



Ste. 146, 207 Bank Str., Ottawa ON K2P 2N2

November 22, 2021

Hon. Steve Clark, MPP
Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Str.
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Clark:

City of Ottawa Official Plan

I am writing on behalf of the Federation of Citizens Associations (FCA), representing 70 community groups within the City of Ottawa. It is our understanding that the City of Ottawa has submitted to you its revised (new) Official Plan that it approved last October 27, 2021, for your approval, as required under the Planning Act. The FCA and its member associations has been very active participants in the City of Ottawa's Official Plan review process, and wish to convey to you our views on the City's Official Plan for your consideration.

The FCA supports the City's 5 Big Moves as founding principles underlying this Official Plan. The 5 Big Moves are:

1. **Growth:** Achieve, by the end of its planning period (2046), more growth in the City of Ottawa will be obtained by intensification than by greenfield development. This growth will provide a variety of affordable housing options for residents.
2. **Mobility:** By 2046 the majority of trips in the City of Ottawa will be made by sustainable transportation.
3. **Urban Design:** Improve the City's sophistication in urban and community design and put this knowledge to the service of good urbanism at all scales, from the largest to the very small.
4. **Resiliency:** Embed public health, environmental, climate and energy resiliency into the framework of the City's planning policies.
5. **Economy:** Embed economic development into the framework of our planning policies.

As well, the FCA supports the concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods as an integral feature of the City's new Official Plan. 15-minute neighbourhoods are compact, well-connected places with a clustering of a diverse mix of land uses. This includes a range of housing types, shops, services, local access to food, schools and child care facilities, employment, greenspaces and parks, and pathways. They are complete communities that support active transportation and transit, reduce car dependency, and enable people to live car-light or car-free. The FCA supports the City's Official Plan policies that seek to achieve the evolution and/or creation of 15-minute neighbourhoods in our city.

However, the FCA does not support the growth management policies contained in the City's Official Plan to accommodate some portion of growth by urban land expansion. We support maintaining the current urban boundary for the City of Ottawa and believe that the growth expected by the City of Ottawa to 2046 can be accommodated by developing current vacant urban lands and through intensification. We are confident that the demand for residential housing based on demographic trends identified by the City can meet the Provincial requirements for adequate land supply through existing vacant urban lands and appropriate intensification. We are very aware of both the servicing costs and environmental costs that occur from urban sprawl, and do not believe it is necessary to expand Ottawa's urban boundary, particularly when the City's projected growth can be accommodated within the current urban boundary.

However, Ottawa City Council, in approving this new Official Plan, is proposing that some of Ottawa's future growth be accommodated by expanding the urban boundary, and has approved an area for future urban growth called the Tewn lands (445 hectares). City planning staff, in developing the City's Growth Management Strategy as part of its Official Plan review, identified a number of parcels of land as potential sites for urban development outside the current urban boundary, and ranked them according to suitability, involving such factors as cost to service (water, sewer, roads, etc.), distance from planned rapid transit, and soil conditions. The Tewn lands scored low in this analysis, based on these factors, and was not recommended as a parcel of land to accommodate future urban development. However, City Council, in revising the City's Growth Management Strategy, removed higher-scoring land parcels for urban development and substituted the lower-scoring Tewn lands in their place. The FCA objects to the inclusion of the Tewn lands in the City of Ottawa's new Official Plan based on the low scores it received based on the important issues as cost of servicing, distance from planned rapid transit, and poor soil conditions that City planning staff had identified.

While the FCA supports intensification as a means of accommodating Ottawa's future growth by no means this is a blank cheque for any type of intensification. We support direction that City Council has given City staff to develop metrics to measure the impact of intensification on neighbourhoods and to measure the mitigative policies in the City's new Official Plan that govern tree canopy and access to greenspace to better accommodate intensification in our neighbourhoods.

In closing, it is important to emphasize the involvement of our communities in the development of this new Official Plan. We participated in every step, held workshops to better inform ourselves, and have availed of every opportunity to provide input. While in some areas we believe the Official Plan could go further in meeting the goals of the 5 Big Moves, we are aware that there is the opportunity in the future to re-tool this Official Plan 10 years after the Minister's approval (as per the Planning Act).

Thank you for your attention to the issues we have raised.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Cullen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alex" being more prominent than the last name "Cullen".

Alex Cullen
President FCA

cc Ottawa-area MPPs
Stephen Willis, General Manager, Planning, Infrastructure & Economic
Development, City of Ottawa
Tim Marc, Senior Legal Counsel, Planning, Development & Real Estate,
City of Ottawa