

Walkable Neighbourhood Workbook, Alta Vista

Transition Your Neighbourhood
into a Complete and Walkable Community



This is a tool to allow residents and development professionals,
to work together to understand and assess an urban neighbourhood,

& to set a course for change:

Toward a compact and complete community.

Toward a delightfully walkable neighbourhood.

Toward healthier residents & a healthier environment.

THIS WORKSHOP HAS BEEN ORGANIZED IN
COLLABORATION WITH ECOLOGY OTTAWA

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Introduction

Ottawa will be intensifying, absorbing new population growth in infill development. We are growing, and there's lots of room for more people, but not if they all bring cars. It's time for our neighbourhoods to become walkable.

Following is a list of the most common barriers to [walkability](#) and the commonly missing pieces required to make our neighbourhoods into [complete communities](#).

1. Density to support transit and walkable services
2. Safe walking routes, 4 seasons of the year
3. Small Format Commercial
4. Recreational and Social Services to compliment walkable urban population growth
5. Delightful Walkability

Every neighbourhood is unique and best understood by neighbours working together with development professionals. Together we can understand your neighbourhoods. Together we can set out a plan to transition your neighbourhood into a [Walkable & Complete Community](#).

This workbook contains the maps and information you will need to participate. We will explain how to use the workbook in our 1st Zoom Meeting.

1st Zoom Meeting:

Meeting: DATE: March 20
TIME: 9:30-10:30 am

Workbook (to do):

At Your Convenience
Work Due: 9pm, Mar. 25

2nd Zoom

DATE: March 27
TIME: 9:30-12:30 pm

Zoom Meetings:

Workshops will be held on Zoom. If you do not already have Zoom on your computer you will have to download it in advance of the Workshop. Ecology Ottawa will send you an invitation and a link. The workshops will be recorded. Turn off your video if you do not wish to be included in the recording. It is important to find a quiet room -- we will need to turn our mikes on to share ideas.

Preparation for 2nd Zoom Meeting:

In preparation for the 2nd Zoom Meeting all maps and photos must be scanned or photographed and sent to our team at: info@walkableottawa.ca. This data will be compiled and formatted to share on screen during the workshop as needed. During the workshop breakout sessions, you may want to mark ideas on maps or diagrams and hold them up for your group members to see. Please have some bright coloured markers handy.

Definitions

What is a Walkable & Complete Community? A neighbourhood that contains not just homes but also shops, services, parks, facilities for recreation, learning and worship, all within a safe and enjoyable walking distance, 15 minutes (about 1km)

How can an urban car-centric neighbourhood become walkable? Car-centric neighbourhoods often lack the density to support walkability. Intensification through development that fosters the community's identity must be matched with investment in walkable infrastructure and the stores and services needed to serve existing and new community members.

What are the benefits of Walkable & Complete Communities? More local businesses, safer streets, healthier residents, more diverse households, aging in place, better air quality, lower emissions, and a deeper sense of community.

ground oriented housing = a dwelling unit that has direct access to the ground from an exterior door that is at ground level or a short flight of steps above the ground

neighbourhood urban fabric = the built urban forms and landscapes in those parts of the city that are occupied predominantly by residential buildings

neighbourhood social fabric = residents and the social structures that connect them within a neighbourhood

transit node = areas that surround rapid transit stops and that are designated for high density mixed use development in recent City planning documents

neighbourhood commercial veins = busier roads through communities which may or may not have businesses along them., and are often the formal or informal boundaries of neighbourhood fabric

small format commercial = small retail outlet (as opposed to big box store), for example a local convenience store, curated thrift shop, local grocers, ice cream store, or coffee shop

gentle density = infill housing comprised of low to mid rise, multi unit buildings that are sized to fit with existing neighbours

Dwelling unit/net hectare = a measure of residential density, this refers to the ratio of residential units (i.e. a home) per land area, expressed in net hectares. The hectares included in the calculation are “net” (i.e. exclude) public right of way (roads and sidewalks, etc.)

About Walkable Neighbourhoods

There are two primary components to making a neighbourhood walkable. To be truly walkable such that individuals would prefer to walk rather than to drive, a neighbourhood must be both Practically & Delightfully Walkable.

Practically Walkable - *Practical, Safe and Efficient walking access for everyday needs*

- Transit or walk to work
- grocery stores
- shopping & restaurants
- amenities, recreation, green spaces
- schools, daycare
- health care and personal services

Delightfully Walkable - *A Pleasing Pedestrian Experience*

- Trees, gardens and wild spaces
- Variety
- shops and services front facing windows and seasonal patios
- porches and balconies
- personalized features in front of homes
- Parks
- Views & spaces of varied size
- other people
- familiar faces

Barriers to Walkability – *Aspects that reduce practicality and delight in walking*

- Long blank stretches of building (i.e. Long apartment buildings)
- Diminished safety
- large empty stretches of street
- no sidewalks
- high traffic streets

About the Study Area

The study area lies within the broader community of Alta Vista. It is roughly 150 hectares or 1.5 square km, and includes roughly 1010 houses on 38 city blocks, and is highly residential with a strong community. Most residents live in single family homes.

Generally, the study captures an area within a 1.5 km walk of the Pleasant Park transit station. It includes Riverside Drive to the west, and is bounded by Smythe Road to the north, Fairbanks Avenue to the east, and generally north of Crocus Avenue to the south.

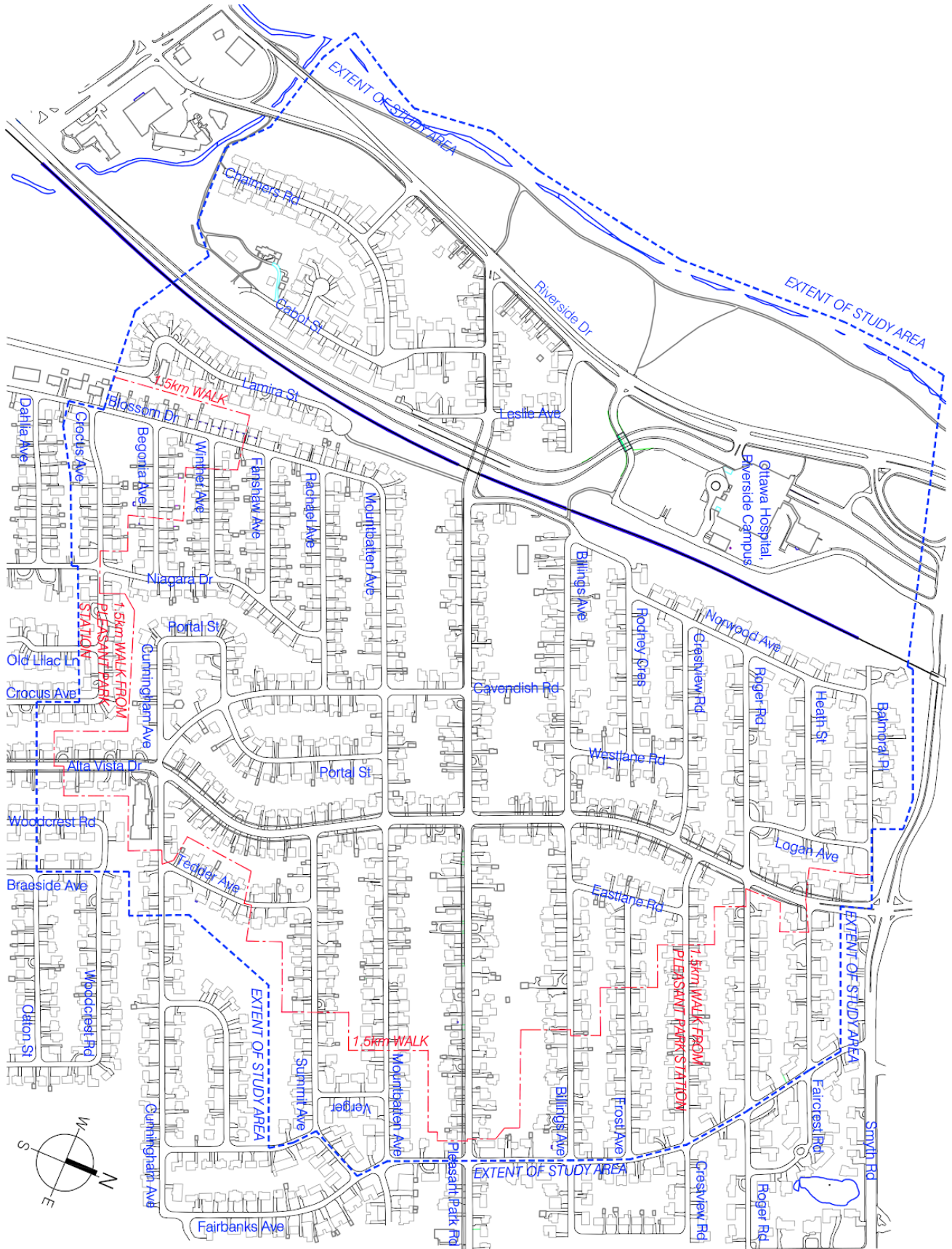
Two parks (Applewood and Cunningham) as well as the river parkway greenspace lie within the study area. The neighbourhood enjoys significant tree canopy, although this has been reduced in recent years mainly due to disease.

Alta Vista Drive and Riverside Drive, both significant commuter/vehicular routes lie within the area.

Of note, the Ottawa General Riverside campus and Billings Estate National Historic site lie within the area. To the south of the area (outside of the study map) is Alta Vista Public School).

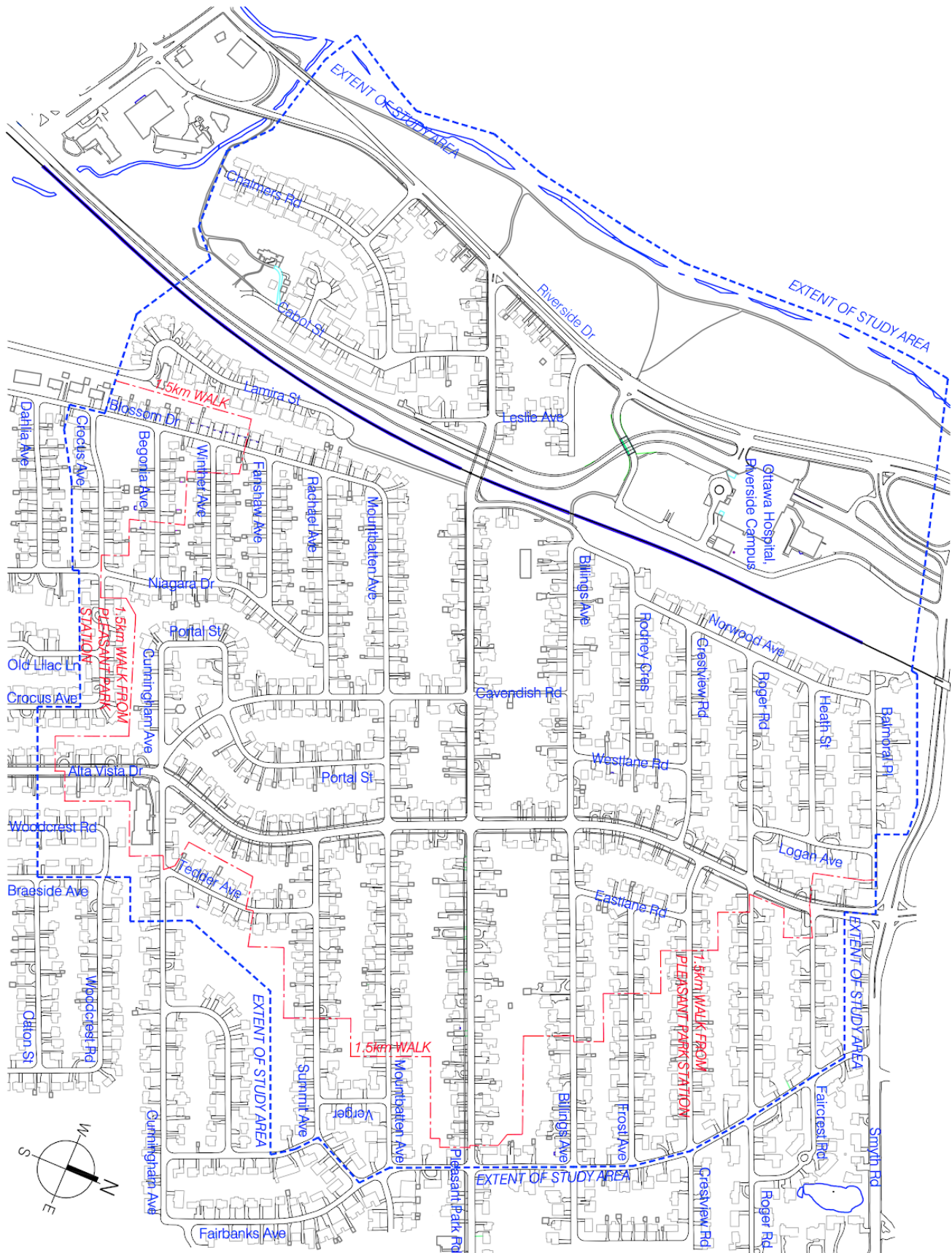
Module 1: WALKING AND BIKE PATHS

MAP YOUR WALKING: Print this map, and take a walk, virtually or in real life. Annotate features along your routes that make these routes practical or impractical, delightful or dreary. What walking routes are popular/frequented and why?



Module 1: WALKING AND BIKE PATHS

MAP YOUR BIKING: If you are a cyclist, print this map, and mark common biking routes. Annotate features along these routes that make these routes practical or impractical, delightful or dreary. Why are these routes favoured/frequented?



Module 1: WALKING AND BIKE PATHS

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to discuss and determine the pathway solutions that are needed in this area, based on the options below.

WB1 ADD TRANSITIONAL SIDEWALKS

Walking paths are so critical to the early stages of a neighbourhood's transition to walkability that we must act immediately, building transitional walking paths, then new sidewalks to international standards for accessibility.



Rumble
Strip &
Paint Line

Traffic
slowed



Street Pkg
1 side only

Sidewalk

No increase
in hard
surfaces

WB2 NEW AND UPGRADED SIDEWALKS PATHWAYS AND BIKE TRAILS

New or upgraded sidewalks must be constructed to shed rain water, rather than collect puddles. They need to be designed to make walking comfortable and safe. Our growing infrastructure of bike lanes is also important. New bike lanes are particularly needed on busy streets and to connect / expanding our existing safe bike routes.

WB3 PEDESTRIAN LINKS

Some of our neighbourhoods are sorely in need of Pedestrian Links, paths through long city blocks, cross walks along long busy stretches of collector streets, foot bridges, etc. Some of these are very expensive infrastructure projects. Some are not. But often they are critical to making practical or delightful walkability, or necessary to linking to elements and features that make the neighbourhood complete (parks, recreation, schools, shops).



WB4 COMPLETE STREETS WITH SMALL SHOPS & SERVICES

Streets that will transition to become walking destinations with small shops, services and offices must be rebuilt as complete streets with dedicated walking, biking and driving isles, and space for benches, tree roots and canopies.



Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY

From the Draft Official Plan, City of Ottawa....

“Regeneration is about guiding the evolution of neighbourhoods into complete 15-minute neighbourhoods. This includes ensuring that the services, parks, recreational facilities, public spaces, and other elements of a complete neighbourhood are keeping up with the increases in population. Regeneration ... in line with our goal of becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America.” (page 18)

How is density important to regeneration and walkability?

Consider that a truly walkable neighbourhood functions like an ecosystem, where all the elements that make it complete (i.e. serve daily needs re: grocery, schools, parks/recreation, etc.) are available within a walking/biking distance. Density, or rather, a sufficient population within a 15-min catchment area, is critical here. Why? Because to attract local commercial/shops, there must be enough built-in demand to support. This also holds for public investments in transit, as well as walking/cycling infrastructure, etc. A neighbourhood may be a beautiful place to ‘go for a walk’. However, unless it has enough people to support walkable infrastructure, as well as destinations that residents frequent as part of daily life, residents will continue to have to rely on cars to get to where they need to go outside of their neighbourhoods.

Why is the Official Plan calling for increased density in urban areas?

The City projects that over the next 25 years, we will add roughly 400,000 people to our current population of 1 million residents. Council approved a Growth Management Strategy back in May 2020 that calls for roughly 60% of these residents to be absorbed within the existing built up urban area. The remainder will go to areas that are currently undeveloped/greenfield but are also within the existing urban boundary, as well as within new lands designated that will result in an expanded Urban Boundary.

Generally speaking, adding density to the existing urban area makes more efficient use of investments in public infrastructure (pipes, transit, etc.) and is a key reason for focusing growth in urban areas first. Housing 60% of 400,000 people in the urban area (ie. 240,000 people) translates to roughly 95,000 new “dwelling units”, or homes, based on an assumed average of 2.5 people/unit. Increasing density is a strategy for absorbing new residents, and if we do it well, can also be the key to neighbourhood regeneration and increased walkability.

The City is calling for new development in this area to meet a minimum density target of 80 dwelling units/net hectare. Currently, the average density in the study area is about 15du/ha (dwelling units per hectare).

Question: How could this neighbourhood add density to ensure that the benefits of regeneration are achieved and walkability is enhanced, while maintaining the desired characteristics of the neighbourhood?

Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY

Print this page (black and white is fine) and on the images below, mark the things that make these places more or less interesting/safe/nice to walk past.



Image 1:
Niagara and Fanshaw
22 du/ha

Image 2:
Pleasant Park
8 du/ha

Image 3:
2158 Blossom
54 du/ha



Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY

Challenge 1:

10,000 sq.m. = 1 ha

Calculate the density where you live.

Density (D) is measured in dwelling units (du) per hectare (ha).

To make this calculation you will need to know:

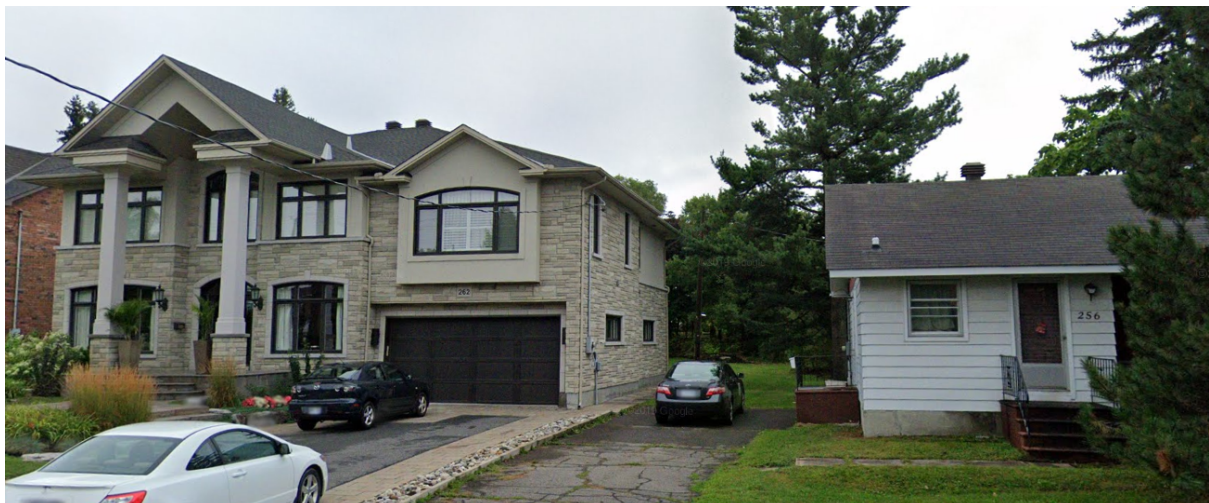
X = the number of dwelling units on your property (1 if you live in a single family home, 2 if you have a rental apartment in your basement, 6 if you live in a 6-plex, etc.)

Y = the size of your property in square meters

$$D = X / (Y / 10000)$$

Challenge 2: Test your understanding:

These two houses are on the same sized lot. Each house contains only one dwelling unit. One house is 3 times the size of the other. If the house on the right is 8 du/ha, what is the density of the house on the left?



Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY



Challenge 3 (For math enthusiasts):

1. If this house has one dwelling unit and a density of 35 du/ha, what size lot is it on?
2. If this house has 4 dwelling units inside it (it actually does...269 Carruthers Ave) and a lot size of 280 sq.m., what is the density?
3. If this house has 6 dwelling units inside it (1 bedroom units) and a lot size of 280 sq.m., what is the density?

Challenge 4: Guess the density of the towers below (located on Frobisher Lane)



Challenge Answers : 2) equal density 3.1) 286sq.m or 30'x103' 3.2) 143du/ha 3.3) 214du/ha 4) approx. 200du/ha

Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to discuss and determine the density solutions that are appropriate in this area, based on the options below.



This first image represents a typical street in the study area today. Most of the homes are more than 60 years old, but there's also a recent infill single included.

The draft Official Plan targets this neighbourhood for intensification. Below are two options that meet the intent of the draft Official Plan and could become development patterns in the neighbourhood, built over the next 25 years. (We have not included development patterns that might be made possible as per the draft Official Plan but are unlikely to have significant uptake by developers.)



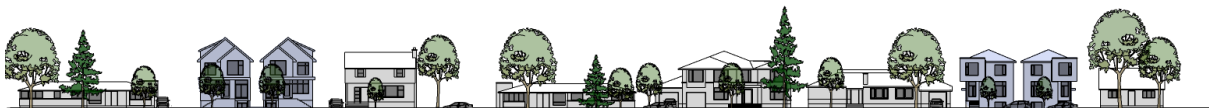
1. Towers could be built near to the transit stop, in Area A (yellow) of the following



map.

2. Apartment buildings could be built along Pleasant Park Drive, in Area B (cyan).

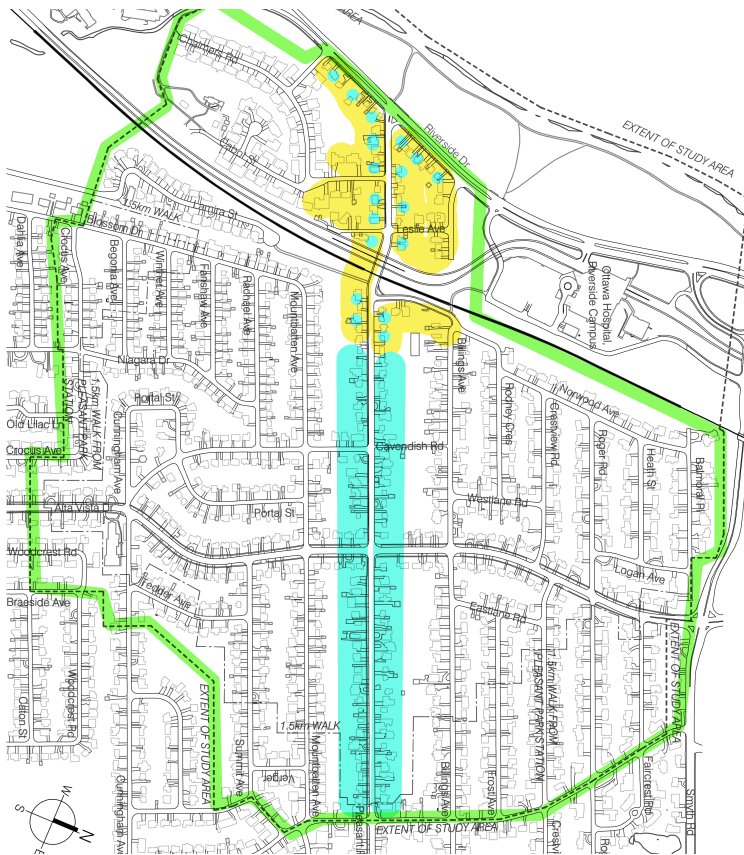
Alternatively, Walkable Ottawa proposes that density be spread throughout the neighbourhood in buildings sized to complement the existing homes, but with multiple units in each building. These could be built gradually throughout the area over the same 25 year period. (Number 3 below.)



3. Multi-unit buildings with zoning to limit built size and setbacks, throughout the entire study area. All units would have their own front door. Unit sizes would vary from 1500sq.ft. three bedroom units to 600sq.ft. one bedroom units.

Module 2: INFILL AND DENSITY

The infill development could be distributed in the areas below:



Area A: Yellow (Towers close to transit)

Area B: Cyan (Apartments along *corridors* Pleasant Park or Riverside)

Area C: Green - within the **green line** (the entire study area minus the hospital could receive Multi-unit infill)

What density increases do these development pattern examples yield? What is the cumulative effect? The following chart documents anticipated density increases based on equal rates of land purchase and development over a 25 year period, in the areas mapped above.

	Infill Type	Units / Bldg	No. of Bldgs	Total New Units	Density Increase
1	10 Storey Towers	70	5	350	1.3x
2	3.5 Storey Apartments	37	14	518	1.5x
3	2.5 Storey Multi-Unit	7.5 (avg.)	253	1762	2.8x
4	25 Storey Towers	175	5	875	1.9x
5	8 Storey Apartments	74	14	1036	2.0x
6	Towers(10) & Apartm'ts(3.5)	70 & 37	5 & 10	720	1.7x

Module 3: TRANSITIONAL PARKING

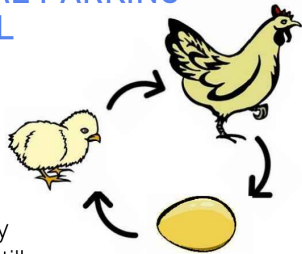
WALKABLE DENSITY MEANS MORE PEOPLE NOT MORE CARS

The beauty of walkable density is that it means intensifying our existing neighbourhoods with people, not with more cars. This means fewer traffic jams, and much less emissions.



TRANSITIONAL PARKING IS ESSENTIAL

Transitioning our neighbourhoods to become walkable will take time, and until they are fully walkable we will still need cars. Most of us are so used to a driving that we won't switch gears until we can walk to all our daily needs, along walking routes that are both convenient and lovely. In the mean time, walkable infill housing needs to be built to enable the transition... together with parking for new residents. It's a chicken and egg sort of problem, and temporary or transitional parking is the necessary solution.



'GREEN P' vs 'BLUE P' PARKING



'Green P' parking lots attract shoppers in cars and facilitate long term driving lifestyles. 'Blue P' parking lots provide parking only for neighbourhood residents who don't have parking on the same lot as their home. 'Blue P' parking can be an important part of a complete walkable neighbourhood.

OTTAWA IS GROWING and has chosen a future of intensification & WALKABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS that are Happier Healthier Safer Smarter & Greener.

JOIN WALKABLE OTTAWA in creating a clear vision and viable plan for your street & your neighbourhood to transition into a *Walkable & Complete Community*.

MOVING AWAY FROM CAR DEPENDENCY TOWARD A ONE EARTH LIFESTYLE

Most neighbourhoods in Ottawa are car-centric, meaning that they are designed for car use and inconvenient to live in without at least one car per household. The vast majority of our shops, services and office spaces in Ottawa are designed to received people arriving by car. We all know that driving is bad for the environment. But some estimate that if everyone in the world lived in a neighbourhood like those in Ottawa, we would need 4.5 earths to sustain us? If we transition our neighbourhoods and lifestyles to become walkable, we could half our carbon footprint!



9,980km = 1 earth

PARKING AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES



Underground services will be located under Short Driveway Parking spaces, driveways and walkways where ever possible. Consolidating these two uses leaves more space for trees and tree roots. See TP Trees and Parks Data Sheet.

PERMEABLE SURFACES & RAIN STORMS

Increasing high rain events remind us of the importance of soft absorbent surfaces in our neighbourhoods. Transitional surface parking solutions can be permeable, then transformed into gardens or new infill housing.



Module 3: TRANSITIONAL PARKING

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to discuss and determine the transitional parking solutions that are appropriate in this area, based on the options below.

PS1 STREET VISITOR PARKING

As neighbourhoods move toward walkable desnties, street parking will be required for our visitors arriving in cars. Some visitors will come for dinner, some to stay the weekend. Street parking can meet this need by allowing short 3hr stays, or longer stays using an online or automated system. This parking would not be regularly available to residents.



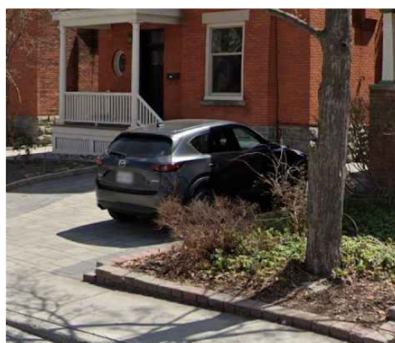
PS2 STREET PERMIT PARKING

In neighbourhoods with an existing pattern of wide residential lots it is possible to meet the need for transitional residential parking with on-street permit parking. (Streets with existing narrow lots often have so many driveways that there isn't enough room for street parking to accomadate new residents. There is only just enough for visitors parking.)



PS3 SHORT DRIVEWAY PARKING

Short Driveway Parking is located in front of a home(s) on a permeable surface parking pad that is partly on City property (within the road widening) and partly on private property (front yard). It is the most land economical location for off street parking -- the size of only one car. Most Short Driveway Parking will be set to 'time-out' once a neighbourhood is fully walkable, at which point they will be relcaimed for trees and other landscaping.



PS4 TEMPORARY PARKING LOTS

Temporary Parking Lots can take the place of an aging home on a residential street, allowing a developer who has other projects near by to offer parking to new tenants. As the neighbourhood transitions to full walkability these lots will be redeveloped into new homes. Example: Roosevelt Ave.



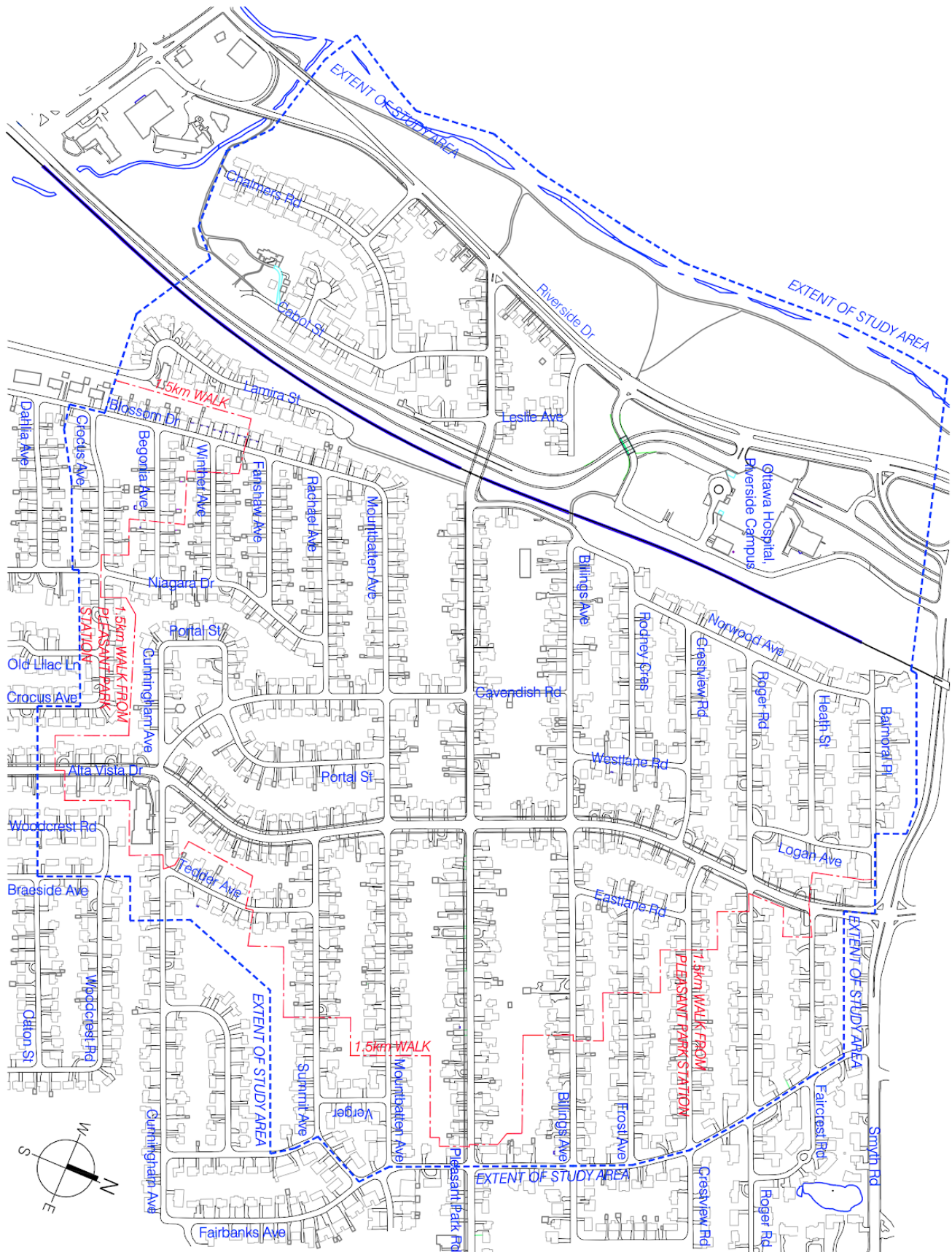
PS5 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKING LOTS (PERMANENT)

Some neighbourhoods will require long term Neighbourhood Parking Lots to provide parking for residents who do not have a parking space close to their dwelling unit. These lots could be municipal or private. They could be above grade or below mixed use or residential buildings. They would be largely out of sight, 'Blue P' parking for residents only, and would therefore not attract car traffic to shops or services. Example: The Glebe.



Module 4: SHOPS TO WALK TO

On the map below, identify the following: shops, banches, parks, mail boxes, transit stops, features of neighbourhood cultural significance.



Module 4: SHOPS TO WALK TO

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to discuss and determine where to locate veins or clusters of small shops, services and office spaces in this area, as shown in the images below. Use your map on the previous page to map your idea



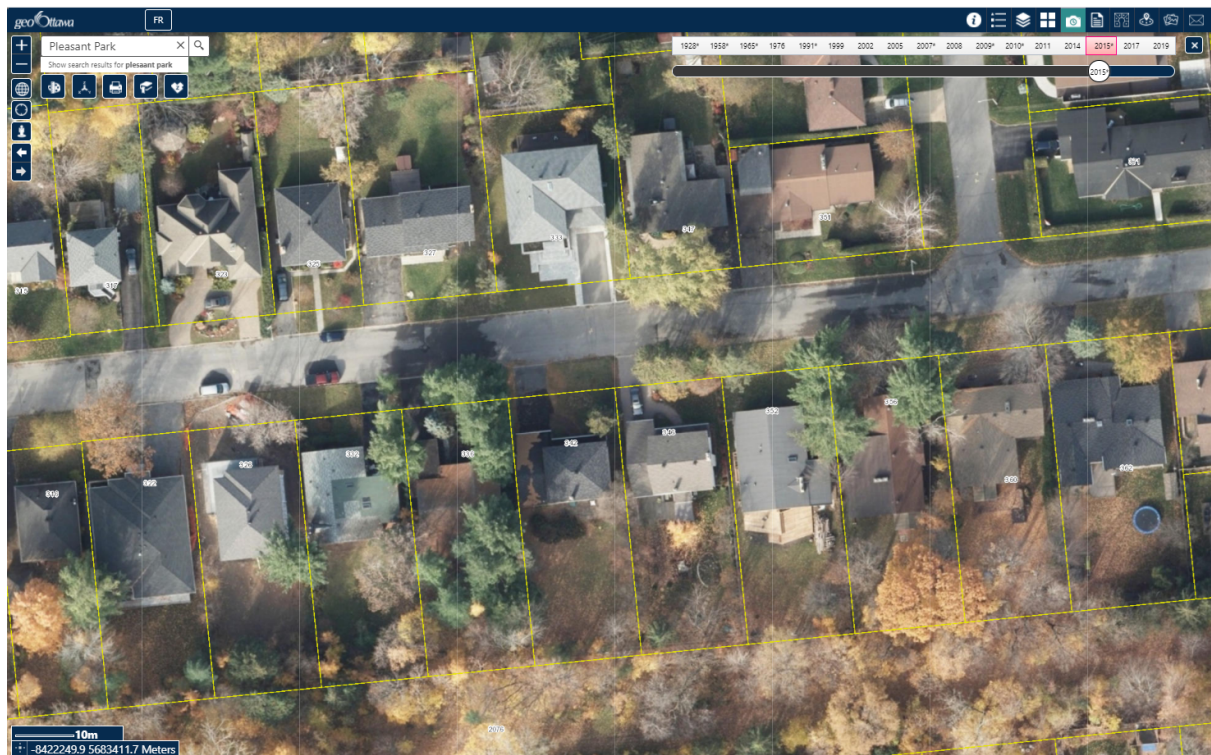
Module 5: COMMUNITY COMMONS

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to brainstorm the elements of a Community Commons that could enliven the future walking shopping destination in this area.

Module 6: PARKS, TREES AND GARDENS

This neighbourhood is known for its ample residential lots and leafy tree canopy. However, tree canopy on a number of streets has been diminished in recent years due to various diseases.

The study area includes two parks (Applewood and Cunningham, as well as the River Parkway greenspace). Is this area sufficiently served in this regard? Are there opportunities to enhance trees/greenspace?



Module 6: PARKS, TREES AND GARDENS

During the 2nd Zoom meeting you will be asked to work with a small group to discuss and determine the appropriate solutions for parkland, to meet the needs of a growing population, based on the options below.

TP1 COMMUNITY / CHILDREN'S GARDENS



- relatively small (one lot)
- highly visible location
- garden plots and activity spaces
- benches and tables
- activated with community activities
- adding to street tree canopy

TP2 EXISTING PARKLAND RENOVATIONS



- allows fuller use of existing parkland
- no acquisition costs
- community directed to meet growing need

TP3 NEW LINEAR PARKS OR EXPAND EXIST'G PATHWAYS



- two lots back to back or expansion of existing pathway
- pedestrian link activated with community activities
- small play structures, chin up bars, sprinklers, art
- benches and tables
- adding to street tree canopy

TP4 PARKLAND ON SURPLUS OR PRIVATE PROPERTY

- front yards of larger building, re-landscaped for public use with the permission of the owner (school board, large apartment building, etc.)
- active or passive park space
- benches to allow rest stops for those on longer walks



TP5 RE-PURPOSED PARKING LOTS

- libraries, schools, apartment buildings and strip malls will eventually have more parking lot than they require, as more and more clients walk
- parkettes can be created as suited to the location or the adjacent building

TP6 NEW PARKETTES

- city acquisition of single or double lots for small parkettes



Module 6: PARKS, TREES AND GARDENS

As your group considers the appropriate solutions for parkland, consider where these parks might be located. As properties are sold, it is possible for the City to purchase them for parkland. But you never know what land might become available at the right time and the right price. So target areas, not specific lots.

