

Model Municipal Declaration The Right To A Healthy Environment

Whereas the MUNICIPALITY understands that people are part of the environment, and that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the well-being of our community;

The MUNICIPALITY finds and declares that:

1. All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, including:

The right to breathe clean air

The right to drink clean water.

The right to consume safe food.

The right to access nature

The right to know about pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment.

The right to participate in decision-making that will affect the environment

2. The MUNICIPALITY has the responsibility, within its jurisdiction, to respect, protect, fulfill and promote these rights.
3. The MUNICIPALITY shall apply the precautionary principle: where threats of serious or irreversible damage to human health or the environment exist, the MUNICIPALITY shall take cost effective measures to prevent the degradation of the environment and protect the health of its citizens. Lack of full scientific certainty shall not be viewed as sufficient reason for the MUNICIPALITY to postpone such measures
4. The MUNICIPALITY shall apply full cost accounting: when evaluating reasonably foreseeable costs of proposed actions and alternatives, the MUNICIPALITY will consider costs to human health and the environment.
5. By Dec 31st 2015, the MUNICIPALITY shall specify objectives, targets and timelines and actions the MUNICIPALITY will take, within its jurisdiction, to fulfill residents' right to a healthy environment, including priority actions to:
 - a. Ensure equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within the municipality, preventing the development of pollution "hot spots";
 - b. Ensure infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;

- c. Address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;
- d. Responsibly increase density;
- e. Prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as preferred modes of transportation;
- f. Ensure adequate infrastructure for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
- g. Promote the availability of safe foods;
- h. Reduce solid waste and promote recycling and composting;
- i. Establish and maintain accessible green spaces in all residential neighbourhoods.

The MUNICIPALITY shall review the objectives, targets, timelines and actions every five (5) years, and evaluate progress towards fulfilling this declaration.

The MUNICIPALITY shall consult with residents as part of this process.