

April 30 2020

To: Mayor Jim Watson, City of Ottawa  
Jan Harder, Chair of the Planning Committee, Ottawa City Council  
Eli El-Chantry, Chair of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, Ottawa City Council

Copy: Councillor Mathieu Fleury, Ottawa City Council

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I'm writing to you today concerning the upcoming decision of Council on the urban boundary. Before doing that, on behalf of the residents of Lowertown, I want to thank you all for your hard work in helping to keep Ottawa residents safe during the current COVID-19 pandemic and in moving forward with the development of the new Official Plan.

During this term of Council you have declared both a Climate Emergency and a Housing and Homelessness Emergency. We applaud these steps because they acknowledge what residents of Ottawa truly care about: the affordability, livability and sustainability of our community. In keeping with these declarations, we in Lowertown urge you to vote for an Official Plan "land budget" that does NOT allow expansion of the urban boundary. Instead, we want the city to grow through intensification within the existing urban footprint, in an environmentally sustainable way and with respect for the heritage and character of existing neighbourhoods. We believe that Ottawa can no longer afford a pattern of urban development that extends municipal services further out, paves over farmland and rural areas, causes the loss of green spaces and woodlands, and compounds the problems of car dependency. By now it is also well understood that remote and sprawling subdivisions do not create the affordable housing needed by Ottawa's diverse communities and they add substantially to municipal operating costs.

We also acknowledge that saying no to urban expansion means saying yes to greater density within the current urban boundary. The Lowertown Community Association supports the addition of more residential accommodation in its community primarily using mid-rise developments (6-9 stories) along major arteries, without impinging on existing parklands and green spaces. Through such measures the population of Lowertown could readily be expanded by several thousand residents. The challenge is to do it right, by creating policies that bring the benefits of urban life to all neighbourhoods in a culturally diverse city. The city has set out important policy directions in the *Five Big Moves* document. While these need to be fully articulated it is clear that they lend support to an official plan and overall direction that maintains the urban boundary and prevents urban sprawl. The City's plan to foster transitions to "15 minute neighbourhoods" is a step in that direction. Critically, it should also integrate green building

principles and retain, renovate and retrofit viable existing dwellings to meet required energy efficiency and low carbon footprints. Lowertown is already a “15 Minute Neighbourhood” and we are ready to welcome new residents.

Thank you for your attention to our comments and for your dedication to the well-being of our city, today and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norman Moyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Norman Moyer  
President, Lowertown Community Association