



Section 2. Strategic Directions

Photo: City of Ottawa



Section 2. Strategic Directions

2.1 The Big Policy Moves

This new Official Plan is proposing five broad policy directions as the foundation to becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America over the next century.

Big Policy Move 1: Achieve, by the end of the planning period, more growth by intensification than by greenfield development.

Ottawa is projected to grow by 402,000 people by 2046, requiring 194,800 new private households. The City will accommodate this growth within its existing neighbourhoods and villages, in undeveloped greenfield areas within Ottawa's urban boundary and by expanding the City's urban boundary. The City's approach will have significant impacts on the evolution of Ottawa's neighbourhoods, on housing options and affordability and on our ability to meet our climate change responsibilities.

The Official Plan will increase the share of future growth to be within Ottawa's existing built-up area to 60 per cent by 2046, by putting in place zoning and other mechanisms to give the City the opportunity to avoid or delay further expansions. In support of this direction, new policies will increase the variety of affordable, Low-rise housing options for residents within existing neighbourhoods close to Hubs and Corridors, increase the urban tree canopy and promote an evolution to 15-minute neighbourhoods.

This balanced approach to growth management is intended to mitigate the effects of growth on land consumption, avoid spaces of agricultural or ecological importance, efficiently use public services and moderate the impacts to municipal financial resources to service growth. The balanced approach continues to promote a mix of housing supply. That mix of housing supply must include a diversity of supply and housing options at different levels of market-based and affordable levels, so there is choice in the market for households to meet their needs

Big Policy Move 2: By 2046, the majority of trips in the city will be made by sustainable transportation.

The overarching mobility goal of the Official Plan is that by the end of its planning horizon, more than half of all trips will be made by sustainable transportation such as walking, cycling, transit or carpooling.

Increasing the share of trips by sustainable modes of transportation is urgently needed to meet the City's climate change goals, given that 40 per cent of Ottawa's current greenhouse gas emissions are transportation related. Supporting active transportation and transit is also crucial to creating a healthier and more equitable and inclusive city, where anyone can get to work, to school and to daily activities without needing a car. As a result, safe and convenient sustainable transportation options are fundamental to 15-minute neighbourhoods and vibrant communities that support economic activity and social interaction throughout the day and evening.

Achieving this Big Move relies heavily on leveraging the City's generational-level investments in transit, particularly the construction of Stage 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT) and ongoing efforts to plan and seek funding for the Baseline Bus Rapid Transit Corridor and Stage 3 LRT to expand the O-Train network to Barrhaven, Kanata and Stittsville. These transit investments multiply efforts to increase sustainable

transportation mode share because they require new and improved active transportation connections to provide access to the stations and also stimulate private sector transit-supportive development that generates new ridership. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will identify and prioritize these and other important public investments.

Big Policy Move 3: 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.

Ottawa is a city of neighbourhoods and Villages. Each of these neighbourhoods and Villages have their own characteristics that make them different from each other. Yet, despite these differences, the elements of successful neighbourhoods and Villages are quite similar- whether it's safe and easy access to groceries, parks and schools, good housing options, or gathering places like Mainstreets, soccer fields or coffee shops. The goal of this Plan is to contribute towards stronger, more inclusive and more vibrant neighbourhoods and Villages in a way that reflects the differences from highly urbanized and dense areas in the downtown, to lower-density suburban areas farther out. The goal of this Plan is also to contribute toward stronger, more inclusive and vibrant neighbourhoods and Villages that reflect and integrate Ottawa's economic, racial and gender diversity in every neighbourhood. Planning for the evolution of a new subdivision in Kanata or Barrhaven will be different than for a former streetcar suburb such as Hintonburg, or a 19th century downtown neighbourhood like Centretown.

The Official Plan introduces a transect approach to planning that will better distinguish, by context, Ottawa's distinct neighbourhoods and rural Villages, resulting in policies that are better tailored to an area's context, age and function in the city. The City has been divided into six transects—each representing a different gradation in the type and evolution of built environment and planned function of the lands within it, from the most urban (the Downtown Core) to the least urban (Rural). Policies associated with land use designations, including Hubs, Corridors, Neighbourhoods and Rural Villages are specific to the context of each transect. Finally, overlays have been identified where specific policy direction is needed beyond those contained in land use designations to guide growth, to allow certain types of activities and provide built form guidance. Identifying Design Priority Areas, including Special Districts, targets areas of the city that are important to our national and international image as the capital of Canada, that are key regional economic or entertainment districts, or that are local spaces that are important to our local identity.

Big Policy Move 4: Embed environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy into the framework of our planning policies.

The future liveability of Ottawa—its economic vitality, its social cohesion and the health and well-being of its residents—depends upon a healthy natural and built environment. The Official Plan contains bold policies to encourage the evolution of neighbourhoods into healthy, inclusive and walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods with a diverse mix of land uses, including a range of housing, shops, services, local access to healthy and affordable food, schools, employment, mature trees, greenspaces and pathways. It also includes policies to help the City achieve its target of 100 per cent greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2050, its target of a 40 per cent urban forest canopy cover and to increase the City’s resiliency to the effects of climate change, including much warmer temperatures, more rain and more extreme weather such as heat waves, floods and storms (See Figure 4).

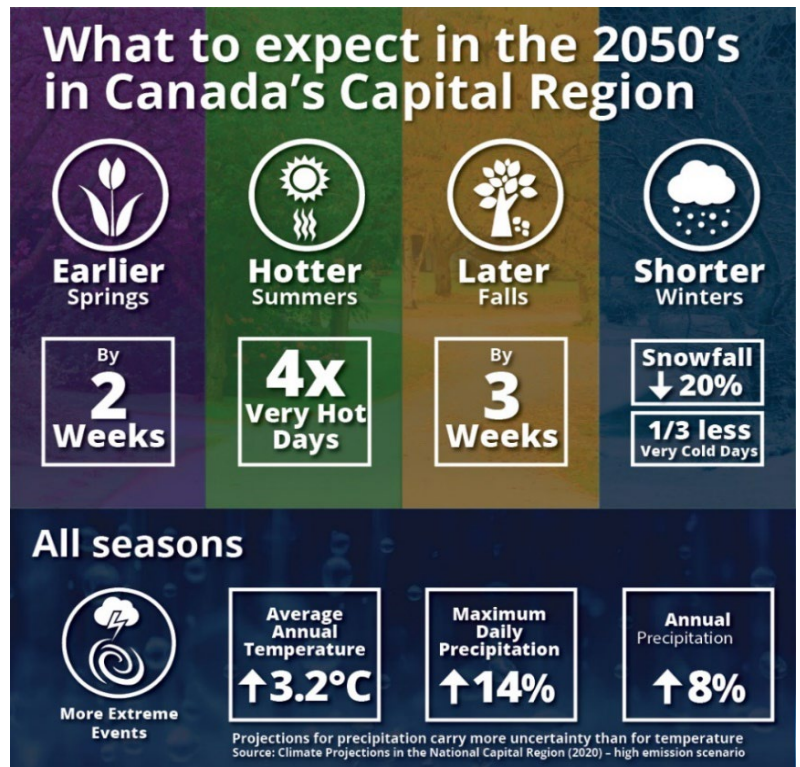


Figure 4

Big Policy Move 5: Embed economic development into the framework of our planning policies.







A range of interconnected factors influence economic sustainability and growth. In the Official Plan, an economic development lens is taken to policies throughout the Plan spanning the rural, suburban and urban contexts. While land use policies in the Official Plan alone do not ensure economic development, they provide an important foundation for other City initiatives and programs to support economic development and create a context for business and entrepreneurship to succeed.

The Official Plan supports long-term economic sustainability and growth in a number of ways, working with other City programs. In the Plan, flexible land use designations are adaptable to changing economic conditions, new industries and ways of doing business. The Official Plan also supports a broad geographic distribution of employment so that people have the choice to work closer to where they live. Special Economic Districts are individually identified areas in the Plan with tailored policies that support these areas as economic generators and hubs for innovation. Land is also designated for employment uses like goods movement and manufacturing in strategic locations to support those industries and allow for their evolution. The protection of non-renewable resources including prime agricultural lands and aggregates (bedrock, sand and gravel) also helps to safeguard the rural economy. Ottawa’s economic success continues to be based on maintaining a liveable city and having affordable market-based housing options in relation to larger cities. We need to attract skilled workers to support

growing and new enterprises in Ottawa and be a choice destination for new Canadians. Becoming more liveable and affordable relative to other cities is a key to Ottawa’s success. That is why there is a high degree of relationship between achieving the other Big Policy Moves that will facilitate economic success.

2.2 Cross Cutting Issues

Some of the City’s policy goals require implementation policies that span multiple themes and fall under a number of other City policies, plans, by-laws and operational or other practices. For instance, creating healthy and inclusive communities requires policy direction related to areas such as mobility, housing, urban design, parks and growth management. Six of these cross cutting issues have been identified that are essential to the achievement of a liveable city, but are implemented through the policies in multiple sections of this Plan. To the extent that urban planning or development decisions can play a role in achieving the City’s intent, these themes are to be considered:

-  Intensification
-  Economic Development
-  Energy and Climate Change
-  Healthy and Inclusive Communities
-  Gender and Racial Equity
-  Culture

Subsections 2.2.1 to 2.2.6 provide the broader context and policy intent related to these issues. However, the Official Plan policies that give effect to the policy intent of each cross-cutting issue are embedded throughout many sections of this Plan. Many of these policies are identified through issue-specific icons attached to sections of this Plan. These icons are intended simply to draw the link between the section and a specific cross cutting issue but do not confer additional weight to any particular section or policy.

The Official Plan guides the city’s physical growth and change. It is not the only City document that plans for its operations and services. Many of these cross-cutting issues are addressed in other City policy documents and plans (see Subsection 1.4), and consequently, the Official Plan needs to be read in conjunction with those other policy documents. Furthermore, where other policies exist, the Official Plan will not repeat policy, particularly when that policy is not related to physical growth and change.

2.2.1 Intensification and Diversifying Housing Options



Ottawa will grow by 402,000 people from 2018 to 2046. This growth presents significant challenges in terms of how to provide choice in housing types and prices, how to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and how to design a transportation system that will move people efficiently and sustainably. It also presents incredible opportunities to shape Ottawa in a way that promotes healthy, vibrant and walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods.

Section 3 outlines the growth projection within Ottawa to 2046 with over half of urban residential growth occurring within the built-up area. Intensification in this Plan incorporates the definition of intensification in the *Provincial Policy Statement*, the relationship of redevelopment to its surrounding and future context and how community infrastructure and other neighbourhood amenities within a walking distance are to improve over the life of this Plan. However, growth and development within the built-up area is not only about the numerical targets of intensification and simply increasing urban density. Intensification is about guiding the evolution of neighbourhoods into complete 15-minute neighbourhoods, which includes ensuring that the services, parks, recreational facilities, public spaces, infrastructure and other elements of a complete neighbourhood, are keeping up with the increases in population. Intensification acknowledges the multiple facets of city-building that not only adds people but considers other components in planning for liveable complete neighbourhoods, in line with our goal of becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Direct residential growth within the built-up urban area to support an evolution towards 15-minute neighbourhoods
- 2) Provide housing options for larger households
- 3) Improve public amenities and services

Definition

Intensification:

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- (a) The creation of new units, uses or lots on land on previously developed land in existing communities, including the reuse of brownfield sites;
- (b) The development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- (c) Infill development; or
- (d) The expansion or conversion of existing buildings.



Policy Intent:

1) Direct residential growth within the built-up urban area to support an evolution towards 15-minute neighbourhoods

The growth management strategy includes a 60 per cent intensification target by 2046. This means that by 2046, 60 per cent of all new dwelling units will be built in existing neighbourhoods as opposed to undeveloped greenfield lands.

This Plan envisions directing residential intensification towards Hubs, Corridors and surrounding Neighbourhoods where daily and weekly needs can be accessed within a short walk. This direction will support an evolution of these areas towards becoming 15-minute neighbourhoods. It will also contribute to the needs of an increasingly diverse population with a range of abilities, incomes, ages and cultural needs by enhancing accessibility to more vibrant areas with social interaction, cultural organizations, health services and community facilities; This necessitates both simplifying the rules for intensification and using design approaches to create the demand for living in multi-family housing typologies.

2) Provide housing options for larger households

Much of the demand for new housing is expected to be for ground-oriented units, such as single-detached, semi-detached, rowhouse dwellings and new forms not yet developed. However, opportunities to provide for these dwelling types are limited within areas that are already developed. There needs to be opportunities in residential Neighbourhoods within a short walking distance to Hubs and Corridors to build dwelling units with enough floor space to accommodate larger households within buildings typologies that increase densities on existing lots. This will provide more choices for housing with three or more bedrooms within the developed built-up portions of the urban area. Smaller dwelling units in the form of one- and two-bedroom apartments will continue to be located adjacent to transit stations, within commercial clusters, along corridors with transit stops and commercial services and within Neighbourhoods. Subsection 4.2 describes our policies for housing affordability.

3) Improve public amenities and services

The supportive policies for growth management, housing, transportation, urban design and parks and greenspace throughout this Plan will provide some of the necessary elements to facilitate achieving a 60 per cent intensification target. Policies are also included to guide the preparation of local plans such as secondary plans and area-specific policies, as well as development applications. To support the City's strategy to achieve a 60 per cent intensification target by 2046, the City will:

- a) Direct residential intensification to Hubs, Corridors and residential Neighbourhoods within a short walking distance of those Hubs and Corridors;
- b) Require the production of denser, small-scale, Low-rise infill housing of generally three or more units per existing lot that will increase the supply of growth allocated for the built-up area;
- c) Require an appropriate proportion of housing with three or more bedrooms that will provide more housing choices for larger households;
- d) Protect and enhance the urban tree canopy and provide equitable access to greenspace that will provide shade and opportunities to promote mental and physical health and well-being;
- e) Ensure that the development and redevelopment of transit, road and active transportation infrastructure supports the City's intensification targets;

- f) Provide guidance on the appropriate integration of new and different types of housing with the desirable character of the surrounding neighbourhood so that development opportunities are more welcoming to the existing neighbourhood; and
- g) Encourage a variety of housing typologies, including some that do not exist today, to meet the needs of diverse households and provide a sufficient supply of housing that is affordable.

Do you want to know where the embedded intensification policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement intensification objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the intensification icon



A sample of the policies are:

Sections

3.2 | 4.2.1 Policy 2 | 4.6.6 Policy 4 | 5.1.5 Policy 1 | 5.2.4 Policy 1 | 5.3.4 Policy 1 | 5.3.1 Policy 4 | 5.6.1.1 Policy 2 | 5.6.1.1 Policies 3 & 6 | 6.3.1 Policies 2, 4 & 5 | 6.3.2 Policy 1 | 11.1 Policy 2 | 11.6 Policy 10



2.2.2 Economic Development



As Ottawa reaches the next threshold in population it also gains a certain critical mass that begins to generate more opportunities, both from the organic growth of a larger domestic market, and from increased investment interest from global stakeholders seeking opportunities. Given that economic activity is increasingly concentrated in large economic regions, Ottawa's future opportunities are also tied to its connections and collaboration with Toronto and Montreal to compete internationally as part of the mega-region formed by the three large cities.

As Canada's capital, almost 30 per cent of the City's economic activity and one-third of employed residents are attributable to the public sector, which includes all three levels of government and government-funded organizations like universities and hospitals. In addition to the public sector, knowledge-based industries (including communications technology, software, aerospace, defense and security, digital media, life science and clean technology) are a major employer and economic engine in Ottawa.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Enhance Ottawa's high quality of life to attract a skilled workforce and businesses
- 2) Accommodate growth of post-secondary educational institutions (PSIs) and hospitals to support Ottawa's knowledge based economy and health needs
- 3) Direct major employment to Hubs, Corridors and Special Districts
- 4) Integrate economic activities with residential and other land uses
- 5) Create conditions for small-business growth
- 6) Protect and preserve areas for clusters of economic activities that cannot be integrated with sensitive land uses
- 7) Support growth of important economic generators through Special District Policies
- 8) Protect locations for activities related to goods movement including freight, storage and logistics
- 9) Support rural economic development



While these sectors are important to Ottawa’s economy there is a broad range of other industries and services, both big and small, that make vital contributions to the economy and quality of life. The role of the Official Plan in economic development is to establish through land use policies a framework that will contribute to the sustainability, resiliency, diversification and growth of the local economy. The land use policies should support existing and emerging industries, businesses and services at all scales and within all geographic areas of the City, rural, suburban and urban.

In addition to land use policies, the City of Ottawa also takes a strategic approach to economic development through a Council approved Economic Development Strategy that is generally updated every Term of Council. Strategic objectives, initiatives and programs are focused on Ottawa’s economic growth and diversification, with an emphasis on business attraction, expansion and retention, including foreign direct investment, talent attraction and retention and support for entrepreneurs and main street businesses. Specific sector support is vital for knowledge-based businesses, the rural economy, tourism and creative industries as is engagement and collaboration with economic development partners including Invest Ottawa, Ottawa Tourism, the Ottawa Coalition of Business Improvement Areas, the Ottawa Board of Trade and Ottawa’s post-secondary institutions.

Policy Intent:

1) Enhance Ottawa’s high quality of life to attract a skilled workforce and businesses

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, create the regulatory climate to promote entrepreneurship and innovation and remaining relatively affordable in comparison to other cities. The strong presence of multiple post-secondary institutions, including universities and colleges, is an asset in terms of developing local talent and innovation and is attractive to both employers and



Photo by: City of Ottawa

investors. 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 liveable cities with a variety of safe, affordable, vibrant, mixed-use areas, with access to greenspace and cultural life and social harmony, which includes a sufficient range and supply of affordable housing options for private ownership and rental.

As liveability and housing and mobility affordability are key to the City’s continued economic vitality and competitiveness, they should be monitored as the City grows to ensure that these advantages are maintained

and enhanced. Liveability is one Ottawa's competitive advantages and one that can help the City strengthen its position within the Toronto-Ottawa-Gatineau-Montreal mega-region. New types of employment can also be anticipated in support of the City's transition to a low carbon economy. This includes new sectors in the construction industry working towards higher performance new buildings and deep energy retrofits. Large-scale renewable energy projects, particularly solar photovoltaic, energy storage and district energy, are expected to grow significantly over time.

2) Accommodate growth of post-secondary educational institutions (PSIs) and hospitals to support Ottawa's knowledge-based economy and health needs

Post-secondary educational institutions (PSIs) and hospitals are critical to the City's strength within the knowledge-based economy. In planning for a strong knowledge economy, the City will continue to assist, where appropriate, the post-secondary educational institutions in achieving their long-term goals. The City will work with PSIs and hospitals to help accommodate growth needs. The City supports the development of a new Civic Hospital campus and enhancements to other hospitals to meet the needs of a healthy growing city.

PSIs and hospitals are encouraged to create and maintain campus master plans in consultation with the City, surrounding neighbourhoods and other stakeholders. PSIs should provide for on-site housing for use by students, staff and faculty of such institutions. PSIs are encouraged to focus growth within their existing campus lands, as a first priority PSIs and hospitals will be supported in their efforts to better serve residents and businesses throughout the region by:

- a) Supporting and advancing research and development alliances;
- b) Supporting new enterprises in partnership with the business community on campuses;
- c) Linking to the growth of biomedical and biotechnology enterprises;
- d) Developing the skills of Ottawa's labour force as organizational and technological innovations shape economic prospects;
- e) Promoting the design of campuses with a high quality of public realm organized to promote visual and physical links with adjacent areas of the city;
- f) Connecting major institutions to the network of bicycle routes and pedestrian linkages; and
- h) Establishing new universities, colleges and hospitals or campuses thereof in locations with access to rapid transit and improving transit services to existing universities, colleges and hospitals not currently served by rapid transit. Should new or additional lands be required, development will be in accordance with Subsection 4.3 (Large Scale Institutions and Facilities).

3) Direct major employment to Hubs, Corridors and Special Districts

Jobs that are compatible and can mix with residential uses will be located within Hubs, Corridors and Special Districts. Additionally, employers with the highest employment densities, such as office uses, hospitals, as well as larger retail clusters that draw people from beyond the adjacent neighbourhood, are expected to locate in proximity to rapid transit stations.

4) Integrate economic activities with residential and other land uses

An employment area is generally a cluster of employment uses, such as traditional business parks built for manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, fuel depots; and corporate office parks for research and development. The *Provincial Policy Statement* requires municipalities to protect and preserve employment areas for current and future use. In jurisdictions whose economies are more heavily reliant on manufacturing, warehousing and other high-impact activities, 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.

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 not be segregated from other uses and should be allowed to evolve into mixed-use areas. This also provides more flexibility in responding to the impacts of how people live within and move through neighbourhoods post-COVID-19 pandemic. It supports longer term pandemic and economic resiliency through bringing workplaces closer to where people live and more integrated into neighbourhoods. High-nuisance uses, however, should continue to be separated from sensitive uses. Land shall be protected and preserved for their current and future use.

Commercial and community uses within Neighbourhoods are generally service oriented and are limited in size or area. These uses tend to be schools, community centres, recreational facilities, libraries and smaller scale commercial uses including limited retail, restaurants and personal service businesses. These uses are part of achieving 15-minute neighbourhoods. Some Neighbourhood areas, depending on their specific context, may have requirements for minimum employment uses and/or density.

5) Create conditions for small-business growth

Small and start-up businesses in a range of sectors, from retail to small-scale manufacturing, creative and cultural industries, consulting and people services, where they do not create incompatibilities or nuisances, need to be nurtured and supported through regulations that provide opportunities to use a variety of spaces in a way that minimizes initial start-up costs and ongoing overhead. Through this Official Plan and the implementing Zoning By-law, the City will be simplifying the rules that apply to small businesses so that more are permitted as of right.

Commercial services are an important element for 15-minute neighbourhoods that provide residents, workers and tourists with their daily and weekly needs. These areas are ideal for small-businesses and this Plan intends to promote their growth through land use permissions, increasing viable transportation options and enhancing and animating the public realm to improve overall user experiences.

6) Protect and preserve areas for clusters of economic activities that cannot be integrated with sensitive land uses

Within the urban area, employment uses that cannot typically compete with rents of other uses in Hubs, Corridors or Neighbourhoods, and have potential adverse impacts on adjacent sensitive uses, require clustering of similar type uses located in Industrial and Logistics and Mixed Industrial areas. These uses tend to be manufacturing, construction, storage, trades and logistics related. Many of these land intensive, high-impact uses are also located within the rural area. These clusters provide an important function and will be protected as Rural Industrial and Logistics areas.

7) Support growth of important economic generators through Special District policies

Certain areas that have a unique economic development context and require a tailored policy approach to development are located within Special Districts. These areas fall into two categories: city-defining Special Districts which includes Parliament and Confederation Boulevard, Rideau Canal, ByWard Market, Lansdowne and Ottawa River Islands Special Districts and Special Economic Districts which includes Kanata North and the Ottawa International Airport.

Tourism is a major employment sector in Ottawa. In 2016, ongoing activities carried out by businesses that serve tourists represented over 30,600 full time jobs with employees earning \$1 billion in direct wages and salaries.

The Kanata North Economic District and the Ottawa International Airport Economic District are major economic engines for the City and will continue to play an important role in the future. Kanata North is a nationally significant technology cluster and a major contributor to Ottawa's metropolitan economy. It is a large area of approximately 500 hectares of land with, as of 2020, more than 24,000 tech jobs and 540 companies. The Ottawa International Airport plays an important role in the mega-region as part of the transportation network providing connections regionally, nationally and internationally for both people and goods. It functions as a gateway to the city and a transportation hub, which includes connections to the O-Train network. Each year, more than 5 million travelers pass through the airport and more than \$2 billion in economic activity takes place in the vicinity. There are opportunities in the surrounding area to broaden the employment and commercial uses that benefit from proximity to the airport and O-Train connection.

These areas require their own unique and flexible planning regimes that allow them to adapt over time and be nimble enough to respond to new business and employment opportunities. Planning policies should focus less on land use and more on form and appropriate integration with their economic functions.

The City has a number of other economic districts that have their own secondary plans or area-specific policies. These include Bayview Yards, the new Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus, the Carp Road Corridor and the Orleans corridor. [Amendment 5, By-law 2023-403, Omnibus 1 item 4, September 13, 2023]

8) Protect locations for activities related to goods movement including freight, storage and logistics

Major goods movement facilities and corridors that support strategic freight, storage and logistics locations shall be protected for the long term. Land in strategic locations with proximity and access to provincial 400 series highways is required in both the urban and rural areas to accommodate industrial, warehousing and logistic type uses. These types of uses need larger separation distances from residential uses and require access to a highway interchange. Likewise, new development proposed on adjacent lands to existing or planned corridors and transportation facilities should be supportive of, and not conflict with, the long-term purposes of the corridor by mitigating or minimizing negative impacts. These sites should be protected for this use provided they are not on lands designated Agricultural Resource Area.

9) Support rural economic development throughout all sectors

Ottawa also has one of the largest rural areas of any city in Canada. The rural area makes up 80 per cent of the City, is home to over 86,000 residents and over 2,000 businesses which includes approximately 1000 farming operations. It plays an important economic function in Ottawa, with rural businesses generating approximately \$1.96 billion in annual revenues. Ottawa's rural area is dominated by high-value industries such as agriculture, construction, mineral extraction, manufacturing and warehousing. The rural area is also home to 26 villages, which have varying degrees of enterprise and economic activity. Rural villages and their mainstreets are important to the vitality of rural areas as hubs for essential services and a central component to identity, culture and heritage.

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 in Villages or the urban area, with limited support for Rural Countryside areas; overly prescriptive definitions of home occupations; gaps in the local farm-to-table food chain, including in local food production, processing and packaging; lack of connectivity in both technology (internet) and mobility (transit); and the impacts of climate change and expansion of the urban area 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 support the rural community and attract tourism. A Community Planning Permit System, a tool allowing for a consolidated approval process for developments that would have otherwise been subject to multiple planning approvals, will be pursued in the Rural Transect. That system will help streamline approvals and provide greater flexibility, in support of the rural economy.

The economic activities in the rural area are varied and provide an important function to the city. It is critical to protect important resources as well as strategic locations for current and future use while allowing for innovation and flexibly for complementary uses in order to support growth and a sustainable rural economy. Industry jobs such as agriculture and resource extraction primarily occur in the rural areas and are protected as Agricultural Resource Areas, Bedrock Resource Areas and Sand and Gravel Resource Areas. While these employment sectors may not be dense employment areas, they comprise a significant land area.

Villages will continue to be a focus for employment and services and secondary plans establish more detailed categories for land use. However, this Plan recognizes that employment in the rural area can be associated with residential uses as home occupations and that certain services are advantageous to locate in more rural settings closer to customers, provided that they are supportive of a rural lifestyle. Higher-nuisance uses that are not appropriate in villages will generally be accommodated in Rural Industrial and Logistics areas, which shall be located in strategic locations with access to provincial 400 series highways or near resources, such as aggregates.

Do you want to know where the embedded economic development policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement economic development objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the economic development icon



A sample of the policies are:

Sections

3.1 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 4.1.6 | 6.1.1 | 6.1.2 | 6.3.1 | 6.4.1 | 6.5.1 | 9.1.1 | 9.1.2 | 9.3



2.2.3 Energy and Climate Change



Climate change is the greatest global threat in the 21st Century according to the World Health Organization. A 2019 report from the Government of Canada found that Canada is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world and the costs of natural disasters, such as floods and fires, have risen dramatically. Climate change impacts people’s health and safety, their communities, infrastructure, economy and the natural environment.

Municipalities have a responsibility to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adopt measures to adapt to climate change, and many cities across the country have declared a climate emergency, such as Ottawa, who did so in 2019.

Ottawa shall be a city that is energy conscious, reduces emissions and is more resilient to the impacts of climate change. In carrying out our municipal responsibilities, the City can influence roughly half of our total community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. The Official Plan plays a critical role in achieving the Council-approved long-term target to reduce community emissions 100 per cent by 2050 (see Figure 1).

In addition to taking significant steps to reduce our emissions, Ottawa must also prepare for the impacts of a changing climate. A liveable city is one where people can live, work and play in all future climate conditions. Local climate projection studies show that in the coming decades, Ottawa will be much warmer year-round and could have four times (~43 days) as many very hot days (over 30°C) by the 2050s as during the 2010s. There will be more precipitation, with wetter winters, springs and falls and drier summers. Seasons will shift with shorter winters and more freeze-thaw events. Our city needs to be prepared for extreme events such as heat waves, high winds, heavy rains and freezing rain.

Implementation of climate-related policies will be done with an equity and inclusion lens that examines how people are affected differently by climate change and considers the needs of the vulnerable. While the Official Plan sets out goals and policies that embed climate considerations as part of the land use framework, the City’s broader goals and objectives with respect to climate mitigation and adaptation are contained in the Climate Change Master Plan. The policies of this Plan should be read as supportive of the Climate Change Master Plan.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Plan a compact and connected City
- 2) Apply sustainable and resilient site and building design as part of development
- 3) Prioritize a shift to energy efficient transportation modes
- 4) Enable the use of local renewable energy sources
- 5) Reduce the urban heat island effect and help protect the vulnerable from extreme heat
- 6) Build resilience to future flood risks and increased stormwater runoff
- 7) Protect, and enhance tree canopy and protect wetlands and other natural areas and use nature-based solutions
- 8) Enable sustainable local food production



Policy Intent:

1) Plan a compact and connected city

Ottawa will meet the demands of the 21st Century by planning sustainable, liveable and resilient communities which consume less energy for transportation and housing. Given 90 per cent of the city's total emissions originate from the building and transportation sectors, higher-density development will be encouraged in areas that are close to transit and within walking distance of a wide range of services. Promoting compact urban built form with a mix of land uses and housing options will ensure both energy efficient and sustainable patterns of development over the long term.

2) Apply sustainable and resilient site and building design as part of development

Buildings are the largest energy consumer in Ottawa and account for the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions. Site design also influences healthy communities and sustainable transportation choices. To achieve both climate mitigation and adaptation objectives, sustainable and resilient design measures will be applied as part of site planning and exterior building design, in order to:

- a) Conserve energy and improve the energy and emission performance of buildings with a target of net zero emission homes by 2030;
- h) Support the adaptive reuse or retrofit of existing buildings;
- i) Shift the economy by supporting new low carbon technologies and trades such as geothermal systems and district energy systems in areas of the city containing higher thermal energy density;
- j) Reduce peak demand and build resilience to power disruptions;
- k) Protect health by reducing the urban heat island effect and improving access to shade and other cooling amenities;
- l) Reduce flood risks and manage increased stormwater runoff; and
- m) Enable active transportation, transit use and outdoor recreation in all weather conditions.

3) Prioritize a shift to energy efficient transportation modes

The second highest source of emissions in Ottawa is transportation. In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the reliance on the personal automobile needs to be replaced with active and zero emission transportation modes such as public transit, walking and cycling. The societal uptake of electric vehicles also offers a low carbon alternative for Ottawa residents, but continued reliance on low-occupancy private vehicles does nothing to relieve congestion, and that model has to change. To support Ottawa's transformation to low carbon transportation options, land use patterns and mobility considerations will require frequent and efficient public transit service as well as sustainable transportation infrastructure and other investments. This may include, for example, segregated cycle tracks and electric vehicle charging stations along streets and within parking areas.

4) Enable the use of local renewable energy sources

Locally generated energy reduces greenhouse gas emissions while building resilience to fluctuating energy availability and costs. In 2017, only 5 per cent of the city's total energy consumption was generated or supplied from local, renewable sources. Ottawa will need to transition quickly to the use of energy supplied from green, renewable and local sources over fossil fuels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support current and future housing and employment and protect Ottawa's long-term energy

security and stimulating investments that will grow our local economy. Building local renewable energy sources will be achieved by:

- a) Facilitating small scale local energy generation and storage as well as identifying areas suitable for larger utility scale generation, including solar, wind and hydropower; and
- n) Diverting waste from landfill to promote material reuse, resource recovery and energy generation.

5) Reduce the urban heat island effect and help protect the vulnerable from extreme heat

Rising temperatures due to climate change will affect the liveability of our communities. The design of the built and natural environment also impacts how temperatures are felt. In built-up areas with limited greenspace temperatures can increase by several degrees due to the urban heat island effect. Mitigating the impacts of heat and protecting the most vulnerable will require actions such as providing more shading, reducing the urban heat island effect and providing access to cooling amenities. These actions will also be integrated into the City's various design guidelines.

6) Build resilience to future flood risks and increased stormwater runoff

Flooding is now the costliest type of natural disaster in Canada. Floods damage property and infrastructure, contaminate drinking water and affect people's safety, finances and physical and mental health. Changing snow and rainfall patterns and increases in the total amount and intensity of rainfall can increase flooding near watercourses and in neighbourhoods. Increased stormwater runoff also negatively impacts local watercourses. Resilience to floods and the ability to manage increased stormwater runoff will be strengthened by:

- a) Restricting development in flood plains and mitigating risks in areas vulnerable to flooding under future climate conditions;
- o) Implementing stormwater management practices and designing infrastructure that is resilient to future climate conditions, including extreme weather events; and
- p) Using Low Impact Development stormwater management features where feasible to manage smaller, frequent rainfall events.

7) Protect, and enhance tree canopy and protect wetlands and other natural areas and use nature-based solutions

Nature builds resilience to the impacts of climate change through flood protection, heat mitigation, stormwater management, biodiversity and improved mental, social and physical health. Natural resilience to climate change can be enhanced by:

- a) Protecting, enhancing and managing trees, shorelines, wetlands and other natural areas for the climate services they provide;
- q) Considering and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the natural environment; and
- r) Managing the risks of wildland fire.

8) Enable sustainable local food production.

Agriculture can be both a contributor and a solution to climate change. Climate change will impact global food production through rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns and risk of droughts and extreme weather events that damage crops. These global climate impacts can affect the availability and price of food in Ottawa as supply chains are disrupted. Local farming also needs to adapt to

changing climate conditions and can reduce emissions by sequestering carbon through regenerative practices such as low-tillage or agro-forestry. Local agriculture businesses in Ottawa have already shown their capacity to innovate in areas such as beneficial capture and reuse of previously wasted energy.

Ottawa is fortunate to have a robust agricultural sector and can enhance food security and build resilience to these global impacts by:

- a) Protecting agricultural lands;
- s) Supporting the diversification and resilience of the agricultural economy, including the importance of indoor and outdoor crop production;
- t) Supporting community gardens and enabling produce to be grown, processed and distributed across the city, including in urban areas and villages; and
- u) Encouraging agricultural operations to deploy practices that adapt to future climate conditions and sequester carbon.

In addition to the Official Plan, other City plans and programs are key in meeting our climate change goals. The Climate Change Master Plan and associated Energy Evolution and Climate Resiliency strategies provide the analysis and action plans for City-wide action. The Infrastructure, Transportation, Solid Waste, Parks and Recreation Facilities and Greenspace and Urban Forest Master Plans shall include policies and programs to help meet our emission targets and adapt to future climate conditions. Climate mitigation and resiliency shall also be reflected in long-range plans and programs on asset management, capital planning and finance to ensure a strategic, harmonized approach.

Do you want to know where the embedded energy and climate change policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement energy and climate change objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the energy and climate change icon



A sample of the policies are:

Sections

3.2 | 3.3 | 4.1.3 | 4.1.4 | 4.4.6 | 4.6.3 | 4.6.4 | 4.7.1 | 4.9.1 | 4.10.3 | 4.11, Policy 3
7.3 | 11.1 | 11.3 | 5.1.1 Policy 5 | 5.6.4.1 | 10.1.3 | 10.3



2.2.4 Healthy and Inclusive Communities



Liveable communities shall foster health, inclusivity and sustainability to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The City's physical layout and design play an important role in shaping health and well-being by enabling Ottawa's diverse population to thrive and live their lives to the fullest.

Ottawa, like the rest of Canada, is facing growing health challenges with accompanying rising health-related and societal costs that cannot be addressed by the health care sector alone. Ottawa's population is ageing. Chronic diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, dementia, cerebrovascular disease and diabetes, are the leading causes of death in Ottawa. Physical inactivity, unhealthy eating and obesity are known to contribute to these diseases. Mental health challenges such as social isolation and loneliness are also health concerns in our communities. Climate change and extreme weather impacts are increasingly felt through extreme heat and cold events. Traffic-related air pollution as well as injuries and deaths related to motor vehicles point to the importance of providing safe, convenient and sustainable modes of transportation. In addition, major disruptors such as historic pandemics underscore the importance of building resiliency into our built environments.

The built and natural environment can influence all these conditions, with significant effects on quality of life and well-being. The Official Plan requires the development of healthy and resilient communities through establishing the built and natural environment conditions that are needed to sustain long-term health. The Official Plan is one tool to promote positive health outcomes, while other City strategies and initiatives can help advance population health in matters beyond land use.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Encourage development of healthy, walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods that feature a range of housing options, supporting services and amenities
- 2) Build accessible, inclusive communities, and design for all ages, including children and older adults
- 3) Promote health through sustainability
- 4) Advance human health through decision-making on the built environment



Photo by: City of Ottawa



Policy Intent:

1) Encourage development of healthy, walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods that feature a range of housing options, supporting services and amenities

Healthy, walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods are compact, well-connected places with a clustering of a diverse mix of land uses; this includes a range of housing types and affordability, shops, services, access to food, schools and local child care, employment, greenspaces, parks and pathways. They are complete communities that support active transportation and transit, reduce car dependency and enable people to live car-light or car-free.

15-minute neighbourhoods allow people to walk to meet their daily or weekly needs by bringing destinations closer together. They enable easy, safe and enjoyable connections between destinations (See Figure 5).

15-minute neighbourhoods are an important strategy for creating the conditions for healthier, more sustainable neighbourhoods. 15-minute neighbourhoods promote social and physical health as they help make the healthy choice the easier choice. They also foster health through supporting community identity, cultural expression, social connections and advance equity and inclusion goals. They help reduce greenhouse gas emissions through enabling the use of sustainable transportation modes and decreasing reliance on personal vehicles. 15-minute neighbourhoods support resiliency to major disruptors and events such as pandemics by promoting sustainability, social cohesion, ensuring that people have local access to goods and services within their community using sustainable transportation modes and opportunities for exposure to nature.

Where the conditions for, and components of, 15-minute neighbourhoods exist, the intent of this Plan is to maintain and strengthen them. Where conditions for, and components of, 15-minute neighbourhoods are not all present, the intent of this Plan is to seed them and permit them so that they can materialize over time.

15-minute neighbourhoods vary from one context to another and are always evolving. Depending on the local context and the people that live there, there are a range of features and characteristics. Key attributes of 15-minute neighbourhoods includes the following,

Components:

- a) A mix of housing options including family-sized units, for a range of incomes, including working with senior governments and community partners to include core-affordable housing which strives to meet the City's targets under its 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan
- b) Population levels and residential densities that support local shops and services;
- c) Public service facilities such as parks and public spaces, schools, community centres, licensed child care centres, recreational facilities and libraries. Publicly accessible places for people to connect that contribute to quality of life and well-being are especially important as neighbourhoods continue to intensify;
- d) Neighbourhood retail and commercial services in order to reduce travel time for daily needs and provide jobs and other economic opportunities for residents;
- e) Access to healthy food through grocery stores, community gardens, urban agriculture and farmers markets;
- f) Supporting housing and local amenities that meet the needs of diverse racial and cultural populations within the city.

Sustainable Mobility:

- a) Shaded pedestrian and cycling-friendly streets and pathway networks connecting residents to amenities and services that provide a viable alternative to the use of a private automobile;
- b) Safe and convenient environments for children and youth to play, and to walk, cycle or take transit to school; and
- c) Safe and convenient access to transit.

Urban Design:

- a) High-quality, human scale urban design that creates a sense of place. This includes a vibrant public realm, with streets, trees, gathering places and local amenities that are shaded and green. This will change the way the spaces on streets are allocated on a temporary basis through events or pilot projects and on a permanent basis where Council approves a permanent rebalancing, such as a woonerf, that is consistent with transportation plans; and
- b) A public realm that fosters social connections by inviting people to be in, rather than only travel through places, in all seasons.

Existing communities will evolve over time into healthier, more connected and complete 15-minute neighbourhoods as development and road re-construction occurs. This evolution depends on a mix of uses, a mobility network that enables sustainable transportation and urban design that prioritizes safe and comfortable environments. The concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods is intended to guide the evolution of existing neighbourhoods, as well as new greenfield development.

The components of 15-minute neighbourhoods will be advanced through a range of planning tools and processes. The policies of the Official Plan enable 15-minute neighbourhoods through many implementing policies. This includes broad land use permissions in concentrated areas that are within a 15-minute walk to residents. This Plan also acknowledges that other stakeholders outside of the land use planning realm will play a role in advancing 15-minute neighbourhoods. City Master Plans, local plans and guidelines will provide more detail and geographic specificity to guide the evolution of these neighbourhoods.

2) Build accessible, inclusive communities, and design for all ages, including children and older adults

Health is shaped by the conditions in which we live, work and play. These are known as the social determinants of health and can affect some groups' health and well-being more than others. Inequities in communities can be mitigated through the design of the built environment. Planning decisions shall support development of equitable, inclusive, gender and age-friendly communities in ways that build the city's vibrancy and resiliency and foster community health and well-being. Plans and policies shall ensure that communities and places are designed to consider a diversity of experiences, including children, older adults, people with disabilities, women and gender-diverse persons, those identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ and people living with lower incomes. An equitable and inclusive community considers the needs of various cultural groups and seeks to reduce barriers and promote equity for people who are racialized. It integrates opportunities to advance reconciliation and engage with Indigenous peoples. Neighbourhoods designed to be inclusive help to ensure communities are built for everyone, meet needs across the lifespan and contribute to overall health and quality of life.

Healthy, inclusive communities:

- a) Integrate and honour Indigenous values, knowledge and cultures in city-building, through relationship-building and engagement. This includes through Indigenous representation in planning, placemaking, as well as environmental stewardship;
- b) Integrate age-friendly design by considering the needs of children and older adults, and support aging-in-place;
- c) Are designed to be universally accessible;
- d) Provide housing across the city for a range of ages, income levels and backgrounds, and help meet housing needs across the lifespan;
- e) Support, and prioritize, active transportation for all ages and abilities. This includes the needs of children and older adults in the design of safe, convenient active transportation infrastructure and sustainable mobility options that can be used all seasons, including winter;
- f) Support placemaking features that consider the needs of women, children and older adults and cultural groups. This could include child-friendly urban design, inclusive public gathering places and cultural assets; and
- g) Leverage opportunities to respond to land use, transportation and infrastructure needs in neighbourhoods identified in Ottawa's Neighbourhood Equity Index, as having strong equity concerns. Master plans, local plans and development can help strengthen neighbourhoods, providing a better quality of life.

3) Promote health through sustainability

A healthy community is one that supports sustainable environments for present and future generations. Health is promoted through conserving, protecting, rehabilitating and creating safe environments.

In addition to Subsection 2.2.3, a healthy community is also protected through:

- a) Promoting resilient, sustainable and health-supportive building design;
- b) Recognizing the value of trees and access to greenspaces, parks and trail systems;
- c) Protecting health from natural and human-made hazards, including buffering sensitive land uses from traffic-related air pollution;

- d) Supporting the diversification and resilience of the rural economy;
- e) Allowing for community gardens, farmer markets and indoor and outdoor crop production in urban areas and villages to promote equitable access to healthy food, healthy eating, and active living, helps reduce food insecurity and social isolation while providing broader environmental, aesthetic, and educational benefits; and
- f) Promoting a zero-waste Ottawa through progressive, collective and innovative action resulting in the reduction and reuse of water, diversion and resource recovery of materials such as food and organic waste so that minimal residual waste is sent to landfill.

4) Advance human health through decision-making on the built environment

Land-use practices should be conducive to good health. Policies, plans, guidelines and decision-making that flow from this Official Plan shall recognize the interdependencies between health and the built environment. They enable positive health outcomes and are sensitive to the trade-offs needed to achieve healthy and inclusive communities overall. This includes considering the health and equity implications associated with housing, transportation, parks and public spaces, urban design and the natural environment.

Policies are embedded throughout this Official Plan to advance healthy and inclusive communities' goals through development, the preparation of local plans, other City master plans and design guidelines. Mental health can be promoted through exposure to trees, parks and greenspace and natural environments. Mental health is also supported through creating spaces that enable social connections, fostering community involvement, supporting access to community resources and encouraging a sense of belonging. Regular physical activity, with all the positive health co-benefits, can be encouraged through designing safe, all-season and convenient active transportation infrastructure for walking, cycling and transit, as well as trail systems in all communities. Health hazards can be mitigated through protective practices. Sustainable environments have wide-ranging positive health impacts. The basic conditions needed to sustain health, such as housing and access to daily amenities such as food, are fostered through a supportive surrounding built environment. Overall, community resiliency and a healthy population can be supported through all-season active transportation networks, access to local amenities and healthy and green urban design.



Photo by: City of Ottawa

15-Minute Neighbourhood

Figure 5



Housing
(i.e., low, medium and high rise)



Retail, Commercial and Health Services
(e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, doctor's offices)



Public Service Facilities
(e.g., recreation facilities, libraries, indoor community centres)



Education
(e.g., schools, licensed child care)



Parks and Greenspaces
(e.g., playgrounds, pathways)



Sustainable Mobility
(e.g. cycling facilities, sidewalks, transit)

Do you want to know where the embedded Healthy and Inclusive Communities policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement healthy and inclusive communities objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the healthy and inclusive communities icon



A sample of the policies are:

Sections

3.2 | 3.3 | 4.1.1 | 4.1.2 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.6.3 | 4.6.6 | 4.8.2 | 4.10 | 5.4.4 |
6.1.1 | 6.2.1 | 6.3.2 | 6.3.3 | 9.4.1 | 10 | 11.1 | 11.3

2.2.5 Gender and Racial Equity



Gender and Racial equity are important dimensions of planning a healthy and inclusive city. Inequalities exist and land use planning should work to eliminate them by addressing gender and racial inequities. [Amendment 5, By-law 2023-403, Omnibus 1 item 3, September 13, 2023]

The intersectional way a city is experienced by women, gender diverse persons, members of Black, Indigenous, racialized and religious communities can be very different. The City will develop a toolbox to assess gender and racial equity in planning at all stages, including studies, guidelines, local plans and the processing of development applications within the context of the *Planning Act*.

Although the roles of women and men have changed considerably over the past decades, this is not necessarily reflected in our urban fabric. Planning processes that recognize intersectionality, or the way that people’s social identities can overlap and lead to compounding experiences of discrimination can help create inclusive communities. For example, women who are immigrants may face additional barriers, such as lack of affordable housing or inhospitable pedestrian environments.

Women typically earn less relative to men, frequently handle household and care tasks, and have more complicated commute patterns.

Systemic racism has a devastating impact when it serves to deny members of Black, Indigenous, racialized and religious communities the equal opportunity to succeed. Such racism is reflected in disparities regarding wealth, income, criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education. It is therefore the responsibility of governments to combat the effects of systemic racism.

City-led planning initiatives should, to the greatest extent possible, include engagement with Urban Indigenous community members (First Nations, Métis and Inuit residents), Indigenous frontline and community workers, and Indigenous-led organizations, along with Leaders and Elders from the Algonquin Anishinaabeg Nation.

Incorporating gender and racial equity can improve the quality of life for all residents.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Meet the housing needs of women and racialized communities
- 2) Improved mobility options for women and racialized communities
- 3) Improved access to amenities



Photo by: istock photo



Policy Intent:

1) Application of a gender and racial equity lens to meet the housing needs of women, Black and racialized communities and new immigrants

In Ottawa, in 2021, 80 per cent of lone parent families are led by women, and 90 per cent of one parent families, that are on the centralized waiting list for affordable housing, are female-led families. Access to high-quality, affordable housing for Indigenous people, Black and racialized communities and new immigrants must be one of the City's highest priorities. It is therefore crucial that as the City creates plans for neighbourhoods to intensify, such plans should pursue all opportunities to create the conditions that encourage a broad range of market-affordable and core affordable housing options. Housing that supports Gender and Racial Equity includes housing that meets the needs of families with children, including the availability of family sized units, spaces to play, shared communal spaces within buildings, space for strollers and bike parking.

2) Understand and address the specific housing needs of Indigenous peoples

The City needs to do more work to understand the specific needs of Indigenous peoples and work with Indigenous communities across the city to pursue all opportunities to address these needs.

3) Improve mobility options for women and in neighbourhoods where there are large numbers of residents who may face transportation-related barriers to social and economic participation

Women rely more on public transit than men. Women's routines and family work frequently include child care and care for others and their daily trip patterns are often characterized by more stops as a result. Improving transit and active transportation in neighbourhoods with strong equity concerns as identified in Ottawa's Neighbourhood Equity Index is important as residents depend on these options. Recognizing these patterns, the City should strive for a variety of housing choices, access to work opportunities and child care in areas well-served by public transit.

4) Improve access to amenities

15-minute neighbourhoods are neighbourhoods that support daily needs by providing a range of local amenities to advance more gender-equitable environments that are available on foot, by cycling, or using transit. These amenities include the provision of basic shopping, parks, libraries, recreation and other community infrastructure that are an essential support for those who frequently handle household and care tasks.

A particularly important service in supporting Gender and Racial Equity is child care. The built environment can support women's ability to fully participate in the workforce and in public life through the provision of adequate and accessible licensed child care centres close to where people live or work. The City should ensure that its zoning is broadly permissive of locating licensed child care.

Good planning should make a city more liveable for all, notwithstanding that the way a city is experienced can be very different across community groups. To align with the City of Ottawa's Gender and Racial Equity Strategy, and subsequent equity frameworks, planning at all stages, including zoning and transportation studies, the development of local plans and the review of development applications against the policies of the Official Plan, needs to identify and respond to the priorities, preferences and concerns of women, gender diverse persons and Black, Indigenous, racialized, and religious communities.

A city that is planned to consider the needs of women and racialized communities provides many benefits to the population as a whole. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- a) Recognizing Indigenous, racialized, older women, immigrant women and gender diverse persons are identified as priority populations in city-led planning initiatives;
- b) Embedding consideration of gender and race into City policy plans to provide a coordinated approach to achieving gender equity for all, including people who are marginalized;
- c) Where possible, disaggregating planning data by race, gender, age, socio-economic status and other equity factors where the data is available striving to take into account all needs and experiences in planning processes;
- d) Actively seeking input from women and gender diverse persons and racialized communities, including traditionally underrepresented groups through all consultation processes for City planning initiatives;
- e) Encouraging the development of walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods that meet the needs of all women and include community-oriented uses such as community centres, parks and libraries in accordance with overall City master plans;
- f) Encouraging the availability of appropriate housing in all neighbourhoods for families led by women, gender diverse persons and communities that experience marginalization;
- g) Encouraging the development of a variety of building types within communities with units for a range of income levels as well as larger units to accommodate families for ownership and at all levels of market-affordable and core-affordable rents;
- h) Encouraging the design of buildings and site plans that are able to provide amenities that meet the needs of families with children, including convenience retail amenities, ground floor stroller and bicycle storage, children's play areas and areas for socialization;
- i) Using other City plans, working with senior levels of government and community partners to increase safe options for women, gender diverse persons, and members of racialized communities fleeing violence including family-sized units in shelters, transitional and supportive housing;
- j) Providing parks where children can play in all neighbourhoods as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan and providing opportunities for recreation, leisure activities and cultural expression to meet the needs of an increased population;
- k) Direction for the Zoning By-law to permit spaces in all communities, including the City's newest greenfield areas, for licensed child care centres and that local plans include direction on the provision of child care facilities;

- l) Reviewing equity considerations in the Transportation Master Plan, including: planning that considers women’s travel patterns and recognizes that different groups including people who are experiencing marginalization may have different travel patterns with a priority on improving transit walkability and safety of walking routes;
- m) Improving walkability with shorter blocks, introducing sidewalks where there are none (or if sidewalks are not feasible, lowering vehicular speeds), wider sidewalks, rest areas, safe crossings and adequate space for trees. Longer blocks can create barrier effects, and to avoid them public passageways should be defined;
- n) Adequate lighting and increasing separated cycling facilities are built so people feel safe cycling and walking.

Do you want to know where the embedded Gender and Racial Equity policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement Gender and Racial Equity objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the Gender and Racial Equity icon



Sections

4.1.1 | 4.2.2 Policy 1 | 4.2.3 | 4.4.1 | 4.4.2 | 4.6.3 | 4.8.2 | 4.8.3 Policy 2 | 4.10.1 Policy 2 | 10.4 Policy 1 | 11.3 | 11.4



2.2.6 Culture



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

Access to culture has a direct impact on 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. The benefits of culture are reflected in greater social cohesion and a healthy and growing creative economy. A vibrant culture also attracts and retains talent, new business and tourism 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.

The culture policies in this Plan relate to the incorporation of cultural considerations in land use planning. Cultural related policies in the Plan address the need for new development to consider the role of culture in creating a sense of identity and pursuing equity and inclusion. This is particularly significant for groups that are marginalized. Cultural policies have been embedded throughout this plan to support the four objectives outlined below.



Photo by: City of Ottawa



WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1) Create spaces and places for culture to live, grow and innovate
- 2) Reinforce neighbourhood and place identity through architecture and urban design
- 3) Promote the arts as an important element of placemaking
- 4) Strengthen the economic impact of the creative and cultural industries



Photo by: City of Ottawa



Policy Intent:

1) Create spaces and places for culture to live, grow and innovate

The development and preservation of spaces for artistic, cultural and heritage activities will be supported throughout the City. Co-location of artistic, cultural, sporting and recreational activities where possible will be encouraged as a way to promote vibrant and liveable 15-minute neighbourhoods, villages and community hubs. Preserving our unique cultural, natural and built heritage, including places and stories significant to the Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation, ensures that Ottawa remains an enjoyable place to live and reflects our commitment to reconciliation and recognition of Indigenous peoples as the first inhabitants of this land. A city rich in cultural and built heritage is also an attractive destination for tourism and investment.

2) Reinforce neighbourhood and place identity through architecture and urban design

The image of Ottawa and of its neighbourhoods is constructed over time by its unique range of architectural expressions, its urban design sophistication and the look and feel of its public realm. The built environment shall continue to play a role in defining, reinforcing and conveying the image of Ottawa to its people and to the world. Underrepresented cultural communities, in both urban and rural areas, will be highlighted and commemorated throughout Ottawa.

Preserving our unique cultural and built heritage, including places and stories significant to the Algonquin Anishinabe Host Nation, ensures that Ottawa remains an enjoyable place to live, and an attractive destination for tourism and investment.

3) Promote the arts as an important element of placemaking

Art 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 contribute to social and economic vibrancy. To support local artists, and cultural development more broadly, barriers will be reduced to enable artistic, music and culture events and expression. This includes allocating space in the public realm for cultural expression and ensuring an effective approach to zoning that nurtures cultural development.

Public art in highly visible locations, both within the public realm or on private property, can contribute to an inclusive society by reflecting all culture and gender diversity. These initiatives will be supported throughout the city in accordance with the Public Art Policy, including through allocating money in municipal and P3 capital construction budgets, facilitating the installation of public art on City-owned lands, as well as on private lands through the development process. These important and valuable public art assets will be managed in accordance with the Comprehensive Asset Management Policy.

4) Strengthen the economic impact of the creative and cultural industries

Building on municipal cultural planning initiatives such as the Ottawa Music Strategy, the establishment of special events and film permitting processes, and the work of the Ottawa Film Office, the City will continue to promote culture as an important contributor to economic development, and reduce barriers to enable arts, music and culture events.

The City's inventory of local cultural assets will inform the evaluation of development proposals, support environmental assessments and help identify cultural gaps and opportunities when preparing new local plans.

Supporting existing, or creating new cultural assets can provide economic development, particularly when considering the adaptive reuse of brownfields, development of vacant and/or underutilized sites; and in the expansion or conversion of existing buildings; and mixed-use development

Do you want to know where the embedded Culture policies are located in the Official Plan?

Policies that implement culture objectives are identified throughout the Official Plan by the culture icon



A sample of the policies are:

Sections

4.8.1 | 5.1.1 Policy 2 | 5.2.1 Policy 4 | 5.4.4 Policy 1 | 6.2.2 | 6.3.1 Policy 4 | 6.3.3 | 6.6.1 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 8.4 Policy 3 | 11.3