



The process of developing the plan

The International Healthy Cities Movement was initiated as a means of supporting the World Health Organisation's Health for All Strategy and implementing the action areas of the Ottawa Charter. The Healthy City Plan is a public health plan and has been the 'tool' used in the City to plan and implement more efficient public and environmental health services.

The **'guiding principles'** of the Healthy City Plan developed in Townsville include: -

- **Collaboration** - A community's health is a shared responsibility and the involvement of other key government and community agencies is pivotal to the Plan. Cooperation and coordination are prerequisites for success. Central to the plan is the development of strong links between all relevant sectors. Effective partnerships require the establishment of a clear vision of the work of the member organisations, and understanding of which individual participants can make personal commitments. The Healthy Cities Approach suggests that developing solutions to problems on a community basis, requires partnerships between both local and state government departments and outside government with non-government agencies.
- **Participation** - Community participation draws on the energy and enthusiasm that exists within communities to define what that community wants to do and how it wants to operate. Participation is defined in the plan as a process by which people are enabled to become active and genuinely involved in defining the issues of concern to them, in making decisions about factors that affect their lives, in formulating and implementing policies, in planning, developing and delivering services and in taking action to achieve change. Townsville communities have become increasingly involved in local affairs and decision-making, and Council is confident that residents will become even more engaged through the Healthy City Plan.
- **Equity** - Equity is an important quality for a sustainable and healthy community and refers to equal opportunity for the development of human potential in the City.
- **Socio-ecological health** - The 'socio-ecological' view of health expands considerably beyond medical and behavioural models of health and disease to encompass physical, social and environmental health determinants.

The social, economic and environmental contexts which contribute to the creation of health do not operate separately or independently of each other. Rather, they are interacting and interdependent, and it is the complex interrelationship between them, which determines the conditions that promote health' (Davey and Chapman, 1997).

- **Good governance** - The Healthy Cities Approach is based on a model of good governance, which includes political commitment to community input into health processes and outcomes, intersectoral planning and implementation committees, community participation and Council facilitation of the planning implementation, review and evaluation.

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The process of public health planning is as important as the resulting Healthy City Plan. The process aims to build partnerships with other sectors and levels of government and to provide the community an opportunity to participate in local health decision-making.