



Public Consultations



Keeping the Priority on People

A SPECIAL CONSULTATION

**ON HOUSING AND
OTTAWA'S DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN**

Held October 10, 2002

**Report on Recommendations
From the Community**

Report Released November 2002

Social Planning Council of Ottawa

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<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	3
<u>SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS</u>	4
A) OTTAWA SOCIAL HOUSING NETWORK	4
B) DISABLED AND PROUD	4
C) JACKSON BROWN REAL ESTATE PARTNERSHIP	4
D) ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF OTTAWA	5
E) CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF EASTERN ONTARIO.....	5
F) INTERVAL HOUSE OF OTTAWA-CARLETON	6
G) OTTAWA COUNCIL OF WOMEN.....	7
H) OTTAWA EAST FAITH GROUP	7
I) HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE	8
J) OTTAWA REGION LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION	8
<u>SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS</u>	10
A) ADVANCING THE ISSUE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING	10
RECOMMENDATION #1 IMPROVE THE DEFINITION OF "AFFORDABLE"	10
RECOMMENDATION #2 REFINE THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TARGETS	11
RECOMMENDATION #3 ESTABLISH A "NON-MARKET HOUSING FIRST" POLICY	12
RECOMMENDATION #4 DEVELOP A PERMISSIVE ZONING BY-LAW ENABLING AFFORDABLE HOUSING ..	12
RECOMMENDATION #5 CREATION OF NEW AFFORDABLE STOCK	13
RECOMMENDATION #6 INCENTIVES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....	13
B) IMPLEMENTING ZONING WHICH IS MORE INCLUSIVE AND FLEXIBLE.....	14
RECOMMENDATION #1 CREATE FEWER ZONING DESIGNATIONS & PERMIT A VARIETY OF USES	14
RECOMMENDATION #2 SECONDARY SUITES AS OF RIGHT	14
RECOMMENDATION #3 DISTINCT PROVISIONS FOR THE RURAL AREAS.....	14
RECOMMENDATION #4 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION OF MIXED USE COMMUNITIES	15
C) STRONGER SUPPORTS TO CREATE HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS.....	15
D) PROMOTING THE VISION.....	16
<u>APPENDICES</u>	17
APPENDIX 1 OTTAWA SOCIAL HOUSING NETWORK	17
APPENDIX 2 DISABLED AND PROUD	18
APPENDIX 3 JACKSON BROWN REAL ESTATE PARTNERSHIP	19
APPENDIX 4 ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF OTTAWA	20
APPENDIX 5 CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF EASTERN ONTARIO	21
APPENDIX 6 INTERVAL HOUSE OF OTTAWA-CARLETON	24
APPENDIX 7 OTTAWA COUNCIL OF WOMEN.....	26
APPENDIX 8 OTTAWA EAST FAITH GROUP	27
APPENDIX 9 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE	28
APPENDIX 10 OTTAWA REGION LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION.....	30

INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, October 10th, 60 people attended a Special Consultation on Housing and the Draft Official Plan. The **Social Planning Council of Ottawa, the Health & Social Services Advisory Committee (Housing Sub-Committee)** and the **Ottawa Social Housing Network** organized this special consultation as part of the formal consultation process on the draft Official Plan. Community members were invited to share their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the draft Official Plan in relation to its' likely impact on the housing situation in Ottawa. The event brought together housing advocates, landlords, City staff, social service representatives, faith representatives, and residents concerned about housing and homelessness.

Participants were invited to make a brief presentation at the consultation, outlining their specific recommendations. Nine organizations asked to make a presentation and one organization provided a written presentation to be included in the final report. The ten presentations can be found at the end of this report, in appendices 1 to 10. Participants received a quick overview of the "Housing Backgrounder Ottawa 20/20 Draft Official Plan", which the City had recently made available on its' Ottawa 20/20 website,¹ in particular, highlighting several policy issues addressed in the Official Plan.

Participants then divided into four groups to identify a range of housing issues related to the Official Plan. Each group selected two issues for more detailed discussion and recommendations. At the end of the evening, each group reported back to the full group. A representative from the City's Planning Department closed out the evening by thanking participants, and noting that the City would consider the discussion and the full range of recommendations, assessing how ideas might fit with the Official Plan, the Human Services Plan, and other policy initiatives.

This report presents a summary of each presentation and synthesizes the main ideas from the workshops. Written presentations are reproduced in the appendices.

Unfortunately, this document is only available in English, due to lack of resources.

We would like to thank the participants who attended the day
and shared their expertise.

The Social Planning is grateful to
United Way/Centraide Ottawa
and to
The Health and Social Services Advisory Committee
and the City of Ottawa
for the resources for this event and report.

¹ City of Ottawa. [Housing Backgrounder Ottawa 20/20 Draft Official Plan](http://www.ottawa2020.ca). See www.ottawa2020.ca.

Summary of Community Presentations

a) Ottawa Social Housing Network

Presented by Dennis Carr

The New Supply Committee of the Ottawa Social Housing Network has already put forward their comments to the City which are relevant to this meeting. We need to take a holistic view of the planning process, and see all the sections together: transportation, liveable communities, etc. Housing is one part of the Smart Growth and sustainable growth strategy. There are lots of good recommendations in the plan which we support. Recommendations on the private sector's role in providing housing are somewhat weak. We have noticed a real change in attitudes at the City towards housing and smart growth. Real power is with the politicians, but they face a lot of pressures to maintain the status quo. The Smart Growth Summit produced a lot of good recommendations, but then in the 2002 budget the focus was still on roads and infrastructure. City staff and politicians need to hear from a broad range of groups in order to get the full picture and to hear that the critical need for affordable housing and other sustainable policies should be at the top of the agenda.

b) Disabled and Proud

Presented by Charles Matthews

Disabled and Proud represents about 1,100 members. We look forward to achieving by 2020 a City with housing appropriate for the disabled community. The disabled community needs affordable, accessible and "visitable" accommodation. We ask that all new construction take into account that all can use a ramp but not all can use stairs. Even if a tenant in a building may not need a ramp, their visitors may. As the population ages the need for accessibility increases - over 1 in 4 will need accessible entrances. Waiting lists for affordable housing are at an all time high. Numbers needing affordable housing will not be reduced but will increase over time. An additional 50,000 affordable homes will be needed by 2020. We need to start now if we wish to make an impact on the affordable housing waiting list. Please consider making Ottawa an affordable and accessible place to live by 2020.

c) Jackson Brown Real Estate Partnership

Presented by Joanne Jackson

My main point is: "The devil is in the details." We need a good Official Plan, with the principles reflected all the way down through the zoning requirements, setbacks, separation distances, etc. We need inclusive zoning. I have worked with several groups serving people at risk of homelessness and women and children needing to get away from home. These groups were looking for additional space. Two different kinds of searches, one for houses to renovate, one for suitable land to develop. Two different kinds of road blocks: oppressive

requirements in the zoning and lack of inclusive zoning to allow a number of uses "as of right". Because of these roadblocks, it has been very difficult for these groups to proceed and deliver these services. Infill #1 could only locate downtown because of the type of use but we got blocked by three minor variances. Infill #2 got stopped at the old city line, and when we found a suitable property it needed 7 minor variances. Whole areas of the city are tied up by developers whose site plans only envision the "usual suspects" and specific uses of the land. Their plans don't include the people we are concerned about. We need to look at the things that are oppressive in zoning and setbacks and have more "as of right" ability to go into the suburbs etc. We need zoning there that reflects more uses and permits multiple uses within a residential zone.

d) Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa

Presented by Julie Mckay

Elizabeth Fry Society provides support to women who are in conflict with the law (or at risk of being in conflict). Positive aspects of the Official Plan are that through SCPI money and the City, Elizabeth Fry has recently opened its' long term transitional support housing (Apartment 301) for women and women with children. As well, the Official Plan identifies the need for a sustainable plan for adequate affordable housing. However, there is little mention of transitional housing for people who are at risk - bridging the gap between institution and secure permanent housing. There needs to be more mention of transitional housing and the need to provide transitional support. There is also a need for a range of zoning.

e) Co-operative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario

Presented by Brian Gifford

CHASEO is a co-op of co-operatives with almost 40 of the 57 Ottawa co-ops as members. CHASEO participates in the Ottawa Social Housing Network and supports the views presented by the OSHN on housing and the Official Plan.

CHASEO requests that there be explicit reference made to "co-operative housing" in the Official Plan. While co-operative housing is a form of "non-profit housing", there are some significant differences in the self-management element of co-operative housing. One way to include the term would be to expand "non-profit" to "co-operative and other non-profit housing" the first time the word "non-profit" appears. Or a new line could be added immediately after "non-profit" first appears: "Non-profit housing includes co-operative and other forms of non-profit housing".

Two major concerns identified by CHASEO were that the 25% affordability requirement should be strengthened and that housing affordability should be preserved permanently for new affordable housing created through the 25% requirement and other measures.

CHASEO supports the general approach of the draft plan – encouraging compact development, mixed uses to reduce transportation and environmental costs and to encourage more liveable, walkable communities. We also support various specific elements of the Housing Section of the Plan, including:

- the requirement that a mix of housing types be used
- a Housing First policy for use of city owned land
- encouragement of non-profit housing, and
- establishing a minimum 25% affordability requirement for new housing

One lesson learned in the co-op sector is that it is easier to build in permanent affordability from the start than to add it on later. CHASEO recommends that a new subsection be added to the Official Plan (7.1.4 Preserve Housing Affordability) explicitly stating the goal of preserving affordability of the affordable housing created under the Official Plan and listing the mechanisms for preserving affordability.

CHASEO also recommends that the City consider land banking and the creation of a land trust to hold land and manage leases.

f) Interval House of Ottawa-Carleton

Presented by Lyallen Hayes

Interval House is a 20 bed temporary emergency shelter for women and their children who are fleeing abuse from their partner. Women are staying at Interval House between ten to twelve weeks. This is on the increase due to the lack of further safe, affordable housing being built in this region. Changes in City social housing policies that have a direct and negative impact on women obtaining priority status under the "abuse" category. Many women and children in Ottawa live in poverty and cannot afford market rent.

The recent changes in housing policy have increased the barriers for women who have fled their homes only to have the abuser re-enter their lives after locating the woman and resuming the abuse that made them leave in the first place. These women will not qualify for the "Special Priority Household Category" instituted by the City of Ottawa Housing. Even if a police report has been filed, these women would not qualify. The City's new policy is, if a woman is abused by an ex-abuser recently and they had not lived together for three months she does not qualify for Special Priority Housing. Even though he has access to her, has threatened her, and she has had to move from where she was.

To illustrate the seriousness of the issue, Interval House presented the case of Gillian Hadley and the results of the Coroner's Inquest into her death. Gillian Hadley was murdered June 2002. The jury at this Inquest made several recommendations related to housing. Gillian Hadley was on a waiting list of the "abuse priority category" but as the months passed the Housing Authorities changed her priority to one level down even though Ralph Hadley, her abuser had access to her.

Interval House noted that violence by male partners against women has increased in Ontario and yet hundreds of recommendations arising from Corner's Inquests have not been implemented

g) Ottawa Council of Women

Presented by Beth Cook

The Ottawa Council of Women has long supported the idea of more affordable housing, especially for low-income households, special needs groups, the abused, and the homeless, considering it to be essential for a liveable, workable city with strong, cohesive communities. OCW strongly endorses the many supports which the City Plan gives to help meet the crisis in affordable rentals and ownership and various forms of special needs housing. OCW is pleased that the Plan permits secondary and garden suites in all areas. However, in setting out Plan details and by-laws, OCW believes it will be necessary to allow presently illegal secondary units a considerable time to meet any standards established for such units and to provide for some assistance in meeting new standards.

The OCW supports:

- 1) Community sensitive infill: Here it is important that by-laws look at issues of shadowing and cutting off sunlight exposure to neighbouring residents
- 2) Increased housing density which makes urban transit more viable, lessens air pollution and may also increase affordability. However we do not want 'canyon streets' of commercial buildings with little light and bitter winds.
- 3) Mixed-use neighbourhoods for affordability, reduced car use, and cohesiveness

We have concerns about some aspects of section 7.1. We have real trouble with the idea that a "25% provision for every development may not be appropriate". We would like to see this paragraph re-examined (7.1.2 paragraph 3). It seems weak and tentative. It has too many loopholes and I doubt its effectiveness in ensuring the construction of affordable housing.

h) Ottawa East Faith Group

Presented by Mark Ziegler

The Ottawa East Faith Group was formed by members of three churches who came together in early September to form a small faith-based group. Their objective is to study and take action on the pressing need for affordable housing in Ottawa, with a particular focus on Ottawa East. The group was formed in response to an invitation to our churches to become involved in the city-wide Multi-faith Housing Initiative. The Faith Group strongly supports the eight affordable housing objectives in the Draft Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

**i) Health and Social Services Advisory Committee
(Housing Sub-Committee)**

Presented by Lee Farnworth

The members of the Health and Social Services Advisory Committee, Housing Sub-Committee are generally pleased with the vision for housing as set out in the Draft Official Plan and are pleased that the City has adopted an "Affordable Housing Strategy". HSSAC-HSC endorses the ideas of liveable and complete communities, "inclusive communities" and neighbourhoods, the "housing first" policy for surplus city owned lands, and the priority for processing of applications by non-profit housing corporations.

HSSAC-HSC believes the success of the vision will depend on the implementation of the OP through zoning bylaws and other development control processes and housing programs. There must be more flexibility and more inclusiveness than is currently proposed and, certainly, more than the "old" city of Ottawa had. Less restrictive zoning and fewer zones would both eliminate the continuous revisiting of areas with spot rezoning, lengthy, expensive and often contentious appeals, and minor variances, and encourage more integrated uses for land.

There are inconsistencies and apparent confusion in the Official Plan when it came to concepts and definitions related to "affordable" and "social" housing, as well as "supportive" and "special needs" housing.

While HSSAC-HSC offers a number of recommendations, we have not completed our analysis of the OP and will be offering further comments in the future.

j) Ottawa Region Landlords Association

Written comments provided by Gabrielle Horan

The Ottawa Region Landlords Association notes that shelter allowances for tenants on social assistance are woefully inadequate and should reflect the reality of average rents in the Ottawa area. ORLA also wants to see tax assessments that would reflect the increases in utility costs. Landlords who want to build additions to units outside the small inner city exemption territory have to pay whopping fees, uphold stringent code requirements - it is just about impossible to "build on". ORLA welcomes incentives to permit secondary suites and to stimulate affordable development, but the City should not restrict such incentives to ill-defined "affordable" units.

Overview of the City's Housing Backgrounder

Presented by Steve Pomeroy

Mr. Pomeroy, on behalf of the City, highlighted policy issues from the City's Housing Backgrounder², and commented on the overall policy framework: what the Official Plan could do and what it could not do.

There are a number of key issues in the Housing Backgrounder:

- a) The mismatch between the type of development (housing stock) that has been taking place and the type of development that will be necessary in the future, is the critical issue
- b) The overall low level of rental supply - this will become even more of a problem over the next few years
- c) There is a "leaky bucket" of rental units. Since the 1996 census we have lost more rental units to conversion than have been created in that period. Even if we put all our resources into creating new housing, we would still lose because of this on-going loss.

The mismatch problem is reflecting market demand. Many of the people agencies serve don't have the purchasing power to access what is available. The purpose of the policy is to intervene in that.

"NIMBY" (i.e. "not in my back yard") is alive and well. The existing regulations feed the NIMBY problem because it forces organizations to go through the public process. Even the landlords are confronted by NIMBY too. They don't make much by serving the lower income population, but if they want to serve this group, they run into the NIMBY problem as well.

We can plan what we like in the Official Plan, but it is the tactical plan. It must be related to the by-laws, the Affordable Housing Strategy, policies on conversion, and programs on affordable housing. The Official Plan, without those other tools, is not effective.

People see the Official Plan as controlling the bureaucrats, but it also tells the bureaucrats what the plan is. Therefore, if the transportation department, for example, is not on side, we can use the Official Plan to hold people accountable.

Be realistic about what we put into the Official Plan.

- We have put in 25% of all development, but if it is too punitive, the developers will not develop at all, so we need tools to make it viable.
- We can address exclusionary zoning with a stick or with a carrot.
- What happens from new growth? Intensification and re-use.
- Could say we have an excellent housing policy - 5% is set aside for parklands, so why not dedicate land for affordable housing?

What most people really think about is non-market housing, and they want it affordable in the long term. Perhaps there are better ways to think about that.

² The City's Housing Backgrounder can be found on the Ottawa 20/20 website at www.ottawa2020.on.ca

Summary of Workshop Discussions

Within the four workshops, participants identified a range of issues which concerned them and which could be partially addressed through the Official Plan, including

- the need for more rental housing
- strategies to address the growing number of homeless people on the streets
- the need for inclusive neighbourhoods
- policies which preserve and maintain the existing housing stock (especially rental stock)
- policies related to keeping a level of affordability within the existing private rental stock
- increased supports for people at risk of losing their housing
- supports and support services to aid in keeping people in their homes and out of institutions

Participants in each workshop selected two issues which they explored in more detail, noting that the issues listed were integrally related. The issues selected can be grouped under four categories:

- Advancing the issue of affordable housing
- Implementing zoning which is more inclusive and flexible
- Stronger provisions to support the creation of housing for people with special needs
- Promoting the vision

A summary of the discussions from the workshops is presented below, along with the recommendations from the workshops.

a) Advancing the Issue of Affordable Housing

Participants were generally pleased that the City is endeavouring to encourage the creation and preservation of affordable housing through the Official Plan and the related Municipal Housing Facilities By-law. Nonetheless, most of the workshops identified strategies to strengthen the Official Plan provisions intended to support the creation or preservation of affordable housing.

Recommendation #1 Improve the Definition of "Affordable"

Participants in several of the workshops were concerned with the current definition of "affordable" in the draft Official Plan³. As well, in several workshops people identified

³ "Affordable housing is defined as housing, either ownership or rental, for which a household will pay no more than 30% of its gross annual income. Affordable home ownership will be targeted to households up to the 60th income percentile and is calculated on the basis of a three-year average of the three-year mortgage rate, taxes at 1.5 percent of house price and a down payment of 10 percent. Affordable rental housing will be targeted to households up to the 30th income percentile." City of Ottawa, Draft Official Plan, section 7.1.2 subsection 2, pg. 74.

the concern of preserving the affordability of housing in the long term. Many people identified the ineffectiveness of requiring the creation of affordable housing under section 7.1.2 with no plan or policies which would keep the housing affordable beyond a couple of years. The following recommendations were made:

- The 60th income percentile is too high a target for the definition of affordable home ownership, particularly in light of the higher than average income in Ottawa. A lower income percentile should be selected.
- There should be a clearer distinction between affordable rental and ownership property, and specifically, in section 7.1.2 subsections 2 and 3, include a policy on the percentage of affordable rental housing which is required, as affordable rental housing is targeted to households up to the 30th income percentile.
- The Official Plan should include specific affordable housing targets for people with lower incomes and people for whom market rents are not affordable, particularly setting targets for affordable housing for people in the lowest tenth percentile of income.
- See also Recommendation #3 below (Preserving Permanent Affordability).
- In the Official Plan, the terms "market" and "non-market" housing could be a more useful distinction than "social" or "affordable". "Non-market" housing implicitly includes the concept of long-term affordability.

Recommendation #2 Refine the Affordable Housing Targets

Many of the workshops also identified a need to “tighten up” the targets for affordability. Recommended actions to improve the affordability targets included:

- There is a need to reconcile the requirement that “a minimum of 25% of all housing built each year will be affordable” (section 7.1.2. subsection 2) and the requirement that “a minimum of 25% of the total units in major development projects will be affordable housing” (section 7.1.2 subsection 3).
- In most workshops, participants felt the “150 unit” rule should be changed, as it represented a loophole which could be used to thwart the intent of the affordability provision of the Official Plan (i.e. section 7.1.2 subsection 3, read in conjunction with section 7.1.1. subsection 2). Most workshop participants felt 25% of all developments should be affordable, irrespective of the size of the development (i.e. for developments under 150 new housing units and under 4 hectares). One workshop suggested the Official Plan could set out a "sliding scale of affordable housing targets" for developments under 150 units to ensure a mix of housing in all developments. One other workshop suggested setting a target lower than 25% (10% was suggested as an example), but making this target more meaningful by re-defining “affordable” to target lower income residents (as above).
- In several workshops participants felt section 7.1.2 subsection 3 should be re-written to remove the phrase "recognizing that the 25% requirement may not be appropriate for each and every development", as this phrase creates a major loophole in the intended policy.
- Instead, this section 7.1.2. subsection 3 could set specific alternate actions which could be substituted for the 25% rule such as cash in lieu of creating the 25% affordable housing.

- Affordability targets within the Plan should clarify targets for market housing (which would meet the definition of “affordable” in the current market but might become unaffordable over time) and targets for non-market housing (which would remain permanently affordable).

Recommendation #3 Establish a "Non-Market Housing First" Policy

Many participants congratulated the City on the “Housing First” surplus land policy (section 7.1.3. subsection 2), and encouraged the following improvement to this policy:

- Modify the “Housing First” surplus land policy to make such lands available (exclusively or at least through right of first refusal) for non-market housing (co-operative housing or non-profit housing, including but not limited to rent-geared to income housing). This would not exclude the possibility of public/private partnerships in the development of such land, but would ensure that the housing created would remain permanently affordable.⁴

Recommendation #4 Develop a Permissive Zoning By-law Enabling Affordable Housing

In several workshops participants noted their agreement with the intentions set out in the Official Plan to encourage a mix of housing in all neighbourhoods, to encourage in-fill and intensification, to provide flexible zoning with respect to development standards on a site-area specific basis, and to support the provision of community services throughout the city. In particular, there was unanimous support for the draft Official Plan policy of permitting additional residential living space in existing houses as well as strong support for the policy of permitting garden suites. In several workshops, improvements were identified which could be made to the draft Official Plan which would enhance the ability to locate small scale affordable or special needs housing in neighbourhoods across the City. The following recommendations were made:

- Establish a system based on less specific and more permissive zoning, specifically, permitting many uses in a given zone, including affordable housing. This would reduce the requirement to apply for minor variances, which causes problems and mitigates against achieving the intent of the OP
- Include in the Official Plan a policy to encourage easy conversion of larger homes to singles and establish zoning bylaws which are consistent
- Permit re-zoning of non-housing lands (e.g. school lands) for housing
- One workshop suggested creating a policy whereby large landlords who put up a large development or building must participate in the rent supplement program as part of the site plan, if rent supplements are available. (Participants recognized that the rent supplement program is Provincial, and might not be available.)
- Participants in one workshop debated whether (subsidized) scattered units are a positive or negative strategy. The workshop did not reach consensus on this issue but all agreed there should be housing for a mix of incomes in most neighbourhoods.

⁴ Participants also pointed out that such a policy could only be effective, if there was in place an associated commitment to work with the non-profit and co-operative housing sector to have the means to develop such land – possibly through the Human Services Plan or through the Municipal Housing Facilities By-law.

Recommendation #5 Creation of New Affordable Stock

In all workshops participants were concerned that the supply of affordable housing is inadequate. Participants made recommendations for City intervention which they felt would lead to the creation of more affordable housing. Some of these suggestions identified the need for policies under the Human Services Plan, Action Ottawa, or the Community Action Plan on Homelessness to complement the Official Plan policies.

- Continue the "housing first" policy
- Be creative in encouraging affordable ownership (including condominiums) through the Official Plan and other policy tools of the City
- Find ways to create more affordable housing which is also accessible, transitional, and supportive
- Establish policies intended to ensure that affordable housing is properly maintained
- Develop sources of cash for affordable housing development, specifically:
 - Municipal funding for creating affordable housing
 - Housing reserve funds
 - Municipal bonds to fund housing
 - Incentives for the private sector (see below)

Recommendation #6 Incentives to the Private Sector to Create Affordable Housing

All but one of the workshops identified the need for incentives to the private sector to encourage the sector to develop affordable housing. These incentives should also be available to non-profit organizations interested in developing affordable housing (e.g. faith communities, co-operative housing, private non-profit housing corporations). Participants recognized that several of the suggestions were already included in policy directions of the City (e.g. Municipal Facilities By-law). The recommendations were:

- Support the development of public/private partnerships. Several participants were concerned about preserving the affordability of housing over the long term, and felt such partnerships were appropriate for the development of affordable housing but not for the ownership (i.e. create only non-market housing through such partnerships)
- Permit cash in lieu of affordable development
- The City contribute to payments up front to develop affordable housing (e.g. of principal on mortgage);
- Reduce or eliminate development charges for affordable housing;
- Permit land leases as long as the housing remains affordable;
- Provide incentives for the building of smaller, easier-to-buy homes;
- Provide more information to developers & investors regarding the benefits to them of investing in affordable housing.

Some participants also recommended specific penalties for development which did not increase the availability of affordable housing, specifically a penalty charge if existing housing is not preserved. There was a difference of opinion on additional levies to provide funds for affordable housing. Some felt there should be levies on high end development. Others felt there are already too many fees and such a levy would be counter-productive.

b) Implementing Zoning Which Is More Inclusive and Flexible

In all four workshops participants supported the principle of consistent multi-use zoning across the City which would permit and support the creation of mixed-use communities by recognizing a range of uses within a zoning designation. Many identified that a more "performance based" by-law framework, with fewer designations and broader definitions of use could reduce some of the so-called NIMBY ("not in my back yard") resistance to implementing the vision set out in the current Official Plan. In particular, if the need for minor variances is reduced there are fewer "red flags" to serve as a flash point.

Participants made the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1 Create Fewer Zoning Designations & Permit a Variety of Uses

- Establish fewer zoning designations, more flexibility in the zoning, and a very broad definition of uses in residential zones (including permitting group homes, shelters, and other special needs uses);
- link urban form with zoning and performance based by-laws (less focus on use, more focus on shape)

Recommendation #2 Secondary Suites As of Right

Participants in all workshops supported the direction in the draft Official Plan to permit secondary suites as of right. Some recommended modifying the granny suite provisions of the draft Official Plan to remove the requirement that the unit be used by a family member. Some were concerned that granny suites are permitted only as a temporary use. Participants were agreed that evidence from other jurisdictions confirms secondary suites do not lead to the range of problems sometimes raised in the context of "NIMBY" resistance to secondary suites (parking problems, etc.).

One workshop identified that while secondary suites as of right are a positive form of intensification, more intensive increases to density should not be permitted as of right. As well, a few participants were concerned about safety and security in neighbourhoods and suggested a need for more information to determine if some of these problems are related to very high levels of density in some communities (specifically, concentrated highrise development).

Recommendation #3 Distinct Provisions for the Rural Areas

Participants in one workshop identified the need for the Official Plan to establish special requirements for rural areas which will protect the nature of rural communities but permit development of low cost housing as well. The following recommendations were made:

- Permit severance of lots from rural properties.
- Allow low density and affordable housing on non-arable land.

Recommendation #4 Implementing the Vision of Mixed Use Communities

A recurring theme in the workshops and the presentations was that the vision set out in the draft Official Plan can only be achieved if the zoning by-laws which are developed are consistent with the vision. Participants in one workshop made the following recommendations to ensure the zoning by-law is consistent with the Official Plan:

- The City needs to ensure adequate staffing at the departmental level to enable a careful re-writing of the by-laws consistent with the Official Plan
- Staff should consult with groups like Canadian Housing Renewal Association and Canadian Institute of Planners on best practices
- Implement a good communications strategy to inform the community of the vision and how the by-laws relate to that vision

Participants in the workshop were divided on two additional recommendations, with the concern being how to balance the benefits of public consultation against cost and delay implications. The two recommendations which were not unanimous were:

- Establish a Mayor's Task Force on the development of the by-laws to brainstorm possibilities (e.g. similar to the "Better Way Task Force") and have public consultation on the draft by-laws
- Place a requirement in the Official Plan for public consultation when changing the zoning by-law.

c) Stronger Supports to Create Housing For Special Needs

Many participants were very concerned about the severe shortage of housing for people with special needs. In two workshops, recommendations were made with respect to this issue, specifically:

- Increase the availability of affordable housing which is accessible for people with disabilities including increased accessibility of existing affordable housing (consistent with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Increase the availability of transitional housing including housing for people leaving abuse and housing similar to the Options Bytown model (more support to move from transitional to permanent housing was also encouraged)
- Create an environment which will lead to broader supports across diverse neighbourhoods for homeless people and ex-psychiatric patients, to reduce the concentration in specific neighbourhoods of people facing these challenges
- Some participants suggested setting a target for supportive housing of 1 - 5% of new housing created

d) Promoting the Vision

Participants in two workshops identified the need for Ottawans to "buy into" the vision put forward in the Official Plan. It was noted that issues like transportation, density, and availability of services are all linked, and the proposed mixed use development can only work if it is integrated with transportation strategies (public transit and roads) and services. Workshop participants suggested there was a need for an integrated strategy to address the housing situation, along the lines of postwar Canada where support was mobilized to build housing for veterans from the war. Participants acknowledged there is currently not the same level on intergovernmental co-operation (nor funding programs). Nonetheless, participants identified that the City could advance on its' own integrated housing plan. The draft Official Plan in conjunction with other policy initiatives (City Facilities By-law, Human Services Plan, Action Ottawa, and Community Action Plan on Homelessness) were considered a good start which could make a difference. The following recommendations were made with respect to promoting the vision in the Official Plan:

- The City undertake a strong communications strategy to promote the Official Plan's vision (especially the housing vision) in the context of the broader urban fabric (in relation to transportation, services, etc.).
- The City undertake public education to encourage new visions of community, to influence consumer behaviour, and to "sell the vision" in the Official Plan (including intensification)
- Integrate the Official Plan with the various policy documents (in particular, the Human Services Plan was identified), by developing "placemarkers" in the Official Plan, i.e. policy statements that explicitly refer to the related policy documents and make the connection. The example given was a policy statement in the Official Plan that excess city land would be set aside for non-market housing use.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Ottawa Social Housing Network

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. The New Supply Committee of the Ottawa Social Housing Network has already put forward to the City recommendations which would improve the Official Plan. I will speak about some general issues.

We have to take a holistic view of the Official Plan and the planning process. We have to see all the sections together: transportation, liveable communities, etc. The housing part is just one part of smart growth and sustainable development. We have to look at the Official Plan in that way. There is no point in having affordable housing in the suburbs if there is no transportation or recreation.

There are a lot of good recommendations which we support. Recommendations that impact on the private sector's role in providing housing are weak and we have made recommendations to toughen them up. We have noticed a real change towards housing at the City and towards smart growth. Real power lies with the politicians and there are strong forces behind them to maintain the status quo. Last year we had the Smart Growth Summit with good recommendations. But in the draft City budget that came out last spring we saw a lot of money for roads and infrastructure but not a lot for social infrastructure.

The sector has a unique opportunity to influence the City's housing and related policies for years to come. Politicians need to hear from a broad range of community groups that housing and related issues should have top priority. It's up to us to ensure that the critical need for affordable housing and other sustainable policies are put at the top of the agenda.

Appendix 2 Disabled and Proud

Disabled and Proud represents about 1,100 members. I will talk about the impact on the disabled community. As we look forward to the year 2020 we have a vision in mind to see housing appropriate for the Disabled community. To achieve this vision the City of Ottawa has to start working now to identify the housing situation and take steps to reach this goal.

The first step is to identify the areas that need looking into and what the disabled community needs. The needs of the disabled community are affordable and accessible accommodation. Most people with a disability are on some kind of income assistance. Most in our community need subsidized or affordable rents. All of us need accessible and visitable accommodations.

The City has heard from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and from Disabled and Proud on the issue of visitability. We have shown that all can use a ramp, but not all can use stairs. Therefore we have asked that all new construction take this into account when submitting new plans. Picture yourself in a building where a person in a wheelchair or someone who uses a walker cannot access the doorbell or enter the building by the front door. Many places now have an accessible entrance that can only be used for the tenant, who must have a key. What about their friends? By not having access to the front door, the building is saying, "I'm sorry! But those in wheelchairs and who use walkers are not welcome!"

As our population ages, which is shown is a reality, many more of the cities residents are going to need accessibility. The numbers show that this number will be in excess of 25%. Over 1 in 4 will need accessible entrances.

Waiting lists are at an all time high, waiting for affordable accommodations here in Ottawa. With current plans in place for addressing this issue, we will not reduce this number but in fact it will increase. 400,000 more people are projected to call Ottawa home by 2020. If statistics are right 100,000 more people will need affordable accommodations, this translates to at least an additional 50,000 affordable homes. Projected new projects of affordable homes are well below this number. If we wish to make an impact on those waiting for these homes, we have to start working now to achieve this objective. I would like to inform you of a deplorable situation that is now at hand . A woman, 81 years old, with a disability has to wait more than 2 years to get a place with no stairs.

What we are asking for is to achieve results for 2020 and not just make plans now to start working on this disaster then. Please consider making Ottawa an affordable and accessible place to live by 2020. Thank you.

Appendix 3 Jackson Brown Real Estate Partnership

I'm Joanne Jackson, a working realtor and a development consultant with Jackson-Brown Associates. My presentation will go from the general to the specific. My main point is: "The devil is in the details." We need a good Official Plan, but there are implications all the way down through the zoning requirements - setbacks etc. and all the things that are involved in planning.

Over the past two years, it has been my privilege to work with three organizations trying to build more housing for people at risk of homelessness, the first House of Hope, looking in two progressive attempts to renovate larger homes into bachelors and one bedroom units to provide second stage housing for ex-convicts and secondly two groups seeking to build shelters for abused women and their children.

Two different kinds of searches, one for houses to renovate, one for suitable land to develop. Two different kinds of road blocks - oppressive requirements in the zoning that makes doing an intensive infill project a Chinese puzzle - lack of inclusive zoning to allow a number of uses "as of right". Because of these roadblocks, it has been very difficult for these groups to proceed and deliver these services.

Infill #1. I did a search. It should have been a 2 minute search on the MLS, but it took 7 hours because only 1 site could fit all the requirements with regards to zoning, etc. We could only locate it downtown because of the lack of appropriate zoning outside the core. Then we needed three minor variances, so it didn't work.

For Infill #2, we thought we had learned from infill # 1, and we went looking in the suburbs. We got stopped dead at the old city boundaries because of the lack of inclusive zoning. When we found a duplex in the right zone it needed 7 minor variances. We couldn't win.

Whole areas of the city are tied up by developers whose site plans only envision the "usual suspects" for other uses of the land, churches, retail plazas, apartments, old age homes. Their plans don't include the people we are concerned about. We went looking for odd parcels, one-of parcels and leftovers, knowing that if we found something there was no "as of right" ability to locate in a residential zone. There was always the rezoning hanging over our head as well as separation distances (if we were considered institutional). One can have an old age home there, but not a shelter. What is the structural difference? We couldn't get around these barriers.

We need to look at the things that are oppressive in zoning and setbacks and have more "as of right" ability to go into the suburbs etc. We need zoning there that reflects more uses. We are going to have a large group of large homes turning over in the next little while. We want to be able to take advantage of that opportunity.

Appendix 4 Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa

The Elizabeth Fry Society has been operating since 1950. Our primary purpose is to provide services and supports to women, primarily young women, who are at risk or in conflict with the law. For years we maintained an open custody facility for women and a halfway house for women serving their sentences in the community.

We have a couple of positive comments on the Official Plan. Elizabeth Fry recently, through some of the SCPI money has very recently opened its' long term transitional support housing (apartment 301). It is a communal space for 8 women, 2 of them women with children.

I wanted to comment on something not so positive. It has been our experience that we all recognize a need for a sustainable plan to create adequate housing for residents, but not much mention is made of transitional housing. And those of us in this kind of field feel strongly that there is a need for bridging the gap between the institution and secure permanent housing in a safe community for women at risk. Elizabeth Fry would certainly like to see a process by which there is mention of the ability to create transitional housing and the need to provide transitional support for individuals needing this kind of support. There is also a need for a range of zoning.

Appendix 5 Co-operative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario

Introduction- General Comments

- 57 housing co-operatives in Ottawa
- CHASEO is a co-op of co-operatives with almost 40 of the local co-ops as members
- Sound Advice, whose development consultants have decades of experience in the development of housing co-operatives, is also a member
- We also participate in the Ottawa Social Housing Network and support the ideas they will be presenting

The Draft Official Plan

We have one simple request: We request that there be explicit reference to “co-operative housing” in this section. We recognize that co-operative housing is a form of “non-profit housing” but there are some significant differences in the self-management element of co-operative housing. One way to include the term would be to expand “non-profit” to “co-operative and other non-profit housing” the first time the word “non-profit” appears. Or a new line could be added immediately after “non-profit” first appears: “Non-profit housing includes co-operative and other forms of non-profit housing”.

We have two major concerns:

- The 25% affordability requirement should be strengthened
- Housing affordability should be preserved permanently for new affordable housing created through the 25% requirement and other measures

These two concerns are spelled out in more detail after some general comments are noted below

We support the general approach of the draft plan – encouraging compact development, mixed uses to reduce transportation and environmental costs and to encourage more liveable, walkable communities. These approaches should lead to more affordable housing and transportation.

We also support various specific elements of the Housing Section of the Plan, including:

- The requirement that a mix of housing types be used
- A Housing First policy for use of city owned land
- Encouragement of non-profit housing
- And establishing a minimum 25% affordability requirement for new housing (7.1.2)
 - QUESTION: 7.1.2 - establishing “affordable housing targets for annual residential construction...based on the income mix” implies that you envision targets higher than 25% in some years or localized targets – which is it?

- Housing price and income are the 2 sides of the coin that influence affordability – basing affordability targets on the income mix and affordable housing supply at different prices would make sense.

STRENGTHENING THE 25% AFFORDABILITY REQUIREMENT:

We support the recommendations of the OSHN (Ottawa Social Housing Network), including:

- The 25% affordability requirement should be strengthened by applying it to smaller proposals, including to all projects requiring subdivision approval as suggested by OSHN
- We are concerned about the statement that “the 25% requirement may not be appropriate for each and every development” – this seems to mean that even major developments may not be required to meet this goal, which would weaken its impact to virtually nothing. If some are expected to meet the goal and others are not, enforcement will become difficult.
- One way to resolve this would be to allow for in lieu fees as rare exceptions, and set at a level to have the same economic impact and the same impact on affordable housing supply as if the housing units were actually provided. Such an in-lieu fee could also be used for projects with less than 4 units – and even for single lots that are over a specified value.

PRESERVING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PERMANENTLY FOR NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING CREATED THROUGH THE 25% REQUIREMENT AND OTHER MEASURES

- There is little value in creating a “leaky bucket” of affordable housing by expending scarce resources to create affordability and then letting it leak out of the affordable housing supply by going to market prices soon after – we’ll never get ahead
- The co-op housing sector spent considerable effort tackling this question and successfully changed the Ontario Co-op Corporations Act to ensure that housing co-ops will retain their affordable status permanently. In some parts of the country land trusts were created to preserve affordability.
- One lesson we learned in the co-op sector is that it is easier to build in permanent affordability from the start than to add it on later
 - 7.1.5 discusses ways of preserving the housing stock; there also need to be ways of preserving the affordability required of 25% of new housing. The current requirement does not speak to the long term – after the housing is first created.
 - In the case of affordable home ownership and affordable private rental housing, what’s required for long term affordability is a pricing formula, a legal mechanism to contractually require its use and an administrative structure to enforce the use of the pricing formula
 - For non-profit and co-op housing, what is needed is restrictions on resale and other potential sources of profiteering

- Add a new subsection: 7.1.4 Preserve Housing Affordability
 - The goal of preserving affordability of the affordable housing created under the Official Plan should be explicitly stated
 - The mechanisms that will be used should be listed

Methods could include

- Use of non-profit and co-op housing with a commitment to long term affordability
- The City leasing the land it provides to the project
 - *Both of these mechanisms are included in the draft Official Plan*
- The City could require title to land used for the 25% affordability requirement be transferred to the City if it will not be protected through non-profit development and then lease it to the developer
 - The City could invest in land banking – the Government of NS did this successfully for many years – paying for its operations by re-selling the land. The difference is that the City could lease instead of selling the land, to preserve affordability.
 - The City could create an arm’s length Land Trust to hold the land and manage the leases
- Other potential mechanisms may include deed-restricted, owner-occupied houses; Community Land Trusts, limited-equity condominiums, and multiple variations of each.
- This would require changes under
 - 7.1.2 Achieve Greater Affordability – “these lands could be retained by the developer and developed as affordable housing’. This would change to “these lands could be transferred to the city, leased by the developer and developed as affordable housing”.
 - 7.1.3 Promote Affordable Housing - #3, #6 – joint ventures and assistance – would be subject to a permanent affordability provision

Conclusion

Public investment in housing cannot possibly be of sufficient magnitude to turn Ottawa’s housing affordability and supply crisis around in one or two or five years. However, the cumulative impact can be substantial if public investments are made with permanent affordability as a goal. Permanent affordability is the most fiscally prudent policy for investing Ottawa’s affordable housing dollars, regulatory concessions and affordability requirements in the years ahead.

Like others in the non-profit sector, co-operative housing advocates have a strong interest in developing new projects that serve a community need and that create self-managed communities that empower their residents. It is vital to us and to the broader community that the official plan facilitates the process of creating affordable housing and we look forward to working with you on this goal.

Appendix 6 Interval House of Ottawa-Carleton

Interval House is a 20 bed temporary emergency shelter for women and their children who are fleeing abuse from their partner. Interval House has been in existence since 1976. As you may know the majority of the abuse is perpetuated by males towards females and children

Women are staying at Interval House between ten to twelve weeks. This is on the increase and we feel that it is directly connected to the lack of further safe, affordable housing being built in this region. There have been changes in the housing policies that have direct impact on women obtaining priority status under the "abuse" category. As well many women and children in Ottawa live in poverty and cannot afford market rent.

These recent changes have increased the barriers for which women who have fled their homes, to an independent life only to have the abuser re-enter their lives after successfully locating the woman and continuing on the abuse that made them leave to begin with. These women will not qualify for the "Special Priority Household Category" (see Attachment A) under the new Social Housing Reform Act in the summer of 2002 instituted by the City of Ottawa Housing Managers. Even if a police report has been filed, these women still would not qualify. The City's new policy is, if a woman is abused by an ex-abuser recently and they had not lived together for three months she does not qualify for Special Priority Housing. Even though he has access to her, has threatened her, and she has had to move from where she was.

This is disconcerting in many ways. First of all let us take the results of the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Gillian Hadley, who was murdered June 2002. The Jury to this inquest has made several recommendations including 23 - 30 (see Attachment B), which specifically relates to Housing. You should note that Gillian Hadley was not living with her abuser at the time of her death and in fact a woman's risk for safety is high from the moment she leaves the abuser to 18 months later. Gillian Hadley was on a waiting list of the "abuse priority category" but as the months passed the Housing Authorities changed her priority to one level down even though Ralph Hadley, her abuser had access to her. He had been in conflict with the police consistently breaching his restraining order regarding no communication/contact with Gillian. Just as consistently he was being re-released by the courts.

The second concern is that the City of Ottawa Housing Managers are ignoring the Ministry of Ontario regulations that were to stay in place when they gave the municipality charge of Social Housing. In Part IV under Special Priority Household Category ("abused priority category") they are ignoring:

3(a), (b), (c)

9

10

12

Pertaining to number 13 of the Special Priority Household Category, in Appendix A #26 where it states "...whether the 90 days from separation" eligibility requirement for the Special Priority Housing Category" (abuse priority category) should be amended or abolished.

The third concern is that statistically across Canada violence against women by their male partner either stayed the same or decreased in numbers except in Ontario where it rose 52 percent. We believe that that is due to the 278 recommendations that were made in two Coroner's inquests on the deaths of two women by the hand of each of their abuser was not implemented in the way to keep women safe. In fact, very few of the recommendations have been implemented at all.

My final concern is the fact that women who are going to look at Housing units set up by the Registry have to go in competition with two other women. We know about the racism that is in our society and if women of colour, immigrant women and aboriginal women are competing against white women for this unit, they will be less likely to secure that unit.

I wish to thank you for the time you have given me and I hope that you take Interval House's concerns seriously.

Appendix 7 Ottawa Council of Women

The Council of Women at local, provincial and national levels has long supported the need for more affordable housing, especially for low-income households, special needs groups, the abused, and the homeless. We see it as essential to a liveable, workable city with strong, cohesive communities. We know such housing is not easy to locate as over the years we have appeared before various OMB and city hearings on the location of non-profit housing, shelters and supportive housing.

Therefore, we strongly endorse the many supports which the City Plan gives to help meet the crisis in affordable rentals and ownership and various forms of special needs housing. NIMBY is alive and well, and much of what is in this plan might reduce such challenges.

We are pleased that you have included secondary and garden suites as permitted in all areas. We know that there has been strong opposition in the past to secondary and garden-suites. This seemed out of proportion to the impact on the neighbourhood. There are many secondary units in the city, some in areas currently illegal. These are fulfilling an important function for students and others. While obtaining her MA, my own daughter and son-in-law lived in a basement secondary suite in a well-to-do Vancouver single family neighbourhood. That area had many secondary suites with no real concerns.

However, in setting out Plan details and by-laws, we consider it will be necessary to allow presently illegal secondary units a considerable time to meet any standards established for such units and to provide for some assistance in meeting new standards.

The OCW supports:

- 4) community sensitive infill. Here it is important that by-laws look at issues of shadowing and cutting off sunlight exposure to neighbouring residents
- 5) Increased housing density which makes urban transit more viable, lessens air pollution and may also increase affordability. However we do not want 'canyon streets' of commercial buildings with little light and bitter winds.
- 6) Mixed use neighbourhoods for affordability, reduced car use, and cohesiveness

While in general we find the Preliminary Plan excellent on housing we will have to await the development of By-laws and details to see whether this good intent is fulfilled. However, I note that at your previous session, a question was raised about 7.1.2.3. The issue was on the phrase 'where required'. However, I also have real trouble with the idea that a '25% provision for every development may not be appropriate'. It does seem odd that any development could not reserve 25% of land for affordable ownership for up to the 60th income percentile. Perhaps the rental housing component for up to the 30th percentile may not be always appropriate, but I question that. I really like to see this paragraph re-examined and have concerns about the final wording. As it is, it seems weak and tentative. It has too many loopholes and I doubt its effectiveness in insuring the construction of affordable housing.

Appendix 8 Ottawa East Faith Group

We are members of three churches in Ottawa East (Canadian Martyrs, Church of the Ascension and Wesley United) who came together in early September to form a small faith-based group to study and take action on the pressing need for affordable housing in Ottawa, with a particular focus on Ottawa East. Our group was formed in response to an invitation to our churches to become involved in a larger, city-wide initiative: the Multifaith Housing Initiative.

We would like to better understand the affordable housing situation in this city. We are now seeking an indication of the degree of awareness, resources and support for action within our parishes.

We agree with the Council for the City of Ottawa that there is a need for a responsive housing market that has the flexibility to adequately meet housing needs as they change over time. The provision of affordable housing is an element of this response that urgently requires attention.

We strongly support the eight affordable housing objectives in the Draft Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

For the record these objectives are:

1. Ensure an adequate supply of zoned and for a full range of housing types
2. Set affordability targets
3. Establish incentives to promote and stimulate affordable development
4. Ensure that other city services provide appropriate supports and facilitate the full integration of people with special needs across the community
5. Accelerate the approval process for social housing projects
6. Permit secondary suites to be installed
7. Continue to regulate the conversion of rental properties to condominiums
8. Require compensation in the form of replacement units for demolished or converted units.

The secondary suites objective may be of particular relevance to our neighbourhood which has many seniors with homes larger than their needs and who would benefit as well from some extra income.

Appendix 9 Health and Social Services Advisory Committee

We are generally pleased with the comments re: the vision for housing as set out in the Draft Official Plan. We are pleased that the City has adopted an "Affordable Housing Strategy". We endorse the concept of

- liveable and complete communities
- a responsive housing market that includes flexible zoning and encourages *"inclusive communities" and neighbourhoods*
- the "housing first" policy for surplus city owned lands
- and the priority for processing of applications by non-profit housing corporations.

However, whether or not the vision is successful will depend very much on the implementation of the OP through such measures as zoning bylaws and other development control processes and housing programs. There must be more flexibility and more inclusiveness than is currently proposed and, certainly, more than the "old" city of Ottawa had. Less restrictive zoning and fewer zones would both eliminate the continuous revisiting of areas with spot rezoning, lengthy, expensive and often contentious appeals, and minor variances, and encourage more integrated uses for land.

Following are some specific areas that we believe should be reviewed.

1. Section 7.1 - Housing Policies

- 1) There is some *confusion between the terms "affordable" and "social" housing*. There is a difference. Every community should have "affordable" housing, that is housing that people can afford to buy or rent based on their incomes. "Social" housing, on the other hand refers to the need for housing by people who face challenges brought on by economic, physical, emotional or mental circumstances and require financial and social supports from the community. The 30% rule cannot be used to define "social" housing. Therefore, in places where "affordable" is used, sometimes "social" would be more appropriate. An example is in the second point under 7.1.3 where it states that land under the "Housing First" surplus land policy should be used for "affordable" housing. That land should be put aside for "social" housing. Or at least a specific percentage of it needs to be identified specifically for "social" vs. "affordable" housing.

Similarly, there must be clarification both of the type (affordable vs. social) and also of the percentage of developments that will be required to be "affordable" housing. On page 74 (7.1.2) #2 suggest that 25% of ALL housing built each year will be "affordable" But on page 75 #3 indicates that it will be 25% of all MAJOR developments. This should be clarified.

We believe that the definition of "affordable" at 60% income percentile is too high and unrealistic.

- 2) The use of the term *"special needs"* must also be clarified. The term "Special Needs Housing" is used on page 81 in a heading that goes on to apply to "people who need

support and/or supervision" and specifically refers to group homes. On page 76(7.1.4) it refers to people with special needs who can "live independently". Do we want to use "supportive" in the first instance?

- 3) We would like the City to consider some innovative ways to support affordable and social housing. One could be to require that developers have the option of "cash-in-lieu" of lands set aside in subdivisions, much like we currently do with parkland. Another idea is to institute a levy on all units in a subdivision which exceed the "affordable range". These monies would then be used by the City to facilitate a permanent supply of assisted or social housing
- 4) We cannot wait for "major developments" of more than 4 hectares or 150 units before we require that a certain percentage must include a minimum percentage of affordable housing. We should require that *any* development requiring subdivision approval and *also any* multiple unit development exceeding 6 units include 25% affordable and social housing.
- 5) On page 75 #3 (7.1.3) we would like to see the last line replaced by wording such as *"These lands could be retained by the developer and developed as housing which is affordable to a mix of incomes up to the 40% income percentile or made available for sale to non-profit housing providers at a cost which facilitates the development of the lands for affordable housing"*.
- 6) Rural areas cannot be expected to provide the same numbers as urban areas. 25% of all housing may be impractical for rural areas. We cannot paint all communities with the same brush. We encourage consultation with the rural community to come up with realistic goals for their communities.

2. 3.0 - Building Liveable Communities

- 1) The current bylaws *for parking* are too restrictive for rental housing and developments such as those maintained by affordable/social housing organizations which tend to locate near bus routes and encourage alternate forms of transportation.

3. 8.0 - Community Designations

- 1) The new OP should allow for "additional residential living space in existing houses" without the need for a minor variance (8.1.2)

We have not completed our analysis of the OP and will be offering further comments after another public consultation on November 2 and also after we have had an opportunity to go over both the recommendations of the New Housing Supply sub-committee of the Social Housing Providers Network and the City's own backgrounder on housing.

Appendix 10 Ottawa Region Landlords Association

The Ottawa Region Landlords Association is not a lobby group. But as editor of the publication we produce - ORLA Newsmagazine - I would like to create awareness of issues important to landlords.

- The shelter allowance for tenants on social assistance is woefully inadequate. It should reflect the reality of CMHC average rents in the Ottawa area. Keep in mind that earning tenants in Ottawa make the best incomes in Ontario. That is who the low income tenants have to compete with. Reduced rents for low income tenants only translates into a windfall for all average earning tenants.
- The City of Ottawa has to look "outside the box" for subsidies for these tenants now that the Ministry of Housing is looking to pass the responsibilities to municipalities
- Similarly, increases in tax assessments should reflect the sudden increases in gas, electricity and water which residential landlords have to face.
- Landlords who want to build additions to units outside the small inner city exemption territory have to pay whopping fees, uphold stringent code requirements - it is just about impossible to "build on".
- Incentives to permit secondary suites and to promote and stimulate affordable development are a good idea. But restricting such units to "affordable" is not following the market logic which seems to be developing in Ottawa. A lot of well-off people in Ottawa want to be tenants. If they move out of an affordable unit to live in a luxury rental unit, what is the problem? Is it not expected that the market will regulate the total number of units if suddenly there is a glut of "luxury" units and generally bring down rent? Landlords think all potential builders of rental units in all areas of Ottawa should be encouraged by the City of Ottawa Official Plan.

Thank you for listening.