



New Official Plan

Rural Ottawa

City of Ottawa
Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Development
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Rural Ottawa

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Rural Ottawa and the Global Context.....	2
Challenges Facing Rural Ottawa.....	4
Demographic Shift	4
Rural Housing.....	7
Rural Economy	9
Agriculture	9
Agri-Tourism.....	11
Rural Jobs and Places to Work.....	12
Village Mainstreets.....	13
Climate Change.....	14
Emerging Technology and Rural Connectivity.....	15
Possible Planning Considerations.....	18
Compatibility	18
Economic Growth	19
Food Security	19
Rural Character	20
Connections to other Discussion Papers.....	20

Introduction

In 2016, Ottawa City Council directed staff to undertake a planning study to identify trends that would shape the city over the next century and identify opportunities for creating complete communities and an affordable and sustainable city. The result of this study is presented as the Ottawa Next: Beyond 2036 Study Report. With a scenario based approach to land-use planning, this report brings focus to the forces driving change in our City and the potential impacts of those drivers. Based on trends such as technological advancements, tourism, aging, and lifestyle needs, the Ottawa Next report suggests planning considerations to help inform the next Official Plan and includes considerations related to the rural area such as:

- Harnessing technology in agricultural processes and improving connectivity
- Enhancing rural/village character and agri-tourism
- Promoting agricultural as a key sector of the economy
- Protecting agricultural lands
- Providing age-in-place opportunities, and
- Promoting access to affordable, local, and culturally appropriate food¹

The purpose of this discussion paper is to build on the Ottawa Next: Beyond 2036 report by looking closely at the challenges facing Ottawa's rural area, examine where land-use planning can play a role in addressing the considerations proposed by the report, and seek opportunities for addressing those challenges as we strive towards supporting rural residents and industries, building resilience, and strengthening the character of Ottawa's rural area.

Rural Ottawa and the Global Context

Ottawa is a diverse city with dense urban areas, quaint villages, and a vast countryside, which offers a unique mix of housing, industry, and recreation. The diversity of land-uses along with an extensive local and regional transportation network, provides Ottawa with a competitive advantage over many other municipalities when it comes to attracting and retaining talent and investment.

Ottawa's land area is comprised of extensive rural uses and natural environment areas around a major urban settlement area. At the end of 2016, the City of Ottawa's rural area was approximately 222,300 hectares of land, accounting for close to 80% of the City's total land area (figure 1).

¹ City of Ottawa, Ottawa Next Beyond 2036 – Draft Final Report, September 2018

these two areas meet. It also ensures consideration for the economic contribution that rural industries provide to the City as a whole.

The City has an ambitious goal of becoming the most liveable mid-size city in North America and Ottawa’s rural area will play an important role in achieving this goal. Answering the question of how to achieve this goal is the driving force behind the next Official Plan and will require extensive review of the current conditions today and the trends and forces influencing rural development in the future. Are we doing enough? How can we support the role of the rural area in achieving this goal?

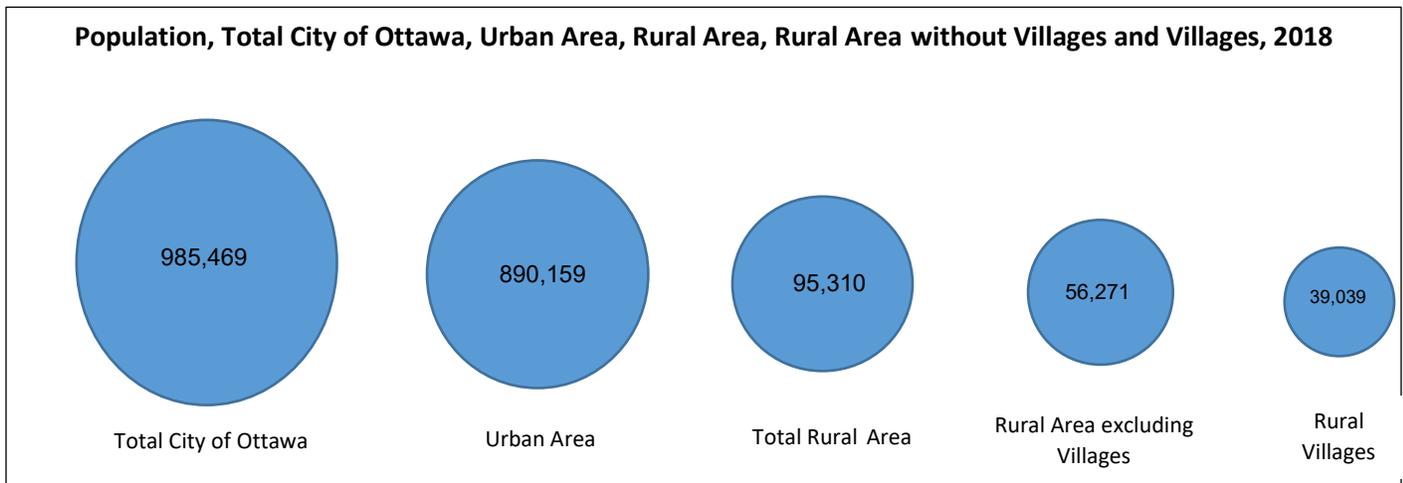
Challenges Facing Rural Ottawa

Ottawa has experienced significant growth over the last few decades. As the City continues to grow, it is important to consider the drivers bringing about change and to ensure that policies support Ottawa’s goal of becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America.

Demographic Shift

A fundamental component in developing rural policy is the demographic construct of the area. Though comprising almost 80% of the land mass of the City, the rural area contains less than 10% of the total population (figure 2), and within that is a diverse population with specific needs to be considered for ensured liveability.

Figure 2: Comparison of total population across the City of Ottawa

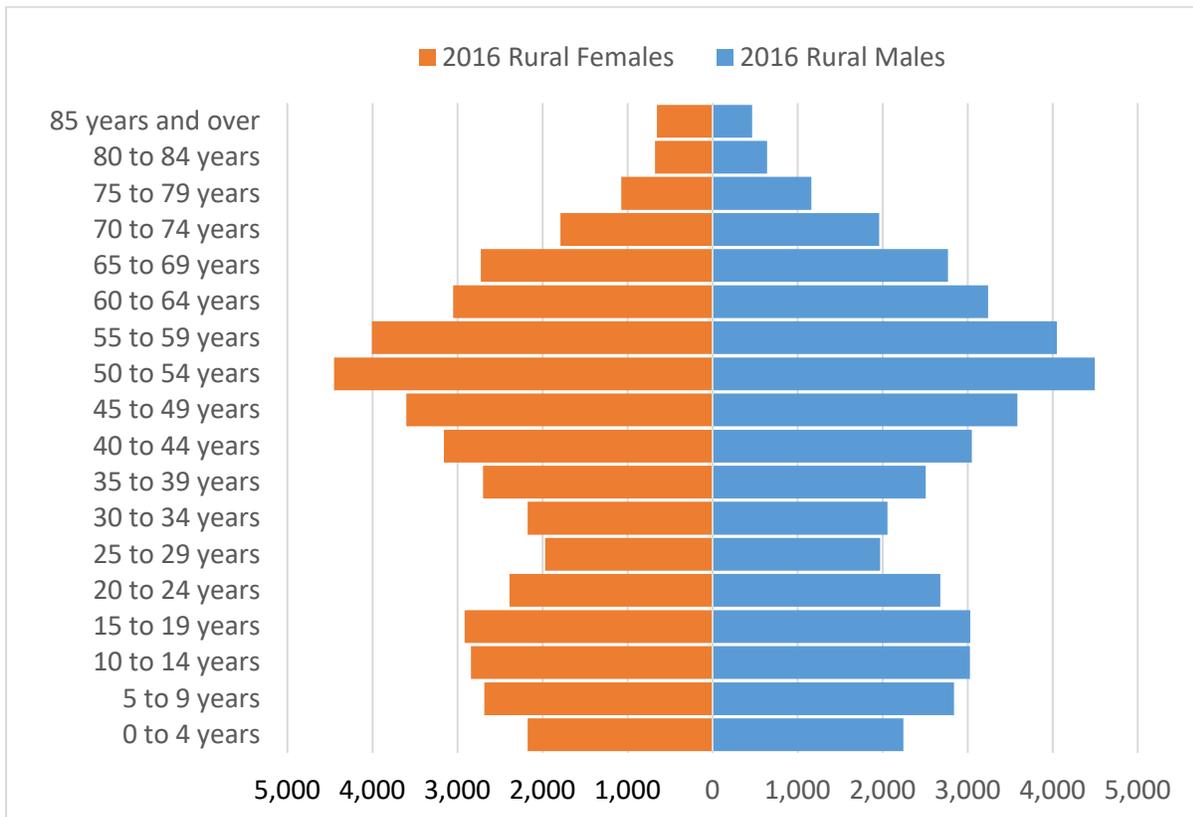


Source: City of Ottawa Building Permit Data, City of Ottawa, Sub-Area Household and Population Estimates, Mid-2018

One of the challenges facing the rural area is an aging population. Shifts in demographics are happening globally and at the local level, places demand on housing, mobility, and services such as health and other forms of care.

According to 2016 Census data, adults aged 50 to 59 comprise the largest group of people living in the rural area (figure 3).

Figure 3: Rural Population by Age Pyramid

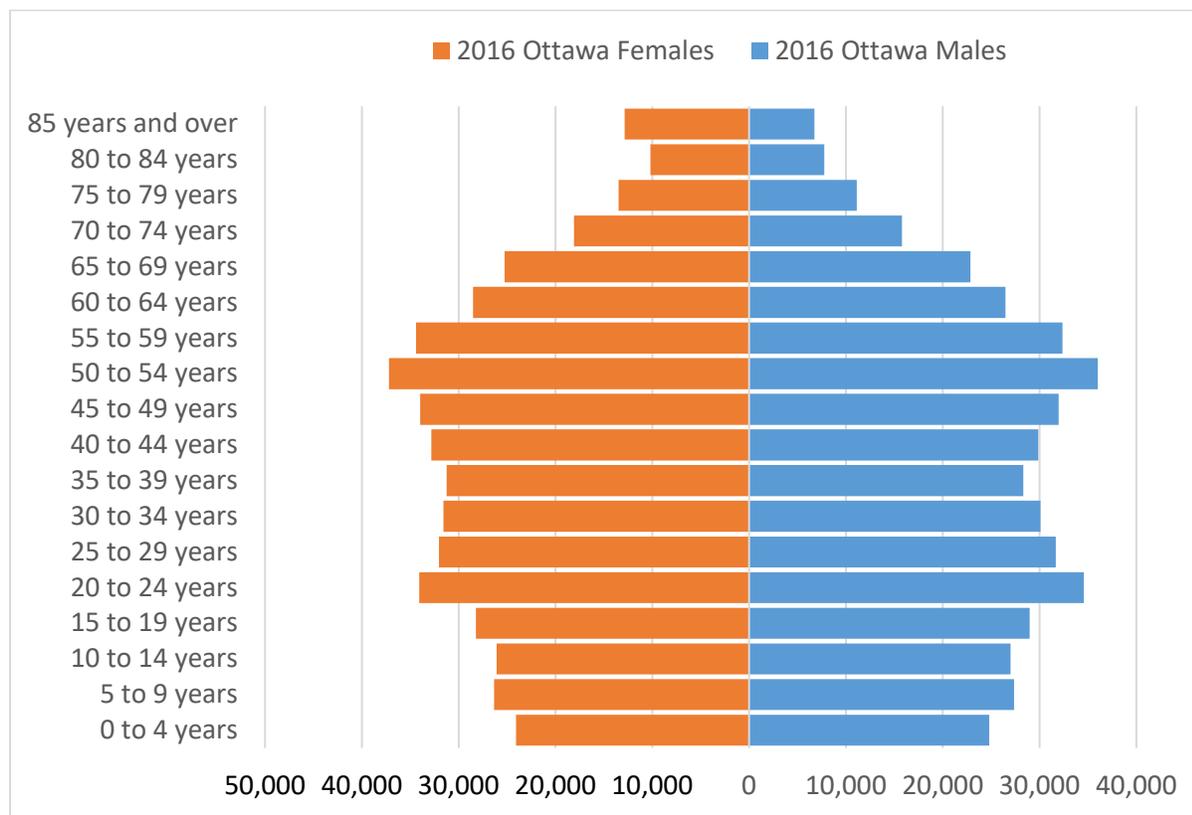


Source: 2016 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada

Further to this, Census data between 2001 and 2016 indicates that the proportion of children aged 0-4 years and between 5 and 19 years in the rural area has been decreasing, while the population over 65 years continues to rise.² Compared to the urban area, the rural population is significantly older, while younger populations aged 30 and younger are lower than in the urban area (figure 4).

² Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2001-2016

Figure 4: Urban Population Pyramid



Source: 2016 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada

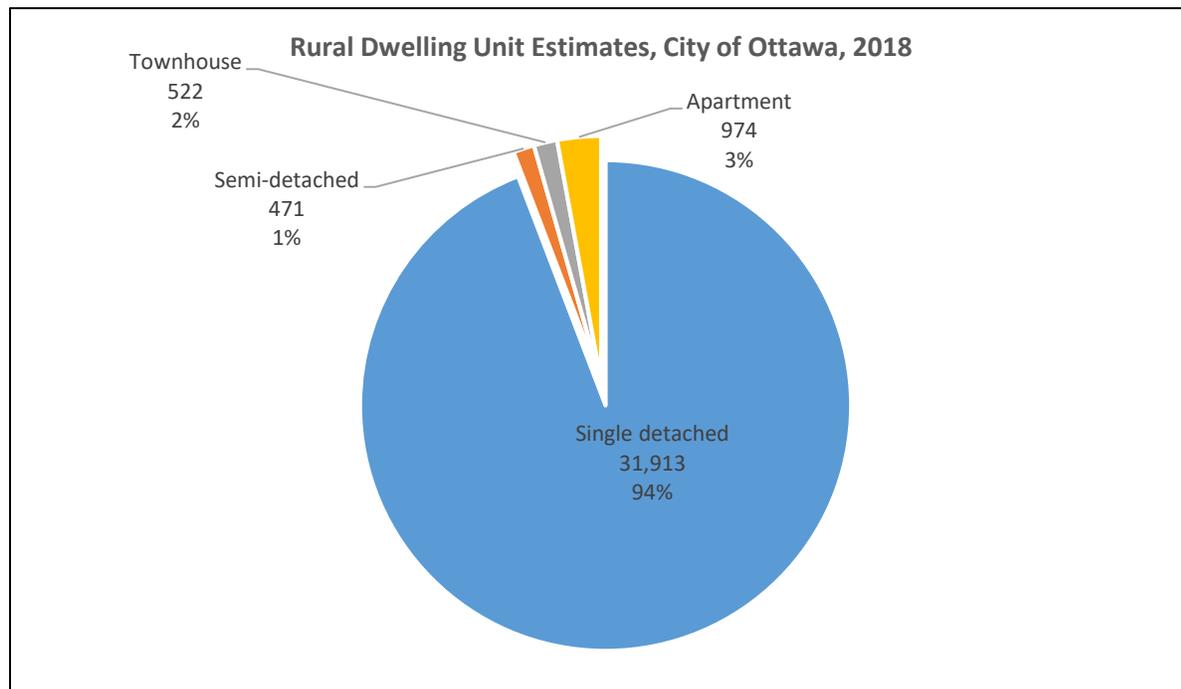
With seniors representing the fastest-growing segment of the population, should greater age-in-place considerations be made? And what would those considerations look like?

Retirement residences currently exist within a number of rural villages, however, besides entering into older stages of life, changes in lifestyle are also experienced as children grow. The concentration of younger populations is higher in the urban area than in the rural area and some reasons for that include proximity to post-secondary education, services, and employment. What options are available in the rural area for young adults, especially those leaving childhood homes and who desire to stay close to family? Are their housing needs being met? Are there amenities available for education, recreation, or other social needs? Is employment available closer to home? What transportation options are there and what are the needs?

Rural Housing

Single detached dwellings make up a significant portion of existing built form in the rural area and although the majority of higher density forms such as townhouses and apartments are concentrated in the villages with municipal water and wastewater services, overall single detached dwellings are the dominant built form (figure 5).

Figure 5: Rural Dwelling Unit Estimates, City of Ottawa, 2018



Source: City of Ottawa Building Permit Data, City of Ottawa, Sub-Area Household and Population Estimates, Mid-2018

One reason for this is due to the availability of public services, municipal water and wastewater services limited to certain villages, and the need for large lot sizes to accommodate private wells and septic systems, as required by Provincial Regulations. Currently, the City's Official Plan, permits the development of five or less units under single ownership on a single/shared water and wastewater system³. Residential developments above five units are possible subject to a municipal responsibility agreement however this practice is costly and in many cases not favourable. This creates a limitation for small units, a typology that is commonly rented.

Even in villages with municipal water and wastewater services, single detached dwellings have been the preferred built form, perhaps due to land values that are relatively lower than the urban area and the desires of a less dense lifestyle. Having noted that changes in demographics will place demand on the need for a variety of housing types, should

³ City of Ottawa, Official Plan Amendment 150, Section 4.4.2.3

other forms of housing be explored? How might these built forms be limited by the availability of municipal water and wastewater services, or private service requirements?

In 2018, the average housing price in the rural area of all types was approximately \$450,000 (Table 1). With higher density/smaller unit types comprising less than 10% of housing stock and an overall average household income of \$45,000, the availability of affordable housing can be considered low. Compared to cost and availability of housing choices in suburban areas, more options are available in these areas for younger populations and their families. In order to support this demographic in the rural area, policies to encourage a mix of housing at affordable rates would be required.

Table 1: Average Housing Price, City of Ottawa Rural Area, 2018

Average Value of Housing in the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Rural and Suburban Areas, 2018						
Housing Type	City of Ottawa	Total Ottawa Units	Ottawa Rural Area	Total Rural Units	Ottawa Suburban Area	Total Suburban Units
Single-detached	\$470,066	165,118	\$449,825	30,753	\$429,108	69,349
Semi-detached	\$362,251	19,330	\$277,983	210	\$313,958	5,857
Townhouse	\$319,587	59,617	\$305,981	388	\$277,947	46,089
Duplex	\$242,203	5,494	\$139,273	84	\$198,152	97
3 to 6 Plex	\$181,375	13,067	\$101,876	118	\$144,959	85
Apartment	\$251,145	109,886	N/A	0	\$239,851	4,321
Mobile Home	\$160,409	1,042	\$166,663	619	\$50,485	169
Total All Unit Types	\$385,398	373,554	\$446,115	32,172	\$360,360	125,967

Source: City of Ottawa Assessment, October 2018 *buildings and units assessed by MPAC as of October 2018

Rural Economy

Ottawa NextBeyond 2036 notes that Ottawa's population is expected to reach 1 million people in 2019 and contemplates how to proactively accelerate population growth, recognizing that an increase to critical urban mass is good for social and physical infrastructure.⁴ It is important to recognize what pressure urban growth places on the rural area as it can have impacts to valuable industries such as agriculture, tourism, and mineral extraction.

Agriculture

In 2017, agriculture and agri-food was a \$111.9-billion industry in Canada, accounting for 6.7 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).⁵ Globally, Canada is the fifth largest exporter of agriculture commodities.⁶ The Agri-food industry employs 12.5 percent of Canadians and since 2012 has been growing rapidly.

In 2016, Ontario farm sale receipts were worth over \$13 billion, of which \$165 million was Ottawa's share, not including value-added activities such as processing, distributing, retailing, and manufacturing.⁷ In the same year, 5.7 percent of people employed in Ontario's agri-food sector were in Ottawa.⁸ Although these statistics are positive, Ottawa has experienced a net loss in farmland since 2011 and the number of farms have also decreased, down 7.4 percent since 2011.

⁴ *Beyond 2036*, page 5.

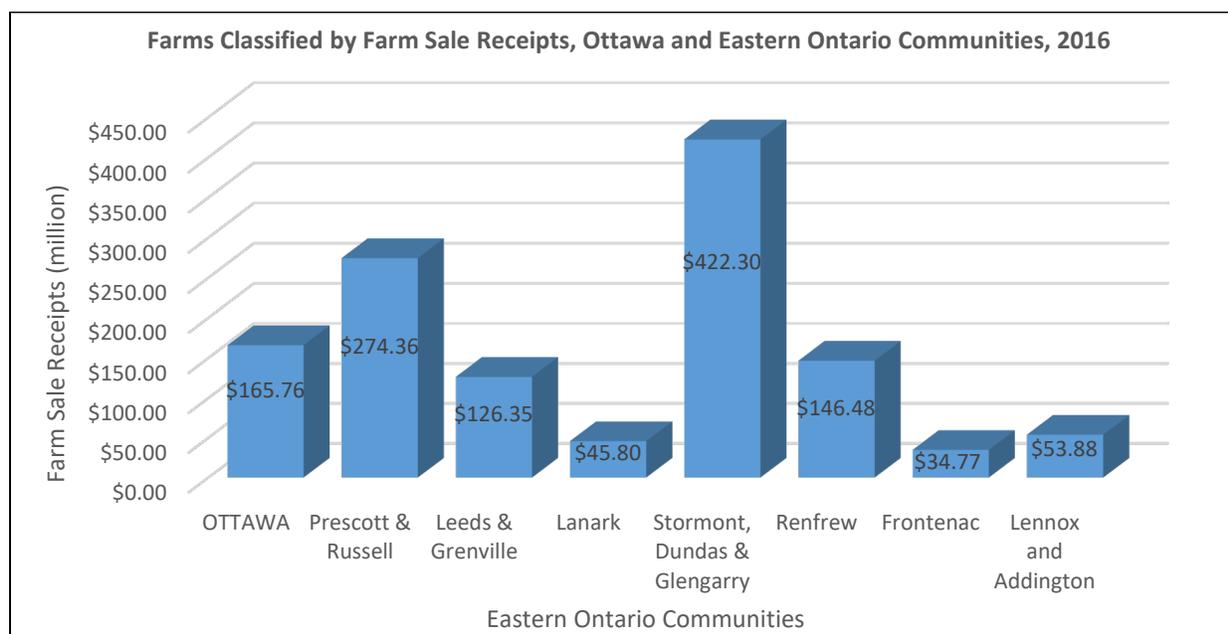
⁵ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, *Overview of the Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food System*, 2017.

⁶ Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, *Agri-Food Exports*, 2019

⁷ Statistics Canada, *Census of Agriculture*, 2016

⁸ OMAFRA, *Statistical Summary of Ontario Agriculture*, 2016

Figure 6: Total Gross Farm Receipts, City of Ottawa and Eastern Ontario Communities, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census, 2016

In the Eastern Ontario Region, Ottawa is producing significantly less than surrounding townships like Prescott & Russell and Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry who are leading farm sales (figure 6).

Recognizing the value of the agriculture and the agri-food industry, what opportunities exist for Ottawa to increase its contribution? How can the city encourage and support increased food production? One way is to ensure protection of agriculture, the lands and the operations. These can be threatened by development in surrounding areas such as adjacent municipalities or nearby rural-industrial areas which may bring increased traffic and incompatible uses.

Provincial policy requires that prime agricultural areas be protected for long-term agricultural use. There are strict policies that limit the circumstances under which an urban expansion into an agricultural area may be contemplated. Another way these lands are protected is through the application of provincial minimum distance separation (MDS) guidelines when new development near farming operations is proposed.⁹ Finding additional ways to ensure compatibility between agriculture and non-agricultural uses is essential to long-term protection.

⁹ Provincial Policy Statement, 2014, Section 2.3.4

Agri-Tourism

Agri-tourism is good for the rural economy. Visiting farms and participating in farming activities provides an opportunity for people to learn how food is produced, gain an appreciation for the effort that goes into producing food, and understand the importance of local food production and good stewardship practices. These activities are a way for farm operators to generate additional revenue and also provides an opportunity for them to connect with their communities.

However, at what point does such agriculture-related or on-farm diversification exceed the intent of agriculture as the prime permitted use? The challenge today is that 'agriculture-related' is a limited definition which does not restrict the size nor scale that these activities can occur, and if not regulated properly could result in the loss of prime agricultural land or become a nuisance to other uses nearby.

In 2016, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), released 'Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas'. These guidelines provide criteria for qualifying agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses and are meant to complement and be consistent with provincial policies including the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)¹⁰. The goal in determining acceptable uses for rural and prime agricultural areas is to prevent the loss of agriculture lands and mitigate impacts to these operations from new or expanding non-agricultural uses, and these guidelines are aimed at assisting municipalities in their decision making.

Common on-farm diversified uses include wineries, breweries, sugar bushes, pick your own produce, or retail shops which sell other value added products produced on-site such as jams or baked goods. But, there is rising interest in other types of uses that are greater in scope and scale. As Ottawa values its rural community, consideration for how best to support farming operations in their business ventures while ensuring continued protection for agricultural production is an essential conversation for the development of the next Official Plan. This conversation also extends to the vast array of natural systems within the rural area, representing an opportunity for enhancing eco-tourism and sharing good stewardship.

¹⁰ Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas, Publication 851, 2016, page 1

Rural Jobs and Places to Work

Employment in the rural area is diverse, representing all sectors (Table 2). Though dispersed throughout the rural area, much is concentrated in the villages and within industrial business parks.

Table 2: Employment by Sector in the Rural Area

Jobs by Sector in the Rural Area, 2016	
Sector Type	Total Jobs by Sector
Accommodation & Food Services	1,110
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,415
Business, Building and Other Support Services	1,877
Construction	6,165
Educational Services	1,381
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,269
Manufacturing	2,044
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,407
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,119
Retail Trade	2,583
Transportation and Warehousing	1,475
Total Jobs	22,845

Source: City of Ottawa, Employment Survey (Preliminary Results), 2016

In 2015, the City undertook a comprehensive review of business parks and industrial lands across the city to ensure there was a sufficient land supply of these types of uses over the next 20 years. The study also examined locations around existing rural highway interchanges for opportunities to enhance existing employment clusters. Such locations offer provide proximity to a rural customer base and are suitable for businesses conducting large scale goods movement across inter- and intra-provincial boundaries. These locations were formerly identified as Rural Employment Areas in the Official Plan.

As noted in the Ottawa Employment Land Review (2016), not all interchange areas are appropriate for employment areas. Some areas are constrained by lands of other significance such as Agricultural Resource Areas, environmental areas with provincial significance features, or too close to the urban area.¹¹

Rural Employment Areas also play an important role within the rural economy. In 2016, approximately 7,000 jobs were within rural business parks¹² representing 30% of rural jobs. Rural Employment Areas are attractive places for business operations needing

¹¹ City of Ottawa, Ottawa Employment Land Review – Final Report, November 2016, 32.

¹² City of Ottawa, Ottawa Employment Land Review – Final Report, November 2016, 32.

space due to the availability of relatively large lots and separation from concentrations of residential development.

If demand for Rural Employment Area increases, the provision of water and wastewater services and the current state of commercial/industrial land supply should be reassessed. As development within existing rural industrial parks occurs, the transportation needs of goods moving to and from these areas and their workforces should be part of a city-wide goods movement strategy and the Transportation Master Plan.

Village Mainstreets

Villages and their mainstreets are important to the vitality of rural areas as they are the hub for essential services and a central component to heritage and identity. Village mainstreets employ close to 3,000 people in industries such as retail, food service, education, health, and professional services (table 3).¹³ But, these industries are impacted by rising operation costs and increased competition including on-line retail.

Table 3: Mainstreet Employment Sectors

Village Mainstreet Jobs, 2016	
Sector Type	Total Jobs by Sector
Retail Trade	495
Accommodation & Food Services	426
Educational Services	353
Construction	335
Health Care & Social Assistance	293
Other	1,001
Total Employment on Village Mainstreets	2,903

Source: City of Ottawa, Employment Survey (Preliminary Results) 2016

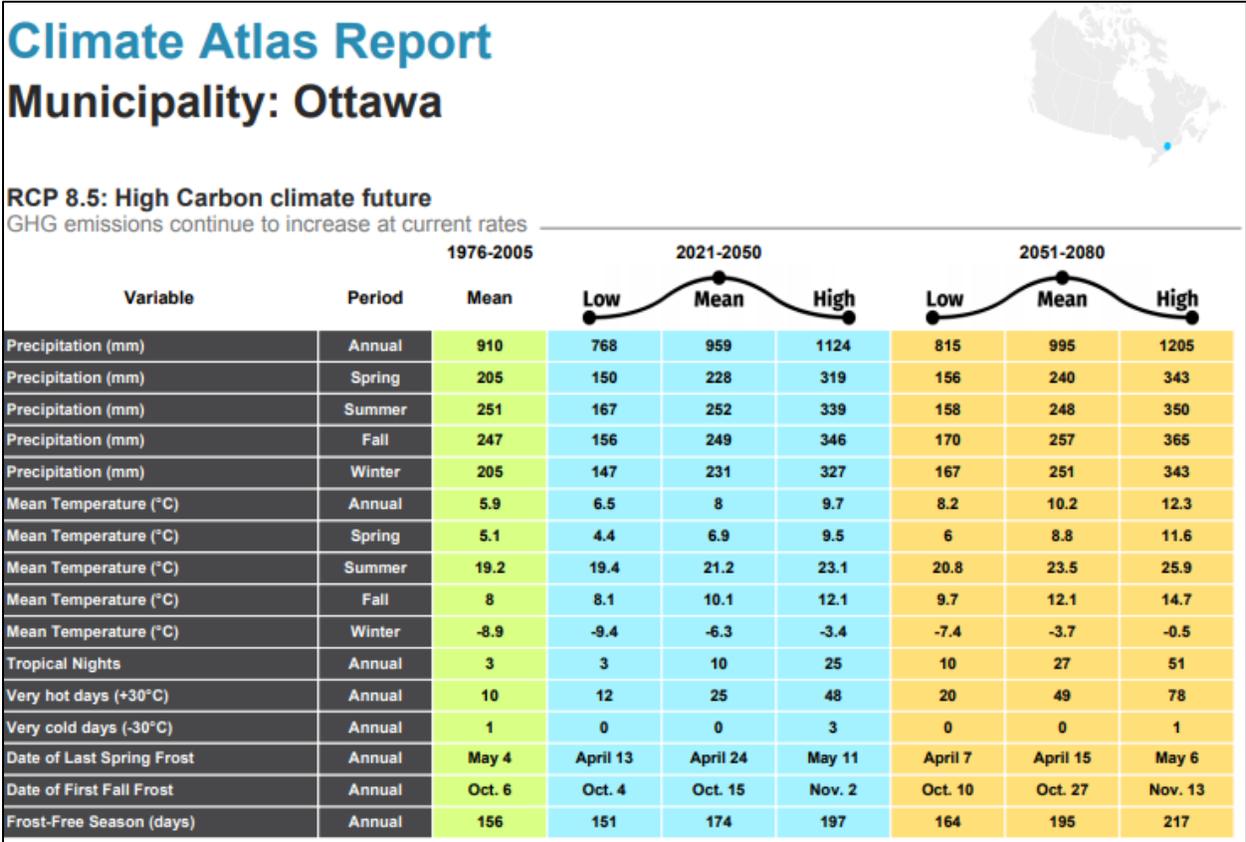
The City’s Zoning By-law currently permits for a range of uses in the Village Mixed-Use zone, a list which corresponds with the uses permitted by the former townships. Uses are typically service oriented, retail, and also includes entertainment uses such as bars and restaurants. With a variety of subzones, some commercial areas permit more uses than others. Should there be an examination of what other kinds of uses are appropriate for a village mainstreet? How can we invigorate mainstreets and make them lively destinations, true to the character of the communities they represent? Villages are their people and to ensure they are successful, development within villages should be consistent with serving local communities and becoming attractive places to visit. Areas outside of Village boundaries may also have the potential for contributing to the lived and tourist experience and are opportunities to provide appropriate and compatible uses that enhance the lived and visited experience without impact to defined village centres.

¹³ Draft City of Ottawa, 2016 Employment Survey, Economic Development and Long Range Planning Department

Climate Change

Agriculture operators are vulnerable to climate change which puts local food security at risk. Global temperatures are rising and many regions in Canada, including Ottawa are projected to be warmer (figure 7), which would cause significant impact to local agriculture operations. Frequent droughts, extreme rainfalls potentially causing severe flooding, and variable free-thaw cycles are expected, presenting a challenge to producers as they determine their operational needs.

Figure 7: Effects of Climate Change on Weather Patterns between year 2021 and 2080.



Source: www.climateatlas.ca, retrieved 2019

However, climate change does present some opportunities. With rising temperatures comes longer growing seasons potentially increasing production times (table 4). Dry periods also pose a risk to production due to the lack of rainfall necessary to grow crops.¹⁴

Table 4: Summary of length of growing season comparing 1971 to 2000 to projected climate change in 2010 to 2039

Length of Growing Season (days)	1971 to 2000 Baseline (Percent of total area)	2010 to 2039 CGCM 3.1 (Percent of total area)
> 170	2.5	8.2
160-170	3.5	4.6
150-160	3.4	3.6
140-150	6.0	11.7
130-140	12.3	17.2
120-130	14.6	21.3
110-120	20.3	17.7
100-110	19.2	7.8
< 100	18.2	7.8

Source: *agriculture and Agri-Food Canada* <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/science-and-innovation/agricultural-practices/climate-change-and-agriculture/future-outlook/climate-change-scenarios/length-of-growing-season-in-ontario/?id=1363033977515>

Knowing how vulnerable these operations are to climate change, a risk-based approach to rural land-use planning which considers building climate and economic resilience is imperative to long-term viability and security. This could include working with tools available to increase output by reducing input into the production of agricultural goods.

Emerging Technology and Rural Connectivity

The world is changing at a rapid rate and much of that is due to advancements in technology. Technological advancements in communication has allowed us to share information, stay informed, and stayed connected with people in ways that many wouldn't have thought possible. Technology has also improved productivity in an array of industries, changing the way business operate, including increase in output with a reduction to resource inputs.

Farming is one industry where the use of modern technology can assist with daily operations and as of 2016, many farms across Ottawa were making use of technologies such as automated feeding, milking, or GIS soil mapping (figure 8).

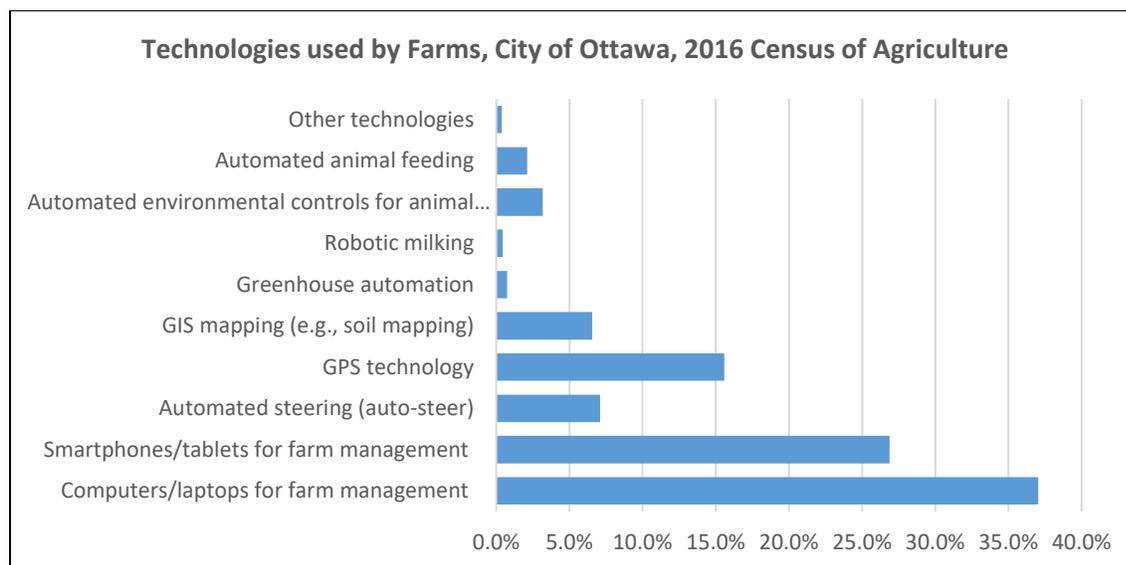
The agricultural industry is increasingly reliant on precision agriculture as a means to stay competitive in the farming business. Reliable and fast connectivity is required to take full advantage of new cost-saving farm technologies that support precise planting, input optimization and animal health. Some farm operations in the city are at a disadvantage because they do not have the connectivity needed to support precision agriculture. The

¹⁴ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, *Impact of Climate Change on Canadian Agriculture*, 2015. Accessed from: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/science-and-innovation/agricultural-practices/climate-change-and-agriculture/future-outlook/impact-of-climate-change-on-canadian-agriculture/?id=1329321987305>

City recognizes that farmers need connectivity and as a result, Ottawa has identified connectivity as a necessity for all residents in its Smart City 2.0 Strategy.

Rural connectivity is also an identified Federal interest. The optimization of internet connection would allow the City to share information with residents readily, allow residents to access municipal services more effectively, and ensure competitive advantage for the rural economy including optimal use of technological assistance within agriculture operations. What can the City do to improve access and connection? How can we advocate, facilitate and support the deployment of affordable and robust connectivity in rural areas? What is the role for the municipality in enhancing connectivity?

Figure 8: Use of Farm Technology, 2016



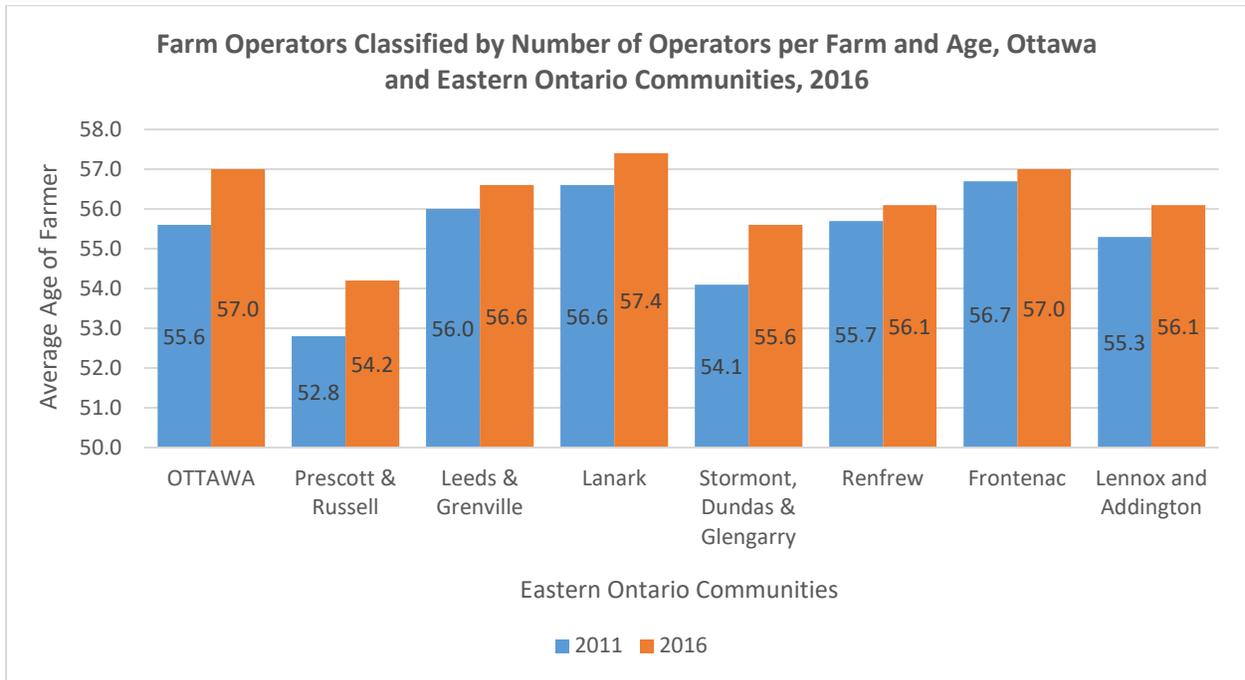
Source: 2016 Census of Agriculture, Statistics Canada

The use of technology in these operations assists with accuracy and with the impacts of climate change resulting in increased seasonal variability, utilizing technologies that can efficiently respond to changing conditions is beneficial to farming operations, as it takes out the guesswork, reduces physical demand on operators and reduces operating hours on equipment.

Despite the widespread use of technological tools in existing farming operations, challenges still remain to increasing implementation such as investing in change and the skill set to operate many tools. Besides the use of technology, farming practices in general are changing and with that comes the importance of ensuring education and training is accessible including promoting farming as a career.

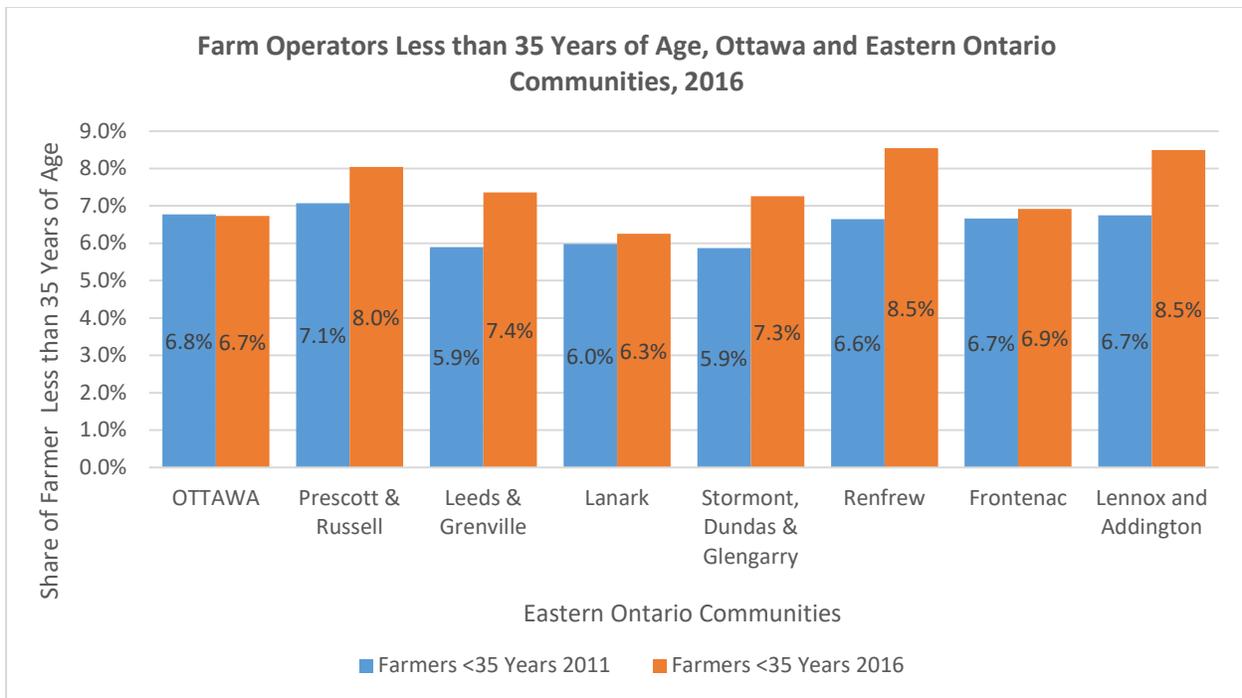
In Ottawa, as of 2016, the average age of farmers was 57 years old (figure 9) and while this age rises, the number of farmers aged less than 35 years has declined. This is much different than farming in surrounding areas where the number of young farmers is rising (figure 10).

Figure 9: Farm Operators Classified by Number of Operators per Farm and Age over 50, Ottawa and Eastern Ontario Communities, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census, 2016

Figure 10: Farm Operators Classified by Number of Operators per Farm and Age under 35, Ottawa and Eastern Ontario Communities, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census, 2016

Succession planning is vital to the City's long term agriculture success. The impact of potential loss of farming operations would adversely impact the access and price of locally produced goods. What role can the City play in supporting young farmers to ensure the long-term economic viability of our local agriculture industry?

New opportunities are presented each day and it is important to keep on top of trends in all industries in order to be prepared for the demands it may place on rural lands and rural life. Emerging industries like clean technology, autonomous and connected vehicles, and even new crop forms such as cannabis can disrupt the area's current makeup.

Possible Planning Considerations

Compatibility

Compatibility is essential to the discussion on the rising interest in expanding permitted land uses in the rural area. This paper has discussed conflicts that arise between agriculture operations and residential uses, large scale development on surrounding rural areas, and whether more variety on village mainstreets could drastically change local communities, impacting surrounding residential areas as well. With increasing interest in diversifying farm activities, the question of compatibility also arises. Possible considerations for ensuring compatibility could include Edge Planning principles, an approach to land-use planning that examines where urban development meets rural and sensitive areas and mitigates conflict between these uses that exist in this fringe area.

Economic Growth

The PPS along with OMAFRA's *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas* provides the municipality with tools to support and encourage diversified farm uses. In the Ottawa context, what types of uses should be permitted with agricultural operations to support additional economic activity? Aside from farming operations, are there other uses that are suitable for rural lands that should be considered? What considerations should be made when it comes to the municipality's pursuit of permitting on-farm diversified uses? Is there potential for expanding home-based business knowing that they provide an opportunity to provide services in areas away from designated commercial areas? Ultimately what are opportunities that can be pursued to boost economies of scale in the rural area which would not disrupt existing industries, dense residential areas, or sensitive ecosystems?

Villages and hamlets are the hubs of rural life, each with their own culture, communities, and unique characteristics that distinguish them from one another. Each have their own potential for economic growth and needs for livability and vitality. What makes each village thrive? What is a threat to their economic success?

Food Security

According to Ottawa Public Health, approximately 6.5% of Ottawa's households experience food insecurity meaning they cannot afford balanced meals, go hungry by eating less or not at all for a whole day, or are unable to access a variety or quantity of food that they need.¹⁵

With climate change and urban development impacting agricultural operations and food production, how do we work towards short and long term success in ensuring our food security? Regardless of income, global food shortages affect everyone and we have an opportunity to be as self-sufficient as we want to be. How do we reduce our dependence on imported goods, support our local economy, and ensure our residents have access to quality food? We also have an opportunity to become a global exporter in the agri-food sector. How can we contribute to this global need?

Having noted that farming in the city is a valuable industry and knowing that food insecurity is a serious public issue, protection of agricultural lands could take the form of supporting the operation of hobby farms on smaller lot sizes, and implementing policies which recognize the relationship between the urban and rural area.

Advancements in technology are leading to rapid changes in the agri-food sector which provide Canadian farmers with an opportunity to become more robust and maintain economic viability while being faced with strong environmental and societal pressures, and international trade competition. Precision and smart agriculture principles are defining

¹⁵ Ottawa Public Health, Nutritious Food Basket, The Price of Eating Well, 2017

opportunities for Ottawa's farmers and the increased use of technology will drastically change how farms operate.

Rural Character

The rural landscape is changing. Its character is a product of its natural areas, built form, recreational and economic activity, and most importantly history and traditional values, all of which are being impacted by climate change, technological advancements, economic shifts, demand for land, and demographic change. Given these changes, how does it redefine the rural area?

As housing is a major component of what creates a sense of place and knowing that demographic change is generating demand for types of housing beyond what is currently possible in the rural area, how do we support the development of residential uses that meet this need while still preserving rural character?

The character of commercial buildings and industrial sites, their layout in relation to rural roads, also shape the image of the rural area. Both the character of these buildings and the look and feel of rural roads are integral to rural identity. Given the predominant location of these uses being along highways, interchanges, and major arterial roads, these developments are the first impression of the rural area for those travelling through making how we define rural character and identify scenic entry routes an important conversation.

Connections to other Discussion Papers

Discussion papers pertaining to a variety of important issues facing Ottawa have been released with the intent of generating conversation around how the City should proceed towards creating an Official Plan that not only responds to these issues but is in itself a driving force to creating the most liveable mid-size city in North America.

These papers cover a broad range of issues all of which are applicable to the rural area.

Climate Adaptation and Resiliency

The rural area faces extreme challenges when it comes to climate change. Changes in weather patterns affect crop yield and with a number of watercourses flowing through this area, many homes and fields are at risk of flooding. Most recently, many properties in the rural area were devastated by a tornado which caused the destruction of homes and loss of power to remaining homes and businesses. The increase in major storm events poses a risk on rural homes and businesses and calls for action towards ensuring resilient buildings and economies.

Health

The discussion paper on health brings focus to food insecurity as it relates to accessibility and affordability of food. Food production and protection of our local food system is central to rural land use planning as it is a major public health issue as much as it is an economic

one. Where the discussion paper on health focuses on the impacts on food insecurity, this paper focuses on the contributions of the city's local food system and considerations for its protection.

Housing

The discussion paper on housing does not directly discuss housing issues in the rural area, however, general themes on affordability and mix are expanded in this paper. Strategies for addressing housing needs in the rural area require further discussion.

Infrastructure

Servicing has major implications for the rural area. The majority of rural developments are serviced privately by well and septic. Some areas have mixed services such as public water and private sanitary, and where public water is available, the systems which deliver this service could be through trickle feed or public wells. Servicing requirements are a major determinant for the types of uses that can be located on a lot, the demand and amount of growth that could occur within a village, and the discussion on servicing needs for village and rural development are a focus in the discussion paper related to infrastructure.

Natural Ottawa

This paper makes mention of the sensitive ecosystems that exist in the rural area and the contribution of natural landscapes to rural identity and character. The rural area is abundant with natural environment areas, significant woodlands, and wetlands, defined as Provincially Significant and not. Ottawa's natural area being urban and rural are further discussed in the paper on Natural Ottawa.