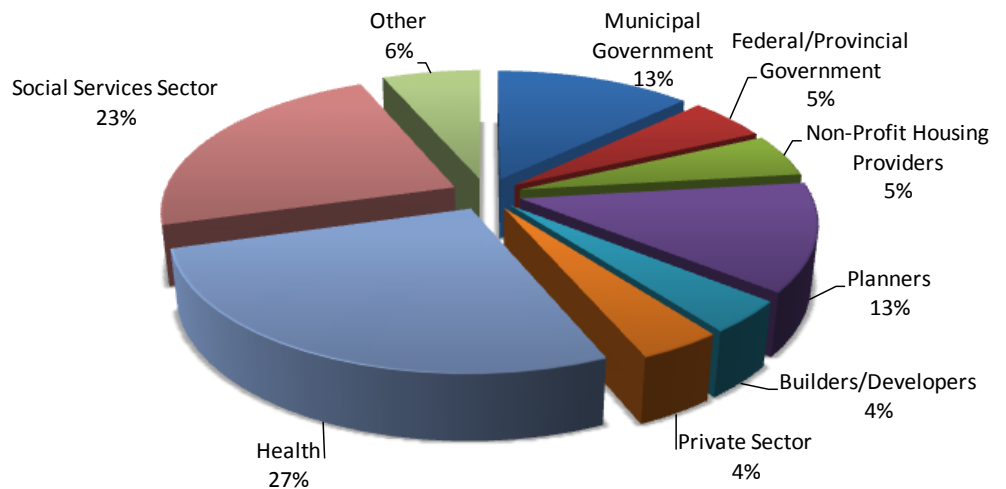
The following section provides an overview of each day of the Community Summit, including who attended and what was discussed.

Summit by Numbers

Knowledge Exchange Day

- >> 124 participants from across the Tri-Counties
- >> 5 presentations by industry experts
- >> 28 speaker's corner questionnaire responses

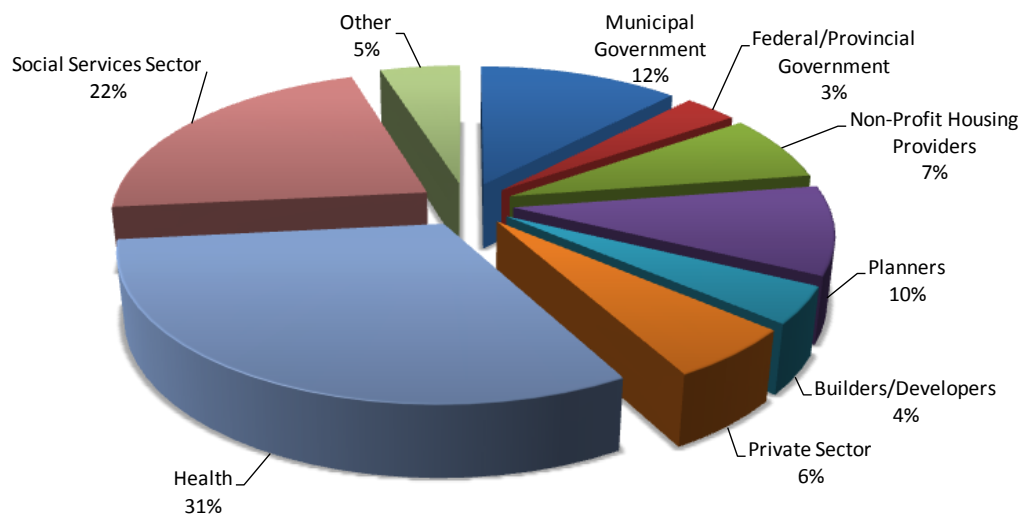
Knowledge Exchange Day Participants by Sector



Call-to-Action Day

- >> 78 participants from across the Tri-Counties
- >> 6 working groups
- >> 3 roundtable discussions
- >> 11 Tri-Counties' Principles for Creating Healthy Communities

Call-to-Action Day Participants by Sector



Day One: Knowledge Exchange

As previously mentioned, the Knowledge Exchange Day on October 8th, 2009, was a facilitated session that consisted of five presentations from industry experts.

The presenters were:

- >> **Pat Pearce**, Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network; reviewed the aging population demographics and identified seniors' needs in the Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network region.
- >> **Ed Starr**, SHS Consulting; presented research on identifying gaps and needs of seniors for residential housing options in the North East Local Health Integration Network region.
- >> **Larry Silani**, Town of LaSalle, and **Brian Hillman**, Town of Tecumseh; reviewed the planning principles contained in the "Healthy Places, Healthy People" report.
- >> **Kevin Eby**, Director of Planning for the Region of Waterloo; spoke to the development of healthy communities for all ages in the Region of Waterloo.
- >> **Glen Miller**, Canadian Urban Institute, and **Dr. Ian Ferguson**, a Toronto-based psychogeriatrician; reviewed research related to the concerns of the impact of the environment on aging and mobility.

All presentations were followed by a question-and-answer period, where participants inquired further about issues outlined in the presentations.

The Knowledge Exchange Day set the scene for the development of principles around creating healthy communities by identifying critical concepts of healthy communities, outlining best practices and exploring trends in the Tri-Counties area.

Presentations and other background materials are available online at: www.esc.ccac-ont.ca



"Some great ideas were presented. Very thought-provoking. Inspires hope that this kind of discussion is taking place."

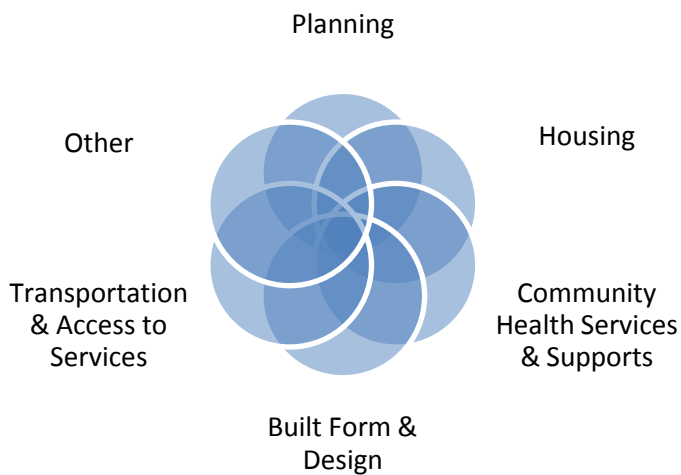
~ Summit participant



Day Two: Call to Action

During the Call to Action on November 19th, 2009, participants were divided into six working groups to discuss the integrated and holistic principles of healthy communities from the following perspectives: planning, housing, community health services and supports, built form and design, transportation and access to services, and other.

Call-to-Action Day Working Groups



“Our challenge is not to use conventional thinking – the future is very different than the past.”

~ Summit presenter

These working groups were designed to focus on common ground through various lenses, rather than to create silos within the discussion.

Each working group addressed four specific questions during the roundtable discussions:

1. What are the basic guiding principles for planning and developing healthy communities?
2. What are the barriers and challenges to be overcome?
3. Who are the key stakeholders and champions that need to be involved?
4. What is the strategy for moving forward?

The results of these discussions are outlined on the following pages in the *Outcomes* and *Strategies for Moving Forward* Sections.



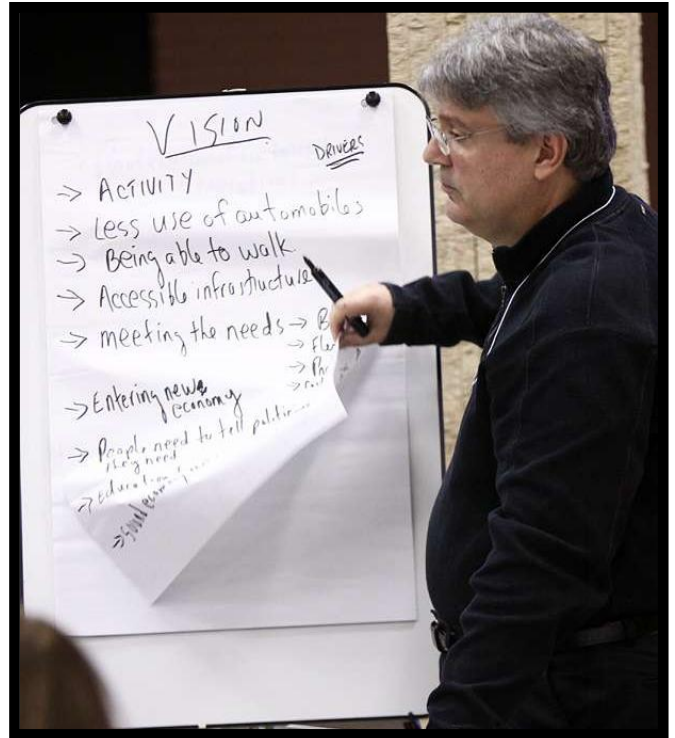
OUTCOMES

The following outcomes are compilations of the ideas discussed by Summit participants in roundtable and large-group discussions on the Call-to-Action Day. In these dialogues, participants identified the guiding principles of creating healthy communities, the barriers and challenges to achieving healthy communities, the stakeholders and champions of the process, as well as the actions and next steps to work toward these goals.

Vision for Healthy Communities in the Tri-Counties Area

The following vision statement was developed from the key components of the draft vision statements created by each of the working groups:

"A healthy community in the Tri-Counties area means an inclusive community that supports healthy living and emphasizes accessibility as well as choice for people of all ages and abilities".



Tri-Counties' Guiding Principles for Creating Healthy Communities

Emerging from these dialogues was a collective set of principles on which to base the development of healthy communities in the Tri-Counties area in all sectors.

1. Create accessible, connected neighbourhoods and services for all ages and abilities
2. Encourage rich relationships and build a strong sense of belonging for all age groups, income levels and cultures
3. Develop walk-able, compact neighbourhoods through mixed land uses, live-work options, diverse building forms and wide-ranging transportation options
4. Ensure a high quality of life by providing adequate health care and promoting active lifestyles
5. Maintain safe, secure, vibrant, and beautiful environments; preserve and reuse existing structures and community assets



6. Foster caring, collaborative, coordinated and client-oriented support systems by strengthening the integration of services and resources
7. Provide a range of affordable housing choices for all
8. Promote food security, the preservation of agriculture and the strengthening of rural communities
9. Sustain good-quality employment options
10. Engage municipal councils, citizens and local organizations in measurable actions of continuous community improvement to work toward community resilience
11. Educate community members about healthy living options and services available in their community
12. Promote cost-effective, long-term solutions to healthy communities
13. Foster collaboration among governments at all levels

“We must change the way we design our communities and how we manage the places we call home.”

~ Summit presenter



Barriers and Challenges to Achieving Healthy Communities

The following is a list of key barriers and challenges to achieving healthy communities in the Tri-Counties area as identified by Summit participants.

SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

1. **Existing Built Form** – Many of the existing structures are not capable of adapting to changing community needs.
2. **Lack of Transportation** – There is no adequate public transportation for everyone.
3. **Limited Access** – Extensive development is required to make services and public facilities accessible to all community members.
4. **Lack of Affordable Housing Options** – There is a limited range of affordable housing options available to all segments of the population.

ECONOMICS & FINANCE

5. **Recession** – Current economic realities have created significant limitations for individuals and organizations alike. How do we change the way we plan and build within the current economic framework?
6. **Struggling Independent Businesses** – Local, independent businesses are struggling to compete with larger business chains, especially in the face of an increasing local tax burden.
7. **Narrow Financial Focus** – Many organizations have a solely financial focus that does not include the social and environmental impacts of their decisions on the community.
8. **Lack of Funding** – There is currently not enough sustainable funding for the development and operations of community projects, making long-term planning difficult.

GOVERNMENT POLICY & PROGRAMS

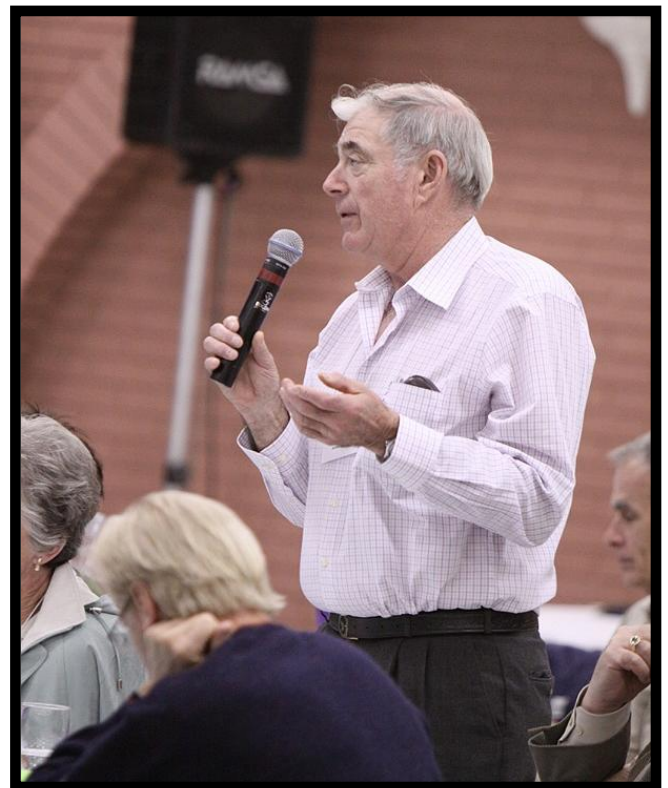
9. **Government Structures** – The bureaucracy, regulations, silos, inconsistent enforcement of government policies and funding limitations of government make it difficult to work towards an integrated definition of community health.
10. **Official Plans and By-laws** – Some policies are outdated, limiting geographic areas to single use rather than establishing multi-use areas and multi-modal transportation and promoting development of green lands.
11. **Municipal Overload** – The downloading of responsibilities onto municipal government has caused great competition for limited resources and conflicting spending priorities.
12. **Short-term View** – Governments tend to make decisions in response to short-term issues rather than long-term vision.
18. **Discrimination** – There is a struggle to make the community more inclusive and to address biases around all ages, cultures and persons with special needs.
19. **Isolation** – Many individuals are disconnected from the community and do not have a strong support system. Families are more spread out and far-flung. A former sense of community is increasingly lacking.
20. **High-level Change** – Many individuals are only interested in issues at the neighbourhood level. How do we enact change at a higher level?

DEMOGRAPHICS

13. **Aging Population** – The increasing population of seniors requires a range of community adjustments, especially in housing, health care, and support services.
14. **Youth-out Migration** – Many youth are leaving the community for opportunities elsewhere, such as employment and education.
15. **Rural and Urban Priorities** – Managing needs specific to rural or urban communities can be challenging, especially when priorities between rural and urban populations conflict.

EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION

16. **Education and Awareness** – There is a need to communicate and educate across generations and cultures about community health and ways in which individuals can improve their community.
17. **Creating Behaviour Change** – There is significant resistance to change when attempting to adjust the culture of entitlement and move towards long-term thinking.



Stakeholders and Champions

During roundtable discussions, it was confirmed that collaboration between the community and its stakeholders is key to achieving the goal of developing healthy communities.

Participants suggested that to do this, the Tri-Counties must educate, create opportunities for dialogue, utilize existing networks, develop partnerships and provide thoughtful strategic messaging around healthy communities to create a common resolution and build commitment. It was agreed that champions of this strategy are necessary to engage others and to build momentum.

The following groups of people and organizations were mentioned as having a critical role in creating healthy communities in the Tri-Counties area:

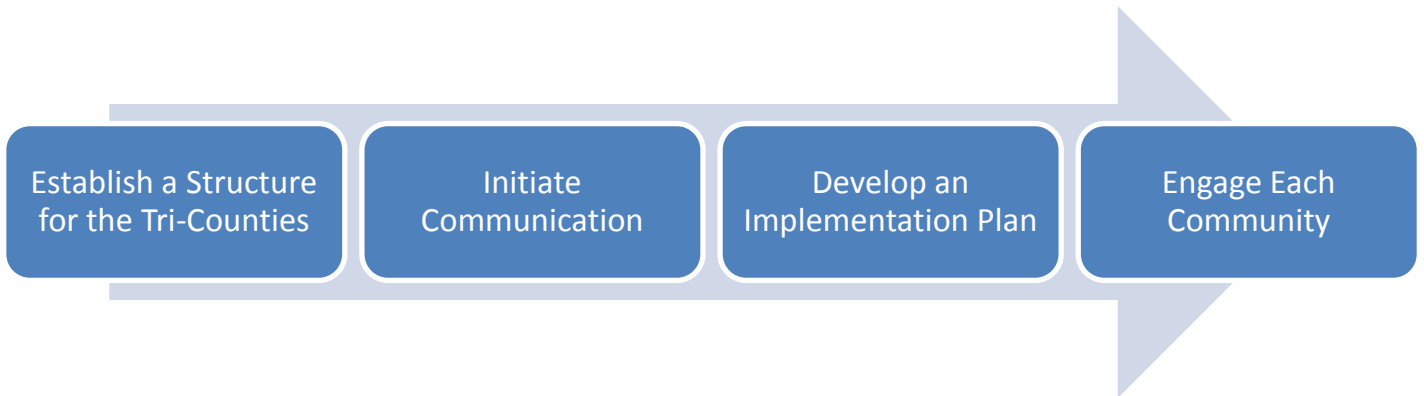
- >> **Community** – Citizens (residents, customers, patients, caregivers, etc.), community organizations, as well as accessibility and seniors advisory committees
- >> **Non-profit Sector** – Non-profit groups, service clubs, networks, as well as religious and cultural groups
- >> **Government** – Local, federal and provincial politicians as well as civil servants across departments
- >> **Private Sector** – Business managers, developers and builders, professional associations, business improvement associations, the Chamber of Commerce, banks, investors and media companies
- >> **Service Providers** – Transportation providers, healthcare practitioners, and housing providers, as well as other social and community service providers
- >> **Academics** – Educators, researchers and school administrators

“We can see the obvious converging issues that are bringing us all together.”

~ Summit participant



STRATEGY FOR MOVING FORWARD



Participants at the Community Summit were asked how best to achieve the goal of creating healthy communities in the Tri-Counties area and to identify next steps. The following strategy was developed during the final roundtable discussion to advance the goal of developing healthy communities in the Tri-Counties area.

- 1. Establish a structure for the Tri-Counties** to move forward in the process of collaboration around developing healthy communities in Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent, and Sarnia-Lambton.

The Regional Leadership and Partnership Committee will work with summit participants who have expressed interest in collaborating to further identify champions - those who will carry forward the actions developed during the Summit.

Suggestions from the Summit:

- >> Establish a Tri-Counties steering committee to champion the process.
- >> Create working groups to continue the dialogue around action in specific themes.
- >> Include representatives and volunteers from each municipality.

- 2. Initiate communication:** informing politicians, engaging advertising and media organizations, and informing and involving communities in current initiatives.

Suggestions from the Summit:

- >> Develop common language around a coordinated, integrated approach to creating healthy communities.
- >> Promote a broad definition of health and a proactive and integrated community approach.
- >> Establish key documents to guide communities that would hopefully become officially endorsed.



3. Develop an implementation plan that includes short- and long-range planning of strategic actions based on an inventory of what is currently happening related to building healthy communities in the Tri-Counties.

Suggestions from the Summit:

- >> Assess what is working and build on existing assets, resources and initiatives. For example, build on initiatives such as OPPI, Ontario Seniors Secretariat, and the distribution of the CCAC Caregiver Guide.
- >> Build research on the health of communities in the area, including conducting a demographic study and evaluating housing stock.
- >> Look for some quick wins by identifying best practices and pressing community needs.
- >> Develop a measure of accountability to ensure that the strategy is carried out, deadlines are met and performance is reviewed.

“We do not need to re-invent the wheel. We should look at the programs that are serving the community well and share what is working.”

~ Summit participant

The Regional Leadership and Partnership Committee would like to thank all participants of the two-day event for their valuable contributions to the Community Summit Report on promoting healthy living, housing and community design options.

4. Engage each community around the issues of healthy communities, as needs and strategies will be different in each community.

Suggestions from the Summit:

- >> Encourage each community to create its own process, supported by the overall strategy and resources.
- >> Provide several forums for feedback, including a website or survey.
- >> Utilize Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition facilitators to engage communities in the process.



ADDITIONAL SUMMIT INFORMATION

Community Summit Regional Leadership and Partnership Committee

The 2009 Community Summit was developed and delivered by collection of community partners across the Tri-Counties: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Erie St. Clair Community Care Access Centre, Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network, Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership Development, Windsor-Essex Go for Health, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, County of Lambton, City of Windsor, Town of Tecumseh, and Town of LaSalle.



Committee members include:

- >> **Tricia Khan** (Chair of Committee), Senior Director of Strategic Planning & Integration, Erie St. Clair CCAC
- >> **William Baker**, Vice-chair of the Board and Chair of the Governance Committee, Erie St. CCAC Board
- >> **Caen Suni**, Director of Communications, Erie St. Clair CCAC
- >> **Judith Binder**, District Manager Southwestern Ontario, CMHC
- >> **Nadia Frantellizzi**, Senior Research Consultant, CMHC
- >> **Stephen Derksen**, Analyst, Ontario— Communications & Marketing, CMHC
- >> **Shelley Wilkins**, Director of Social Housing Health & Family Services, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- >> **Ted Zatylny**, Project Leader, New Resident Attraction & Retention, Sarnia Lambton Economic Partnership
- >> **Lola Dudley**, Manager of Housing Services, County of Lambton
- >> **Celso Oliveira**, Program Coordinator, Go for Health, Windsor-Essex
- >> **Larry Silani**, Director of Planning & Development Services, the Town of LaSalle
- >> **Brian Hillman**, Director of Planning and Building Services, the Town of Tecumseh
- >> **Thom Hunt**, City Planner, the City of Windsor
- >> **Ron Sheppard**, Community Engagement Consultant, Erie St. Clair LHIN

CONTACT

Tricia Khan, Dipl. PT, MBA
Sr. Director, Strategic Planning & Integration,
Privacy Officer
Erie St. Clair Community Care Access Centre

519-436-2222 | tricia.khan@esc.ccac-ont.ca |
www.esc.ccac-ont.ca



List of Resources

- >> Presentation by Pat Pearce
- >> Presentation by Ed Starr
- >> North East LHIN - Seniors' Housing Options Study
- >> Final Adopted 2008 IMPCCC Annual Report
- >> 2007 IMPCCC Annual Report
- >> Presentation by Kevin Eby
- >> Presentation by Glenn Miller and Dr. Ian Ferguson
- >> Presentation by Larry Silani and Brian Hillman
- >> Age-friendly Cities Checklist
- >> Global Age-friendly Cities Guide
- >> Healthy Aging: A New Vision Background Paper
- >> OPPI Healthy Communities Revised September 2009
- >> Senate Report on Seniors' Aging
- >> WHO's Age-friendly Cities Initiatives

All resources are available at: www.esc.ccac-ont.ca

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