

## New Official Plan FAQ

### 15-minute Neighbourhoods

#### **How can 15-minute neighbourhoods allow senior citizens to remain healthy, active and engaged in their communities after their driver's licences have expired?**

We know that a healthy and inclusive city is one that builds on the needs of all members of society including older adults and 15-minute neighborhoods are premised around the idea that communities can offer local places to access daily needs in a way that's safe and convenient for people of all ages. These communities also have a range of different housing options allowing seniors the ability to age in place. 15-minute neighbourhoods also provide opportunities for meeting and connecting with others, in their neighbourhood, which is good for their well-being, and staying active and connected with others. When there are more options and opportunities to walk for daily needs in their local neighborhood, it means that there's other ways to get around, such as pedestrian networks like sidewalks and pathways, without having to rely on a car.

#### **Will the 15 mins neighborhood apply to Cumberland as well?**

Yes, the New Official Plan sees villages as rural 15-minute neighborhoods.

#### **Will the 15-minute neighbour look more like Paris?**

The 15-minute neighbourhood is an idea that's gone around the world. The 15-minute neighborhoods in Ottawa will be unique to Ottawa. We have a lot in common with Paris, we're both national capitals, we're both gorgeous cities, we're both G7 capitals, and we both have this ambition of 15-minute neighborhoods. That said, we have a lot that is not in common with Paris. We have our own history and culture and we're making our own version of 15-minute neighbourhoods in this Official Plan.

#### **How will the city ensure that density in established 15-minute neighborhoods also includes more affordable housing? 15-minute neighborhoods are often more expensive neighborhoods so how do we ensure that everyone can be in a 15-minute neighborhood regardless of income?**

One key piece of achieving this is making sure we have more diversification and range of housing types to meet different income levels. There is also the inclusionary zoning study that will look at how we can secure this range of housing options.

**The absence of mandatory setbacks and trees in the draft New Official Plan contradicts tree canopy requirements, what will be done to address this discrepancy?**

There are policies within the New Official Plan that do speak to the need to provide soft landscaping and space for trees. Trees are certainly a very important element in terms of urban design, and for environmental reasons.

**Was the 15 neighborhood study informed by the urban forest management plan or did it assign value to the preservation of the urban forest as a key asset driving enjoyment of neighborhoods?**

This is out of scope for the New Official Plan but in terms of the trees, we looked at tree canopy data that we have along our streets to get a better sense of the quality of the pedestrian experience on those streets.

**How is the timing or measuring of distance for the walks to various amenities being done?**

A pedestrian network was constructed by determining the distance travelled in 15 minutes from the average human walking pace. Catchment areas representing this 15-minute walk was applied around each residential parcel where the number of services and amenities were counted and scored.

**Our Rural areas are spread out making 15-minute neighborhood less feasible. How is this being addressed?**

Villages are focal points within our rural areas where most people drive to and were the focus of the rural component of the study. The future of our villages requires an understanding of what amenities and services are there and what are missing and what we can do as a municipality to encourage diversifying services and amenities in our villages. Recognizing the geographical limitations, we really need to focus on those village cores.

**Why does the City assume that all residents want to live in a 15-minute neighborhood?**

The City is not making that assumption. The aim is to provide those opportunities so that those who do want to locate in a 15-minute neighborhood are able to.

**Have changing shopping patterns been considered?**

Shopping and retail are ever evolving. What makes neighborhoods and cities resilient is that you could always count on a critical mass to provide the needs and the supplies that people need within a certain proximity to an area. Historically, the main street was threatened by the strip mall, then the strip mall was threatened by the shopping mall, and then that is threatened by the big box store and now it's threatened by online shopping. However, we are seeing a lot of sites that are being redeveloped to be mixed use and look more like main streets. The aim is to recreate the conditions of critical mass that was lost. The big lesson for cities is we cannot put all our eggs in a single basket. We cannot depend on trends that are impermanent, and we need to go back to the ingredients that make a city resilient and complete which is a mixed-use critical mass and access to things by foot.

**Have business plans been studied for profitability?**

The New Official Plan does not have a mandate to look at private parties' finances or business plans. We do have plenty of constructive experience providing permissions in certain areas where those permissions have been acted on. We have many examples across the City where new zoning has been put in to create the permissions and then development happens.

**Are there a significant number of merchants lining up to open convenience stores or other proposed ground level storefronts in residential neighborhoods, such as AltaVista? Is there a lot of folks lining up to do that?**

We will note that a neighbourhood is not only the residential component but also the streets where there are ground level storefronts. While the corner-store of the past would certainly increase accessibility within a residential neighbourhood, their absence will make the established commercial services all the more important, including the pedestrian experience to get to and from those services.

**Has the city considered further developing box malls by building apartment buildings?**

That is something that is included in some secondary plans for suburban areas already. There is a market difference in time so while we have blocks set aside for those apartments in those areas, if there isn't a market, buyers are not going to come. However, by setting aside the blocks, when that community is ready, and apartment dwellers want to live there, then those conditions are ready for those apartments to be built.

**If you are not identified as a 15-minute neighborhood, how can the OP prescribe that most growth must be in 15-minute neighborhoods?**

The OP is not prescribing that most growth must be in 15-minute neighbourhoods, but if we want to achieve our objectives where most of the growth is through intensification, to provide more housing options for growth within our built-up areas, and reduce our GHG emissions, then our residential neighbourhoods need to play a larger role. The OP is not prescribing growth in these areas; rather the OP is targeting growth and 15-minute neighbourhoods is one consideration for where this growth may occur. Neighbourhoods that score lower for amenity access will not likely see as much demand as those that score higher.

**How could the city help to treat grocery stores differently than the very general commercial use?**

The City does not directly work with the actual businesses or the brokers that fund the business. Our role is to set the stage and environment for where it makes sense for those business to happen.

**How will zoning regulations hinder small retail, how will this be addressed?**

This is a question that is best answered through the Zoning By-law Review which will take place after the New Official Plan has been adopted. It will have a separate and fulsome public engagement plan.

**What is being done to encourage builders to create 15-minute neighborhoods?**

The New Official Plan is the first step of many. The City will continue the conversation internally through the implementation of master plans for infrastructure and facilities, as well as with the developers and the applicants in the future.

**Given COVID what amenities and services do you see the 15-minute neighborhood offering in the future?**

This past year, during COVID-19, it demonstrated the importance of 15-minute neighbourhoods in terms of providing us with the environments that support resiliency and well-being. The pandemic has highlighted that we need local places to access essential services, like pharmacies and grocery stores. It has also shown that we need comfortable walking environments and access to local greenspace. A high-quality public realm, where we can run into neighbours and connect with others also has newfound importance. Overall, the pandemic has shown us that there are real benefits to being able to access our daily needs within our own neighbourhoods.

**Can the city guarantee that an existing community will be equipped with services such as safe, walkable sidewalks before intensification happens?**

It's very difficult for the City to guarantee things but, that is certainly a goal that we strive to achieve.

**What policies will be put in place to ensure affordability housing is available in 15-minute neighborhoods?**

The City has committed to adopting inclusionary zoning as permitted by the Province. We have included a "placeholder" policy to that effect in the current draft Official Plan while we undertake the background research required by the Provincial law. Once that step is complete, we will develop a full inclusionary zoning policy, tailored to Ottawa's needs, and regulations for adoption. When that happens, the draft policies will go through public consultation, including a project web page on Ottawa.ca. Whatever the details of the inclusionary zoning regime, once it is developed and adopted, developers will have to comply with it.

**There is talk of intensification being directed to 15-minute neighborhoods. What does that mean?**

The City would like more intensification in the built-up environment so we would want to focus them within 15-minute neighborhoods so that new residents would have access to existing services. These new residents could also provide a customer base for our local businesses.

**How will the study influence the Infrastructure Master Plan?**

We will coordinate with the infrastructure planning team and the related 15-minute neighbourhood concepts.

**Will other master plans give higher priority to local level infrastructures?**

Each Master Plan would have to weigh the priorities. The 15-minute neighborhood study is part of that consideration with all the other things that need to be considered.

**To what extent will the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) consider the impacts of the urban design and land use on active transportation and transit use?**

The New OP establishes the framework and the fulsome TMP review will come after, where this question will be better addressed.

**Will the new plan make provisions for walking and cycling improvements to be made without having to wait for another development to occur first?**

That is best addressed through the TMP.

**What is the city doing to ensure proper infrastructure, such as sidewalks, are in place?**

One of the points of the study is to identify what those deficiencies are and see how we can make improvements. This is the starting point for our discussions with other departments that are more involved with implementation.

**What percentage of the population can walk 15-minutes to a grocery store, and then walk home carrying the groceries, have seniors, disabled and pregnant women been considered in this concept?**

The concept is about having the option to walk if you're able to and you have the resources. People can also take other modes, the concept doesn't preclude that from happening, it just provides more options.

**How do the 15-minute neighborhoods apply to the current suburbs?**

The concept also applies to the suburbs, with communities evolving over time in to 15-minute neighbourhoods. The New Official Plan recognizes that there will always be changes in the built environments and this includes the suburbs. We are hoping our study will identify some of the specific elements that should be focussed on in different areas, including the suburbs.

**Has it occurred to planners that many residents don't think their streets need improvement?**

Yes, planners have taken that into consideration. By the same token, some residents may believe improvements are needed even though other residents do not. Different levels of mobility, age, access to resources are some examples of how different residents may have different view points about the same street.

**How will this study inform the new Zoning By-law?**

The New Official Plan is a high-level policy document and does not include a street by street level changes to Zoning. This level of detail will be undertaken by the Zoning By-Law project, which starts once the high-level policies in the New Official Plan are approved. The Zoning By-Law project will be a multi-year process with many opportunities for public engagement to inform what the street level changes will be.

**Why don't you call it the 30-minute neighborhood as you need to include the return trip?**

It is 30 minutes there and back but the focus of the study is how easy it is to access a service within that 15 minute time frame.

**Is the city planning to invest in all parts of the urban area, including low density areas to make 15-minute neighborhoods?**

Through the Official Plan, the City is seeking to ensure that the framework is in place to allow for the gradual evolution of neighbourhoods of all densities. This includes low density communities. Having more growth in these areas will support future investments in infrastructure. The Master Plans on issues such as Transportation and Parks and Recreation Facilities will help understand and unpack where and when City investments are made.

In other words, more people create the conditions for City to improve services and make local investments. Also, with more people, it becomes more viable for local services and businesses to become established by having the critical mass needed.

**Will the City revisit speed limits in the inner urban transect?**

It is premature at this stage to talk about that specific of a strategy.

**What gaps are you looking at? And are you looking at missing infrastructure, canopy and grocery stores?**

The gap analysis is one of the next steps of advancing 15-minute neighbourhoods. It includes looking at areas of the city with lower scores and determining what needs to be done to improve those scores and who can help achieve the desired results. For example, looking at the pedestrian experience, a lower score could be due to the absence of street trees or too many interruptions in the pedestrian environment so the gap analysis would identify these issues and identify a variety of strategies to improve them such as planting street trees or turning a plaza that's more automobile oriented into something that's more inviting for the pedestrian. Overall, gap analyses will identify areas for improvement, what can be done to make those improvements, and who can help achieve the desired results.

**How is the high percentage of residents driving into urban areas to access commercial services informing the strategy?**

The concept of 15-minute neighborhoods is the ability to get access your daily and weekly needs within a 15-minute walk. We recognize that you're not going to get everything all the time, within a 15-minute walk of where you live, you're going to take transportation, whether it's a transit, a bike, or vehicle, or Uber to get to those areas. There are perfectly valid reasons to travel further than your 15-minute walk catchment area, but the goal is to provide that option so that there's a convenience factor around where you live.

In terms of the rural area, the City is thinking about how we establish more complete villages, complete neighborhoods, that function sort of autonomously without the need to drive in to urban areas.

**Have you taken into account seasonal data? How do things change in the Winter?**

That is something the City would like to assess in the future as part of, for instance, winter maintenance standards.

**What is the template being used?**

We are not using a template because we are not holding any preconceived notions and recognizing the range and variability of 15-minute neighbourhoods; as such we will not delineate the area around a neighborhood and declare it a 15-minute neighborhood. The study is showing the range of local services and the quality of the pedestrian environment within those areas.

**Were the demographics considered as part of the weighting?**

No.

### **What was the distribution of age groups participating in the survey?**

The public survey provided respondents the option to choose the age range that applied to them at the beginning of the survey. The breakdown, by percentage, of the age ranges of respondents is:

- No response to age group: 0.6%
- 0-18: 0.3%
- 19-24: 3.4% 25-34: 20.0% 35-44: 23.8% 45-54: 16.3%
- 55-64: 15.7%
- 65-74: 14.9% 75-84: 4.5% 85-94: 0.5%

### **Will you publish the detailed methodology and results of the survey?**

Yes, the study will be a document that will accompany the official plan.

### **How did you determine the weighting of the results now?**

The weighting for the service and amenities was taken directly from the responses from our public survey. Respondents prioritized a list of services and amenities like grocery stores, parks, retail, commercial LRT, bus stops, rec facilities, indoor centers and libraries, schools and daycares from highest to lowest and the weighting from that priority list was used in the mapping exercise.

For the pedestrian experience, the weighting was less of a factor but the mapping exercise did consider the survey results in terms of the factors that respondents indicated were important for determining whether their walk was safe and enjoyable.

## **Affordable Housing and Inclusionary Zoning**

### **Is there a mandatory inclusionary affordable housing policy in the official plan? If so, do developers have an option to reject the mandate with a buyout?**

The City has committed to adopting inclusionary as permitted by the Province. We have included a "placeholder" policy to that effect in the current draft Official Plan while we undertake the background research required by the Provincial law. Once that step is complete, we will develop a full inclusionary zoning policy, tailored to Ottawa's needs, and regulations for adoption. When that happens, the draft policies will go through public consultation, including a project web page on Ottawa.ca. Whatever the details of the inclusionary zoning regime, once it is developed and adopted, developers will have to comply with it.

### **Would Ottawa consider inclusionary zoning like Montreal's 20-20-20?**

Montreal is under Quebec legislation; we can only consider inclusionary zoning under Ontario's legislation, which may not enable the same approach. However, we will be paying close attention to what other cities are doing, in order to draw the best ideas, we can apply to Ottawa's context.

**Will the City consider alternative ways to achieve over-all density goals that would have less negative impact on neighborhoods and more potential to lead to affordable housing?**

Yes, taking into consideration all the feedback that has come in since we released the draft official plan, we are currently determining how we can revise the current draft official plan to be more sensitive to neighborhoods. The City will work to provide Council a way to achieve the approved growth management strategy which calls for a majority of new residents to be accommodated in existing built up areas and at the same time, show how that extra population can assist in taking communities to more of a 15-minute neighborhood status.

**Alta Vista Transportation Corridor**

The Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC) is included in the OP because Council gave the mandate to carry forward the current Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Through the review of the TMP, questions around the AVTC can be addressed by the City's transportation department, the TMP will have regard and be consistent with the policy direction included in the New OP. At this time, residents should direct any comments on the AVTC to [TMPUpdate@ottawa.ca](mailto:TMPUpdate@ottawa.ca) or visit <https://engage.ottawa.ca/transportation-master-plan>.

**Background Information**

**Why are Councillors only being presented 1 model for the new official plan. Why are there no other options for handling population increase?**

When staff prepared the Beyond 2036 scenario study two years ago, the City looked at several different options and produced a series of discussion papers that led to the Five Big Moves. See:

[https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news\\_feed/ottawa-next-beyond-2036-identifying-the-challenges-of-unknown-futures](https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news_feed/ottawa-next-beyond-2036-identifying-the-challenges-of-unknown-futures)

[https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news\\_feed/preliminary-policy-directions](https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news_feed/preliminary-policy-directions)

In December 2019, a growth projections report for the new Official Plan reviewed three projection scenarios based on Statistics Canada National and Ontario Ministry of Finance Provincial projection scenarios. The medium scenario was recommended and adopted by Council.

In May 2020, a report on the residential growth strategy presented three growth management options based on achieving the new Official Plan policy objectives adopted by Council in December 2019, the Provincial Policy Statement, and Council's GHG emission reduction target. The balanced scenario was recommended and adopted by Council.

See:

[https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news\\_feed/new-official-plan-growth-management-strategy](https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan/news_feed/new-official-plan-growth-management-strategy)

**The population forecast tables in the Ottawa-Ward-Boundary-Review 2020 Options Report (approx. 120k new residents by 2036) do not show the same increase in residents projected by the official plan (450k by 2046). Why did we base our new ward boundaries on different data than in the Official Plan?**

The population forecasts are the same in the Ottawa-Ward-Boundary-Review 2020 and the new Official Plan. The final report for Ward Boundary Review population projection for 2034 is 1,263,613 persons and is the same projection for 2034 in the new Official Plan.

The two projects differ by end date. The Ward Boundary review has a mandate to last up to three elections and perhaps a fourth election in 2034. The new Official Plan has a time horizon to 2046 in-line with the requirements with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Official Plan is projecting an increase of 400,000 City wide by 2046.

**How flexible are Official Plan reviews to amendments?**

Under the Planning Act, the City must go back and re-evaluate the Official Plan. It's an obligation under the law. We also keep tabs on the plan through the monitoring that we do of certain metrics. We are still determining what metrics will be monitored to correspond with the goals of the new OP. And while the New OP is meant to last 10 years before a review, we have said to Council that we would report back in five years on the growth management strategy.

**Was there a critical review of the previous Official Plan? If yes, are the lessons being applied to the new Official Plan? How has that informed your confidence in achieving the 5 Big Moves?**

Yes, we did take a very critical look at the existing Official Plan. The existing OP has done some things well, including the environmental policies, the urban tree canopy, establishing intensification targets and limiting urban sprawl, and policies on Main Streets.

Where we have fallen short is with regards to urban design and community design. That's where our third big move, Urban and Community Design, comes from. This Official Plan wants to fix that and wants to improve on that. We want to keep getting better at community design.

In terms of the rural area, it's fair to say that most of the current policies related to the rural area were inherited from the former townships and they lacked cohesion with the Official Plan as a whole and were not always applied consistently. The New Official Plan gives more flexibility, more real-life permissions to the rural area. The hope is that there can be more economic diversification, more opportunities for rural and agricultural business such as on-farm diversification, wineries, tourism, and other small-scale commercial activity that support the rural community. In time, Village secondary plans will be updated to be consistent with the 5 big moves, one of which is the preservation of rural character.

Another area the New Official Plan aims to improve is mobility. The new mobility section ties together land use and transportation at a very intimate level; the look of streets, the design of streets, the impact of streets, and how they set the stage for public space in neighborhoods. All the work that the city is done on complete streets, we want to continue to build on that and the new Official Plan is an opportunity to get better.

### **Where is the cost-benefit study of the draft new plan?**

We have engaged with every single internal department in the city that has an operational program that is remotely connected to growth, and especially to the accommodation of new population in new neighborhoods. Through this we have taken into account the operational considerations of the city departments and the programs that are offered by the city. The New OP is a strategy to grow the city that combines a realistic assessment of what the market will produce, and a continued need to consolidate population growth into existing areas. It will ensure we don't spend on new things if we take better advantage of what we've already paid for.

### **Why are the 2012 Urban Design principles not included or referenced in the Plan, specifically Section 6?**

The low-rise infill housing urban design guidelines are in the process of being updated and are anticipated for release in 2022. Residents can participate in that review by clicking [here](#). The Plan contains policies, but beyond policies there are guidelines that are more interpretative and more context-sensitive and would not belong in an Official Plan. We have a much larger toolbox than just policy.

## Climate Change

### **The Ottawa Climate Change Master Plan calls for a significant increase in renewable energy generation which requires land and/or water resources. How does the Official Plan \*encourage\* land use for renewable energy generation?**

Currently the Draft OP includes renewable energy generation as a Generally Permitted Use. Since the repeal of the Green Energy Act, the Province has restored municipal authority in zoning for renewable energy generation uses. Staff are currently considering additional policy guidance in the OP.

### **How does the Official Plan, in its guidance for growth, encourage energy efficiency, energy retrofitting of existing buildings and carbon-wise capital asset management?**

There is a section that talks about the integration of energy considerations as part of growth management, as well as consideration of emissions from the building and transportation sector. Regeneration is a critical component for achieving an energy efficient pattern of growth. We are also working on high-performance development standards and community energy plan requirements that will lay out requirements for development to work towards being net zero emission in keeping with Council approved GHG reduction targets.

Our energy evolution strategy is starting to look at what supports can be put in place from the city and from other levels of government to help people along in making decisions about their private buildings, providing resources, providing contacts, providing information and linking them up to any incentive program that could exist.

### **Energy evolution has no mandate for land use planning whatsoever. Can you elaborate again?**

Intensification targets play an important that can lead to reduced emissions. Denser 15-minute neighbourhoods will help reduce emissions from transportation by increasing viable options for walking and cycling. There is technically no link between land use and energy, if we go to a net zero energy source for heating and cooling buildings, then the land use in and of itself is not adding or subtracting from that. If we go to nonpolluting or non emitting transportation of any type, then by definition, the land use is not adding or subtracting to the emissions. However, the land use piece is certainly something that can help. For example, if you have more contiguous buildings, they can cost less to heat and cool than detached buildings. From an urban form standpoint, if you have 15-minute neighborhoods and a denser urban area, it supports more non-private vehicle modes of transportation.

**Realistically, how widely will the new Green Standard (HPDS) apply? How will developments that do not have site plan requirements (all low rise and mixed use, existing building expansions) achieve energy efficiency, tree retention and High Performance Development Standards? Will there be a 'Green Fast lane' incentives?**

We want energy efficiency to be standard and we will work with the building industry, the homebuilding industry, the commercial building industry, and with our internal departments and services within the Ontario building code to move this forward.

## Corridors

**Table 4 in the draft document classifies streets as Access or Flow based on their land use. Can you please provide more context on what an access street looks like compared to a flow street? What changes would be made to a street whose classification changes to Access as part of the new OP?**

We would first like to note that we are not replacing the existing street hierarchy (locals, collector, arterials etc.); it is staying. The new street function helps us look beyond moving people and goods also to guide city-building objectives.

The existing hierarchy makes little effort to discern functional differences between road classifications. For example, Elgin, St-Joseph and Eagleson are all arterial roads. With the introduction of access and capacity and flow streets we are trying to make movement and street permission intuitive through design.

An access street is a street that can be accessed by other streets and have a close relationship to the built environment; whereas a flow street is a street that has a greater focus on moving traffic. It is important to remember that the New OP has expanded the definition of traffic to include transit and active transportation.

An example of a flow street is Hunt Club between Merivale and Woodroffe. There are no streets that connect to it aside from the other major arterials.

Laurier Ave East could be considered an access street. While it plays an arterial function on the street network because it crosses a lot of neighborhoods, all the local streets connect to it and you can turn in and off. Access street considerations include elements such as:

- Design and operating slow speeds

- Focus on crossing movements along desire lines or high intersection density to improve network connectivity
- Direct relation to place, and ties to the buildings, activities and public space that make those streets a place in their own right rather than just a road to go to and from places.

## Density and Intensification

### **How can small locally owned businesses arranged around walkable centres provide employment to young people?**

This is a nice example of the benefits of intensification through having more people in neighborhoods. If intensification can occur within walking distance to small local businesses, you provide a local labor pool for them to draw on including youth. The new OP looks to blend employment areas into places where people live including around Main Street corridors and around transit hubs. And that really means that more local businesses and services can help provide employment opportunities for youth to work within their neighborhoods and close to home.

### **What plans are there for redevelopment of Trainyards to meet housing goals?**

Train yards is the area which is now a big box retail power center just south of the Via station on Tremblay Road. It is included in the *Inner East Line One Stations* secondary plan. It calls for a whole redevelopment of that area over time. And there will be quite an addition of new housing to that area because right now it's mostly retail and offices.

### **Why do we need to allow for increased density in established neighbourhoods?**

The growth management strategy is calling for the city to welcome the majority of its new residents in existing neighborhoods, and therefore, we want to land on a set of rules that is going to describe how that should happen. The current Official Plan doesn't do that.

This is also part of the city's pandemic recovery strategy in a very big way. The city needs to be ready with direction, which we don't have right now as to how we are going to accommodate additional population. What we don't have is a good description, context by context, of how new development in neighbourhoods should look and how it should be done. And we want the new Official Plan to give that direction.

### **Are there thoughts about new housing at existing malls? E.g., St Laurent (former Sears)**

Yes, there are a lot of malls that are now rethinking how they can use their land. There are currently malls already doing this including, Lincoln Fields and Westgate.

### **Will minimum densities be based on a per-lot basis or per-neighbourhood basis?**

We are taking another look at how we express that. Density is just math; it's a number of people divided by a land area. So there is a correlation between density and the things that the city offers: transit, sewer, water, all the services, the amenities that people call for including parks, libraries, community centers, pools, all the things that people enjoy in neighborhoods. There is a relationship between how many people are in an area and how many of these things can be provided. In the Official Plan, what we want to do is to at least give targets and indications of the things we should be aiming for in terms of the

levels of population, the levels of density levels of people that are needed to sustain the services that people are looking for. So in the Official Plan, there will not be a per lot requirement. That's something that the Zoning By-law deals with. But there will be a relationship between the Official Plan and what the Zoning By-law does after the Official Plan is adopted. The Official Plan will talk more in terms of targets to allow for enough flexibility on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis to aim right.

**Will there be opportunities to rezone R1 neighbourhoods to allow for mixed use developments.**

The New Official Plan aims to provide more diversity and more housing options across neighborhoods. That is a foundational element of this plan. Once the New OP has been approved there will be a further discussion and review of how this will be done. This level of detail will be undertaken by the Zoning By-Law project. The Zoning By-Law project will be a multi-year process with many opportunities for public engagement to inform what the street-level changes will be.

**Will it be a requirement that when a house is demolished, the lot must be severed, and the ensuing structures must each have at the very least two housing units in each?**

No, it will not. Stay tuned for the next version of the new Official Plan where this will be clarified.

**How will the City work to protect the established neighbourhood character?**

An important measure in the plan to ensure new development responds to the context of existing neighborhoods can be found in the urban design section (section 4.6 policy seven). The entire policy is relevant but it speaks to infill development integrating appropriate architectural materials and materials that complement the surrounding context. It is important to note that this refers to development that enhances and establishes streetscape through good design and innovation in a manner that coexists with and does not cause undue adverse impacts on surrounding properties, but doesn't necessarily mean that new development must be the same as what is there today. It's about good integration. There are also important policies for each Transect and under the Neighbourhoods designation. The new Mobility polices, as well as the all the policies that support public space, parks, and elements of a 15-minute neighbourhood work in concert with this goal.

The Official Plan provides the high-level direction for land use planning at the scale of the entire city. So, the policies are meant to provide general direction for the Zoning By-law, and the Zoning By-law process will be undertaken in 2022. This will involve further community consultation to ensure neighborhood context sensitive planning is incorporated and implemented.

And then finally, the secondary plans, both existing and future, will continue to be an important tool to provide planning direction and at the neighborhood level.

**Will the New OP be building in maximum density requirements and transects? By neighborhoods, corridors and hubs?**

No, we will not be building in maximum densities.

**What is the plan to achieve these density targets?**

The New Official Plan must set the framework that will achieve the number of dwelling units that we need. It recognizes there are different parts of the city: the hubs, the corridors, the neighbourhoods, and

each has its scale, each has its role to play for the types of dwellings that the Plan is calling for. If every neighborhood plays its part and if we all do our little bit, together we'll get there as a city.

## Finances

**What are the financial and tax implications of this new Official Plan? Is there a long-range financial analysis and modeling that connects the plans for growth to the City's Long-Range Financial Plans? In particular: (i) If 49% of growth will be greenfield and boundary expansion, will development charges or new taxes on existing households pay for this?**

If we have a majority of new residents being welcomed in existing neighborhoods, where there is already city infrastructure, where there are already city services, where we already have public transit, we already have streets, then it's just the upkeep because the municipality has already paid for these things. Further, if there are more taxpayers in the same geography, to pay for that upkeep, then it lessens the load on everybody. It's distributed among more taxpayers.

With regards to new lands that we're adding to the urban boundary where we have to build roads, build blocks, build infrastructure, that is financed in a different way, largely through Development Charges. In Ontario, much of what is built can be recovered by Development Charges, but the city still must finance the daily operation of anything that's built and then the ongoing upkeep as time goes by. So, in the big picture, the more we can accommodate population within areas that are already paid for the better it is for city finances.

## Greenspace

**What measures to maintain tree canopy, access to greenspace, etc., will accompany the City's intensification policies?**

We believe that intensification is compatible with achieving the 40% urban tree canopy target in the draft Official Plan. We currently have an urban canopy of about 31%. It's about 50% inside the greenbelt and about 25% in residential areas. The City is taking a multi-pronged approach to ensuring that we protect that canopy and we grow it over time (<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/environment-conservation-and-climate/trees-and-urban-forests/tree-protection-law/planning-around-trees>). The first tool we have is our Zoning By-law where we have the example of our current infill zoning, which requires consolidated soft landscaping to provide space for trees. This is our model for the future Zoning Bylaw. We also have an improved Tree By-law that strengthens our protections for existing trees and compensation requirements for new trees when trees are removed. And we have improved processes for implementation of that bylaw. For example, we now have a planning forester assigned specifically to work with the Committee of Adjustment on issues of affecting trees. To protect City-owned street trees and trees on front yards, we have proposed a ban on new curb cuts because we see a lot of trees lost to new driveways. Finally, we are moving ahead with a planting strategy for the city in collaboration with the natural National Capital Commission. This will identify new space for planting of trees.

**Will the 40% tree canopy requirement be for all neighborhoods?**

No, we're not doing that at a neighborhood level. It's an urban canopy target. We're not certain that 40% canopy cover is achievable target in every neighborhood. It will be our goal, but we don't want to commit to something that we can't achieve.

**How will greenspace be protected when there is intensification?**

We already have very successful urban green space policies. Our target in the Official Plan is four hectares of accessible green space for every 1000 residents. We're currently at 5.4 hectares of green space for every 1000 residents. If you include the accessible and adjacent areas of the Greenbelt, that number goes way up. We're switching our focus now to new policies that ensures that access to that green space is equitable.

**Why doesn't the plan not place a priority on biodiversity and supporting green space in urban areas including lower-density residential areas within the downtown core.**

There is a very strong focus on biodiversity and we are putting in requirements for soft landscaping so that there is the opportunity for trees and that greenery. Soft landscaping is the idea that if it's green and it grows, it's soft landscaping. If it is rock and it's dead, it's hard landscaping. There needs to be plants associated with hard landscaping.

**Will there be more community gardens allocated to communities?**

That is not really an Official Plan question, but the official plan would not stand in the way of more.

**My understanding is that the new OP could allow zero-lot-lines (so no front yards) in the downtown core as of right. Doesn't that conflict with the idea of providing green amenities - taking away green space that is there now?**

The Official Plan does not aim to eliminate front yards. If there are front yards as part of the established character of a neighborhood, we would keep front yards. There are some neighbourhoods with more traditional streets in the older parts of town where it's really door-on-sidewalk. In those particular cases, it would be inappropriate to push a building back. The New OP aims for compatibility with what's there. If you're in a 19th century neighborhood that has no front yards, then that's what you should do. If you're in an early 20th century neighborhood that has front yards, then that's what you should do. And within that framework, we want to provide direction so that you know what you're doing as you're intensifying, as you're redeveloping, as you're adding to an existing house, or as you're making renovations.

**If the tree target is not by neighborhood, how will the city ensure developers are planting trees? Why would the developer plant a tree if it doesn't suit them?**

There are requirements under the tree by law for compensation, if someone is removing a tree. Further, while they may not be required to plant a tree, we can require them to provide the soft landscaping so that the resident in that new home, if they so wish can plant a tree or other green space. We will also be working with our community partners on outreach and education around the benefits of green space.

**Infill**

**What are some benefits and downsides for the neighbourhoods where infill will be directed?**

The upside is that in a lot of neighborhoods, it can mean the addition of new types of homes, new opportunities for new residents to live in enjoyable neighborhoods, in the case of the more central neighborhoods, close to amenities close to stores close to schools close to public transportation. So the advantages are obviously that additional people residing in a neighborhood create more of a critical mass for the things that make a neighborhood a 15 minute neighborhood, a dynamic community.

As we know there are a lot of disruptions that come from construction sites. And those are just ongoing whether there's an Official Plan or not. People, when they replace a building, do create disruption through construction. And the advantage of having an Official Plan that gives better direction to infill is something that we don't have under the current Official Plan. The current Official Plan is too vague as to how infill should look and how it should land on parcels. We want the new Official Plan to do a much better job at saying what direction should be given for infill as to how it should fit into streets by each of the areas of the city. And that's what we've been trying to improve upon.

### **Why can't infill targets be monitored and adjusted more frequently, and not locked down into a plan?**

We have something called the Annual Development Report where we look at what's happening. We measure the number of building permits, where things have been built and what kind of things have been built. And we do that on an annual basis. On a five- and 10-year basis, we take a look at the bigger picture, and the bigger numbers to see if the strategy, the growth management strategy is playing out the way the Official Plan set it out.

### **Will infill lead to neighbourhoods full of small apartments? How can family sized housing be encouraged?**

No. The Official Plan is really clear on this, we want to diversify housing but that includes maintaining homes for families with kids. One of the things you'll see in the draft Official Plan and that we're going to keep is direction to make sure that there's homes for families with kids that are ground oriented and with a yard so that people have the opportunity to get themselves a home in an existing neighborhood and raise a family in an existing neighborhood. So people aren't forced to go to the suburbs and only to the suburbs, if they want to house with enough space to raise a family.

### **Will current lots be open for rezoning to accommodate more types of dwellings and/or will it become easier to rezone lots?**

The new Zoning By-law will implement the new Official Plan and create the permissions that are called for by the policies of the new OP. The rezoning process continues to exist under the Ontario Planning Act. Before the new Zoning By-law comes into effect, people wanting to develop things that the new OP supports would have the support of that policy on which to base their application.

Currently we have a Zoning By-law that is a conglomeration of a lot of rules. We have over 420 subzones in the city over 4000 exceptions, we have dozens of schedules, and it is difficult for anyone to understand and administer. One of the big things that we would like to do following the approval of the New Official Plan is come up with a much better, much more streamlined Zoning By-law. One that is clear, that is efficient, that is very effective in terms of implementing the policies of the Official Plan. This will also give the community some assurance and understanding of the parameters in which new development is going to fit in contextually with their neighborhood.

## Infrastructure

**Is the City planning to invest in all parts of the urban area including low density areas to improve services, infrastructure and livability?**

Through the Official Plan, the city is looking to ensure that the framework is in place to allow for the gradual evolution of neighborhoods of all density. This includes low density communities. Creating opportunities for growth in these areas will support investments and inform documents such as the infrastructure, transportation and parks master plans.

**If neighbourhoods are evolving or transitioning towards 15-minute neighbourhoods, this requires investments in social services, community and recreational centres, schools, parks and greenspace, sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.; have investments in upgrading the livability of our many urban neighbourhoods been costed in?**

The features that contribute to a 15-minute neighborhood come from a combination of public and private investments. On the municipal side, upon adoption of the Official Plan, the city will get into more details by updating a series of master plans. These master plans like the infrastructure master plan, the parks and recreation facilities master plan, and the transportation master plan, they typically get into more details by identifying projects, their costs, and their timing. In terms of things like schools, for instance, that would be up to the individual school boards and the province.

## Overlays

**Applying overlays is good policy that avoids spot zoning, but if you don't plan to sell your house for development, will rising property taxes force-out existing home owners who may struggle to pay higher assessments on what were once some of the cheapest homes in these neighbourhoods? For example, Bronson Avenue houses were affordable in the Glebe, but not if a \$175,000 house in 1999 is now \$1.5 million? How will assessment differentiate between modest homes and development lots?**

It would be more appropriate to direct that question though to MPAC, the municipal property assessment Corporation <https://www.mpac.ca/en/Homepage>

**Does the New OP remove R1 or R2 from existing neighbourhoods in the transforming overlay? Does it remove R1 or R2 from existing neighbourhoods the evolving overlay? Does this plan remove R1 or R2 zoning designation from all existing neighbourhoods of Ottawa?**

A lot of the general policies throughout the Official Plan are asking for a diversity of housing, so that neighborhoods can have a mix of different types of housing throughout, and that will allow for new property owners to get into areas. How that will translate to the zoning, we're not sure yet the zoning project will be underway next year. At that time, those questions should be directed to that project, which will involve public consultation opportunities.

## Process/Engagement

**Why is the city unwilling to wait until the pandemic is over before finalizing its vision given that the pandemic is expected to change the way we live and work?**

Staff is working under the direction of Council, who adopted the timetable for the Official Plan. We are considering all the information that we are getting from our colleagues in Ottawa, Public Health and across other departments to keep track of what is happening in the city. At the same time, the Official Plan is part of the pandemic recovery package that the city has to put together in order to bounce back.

**Could South March lands be brought back into consideration for the urban boundary expansion?**

No, not at this point.

## Secondary Plans

**Could secondary plans also allow for taller buildings than what's called for in the Official Plan, not just downsizing?**

Yes, they could and a lot of them do. For example, through public consultation the secondary plan near the Gladstone Station allowed for tall buildings closest to the O-Train station and at other appropriate locations.

**Confusing secondary plans are further reasons that property owners need to be directly informed of the zoning proposals that could apply to their property so they can provide response.**

We are trying to incorporate a lot of the old secondary plans into the New Official Plan. And there have been changes in how we approach planning since a lot of these secondary plans in many cases are decades old so there have been some adjustments in how policy is giving direction. The purpose of a secondary plan is to be more precise mini official plan for a neighborhood. If there's confusion about what secondary plans are saying, please talk to us and ask us questions to the [newop@ottawa.ca](mailto:newop@ottawa.ca).

**The draft OP says the secondary Plan will take precedence. Alta Vista has a Secondary Plan, how is this supposed to work. At what point does the Secondary Plan take precedence?**

The answer is the secondary plan takes precedence. What that means is when the secondary plan says something that is different than what the parent OP says, it's the secondary plan policy that is in effect.

## Transects

**What is a Transect?**

A transect is an area of the city that's mapped on our Official Plan maps that represents a particular context. The downtown core is a transect, the inner urban transect is the group of neighborhoods that surround the downtown core, the outer urban transect is the group of neighborhoods beyond the inner urban but inside the Greenbelt, the greenbelt itself is a transect area. We have the suburban communities that are their own transect area, Kanata, Barrhaven, Riverside South and Orleans. And then the rural area is its own transect. Each of those is its own context. They have their own set of rules, their goals and objectives. There are different needs, and they are at different points in their state of evolution.

**Will there be restrictions on being able to rebuild a single-family home in any Transects? Will this policy vary based on Transect?**

No there won't.

**Does that diversity of housing also apply to outside the greenbelt in subdivisions in Kanata and Barrhaven?**

Yes. In the typical suburban neighborhood that is built today, the zoning already is either R3 or R4 so we'd already anticipate that diversity, we're building it into the zoning of new neighborhoods already as we speak.

Transportation

**A car is still necessary for many of us, especially older residents or those with small children, how will this be addressed in the plan? What about the possibilities for electric cars?**

The plan doesn't suggest that people shouldn't use vehicles when needed. The Plan, however, looks at distributing permissions with a view on achieving our transportation modal share goals to help make other sustainable forms of transportation like walking and biking more viable options for people who are able to use them. This is good for our health, it's good for society, climate greenhouse gas reduction targets. With respect to electric cars the Zoning By-law will be looking into the minimum electric car requirements for places where people park like vehicle charging stations to help encourage that transition to electric vehicles.

**Could the Plan set targets of additional number km for bicycles for the next 2,5, 10 years, more protected areas where no cars would be allowed on certain days, etc?**

One of the five big moves that guides the New OP and the overarching mobility goal of the new Official Plan is that by the end of its planning horizon, more than half of all trips will be made by sustainable transportation (walking, cycling, transit or carpool). The OP doesn't set a target for bicycle modal share. As part of the TMP and AT Plan, we will be reviewing our cycling mode share targets. We will also consider other metrics for monitoring changes over time. It is important to note that total bicycle kilometres travelled is not a frequently used metric largely because it is very difficult to calculate.

That said, the OP recognizes that there has been a ~5-7% annual growth in cycling trips since 2010 in wards 11-18. We aim to coordinate land use and transportation planning and support the tangible shift in mobility modes and other mobility goals.

For instance: 4.1.2(15) all urban area collectors, major collectors, and arterials are cycling routes that, over time, through integrated road, water sewer renewal through our asset management group, are to include cycling facilities. The TMP and associated plans shall identify priority pedestrian and cycling projects to be implemented in the near-term.

We recognize it is also a good business case to promote cycling use; Each trip generated has a spatial footprint, and the more trips generated in any given area, the greater the need to make those trips in a spatially efficient manner.

**Do you have a timeline for the transportation master plan?**

The scope of work for the TMP Update was scheduled to be completed April 2022. That timing was based on a set of key milestones, which includes a new Origin-Destination (OD) Survey, coordination with the Official Plan review, and public consultation milestones.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the OD Survey, has been deferred because travel patterns across the region would not be representative of long-term trends or valuable to the TMP Update. The start of the OD Survey has therefore been rescheduled to the fall of 2021, subject to further delays, should COVID-19 still pose significant challenges by then.

The revised completion date for the TMP Update and new Active Transportation Plan is the fall of 2023, subject to further delays caused by any additional postponement of the OD Survey. In the interim, staff will continue to advance transit, road, cycling and sidewalk projects

The public and project stakeholders will be advised of these changes through direct communications and updates to the project website - [Ottawa.ca/TMPUpdate](http://Ottawa.ca/TMPUpdate).

## Misc/Unique

### **Are there mechanisms that will be put in place to make getting permits for Accessory Dwelling Units easier?**

We're constantly watching the coach's program and seeing how it can be improved. There are numerous areas for improvement. And as we're getting more coach houses built in the city, people are reaching out to us with areas that we can improve. So it's on our radar, but not something that is part of the Official Plan. The policies in the Official Plan for Coach houses have been mirrored on those of the existing OP, they have not been changed because they are recent policy provisions.

### **Some of the newer streets, crosswalks, and sidewalks have not been built with accessible use for people with mobility difficulties in mind. Is there a current plan to capitalize on the opportunities to create more accessible communities in that fashion?**

Yes, the City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards (ADS) were developed with recognition of provincial legislation, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) initiative. Together with the Complete Streets Framework, this standard ensures that all City-owned and operated spaces and facilities are inclusive and accessible to everyone. This commitment extends to residents, visitors and employees with visible or non-visible disabilities. As streets are retrofitted and new streets are built, this standard will be upheld by Transportation Services.

### **Can you point to another mid-sized City that has sought to drive density through the addition of multi-unit residents in generally single unit neighbourhoods. What challenges did they face?**

We looked at about 40 different cities and evaluated several different jurisdictions in North America, the EU, Scandinavia, the UK, and Australia. We drew a lot of information and inspiration from what is being done around the world, in cities that are our size or just a little larger, so that we can learn from cities that have been our size before and have grown into the next threshold of size.

In North America, Minneapolis is one that has been in the news. They've gone through a very political process where it was sort of a housing emergency driven decision to get rid of R1 zoning and diversify the types of options in residential neighbourhoods. In Australia, they have done a lot of interesting work some of which is what we are presenting here in Ottawa. For instance, Australia uses the transect in a lot of their jurisdictions, in order to start to talk about how to give direction to neighborhood evolution.

## Zoning

### **Is it possible to remove motor vehicle parking minimums in zoning?**

Yes, the City has already removed the requirement for minimum parking for buildings with 12 or less units in significant portions of the inner urban area of the city. We may look at further changes in line with policy directions on promoting walkability and to facilitate additional density and better active transportation linkages. That would be something that we would be looking at in the new Zoning By-law rewrite following adoption of the Official Plan.

### **Will the Official Plan mandate the introduction of form-based zoning? If so, to which portions of the new zoning by-law would the change apply?**

The Official Plan introduces policy support for moving to form-based land use regulations. This focuses more on how the building fits in the community, in the neighbourhoods or on the corridors. If the building fits in terms of form into its context, and its compatibility with adjacent properties is managed appropriately, then the uses inside matter less. The type of zoning that will be instituted will be determined through the Zoning By-Law Review.

### **The OP is the over-arching document, therefore how can you 'leave intensification rules in neighbourhoods to the Zoning Bylaw and updates to the Secondary Plans. Doesn't zoning fall out of the over-arching document?**

The Official Plan is here to give the main direction. And a flaw of the current Official Plan is that it was trying to give very general direction to areas that were fundamentally different from one another. The improvement we're trying to make with this new Official Plan is that we're talking about areas based on their context. This means the downtown core has its own set of rules, inner urban has its own set of rules, suburban has its own set of rules, and so forth. Once those are understood, agreed upon and adopted, then the City has a much easier job at matching the direction from the Official Plan with the rules that need to apply at the zoning bylaw level.

### **What condition in the Official Plan will be included to upgrade our Zoning By-laws to equalize or supersede the Official Plan?**

The zoning bylaw would not supersede the Official Plan. The Zoning By-law and the Official Plan work together. The Provincial Planning Act requires that a Zoning By-law must come into conformance with the Official Plan within 3 years of it coming into effect.

### **Will the Greenbelt be affected by the proposed policies?**

No it won't be affected by the proposed policies. We're carrying forward the designations and provisions in the NCC's Greenbelt Master Plan.

### **How will the urban design section prevent poor quality architects and building materials?**

We can't regulate good or bad taste because those notions cannot be defined and understood the same way by everyone. The urban design section refers to our urban design guidelines and within those guidelines, there are references (as much as we can under the Ontario Planning Act) to the appropriateness of an architectural expression, including the materials Depending on where new

buildings are being proposed, the City also has an Urban Design Review Panel to make sure that new development in our most prominent and visible areas have that level of design review and quality.

**Can there be a before vs. after sketch of what a changed neighbourhood will look like?**

Technology and graphics applications have come a long way. The zoning bylaw has will be taking a more graphical approach towards modelling the impact of the revised regulations for the zoning bylaw. People need to see what the regulations mean, when they appear on the ground. That is not something that the zoning bylaw currently does very well, it's not something the Official Plan does very well. We want to change that. You should be able to see and understand clearly what those development standards mean, and how they affect your lot, how they affect your streets, how they affect your block, how they affect your neighborhood. The visual identity before and after is going to be a part of our program in terms of restructuring and rewriting the zoning bylaws following the New OP. These are going to be conceptual models. They don't dictate what the private sector or what private development interests may do. But they will certainly give much more of a clearer idea of what the expectation might be in terms of what that change will look like when it's on the ground.

**There are clearly a lot of different documents to serve various purposes. It would be great if the city could offer a document that explains how all these documents link to one another so that residents can easily search and find the information they seek.**



## **OP** Official Plan

An Official Plan provides the policy framework to guide the city's physical development including:

- Regulating land use
- Managing growth and change in the urban, suburban and rural areas
- Planning for public works and infrastructure
- Planning for new communities and existing areas undergoing change
- Preserving natural systems providing for the wise use of resources

The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is the City's blueprint for planning, developing and operating its transportation networks over the next several decades.

The TMP prescribes transportation policies and identifies new infrastructure to be built to serve the City as it grows.



## **TMP** Transportation Master Plan



## **IMP** Infrastructure Master Plan

The Infrastructure Master Plan (IMP) update is an initiative supporting the City's New Official Plan project.

The IMP is a strategic document that sets growth-related goals, objectives, and priorities for municipal systems related to water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment and stormwater management.

The Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan will include:

- An analysis of how the AQCCMP's long term target to reduce GHG emissions 80% below 2012 levels by 2050 compares to the IPCC's targets for limiting global warming to 1.5 °C
- Midterm (2030) corporate and community GHG emission reduction targets
- Climate Change mitigation and adaptation priorities for next five years (2019 - 2024) to embed climate change considerations across all elements of City business;
- The 2018 GHG emissions inventory
- An update of actions undertaken by the corporation within the last five years



## **AQCCMP** Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan



## **GUFMP** Greenspace and Urban Forest Master Plan

The purpose of the Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces is to express Council's vision for greenspace in the urban area and set policies for how this vision can be pursued.

As the city grows, there is to be an adequate supply of greenspace, accessible to all residents. It will be linked, to allow for movement through green corridors, and it will be high quality and sustainable, minimizing the need for human intervention and public spending.