

Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital 2020 Annual Report

Introduction

The Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital continues to be active in its work to protect and preserve greenspace and shape and influence federal, provincial and municipal policy and plans that have an effect on greenspace, while continuing to maintain itself and develop as an effective advocacy organization.

Our action starts with monitoring threats and developments to greenspace in Ottawa-Gatineau and also keeping abreast of new or revised policy or plans that touch on local greenspace. We are assisted in this by the eyes and ears of our members, of our list subscribers and of community members at large, to whom we are indebted for their care and concern for greenspace. We also get a steady stream of information through subscriptions to email alerts from a wide array of sources.

We educate ourselves and others regarding the issues that arise from this monitoring so that we can better focus our advocacy. We do this through the preparation of briefs and submissions, appearances at committee and council meetings and participation in public consultations. We may also participate in events such as demonstrations and marches, or launch campaigns to influence public opinion and sway decision makers. We may go as far as taking cases to appeal and adjudication bodies for review.

This annual report is meant to provide something of a report card on our action over the period of May 2019 to April 2020. What did we do in terms of protecting and preserving greenspace and how successful was it? It will be presented under the headings of threats to greenspace that were faced during the year, policy and plans that we shaped or influenced, and our own governance as an organization.

Executive Summary

The major threats to greenspace that the Greenspace Alliance concerned itself with this year included protection for the Goulbourn Provincially Significant Wetlands, development in the Jock River floodplain, massive tree clearing for LRT Phase 2 and a court battle to preserve Kanata Golf and Country Club greenspace.

On the policy front, most of our energy was devoted to engaging with the City of Ottawa on the development of its new Official Plan, advocating for greenspace protection and preservation as part of its more general response to climate change. The new Tree Conservation By-Law was also a focus of our attention.

On both these fronts, a major achievement was expanding the network of organizations with which we traditionally work to include not only many more local environmental organizations but also, for the first time in our history and perhaps in the history of Ottawa's civil society, social equity and inclusion seeking organizations such as women's groups, indigenous organizations, housing and homelessness advocates, and groups representing persons with disabilities, for whom access to greenspace and environmental issues are equally, if not more, important, and take on different forms and meanings.

Table of Contents

1. THREATS TO GREENSPACE	3
<i>a. Rural greenspace</i>	3
<i>i. Goulbourn Provincially Significant Wetland</i>	3
<i>ii. Hobbs Drain Court Decision</i>	3
<i>iii. Chalk River nuclear waste dump</i>	3
<i>b. Major urban greenspace</i>	4
<i>i. Central Experimental Farm</i>	4
<i>ii. Jock River floodplain and other greenspace in Barrhaven</i>	4
<i>iii. Tree clearing for LRT Phase 2</i>	5
<i>c. Other greenspace</i>	5
<i>i. 10 Oblates Avenue</i>	5
<i>ii. Kanata Golf and Country Club</i>	6
2. POLICY	7
a. City Hall	7
1. <i>Ottawa’s New Official Plan</i>	7
i. <i>The Peoples’ Official Plan</i>	7
ii. <i>GOHBA/Stakeholders group</i>	12
iii. <i>The Equity and Inclusion Ambassadors Group</i>	13
2. <i>Tree Conservation By-law</i>	13
3. <i>OPA150/180 Appeals</i>	13
4. <i>City Climate Change Plan</i>	14
5. <i>Development Charges Working Group</i>	14
3. GOVERNANCE	14

1. THREATS TO GREENSPACE

a. Rural greenspace

i. Goulbourn Provincially Significant Wetland

After many years of studies, reviews and legal wrangling, the recommendation to protect the Goulbourn wetland complex finally made it to the City of Ottawa Council's agenda in February 2020, in the form of a report from the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. It contained a recommendation to Council to reject staff recommendations regarding an Official Plan amendment and Zoning Bylaw amendment to protect the entirety of the Goulbourn PSW as delineated by the OMNRF in 2019 and to substitute instead its own recommendation to protect only that part which is covered by the Flewellyn Special Study Area (the southern half of the complex). The only rationale provided was that there was "an interest" to do so.

The Greenspace Alliance, which has been monitoring and intervening on this issue for years, wrote a letter to the mayor, the Chair of ARAC and the local Councillor calling on them to designate in the Official Plan the entirety of the GSW, as delineated by the OMNRF, and not just the portion covered by the FSSA. Other local activists did likewise, but to no avail. Council approved the ARAC recommendation and limited the significant wetland designation in the Official Plan to the FSSA area. It leaves the remaining wetlands in a state of limbo from a planning perspective. The RVCA has confirmed that it will apply its protection to the entire PSW as delineated in 2019 by the OMNRF so, on the ground, no development, site alteration or vegetation removal will be permitted despite the City's exclusion of part of the PSW in the OP designation for wetlands. It was basically an empty gesture for purely political purposes.

As expected, appeals have been received from landowners whose lands are part of the now recognized Goulbourn PSW in the Official Plan. So this saga is not yet over, although the bulk of the lower complex seems well and truly protected, while the upper part is effectively under the protection of the Conservation Authority.

ii. Hobbs Drain Court Decision

In a related matter, a Provincial court decision was given against extending Hobbs Drain into the Goulbourn Provincially Significant Wetland, as was requested by a local landowner. This was another win for the GPSW. There was some question regarding the appropriateness of the City even initiating and incurring costs for the study requested by landowner as the outcome was a foregone conclusion, as determined in advance by the responsible Conservation Authority (RVCA). The GA made a submission to Council to this effect.

iii. Chalk River nuclear waste dump

The GA has for a few years now been supporting efforts of local groups in the upper Ottawa Valley and other environmental groups. This year, the GA supported a request from the Concerned Citizens of

Renfrew County and Area and the Old Fort William Cottagers' Association to help them pay for two full page ads in The Hill Times against the current plans for storing nuclear waste from the decommissioned Chalk River site in an above ground landfill near wetlands that drain into the nearby Ottawa River. Both seemed to get noticed by Hill politicians and generated good coverage.

b. Major urban greenspace

i. Central Experimental Farm

The GA has remained engaged in the project to construct a new campus of the Ottawa Hospital on a site bordering the Central Experimental Farm. Our continuing engagement in this project is to protect against any incursion into or degradation of the CEF greenspace and to promote greenspace retention and incorporation in the new hospital complex. Paul Johanis, the current Chair of the GA, is co-chair of the Campus Engagement Group, the main public consultation and engagement body for the project. In November 2019, he represented this group in a presentation on the CEG's first report, after a little more than a year of operation, to the Board of Governors of the Ottawa Hospital, to which it reports.

ii. Jock River floodplain and other greenspace in Barrhaven

At various times over the last year, we received information in a piecemeal fashion regarding a number of seemingly problematic development applications in Barrhaven. First, we noted an approval by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority to allow a very large site alteration within the Jock River flood plain in Barrhaven in support of nearby residential development plans. It was unusual by its size (a very large volume of soil to be displaced) and by the fact that it could only be approved by special exception by the RCVA board, more or less against RVCA policies and staff recommendations, and several Official Plan policies. The GA sought to intervene and discussed various ways how to do so such as finding partners with direct connection to the Jock River and contact others with experience with similar previous alterations in Richmond. It was agreed that the GA should write to the City to register its concern and to seek more information about this site alteration. A letter was duly sent to Jan Harder, local councillor and chair of Planning Committee, to register our concern and to seek more information about this site alteration. Councillor Harder provided a response clarifying what this plan was about but not lifting doubts about the appropriateness of the extensive alterations being made in this part of the floodplain.

In the preparation of this correspondence, new information surfaced regarding a development application nearby in Barrhaven in which residential subdivisions are proposed to be built in existing/soon to be closed sand and gravel quarries. The first inkling that something was amiss was the publication in the Environmental Registry of Ontario of a Permit to Take Water that authorized the taking of unusually large volumes of water over a 10 year period. With these areas already having been excavated to a certain depth, further excavation for storm water management ponds can be expected to further lower groundwater, with deleterious effects for deeply rooted vegetation upgrade from the development. This could cause irreparable damage to the Cambrian Woods, a protected urban natural feature owned by the City. It is located just north of one of these areas, the Drummond Pit, where a storm water management pond was expected to be located. This concern was raised with the City and it had an immediate effect, causing a last minute change to the development plan to exclude the SWM pond altogether and leading to the release of a whole range of detailed documentation about the

project that had not been posted previously on DevApp, the City's public development application database. Review of these documents established that there has been no environmental impact assessment of the potential damage to Cambrian Woods. Further intervention may be required on our part to protect this greenspace, which is the only large woodland in an otherwise barren landscape in this part of South Barrhaven.

More Zoning By-Law amendments were later considered by Planning Committee for surrounding parcels, including the rezoning of an abutting rural parcel for industrial uses, raising many additional concerns regarding groundwater impact, floodplain and risk of disturbing a plume of contamination leaching eastward under Highway 416 towards the northern edge of these developments.

Also planned in close proximity to the Jock River is the development of a new Barrhaven Town Centre, laid out in a secondary plan initiated by Minto and Richcraft at the request of the local Councillor, and approved by Council in December 2019.

All of this activity, much of it seemingly conducted in an irregular fashion and in a manner to avoid public scrutiny, has brought into sharp focus the need to take a more general look at the preservation of greenspace and a more active role in this last push to complete the development of the southern community of Barrhaven.

iii. Tree clearing for LRT Phase 2

For all the great work that has gone into the Urban Forest Management Plan and the joint City/NCC Tree Canopy Study for Ottawa/Gatineau, the volume and pace of tree clearing throughout the City seems to have accelerated over the last year. Many residents and members have reported their anguish at seeing so many trees taken down along the path of LRT Phase 2. Whether it is in Orleans, along the Trillium line, along the SJAM parkway, the Transitway towards Barrhaven, or Highway 417 west of Bayshore, never have we received such of volume of enquiries and complaints about tree clearing. A resident along the existing path of the Trillium line wrote a particularly eloquent note to the GA questioning whether all of the removals were in fact necessary. Are trees being removed beyond the actual corridors, especially in the case, like the Trillium line, where the rails are sunken below grade? While the GA has taken the position that the City should ensure that tree removals are kept to the strict minimum, that impact on canopy cover of the removal of mature trees be given special consideration and that the City protocol on wildlife protection during construction be adhered to, it has been very challenging to engage with the juggernaut that is LRT Phase 2, which has been steaming ahead with almost desperate urgency while Phase 1 founders.

c. Other greenspace

The GA is alerted and deals with many more threats to greenspace at a more local level, each as equally important to local residents as the major greenspace tracts referenced above. Here is a sampling of some of the issues we followed during the course of 2019-20.

i. 10 Oblates Avenue

We made an intervention at Planning Committee on June 27 2019 concerning the proposed change to the secondary plan for the Oblate Lands development to allow for greater height. This plan had been

painstakingly developed and agreed to by the Regional Group, which was the project developer, and the community. Allowing this change is a breach of trust and puts in doubt the worth and purpose of community involvement in the development of secondary plans. Erwin Dreessen expressed our concerns in this respect in a letter to Stephen Willis, General Manager of Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development for the City of Ottawa.

ii. Kanata Golf and Country Club

Minto and Mattamy finally submitted their application for a residential development on the lands of the Kanata Golf and Country Club, triggering the operation of the 40/60 agreement, as had been outlined by the City in its correspondence with the proponents last year. The City made an extensive review of the application and listed a very large number of concerns and conditions. As this review took more than 90 days to complete, the proponents appealed to LPAT on the basis of failure to make a timely decision. In the meantime, the City had referred the matter of the operation of the 60/40 agreement to Provincial Court. This agreement covers not only the golf course but the entire territory of Kanata Lakes, including the KNL lands now under development north of the Beaver Pond. It requires that the ratio of 40% greenspace and 60% development be retained over this entire area. The golf course is accounted for as part of the 40% greenspace. As all or most of the rest of the area has either been developed already or clear cut for development currently (KNL lands in 2017), redeveloping the golf course now as residential would breach the 60/40 agreement. According to the agreement, if its private owners do not wish to continue to operate the golf club, the land would revert to City ownership. Clublink, Mattamy and Minto are arguing that the 60/40 development/greenspace agreement is invalid as the former City of Kanata had no authority to enter into such an agreement. In addition, the assignments of this agreement to subsequent owners after Campeau, the original owner, are also invalid in their view.

After various preliminary hearings, the date of the hearing was set for February 28 and 29 2020. However, in researching the case it was discovered that Imperial Tobacco of Canada, the last assignee in this chain of transmission of ownership prior to Clublink (Genstar, Imasco, Imperial Tobacco of Canada) had an interest and petitioned for an opportunity to assess whether or not it wished to be considered a party in these proceedings. The Court allowed a delay until this issue is resolved.

With the Covid-19 emergency, hearings were postponed indefinitely, although by the end of April there was talk of proceeding with a virtual hearing. The GA has remained in touch with the case through the Kanata Greenspace Protection Coalition, a local grassroots not-for-profit that has sprung up spontaneously. It has been extremely active and effective in organizing, fundraising and networking. It has been recognized as an intervenor by the Court and retained legal and planning expertise. In addition to leading on the defense of the golf course greenspace, this new partner has taken positions on other Kanata greenspace issues and has participated in other GA sponsored activities such as the workshops and representations to City Committees described in the Policy section of this report.

2. POLICY

a. City Hall

The Greenspace Alliance's major policy preoccupation for the entire year was the City's new Official Plan, a process which started in early 2018 with the Beyond 2036 Sounding Board, of which the GA Chair was a member. The comprehensive review of the Official Plan was launched in February 2019. As consultation plans were rolled out by the City, it became apparent that there was no environmental stream in the process, which led the GA, along with a number of like-minded organizations with which it had been working more closely, to self-organize and develop common positions on the new Official Plan. This was called the Peoples' Official Plan.

1. Ottawa's New Official Plan

i. The Peoples' Official Plan

The initial meeting of the "People's Official Plan" was held on May 15th, 2019. It was well attended with about 20 participants, including several from beyond the immediate sponsoring groups - the Greenspace Alliance, the Federation of Citizens' Associations, Ecology Ottawa and Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability (CAFES). At that meeting, it was agreed that a joint response to the discussion papers produced by the City for the new Official Plan should be prepared, along the lines of a framework developed and endorsed by the GA to make climate change the central organizing theme of the new Official Plan.

The People's Official Plan informal group met again on June 18 at the offices of the Ottawa Renewable Energy Cooperative. Representatives from CAFES, Greenspace Alliance, the FCA, Ecology Ottawa, OREC, The Energy Mix, Healthy Transportation Coalition, Ottawa Stewardship Council, Bike Ottawa, Energy Evolution, Extinction Rebellion Ottawa, Somerset West Community Health, Beetbox Farm, Climate Justice Ottawa, Sustainable Living Ottawa East and Just Food participated. The main outcomes were agreement to:

- Submit personal or organizational comments on the Official Plan prior to the June 30 City deadline, either by completing the City's online survey or writing directly to: planning@ottawa.ca
- In feedback to the City, endorse the current version of the Joint Declaration on the Climate Emergency, copy to the Greenspace Alliance for Canada's Capital so that endorsements could be tracked

The POP group met again on July 18 at the offices of Ecology Ottawa. The Council on Ageing was represented at this meeting in addition to previous participants. It was agreed to prepare four substantive papers on the following themes: 1) introduce a climate test in the Official Plan (prioritize choices that decrease CO2 emissions and/or increase greenspace/carbon storage, or best adapt to climate change), 2) transportation, 3) intensification and 4) regional integration/economic development. These were intended for submission to Planning Committee on August 22. Responsibilities were assigned and a work schedule agreed. It was recognized that these write ups would need to be reviewed

once the staff report on draft strategic directions was released on August 12 and that a meeting would be scheduled for this purpose.

On July 22, GA member Erwin Dreessen circulated a draft op-ed on the City's stated intention to consolidate all extant secondary plans, underlining the immense technical difficulties, but in particular the lack of public consultation that would be needed to avoid further erosion of the public's trust in the value and adherence to these plans. The op-ed was published in the August 12 edition of the Ottawa Citizen and made quite a splash, being cited by the City's lead planner on the Official Plan at a workshop the day following its publication.

The GA held a special general meeting on August 15 at the Hintonburg Community Centre, with all members of the POP group invited. The purpose was to review the staff report and the Five Big Moves paper published on August 12 and to realign our submissions as necessary. A final general assignment of tasks was agreed, including organizing our input in accordance with the Five Big Moves and subordinate strategic policy directions.

The POP group was well represented at the August 22 Joint Meeting of Planning Committee and Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee, dominating the public delegation period. Oral presentations were made by Mitchell Beer (The Energy Mix), Paul Johanis (GA), Daniel Buckles (CAFES), Moe Garahan (Just Food), Sally Thomas and Trevor Hache (Healthy Transportation Coalition), John Woodhouse (Council on Ageing), Heather Pearl (Champlain Park Community Association) and Sheila Perry (FCA).

This very effective, coordinated set of interventions and submissions helped shape the draft strategic directions that were approved for public consultation over the period of September to December 2019.

- a greater share of projected growth to be accommodated through intensification.
- explicit link between growth management strategy and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
- mobility policy directions consistent with effective climate change response .
- aim to enhance liveability in a context of greater intensification.
- explicit link between public health and response to climate change
- walkable, 15 minute neighbourhoods for all ages which are green and sustainable are promoted.
- embed public health, environmental, climate and energy resiliency into the framework of all planning policies.
- embed emission reduction targets in Master Plans that support the Official Plan (e.g. Infrastructure, Transportation, and Waste Master Plans)

At a meeting of the POP group on October 1, it was agreed that outreach meetings with community associations would be held over the month of October, Ecology Ottawa would launch a "hold the line" petition to advocate for not expanding the urban boundary in the new Official Plan, a mid-November workshop on Climate Solutions and the Official Plan would be organized, and another event in support of "hold the line" would be held ahead of the joint Planning/ARAC meeting of December 9.

Youth Climate Ambassadors

The Greenspace Alliance was one of the sponsoring organizations for the Youth Climate Ambassadors program launched by Ecology Ottawa. We hosted the third cohort of Ambassadors, over the period of September to December 2019. We engaged them directly in our efforts to influence the City to make climate action the central organizing concept for the new Official Plan being developed at during this period.

We wanted to expand our outreach further to community associations and seek their input on the climate action we were recommending to see how it matched their needs and realities. This is where the Youth Climate Ambassadors got involved. The goal was to bring all this information together in a major workshop on November 15-16, at which time we finalized the community's position on climate action in the Official Plan. This position was then carried forward by all to Joint Meeting of Planning and Agricultural Affairs Committee on December 9th and subsequently to full Council on December 11, where the strategic directions for the new OP were approved.

The YCAs under the mentorship of the GA went out to meet with associations and groups in a rural area (West Carleton), a suburban area (Kanata and Riverside South, an inner urban area (Kitchissippi) and the downtown core (Vanier), in addition to multi group meetings with a broad cross-section of community associations through events organized by the Federation of Citizens' Associations.

They compiled the results of their interviews with all of these in a report, which they delivered in a presentation to 100+ attendees of the Workshop on Climate and the Official Plan, held at Bayview Yards on November 15-16.

The final strategic directions for the new Official Plan approved by the City largely reflected the views and positions of the community on climate action. On one major issue, the expansion of the urban boundary, we believe the clear opposition of the community led to the postponement of this decision until March 2020. The Youth Climate Ambassadors certainly played a role in disseminating and consolidating the messages that led to this outcome.

November POP Workshop

The workshop on Climate Solutions and Ottawa's new Official Plan was held on November 15 and 16. Some 100 people gathered for a day and a half at Bayview Yards in Ottawa to discuss the climate crisis face to face and define priority actions that must be included in the new Official Plan. The organization of the workshop was led by Daniel Buckles and Paul Johanis of the Greenspace Alliance, with significant support from Ecology Ottawa, The Energy Mix and a group of Youth Climate Ambassadors. It built on the People's Official Plan for Ottawa's Climate Emergency, initiated in April, and supported strongly by Ecology Ottawa, the Federation of Citizens' Associations, Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability (CAFES), Bike Ottawa, the Healthy Transportation Coalition, OREC, Just Food and others.

Dianne Saxe, former Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, provided a recorded opening address. Her comments covered urban expansion, smart intensification, rural development, canopy cover and access to greenspace. She also provided for distribution her presentation at the recent conference of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.

The outputs of the workshop include a declaration, an Executive summary, a graphic summary and a full report published online. The results of the workshop were communicated to City staff and elected officials ahead of the Joint Meeting of the Planning and Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committees on December 9 and the full Council meeting of December 11, where the strategic directions for the new Official Plan would be finalized.

At the December 9 Joint Meeting of Planning and ARAC Committees, 11 of the 26 delegations, including the GA, represented POP aligned views. All were in general supportive of the strategic directions put forward by staff, with the proviso that the City needed to go further and faster than what was recommended. The one exception would have been on the issue of urban expansion, where preliminary indications were that staff would recommend an expansion of 1200 to 1500 hectares, which we opposed. However, without explanation, the City removed this specific item from the agenda at the last minute. It was subsequently announced that the postponement was due to the need do more consultation with the Algonquins of Ontario. We rather believed that it was due to the public pressure against expansion, which by then was starting to be more keenly felt. March 30 was set as the new date for a joint Planning/ARAC meeting to deal specifically with the issue of urban expansion. This gave us three more months to organize.

Second POP Workshop

At a meeting of the People's Official Plan on January 27, it was decided to organize a new workshop, which was scheduled for February 22. This workshop would continue the work of the November workshop on Climate Solutions and Ottawa's New Official Plan, but focus more narrowly on intensification and urban expansion. The main outcome would be the organization of a series of actions in support of denser, just and healthy neighbourhoods, and against urban expansion ahead of the March 30 joint meeting of the Planning and ARAC Committees.

Other POP partners took a greater role in organizing this workshop, which was funded by Healthy Transportation Coalition and a new partner, the Citywide All Women's Initiative. It was held at the Nepean Sportsplex, which the FCA managed to book free of charge. The program featured a slate of excellent speakers and advance registration was very successful with about 150 participants registered.

The workshop on February 22 was well attended and was a generally more inclusive gathering than our previous events, with significantly more indigenous, women's and mobility impaired voices. Also attending was Councillor Egli, in his role as Chair of the Ottawa Board of Health.

The main outcomes of the meeting included additional support for the Hold the Line petition, plans for participants to organize face to face meetings with councillors, a plan for engagement of CAs to communicate their objection to urban expansion to their local councillors and energized participants who plan to mount their own initiatives in support of POP objectives of no urban expansion coupled with denser, inclusive, healthy, green and connected neighbourhoods.

The final push

A number of in person councillor meetings occurred prior to the Covid emergency: Councillor Leiper for a detailed technical briefing on March 9, staff in Councillor Menard's office for the same purpose on March 10, and, accompanied by Ecology Ottawa staff and local constituents, with Councillor Egli on

March 11. The first two were considered supporters of our position while the latter was an undecided in our estimation. As such, this meeting provided valuable insight on the issues that cause the undecided councillors to resist our appeal as did a detailed letter received from Councillor Moffatt by one of our workshop participants as a result of her outreach to him. Other workshop participants reported on subsequent meetings or encounters with Councillors Fleury, Kavanagh and McKenney, confirming our assessment that these were likely supportive of our position while a meeting with Councillor Cloutier, a likely supporter of urban expansion, was put off as a result of the Covid emergency. Additional Zoom meetings were subsequently held with Councillors Moffatt, Hubley and Gower.

The Joint meeting of ARAC and Planning Committee which was to occur on March 30 was postponed until May 4. This decision was taken prior to the Covid emergency and we believe it reflected the City's need to take on board the impact of the PPS 2020, which was released on February 29. The main change in the PPS 2020 that affects the urban boundary issue is the requirement for the City to "maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years." Previously, this was 10 years. This constraint has in the past been used as justification for expanding the urban on its own merits, beyond the requirement to supply housing for projected population growth.

In the past the City demonstrated that it met this requirement by maintaining a large inventory of vacant greenfield lands in the outer suburbs. By boosting the requirement to 15 years, the existing greenfield inventory would no longer be sufficient in the event of a no expansion scenario. The PPS allows, however - in fact insists - that the 15 year requirement be met "through residential intensification and redevelopment" and, only if necessary, greenfield lands. Counting on intensification as part of this required minimum supply required the development of new methods and analysis to translate intensification in years of supply. We prepared a paper putting forward a basic approach for doing so and, using the City's own numbers, demonstrated that it can maintain a 15 year supply of residential growth while also maintaining the current urban boundary.

The Joint meeting of ARAC and Planning Committee was subsequently pushed back to May 11. The POP group met on April 3 to finalize mobilization plans ahead of this meeting. It was agreed to proceed as follows:

- *Advertising and social media in support of urban expansion:* Members and contacts reported a number of instances of advertising in newspapers and on social media by builders associations and allied parties in support of expanding the urban boundary. These used inflammatory and inaccurate language to promote urban expansion. We, collectively with POP members, responded to these on social media and through a number of published op-eds and letters. We will continue to respond to further messages in this campaign in addition to launching our own social media campaign and advertisements.
- *Outreach to Community Associations:* In recognition that, in addition to the voices of the various members of the POP collective, Councillors would more likely be moved by voices from their own wards, we set out to engage community associations to have them communicate directly to their ward councillor that they oppose urban expansion, that they understand that this might mean more density for their neighbourhood but that this is a trade-off they are willing to accept. A sample letter was prepared and distributed directly to CAs from a mailing list that had been compiled by the GA and other POP members. This letter was then presented to CA representatives at the April 22 General meeting of the Federation of Citizens' Associations,

where it received the FCA's endorsement. It was also distributed through our new Ottawa Climate Solutions listserve.

- *Joint Collective letter to Mayor and Council:* As part of our general plan, Ecology Ottawa took the lead in preparing a joint letter to Mayor and Council and collecting signatures from all participants in the POP collective.
- *Online Rally May 8:* Ecology Ottawa took the lead on the online rally that was held on May 8, which featured a number of speakers, including Dianne Saxe, the former Environment Commissioner of Ontario, and the current GA Chair. The joint letter to Mayor and Council and a petition to Hold the Line with 4000 signatures was formally transferred to the Mayor and Council as part of the rally. More than 500 people participated in this online rally.

Note: At the marathon May 11, May 12 and May 19 Joint Meeting of Planning and ARAC, an urban expansion of 1650 hectares was approved, with Councillor Leiper the sole vote in opposition. This despite 43 in-person delegations opposed vs 41 landowner and allied delegations for, 64% of written submissions opposed versus 8% for and a survey conducted by reputable pollster EKOS finding 52% of Ottawa residents opposed. The proposed expansion was subsequently reduced to 1281 ha at the May 27 Council meeting, on a motion from Councillor Menard.

ii. GOHBA/Stakeholders group

Throughout this process the Greenspace Alliance was included in a FCA/GOHBA stakeholder group established by the City for technical briefings on Official Plan issues. A meeting on June 11 at the Jack Purcell Centre was an opportunity to exchange with senior city planning staff and representatives of several developers on key issues regarding growth, intensification and affordability. The August 14 meeting was given over to exploring possible candidate locations for intensification nodes and corridors outside the core. No report has been made of these discussions.

At a September 23 meeting, staff gave a detailed briefing on population and housing projections and preliminary land budget directions. It was at this meeting that we learned that staff was leaning towards a 1200 to 1500 hectare expansion. The data provided at this meeting formed the basis of the modelling subsequently produced by the GA to fully develop a viable no-expansion option. At a meeting on April 16, the City invited the builders/community stakeholders group to comment on the latest version of the criteria that would be used to evaluate land parcels for inclusion in an expanded urban area, should an expansion be approved. A draft was circulated and the issues we focused on were the recognition of wildlife corridors, which was the result of the settlement of a previous GA appeal, and the protection of agricultural land, which the PPS 2020 leaves potentially vulnerable.

The final meeting of this group was held on April 24, just ahead of the release of the final staff report later that day. Despite having been in communication with staff throughout this entire period and having been part of the supposedly most insider consultation group, there were significant surprises for us in this report.

- up to 369 additional hectares were recommended to be added to the urban area for employment land purposes, an issue that had never previously been brought up and for which

required studies have not been completed. This brought the total recommended expansion to 1650 hectares, of which 1281 were for residential purposes;

- the method for calculating and reporting on intensification that has been used for the last 10 years was, this time and for this report only, changed in a way that artificially reduces the observed rate of intensification performance, which has the effect of making the no expansion option seem less achievable;
- a whole new vocabulary borrowed from the growth plan for the Golden Horseshoe, which does not even apply to Ottawa, was introduced to describe the urban boundary, the built up area and vacant greenfields within the urban area in ways that are marginally different from what has been used without any problems in the last three Official Plans. If the goal was obfuscation and confusion, it could not have been better achieved.

iii. The Equity and Inclusion Ambassadors Group

To its credit, the City set up a consultation stream to interact directly with disadvantaged and marginalized communities which have not traditionally had a voice in Official Plan matters. We were given the opportunity to participate in this group and took part in all of its meetings and activities. While not truly effective in engaging with the communities, the process nevertheless exposed us to perspectives, voices and concerns we have not often experienced. It opened the doors to establishing relationships with new groups for which access to greenspace is equally if not more important.

2. Tree Conservation By-law

The GA attended a City meeting on May 29 on approaches to infill and trees in the Tree Conservation By-law. This was a joint stakeholder meeting, with representatives from developers and the community in attendance. We sent a joint response (CAFES, Ecology Ottawa, FCA, GA) to the City on June 3. This was followed by a formal stakeholder meeting on June 24, at which time a discussion paper containing proposed directions for all aspects of the new By-law was tabled. A ten minute discussion for each proposal ensued. City staff took note of comments at the meeting and indicated that written submissions would be accepted until September 9. A joint submission, by way of a public petition with 376 signatures, was sent to the City on August 29. There was a final push for signatures in September, including during national tree week, and the petition was formally delivered to Mayor and Council at that time.

City Council approved the new Tree Conservation Bylaw on January 29. We participated extensively in the review of this bylaw and some good came of it. However, it will really only be fully implemented in 2021 and we are concerned that it will again come down to a tree by tree fight, as per the old bylaw, because there is no overarching target for canopy cover. We have proposed that tree removals be assessed against reaching or maintaining mandatory canopy cover targets at the neighbourhood level, a proposal that the Environment Committee has directed staff to examine and report back on. We will continue our advocacy on this file.

3. OPA150/180 Appeals

The last remaining set of appeals of OPA 150/180, dealing with Urban Expansion, were to be heard over a two week period starting on August 12. The GA is a recognized party in this appeal process. We

retained the services of an expert witness, who prepared a draft witness statement. However, the appellants requested that the hearings be suspended pending the outcome of the new Official Plan review that has now been launched. We therefore curtailed preparation for the appeal hearings. However, there is every reason to believe that the threat of resuming their appeals, which the appellants can hold over the City, influenced the outcome of the comprehensive review regarding urban boundary expansion.

4. City Climate Change Plan

Ahead of regular business at the June general meeting, Andrea Flowers and Jen Brown of the Climate Change and Resiliency Unit at the City of Ottawa, gave a presentation on the Climate Change and Resiliency team's work, including overviews of the updated Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan, the proposed vision, targets, and priorities, the Energy Evolution model and the magnitude of change required to meet proposed targets.

5. Development Charges Working Group

Erwin Dreessen has continued his work on the ad hoc FCA, Ecology Ottawa, Healthy Transportation Coalition working group that is trying to open up the process for setting these charges to input from civil society groups. Some headway has been made in this respect. However, the impact of recent changes announced by the provincial government is not fully understood and has slowed down the progress of the working group somewhat.

3. GOVERNANCE

Members of the Board of Directors for the year were Paul Johanis, Nicole DesRoches, Daniel Buckles, Juan Pedro Unger, Jason Kania and Adam Caldwell.

Starting with the November 2019 meeting, in an effort to facilitate attendance and reduce our carbon footprint, the GA monthly general meetings have been conducted online. So we were well prepared to carry on this way under the Covid-19 state of emergency. We have found that attendance has improved as a result, that meeting materials are more easily and fully shared and that we can get through our agendas more efficiently.

Our membership has remained steady over the last year, while our subscriber list and Twitter following have grown. We implemented a new listserv and website to support the Peoples Official Plan process and increased our reach significantly through our working relationship with a wider array of partners.

Our collaboration with the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study's greenspace mapping project has deepened, with regular meetings over the course of the year. We believe we are on the verge of having a fully functional comprehensive spatial database of greenspace for Ottawa.

The grant money obtained for the Youth Ambassador Program was instrumental in funding the Climate Solutions workshop in November. Over the course of the year, we had two additional opportunities to

apply for grants. Late in 2019, we were invited by Nature Canada to partner with them to bring local content to a conference planned for February 2020 on Natural Climate Solutions. This took the form of a grant application made to the Ottawa Community Foundation, with Nature Canada as the charitable partner. Unfortunately this application was not approved and the local content panel was dropped from the conference. A few months later, however, we were included as a participating organization in a grant application by Ecology Ottawa to the Ottawa Community Foundation to keep developing over the next two years the collaborative network of organizations we brought together as the Peoples Official Plan. This application was approved and we will receive funding in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to continue convening and organizing to ensure that the climate and environmental strategic directions in new Official Plan are carried through to the Transportation Master Plan, the Infrastructure Master Plan, the Climate Change Master Plan and a completely new, rebooted Greenspace Master Plan.

Over the year, we have further deepened our ties with traditional partners such as the Federation of Citizens' Associations, Ecology Ottawa, Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability and the Healthy Transportation Coalition. Through the POP process, we have expanded our effective collaboration network to include Bike Ottawa, the Ottawa Renewal Energy Cooperative, Just Food, the Citywide All Women's Initiative and through this latter group, many equity and inclusiveness organizations with which we have had little contact in the past. There are sufficient points of shared interest and agreement across this broader network to leverage each other's advocacy efforts for greater reach and impact. We intend to further develop this approach in the coming year.