

WESTBORO INFILL ZONING STUDY

As We Heard It



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Background

In October of 2018, Council adopted an Interim Control By-law (ICB) covering a significant portion of the Westboro neighbourhood. The intent of this By-law is to review "the land-use policies associated with triplex dwellings and dwellings that are over 400 square metres in Gross Floor Area within the area described below and assess the suitability and compatibility of these housing typologies in the context of intensification within the study area".

Staff prepared a Discussion Paper, which was released to the public in September of 2019. The intention of this Discussion Paper was to outline some of the issues associated with residential development within Westboro and to highlight some of the trends that underlie the current pace, form, and type of construction that has been occurring within the neighbourhood.

This report is intended to highlight a summary of the comments and major themes received on the Discussion Paper.

Consultation Activities Summary

The Discussion Paper was released on September 27, 2019. The comment period on the paper was open until October 25, 2019.

A total of 117 residents submitted written comments on the discussion paper during the aforementioned comment period.

In addition to a discussion of development and housing trends within the neighbourhood, the paper also set out the following list of questions to facilitate comments and discussion on Westboro development:

What characteristics of Westboro should we...

- *Preserve?*
- *Aim to minimize or eliminate over time?*
- *Enhance?*
- *Introduce or re-introduce?*

Are there examples of infill that do a good job of complementing or enhancing the neighbourhood's character? How, in your view, did these projects do this?

Are there examples of infill that detract from the neighbourhood's character? How, in your view, did these projects do this?

Westboro is a neighbourhood that is in close proximity to a variety of services, with parts of the neighbourhood in proximity to rapid transit. With this in mind, how can we ensure a range of housing options that are reasonably affordable to a wide range of Ottawa's population?

How can multi-unit dwellings (including triplexes) be designed in such a way as to better reflect and enhance the character of the neighbourhood?

If a multi-unit dwelling were designed so as to be similar in appearance and configuration to existing adjacent houses, what would be your opinion of the proposal?

Greenspace and trees are often seen as important functions of rear yard space. What do you consider to be other primary functions of rear yard space? How can these functions be achieved while adequately preserving greenspace?

How can the negative impacts of parking be better mitigated for new developments?

Given that automobile use drives demand for on-site parking, how can Westboro transition towards lower automobile use? What impacts can infill have in this transition?

The questions are intended to facilitate discussion on a wide variety of topics pertaining to development in Westboro. They are open-ended, and while many commenters elected to structure their answers around the questions, there was no requirement for residents to confine their comments to the questions being raised.

The list of themes shown in the “public comment themes” section of the table of contents are the themes that were most commonly encountered in responses to the discussion paper.

Given the open-ended nature of the questions asked of commenters, this report will focus less on how each of the above questions was answered and instead more on common themes that were prevalent among the comments received.

Public Comment Themes

This section contains excerpts of submissions from residents who provided comments on the Discussion Paper. These excerpts are grouped by common themes and appear in a numbered list, where one entry on the list represents the comments of one individual on a given subject. While these lists are not intended as an exact representation of the number of people who discussed a specific topic, the list is intended to give an idea of the most frequently discussed themes – the longer the list, the more common that topic.

The comments within each theme are quoted verbatim from those who made submissions on the Discussion Paper, except modified only as necessary to remove any information that might directly identify the commenter (e.g. address of their residence/property). **The views expressed in these comments do not necessarily represent the views of Staff.**

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHANGE/“OVERINTENSIFICATION” CONCERNS

The comments in this section pertain to the issue of change within Westboro, and the manner in which development and new construction have affected the neighbourhood on a broad scale. This also includes the rate at which this change or redevelopment is occurring.

The inclusion of a comment within this section is not to suggest that the comment represents an opposition to change in general, but merely that the comment relates to how the neighbourhood has changed and/or how it may or should change in the future.

1. “There need to be laws made about the number of infill houses built, not on their design characteristics. Will they preserve all of the mature trees on the property? Will they build respectful of neighbouring houses?”
2. “In every decision and requirement for infills it is important to always keep in mind that we all want to live neighbourhoods that are somewhat like villages. Let’s keep Westboro that way.”
3. “As Westboro has become a neighbourhood of choice, prices of real estate have increased quite dramatically. This has attracted developers, who are keen on profiting from the market situation. This is an important distinction to make: between house buyers and developers, although some property buyers have done so with development purposes in mind.

Initially, house buyers created a demand that drove real estate prices to increase, but as prices increased, and so did capital gains on sold properties, developers started being interested in the market. So, instead of a real demand from home buyers, we transitioned to a combined demand from home buyers and developers, which added to the upward pressure on prices. As prices continued to increase, it became less and less feasible for developers to make a profit on houses of equal size and/or number to what was pre-existing. Let’s make it clear that developers have been paying market prices for properties, which once you add the cost of demolishing the old building and building a new one, make it prohibitive for them to make a profit unless they build a much larger house or a larger number of units, or both.

Real estate agents have fanned the flames of the market, using among other strategies so called “bidding wars”.

So, the demand for housing in Westboro is not what has driven the re-development of old properties into larger and more numerous buildings/units, rather it is the mechanics of the market and the aggressive participation of developers that has created the “need” to build these bigger and more numerous units to ensure thick profits. Home buyers have no influence in such a market, as they are easily out powered by developers, and by their individual nature are not organized or budgeted or trained to exert any control on the real estate market.”

4. “This is at least the fourth time that I have been involved with one of these surveys. Each survey touches on the same topics because the same problems are being reported constantly. Doing a survey is virtually the same as doing nothing. It moves the ball down the road. Do you think that there is a way that a neighbourhood looks forward to change?? There isn’t any. In thirty years I haven’t seen anything done around here in the way of change that someone was not opposed to. Opposed even to the tearing down of old, rundown shacks.

Change is necessary. As I said, Detroit and other northern US cities are the results of no reinvestments in neighbourhoods. The first change that the City needs to do is stop doing surveys and get on with the job. That job is to enforce the current zoning laws — strictly. Expect appeals to the OMB but fight those appeals but with competent lawyers. Ease back on the documentation and surveys and apply common sense instead.”

5. “Westboro is not the only neighbourhood close to rapid transit or offers many services.... Yet it seems that much more intensification is taking place in Westboro. In the passed 8 years it seems that my street has double. Even new owner that bought an infill property are now

moving away, because there are more infills coming, and the reason they moved was they liked the variation of homes and street line trees... which is disappearing. I'm surprised that I'm not seeing the same intensification in other neighbourhoods (Sandy Hill, Alta Vista, Glebe) along the rapid transit."

6. "As a resident in this area I feel just utterly exhausted with the problems that poor infill has caused in the neighborhood. I'm sure I'm not the only one with "infill fatigue". Honestly, most of us just want to build a community where we can get to know our neighbours and live in a healthy and safe environment. Overall, I feel it has been too much all at once without the necessary infrastructure upgrades nor thoughtful planning as part of an overall neighbourhood/community plan to make good infill work. It has become the wild west of intensification."
7. "I am writing to you to express my concern on the Westboro infill zoning and redevelopment of properties. As someone who grew up in Westboro I am extremely saddened how developers have been given free reign to tear down houses and completely transform the character of the neighborhood.

Replacing small single family homes with monstrous triplexes/duplexes has changed the community itself; it is now only a community for the very affluent.

I am imploring the City to create bylaws and use its power to restrict developers from tearing down single family homes and creating triplexes and duplexes. These new developments are perpetuating the affordable housing crisis, destroying perfectly decent homes, and dramatically reducing green space (i.e. lawns) where families used to find comfort socializing, gardening, and playing outdoors. The redeveloped sites do not fit in with the history and character of Westboro."

8. "Over-intensification is changing the face of our neighbourhood, with unattractive square semi-detached houses and proposals of high rises infringing on residential neighbourhoods."
9. "I live on Tweedsmuir Avenue and there has been ongoing construction on this street for multiple years as one after another the old homes are torn down. The house next to mine was torn down last Fall and construction will be ongoing through the Spring. The developer has every right to do so but seeing my view of the sky to the North blocked out really brings home the reality of living next to infill. "I suppose it could be worse" is sad consolation.

I cannot imagine the anxiety the residents of Roosevelt directly affected by these developments are feeling. A person's home: their house, their yard, their neighbours... all these things are an integral part of our identity and to see so little care being paid to their humanity is appalling. Appalling but not surprising. I've become a hardened cynic of this city which is regretful.

When people ask me where I live and I say Westboro I almost universally hear in return how fortunate I am. And I agree. I love my neighbourhood. I've lived here on and off for the past 32 years. But a lot of the Westboro I love only exists in my memory now. It's inevitable, things change. But when things change for the worse it's important to speak out, which is why I am writing you today."

10. "Your report's hypothesis of eventual turnover from original houses would be regrettable as the existing homes as noted above add to the ambience of Westboro. Older homes: have

interesting architectural details, generally the driveways and garages have less dominance, the houses may be somewhat smaller and lower than new builds, older homes may have wider open side yards and of course boulevard and front yard trees are mature and stately. We see examples of smaller or rundown houses being sold and torn down and replaced due to market factors. Often the replacement seems to be at least a semi-detached selling for over \$1million per unit.”

11. “I find it very hard to look around this wonderful neighbourhood every day and see it being torn apart by development. Construction everywhere all the time. Beautiful old houses with many years of life left being torn down (creating huge waste for the landfill and environmental impact). So many big beautiful trees being cut down every day, with impacts to the whole ecosystem that depend on them. It is sad and it impacts the quality of life of all the people living here. Please help us get it under control and done in a way that adds value for everyone, not just the developers.”
12. “Westboro is quiet. One can leave the busyness of Richmond Rd. and walk back to one's home and it is as quiet and as safe as the suburbs. This is what is special about Westboro and why it is so desirable. Residents fear that overintensification will change all the things that make it so special.”
13. “Many of the older homes in Westboro are not very energy efficient and are showing their age and are rightfully in need of replacement. City planners have stated that as far Westboro is concerned: “It is reasonable to expect that, as the City grows and develops, this neighbourhood as a whole will gradually evolve into one that no longer predominantly consists of detached and/or semi-detached homes.” It is important that city planners be challenged on this *expectation*, since my experience and that of my father, grandfather and great grandfather suggests otherwise. Many single family homes, including our new home, will still be standing when planners take their pensions. I believe that a search of relevant building permits in Westboro over the last ten or twenty years would reveal that the vast majority have been for detached or semi-detached homes, which would undermine the planners’ expectations.”
14. “Some feel that intensification will necessarily destroy all that is good about Westboro, but this is a myth. Intensification is a great opportunity to fix all that is wanting about Westboro, and to allow those things that are lovely about Westboro to mature into fullness. Just because that hasn't been our experience so far, does not mean it is impossible. We haven't given it a try yet.”
15. “We are a neighbourhood. We help each other out... we don't mow the lawn when our neighbours are eating dinner. The developer and their teams come in with no respect - We don't have sidewalks or curbs. Typically a minimum of 7 big trucks park daily on the street to staff the build... Numerous detached and long semis and triplexes have taken over a year to build... and of course there are multiple buildings being built on any given street. The semis seem to go faster. Your calculation of how long it would take to redevelop the neighbourhood is interesting... How much development can one street take in a year. Of course this has the encouraged effect that long time owners then sell out knowing that this is what they face and of course there is \$\$ to be made.”

16. "Please do not allow destruction of one of Ottawa's finest neighbourhoods. The only reason I can see to allow such dramatic change is an increased tax base. It certainly is contrary to the existing residents' wishes."
17. "We previously lived on Highcroft Avenue, which was a vibrant, eclectic and beautiful street in Westboro. When the high-rise apartment at the corner of Highcroft and Byron was announced, there was an exodus of families living on the street who were worried about a drop in property values, the imposing shade and the change of street character associated with an 8 story building at the end of their street!"
18. "Maintain the side and rear yard setbacks so that Westboro keeps its spaces between dwellings wider than such areas as the Glebe. We do not need another Glebe in Ottawa. Let's keep this area different with lots wider and private. Also, this is in keeping with how Westboro started, as a Golf and Country suburb."
19. "I would encourage the City to slow the pace of change in the Westboro neighbourhood to minimize the negative effects of construction (noise, dust, damage to existing road surfaces, traffic congestion) until a plan for the neighbourhood has been put in place. Existing aging infrastructure (sewers, water, etc) may not be able to continue to handle the current pace of development. Schools are overcrowded and need time to adapt to the increasing number of students. The O-train is years away from servicing the Westboro neighbourhood and the current transit system is experiencing challenges with maintaining acceptable service levels."
20. "The title of the document is misleading. A quick Google search shows that the common definition of infill is "the development of vacant parcels within previously built areas." "Redevelopment" describes converting an existing built property into another use.

The document should be re-titled "Westboro Redevelopment Study". This may seem like splitting hairs, but the common vision for 'infill' is building a new structure on a vacant piece of land between existing structures. In Westboro, in almost all the cases of recent new buildings, the existing structures have been demolished, and new structures built on lots that were not vacant. 'Redevelopment' is a larger scale of change than 'infill'.

So, as they say, please call a spade a spade."

21. "There has been so much development in this specific area that it is now having a detrimental impact on the quality of life of the residents. This particular area has been unfairly singled-out and burdened with development initiatives. We want the over-intensification initiatives to come to an end."
22. "We purchased our single family Westboro beach home in 1981. It is hard to believe we just celebrated our 38th anniversary of living here last August! [...] We love the neighbourhood and it is almost like being in the country within the city. The trees the large lots, access to the SJAM for biking and skiing, low traffic volume, Westboro beach, neighbours we know all contribute to the things we love about Westboro.

We have seen many changes over the years especially in the last 10 years as a result of infill. We welcome your study and have been very concerned with the ad hoc approval of infill and the uncertainty of what is coming next. We have seen infill on our street where the 50 by 100 lots are transformed to doubles and in some cases include so called "granny suites" resulting

in 4 units where once there was a single family home. The result, more vehicles and crowded street parking.

The need for a plan is critical so all of know the "rules of the game" especially for properties close to the LRT stations."

23. "More and more homes are losing character, and looking the exact same, creating more cars on single family lots, less green space, endless construction, and above all ridiculous prices for homes. Last night I was browsing a real estate website and saw a house going for over \$500K that was simply falling apart on the inside. Broken cabinets, trashed rooms, ripped wall paper. But what's shocking is that this price is no problem for a developer to come in and build a minimum of 2-4 homes/condos on the lot.

This isn't the first house I've seen like that either. I've seen many that won't even post photos of the inside. Instead on the ad it says "prezoned for duplex and triplex". Sellers know they can sell their run down homes for the land, and that developers will build 4 units for \$900K minimum.

This makes young couples hoping to buy in this neighborhood nearly impossible. Developers rule the land in this area. Gone are the days of families owning single family homes in Westboro. That is simply due to the ridiculous pricing that happens because of the bottomless pockets of developers who don't care about getting rid of yards, and trees, so long as they can make a profit."

24. "Perhaps the number of multi-unit dwellings can be limited per block so as to retain a mix of single, detached and multi-family dwellings. No one benefits from eliminating the wonderful sense of community that is present in Westboro, and replacing it with blocks of multi-unit houses where there is no interaction."
25. "Westboro no longer has starter homes, homes in need of work, or smaller homes with a yard for dogs to run around. Beautiful small homes, or homes on big lots were being knocked down daily and in their place would be three generic townhomes. 3 homes where a single house used to stand. Older homes that were put on the market were either being listed at a price that would only make sense to purchase if you were knocking down with the intention of building three homes, or I would lose out on every offer I placed by a developer who paid way over what the house was worth - only because he intended to knock it down. Homes were even being bought off market by developers, with residents forced to sell because they were being offered more than what they thought they would ever receive for their beautiful unique house."
26. "Regarding residents' infill concerns, I suggest that a new factor needs to be included: time. Each time a house is replaced the character of the neighbourhood changes, a little or a lot. I suspect that most people object to replacing one house with multiple houses. We would all benefit if the rules applied to developers included a "time" condition, in addition to the zoning restrictions."
27. "My feelings remain unchanged regarding major developments in my neighbourhood. I bought a small detached home on Tweedsmuir ten years ago and am always disappointed to see how many unique lovely homes are being demolished.

Since I've been living at my house, two houses in my immediate surroundings have been demolished and replaced with semis. My neighbour's house was demolished last October and

replaced with a semi (neither side sold as of now). I live in a small house with a big back yard, and so did my neighbour, who lived in a perfectly livable house.

Although I dislike those new boxy semis being built, I find myself lucky that it's only a semi that was built beside my house! The developer didn't even ask for variances! We were lucky! There are now triplexes being built and also long semis, in residential neighbourhoods."

28. "In conclusion, I do not believe that development and increased intensification needs to be at odds with the exceptional qualities that attracted so many of us to come and live in Westboro. However, if developers and their 'bottom lines', efficiencies, and apparent greed hold sway, I think that the City will continue to hear from people like me who will not sit quietly while our neighbourhoods are damaged.

Conversely, if careful attention is paid to how this intensification happens so that these attributes are not sacrificed, then I look forward to welcoming more new neighbours into our lovely, leafy neighbourhood."

29. "We, like the overwhelming majority of Westboro residents, recognize that the population of Ottawa will grow substantially in the future and that sound urban planning approaches must be adopted to ensure that suitable housing, at manageable cost, is provided. We understand that it is logical and cost-effective to focus intensification more in the inner urban area of the City. We understand and accept that neighbourhoods such as Westboro will, of necessity, evolve through this process. The question for us is "to what, and how quickly?"

For Westboro residents, the ratepayers whose taxes help support the City, the process of intensification, driven by the economic imperatives of developers who are owners, but not neighbours, is running out of control. Intensification under the current land use approval regime is driving us and our neighbourhood to a future that is neither desirable nor inevitable.

Not desirable because it is, quite clearly, destroying the very characteristics that make Westboro a desirable place to live. And not inevitable because a more reasonable approach to intensification and infills could be achieved through modifications to the zoning bylaws, to bylaws respecting trees and environmental impacts, and to the land use assessment and approval process which is currently designed and operated in a way that prevents the integrative, "holistic" approach that underpins sound urban planning and design."

30. "I understand that many Westboro residents have concerns about the impact of infills.

I'm a Westboro home owner and from a purely selfish point of view, greater regulation of development would keep the neighbourhood's population growing at a lower rate, keep traffic down, keep housing prices higher, and preserve the "feel" of the neighbourhood. However, just because I would personally benefit does not make greater regulation good public policy. The City of Ottawa should really consider the bigger picture and not just the parochial concerns of Westboro residents. Westboro real estate should go to its highest valued use and that means letting people who want to move to the area, move to the area as much as possible. Furthermore, architectural styles and preferences are constantly evolving, the fact that the new triplexes and infills have a certain style should not be of much concern and the city shouldn't really be in the business of making these types of judgements."

31. "I have lived in the area all my life and overall it has changed for the better. That being said, greed by individual landowners and developers and the City's apparent unending appetite for increased assessment will eventually result in losing what almost all residents and visitors love about the area."
32. "Westboro used to be a neighbourhood full of different and unique homes and it had quite a charm to it. Over the last number of years the number of near identical semi-detached modern homes, condos, triplexes have radically changed the landscape of Westboro. Most people have lost all their privacy in their backyards due to the sheer number of semi-detached homes with high decks that tower over fences. The number of condos on Richmond road near Island Park have created quite a windy dark corridor. The neighbourhood has lost most of its unique character while gaining many new residents. More residents living in this neighbourhood has led to an increase of traffic. The identical semi-detached homes has rumoured to have happened as builders are sharing blueprints from architects to reduce cost of building and increase the amount of profit."
33. "I feel the magnitude of change and the consequences on parking, traffic, green space, light etc. is not being considered as approvals are being given as "one-offs" vs a more thoughtful and holistic strategy / plan."
34. "The issues raised in the discussion paper raise many other aspects which must be carefully considered as Westboro's redevelopment may provide a template for redevelopment within the city for decades. Intensification, as presently practiced in Westboro, seems to be in the process of destroying what initially attracted that redevelopment to the neighbourhood. Change seems to be overwhelming the neighbourhood character rather than integrating greater population density while respecting neighbourhood character."
35. "The way the character (as in the look) of Westboro has changed in the 7.5 years we have lived here is unfortunate, but also expected. Housing styles change. Homes are demolished and rebuilt in modern styles. That is not the problem in my eye. What is the problem is completely changing the character (the soul) of Westboro as a family-friendly neighbourhood. The rumours we were hearing of 12 units being acceptable for a single lot are terrifying. Small homes are being demolished at an alarming rate, taking away the opportunity for young families to live in the area. If the goal is majority tri-plex rentals, where can the families go? Young couples who pay the rent on these new tri-plexes will never be able to afford to buy anything. Will there be anything left to buy?"
36. "In some ways, there is very little difference between what is going on in Westboro and what is going on in Mechanicsville. There are sidewalk closures all over the place. People jack-hammering all day. Big trucks all over the place. But I am not going to complain. The city needs places for its people to live. The biggest difference is that we are getting tower after tower in addition to all of the plexes. So, development is going like crazy, but it is just life, and it seems more equitable in Mechanicsville. For some reason Westboro thinks they can be immune to this, *because character?*"
37. "Whoever consulted with us when this all started? Who said, "Hey guys, your neighbourhood as you know it...the place you have bought into, paid taxes for and enjoyed all this time..well, we're going to destroy it. You love the character of the old houses and all the trees? Well, forget it. We're going to knock down all the houses, even if they are on a heritage list. We're

going to replace them with ugly, flat roofed boxes that loom over their neighbours. We're going to allow shady developers to tear down all the trees on your street because trees aren't really important. We're going to allow these greedy characters to erect office-type dwellings in residential areas. We don't care if they don't resemble the neighbours' homes."

Why is this happening? Why does this city not care about preserving the character of existing neighbourhoods? Why does this city not really care about heritage dwellings? or greenspace, or trees? Where is all the rain and snow supposed to go, if we pave over every bit of land? What kind of shape are these flat roofed boxes going to be in 10 years time? How ugly is our ward going to look when this is finished? Other cities - London England, St Augustine Florida - these places care about their historical areas. You can't build new houses or offices there, that do not comply with the existing character of the neighbourhood. Even the Hilton Hotel chain was not allowed to build a skyscraper in St Augustine. Instead they built a charming low hotel to blend in with the existing historical area. Ottawa is so short-sighted!"

38. "As the study shows, Westboro is experiencing some of the highest intensification pressure in the city. While we are not opposed to intensification, and recognize that it has many benefits if done well, we are opposed to the way it's currently being implemented.

Specifically, if you are building in a neighbourhood with a mature overlay, and you are demolishing most of the mature homes and trees and replacing them with predominantly big boxes or highrises and that tower over all the other homes on the street and are overbuilt on lots (removing trees and lawn) – with the permission of the City – ultimately, you are destroying the character and diminishing the quality of life of that community today and in the future.

[...]

Our response speaks directly to the questions put forward in the study: Given that Westboro is one of the oldest, most established residential neighbourhoods in Ottawa, which is attractive to many people, how can we intensify without losing what makes our community great? Or as the City states: how can we be sure that new builds "are designed in such a way as to be sensitive to and compatible with their surrounding characteristics"?

[...]

If you walk around the neighbourhood and talk to long-time residents, many seniors, they will tell you that they are terrified that the home they have lovingly taken care of and invested in for a lifetime will one day be torn down. And let us be clear: these are not "tear downs" in the traditional sense – they are beautiful, move-in-condition, family homes.

When you live here you are daily faced with these questions:

- what will happen when the house sells next door?
- will my landlord "renovict" me?
- will the low rise apartments on the corner be replaced with a huge tower?
- should we continue to put money and time into maintaining our home given that it may be torn down?

- why are developers allowed to break laws and behave unethically in our community, when we as home owners/renters must and should abide by the laws?”

39. “In short, we support the cities efforts to intensify the density of this downtown neighbourhood. We simply seek some limitation on its extent, and would appreciate any effort that supports maintaining the characterful, essentially family-oriented, residential character of our neighbourhood.”

40. “As I grew up in the house I am currently living in my statement about living in Westboro is the same statement I have said growing up as now, “Living in Westboro is like living in the country, but, in the City.”

The reasons:

a) Large mature beautiful trees at the front and the back of homes that give us healthy air to breathe;

b) Large and small lots were houses and people can live and not crammed between each other;

c) Character of homes: (Mostly no flat roofs); each one of the houses on each street are different, some 100 years old some 30, some 20 and most have trees, bushes and greenery out front.

d) Greenspace everywhere front, back and side and some have gardens in back.

e) quiet, private space;

f) Mostly single family homes and the triplexes (some rental) that look like single family homes;

g) cars are parked in laneways- people see each other as they get into their cars and wave and interact;

h) streets do not have curbs, we can walk on the streets. Dog walkers walk on the roads.”

TREES AND GREENSPACE

The comments in this section pertain to the retention, planting, and protection of mature and distinctive trees within the neighbourhood and on development sites.

Most commenters, including comments not listed here, made reference to Westboro’s mature trees and urban tree canopy as a key characteristic of the neighbourhood; many are unsatisfied or concerned with the level of tree protection and retention that is presently occurring on many infill sites.

Also of relevance to this topic is the City’s Urban Tree By-law Project: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-engagement/projects/tree-law-review-project>

1. “Maintain or increase the number of mature trees on residential streets.”
2. “My concern is related to maintaining the neighbourhood feeling and providing the green space for water to seep into the ground through the continuing use of trees and green spaces in front of the buildings.

I am not in the study area but am in Westboro. What i am seeing in my area is small houses being taken down and two being put in its place. These new houses have footprints which cover most of the lot. Looking down a street which used to have mature trees along the road now have not a single tree because there is no space to plant in front of the home and the side yard no longer exists being covered by another home.

It is possible to have infill and still have trees. The downtown residential areas of Vancouver are a great example. Walking along the sidewalks you feel you are in a wonderful tree-lined neighbourhood while multi-storey buildings are set back along the street.

I would suggest that a setback which would adequately incorporate a tree in front of each building should be included in the new regulations. Perhaps this and the requirement for underground parking for buildings of 3 or more units would allow for more intensification while still maintaining a neighbourhood feel.”

3. “The loss of green space in Westboro is regrettable, and a direct consequence of new infill development. It will contribute to deteriorating air quality, and possibly won’t help alleviate climate change, even if it seems its contribution is minute.”
4. “These huge houses are built right to the property line of the house next door to the point where windows in the neighbouring houses are completely obstructed. This in itself should not be permitted. What’s more, mature trees in the front and back of these houses are cut down, eliminating necessary habitat and food sources for the birds that are summer residents or migrating.”
5. “Rear yards provide trees to buffer neighbours at the rear. Rear yards provide permeable surfaces to prevent excessive run off. Rear yards provide decks for barbecues and places for children to play.

Every rear yard of an original lot on Roosevelt has large trees including some unique seventy year old walnuts. Million dollar singles on half lots or traditional semis will keep these trees as they significantly enhance the privacy and look of the home. Building long semis cannot as all trees must be cut down.”

6. “Trees are an important part of the area, particularly the large native maples and oaks, and these trees are being lost. The city’s report related to updating the tree bylaws (a too slow process for my taste) shows a 50% loss of mature trees in the urban area. Half that to development. Large trees are inconvenient for developers and seem to be cut or die with almost total disregard for the community and when replaced they’re replaced by small, short lived trees that will never offer the shade, water retention or greenery of what was lost.”
7. “While I highly support the development of semi-detached homes, the challenge that any kind of infill has for Westboro is the elimination of mature trees. Many residents would agree that the trees that have grown over decades are one of the most integral parts of Westboro’s character. They differentiate the neighbourhood from newer neighbourhoods in suburban areas like Barrhaven. They are also one of the main reasons why many people buy in the neighbourhood, besides its central location. Unfortunately, infill development is uprooting many of the mature trees, which are either replaced with young trees or not at all. The government has a responsibility to protect our trees, within reason, as well as mandating the planting of

new trees. The government should look at implementing rules that require builders to replace trees, preferably with trees that are more mature.”

8. “We are losing so many trees and so much green space due to infill that covers more of the lot footprint, leaving only small patches of green (if at all). This much concrete and asphalt on the ground creates heat in summer (see urban heat island effect) and slippery surfaces in winter.”
9. “Greenspace (including yards - which are now often absent), park space, sidewalk spaces (benches, cafes) are stretched thin.”
10. “Enhance and require sufficient green space to ensure that the Westboro neighbourhood doesn't result in a streetscape that mirrors downtown Ottawa with no grass and trees.”
11. “Our house is large but occupies only about 40% of the lot and we have planted about a half dozen large trees and gardens on the remaining green space. Green space is important for aesthetic reasons but also for many practical reasons, including keeping urban areas cool in summer as climate change is causing health problems in over-developed inner city areas, as this innovative multinational study found (<https://e360.yale.edu/features/can-we-turn-down-the-temperature-on-urban-heat-islands>).”
12. “I would have liked to see much more on the loss of greenspace and trees in the paper - perhaps some quantitative data.”
13. “Leave more green space in front and back and not build to 3 feet from the lot boundary.....the height should not tower over the neighbours building.”
14. “Introduce greenspace and trees. 468 Highcroft cut down 3 enormous mature maples and have damaged the roots of the 1 protected tree left on site. All this for a semi (but with basement dwelling unit, so 4 units where 1 stood).”
15. “Trees need to be planted to replace those lost to development & disease.”
16. “The streets are generally lined with mature trees, except where recent infills have resulted in significant loss of urban canopy.

[...]

The area has an abundance of mature trees, particularly deciduous ones. However, the urban canopy in Westboro has been seriously reduced in the past decade as mature trees, some up to 100 years old, have been cut down. The saplings that are planted in no way compensate for this loss.

[...]

Westboro has suffered a very significant loss of urban canopy, both from developments that destroy mature trees and from natural causes.

Not all tree loss is caused by infill developers actually cutting down a tree in the initial stages of construction. In some cases mature trees that remain on the developed property, or on adjacent properties, die due to the damage to their root systems caused by excavations or due to the reduction in water due to loss of permeable surfaces above the root system.

The fees paid by developers who obtain approval from the City to destroy a tree are massively insufficient to compensate for the value of a mature tree that has been growing and contributing to the neighbourhood for up to 100 years. And the few saplings that may be planted by developers (some not even in the Westboro area) will take decades before they can come close to providing the value of the trees that have been lost.

The destruction of the urban canopy in Westboro must be arrested and the canopy restored and enhanced in accordance with the City's objectives for the urban forest and for environmental sustainability. This will require not only strengthening the provisions of the City's tree bylaws, but ensuring that impacts on the canopy are taken into consideration in any decisions on minor variances (unlike the current approach) and that limitations are placed on the size of buildings relative to the lot areas so that existing trees on both the subject properties and on adjacent properties can be preserved."

17. "City approves tree removal for nothing. Two healthy mature maple trees came down last spring on a property approved to be demolished for a Semi. [Cole Avenue] 50 year old trees providing needed canopy... Apparently the city issued the permit for around \$1000 this is unacceptable. This tree bylaw study shows how much the canopy has eroded in recent years. Our MP issued a statement that we were in a climate emergency. next week city approves these trees to come down. The developers are not suffering they will keep trying to make \$ - demand they keep these trees and they will find a new arrangement for accessing the house. Charge \$1000 for every year the tree is old.. Make them pay if this is the best solution. And the sad part is it is almost November. That street was without these trees for 4 months and no work has been done at all.

[...]

The triplexes basically pave or build on 95% of the area. This is indeed a crime."

18. "Regarding the first question, as to which characteristics of Westboro do we wish to preserve, I would answer that the mature trees are a vital aspect of the neighbourhood and must be preserved. I am not opposed to infill homes (I live in one), but the trees must be preserved and the plans for new structures should work around the existing trees."
19. "Greenspace encompasses both a green canopy for protection from sun, provision of shade and ground which is permeable with earth/grass providing effective drainage, run-off of rain, as well as a place to play and to enjoy the beauty of nature.
- We need better protection of our greenspace, not just from too much coverage by building and hard surface in over-intensification, but by building practices in any infill."
20. "Maintain our trees and green spaces and keeping it well 'canopied' which also is part of the beauty of this neighbourhood. What a treasure to have yet within city limits!"
21. "Green space (trees, gardens) and other environmental features should be required as part of all redvelopments. Squeezing asphalt driveways into backyards because there is no room elsewhere on the lots after multiple dwellings are built is not fair to neighbours. Many residents chose to move out of downtown to enjoy the green space and quiet of the neighbourhood."
22. "In Westboro, most original lots are 50% or more green space. The amount of green space in recent proposals is less than 10%. this leaves very little space the for trees, shrubs, flowers,

insects, birds, absorption of runoff, cooling effects of the urban forest overstory, a pleasant waking environment, and tin |Westboro is primarily in back yards. New developments consistently reduce the size of backyards (rear amenity space) and re-purpose them usually to parking lots.

The point is to come up with designs for intensification that preserve the urban forest and biodiversity and other ecological services. This is not impossible. It just requires some creative design, and, undoubtedly, some reduction in profit for the develop (do we have an obligation to maximize the profits of developers, do we?). Other cities do it. So can Ottawa. (see: <https://civicplan.ca/projects/dna-neighbourhood-character-study/>, for example. I'm sure you know of more."

23. "My key concern is preserving / enhancing greenspace through low impact development."
24. "I certainly understand the pressure on the city to provide more accommodation in this area and the developer's strong interest in profiting off such development. The single family beside mine was knocked down two years ago and a semi was built in its place.

However one of my main objections to infill development is that it is significantly degrading the greenspace/tree canopy of this area. Every single tree was removed (three mature trees) when the site next to us was developed. Only one tree was planted...an English Oak with a narrow columnar shape. Hardly a tree with a beautiful canopy. Other development infills have significantly reduced greenspace (e.g. lawn, garden).

Both the reduction of mature trees and greenspace is counter productive to climate change. We need to increase the number of trees in the city and we need to protect our greenspaces in this area. What is the city going to do to protect trees and greenspaces?? The majority of Canadians are rightly concerned about climate change. It was a huge topic in the Federal Election. We need to act now before our neighbourhood loses more mature trees and greenspaces.

I look forward to hearing about what action the city is going to take to protect our trees and greenspaces."

25. "Why does every inch of the property need to be excavated and every tree taken down? It is so discouraging and sad to see this happening all over the neighbourhood, every single day."
26. "Front and rear yards are important - for healthy activity (kids and adults), for environmental reasons (water absorption, trees/shade/cooling) and for enjoyment. Front yard parking (paving over gardens) should not be allowed. Happy to support backyard mini-houses (laneway, in-law suites) when owner (not developer) requests the same. Trees are critical for the City as a whole and for the neighbourhood - they give a shady place to stop and chat, encourage bird life etc., and add beauty to the neighbourhood. How can City incentivize more green space and great trees?"
27. "New buildings, attempting to maximize floor area in the units, typically remove most greenspace in the lots. Trees are cut, grass laws and hedges are removed. Often, green areas are paved over. This has several impacts:
- Changes to microclimate: shade, humidity, and other positive characteristics are reduced

- Changes to rainwater absorption capacity: during snowmelt and rainstorms, the area has less capacity to soak up water, putting extra stress on the stormdrain/sewer and other systems, and resulting in higher risk of basement flooding and other problems
- Aesthetic changes: there is a demonstrated benefit from being surrounded by nature. The removal of trees, bushes, lawns will have a cumulative effect on feelings of wellbeing for residents.”

28. “Although increased construction of triplexes or low-rise units will have some impact on neighbourhood green space by reducing yard size, I note that both Westboro and Wellington West offer many parks and other public green spaces already. I would also think that this impact could be mitigated by a reasonable approach to setback requirements, perhaps by allowing variances to front yard or rear yard setback but not both, or fixing a minimum setback area for the lot with greater developer discretion as to how it's divided (i.e., rather than requiring a metre or more from each side of the lot, permitting lesser setback on the sides and in front to provide a larger back yard).”

29. “Mature tree loss. Despite protections for certain sized trees, most developers take no measures to protect trees during work, and often damage even protected trees to the point where they will have to be removed (e.g., most recently, a protected oak on Currell Avenue was so badly damaged by the builder that it will need to be taken out. This one tree absorbed about 20,000 litres of stormwater every year; the city rarely holds developers to account for the very real costs associated with tree removal).

[...]

Enhance trees/greenspace/natural infrastructure. If not already done, an inventory and assessment of natural infrastructure should be performed. Natural infrastructure like trees, ditches, parks, swales, meadows all perform ecological functions that are more cost effective than engineered solutions.

Well maintained urban forests, for example, reduce local air pollution and flood risk, and offer natural "cooling" centres in summer.”

30. “Mature trees too! Infills without them look terrible. A bylaw requiring people to work around trees, would go a long way to preserving the character.”

31. “We have mature trees, as many as our lot can hold. We mourn the loss of the canopy that used to grace our streets. We used to have three back yard neighbours, now we have five.”

32. “The urban canopy is very important to keep, it helps in reducing the heat in the summer, also greenspace is important for drainage (think spring flooding, or summer thunderstorms).

See <https://grist.org/article/leaving-trees-standing-might-be-more-important-than-planting-new-ones/>”

33. “Buildings which are so close to the street that there is no space left for shade trees and garden; unfriendly noise of aggressive vehicles (enforcement of noise bylaws for vehicles with illegal "un-mufflers"); the tendency to pave over green space.

I understand that from an environmental perspective there should be some intensification in Westboro, however it is critical that the capacity of the land to buffer the impact of our urban environment on the Ottawa River be improved. Permeable surface options for parking, driveways and easements around buildings should be incorporated into new

development, particularly in cases where the development results in a larger footprint of the lot being taken up by the building.

[...]

The City needs to REQUIRE developers / owners of new single or multifamily dwellings to plant what will become shade trees along the street following construction. Too often the developer simply cuts down significant trees which were providing shade to the street either with or without permission from the City and is not obliged to replace them with trees which are suitable to become shade trees. An exotic ornamental species unlikely to thrive in Ottawa's environment and which will not grow taller than 15 feet is NOT a suitable replacement for the lost canopy on the street.”

34. “In recent years, we have been dismayed to see the mature trees in our neighbourhood cut down one by one to make way for infill development. One mature, beautiful tree after another is cut down and the surrounding land is paved over or filled up with yet another big boxy structure. Our street has changed dramatically in the last 10 years as the mature trees are cut down. It seems they are cut down with little care for the broader impact on our neighbourhood or our climate. Given the incredibly important issue of Climate Change - and the fact that trees and green space will help to protect our climate - the City of Ottawa absolutely needs more stringent guidelines to protect mature trees and green space.”
35. “An example of infill that I find disturbing on our street are two large single family homes that occupy nearly the entire property footprint after cutting down multiple healthy trees and so far not replaced in the remaining green space by shade trees. Red maple, linden, oak, ginkgo please; not a nookta cedar shrub. Our street was designed for walkability and the absence of shade trees is noticed in summer ... that is why the fellows constructing the homes park under the shade of our burr oak.”
36. “Overall, residential in-fill involving severance of single family lots into semi-detached dwellings has been sporadic in some neighbourhoods, while in it others, it has transformed entire streets. Either way, it has had an impact on 4 essential residential neighbourhood street characteristics:
- Greenspace – This includes ample space on the street and dwelling frontages, as well as dwelling rear yards, for shrubs, flower gardens, lawns, and especially trees, to provide privacy. A sufficient number of ample-size trees also provide large areas of shade that can lower temperatures in neighbourhoods on hot days, lowering the need for air-conditioning;
 - Recreational space – Ample space for porches, decks, or patios on street frontages and rear yards;
 - Diverse streetscapes – This includes ample trees on street frontages, and a variety of architectural designs among dwellings on the street; and
 - Accessible parking.”
- 37.
- “Preserve front yards (infiltration)

- Preserve front-yard trees (cooling)
 - Preserve back-yard fence line trees (more cooling)
- [...]
- Infills that place parking at the rear result in preservation of front lawns, which in turn preserves trees and infiltration capacity.
 - Infills should be required to place parking at the rear WITH a buffer zone at the rear in which trees, or hedges, or both are mandatory to help preserve the tree canopy. Trees help keep the neighbourhood cooler.”

38. “Some infills take up a huge amount of their lot space, taking away from the balance of nature vs concrete. This affects everything like flora, fauna, rainwater absorption...”
39. “Greenspace cannot be adequately preserved when two tri-plexes as built on a single lot. It is an 80% loss when the original home was small. The rear yard should be amenity and play space. It should never be a parking lot.”
40. “Greenspace and trees are extremely important for making our neighbourhood a pleasant, beautiful place to live, for providing space for rainwater to be absorbed, and for trying to mitigate the effects of climate change. I have read that the city is committed to preserving our urban tree canopy. Allowing it to be destroyed by allowing a level of intensification that does not preserve backyards is contrary to this goal. The impact is not just aesthetic - we are already seeing more rainwater running down the streets of our neighbourhood as there is less and less permeable ground for it to soak into. I do not feel that garbage storage and parking ought to be primary functions of backyard space.”
41. “We need to maintain front and rear yard spaces that encourage social interaction and promote greenspace that helps our environment, reduce stress and slow traffic (i.e. mature traffic).”
42. “We chose this area for many reasons. One of the main reasons was the green space and abundance of trees. The canopy in many areas should be preserved. I am concerned as more development occurs that the green space is being limited to discrete parks. Currently most streets have trees visible both in the front and back yards.”
43. “Builders aren’t motivated in maintaining the integrity of neighbourhoods. For example, trees are often unnecessarily removed, or excavation sites come so close to the roots of neighbouring trees that cause the trees to eventually die.”
44. “The city should enhance tree planting throughout the neighbourhood. Developers should be required to replace the trees they remove with reasonable sized trees. The city should take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to By-law enforcement. This could represent a significant revenue stream. There is currently almost total disregard - particularly by contractors - for parking by-laws. With regard to the Byron linear park, the city should install properly scaled light standards [i.e. not stadium style street lighting] along the walkway. The city should push bicycle traffic off the walkway onto bike lanes along Byron Avenue and Richmond Road. The city should install permeable pavers adjacent to the paved walk where market stalls are erected each weekend to preserve the underlying vegetation. Currently the

stalls kill off the grass leaving behind mud-holes. This is extremely unsightly and leaves the impression that nobody cares.”

45. “When my neighbour’s home was demolished along with it went four mature trees. These have been replaced by a small columnar oak. Hardly a fair exchange when the urban tree canopy is concerned. The city’s forestry department was nowhere to be seen while this was happening. I assume they would become involved during the granting of the demolition/building process, but maybe not. In any case, the city needs to take a more active role in preserving our mature trees because, in addition to sequestering GHG, they add to what makes Westboro such a desirable neighbourhood in which to live.

The other consequence of over-intensification is the paving over of permeable surfaces. Grass, gardens and trees become roofs and asphalt driveways and parking spaces. At least the semi’s beside me have some grass out front as well as in their backyards. What would be even better is if the asphalt driveways were replaced by a permeable surface that would still allow water to penetrate into the soil. In fact, the city already has a stormwater program that promotes this very idea (<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/water/protecting-ottawas-waterways/rainwater-and-your-property>) This should be a city building code requirement.”

46. “One half of the west side of my street had beautiful mature tall trees and lots of bushes and greenery, Now the west side has no mature tall trees no bushes and a small amount of greenery. My end of the street has mature beautiful trees and greenery. Last summer a neighbour at the far end wanted to have a block party. It was organized to be spread out on the east side around 4 p.m. It ended up in front of my place and my lawn. It was too hot to be on the EAST side AS THERE WERE NO TREES ON THE WEST SIDE, TO PROTECT FROM THE HEAT of the SUN, ALL TAKEN DOWN BY DEVELOPERS!!!”
47. “Maintain green space and tree coverage — when trees are taken down for construction have new mature trees planted to replace all that were removed.”
48. “C’est un quartier résidentiel tranquille, avec des rues où, en marchant, on voit toute une lignée d’arbres avec les maisons en retrait. On se croirait à la campagne et on respire mieux. On est en train de remplacer ces arbres avec des voitures stationnées en ligne devant les maisons. On remplace les maisons avec des cages rectangulaires qui remplissent tout l’espace permis sur un terrain, en plus subdivisé. ”
49. “We are in a climate change crises, and yet we continue to remove trees, for development. In the case of 300- 304 four trees were removed and adjacent trees on the East side of the buildings, on City property had their roots exposed during the spring and summer months. The replacement trees will be new saplings, which will take years to grow; Developers and the City need to take this crisis seriously, in order to help our sustainability on the planet. And Westboro is a Mature neighbourhood with old growth trees; the removal of these trees cumulatively would result in further negative affects on the environment.“
50. “Green spaces and mature tree to help combat the urban heat sink effects. Ottawa is going to have 28 very hot days (+30 degree) in the future compared to the current 13 days. Annual precipitation is going to be 935mm compared to the current mean of 887 mm. Loss of green space is going to increased flooding in the basements as green surfaces are taken over by concrete. Loss of mature trees will compound the effects of heat.”

DENSITY

These comments relate to the type and permitted density of residential development in Westboro. This was the most commonly discussed topic (as is expected, given that the focus of the study is on the neighbourhood's zoning).

Many commenters who indicated opposition to higher levels of residential density made reference to the specific types of infill development presently occurring, or that had occurred prior to the ICB in the case of triplexes. This included the development of long (front-to-back) semi-detached dwellings, a dwelling type that multiple triplex builders proposed as an alternative after the ICB was enacted.

1. "Infills should be limited in how many families or residents are allowed to live in the building."
2. "I lived in Calgary for several years. There exists an abundance of infill homes in that city, and they are often an eyesore, taking up every inch of space possible within a lot, and minimizing greenspace and landscaping in search of maximizing indoor square footage.
As a resident of Westboro, I oppose the movement of infills to the area, particularly triplexes."
3. "I'm not sure how much R1&2 is left in the Westboro study area but it should all be upzoned. I think R4 should be the minimum in the areas targeted for densification. We can manage the size of buildings and limit parking, etc., but we should be encouraging creative multi-residential infill over the current spate of massive, unaffordable, duplexes. The intro text calls out R3R and R3S which exclude even duplexes which should be corrected."
4. "You are completely wrong on page 17 when you argue that over intensification can be resolved by "design". You can't put 20 pounds of jelly in a 10 pound bag. Double density with semi-detached homes is the only form of intensification that should be allowed in Central Westboro with R-3 zoning."
5. "You can cap the units all you want, they all look the same. Have you ever considered maybe the problem is the restrictions are too much? You look at the pie chart in the document and Westboro is mostly single detached. Perhaps, if a bunch of low rises were allowed to be built, then there wouldn't be so many people fighting over turning little multi-million dollar homes into expensive subunits."
6. "In my opinion, triplexes and larger developments highly detract from the character of the neighbourhood. They take away some of the basic elements of what make up Westboro, including front and back yards, gardens, driveways and owner's responsibility to upkeep their properties. While owners of condos within triplexes may care for their individual condos, there is usually little to no attention to yard work or outdoor upkeep. Triplexes and larger developments also take away some of the skyline for neighbours to such developments. Furthermore, many builders have begun building triplexes with basements, that are later considered as dwellings as well. The government should immediately rezone Westboro to a R2 zone, to allow for semi-detached and detached builds.

However, to allow for more affordable options and more housing stock, the city should take a targeted approach in rezoning areas that are in busier areas. This includes properties along Churchill Avenue, Scott Street, Richmond Road etc. Through a targeted approach, buildings that are triplexes or greater, such as low-rise condos, should be allowed to be built along some of the main arteries of the community. This would allow for a balancing act

between keeping the integral character of Westboro, and allowing for more affordable options for new residents to consider.”

7. “I wanted to send this email to support the concept of infill in the neighborhood for triplexes. As long as the property can accommodate the parking requirements and structure they should be approved.”
8. “Introduce or re-introduce row housing/stacked housing.”
9. “I am in favour of reasonable, moderate, appropriate and affordable intensification. The 50's bungalow on a 50 foot lot beside me was demolished in 2016 and replaced by a semi-detached. This is reasonable, moderate and appropriate (but, at \$900k each, hardly affordable). However, it provides homes for two, four-person families in place of the single individual that was formerly my neighbour. A win for all.
I've been to several meetings and CoA's regarding long semi's and triplexes. It doesn't make sense to me why either of these structures would be allowed on quiet residential streets. Not only are the developers building lot line to lot line but they are asking for "minor" variances to exceed footprints and height requirements. I cannot see how such infills are in keeping with the character of the street in our neighbourhood.”
10. “Design alone, whether design of structures or urban design more generally, cannot compensate for, or properly ameliorate the adverse impacts from excessive intensification developments in Westboro that are bit by bit, lot by lot, transforming the neighbourhood. The suggestion that the number of dwelling units contained in an infill development is of no consequence if the design is done well, is based on flawed logic. The number of dwelling units DOES make a difference.

Even if the size of dwelling units is decreased, more units generally means building envelopes that will need to be larger than they would be otherwise. Larger buildings mean less greenspace, more crowding of neighbours, impairment of privacy for neighbours, potential drainage issues, less area for snow storage, and inevitable loss of urban canopy.

More dwelling units also generally means more people. More people means more cars, more garbage containers, more traffic, more space devoted to both on-site and on-street parking, more noise, more pollution, greater demands on both physical and social infrastructure, and an urban environment that is less safe.

In moderation, these adverse impacts from building size and increased population can be mitigated and the community can adjust. However, when the degree of intensification is excessive, as is the case with triplexes (including those converted to four-plexes) and with long semis with secondary units, the pace of change is too rapid and unrelenting. The result is an unacceptable level of stress on residents. In this case, which now prevails in Westboro, the City (through both purposeful actions to encourage excessive infill intensification developments and through its persistent failure to intervene in support of Westboro residents) is complicit in eroding the quality of life for its citizens.

[...]

Although the Discussion Paper makes it clear that City Planning staff do not support a wholesale down-zoning of the Westboro residential neighbourhood that is subject to the Interim Control Bylaw, we are concerned that unless the area is down-zoned, the problem of excessive intensification will persist.

[...]

The Ravenhill Common condo development (Ravenhill/Edison) is, for at least some residents, another example of an infill that was designed to fit in with the neighbourhood. This is actually a townhouse-type development, which is not allowed in the R3 zone, but it seems to fit in well in its specific location. The architectural design of the development (with the third floor stepped back and using a different facing material) helps mitigate the impact of the large structure relative to the neighbouring homes.”

11. “I am writing to support making it easier to densify the Westboro study area. The R3 zoning, and particularly the subcategories, are perhaps even too restrictive and the area (the whole city to be honest) should be upzoned to R4 with lower zoning categories completely discontinued. Density is important and it needs to be done well and respectfully. The rise of supertowers, with zoning being overruled at council, adds unpredictability to neighbourhood development. Instead, by allowing more medium density developments to go in we can really begin to have a livable city at a number of scales.”
12. “Again while not in the study area, another regrettable issue is if expected nearby higher density would disturb the ambience and resident enjoyment for existing homes/streets as appears threatened for tiny Shannon Street. There are better options that would save Shannon from unnecessary widening.”
13. “The study side-steps the issue of an acceptable level of intensification in terms of density. The majority of dwellings in Westboro are single detached residences. Developers are requesting approval to build long semis allowing eight residences where only one previously existed. There is a currently a proposal at the south-east corner of Byron and Churchill to build an apartment building with over 70 units where fewer than a half-dozen single detached homes exist.

It seems disingenuous to encourage discussion about maintaining the neighbourhood's character and streetscape, when the very thing that the residents are opposing is the seemingly unrestricted intensification. I'm not sure how building a multi-story apartment building next to a single-detached home can be done in such a manner to "enhance" or "improve" the current "character" and "streetscape".”

14. “Keeping higher developments closer to Westboro transit station with mid-rise buildings allowed on Richmond. While a street like Byron should be no higher than 3 stories.”
15. “Being within walking distance of my grandfather’s and my parents houses was one of the features that inspired us to build a home in Westboro. But the overwhelming reason was that the city has through many generations been able to balance the need for inner city housing and green space. The lots in Westboro and surrounding area are much larger on average than in the suburbs and two homes can easily be built where there was once only one home. But allowing developers to build three or four homes where there was once only a single family home will in my view undermine this balance.”
16.
 - a. “The current zoning allows for a complementing mixture of housing types except for the impact of long semis.
 - b. the City should look at long semis and their impact more carefully. Also minor variance applications so that triplexes can be squeezed onto smaller lots should be

reconsidered. I have attached several examples of triplexes with their applicable dimensions and how they might better fit into the community.

c. Duplexes for some reason have disappeared from possible units being built. Over by the Civic Hospital there are duplexes built some time ago but they have stayed the time and continue to go up in value.”

17. “I really like this sentence on your first page “To ensure that a variety of housing forms can be designed and provided in a careful and sensitive manner, we want to develop a vision for how growth can take place.” That’s really it, in a nut shell. We need a variety of housing forms. Not what we have now; singles, semi’s and triplexes (with parking) to house the upper middle class and their cars. And we can achieve this new variety without compromising what is great about Westboro, if we first come together around a vision for this new pattern of development.

[...]

As I think of the things worth keeping and needing change in Westboro... the hard truth is that Westboro is characterized by a density of housing that is an environmental crime -- car dependent and sprawling. We take this pattern of development for granted because we have inherited it, and we are used to it. We try to be more environmentally conscious in our lifestyles, by recycling, biking some of the time, and adding insulation to our large homes in sprawling car dependent neighbourhoods. But the truth is that more smaller units in multi unit buildings are vastly VASTLY more environmentally responsible than any number of solar panels or blue bins. This is a characteristic element of Westboro that has to change.

And the development pattern of Westboro is both economically biased and gender biased. Those of lower income are priced out of Westboro. This is a result of zoning that, designed in a real estate market of decades ago (and without the intent to discriminate) imposes minimum lot widths that result in the construction of only high end housing. Developers are not to blame for this. It’s time we all share the blame for a development pattern that is not sustainable or affordable. And it’s time to chose a new development pattern that meets the housing needs of a wider variety of people, while making Westboro healthier.”

18. “The density of triplex-units as seen on Ravenhill Ave creates a street-wall effect that is similar to a much larger scale building and in my opinion, diminishes both the character of the neighbourhood as a mid-density residential neighbourhood and, due to the scale of these buildings, necessarily causes the removal of many old-growth trees from both the front yard and the back (given the ubiquity of the back “yards” of these properties being used for parking spaces.)

If each of the 6 large triplex-style buildings on Ravenhill Ave (and indeed, 2 more buildings immediately opposite facing Byron ave) were scattered through the neighbourhood, their impact on both canopy cover and neighbourhood character would be somewhat minimized by a ‘dilution’ effect, with similar numbers of people being housed in Westboro in line with the city’s strategy for densification.

[...]

Allowing these types of buildings to cluster is the issue I wish to add to the discussion.”

19. “When you talk about the character of the neighborhood, you seem preoccupied with the look of the building and pay no attention to the density of the cars on the road which has become totally intolerable to us long term residents who moved here to have a decent family neighborhood. The goals of becoming middle class in Canada are to live in single family residences where children are safe and locals are invested in their property. Triplexes do not support this nor do condos as there are many many people now using this neighborhood as a starter neighborhood.”

20. “I cannot imagine that this density of development would be approved in Rockcliffe Park, or in other “older” neighbourhoods. Westboro is a trendy place right now, and I understand that people want to live here - it’s a great place with lots of services — that’s why I live here :)

I agree that Westboro is primarily made-up of single family homes on single lots, and I can agree that more houses could fit into these lots, but I feel that proposals should be reasonable, and not cheek to jowl, as many of the current proposals are requesting. Such high density reduces green space, adds cars to the neighbourhood, adding noise. It’s not what the developments look like that concerns me, its that the character of Westboro is changing to the detriment of the people who already live here. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that the majority of the new infill houses are identical, and if you look at Westboro, you’ll see there is more of a variety of housing, big, small, and in-between!”

21. “Triplexes seem to be the main thrust of this survey so I have knowledge of them that most people would not. Importantly, my triplex was built in the sixties, is not nearly as big as those being built now and fits in with the neighbourhood well, particularly as it has been owner-occupied for the last thirty years. There is no reason true triplexes could not be slotted into “South Westboro” or any older neighbourhood in the city without stressing the existing infrastructure and neighbours.”

22. “Triplexes have no business in the middle of a neighbourhood. At best, they should only be permitted on Scott; Carling.

[...]

The look is only one factor. Consider noise; neighbourhood security (ghost rentals); garbage; snow pile up; traffic, water run off and parking. With more and more snow being shovelled onto roads, the city is not keeping up their end of clearing the snowbanks (yet happily allowing more driveways).”

23. “Minimize extra-large single family dwellings or multiple unit dwellings crammed on a single lot.

Restrict building height proportionally on streets that are further from main streets (such as Richmond Road, Byron, Churchill and Carling avenue). Restrict height to preserve “neighbourhood” feel, privacy and sunlight.

[...]

Proportional housing density should be considered where streets are within a block of the major streets. There should be an increase in low/high rise rental units along Richmond Road or streets that are within a block of the transit way to support the need for affordable housing and housing within direct proximity to transit.”

24. “Your study indicates how many semis and triplexes need to get variances. This 12 meter lot width means that every time the existing lot is severed they have to come to the committee of adjustment automatically. None of the lots are 24 meters wide to start. This lot width should simply be fixed to be half the size of the typical Westboro lot size. This would reduce the developers’ upfront costs and perhaps help them stay with in the variance if there is no other reason to go before the committee.

[...]

Why not encourage townhouses, or small apartments - these appear in the rest of the city and seem to have less impact. I grew up in Toronto... we had big triplexes 3 bedroom generous homes with wide driveways with garages at the back. They worked. The streets North of Richmond near dominion could have been a beautiful opportunity to have something like streets in London, Boston, New York... Georgian homes that look good and make much more effective use of the street. I must say that the bylaws protected the street view in this case. A string of 3 or more similar houses look much better. As is the case for the townhouses that were built quite awhile ago at Berkley and Tay. These look good!”

25. “My comments are simple. It matters less as to how intensification looks, but more how severe it is. In other words, if a developer asks for a “minor variance” to allow intensification of four, five, six, seven, or eight times, it is not minor and should not be allowed, regardless of how the proposed structure integrates aesthetically.”

26. “Another aspect of the neighbourhood that should be preserved is the safety of our side streets for pedestrians and children. The number of cars on the streets is increasing with semis built where detached homes used to be, and triplexes or long-semis will worsen the problem. Too many homes on our residential streets will make our neighbourhood crowded and noisier. The main thoroughfares (Scott, Churchill, Kirkwood, Richmond) are suitable for multi-unit structures but not the side streets.”

27. “Fortunately there is a way to increase affordability and density: small scale apartments in houses. That is, a medium sized to larger older home that has been converted into several apartments, usually with the home owner living in one suite. There are five or so of these on our street, and they are filled with young families and couples starting out. These types of dwellings should be encouraged as they increase density, increase affordability, preserve the character of the neighbourhood because the original house is left standing. It’s the perfect infill for Westboro.”

28. “Multiple unit apartments and triplexes change the character of any street. I pay ~\$10,000 in property taxes every year to live in a single-house street and neighbourhood in Ottawa and would be very unhappy to have a multi-unit apartment in my backyard, as would my neighbours.”

29. “A range of housing options could be done by building new affordable housing units in large lot areas that are mainly empty. For example where the Rogers Cable building is, prime location that takes up a lot of room yet only services one business. There are lots of large underused areas within the commercial main street that can be used for mixed use developments.

Also, why are so many businesses and small buildings along the main street for Lease? Why not convert these empty spaces to mixed use low rise buildings (6 or 8 storey

maximum is a good height for the town mainstreet. Look to European towns for good examples)

Make use of empty unused already R3 + zoned spaces instead of allowing developers to change existing zoned spaces. The spaces that are already zoned for R3+ are not being fully utilized to their maximum potential.

Multi use dwelling designs need to be designed so that they keep the look of a single dwelling units in it's shape, protections and character without looking like they cram in 3 dwelling units on one lot and start looking like apartment buildings.”

30. “Intensity of the infill is at the core of my concern. It makes no sense and is unfair to residents to intensify a given area by a factor of up to eight. This was recently proposed in building long semi-detached homes where there were previously single dwellings. Residents are not opposed to redevelopment to recapitalize old housing stock and intensify the neighbourhood to capitalize on public transit for environmental improvements and traffic congestion relief. However, residents want to maintain the character of the neighborhood which they are part. Development needs to be reasonable and equitable balancing concerns of the neighbours, and the city. Developers should not have influence in making these policy decisions.

Limits should be placed on the amount of triplex (or higher density) infill buildings in the study area. These should not be the majority and should be at a much lower rate of construction than semi detached dwellings.”

31. “I also find it more appealing to see similar dwellings together on a street.

For instance, have triplexes on one end of street while keeping semi-attached and single dwellings on the other end of the street.”

32. “If one, instead of two, multi-unit dwelling were proposed to be built on the lot, thus preserving green space and character, that would be much more acceptable and still result in a 400% increase in density (verses the standard 800% increase). this would also avoid the 'standard" requested suite of variances that come with most new proposals. Also, if they were designed not to look like shoe boxes or packing crates, and had some artistic elements of design, and took into account the environment they were being built on (and not just cookie-cutter designs plunked onto the lot).”
33. “The Westboro community has already demonstrated its strong opposition to the construction of long-semis with 4 units, and triplexes, in the proposed study area. Please refer to the proceedings of the Committee of Adjustment hearing and the LPAT hearing related to 508 and 514 Roosevelt Ave. Hundreds of lawn signs further demonstrate the community's opposition. 6 and 8 fold intensification is unacceptable.”
34. “Box homes or other multiple housing units that occupy the entire property is not sustainable development.....it is over intensification.”
35. “Holistically, the effect of using triplex to help achieve city's intensification goal is low, unless you have massive neighborhood rebuild across the city using that approach. We are talking about the increase of housing supply of course. In the case of the more scale development like at Westgate, Lincoln field, and even the Trinity at Bayview, etc, they are a better approach

to address intensification and in a broader sense. Therefore, arguing allowing more triplexes, in the name of intensification, is missing the big picture.

We are all aware that Westboro is a very highly desirable neighborhood--let's be clear about the elephant in the room. That is to say it is not an affordable choice for the broader spectrum of citizens in Ottawa. It is understandable that developers' main goal is economical. Nothing against that. However, helping address intensification goal of the city should not be assumed as their priority, in this case of Westboro.

I personally think the current R3R and R3S zoning is adequate and reasonable and should be kept intact. If we were to allow exceptions to that, we should support those developments to be for reasonable – from affordable to low-to-mid price \$300-\$400 per square feet price point – housing.”

36. “There is certainly a place for continued construction of infill single family homes in the area. However, the high prices of these homes make the neighbourhood unaffordable for many Ottawans, particularly given the large lot sizes which often mean very large homes. This neighbourhood is highly uniform in its affluence and, as a result, many other demographics. As Ottawa's population grows and with it demand for homes within the greenbelt, this area provides an excellent opportunity for increased density if it can be done properly. Although high-rise construction is not really in keeping with the neighbourhood's character and would preferably be limited, greater development of triplexes and low-rise multi-residence buildings (no more than 4 or maybe 5 storeys) would likely increase the range of home sizes and affordability in the area, particularly if low-rise multi-residence buildings were required to include a number of affordable units.”
37. “This is of concern to me, my family and our neighbors, in particular, as you would know, due to the proposed development of four front to back semi-detached homes (with definite plans to have basement units) such that where there are currently two lots with one unit each will become four lots with four units each – two units become 16 units. Obviously a significant impact on a residential street that currently contains only single and semi-detached homes.”
38. “More rental units. The relatively new three-story rental buildings on nearby Tillbury at Churchill mimic the style of the red brick ones built in the 1950s and 60s. Despite the loss of every mature tree on that street a few years ago (emerald ash borer, I believe), the buildings are attractive, fit within the existing older designs, and are ideal for short- and long-term renters.”
39. “I am strongly in favour of continuing the sensible intensification which has been taking place in Westboro. Greater urban density is the way of the future. It's environmentally responsible, it helps create a sense of community, and it's great for the businesses on Richmond Road.
- Do we really want to preserve Westboro for large single-dwellings only, forcing more and more people to clog the 417 every morning, spewing smog on their commutes from Kanata? Or do we want more people living in a bike-friendly, transit-friendly area close to downtown?”
40. “Low rises in the middle of streets are slightly out place (not inherently opposed).
- The giant duplexes (that have minimum front and back) are out of place, especially when they have no grass/trees on their property.”

41. "I am of the opinion that infill has been excessive.

I agree that some degree of intensification is required, but going from one house on one plot to 8 units (e.g. two so-called triplexes with each having a 4th unit basement = 8) or (two so-called long semi's each with an option of a basement unit = 8) is too much.

I read an article in a Toronto newspaper that suggested corners of blocks might be more amenable for intensification."

42. "Preserve and encourage the construction of single homes in Westboroto me intensification means new single home buyers cannot compete with developers who can build 3 units or even 6 units on the equivalent space of an existing single home lot. The city by allowing multi-unit dwellings has eliminated the single residential home in Westboro."

43. "Density is good for the environment. It increases the dynamism and diversity of the area. It makes urban living more accessible for more people. The future residents of Westboro (those who would buy a triplex unit etc...) are likely not going to be writing to you, but we should actually consider them in thinking about zoning. You're going to get tons of letters from Westboro NIMBYs asking for more regulation, but I would encourage the City to think of the bigger picture."

44. "Triplex infills on residential streets is also detracting from the neighbourhood's character. The very term of "character" means there is already something there that attracted residents. Adding something so juxtaposed to the surroundings is out of character."

45. "When considering infill or zoning changes, do not allow more than two units (duplex or semi) if surrounding residences are single or semi/duplex.

- Change zoning rules to prohibit long semis.
- Do not allow changes to number of units once plans have been approved by the city."

46. "Unless the City intervenes strongly to prevent the occurrence of such multi units long semis or disguised quadruplexes in apparent triplexes, Westboro will become a corporate Airbnb zone to the detriment of its charm and character. The current residents are fighting to preserve that character and it is time for elected officials to carry the fight as well because it is exhausting to undertake the same fight for every Westboro civic address that is attracting developers.

Your variance committee found that projected long-semis on Roosevelt were not in keeping with the character and fabric of the community and refused to allow the construction even if only a small variance was sought: the end result was major not minor, according to the committee. This should constitute be a strong precedent for your group to discourage any type of over-intensification by rentals. Our experience is that a 2 for one ratio of permanent owners is the best formula for our neighborhood."

47. "This neighbourhood is "popular" in part because of the character of its residential streets and the predominance of single family homes with some duplexes. A shift to triplexes and tall apartment buildings on residential streets is not keeping with this character."

48. "The changes that have been happening of late, the addition of triplexes and/or long semi-detached units, have a number of negative impacts on the community.

[...]

It is apparent, in order to retain the character of our neighbourhood, the zoning must be changed to R2 or R1, in the residential areas, while permitting more intense development on the perimeter, i.e., Churchill and Byron.”

49. “Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I think the discussion paper is excellent. Westboro needs more housing options and intensification as the city’s core spreads west with the emergence of light rail transit. This could be in the form of triplexes. What’s also needed is low-rise walk-up apartment buildings up to five storeys in certain locations. These low-rise apartment buildings may even be more fitting with the character of the neighbourhood than rows of triplexes, and are a better use of space.

It is a shame to see all the STOP OVERINTENSIFICATION signs throughout the neighbourhood. I’m concerned that those signs serve to silence those who support infill development. I think it makes people who lives in multi-unit residences feel like they don’t belong. I recognize that not all change is good change. Some developments are not sympathetic to the neighbourhood’s character. But think that’s a design issue, and not a density issue.”

50. “Over the last couple of years, as land value and lot prices have increased in Westboro, multiple developers have become profit-focused to the point that they are abandoning principles of responsible intensification. The same type of lot that was used for my semi-detached home and its counterpart is now being used for two full “triplexes” that are of a design that can be converted into low-rise apartment buildings. If that is rejected due to the current ban, the developers opt to build long semi-detached homes with basement apartments. The result is that a full lot that used to hold a single family home is now being used to host up to eight individual dwellings, each of which is suitable for a couple or small family. The streets that the lots are built on, however, are still designed to serve a population density that is a fraction of that.

[...]

Development in this vein is not acceptable to residents in Westboro. We believe in redevelopment and intensification, but done in a reasonable manner.

What is reasonable, though? I would argue that reasonable is a number of dwelling units that can be fit within a building envelope that meets the current zoning and is consistent with the character of the existing residential area, without any minor variances for setbacks or yard size. If a developer can fit six or eight units into a building (or buildings) that meets those criteria, so be it. If they can only fit two, that is the answer. Additionally, reasonable would take into account the amount of parking, traffic, snow-clearing space and rainwater management available on the street. Planning should be done looking at the entire area surrounding the development, not only at the single lot being developed.

In practical terms, this would mean that Westboro residents should accept a triplex that looks like any of the other infill homes in the area. The development would have to have landscaping and space around the edge of the lot and in the rear and fronts that is consistent with existing homes. On major streets, such as Churchill, developments should be larger and consistent with other buildings in that zoning type: condominiums or

apartment buildings that are within the height limit should be both permitted and encouraged. These streets are designed for the higher density and therefore that design should be embraced, while the smaller residential streets should have their designs respected. (At this point, I will note that I am not saying this hypocritically: the lot directly behind my home faces Churchill and would be ripe for redevelopment into a large multi-unit building. This would lower my property value and be inconvenient to my privacy, but would be consistent with good intensification.)”

51. “Triplexes and 4plexes are out of character with the built form on neighbourhood streets of Westboro. A phased in introduction fo these building forms along more significantly travelled neighbourhood streets, such as Churchill, could lead to intensification which meets both the city’s need to grow within established neighbourhoods and Westboro’s need to maintain at least some of it’s “leafy neighbourhood” attractiveness (which has been a prime attraction to people moving into the neighbourhood in the last decade).”
52. “Implement rules that place driveways between long semis and place parking at the rear. In Westboro, single houses are already being replaced by two long semis and each semi has a secondary unit. Thus, one house can be replaced by eight units. Maintain a mandatory border on the rear lot line for hedges and trees. Maintain a requirement for lawns in front where trees would also be mandatory and where snow can be piled in winter (rather than being shoved into the street). Limit height to the average of 75% of housing in the neighbourhood. The main issue with pairs of long semis is the garbage. Eight household’s worth of garbage at the end of one driveway. A potential mess in winter.”
53. “My argument against tri-plexes is not about character. Developers will do what they want to do anyway. It’s too late to try to preserve the wonderful look and fabric of old Westboro. Too many brutalistic structures have already been built. My argument is about over-intensification. How is it appropriate to put 6 units where one currently stands? How is it fair to our children and the grandchildren of the other adjacent neighbours that they would have to play next to a parking lot in our rear yard? How is it acceptable to put that many people, with that much lighting and garbage into a quiet street without sidewalks? And how is it acceptable that the developers makes false claims of affordability and proximity to rapid transit?
[...]
Putting two tri-plexes in the place of a single family home detracts of a neighbourhood’s character. They tower over everything else, they take away 80% of green space, they freeze out families, they fill our streets with garbage and snow. They pollute our streets with light. Two tri-plexes (6 units) is clearly over-intensification.”
54. “I understand the need to have more people living in the core areas of the city. On a recent trip to Toronto I saw some really attractive developments. You might call them row housing. There may have been 10 units all in a row. I wouldn’t mind if my block actually had one of these long units on it because it was attractive. It was of a reasonable height. There was greenspace out front and the style was lovely. It was covered in traditional materials, there were peaked roofs, a few curves, some actual style. If infill was truly built with some style and respect for the existing homes, we wouldn’t be so sad and upset.”

55. “We would like to suggest that housing properties not be turned into bunk houses, similar to that proposed for Byron Place bordering on Churchill, Highcroft and Byron. No house should suddenly have an 8 story neighbour with 70 plus residents in it.

We would also oppose a single house property becoming a triplex or inevitably a four-plex.”

56. “Too many, too big, too high. 505 Churchill comes to mind, a single detached home, torn down to build 2 set of triplex, extremely high, out of character, the adjacent homes look minuscule. All trees are gone, and a big parking lot in the back to accomodate car for the 6 units, actually 8 since they have already roughted in 2 extra units...

[...]

I would consider [*multi-units*], as long as it is not a rental building and not just a bunch of studio (1 bedroom condos), families need to be able to move in and be able to afford it!”

57. “I understand that triplexes are currently an allowed use within the zoning for this neighbourhood. In my opinion, the best way to design multi-unit buildings such as triplexes to fit into the neighbourhood would be to allow only ONE per standard sized (either 50 ft or 66 ft wide) lot. The problems with loss of green space, and concerns around parking and garbage all stem from trying to fit two very large multi-unit buildings on a lot that is simply too small for this. Allowing one triplex on a standard single family lot already triples the available housing.”

58. “The failure of the vision of intensification is that, if allowed, where there is one house on a large lot there will be 2 back to back semis (8 units including basement apartments) and on smaller lots there will be 1 back to back semi (4 units including basement apartments). All of these require some sort of variance. This density is too much of a financial incentive and will drive developers to build at every opportunity. In 10, 20 or 30 years there will likely be no unique homes left, and the community fabric of Westboro will be lost forever - replaced with cookie cutter, architecturally void multi-unit dwellings.

This is just pure economics. And I don’t blame the developers, they are capitalizing on an opportunity.”

59. “I support more residential density, like the four units being built on Elmgrove. As long as there's a commensurate increase in walkable and non-gigantic services, like grocery stores (the Metro on Carleton is a great size), schools, cafes, etc.”

60. “These types of building do not complement or enhance the character of the existing neighbourhood. Residents are generally receptive to a 100% increase in density - that is replacing an old dwelling on a 66 foot by 100 foot lot with two dwellings. Intensification beyond this level dramatically reduces green space and fundamentally changes the character of the neighbourhood. For example, the construction of the project at Ravenhill and Edison used high-quality materials, the edge of the street has been entirely paved for parking, and there is no green space at all on the site. Are view, is that try-plexes and low-rise apartments should be encouraged along and immediately behind mainstrems and developers should be required to create green spaces and amenities for incoming residents. Currently, as far as we can ascertain, existing parks and community centres and schools are rapidly becoming inadequate. We haven’t seen one new park created since in the 23 years that we have lived in the neighbourhood. If triplexes are to be encouraged, they should respect the

current R3 zoning heights, property area and set backs to allow for surrounding green space and privacy.

If multi-unit dwellings were required to respect the existing R3 zoning requirements in terms of lot-size, set-backs and height, and incorporate building materials and landscaping that generally reflect what is found in the surrounding residential community, we would have very little objection. Problems arise when for example, developers purchase a 66 foot lot, receive city approval to sever the lot and subsequent approvals to build multi-unit dwellings on each half of the lot with further allowances for reduced front, side and rear yard setbacks and increased height. These proposals are certain to increase density by many orders of magnitude and reduce green space and privacy. They represent a fundamental change in the character of the neighbourhood and threaten the very things that have made the neighbourhood so attractive in the first place. These proposals are also certain to increase traffic congestion, increase storm water and reduce the areas available for snow management in winter. This is already an issue with the 100% increase in intensification that is already occurring.”

61. “There are plenty of housing options with all the condos on Richmond Road not filled to capacity. I think all empty dwellings should be filled to capacity before any new structure is built in Westboro. It seems like the builders know that the city wanted intensification so badly that variance was easily given and the builders seized on the opportunity. Perhaps all the empty condos/triplex spaces could be turned into affordable housing. The taxes are so high in Westboro at this point that affordable question seems to be out of the question. The existing low-income housing will have to suffice.”
62. “Higher density housing should be in very close proximity to transit stations to make rapid transit more easily accessible to a greater number of people. For example, highest density along Scott St, medium density between Scott and Richmond Rd and lower density housing could be maintained further away from the transit station. Limiting high density housing outside of the immediate transit station zone would help to maintain the character of the existing neighbourhood. High density development along Scott St should still have the same look and feel in order to maintain a cohesive architectural style.

[...]

If the design of a multi-unit dwelling results in it being difficult to see much difference between it and neighbouring houses (built prior to 2000) then I would be much more in favour of them.”

63. “Given house values, there is not a single house owner in the McKellar park area who is not a millionaire. For many, as was my case, their entire life savings are tied up in the value of their house.

Understandably, they are concerned that higher density will lead to lower real estate values. However, perhaps this is not true. It would be helpful if the City could present information from other neighbourhoods that have been infilled, and its effect on property values as the infill proceeds.

A major argument in favour of construction of more triplexes is that seniors (like me) could sell their houses and still stay in the neighbourhood. Handicap access first-floor access housing can be built, on the very same property where their house is. Not everyone wants to move to a high-rise condo. The City needs to put forward this argument in a forceful, convincing way.

By opposing triplex development, these millionaires are excluding their own adult children from the neighbourhood. If triplexes are built, their children and grandchildren could live nearby and enjoy the same parks and amenities as grandma and grandpa had.”

64. “In general, as a number of lots around us have sprouted new semi-detached and triplex buildings, although many rather unimaginative in design, we have been supportive. Indeed, we supported our neighbours when they purchased the twin house to our south and sensitively built a new home in the rear, with a “granny flat” below on what we understand is called a “flagpole” severance of the corner lot. Thus, we are not against intensification.

- Rather, we note a steady creep, mostly through the creative use of “minor variances”, to move from two, to three/four times more dwellings on a lot, to, now, potentially, eight times, with the “long semi-detached” dwelling concept. This cannot possibly but avoid changing the character of the neighbourhood. Furthermore, the proposal for a six/seven story apartment complex on the South East corner of Byron and Churchill seems to be trying to push the envelope even further, with what would surely be an intrusive degree of massing on a pleasantly open key corner (where the orange tree sculpture presently holds sway).”

65. “Mixed housing styles and income levels: Too much development is now at the “top end”. What kind of bylaws etc could allow for single homes on smaller lots, why do approvals need to be for such big sizes of housing? Why not encourage not only types of houses (e.g. single, triplex) but also sizes? Why not a small apartment complex (e.g. 3-4 stories, 8-12 apartments)? I think that triplexes that were less jarring with the neighbourhood (box shape, height) would be better than the current style which is boxy and thus cheap to build, and often doesn’t respect lot parameters etc..

[...]

Density: I support better density, but also smaller housing. By-laws should be encouraging a gradual decrease in size of homes as well as sub-division of lots. There should also be a limit on how many times a lot/building etc can be sub-divided in its lifespan (e.g. single lot can be divided into 2, but each half can not again be subdivided into more than 2). Variances to turn 3 into 4 units etc should be denied outright, and illegal units closed. There should be a moratorium of a number of years (e.g. 5-7 years) on the conversion of a unit into additional units, again to reinforce respect for building rules and character of neighbourhood.”

66. “Despite some commercial zoning in around Richmond Road, Churchill Ave. is south of Byron Ave. a residential street. Despite being classified a collector for traffic purposes, Churchill Ave. is part of a residential neighbourhood. Any changes that affect Churchill Ave. will be felt two or three streets over. I remark this because it is very common for non-Churchill Ave. Westboro residents to disregard Churchill Ave. and to consider its residential component as dispensable. I think this is unfortunate.”

67. “The infills along Churchill Avenue near the Churchill Alternative School have done a good job of placing triplexes in close proximity to busy streets. They look like townhouses and maintain the character of that street. However this type of infill would not work where the houses are detached or semi-detached. To this end the Roca infills at Byron and Roosevelt or at Byron and Golden do not maintain the character of the street. They are not in keeping with size of the houses near by or detached/semi detached nature of the adjacent properties.

I agree intensification needs to occur near the LRT lines but it should be precisely that. As taxpayers we bought property in a particularly zoned area thinking the nature of the street would remain similar over time. Ottawa taxes are among the highest in the country and I pay these taxes but expect my property value to be maintained.

I am very against triplexes that require the backyards to be turned into parking lots to accommodate multiple cars. That is totally against the fibre of the neighbourhood.”

68. “New semi detached or single family homes on 50 foot lots (or larger) are attractive and can result in modestly higher density. Many of the homes in the neighborhood are old and run down. (We know this because we looked for a home to buy in the neighborhood last summer and finally gave up.)

Triplexes are fine where they are height appropriate for the street— e.g. the ones on Ravenhill between Roosevelt and Golden — as long as they are only triplexes. The addition of extra living units in the basement pushes them over the limit.

[...]

Put [*triplexes*] in locations that are closer to arterial routes, and not on what are really residential streets.

Keep the height to a minimum level, so they are compatible with the adjacent houses.

Include significant greenspace around them.

Build them with underground parking, eliminating the potential for adding that 4th suite and keeping cars and trash off the streets and out of the back yard”

69. “To be as brief as possible, the "shoehorning" of multi-units, on modest lots is destroying the fabric of our neighbourhood.

These new over size buildings and multi units on previous one family lots will unfortunately lead to less desirability and deteriorating appeal.

[...]

We are in an upper middle class area, similar multi units in Rockcliffe Park would not even be attempted.”

70. “The Discussion Paper says that as multi-unit ground-oriented buildings gradually become more common on local streets, it may be reasonable to anticipate the transformation away from predominantly detached dwellings towards a greater density and mix of housing. I do not agree that multi-unit buildings should be mixed in with detached homes and semis as anything other than an exceptional circumstance and done with care and compliance with the noted policies and regulations. A single or semi home’s value is affected if the street is mixed and crowded with multi-use and rental properties. Multi-unit dwellings are usually rental and

therefore more transient in nature, detracting from intimate neighbour relations. Also, owners usually keep up maintenance and appearance better than renters. Lower density pockets of single family homes and larger semis, with adequate yards, should be retained. Multi-unit dwellings are best located in the areas that are already busier because of commercial use or heavier through traffic like Churchill Ave.”

71. “Another environmental dimension relates to the population density. Here I am most concerned with avoiding urban sprawl and maximizing the numbers of people living in this area, which is on the fringes of the CBD, to make public transit more effective from environmental and fiscal perspectives. While I absolutely understand the concern from many citizens about triplexes, I am in many ways more sympathetic to efforts to provide housing for multiple households, rather than to use a single plot for a large single unit for one household. Where developers are building big luxury houses, the environmental impact is the same as outlined above. Personally, I would rather see more people making use of our neighbourhood, rather than fewer, in order to reduce the overall environmental impact of the city (sprawl; in general intensification makes more environmental sense than the expansion of suburbs in e.g. Kanata, Nepean).”

PARKING AND TRAFFIC

This section relates to parking and traffic issues within Westboro, including the provision and management of on-site parking for new developments but also issues surrounding traffic on residential streets, the neighbourhood’s walkability, and concerns regarding the potential for “spillover” parking where not provided in support of new construction.

Many commenters, irrespective of their opinion on appropriate level of density, are of the opinion that on-site parking is a necessity for new construction. However, many commenters are of the opposite view, that no parking should be provided on-site in support of new development in order to maintain and improve walkability within the neighbourhood.

1. “It is not the role of the City to destroy the community by approving over intensification. They're killing the golden goose. The rapid transit proximity factor is grossly overstated by City planners. The two main groups of people in our neighbourhood are young families and retired or semi retired couples. Yes, they can now take the LRT to downtown but they still have to have cars. Young families can't take children on public transit to hockey practice at six in the morning. They can't take public transit to go to Costco or when you want you to visit grandparents out of town. Retired or semi retired residents can't take public transit to summer cottages or on vacation. Young City planners who live in the market, Sandy Hill, or in the Glebe seem to think that they can force Westboro residents to give up their cars. This will not happen and it is the not the role of the City to dictate whether we can have cars.”
2. “To me the most valid concern outlined in the discussion paper is around parking - concerns around backyard parking and loss of green space due to developers feeling they need to provide on-site parking. I am very interested in the question raised about how we get people to transition away from needing cars and parking spaces.

Significant bike lanes like the Churchill bike lanes are a big step in this direction, and when it's possible to bike on a separated bike lane all the way down Churchill to downtown, that will be very significant in supporting commuters to cycle instead of drive.

Personally I still own a car but I've been able to transition to taking transit to work 4/5 days of the week. As someone who would like to walk and take transit more and give up my car in the near future, I think the biggest help would be more consistent sidewalk plowing in winter, and better management of ice accumulation on the pavement around bus stops and bus shelters.”

3. “We really need to reduce parking to an absolute minimum... I'd like to see it reduced to a max single car garage and a single vehicle's length in the driveway (or eliminated entirely... maybe with some other perks). But not too short... we don't need people parking while blocking the sidewalk which all too often happens. We should be limiting the % of a yard that's permitted to be hardscaped (even in some ostensibly permeable surface). Limiting on-site parking and a medium-term phase-out of street parking (starting with the long overdue paid parking along the main streets) will help encourage a reduction in automobile use.”
4. “Sufficient off-driveway parking in garages must match the number of residents. Calculations of parking requirements must assume at least one vehicle per family. The best planning would also include some parking for visitors that would not block resident parking. If you don't have enough parking for cars in garages you end up with a situation with several cars parked in the driveway and often intruding into sidewalks. Encouraging parking in rear yards just makes neighbouring use of green yards very uncomfortable. Rear yard parking also leads to hardscaping with unfortunate impacts on drainage and water problems, not just for the building itself but also for neighbours.”
5. “Je dirais des garages où on peut cacher les voitures, mais je sais que les gens les utilisent pour entreposer au lieu de stationner. Un règlement qui oblige les résidents à stationner dans leurs garages le soir?

[...]

Ne pas inclure de places de stationnement dans une majorité des nouvelles résidences.”

6. “If one were to take a drive down Dovercourt after 6pm, one would notice many cars parked on the street. This is primarily due to the amount of triplexes that exist in the area, which offer little to no parking. This is another issue that triplexes possess. While builders can build small parking lots behind or in front of triplexes, this once again goes against the integral character of Westboro. Front and back yards, with gardens and trees, are highly important to the character of Westboro. This cannot be achieved with triplexes, as either we construct parking lots and get rid of the greenspace, or force new residents to park on the street.”
7. “Obviously with higher density development street vehicle parking becomes an intensified issue as does traffic. While transit is important, cars remain a Westboro factor from visitors, Main Street spillover, deliveries, services like garbage pick up etc. The affluent home owners appear to often have two vehicles. Local streets should remain local streets without collector road traffic levels spawned by over development.”
8. “Westboro/Kitchissippi has the least amount of recreational space in the City. Rear yard space would help alleviate that problem. However paving the rear yard for parking doesn't help. Also

where does rainwater and melting snow go? Two triplexes built on a 66 foot wide lot with a common driveway providing 3 parking spots for each triplex has a tremendous adverse impact over one triplex/duplex.”

9. “But the problem, of course, is cars. The neighbourhood cannot sustain more car parking. Paving is not an environmentally responsible use of land, and the loss of greenspace erodes the neighbourhood character. No less important, urban green space and trees improve our mental, emotional and physical health. So then, we must build more smaller units without parking. But this isn't realistic unless the neighbourhood is walkable.

Therefore it is absolutely necessary that Westboro become walkable, in both a practical sense (people able to walk to all their weekday destinations) and delightfully walkable (so that people actually choose to walk).”

10. “No over-intensification in a residential neighbourhood. If you build too intensely, there will be cars. That is obvious. Cars mean parking and I am certain that the day will come when a Westboro child is seriously hurt or worse by a speeding car down a residential street fully lined with parked cars. And then will the city realise over-intensification, ergo cars parked on the street because they have nowhere else to go, is a problem?

[...]

People still own cars. People still buy cars. Even if they live within 30 seconds of the transitway. Look at all the houses within 200 m of Westboro station. They all have cars. It does not stand to reason that just because intensification happens close to a (not great, overpacked to suffocation) train, the residents won't buy cars anyway.”

11. “While I agree with the scope of the study, I think there are some aspects/impact of the infill in the area that are not mentioned well. Especially the parking requirement on the street. I think it is a good idea to have intensification of the area, because of the location of the neighborhood and traditional single dwellings now taking up too much space.

However, I don't think the current zoning rules really take parking into account. For example, Dovercourt between Churchill and Tweedsmuir is a bad example. There are way too many duplexes with short driveway and so many cars have to park on the street that it is almost impossible to pass especially in winter. Whereas on Switzer Ave, where I am on, we have similar number of duplexes, but since most of them have long enough driveway, the parking on the street issue is much less prominent, and the street feels less crowded.”

12. “As much as the city dreams of reducing cars, personally, we feel, and experience shows, that this process will take a paradigm shift in the Canadian lifestyle. It may happen, but hard to predict how far in the future. Squeezing more cars on the already narrow streets of Westboro street is not an acceptable solution. Nor is turning back yards into parking lots. Even if the LRT changes commuter habits, people will still have cars. Both my wife and I for decades never took our cars to work (we cycled, walked, ran, paddled, skied, and occasionally took public transportation) , but we still had cars.

Parking is an important issue. So before all this new re-developemnt takes place, a creative solution need to be in place (eg. central parking lots, like park and walk, for instance, if people would actually consider waling a short distance to retrieve their vehicle.).”

13. "Parking is a challenge in this area. New developments should take parking into consideration. If less vehicle traffic comes to pass in the future, this space could be reconfigured at that time."
14. "The city requirement to reduce the number of driveways intersecting the street creates BAD design. So many of these driveways between these fourplexes (in Triplex clothing) are not wide enough to have any leeway and force this paving situation affecting watershed and of course we do have significant snow in Ottawa which then reduces the parking in the back. If the severed property cannot support the parking, watershed and driveway for a triplex than look for another piece of property."
15. "We need to enhance walking and biking in Westboro. If we are to increase the population density of the village and at the same time have fewer cars, we'll need to enhance the notion that the best way to go somewhere in Westboro is to walk or bike. We need to increase the safety, utility, and enjoyability of being a pedestrian or a cyclist in the Village. A good example of this are the new bike lanes along Byron Ave. These are great and since their introduction I use them every day. We'll need to enhance things like this. A good example of the opposite is are the storefronts of the previously mentioned Ashcroft development, which are no fun to be in or walk through because of the lack of shops, lack of sunlight, the 'wind tunnel' effect, and the general oppressiveness of the buildings themselves."
16. "Over intensification occurs when building development does not properly address the real requirements for parking and automobile usage in an area."
17. "Change the zoning requirement for required parking spaces for each dwelling. If parking is not available for new units, people that use bikes, public or shared transit will move into these areas. Not requiring parking spaces for a percentage of new developments will attract individuals who don't need cars to get around and will not have such a negative carbon imprint on the community."
18. "More dwellings means more vehicles, that is the simple truth no matter how convenient public transit may be. These streets are not capable of handling more vehicles, they are narrow, they were laid out 100 years ago and don't even have sidewalks. We all have to walk on the road to get around, this is especially dangerous for school children who go to the 4 local schools (our son went to 3 of them). Winter and snowbanks make this even worse."
19. "I would recommend a more conservative building footprint to lot size ratio, and mandatory, one parking spot per unit.

[...]

My street is already struggling with traffic issues due to an existing daycare/ school and church which have been part of our community for many years. Although I have been living directly across, enduring congested traffic and street parking at peak times, I appreciate these institutions, and additional traffic as part of our wonderful, vibrant neighbourhood.

I fear additional development will further impact the issue of high traffic on our street."

20. "First, while it's laudable that the city is seeking to reduce reliance on cars, I am highly skeptical that this can be accomplished by zoning. Street parking in Westboro and Wellington West is already in short supply, not only based on the number of local residents and the quality of transit services available, but also traffic from other parts of the city. I urge you to maintain reasonable parking requirements as part of future developments. While I support greater

densification in these areas and a greater variety in home sizes, the reality is that current public transit is inadequate and far too expensive, cycling infrastructure is unsafe or lacking altogether, and it's unrealistic to expect people to purchase homes in the area for market value if there is no parking available. While there are many areas where the city can improve to reduce reliance on cars, zoning requirements cannot address the fundamental problems and zoning that permits reduced parking spots would exacerbate the issue.”

21. “Permeable paving options

No parking at all for certain units

Raise on-street parking fees

Educate, erect signage, and enforce parking, speeding, and anti-idling bylaws

Work with BIA, realtors and local groups to promote the car-free benefits of the area (walkability, transit access, services, etc.). I don't own a car or drive, and can get to everything I need on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis on foot or bike, with the occasional transit trip thrown in.

Work with builders to market new homes to people who DON'T own cars. This is a growing segment of the population.

Raise parking fees.

Encourage builders to offer car sharing space at larger developments and promote easy transit access (where true). The Current/GCTC building marketed its partnership with VrtuCar and its proximity to the Tunney's Pasture transit station when selling those units.”

22. “Walkability should be the number one feature of Westboro. I don't mind infills per se. Low density units are nicer than higher density ones.

Parking should be a big consideration. It is a constant source of frustration for residents. All new units should have sufficient parking for residents (i.e. at least once space per unit). Parking regs should actually be enforced, especially in the winter (sometimes I can't get out of my driveway because someone is parked across the street from me and the banks have made the street too narrow to turn!). Solve the parking problem, a lot of the infill concerns go away.”

23. “The streets of Westboro are walkable and it is a neighbourhood in which it is the norm to see people strolling down the streets (not on the sidewalks, which generally do not exist), walking their dogs, or just enjoying the neighbourhood.

[...]

Westboro is an eminently walkable neighbourhood, but car ownership is the norm. Most residents own at least one vehicle.

[...]

As stated previously Westboro is, and is likely to remain for some time, a family-oriented neighbourhood where car ownership will be the norm. And, so, for the foreseeable future, residents will demand facilities for parking their vehicles. We favour a adaptable design approach that provides front-oriented parking space on shorter driveways, which can, in the future, be converted to landscaped greenspace when the prevalence of car ownership is reduced.

We also favour more effective enforcement of the existing bylaw provisions limiting the duration of on-street parking.

We do not know if it is possible to design new infill homes so that the garages can be more, rather than less, easily converted to expand the accommodation areas. We have seen some examples in Westboro of older homes in which that appears to have been done.”

24. “Some approved housing should be purpose-built rental units, including semi's and triplexes; some new development should come without a parking space for each unit, thus people with limited means who do not own a car are not paying for the cost of a parking space with their rent or purchase price. New developments could provide a space for a Communauto (car sharing) space to enable a car-free lifestyle, or as an effective alternative to those who need a second car only occasionally. Note that Westboro is already home to several such stations and could use more. Analysis published in the Globe and Mail (October 25, 2019) indicates that as car sharing infrastructure and options increase, the use of such options also increase, effectively increasing the overall size of the market for these transportation solutions, and decreasing the need for private vehicles.”
25. “Westboro is a progressive and environmentally conscious neighbourhood. Residents value their ability to walk to services as much as possible and residents take transit as much as possible. But, the reality is, that it is still a family neighbourhood with children attending extracurricular activities multiple times a week; they are doing groceries for large families and require a car to do this. As a family oriented neighbourhood, this is still a reality. This neighbourhood is not a "downtown" neighbourhood. Families manage with one car, but the current level of infill and the parking allowance of the current developments is insufficient. Many streets currently allow parking on both sides of the street. Allowing multiple units within this neighbourhood will mean that on street parking will increase significantly with the approval of multiple triplex/fourplex approvals per block. The only answer to this is to limit the number of multiple units in a single block, and increase the number of multiple units indirect proximity to the transit way, otherwise the streets will be further clogged with parked cars.”
26. “Secondly, I am not convinced that infill bringing more residents to a transit corridor (such as the LRT) actually results in less car usage. In my case, my husband and I deliberately chose to live in Westboro so that we could take public transit to work, and we do so. But like many others we still own a car. The infill on our street has only added more cars along with the doubling of units. Most of our direct neighbours actually use their cars to commute and, in addition, have frequent deliveries. People may drive less to run errands, but appear to be ordering more online. To decrease car ownership, the city would need to do more to encourage electric car-sharing services, e-scooters, bikes, etc.”
27. “The essential residential neighbourhood street characteristics, cited earlier, can exist in a highly dense residential neighbourhood. Examples of dense residential neighbourhoods that

work, which immediately come to mind, include the Annex, Cabbagetown, and the Danforth District; all in Toronto. There's one thing these neighbourhoods all have in common: They do not have private parking at the front of the property, accessed from the main street. All residential parking is accommodated at the back of the lot, which is accessible by means of a back lane. There are some neighbourhoods in Ottawa, including Kitchissippi, which once used this concept. But it never became adopted; most likely because the heavy winter snowfalls here make it less than practical. Without public snow removal these lanes would not be useable in the winter, and adding laneways to the City's snow removal budget would be costly. The key lesson these good examples of high-density inner-city residential neighbourhoods tell us is that private parking in the street corridor is not an option for good residential planning."

28. "Eliminate in-front parking, minimize the width of driveways to a single lane, eliminate fake front walks that actually serve as sneaky ways to widen driveways and allow cars to park side by side."
29. "It's hard to tell what is officially better: providing a generous amount of parking spaces (which means losing green space and increasing traffic), or limiting parking spaces which may be meant to encourage public transit use, but may instead just lead to street parking."
30. "There is a difference between automobile use and automobile ownership. I think it's unrealistic to think that people in a country of our size, especially in cities like Ottawa with the multitude of people who do outdoor recreation activities outside of the city, will stop owning cars. While public transit has improved, there is no infrastructure to adequately address travelling outside of the city or larger distances within the city (once off the LRT line) in a convenient manner. Adequate parking should be provided for each new development, at a minimum of one spot per unit. Too many cars on the street are a safety issue as well as unsightly. It is also disruptive to the parking needs of residents' visitors and tradespeople. Many streets are virtually single lane and, in the winter, can become impassible if cars are parked. I have seen school buses have to back up to go around blockages to get to their stops. Parking can be put underground as has been done in some developments. Paving the side and most of the back yard for parking is unacceptable, for all the reasons discussed above. Higher density kept closer to transit areas would make it more convenient for, and therefore encourage, that relatively larger proportion of the neighbourhood's population to use transit. Building one or more central parking garages or lots for more public parking for the commercial area would take some of the pressure off the streets and may encourage people to deposit their cars and walk along the commercial area to relieve traffic."
31. "Additional ideas to helping a single tri-plex fit in better: no rear yard parking. How can a parking lot enhance a neighbourhood?"
32. "Cars and parking issues go beyond neighbourhood design - having a transit system that actually works (cost, frequency, and routes that actually get to places within the community, not focus exclusively on commuters) will encourage people to get rid of their cars. Designing complete neighbourhoods, with most requirements within walking/biking distance or one bus ride, is important too. Not everyone needs to get to the train."
33. "Additionally, the triplexes that are built (not quadruplexes) should not be permitted to have paved backyards and front yards. It detracts from the beauty of the neighbourhood (usually many trees were torn down for the building), and makes these asphalt islands further

detracting from the neighbourhood and causing draining and environmental issues. All houses are to have front yards and backyards so should triplexes. Paved backyards are an eyesore and an environmental disaster. If the triplexes need parking they should have garage or parking pads that respect by-law. If there is no space for by-law respecting garages or parking pads then no parking should be provided after all the argument for densification is that transit and downtown are so nearby. If developers think that parking is a necessity they should build to address that and perhaps building a semi-detached with a parking pad or a garage is a more appropriate densification for the property.”

34. “I understand the city's desire to have more people using public transit. This is a worthwhile goal, however, by eliminating the requirement for homes to provide parking, we are putting the cart before the horse. The reality is that most families will continue to have a car, even if they commute by public transit. Trying to encourage less cars in the downtown core is a sensible goal. However, in our country and climate, I don't think it is reasonable to build housing without parking, and assume that people will forgo having a car as a result. I think it is important to provide at least one parking spot per home/unit. This is not excessive, and it prevents our streets being overcrowded with parked cars. On my own street, I find it upsetting that my elderly parents can't always find a spot to park on my block when they come to visit.”
35. “There has been a noticeable increase in traffic in recent years - cut through traffic in particular. My street had it's speed limit reduced to 30 km/h yet with no enforcement, cars travel way too fast on our street.

Improving safely and convenience of pedestrian traffic

- more pedestrian crossings (like Byron & Athlone ave)
- I sometimes drive 5 blocks due to safety concerns when I would rather walk
- Pedestrian crosswalk signals should default more often to the "walk" symbol without having to press the "beg" button
- preventing cut through traffic using some physical barrier of some sort
- synchronizing the traffic lights to the 2 pedestrian crossing at westboro transit station

Improve the quality of road repairs after a road cut due to a new house construction.

- As a cyclist, I feel all the bumps from poor road repairs
- And with all the new houses being built, I get a new bump to deal with every month or so.

A lot of new property tax revenue is being created by all these infills. I would like a portion of this money to be used to mitigate the issues caused by all the development

- new crosswalks to help with the increased car traffic
- more enforcement of traffic laws

- more frequent sidewalk & road repairs”

36. “Underground parking and / or parking within the envelope of the building should be required for multi-unit dwellings. In addition, to the extent possible, the city should reduce barriers to the introduction of electronic scooters and car sharing services.”

37. “PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS DRIVE CARS!!!!!!AND IF YOU THINK YOU CAN CUT BACK YOU ARE NOT INTUNE TO HOW PEOPLE THINK. They can take the LRT to work but if they need articles for their home, garden and materials to keep up their homes, fencing, winter tires THEY WILL ALWAYS TAKE CARS. Going to Bayshore, on trips always use cars.”

38. “There shouldn’t be any more new developments. All the existing dwellings should have underground parking. Parking is already a premium in Westboro with people wanting to shop and eat in Westboro. Most streets have lots of parking issues there is no need to add any more.

I know the city is looking towards lower automobile downtown and the surrounding neighbourhoods of the Glebe and Westboro. It is evident in the way traffic is being constricted on major routes. People visiting Westboro to eat and shop will visit in cars. They will not think to take the light rail or bus to Westboro. If people are using public transit they will go downtown instead. There are already enough condos closer to transit that will be perfect for people without cars.”

39. “Parking could be easily accommodated on lots while still preserving greenspace if the building was smaller and didn’t require variances. Reduce the foot print of the structure to allow space for both 1 parking spot and grass/trees/landscaping. Buildings close to LRT should have NO parking allocated and should have special requirements for affordable units so our community/neighbourhood can be diversified and open to all.

I am very concerned about cars and traffic in Westboro. Just look around the neighbourhood and you will see MANY streets with traffic calming measures and lower speed limits. Our streets have become UNSAFE – so many cars speeding down our residential street – putting our children at risk. MORE must be done to calm traffic in Westboro. We need rules in place that buildings close to LRT are not allowed to build parking – so people moving in are actually going to use transit. Same with multi-unit dwellings. Build for people who don’t have cars – provide amazing transit options, bike paths, walking paths. Continue to develop and support Richmond road so we can walk to everything we need. If we keep building parking spaces, they will fill with cars.”

40. “One way that parking could be accommodated without losing outdoor green space is to use the basement level for the parking. I’ve seen this work wonderfully in multi-unit dwellings in Collingwood. This would be very appealing to anyone who has to tackle with clearing snow and ice from their cars in winter. Both neighbours and residents would be happy.

Maybe a partnership with Virtuecar or one of the car sharing companies could be explored.”

41. “Walkability: including access to local services, safe sidewalks, pathways, bike lanes, green space, but also importantly low speeds. Too many cars using it as a through-fare, short-cut etc.. On-street residential parking should be limited/controlled by permit.”

42. “Intensification should happen closest to transit. Better cycling infrastructure needs to be built in this area to better accommodate the choice to not own a car. Parking fees on the street need to be increased, or established at all. Parking minimums should be abolished.”

BUILDING/SITE DESIGN

This section addresses comments pertaining to the design of new residential construction.

Note that this does not relate solely to the design of the building itself (although many commenters focused on building design), but also to the design of the entire property as a whole. Questions of how parking areas, greenspace, and other supporting functions are configured and provided can all relate in some way to site design.

Comments were somewhat varied in terms of preferred architectural style or exact features, but are generally consistent in emphasizing the importance of building design being compatible with the existing context.

1. “Architectural designs that suit the neighbourhood. Do we really need one more flat-roofed, rectangular box with huge permanently covered windows, jutting floating walls with no apparent purpose, and other features that are in the process of changing Westboro and surrounding neighbourhoods?”
2. “In looking at the single family new houses, some do a better job of complementing existing neighbourhood architecture. Some replicate the older styles. Some while modern blend in. Others are stark contrasts in shape and materials.

In looking at semi-attached, it is a good thing there is a height regulation as builders are often choosing boxy designs to maximize interior space and to include integrated garages on the main level. These sometimes overwhelm adjacent houses.

The triplexes especially the sneaky ones planned to become apartments (e.g. add basement units later) have few examples of “nice” design. The shoe boxes on Ravenhill are not visually appealing. Another set of new development on Byron (outside of the study area) appears to add basement units after the fact. They are reasonable architecturally and have the saving grace of offering new rental accommodation. I don’t know if they create parking or traffic problems or have good onsite parking. Also there are other older apartments in the vicinity.”

3. “The vast majority of examples I've seen on my walks have been consistent with the character of the neighbourhood - mirroring similar building materials/colour schemes, and building height.”
4. “Design is an important aspect (see #2 above). Colour, shape, size of building(s). It needs to take into account existing homes and residents, especially near schools (although I don’t this is an issue for a multi-unit dwelling, such as a triplex).”
5. “Design can be modern but good infill will use roofing lines, size/shape, and green space that aligns with an older neighbourhood. Mature trees and houses with character are what brought many of us to this area in the first place. Let’s not lose that. Bad infill in this case looks like: semi detached three story buildings that are essentially a massive concrete block using up most of the footprint. Nobody wants to sit on their patio staring straight at a giant wall.”
6. “No matter how lovely the architecture, paving over a large section of a residential street with a multiple unit dwelling next to a multiple unit dwelling next to another multiple unit dwelling is of grave concern. It’s not about the look of a dwelling, it is how the dwelling feels and fits into the

character of the neighbourhood, and the overall impact on the street. And the cumulative effective of several of these units on one street.”

7. “The report “suggests” that the larger buildings associated with triplexes “have a more noticeable visual impact on the character of the neighbourhood” but then doesn’t support it. That does not have to be the case. I’d strongly suggest focusing on dealing with what might make these buildings loom over the street. Some of my least favourite infill buildings in the area are singles or doubles and a garage door, or massive entrance half a story off the ground contribute to that. Too many restrictions will impact accessibility and light by forcing units underground or limiting their useful space.”
8. “Some semi detached homes, some that keep more trees, and are not 3 storey high. However these are rare most all of them seem to be large homes that had variances, maximizing the lots, this take away from the urban greenery and attractiveness of Westboro.”
9. “Newer buildings in Westboro generally don’t have much semi private space in the front, and often have few front windows close to grade, so they don’t feel ‘neighbourly’. Their front facades are dominated by a garage door. Large infill singles are often designed to be beautiful and private, and suggest that the owners value living in this location but would rather not interact with people on the street. This is not a characteristic element worth repeating.”
10. “Indeed, as the pattern continues, It is conceivable 2 or even 4 more of these style of buildings could be built along that stretch of Ravenhill, leading to the visual impact of a single large and un-variegated building streetscape (and loss of canopy) in an otherwise residential mix of homes. Ravenshill would be the most egregious example of this pattern in the study area to my knowledge, but addressing this as part of the impact study may limit the number of other streets subject to similar outcome.”
11. “In particular connected developments where a new house is built attached to an older one. Assuming proper setbacks and height restrictions are observed, these can look great and function well too. The character is preserved because the old building is preserved, and of course density is doubled. I believe that developments like this should be encouraged. I was interested to read in the discussion paper that prior to 2008 all triplexes had to be built this way. Maybe it is time to re-introduce this rule.”
12. “When I think multi-unit, I think of the brick rental triplexes that are common in this neighbourhood. I have few issues with that type of design.

More units can mean less space between the new building and existing houses. I have seen the impacts of some drip lines that are too close together. I do not understand how things like this fall through the cracks.”

13. “The new infill homes are ugly (boxy, grey, etc.), some styles are timeless, these are not. I much prefer the redbrick semis on Roosevelt (near the Starbucks, as well as on Berkley and Dominion). More timeless. The grey boxy infills are the shag carpet of housing. They’ll look terrible years from now.”
14. “I have no objection to the nicely designed infills where the architecture resembles the historic neighbourhood as many to the west of Churchill and south of Byron do with attractive landscaping.”

15. “Concerning design, my own preference is for a more industrial feel in keeping with the origins of Westboro. Many residents comment positively on the appearance of 396 Roosevelt, to cite one example.”
16. “Traditional architectural style, exterior finishes, building height, setbacks and greenspace that are consistent with the majority of the existing housing. Greenspace should not be sacrificed for off-street parking. Building entrances should be at ground level not many steps up.”
17. “Good infill examples are not the cookie cutter homes that seem to be all done by the same handful of architects and therefore our streets are starting to look like suburban, cheap developer style living. Good infill designs enhance and express good traditional architecture that is set back from the street and does not fill the entire site. Architecture with expressive roof lines and projections compared to building to maximize zoning setbacks makes a huge difference to the street scape and atmosphere of the area.”

SENSE OF PLACE/NEIGHBOURHOOD INTERACTION

These comments address the concept of “sense of place”, essentially the question of what about the community within Westboro promotes people’s attachment to their neighbourhood.

The ability of residents to interact with neighbours, and how the design of new development encourages or detracts from that ability, was referenced by commenters who addressed this theme.

1. “Maintain residential streets as appropriate for kids playing on the street and sidewalk (basketball and hockey nets, scootering, etc.). Playing on the street builds community, encourages free activity for kids, that is convenient for parents and kids. As well, it is reasonably priced for the City.”
2. “One of the characteristics I believe is important to preserve in this very vital neighborhood is: opportunities for the residents of infill dwellings to interact with their neighbours and their environment, which is best accomplished by having as much green outdoor space as possible for activities like gardening, watching and playing with children, sitting and reading. If the only outdoor space is parking this limits the time they spend immersing themselves in and engaging with their neighbourhood. People need to feel connected to make their dwelling feel like their home. This is a crucial connection to maintain a sense of well being and good mental health.”
3. “Sense of community - being able to see/interact with our neighbours (e.g., good infill = places to sit out on a front porch or meet up communally). Without this, we become less engaged, less likely to know our neighbours, and less likely to look out for one another. What about encouraging community gardens?”
4. “What makes Westboro such a desirable place to live is that it is like living in the suburbs with all the conveniences of the city. It is filled with families raising children who can safely play outside or walk to nearby parks and schools. It has several recreation centres within a 2 km radius, the JCC, Dovercourt, and the YMCA at Carlingwood. All these places have summer camps for children as well as swimming lessons and daycare.

There is Kitchissippi Beach within walking distance as well as a myriad of restaurants, grocery stores, banks, shops, legions, etc. all conveniently located and within walking distance.”

5. “Establishing a cohesive vision for development in Westboro would allow Westboro to maintain its more relaxed and friendly neighbourhood feel instead of becoming a busy, impersonal space. Many streets enjoy yearly street parties with their neighbours and children are able to play safely outside with friends.”
6. “Even the older housing stock in the neighbourhood is not as 'neighbourly' as other Ottawa neighbourhoods -- in Hintonburg for example, you can look at many houses and imagine where a child might sit to eat their popsicle, and where neighbours might relax with a cold beer. But Westboro is lacking many of these semi private places along the street, with many porches that are formalities only. This might explain why many residents sense that their neighbourhood identity is holding on by only a thread. There is room for improvement here.”
7. “The defining character of Westboro is that it is a small town. It's a small town that just happens to be enclosed within a city, but the character that people love about it is that it has the look and feel of an older, small, self-sufficient community where everyone knows each other. This is in contrast to other old neighbourhoods such as The Glebe, Centertown, or the Golden Triangle, which all have a distinct urban feel.

The notion that Westboro is a small town should be kept in mind whenever we talk about planning and development. Using this frame of reference will make it easier to judge if a particular development fits in the character of Westboro or not.”

8. “A new way to deal with rear yard functions, is the idea of communal rear yards. Multiple dwelling units that share a communal large rear yard or public park with shared park facilities such as play areas, benches and BBQ pits. With multiple homes looking out back to a communal yard allows for smaller room for private yard with access to larger public spaces that are also safe and convenient for all ages.”
9. “Westboro has long been known as the “Village of Westboro”. I believe this moniker points to fundamental characteristics that should be preserved and, to the extent they have been eroded by the rapid development over the last several year, be re-introduced.

The Lexico dictionary by Oxford (lexico.com) defines “village” as “A self-contained district or community within a town or city, regarded as having features characteristic of village life.” Villages typically have people’s homes clustered around a central area (nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia), forming a community whose members have a strong sense of “we” – i.e. a strong community feeling. Neighbours tend to have intimate relations with each other and local businesses tend to get to know their regular local patrons. In Westboro, that central area is Richmond Rd.

This sense of village and community are a big part of what makes Westboro the great neighbourhood that it is. The central commercial area should be maintained, with densest population closest to that area where it is typically found and expected. Surrounding residential streets should be maintained as quieter, less dense areas where neighbours tend to turn over more slowly and get to know each other. Architectural styles vary, which is part of the charm, but more traditional styles dominate, with peaked or hip rooflines, and building materials like stucco, brick, wood and stone. Most residents maintain nicely landscaped front and side yards, cars in garages or driveways, mature trees and welcoming facades and entranceways. All these elements should be preserved.”

10. "Community: that means knowing who your neighbours are, design that encourages human interaction (i.e. lots of activity on the street, at the front of homes. As an example, the only neighbours i know are ones who lives in older homes, as we never see the people who lives in the newer ones, as their cars are parked in the back, and they never used their front doors, and they never are out shoveling snow, or washing their car, or gardening out front, etc."
11. "Preserve the family-friendly, leafy neighbourhood where people feel safe and connected to their neighbours, can walk to do errands and shopping, and can easily access transit and bike paths to travel to other parts of the city."
12. "Westboro's key characteristics are is a walking neighborhood where you can park you car and not drive for the weekend errands and activities. Kids playing along streets with lots of lightfilled greenspace at parks and waterfront. Most streets lined by trees. Houses have backyard gardens and private green space. The community is family oriented, many have grown up in neighborhood and purchased their own housing close to parents and siblings. These are all characteristics we should preserve."
13. "Enhance the community factor, quiet streets yet close to the core"
14. "The small-scale, "rural" nature of Westboro lies at the heart of what makes it a unique and valued neighbourhood. This is manifested in the smaller, walkable streets, extensive tree canopy both on city and private land, lots with homes scaled so that there remains substantial greenspace, a variation in architectural design of dwellings, and a urban design that facilitates interaction among neighbours. These are among the characteristics that should be preserved and enhanced as intensification proceeds."
15. "In answer to some of the questions posed in the discussion paper, we should aim to preserve the characteristics of quiet residential streets and lively, busier main streets. We should strive to maintain green space, low vehicle speeds, safe spaces for children and families surrounded by commercial and high-density housing (affordable and otherwise). The area should feel planned and organized, not haphazardly built upon by those seeking to maximize profit. Trees, plants, greenery and light should be valued. The desire for residents to own and operate cars should be respected, because it will not be eclipsed entirely by public transit: even if public transit were vastly improved there are still a critical number of use cases in Ottawa (as with most Canadian cities) that do not allow for residents to move to a transit-only lifestyle."
16. "Currently, there is obvious pride of ownership / well-maintained properties throughout the study zone. The city should work to preserve and enhance Richmond Road as a community high street with charming lighting, store fronts and walks. Almost all the avenues in the neighbourhood including Tweedsmuir, Athlone, Kenwood Cole and others within and outside the study zone are currently used by neighbours as pedestrian walkways, allowing neighbours to regularly connect. Narrow streets / lane ways are a defining characteristic of the neighbourhood. They slow traffic and make the streets friendly."

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS

The comments in this section relate to the demographics of people who reside within the neighbourhood, including tenure of housing provided within the neighbourhood (i.e. whether or not it is ownership or rental forms of housing).

Some commenters expressed concern with the potential for displacement, either of families or of renters presently living in the neighbourhood. Other comments focused on the demographics of people that they want to see living in Westboro.

1. “Re-introduce / encourage multigenerational housing (e.g. CMHC flex-housing) - singles with in-law suites or linked singles / townhomes”
2. “What concerned us trying to find a place to live is that most new dense units are not sized for families. My wife and I are older millennials (just under 40) for whom living centrally near transit is important, but it was very difficult to find something appropriate. Our condo building was building in the 80s and seems to be the sweet spot of being a reasonable size (just over 1000 sq ft), but having e.g., in unit laundry. Building density won’t be effective in building a neighbourhood if people with children can’t live there.

A complicating concern for us is that my wife developed some minor mobility limitations, and also our child is quite tall and heavy. So many of the new build multiplexes are full of stairs (including the townhome we had been renting). Many of them can’t even be accessed from the street or garage without traversing at least a few little staircases, which doesn’t help one get outside with a child in a stroller - especially in the winter. The same is true of people later in life, or people of any age with mobility challenges. Again, if we’re going to have neighbourhoods with families, we need to have places that diverse families can live.

I think [*these points*] aren’t really the focus of the zoning study, but are very much worth considering. We need to think about the range of people we want living in our neighbourhoods, and then think about whether they can live in the type of dwellings our zoning encourages.”

3. “The single most important aspect for me is to maintain the family focused and friendly environment which is predicated on owner occupied dwellings, as has historically been, for the most part, in Westboro.”
4. “I know many in Westboro are concerned about their neighbourhood's character changing, but by restricting zoning we're pricing out young families, such as mine with two adults working solidly middle class jobs, where we can only really consider moving into a pretty rundown semi (and can't afford to stay in our current neighbourhood at all!!). In order to keep the neighbourhood full of families we, simply put, need more housing stock.”
5. “Why is this area being targeted to not be a family neighborhood anymore, but a high density, condo/urban, high density area? I understand there is a preoccupation with climate change and it seems that increasing density is the City of Ottawa’s only approach to address that; but all it seems to be doing is creating more costs, driving people away who cared about the neighborhood and bringing people who only care about buying starter properties.”
6. “I understand that the City wishes to have a balance of housing to support a variety of demographic profiles through the General Urban Area per Policy 3.6.1. In my opinion, this does not require the City to achieve all types of housing for all demographics in all parts of the city on all streets. Westboro is only one part of the city and there are many areas with proximity to services and transit. Part of the charm of a city like Ottawa is that there are distinct neighbourhoods that have their own flavours. Consider also the demographics that may be pushed out of Westboro if development continues as it is, rapidly with multiple rental units interspersed with single homes and semis and crowded streets. For example, families who

want more space with a yard and quiet streets suitable for children to play may be forced out as density increases.”

7. “Enhance smaller, more affordable units including more rental units. Some attitudes against renters are ridiculous; most people have had to rent housing at some point in their lives. Our neighbourhood has a history of long-term renters and they are already being pushed out by development. I live near several small apartment buildings, rooming houses, and social housing units and many of those residents have been neighbours for more than 30 years.”
8. “However, the developers are now promoting the notion that the multiple dwellings they intend to erect will be occupied by renters who have little capital at play and no welcome tax. These renters will be of the Airbnb variety, transient with no long term meaningful commitment to the community for the duration of their Ottawa assignment.

This is not in keeping with the fabric of Westboro. The corporate rental business to be conducted by the administration arm of the developers is not what intensification was ever meant to be: gentle balanced intensification rests best with committed new residents not with unknown renters and visitors in a ratio of 8 to 1 former residing family.”

9. “Also those awful red signs aren’t doing anything to improve the aesthetic appeal of a once lovely neighbourhood. They are exclusionary, and make people moving into new homes feel unwelcome in their new neighbourhood. They should be removed.”
10. “Improve the process by being truly inclusive. Inclusion is a concept that the City is committed to; so it’s imperative that our community being included in this massive change affecting our daily lives.

The infill study, and the invitation to respond, is only a starting point.

We must include renters, home owners, seniors, students, schools, community centres, businesses, historians, landlords, developers, etc. in the ongoing intensification of Westboro. We must work together to develop a plan that address concerns and interests of all parties.

True inclusion would actually improve the process and lead to better outcomes for developers, residents and the City.”

COST OF HOUSING/AFFORDABILITY

Comments in this section relate to the cost of houses and/or apartments in Westboro (whether freehold, condominium, or rental units).

Commenters who made reference to the cost of housing generally raised concerns about the neighbourhood’s affordability, although in some cases the focus was more on the cost of primarily ownership forms of housing (e.g. detached or semi-detached dwellings) as opposed to more primarily rental forms of housing.

1. “In terms of characteristics that we should be striving to preserve: yes, character for sure (e.g. brick houses, front porches), and also affordability, which is rapidly being lost as the smaller housing stock is being removed and replaced by much larger structures which remove greenspace.”
2. “I know that housing affordability is a big challenge in Ottawa and there is a lot of demand to live in neighbourhoods like Westboro that are fairly convenient to downtown, well-served by

transit, shopping areas and other services. I believe slowly intensifying the area as the City has been doing is a good way to start improving affordability.”

3. “Long Semis do not create affordable housing. The Roosevelt developments are essentially duplexes or eight unit rental properties. The rents will be two thousand to three thousand dollars a month.”
4. “This area has some co-op housing. I think it would increase access and affordability to increase availability of more co-op housing.”
5. “The great dread of any homeowner is that public housing will come into the neighbourhood, under the euphemism of "affordable housing", or "densification". People who don't work for a living and have all day to stay home and make trouble, move into the neighbourhood. I should know, we had a half-way house on Currell, and subsidized housing on Tweedsmuir, and homes and vehicles on the street were robbed, frequently - very much in contrast to McKellar Park, which did not have this sort of lowlifes to deal with.

The public housing townhouses on Tweedsmuir (between Currell and Dovercourt) are a exactly the kind of housing that should be kept OUT of McKellar Park. They are a shocking waste of public money, and degrade the value of nearby homes. They could be sold off for millions of dollars, which could be used to provide affordable housing in other neighbourhoods in the form of apartments. Instead, the City persists in paying enormous subsidies to the privileged few who have come to the top of the housing waitlist. It is a model of the kind of housing NOT to build.

Property owners need some assurance that the triplexes will be private sector, market rent units – i.e., that the City isn't going to build another Ritchie Street or Caldwell Avenue, in which case they can kiss their life savings good-bye, as well as the quality of life in their neighbourhood. Unless the City can give that assurance, it can expect enormous opposition from a well-organized and wealthy elite - and rightly so.”

6. “All of the people I've spoken with agree that they can live with some increase in density; adding subsidized / lower rent housing is not a problem either. The issue is that the developers are NOT building:
 - reasonably-sized / density developments, or
 - lower-rent / subsidized housing

They are building luxury housing and trying to provide parking for all the units which means that the lot is used for cars, removing pivotal green space, adding more garbage, more noise and removing mature trees.”

7. “I have been a resident of Westboro since 2002. I want to see the beautiful parts of Westboro protected. I want to see affordable housing built that real families can move into and enjoy the excellent schools and recreation facilities.

I do not want to see developers cramming every square inch of a lot with building and concrete, offering housing that most families cannot afford and using our neighbourhood to make money with no benefit to our community, instead of enhancing it for everyone.“

8. “Finally, low vacancy rates should not result in trying to increase the affordability of housing within the area. This would ruin what is here now. There are a number of affordable housing

options in the immediate surrounding area, with at least two low income high rises. One also needs to consider the number of vagrants and beggars from outside the area that have increased in the recent past.”

9. “I don't agree that city wide affordable housing and diverse demographic metrics are applicable to such a small study area. If quoting affordability, demographics then applicable static can only be applied to "central west Ottawa which would include Carlington, Glabar Park, Bel air etc... and surrounding neighborhoods. Affordable housing seems more reasonably defined within a commute time area, not geographic area. Developers in Westboro are paying more for teardown lots than whole houses elsewhere. How do we think they create affordable housing with so much up front cost? They need to make premium housing to recoup which leads to larger sq. and deeper buildings. It appears the target is well heeled, kid free couples who don't want to maintain yards vs. any other demographic. Any affordability metric argument that developers are creating affordable housing with their taller multi tenant buildings in central streets of Westboro is not practically defensible. Taller buildings (with reasonable setbacks to allow light) along transit or Carling corridors can easily be defended.”
10. “In regards to the two detached houses; both contained small apartments with long term tenants, who were forced to leave and live in locations in the suburbs where transportation is poor, and commutes long. So, infill for whom, I ask? Many of these conversion and infills in our area are taking place on rental properties, where tenants become the victims of infill. These new units are \$2100 to \$2500 a month, hardly affordable. With very little rental accommodation across Westboro, the existing affordable units are being replaced by luxury and exclusive rentals. Funny that the reason for these units' quick approval is the lack of rental in our area and their proximity to the LRT. However, location, location, location, and affordability is just a dream some of us had. In addition, much of the financing is coming from off shore, which means those not living in Ottawa or Canada are driving the rental infills in Westboro and no doubt across the City.”
11. “I highly doubt that two triplexes on one lot will increase affordability. They are currently renting for \$2000+/mth. If affordability is the issue that the city wants to tackle, providing apartments which are out of the reach of many families will not help them move towards homeownership or build a nest egg. The city can allow multiple types of housing such as row housing/ stacked housing etc. to make Westboro more affordable.”
12. “I'm afraid I don't have an answer as to how to provide affordable housing in Westboro, but what I can say is that the infill that is currently being built is NOT in any way affordable. The infill we are seeing are very high end homes, extremely large, and beyond most budgets. One idea might be to encourage modest, attractive townhomes that preserve the character of Westboro but provide options to get into the neighbourhood at a different price point. The current push for intensification has absolutely nothing to do with providing affordable housing.”
13. “Enhance and preserve affordability: We moved to this area 20 years ago, when it was still possible to buy a home for less than \$500,000. We could not afford to buy here now. We can barely afford to pay the taxes. Even with the increased property value, we don't know if we will be able to stay in our home in our retirement years.

Who is benefiting from Westboro redevelopment? Where is the affordable and middle class housing? Rentals?

The City can't claim that intensification is creating more affordable housing and diverse housing options if they continue to allow developers to tear down houses and put in huge,

single family homes, semi-detached and triplexes that cost close to or over \$1 million. And rents at more than \$3000 a month.”

14. “This is a very tough question and the viability of any strategies to ensure affordable housing in Westboro are severely constrained by the economics of the property/housing market in the area. Westboro, despite the adverse impacts of excessive intensification, remains a desirable area of the City. That market demand translates into higher prices for the existing properties that are available for development.

We know that developers actively seek out development properties from existing homeowners and that they can engage in a bidding war, which further drives up the acquisition cost of properties that will be re-developed through infills. The higher cost of the property means that the developer must obtain a higher price for the residences that are built, in order to generate the desired profit. This creates an imperative for building luxury dwellings which can command a higher premium and/or for increasing the number of dwelling units on the property. But even with multi-unit developments (most often intended for rentals) the rental cost far exceeds the level that would be considered to qualify as “affordable housing”. Triplexes in the Westboro area command rents that fall within the top 5% of the Ottawa rental market.

As far as we can tell, unless subsidized housing is constructed by the City in Westboro, nothing can be done to ensure that truly affordable housing is available in this area. And, given the cost of acquiring the existing properties, this would not be priority (i.e. cost-effective) area for pursuing that type of initiative by the City.

It is possible that a mix of housing options could be provided in the Westboro area by adjusting the zoning requirements for areas that are adjacent to the LRT. (Most of the properties within the area of the Interim Control Bylaw do not fall within a 800 metre walking distance of an LRT station.)”

15. “The question of affordable housing is one that I often grapple with, as property prices in Westboro make such developments difficult. The larger streets in Westboro have multiple properties that are suitable for redevelopment into condominiums or apartments, and within developments such as those I see the greatest opportunity for affordable housing. I would be very happy for smaller houses to be developed in inner blocks, so long as their design is consistent with current buildings and dwellings, though I am worried at how difficult it would be to build these and how much of a subsidy would be required to make them viable.”

CONCERNS REGARDING APPROVAL PROCESSES

Comments in this section related to the process through which infill and residential development is approved. This includes any application process that a development may seek in support of its construction, most notably Minor Variances and/or Consents from the Committee of Adjustment, but also Site Plan Control approval. Many commenters expressed concerns with the structure and process of the Committee of Adjustment in particular.

A common related theme revolves around the approval processes for multi-unit buildings more specifically. In the case of triplexes built in and around the study area, there are multiple cases where the developer, having received approval to construct a triplex, has intended all along to operate these buildings as “fourplexes” (defined in the Zoning By-law as a “low-rise apartment building”, not permitted in the R3 zones which comprise most of the study area). This is accomplished through either changing the zoning and/or receiving other necessary approvals after the fact, or alternatively by creating the fourth unit illegally after receiving their occupancy

permit for the initial building. A number of comments expressed issues with the manner in which these “fourplexes” were created.

1. “Since the fourplex requires a great deal of extra documentation and costs, why not pretend that you are building a triplex and then create the basement apartment later? That saves a lot of money and aggravation and means that you can ask for forgiveness rather than permission which is always more successful.

That, in a nutshell is why you have infill difficulties.

Obviously, all it would take is for the City to permanently deny the owner occupancy permits for those two basement apartments and I will guarantee that he and any developer that knows him would never again get permits for a triplex and then build a fourplex in the hopes that it will be subsequently approved. Of course, the City would have to defeat his appeal to the OMB (or whatever it is called now) but if the City's legal department was more capable than what it is now, it could not lose.”

2. “Finally, I think that there is a need for better enforcement of current by-laws. Variance approvals should not be at 70%, they should be the exception rather than the rule. It seems that developer expectations are now set that variances will be obtained, whereas residents expect rules to be respected.”
3. “LPAT is described as a quasi-judicial body. It is not. There is no record and no appeal. It has minor trappings of a court-type process but this is a fraud. The LPAT can interpret the four point test in favour of developers (with the support of the City planners) knowing full well that the neighborhood groups have no recourse. The process is an outrageous sham.”
4. “While I'm clearly pro-development and densification the cases where people have built fully intending to break the law and seek approval for things that never would have been acceptable upfront is a serious issue. Personally I have no problem saying we should not just reject these outright but penalize the developers in some way. We should also think nothing of forcing full remediation of projects that are "accidentally" too tall, too close, or too whatever regardless of cost to the developer. The idea of "better to seek forgiveness than ask permission" has no place in our planning process at any scale.”
5. “There should be heavy penalties for adding 4th units, including mandatory removal of plumbing, bathrooms, kitchens, electrical services from “illegal” units added later.”
6. “The only infill that could possibly enhance the neighbourhood would be those that adhere to the zoning by-law and the characteristics of a given street. Unfortunately it is almost too late as so many of our neighbourhood streets have been pretty well minor variances into something so little character.”
7. “That said, the prime problem driving all others is the issuing of too many variances. If existing zoning was respected, the infill would occur at lower intensity that would address most of the concerns. The issue of character is not about design - there is a wide diversity of architectural styles in Westboro - it is about size. We would still be intensifying, such as going from one dwelling to two or three, but not from one to six or eight. Then there would be room for trees, garbage and drainage, which in my opinion are the prime concerns. We absolutely need trees from an ecological perspective, in addition to the privacy and beauty they provide. We need

proper drainage to mitigate flooding. And we need to be able to store waste, and have backyard composters.

The fact that variances are almost always granted has driven up the price of land and makes our neighbourhood unaffordable - developers are speculating that they can get more units than zoned when they purchase, and getting the variance rewards the risk and encourages others. This has to stop.”

8. “While I am not averse to duplex and triplexes, the most recent proposals by developers are completely inappropriate. It is not just that they are proposing a large number of units on a lot, but that they receive approval for these proposed developments, add another dwelling (while it’s being built without permission), apply for a variance once completed and receive approval. This is a broken process that must be fixed, and the original plans enforced (the corner of Roosevelt and Byron is the perfect example of such shenanigans perpetrated by the developer).

[...]

Of course, I don’t begrudge developers their desire to build in Westboro, but the developments need to be reasonable and the original plans enforced. In addition, when the houses are built, the roads are dug-up (for water tie-in) and the road repairs are rarely done properly.”

9. “Enforce zoning requirements for new developments, especially height restrictions and setbacks. You hinted that this in your paper when you said that the sheer number of minor variance applications indicates that developers are out of step with the neighbourhood zoning. The simple answer is just to enforce the neighbourhood zoning.”
10. “Minor variances MUST be kept to truly minor items. Reducing side, front, or rear yard spacings by several feet is no longer minor.

Builders who flout the existing rules (such as building extra stories or adding a 4th unit to a triplex) should forfeit the non-complying section to the City for its subsidized housing pool.”

11. “I am also concerned with the risk of overall erosion of city oversight and lack of clear strategy for maintaining greenspace in the neighbourhood. Developers should not be able to go beyond the zoning regulations. Based on experiences in my immediate neighbourhood, developers seem to have a lot of leeway. This is also noted in the discussion paper. The city should be more rigorous and more strategic in regulating towards a particular, community-validated vision.

If developers are paying certain fees to the city related to cutting down trees or removing greenspace, the city has a responsibility to consult with residents over how those fees may be used to re-green the neighbourhood.”

12. “I am not against triplexes, in fact I think they are appropriate in terms of densification of Westboro, whereas high rises are not. That said the main issue with these “triplexes” is none are actual triplexes, they pretend to get city approval and then make them quadruplexes. The city for some reason after they are built allows this switch. Which just encourages further developers to engage in such a “bait and switch”. Triplexes can be acceptable depending on

design quadruplexes cannot. The city cannot allow this to happen. In less than 100 meters from my house I have 8 such “triplexes” actual quadruplexes. All on land where there were single family houses. This is inappropriate and unfair to all neighbours. Intensification can happen but should happen fairly and honestly.”

13. “However, densification must be done properly. In my view, the problem is not the size or density of the infill developments being built. The problem is developers being allowed to make significant changes after having received variances to start construction. This incentivizes dishonest variance applications from developers who may plan all along to build a 5- or 8-unit building but know that a variance is more easily obtained under the pretense that they're building a triplex. To be clear, I support greater density, but developers must be upfront about the density they plan to add with each infill project. Developers who change the nature of their project should have their variance cancelled, construction stopped, and be made to reapply. Where developers sought a variance under false pretenses, fines should be levied.

[...]

Essentially, I view the problems in Westboro (and Wellington West) not as zoning problems, but as issues of developer compliance and variance decision-making. While some small zoning changes might reduce the need for variances, the issue of developer bait-and-switch projects will not be resolved by these minor tweaks. The city needs to find a reasonable balance between preserving the character of the neighbourhood and promoting development that increases both density and affordability, and this will likely require both approval of more projects that meet some resident opposition and much more stringent enforcement where developers are not honest and upfront about their intentions.”

14. “As the study alludes, “minor variances” are often not minor. There are too many examples of projects not being inspected properly or regularly enough to address problems ahead of time and many residents are either fed up or cannot keep up with the number of applications, leaving many bad practices unreported.”
15. “I have attended several hearings at the Committee of Adjustment and have observed that decisions on whether to approve or reject variances seem to be made on a project by project basis with the Committee's hands tied and unable to make decisions based on consideration of broader, long term implications. This method of decision making simply does not make sense in light of significant development concentrated in one particular neighbourhood. I hope that this process will be adjusted to better assess broader implications of new developments and also revised to enable residents to have equal footing with developers.”
16. “Often the projects have multiple minor variances that if considered in totally would be considered a major change; or a project is built outside of the zoning requirements and a variance / adjustment is requested after construction. Not sure what the penalties are here but likely not enough to discourage the practice.”
17. “At every COA hearing or LPAT appeal I have attended, at least one presenter will try and argue that the proposed variances are not minor. Invariably the authority will state that, in relation to the specific property, the requested variances are minor. However, when each redevelopment application makes highly similar requests (and they are invariably granted) it changes the neighbourhood in a consistent divergent direction at very high speed.

[...]

The first paragraph on page 16 of the report focusses on the most egregious problem with current triplex development. The "backdoor" procedures which developers have attempted to use to sneak 4 unit buildings into residential areas without site plan control regulations being invoked make mockery of the official plan and zoning bylaws."

18. "Encourage developers to be good neighbours and act ethically: We know that developers are approaching (and exploiting) older home owners, making low ball bids, saying they will not tear the house down, and then immediately applying for a demolition permit.

Other developers apply for permits and then build something they don't have permission to build. Then they proceed to make ongoing messes on the street; leave open/unsafe worksites overnight; with materials spilling out onto the road and demolitions debris (asbestos?) covering surrounding properties; "borrowing" a neighbour's hose and not paying use of their water/hydro -- all the while ignoring requirements of their permits and bylaws while existing home owners can barely get permission to do small adjustments to their home or yard. *The list goes on.*"

19. "When developers build homes that require variances or rezoning, they are pushing beyond the limit of what is acceptable. When they ask for exemptions after-the-fact, as in the height exemption that is currently being requested for new triplexes under construction on Churchill, they should be required to either remedy the problem and bring the building back into compliance with the approved building permits, or pay very substantial financial penalties. By that I mean penalties in the range of \$100,000 or more, with significant escalation for repeat offences."
20. "Most of the same arguments I made to the Committee of Adjustment are being repeated at these sessions: the cumulative impact of minor amendments, reduction of privacy, damage to and removal of trees and green space, total modification of the character of the streets and neighbourhood, increased traffic and pollution, etc. The Committee of adjustment had partially supported me with a tie decision but the OMB laughed at us and the lawyer added insult to injury by lecturing the Commissioner for allowing such appeals to be heard. Of course he was the same lawyer who represents the Builders' Association of Ottawa.

City councillors, saying they are forced into this by the Province, are supporting all out densification, public servants have their hands tied by the rules and policies, and consultants/lawyers are getting rich selling their expertise on how to manipulate the system and exploit loopholes to get what they want. No one, except our councillor who is trying his best, speaks for we, the residents, and so we do not feel in any way protected or even understood by the City of Ottawa. We are losing confidence in our institutions and their processes. This is where our anger is stemming from, because we feel cheated and helpless. Even our Councillor feels the system is broken and here is why he is right.

The Committee of Adjustment approves endless minor variances which, individually, respect the rules and criteria. However the cumulative impact of all these minor variances are having a MAJOR impact on our neighbourhood. Statistics show that the biggest proportion of intensification is occurring in Westboro. Densification should be spread evenly across the City. "

21. "The Committee of Adjustment should be abolished. It is simply a prop, allowing residents to think they have an avenue of appeal if their quality of life is tossed to the wind by developers. It should be more sensitive to the community, not biased to favour developers."
22. "In general, I am not against the idea of increased density in keeping with the R3 zoning of Westboro. What is troubling is the slide from 3 units to 4 or more based on developers' assumption that they can get away with these unfair practices. Those of us who currently live in this neighbourhood bought our properties based on the current zoning: to change the densification to something higher than R3 (either through City approved means or not) is unfair."

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Comments in this section related to services and infrastructure that support housing and infill, including water and sanitary sewer services but also sidewalks and "soft" services such as schools and similar resources.

1. "I read the infill study and one thing that I didn't see mentioned was the effect that the over intensification is having on our schools. My children go to Broadview, which is already well over capacity at almost 1200 students in a brand new school built for 700.

With the continued over intensification, and 2-4 dwellings being build on land that previously only had one, it is not a leap to say that the school's population will continue to grow, where there isn't any more room."
2. "Is consideration being made for city resources (rec centres, etc), and greenspace in this study?"
3. "Infill puts an increased strain on the current old and original infrastructure for public water and sanitary wastewater facilities. The City's plan promises in Section 2.3.2, Policy 2 that it will *"promote intensification and infill where sufficient water and sewer capacity is available or can be provided to support the magnitude of the resulting growth."* As storms intensify from climate change and the amount of permeable land diminishes, we wonder how the city's systems will be able to accommodate such developments?"
4. "Buildings and pavement must be limited so that drainage does not lead to flooding nor to runoff not adjoining properties. Note, with global warming, heavy rain events are likely to be more frequent and more severe than in the past so storm water management must be amplified, not reduced."
5. "In place stormwater management is critical feature of design with nature.

In addition, this a neighbourhood of schools, schools and more schools. Additional cars and parking congestion is a reality of intensification so ensuring a safe pedestrian design is another key consideration."
6. "Roads, engineered sewer and water infrastructure. Many of the area's sewers and roads were upgraded in the last 10-15 years; were they sized correctly given the subsequent and planned population increases, and were they built with climate impacts in mind?"

Green pedestrian and/or multi-use path corridors (possibly right-of-way issues with Hydro)

Use of complete street designs for some arterial roads. Compared to what Churchill Avenue looked like before this was a 100% improvement! I love walking and riding it, although parked cars often makes many intersections hard to navigate.”

7. “With infills come the associated road work for the water and sewer connections. When this work is left to the builder then, at best, the end result is a patchwork of asphalt that must surely shorten the lifecycle of the road surface considerably. We can see this every year with the ever increasing size and number of potholes. At worst, the builder connects the sewers to the wrong pipe and has to dig up the street again to correct their mistake (see Byron and Roosevelt for the most recent example of this). I believe the city should be responsible for maintaining the municipal infrastructure; so, in addition to performing proper inspections, it should be responsible for properly repaving the street to proper standards and then charging the developer on a cost-recovery basis.”
 8. “Sidewalks!!! The lack of sidewalks in Westboro is shocking and is a significant detriment to the use of public transit. My wife does not drive and the lack of sidewalks forces her to walk on the streets in the neighbourhood. This is not ideal (or safe) in summer, but in winter with the horrible snow and ice conditions on the roads, it is treacherous.”
 9. “As this paper hints at in its opening letter, I believe that it’s important to find a way to prevent over intensification in small areas thereby increasing city infrastructure demands and frustrations and tensions in the community. Some of the ways the congestion will create obvious problems is pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and the safety issues surrounding these issues, as well as garbage collection, snow removal and drainage.”
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Comments from Westboro Community Association

The Westboro Community Association submitted the following list of words and phrases that, in their opinion, define the “character” of Westboro, and thus representative of features that they would like to see maintained/enhanced. Note that many of these themes and phrases have been repeated in individual comments on the Discussion Paper, as noted in the “Public Comment Themes” sections:

“Valued Characteristics of Westboro:

Mature trees, green, leafy, rich canopy cover

Rural feeling, “like being in the country in the city”

Village-like, quaint

Sense of space and openness

Walkable

Safe

Family-like, everybody knows everybody else, neighbours greet you on the street, strangers smile at you

Diverse population- owners, renters, group home residents, young, old, rich and not-so-rich

Diverse architecture and styles of home

Reminders of our heritage: Mix of grand heritage homes, small cottages, mid-century homes, and newer homes”

Notes on Present Zoning and Related Regulations

Zoning Context

- The study area, defined by the boundaries of Interim Control By-law 2018-326 (Byron Avenue, Dovercourt Avenue, Golden Avenue, and Tweedsmuir Avenue) is predominantly zoned R3R – Residential Third Density Zone, Subzone R. A small portion of the study area is zoned R3S (Subzone S), which is similar to R3R in terms of permitted uses but sets out slightly different development standards.
- R3 zones permit a range of uses, including detached, semi-detached, duplex, and three-unit (triplex) dwellings.
- Low-rise apartment dwellings, defined as a residential building containing four or more principal dwelling units, are not permitted in R3 zones. In addition, townhouse dwellings, which are normally permitted in R3 zones, are also prohibited in the R3R and R3S subzones.

Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay

- The study area is located within the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay, and therefore new development in the area is subject to a number of additional regulations within [Sections 139 and 140](#) of the Zoning By-law.
- Most notably, a Streetscape Character Analysis is required in support of new development within the area.
- A number of changes to the Mature Neighbourhoods regulations are presently proposed as part of the Infill Monitoring project. These changes would affect some of the regulations applicable to Westboro, notably relating to front yard landscaping and parking configuration: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-engagement/projects/monitoring-infill-i-and-ii>

Parking

- As part of the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay, on-site parking is not required to be provided for residential buildings containing twelve dwelling units or fewer.
- Where desired, parking must meet the dominant characteristics of the Streetscape Character Analysis.
- Re-introduction of minimum parking requirements is **not** within the scope of this study.

Ownership and Rental

- The *Planning Act* prohibits municipal zoning by-laws from making a distinction on the basis of whether or not occupants within a house or dwelling unit are related to each other (Section 34). Similarly, the Zoning By-law does not make any distinctions on the tenure of a dwelling unit (i.e. whether or not it is rental, freehold ownership, or condominium ownership).

Consequently, it is **not** within the scope of this study, let alone within the authority of the City, to pass regulations that would have the effect of prohibiting housing on the basis of its potential tenure.