



OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE and RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

NEW OFFICIAL PLAN – HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIRECTIONS Comments August 22, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

FEDERATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS (FCA) – The FCA-FAC is the forum for community associations and similar non-profit volunteer groups in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Member associations share information about issues facing their communities and, when appropriate, take joint action. The FCA encourages discussion of civic affairs. FCA representatives are participating in Official Plan and workshop discussion with GOHBA, BOMA and City Staff.

1. OVERVIEW STATEMENTS:

The FCA congratulates staff for work done to date and for their expansive public consultation plans. Public engagement is key to a successful Official Plan. I.e. input from over 2000 people. These are positive signs that their outreach is working.

The FCA Recommends that City committees endorse the staff's 5 Big Moves and Document 1 report as high level policy direction for the drafting of the next Official Plan

2. SPECIFIC COMMENTS FROM FCA:

1) WHAT WE LIKE:

- An Official Plan that envisages Ottawa as a city of diverse, complete urban, suburban and rural communities.
- An Official Plan “first” for Ottawa: a Climate Change Master Plan.
- Growth plan centred on intensification, not expansion of the urban boundary.
- The focus on the protection of trees, the urban canopy, wetlands greenspaces and parks.
- Higher order transit as focal points for intensification.

2) CHALLENGES:

- **Goals, policy and programs:** Translating the “5 Big Move” aspirational goals into actionable policies and programs.
- **Funding future budgets** to turn good words (goals) into deeds.
- **Intensification:** What is the right amount in Ottawa neighbourhoods?
We "Prefer to leave it to city staff to decide the intensification targets using updated Statistics Canada population growth rates for Ottawa but always with no expansion of the urban boundary as a determining criteria".
- **Affordable Housing** – is an important Intensification Goal for Ottawa

3) ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **The FCA and its members are opposed to expansion of the urban boundary within the time horizon of the next OP.** We encourage Councillors to direct staff to adopt intensification targets that avoid a need to expand the current borders for the foreseeable future.

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- **The FCA acknowledges sustainable rural farm and village lifestyles as strategic advantages** and integral to the city's future success.
- **Intensification should always be context-sensitive; mindful of the core intention of a community's Secondary Plan or Community Design Plan;** based on a meaningful public consultation process; and strive for consensual outcomes that respect the aspirations of all stakeholders, residents and developers alike. Bottom up, consensus based, planning is a much surer path to community recognition of the benefits of intensification. It also ultimately is a less expensive path for developers and community residents alike if it results in fewer costly, time consuming appeals to the LPAT.
- **Transportation:** Adopt much more ambitious target modal shares for sustainable transportation.
- **Consider alternative traffic demand management strategies** that motivate drivers of private combustion-engine vehicles to shift to more sustainable alternatives. Adopt those most suitable for Ottawa.
- **Intensification needs to be compatible with protecting/sustaining our natural environment.** "Trees before intensification" is a well-intentioned aspirational goal. We support the spirit in which it is made. We suggest that with the right policies and programs, intensification needs to be compatible with protecting/sustaining our natural environment. With good design and good, well enforced, policies, we should not have to choose between the two.
- **Good Design and Built Form Heritage:** We welcome the staff proposed emphasis on good design. We would very much welcome a toolkit of **policies and regulations** targeted at strengthening the City's hand at protecting our built form heritage and at promoting better design overall. We see good design as more than just outward form.
- **Good design also encompasses function,** including how the OP Master Plans and sub-plans, policies and programs function as an integrated whole, including the new Climate Change Master Plan. For example, the Transportation Master Plan, the Infrastructure Master Plan and the city's intensification strategies need to be implemented collectively through the lens of the Climate Change Master Plan. If they are not, then they have not been well designed
- **Governance Review to Meet Challenges Ahead:** To that end, we encourage Council, during its next governance review, to take a look at the City's organizational structure with an eye to best ensuring that it is well designed to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that continued population growth in an increasingly uncertain future are sure to bring.

Summary:

- The FCA looks forward to working with the City and other stakeholders to make the next Official Plan the best it can be.

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