



# City of Ottawa – New Official Plan Preliminary Policy Directions

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# City of Ottawa – New Official Plan

## Preliminary Policy Directions

The Official Plan is built upon the understanding and recognition that what is now known as Ottawa is located on the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation.

Ottawa is Canada's capital. It is the largest city, and one of the two central cities, of the Greater Ottawa-Gatineau metropolitan area. It is the second largest city in Ontario and, as Canada's fourth largest, one of the nation's big cities. On the global scale, it is a mid-sized city with a higher degree of visibility by virtue of its role as a G7 capital.

### 1. Strategic Directions

An Official Plan is a strategic document that describes how the city will grow over time, where we will place major infrastructure, and what policies will be in place to support economic growth, achieve our greenhouse gas emission targets, and guide the development and evolution of communities. The purpose of this new Official Plan is to position Ottawa to be flexible, resilient, and, above all, a city where people want to live, work, and play. This new Plan will take us to the year 2046, but it also seeks to set the stage for the City and Region to reach a population of two to three million people.

The goal of the new Official Plan is **to make Ottawa the most liveable mid-sized city in North America**. To achieve this goal, Five Big Moves are being proposed that frame the policy direction of the New Official Plan:

- 1. Growth:** Achieve, by the end of the Plan's planning period, more growth by intensification than by greenfield development. This growth will provide for complete communities and a variety of affordable housing options.
- 2. Mobility:** By 2046, the majority of trips in the city of Ottawa will be made by sustainable transportation (walking, cycling, transit or carpool).
- 3. Urban Design:** Improve our sophistication in urban and community design, and put this knowledge to the service of good urbanism at all scales, from the largest to the very small.
- 4. Resiliency:** Embed public health, environmental, climate and energy resiliency into the framework of our planning policies.
- 5. Economy:** Embed economic development into the framework of our planning policies.



## 2. Growth Management Framework

### Background and Rationale

#### Policy Directions from the Five Big Moves

1. By 2046, achieve majority of new residential units by intensification in the urban area and serviced villages
2. Grow the city around its rapid transit system

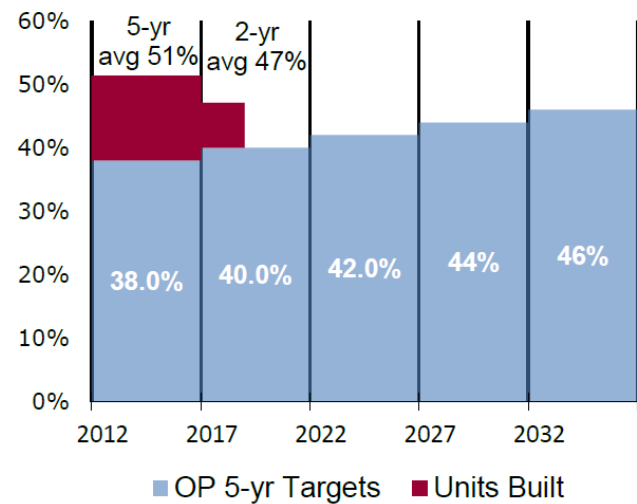
Reviewing growth management options begins on a spectrum of what role intensification plays for the direction of growth. One end of the spectrum begins with a “status quo” continuation of intensification expectations from the current Official Plan. On the other end would be maximizing intensification to accommodate additional residential units after existing suburban greenfield areas identified for growth have been consumed, being a “no urban expansion” scenario.

The current Official Plan has targets for the percentage of new dwelling units to be accommodated through intensification opportunities, being development that results in a net increase of residential units. The intensification targets incrementally increase 2% every five-year period, starting at 38% between 2012-2016, and ending at 46% by 2032-2036. Extending this 2% increase every five-years to 2046 would result in an intensification target of 50% by 2042-2046.

The current Official Plan also has sufficient vacant greenfield areas to accommodate over 81,000 residential units on 1,870 net residential hectares<sup>1</sup>. Recent growth projections show that this supply is not likely to be sufficient to 2046. At the “status quo” end of the spectrum, the new Official Plan would plan to maintain a gradual intensification increase to 50% by 2046 with the remaining residential units being accommodated on existing vacant greenfield areas and by expanding the existing urban area. At the “no urban expansion” end of the spectrum after the existing vacant greenfield areas are consumed the remaining residential units would be accommodated through intensification by increasing the intensification percentage significantly more than 50%.

Over the past decade, the percentage of residential dwelling units in intensification areas has been higher than the Official Plan targets, achieving close to 50%.

The new Official Plan should recognize that intensification areas will become a more important part of growth management and that what has been observed over the past decade should continue so that the majority of new



<sup>1</sup> City of Ottawa, 2019. *Vacant Urban Residential Land Survey, 2019 Update*.  
[https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/ADR\\_2018\\_Full\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/ADR_2018_Full_Report_FINAL.pdf)



residential units should be accommodated through intensification. The intensification rate would be between the two above averages on the intensification spectrum.

To achieve higher intensification rates there should be a greater connection between the type of residential unit developed through intensification and the type of residential unit required from the growth projections. Traditionally, intensification mostly consists of apartment<sup>2</sup> units that are typically two-bedrooms or less in size, while greenfield growth mostly consists of larger single-, semi-detached and rowhouse units, which together can be referred to as “low-rise, ground-oriented” due to their relative height to taller apartment buildings. Accommodating some of these projected ground-oriented dwellings will be required through intensification; however, they cannot typically be replaced by one- or two-bedroom apartments. The primary driver for the ground-oriented dwellings will be space for families or larger households. Additional intensification opportunities for residential units larger than two-bedrooms should then be provided to increase the housing options for those seeking more space than provided by typical one- or two-bedroom apartments.

Increasing opportunities for the “missing middle” concept, being housing in mid-density forms between wood-framed ground-oriented buildings and concrete poured mid-and high-rise apartment buildings, is one strategy to help increase housing options through intensification. This strategy and the related policy directions are further explored in the Housing section of this document. Providing for additional opportunities will occur to a limited degree in the short-term as updating the zoning by-law and other initiatives such as supporting infrastructure will take some time. Increased intensification rates are then expected to occur over the mid- to long-term horizons of the new Official Plan.

Intensification should also be focused in areas that can take advantage of the transportation network and make the most efficient use of transit and other sustainable modes of travel. This will allow more residents to conveniently access their daily needs within a community or provide a variety of viable options for commuting to work or school. This strategy and the related policy directions are further explored in the Transportation / Mobility section of this document.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

- 1. An increased intensification target should be gradual in the short-term, and gradually increase over the long-term horizon of the Plan.**
  - Time required to update the Zoning By-law
  - Implement other initiatives to support a higher rate of intensification
- 2. Require a minimum percentage of residential units with 3 or more bedrooms for certain types of development**

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<sup>2</sup> Apartments are a building type rather than tenure and includes both rental and condominium buildings. Most of the built intensification units have been condominium apartments, commonly referred to as “condos”.



- 3. Any urban area expansion will support the City’s policy directions with respect of climate change, growth management, transit and the efficient use of infrastructure**
  - Establish how much expansion land will be required
  - Select expansion lands at locations that will generate high transit ridership
  - Round out some suburban communities first and extend others on new expansion lands. Create complete communities on new expansion lands
  - Secondary Plan process required, similar to current process for CDPs on urban expansion areas
  - Avoid Agricultural Resource Areas
  - Each community achieve overall 36 units per net hectare
  - Minimum 10% apartments, all other built forms will be remaining 90%
  - Policy wording that requires mix of built forms to avoid the cumulative impacts generated by high concentrations of narrow-frontage, front-driveway housing types
  - Establish minimum thresholds of service (starting with day-one rapid transit availability) before planning for new expansion lands can begin.
  
- 3. Ensure city infrastructure is considered as part of intensification strategy**
  - Ensure adequate capacity and address “pinch points” where they block potential infill
  - Ensure transit service is available at a level of service that supports mode share targets
  
- 4. Ensure intensification strategy will consider housing and transportation affordability**
  
- 5. Incent intensification through a variety of mechanisms**
  - Implement intensification policies in the Zoning By-law to avoid need for zoning by-law amendment and Committee of Adjustment applications
  - Improve policies that guide review of zoning by-law amendment, minor variance and consent applications
  - Continue to adjust parking requirements to support planning goals
  - Consider use of a community planning permit system
  - Consider providing delegated authority for consents to an appointed staff officer
  - Enhance transportation network to increase mobility options

## 3. Economic Development and Employment Lands

### Background and Rationale

Ottawa’s ability to compete in the knowledge economy relies on its ability to develop local businesses and talent, attract and retain highly skilled labour and new businesses, and create the regulatory climate to promote entrepreneurship and innovation. It will also be based on our success in promoting Ottawa to the world through branding and signature projects. Employers are looking for greater connections to



other major cities and an environment that attracts a highly-skilled work force. The work force is looking for livable cities that are resilient, with a variety of safe, affordable, vibrant, mixed-use areas, cultural life and social harmony.

Part of the larger backdrop that must also be considered is Ottawa's role, in collaboration with Gatineau, as one of the three major pillars in the Toronto-Ottawa/Gatineau-Montreal megaregion. This broader context helps to better define and inform land use decisions that support our role and economic growth within this megaregion.

### **What is an "Employment Area"?**

An "Employment Area" is a cluster of employment uses, such as traditional business parks built for manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, fuel depots; and, in Ottawa's current Official Plan, the terms also applies to corporate office parks for research and development. However, the nature of employment has evolved and today includes many areas outside of these industrial business parks. Technology and new business processes have changed the employment landscape.

Under the Provincial Policy Statement (s. 1.3), municipalities must designate and protect "employment areas" for current and future uses. In jurisdictions whose economies are more heavily reliant on manufacturing, warehousing, logistics and distribution (which are high-impact activities that typically require locations that are segregated from neighbourhoods), this protection serves to maintain a supply of suitably-located and suitably-priced lands for these types of jobs, and to protect them from residential development pressures that would likely increase land prices and effectively prevent high-impact activities from then locating close to homes.

Most employment in Ottawa, however, is knowledge-based and primarily office-based. While it remains relevant to keep high-impact nuisance uses away from homes, the same is not the case for office-based jobs. Furthermore, today's knowledge-based employers typically do not prefer segregated locations, but seek vibrant, mixed-use environments where their workforce can enjoy a range of services, activities, amenities and residential opportunities in the context of a 15-minute neighbourhood.

In this context, therefore, office and knowledge-based "employment areas" should be allowed to evolve into mixed use areas while "industries" having noxious impacts should continue to be separated from adjacent uses.

### **Existing Urban Employment Area designation**

The current 'Urban Employment Area' policies are a "one size fits all" approach. This may be the correct approach for some business parks but can be overly restrictive for others and may not achieve a worthwhile intent in the Ottawa context. The "one size fits all" approach has also led to confusion with the overall intent of the Urban Employment Area designation in a broader sense, and inconsistent application of this designation to Traditional Industrial, Freight, Storage areas (TIFS).

Business parks that are more knowledge- and office-based are often easily integrated into the surrounding community and do not need to be segregated from more sensitive uses, nor do they need



to be designated as Employment lands. The ongoing separation of these types of jobs is counterproductive to the City's goal of increasing transit use and active transportation, in addition to perpetuating an outdated model that most Ottawa employers and their workers are no longer seeking.

## **Rural Business and the Existing Official Plan**

Ottawa's rural area is dominated by high-value industries such as agriculture, mineral extraction, manufacturing and warehousing. To the latter, the rural area is attractive due to the availability of large tracts of land and strategic locations for the efficient movement of goods. The rural area is also home to 26 Villages, which have varying degrees of enterprise and success.

Current challenges for business development within Villages and the Rural Area can be attributed to the availability of infrastructure services such as water, wastewater, and stormwater; the concentration of commercial and institutional uses Villages or the Urban Area, with limited support for rural countryside areas; overly prescriptive definitions of home occupations; gaps in the farm-to-table chain, particularly packaging; lack of connectivity both technology (internet) and mobility (transit); and the impacts of climate change and urbanization on agricultural production. By providing greater flexibility in land uses throughout the general area while ensuring protection of prime agricultural lands, the City will encourage the growth of businesses which supports the rural community and attracts tourism.

## **Preliminary Policy Directions**

### **1. Direct employment to Nodes and Corridors**

- The Official Plan will state that the best place for jobs, especially in the knowledge industries, is Downtown, at Nodes (including suburban Town Centres) and on Mainstreets (including suburban Mainstreets). The importance of locating employment in the Downtown Core, in major Nodes and on Mainstreets. This is a critical element of growth management and for the promotion of active mobility.
- Jobs can play a pivotal role in suburban Town Centres and along suburban Mainstreets to give those places a sense of identity that goes beyond retail or community services and animates them for additional purposes.
- In the Downtown Core and Inner Urban areas, additional employment also serves to reinforce and consolidate the established businesses along Mainstreets and near Nodes, especially those with higher-order transit service, and encourage retail diversification to the benefit of the broader neighbourhood.
- The City needs to work for a distribution of jobs in the urban and suburban areas of the City to help reduce the time needed for commuting to work and associated environment impacts.



**2. Develop new policies for employment areas based on their different contexts, including level of integration with adjacent areas and simplify zoning rules to be generally more permissive where the land use context is suitable.**

The intent of the new policies will be to segregate those uses from neighbourhoods which are considered high impact nuisance uses. Certain other uses, while being less impactful, may also need to continue to be kept separate from neighbourhoods. The new policies will provide for differing levels of separation or integration depending on the impacts of the uses.

**a) Traditional Industrial, Freight, Storage (TIFS)**

- Characterised by uses such manufacturing, warehousing, distribution and remove current institutional permissions.
- Areas for segregation and preservation of land for the above uses.

**b) Non-Traditional Mixed**

- Characterised by a broad mix of uses including office, light industrial, wholesale, small contractors and community-based uses, including institutional uses such as, places of worship, indoor recreational uses and stand-alone day care centres.
- Even though these uses are not considered high nuisance impact many would not be appropriate within residential neighbourhoods or commercial centres. Some level of integration would still possible through community-based uses.
- May include retail and groceries to support a 15-minute neighbourhood or act as a transition between residential areas and TIFS.
- May be designated as Nodes.
- The other types of “Employment Lands” uses will no longer be in designations that segregate them from their surrounding neighbourhoods. Over the long term, the intent is to blend them more into their community.

**c) Knowledge-Based**

- Characterised by uses such as office, research and development, training centres. Includes specialized knowledge hubs or economic clusters of uses that benefit from being in a cluster.
- Includes Federal Campuses, Hospitals, and Post-Secondary Institutions.
- Includes residential permissions and other supportive uses for high-tech or health focussed employment. High mix of uses.
- Focus on node edges for integration with adjacent neighbourhoods and where appropriate use a secondary or master planning exercise.
- May be designated as Nodes.

**3. Maintain Kanata North as a key economic generator over the next 28 years and increase quality of life through land use planning (see Special District 4 in Section 15d)**





- 4. Establish the boundaries for a new economic zone centered on the MacDonald-Cartier International Airport and include policies guiding the development of a new Secondary Plan for the area. (see Special District 5 in Section 15d)**
- 5. Support rural economic development throughout all sectors, by introducing policies that support a broad range of land uses that are context sensitive and ensure the protection of prime agricultural lands in recognition of increasing global scarcity.**

### **5.1 Agriculture**

- Require all development proposals in proximity to ongoing farm operations to include an assessment of the potential adverse impacts on the farm operations (MDS, noise dust) and the measures proposed as part of the development to mitigate those impacts. The City may identify appropriate mitigation measures.
- Ensure policies related to on-farm diversified uses and value-added production include the use of off-site materials to support the increased production of a broad range of goods. Policies will support uses such as wineries and breweries and may include the ability to provide related services to other agricultural operations, as well as tourism-based operations such as event space and restaurants.

### **5.2 Villages and Rural Residential Areas**

- Introduce policies that would allow for a broad range of permitted uses to support complete communities with services to meet needs of residents and attractive for tourists. This may include opportunities for co-working or incubation spaces.
- Introduce policies that would broaden the scope of what could be considered a home-based business to support local services while mitigating disruption to others nearby.

### **5.3 Rural Countryside and Industrial Areas**

- Revise policies to allow some small-scale commercial and institutional uses, which are currently restricted to villages or the urban area, to locate in the rural area subject to specific size and location criteria.
- Introduce policies that allow consideration of new tourist development in the rural area which may not be practical in the urban area
- Evaluate strategic locations along 400 series highways for future Traditional Industrial, Freight, Storage (TIFS), including servicing considerations.



## 4. Public Health [Click to GO BACK TO INDEX](#)

### Background and Rationale

The Official Plan is a critical policy lever for developing livable, inclusive and resilient communities that foster health and well-being. The built and natural environments shape peoples' daily experiences and decisions, and have a direct influence on physical, mental and social health. This includes:

- chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, which are linked to physical inactivity and unhealthy eating;
- mental health challenges such as social isolation;
- climate change impacts including extreme weather, exposure to extreme heat/cold, vector-borne diseases; and
- health impacts from air pollution, including from traffic, as well as injuries and deaths from motor vehicles.

The Official Plan provides an opportunity to recognize these impacts and, through land-use and transportation policies, help mitigate them.

The *Ottawa Next: Beyond 2036* report identified a number of long-range trends and disruptors that could have significant impacts on the health and well-being of the population and livability of the city. Changing demographics through an aging population as well as on-going immigration, which will be a critical source of population growth, will result in changes in the social and cultural make up of communities. Pressures are also anticipated from climate change, and growing income disparity will challenge community cohesion.

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) sets high level policy that identifies the need to manage land use in a way that sustains healthy, liveable and safe communities. The proposed 2019 PPS has stronger climate policies, requiring municipalities to prepare for the local impacts of a changing climate and mitigate the risks to human health, safety, property and environment. Changes to the legal and regulatory environment, such as new legislation governing the Development Charges Act, may create new conditions that warrant a closer focus to ensure growth promotes human health and well-being. Advancing positive health outcomes through the Official Plan has also been formally endorsed through a motion by the Ottawa Board of Health in support of the "5 Big Moves".

The new Official Plan needs to create an environment that will enable physical activity, the building of social connections, positive health outcomes, and resiliency through an evolving urban form also supported by sustainable mobility options. This will position Ottawa to address emerging health challenges and ensure the places we build enable all people to be healthy, thrive, and live their lives to their fullest. The Official Plan should have a more integrated and broadened health perspective, with consideration of health impacts. The current Official Plan refers to health in the introduction and has a section with policies to protect health and safety that are limited to health hazards such as noise and



vibration; however the Official Plan does not explicitly address the underlying built environment conditions that are needed to sustain long-term human health, nor does it integrate those considerations through the range of policies. It includes strategic directions around affordable housing, active transportation, climate change, and energy, but these directions have limited implementing policies. Health considerations should be considered and integrated with other priorities and policy changes that emerge from the Official Plan, such as the Transportation Master Plan and the Parks, Forests and Greenspace Master Plan.

## Preliminary Policy Direction

### 1. Official Plan policies must advance human health through the built environment

New Official Plan policies must foster an integrated approach to planning that recognizes the interdependencies between health and the built environment, including through housing, transportation, parks, urban design, and the natural environment. Implementation policies in the Official Plan need to recognize health. Additionally, the policies should enable consideration of health in, for instance, secondary planning, and supporting Master Plans and guidelines.

### 2. Ensure policies support building accessible, inclusive communities, and design for all ages, including children and older adults

Make inclusion an explicit consideration in planning policies through designing communities that meet needs of children, older adults, women and gender-diverse persons, and those who are at greater risk for negative health and well-being outcomes. This includes:

- Improving housing options for all ages and incomes, including a greater diversity and affordability of housing, especially in areas with high-level transit service; inclusionary zoning may be a policy lever to support this.
- Designing more broadly accessible, safe and convenient pedestrian, cycling and transit infrastructure (e.g. more conveniently timed pedestrian and cycling traffic signals, separated cycling facilities, snow clearing). This is critical for ensuring our built environment leads to a more physically active population at all ages, with all the associated health co-benefits.
- Ensure that public and commercial spaces are designed to be universally accessible for all, including people with mobility impairments or differing abilities that may limit the ability to move about safely or independently, or fully engage in one's environment. The City's Accessibility Design Standards go beyond Provincial requirements to optimize accessibility for spaces and facilities owned, leased or operated by the City of Ottawa. A universal design-for-all approach seeks to meet the needs of all ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds that promote inclusiveness not just for City facilities but for commercial and public spaces as well.

### 3. Advance policies that enable evolution to walkable, 15-minute neighborhoods

Ensure policies support evolution of the built environment into walkable, 15-minute neighborhoods through building dense, complete, compact, well-connected communities. This includes a diverse mix of land uses that reduce and disincentivizes the need for a private vehicle and makes it more feasible to live car light or car free. Enable a mix of walkable land uses through a range of housing,



shops and services, local access to food, schools, employment and greenspaces/parks. This will evolve differently depending on the context. This includes:

- In appropriate contexts, developing traffic-calmed local roads for slower speeds, including 30 km/h streets or less, as well as an inclusive public realm through “living streets” which are designed as social spaces to promote very slow motor speeds for the benefit of people walking and biking, and children playing (e.g. woonerf).
- Siting, design and location of schools and surrounding community to optimize opportunities for healthy living and safe active transportation to school.
- Clustering of local services, commercial spaces, parks, recreation, cultural and public space amenities especially at nodes and corridors to contribute to a vibrant public realm that encourages walking, cycling and transit.
- Facilitate the development of major integrated healthcare facilities in the core and each suburban area. In suburban areas, this includes ensuring they are located in town centres. They must be designed and oriented to be fully integrated in the surrounding communities and facilitate access through active transportation and public transit.

#### **4. Require policies to support the design of sustainable and green communities**

Develop policies that support the provision of parks, greenspaces, and natural areas, and prioritizes trees as well as sustainable building design in order to adapt to climate change, reduce exposure to air pollution, mitigate urban heat islands, and promote active lifestyles. This includes:

- Developing policies to design greenspaces, parks and natural areas that are protective and supportive of health (e.g. shade, benches) and inclusive for all ages and genders; ensure the access and use is designed to meet a range of physical, social and cultural needs.
- Prioritizing these spaces in a way that considers equitable distribution across neighborhoods. Require investment in parks and recreation amenities in high density communities such as nodes.
- Developing policies to help buffer sensitive land uses from health hazards (e.g. high traffic corridors, landfills).
- Developing policies that mitigate urban heat islands by increasing greenness, shading and high albedo building surfaces (e.g. green corridors, green building standards).
- Introduce policies that supports indoor and outdoor food production in urban areas to enhance local food security and sovereignty.

#### **5. Implement policies based on neighbourhood context**

Certain policies will be context- specific and others would apply city-wide. In the Downtown and Inner Urban areas, active transportation and transit would be prioritized as the most efficient and desired means of travel. The built environment would support this through densities, urban design and complete street design that disincentivizes driving and supports active transportation and the provision of shaded areas. In recognition of the rising population of the Downtown Core and Inner Urban areas, the Official Plan and/or Secondary Plans would include a strategy to provide additional active cultural and recreation space and facilities to keep up with population growth.



In existing Outer Urban communities, there would be an evolution to more walkable, connected communities as opportunities for road reconstruction and re-development emerge. In new greenfield communities, development should ensure from the outset that transportation and the built environment are optimized for highly walkable and transit-supportive environments. Commercial areas, parks and greenspaces should be designed to be integrated with new neighbourhoods, and conceived at a more human scale, to encourage users to make active transportation and transit a viable and desired option for daily activities.

In the context of the rural area and villages, the private automobile would continue to be a primary mode of transportation however, safe walking and cycling provisions would be provided for recreational as well as daily purposes where possible.

## 5. Housing [Click to GO BACK TO INDEX](#)

### Background and Rationale

The current Official Plan applies a one-size-fits all approach with its application of the General Urban Area designation. The General Urban Area designation is the primary policy area identified for housing in the current Official Plan and it is applied generically across the entire city. The use of this designation does not provide context-specific detail to guide the evolution of neighbourhoods into complete, compact and liveable communities. A context-based policy framework based on the type of place can provide focused direction to neighbourhoods within the downtown core; the inner urban area and subsequent rings of post-War neighbourhoods.

The current Official Plan provides little in the way of detailed, practical and implementable affordable housing strategy in order to provide the necessary units for the change in population and the growing need for affordable units. The population is ageing and there are more single-person households; these housing demands need to be addressed in policy. Sharply rising rents and ongoing low vacancies continue to challenge renter households and threaten the liveability of the city.

Traditional means by which people can lower their housing costs are less effective; for instance, where residents move to less central and less transit-supportive neighbourhoods, the resulting higher transport costs undermine or cancel out the benefits of lower rent or mortgage payments. Affordability should now be understood to encompass a combination of housing and transportation costs, which are fixed costs in household budgets.

There is a “missing middle” range of housing (i.e. housing in mid-density forms between ground-oriented buildings such as singles and townhouses, and concrete mid-rise or high-rise buildings). Policies that support the development of mid-density, ground-oriented, low-rise development, such as courtyard buildings and low-rise apartments, would contribute to a more diverse and affordable building stock.

The current Official Plan provides policy direction to guide Site Plan Control requirements for development throughout the City. Site Plan Control is a necessary part of the development approvals



system, but in its current form it often imposes a cost and burden that is disproportionate to the scale of the development, particularly for low-density, multi-unit construction. This in turn discourages a range of versatile and affordable housing types that could help meet the growing need for housing.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

The new policy directions for housing will accomplish a variety of objectives to help Ottawa become the most livable mid-sized city in North America and support each of the Five Big Moves. The new policy directions will include:

1. **Introduce the notion of “neighbourhood” into the planning vocabulary of the Official Plan to help the City develop better tools and understandings to be able to plan at smaller scales.** A finer gradation of the City’s neighbourhoods will be provided to create a context-sensitive planning policy framework that reflects the diversity of contexts that exist across the city. This will allow the Official Plan to identify which neighbourhoods are undergoing active change and require clear direction as to their next stage of evolution, and which neighbourhoods are not yet experiencing such pressures. The City will then be able to evaluate the potential for increased low-rise and/or ground-oriented multi-unit housing within established neighbourhoods that are experiencing redevelopment pressures due to their location in relation to higher-order transit and provide the necessary capacity to accommodate the growth that is anticipated by 2046.

2. **New policy will emphasize building form (size and shape of building) rather than focusing on the type of dwelling (number of units in the building), as a way to provide a broader range of housing options than is currently permitted.**

This approach represents a refinement of the existing policy direction. In new neighbourhoods, this policy direction will be a continuation of the current practice of pre-zoning new subdivisions for maximum flexibility to allow the market to react nimbly to changing demands, and to support the *Building Better and Smarter Suburbs* initiative, especially as it relates to the design of new buildings to address the logistical challenges of higher densities in suburban locations. In the rural area, options will be explored to permit a broader range of housing options within Villages, especially serviced Villages.

3. **Encourage denser, walkable 15- minute neighbourhoods to help reduce or eliminate car dependency and promote social and physical health and sustainable neighbourhoods.**

Ensuring that housing is close to local shops and services, with a street and pathway network that facilitates active transportation and discourages the local car trips, will promote the health, sustainability and economic vibrancy of communities. In existing neighbourhoods new policy will support the evolution into walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods by promoting housing flexibility and supporting the nodes and corridors for quick access to shops and services. In new neighbourhoods, new policy will build dense, compact, well-connected, walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods with a fully-connected street grid and a diverse mix of land uses, including a range of housing, shops, services, food, schools, employment, parks and recreation, greenspaces and pathways. High quality urban design and the creation of an engaging public realm and public spaces will be required.



**4. Provide new policy that supports innovative, affordable and context-sensitive housing forms, in appropriate locations, including family-oriented housing as well as forms that suit single-person households.**

New policy will also encourage the production of more “missing middle” mid-density housing near high-level transit service such as rapid-transit stations and high-frequency street buses, as well as near commercial mainstreets, to support new developments that are affordable in terms of both housing and transportation. It will provide a target rental vacancy rate, in order to ensure that the rental market supports housing needs, and it will link Protected Major Transit Station Areas (Topic 6) with implementing direction for Inclusionary Zoning to require affordable housing within private developments around selected rapid transit stations. It is proposed to strengthen current policies that support production of subsidized affordable housing that produce a diversity of housing forms to suit a variety of household types, tenures and price points, and that recognize the increasing affordability challenges faced by renter households.

**5. Strengthen the current policy direction which focuses new growth around existing higher-order transit.**

This could be achieved by ensuring that the timing of new development is contingent on the provision of new higher-order transit to serve it. Policies will be strengthened to support the development of higher-density housing and reduced parking requirements near higher-order transit, to meet the needs of the growing number of residents who want “car-light” or car-free lifestyles.

**6. Promote the use of publicly owned lands to supplement the supply of affordable housing while providing incentives and regulatory mechanisms to promote more affordability in the private housing supply.**

The new Official Plan will strengthen the existing policy that requires surplus City lands to be given priority for affordable housing. Further the new Official Plan will support the direction of the Interdepartmental Task Force on Affordable Housing to ensure Official Plan level incentives and regulatory mechanisms are provided as part of this update.

**7. Provide new policy direction to require the co-location of otherwise segregated land uses, with a strong policy direction for housing to be integrated into new City facilities and for housing to be integrated into existing employment business parks.**

New City-owned urban infrastructure projects (libraries, recreation and some transit facilities) will be required to integrate housing within the site, where land parcel size and building-type compatibility makes that feasible. Further, the new Official Plan will include policy direction that requires the City to consider options for public municipal facilities to be part of mixed-use private development (e.g. podiums of condominium or rental housing developments.)

Existing office parks that house a high proportion of the City’s knowledge-based jobs and other non-noxious employment land uses (government institutions, universities, colleges and hospitals) will be allowed to have a broader range and integration of uses in circumstances where certain types of jobs are actually wanted in locations within communities (such as in hubs and corridors),



while continuing to protect land and segregate uses in circumstances where their proximity to residences is clearly not desirable. (see Topic 3)

**8. Adopt a less onerous Site Plan Control process for low-rise and/or ground-oriented residential construction**

To accompany supportive OP policies, it will be recommended to put in place a less onerous Site Plan Control process for low-rise and/or ground-oriented residential construction in some areas of the city, in an effort to encourage and promote more diverse forms of residential building types. The review of the Site Plan Control process will consider stormwater management in intensification areas and complement urban design objectives (Topics 7 and 13).

**9. Continue to monitor and adjust City policies to ensure there is a range and mix of housing types and housing availability for all income groups.**

The new Official Plan will include a monitoring section that will contain direction for Staff to periodically review and report back on the implementation of the housing policies. The goal of this monitoring piece will be to ensure that the City achieves a range and mix of housing types for all income groups.

## 6. Transportation / Mobility [Click to GO BACK TO INDEX](#)

### Background and Rationale

The Official Plan (OP) and Transportation Master Plan (TMP) identify mode share targets that are implemented through policies in the TMP, as well as the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan and Ottawa Cycling Plan. These plans define the City's priorities for transportation, from day-to-day programs to long-term infrastructure investments.

The current OP and TMP represent an evolution of the City's approach towards more sustainable land use and transportation patterns and identify a sustainable mode share target of 50% by 2031. The new Official Plan provides an opportunity to revise and strengthen these targets for trips made by sustainable modes, both in terms of environmental sustainability and affordability (walking, cycling, transit, or carpool) to the year 2046 to create a healthy, complete, compact, livable and resilient City.

There is considerable momentum towards more ambitious mode share targets. First, the City has consistently exceeded intensification targets established in previous Official Plans, achieving about 50% intensification in 2018 compared to a target of 40%. The City has also made significant investments in sustainable transportation infrastructure and has seen rapid growth in cycling trip volumes. Furthermore, the completion of Stage 1 LRT, the implementation of Stages 2 and 3 LRT, and future rapid transit plans will fundamentally change patterns of mobility and development in Ottawa in support of sustainable transportation.





Big Move #2 for the New Official Plan proposes that by 2046, the majority of trips in the city of Ottawa will be made by sustainable transportation. This Big Move relies on the TMP update to identify a more precise and higher target that is ambitious yet attainable. The TMP update is planned for Council approval in April 2022, following the completion of an Origin-Destination Survey that will capture changes to travel patterns following the opening of O-Train Line 1, and public consultation and planning work.

In order to achieve the mode share targets established through the new TMP, there are several opportunities to be pursued and challenges to be mitigated. These include limited revenues relative to transportation capital and operating costs; benefits and risks of emerging business models and technologies (e.g. e-scooters, ride-hailing services, and automated vehicles); and implications of servicing existing low density and geographically dispersed developments. The TMP will also address the importance of equitable and resilient transportation systems, and the need to reduce transportation sector greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to meet the City's Climate Change Master Plan targets.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

### **1. New or significantly updated OP policies that are proposed to help achieve the goal of the majority of trips by sustainable transportation by 2046:**

- Focus new growth around existing higher-order transit, otherwise ensure that the timing of new development is contingent on the provision of new higher-order transit to serve it
- Introduce a “transect” planning framework that provides a more context-sensitive approach to intensification, whereby permissions for land use mix and residential densities will be more closely matched to transit service and street or neighbourhood typologies
- Identify “Protected Major Transit Station Areas” that will establish minimum densities for new developments in proximity to important rapid transit stations
- Recognize that growth management objectives are premised on ongoing improvements to transit service
- Appropriately match right-of-way and street design to each neighbourhood context based on the new Transect policy areas
- Increase the supply of parking for active and sustainable modes of transportation (bicycles, car-share, etc.) including in private developments
- Expand areas subject to reduced or eliminated vehicle parking requirements to support households who want “car-light” and “car-free” lifestyles



- Expand the geographic area of the city in which households can viably and reasonably function without a car
- Update goods movement policies, such as suitable locations for intermodal facilities, maximum truck sizes by context, and accommodation of deliveries related to online shopping
- Strengthen corridor protection for future intercity passenger rail, including high-speed rail
- Develop policies to support future transit-oriented redevelopment of certain Park and Ride lots

**2. A number of strategies will also be pursued as part of the update of the TMP and related plans to support OP goals for achieving mode share targets and objectives for mobility, liveability, equity, health and environmental sustainability:**

- Identify short- to medium-term opportunities for ongoing transit improvements along corridors designated for development and intensification to better align land use and transportation planning, starting with frequency increases and travel time reductions but also low-cost improvements such as signal priority and conversion to exclusive transit lanes, as well as more significant investments, dependent on funding availability
- Initiate long-term LRT planning (beyond Stage 3) to maximize transit ridership by targeting high-demand, high-density transit corridors inside the Greenbelt
- Improve multi-modal connections to rapid transit stations, including street bus service, new pathways, structures and land requirements
- The Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan will recognize the importance of interprovincial transportation and, through the Origin-Destination survey and related modelling, will analyse interprovincial transportation demand and related issues. The analysis of the infrastructure needs will be carried out through separate joint studies, including the City of Gatineau, NCC, MTO and MTQ, focusing on overarching transportation issues in the National Capital Region.
- Continue to develop new complete street design guidelines and cross-sections that fit the community context and support the City's objectives for land use, mobility, environment, health and economic development
- Establish a strong policy and planning framework to foster the benefits of new technologies and business models (e.g. expand mobility choices, reduce GHG emissions) and minimize their negative impacts (e.g. increase automobile reliance, reduce sustainable mode share)
- Collect and analyze data on emerging and new transportation technologies and business models to inform planning and transportation system management



- Explore new funding mechanisms in response to changing revenue streams, for example user fees, parking micro-levies, gas taxes, increased ride-hail levies, road tolls and congestion charges, to enable implementation of new sustainable transportation infrastructure
- Update the TMP, Corporate Sustainable Purchasing Policy and Corporate Electric Vehicle Policy to expedite the transition to low-carbon vehicles and to reduce GHG emissions from City fleets
- Work with adjacent municipalities to increase transit ridership by improving integration with the O-Train and Transitway network linked to a stronger regional bus network
- Focus new interprovincial transportation on public transit and active transportation capacity, as well as diverting interprovincial heavy truck traffic away from downtown and community streets
- Work with industry to enhance goods movement within Ottawa by establishing a collaborative group of stakeholders and facilitating a diversity of goods delivery options such as low emission vehicles and right-sized vehicles for the urban context
- Plan new street networks according to network principles that support safe and convenient trips by walking, cycling and transit
- Support the evolution of OC Transpo Park and Ride lots to further increase the focus on access by walking, cycling and passenger pick-up and drop-off
- Explore the potential connections between bus stations, rail stations and the Ottawa airport

## 7. Infrastructure

### Background and Rationale

Planning for water, sewer, and stormwater management infrastructure for Ottawa's settlement areas can be informed by new and emerging themes. These themes range from high-level concepts like the implications of climate change to more specific best management practices such as Low Impact Development (LID). Increasing the compactness of development and the mix of uses in the Urban Area and Villages as another strong theme. There is also an opportunity to provide greater certainty in planning and land development decisions including clarity of responsibilities, delivery, and the sharing of costs of servicing infrastructure in Urban Areas, Villages, and the Rural Area. Corresponding changes to Official Plan policies pertaining to infrastructure will have an emphasis on sustainability, affordability, equity, and value.



The following are policy directions that may be found in the new Official Plan or in the implementing Infrastructure Master Plan.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

### **1. Support Infill and Intensification by Ensuring Adequate Capacity and Delivery of Infrastructure in Priority Intensification Areas**

- Establish programs and processes to ensure that adequate infrastructure capacity is available to accommodate long-term growth, infill and intensification within priority areas, such as those surrounding rapid transit stations.
- Clarify how infrastructure needs are identified and financed to support intensification in various locations across the City.
- Consider the use of sewershed-specific capacity credits to mitigate the risk of wet weather flows in constrained systems and support accommodation of intensification and infill projects.
- Provide direction for identifying where on-site stormwater management is needed to support all forms of infill and intensification.

### **2. Clarify the Master Planning Study Requirements for Development in Established Growth Areas and When Considering Expansion Areas**

- Establish the master planning, secondary planning, and community design plan study requirements in a manner that addresses the inter-relationships between infrastructure and the natural environment, and the context-specific level of detail needed to support planning and development approvals.
- Establish appropriate review and approval requirements for evaluating proposed deviations from approved master plans that are encountered during the development review process.
- Establish how to consider potential future Urban Area boundary or Public Service Area expansions when forecasting system capacity requirements and sizing infrastructure.

### **3. Deliver Infrastructure that is Sustainable and Resilient**

- Coordinate policies with the City's Comprehensive Asset Management Program and Wet Weather Infrastructure Management Plan.
- Construct infrastructure that is durable, adaptive and resilient to the current climate and future climate, including extreme weather events.

### **4. Improve the Affordability and Sustainability of Infrastructure and Clarify Financial Responsibilities and Tools**

- Support the City's Asset Management Policies by identifying how they relate to planning and development decision-making processes.
- Support the provision of sustainable servicing in Villages by investigating alternative local improvement options where appropriate.



- Clarify responsibilities related to the implementation of infrastructure in varying contexts.
- Clarify the use of area-specific development charges and other tools for financing stormwater services and infrastructure for the Rural Villages.

Clarify the use of front-ending agreements as one means of financing and expediting the delivery of infrastructure.

- Improve the planning and coordination of public and private works to minimize and fairly assign costs to all benefitting parties.
- Coordinate the planning of trunk infrastructure and transportation corridors where appropriate to ensure short- and long-term needs are met at least cost and impact.

## **5. Use Land and Infrastructure Efficiently**

- Clarify the conditions under which it is appropriate, if at all, to locate infrastructure in the Rural Area outside of designated Urban Areas or Villages.
- Require innovative approaches to stormwater management at all scales, in response to increased imperviousness resulting from more compact communities.
- Identify appropriate practices and considerations/constraints for the integration of stormwater management in parks and public spaces to reduce the total land area allocation required for stormwater management.
- Do not permit non-contiguous development (leap-frogging) to avoid servicing inefficiencies.
- Review criteria for the creation of new Public Service Areas in the rural area.
- Support the long-term servicing needs of the Ottawa International Airport economic area.
- Ensure that privately serviced lots, in both the rural and urban areas, will be sustainable from groundwater quantity and quality perspectives.

## **6. Provide Protection Against Hazards**

- Clarify responsibilities and criteria for establishing hazard limits prior to approval of community design plans.
- Consider alternative approaches to servicing and flood protection in consideration of the potential impact of climate change on flooding hazards, to support resilient communities.
- Provide a unified approach to flood hazard delineation to support the planning and design of stormwater management and engineered drainage systems
- Recognize the unique risks of sensitive marine clay soils in Ottawa and the implications of these soils on the delineation of hazard limits.



## 7. Optimize the use of Innovative Stormwater Management Solutions

- Identify where the use of Low Impact Development (LID) principles in the planning and design of new communities, redevelopment and intensification is appropriate.
- Support the evolution of stormwater infrastructure planning and design to meet or exceed emerging changes to relevant provincial policies, standards and guidelines.
- Consider incentives and stewardship programs to encourage the implementation of lot-level controls by private property owners.

## 8. Natural Heritage

### Background and Rationale

The natural heritage system and other environmental policies in the Official Plan require revision and updating to respond to emerging challenges, to reflect Ottawa's growth and evolving urban form, to ensure integration with other priorities and policy changes, and to meet new legislated and regulatory requirements.

For the urban area, the proposed policy directions reflect the interdependencies between the natural environment, urban design and built form, active and public transportation, public health, equity, energy, and climate change. Major policy areas include the quantity, quality, and accessibility of parks and greenspaces, the protection of the urban tree canopy, and the role of green infrastructure (ecological services). The policy changes will support an update to the 2006 Greenspace Master Plan.

For the rural area, the proposed policy directions focus on resiliency and mitigation of climate change impacts, water protection, increased clarity regarding environmental protection and land uses, support for rural character and economy, and fostering of natural landscape connectivity. The new policies will distinguish more clearly between the natural landscape and the managed landscape, providing greater transparency and certainty to landowners. At the same time, the policies will require and support planning that protects forests and wetlands over the long-term for all their ecological values and functions, especially those related to water protection, biodiversity and climate change resiliency.

### Preliminary Policy Direction

#### 1. Maintain and grow the urban tree canopy

- Recognize the value of the urban tree canopy as a key component of good urban design.
- Ensure that growth and intensification will not compromise the urban forest.
- Require early consideration of trees in development and infrastructure projects.
- Provide clear direction on tree issues to staff and Committees of Adjustment.
- Support the implementation of the tree by-law: the OP should explicitly acknowledge the tree by-law as an enforcement tool for OP policies relating to the urban forest / urban tree canopy (ensuring that growth and intensification will not compromise the urban forest, requiring early



consideration of trees, etc.) and should reinforce the tree by-law's application in development review and Committee of Adjustment processes.

- Set an evidence-based target[s] for urban canopy cover that reflects accurate canopy cover data, land uses, and the provision of important ecosystem services (e.g. heat island mitigation).
- Acknowledge and value the role of the urban tree canopy as green infrastructure.

## **2. Increase the accessibility of urban parks, greenspace, and natural areas**

- Provide context-sensitive direction on the form and integration of parks, greenspace and natural areas with the contiguous urban environment, including planning for linear greenspace corridors and parks.
- Provide capital and operational funding for the provision and maintenance of appropriate facilities and amenities in urban natural areas and greenspaces (non-park greenspace).
- Provide direction on the facilities, amenities, and features required for equitable and inclusive access to greenspace and natural areas, including quiet "reflection spaces".
- Identify and promote transit-accessible greenspace destinations with enhanced facilities and amenities, to provide more widespread and equitable access to greenspace and natural areas.
- Collaborate with the Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation (11 First Nation communities), with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and organizations in Ottawa and the National Capital Commission on the respectful inclusion and representation of Algonquin Anishinabe, First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples' culture and heritage in urban greenspace and natural areas. Identify and equip safe and secure outdoor space(s) for Indigenous ceremony in Ottawa, hosted and facilitated by the Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation.
- Provide direction on the value and function of greenspace and natural areas as green infrastructure.
- Support a review of parkland supply, development, and funding approaches.

## **3. Retire the Rural Natural Features Area designation (now considered redundant with the Natural Heritage System Overlay)**

## **4. Protect, conserve, and restore Ottawa's natural heritage and water system for the long term**

- Protect and conserve core natural areas, including significant wetlands.
- Protect, enhance, and restore landscape linkages between core natural areas.
- Protect, enhance, and restore surface water buffers, especially in floodplains and agricultural areas, through the promotion of best practices and stewardship.
- Protect natural areas and features associated with vulnerable aquifers and groundwater recharge areas.

## **5. Maintain and increase natural resiliency to the impacts of climate change**

- Establish a goal of no net loss of rural forest cover and functions, and provide direction on the development of implementation guidelines.



- Establish a goal of no net loss of rural wetland area and functions, and provide direction on the development of implementation guidelines.
- Manage forested natural environment areas to reduce fire hazard and risk.
- Manage natural environment areas to increase carbon storage and sequestration.

**6. Support landowners on the voluntary stewardship and restoration of privately-owned natural features and natural lands**

**7. Reduce environmental study requirements and support greater flexibility for simple development applications outside of core natural areas and linkages**

**8. Identify land use designations where renewable energy facilities would be an allowable land use.**

## 9. Water Resources

### Background and Rationale

As Ottawa continues to grow, increased pressures related to urban runoff, pollution and loss of natural spaces are being placed on surface water and groundwater resources. The City must continue to value and prioritize a healthy water environment to safeguard drinking water sources, support agriculture, recreation and tourism, sustain fish and wildlife populations and promote resilience to flooding and droughts.

The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) requires planning authorities to protect, improve, or restore sensitive surface water and groundwater features and related hydrologic functions. Proposed changes to the PPS (released on July 22, 2019) address the need to evaluate and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate on water resource systems. The *Clean Water Act, 2006* requires municipalities with jurisdiction in an area where one or more Source Protection Plans apply to amend its Official Plan to conform with significant threat policies prescribed in the applicable Source Protection Plans.

To encourage environmentally-sound growth and intensification, protect watercourses and groundwater, and comply with new legislated and regulatory requirements, Ottawa needs to bring clarity and consistency to the water resource policies in its Official Plan. There are also opportunities to enhance the linkages between other guidance documents, such as those relating to headwater drainage features and hydrogeological studies, to strengthen the protection of sensitive features and functions. Updates will also be required to other supporting documents including the Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines and Slope Stability Guidelines for Development Applications.





## Preliminary Policy Direction

Changes to the Official Plan will increase protection for surface water and groundwater resources and strengthen policies related to drinking water sources. Currently, these policies are scattered through several sections of the Official Plan. A new section devoted to Water Resources will bring these policies together in recognition of the natural synergies that exist between them. The overall intentions for these changes are described below.

### 1. Protect, improve, and restore surface water resources by:

- Clearly defining all terms related to the identification and evaluation of watercourses, the establishment of watercourse setbacks, and the conditions under which exceptions will be permitted;
- Requiring the use of criteria and procedures approved by the General Manager PIED when evaluating headwater features (e.g. minor watercourses) for approval for reduced setbacks or removal of such features (e.g. Evaluation, Classification and Management of Headwater Drainage Features, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Credit Valley Conservation Authority);
- Striving to improve setbacks during redevelopment in hazard lands, using a suite of mechanisms, when the minimum setback is impossible to achieve due to historical development;
- Extending the requirement for an Environmental Impact Statement to include development adjacent to surface water features;
- Including considerations for future climate conditions for all new subwatershed plans and environmental management plans; and
- Amending the former section addressing Erosion Prevention and Protection of Surface Water to instead deal with Protection of Surface Water Features.

### 2. Protect, improve, and restore groundwater resources by:

- Clearly defining all terms related to the identification and evaluation of sensitive and/or vulnerable groundwater features to enable consistent application of policies;
- Requiring the use of Council-approved Hydrogeological and Terrain Analysis Guidelines to inform planning decisions that may impact groundwater features;
- Requiring a water budget, including the origin and movement of groundwater and surface water and the interactions between the water systems, for all new subwatershed plans, environmental management plans and plans of subdivision; and
- Including considerations for future climate conditions for all new subwatershed plans and environmental management plans.

### 3. Reinforce protection for municipal and communal sources of drinking water by:

- Amending the Official Plan to conform with significant threat policies set out in the Mississippi-Rideau and Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Plans (SPP), as required by the Clean Water Act, 2006;



- Ensuring that municipal decisions conform to the most recently approved SPP, as policies and mapping are subject to change; and
- Moving toward including protective measures for privately owned communal drinking water systems.

**4. Highlight the unique challenges associated with development in areas with sensitive marine clay soils and provide policy support for guidelines that may be released in the future.**

## 10. Energy and Climate Mitigation

### Background and Rationale

Preventing greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change is essential to maintain our health, safety and quality of life. Cities play an instrumental role in the fight against climate change since urbanization and emissions go hand in hand. The scenarios and planning considerations identified in the *Ottawa Next: Beyond 2036* report identified “increased pressure to conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and design for a low carbon future” as a significant driver of change.

In 2018, roughly 90% of Ottawa’s greenhouse gas emissions came from the building and transportation sectors, with solid waste, wastewater and agriculture making up the other 10%.

Less than 6% of the energy consumed in Ottawa is generated in Ottawa. In 2015, Ottawa imported \$3B worth of energy, less than 8% of which was renewable. Imported energy of this magnitude makes Ottawa vulnerable to national and global energy pricing and supply. By diversifying local renewable energy sources, Ottawa will decrease its reliance on imported energy supplies while boosting local economic growth.

Ottawa will meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by planning sustainable, livable and resilient communities which consume less energy for travel and housing and rely on energy supplied from green, renewable sources. Renewable energy technologies will play an increasingly important role to protect Ottawa’s long-term energy security.

The New Official Plan is one of many tools for Ottawa to minimize energy consumption, promote renewable energy and achieve Council-adopted greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Policies will be significantly strengthened to mobilize actions in all sectors including the City’s growth management strategy and the building and transportation sectors. The City will also ensure that Official Plan policies are coordinated amongst all long-range municipal plans, including land use, transportation, and climate change master plans, the comprehensive asset management plan, and the long-range financial plan to ensure a strategic, harmonized approach.



## Preliminary Policy Direction

The Official Plan will set the intent of the City to take aggressive steps to support a sustained transition away from fossil fuels toward a low carbon economy and fulfil both community and corporate greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. This direction will guide the remaining sections of the Plan.

The following represents a summary of the policy directions in support of energy and climate mitigation. Some of these policies may be in other documents than the Official Plan but will be linked to OP objectives:

### 1. Embed climate change and energy conservation consideration in city planning

- Identify the policy directions on intensification to conserve energy and maximize energy efficiency.
- Master planning, secondary planning, and community design plan study requirements will include strategies to conserve energy and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Options for introducing renewable energy systems in new Secondary Plan and Community Design Plan areas will be identified.

### 2. Develop a new high-performance development standard (HPDS) for buildings

- In accordance with Section 41 of the *Planning Act*, the City will enable the development of a new high-performance development standard (HPDS) as part of the review and approval of new development proposed as part of Plans of Subdivision, Zoning By-law Amendments and Site Plan Control applications. Changes to the City's Green Building Policy will be consistent with this approach. The HPDS will cover a wide array of sustainability metrics, including building energy efficiency and thermal performance based on criteria set out in the *Ontario Building Code* with progression towards net zero energy ready buildings with higher performance to be encouraged through incentives.
- The HPDS standard will also contain metrics to protect air and water quality, ecological protections (e.g. bird-friendly design and tree canopy cover), sustainable urban design and climate resiliency measures such as strategies to mitigate the heat island effect and waste diversion requirements for construction waste and organics collection.
- The HPDS provides an opportunity to consolidate the requirements for the review and approval of new development into a stand-alone document (currently found in Section 4 of the existing official plan). Currently there are numerous individual documents applicable to new development. It will also be necessary to review and update the existing design guidelines against the new transect designations.
- The City will encourage and help to facilitate retrofit programs for existing buildings.



### 3. Reduce emissions through transportation and infrastructure

- Identify the policy directions to increase the supply of non-auto transportation modes as a critical component of the City's commitment to reducing emissions and transitioning away from fossil fuels.
- Through the Transportation Master Plan, the City will work to reduce emissions from transportation by converting the public transit system from diesel buses to low- or zero-emission fleets (i.e. electric, biodiesel, etc.).
- Create enabling city policies for the location of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Establish transect-based parking regulations and right-of-way infrastructure requirements in support of electric vehicle charging stations.
- The City will explore opportunities to locate small scale waste transfer stations within the inner and outer urban transects as part of the transition to low and zero emission fleets and low carbon thermal heating.

### 4. Promote Local Energy Generation, Storage and Efficiency

- Local energy generation and storage will ensure local energy security and reliability as well as promote economic competitiveness and resiliency. Add renewable energy and energy storage facilities to the list of generally permitted uses in the rural and urban area with accompanying compatibility criteria applicable to the built form context.
- In accordance with the authority outlined in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, the city will explore using Community Improvement Plans to include energy efficiency measures to the scope of eligible costs for which the City can provide community improvement grants or loans.
- Explore the changing nature of gas stations and their placement in the urban area in consideration of new transportation options such as zero emission vehicles.

## 11. Climate Resiliency

### Background and Rationale

The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) requires municipalities to consider the potential impacts of climate change and to reduce risks from climate events through stormwater management, green infrastructure and maximizing vegetation. The proposed 2019 PPS has stronger climate resiliency policies and requires municipalities to prepare for the local impacts of a changing climate and mitigate the risks to human health, safety, property and environment.



The impacts of climate change were identified as the third highest key issue facing the city in an online survey on the Official Plan (OP) discussion papers. Ottawa's vision to be a livable mid-sized city must be one where people can live, work and play in all future climate conditions. In the coming decades, Ottawa will be much warmer, with more variable precipitation and unpredictable extreme events such as heat waves, high winds, heavy rain and freezing rain:

- The number of **extreme heat days** is expected to increase from 14 to 57 days by 2050. Everyone is at risk, but those who are more vulnerable to experiencing negative health outcomes even more so, including older adults, young, those with health conditions, those who work or are physically active outdoors and those living without air conditioning.
- **Flooding** is now the costliest type of natural disaster in Canada. Floods damage property, threaten infrastructure, and contaminate drinking water. People are impacted in terms of safety, food and water quality, shelter, financial costs and physical and mental health.
- Our **buildings and infrastructure** need to function in all future weather conditions, including high temperatures, freeze-thaw, high winds, heavy rains and other storms.
- Our **built environment** must be designed to protect health by reducing heat-related illnesses and deaths, protecting against flooding, and enabling active transportation, transit use and outdoor recreation in all weather conditions.

Climate change science and policy have changed considerably in recent decades, including the new directions in the proposed PPS. While Ottawa's current OP provides broad strategic directions around climate change adaptation, it can be strengthened with specific policies and implementing tools. Changes will be required in the OP and other policy documents, by-laws, and tools that support growth management, such as planning and development requirements and guidelines. Official Plan policies on climate change will be coordinated amongst all long-range municipal plans, including land use, transportation, infrastructure, and greenspace and parks master plans, as well as programs that guide the planning and management of City assets such as comprehensive asset management, long range financial plan and capital planning requirements to ensure a strategic, harmonized approach. The OP will be informed by the Climate Change Master Plan (expected in December 2019) which will set direction for both greenhouse gas emission reductions and climate resiliency. The City will need to continue to work with provincial and federal governments to ensure the Building Code and other regulations provide adequate climate protection.

### Preliminary Policy Direction

Changes to the Official Plan will provide direction for the City to mitigate extreme heat, reduce the impacts of flooding, and build resiliency of our communities, infrastructure and natural environment to adapt to a warmer city with more variable precipitation and extreme weather events. Climate resiliency will be integrated into all policy considerations in the Official Plan, including public health, urban design, transportation, parks and public realm, grey and green infrastructure, and natural heritage. Policy directions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build a more resilient natural environment are covered under the Energy and Natural Heritage sections.

The Official Plan and other City documents will provide new and strengthened policy direction to:



**1. Reduce the impacts of extreme heat and reduce the urban heat island effect by:**

- Adding extreme heat as a new public health and safety hazard and directing the use of heat maps and mapping of disadvantaged populations to direct interventions where they are most needed and to monitor progress.
- Retaining and planting large caliper shade trees along streets, in public areas and on private property, in recognition of the health benefits and environmental services provided by trees, in addition to their aesthetic value.
- Clarifying how tree canopy targets are met in parks and across neighbourhoods, and how to provide cost-effective shade features in parks and the public realm to provide heat relief and encourage safe, outdoor recreation.
- Creating shaded homes, routes (sidewalks, bike lanes, paths) and connections (bus stops).
- Installing cool (reflective) or green roofs, reflective materials in parking lots and other materials that reduce the heat island (e.g. playing fields in parks).

**2. Further reduce flood risks and their impacts by:**

- Considering projected rainfall patterns and cumulative growth impacts in policies and procedures for stormwater and flood risk management.
- Identifying regulatory floodplains prior to approval of land use plans (e.g. Community Design Plans, Secondary Plan).
- Enhancing flood proofing requirements for new or re-development in areas at risk of riverine flooding during extreme events beyond the regulatory event.
- Introducing new flood-proofing requirements for re-development in existing areas prone to urban flooding (e.g. backwater valves, building elevation).
- Clarifying requirements for reduced or no new net impact on stormwater runoff from new and re-development (including individual lots), as specified in Retrofit Studies, Master Drainage Plans or other relevant studies or guidelines.



### **3. Build more resilient homes, buildings and communities by:**

- Requiring an assessment of climate resilient design as part of new Secondary Plans and Community Design Plans (whether undertaken by the city or others).
- Including requirements for climate resilient design in a new high-performance development standard to enhance energy conservation, climate adaptation, and health protection. These standards would be part of the review and approval of new proposed development Plans of Subdivision, Zoning By-law Amendments and Site Plan Control applications.
- Climate resilient design includes measures to reduce the risks of flooding (e.g. backwater valves, back-up power for sump pumps, prohibition of reverse-sloped driveways), wind damage (e.g. roofing and hurricane straps), power outages (e.g. emergency power), and extreme heat (e.g. shading, reflective materials, air cooling).
- Ensuring consistency with capital planning requirements for City facilities.
- Exploring mechanisms such as incentives to support the retrofit of existing buildings to build climate resiliency.

### **4. Improve infrastructure resilience by:**

- Ensuring consistency across the OP, Master Plans and other long-range plans to integrate future climate conditions in infrastructure standards, asset management planning, and capital project design.
- Protecting and managing green infrastructure as City assets (natural and constructed features) in light of the climate resilience services they provide.
- Requiring the use of low impact development stormwater management features to complement traditional grey infrastructure.
- Considering future climate conditions in subwatershed management plans, environmental management plans, and other environmental plans.

### **5. Improve local resilience to the global impacts of climate change by:**

- Strengthening local food security and reducing the impacts of fluctuating food availability or price by enabling food to be easily produced, processed and distributed across the City.
- Reducing the impacts of fluctuating energy availability or price by enabling local energy generation and storage (see Energy policy directions).



## 12. Parks and Recreation [Click to GO BACK TO INDEX](#)

### Background and Rationale

Parks and recreation facilities are a major factor contributing to a neighbourhood's quality of life. A significant majority of respondents to the Official Plan discussion papers said walking and biking to parks and greenspace was very important.

- Parks and recreation facilities are the places that people go to learn important life skills, to get healthy and stay fit. Nine in ten Ottawa adults consider it important for a neighbourhood to have public and open spaces, such as playgrounds, parks, plazas, patios, street corners with places to sit, and other areas that create a place for people to gather.
- Parks and recreation facilities provide places for health that are affordable and accessible by persons of all ages and abilities. Children with a park playground located within 1 km of their home were five times more likely to have healthy weights. Conversely, a shortage of green space within urban environments has been linked to feelings of loneliness and lack of social support. In statistical terms, the relationship between avoiding loneliness and living near a park was four times greater than the relationship between avoiding loneliness and having children
- Access to parks and recreation opportunities has been strongly linked to reduction in crime and to reduced juvenile delinquency. A recent study that looked at 300 cities found that green space was associated with lower risk of crime. Burglaries, larcenies, auto theft and armed robbery were also less common in greener neighbourhoods in nearly all the cities studied.
- Quality park spaces and recreation services are cited as one of the top reasons that businesses cite in relocation decisions.

A larger older adult population will influence shifts in policy and spending to reflect the types of parks and recreation needed for older adults. For example, demand may shift from playgrounds to seating and pickleball.

The recommended growth management strategy of the new Official Plan involves achieving at least 60% of new growth through intensification. Higher density and mixed uses will attract all ages to the downtown and inner urban area. Once people choose more urban type living, what will keep them there as they go through the family stages of life? Multi-family units may lack a backyard to play in—and that's why investing in public park space is crucial for attracting and keeping families. Our urban and community design must accommodate the public service facilities we wish to have, including active recreation.

**Issues with Implementation and Changes to Planning Act:** New parks are dedicated to the City through development or rarely purchased by the City. Upcoming changes to the *Planning Act* are expected to make it more challenging to secure parkland because the Community Benefits requirements will share the allocation for parks with libraries, daycare and other soft services.





The current Official Plan lacks policy direction to determine how to use the parkland entitlement provided under the *Planning Act* based on context. For example, it includes a citywide target for parkland acquisition of at least 2 hectares of park and leisure land per 1,000 population or approximately 8 per cent to 10 per cent of developable land. A citywide target does not fully address context and the new Official Plan will provide direction on park policy for downtown, inner urban, outer urban and rural areas.

The parkland and recreation amenities in each neighbourhood vary across the city based on when they were developed and the type of parkland requirements that were in place at that time. For example, the downtown and inner urban area have less parkland than areas developed since the 1960s. The downtown and inner urban areas do have access to federally-owned greenspace although it is not generally available for recreation.

Past planning decisions and incentives to encourage growth have had an effect. In inner urban wards, development charges are used to construct parks if parkland is secured. Development charges and parkland dedication/cash in lieu of parkland were waived for residential developments in the downtown from 1994 to 2011. In 2011, the City began collecting cash-in-lieu of parkland in inner urban wards but the practice to not acquire public land for parks remained until 2015. The current approach in high-density areas is site-by-site, directing staff to secure urban parkettes/plazas from large development sites and take cash-in-lieu instead of parkland on smaller development sites. The City can include policies in the new Official Plan to acquire new parks and recreation spaces where they are needed in inner urban areas and provide new amenities in existing parks where population is increasing through intensification.

The urban parkette/plaza typology is typically focused on providing seating areas. The current Official Plan does not provide guidance on specific neighbourhood needs. While some Community Design Plans, Secondary Plans and site-specific policies identify preferred locations for new parks, they do not provide guidance on recreation amenities needs or gaps (playgrounds, basketball, community centres etc.).

The context is different in suburban areas and villages, where in recent years, the policy of accepting a combination of both land and cash-on-lieu of parkland has challenged the City's ability to acquire larger parks. Current practice over the last 5 years has demonstrated a shrinking of individual park sizes overall. The annual average was 11 new parks per year, at an average size of 1.3 hectares. This trend has led to a demonstratable shortage of active recreation opportunities that require a larger parcel. For example, because of smaller parcel sizes the City can only typically develop intermediate or mini soccer fields instead of full-size. In general, soccer leagues switch to full-size fields when children are 12 years old.



## Preliminary Policy Direction

### **1. Introduce policies to promote equitable access to recreational experiences for all residents**

- Provide policy direction on parks that fit downtown, inner urban, outer urban and rural context.
- All communities need active recreation, parks and facilities with sport fields, playgrounds and splash pads, etc. as well as community centres and recreation complexes.
- Review and update whether changes are required to the City's parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu policies. For example, direct all institutional uses such as schools, universities, colleges to contribute and provide parkland dedication or cash-in-lieu of parkland.
- New development should prioritize on-site parkland over cash-in-lieu of parkland.
- Include policies on active recreation space and facilities in Official Plan, secondary plans, community design plans and site-specific policies. Community Design Plans, Secondary Plans and site-specific policies identify preferred locations for new parks and provide guidance on active recreation amenities needed. Set Community Benefit requirements for both parkland and recreation amenities.
- When approving new area plans for large parcels of land and the provision of parks in areas involving a number of landowners, the City may require an agreement among all the landowners that ensures the timely conveyance of parkland or improvements in existing parks and within the public realm.
- The City will work with the private sector and other interested parties to investigate means to retain properties for parks and active recreation in the vicinity of nodes and corridors.
- Identify corridors for new linear greenspaces and parks. This will involve reworking processes and developing a common understanding of how these spaces get funded, built and maintained among Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development, Transportation Services, Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services, Public Works and Environmental Services.
- Establish minimum standards to avoid shadow impacts from adjacent development and ensure a minimum number of hours of sunlight in parks and protect for sky views.

### **2. Provide parks and space for recreation in the downtown and inner urban areas where populations are growing and higher-density communities are expected**

- Develop annexes that identify neighbourhood needs in areas undergoing intensification.
- Include the policy direction in the Official Plan that, as first preference, 10% of land be acquired for public parkland for development sites of over 4,000 m<sup>2</sup>.
- Include new approaches: Pursue opportunities to use underutilized spaces such as redundant vehicular lanes, leftover road segments and unconventional spaces.
- Partnerships with the National Capital Commission and school boards should also be explored for programming and using publicly owned greenspace.
- Provide direction on responsibilities of private development, for example, how public realm, private amenity space requirements and privately-owned public spaces (POPS) complement public parks.



- Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services will develop an Urban Parks Strategy and Parks Master Plan that will guide parks and recreation facilities in different parts of the city in alignment with Official Plan policies.
  - District parks in an urban context, such as recreation at Lansdowne Park, have their own characteristics. They are visited by tourists as well as residents, must be built to withstand high impact and require expensive recreation amenities and event/festival spaces.
- 2. For outer urban and greenfield communities, priority should be given to larger park properties that offer the widest range of activity spaces, such as sports fields.**
  - 3. Incorporate the principles of “Building Better and Smarter Suburbs” including the combination of stormwater facilities, schools and parks.**
  - 4. Rural Development will contribute to village parks and recreation facilities**
    - In the rural area new parks and recreation facilities will be located in villages. When new developments in villages are higher density subdivisions the policy direction should require the same park acquisition rates and standards as similar developments in the outer urban area. Development outside of village boundaries should contribute towards village parks and recreation facilities.
  - 5. Include Housing in More City Facilities, and Include More City Facilities in Mixed-Use Buildings**
    - Currently, City-owned facilities and land uses are identified for single use (e.g. recreation facilities, OC Transpo facilities, libraries). The new Official Plan will include policy direction that requires the inclusion of housing when new facilities are being constructed, with an emphasis on affordable housing. Further, the new Official Plan will include policy direction that requires the City to consider options for public municipal facilities to be part of mixed-use private development (e.g. podiums of condominium developments).

Considerations include:

- Evaluating the applicability for all City assets including office/administration, work yards, fire stations, police stations, etc. Consider opportunities for developing partnership/co-location opportunities with City Departments, agencies and boards and community-based organizations.
- There should be no loss of dedicated recreation amenities or dedicated land for parks.
- Explore criteria for the inclusion of housing based on programming components for various facility sizes within the Recreation Facility Infrastructure Standards and Strategy.
- Identify growth-related funding to expand and renew existing facilities, as well as to develop new facilities. Current cost projections for recreation facilities are based on efficiency of construction of single purpose buildings. Adding other uses such as affordable housing will increase costs. These costs may be offset by savings on land purchases.



## 13. Culture

### Background and Rationale

A liveable city is based on the understanding that places exist for social and creative activities by all residents. These cultural spaces are necessary locally for the City to encourage expression, better health and interaction.

The importance of culture is that it is directly related to quality of life and a sense of well-being. A vibrant culture is evidence of a healthy, active and creative city – one that promotes a sense of identity and inclusiveness and fosters personal and cognitive growth. Benefits of culture are also reflected in greater social cohesion and a healthy and growing creative economy. A vibrant culture also attracts and retains talent, new business and tourism to a place and increases the city's global profile. In this regard cultural planning and the identification and development of cultural assets offers a way to improve quality of life, liveability and grow and diversify the economy.

Cultural planning in the Official Plan is currently limited to a few, relatively minor considerations. These considerations include general language supporting cultural vitality and diversity and the Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture. The effect of this support is largely not tangible – there are no specific policies in the plan that address culture as a guide for the review of new plans and developments.

Nevertheless, cultural planning support is an emerging consideration in Ottawa as evidenced through the ongoing support of cultural institutions, public art programs and the timely development of a new 10-year Culture Plan for the city. What is needed are the inclusion of cultural policies in the Official Plan that directly address the need for new development to foster and support a sense of identity and belonging and to promote access, equity and inclusion. This is particularly significant for Indigenous (Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation, First Nations, Inuit and Métis) people as it is for new immigrant residents and communities. For culture to become a tangible consideration for planning of new buildings, spaces and neighbourhoods takes more than the support of the Action plan. What is needed is for the Official Plan to address three specific needs.

The first is based on the understanding that cultural development requires spaces and places for culture to live, to grow, to innovate and preserve an authentic and unique identity for Ottawa as a cultural capital. What is needed are spaces and places for culture to take place. Cultural uses and industries should be permitted almost anywhere in the City. Sports, cultural and entrepreneurial activities can intentionally overlap spatially. There is also a need to acknowledge the importance of urban greenspace and natural areas to the health and vitality of Indigenous culture and heritage.

The second need is for a more and active public art policy and program in the Official Plan. Public art is an important element of placemaking. It has the power to define a community and create a unique sense of place. It can enhance the urban fabric of a community by creating landmarks, reflect local culture as well as global influences, and also contribute to social and economic vibrancy. A plan for public art should be a required in all capital projects as well as in new community plans and in prominent developments.



The final need is for the city to provide policies that identify and encourage the support and maintenance of cultural assets and supports all related efforts to develop and strengthen culture as an economic development generator, including explicit support of nightlife and the night-time economy. In particular, documentation and support of cultural assets needs to be evaluated in applications for new development. New development and redevelopment should also include provisions for new cultural assets including: the adaptive reuse of brownfields, development of vacant and/or underutilized sites; and in the expansion or conversion of existing buildings; and mixed-use developments.

There is a further link to affordable housing as part of a robust package of policies that support arts and culture. Artists require affordable housing as much as affordable creation, production and presentation or performance spaces.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

Ottawa is built on unceded Algonquin Anishinabe territory. The peoples of the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation have lived on this territory for millennia. Their culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this place. We honour the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation and all First Nations, Inuit and Métis elders, people and communities.

The largest and most important centre of Franco-Ontarian culture and a destination of choice for immigrants the world over, Ottawa is home to diverse peoples and communities.

The cultural landscape in Ottawa comprises many vibrant spaces, places, practices and people including:

- important Indigenous traditional knowledge, cultural practices, ceremonies, rites, and landscapes;
- a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Rideau Canal);
- major, national cultural institutions, and rich historic-archaeological sites;
- vital neighbourhoods and rural villages inclusive of many living cultures;
- a local arts and heritage scene that reflects the vitality of Ottawa communities in two official languages and myriad mother tongues;
- exceptional home-grown festivals, fairs and gatherings;
- international award-winning artists in all disciplines;
- emerging cultural and creative industries;
- vibrant public art and engaging street culture; and
- a thriving local food and culinary scene.

It is recommended that we provide new policies throughout the Plan that recognize that a liveable city fosters and supports cultural expression, identity and social connection. The Official Plan's Culture



section will support working towards reconciliation, and support the development of Ottawa as an international cultural capital. Policies that support a diversity of cultural industries and cultural offerings will be included in the plan. Specific directions will include:

- 1. Include a new Culture subsection in the Plan**
- 2. Throughout the plan (and across all transect areas), include new policies directed towards ensuring the consideration of public art and cultural expression, identity and social connection. Particularly at nodes, corridors, and in neighbourhood and community level plans.**
- 3. Recognize neighbourhood or place history and identity as part of the guidance to be provided for new cultural interventions, through development or redevelopment.**
- 4. A new requirement that significant private developments such as new tall buildings and in developments that have public and semi-public spaces provide a plan for, or contribution to, public art and cultural space.**
- 5. Provide direction that public art/cultural space/commemoration of lost heritage be a necessary component of new capital and infrastructure project plans.**
- 6. A new requirement for planning justifications and environmental assessments to document and address cultural assets**
- 7. Review, update, and develop a database of cultural assets**
- 8. Analyse and assess patterns of cultural land use across spatial scales (site, neighbourhood, citywide) to inform integrated policy and design directions**
- 9. Provide policy that strongly supports cultural industries and ecosystems in existing development**
- 10. Include new provisions that encourage sport and places for sports and cultural activities, as well as encouraging the connection between sport and cultural land uses.**
- 11. Introduce policies to promote equitable access to cultural experiences for all residents by**
  - developing cultural facilities that celebrate the best of city living**
  - celebrating multiculturalism and supporting cultural diversity**
  - actively promoting arts, heritage and culture**
- 12. Recognize major and minor league sports teams as part of the city's cultural identity, and provide direction in that regard to the planning of their facilities and the districts around such facilities**
- 13. Create and maintain respectful relationships with Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples living and working in Ottawa, and work collaboratively with them to develop planning processes that reflect their interests and circumstances**



- 14. Ensure groups at risk of exclusion are included, participate and contribute in public engagement processes and that their input is taken into account in order to reduce systemic barriers and discrimination**
  
- 15. Strengthen connections between the Official Plan and the City's cultural areas of importance through the designation of special districts**

## 14. Urban Design, Cultural Heritage

### Background and Rationale

Ottawa is too important a city to be bland. The focus that needs to be placed on urban design and built heritage should be commensurate with our role as the nation's capital and as an aspiring global city that has an identity, a presence and a personality that can be instantly recognized and is unique to us. A number of design-related considerations flow from this, as follows.

#### Views and skyline

The current Official Plan protects views to and from the Parliament Buildings, and these protections will remain. The City may also wish to identify, in the future, other important views that may also warrant protection. It should take a more deliberate approach to skyline sculpting so that the distant silhouette of the city is not generic, but instantly recognizable.

#### Cultural Heritage

The Official Plan has long recognized the importance of a comprehensive heritage program as a crucial aspect of city building. Cultural heritage resources define many of the City's most unique, attractive and liveable neighbourhoods. There is a need to ensure that the OP contains strong protection for cultural heritage resources through a robust heritage program that provides for designation, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage resources.

#### Design Priority Areas

The current Official Plan provides policy direction for Design Priority Areas, as a means to apply a greater threshold of urban design review for important areas of the City. This review has been very successful and the policy should be strengthened to apply to additional areas to ensure the City is achieving the highest degree of urban design. However, there is no differentiation between areas whose design importance is at the national/international scale, the city/metropolitan scale, or the neighbourhood scale.



### **Site Plan Control**

The current Official Plan includes direction to require Site Plan Control in certain circumstances. Site Plan Control remains a key urban design tool to review and comment on the site and design of buildings throughout the City. A review of the thresholds and requirements is needed in order to ensure this important tool is functioning to produce great urban design.

### **Compatibility**

The current Official Plan policies for urban design have a large focus on built form compatibility for intensification. With the encouragement for greater intensification and the recognition that some areas of the city, particularly the nodes and corridors identified in the new OP, are changing, there needs to be a broadening of efforts to also include improvements to public realm and the assurance of livability in private spaces. This will be important for the successful intensification of nodes and corridors that will contribute to a compact built form of the city, and to sustain the evolution into more walkable, 15-minute neighborhoods of its urban communities.

### **High Impact City Building Projects**

The current Official Plan lacks any discussion or policy guidance on High-Impact-City Building Projects. These are projects that are globally recognized and are important to the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of our economy. The type and scale of these projects are rare and exceptional opportunities that elevate the City and its global visibility, and help it be a more attractive and distinctive destination for business, tourists and investment. High Impact City Building projects often include cultural heritage resources and thus provide opportunities to celebrate the City's rich architectural heritage. A discussion is needed on how the City can support and encourage these types of projects. This directive is supports Topic 3, Economic Development, as they typically are leveraged as economic generators.

### **Rural Villages and Hamlets**

Ottawa is comprised of over 26 Villages and Hamlets, each with their own defining character and cultural heritage. Many of these rural communities are thriving with steady growth in residential and commercial activity, while others may be in decline due to lack of investment and opportunity.





## Preliminary Policy Directions

The new policy directions for urban design and public realm will accomplish a variety of objectives in order to improve our sophistication in urban and community design. The new policy directions will include:

### 1. **New policies will recognize the role of clusters of tall buildings on the skyline of the city.**

- The city's evolving skyline and its geographic context will be captured in a more holistic way to encompass important views, perspectives, entranceways, silhouette construction and framing of vistas. These are matters that will continue to form part of our urban design policies, however its level of sophistication will be strengthened to be on par with those of other world capitals as views contribute greatly to city image.

### 2. **Strengthen the protection and conservation of Ottawa's diverse cultural heritage resources**

- Strengthen the protection and conservation of cultural heritage resources across the City through the designation and listing of individual cultural heritage resources and the designation of heritage conservation districts under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- Rural inhabitants, diverse communities and Indigenous people are underrepresented in the City's heritage designation program. Efforts will be made to ensure that properties, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources associated with the history and culture of these groups are honoured, celebrated and protected.
- Encourage the adaptive re-use of designated heritage buildings to ensure their ongoing role in the urban fabric through collaborative planning processes with the City's development review planners and others.
- Provide financial and other incentives to assist property owners in the conservation of their properties.
- Develop and implement a Heritage Management Plan that supports the Official Plan's overall policy directions and growth management strategy. The Heritage Management Plan will be a comprehensive document outlining strategies for the identification, conservation and management of the city's cultural heritage resources, including all properties on the Heritage Register, and unidentified and potential heritage properties. The Heritage Management Plan will also include policies regarding development adjacent to Rideau Canal and Central Experimental Farm National Historic Sites; requirements for Cultural Heritage Impact Statements and other matters crucial to the wise management of the City's heritage.
- The Heritage Management Plan will provide direction regarding the management of the dual objectives of preservation and conservation of the City's cultural heritage and the intensification and ongoing regeneration of the existing built-up area.



- Continue to use all available tools under the Ontario Heritage Act to identify and protect properties and landscapes that are important in creating a sense of place and defining Ottawa and its neighbourhoods and villages.
- Address the importance of federal heritage resources in the City's urban fabric and reflect this role in the city's planning documents.

### **3. Refine Design Priority Areas**

- The current Official Plan identifies Design Priority Areas as the City's intensification target areas, as well as Village Cores. The emphasis on these will be maintained.
- Special attention is required for additional important areas of our City that have a significant influence on the identity and character of the City. Areas such as the scenic routes, major waterways, and important historic, cultural and tourist destinations including the rural cultural landscape, will be evaluated for their inclusion.
- The Design Priority Areas will also be analyzed to identify the different contexts and objectives for the areas. Currently all the areas are treated the same, however the City has a number of distinct urban and rural contexts that require a differentiation in objectives and desired outcomes.

### **4. Provide enabling policies and strategic directions in the Official Plan to recognize, encourage, and facilitate the delivery of high impact city-building projects across the city as distinct types of projects that require their own framework**

- New Official Plan policies will provide direction that explains what these projects are and what they aren't, boost creativity in design rather than conformity to the rules while not jeopardizing the City's overall approach when dealing with growth and change.

### **5. Provide policies that strengthen the City's urban design toolkit, including new high-level direction for:**

- New policies to enhance both built form and public realm, including responsibilities of private development and guidance for municipal capital investment. Strengthening the Building Better Infill program and the Building Better and Smarter Suburbs program.
- The City's Tree Infill Bylaw needs to be strengthened to ensure that public realm trees are protected.
- The City's Guidelines for certain forms of housing: high-rise; mid-rise and low-rise are still relevant and up-to-date.



## 15a. A New Planning Framework: The Transect

Previous Official Plans identified a boundary dividing the City into an urban and a rural area, with very general policy direction for each. However, that binary urban/rural divide made no policy distinction between e.g. highly urbanized and dense areas in the downtown, and low-density suburban areas farther out. As a result, a new subdivision in e.g. Kanata or Barrhaven had, in principle, the same planning guidance as a streetcar suburb such as Hintonburg or a nineteenth century downtown neighbourhood like Centretown.

The “Transect” framework will be a more refined version of the existing urban vs. rural divide. The Transect model continues to recognize the rural area but divides the urban area into a finer gradation that distinguishes the differences between old, dense central areas and new, less dense suburban areas, and identifies the Greenbelt as its own distinct area. The result is a gradation of five concentric rings, each describing a typology of built environment that either already exist or can be expected to start to emerge during the life of this Plan. This in turn allows policies to be more accurately tailored to an area’s context, age and function in the City.

**These five “transect bands”, in concentric order of centrality, urbanity and intensity, will be mapped on Schedule A of the new Official Plan. They are:**

- Downtown Core
- Inner Urban Area;
- Outer Urban Area;
- Rural Area; and
- Greenbelt

**These five bands or typologies are each based on the intersection of three characteristics:**

- a) Density, which refers to the intensiveness of human use and occupation of the land, and includes matters such as height, massing, lot coverage of buildings and lots;
- b) Integration of land use, which refers to the degree, manner and grain at which different land uses are expected or allowed to be mixed; and
- c) Mode-specific transportation levels of service, which refers to the degree to which walking, cycling, public transit and private automobiles are encouraged, discouraged and prioritized for trips within the transect band and between transect bands.



**Thus, in this framework:**

- The Downtown Core is the most urban policy area; it is the hub of the City-wide rapid-transit system, where walking, cycling and transit are paramount, where densities are highest, and where land uses are most finely mixed
- The Inner Urban Area encompasses the band of dense, walkable and transit-supportive form of older urban neighbourhoods surrounding Downtown and includes areas on which to expand this function into the earliest post-WW2 suburbs (effectively, enlarging the geographic area of the city in which residents can viably and reasonably live without a car).
- The Outer Urban Area applies to two contexts:
  - First, to established suburban areas that are too recent to expect significant change over the life of this Plan, and where land uses are likely to remain separated for the foreseeable future, thereby maintaining the practical need for automobile travel (without minimizing the role of transit for long-distance trips to major destinations, or the role of walking and cycling for short local trips);
  - Second, new greenfield areas to which policy direction can be provided to implement the findings of *Building Better and Smarter Suburbs* (BBSS), and for which transit and active transport mode share targets can form part of the initial assumptions in order to determine the form of development for those areas as new, complete 15-minute neighbourhoods.
- The Rural Area is treated substantially the same as it is currently, with growth mostly directed to villages, and where walking and cycling are marginal options outside of Villages; and
- The Greenbelt, which geographically actually bisects the Outer Urban Area, but is unique due to its legislated purpose as defined by higher levels of government and warrants its own treatment in municipal policy.

The five-band Transect is just part of the proposed policy geography. Just as the old Official Plan went on to divide the urban and rural areas into policy areas known as “land use designations,” so will the Transect model recognize designations rooted in urban form and function. Those will be mapped on the new B-series of schedules.

These designations are outlined in Topic #15b (Urban Designations), #15c (Rural Designations) and #15d (Special Districts).



## 15b. Urban Designations

The current Official Plan divides the urban area into so-called “land use designations,” applying different planning guidance to each designation. This use-based approach is rooted in a mid-twentieth-century planning model where the main goal was the separation of land uses, such as keeping factories away from homes and houses away from apartments.

Today’s planning goals and priorities aim to create complete, well-integrated communities. But while City policies have evolved towards these goals, they continue to be hampered by the old use-based framework. It is becoming much more difficult to reconcile our current city-building goals with the now-obsolete planning legacy of land-use separation.

Accordingly, the new Official Plan will organize policies around *functional designations*: kinds or typologies of urban environment that are defined primarily, not by permitted land uses, but rather by the intended *form and function* of that environment.

The proposed framework divides the three urban Transect bands (Downtown, Inner Urban and Outer Urban) into six designations (whose names may change when finalized) to reflect the actual and planned structure of the city. These will constitute the mapping basis for the new B-series of Schedules. There will be several such schedules to show a greater amount of mapping detail. Hence, the Downtown Core will be Schedule B1, the Inner Urban West will be Schedule B2, etc.

The designations for these Schedules are as follows:

**Nodes** are important areas of the city defined by the function of centrality they play either at the scale of the city, of a large community, or of several neighbourhoods (which typically involves a concentration of jobs and services and a close walking distance from a rapid-transit station). They are planned to support a high level of service for sustainable transportation modes (transit, walking and cycling) as well as a higher density and mixedness of land use than surrounding or abutting Neighbourhoods. Many proposed Nodes coincide with what the current Official Plan defines as Mixed-use Centres and Town Centers as well as the Central Area. Where Nodes also correspond to major transit station areas for which the City has specific goals, the new Official Plan may add a new “Protected Major Transit Station Area” overlay as part of a policy framework that will encourage the provision of housing, notably affordable housing, at key locations, and to also take advantage of new legislative tools for Inclusionary Zoning.

**Corridors** are, like Nodes, planned for an emphasis on sustainable transportation modes and for a higher density and mixedness of land use than surrounding or abutting Neighbourhoods. Unlike Nodes, which are points centred on rapid-transit stations, Corridors are linear and comprise the lands abutting certain major streets. Corridors will include the current Official Plan’s Traditional and Arterial Mainstreets, but will also include neighbourhood-level minor corridors, and other important streets where higher densities and transit service exist or can be directed.



Both Nodes and Corridors are linked to the notion of 15-minute **neighbourhoods**: they serve local needs as much as they serve city-wide functions. Even the major nodes and corridors serve local needs.

**Neighbourhoods** are contiguous urban areas that are planned for ongoing gradual, integrated, sustainable and internally compatible development. While most neighbourhoods have a residential focus, some, such as office parks, may have a commercial or employment focus. Most of what the current Official Plan calls General Urban Area will become one of several kinds of Neighbourhood. To move towards the goal of 15-minute neighbourhoods, the urban area is seen as an integrated whole in which there are enough corridors and nodes to be within a 15-minute walk (or active transportation ride) to a corridor or node so that people's daily necessities are always close to their place of residence.

**Major Urban Greenspaces** are areas that form part of, and are integrated into, their urban communities and feature major conservation or public open space, parks and recreation amenities and provide access to city's waterways. They provide access to major green space to residents.

**Industrial Areas** are areas reserved for that subset of industrial and/or employment uses that carry an inherent and unacceptable risk of nuisance or hazard to residential uses, and on that basis are to be confined to designated areas and prohibit residential and other sensitive uses. Some of the current Employment Areas would be designated as Industrial Areas. Industrial Area is the only proposed designation that is rooted in land use. This recognizes the real conflicts between heavy industry and other uses that was the impetus a century ago for separating land uses (but recognizes that the systematic separation of all uses, as done throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is not desirable).

**Special Districts** are areas that define the city's image because of their historic importance, cultural value, status as major tourist destinations, and/or their key role as economic generators. They are specifically identified as being distinct enough in existing and planned function from the visions of other designations to warrant unique planning treatment to increase or protect the quality of place and increase economic growth of the region/city.

The boundaries of the new designations will coincide with some of the old ones. As mentioned before, City policy has been evolving in this direction for years, and so in many respects the new geography simply formalizes what has been going on for some time now. At the same time, by making this focus explicit, the Official Plan will be able to treat some areas (notably the General Urban Area) in a more appropriate and detailed way than is possible under the current framework.

### **How does the Transect relate to these designations?**

Together with the Transect bands outlined in Topic 14a, these six designations allow a coherent and systematic approach to land policy. For instance, Nodes will generally be planned for higher densities than their surrounding areas; but a Node located in the Downtown Core would be expected to have higher densities than one located in the Outer Urban Area. (Again, this approach is already hinted at in



the current framework where inner-urban Mixed-use Centres have slightly different policies than suburban Town Centres.)

The intersection of these function-based designations with their location along the transect will allow for coherent policy and expectations for any given site. The resulting policy direction takes into account both its position on the continuum from highly urban to highly rural, as well as a given area's function within the city.

### Guiding Evolution

Two overlays will apply to the underlying urban designations of Node, Corridor and Neighbourhood, to allow the Official Plan to provide guidance to areas in which a policy framework is needed to ensure an evolution that corresponds to the context and needs of the various areas of the city.

- **No overlay** will apply to nodes, corridors and neighbourhoods in which development and redevelopment is seen as continuing to be within the existing context. This does not preclude the ability to develop various types of dwellings. Rather, the policy will focus on building form. A Downtown Neighbourhood, for example, would continue to develop with urban-type building and site typologies. An Outer Urban Corridor would continue to develop with suburban-type building and site typologies. Established neighbourhoods in the Outer Urban area that are too new to change during the life of the Plan would also have no overlay, and the policy would then call for them to continue to develop with suburban typologies.
- **The “Evolving” overlay** will apply to nodes, corridors and neighbourhoods in which a gentle evolution from suburban to urban is contemplated within the life of this Plan. Under this overlay, policy direction would be given to implement zoning that will permit the development of urban-type buildings, or hybrid buildings that combine attributes of the suburban context and attributes of urbanity.
- **The “Transitioning” overlay** will apply to nodes, corridors and neighbourhoods where the City has specific goals to achieve full urbanity at the onset of development, without the intermediary stage of suburban-type building and site typologies. Examples of Transitioning Nodes may be the Hurdman Station Area, or the Riverside South Community Core, or new greenfield neighbourhoods where concurrent transit investment makes them logical places to be developed as fully urban from inception.



## 15c. Rural Designations

The current Official Plan identifies a set of rural land use designations in its Schedule A – Rural Policy Plan. These designations remain relevant for the next Official Plan as they appropriately describe the contexts of what they designate. The new Official Plan places focus on function, typologies, the characteristics of environments, and how these function in nature rather than by permitted land uses. By this, the existing designations are fitting of the whole of the rural area where they apply.

A few modifications of this approach are needed in order to be consistent with the language of urban designations where similar functions are served. The following designations recognize the diversity of functions that the rural area provides for the City, highlighting their importance to our economy, our environment, and our sense of community.

The following are identified as the designations that will be nested under the Rural Policy Area (Transect Band):

**Agricultural Resource Area** designates lands solely for the production of crops and raising of livestock, including on-farm diversified uses, on the basis of their identification as Prime Agriculture through the Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) evaluation system. This designation may also include lands surrounding prime agricultural lands in order to ensure the protection of the AG lands recognizing the whole agricultural system.

**Major Rural facility** – are areas identified for specific uses with unique considerations such as disposal facilities, Carp Airport, museums, fairgrounds and amusement centres. The existing Schedule A – Rural Policy Plan identifies these areas by a singular black dot and it may be more appropriate to map the limits to provide certainty over the locations and also to appropriately buffer from adjacent designations.

**Major Rural Greenspace** - large parks or green corridors forming part of the Greenspace Network, typically in public ownership, used primarily for sport and leisure activities.

**Mineral Resource Area** – lands containing deposits of aggregates, namely Sand, Gravel and Bedrock. These areas may be existing extraction operations or reserves from which to extract in the future. The current practice is to rehabilitate lands depleted of their resources back to the underlying designation, however, designating the lands as ‘mineral resource’ does not allow for adequate representation of what the underlying designation should be. For this reason, it may be more appropriate to convert this designation into an overlay. A study of Mineral Resources is currently underway, independent of the OP review, and the overlay approach will be considered as part of that study. The draft of the new Official Plan will retain Mineral Resource Area as a full-fledged designation.

**Rural Countryside** – rural lands permitting a range of uses including agriculture, residential, and commercial activity, limited in size and scope, and appropriately located. This designation would replace the currently-named ‘General Rural’ designation.

**Rural Industrial Area** – These lands are identified by their strategic locations favourable to the efficiency of the movement of goods, typically highway interchanges. While not limited solely to





distribution and warehousing, the areas are also designated such that they are separated from sensitive uses and appropriately buffered. This designation will replace the currently-named as 'Rural Employment Area'.

**Village** – Settlement areas, not including rural country lot subdivisions, with traditional functions of rural centrality, supportive of a variety of uses including residential, commercial, and institutional. Villages are neighbourhoods with unique characteristics among them and as such have their own needs and vision for their communities. A consideration for the approach on how to distinguish villages by size or service levels will be made, as in the current Official Plan, in order to clarify permitted uses and direct future growth, particularly intensified residential development.

It may be an option to apply the “Evolving” and “Transitioning” overlays to Villages depending on the objectives that the City might wish to pursue.

## 15d. Special Districts

Special Districts will be a new policy tool for Ottawa. They are areas that define the city's image because of their historic importance, cultural value, status as major tourist destinations, and/or their key role as economic generators. They are specifically identified as being distinct enough in existing and planned function from the visions of other designations to warrant unique planning treatment to increase or protect the quality of place and contribute to the economic growth of the city and region.

**Issues with Current OP:** The current Official Plan (OP) identifies the City's intensification target areas as Design Priority Areas. However, there is no differentiation between areas whose design importance is at the national/international scale, the city/metropolitan scale, or the neighbourhood scale. Special attention is required for important areas of our city that have a significant influence on its identity and character.

### Implementation:

- Designate special districts on the new B-series of Schedules of the new Official Plan.
- Create a hierarchy of design priority areas that will recognize districts with cultural or economic significance of City-wide importance. Focus is on urban design (arts, heritage, contemporary interpretation for redeveloping sites, public realm) and community design (mix of uses, street design) with specific objectives for each area. Requirement for Urban Design Review Panel review for applications in these areas.
- Acknowledge our role as capital and how we collaborate with the federal government and recognize the overlapping but consistent approaches in National Capital Commission and other federal planning documents that contribute to the image of the city.
- Develop criteria to evaluate the addition of future special districts.



### **Special district 1: Parliamentary precinct and Confederation Boulevard**

Ottawa is known for its role as a capital city and the federal government's presence. The Parliamentary Precinct is an important place in Canada, with national landmarks visited by dignitaries and tourists from around the world. The OP will recognize the interface and the necessary integration between "Town and Crown" and provide more direction for urban design, public realm in its area of influence. Consideration will also be given to the importance of planning guidance for properties along Confederation Boulevard. The mapping of this Special District should include the Gatineau components of Confederation Boulevard, even though Ottawa's Official Plan policies will not apply there, to provide the complete context of this district as defined by the National Capital Commission.

Policy direction:

- Confirm and update mapping to delineate this District's boundary to closely match federal-level plans and extend it to include city streets leading to the Parliamentary Precinct, in collaboration with the relevant federal agencies.
- Consider whether to include the NCC-designated Confederation Boulevard as an additional special district
- Identify streetscapes and buildings (including federally-owned properties) that have a critical city-image-defining role, and articulate a municipal wish for those to be maintained
- The current formal protection of views of the Parliament Buildings will continue, however new policies could provide for the identification of views that should be protected in the future. Additional policies will recognize the impact of clusters of tall buildings on the skyline of the city.
- Provide the highest amount of urban design and architectural scrutiny, guidance and quality requirements to all development, redevelopment and public realm improvements or interventions

### **Special district 2: Rideau Canal**

The Rideau Canal is a National Historic Site and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Between Hartwell's locks/Dow's Lake and downtown, there is a richness of historical landmarks along its shorelines. The first row of properties fronting on the Canal occupies a special place in Ottawa and policies will provide a process to manage its character.

Policy direction:

- The Heritage Management Plan will include policies regarding development adjacent to the Rideau Canal, requirements for Cultural Heritage Impact Statements and relevant policy in Parks Canada, National Capital Commission plans.



- Delineate boundary, recognize changing character from downtown to more picturesque landscapes and cityscapes along its shorelines near Dow's Lake. Provide design guidance for changes in character as develops, heritage and animation through buildings facing canal.
- Facilitate public access, interface with multi-use pathway and connections to neighbourhoods.

### **Special district 3: Byward Market**

The Byward Market neighbourhood was established in the 1820s as a base for constructing the Rideau Canal. It is now Ottawa's number one tourist attraction with 50,000 visitors per weekend in the summer months and enjoys vibrant 24-hour animation as the best-known nightlife hub in the city. It supports the evolution of the economic, social and cultural activity within the city core. Consideration as a special district is to provide guidance to accommodate change and grow while keeping its strong historical connotations and vibrancy.

Policy direction:

- Provide clear direction on physical form and design in context of heritage and sensitive contemporary interpretation. Reference Uptown Rideau Community Design Plan, Byward Market Public Realm Plan and Recognize Heritage Conservation District.
- Confirm the boundary of Byward Market and its relationship to King Edward Ave./Rideau St. and Daly Ave. (Arts Court and Ottawa Art Gallery)
- Recognize the importance of ByWard Market nightlife to the City's identity, economic and cultural dynamism, and provide direction to achieve successful balance and coexistence between the day- and night-time economies and residents of the neighbourhood.
- Current height control limits and distinctive streets will continue.

### **Special district 4: Kanata North Tech Cluster**

Kanata North is a nationally-significant technology cluster and a major contributor to Ottawa's metropolitan economy. Almost 23,000 tech jobs and 300 companies are based in Kanata North. Its consideration as a special district is to maintain it as a key economic generator over the next 25 years and to increase quality of life through land use planning. Quality of life is cited as one of the top reasons businesses cite in relocation decisions.

Policy direction:

- Refine our strategy for creating jobs. Includes specialized knowledge hubs or economic clusters of uses such as Kanata North Business Park.



- Guide the gradual redevelopment of the district into an area that offers nationally-recognized quality of life in terms of mixed-use, recreational amenities, notably by guiding the redevelopment of sites to have more presence along March Road and creating smaller city blocks.
- Develop high-level policy direction to improve access to transit, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and introduce more flexible zoning.

### **Special district 5: Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International Airport**

The MacDonal-Cartier International Airport is a major employment and travel hub. Each year more than 5 million travelers pass through the airport and more than \$2bn in economic activity takes place in the vicinity. There are also more than 10,000 people employed at the airport and airport-related activities. By 2036 it is estimated that the international airport economic zone will be responsible for more than 16,000 jobs and more than \$3bn in economic output.

The Airport also has a city-image-defining role as one of the busiest and most visible points of entry into the city and metropolitan area. The first impression our city makes on those arriving by air is made there, and on the journey from the airport into the city.

With its abundance of undeveloped lands and improved connectivity through Stage 2 of the LRT the airport zone can become, much like Toronto's Pearson International Airport area is now, a provincially and nationally important employment and economic district. It is also one of the country's few 24-hour airports, a competitive advantage in relation to Toronto and Montreal. There is a need however for a plan to guide land use and economic development in this area.

Policy direction:

- It is intended that the Official Plan will establish the boundaries of a new economic zone centred on the MacDonal-Cartier International Airport. The Plan will include policies guiding the development of a new Secondary Plan for the area. The new Secondary Plan will set out the principles, goals, objectives and policies which will include airport enhancement, servicing, transit-oriented development, business development, natural heritage and the relative balance of employment/mixed uses around the airport.

### **Special district 6: Lansdowne**

One of Canada's marquee urban stadium redevelopments, Lansdowne is a contemporary demonstration of the successful integration of a large professional sports facility within a historic, fine-grained urban environment, and its ability to support the surrounding neighbourhood in beneficial ways that include new parks, performance and event space, retail and restaurants, night-time activity, outdoor markets and new residences and offices, all of which are premised on the significant focus placed on active transportation for major events and for daily use.



Policy direction:

- Continue to work on achieving a better balance between transportation modes within the site, to gradually de-emphasize automobile use and prioritize pedestrians and cyclists
- Manage the evolution of the site's interface with the Rideau Canal in collaboration with Parks Canada and the NCC, and explore new opportunities for animating the canal edge of the site

### **Special District 7: Zibi and the Islands**

The Ottawa River islands between Ottawa and Gatineau are a rare occurrence of a continuous urban fabric across a waterway and they constitute the most meaningful link between both sides of the River. The Booth Street-Eddy Street alignment form a unique spine that unites both sides of the Metropolitan Downtown Core. The Zibi redevelopment will bring more residents, jobs, retail, entertainment and services to these islands and their immediate waterfronts, and catalyze the animation of this once-industrial district as an international-scale demonstration of urban regeneration along sustainable principles. This district is unique in that it is characterized by buildings that plunge directly into the water (an attribute that must be maintained) and because of its unique public realm and active transportation opportunities. Other islands beyond the Zibi project have similarly important and image-defining roles to fulfill, notably to mark Algonquin Anishinabeg presence and culture in a location that has significant historical and symbolic importance.

The mapping of this Special District should include its Gatineau components, although Ottawa's Official Plan policies will not apply there, in order to show the entirety of the context of this District as it exists across municipal boundaries.

Policy direction:

- Maintain the continuity of direction of the Zibi redevelopment program and improve the integration of urban design and public realm approaches between Ottawa and Gatineau to produce a more integrated and seamlessly connected "heart of the Metropolitan Downtown Core".
- Continue to work with Gatineau and the NCC on the approaches to be taken to the immediate waterfront, to integrate the land-side of the waterfront to the islands more seamlessly, and to strengthen the continuity of the urban fabric across the river and into the established downtowns on both sides of the river.
- Maintain a harmonized set of urban design guidelines and public realm principles between Ottawa and Gatineau to ensure a unified look and feel for the district.
- Identify and implement new ways to animate the waterfront close to the Islands.
- Place a special emphasis on Victoria Island as a symbolic location for Algonquin Anishinabeg culture and presence



## 16. Major Facilities

### Background and Rationale

Major Facilities are typically distinguished by a number of unique characteristics. They usually service the entire city or large parts of it and may draw from beyond the boundaries of Ottawa. Large numbers of people require convenient access to these facilities. Some exert a concentrated demand on the transportation, water and wastewater systems that may peak at particular "event" times, while others operate more or less continuously over a 24-hour period. They typically require and occupy large sites. They have the potential to exert varying degrees of impact upon neighbouring residential areas. There may be merit in combining these uses to achieve mutually supportive relationships.

The world's economies are increasingly based on knowledge and information. The role of the universities and hospitals, along with the hospitality and tourism sector, is central to economic development, providing a range of employment opportunities for sustainable population growth and attracting newcomers. Major facilities can assist in advancing Ottawa's cultural offerings beyond national institutions (e.g. national museums). At the same time, these facilities can better play their role if they are seamlessly integrated into a neighbourhood or an established community.

### Issues with Current OP

Legacy planning practices have tended to treat Major Facilities in a very standalone manner, effectively separating their sites from the urban fabric in which they are introduced. This approach needs to be reversed so that Major Facilities are well-integrated into, and made to contribute towards, their surroundings, not as individual sites but as integral components of their communities.

New major urban facilities are established by amendment to the Zoning By-law. They must be located with good access to transit, major corridors and be connected to public water and wastewater services. However, there is no clear direction that requires Major Facilities to integrate into the urban fabric of a community, to maintain the pattern of streets and block sizes, and instead encourages these to take an isolated site planning approach.

Major facilities are subject to the policies for Design Priority Areas, which the new Official Plan will review in the context of their distinct character. Considerations include architecture, building materials, public realm improvements, massing and scale of developments. Major facilities are encouraged to include public art. Again, looking at the design of new Major Facilities, such reviews are typically limited to site design and building architecture, but do not delve into how to integrate such facilities into the urban fabric – which should be the primary focus of design review for a Major Facility.



## Preliminary Policy Directions

The identification of what constitutes a major facility will mostly remain consistent with the current Official Plan. Major facilities include hospitals, universities and community colleges, major sports, cultural, recreational facilities such as stadiums and concert halls, major City facilities and national institutions.

Some of the major facilities currently identified in the Official Plan require different approaches or updating:

- The removal of major shopping malls as major facilities. In the next 25 years shopping malls will evolve to become better integrated into communities with a mix of uses and residential. They are no longer viewed as standalone “sites” but as components of the urban fabric that must be reintegrated into their neighbourhoods.
- Update to reflect new names of Lynx Stadium, Scotiabank Place, Lansdowne Park
- Consider adding some large national institutions in addition to the currently-designated Canada Science and Technology museum (also since renamed).
- Expand list to add City facilities: City Hall, Ottawa Art Gallery and Arts Court , Shenkman Arts Centre, Ben Franklin Place and Centrepointe Theatre
- The Central Canada Exhibition site is no longer being considered for development.
- Private career colleges may not be at the scale of major facility

Major facilities are currently permitted in the General Urban Area, Central Area, Mixed Use Centre and on Arterial Main streets. As these terms will be replaced in the new Official Plan, a new approach will be developed to also direct the integration of major facilities (or the enlargement of existing ones) into their surrounding urban fabric through the transect approach.

The current Official Plan links major facilities and urban employment area policies. For the new Official Plan, the overall approach to employment will include major facilities. As stated in Section 3, employment is to be directed to Nodes and Corridors. This will apply to Major Facilities that are also significant employers.

The current Official Plan does not include guidance on conversion of major urban facilities to new uses – e.g. street structure, building re-use, provision of new public parks. Such direction will be provided in the new Plan.

Consideration for national institutions: The location of future national institutions, normally on federal lands, will be considered in collaboration with the relevant federal or national-level partner, to the extent



that a new institution may have the ability to integrate into its immediate surroundings and provide additional elements of place identity. The role of Special Districts in relation to these national institutions will be spelled out.

## 17. Greenbelt

### Background and Rationale

The National Capital Commission (NCC) Greenbelt is approximately 20,000 hectares of predominantly rural land with natural environment areas and wetlands, providing for activities such as farming, research, recreation, and tourism. It is also the location of large facilities such as the Nepean Sportsplex, Queensway-Carleton Hospital, and the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. The Greenbelt was created in the 1950's to protect rural land and contain the City, however since then, development has continued beyond the greenbelt, and urban growth continues to exert pressure on the more distant rural and ecologically sensitive areas beyond the Greenbelt.

The NCC Greenbelt is regulated by the NCC Greenbelt Masterplan (GBMP), however the City has also assumed a role in managing the use of the NCC Greenbelt by including regulatory policies within its Official Plan. While doing so has enabled the City to be more active participants in proposed amendments to both the Official Plan and the GBMP, the current process for doing so can be considered onerous.

The preliminary policy directions related to the future regulatory framework of the NCC Greenbelt is proposed with the intention of supporting the NCC, working collaboratively to ensure the best management practice over this area, which includes maintaining its rural character and protecting its environmentally sensitive areas, while putting in place efficient processes for development that is favourable to both organizations.

### Preliminary Policy Directions

- The NCC Greenbelt will be identified as a policy area on the Transect and identified as such in Schedule A of the new Official Plan
- A dedicated B-series Schedule will identify Greenbelt designations with policies that are consistent with the NCC GBMP
- Harmonize the boundaries of the NCC Greenbelt per the NCC GBMP with the City's Official Plan
- Provide policies that regulate privately-owned lands within the Greenbelt, recognizing that the NCC GBMP only regulates publicly-owned lands in this area. Policies will provide for uses and activities that are compatible with the surrounding area and maintain rural character
- Streamline the process for any development proposed, where the City is an active participant, but without the need to undertake a development review process.





## 18. Implementation

### Background and Rationale

This section summarises the tools that the City is authorised to use under the Planning Act and other legislation in order to achieve its policy objectives. This includes powers to regulate development such as site plan. It also contains Ottawa Specific public notification, land acquisition, developer agreement and complete application policies that are required in the OP.

### Preliminary Policy Directions

1. The Planning Act allows the City to implement a Community Planning Permit or CPP System, formerly known as a Development Permits, in all or part of its territory. A CPP system may in some cases offer some advantages over the current framework zoning, minor variances and Site Plan Control. Whether the merits of a CPP system would justify implementing it calls for further analysis. However, a CPP system would in any case require an enabling policy in the Official Plan. It is proposed to include such a statement so that if a CPP system is found to be worth pursuing, the required Official Plan component is already in place.
2. Streamlining prescribed information
3. Too much text associated with Cost sharing Agreements
4. There may be specific provisions required to address Community Benefits Agreements
5. New monitoring reporting
6. Review public notification and consultation policies to drive more meaningful, effective and inclusive public involvement in planning decisions.

## 19. Secondary Plans

### Background and Rationale

#### Changing legal/regulatory environment

The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) supports improved land use planning and management, to contribute to a more effective and efficient land use planning system for Ontario. Municipal OPs are the most important vehicle for implementation of the PPS. PPS policies represent minimum standards, from which a municipality can go above and beyond, but policies must be consistent with the PPS. Secondary Plans are a component of an OP and provide more detailed policy direction.

A draft 2019 PPS was released July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019 and resulting implementation will impact the minimum requirements for the City of Ottawa OP, and for the Secondary Plans that form part of the OP. Increased emphasis is proposed for:

- Range of housing options to respond to current and future needs.
- Transit-supportive development and the optimization of transit investments



- Including Indigenous communities in land use planning decisions.
- Impacts of a changing climate and provision for sustainable clean energy
- Recreational opportunities in the Provinces Natural Heritage Resources
- Supporting local food and maintaining and improving the agri-food network.

### Issues with respect to policy in current Official Plan and Implementation

- No clear distinction between what is adequate content for a Secondary Plan or other type of Plan (Community Design Plan, Area-Specific Policy, Site-Specific Policy, Transit-Oriented Development Plan), creating significant duplication and lack of consistency.
- Many outdated plans that no longer direct appropriate development, or have outlived their purpose (for example, in the case of Secondary Plans for then-greenfield areas that are now fully built-out).
- Need for Secondary Plans to better reflect challenges being faced by Ottawa, such as for those items being emphasized in the draft 2019 PPS.
- Unnecessary and repetitive detail in many of the Secondary Plans and the number of plans, creates a shortage of staff resources needed to address required reviews and updates to those plans.
- Confusion as to the suitability of privately-initiated Secondary Plans for sites or areas that should receive a different type and level of policy framework.

## Preliminary Policy Directions

1. **Consolidate 12 Secondary Plans and 2 Community Design Plans to 5 Secondary Plans, to be carried forward in the New OP, with a consistency review.**
  - Central Downtown Core Secondary Plan (will include Central Area, Centretown, Escarpment District Secondary Plans)
  - East Downtown Core Secondary Plan (will include Uptown Rideau, Sandy Hill and Part of Old Ottawa East Secondary Plans and Lees Station Area CDP)
  - West Downtown Core Secondary Plan (will include Bayview Station Area, Gladstone Station District and Preston-Carling Secondary Plans)
    - Plans date from pre-amalgamation (2003) to present
    - Overlapping boundaries and policies will be resolved
  - Inner East Line 1 Stations SP from 5 Transit Oriented Development Plans (Hurdman, Tremblay, St. Laurent, Cyrville and Blair Stations TOD Plans)
    - Eliminate policies that will be in Parent OP under Major Nodes
  - Outer East Line 1 Stations SP from 2 Town Centre Plans (former Gloucester and former Cumberland Town Centre Secondary Plans, plus new Montreal, Jeanne-d'Arc, Convent Glen, Place-d'Orléans and Trim Stations Areas)
    - Eliminate policies that will be in Parent OP under Major Nodes



**2. Repeal 16 secondary plans that cover stable built-out areas and are outdated (from as far back as 1982); and/or where parent OP policies for Nodes and Corridors can guide development for these areas.**

- Kanata West
- Baseline and Woodroffe
- Merivale Road
- Carleton Heights
- Hunt Club
- Confederation Heights
- Riverside Park
- South Keys to Blossom Park, Bank Street
- Westgate
- Elmvale Acres Shopping Centre
- Nepean South Areas 1, 2, 3
- Nepean South Areas 4, 5, 6
- Nepean South Area 8
- Nepean South Areas 9, 10
- Nepean South Area 12A

**3. Review and amend 16 secondary plans to be consistent with and not duplicate new OP policies; remove/revise policies that are inconsistent with the PPS; remove policies that are inconsistent with more contemporary urban design rules; and update schedules.**

- Alta Vista / Faircrest / Riverview Park
- Rockcliffe Park
- Richmond Road / Westboro
- Kanata Town Centre
- Scott Street
- Wellington Street West
- Cleary and New Orchard
- Montreal Road District
- Old Ottawa East
- Bank Street South
- Former CFB Rockcliffe
- Nepean South Area 7
- Stittsville Main Street
- Mer Bleue Urban Expansion Area Secondary Plan
- East Urban Community MUC
- Riverside South

**4. Review and amend plans to be consistent with and not duplicate New OP policies; remove/revise policies that are inconsistent with the PPS; and update schedules, including for:**

- Existing Consolidated Villages Secondary Plan for 20 villages: Ashton, Burritt's Rapids, Carlsbad Springs, Cumberland, Dunrobin, Fallowfield, Fitzroy Harbour, Galetta, Kars, Kenmore, Kinburn, Marionville, Metcalfe, Munster, Navan, Notre Dame des Champs, Osgoode, Sarsfield, Vars, Vernon



- 3 separate Village Secondary Plans: Manotick, North Gower, Richmond.
- 3 Village Community Design Plans and one Corridor Community Design Plan to be elevated to Secondary Plan status: Carp Road Corridor, Carp Village, Constance Bay, Greely.

**5. Provide direction with respect to what should be included in future neighbourhood plans.**

- No repeat of Parent OP policies, such as for: planning and design strategies and changing climate, public health consideration and provision for sustainable clean energy.
- Secondary Plans for new neighbourhoods to include: specific provisions on built form; densities; mix of uses; transit mode share targets; mobility; and location of major municipal facilities.
- Secondary Plans for existing built-up areas to include: more detailed identification of “evolving”, “transitioning” and “transforming” overlay areas where these should differ from the Parent OP to address specific local conditions, although the removal of “Transitioning” or “Transforming” overlays must be associated with equivalent compensation elsewhere in the area subject to the same Plan; the layout of new streets, street networks or street extensions, including all public streets and rear lanes, or direction to guide such layouts and networks; identification of locations where building height direction differs from that of the Parent OP; and prioritization of public works in municipal budgets, design guidelines for specific locations.
- Community Design Plans for new neighbourhoods to include: analysis of how the proposed development will achieve the minimum number of jobs and the density and mix of residential units, including the close mixing of dwelling typologies; phasing priorities and funding sources; prioritization of public works in municipal budgets; Master Servicing Strategy and comprehensive servicing study; environmental and natural heritage protection; greenspaces and multi use pathways; requirements for public facilities such as parks and schools; design guidelines for specific locations (only where they differ from those in the Parent OP); amendments to the Zoning By-law and requirements for subdivision and site plan applications; and a sunset clause for the plan that is no longer than 25 years.



## 20. Inclusive Design

### Background and Rationale

The City is embarking on its first Women & Gender Equity Strategy to identify key strategic actions for improved gender mainstreaming in the city. Under the City's Equity and Inclusion Lens, when we apply a Gender and Health Equity Lens to Official Plan policy-making we ask about differences among women, men and gender diverse persons. Do planning assumptions take into account women, gender diverse and other equity-seeking persons?

- Neighbourhoods that are zoned exclusively for detached houses, limit who is able to access housing in those communities. In the 1950s, a policy preference for single-family housing was established with the nuclear family in mind, it did not respond to the complexities of the female experience. Today's median market rent and average single detached house prices can create affordability challenges for women on a single income.
- Social inequalities are increasing, with a growing gap between the rich and poor. Canadian women who work full-time, earn on average 75¢ for every dollar earned by a white male. It is therefore harder for single women to find affordable housing.
- The wage gap widens for women who are newcomers, Indigenous, gender-diverse, living with a disability and/or who are racialized. For example, in Ontario, 50% of trans people live on less than \$15,000 a year.
- Four out of ten Ottawa households spend more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities. The high cost of housing makes it harder to meet basic household needs for food, childcare, education, transit and access to other basic necessities.
- In pair with lower incomes, the fixed costs of housing and transportation mean that women statistically rely on public transit more than men and make trips with more stops. This is particularly prevalent among economically-disadvantaged populations.
- The cost of transportation varies across the city which impacts women and gender diverse persons ability to afford basic necessities.
- A systematic review exploring cycling infrastructure preferences by age and gender found that women reported stronger preferences than men for greater separation from traffic. If bicycle facilities are designed for only one type of cyclist, such facilities may be underutilized.
- Between 2014 and 2017, families using shelters rose by 33%. Newcomer families made up more than 1/3 of all families living in shelters in 2017.
- Women, gender diverse persons living in disadvantaged conditions/areas are particularly sensitive to safety in the built environment.

### Issues with Current OP

Some people experience more barriers from the built environment than others. The Official Plan lays the foundation for how communities are planned and should take into account the needs of the entire population with all its different groups.



## Issues around implementation

The new Official Plan can establish goals and guidelines for affordable housing, equity in mobility, access to recreation, and planning for social cohesion that flow from, and link to, the City's Women & Gender Equity Strategy and the Equity and Inclusion Lens.

### Affordable Housing

Some groups are more affected by inadequate housing, such as lone-parent households, recent immigrants, refugee, ethno-racialized peoples, youth and gender diverse persons.

Traditionally, 50% of Canada's social housing inventory has been built under federal-provincial agreements. Since the mid 1990's cutbacks have reduced government programs while the need for affordable housing has grown. Increasing affordable housing may require specific planning tools beyond market forces that protect the supply of rental housing and secure new affordable housing at Major Transit Stations Areas and in other areas.

- The direction of new Official Plan is to provide a variety of affordable housing options. Prioritizing affordable housing options through diverse housing forms and tenure types can help reduce inequities. Enlarging the area of the City in which households can function without a car can also result in greater equity in mobility and access.
- The Official Plan will include policies to support City-assisted affordable housing as outlined in the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to be submitted to the Province by December 31, 2019. Currently, City-owned facilities and land uses are identified for single use (e.g. recreation facilities, OC Transpo facilities, libraries). The new Official Plan will include policy direction that requires the inclusion of housing when new facilities are being constructed, with an emphasis on affordable housing.
- Supportive housing for women and gender-diverse persons includes group homes. The City's Zoning By-law requires a separation distance of 300 metres between group homes. This requirement can make it more difficult for supportive housing to be created, in addition to possibly being inconsistent with current constitutional interpretations of discriminatory practice.

### Equity in Mobility

Everyday chores and family work are characterized by complex trip chains. Equal access by persons with disabilities, older Ontarians, and families with young children to adequate, dignified public transit services is a right protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- The direction of the new Official Plan is to achieve >60% of growth through intensification. This approach to urban growth management seeks to reduce reliance on the automobile, and not having to own a car is more affordable. Greenfield development is generally more decentralized and can lead to less accessible public transit unless it is deliberately planned around the transit network and with denser, transit-supportive forms of development.
- Prioritize transportation equity:



- Ensure that the planning and design of streets, intersections, and networks are considered from an equity perspective, particularly on corridor streets. Where there are large number of pedestrians, provide wider sidewalks, rest areas, safe crossings and lines of trees.
- Collect data on women's travel patterns for the Transportation Master Plan. Many of the gender gaps in planning are caused by lack of gender-sensitive data systems and processes.
- Land use planning should consider the ability of people to afford their transportation needs. Community design can strongly influence a person's mobility options and affordability.

## Recreation

Despite increased labour force participation, women are the predominant providers of informal (i.e., unpaid) care to children. Allocating space and resources for parks and recreation facilities provide essential support to those who frequently handle household and care tasks.

- The OP should have policies that equitably distribute parks and recreation facilities.
- Tall buildings and higher-density developments should adjoin easily accessible park space, since this will compensate for the lack of outdoor space on the building's property.
- The OP may need additional direction for shade studies, to determine, for example, the extent to which park areas should be sunlit.
- In the case of multi-developer construction projects, co-operation and possibilities should be explored to create larger, easily accessible park spaces. Larger facilities need to be specifically designed and designated in land use plans and accessible by transit.
- Special attention is to be given to interfaces between buildings and parks. Parks should be accessible from building entrances and via short and attractive routes. Buildings should have active frontages onto the park.

## Social cohesion

Persons with care and household tasks, as well as older adults, attach much greater importance to informal contacts with neighbours. Unwanted anonymity can be avoided.

- Concept of "15 minutes neighbourhoods" where people can get to most of their daily destinations—within a 15-minute walk from their homes. Planning for mix of uses including commercial/retail where nutritious food and child care can be accessed.
- Longer blocks create barrier-like effects. Community and building design should design blocks that are barrier-free and allow key routes for pedestrian access through sites.
- Varied housing forms (multiple bedrooms, barrier-free units, etc.) within neighbourhoods to attract people in different stages of life.
- Provide direction for emergence of distinct neighbourhoods and varied design characteristics for sense of place.
- Communal spaces for interaction inside and outside buildings.



- Integration of daycare into neighbourhood and building design.
- Provide stroller and bike parking that can be easily reached.
- Safe spaces: lighting and good visibility in entrance zones, staircases, underground parking has specially marked spots for women and gender diverse persons close to entrance zones.