



Mandating a Healthy Built Environment?

Tammy Evans is a commercial real estate partner in the Firm with significant experience in all aspects of condominium development.

Tammy may be reached directly at 416.593.2986 or tevans@blaney.com.

Marc Kemerer is a municipal partner in the Firm, with significant experience in all aspects of municipal planning and development.

Marc may be reached directly at 416.593.2975 or mkemerer@blaney.com.

Catherine Longo is an articling student at Blaney McMurtry LLP. Catherine is a graduate of Queen's Law School. She holds a Bachelor of Social Science Honours degree in International Studies and Modern Languages from the University of Ottawa.

Catherine may be reached directly at 416.593.7221 ext. 4447 or clongo@blaney.com.

by Tammy Evans, Marc Kemerer, and Catherine Longo

Originally published in *Blaneys on Building* (December 2010) - [Read the entire newsletter](#)

We have previously written on the new “green” building standards being imposed by municipalities, particularly the City of Toronto. Those policies may soon be complimented by additional initiatives with respect to “healthy” buildings as urban planners have been directed to take a closer look at the correlation between health and the built environment.

Leading the way in this respect is the Health Background Study (the “Study”) being undertaken by the Region of Peel in collaboration with the City of Toronto, with funding through the federal Public Health Agency and the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The purpose of the Study is to establish a set of standards intended for adoption by municipalities in Ontario, and eventually across Canada to assess the health impact of development proposals. The Study will focus on the following areas, which are incorporated into its terms of reference:

1. Density
2. Service Proximity
3. Land Use Mix
4. Street Connectivity
5. Road Network and Streetscape Characteristics
6. Parking
7. Aesthetics and Human Scale

These terms of reference, and eventually a user’s guide, are intended to address both greenfield and infill developments. The challenges faced by developers in retrofitting existing sites are expected to be taken into consideration. A further challenge for the project team will be to sort through any conflict with existing municipal and/or provincial policies

The Region of Peel and the City of Toronto are currently conducting workshops and inviting interested parties to discuss the terms of reference and to provide input into the substance and implementation of development criteria for this healthy building initiative. The result of these consultations will be a user’s guide intended eventually for adoption by provincial governments and/or municipalities. This guide could therefore have very significant implications for the development industry.

Will this initiative materialize into yet another dip into the developer’s pocket, with increased consultation, additional expert reports, studies, time and expenses to develop land in Ontario? It certainly has the potential. We will be monitoring the progress of these consultations and the development of the user’s guide in the coming year and would be pleased to discuss the Study and its potential impact on your future developments. ■