



# Interior Health

November 1, 2016

Ian McIntosh  
Director of Development Services  
District of Summerland

Dear Ian,

RE: Okanagan Vistas, Shaughnessy Greens

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a health perspective for this development application. If approved this development would include up to 346 housing units for seniors and include market, independent and assisted living options. This site is challenged by the geomorphology with a steep silt bluff partially located in the High Hazard Development Permit Area. The preliminary geotech report supports this development.

If developed the site would contain 5 buildings and will be accessed from Latimer Avenue and Banks Crescent. The property is bounded by Bristow Rd and Solly Rd at the top of the bluff to the west, a municipal park and single family residential at the top of the bluff to the north, Latimer Avenue and Banks Crescent to the east and single family residential at the top of the bluff to the south that drains to a watercourse that feeds the fish hatchery.

The traffic impact report supports this development and indicates that:

*Traffic generated by the development "...did not result in any system or capacity issues, and there are no infrastructure improvements required to accommodate the additional development traffic."*

Over the last number of years research has emerged linking the built form to health impacts. As outlined in the [Healthy Built Environment Linkages: A Toolkit for Design-Planning-Health](#) how a community is planned and built makes a difference in how active and healthy residents are. The current health of British Columbians has one in three living with a chronic disease (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers) and one in four adults are obese. The three risk factors for developing a chronic disease are; smoking, unhealthy eating and physical inactivity. These risk factors are in part influenced by land use patterns and the ability of a resident to 'make the healthy choice the easy choice' as they move through their daily life.

The following comments are intended to provide a health lens in three areas; neighbourhood design and transportation systems, food security and drinking water as it relates to this development application.

## **Neighbourhood Design and Transportation Systems**

Internally the site has limited opportunities for residents to engage in physical activity and connect with other residents at the site. From the diagrams provided there appears to be limited green space available for residents.

[Healthy Aging through Healthy Living](#) indicates that;

Physical activity brings multiple benefits and significantly contributes to healthy aging. Physical inactivity is associated with premature death, chronic diseases, illness and disability, as well as reduced quality of life and independence.

Walking/cycling from the site is limited by narrow roads (Latimer/Banks Crescent and topography (accessing Solly Road/MacDonald Place). Enhancing connectivity can encourage people to walk or cycle for either recreational or transportation purposes. Safety concerns are common barriers to physical activity across smaller communities.

Research indicates that;

Improving streetscape aesthetics and making streets more useable by providing sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting and benches are all factors associated with an increase in physical activity among older adults. (1)

Interior Health supports the recommendation of staff including:

- a) Construction of a sidewalk from the development site north to Latimer Avenue then west up Solly Road to connect to the existing sidewalk, then further west to connect to the existing pedestrian underpass at Solly Road and Highway 97
- b) Construction of a pedestrian walkway complete with stairs (if required) within the MacDonald Place right-of-way connecting Solly Road to Gillespie Road.

These recommendations will improve the ability of seniors to recreate and use active transportation as part of their daily activities.

### **Food Security**

Interior Health has an interest in community design and planning, as the built environment can support access to healthy food and increase community food security. Community food security, which is the foundation for healthy eating, requires a stable and sustainable food supply across the food system, from production to disposal. This includes having an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that ensures enough nutritious food and water is available, accessible, affordable, acceptable and safe for everyone at all times. (2)

- Farmland preservation helps to maintain a level of food production that contributes to food self-sufficiency, and food self-sufficiency increases food security and supports healthy eating. Although the current use of the land is to grow grapes for wine production, the land could be converted to grow food crops in the future when needed.
- Food self-sufficiency in BC is increasingly important, as extreme weather will affect food production in California and elsewhere. Currently, California supplies 40%-50% of BC's imported fruits and vegetables.

If this development does move forward, there are some built environment features that may support community food security of the residents. Garden space for residents to grow food, edible landscapes, and a communal kitchen where residents can cook and eat together are examples that support food security.

### **Drinking Water**

From a drinking water supply perspective, the District of Summerland is encouraged to assess their capacity to provide domestic water that meets the BC Drinking Water Treatment Objectives as they proceed in planning for increased development and growth. The capacity of the Summerland water treatment plant is 75 ML/day. According to the 2008 Water Master Plan, system flows reached 105 ML/day during peak irrigation season.

Summerland has completed a number of projects outlined in their Water Master Plan. Projects to separate portions of irrigation lines from domestic service lines, metering, and increased conservation efforts have been successful. In the past two years they have not needed to activate the supplemental line. However, build out of anticipated development, population growth, and extension of the domestic water supply to Garnet Valley residents may affect the District's ability to continue providing maximum demand without use of the supplemental line. When the capacity of the water treatment plant is exceeded, the supplemental line is opened to provide additional water to meet the high demand. This exposes all water system users to inadequately treated drinking water.

To accommodate future growth and development the District will need to either increase the capacity of the treatment plant or seek an alternate source. Re-establishing an Okanagan Lake pump station was listed as a high priority item in the Plan. Protection of the Okanagan Lake source intake is a key component of a multi-barrier plan for ensuring a safe, reliable drinking water source for Summerland residents.

### **Assisted Living Residences**

It appears that 46 units will potentially be Assisted Living residences; and don't fall under the purview of Community Care Licensing and do not require a licence. However, there is an Assisted Living registrar <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/accessing-health-care/assisted-living-registrar> that will need to be contacted to register if this development is to be approved.

The three Interior Health portfolios that have made comment can be reached at:

**Neighbourhood Design and Transportation Systems** – [pam.moore@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:pam.moore@interiorhealth.ca)

**Food Security** – [jill.worboys@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:jill.worboys@interiorhealth.ca)

**Drinking Water**- [judi.ekkert@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:judi.ekkert@interiorhealth.ca)

Interior health would be more than happy to become further involved with the District Of Summerland and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this in greater detail

If you have any questions or comments, please contact [pam.moore@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:pam.moore@interiorhealth.ca).

Sincerely,

Pam Moore  
Healthy Built Environment Team

#### References

- (1) [Healthy Built Environment Linkages: A Toolkit for Design-Planning-Health](#); Healthy Transportation
- (2) Agriculture's Connection to Health: [http://www.phsa.ca/population-public-health-site/Documents/AgConnectiontoHealth\\_FullReport\\_April2016.pdf](http://www.phsa.ca/population-public-health-site/Documents/AgConnectiontoHealth_FullReport_April2016.pdf)