

# Planning Rationale

Official Plan Amendment - Urban and Village Boundary Expansion



Prepared for:  
Leitrim Landowners Group

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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Overview of the Applicants .....	7
1.2 Site Context .....	9
1.3 Surrounding Context .....	9
1.4 Connectivity .....	12
1.5 Natural Heritage System .....	12
1.6 Requested Amendment.....	12
1.7 Details of the Proposal .....	13
<b>2 Existing Policy Context .....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 Official Plan.....	16
2.2 Previous Considerations of these lands during the Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan and the Chronology of Ministerial Decisions .....	17
2.3 Zoning By-law 2008-250 .....	20
2.4 Parkland .....	21
<b>3 Policy Justification .....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 .....	22
3.1.1 Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities .....	22
3.1.2 Infrastructure and Facilities .....	29
3.2 Official Plan.....	30
3.2.1 Strategic Directions.....	31
3.2.2 Growth Management Framework .....	34
3.2.3 Transect and Designations.....	35
<b>4 Supporting Documents.....</b>	<b>37</b>
4.1 South March Lands, Ottawa – Ministry of Finance Population Forecasts, Parcel Economics .....	37
4.2 Environmental Considerations.....	38
4.3 Transportation Considerations.....	38
4.4 Climate Change Master Plan Considerations.....	39
<b>5 Conclusions .....</b>	<b>40</b>

### List of Tables

Table 1. Land ownership breakdown.....	7
Table 2. Subject site conceptual development scenario – non-residential non-developable area .....	14
Table 3. Assumed housing mix and estimated population yield for the subject lands .....	14
Table 4: Structure of the proposed OPA .....	15

### List of Figures

Figure 1. location of the subject lands / Study Area .....	6
Figure 2. ownership breakdown of the subject lands .....	8
Figure 3. The subject lands within the broader City of Ottawa context .....	10
Figure 4 excerpt from the 15-Minute Neighborhood Baseline Report showing Map A2 low scores for Service and Amenity .....	11



<b>Figure 5 excerpt showing Findlay Creek receives a low to moderate score on being assessed for Access to Services &amp; Amenities and Pedestrian Movement .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Figure 6. Extract from Schedule B9 of the Official Plan (subject lands are within the Rural Transect and designated Rural Countryside).....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Figure 7. Extract from the Residential Growth Management Strategy showing the Criteria and Scoring Summary.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Figure 8 Current zoning of the subject lands is Rural Countryside. Lands surrounding the site are a range of residential, parks and open space, and mineral extraction zones.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Figure 9. Excerpt from the Parcel Economics report showing population forecast and difference between the City of Ottawa and Ministry of Finance .....</b>	<b>26</b>



## **Executive Summary**

The Leitrim Landowners Group has retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. to prepare this Planning Rationale as part of an application for an Official Plan Amendment for their properties (“subject lands”) located in Ward 22 Riverside South-Findlay Creek to be included in the City of Ottawa Urban Boundary as *Category 1 – Future Neighbourhood Overlay* Urban Expansion Area. Should this application be approved, a future Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan, as outlined in the *Official Plan Annex 4: Local Plan Framework* and *Section 12 – Local Plan*, will be needed to determine area-specific policies and guidelines.

This rationale responds to significant changes in Provincial legislation and the Provincial Planning Statement since the adoption of the City of Ottawa Official Plan to permit private applications for changes to urban boundaries, and to address more stringent Provincial requirements to maintain a minimum supply of designated and available land for future housing need based on the Province of Ontario’s mandated use of Ministry of Finance population projections.

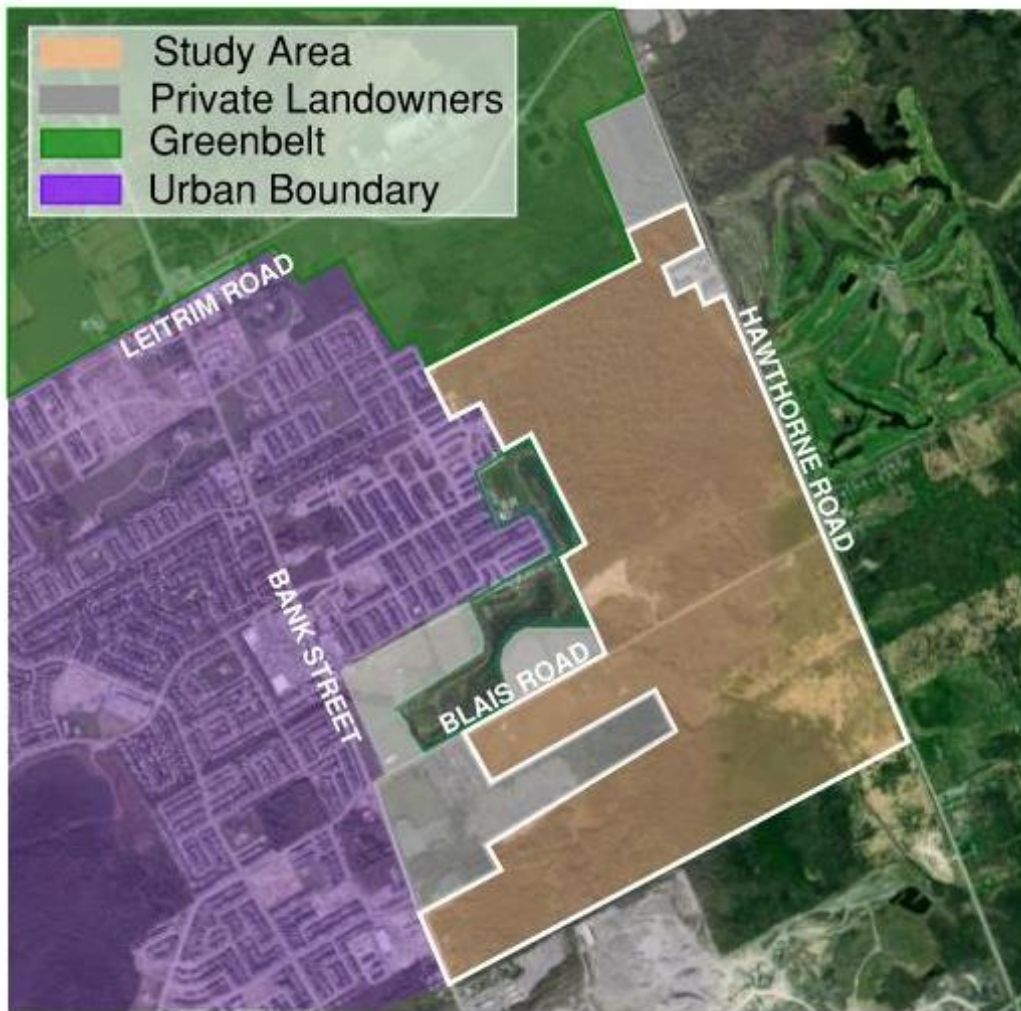
The rationale summarizes the ministerial decisions and highlights that the subject lands have been evaluated and deemed appropriate to be considered for inclusion in the urban boundary. Notable changes to the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and the requirement to rely on Ministry of Finance population forecasts to accommodate growth for a 15-year land supply are critical elements, amongst others, that drive the request for the proposed amendment to the Official Plan.

This Planning Rationale demonstrates the proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA) for a settlement area boundary expansion is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), conforms to the general intent and purpose of the City of Ottawa Official Plan (2022), and takes direction from recent legislative changes to the Ontario Planning Act. Further, the rationale discusses how this expansion will enable the community of Leitrim (Findlay Creek) to reach a sufficient critical mass in population to support frequent bus service and amenities that could make it become a desirable fifteen-minute neighbourhood as intended for by the Official Plan.



# 1 Introduction

Stantec Consulting Ltd. has been retained by the Leitrim Landowners Group (“LLG”) to prepare and submit an Urban and Village Boundary Expansion (UVBE) Official Plan Amendment (OPA) application that seeks to expand the City of Ottawa’s Urban Boundary to include the Leitrim East Lands (“subject lands”) that lie to the south of Leitrim Road, east of Bank Street, and west of Hawthorne Road (see **Figure 1**).



**Figure 1. location of the subject lands / Study Area**

**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

The Leitrim Landowners Group consisting of Claridge Homes, Richcraft Homes and Urbandale Construction together own approximately 605 acres of vacant land on the border of the City of Ottawa’s Urban Boundary (seen in **Figure 1**). The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 only permitted urban expansion to take place as part of a municipal-led comprehensive official plan review. Since then, the PPS has been updated, and the Provincial Planning Statement came into effect on October 10, 2024, permitting private applications to expand the urban boundary. This change represents one of the many legislative actions taken by the province in recent years in an effort to address the province-wide housing supply crisis. In response, the City of Ottawa released a new Urban and Village Boundary Expansion (UVBE) application process in October 2024.

The LLG propose to develop the subject lands into a vibrant community on full municipal services. An amendment to the City of Ottawa Official Plan is required to designate the subject lands appropriately while understanding that a subsequent Secondary Plan process will be required to provide specific policies and guidelines for the lands.

This Planning Rationale has been prepared in support of the noted Urban and Village Boundary Expansion (UVBE) Official Plan Amendment application to demonstrate that the proposal is appropriate for facilitating a desirable and efficient use of the subject lands.

**1.1 Overview of the Applicants**

The subject lands consist of eight contiguous parcels that are under ownership by the members of the Leitrim Landowners Group (demonstrated in Error! Reference source not found.). The subject lands also border a number of smaller parcels on the west that are under private ownership but not included in the application at this time; these lands are bordered by Bank Street to their west.

Error! Reference source not found. provides a breakdown of the percentage of land held by each member of the Leitrim Landowner Group within the subject lands:

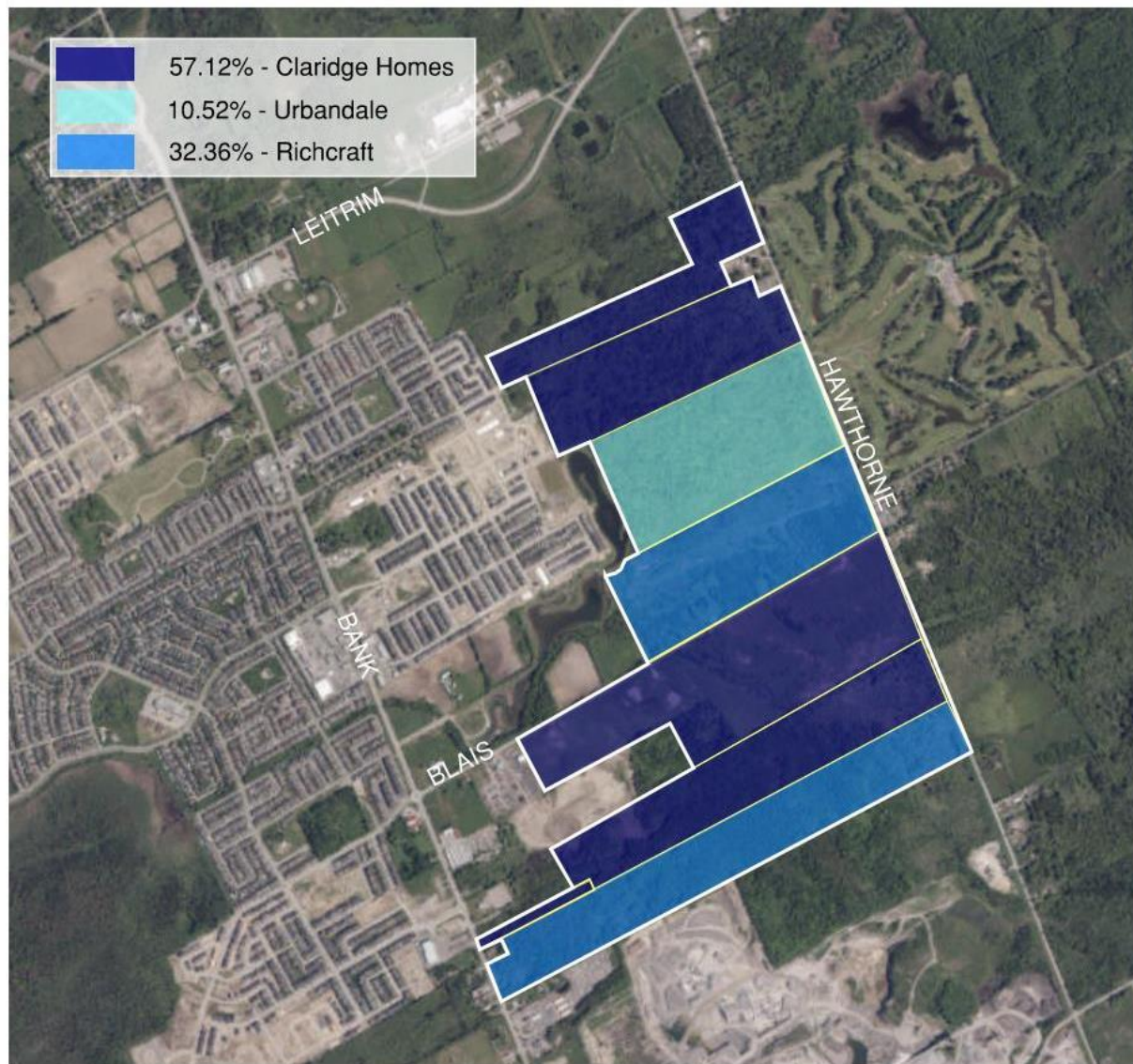
**Table 1. Land ownership breakdown**

Landowner	Area per landowner (acre / hectare)	Area Percentage
Urbandale Corporation	63.61 / 25.74	10.52%
Richcraft Homes	195.73 / 79.20	32.36%
Claridge Homes	345.47 / 139.80	57.12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>604.81 / 244.75</b>	<b>100%</b>





**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**



**Figure 2. ownership breakdown of the subject lands**





## **1.2 Site Context**

The subject lands are adjacent to the existing community of Findlay Creek, are bisected east-west by Blais Road, and generally account for half of the land located west of Bank Street, east of Hawthorne Road, south of Leitrim Road, and north of an existing quarry. A portion of the remaining lands within this defined area are already located within the Urban Boundary and contain existing and ongoing greenfield development. Site location and immediate site context is demonstrated in **Error! Reference source not found.** The subject lands have a total area of approximately 244.75 hectares (604.81 acres) and can be accessed by Blaise Road, Bank Street, and Hawthorne Road.

## **1.3 Surrounding Context**

The community of Findlay Creek has experienced rapid growth in the past decade and continues to grow into a compact urban community. Prior to development which began in the early-2000s, the community was primarily underdeveloped and consisted of some agricultural land surrounded by a wetland system.

The community is approximately 520-heactare in area, located entirely south of Leitrim Road, and primarily between Bank Street and Albion Road. Historically, the community was conceived as a village. In 1990, an amendment to the then City of Gloucester Official Plan redesignated Leitrim community from a Rural Policy Area to an Urban Policy Area. Increased pressure for development within Leitrim led to the preparation of a Community Design Plan in November 2003 to provide a coordinated vision to guide all future development in Leitrim.

At present, the majority of the Findlay Creek community consists of a variety of housing choices, parks, institutional and commercial retail uses with connections to the larger nearby communities of Riverside South to the west and South Keys to the north.

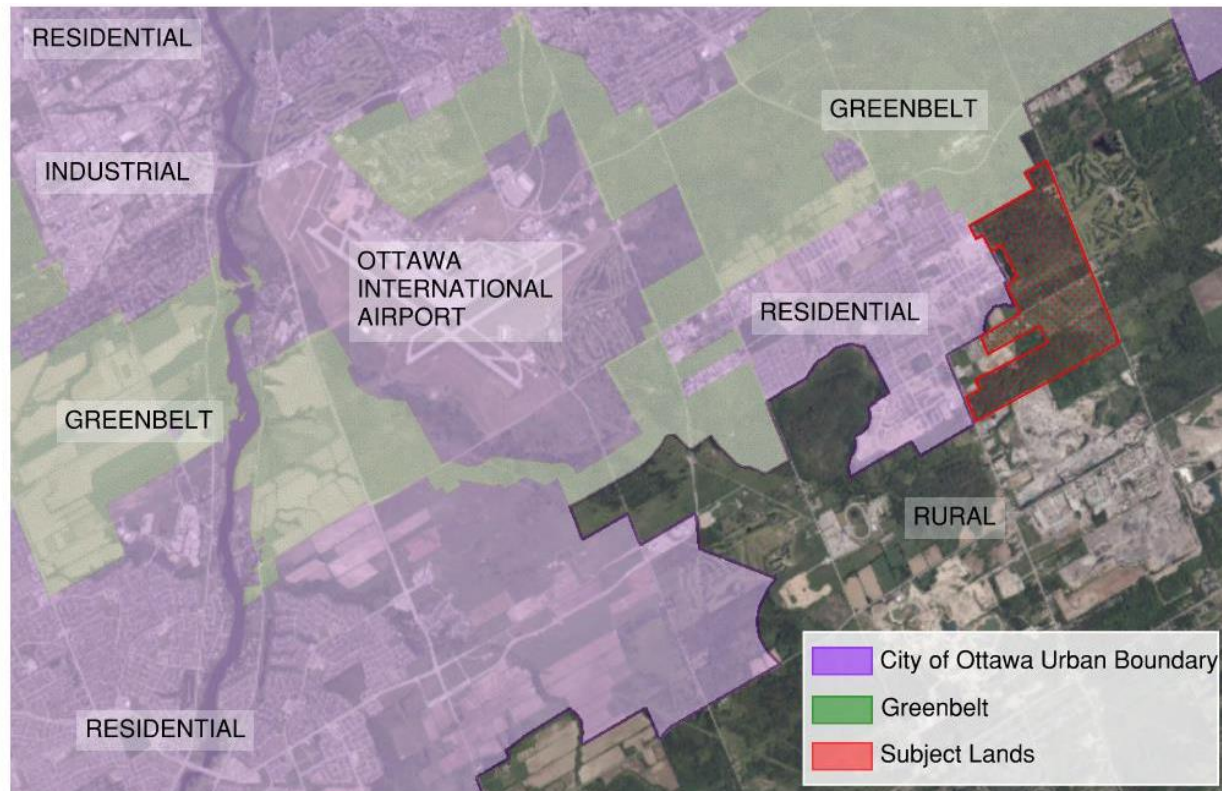
shows the general location of the subject lands adjacent to the Findlay Creek community. Per the 2021 census data by Statistics Canada, the population of the community was approximately 14,000 and included 4,395 dwelling units.

The community is relatively small in comparison to other southerly Ottawa communities outside the NCC Greenbelt such as Barrhaven. Limited transportation and transit opportunities, smaller population, limited amenities and services are a few reasons the community cannot be described as a complete community.

**Figure 3** shows the subject lands within the broader city context. The Ottawa-Cartier International Airport is located to the northwest while Canadian Forces Base Station operated by the Department of National Defence is located to the northeast of the subject lands. Generally, surrounding uses consist of a mix of residential, light industrial, and institutional uses along with the greenbelt to the north and active quarries to the south. There are existing institutional uses located near the Bank Street and Leitrim Road intersection, including a police station, a Hydro Ottawa building, a fire station, a community centre, a church, and Leitrim Park, a district level park that contains Fred Barrett Arena and a number of fields and ball diamonds.



**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**



**Figure 3. The subject lands within the broader City of Ottawa context**

The following uses and features surround the subject lands:

- North** The NCC Greenbelt borders the subject lands to the north. Leitrim Road lies further north and is an existing arterial road forming an east-west connection.
- East** Hawthorne Road borders the subject lands immediately to the east. The Meadows Golf and Country Club is located to the east of Hawthorne. Lands further east are generally rural in character with some agricultural uses.
- South** The subject lands border an existing quarry owned and operated by Green Infrastructure Partners Inc. (outside the City's urban boundary). Further south are other aggregate and rural heavy industrial type uses.
- West** Seen in **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Figure 3**, the subject lands border the city's urban boundary at both its north and west extents. Blais Road bisects the subject lands east-west serving as a connection between Bank Street and Hawthorne Road. Lands south of Blais Road (represented in grey in Figure 1), consist of individual parcels under private ownership. Findlay Creek is located immediately west of the subject lands and consists of mainly residential uses and parkland. Bank Street provides a north-south connection through Findlay Creek with various intersections with east-west roads.

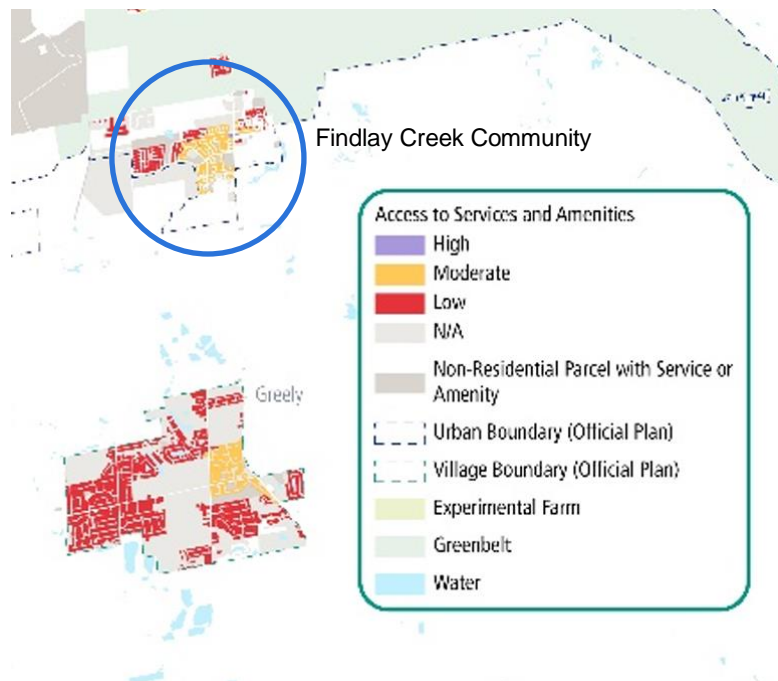


## Planning Rationale

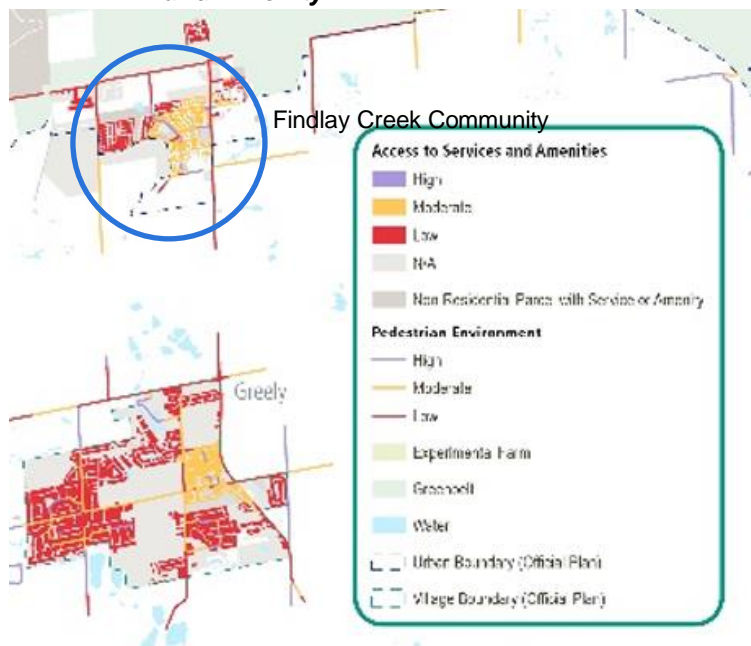
### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

In 2021, the City released 15-Minute Neighbourhoods Baseline Report that discussed the role of neighbourhood design, transportation, housing, food and natural environments and greenspaces to community well-being. The report further highlighted that 15-minute neighbourhoods are a key strategy for advancing the Five Big Moves in an integrated way through Official Plan policy.

The existing Findlay Creek area was evaluated and found that it scored low to very low on the Service and Amenity scoring. **Figure 4** contains an excerpt from Map A2 showing the presence of each amenity type within a 15-minute walk, with red areas showing the lowest presence and magenta areas showing the highest presence. Likewise, the area scored equally low on the Service and Amenity Diversity, with Priority Weighting from Survey scoring (Map A3), the Service and Amenity Concentration score (Map A4), and Access to Services and Amenities (Map A5). The image below is from Map A8 which combines access to services and amenities and pedestrian movement which shows that the existing community scores moderate to low in the Neighbourhoods Baseline Report. This demonstrates that development of the subject lands will in turn prompt subsequent development to include more services and amenities to service a larger population making the Leitrim community a complete community.



**Figure 4 excerpt from the 15-Minute Neighborhood Baseline Report showing Map A2 low scores for Service and Amenity**



**Figure 5 excerpt showing Findlay Creek receives a low to moderate score on being assessed for Access to Services & Amenities and Pedestrian Movement**



## **1.4 Connectivity**

### **ROAD**

Schedule C9-Rural Road Network of the Official Plan identifies Leitrim Road and Bank Street as existing arterial roads while Blais Road and Hawthorne Road are identified as existing collector roads.

Arterial roads are major roads that are designed to carry large volumes of traffic over the longest distances and function as major connectors in urban and rural communities. Collector roads connect communities and distribute traffic between the arterial system and local road network.

### **TRANSIT**

The subject lands are not currently serviced by the city's light-rail transit network. However, OC Transpo buses service the existing Findlay Creek community with limited stops based on current population and transit use. The Trillium Line 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT) Leitrim Station is located at Gilligan Road approximately 3.5 km west of the subject lands, and serves as a transportation hub connecting Findlay Creek community to the City's downtown area

### **AIRPORT**

The Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport is located approximately 4.5 km from the subject lands. Per the City of Ottawa Official Plan Schedule C14-Land Use Constraints due to Aircraft Noise, the subject lands are not within the Airport Vicinity Development Zone.

## **1.5 Natural Heritage System**

The City of Ottawa Official Plan Schedule C11-C Natural Heritage System (East) highlights that the subject lands may include Natural Heritage Features Overlay and a watercourse. A Natural Heritage Screening assessment has been prepared which provides a high-level, desktop review of the existing natural heritage features within and adjacent to the subject lands that shows there are no ANSIs, PSWs, fish nurseries, linkages and wildlife corridors, significant woodlands, or significant valleylands within the subject lands.

## **1.6 Requested Amendment**

The LLG are proposing an amendment to the City of Ottawa Official Plan (OP) to redesignate the subject lands as a *Category 1 – Future Neighbourhood Overlay* Urban Expansion Area on Schedule C17 for the purpose of adding them to the City's Urban Boundary (urban settlement area).

This Official Plan Amendment (OPA) application applies to the LLG subject lands, though we see it appropriate for the City to include the surrounding smaller parcels of lands to achieve a logical rounding out of the urban boundary and consistency in the planning for growth.



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

There are no previous approvals or pertinent applications from the City or relevant authorities. Section 2.2 of this report discusses the City and the Province's previous considerations of this land for inclusion within the Urban Boundary.

The proposed OPA will permit future development of the lands on full municipal services ensuring that adequate supply of land exists to accommodate a minimum of 15 years. The *Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay* redesignation will allow the subject lands to be studied in greater detail at a future date through a Community Design and/or Secondary Plan process.

The new PPS 2024 requires planning authorities use population forecasts from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and ensure that sufficient land be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses for a time horizon of at least 20 years but not more than 30 years. The PPS 2024 still requires that planning authorities maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are designated and available for residential development. As noted throughout this report, a supporting land needs study prepared by Parcel Economics demonstrates the City's current growth management framework does not satisfy this requirement of the PPS.

## 1.7 Details of the Proposal

A conceptual development scenario has been developed to demonstrate the type of future growth potential envisioned for the subject lands which would consist of a mix of detached homes, traditional townhouses, back-to-back townhouses, and stacked dwellings. The proposed community will be connected to full municipal services including water, sanitary and stormwater and would add to the existing Findlay Creek community. This conceptual development scenario will be refined through a future Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan outlined in the *Official Plan Annex 4: Local Plan Framework* and *Section 12 – Local Plan* should this application be approved.

Average density of the proposed conceptual development scenario was calculated at 35 dwelling units per net hectare resulting in a total of 4,712 units supporting an approximate population of 13,523. The City of Ottawa Official Plan Table 3b Suburban Transects was consulted which provides a range of 40 to 60 dwelling units per hectare for Neighbourhood and Minor Corridor Residential Density. The 35 DU/ha density of the conceptual development scenario is an appropriate value for establishing the type of critical mass necessary to support a 15-minute neighbourhood. Additionally, it is anticipated this density value is similar to the type of density found throughout the existing Findlay Creek community.

Land uses such as schools, parks, open space, stormwater facilities, and road network are identified as non-residential non-developable area, and account for approximately half of the total subject lands (**Table 2**). This breakdown of land uses is based on the City's standard estimates, our professional experience, and input from the landowners. The balance of the lands was assumed to be capable of residential development. It's anticipated that these conceptual land uses would be complemented by other non-residential uses, particularly along Bank Street, and that together, they would help support Findlay Creek into becoming a more complete community. We note that these are only estimates and will need to be investigated in greater detail through a future Community Design and/or Secondary Plan exercise.



**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

**Table 2. Subject site conceptual development scenario – non-residential non-developable area**

Subject Lands	Area	Percentage
<b>Gross Land (acres)</b>	<b>604.81</b>	<b>100%</b>
School	36.29	6%
Parks	60.48	10%
Stormwater Pond Facility	48.38	8%
Open Space	6.05	1%
Road Network	120.96	20%
<b>Total Non-Residential Non-developable Area (acres)</b>	<b>272.16</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Total Developable Area (acres)</b>	<b>332.62</b>	<b>55%</b>

An appropriate mix of low-rise residential housing types is assumed to make up 55% of the total area of the subject lands. The residential land use would consist of 50% of single-family homes and 50% of a mix of townhomes and stacked dwellings (**Table 3**). No employment or commercial uses have been assumed at this time, though as previously noted, it is anticipated they would be supported along Bank Street as part of future redevelopment. The City of Ottawa Sewer Design Guidelines were relied upon to provide an estimate of the persons per household to generate the approximate population for the subject lands.

**Table 3. Assumed housing mix and estimated population yield for the subject lands**

Housing Types	Units Yield	Percentage	People per Unit	Total Population
Single homes	2,356	50%	3.4	8,010
Townhouses	471	10%	2.7	1,272
Back-to-Back Townhouses	942	20%	2.7	2,544
Stacked Townhouses	942	20%	1.8	1,696
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,712</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>13,523</b>

The community will provide approximately 4,712 new homes and support a population of 13,523. The proposed OPA seeks to add the subject lands to the City's urban boundary to assist the City in achieving a 15-year supply of land designated and available for housing, as required by the PPS.

The OPA will redesignate the subject lands as *Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay* Urban Expansion Lands. The OP provides that the Future Neighbourhood Overlay is intended to guide development in these areas towards creating walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods that are well served by rapid transit. We note that a future Community Design Plan or a Secondary Plan process will be necessary to help guide the intended growth by providing detailed land use designations and policy direction to fit with the local context of the planning area meeting the intent of policy 5.6.2.1.6 of the OP. We understand that the subject lands may be included and integrated in the existing Community Design Plan or Secondary Plan of the adjacent Findlay Creek community provided the scale of the additional lands is commensurate to an update process, and that supporting studies, such as a master servicing study, are also updated. These items will be investigated in detail in the future.



**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

Additional to amending Schedule C17 of the City of Ottawa Official Plan, the proposed OPA includes a site-specific policy to address the timing of approvals related to the surrendering of the aggregate licence applicable to the lands immediately south of the subject lands. The amendments to the OP are summarized below in **Table 4**:

**Table 4: Structure of the proposed OPA**

Existing Policy Schedule	Proposed Amended Policy	Rationale
Schedule C17- Urban Expansion Area	Amend Urban Boundary to include the subject lands.  Designate a Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay to the subject lands.	Align schedule with the limits of the subject lands to provide additional land for future growth. This is needed for consistency with the PPS requirement to maintain a minimum 15-year supply of land suitably designated and available for residential development
Policy 5.6.3.1.9 – Aggregate Overlay policies	Provide area-specific policies in the interim to limit subdivision approvals in the 500 m influence area until surrendering of the aggregate licence.	The area within the subject lands impacted by the 500 m influence area will be available to develop prior to 2046. The required Secondary Plan process could proceed during this interim period so that local policy context is fully established by the time the aggregate licence is surrendered.





## 2 Existing Policy Context

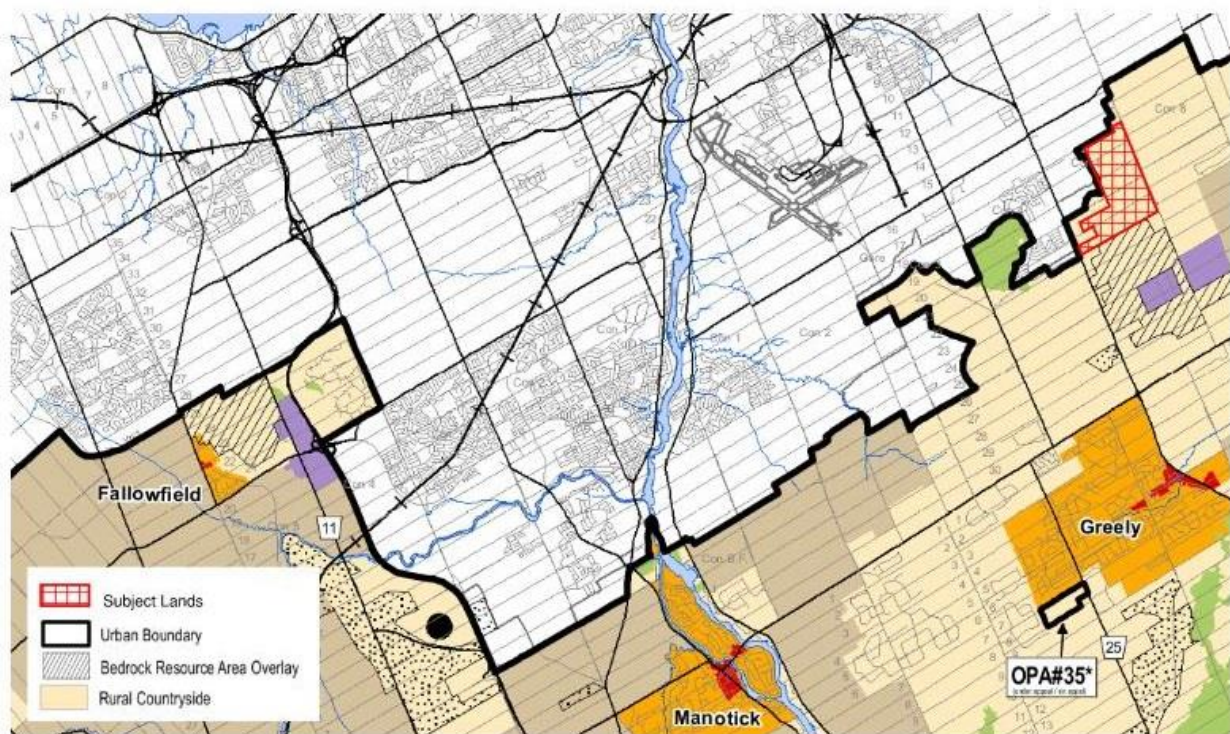
### 2.1 Official Plan

The subject lands are currently within the Rural Transect and designated Rural Countryside (Schedule B9). The Rural Countryside is made up of a variety of low intensity uses such as farming, small-scale industries, outdoor recreation and tourism, golf courses, and rural-scaled housing. The Rural Countryside designation is intended to accommodate a variety of land uses that are appropriate for a rural location, limiting the amount of residential development and supporting industries that serve local residents and the travelling public, all while ensuring that the character of the rural area is preserved.

At present the subject lands are vacant and underdeveloped. **Figure 6** shows Schedule B9 illustrating the location of the subject lands (in red) bordering the city's Urban Boundary to the west and a Bedrock and Resources Mineral Aggregate Overlay to the south.

Policy 5.6.3.1 of the OP speaks to the protection of mineral aggregate resources from incompatible development. Further, policy 5.6.3.1.9 prescribes that a 500 m buffer or area of influence from the active quarry site is required. Approximately one-third of the subject lands, that constitute the southern portion, are impacted by the required 500 m buffer. It is our understanding that Green Infrastructure Partners currently operates the quarry site and that only a fraction of it remains active before operations will be delicensed and ceased. Accordingly, it is anticipated these lands will become available for development by the time the City considers development on the subject lands through a required a Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan exercise an exercise that will take 5 to 10 years to complete.





**Figure 6. Extract from Schedule B9 of the Official Plan (subject lands are within the Rural Transect and designated Rural Countryside)**

## **2.2 Previous Considerations of these lands during the Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan and the Chronology of Ministerial Decisions**

The City's new Official Plan was approved by Council in 2021 and by the Minister in 2022. In preparation of the Official Plan the City evaluated the need for an urban area expansion to accommodate anticipated urban population growth and the related need for housing and employment with the existing urban boundary. The City approved the Residential Growth Management Strategy for the New Official Plan in 2020 to inform the Official Plan to establish where, and under what conditions, growth in the city can be accommodated with the aim to achieve a desired urban form. The strategy also provided guidance on the evaluation of lands for potential urban expansion and included a set of criteria for scoring land suitability.

Over 2021 and 2022, the City of Ottawa completed a Comprehensive Official Plan Review consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020* that was in effect at the time. The strategy provided extensive recommendations on how potential lands for expansion could be identified and also how these candidate lands should be evaluated. The evaluation criteria and methodology created were unique to Ottawa while



**Planning Rationale**  
**Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

remaining consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and subject to decisions of Council. Following this, the City adopted the selection criteria for the evaluation of rural lands for expansion (shown in Error! Reference source not found.). Candidate parcels were selected which generally comprise individual rural lots located within one to two kilometres of the current urban boundary and were then assembled with like lots to create contiguous land areas for consideration.

<b>Table 1: Criteria and Scoring Summary by Category</b>			
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Potential Score</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Engineering (serviceability)</b>	Water	8	
<i>OP Sections 2.2.1 4d &amp; 4g</i>	Wastewater	8	
	Stormwater	8	
	Servicing Integration Factor	6	
	Servicing Risk Factors	0 to -4	
<b>Max for Engineering</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	Availability of Rapid Transit	18	
<i>OP Sections 2.2.1 4e, 4g &amp; 4h</i>	Distance to Rapid Transit Station	12	
	Proximity to jobs - median commute distance (all modes)	8	
	Proximity to Convenience Retail- median distance (all modes)	5	
	Proximity to Major City Facilities	5	
	Proximity of Emergency Services – Fire response	4	
	Potential Arterial Road upgrades	0 to -8	
<b>Maximum for Transportation</b>		<b>52</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Community Integration</b>	Connectivity - Barriers to efficient urban integration	8	
<b>Potential Total Integration</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Conflicting Uses</b>	Agriculture Resource within 250m	0 to -4	
<i>OP Sections 2.2.1 4 a &amp; c</i>	Natural Linkages	0 to -4	
<b>Potential Total for Conflicting</b>		<b>0</b>	
<b>Potential Maximum Score</b>		<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 7. Extract from the Residential Growth Management Strategy showing the Criteria and Scoring Summary**



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

The main themes of the evaluation and scoring criteria were ranked in order by their total score, from highest to lowest. The themes and their high-level objectives and considerations are detailed below.

Theme	Objective
<b>Transportation</b>	This criterion promotes development in proximity to existing or planned rapid transit stations.
<b>Servicing</b>	Engineering (serviceability) factors assess the ease with which water, wastewater and stormwater services can be provided to accommodate additional development without any or with only minimal need for major upgrades to the existing trunk systems or downstream watercourses.
<b>Community Integration</b>	Community integration ranks the ability of the parcels to be integrated with the adjacent parcels.
<b>Conflicting Rural Uses</b>	Proximity of new urban development to agricultural resource land, villages and country lot subdivisions are identified as the main areas of potential conflict.
<b>Scoring and Selecting Land</b>	Parcels will be scored in the initial evaluation on two passes, as individual parcels and as clusters, to determine if there are advantages or disadvantages that can be identified. The gross developable area will be determined

The subject lands were evaluated against the scoring criteria and initially received a Category 2 score, which indicated lands meeting partial adherence to the Growth Management Strategy and the city's Five Big Moves. The lands scored poorly due to a lack of existing or planned infrastructure including servicing and transit as well as amenities such as recreational facilities and retail.

Lands determined as Category 1 did not add up to the necessary 1,281 hectares required under the Growth Management Strategy, and therefore, the City recommended additional study to identify 270 hectares. Staff recommended that though Category 2 lands can potentially address the deficit they would need to demonstrate local transit improvements, servicing infrastructure, and new road infrastructure projects prior to being added to the urban boundary. Staff recommended the Leitrim East and Carlsbad West option for inclusion in the Urban Boundary, which included the subject lands. However, Council ultimately chose to approve the Tewin Community in place of the lands recommended by Staff. The decision was reversed by the MMHA through Bill 150: Planning Statutes Law Amendment Act, 2023 which added the lands by were then removed. We highlight this history to emphasize that the subject lands have been evaluated and considered a viable and preferred option for inclusion in the urban boundary as part of the City's recent process of preparing a new Official Plan.

Recently, Bill 17: Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025 received royal assent June 5, 2025, which further streamlines the municipal development process. The Technical Briefing states that the *"Ministry of Finance forecasts for some areas will experience higher growth than previously estimated and recognizing that some of the 50 large and fast-growing municipalities official plans are outdated or misaligned with new projections"*. The newly released provincial legislation now requires municipalities to update official plans that reflect current population projections, ensuring better planning for future growth. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) will *"undertake targeted outreach to municipalities where additional population growth is projected to surpass previous estimates in their current official plans"*.





## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

It is noted that City staff is now seeking direction from Council (City File No. ACS2025-PDB-PS-0041) for updating their growth projections to align with the 2025 publication of the Ministry of Finance Population Projections, which is a requirement of the 2024 PPS.

## 2.3 Zoning By-law 2008-250

The subject lands are zoned Rural Countryside (RU) Zone per the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250, as amended). The intent of the RU zone is to accommodate and permit a range of rural-based land uses which often have large lot or distance separation requirements, and to regulate various types of development in manners that ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and respect the rural context.

The adjacent Findlay Creek community located to the west is subject to urban residential zoning permitting a mix of building forms ranging from detached to stacked dwellings. The subject lands also border parks and open space consisting of stormwater facilities that support the adjacent Findlay Creek community. The subject lands border lands zoned mineral extraction to the south which currently includes an active quarry site. **Figure 8** shows the current zoning of the subject lands and surrounding area.



**Figure 8** Current zoning of the subject lands is Rural Countryside. Lands surrounding the site are a range of residential, parks and open space, and mineral extraction zones.



## **2.4 Parkland**

A subsequent Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan exercise will determine what parks are required to support the subject lands and even the existing Leitrim community, with dedication to occur in accordance with the Parkland Dedication By-law and the Planning Act as part of future subdivision and site plan control approvals. Section 1.7 of this report describes the proposed development to include a proportion of the subject lands being allocated to parkland.



## 3 Policy Justification

### 3.1 Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on land use planning and development matters of provincial interest for the Province of Ontario. This direction is for the planning of strong, sustainable, and resilient communities for all people, for clean and healthy environments, and for strong and competitive economies. Under Section 3 of the Planning Act, decisions affecting planning matters “shall be consistent with” the PPS. As noted above, the PPS came into effect on October 20, 2024, replacing the Provincial Policy Statement 2020.

Policies of the PPS relevant to the proposed OPA are discussed in the below subsections.

#### 3.1.1 Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities

Section 2.1 Planning for People of the PPS provides policy guidance on providing an appropriate mix of densities and housing options to meet the projected population demands.

1. *As informed by provincial guidance, planning authorities shall base population and employment growth forecasts on Ontario Population Projections published by the Ministry of Finance and may modify, as appropriate.*
3. *At the time of creating a new official plan and each official plan update, sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years, informed by provincial guidance. Planning for infrastructure, public service facilities, strategic growth areas and employment areas may extend beyond this time horizon.*
4. *To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall:*
  - a) *maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are designated and available for residential development; and*
  - b) *maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned, including units in draft approved or registered plans.*
6. *Planning authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by:*
  - a) *accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses (including schools and associated child care facilities, long term care facilities, places of worship and cemeteries), recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;*
  - b) *improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and*
  - c) *improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.*

The subject lands are located adjacent to the established and expanding community of Findlay Creek and are well connected by the existing road network and in proximity to existing infrastructure, public services, active transportation links, parks, and open space. In the 2021 Census, the Findlay Creek community had





## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

a population of 14,089 persons. Expanding the urban area in this location will contribute to the addition of services for use by the proposed development and existing Findlay Creek community.

Section 2.2 Housing of the PPS provides guidance for promoting a range of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of a regional market area such as the City of Ottawa.

- 1. Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:
  - a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households, and coordinating land use planning and planning for housing with Service Managers to address the full range of housing options including affordable housing needs;*
  - b) permitting and facilitating:
    - 1. all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well being requirements of current and future residents, including additional needs housing and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and*
    - 2. all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas) for residential use, development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment, which results in a net increase in residential units in accordance with policy 2.3.1.3;**
  - c) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation; and*
  - d) requiring transit-supportive development and prioritizing intensification, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations.**

The proposed conceptual housing breakdown provides a high-level understanding of the type of development envisioned for the subject lands which includes a mix of detached, townhouse, and stacked dwellings. This high-level housing breakdown is based on a minimum target density of 35 dwelling units per net hectare. The specific breakdown may be further refined as part of a future community design plan or secondary plan process.

Section 2.3 provides general policy guidance on settlement areas and settlement area boundary expansions.

- 1. Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Within settlement areas, growth should be focused in, where applicable, strategic growth areas, including major transit station areas.*
- 2. Land use patterns within settlement areas should be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:
  - a) efficiently use land and resources*
  - b) optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities*
  - c) support active transportation*
  - d) are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and*
  - e) are freight-supportive.**
- 3. Planning authorities shall support general intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities, including by planning for a range and mix of housing options and prioritizing planning and investment in the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities.*



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

Ottawa's urban boundary and villages represent settlement areas. Generally, these areas then consist of built-up lands and greenfield lands, with the built-up lands typically being the areas where higher-order transit and components of a complete community are situated, and therefore where intensification is targeted and supported. Greenfield lands represent undeveloped lands positioned for development. Greenfield lands abutting established and expanding communities are generally most suitable for continued growth of a community. The proposed OPA would result in designating the subject lands as *Category 1 – Future Neighbourhood Overlay* to include them within the City's urban boundary with the aim of addressing the City's land need to accommodate its projected population growth to 2046. The subject lands were recently evaluated as part of the City's comprehensive OP process and were recommended by Staff for inclusion in the urban boundary for their appropriateness in advancing the goals of the Official Plan including for contributing to the establishment of a 15-minute community.

Further section 2.3.2 New Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions provides guidance on identifying a new settlement area or allowing settlement area boundary expansion. These criteria are discussed in detail below:

1. *In identifying a new settlement area or allowing a settlement area boundary expansion, planning authorities shall consider the following:*
  - a. *the need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses;*
  - c. *whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas;*
  - d. *the evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and, where avoidance is not possible, consider reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;*
  - e. *whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;*
  - f. *whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance; and*
  - g. *the new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.*



## **Planning Rationale**

### **Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

#### ***a) The need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses.***

The OP recognizes that Ottawa is a large municipality and is expected to grow 40% from 2018 to 2046. The Ministry of Finance's population projections for Ontario and Ottawa are based on detailed Statistics Canada data and the Ministry's own methodology. The Ministry recognizes that Ottawa is the fastest growing census division in Ontario. While the Official Plan anticipates a population growth of approximately 405,000 people within the noted horizon, the more recent Minister of Finance projections, which are to form the basis of OP growth forecasts per policy 2.1.1 of the PPS, demonstrate a much larger growth and subsequent need for housing to 2046. The most recent Ministry forecasts prepared in Summer 2023 forecast a population of 1.66 million persons in the City of Ottawa by 2046. The Ministry has recognized that population forecasts have increased due to a variety of factors including immigration to Canada, the City of Ottawa should be taking the same approach and account for forecasted growth to help address the housing crisis.

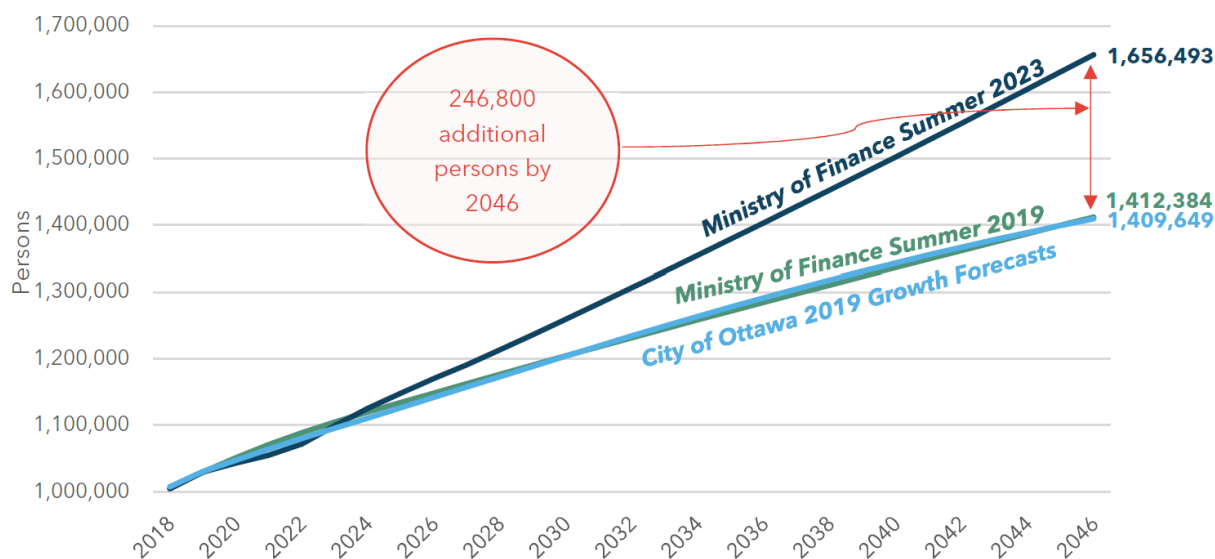
This rationale relies on the work undertaken by Parcel Economics Inc. in 2024 which investigated if it was reasonable to use the population projections prepared by the Ministry of Finance in assessing land needs in Ottawa till 2046. The report noted that immigration levels used in preparing the MoF forecasts were based on federal government policy and that significant increase in federal immigration targets since 2020 has had an impact on population growth in the province and the city. In 2020 the Federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada set a target of 401,000 new immigrants to the country in 2021, increasing to 421,000 new immigrants in 2023. More recently, the planned immigration target has been increased to 485,000 persons in 2024, increasing to 500,000 new immigrants in 2025 and 2026. The report notes that population projections prepared by the City of Ottawa in 2019 were prepared before the announced immigration targets in 2020.



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

#### City of Ottawa Population Forecast, 2018-2046



Source: Parcel based on Ontario Ministry of Finance Annual Population Projections, various years.

**Figure 9. Excerpt from the Parcel Economics report showing population forecast and difference between the City of Ottawa and Ministry of Finance**

Parcel Economics report found that the “City of Ottawa has not updated their population projections since 2019, to account for the higher Federal immigration targets, which were announced in 2020 and more recently in 2023”. The population growth forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa in 2007 and 2019 is generally consistent with the population growth projections prepared by the MoF around the same time (seen in **Figure 9**). The report found that the population forecast prepared by the MoF in Summer 2019 (around the same time the Ottawa 2019 Growth Forecasts were prepared), forecast a population of 1.4 million persons in the City of Ottawa by 2046. The MoF Summer 2019 forecasts are nearly the same as the forecasts prepared by the City in 2019 (a difference of 2,735 persons between 2018 and 2046, or a 0.7% difference in growth). Since then, the MoF has revisited their population forecasts to recognize increased immigration to Canada, and there is an expectation that the City of Ottawa should be taking the same approach to help address the housing crisis. Further, the same approach should be considered when evaluating land needs to 2046. Therefore, although the City of Ottawa 2019 Growth Forecasts are only five years old, the increase in international migration to Canada and the large share of immigrants settling in Ontario and the Ottawa Region has had a significant impact on population forecasts.

The result of this population growth change is that the City's Official Plan does not currently have an adequate supply of designated and available land within the urban boundary to meet the 15-year land need requirement of the PPS. The report concludes that the population forecasts prepared by the MoF for the City of Ottawa are now 18% higher than their projections from Spring 2019 and the forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa and contained in Growth Projections for the New Official Plan (Methods and



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment, 2018 to 2046). Accordingly, the City of Ottawa would need to accommodate 289,505 new dwelling units between 2018 and 2046. This is higher than the City of Ottawa 2019 Growth Forecasts, which estimates the need for 194,800 new units, resulting in the conclusion that the city fails to meet the 15-year land supply of designated and available lands in the Urban Boundary. Further, the report recommends that by proactively addressing these lands needs now, rather than when the forecasts are updated as part of the next Official Plan Review would be a logical path to follow.

Notwithstanding the fact that the City intends to complete that update by 2027, Section 6.1.7 of the PPS states, *“Where a planning authority must decide on a planning matter before their official plan has been updated to be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, or before other applicable planning instruments have been updated accordingly, it must still make a decision that is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.”*

The city at present fails to meet a minimum 15-year supply of designated and available land. In a recent Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) decision (OLT-24-001182 and OLT-25-000011), the OLT agreed that the 2024 PPS sets a minimum time period for the 15-year land supply, with no maximum time period. The decision states:

*“The Tribunal agrees that the 2024 PPS sets a minimum time period, with no maximum time period specified in the policy. In other words, if an authority had complied with this requirement within the minimum 15-year supply period, including additional lands within the urban boundary would not offend the policy as there is no maximum time period. Rather, it would only serve to increase the number of years for land supply in our Province which is known to have a housing crises and shortage of housing supply.”*

To address the growing population in accordance with the PPS, the proposed addition of subject lands to the urban boundary would support appropriate growth in a location that will support an existing community, will allow an efficient use of the subject lands that involves maximizing the availability of land while encouraging economic vitality. Expansions to existing settlement areas contribute to creating vibrant, modern, compact and efficient urban environments. The proposed addition of the subject lands will increase housing supply, encourage economic growth, and provide opportunity for efficient use and expansion of infrastructure. In achieving these objectives, the subject lands will provide opportunity for establishing the type of critical mass and services necessary to support Findlay Creek in becoming a more complete community.

Moreover, it is noted that this redesignation to *Category 1- Future Neighbourhood Overlay* is the first critical step to providing more residential land supply but it still does not address the immediate demand. As a first step it serves to position the City for consistency with the PPS. Following the proposed amendment to the OP, the site would still require a Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan process, followed by subdivision processes, which are complex approval processes requiring several years of consultation, negotiations, and detailed studies. The intent would be for first occupancy to be achieved within the planning horizon of the current Official Plan, understanding there are factors that will influence the timing of this such as those noted above as well as surrendering of the aggregate license and any necessary infrastructure upgrades.



***c) whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas***

The subject lands are not a designated Specialty Crop Area as defined by the PPS.

***d) the evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and, where avoidance is not possible, consider reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;***

The lands have been scored within the City of Ottawa's Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) for Agriculture. The LEAR system is a high-level decision-making tool that enables every agricultural property to be evaluated quantitatively to assess the capability of the soils on the land, the use of the land and other surrounding influences that might determine the suitability of the property for ongoing agricultural use or not. The subject lands scored 0-115 which represents the lowest quality land and is therefore not a prime agricultural area. The PPS includes policies to ensure that municipalities identify and protect "prime agricultural areas" for ongoing agriculture use. The subject lands are not prime agricultural areas.

***e) whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae***

A review of GeoOttawa aerial imagery (2022) and Google Streetview was conducted and there are no apparent livestock operations within or adjacent to the subject lands.

***f) whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance;***

The subject lands are not located in proximity to any active farms or farmland and will not negatively impact agricultural areas. The lands were not identified as significant agricultural lands in the City's Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) in its 2009 update, nor were the lands designated as an Agricultural Resource Area in the 2021 Official Plan. On that basis, no impact assessment is necessary.

***g) the new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.***

The subject lands, together with the rural designated lands along Bank Street and opposite the urban boundary, present as a logical area for urban expansion and development as they will support the continued pressures for growth of the Findlay Creek community, and will help it move towards a complete community capable of supporting greater investment in transit and other growth-related infrastructure and services.

It is noted that a recent Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) decision (OLT-24-001182 and OLT-25-000011) was rendered for two separate applications seeking to amend the City of Ottawa Official Plan for the purposes of urban boundary expansions. In that decision the OLT states there is a legislative intention to move away from the comprehensive review process for evaluation of urban boundary expansions. This is important to note since it clarifies there is no legislative requirement for an applicant to provide the same comprehensive analysis as prepared by the City as part of their 2022 Official Plan for the purpose of



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

supporting a privately initiated urban boundary expansion. Accordingly, the test for consideration of the proposed OPA is established by the PPS and the policy statements reviewed above.

In particular, the OLT ruled against requiring a Settlement Area Parcel Analysis (SAPA). This report was added as a requirement in the UVBE application process released by the City in October 2024. However, in the recent OLT decision, the Tribunal found this requirement “unreasonable” stating that a relevant discussion of the City’s criteria and scoring methodology for the evaluation of individual land candidate parcels for urban boundary expansion is acceptable evidence.

### 3.1.2 Infrastructure and Facilities

Section 3.1 General Policies for Infrastructure and Facilities contains policy direction on providing infrastructure and public service facilities in an efficient manner while also accommodating projected needs. Section 3.6 Sewage, Water and Stormwater provides policy direction specific to planning for sewage and water services for communities.

*1. Planning for sewage and water services shall:*

*a) accommodate forecasted growth in a timely manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services and existing private communal sewage services and private communal water services;*

*b) ensure that these services are provided in a manner that:*

*1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;*

*2. is feasible and financially viable over their life cycle;*

*3. protects human health and safety, and the natural environment, including the quality and quantity of water; and*

*4. aligns with comprehensive municipal planning for these services, where applicable.*

*c) promote water and energy conservation and efficiency;*

*d) integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process;*

*e) consider opportunities to allocate, and re-allocate if necessary, the unused system capacity of municipal water services and municipal sewage services to support efficient use of these services to meet current and projected needs for increased housing supply; and*

*f) be in accordance with the servicing options outlined through policies 3.6.2, 3.6.3, 3.6.4 and 3.6.5*

Policy 3.6.2 states that municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety. The intent would be for the subject lands to be supported by full municipal services.

Policy 3.6.8 states that planning for stormwater management shall:

*Planning for stormwater management shall:*

*a) be integrated with planning for sewage and water services and ensure that systems are optimized, retrofitted as appropriate, feasible and financially viable over their full life cycle;*

*b) minimize, or, where possible, prevent or reduce increases in stormwater volumes and contaminant loads;*





## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

- c) minimize erosion and changes in water balance including through the use of green infrastructure;*
- d) mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment;*
- e) maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces;*
- f) promote best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency, and low impact development; and*
- g) align with any comprehensive municipal plans for stormwater management that consider cumulative impacts of stormwater from development on a watershed scale.*

Policy 3.9.1 states that healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by:

- a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;*
- b) planning and providing for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities in the distribution of a full range of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;*
- c) providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and*
- d) recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.*

A Step 1 Infrastructure Capacity Assessment (ICA) was submitted to the City in January 2025 but a response has not yet been received. We will review the assessment results to determine the capacity of municipal water and sewage services to meet the projected needs for the subject lands. At the recommendation of City staff the LLG have paid for the Step 2 ICA in advance of the Step 1 ICA being completed. The Step 2 ICA will indicate what upgrades are required to accommodate the subject lands.

The proposed OPA is not intended to establish the final land use strategy for the subject lands, however, it provides a high-level breakdown of potential housing options and estimated population. A future Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan process will determine the details such as land use, densities, location of services, and transportation network.

## 3.2 Official Plan

In 2022, the Minister approved the City's new Official Plan which established that a portion of future growth will be accommodated through the development of existing greenfield land supply and intensification within the built-up area. However, not all future growth can be met through existing greenfield development infill and intensification. Previously, the growth management strategy identified a requirement of 1287 hectares of land (12.87 km<sup>2</sup>) to meet the city's needs for residential land supply to the year 2046. The amount of land required was calculated using a balanced scenario of increasing rates of intensification in the existing urban area balanced with modest expansion of greenfield development at locations that are largely transit-supported and can be developed as walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods (based on the prescribed Selection Criteria).

The OP stated that Ottawa's population is projected to grow 40 per cent from 2018 to 2046, reaching an estimated 1.4 million people and supported the need to have an appropriate range and mix of housing that



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

considers the geographic distribution of new dwelling types and/or sizes to 2046. Further, the OP established that *“sufficient land shall be designated for growth to meet the projected requirement for population, housing, employment and other purposes for a period of 25 years in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement”*.

The City of Ottawa used the *PPS 2020* in effect at the time as a guiding document to develop the *Official Plan (2022)*. The 2020 PPS only permitted urban expansion to take place as part of a municipal-led comprehensive official plan review.

The Provincial Planning Statement came into effect in 2024 and requires planning authorities use population forecasts from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to ensure that sufficient land be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses for a time horizon of at least 20 years but not more than 30 years. The PPS 2024 requires that planning authorities maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential development lands which are designated and available. As a result of a significantly higher population in the 25-year planning horizon shown in the Ministry of Finance’s latest (2024) population projections, the OP requires more land to address the additional land need. The MoF’s updated population projections released in Fall 2024 for the City of Ottawa forecasts a population projection of 1.66 million people by 2046 compared to the 1.4 million people forecast completed by City staff in 2019.

Policy 2.3.2 of PPS 2024, New Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions, permits private applications for additions to settlement areas outside of comprehensive reviews by the municipality which is explained in the Section 4.1 of this report.

In response to this, City staff released a report *“New Urban and Village Boundary Expansion Official Plan Application Process”* dated October 16, 2024, that went to joint Planning and Housing Committee/Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee meeting and incorrectly directs a private expansion application to use the population and growth projections as contained in the approved Official Plan 2022. Policy 6.1.6 of the PPS is clear in that a decision on a planning matter must be consistent with the PPS even when an Official Plan has not yet been updated for consistency with the PPS.

In the following subsections of this report, we have evaluated applicable policies of the Official Plan in support of the proposed amendment.

### 3.2.1 Strategic Directions

The Official Plan proposes five (5) broad policy directions as the foundation to becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America over the next century. These moves include the following:

***Big Policy Move 1: Achieve, by the end of the planning period, more growth by intensification than by greenfield development.***



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

Ottawa is projected to grow by 402,000 people by 2046, requiring 194,800 new private households. The City will accommodate this growth within its existing neighbourhoods and villages, in undeveloped greenfield areas within Ottawa's urban boundary and by expanding the City's urban boundary. The City's approach will have significant impacts on the evolution of Ottawa's neighbourhoods, on housing options and affordability and on our ability to meet our climate change responsibilities. Not all of the growth forecasted can be accommodated through intensification.

**The proposed OPA seeking to bring the subject lands within the urban boundary will contribute to land supply necessary for housing to satisfy Ottawa's projected growth. This directly responds to the Ministry of Finance's growth projections for Ottawa which highlights a shortfall in the OP's projections and therefore a need for additional land supply.**

***Big Policy Move 2: By 2046, the majority of trips in the city will be made by sustainable transportation.***

The overarching mobility goal of the Official Plan is that by the end of its planning horizon, more than half of all trips will be made by sustainable transportation such as walking, cycling, transit or carpooling.

The OP's goal is to increase the share of trips by sustainable modes of transportation as 40% of Ottawa's current greenhouse gas emissions are transportation related. Supporting active transportation and transit is also crucial to creating a healthier and more equitable and inclusive city, where anyone can get to work, to school and to daily activities without needing a car. As a result, safe and convenient sustainable transportation options are fundamental to 15-minute neighbourhoods and vibrant communities that support economic activity and social interaction throughout the day and evening.

**The subject lands are in proximity to the Trillium Line (Line 2) LRT that runs north-south between Bayview and Limebank Stations. Leitrim Station located on Gilligan Road serves as a transportation hub connecting residents to downtown Ottawa and other areas. At present the community of Findlay Creek and surrounding areas are supported by Leitrim Station, but lack the critical mass to justify a cost-effective expansion of bus transit services. The subject lands will contribute to and benefit from the existing transit system therefore reducing automobile dependence as promoted by the OP.**

***Big Policy Move 3: Improve our sophistication in urban and community design and put this knowledge to the service of good urbanism at all scales, from the largest to the very small.***

The goal of this Plan is to contribute towards stronger, more inclusive, and more vibrant neighbourhoods and Villages in a way that reflects the differences from highly urbanized and dense areas in the downtown, to lower-density suburban areas farther out. The Plan should also contribute towards stronger, more inclusive, and vibrant neighbourhoods and Villages that reflect and integrate Ottawa's economic, racial and gender diversity in every neighbourhood.



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

The subject lands propose to develop as a low-to-medium density housing offering a mix of housing options conveniently located adjacent to the developing Findlay Creek community.

***Big Policy Move 4: Embed environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy into the framework of our planning policies.***

The Official Plan contains bold policies to encourage the evolution of neighbourhoods into healthy, inclusive, and walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods with a diverse mix of land uses, including a range of housing, shops, services, local access to healthy and affordable food, schools, employment, mature trees, greenspaces, and pathways. It also includes policies to help the City achieve its targets on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the increase in the urban forest canopy as part of addressing its resiliency to the effects of climate change. At subsequent stages of planning, should this application be approved, specific design principles and features can be included in a Community Design Plan and/or Secondary Plan.

**By adding more population to an existing area underserved by amenities as shown in the City's 15-minute baseline analysis, more amenities and transit can become economically viable, which will improve the capacity of the Findlay Creek/Leitrim area to improve its 15-minute features.**

In 2023, a paper titled Residential density and 20-minute neighbourhoods: A multi-neighbourhood destination location optimisation approach<sup>1</sup>, highlighted 20-minute neighbourhoods as key to promoting local living and active travel. We reference this paper as it provides a current discussion of the concept of “complete communities” and recognizes that “*land uses and urban design must integrate supportive active transportation infrastructure and build upon concepts of complete streets*”. It further explores the idea that the cost of 20-minute neighbourhoods is negatively correlated with dwelling density. The paper recommends that communities of 15,000 to 30,000 residents are more likely to be serviced by a broad range of amenities and community facilities. Increased dwelling density is vital because it ensures that there are employment opportunities, services, and economically viable public transport.

As mentioned earlier in this report, Findlay Creek community is home to approximately 14,000 residents and continues to expand with new growth. The subject lands present a good opportunity to be added to the urban boundary and subsequently be subject to a Secondary Planning process to ensure “*delivery of diverse amenities over time and urban design that creates connected street networks, residential and destination diversity, and neighbourhood desirability*”.

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<sup>1</sup> Residential density and 20-minute neighbourhoods: A multi-neighbourhood destination location optimisation approach authored by Afshin Jafari , Dharendra Singh , Billie Giles-Corti [Residential density and 20-minute neighbourhoods: A multi-neighbourhood destination location optimisation approach - ScienceDirect](#)



**The proposed OPA seeks to develop the subject lands by bringing them into the urban boundary in order to support the growth of Findlay Creek through the logical development of adjacent lands. The addition of the subject lands will support the policies of the Official Plan by contributing to the creation of a 15-minute community which will support environmental, climate and health resiliency policies.**

***Big Policy Move 5: Embed economic development into the framework of our planning policies.***

A range of interconnected factors influence economic sustainability and growth. In the Official Plan, an economic development lens is taken to policies throughout the Plan spanning the rural, suburban, and urban contexts. While land use policies in the Official Plan alone do not ensure economic development, they provide an important foundation for other City initiatives and programs to support economic development and create a context for business and entrepreneurship to succeed.

**The proposed OPA will help facilitate a dynamic community supporting economic growth in proximity to the growing community of Findlay Creek. The additional residential growth will provide the critical mass necessary to support existing and future retail and amenity opportunities.**

### **3.2.2 Growth Management Framework**

Section 3 of the Official Plan establishes the City's framework to accommodate projected population, household, and employment growth to the year 2046 and beyond. The framework seeks to provide sufficient development opportunities and an appropriate range of choice by locating and designing growth to increase sustainable transportation mode shares and use existing infrastructure efficiently, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Ottawa's population is projected to grow by 40% during the OP's time horizon, reaching 1.4 million residents by 2046. Section 3.1- Designate Sufficient Land for Growth, states:

- 3) *The urban area and villages shall be the focus of growth and development.*
- 4) *The City will allocate household growth targets as follows:*
  - a) *93 per cent within the urban area where:*
    - i) *47 per cent is within the urban area that is built-up or developed as of July 1, 2018, and*
    - ii) *46 per cent is within the greenfield portion of the urban area*

The proposed addition of the subject lands will accommodate a mixed-use development with residential growth adjacent to an existing built-up urban area. It is our conclusion that the subject lands have strong adherence to the Growth Management Strategy criteria, Five Big Moves, and Growth Management Framework of the Official Plan, and the subject lands satisfy all of the criteria and minimum scoring under the Growth Management Strategy. We believe the requested addition of will result in the efficient management of the subject lands to add to the city's land supply for housing.



### **3.2.3 Transect and Designations**

The proposed Official Plan Amendment seeks to bring the subject lands within the urban boundary by amending Schedule C17 and designate the subject lands as Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay where Category 1 is described as a new urban expansion area.

Policy 5.6.2 establishes that the Future Neighbourhood Overlay is applied to lands that have been added to the urban boundary to accommodate City growth in the Suburban Transect and that form part of the Urban Greenfield Area. The Future Neighbourhood Overlay is intended to guide development in these areas towards creating walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods that are well served by rapid transit.

- 1) Development may only receive draft approval or final approval on land within the Future Neighbourhoods Overlay once the overlay has been removed through an Official Plan amendment. Removal of the overlay can only occur once the policies of this section have been satisfied.*
- 2) The underlying designation within the Future Neighbourhoods Overlay is Neighbourhood. Through the Official Plan amendment to remove the overlay, other designations may be established, where applicable, and shall be consistent with designations of the parent Official Plan.*
- 3) Lands within Category 1 and 2 include individual parcels or clusters of land requiring an extension or upgrade of services including transit and infrastructure (being water, wastewater and stormwater). In addition to the other requirements listed in this section, all of the following must be satisfied prior to the Future Neighbourhoods Overlay being removed for lands that are not within the catchment area of an existing rapid transit station (including those under construction) or a funded rapid transit station and/or have infrastructure servicing issues that would require major upgrades to an existing system and/or unplanned extension of infrastructure:*
  - a) A Council-approved funding source and/or legal funding mechanisms is required where infrastructure servicing issues need major upgrades to an existing system and/or an unplanned extension of water, wastewater and stormwater services, to service the lands within the overlay;*
  - b) Provision of rapid or equivalent quality transit service within a 1.9 km radius of the centroid of the proposed subdivision, as well as sufficient road connections and system capacity to accommodate the forecast level of demand. Road and transit facilities must either be operational at the time of development approval or have sufficient funding secured for their implementation through a Council approved mechanism. In establishing equivalent transit service, consideration should be given to both the frequency and quality (reliability/speed) of transit operations; and*
  - c) Completion of a transportation study to the satisfaction of the City which:*
    - i) Identifies a mode share that is consistent with, or better than, the objectives of the Big Policy Move 2 of this Official Plan;*
    - ii) Identifies any downstream transit or road capacity deficiencies triggered or made worse by the new development;*
    - iii) Identifies measures to address these deficiencies (including improvements to the road, transit and active transportation networks); and*
    - iv) Sets out an implementation timeframe for each measure corresponding to the anticipated phasing of development*



## Planning Rationale

### Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion

*5) A Community Design Plan including applicable studies per section 12 shall be approved by Council and that approval may be concurrent with the adoption of an Official Plan Amendment which would remove the Future Neighbourhood Overlay and establish a Secondary Plan for the lands.*

*6) Notwithstanding Policy 5), an update of an existing Community Design Plan or Secondary Plan to include the new land area may be acceptable when the proposed development is adjacent to an area subject to an existing such plan and the scale of the addition is commensurate to an update process, provided supporting studies, such as a master servicing study, are also updated.*

The proposed OPA is seeking to add the subject lands into the urban boundary and recognizes that future detailed study will be essential to define desired growth.

On October 9, 2024, City staff presented a report to the Joint meeting of the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee and Planning and Housing Committee entitled *New Urban and Village Boundary Expansion Official Plan Application Process*. The report outlined a new process to support a boundary expansion request. Stantec has supported the LLG in submitting the Step 1 Infrastructure Capacity Assessment which is currently under the City's review.





## 4 Supporting Documents

### 4.1 South March Lands, Ottawa – Ministry of Finance Population Forecasts, Parcel Economics

Parcel Economics Inc. was retained by the South March Landowners Group for a similar application to include their lands in the Urban Boundary. This rationale relies on the findings of a report prepared in 2024 by Parcel Economics Inc. as it is not area specific and provides a comprehensive summary of population forecast used by the Ministry of Finance (MoF). The purpose of the Parcel report was to determine if it is reasonable to use the population projections prepared by the MoF in assessing land needs in the City of Ottawa to 2046. The report stated that the population forecasts prepared by the MoF for the City of Ottawa are now 18% higher than their projections from Spring 2019 and the forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa and contained in *Growth Projections for the New Official Plan: Methods and Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment, 2018 to 2046*.

Key findings of the report are:

- The population growth forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa in 2007 and 2019 are generally consistent with the population growth projections prepared by the MoF around the same time (difference of 0.3% to 0.7% in 2007 and 2019, respectively). The consistency between the forecasts suggests that if the City of Ottawa were to update their population forecasts today, they would be in line with the MoF Summer 2023 forecasts.
- A review of historical MoF forecasts between 2005 and 2018 demonstrates that these forecasts have been reasonably accurate in forecasting population growth in Ottawa over the preceding 5-year period. Further, any revisions to the long-term forecasts generally resulted in MoF anticipating a larger population in the City of Ottawa.
- The MoF population projections have historically been consistent with population forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa up to 2019 and the longer-term population forecasts do not change significantly year-to-year. The report recommends that the Summer 2023 MoF forecasts should be used in assessing land needs in Ottawa to 2046.
- The MoF revises population forecasts from year-to-year for the City of Ottawa. It is noted that that the revised forecasts typically result in the 2046 population in the city being larger than estimated in the previous years' projection. This reduces the risk that the city would expand their Urban Boundary beyond what is needed to 2046.
- Further the Parcel report concludes that the population forecasts prepared by the MoF for the City of Ottawa are now 18% higher than their projections from Spring 2019 and the forecasts prepared by the City of Ottawa and contained in *Growth Projections for the New Official Plan (Methods and Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment, 2018 to 2046)*. Accordingly, the City of Ottawa would need to accommodate 289,505 new dwelling units between 2018 and 2046. This is



higher than the City of Ottawa 2019 Growth Forecasts, which estimates the need for 194,800 new units, summarizing that the city fails to meet the 15-year land supply of designated and available lands in the Urban Boundary.

- The conclusion of the Parcel Economics report is that City of Ottawa Official Plan growth numbers are too low and do not reflect future growth forecasted by the MoF which means Ottawa does not have sufficient land to be consistent with the 2024 PPS.

## **4.2 Environmental Considerations**

A Natural Heritage Screening (NHS) was completed by Stantec for the subject lands and lands within 120 m of the subject lands. The purpose of the desktop review was to identify Natural Heritage Features and Areas (NHFA) that may overlap the Study Area which includes species at risk (SAR) and their habitats, Areas of Natural Scientific Interest (ANSI), Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs), Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH), unevaluated wetlands, watercourses, fish nurseries, linkages and wildlife corridors, significant woodlands, and significant valleylands.

A variety of background documents and sources of information were consulted during the preparation of this report, to identify recent records (i.e., records from 2005 or later) of SAR and species of conservation concern (SOCC) within the Study Area.

The report identifies that the subject lands are within the South Nation Conservation (SNC) regulated areas and on lands designated as non-significant wetlands and woodlands. The report concluded that no ANSIs, PSWs, fish nurseries, linkages and wildlife corridors, significant woodlands, or significant valleylands are within the subject lands. However, further investigation is warranted to determine potential impacts in or adjacent to wetlands, woodlands, SAR habitat, SWH, and watercourses, and provide appropriate mitigation measures prior to development.

## **4.3 Transportation Considerations**

A Transportation Report was completed by Stantec in support of the Urban and Village Boundary Expansion (UVBE) Official Plan Amendment (OPA). The report identifies that the current transportation network near the subject land consists of the existing suburban and rural road network in the Findlay Creek community. According to the proposed development unit breakdown, the total site generated trips are projected to be 4,032 two-way person trips in the AM peak hour and 4,345 two-way person trips in the PM peak hour.

The report notes that Bank Street between Leitrim Road and Conroy Road is projected to be over capacity in the 2046 Future Background conditions. Based on high-level estimates, site-generated trips may cause sections of Bank Street and Hawthorne Road near the lands to be over capacity and recommends that further opportunities can be explored in the future to ensure that the site's transportation network supports 15-minute neighbourhoods to connect residents with local destinations, where sustainable transportation is prioritized, and uses the existing and planned transportation infrastructure in an efficient manner.



## **Planning Rationale**

### **Leitrim Landowners Group – Urban and Village Boundary Expansion**

The report recognizes that the subject lands benefit from access to existing collectors and various points of connections to key arterials in the area like Bank, Leitrim, and Hawthorne north of Leitrim. Planned changes to the road network like the committed widening of Bank Street from Leitrim to Blais, and extension of Earl Armstrong to Bank Street as a Priority Project indicate future infrastructure projects that are intended to support growth in the Findlay Creek area. The subject lands would help create critical mass to support these future transit projects and ensure adequate ridership not only on these corridors, but also potentially Leitrim Station via enhancement of existing Findlay Creek bus routes.

## **4.4 Climate Change Master Plan Considerations**

The Climate Change Master Plan is the City's overarching framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to the current and future effects of climate change. Although, premature to relate the plan to the proposed OPA, the subject lands provide an opportunity for robust planning to create a complete Leitrim community, 15-minute neighbourhoods well supported by active transportation and transit, enhancing the quality of life for existing and new residents.



## **5 Conclusions**

The Official Plan recognizes that the City is growing, and this growth presents significant challenges such as provision of a range of housing choices, encouraging transportation reliability, and improving public amenities and services.

It is our professional opinion that the redesignation of the subject lands, to include them as Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay on Schedule C17, would be an efficient use of land and logical extension of services to permit growth and development for the following reasons:

- The proposed redesignation application is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2024) by seeking to develop larger, underutilized parcels of land in proximity to existing services and amenities. The proposed boundary expansion will accommodate a range of housing options, ample greenspace for recreation, and may use and contribute to existing public service facilities and infrastructure.
- There is a need to expand the boundary to provide a sufficient supply of lands to meet the 15-year supply requirement of the PPS based on the requirement to use the Ministry of Finance population forecast. The subject property is ideally located to meet the City's objectives while achieving the necessary land supply.
- The redesignation application and proposed development conforms to the goals, objectives, and policies of the Official Plan. The lands are in proximity to the urban boundary and will help with the creation of a 15-minute community through expansion of employment, retail, and parks. The density and housing choices proposed for the subject lands help achieve the City's objectives for growth management to accommodate the projected growth in population. We also highlight that the boundary expansion will contribute to the existing Findlay Creek community becoming a complete community.
- After being added to the urban area on Scheduled C17, the subject lands will follow a Secondary Plan process or Community Design Plan in accordance with the *Annex 4: Local Plan Framework* and *Section 12 – Local Plan of the Official Plan* to outline community design and goals that support a 15-minute neighbourhood concept.
- The proposed future development of the subject lands will require the lands to be rezoned through a future Zoning By-law Amendment application to permit the proposed development. The future zoning would allow for a more compact redevelopment of the lands.

Accordingly, we recommend approval of the proposed Official Plan Amendment to redesignated them as *Category 1 - Future Neighbourhood Overlay* on Schedule C17, add the subject lands into the City's Urban Boundary, and support the City's requirement under the PPS to provide a 15-year supply of land designated and available for residential development.



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