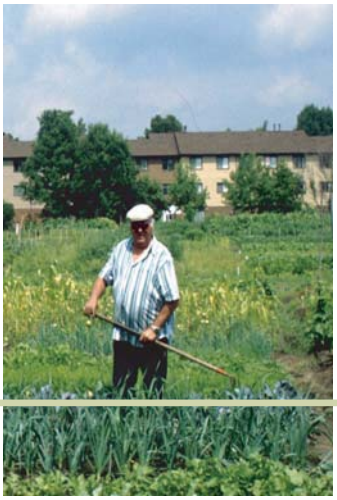
# Greenspace Master Plan

## Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces

August 2006



City services
3-1-1
TTY
613-580-2401

ottawa.ca

# Greenspace Master Plan

***Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces***

**Publication: 4-01**
City of Ottawa, 2006
*Aussi disponible en Français*

**Information**
Tel. : 613-580-2400
Department of Planning and Growth Management
www.ottawa.ca

# Index

Summary....iii

1 A Greenspace Master Plan....1

1.1 Setting the Context....1

1.2 The Greenspace Master Plan and the Ottawa Official Plan....2

1.3 What is Greenspace?....3

1.3.1 Natural Land....4
1.3.2 Open Space and Leisure Land....4
1.3.3 Other Open Space....5

1.4 Objectives for Ottawa's Greenspace....6

1.4.1 Ottawa 20/20....6
1.4.2 Greenspace Objectives....7

1.5 The Structure of this Plan....7

2 Identifying Ottawa's Greenspaces and the Urban Greenspace Network....9

2.1 Taking Inventory....9

2.1.1 Data Sources and Assigned Values....10

2.2 Ottawa's Natural Lands....12

2.2.1 Wetlands....13
2.2.2 Forests and Woodlands....13
2.2.3 River, Stream and Creek Corridors....14
2.2.4 Escarpments and Steep Slopes....15
2.2.5 The Policy and Regulatory Framework for Natural Lands....15
2.2.6 Current Initiatives to Secure Ottawa's Natural Lands....16

2.3 Ottawa's Open Space and Leisure Lands....16

2.3.1 Public Parks, Sports Fields, and Multi-Use Pathways....17
2.3.2 Other Publicly Owned Lands....17
2.3.3 Privately Owned Lands....18
2.3.4 The Policy and Regulatory Framework for Open Space and Leisure Lands....18
2.3.5 Ongoing Initiatives for Securing Open Space and Leisure Lands....19

2.4 Ottawa's Urban Greenspace Network....19

2.4.1 A Network Approach....19
2.4.2 Building on Past Experience....20
2.4.3 What is the Urban Greenspace Network?....21
2.4.4 Building the Urban Greenspace Network....22
2.4.5 Strategies to Build the Urban Greenspace Network....23
2.4.6 Multi-Use Pathways....24
2.4.7 Green Streets....25

3 Achieving the Vision ..... 27
3.1 Introduction ..... 27
3.2 Adequate Greenspace ..... 27
3.2.1 Current Provisions - Targets and Challenges ..... 27
3.2.2 Keeping Pace with Change ..... 29
3.2.3 Summary - Strategies for Achieving an Adequate Amount of Greenspace ..... 34
3.3 Accessible Greenspace ..... 35
3.3.1 Strategies for Achieving Accessible Greenspace ..... 37
3.4 Quality Greenspace ..... 37
3.4.1 Strategies for Achieving Quality Greenspace ..... 38
3.5 Connected Greenspace ..... 39
3.5.1 Strategies for Achieving Connected Greenspaces ..... 40
3.6 Sustainable Greenspace ..... 41
3.6.1 Strategies for Achieving Sustainable Greenspace ..... 41

4 Implementation ..... 43
4.1 Implementation: Policies ..... 44
4.1.1 Land Use Planning ..... 44
4.1.2 Development Review Process ..... 45
4.1.3 Undertaking Public Works and Building Infrastructure ..... 46
4.1.4 Partnering with Others ..... 47
4.1.5 Managing Land ..... 47
4.1.6 Land Acquisition ..... 48
4.1.7 Monitoring and Building Our Knowledge Base ..... 50
4.2 Implementation: A Three-Year Plan ..... 50

5 Appendices ..... 53
5.1 Appendix A - Land Securement Tools ..... 54
5.2 Appendix B – Greenspace Acquisition Policy ..... 57

.

## Summary

Ottawa residents are passionate about their greenspaces because the city's parks and forests are the source of a great deal of the pleasure that comes from living here. These greenspaces are the legacy of visionary community builders in the past: federal planners who constructed scenic parkways radiating outwards from Parliament Hill, homebuilders who built communities for returning veterans around central parks and playgrounds, local municipal councillors who assembled land along rivers and other waterways well before the first houses appeared.

While Ottawa can be proud of this green heritage, it cannot be complacent. With a population projected to increase by almost 50 per cent by 2021, the City will be hard-pressed to maintain the high standards of the past as new neighbourhoods are built and established ones redevelop. Fortunately, the City has never been better positioned to meet this challenge: with amalgamation of 11 local municipalities and a regional government in 2001, a single municipal government is now in place to provide leadership and pursue a greenspace vision in partnership with other levels of government, the private sector and the community.

The purpose of the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* is to express Council's vision for greenspace in the urban area and set policies for how this vision can be pursued over the next three years and beyond. That vision is firmly rooted in the principles residents expressed in 2001 when they developed the Ottawa 20/20 plans to manage the city's future growth. As the city grows, there is to be an adequate supply of greenspace, accessible to all residents. It will be linked, to allow for movement through green corridors, and it will be high quality and sustainable, minimizing the need for human intervention and public spending.

Council's vision for greenspace is broad and takes in a continuum of lands, ranging from waterways and remnant woodlands to manicured downtown pocket parks. It also includes lands that are not usually considered as greenspace, such as stormwater management ponds and other infrastructure lands, plus the landscaped lands around major institutions and business parks. One of the major accomplishments of the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* is that it inventories all the greenspaces in the urban area and shows which spaces are the most valuable in terms of their contribution to natural lands or open space and leisure uses.

An Urban Greenspace Network is the focal point of Council's greenspace vision. Building on the land inventory, the Urban Greenspace Network is a continuum of natural lands and open space and leisure lands that in time could connect every home in Ottawa to a larger network of greenspace that spans the

urban area. Much of this network now exists but many key linkages and features are yet to be secured. The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* proposes two strategies to advance this work:

- Implement key sections of the recreational pathway system identified in the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region:2006 Strategic Plan* and request staff to prepare a plan and budget estimate to do so.

- Prepare a Green Street Strategy to explore ways that Green Streets could be used to provide connections within the Urban Greenspace Network and contribute to the greening of municipal infrastructure.

Several ongoing initiatives will potentially help build the Urban Greenspace Network and add to the city's greenspace lands. These include an evaluation of all natural areas remaining in the urban area completed in 2006 that will serve as a basis for a strategy to secure the priority sites through acquisition and other means. Also, a shortfall in large sports fields has been identified through past studies and a strategy has been developed to create more sites through partnerships.

In addition to these and other ongoing initiatives, the City can build the Urban Greenspace Network and pursue its greenspace objectives by adopting a "Greenspace Also" approach to municipal business. The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* proposes that the City conduct many of its day-to-day municipal functions with a view to expanding the amount of greenspace in the city, increasing its quality, and enhancing residents' access to it. For example, it proposes that in fulfilling its responsibilities for land use planning, the City pursue its greenspace objectives through official plan policies and the zoning bylaw, and by setting targets for greenspace and ensuring these are met through plans for new and redeveloping communities. Through the development review process, the City can pursue landscaping and open space features that support a high quality of urban design. As a builder of public works and infrastructure, the City can ensure that projects such as stormwater management ponds and other infrastructure contribute to greenspaces by incorporating pathways or providing natural habitat. It can manage its own natural land wisely and evaluate whether surplus land has a greenspace contribution before releasing it for sale. The City can partner with local communities to prepare management plans for natural areas and with the federal government and others to achieve common goals. It can commit to acquiring greenspace using established criteria and a public process, and it can explore alternatives to acquisition.

The City's requirements for greenspace and opportunities to provide it will continue to evolve as the city grows and changes. While greenspace planning will need to keep pace with that change, as a set of strategies and as a way of doing city business, the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* provides a way forward for the City to achieve its greenspace vision.

# 1 A Greenspace Master Plan

## 1.1 Setting the Context

Ottawa is distinguished as a capital city by the abundance of parks, rivers, and woodlands that contribute to the high quality of life enjoyed by its residents. However, growth projections anticipate that by 2021, Ottawa's population will increase by 50 per cent to almost 1.2 million people. Accommodating this growth poses significant challenges to conserving the city's natural resources and maintaining its high standard of parkland. The contribution that greenspace makes to the overall quality of life will become even more important as the city grows.

Ottawa has never been better positioned to meet this challenge. With the amalgamation of 11 municipalities and one regional government in 2001, the new City of Ottawa has a unique opportunity to develop a view of greenspace that is comprehensive in its reach and that can be co-ordinated with other greenspace partners. It can build on the strong foundation of greenspace created in the past by the former municipalities and senior levels of government. Many of the former local municipalities extended their mandates for parks and recreation facilities to preserve woodlands and river features within their boundaries. The former Region of Ottawa-Carleton acquired environmental features, such as the Marlborough Forest and portions of the Carp Hills. Provincial parks were established around other natural features, such as Fitzroy Harbour, while provincial agencies such as the Conservation Authorities and provincial ministries managed other public lands. At the federal level, the National Capital Commission used greenspace as the fundamental, defining element of the National Capital Region, bounding the urban area of the 1950s with a 20,000 ha Greenbelt and introducing green parkways along the city's canals and riverfronts.

With so many levels of government involved in greenspace, however, there was no common strategy for providing greenspace in the city. Each party had its own mandate, priorities and ability to contribute to greenspace. With amalgamation, there is now one municipality to take the lead in delivering greenspace to Ottawa communities and to partner with other levels of government, the private sector, and the community to provide greenspace for the future. But with this opportunity for leadership comes responsibility: the onus for building on the legacy of the past and maintaining high standards into the future rests with the City of Ottawa.

One of Ottawa's early greenspaces, Major's Hill Park, provides views to the Capital's prominent landmarks.
Courtesy of the National Capital Commission

The purpose of the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* is to express Council's policy on greenspace in the urban area of the city. The Plan describes the lands that can be considered as greenspace and sets strategic

directions for managing and extending this supply in order to achieve the community's vision for greenspace. This vision is expressed in terms of five objectives that guide this plan: adequacy of supply, accessibility to all communities, quality in design and character, connectivity among greenspaces, and sustainability through management plans. The City has a range of tools to achieve these objectives; many are associated with the City's land use planning responsibilities but others are available through the City's own public works and projects undertaken with other partners. Adoption of the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* is timely, as the new City evaluates the remaining natural features within the urban area and contemplates new capital projects for parks and leisure areas.

This is a master plan for the greenspaces in the urban area of Ottawa, a small portion of the city's overall land mass defined in the Ottawa Official Plan as the greenbelt and the adjacent lands where urban development is permitted. Throughout the plan, however, reference is made to greenspaces that extend beyond the urban boundary or exist outside it, since natural areas do not respect planning boundaries. A work program for natural lands and open space and leisure lands in the rural area will be prepared in 2007, coordinating with other studies in the rural area.

## 1.2 The Greenspace Master Plan and the Ottawa Official Plan

In June 2001, the City initiated the Ottawa 20/20 consultation with residents on their vision for the new city, culminating in City Council's adoption of five plans for managing the City's economy, human services, arts and heritage, environment and land use. The City's Official Plan for land use is supported by master plans for transportation and piped infrastructure, and calls for development of a master plan to create a blueprint for the city's greenspaces. More specifically, the Official Plan sets the following tasks for this plan:

1. Characterize and map Ottawa's greenspaces – What do we consider to be greenspace? Where is it? What is the role of each piece - recreational, environmental or both?
2. Review the greenspace identified in the Official Plan – Does the Official Plan accurately show all the different types of greenspace in the city? Are the designations in the Official Plan applied consistently to the same kinds of land?
3. Review the greenspace that is not identified in the Official Plan – Are there parks, woodlands, wetlands and ravines in the urban areas that are not in the Plan and should be?
4. Establish targets for greenspace – Is there enough? What is enough?
5. Establish a network of greenspaces – How much of the city's greenspace is connected? Where are there gaps? How do we fill the gaps and extend the network?
6. Look at management of City-owned greenspaces - How do we find the balance between sustaining environmental lands and permitting public use?

7. Develop a strategy for securing public access to greenspace, including guidelines for public acquisition - What are the tools available to the City? How should the City decide where to spend its money?

This master plan complements other Ottawa 20/20 plans in addition to the City's Official Plan. The Human Services Plan includes parks and recreation facilities as one of the basic municipal services that build healthy and safe communities and contributes to individual well-being. The City's Environmental Strategy recognizes the value of identifying connected natural systems and greenspaces as a means of achieving Council's environmental goals. These goals include developing a green city; developing in harmony with nature; focusing on walking, cycling and transit; and supporting clean air and water. The multi-use pathway proposed in this plan also supports the objectives for walking and cycling in the Transportation Master Plan.

## 1.3 What is Greenspace?

The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* looks at the broadest spectrum of urban land that contributes to greenspace, and looks more widely than many other Canadian municipalities. Most jurisdictions look at a segment of lands, either natural or man-made, and usually publicly owned. In addition to these lands, this plan considers the ravine lands and other remnant natural landscapes tucked in behind homes and urban development; the green and open parklands and school grounds in the suburbs and inner city; and even the parkway roads, parks and plazas that provide relief in a concrete environment. The plan also considers the greenspace contribution of commercial lands such as golf courses, campgrounds and marinas; institutional lands such as university grounds; and infrastructure lands such as utility corridors and storm water management ponds where these are secured for public access.

In its simplest form, greenspace is considered in this Plan to be land that serves one of two purposes:

- Provision of recreation and leisure opportunities for the use and benefit of the public
- Preservation of the natural environment and environmental systems

Some lands can be valued for both their recreational and environmental contributions. **Figure 1** demonstrates how the values ascribed to natural lands and recreational or leisure lands vary along a continuum defined by different levels of human intervention, accessibility and biodiversity. Many of the city's parks complement the functions of adjacent natural areas, and many natural areas

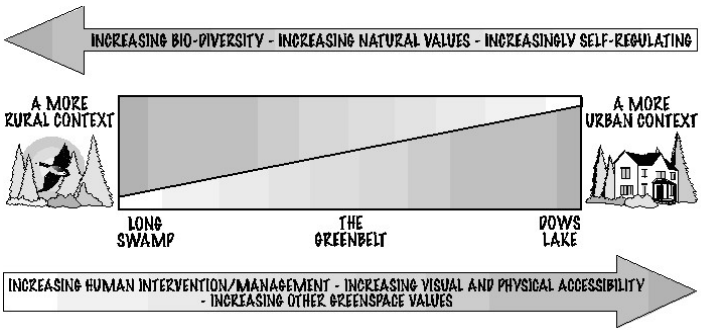



**Figure 1** The values ascribed to natural lands and open space and leisure lands vary depending on their location, accessibility, biodiversity and other qualities.

provide recreational opportunities. At the extremes, however, these two types of land are very different.

### 1.3.1 Natural Land

Natural lands such as wetlands, forests, and waterway corridors are tied to established ecosystems that are essential to their existence. If these ecosystems are healthy, these greenspaces are self-regulating and require little human intervention. In an urban context, this is rarely the case. Planning for these greenspaces is opportunistic, in the sense that these spaces cannot be artificially created or easily recreated once they are destroyed. The City and the federal government own large areas of land that serve environmental functions, but many significant areas are privately owned or have a mixture of private and public ownership.

Healthy natural lands are generally self regulating and require little human intervention.

### 1.3.2 Open Space and Leisure Land

Open space and leisure land can be created in a variety of landscapes and requires human intervention to maintain it for recreational use. Public parks, gardens, play areas and outdoor sports fields are the largest and most obvious examples of these lands. Land containing pathways and trails also provide for informal relaxation and serve other social and community purposes. These lands are characterized by a cultured landscape with trees, turf and other vegetation, along with buildings. As open lands, they contribute to hydrological functions. Although plant and animal diversity is limited, plant and animal species that can adapt to urban conditions flourish and create a "natural" setting for urban residents. The public has full access to this land. In most cases, the land is publicly owned, although increasingly, the private sector or private-public partnerships are delivering sport fields and facilities. Recreation land such as parks and sports fields is provided in response to community growth and community expectations regarding service delivery.

Open space and leisure land can be created in a variety of landscapes and requires human intervention to maintain it for recreational use.

### 1.3.3 Other Open Space

In addition to these two types of greenspaces, there are many other types of land that contribute to the overall sense of greenspace in the city. These are landscaped lands available for public use, such as the grounds surrounding public institutions, and land associated with infrastructure, such as hydro corridors and city parkways. If properly planned and managed, these lands can restore or extend natural environment functions, enhance recreation opportunities, and add to the beauty of the city.

Extensive open landscaped areas that contribute to the city's greenspace surround large institutions and business campuses. Public access may be permitted in some cases and leisure activities and environmental benefits may be ancillary to the main function of the land. Examples include the Central Experimental Farm, where some lands are accessible to the public and others are reserved for research; the campuses of the city's three universities; and the grounds surrounding suburban office parks. Others may include privately owned recreation land such as golf courses and marinas where access is conditional. In these cases, soft surface landscaping contributes to the hydrological function of the area and urban wildlife and plants may flourish.

A constructed wetland in Kanata provides stormwater management and community pathways.

The facilities and corridors used for major infrastructure, such as stormwater management ponds and hydro corridors, also provide opportunity for greenspaces for recreational use and wildlife movement. Corridor lands accommodate linear infrastructure such as hydroelectric facilities, gas, sewer, and major wire and fibre optics, as well as linear transportation facilities such as parkways, railways and rapid transit corridors. These lands also include facility sites such as water and wastewater treatment plants. Some corridors, such as hydroelectric or transportation corridors, can be highly managed landscapes with limited plant and animal diversity. In other situations, such as stormwater management ponds, habitats may be created through facility design and managed naturalization. Depending on its location, the corridor can provide links for animal movement and plant dispersion and pathways for walking and cycling. These lands are primarily in government, public and private agency or corporate ownership, and where they are developed and secured for public access, they are included in the plan's assessment of greenspace.

Many vacant, undeveloped properties provide greenspace benefits, in the short term. In order to secure all or part of these lands, the City must identify these lands and their greenspace role and work with their public or private sector owners to ensure their long-term use.

In order to plan for such a diverse landmass, a computer-based mapping and information system was used to identify and analyse the various types of greenspaces in the city. This system can be

continuously updated and used for a variety of purposes, including monitoring of greenspace targets and achievement of other objectives.

## 1.4 Objectives for Ottawa's Greenspace

### 1.4.1 Ottawa 20/20

Over the course of the Ottawa 20/20 consultation in 2001, residents created seven principles to guide the major growth management plans adopted by Ottawa Council in 2003. All of them can be filtered through a green lens, as shown below, and used to set objectives for Ottawa's greenspace.

A Caring and Inclusive City – "The basics" in Ottawa include recreation, along with food, clothing and shelter. Diversity is celebrated, and everyone feels safe in the community. Ottawa's greenspaces are safe, abundant and accessible, and meet a variety of needs.

A Creative City Rich in Heritage, Unique in Identity - The people of Ottawa are proud of their city and recognize its role as a national capital. Greenspace is integral to Ottawa's image as a national and international capital and colours how residents and visitors see the city.

A Green and Environmentally Sensitive City - Trees are valued as individual specimens lining city streets or as clusters in woodlands and ravines. Residents value the protection of natural lands and seek to improve the quality of the environment including travelling by walking and cycling along multi-use pathways.

A City of Distinct, Liveable Communities – Each community has a unique identity but they all are beautiful, made complete with parks and an abundance of trees. They are also easy to get around and barrier-free for the disabled.

An Innovative City where Prosperity is Shared Among All – Local businesses thrive on opportunities for tourism. Ottawa's greenspaces help make it an attractive tourist destination and an ideal place to live and work.

A Responsible and Responsive City - The City looks for innovative ways to deliver services and makes efficient use of its resources. Partnerships with other levels of government and the community help create greenspaces and manage them through affordable and sustainable strategies.

A Healthy and Active City – Ottawa's greenspaces facilitate residents' participation in a broad range of recreational pursuits and their enjoyment of a healthy lifestyle.

### 1.4.2 Greenspace Objectives

Working from the seven principles, the objectives for greenspace listed below were set in consultation with the public and interested organizations to guide the policies in this Plan.

- **Adequacy -** The City will ensure that there is enough greenspace to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community and will maintain natural systems, biodiversity and habitat.
- **Accessibility -** Ottawa residents will have ready access to greenspaces in close proximity to their homes and communities.
- **Connectivity -** Ottawa's greenspaces will be linked to provide improved access to a variety of greenspaces and recreational facilities, better connections between homes and schools or workplaces, and improved biodiversity and the movement of native plants and animals.
- **Quality -** Greenspaces will be attractive, safe and well-designed, serving the multiple needs of users while defining the unique identity of communities. Where greenspaces are primarily natural areas, they will be preserved in a manner that maintains or improves natural features and functions.
- **Sustainability -** Greenspaces will be planned and managed in a way that minimizes human intervention and public spending over time, through reliance on natural processes as well as innovative methods for protecting greenspace.

## 1.5 The Structure of this Plan

The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* begins with an inventory of all the parks and leisure lands, natural lands and other lands that together constitute greenspace in the urban area of the city. Drawing on previous municipal studies, zoning by-laws, and other sources, the inventories not only identify existing greenspaces, but also map them as natural lands or open space and leisure land, and shows the level of contribution they make to each of these functions. This contribution, to a large degree, reflects evaluations made in other, more detailed studies from the past.

The City's greenspace objectives are advanced when greenspace is considered as a network that exists on the ground as a series of inter-linked greenspaces and also serves as an organizing principle for structuring the city. An Urban Greenspace Network has been identified as part of this Plan, incorporating linked natural lands and open space and leisure lands in the previous municipalities, the landscaped lands plus the infrastructure lands available for public use, plus the parkways and river corridors that link them. By planning for greenspace with reference to an Urban Greenspace Network:

- Accessibility to greenspace throughout the city is improved
- Priorities for acquiring new greenspaces to fill gaps or extend the network are apparent
- A context for neighbourhood planning and larger community design plans is created
- The sustainability of natural environment lands within the network is supported

**Section 2.0** of this Plan presents the inventories of natural lands and open space and leisure lands, and the proposed Urban Greenspace Network described above. The inventory identifies natural land that

serves significant environmental functions needing protection, as well as the open space and leisure land that provides opportunities for outdoor recreation. The Urban Greenspace Network is the City's vision for greenspace in 2020, a continuous greenway connecting homes and neighbourhoods into a larger system that extends into the countryside. Most of this land is already available for public use, but there are gaps in the network that need to be filled. New projects are proposed to build the network, to complement ongoing municipal initiatives to add to the city's greenspace.

**Section 3.0** considers Council's objectives for greenspace and the issues surrounding each one. Adequacy of greenspace is paramount: is there enough? The quality of the greenspace and whether it can be readily accessed and used are also important, along with connectivity among natural areas and sustainable strategies for maintenance. Municipal policies to achieve these objectives are proposed.

**Section 4.0** sums up the project and policies proposed to build the Urban Greenspace Network and pursues Council's objectives for greenspace. To a large degree, the City can advance its greenspace objectives and complete the Urban Greenspace Network in the normal course of its planning, development review and capital works projects in the urban area. But at the same time, key projects will accelerate the extension of the network.

# 2 Identifying Ottawa's Greenspaces and the Urban Greenspace Network

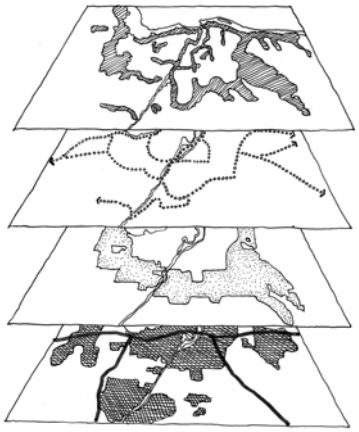
## 2.1 Taking Inventory

In 2001, more than 850 parks and thousands of hectares of municipal forests, wetlands or other natural lands were consolidated under one administration. Each of the former municipalities treated these lands differently in local zoning by-laws and for the most part, pursued different plans for greenspace within their boundaries. In addition to the municipal lands, federal lands in Ottawa include more than 20,000 ha of land within the National Capital Greenbelt, plus parks, parkways and recreational trails. National monuments and other high-profile buildings provide spaces for public gatherings and other greenspaces. The federal government and the Conservation Authorities own and maintain woodlands and other environment lands that bring nature into the city.

The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* sets the table for planning all of these greenspaces in the urban area by:

- Identifying all natural greenspaces and open space and leisure lands in Ottawa and mapping them as natural lands and as open space and leisure lands, or in some cases, as both types of land; some spaces are shown on both maps
- Categorizing these lands based on their contribution to either natural features and functions, or to open space and leisure opportunities
- Identifying an Urban Greenspace Network that combines both kinds of greenspaces into a single system

In order to plan for such a diverse landmass, a computer-based mapping and information system was used to analyse data on various types of greenspaces in the city. This system can be updated and used for a variety of purposes, including monitoring of greenspace targets and achievement of other objectives.



In the process of identifying all of Ottawa's urban greenspaces, the Official Plan designation and the zoning were reviewed. It was found that natural lands, and open space and leisure lands are not always designated in the Official Plan or zoned consistently. Appropriate designation of greenspaces is a basic implementation strategy outlined in Section 4.0 of this Plan.

This section describes strategies for securing natural lands, and open space and leisure lands, and proposes to build the Urban Greenspace Network through multi-use pathways and Greens Streets. While the Urban Greenspace Network is a central, organizing element in the city's greenspace system, land that is located off the network is also

valued. In particular, natural lands occur where they occur and several of the most significant natural areas remaining in the urban area are not connected to the network. Strategies for securing these lands and other natural land will be proposed through the Urban Natural Features Strategy. The role of the Urban Natural Features Strategy is to identify specific natural lands that Council intends to secure for their environmental value through acquisition and other means over the next five to 10 years. The strategy builds on the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study, which established the environmental values of woodlands, wetlands and ravines in the urban area.

The inventories of land shown in this section on **Map 1** Natural Land and **Map 2** Open Space and Leisure Land reflect the present use of the land. Both maps include lands where the zoning and Official Plan designations permit development for urban purposes. The use of these lands for greenspace will be subject to further studies, development applications and planning decisions in the future, with the maps updated periodically. **Map 3** shows how these lands could be linked in a network, and includes potential linkages that do not reflect the current use. The network and the inventories will not have a direct effect on the Official Plan designation or zoning of the lands shown on the maps. Rather, the network and the inventories will be used to guide future land acquisitions, to plan future parks and leisure facilities, and to inform review of development applications and proposals for public works.

### 2.1.1 Data Sources and Assigned Values

Greenspaces were identified using a variety of sources, including former municipal plans and zoning by-laws, land use inventories, scientific studies, ongoing planning studies, and the provincial property database. Several studies described below were particularly critical in assembling the inventory. These studies were prepared at different times and for different purposes; where they addressed the same landscapes, the study undertaken with the most scientific rigour was given preference. Further, where the studies yielded a ranking of the value or importance of certain lands, such as natural greenspaces, these rankings were carried forward into the inventory. In some cases, the studies required updating to reflect changes in land use and commitments for development.

These sources include:

- **The Natural Environment System Strategy, NESS (1997).** The former Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton undertook this comprehensive analysis for the 1997 Regional Official Plan. NESS combined existing regional vegetation and landform mapping with fieldwork to assess the relative significance of natural areas in the rural area and the Greenbelt. It evaluated forested and wetland areas, using standardised criteria to rank the natural landscapes as high, medium and low in significance. NESS also suggested a network of core natural areas and terrestrial and aquatic linkages among them. The NESS evaluation informed the environmental designations for the rural area in the 2003 Ottawa Official Plan.

- **Ministry of Natural Resources information.** The Ministry is responsible for the identification and evaluation of wetlands in Ontario. It also maps the location of Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs), comprising earth science ANSIs such as rare

landforms, and life science ANSIs such as habitats of rare or unique species. This information is continually being updated. Life science ANSIs and Provincially Significant Wetlands are included in environmental designations in the 2003 Ottawa Official Plan; earth science ANSIs are identified as landform features in the Plan.

- **Greenbelt Master Plan.** In 1995, the National Capital Commission undertook this plan to identify greenbelt lands as rural landscapes, areas for future development (such as the Ottawa International Airport and federal employment areas) and natural landscapes with environmental value. The natural landscapes included forested lands, wetlands such as Mer Bleue, and linkages such as river and stream corridors. A network of outdoor destinations and recreational pathways was also proposed. Many of the natural landscapes were confirmed as having a high level of environmental significance in the Natural Environment System Strategy (NESS). The Greenbelt Master Plan is reflected in the designations in the 2003 Ottawa Official Plan.

- **Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study (UNAEES) 2005-2006.** The City of Ottawa undertook this study to identify and to assess the relative environmental value of natural areas in the urban area. This study established a consistent environmental rating system and made recommendations regarding the management of these lands. Nine criteria were used to rank municipal, NCC, and private lands as high, moderate and low in environmental value. Some of these sites were already identified in an environmental and open space designation in the Official Plan and others were not. The study, which also yielded more accurate mapping than previously available, will provide a basis for setting priorities for acquisition or other means of securing these lands as natural areas.

- **Watershed and Subwatershed Studies.** The Conservation Authorities and the City undertake watershed and subwatershed studies and continue to refine information on natural environment systems, river and stream corridors, and surface and ground water connections. These studies have been used to update earlier studies, such as NESS, where appropriate.

- **Cycling and Pathway Studies.** The NCC is updating the 1994 study, *The Integrated Network of Recreational Pathways for the National Capital Region,* in partnership with the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau. The current study, the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan,* identifies pathway corridors throughout the National Capital Region that embraces Gatineau and Ottawa. These pathways are the primary off-road connections among open spaces in the National Capital Region. The City is also undertaking a Cycling Plan to identify an on-road and off-road system for cyclists. Both studies were in progress in 2006 and information from this master plan contributed to their development.

- **Municipal Park Inventories.** The City has prepared a database of all the City-owned and managed parks, identifying all park facilities of the former municipalities. The database is updated regularly and is linked to the City's Geographic Information System (GIS).

In addition to these studies, the parks and recreation plans of the former municipalities classified parks and identified future park locations; community design plans and secondary plans have also identified lands intended for future parks and other greenspace. These have been included where sufficient information exists to do so. The 1999 *Plan for Canada's Capital* and the Official Plan also provided context. In addition, land assessment data, topographic mapping, and mapping from the City's land use surveys in 2001 and 2005 were consulted.

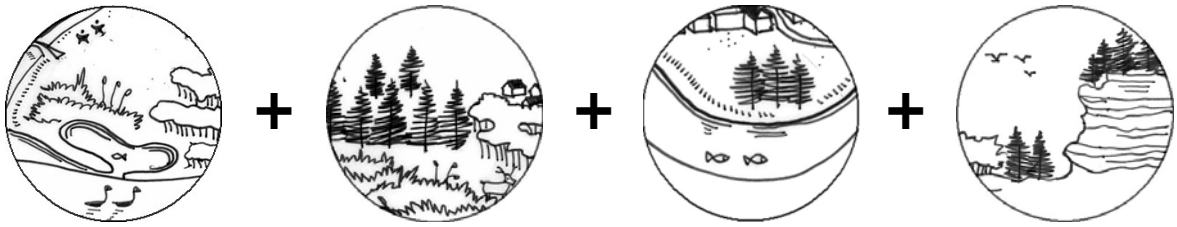
Altogether, these studies and evaluations have been used to identify greenspaces and assign greenspace values in this Plan. Information on natural lands included evaluation and ranking of the relative environmental value of individual sites, and these rankings have been carried forward into this Plan. Such rankings may need to be updated as additional information becomes available. Information on open space and leisure land was primarily descriptive and the ranking in this plan represents the level of public access and use.

The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* recognizes that not all environmental lands or all open space and leisure lands have the same intrinsic value or value to the public, based on their function, either within a natural environment system or within a system of open space and leisure lands. This Plan ranks both types of land generally in terms of their role or function, as described in three broad categories:

- **Primary lands** include the natural landscapes and major rivers that are recognised as having high environmental quality or rarity, as well as the public parks and open spaces specifically designed to provide sport and leisure functions.
- **Supporting lands** refine, complement and expand the primary lands. They include tributaries to rivers, isolated natural features, and habitats that link the primary areas. In the open space and leisure system, they are public lands that potentially contribute to leisure opportunities because they permit public access.
- **Contributing lands** enhance or augment the primary or supporting lands. They include steep slopes, low-value natural areas or treed areas, as well as institutional, commercial recreational and other lands that permit varying levels of public access and use.

As discussed in Section 1.0, many parcels of land contribute to both natural and recreation functions and where this occurs; these lands have been included in both inventories.

## 2.2 Ottawa's Natural Lands



**Wetlands** + **Woodlands** + **River Corridors** + **Steep Slopes**

Ottawa's natural lands comprise the city's significant wetlands and forests, and the rivers and their tributaries that run between them. Natural lands and features in Ottawa's urban and Greenbelt areas are

shown on **Map 1**, along with the priority assigned to each component. Natural functions occur within the physical limits of a forest, wetland or other natural feature and extend beyond the feature to adjacent lands, forming a natural system. Understanding natural systems and identifying their extent is complex, although data is available from previous studies. In particular, the former Region of Ottawa-Carleton's Natural Environment Systems Strategy (NESS) attempted to capture the natural systems extending from the rural area into the Greenbelt and parts of the urban area. Also, the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study (UNAEES) evaluated and accurately mapped the remaining natural lands within the urban boundary. Natural watercourses, urban wetlands and other elements of the NESS system within the urban area, plus the lands evaluated in the UNAEES, provide the basis of a natural environment system in the inventory in this Plan.

### 2.2.1 Wetlands

Wetlands are unique habitat for many different plants and animals and also regulate flooding and water recharge areas.

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on earth. With an abundance of food and vegetative cover, they are a unique habitat for many different types of plants and animals. They also filter surface waters and thus help protect the quality of rivers and streams. They also regulate flooding and act as recharge or discharge areas for ground water resources. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has identified more than 14000 ha of wetlands in Ottawa that are provincially significant. Seven provincially significant wetlands are within the urban area or adjacent to it. Mer Bleue, Leitrim, Stony Swamp, Shirley's Bay, Mud Lake and Petrie Island are the largest of these wetlands. All provincially significant wetlands are included as primary lands in the natural landscapes and features shown on **Map 1**.

There are few other wetlands in the urban area. Most of these are associated with woodlands and river corridors and add to their value. These wetlands are generally ranked as supporting lands on **Map 1**. However, where these wetlands are part of a woodland or other feature ranked high in the UNAEES or NESS, they are considered primary.

### 2.2.2 Forests and Woodlands

Remnant Shield woodlands in Kanata add to the quality of life valued in that community.

Large, complex systems of forests and wetlands in the rural area and the Greenbelt form the city's core natural landscapes and these structure an overall natural landscape system. These core landscapes contain Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources and most ranked as high and medium significance in the Natural Environment System Strategy (NESS). Many of these landscapes lie within the Greenbelt or are located adjacent to the urban area (e.g. the South March Highlands). These lands are

identified as primary on **Map 1**.

Inside the urban area, remnant woodlands are small and isolated but act as anchors for natural features and functions. These wooded lands were identified, mapped and reviewed in detail by the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study (UNAEES). Woodlands that are rated as high or moderate by the UNAEES, such as McCarthy Woods and Trillium Woods, are identified as having a primary role on **Map 1**.

Other forested areas of varying quality play a supportive role to overall landscape biodiversity by buffering or joining more primary landscapes and providing linkages. Isolated woodlands play a supporting role in overall landscape biodiversity. In the urban area, UNAEES identified several sites as having low significance and these areas are shown as fulfilling a supporting role on **Map 1**.

Other treed areas in the urban area have not been evaluated from a natural environment perspective because they are smaller than the 0.8 ha minimum size set for the UNAEES evaluation. **Map 1** identifies these lands as playing a contributing role in the overall greening of the city.

### 2.2.3 River, Stream and Creek Corridors

Shirley's Brook provides a natural quality to the community and manages stormwater from adjacent development.

Six major rivers come together in Ottawa. Four of these run through the urban area: the Ottawa, Rideau, Jock, and Carp Rivers. Creeks and streams that stretch out across the landscape feed these rivers, carving valley lands, floodplains and escarpments as they go. In the rural area, valley and river systems act as habitat and corridors for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife that lead into the Greenbelt. These systems strengthen forest and wetland areas by joining them and supporting overall biodiversity. In the urban area, river corridors, steep slopes, flood plains and watercourses are among the most consistently visible fragments of natural landscapes because they are unsuitable for development. They provide habitat for fish and wildlife. Urban river and stream systems also perform hydrological functions, including conveyance of urban storm water. In some cases, waterfront land is retained in private ownership and public access is not permitted. Smaller watercourses often disappear completely into development.

The rivers and the largest creeks have been identified as primary on **Map 1**. All other creeks, lakes and ponds are in supporting roles.

# Greenspace Master Plan:

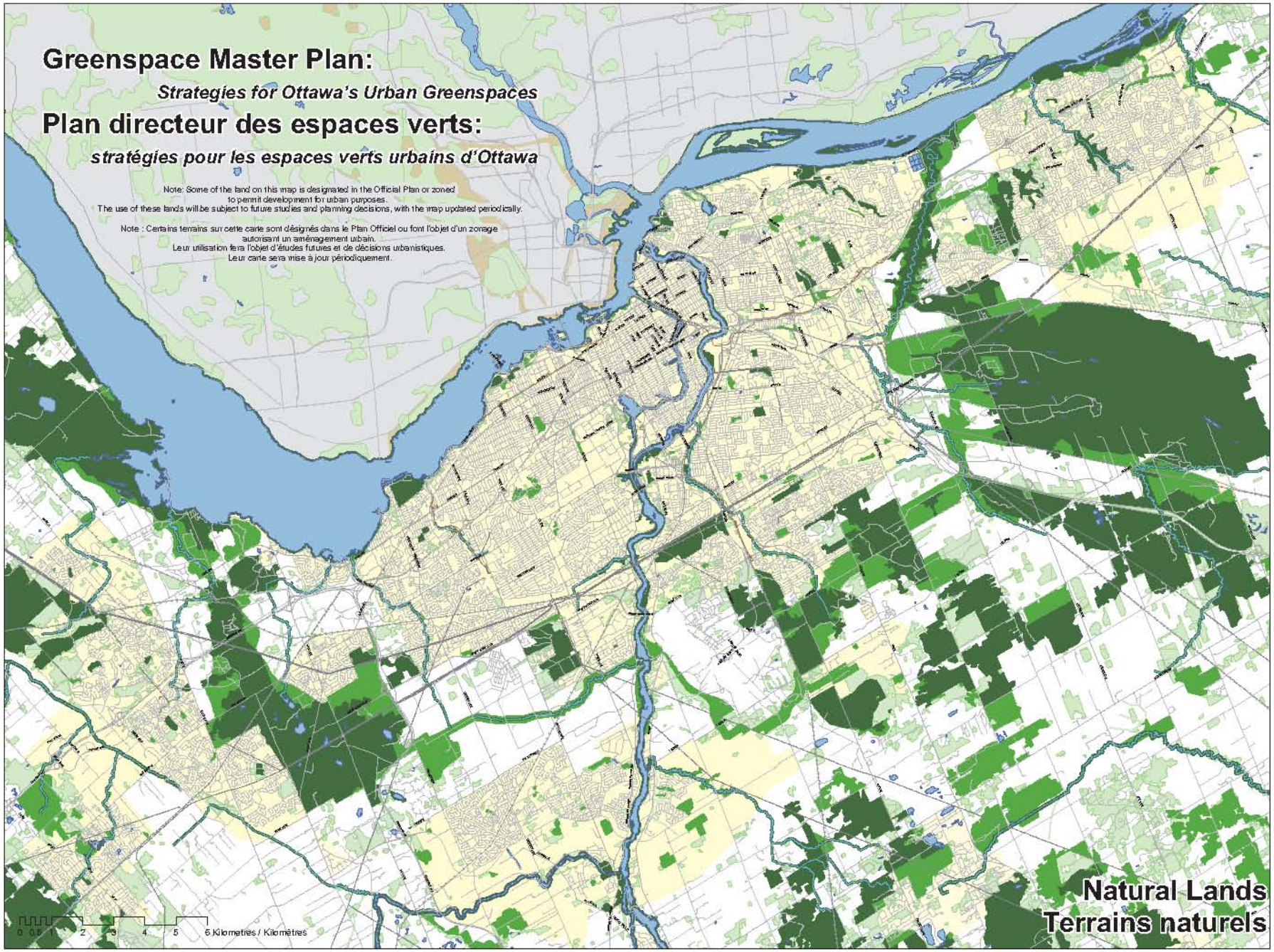
*Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces*

# Plan directeur des espaces verts:

*stratégies pour les espaces verts urbains d'Ottawa*

Note: Some of the land on this map is designated in the Official Plan or zoned to permit development for urban purposes.
The use of these lands will be subject to future studies and planning decisions, with the map updated periodically.

Note : Certains terrains sur cette carte sont désignés dans le Plan Officiel ou font l'objet d'un zonage autorisant un aménagement urbain.
Leur utilisation fera l'objet d'études futures et de décisions urbanistiques.
Leur carte sera mise à jour périodiquement.




**Map Carte 1**

## Legend / Légende

### Primary Primaires

Lands and watercourses that maintain natural features and functions in an urban context, and those forming core areas that structure natural landscapes beyond the urban area

Includes:
Natural environment lands such as quality remnant woodlands and wetlands in the urban area, large complex systems of forests and wetlands in the Greenbelt and beyond the urban area, and the rivers that link them.

Terrains et cours d'eau préservant des caractéristiques et des fonctions naturelles dans un contexte urbain, et terrains formant des zones structurant des paysages naturels au-delà du secteur urbain.

Exemples:
Terrains de milieu naturel comme les vestiges de bois de qualité et les terres humides du secteur urbain, les grands réseaux de forêts et de terres humides situés dans la Ceinture de verdure et au-delà du secteur urbain, et les rivières qui les relient

### Supporting De soutien

Natural lands and watercourses that strengthen the features and functions of the primary lands by buffering or linking them, as well as quality natural features that play a role in supporting overall landscape biodiversity.

Includes:
Forests, woodlands, wetlands, creeks and streams of varying quality

Terrains naturels et cours d'eau qui renforcent les caractéristiques et les fonctions des terrains primaires en constituant des zones tampons ou des liens entre eux, ainsi que les caractéristiques naturelles de qualité pouvant jouer un rôle de soutien de la biodiversité

Exemples:
forêts, bois, terres humides, ruisseaux et cours d'eau de qualité variable

### Contributing De contribution

Other lands and features that may play a role in the enhancement of natural landscapes and features

Includes:
Treed areas, steep slopes, and minor tributaries

Autres terrains et caractéristiques susceptibles d'améliorer les paysages et caractéristiques naturels

Exemples:
Zones arborées, pentes raides et petits affluents


Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch
Planning and Growth Management Department
City of Ottawa

Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure
Service de l'urbanisme et de la gestion de la croissance
Ville d'Ottawa

June 2005 Revisions: March 2006; June 2006
Juin 2005 Révisions: mars 2006; juin 2006


Ottawa

### 2.2.4 Escarpments and Steep Slopes

There are several escarpments in Ottawa that mark the edge of ancient shorelines and the passage of the glaciers. Escarpments skirt Parliament Hill and form the boundary of the Fallingbrook Community in Cumberland, for example, while others stand out only as local landmarks within neighbourhoods. Many of these escarpments are linked with sites identified by the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study and are identified as contributing features on **Map 1**.

### 2.2.5 The Policy and Regulatory Framework for Natural Lands

Most of the primary and supporting lands identified in the urban area on **Map 1** are included in one of four land use designations in the Official Plan. These designations are Natural Environment Area and Significant Wetlands South and East of the Canadian Shield in the Greenbelt, plus Urban Natural Features and Major Open Space elsewhere in the urban area. Lands designated Significant Wetlands and Natural Environment Area are publicly owned. Most of the lands designated as Urban Natural Features and Major Open Space are publicly owned and the designation restricts development.

Throughout Ontario, conservation authorities take the lead role in planning for watercourses and implement much of the legislation in effect to protect them. There are three conservation authorities with responsibilities within the City of Ottawa: the Mississippi Valley CA, the Rideau Valley CA, and the South Nation CA.

These conservation authorities take the lead in implementing the legislation that protects aquatic corridors. Legislation includes the *Federal Fisheries Act*, the *Conservation Authority Act*, and the *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act*. Conservation authorities are the lead agencies in the watershed planning process, which provides the natural environment basis for land use planning in the Ottawa Official Plan. Conservation authorities also provide flood plain mapping and manage site alteration and fill regulations adjacent to many of the City's watercourses, and within and adjacent to provincially significant wetlands. Official Plan policies and the regulations administered by conservation authorities seek to protect setback areas from all watercourses.

The designation of some parcels of natural land and open space land in the Official Plan require amendment. Much of the river-front land is identified as Major Open Space, whereas an environmental designation may be more appropriate in some locations. Also, community design plans approved since 2001 have identified significant greenspaces associated with urban watercourses and these can be designated in the Official Plan. Land along the Jock River is identified in a secondary plan in Volume 2 of the Official Plan, and should also be shown in Volume 1.

### 2.2.6 Current Initiatives to Secure Ottawa's Natural Lands

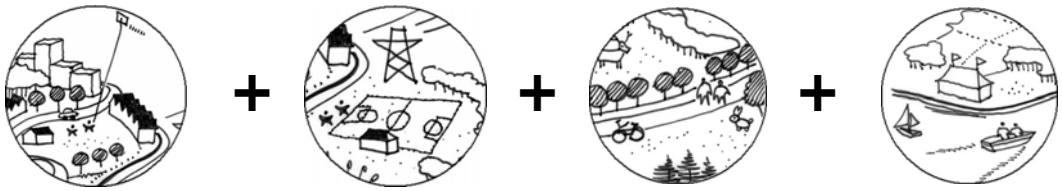
The City is at a crossroads regarding protection of natural areas. By 2006, evaluation of 192 sites of 0.8 ha or more will be completed through the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study, and Council and the community will need to decide which of these are worthy of protection as Urban Natural Features. Urban Natural Features are natural lands designated in the Official Plan to preserve the feature so that it can be used for conservation or passive leisure uses. An Urban Natural Features Strategy will be brought forward for consultation to consider which new sites will be designated and protected over the long term, and how this can be accomplished. While some sites may be secured through partnerships with other levels of government, others will require acquisition.

While the UNAEES looked at large wooded sites across the urban areas, a Forest Strategy, now in progress, is evaluating forest cover in the urban and rural contexts. Forest and tree canopy targets for specific areas of the City will form part of that strategy.

In addition, Council approved new Official Plan policies on setback provisions from waterbodies in 2006. The policies identify appropriate setbacks to protect water quality, aquatic and fish habitat, and the riparian environment, as well as provide an element of protection from hazards associated with unstable slopes and flooding. Further work on implementation guidelines is proposed to help interpret the new policies.

## 2.3 Ottawa's Open Space and Leisure Lands

Ottawa's open space and leisure lands are the greenspaces that provide for the open space, recreation and leisure needs of the community and may be accessed by the public. These are the places where residents congregate, play games, swim and lie in the sun, celebrate with others at festivals, ride bicycles, and sit and read under a shady tree. Much of this land is public park or civic space, but other open space and leisure lands, such as golf courses, are privately owned. In addition, other lands contribute to open space, including landscaped lands available for public use, such as the grounds of major institutions, and land associated with infrastructure, such as stormwater management ponds.



**Public Parks** + **Sport Fields** + **Pathways** + **Other Open Spaces**

Mapping all the land that contributes to open space and leisure use reveals the pattern that they form and the relationships among them. As well, by mapping the inventory of leisure lands, the distribution of public parks in different communities is more evident and standards of delivery for new communities and older communities are more readily monitored.

# Greenspace Master Plan:

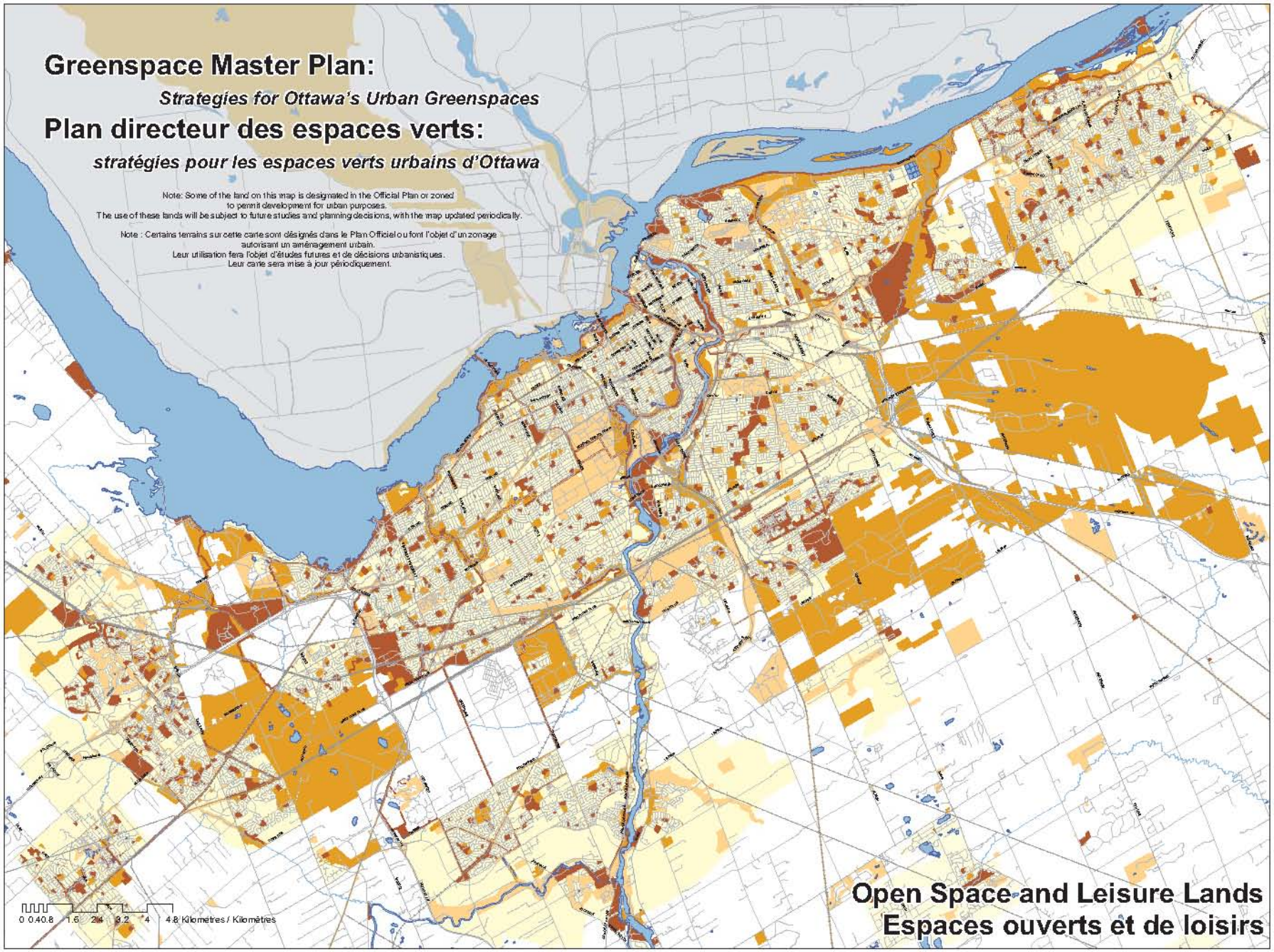
*Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces*

# Plan directeur des espaces verts:

*stratégies pour les espaces verts urbains d'Ottawa*

Note: Some of the land on this map is designated in the Official Plan or zoned to permit development for urban purposes.
The use of these lands will be subject to future studies and planning decisions, with the map updated periodically.

Note : Certains terrains sur cette carte sont désignés dans le Plan Officiel ou font l'objet d'un zonage autorisant un aménagement urbain.
Leur utilisation fera l'objet d'études futures et de décisions urbanistiques.
Leur carte sera mise à jour périodiquement.




## Open Space and Leisure Lands
## Espaces ouverts et de loisirs

**Map**
**Carte 2**

## Legend / Légende

### Primary
### Primaires

The fundamental open spaces that are intended and designed for public use, leisure, and enjoyment

Includes:
Public parks, sports fields, river access points, major pathway corridors, children's play areas and civic squares owned by municipal, provincial and federal agencies

Espaces ouverts essentiels conçus pour l'usage et le bénéfice du public, que peut s'y dérouler.

Comprennent:
parcs publics, terrains de sport, points d'accès riverain, principaux sentiers, aires de jeux et places publiques appartenant à des organismes municipaux, provinciaux et fédéraux.

### Supporting
### De soutien

Lands that are intended for uses other than the provision of open space and leisure, but allow for public access and use and contribute to the overall greenspace experience in the community

Includes:
Municipal forests, school grounds, grounds of public facilities and institutions, some utility infrastructure, and transit and abandoned rail corridors

Terrains destinés à une utilisation autre que des espaces ouverts et de loisir, mais qui peuvent être utilisés par le public et qui contribuent à l'ensemble des espaces verts de la collectivité

Exemples :
forêts municipales, cours d'école, terrains d'installations et d'institutions publiques, terrains accueillant des infrastructures de services publics, couloirs de transports en commun et ferroviaires désaffectés

### Contributing
### De contribution

A variety of private and institutional lands that shape the character of communities and the perception of the quality of open space, and which may allow public access and leisure uses

Includes:
Employment, institutional and other campus grounds, cemeteries and the grounds of places of worship, and commercial outdoor sport and recreation facilities

Divers espaces ouverts privés et institutionnels façonnent le caractère des quartiers et donnent une perception de qualité, pouvant être accessibles au public et offrant des possibilités de loisir

Exemples:
terrains d'organismes, d'employeurs, d'institutions et autres, cimetières et terrains de lieux de culte, installations extérieures commerciales de sports et de loisirs


Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch
Planning and Growth Management Department
City of Ottawa

Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure
Service de l'urbanisme et de la gestion de la croissance
Ville d'Ottawa

May 10, 2005, Revised: March 2006; June 2006
10 mai, 2005, Révisions : mars 2006; juin 2006

In building the inventory of Ottawa's open space and leisure land, shown on **Map 2**, several characteristics have been used to assess the contribution that each parcel of land makes to the overall open space and leisure system in the urban area. These characteristics are:

- Ownership and level of public access
- Current and planned land use
- Topography and inherent natural qualities
- Cultural heritage value (i.e., as associated with a heritage site)
- Ability of municipal government and other partners to increase the open space and leisure use

Three types of land contribute to open space and leisure land in the city. They are ranked below, based upon their planned purpose and their open space and leisure contribution.

### 2.3.1 Public Parks, Sports Fields, and Multi-Use Pathways

Public parks, sports fields, and multi-use pathways are the primary and most important lands that provide for the recreational needs of the community. The City owns most of these lands and compared with other public bodies, has the most direct mandate for open space, recreation and leisure. New public parks, sports fields, and multi-use pathways are provided through public acquisition and through parkland dedication required under the *Planning Act* at the time of development. Federal parks and recreation areas add to Ottawa's urban parkland resources; they beautify the city and support its role as the National Capital. The Province focuses its parkland contributions on two parks in the rural area. All these lands are ranked as primary lands on **Map 2**.

Open space and leisure lands are the accessible greenspaces that provide for the recreational and leisure needs of the community.

### 2.3.2 Other Publicly Owned Lands

Other publicly owned lands developed or maintained for other purposes expand opportunities for public recreation and leisure. They play a supportive role in the open space and leisure system when public access is facilitated by pathways or other facilities, and agreements are in place with the public owner to permit public use. These lands include institutional lands such as school grounds; infrastructure land, such as storm water management ponds; and utility and other corridors such as hydro lands and major roadway corridors. For example, the City programs sports facilities on school sites and secures opportunities for walking, cycling or other recreation by agreement on some provincially owned hydro corridors and some federally owned land. The NCC

Other public lands expand opportunities for public recreation and leisure.

has also developed pathways and other recreation areas on federal property such as the parkway corridors and Greenbelt lands. Some natural areas, such as those managed by the Conservation Authorities, are also developed to provide for informal recreation. These lands are identified as supporting land on **Map 2**.

All levels of government and several public agencies also own vacant lands where public recreation may not be facilitated but public access is rarely restricted. These lands, such as lands associated with the Airport Parkway and provincially owned hydro corridors, are intended for other purposes. However, these public lands play a contributing role by expanding the visual greenspace of the city and the amount of land available for public use in the future. These lands are identified as contributing on **Map 2**.

### 2.3.3 Privately Owned Lands

Privately owned lands such as cemeteries, golf courses and the grounds of public and private institutions also provide open space and leisure opportunities. In these cases, private decisions determine land use and public access is by permission only. These lands play a contributing role in the City's open space and leisure system.

Privately owned golf courses are greenspaces that contribute to the character and identity of communities.

### 2.3.4 The Policy and Regulatory Framework for Open Space and Leisure Lands

The primary and supporting lands identified on **Map 2** have various designations in the Official Plan. The Official Plan designates most of the large parks, open space corridors along the major watercourses, parkway corridors, and corridors reserved for rapid transit and major roads. Some large parks and waterfront lands shown on **Map 2** have been identified in community design plans approved by Council since 2003 and are not designated in the Official Plan.

Unlike the policy framework for natural lands, there is less guidance or regulatory direction from senior levels of government for open spaces and leisure lands. The *Planning Act* provides the framework for the dedication of parkland during the development process. The *Municipal Act* provides the parameters for the provision of municipal facilities required to meet new growth, including indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities. The Provincial Policy Statement (2005) introduces provincial policies for public spaces, parks and open space.

### 2.3.5 Ongoing Initiatives for Securing Open Space and Leisure Lands

The City has adopted a strategy to respond to the need for additional sports fields. In 2004 Council approved a *Sports Fields Strategy–Strategic Options and Recommendations* (2003), which recommended standards for providing sports fields throughout the city on a per capita basis and an approach to partnering with school boards, private sports associations and other partners to meet current and future needs. A subsequent study, *A Study of Potential Sports Fields Sites*, reviewed the potential of vacant lands within the urban area and the Greenbelt to be developed as sports fields, as a guide to future partnerships and acquisition. In 2006 Council approved the acquisition of a new sports field and in 2007 will consider a proposal for ongoing capital funding for sports field acquisition.

An update of the City's parkland dedication by-law is also in progress. The new by-law will standardize the way in which the parkland dedication is calculated throughout the city and establish criteria for the use of cash taken in lieu of the land dedication.

## 2.4 Ottawa's Urban Greenspace Network

### 2.4.1 A Network Approach

The idea of a network approach to greenspaces is based on the principles of landscape ecology and an ecosystems approach to land use planning and management. A systems perspective frames decisions for one element of the system on an understanding of the implications for other elements of the system. Greenspaces function on different levels and as a result have different, but compatible, ecological and social functions that together create a system that is more effective and stronger than if it were fragmented. When the system is compromised, fragmented habitats decline and animal populations are lost; dispersed parks and open spaces are not easily accessible; and environmental mitigation by natural processes is weakened and requires significant intervention and public investment to restore.

**Figure 2** A systems perspective frames decisions for one element of the system on an understanding of the implications for other elements of the system.

A city that keeps its natural areas healthy also keeps its inhabitants healthy. Where people have ample room and can easily access the elements of a greenspace network for recreation and leisure, healthy living becomes part

**The Elements of the Network**

From the natural land on **Map 1**, the Greenspace Network takes in the primary lands that can be connected by water or land corridors, plus the secondary and contributing elements that connect the primary lands. The natural lands carried into the Greenspace Network comprise:

- The primary landscapes identified on **Map 1**, such as Mer Bleue, Stony Swamp, South March Highlands and Shirley's Bay. Most of these are large and self-sustaining
- The woodlots, rivers, streams and creeks that connect these large landscapes

From the open space and leisure lands on **Map 2**, the Greenspace Network takes in the primary elements of the system, such as the major parks and outdoor destinations, plus the secondary and contributing elements that are adjacent to the primary elements and that connect them.

As a result, not all primary elements shown on **Maps 1** and **2** are carried forward, but only those that are or can be connected and that are self-sustaining as part of the City-wide network.

Outdoor recreation and leisure destinations that are accessible from the network are also shown on **Map 4**. Many of these destinations are associated with a significant natural feature, often with associated programming, and attract both residents and visitors to the city. Destinations located in proximity to each other form complexes, such as the complex formed by Dick Bell Park, Andrew Hayden Park and Britannia Park. Other destinations are the launching point into a larger natural landscape such as Mer Bleue or the South March Highlands.

of daily routines and nature becomes an important, visible part of city living. Where an Urban Greenspace Network is fostered, flora and fauna can also thrive in connected habitats. With proper places to grow throughout the Urban Greenspace Network, trees provide enormous benefit by filtering pollutants and cooling the air. When woodlots and forests are preserved and linked, water quality is enhanced, soil is retained, and wildlife can thrive. People are able to move through and between communities more easily and get access to more facilities, which in turn are used more efficiently. The whole network becomes resilient and, as a result, is enhanced so that its benefits exceed the contribution of the individual parts.

### 2.4.2 Building on Past Experience

Greenspace is a powerful planning element that has shaped the character and quality of Ottawa for more than a century. Early in the 19th century, Fredrick Todd was one of the first to prepare plans for the Capital that were inspired by the image of an urban area juxtaposed within a wild natural landscape. This image influenced many successive plans that set the framework for the current pattern of parkway and greenspace development. These visions were best expressed in the 1950 plan for the National Capital prepared by Jacques Gréber. Through the 1960s and 1970s, Ottawa neighbourhoods such as Glen Cairn and Greenboro were structured around greenspaces, providing alternative means for getting around and a wider range of recreational opportunities for residents, making these communities popular places to live. In the 1990s the National Capital Commission brought this concept forward, updating it with ecological planning principles in the Master Plan for Canada's Capital.

The concept of a network of greenspace has been a key organizing principle of recent municipal land use planning. In the 1990s the former City of Ottawa incorporated a Greenway System into its official plan and zoning by-law, identifying a network of natural and open spaces. The Greenway System was opportunistic in that it sought to connect spaces in a city that was already largely

developed. In 1994, the former City of Ottawa, the Regional Municipality and other area municipalities within the National Capital Region worked with the National Capital Commission to plan and develop a system of recreational pathways through the *Integrated Network of Recreational Pathways for the National Capital Region*. In the 1997 Regional Official Plan, this pathway system formed part of a regional open space network that connected land in the Greenbelt, the Central Experimental Farm and large public parks with scenic corridors and over 300 kms of recreational pathways.

The suburban municipalities also had plans and strategies to create networks of green spaces. In these rapidly growing communities, planners, politicians and community leaders sought to protect elements of the natural landscape as suburban development proceeded. Each municipality used various means to protect natural areas and to provide parks, sports fields and quiet places for community residents. Each also sought to expand traditional parks and open space lands by innovative means, for example, by designing naturalistic storm water management ponds such as the Monahan Drain constructed wetland that not only enhances water quality, but also provides habitats for urban wildlife and opportunities for leisure. Transportation and utility corridors such as West Hunt Club Road and the abandoned rail corridor have been designed to include recreational pathways to link communities and support cycling.

The City's Official Plan continues with this tradition of greenspace planning, proposing that a comprehensive greenspace network be developed.

### 2.4.3 What is the Urban Greenspace Network?

The Urban Greenspace Network is a connected and protected network of natural lands and open spaces and leisure lands that structures the urban area; strengthens distinct communities; incorporates natural features; provides opportunities to improve environmental quality; and increases accessibility to open air recreation.

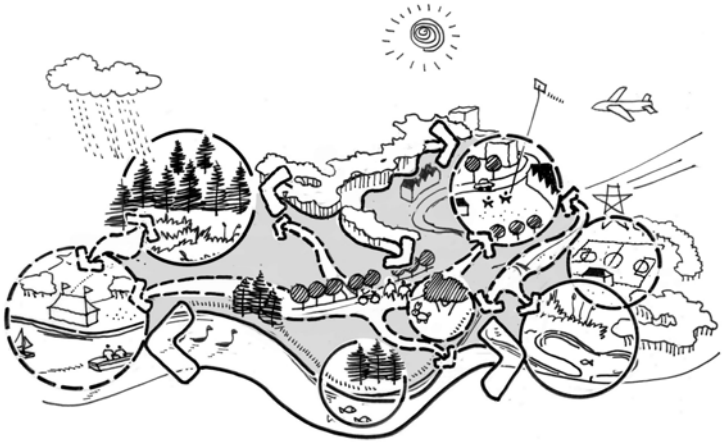


**Figure 3** The Urban Greenspace Network demonstrates how the city can be shaped through the physical connection of natural lands and open spaces.

The proposed Urban Greenspace Network shown on **Map 3** is both a physical entity and a core concept that can be used to plan the city. As a connected and protected physical network of natural lands and open spaces, the network can constitute the permanent, defining feature of the city's physical form where it may grow and what areas should be protected. As a concept, it can guide public decision-making and creation of the network.

As a physical entity, the Urban Greenspace Network is greenspace drawn from the natural lands inventory on **Map 1** and the open space and leisure lands on **Map 2**, and the existing and potential connections among these lands. The connections take the form of streams and other natural corridors that sustain ecological functions and multi-use recreational pathways that increase accessibility. Thus, the network provides access to environmental areas as well as recreation destinations. It also connects large ecological areas and linkages (such as wetlands, river corridors, and large woodlands) in the rural area and the Greenbelt with small and more fragmented urban environment features such as woodlots, creeks, and landscapes that are important for social as well as environmental reasons.

As a core concept, the Urban Greenspace Network provides a frame of reference for land use planning and comprehensive decision-making. Where lands serve environmental and leisure purposes, future management plans for the land can reflect both roles. Reference to the Urban Greenspace Network will help the City to:

- Identify the land that physically connects greenspaces from urban parks and natural areas, through the Greenbelt, to the larger natural landscapes in Ottawa's countryside
- Maintain the sustainability of Ottawa's urban natural areas by maintaining a diversity of natural features and functions and providing or enhancing links between habitats
- Incorporate and protect cultural heritage landscapes, such as the Ottawa and Rideau waterways, that define the city and contribute to the health and vitality of the Greenbelt's diverse natural, rural and cultural landscapes
- Improve access to greenspaces through pathways and other linkages that accommodate the growing interest in outdoor recreation, contact with natural places, and healthy lifestyles
- Guide decisions on the management and acquisition of greenspace
- Provide opportunities for community participation and partnership in the development and management of network components
- Locate new recreation facilities as destinations within the network, and upgrade and connect existing facilities where possible

### 2.4.4 Building the Urban Greenspace Network

Much of the Urban Greenspace Network already exists but other components are still conceptual. It includes lands that are privately owned and lands that are not currently designated in the Official Plan or zoned for open space or environmental purposes. Although public ownership at times is viewed as the most expedient way of securing greenspace land for public use, public ownership is not always necessary or desirable. Public ownership is usually reserved to protect the most fragile of natural environment areas such as Trillium Woods, or to secure public access to a special area such as a waterfront or urban woodland. There are many other ways land can be added to the Urban Greenspace Network, including: covenants, easements, agreements with landowners, and through progressive land management techniques. Some of these techniques are described in detail in Appendix A.

# Greenspace Master Plan:

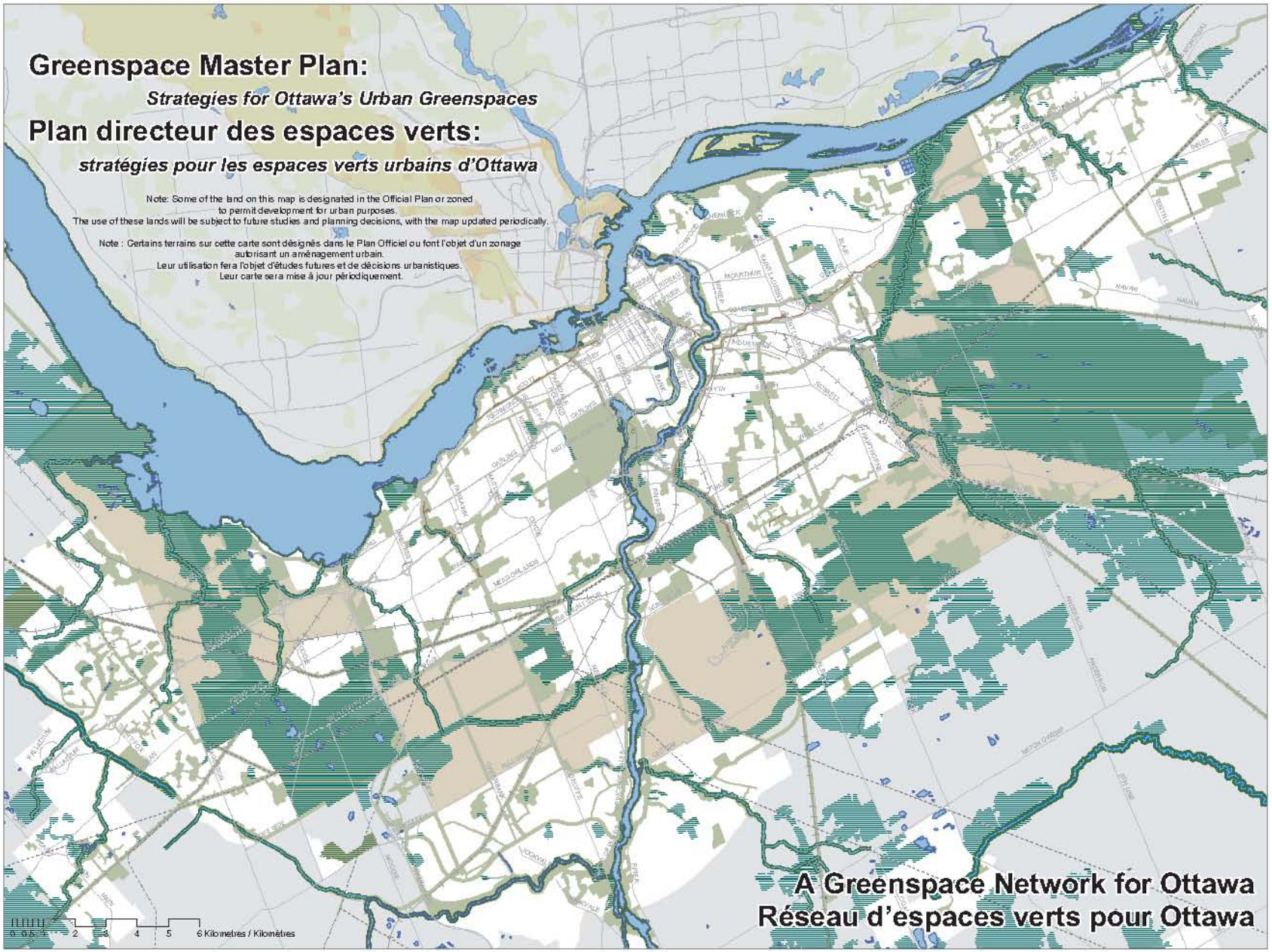
*Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces*

# Plan directeur des espaces verts:

*stratégies pour les espaces verts urbains d'Ottawa*

Note: Some of the land on this map is designated in the Official Plan or zoned to permit development for urban purposes.
The use of these lands will be subject to future studies and planning decisions, with the map updated periodically.

Note : Certains terrains sur cette carte sont désignés dans le Plan Officiel ou font l'objet d'un zonage autorisant un aménagement urbain.
Leur utilisation fera l'objet d'études futures et de décisions urbanistiques.
Leur carte sera mise à jour périodiquement.




## A Greenspace Network for Ottawa
## Réseau d'espaces verts pour Ottawa

**Map**
**Carte 3**

**Legend / Légende**

**Natural Lands**
**Terres Naturels**

- Lands / Terres
- Linkages / Liaisons

**Open Space and Leisure Lands**
**Espaces ouverts et de loisirs**

- Land / Terres
- Connections / Raccordements

- The Greenbelt / Le Ceinture de verdure
- Urban Area / Secteur Urbain


Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch
Planning and Growth Management Department
City of Ottawa

Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure
Service de l'urbanisme et de la gestion de la croissance
Ville d'Ottawa

May 10, 2005
10 mai, 2005
Revised: March 2006, June 2006
Révision : mars 2006, juin 2006


Ottawa

Other conceptual components are the proposed citywide and community pathways on **Map 4**. These multi-use pathways are a defining feature of the Urban Greenspace Network. Lands were chosen for the network in part on the basis of their access to an existing pathway or their potential to be linked in the future to the larger pathway network. In many locations, the pathway forms the link between greenspaces and affords access to the heart of larger areas. **Map 4** shows proposed additions to the pathway systems, which would complete the missing pieces of the Urban Greenspace Network.

### 2.4.5 Strategies to Build the Urban Greenspace Network

Not all of the network can be achieved at once. Several initiatives described previously in this section to protect natural lands and secure greenspaces also contribute to completing the Urban Greenspace Network. These initiatives include acquisition of natural areas through the Urban Natural Features Strategy, planning for new sports fields, and standardizing parkland dedication provisions through the new Parkland Dedication by-law.

The network can also be built through day-to-day functions of municipal government. The City can build the network through development review, community planning, and cooperation with other levels of government and other organizations. Through these functions, the City can act on the premise that greenspace lands that are on or adjacent to the network make the most progress towards achieving the City's greenspace objectives: connectivity, adequacy, quality, accessibility and sustainability. These lands should therefore have priority above other lands that make a similar contribution to the open space and leisure system or natural system, but are not on the Urban Greenspace Network.

The City can build the Urban Greenspace Network through the actions listed below.

1. When planning new parks and open spaces in existing and new communities, give priority to land on the Urban Greenspace Network by:
    - Situating new district and community parks on the network or as extensions to the existing network
    - Using new local and neighbourhood parks to address network gaps and to provide connections to facilities that are not on the network
    - Situating new recreation facilities and other public facilities on the network

2. When developing plans for new and existing communities, ensure that recreation facilities and lands dedicated for public purposes are connected to the Urban Greenspace Network and its multi-use pathway system.

3. When considering development applications, build the Urban Greenspace Network by:
    - Ensuring that the applications implement the community design plan for the area and its plan for greenspace
    - Where no community design plan exists, seek opportunities where appropriate to fill gaps and extend the network

- Being explicit in reports to Council about the effects of the planning decisions on the Urban Greenspace Network

4. Use partnerships and agreements with other public agencies and the private sector to:
   - Develop or enhance the contribution of their lands to the Urban Greenspace Network
   - Explore alternatives to public acquisition to provide public access to additional greenspace

5. Give priority to locations on the Urban Greenspace Network for partnership projects, such as stewardship projects or new capital projects, undertaken with community groups, sports clubs, the business community and other stakeholders.

6. When considering the disposal of City-owned land, ensure that any network function is retained.

7. Where transit, road, rail and utility corridors are part of the Urban Greenspace Network or cross the network, accommodate the network in the design of the infrastructure. Where corridors cross the network, for example, a safe crossing should be provided so that passageways through the greenspace network are not severed. Where these corridors have potential to improve connectivity, recreational pathways and other linkages can be provided.

In addition to these ongoing municipal activities, the Urban Greenspace Network can be built through new initiatives to create the on-road and off-road connections that form the backbone of the network. The Greenspace Master Plan recommends that Council:

1. Implement key sections of the recreational pathway system identified in the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan* and request staff to prepare a plan and budget estimate to do so

2. Prepare a Green Street Strategy to explore ways that Green Streets could be used to provide connections within the Urban Greenspace Network and contribute to the greening of municipal infrastructure

### 2.4.6 Multi-Use Pathways

Much of the city is well-connected by a multi-use pathway built by the National Capital Commission and the former municipalities. *The Greenspace Master Plan – Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* proposes to extend this network by creating a city-wide grid of pathways and filling in the grid with community pathways and Green Streets that link neighbourhoods to the city-wide system. **Map 4** shows the existing pathway systems within the Urban Greenspace Network and how they could be extended.

The groundwork for the citywide pathway system is being laid by the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan*. This is a joint project of the NCC and the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau. This study, due for completion in 2007, inventories and proposes extensions

# Greenspace Master Plan:

*Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces*

# Plan directeur des espaces verts:

*stratégies pour les espaces verts urbains d'Ottawa*

Note: Some of the land on this map is designated in the Official Plan or zoned to permit development for urban purposes.
The use of these lands will be subject to future studies and planning decisions, with the map updated periodically.

Note : Certains terrains sur cette carte sont désignés dans le Plan Officiel ou font l'objet d'un zonage autorisant un aménagement urbain.
Leur utilisation fera l'objet d'études futures et de décisions urbanistiques.
Leur carte sera mise à jour périodiquement.

**Greenspace Destination**
**Espace vert - Destination**

1. Parc Rockcliffe Park
2. Parc Confederation Park
3. Parc Strathcona Park
4. Parc Lebreton Common
5. Parc Lansdowne Park
6. Arboretum, lac Dow's Lake & parc Commissioner's Park
7. Parc Brewer Park
8. Parcs Vincent Massey, Hog's Back Parks & baie Mooney's Bay
9. Parcs Dick Bell, Andrew Haydon & Britannia Parks
10. Equestrian Centre / Centre équestre
11. Terrain de camping Ottawa-Nepean Campground
12. Marécage Stony Swamp
13. Forêt Pinegrove Forest & puit d'extraction Conroy Pit
14. Mer Bleu Bog / tourbière Mer bleu
15. Petrie Island Park / Parc d'île
16. Pointe Pinhey Point
17. Parc Riverfront Park
18. Les hautes terres de South March Highlands
19. Rideau River Parks / parcs de la rivière Rideau

## Multi-use Pathways on the Greenspace Network
## Sentiers polyvalents du réseau d'espaces verts

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 6 Kilometres / Kilomètres

**Map**
**Carte 4**

**Legend / Légende**

**City-Wide Pathway**
**Principaux sentiers**

- Exisiting / Actuel
- Proposed / Proposé

**Community Pathways**
**Sentiers communautaires**

- Exisiting / Actuel
- Proposed / Proposé
- Greenspace Destination / Espace vert - Destination
- Greenspace / Espaces verts
- The Greenbelt / Le Ceinture de verdure
- Urban Area / Secteur urbain

Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch
Planning and Growth Management Department
City of Ottawa

Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure
Service de l'urbanisme et de la gestion de la croissance
Ville d'Ottawa

May 10, 2005
10 mai, 2005
Revised: March 2006, June 2006
Révision : mars 2006, juin 2006

Ottawa

to the existing pathway system in the National Capital Area. Much of the mapping used to create the Urban Greenspace Network was provided as a backdrop for this study. Following Council receipt of this study, a capital budget and implementation plan for priority sections will be prepared for Council consideration.

The proposed community networks shown in new communities on **Map 4** reflect provisions of community design plans approved by the City and will be developed as the community grows. The proposed community network in established communities may also be secured through community design plans in the future, as well as through review of development applications.

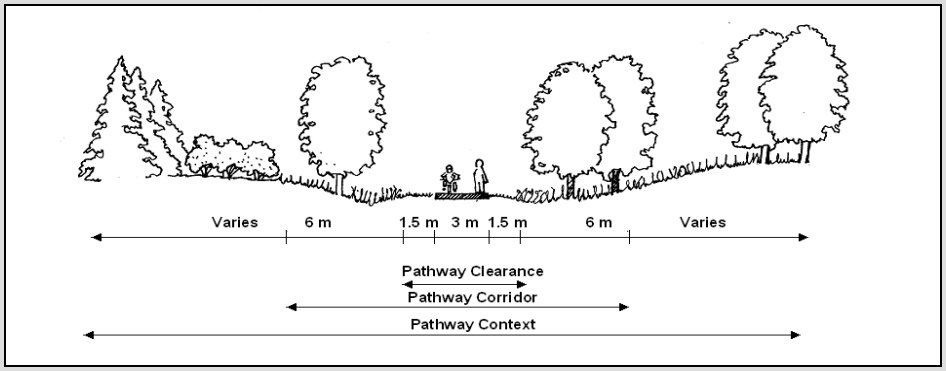
**Components of the Multi-Use Pathway**

The pathway will take its character from the surrounding lands, natural in some areas and more designed in others. Integration with the system built by the NCC will be achieved through common construction and safety standards, with interpretive signs identifying the pathway as an urban amenity.

**A Pathway Clearance Zone** – 6.0 metres wide free and clear for safe use, including a 3.0 metre wide pathway and a 1.5 metre shoulder on either side.

**A Pathway Corridor** – Where opportunity exists, a corridor of 6.0 meters on either side of the clearance zone is desirable. The width of the pathway corridor will be defined for each segment in more detailed area planning and design studies that consider the pathway's context.

**A Pathway Context Zone** –Varying in width according to the pathway corridor's immediate environment and defined by view sheds. Elements that define the view shed's limits may include buildings, fences and other site features, vegetation and landforms. The optimum width of the pathway context zone should also be defined for each segment in more detailed area planning and design studies.



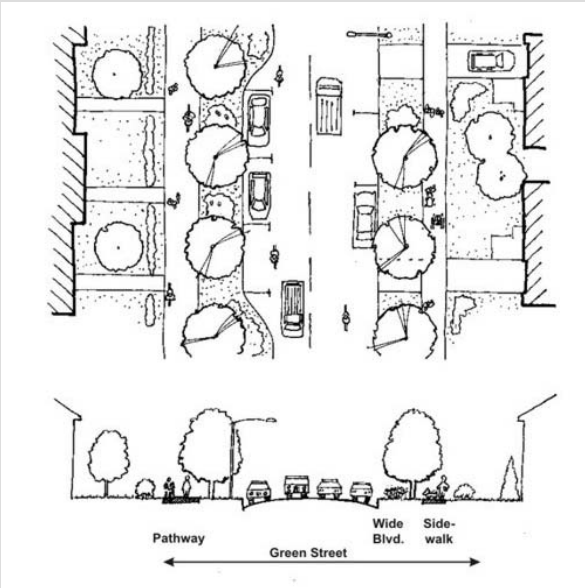

### 2.4.7 Green Streets

Green Streets offer an alternative to off-road pathways and are an attractive amenity in their own right. In older communities, connection of parks to the Urban Greenspace Network may only be possible by converting some streets to "green streets", following a community design plan or other planning study. A Green Street is a street right-of-way that, through its design and operation:

- Strengthens accessibility to destinations such as schools, culture and leisure facilities, parks and open spaces, transit stops, work places and other destinations within and adjacent to the community
- Creates an enhanced environment in the right-of-way that is attractive and safe for all pedestrians and cyclists
- Improves overall environmental quality and the "greening" of infrastructure by cleansing runoff, increasing water infiltration, reducing urban heat island effects and improving air quality
- Improves the overall visual and environmental quality of the community and the city
- Maximizes the opportunity for trees and other landscaping to flourish
- Improves connectivity of the Urban Greenspace Network and community access to the Network

**Characteristics of a Green Street**

Green Streets include many enhancements designed to support walking and cycling in an attractive, open space environment such as wider boulevards, sidewalks, multi-use pathways, street trees and other landscaping, and roadway features. Each Green Street would have its own character and design based on its context, the types of users, the right-of-way dimensions, and its transportation role.




A Green Street Strategy is needed to explore the opportunities in Ottawa to build Green Streets in new communities as public capital works or to create them in established communities at various scales.

In established communities, Green Streets could be built as part of a roadway rehabilitation program or scaled down to focus on the improvement of barren traffic islands and road verges with planting, flowers, benches and other community-sponsored elements. Such projects could be initiated by local communities and funded from such sources as: City grant programs; public, private and not-for-profit partners; or special local improvement levies. Examples of City funding programs include the Adopt-A-Road Program and the Green Partnership Pilot Program. Funding and support partners include Trees Canada, Evergreen Foundation, and Go-for-Green.

# 3 Achieving the Vision

## 3.1 Introduction

Ottawa's 20/20 objectives for managing growth lend themselves to five objectives for managing and expanding greenspace in the urban area.

Adequacy is the objective that sparks the most public interest and controversy. Is there enough greenspace? How can we get more? But achieving an adequate amount of greenspace, as measured by hectares per thousand population, does not necessarily mean that the community's needs for greenspace are satisfied. The amount of greenspace provided does not reflect whether that greenspace meets the recreational needs of the community or whether the most important environmental lands have been secured. The quality of the greenspace, its sustainability, and the access to it that the community enjoys are all important. This section explores the meaning of each objective, the issues associated with achieving it, and the actions the City can take to pursue it.

**The Five Greenspace Objectives**

**Adequacy** - The City will provide enough greenspace to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community and to maintain natural systems, biodiversity and habitat.
**Accessibility** - Ottawa residents will have ready access to greenspace in close proximity to their homes and communities.
**Connectivity** - Ottawa's greenspaces will be linked to provide for variety and improved access to recreational facilities, and to improve biodiversity and the movement of species.
**Quality** - Greenspaces will be attractive, safe and well-designed, serving the multiple needs of users while defining the unique identity of communities. Where greenspaces are primarily natural areas, they will be preserved in manner that maintains or improves natural features and functions.
**Sustainability** - Greenspaces will be planned and managed in a way that minimizes human intervention and public spending over time, through reliance on natural processes as well as innovative methods for protecting greenspace.

## 3.2 Adequate Greenspace

### 3.2.1 Current Provisions - Targets and Challenges

The City's Official Plan sets a target of 4.0 ha of total greenspace (i.e., natural land and open space and leisure land) for every 1000 residents and this target has been achieved throughout most of the urban area. In new communities, the target for total greenspace includes a target of at least 2 ha of park and leisure land for every 1000 residents. This target, which reflects the amount of park space in established communities, is ambitious in that the parkland dedication provided under the *Planning Act* yields about 1.2 ha per thousand population, and the balance must be created through land acquisition and negotiation. These targets have guided the development of recently approved community design plans for the expanding suburban areas.

**Figure 4** shows the population of large districts of the city and the amount of park and total greenspace within each district. **Figure 4** also shows the amount of park and total greenspace per thousand population. In this table, park space comprises city-owned parks and federal land recognized by the NCC as a park. These lands comprise the primary lands shown on **Map 2** in Section 2. Total greenspace, for this analysis, includes all park space plus active and passive open space in public ownership identified in the 2005 Land Use Survey. These lands are generally shown as the supporting lands on **Map 2** in Section 2. School property and land in the Greenbelt is not included in this analysis.

In general, most communities achieve the targets of the Official Plan. While some of the older neighbourhoods have less park land than newer suburban areas, they meet or exceed the target for total greenspace because communities inside the Greenbelt on the whole have access to a considerable amount of federally owned greenspace. The exception is the densely populated Inner Area, which does not achieve the Official Plan target for total greenspace or park space.

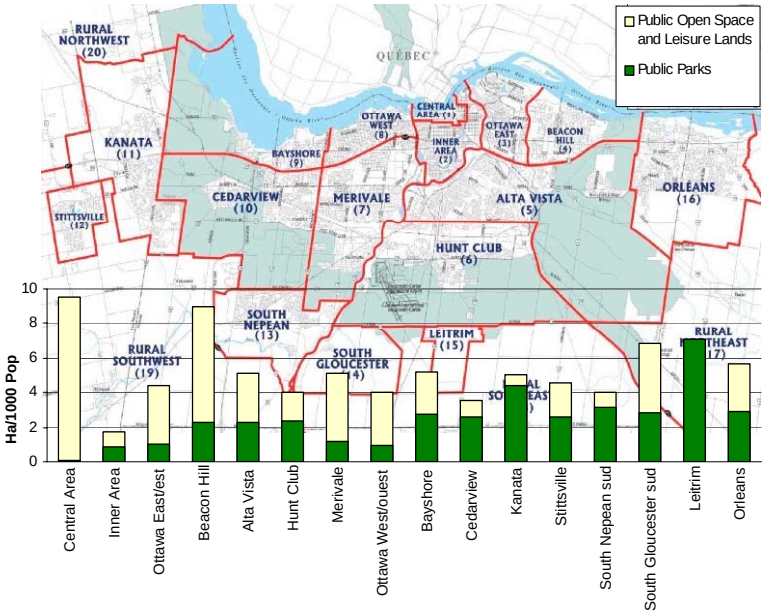



**Figure 4** Distribution of parks and other greenspace in sub-areas of urban Ottawa.

The greenspace characteristics of each area are unique and reflect its natural features, location within the city, and past planning decisions. Overall greenspace may be higher in communities with an abundance of natural features or development constraint lands such as flood plains. Other areas may have more or less land used for infrastructure such as stormwater management facilities. Some former municipalities provided public parks in excess of the current Official Plan target through a combination of developer contributions, partnerships and land acquisition. Many of the former municipalities had capital funds to purchase parkland, leaving a generous supply in some areas. Some areas have access to nearby federally owned or municipally owned landscapes. In Leitrim, a large park has been purchased ahead of population growth, yielding a disproportionate amount of park per thousand population. The presence or absence of these various elements can significantly change the makeup of parks and greenspace in a community, and no two communities are alike in this regard. Further, it is more important to consider the quality of all greenspaces in a community than to pursue achievement of targets.

As neighbourhoods outside the Greenbelt continue to develop and older neighbourhoods inside the Greenbelt intensify, the ratio of park per thousand population is expected to decrease in some areas. In new communities, new subdivisions will be bringing on new parkland as they develop. However, where

the larger parks have already been provided, the move towards build-out of the suburb will entail a decrease in the park-to-population ratio. In older neighbourhoods, parkland will not be lost to development; rather, the population it serves will increase. In these areas, it may be desirable to compensate for the increased use of parks by providing new facilities on other open spaces and city-owned land, in order to increase recreational opportunities. The City can also acquire additional lands inside the Greenbelt as parkland, although costs are high and opportunities are few.

While the City has set a target of 2.0 ha of park and leisure land per thousand population, there is no target for the amount of natural land in Ottawa, although natural land is counted towards the total greenspace target. As in other Canadian cities, environmental areas are preserved on an opportunity basis, where they still exist. Regardless of whether targets are achieved, the City will continue to pursue the acquisition of natural lands and additional park space.

In order to improve adequacy of Ottawa's urban greenspaces, the City will:

- Continue to pursue its overall targets for publicly owned and accessible greenspace, and expand the application of its overall park and leisure land targets across the urban area

### 3.2.2 Keeping Pace with Change

As Ottawa pushes past the million-population mark and approaches 2020, both suburban growth areas and the inner city will experience change and pressures on the greenspace supply. New communities will be challenged to provide a full range of natural lands and open space and leisure lands, while as the inner city intensifies and the population increases, the ratio of parkland to population will fall from current levels. Although these pressures are experienced locally within neighbourhoods, they also extend across communities and across the city. Many of the greenspace issues experienced now will only become more challenging in the future:

- Inadequacy of the parkland dedication under the *Planning Act* to provide sufficient greenspace, particularly sports fields and pathways
- Funding shortfall for the acquisition of natural lands and other greenspaces
- Lack of clarity on what lands are greenspace and what lands are simply vacant
- Redevelopment of privately owned open space and leisure land
- The changing role of school grounds
- The pinch on constraint land and other infrastructure land

*Inadequacy of the parkland dedication*

The parkland dedication required under the *Planning Act* cannot be relied upon to provide all future open space and leisure land needs in either new or established communities. The *Planning Act* provides for parkland dedication as part of the development review process, at no cost to the City. In certain circumstances, cash is paid in lieu of the land dedication. In established communities, infill development typically occurs on small sites and taking land through the parkland dedication is not feasible and may not provide land that is well located. The alternative, to

accept cash-in-lieu of parkland, does not go far since the available land supply is in the form of expensive, serviced inner-urban land. In new communities, the dedication is the primary means of creating parks and is generally sufficient to meet neighbourhood demands for parks close to home. However, not all of the parkland identified in some community plans can be acquired in this manner. Also, the dedication is not sufficient to provide these parks as well as sports fields and natural lands identified for protection.

In particular, the popularity of organized field sports today is increasing and demand for time on large sports fields has outstripped the existing supply (Sports Field Strategy, IBI 2003). The City needs to address the existing under-supply of sports fields and prepare for the future demand created by a growing population. The current shortfall leads to the over-use of some sports fields, resulting in a deterioration of play surface quality and the inability to respond to the needs of sporting groups in a timely manner. Furthermore, neighbourhood parks are usually not large enough to have one or more sports fields, nor can they handle the impacts of sport league players and spectators from beyond a neighbourhood. The most efficient distribution of sports fields for organized league or tournament play is in large, multi-field parks that can meet the needs of players drawn from a community or from across the city, including new downtown communities.

Development Charges can finance a substantial portion of the construction of new sports field facilities to meet demand created by urban growth, but these charges cannot be used to acquire land, under the terms of the *Development Charges Act*. The City has initiated an enhanced sports field acquisition program by allocating $1 million in the 2006 budget for sports field acquisition and will consider additional funding in the 2007 long-range financial plan. It will also continue to pursue long-term land leases and partnerships with sports groups willing to create fields for their own and public use.

In order to pursue the objective of maintaining an adequate supply of greenspace throughout the urban area, the City will:

- Continue to pursue the target, across the city, of 2 ha per 1000 population of park space or eight to ten per cent of developable land area
- Use community design plans as a means to identify all greenspace opportunities in new and redeveloping neighbourhoods and propose strategies to meet the Official Plan targets and provide links to the Urban Greenspace Network
- Implement the open space and urban forest provisions of *The Downtown Ottawa Urban Design Strategy 2020* adopted by Ottawa Council and use the development review process, partnerships and public works to secure potential open spaces identified in the plans for the various precincts within the downtown
- Not consider any land surplus to its needs until it has been evaluated in the context of its contribution to the Urban Greenspace Network, its protection or enhancement of the natural environment, or its contribution to the City's recreational open space, prior to divesting of the property. When considering the disposal of City-owned land, the City will ensure that any network function is retained

*Funding shortfall*

Before amalgamation, several local municipalities had innovative programs and parkland acquisition funds that identified and secured new parks well in advance of urban growth. The former Region of Ottawa-Carleton also had a fund to acquire environmental lands in the rural area and along major waterways. This fund has been carried into the budget of the City of Ottawa. Ottawa has also expanded its greenspace acquisition strategies beyond reliance on the parkland dedication; for example, by leveraging tax credits for donated lands as part of acquisition strategy for natural environment areas.

The City already has a land acquisition policy to aid in the protection of lands currently designated in the City's Official Plan. This policy is included in Appendix B. Notwithstanding this, as the City moves towards 2020, it needs to consider its greenspace priorities and develop a strategy for meeting funding shortfalls. Funding for the acquisition of large district parks as well as natural lands can come from a variety of sources, including cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication, capital budgets (the tax base), and partnerships with city-wide sports leagues. Establishment of a fund for new acquisitions would enhance opportunities for the City to buy land earlier in the development process at a lower cost rather than at a later date when servicing is available and the land is ready to develop. Relying on cash-in-lieu for major purchases does not provide sufficient funds in greenfields in a timely manner, before the property achieves its full urban value.

Council's next decision in the urban area will be whether to fund the acquisition of the remaining privately owned environmental areas identified through the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study and the proposed Urban Natural Features Strategy. While some of the priority sites may be secured through partnerships and other mechanisms, many will need to be acquired by the City if they are to be protected.

In order to create a more comprehensive view of the adequacy of greenspace funding, the City will:

- Review all sources of funding for the acquisition of natural and open space and leisure lands, including the Environmental Land Acquisition Fund, the cash-in-lieu of parkland fund, and other capital programs approved or proposed in the long-range financial plan
- Propose a consistent and coordinated approach to managing the funds and reporting to Council and communities on how they are used

*Lack of clarity on what lands are greenspace and what lands are simply vacant*

Throughout the city, there are large parcels of publicly owned land that are used as open space by the community for dog-walking and other leisure activities, yet these lands are not planned as parks and their future use is uncertain. Some of these lands are corridors that were protected for infrastructure that is no longer needed or has been delayed. Other lands are near or adjacent to planned open spaces but are not planned as part of the open space. In some cases, the knowledge that the municipality or the federal government owns a parcel of vacant land is sufficient to cast it as "park" in the minds of residents, who are aware of the greenspace needs of their community. In

many cases, the role of these lands only becomes apparent when the owner seeks to sell or redevelop the property for another purpose. People who use the space are concerned about the loss and any planning process may lead to an Ontario Municipal Board decision.

Studies of the future use of these sites may be the best vehicle for the NCC and other public landowners, the City, and the adjacent communities to determine the future use of these lands. Many of these undeveloped sites now are zoned to permit development, subject to completion of a study of future use in the area and consultation with the public. Smaller in scale than a community design plan, such a study could be initiated through a terms of reference approved by Council and supported by the landowner. It could also be co-ordinated with planning for additional pathways identified through the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region:2006 Strategic Plan*, since many of the sites are located within the proposed Urban Greenspace Network. Until such time as an agreement on the future use is secured through approval of the plan, the current zoning and Official Plan designations would remain in place.

The City will endeavour to clarify the greenspace role of undeveloped, publicly owned land by:

- Initiating planning studies on the future use of undeveloped, publicly owned lands in partnership with the NCC and other public owners, and in consultation with the community and other stakeholders, in order to determine the future greenspace functions of these lands that are now used as open space but are not planned or managed by the owner for that purpose

The City will also protect land that is planned and developed for conservation and recreation or leisure purposes through the Official Plan and the Comprehensive Zoning By-law by:

- Designating all major municipal parks and Urban Natural Features consistently in the Official Plan
- Zoning all city-owned parks in an open space or equivalent zoning and ensure that there is public consultation where a municipal park is to be sold or changed to another use

*Redevelopment of privately owned open space and leisure land*

The public has an interest in maintaining the open space or leisure function of institutional sites and privately owned but accessible open spaces such as marinas, campgrounds and golf courses. As the City grows and land values rise, the economic feasibility of maintaining some privately owned leisure facilities is reduced to the point where redevelopment is a viable option. In such cases, the City needs to consider the open space function of the site to see whether a greenspace function can be retained even as the land redevelops.

When considering applications to amend the zoning by-law or to redevelop privately owned open space and leisure land, the City will:

- Consider opportunities to maintain the continuity of the Urban Greenspace Network
- Seek opportunities to maintain public access to a waterfront or otherwise provide additional greenspace to the community

*The changing role of school grounds*

School grounds have historically been the focus of neighbourhood activity. School grounds were among the few greenspaces provided in a grid pattern of streets and houses in older, inner-city communities. Since the 1950s, school grounds have continued to play a central role in the community as one of the key organising features in community planning. In many communities, school grounds have been co-located with parks to create large, community greenspaces with facilities for sport and leisure.

The City and school boards have been working together for many years in the planning, design and operation of shared outdoor recreation and leisure facilities. Fiscal pressures, changing demographics, and the high cost of land have challenged these traditional relationships. The inner city faces school closures and the potential loss of accessible greenspace in areas that are already sparsely or underserved with parks and sports fields. Older suburban areas also face school closures that have the potential to fragment established greenspaces created by coordinated park and school locations. The high costs of land in rapidly growing suburban areas has also resulted in some instances of school boards acquiring smaller school properties, which reduces their ability to meet their own recreation demands and their contribution to the community's accessible greenspaces. Smaller school properties contribute to intensified use of nearby parks and increased maintenance and lifecycle costs for the City.

The closure of schools and the proposed sale of these properties are of keen interest to the communities that have grown up around these facilities. Schools in good condition usually get traded to another school board. Generally, those that are offered for sale require major capital investment to bring them up to today's standards and additional cost to re-adapt to other uses. The challenge facing the City is whether to acquire the school to preserve the facility functions of the building, to acquire the land to preserve the greenspace functions of the school yard, or to acquire both or neither.

Council has asked staff to prepare a policy on the disposition of surplus school sites and such a policy will be brought forward in 2007. This master plan assists with that policy by proposing criteria for Council to use in assessing the merit of school sites and other land proposed for acquisition as greenspace, in Section 4. These criteria include the site's location with respect to the Urban Greenspace Network, the amount of greenspace in the community, and future need as the community population increases.

In addition to planning for total parkland requirements through the community design process and other strategies to secure an adequate amount of greenspace, as described above, the City will:

- Adopt clear criteria to guide decisions on the acquisition of natural lands, schoolyards, and other greenspaces, and make sure that the rationale for any recommendation on a proposed acquisition is clear

*The pinch on constraint land and other infrastructure land*

During the development review process, the City requests that stream valleys and corridors be dedicated to a public authority for environmental land management. Plans for some new communities have included trails within these lands, as well as along stormwater management facilities. These lands are not considered as parkland, although they contribute to greenspace. Although public use is permitted, these lands cannot be developed to support programmed recreation. At the same time as land costs rise, it has become increasingly difficult to secure constraint lands. Land developers are seeking engineering solutions to mitigate the development constraint around these lands and increase the developable land area, or are proposing to turn these lands into private property assets. Public safety issues complicate use of these lands for recreation purposes and human activity can impact on features such as plant communities, fish habitat and waterway function.

In order to make the best use of the greenspace role of constraint land and infrastructure land, the City will:

- Design stormwater ponds and utility corridors in such a way that they can also function as greenspace in new communities and redevelopment areas, and hazard lands will be incorporated in the overall greenspace plan. These lands will not be considered as part of the public dedication required under the Planning Act, although adjacent, developable lands proposed for paths or parks may be purchased or included in the public dedication.

### 3.2.3 Summary - Strategies for Achieving an Adequate Amount of Greenspace

In order to pursue the objective of maintaining an adequate supply of greenspace throughout the urban area, the City will:

- Use community design plans as a means to identify all greenspace opportunities in new and redeveloping neighbourhoods and propose strategies to meet the Official Plan targets and provide links to the Urban Greenspace Network
- Implement the open space and urban forest provisions of *The Downtown Ottawa Urban Design Strategy 2020* adopted by Ottawa Council and use the development review process, partnerships and public works to secure potential open spaces identified in the plans for the various precincts within the downtown
- Not consider any land surplus to its needs until it has been evaluated in the context of its contribution to the Urban Greenspace Network, its protection or enhancement of the natural environment, or its contribution to the City's recreational open space, prior to divesting of the property. When considering the disposal of City-owned land, the City will ensure that any network function is retained
- Review all sources of funding for the acquisition of natural and open space and leisure lands, including the Environmental Land Acquisition Fund, the cash-in-lieu of parkland fund, and other capital programs approved or proposed in the long-range financial plan
- Propose a consistent and coordinated approach to managing the funds and reporting to Council and communities on how they are used

- Endeavour to clarify the greenspace role of undeveloped, publicly owned land by initiating planning studies on the future use of undeveloped, publicly owned lands in partnership with the NCC and other public owners, and in consultation with the community and other stakeholders, in order to determine the future greenspace functions of these lands that are now used as open space but are not planned or managed by the owner for that purposes
- The City will designate all major municipal parks and Urban Natural Features consistently in the Official Plan, by:
  - Designating as Major Open Space all municipal parks of 7 ha or more that contain a diversity of facilities, including those identified in community design plans
  - Designating all parkway corridors as Major Open Space
  - Updating the Major Recreational Pathways schedules in the Official Plan to reflect the Urban Greenspace Network and the recommendations of the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan*
- Protect land that is planned and developed for conservation and recreation or leisure purposes through the Comprehensive Zoning By-law by zoning all city-owned parks in an open space or equivalent zone and ensure that there is public consultation where a municipal park is to be sold or changed to another use
- When considering applications to amend the zoning by-law or to redevelop privately owned open space and leisure land, the City will:
  - Consider opportunities to maintain the continuity of the Urban Greenspace Network
  - Seek opportunities to maintain public access to a waterfront or otherwise provide additional greenspace to the community
- Adopt clear criteria to guide decisions on the acquisition of natural lands, schoolyards, and other greenspaces, and make sure that the rationale for any recommendation on a proposed acquisition is clear
- Design stormwater ponds and utility corridors in such a way that they can also function as greenspace in new communities and redevelopment areas, and incorporate hazard lands in the overall greenspace plan. Such land will not be considered as part of the public dedication required under the *Planning Act*, although adjacent, developable lands proposed for paths or parks will be purchased or included in the public dedication

## 3.3 Accessible Greenspace

The principle of accessibility speaks to issues of social equity and community design arising from the distribution of parks and greenspaces. Communities without ready access to nearby greenspace are as deficient as communities that fall short of an adequate supply. Physical constraints such as distance, intervening barriers such as major roads that are difficult to cross, and the user's degree of mobility can hinder access. Barriers also arise from concerns about individual security in the space, cultural norms about how public open space can be used, and any costs involved in accessing the space or using its facilities. Access can be enhanced by good design that opens the space visually and physically to users and that co-locates it with complementary uses. Multiple uses within the space and linkages to other open spaces expand the experience.

In its narrowest sense, access is usually measured as walking distance or walking time. As a rule of thumb, a four- or five-minute walk is considered sufficient to travel between 250 m to 400 m (see **Figure 5**). The Official Plan sets as a target that in residential areas, all homes will be within 400 metres of a greenspace, or roughly within a five-minute walk. This target was tested using the 2005 Land Use Survey, by drawing a 400-metre buffer around active and passive recreation lands owned by a public body. The results illustrated in **Figure 6** show that most of the City's urban residential areas achieve this target.

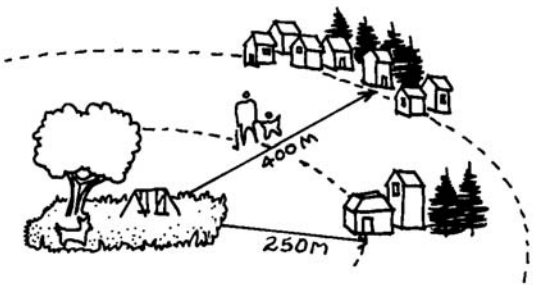



**Figure 5** A four or five-minute walk is considered sufficient to travel between 250 m to 400 m.

While 400 metres is a good, basic target for accessibility, true walking distance may be greater, and more refined targets could be explored that reflect different types of activity and the needs of community residents. For younger and older populations, for example, a shorter distance to greenspace is a more appropriate measure of accessibility. A shorter distance may also be appropriate in areas of higher density, where there may be less private outdoor space and an increased need to access public greenspace. A more robust target of a 250 metres walking distance was also tested and is illustrated in **Figure 6**. The city does remarkably well when measured against this higher standard, since most of the residential areas in urban Ottawa have some form of open space or leisure land within 250 metres. Other targets could be explored for specific community plans or for citywide analysis of park needs in the future.

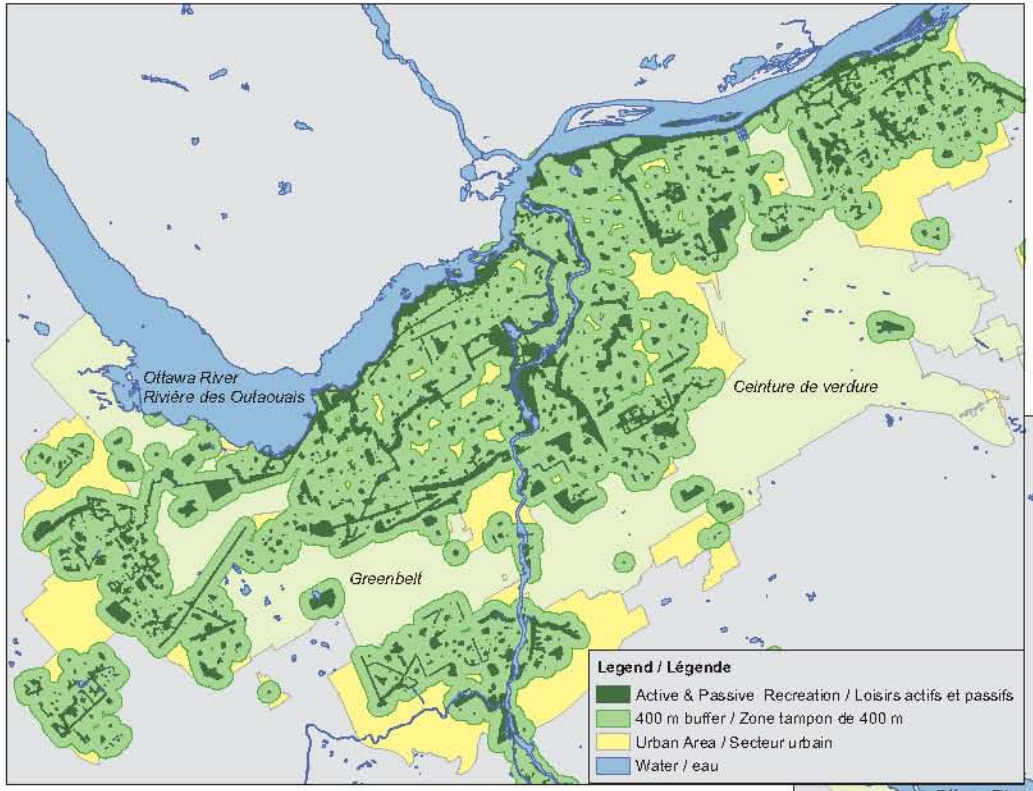
Like all targets, though, targets for accessibility and total greenspace are only broad indicators and may not tell the whole story. They do not address the quality of parks and natural areas, and how well these greenspaces serve community needs or preserve natural features or functions, as discussed below.

Accessibility to natural lands raises several issues. Natural lands provide opportunities for unstructured recreational uses, such as walking, and can offer an alternative to urban parks and corridors. They add value to adjacent residential properties and provide an escape from the bustle and concrete of city living. However, public accessibility must be weighed against the need to sustain the natural features that make the area attractive and worthy of preservation as a natural area. Some sites are very popular and without proper facilities for public use, are being used informally in ways that may create impacts on fragile natural features or raise significant land management issues. As the urban area grows, potentially greater pressure will be placed on these lands.

The City now has management plans for such areas as the Marlborough Forest and Torbolton Forest that combine environmental protection with managed public access. The Forest Strategy, to be completed in 2007, will establish priorities for the preparation of management plans for the remaining municipal forests and management policies for city-owned natural lands in the urban area. These policies will be prepared in partnership with the City Forester and interested community groups to enhance environmental quality and define public access to the area.

# Distribution of Public Open Space and Leisure Lands
# Distribution des espaces ouverts et des terrains de loisirs publics

Figure
Figure 6

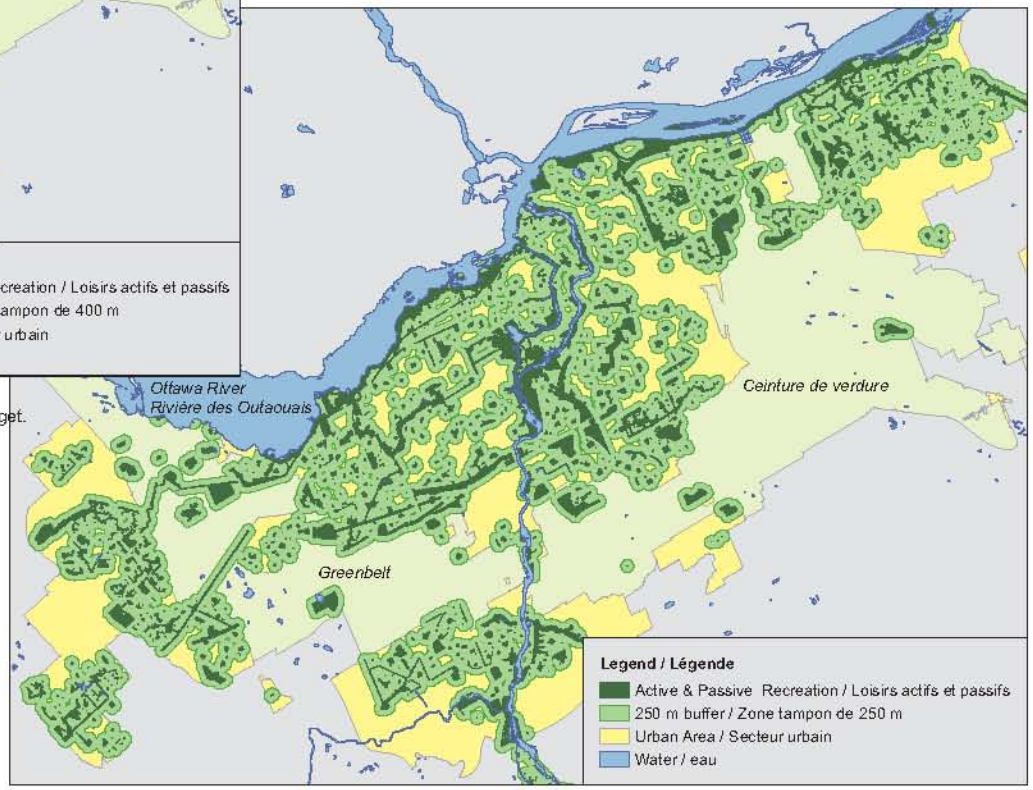



A 400-metre buffer illustrates that most of the city's urban residential areas achieve this distance target.

Une zone tampon de 400 metre illustre que la plupart des secteurs résidentiels urbains dans la ville respectent l'objectif de séparation.

A 250-metre buffer assumes a more limited walking distance, and significant amounts of the urban residential areas are still well covered.

Une zone tampon de 250 metre présume un trajet à pied plus court; un grand nombre de secteurs résidentiels urbains rentrent dans cette catégorie.




Based on the 2005 Land Use Mapping En fonction de la représentation graphique de l'utilisation du sol, 2005

Greenspace Master Plan
Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch
Planning and Growth Management Department
City of Ottawa
June 2006

Plan directeur des espaces verts
Politiques d'urbanisme, d'environnement et d'infrastructure
Service de l'urbanisme et de la gestion de la croissance
Ville d'Ottawa
Juin 2006

### 3.3.1 Strategies for Achieving Accessible Greenspace

In order to improve accessibility to Ottawa's urban greenspaces, the City will:

- Continue to ensure that residential areas are within 400 metres of publicly owned greenspace that is generally accessible to the public
- Explore alternate targets for accessibility to greenspace within the context of plans for specific communities or locations, including targets for areas with higher population densities or targets for access to different types of facilities
- Manage City-owned lands in a manner consistent with the long-term maintenance of greenspace values identified in the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study by preparing management plans and policies for City-owned natural areas that focus on the protection of environmental features and functions while accommodating public access and leisure uses where appropriate

## 3.4 Quality Greenspace

"Quality" refers to the features and characteristics of a greenspace that determine its ability to satisfy a given need or to perform a specified function well. Council's objective is to enhance the quality of greenspaces to improve their carrying capacity and their role in the community, and to maintain or enhance the quality of natural lands to improve habitats and biodiversity.

The quality of natural lands is measured differently than the quality of open space and leisure lands that are intended for public recreation. The quality of a natural area, when evaluated from a purely intrinsic, natural environment perspective, includes an assessment of the size (bigger is better), shape (approaching a square or circle is better to minimize edge effects), connectivity, species composition (sites with a diversity of species that are relatively undisturbed are favoured) and function (hydrologic functions are the most important). These characteristics can be used to assess the quality of natural areas in both urban and rural settings. All other things being equal, the quality of natural features in the rural area, rated against these criteria, will far exceed the quality of urban natural features.

The relatively lower quality of urban natural features must, however, be balanced with an appreciation of the additional functions and values imparted by natural areas in an urban setting. What is rare is valued and natural features are unique within the urban landscape and thus highly valued. Natural land in the urban area also imparts individual and community health benefits, including development of strong neighbourhood ties, environmental awareness among urban residents, and a sense of tranquility and well-being. At the same time, natural land improves water quality, air quality and carbon absorption, and generally mitigates environmental degradation in the urban environment, doing so efficiently and at a low cost. Developing a sense of stewardship in the surrounding community or among community groups with a conservation interest is one of the best ways to protect natural land and its features and functions, and thus enhance its quality. A sense of stewardship and responsibility can be fostered through interpretive, on-site signage and information and education about the site, working in partnership with schools and interest groups.

Natural features are unique within the urban landscape and thus highly valued.

The City supports several programs that foster stewardship by community groups. For example, the City's Green Partnership Pilot Program creates opportunities for stewardship of natural areas. The program will be providing $1 million to fund innovative projects that further clean and green the city. Individuals, community organizations, service groups, business associations and non-profit organizations are encouraged to undertake projects that green communities, restore natural habitat, or create sustainable green spaces. An Environmental Achievement Award Program has been recommended that recognizes annually the exemplary contributions of private individuals and groups that sustain the environment.

Quality considerations for open space and leisure lands include its location, size, and relationship to other land uses or natural features. Done well, the design of open spaces increases their carrying capacity and can compensate for an overall shortfall in supply. Done well, park planning in coordination with overall community planning yields a network of accessible greenspaces that physically structures the community and contributes to a high quality of life. Community planning that coordinates many potential partners and projects can result in a system of greenspaces that work together and have a greater impact than each of the individual elements would have in isolation.

Well-designed park and leisure land exhibits the following qualities:

- Character - a place with its own identity
- Continuity and enclosure - a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- Quality of the public realm – a place with attractive, well-constructed, well-maintained and successful outdoor spaces
- Ease of movement - a place that is easy to get around and through
- Legibility - a place that is easy to interpret and understand
- Adaptability – a place that can handle change easily
- Diversity – a place with variety and choice

### 3.4.1 Strategies for Achieving Quality Greenspace

In order to support the development of quality greenspaces in Ottawa, the City will:

- Support community initiatives to take on stewardship roles for natural land in the urban area, through the Green Partnership Program Pilot and through the city's management policies for these lands
- Adopt plans and policies for natural lands that will:
  - Identify measures to preserve, enhance and manage natural lands in a manner consistent with the purpose for which the land is acquired

- Inventory and update the City's information on the environmental assets of the land and identify potential issues and opportunities, both on and off-site, for the ongoing management of the land
- Incorporate opportunities for public access and recreation
- Identify the bodies responsible for the implementation of the management plans and the ongoing cost of doing so
- Incorporate opportunities for community participation in the preparation of the management plan and identify opportunities for community partnerships in the ongoing implementation of the plan

- Develop design guidelines for public parks in new communities and redeveloping areas, to be implemented through community design plans and through the development review process
- Seek opportunities to enhance the quality of design and construction of parks and public places to improve the carrying capacity of these lands as a means to meet leisure needs of the community – in particular in areas where adequacy target may not be met

## 3.5 Connected Greenspace

The connectivity of greenspaces is as important as the connectivity of transportation systems and other systems that structure a well-designed city. Connectivity is the networking of greenspaces by connecting local parks with natural areas with recreational areas. As outlined in Section 2, creating networks of greenspace reduces the importance of the amount of open space at any specific location because it increases access to others nearby. Connecting open spaces improves accessibility, reduces the need for additional land where it is difficult to provide, and adds to the sustainability of greenspaces. Compared with individual greenspaces, connected greenspaces are more enjoyable to use and explore.

Multi-use pathways are a primary means of creating connectivity within Ottawa. These pathways have grown from a Capital tourist novelty and disjointed lengths of suburban paths to a truly region-wide network. These off-road, multi-use pathways in green corridors have also become part of an increasingly viable mode of transportation, creating a network for cyclists and pedestrians en route to work and educational and leisure destinations in their community and across communities. With more than 300 km of pathways in the National Capital Region embracing parts of Ottawa and Gatineau, the NCC has been the champion and by far the most significant planner and builder of pathways in Ottawa. It continues to implement an impressive program, including over 56 km though the Greenbelt. The NCC builds pathways only on federal lands, and has almost completed this portion of the network. The City will be responsible for creating the network of pathways on its own land and on land such as Hydro corridors where agreements have been reached to allow pathway construction.

Connected greenspaces reduce the importance of the amount of open space at any specific location because it increases the potential to safely access others nearby.

In addition to pathways, other connections are provided by roadway, rapid transit and parkway corridors, hydro corridors, abandoned rail rights-of-way and unopened road allowances. These connections can provide the land base for pathway systems, and where they link natural areas, they may also support ecological functions. Roads and other infrastructure are the primary use in most corridors, but many also include greenspace elements such as multi-use pathways in landscaped boulevards. Where off-road connections between parks do not exist and are not feasible, reconstruction of roads as Green Streets can incorporate green pedestrian corridors focused on pedestrian use as well as cars.

Connectivity through natural linkages between natural areas maintains ecological functions such as biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Linkages provide passage for animals requiring a variety of habitats to complete their life cycle. Linkages provide for movement and reproductive interchange between populations of plant and animal species, and they buffer natural areas and processes from adjacent land uses.

Streams and creeks provide the best connections among natural areas, because they provide upland and riparian habitat for a diversity of plant and animal species. Streams that are vegetated add to the value of the connected core areas because vegetation protects migrating species from predation and improves the aquatic habitat. Connections that are shorter (less distance for an organism to travel from one area to another) and continuous (less risk of mortality and predation) are best.

Most urban natural areas are no longer connected, and naturalized corridors need to be created or maintained to support them. The same pathways and corridors that link parks and open spaces can also connect natural areas if appropriately landscaped and buffering is provided to reduce impacts on the natural areas. **Map 3** in Section 2, showing the Urban Greenspace Network, includes examples of natural lands that are connected by open space and leisure land corridors or could be connected by such corridors.

### 3.5.1 Strategies for Achieving Connected Greenspaces

In order to foster connectivity among Ottawa's urban greenspaces, the City will give priority to land that fills gaps in the Urban Greenspace Network or extends the network, with respect to:

- Acquisition of natural land or new parkland
- Situating new district and community parks
- The location of new recreation facilities and land designated for public purposes in new and existing communities
- Sites for new partnership projects such as stewardship projects and capital projects with community groups, sports clubs and other partners
- Building the multi-use pathway
- Managing City owned land and encouraging design of development to improve linkages between natural land and ecological functions

## 3.6 Sustainable Greenspace

Sustainability is a management issue for both open space and leisure lands and for natural land. Resources for managing parks and recreation facilities are decreasing, which, coupled with an increasing demand on these facilities, has resulted in a steady decline in the quality of urban parks and sports facilities. Given the generally high cost of maintaining property, there is a growing unwillingness to acquire land and take on the responsibility to maintain it. There is also a shift towards larger parks that can accommodate a variety of recreational activities and a move away from the provision of a range of open space opportunities in the community. The former is a more economic approach to providing recreation facilities but works against access and engagement at the local level.

Sustainable maintenance practices offer a cost-effective alternative to the management of land.

Sustainable maintenance practices offer an alternative. The City has banned the use of pesticides on municipal property for cosmetic purposes, and along with the NCC, has adopted a naturalized approach to landscape maintenance where appropriate.

Sustainability of natural areas is directly linked to disturbance factors; the greater the disturbance, the greater the potential to jeopardize the sustainability of the natural area over the long term. Humans disturb natural areas by encouraging invasive species by dumping yard wastes or by tracking in seeds. People who create informal pathways or mountain bike trails within natural areas encourage soil compaction, thereby decreasing the ability for oxygen to reach tree roots. Some species habitat may be compromised by human disturbance and removal of plants. Since the public invariably uses urban natural areas in public ownership, management of these areas to minimize the disturbance is key to their sustainability. An adequate buffer should be created on adjacent lands and managed so that dumping and other human activities do not impact on the natural site.

### 3.6.1 Strategies for Achieving Sustainable Greenspace

In order to support sustainable greenspace in Ottawa, the City will:

- Adopt plans and policies for natural lands owned by the City that:
  - Identify measures to preserve, enhance and manage natural lands in a manner consistent with the purpose for which the land is acquired
  - Inventory and update the City's information on the environmental assets of the land and identify potential issues and opportunities, both on and off-site, for the ongoing management of the land
  - Incorporate opportunities for public access and recreation
  - Identify the bodies responsible for the implementation of the management plans and the ongoing cost of doing so

- Incorporate opportunities for community participation in the preparation of the management plan and identify opportunities for community partnerships in the ongoing implementation of the plan

- Encourage public and private owners of natural lands to retain the land's natural features and functions through stewardship and design with nature principles, where any development is planned so as to minimize impacts on the natural qualities of the land

# 4 Implementation

The *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* will never be complete, in that the city's requirements for greenspace within the urban area and opportunities to provide it will continue to evolve as new communities develop and older communities redevelop. Council's objectives for greenspace are pursued in this context, on an ongoing basis across a broad range of municipal functions. These functions include responsibilities assigned under the *Planning Act*, Council decisions on municipal public works, and projects undertaken in partnership with others. Through these functions, Council can pursue a "Greenspace Also" approach in its decision-making so that greenspace objectives are considered at the same time as other objectives for managing the city's growth and development.

Actions, large and small, are required to achieve the City's objectives for Greenspace.

The tools that Council will use to pursue "Greenspace Also" are listed below.

**Land Use Planning –** Council will identify and protect greenspace in the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, and through Community Design Plans and other planning studies.

**Development Review Process –** As individual parcels come forward for subdivision, zoning or site plan approval, Council will act on opportunities to protect and acquire greenspace.

**Undertaking Public Works and Building Infrastructure –** Council will find ways to provide and protect greenspace when building roads and other infrastructure.

**Partnering with Others –** Council will work with the private sector, the NCC and provincial partners, conservation authorities, and community groups to provide and manage greenspace.

**Managing Land –** Council will model stewardship on city-owned land and maintain or enhance its greenspace function.

**Land Acquisition –** Council will ensure public ownership of greenspaces through acquisition and other mechanisms where appropriate and practical.

In 2005, Council adopted an acquisition policy that commits it to purchase those significant greenspace lands that are designated in the City's Official Plan. These policies establish the actions that trigger Council acquiring land and the mechanisms to establish fair compensation. The Ontario Municipal Board approved this policy with the exception of sub-policy 5(f). The outstanding component deals

with acquisition and compensation for surplus public land and is being reviewed. The whole policy adopted by the City is provided in Appendix B.

## 4.1 Implementation: Policies

Council's policies for implementing its greenspace objectives are listed below, and include the strategies and policies in Section 2 and 3.

### 4.1.1 Land Use Planning

1. The City will adopt an Urban Natural Features Strategy to identify the priority natural areas that remain in the urban area that are worthy of protection, and to propose how these areas can be secured for the long-term through partnerships, acquisition, and other means.

2. The City will designate all major municipal parks and Urban Natural Features consistently in the Official Plan, by:
   - Designating as Major Open Space all municipal parks of 7 ha or more that contain a diversity of facilities, including those identified in community design plans
   - Designating all parkway corridors as Major Open Space
   - Updating the Major Recreational Pathways schedules in the Official Plan to reflect the Urban Greenspace Network and the recommendations of the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan*

3. The City will use community design plans and other plans as a means to:
   - Identify all greenspace opportunities in new and redeveloping neighbourhoods
   - Propose strategies to meet the Official Plan targets
   - Demonstrate that the area can be linked to the Urban Greenspace Network

4. The City will implement the open space and urban forest provisions of *The Downtown Ottawa Urban Design Strategy 2020* adopted by Ottawa Council and use the development review process, partnerships and public works to secure potential open spaces identified in the plans for the various precincts within the downtown.

5 When developing plans for new and existing communities, the City will give priority to land on the Urban Greenspace Network by:
   - Situating new district and community parks on the network or as extensions to the existing network
   - Using new local and neighbourhood parks to address network gaps and to provide connections to facilities that are not on the network
   - Situating new recreation facilities and other public facilities on the network

6 The City will continue to pursue targets for greenspace as follows:
   - 2 ha per 1000 population of park space or eight to ten per cent of developable land area
   - 4 ha per 1000 population of total greenspace or 16 to 20 per cent of gross land area

- Homes in every residential area to be within 400 m of publicly owned greenspace that is generally accessible to the public

7. Within the context of plans for specific communities or locations, the City will explore alternate targets for accessibility to greenspace, including targets for areas with higher population densities or targets for access to different types of facilities.

8. The City will endeavour to clarify the greenspace role of undeveloped, publicly owned land by initiating planning studies on the future use of undeveloped, publicly owned lands in partnership with the NCC and other public owners and in consultation with the community and other stakeholders, in order to determine the future greenspace functions of these lands that are now used as open space but are not planned or managed by the owner for that purpose.

9. The City will protect land that is planned and developed for conservation and recreation or leisure purposes through the Comprehensive Zoning By-law by zoning all city-owned parks in an open space or equivalent zoning and ensuring that there is public consultation where a municipal park is to be sold or changed to another use.

10. The City will develop design guidelines for public parks in new communities and redeveloping areas, to be implemented through community design plans and through the development review process.

11. The City will design stormwater ponds and utility corridors in such a way that they can also function as greenspace in new communities and redevelopment areas, and will incorporate hazard lands in the overall greenspace plan. These lands will not be considered as part of the public dedication required under the Planning Act, although adjacent, developable lands proposed for paths or parks may be purchased or included in the public dedication.

12. The City will adopt a Forest Strategy in 2007 that will:
    - Evaluate forest cover in the urban and rural contexts and set targets for the forest and tree canopy for specific areas of the city
    - Establish priorities for management plans for large municipal forests in the urban and rural area, and management policies for city-owned natural lands in the urban area, where individual management plans are not warranted by the size of the site or its features

### 4.1.2 Development Review Process

1. When considering development applications, the City will build the Urban Greenspace Network by:
    - Ensuring that the applications implement the community design plan for the area and its plan for greenspace
    - Where no community design plan exists, seeking opportunities, where appropriate, to fill gaps and extend the network
    - Being explicit in reports to Council about the effects of the planning decisions on the Urban Greenspace Network

2. When considering applications to amend the zoning by-law or to redevelop institutional sites and privately owned open spaces such as marinas, campgrounds and golf courses that allow public access, the City will:
   - Consider opportunities to maintain the continuity of the Urban Greenspace Network
   - Seek opportunities to maintain public access to a waterfront or otherwise provide additional greenspace to the community

3. The City will set guidelines to help interpret Official Plan policies on setbacks from watercourses within the urban area, where these are not already established in watershed, subwatershed and environmental management plans. The guidelines will include direction on minor tributaries where objectives for environmental health and protection from erosion and flood hazard can be achieved through a flexible interpretation of requirements.

4. The City will encourage a high quality of urban design that respects natural features and functions through design with nature and other strategies identified in the Official Plan, and that features landscaping and open space to achieve the urban design principles of the Plan.

### 4.1.3 Undertaking Public Works and Building Infrastructure

1. The City will adopt a Green Street Strategy to explore ways that Green Streets could be used to provide connections within the Urban Greenspace Network and contribute to the greening of municipal infrastructure.

2. The City will prepare an implementation plan and budget estimate for key sections of the recreational pathway system identified in the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan* as a means of implementing parts of the Greenspace Network.

3. The City will seek opportunities to develop a connected Urban Greenspace Network through the design and location of major infrastructure by:
   - Designing and locating stormwater management ponds so that they contribute to or enhance natural systems within the urban area, and form connections with other greenspaces in the community, where feasible and appropriate
   - Using the lifecycle reconstruction of older roads to provide greenspace linkages to the Urban Greenspace Network, through such means as the provision of wide boulevards or landscaping treatments, where no opportunities exist to provide new greenspace land
   - Retaining ownership of road allowances where these may maintain the potential for public access to water, public waterfront land or other important greenspaces
   - Restoring and enhancing natural processes, natural landscapes, habitats and vegetation cover as an integral part of the utilities, works projects and maintenance of City properties and facilities
   - Providing multi-use pathways as part of the construction of arterial roads and rapid transit facilities where appropriate

4. Where transit, road, rail and utility corridors are part of the Urban Greenspace Network or cross the network, the City will accommodate the network in the design of the infrastructure. Where corridors cross the network, for example, a safe crossing should be provided so that passageways through the greenspace network are not severed. Where these corridors have potential to improve connectivity, pathways and other linkages can be provided within the corridor.

### 4.1.4 Partnering with Others

1. The City will support community initiatives to take on stewardship roles for natural land in the urban area, through the Green Partnership Program Pilot and through the City's management policies for these lands.

2. The City will use partnerships and agreements with other public agencies to:
   - Develop or enhance the contribution of their lands to the Urban Greenspace Network
   - Encourage other agencies to locate any leisure or recreation uses on the Urban Greenspace Network wherever possible

3. The City will give priority to locations on the Urban Greenspace Network for partnership projects, such as stewardship projects or new capital projects, undertaken with community groups, sports clubs, the business community and other stakeholders.

4. The City will encourage public and private owners of natural lands to retain the land's natural features and functions through stewardship and design with nature principles, where any development is planned so as to minimize impacts on the natural qualities of the land.

### 4.1.5 Managing Land

1. The City will manage city-owned lands in a manner consistent with the long-term maintenance of greenspace values identified in the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study by preparing management plans and policies for City-owned natural lands. These will focus on the protection of environmental features and functions while accommodating public access and leisure uses where appropriate. Plans and policies for natural lands will:
   - Identify measures to preserve, enhance and manage natural lands in a manner consistent with the purpose for which the land is acquired
   - Inventory and update the City's information on the environmental assets of the land and identify potential issues and opportunities, both on and off-site, for the ongoing management of the land
   - Incorporate opportunities for public access and recreation

- Identify the bodies responsible for the implementation of the management plans and the ongoing cost of doing so
- Incorporate opportunities for community participation in the preparation of the management plan and identify opportunities for community partnerships in the ongoing implementation of the plan.

2. The City will prepare a management plan for any newly acquired natural land where the size or management requirements warrant. Where the land does not warrant an individual plan, the City will incorporate the land within an existing management plan or common management process that addresses a number of sites with common characteristics.

3. The City will not consider any land surplus to its needs until it has been evaluated in the context of its contribution to the Urban Greenspace Network, its protection or enhancement of the natural environment, or its contribution to the City's recreational open space, prior to divesting of the property. When considering the disposal of City-owned land, the City will ensure that any network function is retained.

4. The City may divest itself of parkland where it can be demonstrated that the park no longer provides a public benefit and it cannot be adapted, redeveloped or expanded to meet current public needs. In such a case, the City will inform the local community and give the community an opportunity to provide input into the decision. The money gained from the sale of the park may only be used for the purchase of new parkland or the expansion or redevelopment of an existing park in the vicinity.

5. The City will seek opportunities to enhance the quality of design and construction of parks and public places to improve the carrying capacity of these lands as a means to meet leisure needs of the community – in particular in areas where adequacy target may not be met.

### 4.1.6 Land Acquisition

1. The City will acquire greenspace land where public ownership is required to maintain the land as greenspace by:
   - Exploring a variety of means to acquire greenspace including: land donations for tax rebates; securing easements; and similar methods as documented in Appendix A, prior to considering the purchase or exchange of land;
   - Acquiring greenspace land prior to urbanisation or prior to development, and to this end may initiate acquisition of land where land is valued for leisure, open space or environmental reasons;
   - Securing public access to the shorelines of the Ottawa River, Rideau River, Rideau Canal, and other watercourses that contribute to environmental health, cultural heritage, and scenic and recreational opportunities.

2. The City will pursue the acquisition of greenspace in the urban area generally with the following priorities:
   - Land in greenspace designations in the City's Official Plan, natural lands identified as priorities based on the Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study, waterfront land, and land identified as priorities in community design plans where there is a willing buyer / willing seller
   - Land that fills gaps in the Urban Greenspace Network or extends the network
   - Greenspace lands declared surplus by another public body that are identified as greenspace on **Map 1** or **Map 2** of this Plan
   - Land identified in watershed or sub-watershed plans or other comprehensive study as having natural significance and that are proposed for development
   - Land on **Map 1** and **Map 2** that may help to consolidate existing City land holdings or secure strategic parcels in advance of development

3. The City will adopt clear criteria to guide decisions on the acquisition of natural lands, schoolyards, and other greenspaces, and make sure that the rationale for any recommendation on a proposed acquisition is clear.

4. When considering the acquisition of greenspace, the City will consider their merit on the basis of the following criteria:
   - **Value** – Cultural value (e.g. association with a historic site) or inherent environmental value
   - **Current Supply** - Will it meet a current shortfall? Will it address a future need, as the neighbourhood intensifies?
   - **Connectivity** - Does it complete or extend the Urban Greenspace Network?
   - **Threat/Risk** – Will the land be used in the near term for another purpose that precludes a greenspace function?
   - **Strategic** – Does the acquisition build upon existing resources or commitments, or has an advantage in terms of timing or partnership opportunity?
   - **Cost and Value** – Is the expenditure warranted in terms of its achievement of Council's objectives?
   - In addition, when considering acquisition of school sites, Council will consider whether the land is already being used for activities programmed by the City.

5. The City will review its current sources of funding for acquiring greenspace by:
   - Reviewing all sources of funding for the acquisition of natural and open space and leisure lands, including the Environmental Land Acquisition Fund, the cash-in-lieu of parkland fund, and other capital programs approved or proposed in the long-range financial plan
   - Proposing a consistent and coordinated approach to managing the funds and reporting to Council and communities on how they are used

### 4.1.7 Monitoring and Building Our Knowledge Base

1. The City will monitor progress in achieving greenspace targets in all communities by:
   - Assessing the greenspace identified in community design plans against City targets and confirming the land delivery as the community develops
   - Monitoring the total area of natural land secured for environmental purposes through public ownership or other means
   - Reporting at five-year intervals on the number of kilometres of multi-use pathway provided by the City and partners and the number of parks and other greenspaces networked by the pathway

## 4.2 Implementation: A Three-Year Plan

Much of the *Greenspace Master Plan - Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces* will be implemented on an ongoing basis, through Council decisions on plans for new communities or redevelopment sites, for example, or through the design of new municipal infrastructure and buildings. In addition, specific actions are proposed to implement the Plan and advance Council's greenspace objectives. These actions are summarized below.

Notes: PGM – Planning and Growth Management
RPAM – Real Property and Asset Management
PWS – Public Works and Services
CPS – Community and Protective Services

| Immediate Action – For completion in 2006 | |
|---|---|
| Lead Department | In order of priority |
| PGM | 1. Amend Official Plan to:<br>- Ensure consistent designation of greenspaces<br>- Update references to Greenspace Master Plan<br>- Reflect policies in the Greenspace Master Plan (e.g. greenspace targets)<br>- Update references to UNAEES and add a reference to the Urban - Natural Features Strategy |
| PGM/RPAM | 2. Adopt an Urban Natural Feature Strategy to secure priority natural land |
| PGM | 3. Ensure that municipal parks and other publicly owned open space and leisure land is appropriately zoned |
| PGM | 4. Promote the Greenspace Master Plan and the Urban Natural Feature Strategy within the public and private sector |

| Short-Term Actions – For completion in 2007 – 2008 | |
|---|---|
| Lead Department | In order of priority |
| PGM/RPAM | 1. Initiate Urban Natural Features Strategy as approved by Council, in consultation with other City departments and other stakeholders |
| PGM & RPAM | 2. Initiate plans to define the greenspace role and other functions of lands that are publicly owned but that are not zoned for greenspace or currently planned for that purpose |
| PGM/PWS | 3. Extend the multi-use pathway system by preparing an implementation strategy for priority areas that complete or extend the existing network |
| PGM/ | 4. Prepare a work program to plan for the natural environment areas and parks and leisure areas in the rural area |
| PGM/CPS | 5. Prepare design guidelines for the development of "Green Streets" in new communities and as a means of extending the Urban Greenspace Network into older communities where other greenspace corridors may not exist |
| PGM | 6. Prepare design guidelines for parks and open spaces for use in Community Design Plans, plans for local area and development review |
| PGM/RPAM | 7. Amend the Official Plan to update the Major Recreational pathways to incorporate the pathway associated with the City's Urban Greenspace Network and the recommendations of the NCC's *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region: 2006 Strategic Plan* |
| PGM/RPAM/ CPS | 8. Preparing procedures to ensure that the City retains ownership of any of its surplus lands that have a Greenspace function |
| PGM | 9. Develop procedures for ensuring public participation in decisions to acquire greenspace land |
| PGM | 10. Establish guidelines in consultation with the development industry, the community, and other stakeholders to help establish appropriate setbacks from waterbodies |

| Long-term Action – For completion in 2009 and beyond | |
|---|---|
| Lead Department | In order of priority |
| PGM/PWS | 1. Review sources of funding for acquiring greenspace and report to Council for the 2010 budget |
| PGM/PWS/ CPS | 2 Prepare management plans for natural lands secured through the Urban Natural Features Strategy |
| PGM | 3. Report on monitoring of Greenspace indicators |

# 5 Appendices

## 5.1 Appendix A - Land Securement Tools

| Techniques - | Description | Advantages/ *Disadvantages* | Legislative Basis | Who/How Administration | Type of lands | Examples |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Purchase** includes "First Right of Refusal" Local Area Levies and Local Improvement Charges | Purchase of land at fair market value.<br><br>. | City or other group directly acquires land. Permanent protection and public access. Options exist to recover costs through levies or charges on benefiting owners. | *Municipal Act* (right of municipality to acquire and dispose of own land) and right of municipality to levy local improvement charge on benefiting land | City of Ottawa, Other government Land Trusts,<br>Non-Profit Groups (e.g., Nature Conservancy)<br>Community Co-operative Partnerships | Any greenspace, particularly those requiring environmental protection. | Marlborough Forest (City)<br>Burnt Lands -(Min. of Natural Resources & Nature Conservancy)<br><br>Brampton, Vaughn use Local improvement charges to acquire greenspace |
| **Land Exchange** (Equivalent to Outright Purchase) | Lands or interest in land can be traded to achieve mutual interests, and net differences in values can then be settled. | Same cost as purchase; permanent protection; public access possible<br><br>*Must be equitable for both parties* | *Municipal Act* (right of municipality to acquire and dispose of own land) | City/NCC most common – public ownership | Any land or land use greenspace or other type of use including housing | City-NCC – Montfort Woods, Rockcliffe Park |
| **Donation/ Bequest**, Including a Life Estate | Land or interests in land donated during an individual's lifetime or by private corporation or as a bequest as part of an estate. The donor may opt to retain use of land until death. | Low cost/ permanent protection and public access. Tax benefits for donor<br><br>*Lands must meet Federal Tax rules for donation in order to qualify for tax exemptions;* | *Municipal Act*<br>*Income Tax Act* | All of the above<br><br>Both public and private ownership | Any greenspace or other type of lands including housing | Rideau Waterways Land Trust- 24 ha near Kemptville Creek/Rideau River donation |
| **Parkland Dedication** Under the *Planning Act* | Lands dedicated to municipality for parkland purposes as a result of subdivision development. Usually relates to recreation land but may be used to acquire natural areas | Provides parkland in growing communities: Can be converted to cash for more flexibility.<br><br>*Planning Act limits amount of land that can be required at no charge.* | *Planning Act* | City ownership | Any greenspace, but usually active parkland | New subdivisions in Orleans, Barrhaven, etc. |
| **Traditional Land Use and Other Regulatory Controls** | Use of land use planning (Official Plan/Zoning/ Subdivision Watershed and Sub-watershed Plans) and other regulatory controls.<br>Land Ownership does not change. | Intent for the land is provided in the Official Plan. Permanent protection can be achieved.<br><br>*May not be popular and does not provide for public access. May trigger requests for financial compensation or purchase.* | *Planning Act*<br>*Conservation Authorities Act*<br>*Fisheries Act*<br>*Trees Act*<br>*Aggregate Resources Act* | City, Province, Conservation Authorities<br><br>Usually private ownership or public ownership other than the City | Any greenspace if designation or zoning is not successfully challenged | Significant Wetlands designation in Official Plan<br>Flood plains<br>ANSIs |

| Techniques - | Description | Advantages/ *Disadvantages* | Legislative Basis | Who/How Administration | Type of lands | Examples |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sale with Restrictions** (Including acquisition and resale) | Land can be sold with restrictions in place to control future uses | Generates revenue while maintaining greenspace; permanent protection; public access can be negotiated<br><br>*Restricted land more difficult to sell, limited market and reduced value.* | *Municipal Act*<br>*Conservation land Act* | City/NCC/Prov. Govt. | Greenspaces requiring environmental protection where public access may not be as critical | Little experience in Ontario. Variation used by Bruce Trail Association along Niagara Escarpment |
| **Land Trust** | Non-profit organizations dedicated to conserving open space, natural areas, etc. | High profile grass-roots organisation. Provides permanent protection and public education.<br><br>*Limits public access. Needs high profile and independence to get funds.* | | Generally non-profit, incorporated community organization or a chapter within an existing organization | Usually land needing environmental protection or recreational Trails | Rideau Waterway Land Trust Foundation |
| **Corporate Landowner Agreement/ Condominium Agreement** | Similar to Land Trust Conservation land can be owned by a shareholder's corporation or condominium devoted to the protection and management of the lands, | An alternative to government ownership and management; no cost; flexible; management costs borne by those directly benefiting. Protection not guaranteed<br><br>*Little used; no guarantee of public access, needs a willing corporate entity* | *Corporations Act*<br>*Condominium Act* | Private landowners, would not involve public ownership | Any greenspaces | Grand Hill Village Association, Kitchener |
| **Conservation Easement** | An agreement that restrict uses for conservation purposes, and when registered on title they bind both current and future landowners | Low cost; may be more acceptable to landowner; can provide permanent protection/<br><br>*Cost of easements may be as great as purchase; public access may be limited; requires ongoing monitoring; not extensively used in Ontario.* | *Ontario Heritage Act;*<br>*Ministry of Government Services Act*<br>*Ontario Conservation Land Act* | Only government agencies and registered charities including land trusts<br><br>Private ownership | Usually land needing environmental protection as well as heritage buildings | Niagara Escarpment – Ontario Heritage Foundation<br><br>Carlington Woods |
| **Restrictive Covenant** | A condition on title that restricts the landowner's use of land or assigns certain rights or access to an adjacent landowner. Applicable where a government wishes to control land use but not own the land | Low cost; can provide permanent protection/<br><br>*Can only be used under certain conditions; unlikely to be able to specify long-term management obligation. Public access not likely.* | Common Law | Any government or conservation authority<br><br>Private ownership | Usually land needing environmental protection | Township of Chandos, Peterborough County |
| **Lease /License** | A lease gives exclusive rights to use land for a specified term and cost.<br>Licenses give permission to use a property for a purpose *but* not exclusive rights and does not bind future owner | Public access can be negotiated/<br><br>*Agreement must be renewed periodically; may not protect land in perpetuity.* | | Legal lease or license agreement between parties<br><br>Private or public ownership | Any land | City leases Ledbury Park site from the NCC |

| Techniques - | Description | Advantages/ *Disadvantages* | Legislative Basis | Who/How Administration | Type of lands | Examples |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Incentives/ Assistance** i.e. Tax Rebates/ Credits/ Management Agreements/ Funding Assistance | Tax or management incentives to encourage retention/ restoration of natural areas. Usually linked to land use restrictions such as Provincial policy and zoning. | Lower cost and non-confrontational; willing landowner agreement/<br><br>*Difficult to monitor compliance; does not provide public access or permanent protection. Lost tax revenue.* | *Woodlands Improvement Act; Games and Fish Act; Conservation Authorities Act; Conservation Land Act* | Ministry of Natural Resources; Conservation Authorities<br><br>Private ownership | Usually land needing environmental protection | Community Wildlife Program and the Community Fisheries Program, Conservation Lands Tax Reduction Program |
| **Stewardship** Support/ Education | Private land owner care and protection of land. Can be linked to incentives. | Voluntary. Least costly; non-threatening; builds rapport<br><br>*Not permanent. No public access or protection.* | N/A | Private although all levels of government publicise and provide support | Usually land needing environmental protection | Wetland Habitat Fund, City of Ottawa's "Green Acres Program" |

## 5.2 Appendix B – Greenspace Acquisition Policy

The following changes to the City's Official Plan were adopted by Council to implement the new acquisition policies:

a. Modify Section 3.2.2, Natural Environment Areas, by deleting policies 4 and 5 in their entirety and renumbering the following sections accordingly.

b. Modify Section 5.2.1 General, by adding the following new policies:

5. The City has a particular interest in ensuring that lands in the following designations are secured in a way that is consistent with their greenspace values: Natural Environment Areas, Significant Wetlands South and East of the Canadian Shield, Urban Natural Features and Major Open Space. A similar interest may apply to any lands along waterways in a Village or Urban Area.

   a) The City will consider methods other than acquisition to meet its objectives for the preservation of lands with greenspace values, including exchanging lands of similar value, negotiating conservation easements, entering into agreements with other public bodies concerning land management or maintenance, partnering with a land trust and other methods that may be proposed from time to time.

   b) The City may initiate the purchase of lands in any of the above-noted designations where acquisition of the land is critical to the achievement of its objectives;

   c) Where land that is designated Natural Environment Area or Urban Natural Feature is in private ownership, the City will acquire the land at the request of the landowner.

   d) Where land that is designated Major Open Space is not otherwise identified as flood plain or steep or unstable slopes, the City will acquire the land at the request of the landowner.

   e) When acquiring the land referred to in c) and d) above:

      i) The City will negotiate a purchase price based on an independent market value appraisal, but, if after six months, an agreement has not been reached, the City will offer to acquire the lands under Section 30 of the Expropriations Act and compensation may be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Act; or

      ii) At the request of the landowner, the City will acquire the property through expropriation in accordance with the Expropriations Act.

      iii) Improvements will not be acquired unless requested by the landowner;

      iv) The acquisition may be limited to a part of a property, provided that the size of the part not acquired satisfies the requirements of this Plan;

**Policy deferred by the Ontario Municipal Board**

   f) Where land in a Natural Environment Area, Urban Natural Feature, or Major Open Space designation is in the ownership of a public body or agency, such as the National Capital Commission or a Conservation Authority, and where this property is not required to achieve their interests as expressed in their plans, and

where this public body seeks to have the City acquire these lands, the City will proceed in accordance with policies c) and d) above.

6. When the City receives an application for a zoning by-law amendment to permit development on lands that are currently zoned in an open space or leisure zone, the City will consider the need to acquire the land to secure its Greenspace interests.