Healthy City Strategy Partnership Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT made at the City of St. John's in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, this 17th day of May, 2021.

BETWEEN:

Eastern Regional Health Authority, a statutory corporation pursuant to the Regional Health Authorities Act SNL 2006 c. R-71

(hereinafter called "Eastern Health)

OF THE ONE PART

AND:

CITY OF ST. JOHN'S, a statutory corporation pursuant the City of St. John's Act, RSNL 1990, c.C-17, as amended,

(hereinafter called the "City")

OF THE OTHER PART

Purpose of the Partnership Agreement:

The City of St. John's and Eastern Health ("the Partners") are working in collaboration, as 'the partners', to establish a Healthy City Strategy. The City and Eastern Health have long histories of collaborating with leaders from various disciplines, sectors, and levels of Government to work together to improve health and wellness, in St. John's and across the region.

This Healthy City Partnership Agreement intends to reinforce our collective goals of making more informed decisions on issues that impact the health of residents. The Partners commit to a guiding vision, partnership principles, framework, and to facilitate on-going efforts to collectively improve the health, mental health, inclusion, and safety of all residents in the City of St. John's. This Partnership Agreement will provide opportunities to:

1. Use 'Collective Impact' to improve collaboration on the identified focus areas of the Healthy City Strategy and improve the coordination of services between the two organizations.

2. Establish a '*Healthy City Advisory Committee*' of stakeholders to provide leadership on the Healthy City Strategy, including high level decision-making, advocacy, and policies that impact health and wellness.

3. Develop '*Implementation Strategies*' to improve the coordination of action between the partners on the policies and services that affect the health and wellness of residents (based on public engagement, emerging health trends and health needs in neighborhoods across the city).

4. Support new partnerships and collaborations that increase the Partners' capacity to create conditions that promote health, mental health, inclusion, and safety (addressing the social determinants of health) in neighborhoods across the city.

5. Build a strong foundation for data collection, evaluation, and knowledge dissemination to highlight existing resources and tools, and to package pilot projects in shareable formats to mobilize action in neighborhoods across the city.

Through this partnership, the City and Eastern Health will focus on creating environments that consider the social, economic, and environmental conditions necessary to promote mental and physical health, strengthen capacity in neighborhoods and create a sustainable healthy future for all. Ultimately, this partnership will contribute to improving health and wellness outcomes by implementing evidence-based policies and practices that work to close the gap in health status between neighborhoods, while addressing the social determinants of health.

Vision: St. John's is a progressive, inclusive, and connected city with active, healthy citizens, living in affordable, accessible, complete neighborhoods where citizens can freely get around, connect with our natural environment, and feel a sense a belonging. St. John's is a city where healthy citizens want to live.

Mission: The Healthy City Strategy is about making small changes in our neighborhoods that work to promote mental and physical health, strengthen capacity, and create a sustainable healthy future for all.

Assumptions: Addressing the social determinants of health as an upstream, long-term approach to supporting healthier environments that support healthier populations.

> The Canadian Social Determinants of Health include: Indigeneity, early life, education, employment and working conditions, food security, gender, health care services, housing, income and its distribution, social safety net, social exclusion, unemployment and employment security. (*Social Determinants of Health 2nd edition – Dennis Raphael, 2009*)

Partnership Principles:

To fulfill the purpose of this Partnership Agreement and to guide the Healthy City Strategy through continued collaboration, the Partners commit to a series of principles that:

1. Support 'health' as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO): "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

2. Reflect Eastern Health's Population Public Health approach; the City's approach to creating healthy communities by:
    - discussing community health issues
    - promoting collective action across sectors and disciplines to improve health and wellness; and
    - providing leadership, guidance, and support for evidence-based decision-making and policy development at the local level that aim to support healthier, equitable, more livable neighborhoods across the city.

3. Facilitate the development of the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* and engage local organizations from several sectors and disciplines as part of the *'Implementation Strategy'*.

These principles are based on a set of assumptions, that guide the work of the Healthy City Strategy (as well as the future work of the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* and the *'Implementation Strategy'*. These assumptions are listed and described as follows:

- **Collaboration**: We mutually understand that we can create more neighborhood-based population health change by working together. We commit to the principles of 'Collective Impact' and to building a governance structure (i.e., *'The Healthy City Advisory Committee'*; led by the City and Eastern Health). The Partners agree to pursue innovative solutions that challenge traditional approaches to achieve long-term community change.
- **Health**: We commit to using a broad definition of health that includes physical, mental, and social health – as defined by the WHO[1].
- **Equity**: We will approach decisions with an equity lens to ensure the benefit of all residents and take collective approaches to issues that affect specific populations that may be more vulnerable to health inequities.
- **The Social Determinants of Health**: We acknowledge that the social and economic conditions that impact the health and wellness of individuals, families, and neighborhoods (the social determinants of health) is largely shaped and influenced by the services, policies, and governance of both the City of St. John's and Eastern Health.

- **Preventative and Upstream Thinking**: We will prioritize the social determinants of health and decisions that impact the determinants of health, and take a preventative approach to health, rather than reacting to problems as they emerge.
- **Whole Systems Approach to Health**: To address health and well-being for all residents of the City of St. John's, the Partners will think and act collectively, and resist the pressure to act in isolation from the bigger picture of Public Health – addressing the complex inter-relationships between health, societies and systems (individual, interpersonal, community, organizational, policy environment) that impact health.
- **Expert Knowledge**: We will utilize the expert advice from those participating on the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* and the assigned staff and partners from the *'Implementation Strategy'* to provide expert knowledge on improving population health.
- **Culturally Competent**: We respectfully acknowledge and will be responsive to the diversity in populations and their unique needs across the City of St. John's.
- **Sustainability**: We will consider social, economic, and environmental sustainability plans to ensure that sustainability objectives are integrated into all aspects of the work coming from the Healthy City Strategy.
- **Mutual Benefit**: We will utilize collective impact to work toward mutually reinforcing activities and shared measurement outcomes/indicators that benefit all partnering organizations on the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* and throughout the *'Implementation Strategy'*.
- **Communication**: Each organization will identify a liaison staff at the management level who will facilitate communication and information sharing between organizations and with key stakeholders and the public. We will work toward continuous communication between regular meetings to ensure that capacity continues to grow.
- **Evaluation**: We will engage experts on the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* and through the *'Implementation Strategy'* to evaluate data and the work happening in communities, provide expert advice and measure outcomes to report success.
- **Knowledge Mobilization**: We agree to build a platform and systems to share the activities and resources developed through this partnership to mobilize healthy community action across the City of St. John's and by collaborating with other levels of government and other municipalities across the region.
- **Knowledge Translation**: We agree to work together to communicate health information in plain language to improve health literacy amongst citizens and decision makers.
- **Engagement**: We will work together to engage residents, key stakeholders, and various levels of government to identify needs that inform the Healthy City Strategy and its desired outcomes.

Planning Framework and Engagement

To ensure viability and transparency in this endeavor, there are two levels of external engagement for Healthy City St. John's.

The Healthy City Advisory Committee: The role of the Advisory Committee is to discuss community health issues; promote collective action across sectors and disciplines; and provide leadership, guidance, and support for evidence-based decision-making on the actions as outlined in the *'Implementation Strategy'*. The Advisory Committee focuses on high-level facilitation of the Healthy City Strategy. The Advisory Committee focuses on the bigger picture of health by reviewing public policies and municipal by-laws through a social determinants of health and Population Public Health lens to inform decision-making and help decision-makers understand the health impact of their decisions at the population level. The work of the Advisory Committee is focused on policy development, advocacy, and knowledge mobilization as informed by the experts from the *'Implementation Strategy'*.

The Implementation Strategy: The *Implementation Strategy* is led by the assigned staff from City and Eastern Health, respectively. The assigned staff will focus on developing a Healthy City workplan with specified focus areas, each with respective implementation strategies and related action items. The assigned staff will work collectively to engage local organizations, collaboratives, and experts to establish working groups for each of the respective focus areas. The assigned staff will work with partnering organizations and experts as part of the *'Implementation Strategy'* to facilitate meetings as required based on objectives of the respective working group. This group will act as a "Mobilization Team" for the Healthy City Strategy and work collectively between the Advisory Committee and the working groups for the focus areas of the strategy.

The Partners commit to a minimum of two-yearly meetings of the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'*. At the two-yearly meetings, the partnering members of the *'Healthy City Advisory Committee'* agree to:

- Use the principles of Collective Impact to guide collaboration.
- Identify areas of focus and priorities based on the needs of neigbourhoods.
- Identify measurable outcomes and indicators for data-collection and future evaluation.
- Identify the reporting process for outcomes at the neighborhood level.

The Partners will also organize yearly public meetings which include all stakeholders associated with the Healthy City Strategy, as well as members of the public to highlight the ongoing Healthy City framework, indicators of success, and share collaborative initiatives arising from the Healthy City Strategy.

Reporting

The Partners agree to formalize a data sharing agreement and will work to share non-personal aggregate data that supports priority collaborative initiatives. Any data collection or data sharing that takes place will be to inform decision-makers on population health changes at the local level. Measures will be put in place to regularly "clean" data stores to ensure that any data collected that cannot be used, or is not needed, is removed from data stores.

The members of the *'Healthy City Steering Committee'* and its *"Implementation Strategy'* agree to sharing measurable outcomes, indicators for evaluation, and regular reports to ensure that there is clear and consistent communication between all partners on impacts at the community level. Sharing data will provide all members with a better understanding of complex community health challenges and the social, economic, environmental and health impacts that change as a result of the work facilitated through the Healthy City Strategy.

Focus Areas for Enhanced Collaboration

The Partners agree to focus on making collaborative efforts on the identified priority areas as listed below, while acknowledging the systemic interconnection of these priorities as determinants of health. The Partners also acknowledge that these priorities will continue to evolve based on the unique needs of neighborhoods.

- Housing: Affordable and Accessible Housing
- Urban Design: Mixed-Use; Getting Around & Accessibility
- Transportation: Active Transportation; Accessible Public Transportation
- Environment: Parks and Open Space; Interaction & Connectivity, Environmental Benefits
- Healthy Neighborhoods and People: Neighborhood Services, Identity & Place-making; Safety; Mental & Physical Health; Early Childhood Development & Lifelong learning; Economic Wellness and Poverty Reduction; Arts and culture; Access to food
- Inclusion: Social Connections; Diversity

Access and Privacy

The Partners acknowledge that they are subject to and governed by the *Personal Health Information Act, 2008* and the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015,* respectively. The Partners further acknowledge and agree that they will not be sharing personal health information or personal information within the meaning of the Act(s), but that should it be required for any reason, they will enter into an Information Sharing Agreement in accordance with the Act(s) before sharing.

Term

This Agreement is for the period of May 2021 - December 2024, with an annual review of the agreement by the Healthy City Advisory Committee.

Resource Commitment

The Partners agree to assign staff to participate and contribute to the work of the Healthy City Strategy and the focus areas as previously identified. The partnering organizations (City of St. John's and Eastern Health) agree to share the costs of hosting the two annual meetings, as well as the open public meetings or other public engagement events to showcase the work and accomplishments of the City of St. John's Healthy City Strategy.

Measures of Success

The Partners agree to the principles of Collective Impact and to developing shared outcome measures, and to report on the identified indicators of the focus areas on an annual basis. The first tasks of the partners will be to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to establish the '*Healthy City Advisory Committee*' and a develop an '*Implementation Strategy*' led by the "Mobilization Team". Once established, the '*Healthy City Advisory Committee*' will approve the Healthy City Strategy Terms of Reference and support the development of a Healthy City workplan.

Dated this 17th day of May, 2021.

CITY OF ST. JOHN'S

Danny Breen
Mayor

EASTERN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

David Diamond
President and Chief Executive Officer