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For Immediate Release

Report by Ontario Professional Planners Institute Links Effective Planning to Healthy Communities

TORONTO (November 8, 2007) – The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) today released a ground-breaking report exploring the positive links between community planning and public health that proposes clear and tangible measures to help make Ontario's communities healthier and more sustainable. Release of the paper, entitled *Healthy Communities, Sustainable Communities*, coincides with World Town Planning Day, celebrated annually on November 8 in more than 30 countries around the world.

"Community planning affects our health and our life expectancy in many ways," said OPPI President Wayne Caldwell. "The quality of the environment, opportunities for exercise and recreation, access to healthy food, the availability of jobs, and the existence of social networks all contribute to our over-all health. Planners play a leading role in community building and advocating for healthy communities throughout Ontario."

Healthy Communities, Sustainable Communities focuses on the relationship between where we live and health issues of significant importance to citizens and communities across Ontario, from increasing rates of obesity and related health problems to air quality issues in transportation and the need to improve and "green" our infrastructure, through to the economic vitality of communities and/or the incidence of poverty.

The release of the paper follows a year of intense research and consultations with planners and key stakeholders in the health, municipal and related sectors.

"(This is) a critically important report that is timely, insightful and incisive," said Dr. Andrew Pipe, Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa and Director, The Minto Prevention and Rehabilitation Centre, University of Ottawa Heart Institute. "It is a document that provides far-reaching advice about shaping healthier communities; every municipal politician and planner needs to read this."

Established in 1986, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute is the recognized voice of the Province's planning profession and provides vision and leadership on key planning issues. The Institute's more than 2,700 members are employed by governments, private industry, agencies, and academic institutions.

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Planners work in a wide variety of fields, including urban and rural community development, urban design, environment, transportation, health and social services, housing, and economic development.

To read the full *Healthy Communities, Sustainable Communities* report or for further information on World Town Planning Day, please visit www.ontarioplanners.on.ca

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