



New Edinburgh Community Alliance Comments and Recommendations for the City of Ottawa's draft Official Plan

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1. Introduction – A city is composed of neighbourhoods

One of the core values of the New Edinburgh Community Alliance is our commitment to the Jane Jacobs understanding of what makes a city thriving and liveable. We think that vision, explicitly stated, should inform the object and purpose of the Official Plan. We would state that vision this way: the city is composed of neighbourhoods.

Roads, particularly high speed and limited access roads, can destroy this urban fabric. We would add that there needs to be explicit recognition that although neighbourhoods can evolve, they should do so in a way that responds to community concerns and needs. Vital neighbourhoods have community spaces where diverse people meet and mingle. Such meeting places may include parks, natural spaces, ceremonial spaces, museums, concert spaces and even commercial spaces. For a neighbourhood to function well, any major new development should contribute amenities (in addition to any cash in lieu of park space).

In the course of our comments we will try to identify where the draft Official Plan (DOP) fails to promote what we will loosely term the "Jane Jacobs" vision of a city.

The reason one includes an "introduction" in an Official Plan is to guide its interpretation. "We have grown from simply being Canada's capital, to become a vibrant major Canadian city" suggests that the Plan is to be interpreted in a way that has no positive regard to Ottawa's

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history; that Ottawa is a city that wants to run away from its history. We have seen this attitude before, and it doesn't lead to good results, but rather mediocrity.

Ottawa has a long, proud history of urban experimentation. It's not correct, smart or appropriate to downplay the city's history to try to make the present seem more important.

Turning to Big Policy Move 3 (on page 15 of the Plan), consider the first paragraph of this section:

Ottawa is a city of neighbourhoods and villages. Each of these neighbourhoods and villages have their own characteristics that make them different from each other. This Plan will reflect the differences in Ottawa's neighbourhoods -- from highly urbanized and dense areas in the downtown, to lower-density suburban areas farther out. Planning for the evolution of a new subdivision in Kanata or Barrhaven will be different than for a former streetcar suburb such as Hintonburg, or a nineteenth century downtown neighbourhood like Centretown. *(Underlining added for emphasis.)*

The third sentence of this paragraph characterizes the differences between the various areas as being a difference in density, from urban in the centre to suburban further out. In fact, the differences in density are not generally graded this way - the New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District, despite being near the centre, is not densely populated, and there are clusters of high rises, well away from the city centre, that are densely populated.

More significantly, neighbourhoods differ in their history, the ethnicity of their residents, income levels, in the cultural amenities and schools available, access to parks, proximity to shops and services, the age and quality of homes in the neighbourhood, and even community ambience. All of these factors are relevant considerations for the residents of these communities and affect the way these neighbourhoods can and should be developed.

We accordingly recommend that the clause "*This Plan will reflect the differences in Ottawa's neighbourhoods - from highly urbanized and dense areas in the downtown, to lower-density suburban areas farther out*" be deleted, and replaced with:

This Plan should be interpreted in a manner that respects the differences in Ottawa's neighbourhoods - the preferences and needs of their residents, their existing built structures including but not limited to structures having heritage significance, their history, and their parks and natural spaces including their tree canopy. Although intensification is an important goal, any large development should also enrich the existing community by fitting in well with community preferences (e.g., for an enhanced commercial district to help create a vibrant 15 minute neighbourhood), improving community use or access to parkland, or by providing other benefits (such as, heritage conservation, enhancement of natural features) to which the local community gives priority.

We note that our proposals use the term "community" a lot. In many cases more than one neighbourhood is affected by a proposed development. In the definition section, we would propose to add: "**Community** means one or more neighbourhoods."

Additionally, we recommend that the Official Plan should respect the existing context of neighbourhoods through endorsement and enforcement of neighbourhood plans, in consultation with neighbourhoods and drawing on Annex 9 of the draft Official Plan.

In the following sections, we will provide specific commentary with respect to the viewpoints, concerns and implications for a neighbourhood with the characteristics of New Edinburgh. Additionally, we shall comment more broadly on aspects of the Official Plan that pertain to neighbourhoods throughout Ottawa.

We share the concern expressed by the Federation of Citizens' Associations that "it is difficult to ascertain what policy has preference over another. For example, where the DOP policy on transforming a neighbourhood through regeneration (aka intensification) conflicts with the OP policy preserving tree canopy, what policy prevails?"

We start by noting that the draft Official Plan should express its policies in clear language and with consistency, so as to minimize any ambiguity of interpretation or understanding.

Wherever possible, we will provide recommended changes to the language to improve the Official Plan. (These recommendations are typically in boldface.)

2. Reconcile goals and policies for neighbourhoods and regeneration

New Edinburgh lies within the draft Official Plan's proposed Inner Urban Transect. This includes "pre-World War II neighbourhoods that immediately surround the downtown core (characterized by an urban pattern of built form) and the earliest Post World War II areas directly adjacent to them" (as per the text on page 133). A portion of New Edinburgh is a designated Heritage Conservation District. The area outside the district contains a mixture of pre-war and post-war housing, with the majority of homes and surrounding property development fitting the draft OP's description for 'Suburban Built Form and Site Design' (as per Table 6 on page 126):

- Moderate to deep front yard setbacks
- Principal entrances oriented to the public realm, but set back from the street
- Larger lots and lower lot coverage
- Variety of building forms
- Generous spacing between buildings
- Informal and natural landscaping
- Automobile parking that may be permanent and visible from the street

One of the principle goals of the DOP is to replace (over time) these suburban-style characteristics with "an urban pattern of built form and an emphasis on mid to high-density development" (5.2.1.). So what will be the characteristics of this new 'urban built form'? Table 6 sets them out as follows:

- Zero or shallow front yard setbacks
- Principle entrances at grade with a direct relationship to the public realm (meaning close to the sidewalk)

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- Smaller lots and higher lot coverage
- Minimum of 2 functional storeys
- Buildings attached or with minimal functional side yard setbacks
- Limited or no parking provided

More specifically, the DOP provides flexibility in lot area and configurations that depart from the traditional pattern of lot division (4.2.1.). This would include permission for as-of-right severances to create small-sized lots with unconventional and irregular sizes such as ‘flag lots’ with minimal lot widths and lots with perimeter lines that jog. The development of multi-unit low-rise residences with a maximum of 4 storeys will be permitted and encouraged.

All this comes under the heading: “Provide Direction to the Neighbourhoods Located in the Inner Urban Transect” which basically provides the tools to completely de-construct our neighbourhood, among others. The extreme provisions and directives would result in:

(1) The loss of what are now cohesive streetscapes and the tearing down of a number of perfectly good single-family homes in exchange for a mish-mash of housing types crammed into broken-up lots.

(2) A serious reduction in greenspaces and trees in order to accommodate more ‘bricks and mortar’. This kind of urban planning contradicts the statement on page 111: “The City has brought in strong policies, regulations and processes to maintain and grow the urban forestry canopy.”

What is even more contradictory and incongruous, when placed alongside the proposed intensification strategies for the Inner Urban Transect, are the following goals also found in the DOP:

- “To reinforce neighbourhood and place identity through architecture and urban design.” (p.30)
- “To create a sense of place and character by integrating high-quality human-scale urban design.” (p.30)
- “Guidance on the compatibility of new housing with the desirable character of the surrounding neighbourhood, so the development opportunities are more welcoming to the existing neighbourhood.” (p.20)

None of these goals will be operationally meaningful in the face of the policies for achieving the proposed regeneration targets in New Edinburgh.

We recommend that to avoid destroying attractive, mature, liveable neighbourhoods the proposed density numbers need to be drastically reduced. We also recommend the

addition of language regarding the intent to preserve our established communities and to ensure stability of their unique characteristics while undergoing regeneration.

3. Add limits to Transforming overlay and set density targets

New Edinburgh is within the Inner Urban transect where, beyond the minor and mainstreet corridors, the “minimum density requirement” in each neighbourhood will be 80 units per hectare, according to Table 3 in Section 3 – Growth Management Strategy. For corridors (mainstreet and minor), the minimum residential density requirement of developments is 80 to 160 units per hectare.

Unfortunately, we have no sense of what “80 units per hectare” looks like or would look like in our neighbourhood. What does “80 units per hectare” mean in actual building or housing terms?

Additionally, we note that no maximum densities are indicated on Table 3, which is an omission we believe needs to be addressed.

We recommend the City add some examples or descriptive language near to Table 3 in the Plan to better inform residents and developers what 80 units per hectare could mean. This language would also assist in the drafting of any changes to Zoning By-Laws.

Additionally, we ask the City to map out the current density in each neighbourhood to show the baseline measure.

We agree with the FCA’s comment that within the OP “there is no indication of any limits to intensification – how many units is too much for a neighbourhood?” We share the FCA’s concern that there is the potential for these policies to “change radically the characteristics of established neighbourhoods.”

We also agree with the FCA’s recommendation for “the development of an intensification trigger point policy that can apply to a neighbourhood so that the appropriateness of intensification policies can be reviewed here.”

We recommend the Plan make density goals aspirational, not mandatory, and establish maximum limits at the neighbourhood level, to respect the heritage, character and liveability of neighbourhoods.

Except for the Heritage Conservation District, New Edinburgh has been designated a Transforming Overlay. The Transforming Overlay is one of two built-form overlays which, in conjunction with 15-minute neighbourhoods, are where the most residential regeneration is to occur.

“The Transforming Overlay is for areas that are expected to undergo significant development to transform into a fully urban form. Developments and redevelopments in the overlay should be in a fully urban form and will establish a new context,” according to a “What’s New” communication on the New Official Plan. Is “a new context” referring to the characteristics which make up a neighbourhood such as New Edinburgh? If so, is the intention to allow regeneration to significantly alter the character of a neighbourhood?

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Zoning By-laws will provide development standards are that consistent with the “planned characteristics of the overlay area, which may differ from the existing characteristics of the area to which the overlay applies.”

We feel strongly that regeneration goals can and should be achieved not by decimating existing mature and liveable neighbourhoods, but by increased levels of regeneration in underdeveloped or newly developing areas throughout the city (the Trainyards areas is a good example). People and families choose the style of neighbourhood they prefer to live in; no doubt newer high-density developments will attract the people who prefer that style of living. However, in New Edinburgh, people have chosen the area because of its village-like feel; transforming it into “the planned characteristics of the overlay area” does not take into consideration the choices and investments that residents have made with respect to where they prefer to live.

We note that through an Official Plan Amendment process, the City may evaluate development that seeks to increase height permission, greater than those permitted in the transect or the Secondary Plan.

Specifically, in section 5.6.1.1. Policy 2 (c), it states that: “In both the Transforming and Evolving Overlay, the City: c) Shall evaluate development that seeks to increase height permissions, for heights greater than those permitted in the underlying transect and designation or Secondary Plan, through an Official Plan Amendment process against all the applicable policies of this Plan.”

How then can communities avoid wind tunnels and dark corridors from developing on mainstreet corridors such as Beechwood Avenue?

We strongly urge the removal of section 5.6.1.1 Policy 2) (c) from the Official Plan, to ensure that policies and goals outlined in the Plan are not undermined and over-ridden by an Official Plan Amendment process.

4. Ensure Heritage Conservation District policies have priority standing

Heritage Conservation Districts are regulated by both municipal and provincial legislation and policies. The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) states: “Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.” Section 2.5.5. of Ottawa’s present current Official Plan provides explicit direction regarding the protection of cultural heritage resources in the city. It states that: “Individual buildings, structures, sites and cultural heritage landscapes will be designated as properties of cultural heritage value under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.” (This includes Heritage Conservation Districts.)

New Edinburgh’s Heritage Conservation Plan (endorsed by Council in 2015) contains policies and guidelines regarding any proposed change to the existing built forms in the district. Policy #3 (p.14) states clearly that: “Future amendments to the City of Ottawa’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law shall be in accordance with and shall implement the policies and guidelines of this plan.”

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This is to ensure the consistent and clear implementation of Section 41.2 of the Ontario Heritage Act which states: “In the event of a conflict between a heritage conservation plan and a municipal by-law that affects the designated district, the plan prevails to the full extent of the conflict, but in all other respects the by-law remains in full force.”

Although the draft OP acknowledges the special status of heritage conservation districts, certain policy statements require clarification and strengthening, as noted in boldface, below.

- Section 5.6.1.3 - Applying a Transforming Overlay... – in Transects section

5.6.1.3 Policy (4) Where lands have been assigned a Transforming Overlay, but the lands are also a heritage conservation district, the heritage conservation district policies shall take priority to ensure the conservation of designated buildings and **significant cultural landscapes**, and inform the approach to site redevelopment where additions or new buildings are proposed, and where site dimensions and configuration make such additions or new buildings possible.

- Section 3.2 Support Regeneration – in Growth Management Framework section

Section 3.2 Policy (14) Where Heritage Conservation Districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act occur within 15-minute neighbourhoods, the achievement of regeneration targets and minimum density requirements shall be determined in part by the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act. District guidelines and heritage overlays will be used to integrate regeneration proposals into designated heritage districts.

This statement needs to change to ensure consistency between policy language in Section 3 (on Transects) and Section 5 (Growth Management Framework) and also to reinforce the priority standing of Heritage Conservation Districts, the policies and guidelines spelled out in their conservation plans, and existing heritage overlays with respect to regeneration and the targets set out in Table 3.

We recommend the following changes in boldface to Section 3.2 (14) to achieve that consistency in policy, as follows:

Where Heritage Conservation Districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act with 15-minute neighbourhoods, the **pursuit** of regeneration targets and minimum density requirements shall be **subject to** the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act. Directives and guidelines laid out in district conservation plans, municipal heritage overlays **shall take priority in regards to** regeneration proposals **in** designated heritage districts.

5. Develop Secondary Plans to reflect neighbourhood context and needs (Beechwood Avenue)

Communities may need to have Secondary Plans to address local needs and ensure they retain and reinforce the neighbourhood characteristics that they hold dear. In the case of Beechwood Avenue, we look forward to engaging with our Ward Councillor and working with the City on developing such a Secondary Plan for our community and the Beechwood corridor.

6. Set the stage for 15-minute neighbourhoods that meet community needs

One of the goals in the Official Plan is to foster intensification, now referred to as regeneration, which translates into greater density, and community support in urban areas for “more walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods with a diverse mix of land uses, including a range of housing, shops, services, local access to food, schools, employment, parks, greenspaces and pathways.” Planning for intensification must therefore also consider the availability of these service and amenities in order to be successful.

The rationale for establishing this localization of living, is that “walkable, 15-minute neighbourhoods will help reduce car dependency, promote social and physical health, and sustainable communities.”

Having laid out the goals and policy agenda, the plan does not provide the metrics for how this will be implemented or indeed what changes will be made, have to be made or will be made in order to realize any of the 15-minute neighbourhood (15 MN) elements, and mix of land uses.

In fact, if the current situation is anything to go by, then planning, zoning and the frequent use of exceptions used by the City and its staff go against the grain in terms of what communities need and desire from a more intensive, effective and efficient 15 MN.

The draft OP recognizes that:

- the goal of growing within established communities also means supporting the evolution of those communities into walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods with a diverse mix of land uses,
 - including a range of housing, shops, services, local access to food, schools, employment, parks, greenspaces and pathways.
 - planning for intensification must therefore also consider the availability of these service and amenities in order to be successful.

However, the city actually has limited tools to achieve the goals of the OP, including the development and supports for 15 MNs. The desire for greater density is one big part of the OP but how to achieve it in relation to community needs and desires is unclear.

We support the FCA’s recommendations that:

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- **There needs to be a mapping of neighbourhoods to identify which communities already fit the 15 minute neighbourhood concept, and which do not. This should be done in consultation with each community.**
- **The City will need to develop metrics to ensure that access to amenities and services grow with intensification in each 15 minute neighbourhood, and a strategy to deal with deficiencies in current neighbourhoods that do not meet the 15 minute neighbourhood standard (e.g. access to parks, etc.).**

The draft OP seems to scope out the goals, leaving attainment to market forces, to new transportation nodes that will foster development and increased height and density prescriptions that will somehow meet City goals and objectives -- all of which seem to favour developers over communities and their needs, in a very asymmetric relationship.

This asymmetry is reinforced by current planning, and zoning practices, and use of a variety of exceptions requiring communities to turn to secondary plans to establish their positions in a document that has legal standing when advocating for more desirable and better developments that serve their needs and objectives.

Implementing a 15 Min Neighbourhood—Beechwood Village—as part of the OP

Cities such as Melbourne have a very clear view of what 15 to 20 MN entails. As the following visual shows a complete live, work play and enjoy lifestyle is just 800 metres away. While this is the intensification that is worth striving for, New Edinburgh, or other parts of communities adjacent to Beechwood, have both geographic, distance, weather and historical layouts that make such an approach possible for only a portion of their population; the rest would need some alternative form of climate friendly transportation, such as an E-Shuttle, to be able to access the Beechwood corridor, which would be the main street of this 15 MN.

Activity Diagram of Melbourne 15-20 Minute Neighbourhood



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- **Rethink**

- The 15 MN is more than just intensification, more retail, walkability, cycling paths and so on.
- To even contemplate a paradigm shift of this nature people need a variety of active policies and programs that are integrated, and which propel community transactions and interaction, nurturing changes in lifestyle and habits, moving away from post-war consumerism built around the automobile.
- Introduce new forms of transportation such as the community E-Shuttle (electric vehicle shuttle) that provides a climate friendly transportation that is convenient, eliminates the need for autos and parking, provides **greater access to the 15 MN from all points of the neighbourhood** and complements OC Transpo lines as a feeder.
- Conversely, developers will also need to revise their thinking looking at communities as whole instead of just their own particular developments.
- The City will also have to do more than just conceptualize 15 MN goals based on present approaches to community development, with minor tweaks. Paradigm shifts apply to everybody. The City and OP should reflect **concrete programs and incentives to achieve 15 MN goals, with realistic disincentives for developers who do not work to realize prescribed 15 MN goals**, by failing to meet community needs.

- **Regenerate**

- With new policies, targeted programs (incentives and disincentives) to nurture 15 MN.
- Develop and receive acceptance of a **Secondary Plan**.
- **Provide tax incentives** to landlords to lower effective rental rates to retailers.
- Introduce further tax or grant **incentives** for development of food halls (indoor markets)/cultural venues/mixed culture & retail vendors-projects in the 15 MN
- Introduce **disincentives** to ensure developers keep to established secondary plans, in the form of developer surcharge on projects in the 15 MN which fall outside the bounds of community Secondary Plans, (in terms height or insufficient retail space).
- Impose **stricter parameters** for the city's use of **exceptions** to zoning and planning framework, as well as secondary plans.

7. Establish greenspace and tree canopy minimum requirement

Greenspace, the tree canopy and preservation of existing trees wherever and whenever possible are necessary elements if Ottawa is to meet its goal of being a livable city of neighbourhoods and a city that will tackle the climate change emergency it declared. However, the Plan currently lacks language that prescribes those requirements.

“The proposed level of density will destroy all remaining mature trees on developed lots, leaving us with considerably less healthy, and consequently less successful neighbourhoods,” notes the

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Community Collective in its comments on the draft Official Plan. “The past ten years of infill activity has significantly reduced the tree canopy across the city.”

We recommend that the City in its Official Plan should set minimum targets at the neighbourhood level for the tree canopy (at 50%) and greenspace and not include NCC lands in this calculation. (This mirrors the recommendation by the Community Collective.)

The Plan should include a commitment to preserve existing mature trees and not allow the loss of trees for the sake of density. The language regarding existing trees in the Parks section (4.4.6) should equally be applied to the Inner Urban Transect and other sections, as appropriate.

We recommend that the following language be added to section 5.2.4 Policy 1): “Existing mature trees shall be preserved and incorporated into landscape designs.”

In Section 4.4 "Parks and Recreation", the opening paragraph of this section sets out the scope:

"Parks are one component of the city's greenspace and are important for our quality of life, active recreation and health. Parks provide spaces to showcase our diverse cultural communities and for creative expression."

We think it is important here to cross-reference the open greenspaces and parks, the canal, and the Greenbelt lands owned by the NCC. There are multiple reasons for a cross reference:

a) The City has a representative on the NCC Board, so that representative should, among other things be coordinating the NCC proposal and use of parks, greenspaces and greenbelt lands with the City's park plans. Much of the greenspace around New Edinburgh is NCC owned, so this issue is important to us.

b) It is important that development adjacent to parks be designed to integrate well with parks. An example of how not to do this is to surround high rise towers next to a park or greenspace with walls or fences to keep park users away from the high rise. The Vancouver waterfront along English Bay offers an excellent example of how to do this better: create a public space near the high rise which is welcoming to park users. Of course, if this is being done next to NCC lands, the NCC should be part of the process.

We note that many NCC lands are currently cut off from neighbourhoods by high speed roads, with few crossing points for pedestrians. We think this is wrong. We've already mentioned the Vancouver example. In Paris, the Bois de Boulogne is, for a significant part of its perimeter, surrounded by quiet city streets, making it easy to enter and adding to the forest's peaceful quality. In the same vein, the Plan also needs to make a commitment to working closely with the NCC to make better use of greenbelt space, by making it more accessible and relevant to City residents.

c) In some places where parks, including NCC lands, are near busy roads that make the park

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noisy, it may be relatively easy to build a berm to cut down on the noise. An example of where this has been done is along the Vanier Parkway near Beechwood Avenue. An example of where it has not been done is along King Edward near Bordeleau Park. The result is a continuous din as far away as Stanley Park (across the Rideau River) and the greenspace near it.

d) The NCC and the Department of Public Works (as it was then known), driven by the car-oriented policies of the 1950s, uses most of the land along the Ottawa River in the central core for parking lots. (Beside the heating plant, using an access road that starts at the new library, behind and beside the National Archives, between the Supreme Court and the West Block, behind and beside the Mint and the National Gallery all the way to the Macdonald-Cartier bridge, and behind the NRC). The City should be pressing the NCC to put a stop to this. The City is being cut off from one of its most beautiful natural features by parking lots.

We also recommend that there be a commitment to consult local neighbourhoods when building public infrastructure in such areas. New Edinburgh was not directly consulted before the Combined Sewage Storage Tunnel (CSST) was built, with its terminus in the greenspace next to Stanley Park. That is not the right way to proceed.

So, we recommend modifying the foregoing paragraph in section 4.4 as follows:

Parks, greenspace and trees are important for the quality of our neighbourhoods, because they offer not only beauty, calm and restful spaces but also spaces for communities to mingle, to spend time together, for active recreation: alone, together with others and even with pets, and diverse cultural activities: from sculpture installations to festivals to pop up shops. In keeping with our vision of the importance of creating and maintaining lively neighbourhoods, the Plan recognizes the importance of ascertaining the preferences of local residents in the process of maintaining and developing parks, greenspaces and the tree canopy. City representatives on the NCC Board will consistently underline the importance of ascertaining the preferences and interests of local residents, and using the resources of the NCC, within its mandate, in a way that contributes to the vision set out in this Plan.

8. Consider Social Infrastructure requirements

There needs to be a City strategy to ensure that as regeneration or intensification occurs within a neighbourhood there is a commensurate increase in infrastructure, including social infrastructure, and amenities in that neighbourhood. This requires the development of standards for the provision of such amenities (e.g. parks per thousand households, etc.). We do realize, however, that social infrastructure planning is outside the scope of the Official Plan.

We recommend that the Official Plan refer to and align with a broader social infrastructure plan, to be developed and implemented by the city.

9. Engage the public effectively, especially neighbourhoods

Ongoing consultation and collaboration with neighbourhoods are critical to achieving the liveable city we all need and want. Design thinking and co-creation processes, with rounds of iteration with stakeholders, would ensure that the City benefits from the insights and knowledge of those who experience and understand best the impacts of land-use planning on Ottawa's liveability.

Effective engagement would include the City reporting back on the comments it received and indicating whether community recommendations were taken into consideration and, if not, why.

The timeline for this process did not allow for meaningful public engagement as befits such a far-reaching and significant process as the development of a new Official Plan.

The slightly extended period (to March 12th) to review this complicated, convoluted document -- presenting a vision for Ottawa for public comment over the holiday season and during a pandemic -- has been inadequate.

Instead, at this juncture, we encourage the City to engage in a more reciprocal way and provide feedback on the public input.

We recommend the City release a second draft with an additional round of public consultation and opportunity for comment. Actively engage with the FCA, the Community Collective and individual community associations, which represent neighbourhood views and have taken the time to provide thoughtful and specific input on the DOP.

The City should set the finalization of the Official Plan for 2023, as recommended by the FCA or scale back the OP with more modest ambitions.

We encourage all members of city staff who are contributing to this effort of creating a new Official Plan to consider the following statement from a thoughtful engaged citizen:

"If we are to have nuanced, context-sensitive, area-specific zoning as a basis for developing diverse 15-Minute Neighbourhoods, centralized decision-makers cannot possibly know as well what is needed as those who have knowledge as engaged citizens with the lived-experience of their own neighbourhoods. One of our largest concerns should be that the City has yet to demonstrate a full commitment to the kind of governance model and related processes to make the next Official Plan a success."

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the communities that make up Ottawa, we believe that the Official Plan will be improved to ensure that Ottawa will remain one of the most liveable mid-sized cities. We urge you to take the time necessary to get this right.