



# **Ottawa Coalition for a People's Budget**

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Alternative Municipal Budget 2022

## Land Acknowledgement

The Ottawa Coalition for People's Budget acknowledges its presence and work on the unceded, unsurrendered stolen lands of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.

We recognize that our work is an effort to address oppressive colonial systems that perpetuate violence on Indigenous communities across Turtle Island and continue genocidal acts of violence through criminal justice systems, child welfare systems, policing, and surveillance.

We also recognize that the City of Ottawa, as a municipal government, is a colonial structure that operates and profits from stolen lands of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation. We hope to address, through our work, oppressive and profit-focused policies at the city through providing alternatives grounded in community well-being.

As we work to build a more environmentally responsible city, we would like to give thanks to Indigenous land and water protectors, who have gathered on these lands since time immemorial and who to this day employ their knowledge and resistance to fight the climate emergency, even as our decision-makers continue being invested in extractive capitalist interests.

Most importantly, we commit to creating and holding space for Indigenous led voices on municipal decision-making as we move forward in this work.

## About Ottawa Coalition for a People's Budget

The Ottawa Coalition for a People's Budget is a broad coalition of organizations from across the City that advocate for social, environmental and economic justice for all residents. These organizations collectively recognize that the way money is spent in the City needs to change. Through the coalition, organizations have come together to advocate for a City Budget that upholds a core focus on the people and communities of Ottawa.

The Alternative Municipal Budget is a document that attempts to show what the City of Ottawa could accomplish if they were guided by a true commitment to values of social equity, human dignity, fairness and environmental sustainability instead of the interests of a privileged few. It is an exercise in participatory budget-making that tries to show what could happen if community stakeholders had a real say in the discussion on how our money gets spent.

## Acknowledgements

Many volunteers were involved with writing, editing, and compiling this year's budget. This document truly represents deep collaboration, organizing efforts and relationship building across diverse community groups in Ottawa. Throughout the cycle of this project, researchers from Vivic Research supported this work through their valuable expertise and insights. Without their tireless work, this document would not be possible. Volunteer members of the Ottawa Coalition for a People's Budget Coordination Committee have significant hours to meetings and building processes around the compilation of this document and without their labour, this document could not have been completed. Most importantly, key volunteers from organizations across diverse sectors have consistently brought their expertise and insights to the document, aiding the process of refining actions and creating coherence across chapters.

***Most importantly we would like to deeply thank volunteers from A7G, who hosted an in-person and virtual participatory budgeting session to create and hold space for an Indigenous led Municipal Budget process. The Indigenous report will be published as a stand-alone supplement to this document, recognizing the importance of self-determination and Indigenous led approaches in decision making and governance.***

It is important that such collaboration be recognized and celebrated as an extraordinary leap in organizing in Ottawa. We would like to thank every individual who has invested time and energy towards making this year's Ottawa Alternative Budget possible.

This year's Alternative Budget is endorsed by:

- 613-819 Black Hub
- Child Care Now Ottawa
- City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)
- Coalition Against More Surveillance (CAMS)
- Courage Ottawa
- Free Transit Ottawa

- Harmony House Ottawa
- Horizon Ottawa
- OCTEVAW
- Ottawa ACORN
- Ottawa Black Diaspora Coalition
- Ottawa Transit Riders

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# Executive Summary

Many of the crises that community members in Ottawa face, such as the climate emergency, housing crisis, toxic drug supply, systemic racism, and the COVID-19 pandemic stem from issues far beyond the scope of the municipality. However, the City has a responsibility to protect its residents from the outcomes of these crises.

This alternative budget presents what the City's funding structure could look like if policy makers were ready to question the status quo and push the bounds of what a municipal budget can do. By drafting a City budget where the needs of the communities are the priority, we show that it is possible to create a city that works for everyone. Black, Indigenous and racialized communities, women, gender-diverse people, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities must have equal access to all the resources and services they need to thrive. This can be achieved by increasing funding to community services, divesting from policing, reallocating funding to address the climate crisis, and eliminating financial barriers to using public services.

## **This Alternative Budget presents a city where:**

- The right to life is entrenched as everyone has access to safe spaces, therapy, food, support, washrooms, and internet;
- The right to housing is entrenched by providing access to supportive and safe housing following a Housing First model;
- Harm reduction services and a safe supply ensure that every human life is valued;
- Crisis response follows a community-based, trauma-informed model, and police officers are no longer a frontline service provider;
- Transit is free, reliable, and safe;
- City funds are allocated to benefit all community members as opposed to developers and corporations;
- Municipal funding is generated through inequality-reducing tax policies rather than user fees for essential public services;

This Alternative Budget presents 8 chapters: Revenue, Policing and Community Safety, Housing, Child and Youth Services, Community Services, Transit, Climate, and Economic Development. Each chapter presents a current overview of who in the city is most impacted by the issue presented and the role the city plays in both creating crisis and undoing ongoing harm. All proposed actions are presented as either a revenue generating policy or have an associated cost. While some of the costs may appear extremely steep at times, we urge the reader to consider that none of these expenses are larger than the current police budget. It is our hope that in funding services that meet the needs of community members, the city can foster a safe and healthy environment for everyone.

The Alternative Budget is not the end goal, but instead one step in dismantling broader systems of oppression and returning this unceded and never surrendered land to the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation.

# Introduction

The Alternative Municipal Budget is a document that attempts to show what the City of Ottawa could accomplish if they were guided by a true commitment to values of social equity, human dignity, fairness and environmental sustainability instead of the interests of a privileged few. It is an exercise in participatory budget-making that tries to display a narrative of what could happen if community stakeholders had a real say in the discussion on how our money gets spent.

The current municipal budget falls short on numerous fronts, and lacks the creativity and forward thinking necessary to make the city better. Annual multi-million dollar increases to the Ottawa Police Service budget, a lack of investment in affordable housing, unreliable transit infrastructure, like the Light Rail Transit (LRT), and a general disinterest in equity and inclusion efforts have left all Ottawans underserved, particularly those with marginalizing identities. The Alternative Budget highlights the ways the city can directly demonstrate their support for the community and its needs by shifting away from the status quo.

The Ottawa Alternative Municipal Budget has been constructed by the Coalition for a People's Budget, a group of community-based organizations, activists, academics, and organizers. All the policies put forward in this alternative budget would be possible if the political will to see a more equitable city was present. While the budget suggests reforms that require changes to the Municipal Act, all of the suggestions are grounded in evidence from other jurisdictions to prove that they are both possible and effective. The ultimate goal of each policy presented in this budget is to create a healthier, more compassionate community. We hope that this document will spur a cycle in which good policy making changes the collective mindset, which in turn lobbies municipal leaders to continue to enact changes to better serve the people of Ottawa.



# Revenue Generation

Table 1a: Taxes/actions that can be implemented within existing legislative frameworks

| Action                                                                                                  | Estimated Revenue | Result                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Implement a progressive property tax up to 4%                                                           | \$84M             | Makes property taxes fairer by changing the structure from regressive to progressive.                                                                                                                                                       |
| Increase parking fees from \$2.5 to \$4                                                                 | \$3.4M            | Disincentivizes car use in the city.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Raise the Accessibility Surcharge for Vehicles for Hire (Uber/Lyft etc.) from \$0.07 to \$0.30 per trip | \$2.3M            | The City requires Vehicles for Hire to pay an 'accessibility surcharge' in exchange for exempting them from providing the accessible service required of taxi companies. Revenue from the surcharge is used to fund accessibility services. |
| Eliminate developer subsidies like Brownfield and Mainstreet grant programs                             | \$7M              | Developer subsidies have not been proven to influence the decisions made by developers and should be reallocated to truly foster economic development.                                                                                      |
| Eliminate user fees from selected Community Recreation & Cultural Programs and police services          | - \$39.7M         | Eliminates financial barriers to accessing essential city services.                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                                                            |        |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Increase development charges on single family homes</b> | \$6.5M | Single family homes primarily benefit upper income groups and creates the urban sprawl that makes the provision of adequate services, especially transit services, particularly costly. |
| <b>Total Revenue Generation:</b>                           | \$97M  |                                                                                                                                                                                         |

**Table 1b: Taxes/actions that require legislative change**

| Action                                                                                    | Legislative change required        | Estimated Revenue | Result                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Implement municipal land transfer tax (LTT) at the same rate of the provincial LTT</b> | Municipal Act & City of Ottawa Act | \$88M             | The LTT reduces the incentive of buying and selling of properties as investment as there is a higher upfront cost. The tax leads to a less severe housing shortage. |
| <b>Implement stronger Vacant Unit Tax at 5%</b>                                           | Municipal Act                      | \$398M            | The vacancy tax aims to change the behaviour of homeowners who leave their properties vacant.                                                                       |
| <b>Implement a non-resident speculation tax (NRST) at 20%</b>                             | Municipal Act & City of Ottawa Act | \$29.5M           | The NRST applies to Non-Canadians and Non-Permanent Residences in order to avoid foreign investment in multiple properties that remain vacant after purchase.       |
| <b>Total Revenue Generation: \$516.4M</b>                                                 |                                    |                   |                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Background

Canadian municipalities are limited in their ability to implement new taxes, leaving them to rely heavily on property-based taxes, fees charged for the use of public facilities or services, or on transfers from provincial and federal governments. In 2021, the City of Ottawa's budget for funding programs and services for the residents of Ottawa totaled \$3.94 billion. 47% of this revenue came from property taxes, 22% came from user fees<sup>1</sup>, and the remaining 31% from provincial or federal government transfers. The city's heavy reliance on property taxes and user fees to finance programs and services reflects the very limited sources of revenue available to Canadian municipalities, as they are prohibited from levying income or sales taxes or tapping many other sources of revenue available to the provinces or the federal government. The limited sources of revenue became an acute problem in the late 1990s when the Harris Conservatives 'downloaded' responsibility for a wide range of services formerly paid for by the provinces to municipalities<sup>2</sup> and continues to be an issue for the City of Ottawa (and others). This, coupled with the economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic have made the City's finances increasingly unsustainable.

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the City of Ottawa in several ways: case numbers have exceeded 30,000 since March 2020 alongside nearly 600 deaths, and the resulting economic downturn has reduced the City's revenue by \$235 million.<sup>3</sup> These costs have disproportionately fallen on people with lower incomes, especially recent immigrants, women and racialized communities.<sup>4</sup> Despite the steps taken by the federal and provincial governments to transfer funds to the City, there is a real danger of financial shortfalls leading to service reductions that will further harm communities that rely on services provided by the city.<sup>5</sup>

In 2018, the average income for Ottawa residents in the top 1% was \$570,200, compared to \$17,500 for residents in the bottom 50%. In addition, 75% of the top 1% identifies as male in their tax files, compared to 42% of individuals in the bottom 50%. These disparities highlight the ways in which not all Ottawa residents are impacted by costs in the same way, and the extent to which some residents hold more than their fair share of resources. The Alternative Budget aims to reverse these trends. The proposals would increase the revenue raised by the City by approximately \$500 million, and demonstrate how this can be done in a way that increases the contribution of its wealthier citizens while decreasing those made by residents with low incomes. It also follows the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) by calling for new sources of revenue to be made available to cities and shows what additional revenue the City could gain from them.

## The Role of the City

The City of Ottawa has kept tax increases at or below the rate of inflation in most years, and below the average of Canadian cities, stunting the provision of services by the City. Since his election in 2010, Mayor Jim Watson capped tax increases between 2-2.5% until 2018, when he allowed for a 3% increase.<sup>6</sup> To increase revenue and cover any shortfalls incurred by not increasing taxation rates, the city increased its reliance on user fees to fund services. The

regular increases in the cost of transit fares are one example; rental fees for rooms in community centres, soccer fields, and skating rinks are others.

One of the few user fees that have not increased are parking rates for cars. The growth of user fees is particularly iniquitous. Unlike income and property taxes which increase as income or house values increase, user fees are a regressive tax; they are the same for all users regardless of their income. This means that they are more costly for people on lower incomes and serve as a barrier to accessing greater services, leading them to reduce their use of these often essential services.

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

As seen in the following tables, the proposals are categorized into two types: those that can be implemented within the current legislation, and those that would require legislative change. All the tax proposals and their justifications can be found below.

More details on the tax breakdown can be found in Appendix A.

### A Progressive Property Tax

Taxation is the primary means by which income is redistributed in Canada. Before tax, the top 1% holds 11% of the total share of income and after-tax holds 9%. For the bottom 50%, they collectively held 12% before tax and 13% after-tax. Currently the tax is a fixed percentage of a property's value making it mildly progressive, but less progressive than income taxes where people with higher incomes pay a higher tax rate than do people with lower incomes. Wealth is a much broader concept than income, and includes the assets, notably property, than an individual owns. In Ottawa, housing ownership is deeply unequal along racial and class lines. For this reason, a sharp increase to the property tax can be justifiable to address these inequalities. There are different ways to achieve this,<sup>7</sup> and we propose one that has the tax rate rise with the value of the property. (See Appendix A)

### Increase Parking Fees

In the context of the ongoing climate crisis, changes that de-incentivize car use and incentivize other transportation methods are much needed. Increasing parking fees can be one such change, which would also bring in extra revenue from a group of people heavily catered to. Car owners tend to benefit greatly from city infrastructure but have unlimited access to roads unlike transit users who have to buy a ticket in order to access transportation.

### Raise the Accessibility Surcharge for Vehicles for Hire (Uber/Lyft etc.)

The City requires Uber & Lyft to pay an accessibility surcharge in exchange for exempting them from providing the accessible service required of taxi companies. The surcharge was established in 2016 and the revenue is used to fund accessibility services in the City. Despite a report commissioned by the City recommending it be 30 cents/ride [the rate in New York City]<sup>8</sup>, it was set in Ottawa at a mere \$7 cents where it has remained ever since. Meanwhile, the charge in New York increased to \$2.75. Increasing rideshare surcharges puts the financial burden on

developers and large corporations because this group has the financial capacity to bear these charges.

### **Eliminate the Brownfields and Main Streets Tax Rebate Programmes**

Tax rebate programs are intended to encourage development in specific areas, specifically on land used previously and thus possibly contaminated in some way, or on 'main' streets in selected neighborhoods<sup>9</sup>. A recent example of the latter was the \$2.9M tax rebate given to Mark Motors to expand its dealership on Montreal Road.<sup>10</sup> However many studies have shown that these programs are just a gift to wealthy developers. Whatever the merits of the development in question, they don't have any impact on their location.<sup>11</sup>

### **Reduce User Fees**

Many user fees come from services, like public transit, that are heavily used by people from low income backgrounds. These fees provide about \$800M of the City's \$3.94 billion in annual revenue. The Alternative Budget proposes to make transit fare free later on in this report, and this would reduce users fees by \$200M. City services in the areas of recreation, culture, and swimming are overwhelmingly used by people with low income and we propose to eliminate these as well, which will reduce user fees by an estimated \$15M. Eliminating user fees collected by the police for information requests and background checks reduces revenue by \$24.7M. Eliminating user fees shifts the collective understanding that all communities' members should have access to recreation, transit, and other public services. Given that users fees are set at a constant rate, the lower a person's income the higher share of revenue they represent. Eliminating the user fees that disproportionately affect low-income residents cuts city revenue, but also lowers out-of-pocket expenditure for all residents.

### **Increase Development Charges**

Development charges are fees collected when a permit is issued or a development is approved for the creation of new residential or commercial projects. These fees allow municipalities to offset the provision of roads, sewers, schools, libraries, and other infrastructure needed for these developments. However, it is well documented that these charges seldom cover the costs of all the additions to infrastructure.<sup>12</sup> There are a variety of development charges collected by the City, and we propose to raise those on single family homes. This sort of development primarily benefits upper income groups and creates the urban sprawl that makes the provision of adequate services, especially transit services particularly costly. Prioritizing affordable housing units over single dwelling homes increases the positive outcomes of these policies beyond simply revenue generation.

### **Implement Municipal Land Transfer Tax (LTT)**

The Ontario land transfer tax is charged to the buyer when land is purchased in Ontario. This provincial tax is calculated on the value of the considerations, and is payable on the closing date when the transfer is registered. The Alternative Budgets recommends implementing a municipal land transfer tax in the City of Ottawa. This tax targets the buying and selling of homes, and addresses the severe housing shortage. The City of Toronto is currently the only municipality to levy a municipal land transfer tax in addition to the provincial tax, which was implemented in 2008 following changes to the City of Toronto Act, 2006.

### Implement a stronger vacant unit tax (VUT)

In 2020, the city's rental vacancy rate was evaluated at a historic low of 1.6% while 20,000 properties were thought to be vacant; enough to house everyone on the city's centralized waitlist (over 12,000 names).<sup>13</sup> In response, Ottawa City Council voted to implement a 1% vacancy tax on homes that were vacant 184 consecutive days out of the year.<sup>14</sup> This does not go far enough to free up housing and adequately address the housing crisis. Many cities including France and Vancouver have much higher vacant unit taxes (VUT) that have shown to be successful. In France in particular, which has a VUT of 12.5%, the number of vacant homes went down by half between 1999 and 2007.<sup>15</sup> If we want to tackle the housing crisis with the voracity we need, we must have a VUT that acknowledges the severity of the crisis.

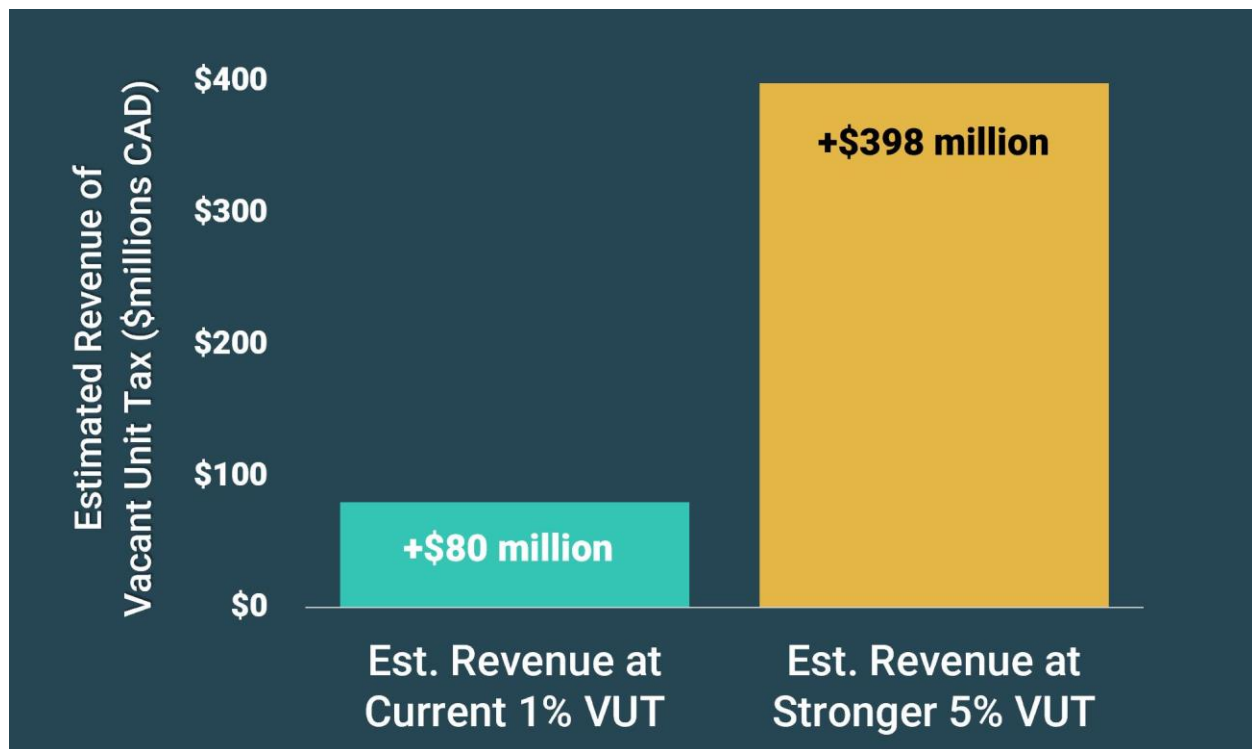


Figure 1: Vacancy Unit Tax estimated revenue under Ottawa Alternative Budget 2022

### Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST)

Speculative investing in the real estate market, buying a home in the hope of turning a profit rather than to live in, is one of the main culprits when it comes to soaring housing prices which have only been exacerbated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A non-resident speculation tax (NRST) is a strong way to curb this real estate speculation and is already in place in several different provinces including Ontario. Just like a vacant unit tax, an NRST is another tool to ensure that homes are available for people to live in, not just to profit off.

# Policing and Community Safety

Table 2: Policing & Community Safety Proposed Actions

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Cost                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Result                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Defunding and detasking from all frontline policing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>\$133M in reallocated funds</b>                                                                                                                                                                    | All frontline police services reallocated to community-based alternatives.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Reduce non-frontline non-criminal investigative services by 75%</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>\$89.6M in reallocated funds</b>                                                                                                                                                                   | By eliminating front line policing, the need for overhead and support services is greatly reduced.                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Divert provincial, federal and development charges</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>\$18.3M in reallocated funds</b>                                                                                                                                                                   | Diverts funding towards non-police alternatives                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Abolish Crime Prevention Ottawa</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>\$1.1M in reallocated funds</b>                                                                                                                                                                    | Diverts funding towards initiatives that do not stigmatize youth                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Implement a community alternative to all frontline response</b><br><br><b>Alternatives, rooted in transformative justice, that provide local communities with the resources and tools needed to respond to issues of harm and accountability in their communities.</b> | \$76.9M<br><br>These teams will be staffed by peers, community workers, harm reduction workers, nurse practitioners and other individuals trained in anti-oppressive, trauma-informed community care. | The community alternative to frontline police includes non-police and disarmed traffic enforcement responses, a mental health crisis response, a violence interruption team, community liaison workers, and a generalized crisis response. |
| <b>Task force to develop alternatives to police for investigative services</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>\$3M</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           | Establish a peer-led task force to develop Ottawa-specific alternatives to police                                                                                                                                                          |

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                         |                                                               | investigative services in order to detask the OPS entirely in subsequent years.                                                                                                          |
| <b>Working groups to advocate for legislative changes at the Federal and Provincial level on matters that pertain to public safety.</b> | \$10M                                                         | Establish 10 working groups to advocate for immediate changes to the Police Services Act, the Mental Health Act, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and other municipal priorities. |
| <b>Total:</b>                                                                                                                           | <b>Divested: \$240.5M</b><br><b>Proposed Actions: \$89.9M</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Background

By directing resources toward policing and surveillance instead of community services, the city has missed a significant opportunity to build more compassionate communities. Instead of policing our most marginalized residents, we call on the City to drastically increase capacity for community-led and community-based services that keep our city's residents healthy, socially connected, housed, and fed. We also call on the city to implement alternative models of community safety and mental health responses, which are led through a coalition of community partners. This chapter outlines ways to reduce police interaction with marginalized community members and introduces alternative services that will respond in the case of a crisis. The subsequent chapters all introduce policies designed to meet people's needs and subsequently act as crime prevention strategies.

There is an extensive history of violence at the hands of the Ottawa Police Services (OPS), with over 20 incidents documented since 1988, the majority of which included racialized folks.<sup>16</sup> Beyond the history of police violence, including many deaths at the hands of police officers, numerous incidents of non-lethal police violence were caught on video and several Ottawa police officers have been charged with sexual assault and sexual violence. Despite this track record of violence and abuse of power, officers who cause harm either remain on the force without repercussions. These outcomes demonstrate that relying on the current criminal legal systems does not create space for accountability or justice for those impacted by harm, particularly when it comes to harms created by the police themselves.

Meanwhile, activists and marginalized communities have consistently spoken out against the ongoing discrimination and violence by the police forces against BIPOC community members including failures to support survivors of gender-based violence<sup>17</sup>. This is the outcome of years of mass policing and surveillance, public denial of systemic racism, and lack of accountability and disciplinary actions against officers who exhibit racist, sexist, discriminatory, and harmful



behaviour. There have been proposed solutions along the lines of police reform and additional oversight, but these have failed to spark significant changes in the patterns of deep-rooted racism and violence<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, the ability for the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to conduct fair and meaningful investigations on the police in circumstances of serious injury, sexual assault, or death has been scrutinized<sup>19</sup>, since they almost always exonerate officers and circumvent any form of accountability or reparation for the harms they create. A March 2021 report looking into 15 years' worth of SIU charges 30% of charges were withdrawn, and only 3% resulted in a suspension without pay.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to highlight that the scope of the concept of "crime", limits the focus of community safety to individualized acts that the state has labelled a "crime" and therefore *criminalized*. Many of the behaviors that are criminalized are not actually harmful or a threat to community safety, and on the other hand many behaviours that are harmful and a threat to community safety are not criminalized. Therefore, the definition of "crime" moves us away from looking at the impacts of how policing budgets that deplete the community of social supports, work to create unstable and under-resourced communities and create the conditions for violence to prevail.

Despite the rising awareness of how police harm marginalized communities, others continue to feel safe when police are present. Ottawa residents who feel safer due to police presence must recognize that the cost of their safety is not the safety of others. Non-police alternatives can provide lifesaving services to those who require them, without jeopardizing the safety of others. De-tasking the police reduces the likelihood of an interaction between a police officer and a vulnerable community member, effectively reducing the likelihood of police brutality. Reducing that risk has immediate positive impacts on Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, as well as unhoused community members, people who use drugs, people who do sex work, people with mental illness, and neurodivergent community members.

Introducing non-police alternatives is beneficial to everyone. The average cost of police response for a traffic violation, a drug offence, and crimes against a person is \$276, \$637, \$462 and \$174 respectively. Rather than exclusively respond to calls once the incident has occurred, preventative services can keep people safe by interrupting cycles of violence for a fraction of the cost. In addition, police spend generally a very small portion of their time responding to calls for service pertaining to violent crime or instances where they can prevent or interrupt a crime from occurring. In 2019, fewer than 1% of all calls for service to the OPS were labelled as Priority 1 calls, meaning a call where there was "an imminent threat to life; actual or potential danger for bodily injury or death; or crimes in progress or imminent"<sup>21</sup>. Accordingly, police arrive once a crime has already been committed and cannot prevent harm 99% of the time. For example, in cases of intimate partner violence, safe housing alternatives and violence interruptions programs are more effective than having a police officer respond following a dispute. Traffic calming strategies such as narrow lanes and roundabouts are effective speed management strategies in urban environments. In rural areas, designing highways based on the desired speed increases safety and efficiency. Community-based public safety teams can respond to mental health crises. Poverty alleviation, housing and comprehensive health care can reduce the number of incidents that occur in the first place. Those investments become possible once police no longer consume 1 in 10 dollars spent at the municipal level.

## Role of the City

The Ottawa Police Services Board is a civilian body that oversees the OPS consisting of both City Councillors and provincially appointed civilians. In 2021, the gross operating budget of the OPS, the funding required to cover the daily operations of the police, stood at \$376.4 million. Of that budget, \$332.5 million is provided by the municipality, and the remaining 12% is provided through provincial and federal funding, or police-generated revenue incurred through fines and fees. The capital budget, funding for long term investments such as infrastructure and technology, was \$24.1 million. In total, roughly 10% of the municipal budget is allocated for police services. In comparison, 5% of the municipal budget is allocated towards housing, 3% towards public health and less than 1% towards recreation. Police are funded at the expense of other municipal services, which highlights why the option of maintaining the current police budget coupled with an increase in social services is inadequate.

Currently, four of the seven members who sit on the Ottawa Police Services Board (OPSB) are appointed by City Council. The Board reviews the Ottawa Police Services budget, which is then voted on by the Council. City Council can only vote to accept or reject the budget as a whole. The Board, however, can strike line items with which they do not agree<sup>22</sup>. In this sense, the City Council can prevent an increase in the police budget but cannot determine what aspects of the department should be cut. In order to dramatically change how we do community safety, while working to abolish the police, legislative changes to the Police Services Act need to be implemented.<sup>23</sup> The City has chosen to expand the police budget and the OPS's role within the community rather than fund social services. It is our stance that in order to truly support harm reduction, councillors need to educate themselves on the harms of policing, identify the perceived safety needs of their constituents, and centre the concerns of those *negatively* impacted and harmed by the police to explore alternative solutions that do not require police.

The Police Services Act dictates that the OPS must provide safe and effective policing, which includes activities related to (1) crime prevention, (2) public order, (3) emergency response, (4) assistance victim's services, (5) law enforcement, and (6) support in prosecutions. The City should work to create non-police and non-carceral alternatives in places where a service is lacking or a need is unaddressed. These services should be based on principles of transformative justice and put adequately trained professionals at the forefront<sup>24</sup>.

Transformative justice is a political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm, and abuse. It seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and requires building new or better relationships. This must happen not only at an individual level but at the level of social structures and institutional policies to help prevent harmful incidents. Divesting from the police budget will ultimately require legislative change, but has the potential to reduce city expenditures by \$222 million.

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

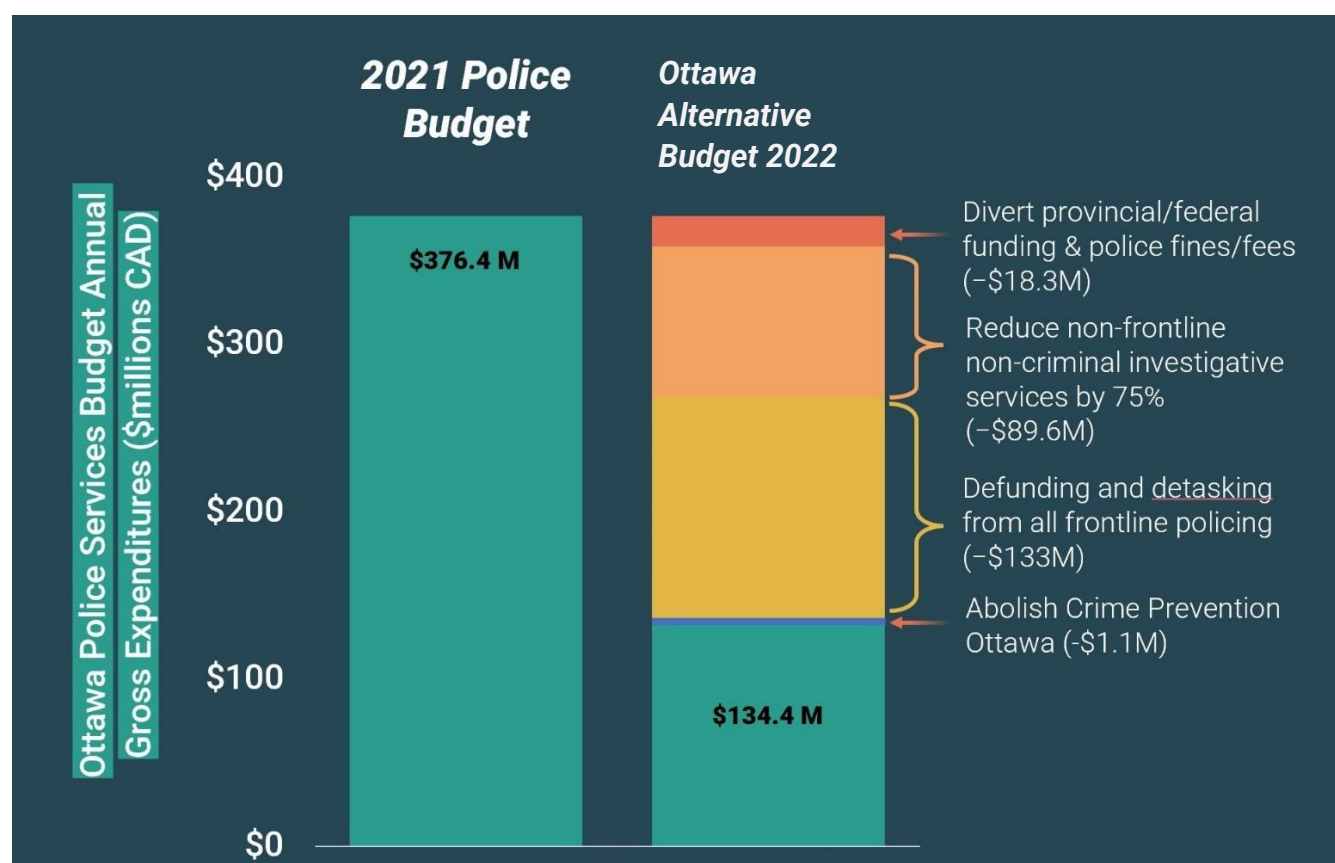


Figure 2: Proposed Police Budget Actions Compared to Actual Police Budget 2021

### **Eliminate all frontline policing from OPS responsibility by disbanding the Community Relations & Frontline Specialized Support Directorate and the Frontline Directorate.**

Currently, both directorates cost a combined \$133M and eliminating them would result in the abolition of the neighbourhood resource team (NRT) and the community police officers (CPO) program, the now-cancelled School Resource Officer (SRO) program<sup>25</sup>, and much more. We ask for the reallocation of funds from the SRO program (\$3.69M spent in the 2021 OPS budget) through an equity lens to support students and build on the recommendations of the Asilu Collective's SRO Research Report<sup>26</sup>. By eliminating frontline policing, marginalized community members are much less likely to interact with police and will receive trauma-informed care from non-police alternatives.

### **Reduce all remaining non-criminal investigate directorates by 75%.**

As part of the call to de-task police services, we are asking for a reduced scope, budget, and staffing of the OPS, specifically for the following programs: Office of the Chief Directorate, Legal Services Directorate, Strategy & Communications Directorate, Respect, Values & Inclusion Directorate, Corporate Support, Human Resources Directorate, Support Services Directorate, Corporate Accounts Directorate, and Financial Accounts Directorate. Retaining only the Criminal

Investigative Directorate (CID) and 25% of overhead departments would cost \$110M in city expenses. Specifically, this includes eliminating line items such as the expense for Special Overtime (off-duty), which is an expense that is actually covered by construction companies or transitioning services, such as background checks, to be available free of charge at City Hall. In addition, OPS would no longer sit on any social service board or public health tables, such as the human needs task force and the unsheltered task force, nor should they be consulted for Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-being Plan.<sup>27</sup> By eliminating police presence during consultations, there is no need to allocate funding to the OPS to facilitate the transition away from traditional police services.

### **Abolish Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) and re-allocating their funds to community services**

Crime Prevention Ottawa controls funding that many community service providers rely on. However, this organization functions as an extension of police by controlling the types of research and initiatives that get funding and recognition. Through their discourse around "prevention" they have often perpetuated stigmatizing language and ideas about youth that only further surveillance and criminalization. For example, much of the discourse around "gangs" is a means to target racialized youth in ways that disenfranchise them further, without offering any meaningful resources or support. Surveillance often turns youth into unknowing police informants, which can result in loss of family, community, and supports.

### **Implement a community alternative to all frontline response**

Police respond to a large number of calls in situations where no "crime" has occurred. This exposes marginalized community members to trauma and state violence. Multiple specialized non-police community-based crisis response teams will be introduced. These teams can be accessed by calling 9-1-1, which will also include paramedics and fire services. Police will no longer provide emergency crisis support and rather only perform investigative duties, and will be accessed independently as needed. The community alternative to frontline police includes non-police and disarmed traffic enforcement responses, a mental health crisis response, a violence interruption team, community liaison workers, and a generalized crisis response. These teams will be staffed by peers, community workers, harm reduction workers, nurse practitioners and other individuals trained in anti-oppressive, trauma-informed community care.

In the long-term, the City should improve transportation infrastructure, like road and vehicle design and engineering, and public transit networks for a safer alternative to driving. In the short-term, Ottawa can look to cities like Washington, DC, who have transferred traffic enforcement cameras from the police to the city transportation department in order to improve safety and privacy protections<sup>28</sup>.

### **Task force to develop alternatives to police for investigative services**

This task force will have the responsibility of developing alternatives to police for investigative services, still provided by OPS. Their work will ensure that complete police abolition can be made a reality in Ottawa. It is our stance that no expansions should be made to the Ottawa police, including increases in the number of sworn or civilian OPS staff, facility expansions or technology advancements. Rather, immediate action must be taken to ensure that complete police abolition is made possible.

**Working groups to advocate for legislative changes at the Federal and Provincial level on matters that pertain to public safety**

Up to 10 working groups will be established to advocate for immediate changes to the Police Services Act, the Mental Health Act, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and other municipal priorities. Oftentimes, the mayor and councillors will choose inaction and state that the issue is beyond the municipal level and therefore out of their hands. However, other municipalities have applied for exemptions to federal laws (such as Vancouver's application to decriminalize drugs).

# Housing

**Table 3: Housing Proposed Actions**

| Action                                                                                                                                   | Cost                                                                                                                                     | Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Create a land transfer program to lead land donations and transfer to Ottawa's Community Land Trust</b>                               | \$70M                                                                                                                                    | Expansion of publicly-owned land and residential options and choice for Ottawans; reduction of private control and land speculation.                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Funding a Housing First Budget to eliminate chronic homelessness</b>                                                                  | \$31.2M<br><br>\$22,257 per person <sup>29</sup> for 1,400 chronically unhoused people                                                   | Elimination of chronic homelessness is a goal aligned to the goals of the National Housing Strategy. This would significantly decrease burden on shelter systems and emergency responses and lead to better social and well-being outcomes for those with experiences of homelessness. |
| <b>Fund 1,000 additional supportive housing units per year and 900 additional affordable housing units per year for the next 5 years</b> | \$150M<br><br>Based on the 2021 capital funding plan, affordable and supportive housing is built at an investment of \$149,731 per unit. | Ottawa is in dire need of affordable housing stock. Adding 1,000 units per year can add around 5,000 units over 5 years, which can particularly support the most vulnerable and precariously housed in Ottawa.                                                                         |
| <b>Establish a Rent Bank to provide grants &amp; interest-free loans to tenants</b>                                                      | \$13.3M <sup>30</sup><br><br>Up to \$4,000 per tenant in need of arrears relief; Rental deposit grants of up                             | This investment contributes to reducing homelessness and provides relief provided for arrears, deposits.                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                           | <p>to: bachelor, \$1,500x2; 1-bedroom, \$1,700x2; 2-bedroom, \$1,900x2; and 3-bedroom or large size units \$2,100 x 2</p> <p>For an estimated 3,330 (3% of rental households in Ottawa) at risk of arrears or evictions.</p>                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Adopt an anti-displacement policy to protect affordable housing</b>                                    | \$0.1M staff personnel cost                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Protection and expansion of affordable rental units;<br/>Prevention of displacement and community disintegration;</p> <p>Prevention of renovations &amp; demolitions.</p> |
| <b>Landlord licensing to allow for proactive enforcement of property standards and renovation bylaws.</b> | <p>Paid for by private landlords (social housing providers/non profits subject to program but don't pay fee). Cost-recovery program that is a per unit annual fee. \$15/unit annually.</p> <p>= \$1.665M (not paid by city)</p> <p>\$100,000 paid by the city for program upkeep</p> | <p>City-wide landlord compliance with maintenance standards;</p> <p>Costs of treating non-compliance-related health issues preempted.</p>                                    |
| <b>Establish a Tenant Defense Fund</b>                                                                    | \$0.6M                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Improved outreach and engagement of tenants;<br/>Expanded advocacy for tenants. Tenants receive fair representation at the LTB and better understand their rights.</p>    |
| <b>Total Expenditure:</b>                                                                                 | <b>\$265.3 M</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                              |



## Background

Housing is emerging as a core social, economic and political issue across Canada. In Ottawa, the deepening affordability crisis is clearly reflected in the growing shortage of affordable housing and pressing capacity issues in emergency response services. Across Canada, housing is an issue that cuts across jurisdictions, and needs holistic solutions that are focused on prevention of affordable housing loss, support for residents with high-needs, and an overall strategy for building healthier and safer communities.

Canada's housing market is currently one of the world's most unaffordable housing markets<sup>31</sup>. Housing markets across cities in Canada are plagued by a phenomenon called financialization of housing<sup>32</sup>. Growing dominance of Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) that use aggressive tactics to force out lower income renters through renovations and demovictions has meant that renters on lower incomes are increasingly being costed out by the rental housing market. Affordable housing is being depleted at overwhelming rates<sup>33</sup> due to the financialization of rental housing. In Ottawa, gentrification is reducing the number of affordable units. Ottawa's 2021 Capital Spending plan<sup>34</sup> approved an addition of 295 permanent affordable units, 174 of them being supportive. However, analysis suggests that with every affordable housing unit added to the market, Ottawa loses seven existing Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) units<sup>35</sup>, due to demolitions and redevelopment into higher cost rental units.

Accompanying sharp increases in housing costs are incomes that are severely failing to lift people out of poverty. According to 2019 estimates<sup>36</sup> 46,875 households in Ottawa are in core housing need and almost all of them are low-income. In 2019 most households with low incomes were renters (66.4%). Renter incomes in Ottawa are predominantly lower than those of the greater population. As such, a large portion of the need for rental housing is for units with rents of no more than \$779 per month<sup>37</sup>. A 2019 policy brief on Ottawa's housing and homelessness emergency<sup>38</sup> estimated that given funding from all levels of government is leveraged, there is a need to invest over \$800 million over 8 years to reduce core housing need by 50% and eliminate chronic homelessness by 100%. These estimates indicate a substantial funding gap between how housing is currently funded and how much is required to make a meaningful difference. Moreover, tackling chronic homelessness is just one aspect of homelessness which fails to account for hidden homelessness<sup>39</sup>, a phenomenon largely impacting women, queer and trans people.

The City also faces challenges in keeping up with the growth of homelessness. Based on 2019 Shelter capacity report, Ottawa has a total of 869 beds, of which 467 are men's shelter beds and only 117 are women's<sup>40</sup>. Youth are allocated just 24 beds, while 201 beds are allocated to families. These numbers present a grim portrait, importantly highlighting how underserved youth and women are in the city. More notably, data on beds allocated to LGBTQ+ people is completely missing, speaking to the glaring gaps in services and supports for gender-diverse people. The 2018 Point-in-Time Count estimated around 1,400 people experiencing homelessness on a given day in Ottawa. These numbers offer the most recent portrait of homelessness in Ottawa, which might look drastically different now due to the pandemic and other changing factors over the last year. Regardless, homelessness continues to be a pressing issue in Ottawa and one that needs urgent and immediate solutions. The city currently pays



\$3,000<sup>41</sup> per month to keep a family housed in a shelter, roughly \$100 per night. Many of these families are newcomers and refugee<sup>42</sup> claimants, finding themselves in multiple marginalizing experiences as they navigate the challenge of being in a completely new place.

These numbers offer the most recent portrait of homelessness in Ottawa, which might look drastically different now due to the pandemic and other changing factors over the last year. It is also critical to note, that women and gender-diverse people are often missed in PiT counts, as the forms of homelessness they experience are often invisible and hidden.<sup>43</sup> Due to the pandemic, many Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters and transition houses in Ottawa reported functioning at reduced capacity while the demand for such services increased<sup>44</sup>.

Housing is a cross jurisdictional, and multi-faceted issue and accordingly calls for multi-faceted and intersectional solutions. Policy interventions proposed in this budget focus on a range of aspects ranging from increased capital funding for projects to developing tenant-focused supports to prevent pathways into homelessness. Additionally, we urge the City to pass a strong citywide inclusionary zoning by-law that ensures 40% of new development is dedicated to affordable housing, with specific commitments towards acquiring and assigning all land in a 1.5 km radius of the LRT towards deeply affordable housing, to increase connectivity.

Eliminating homelessness and housing need in Ottawa is not only possible, it is essential to the health and safety of all community members. In Ottawa, Indigenous people account for 24% of the homeless population despite only making up 2.5% of the city's population.<sup>45</sup> In addition, 21% of homeless youth identified as LGBTQIA2S, 27% report having been in foster care of a group home, and 25% reported being a recent immigrant to Canada. Eliminating housing need and ensuring that everyone has access to a safe home is crucial for families, especially women and gender-diverse people who experience violence within their home. Without access to safe and affordable housing, individuals might feel obligated to remain in their home with an abusive partner and expose themselves and other family members to violence.

## Role of the City

Departments across the city can play various roles in ensuring housing solutions and better housing outcomes for all in the City of Ottawa. Our suggested solutions can be enacted through action from the City Council to legislate bylaws to implement housing demands listed in this Alternative Budget. Bylaw and Regulatory Service holds the power to administer the licensing of landlords to allow for proactive enforcement of property standards and renovations bylaws. The Housing Services Department should hold the responsibility to promote affordable housing measures like rent banks and tenant defence funds. And then finally, the Planning Department should oversee the implementation of the Anti-Displacement Policy and inclusionary zoning to guarantee protection and expansion of affordable housing in Ottawa.

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

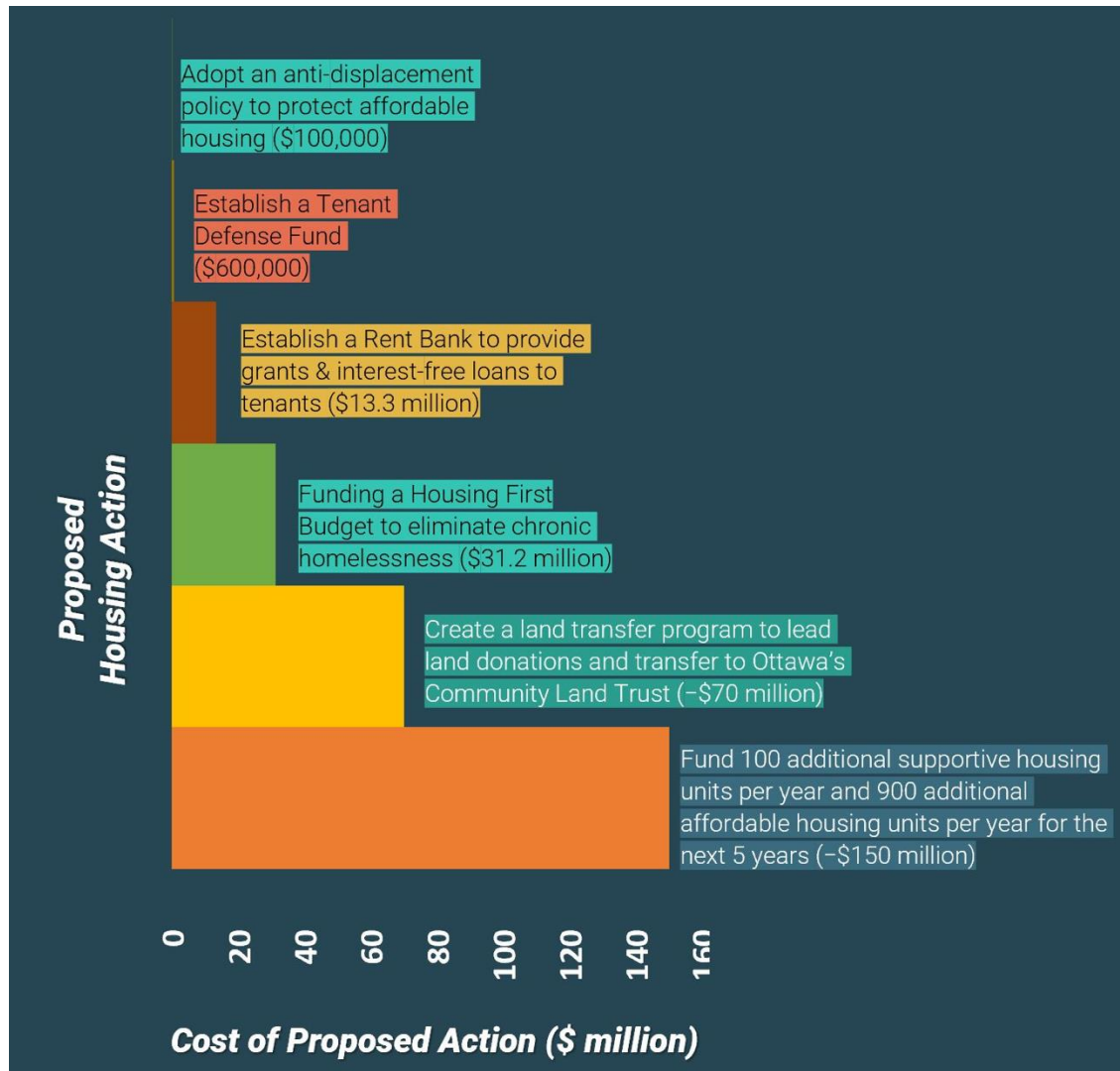


Figure 3: Proposed Housing Actions under Ottawa Alt Budget 2022

### Investments in Affordable Housing

The Alternative Budget is calling on the city to make drastic investments towards making land available for affordable housing and to capital expenditures towards affordable housing. These investments must be paired with implementing a strong inclusionary zoning by-law that allocates at minimum 30% of all new builds to affordable housing. Through assigning lands to Ottawa Community Land Trust, City of Ottawa should affirm their commitment to building affordable housing and enabling smaller housing providers, Indigenous housing providers and other affordable housing providers to access land for affordable housing.

### Housing First

The City's Housing First programs aim to prevent and address homelessness in Ottawa. Significant evidence supports the role Housing First programs can play towards housing the most vulnerable in Ottawa. We are calling for investments in Housing First programs to tackle Ottawa's homelessness population and reduce the stress on emergency response services. Housing First prioritizes people for housing and supports based on how deep their needs are for support services and the length of time they have been homeless. Housing First uses a common assessment tool amongst referring agencies. Housing First does not have a "wait list" but a "priority list". People with the highest needs are able to access housing and supports more quickly<sup>46</sup>.

### **Establish a Rent Bank**

We call on the City of Ottawa to establish a Rent Bank, modelled after the Toronto Rent Bank Grant Pilot Program<sup>47</sup>, to provide grants and interest-free loans to tenants at risk of eviction or who need financial support to afford a rental deposit of first and last month's rent. Tenants at risk of eviction and who struggle to afford rental deposits face not only the threat of displacement and homelessness but also of exposure to COVID-19. Tenants in need of arrears relief would qualify for a grant of 3 month's rent up to \$4000<sup>48</sup>. For this year, keeping COVID recovery in mind, the rent bank should provide support as non-repayable grants. Following the post-COVID-19 recovery, the bank can convert those grants into interest-free loans.

### **A By-law to Protect and Expand Affordable Rental Housing and to Affirm the Rights of Tenants Against displacement by renovation**

We call on the City to Enact an Anti-Displacement Policy<sup>49</sup>, modelled on the example of the Tenant Assistance Policy adopted in 2019 by Burnaby, British Columbia<sup>50</sup>, which "establishes standards for accommodating and assisting tenants of multiple family market rental buildings who are displaced from their homes as a result of major renovation or redevelopment that requires rezoning approval". We call on Ottawa to apply Burnaby's policy here.

### **License every landlord in the city to allow for proactive enforcement of property standards and renovation bylaws**

We call on the City to uphold the right of tenants to live in units which are in compliance with building maintenance standards and renovation bylaws through a bylaw enforcement program for which all landlords holding residential units in Ottawa must register and comply with. Following the example of Toronto's RentSafeTO program,<sup>51</sup> landlord compliance must entail response to urgent service requests such as no heat or water within 24 hours and to non-urgent service requests within 7 days. Ottawa's enforcement must be empowered to issue to non-compliant landlords orders or charges which can result in substantial fines, or with the City hiring a contractor to complete any necessary work and placing the associated costs on the building's property taxes.

A licensing program would allow City By-law to proactively inspect residential rental units to resolve problems that tenants are not reporting for fear of reprisal from their landlord, language barriers or because they do not understand their rights. Buildings would be inspected once a year and assigned a grade. Based on their grade, buildings would be inspected once every 1-3 years. If a building fails an inspection it will trigger a full audit of the building and must be

inspected annually until its grade improves. Licensing will also allow for when new owners take over a building and transfer licenses, the City could proactively inform tenants of their rights as new building ownership is often the first sign of demoviction or renoviction.

### **Establish a Tenant Defence Fund**

We call on the City to establish a Tenant Defence fund to provide support to tenants to preserve affordable rental housing. We are proposing an annual investment of \$600,000 per year for this fund. With renovations and demovictions in full swing, the Tenant Defence Fund will provide to tenants the human and financial resources they need to affirm their rights and to resist the elimination of affordable rental units.

Following the example of the Tenant Defence Fund in Toronto<sup>52</sup>, Ottawa's Tenant Defence Fund can provide Tenants with a range of services as well as grants for assistance, such as:

- A Tenant Hotline to provide education and counsel to tenants;
- Assistance for tenant groups to dispute an AGI;
- Assistance for tenant groups to challenge a demoviction/renoviction;
- Assistance for tenant groups to do tenant outreach and education;
- Assistance for tenant groups to file T6s and rent abatement applications over neglected maintenance;
- Grants for covering additional costs of disputes over AGI applications, etc.

# Children & Youth Services

Table 4: Child & Youth Proposed Actions

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Cost                                                                                                                                       | Result                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Develop a Growth Strategy with the aim of achieving universal childcare within ten years</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposed as a 20:80 split between the municipal and federal government</li> </ul> | \$1.5M from the City but relying on the 20:80 capital funding formula, for a total investment of \$6.5M                                    | Financing to support expansion, design, engagement, and planning to achieve universal child care in Ottawa.                                                                                                       |
| <b>Free after-school care for all youth aged 5-12 from 3-8pm at all 55 community centres</b>                                                                                                                               | \$2M                                                                                                                                       | This program will allow to children to access safe spaces where they will be looked after once they have completed the school day, allowing parents to work outside of traditional working hours if they need to. |
| <b>Create a reserve fund to ensure no non-profit licensed child care providers close due to COVID-19-related costs</b>                                                                                                     | \$5M                                                                                                                                       | Ensure that no programs close due to COVID-19 or future emergency pressures, as federal supports dry up.                                                                                                          |
| <b>Preparatory funding to absorb the download of administrative costs from the Province, so no staff that support childcare are cut</b>                                                                                    | \$2.6M (the cost of converting the administrative burden borne by the City from a 20:80 municipal/provincial ratio to 50:50) <sup>53</sup> | Guarantee administrative capacity is available for child care expansion, particularly if a national child care agreement is reached with Ontario.                                                                 |
| <b>An integrated youth hub dedicated to connecting</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | \$8M                                                                                                                                       | A community-based youth hub in the City of Ottawa can                                                                                                                                                             |

|                                                                                                                           |                |                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| youth to various services and programs, and delivering community-based youth programs led by peers and community leaders. |                | play a role in bridging disparities among racialized and non-racialized youth and offer positive development opportunities to youth. |
| <b>Totals</b>                                                                                                             | <b>\$18.9M</b> |                                                                                                                                      |

## Background

By the City of Ottawa's own estimates in its Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan, 2019-2023<sup>54</sup>, access to affordable, high-quality, licensed child care is still unavailable to the vast majority of children and families in the city. Even so, the critical importance of the meagre system that currently exists was made painfully clear during the past 18 months, as child care centres shuttered in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the City's Children's Services department has identified in its own 2021-2022 work plan, the profoundly gendered impacts on families suddenly denied access to an already wholly inadequate child care system, and increased workforce stress in an overwhelmingly feminized sector as workloads tripled, are still unfolding.<sup>55</sup> Still, even before pandemic closures added immense pressures to families and child care workers, only one in three children in Ottawa (32.9%) had access to a licensed space and access capacity varied widely across neighbourhoods. A strong majority of parents found licensed childcare "completely unaffordable," and service gaps were pronounced for Francophone children, Indigenous children, and children with extra support needs.

Based on analysis from the Neighbourhood Equity Index, racialized youth in Ottawa are experiencing pressing disparities. More than half of racialized youth in Ottawa's 10 most inequitable neighbourhoods live below the poverty line. Racialized youth are twice as likely to be unemployed as white youth and newcomer youth who work full-time are twice as likely to be below the poverty line than white youth.

Income disparities and experiences of complex poverty add significant challenges to youth's lives, and make them vulnerable to exploitation and violence. Deep investments in youth programs and services, particularly those that are culturally appropriate, trauma-informed and harm-reduction based are critical towards supporting racialized youth and building towards better outcomes for them. This Alternative Budget prioritizes supports geared towards youth over funds spent surveilling and policing youth in Ottawa's most equitable neighbourhoods. Violence and trauma created by over-policing and over-surveillance disproportionately impacts racialized youth and further creates barriers to economic and social well-being in their lives.

The latest data for Ottawa places child poverty rates at 14.5% for all children and at 37.8% for children in single-parent households. Furthermore, the poverty gap for children was 36.9%, meaning that on average incomes in families with children fell nearly 37% short of the poverty line. Early childhood investments yield particularly high returns given the importance of this developmental period for lifelong educational and occupational attainment, and physical and mental health. Stability during childhood reduces the likelihood a child experiences early

childhood trauma, and further gives them better coping mechanisms for situations they might encounter later in life.

Childcare, including daycare and after-school programming, has meaningful impacts on all members of a community. Often discussed as a women's issue, childcare benefits all parents by allowing for greater flexibility, and benefits individuals without children by ensuring that parents can work and that children are receiving quality education and socialization. Childcare with flexible hours is key to ensuring that the benefits of childcare reach the most marginalized, such as low wage or criminalized workers who work outside of traditional working hours.

## Role of the City

Childcare and early years administration in the City of Ottawa is carried out by the Children's Services department, which takes direction at the municipal level from the Community and Protective Services Committee of Council. Child care is regulated and funded heavily by the provincial government, and involves a range of programs, from municipal centres operated directly by the City to licensed home child care agencies and drop-in EarlyON centres. There is also a substantial, if difficult to quantify, unlicensed home child care sector in Ottawa that makes up a significant base of child care provision, though with no oversight or material support.

The City of Ottawa is responsible for approximately 20 percent of the annual child care budget it delivers – this funding formula (20% municipal : 80% provincial) is generally held as a rule for both capital and operating expenses in child care. The City, through significant provincial direction and funding, establishes contribution agreements with licensed providers that allow, among other things, general operating (GO) and fee subsidy (FS) funds to flow to providers, and wage enhancement grants (WEG) to flow to those working in child care. Financial assistance for parents is means-tested and subject to a waitlist determined by the funds available. Full-fee paying parents who do not access subsidies also find themselves waiting on the City-managed centralized waiting list, because demand for licensed child care far outstrips supply, especially for infant spaces.

Ottawa's community engagement model is heavily oriented towards providers, through the System Planning Advisory Group, the Francophone Table, and the Indigenous Early Years Circle, with no formal processes in place for regular parent input or community planning mechanisms. Youth services in Ottawa are delivered through the Family and Social Services department. Youth programs and services involve a range of initiatives from volunteering and employment services to health education. Currently, youth programs are geared towards youth community engagement and providing healthier avenues to youth.

Based on Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee's 2019 report, Youth Action Plan's most recent priorities include<sup>56</sup>:

- Improve youth's knowledge of and relationships with the City of Ottawa and City Councillors.
- Increase young people's access to sexual education & sexual health resources.



- Build better relationships between racialized youth and City of Ottawa staff.
- Improve the City of Ottawa for Indigenous youth.
- Devise a project to combat youth unemployment in Ottawa.

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

### **Achieve affordable, licensed, non-profit child care for all Ottawa children under 5, through a 10-year Growth Strategy, beginning with capital expansion this year**

A Growth Strategy - as distinct from a service plan - would allow the city to shape investment in child care expansion through a detailed, geographically sensitive strategy while maintaining the traditional 20:80 funding formula. This ask is particularly pertinent in a year that includes a major federal plan for a national child care system, but more importantly allows the City to bargain directly with the Province to see operating and capital expenses match the City's growth and child care needs. This is a needed resource regardless of the status of a national child care plan – the City of Ottawa should be planning for growth and communicating detailed project needs to the Province in a structured, public manner that involves significant community input.

This year's proposal is part of a ten-year plan, with increasing financial contributions as system buildout begins to take root. The priority for this year should be centered on the construction of four new municipally-run child care centres, which sets a high bar of quality in child care provision while expanding public sector delivery and creating good jobs for those working in child care. These centres can also meet already established community needs, as laid out in the City's current work plans and service plans. Using comparative City of Toronto capital cost estimates<sup>57</sup>, this will establish brick and mortar spaces at \$6.49 million in total costs, with a 20 percent municipal share at \$1.28 million, that will be added to the City budget as operating costs for the next ten years. All expansion plans in Ottawa should continue the City's current policy of only funding non-profit or public child care.

### **Free after-school care for all youth 5-12 years from 3-8pm at all community centres**

Free after-school programs ensure that children have access to safe environments after school that provide relief to parents who work irregular shift hours without burdening their income. After school programs are critical for parents who are unable to pick up their children at school cut-off times. The programs also reduce risks of parents having to deal with child apprehension due to not being present. After-school programs promote positive youth development and offer a safe space where children can explore their potential. After-school programs create learning settings that bring a range of benefits to youth, families, and communities. After-school programs offer support for social and cognitive development, promote physical and emotional health, and provide a safe and supportive environment for children<sup>58</sup>.

### **Ongoing support for pandemic-related child care program costs not covered by federal relief funding**

Federal funding relief (in the form of the Safe Restart Agreement with Ontario, and through other federal benefit programs such as CEWS and CERB) was the only funding stream that prevented a collapse of the child care sector in Ottawa during the pandemic. Still, as enrollment continues



to lag behind pre-pandemic levels, some programs continue to face impossible decisions with regards to workforce retention and operating costs. A public child care system would never have to face this form of systemic implosion due to emergency conditions such as a pandemic enrollment shock. Emergency funds should be allocated on an annual basis to ensure that no non-profit, licensed child care program falls through the cracks. As an already profoundly under resourced system, Ottawa can not afford to lose a single program. A dedicated reserve fund of \$5 million (renewable and accumulable annually) at 100% municipal contribution is proposed to ensure system stability in the case of continued COVID-19 effects or future emergencies.

**Preparatory funding to absorb the download of administrative costs from the Province, so no staff that support child care are cut**

Since 2019, Ontario has been threatening to impose a 50:50 cost sharing arrangement with municipalities, which had previously been arranged along the legislated and routine 20:80 municipal-provincial ratio. Though this cut has been deferred twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic's enrollment crisis, 2021-22 is likely to be the year where it is reimposed. Given that the child care sector is in recovery from a debilitating crisis, and is facing historic workforce shortages due to chronically low sectoral wages and increased pandemic pressures (such as sickness and tripled workloads), Ottawa should prioritize staff retention in Children's Services and other departments with administrative burdens related to child care. The estimated cost to absorb the cost of download from the province, without losing any staff, for 2021 would be \$2.6 million. Rather than expand Ottawa's police force, the City should prioritize ensuring the administrative capacity to expand its child care sector.

**Ottawa Youth Hub**

We are calling on the City to invest in a youth hub funded by the City of Ottawa with a key goal of bridging youth outcomes among racialized and non-racialized youth in Ottawa. The youth hub<sup>59</sup> must have targeted programs focused on black, Indigenous, racialized youth, youth on low income, queer and trans youth, and youth living with disabilities. The hub should work in partnership with existing youth services in the city to create a referral and systems navigation program, and as well working in partnership with local racialized communities to offer capacity to design and lead their own programs in their communities.

# Community Services

**Table 5: Community Services Proposed Actions**

| Action                                                                                                                       | Cost                                                                                                                                                        | Result                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Five 24-hour safe spaces in high-risk communities</b>                                                                     | <p>\$6M</p> <p>\$300,000 per space with 5 workers at each in</p> <p>5 highest needs neighbourhoods in Ottawa, based on the Neighbourhood Equity Index.</p>  | Women, youth and high risk adults can seek temporary safety without becoming involved with child apprehension, police, or requiring other institutionalizing services.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Free therapy and counselling at all libraries and community centres</b>                                                   | <p>\$9M (including admin costs)</p> <p>8 hours of availability per 34 libraries and 55 community centres for 5 days a week (50 weeks) at \$50 per hour.</p> | Provides safe and accessible help to decrease a variety of issues like burdening mental health related hospital emergency visits, building stronger support network for suicide prevention and related cases, addressing violent tendencies, and providing victim support. |
| <b>Provide and service free gender neutral washrooms in select parks, available 24/7</b>                                     | \$3M                                                                                                                                                        | Dignified access to bathrooms is a basic right and fundamental need of all residents in Ottawa.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Provide support workers in public spaces to assist community members in navigating bureaucracy and accessing programs</b> | <p>\$2M</p> <p>34 libraries</p> <p>55 community centres</p>                                                                                                 | Many individuals, particularly new immigrants and low-income people, experience many barriers in accessing benefits or programs. Support workers with knowledge of provincial and                                                                                          |

|                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                | <p>4 hours of availability per site- 5 days a week- 50 weeks a year</p> <p>\$22/hr</p>                                        | federal programs will help direct community members.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Invest in new domestic emergency response service for queer and trans people that incorporate support services and shelter bed for 25 adults and youth.</b> | <p>\$3.1M</p> <p>Cost of a shelter bed per client post COVID-19 is 80,000 annually<sup>60</sup>.</p>                          | There are currently no domestic violence shelters that exclusively serve the LGBTQ2S+ community. Bringing in domestic violence shelter beds for the rainbow community would allow people to escape to safety in times of distress.                          |
| <b>Create a monthly direct cash transfer for food purchases to households experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity</b>                                  | <p>\$120.4M</p> <p>9.5% of moderately to severely food insecure households receiving a monthly \$240 dollar cash transfer</p> | A poverty reduction measure which can lead to families and individuals having more agency towards the food they buy.                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Municipal Broadband Program that leverages the City's own assets to offer \$10-\$30/month internet for low to moderate income households</b>                | \$0.3M for a pilot program                                                                                                    | <p>Closing Ottawa's digital divide would mean improved access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education/information;</li> <li>- Government and community services;</li> <li>- Health care;</li> <li>- Banking;</li> <li>- Jobs.</li> </ul> |

|                                                    |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Harm-reduction programs</b>                     | <b>\$35M</b>    | Introducing a wide array of community programs which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50 harm reduction community developers;</li> <li>- 4 safe consumption sites;</li> <li>- 20 grief community response teams;</li> <li>- Safe supply programs.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Invest in arts, music, and culture programs</b> | <b>\$10M</b>    | The importance of investment in accessible arts and culture is to foster community.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Totals</b>                                      | <b>\$188.8M</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Background

In 2018, the Coalition of Community Health Resource Centres made a bold but reasonable proposal to Ottawa City Council, calling for an investment of “at least \$5M, over and above existing funding, for non-profit social services in Ottawa during the 2019-2022 Term of Council.” In truth, \$5M is not enough, based on the need and the chronic underfunding outlined in the 2018 Ottawa Wellbeing Report.

Community services are an essential component of providing an equitable society at a municipal level, given that many of the primary determinants of equity are determined at the provincial or federal level. As long as social assistance rates remain abysmally low and capital gains are taxed differently from income, and in the absence of universal comprehensive healthcare and a single-tier immigration system, municipalities will need to provide services to meet community members' basic needs. Beyond those basic needs, community services provide a place for everyone to be active, engaged and mobilized. Low-barrier, accessible, public spaces can provide the foundation to building healthy and safe communities which serve as alternatives to reactive services.

Many populations are left out of the city's social safety net. There are currently no domestic violence shelters that exclusively serve the LGBTQ2S+ community in Ottawa. Transgender people especially have difficulty finding a safe place to go as most shelters are based on gender. A recent Canadian Association for Mental Health (CAMH) poll found that 7 out of 10 Ontarians believe that there will be a 'serious mental health crisis' as a result of the pandemic<sup>61</sup>.

Now more than ever, mental health needs to be a top priority for the City budget, and our alternative budget introduces many initiatives that demonstrate the importance of mental health investments in this year's City Budget.

City of Ottawa's Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) survey recognizes that efforts to implement long-term, income-based strategies that address poverty, the root cause of food insecurity, are needed to help address food insecurity. The cost of basic healthy eating, measured by NFB, has gone up by 22% in Ottawa and continues to rise creating challenging circumstances for those experiencing income insecurity<sup>62</sup>. Poverty reduction measures are also linked to fewer hospitalizations, reduction in youth encounters with the criminal justice system, and improved high school graduation rates<sup>63</sup>.

COVID-19 has shone a new light on the digital divide with many government and social services being moved online. With other Canadian municipalities such as Toronto introducing their own municipal broadband programs (ConnectTO), we need Ottawa City Hall to step up and close the digital divide in the nation's capital<sup>64</sup>. COVID-19 has shone a new light on the digital divide with many government and social services being moved online. Yet, not everyone has access to this essential service. In 2019, ACORN conducted a survey on internet use. 20% of those earning less than \$30K/year had no home internet<sup>65</sup>. Of those without the internet, 72% identified cost as the main reason<sup>66</sup>. While for some the cost may be so prohibitive that they live without the internet, for others, they make big sacrifices in order to stay connected. For example, in ACORN's survey 25% of respondents reported sacrificing food in order to pay for internet services<sup>67</sup>.

While some community services offer targeted support, such as safe consumption sites and food cupboards, many are engaged by all community members such as public libraries, pools, and arenas. Even a service that an individual may never use benefits them by keeping other members of their community safe and healthy. Community services provide the essential services of allowing for dialogue between community members who otherwise might not get to know each other. In order to see the changes this alternative budget advocates for become a reality, a shift in the cultural framework towards empathy, engagement and mutual aid is required. Building trust is fundamental to grow solidarity between community members, and can be best achieved in safe public spaces, where everyone is welcomed and encouraged to grow.

## Role of the City

Under the current arrangement many community services are deeply intertwined with law enforcement and protective services. Some often but not always have little to no choice but to work with Ottawa Police due to lack of any real police alternatives. This all falls within the purview of the Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) at City Hall. Currently all applicable services and branches within the Community and Social Services Department, Emergency and Protective Services Department; Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department report to this committee.

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

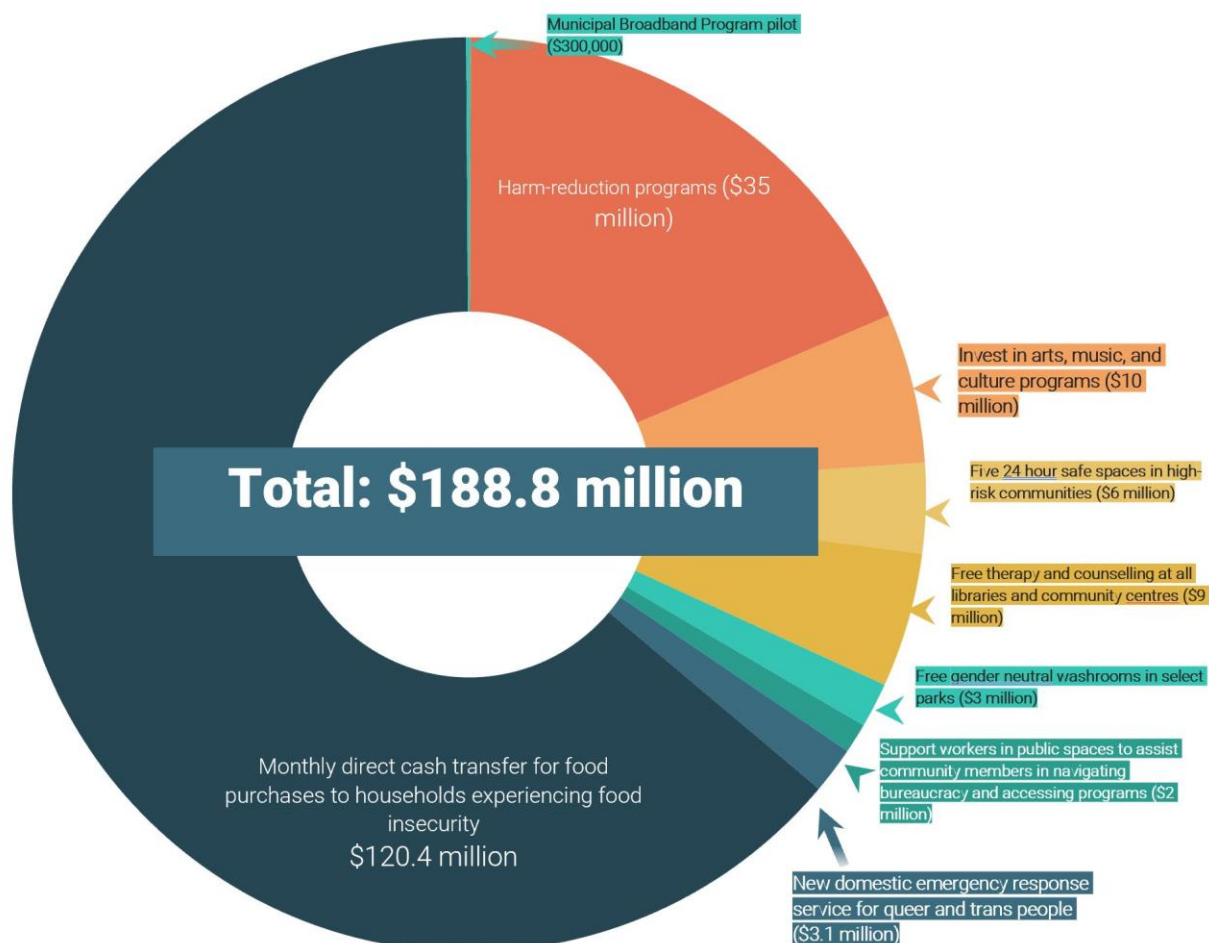


Figure 4: Proposed Investments in Community Programs and Services

### Five 24 hour safe spaces in high-risk communities

Women, youth and high risk adults can seek temporary safety without becoming involved with child apprehension, police, or requiring other institutionalizing services. These 24 safe drop-in spaces recognize that the current non-profit industrial complex in which social services are intertwined with policing, incarceration and child apprehension deter individuals from seeking help. These temporary spaces hope to offer a community alternative to institutionalized supports that further perpetuate harm and violence. These spaces are valuable for temporary situations such as:

- a drunk parent;
- a cooling off period after an argument;
- hiding from an abuser;
- extreme anxiety/fear; and/or

- parents/guardians working overnight.

### **Free therapy and counsellor at all libraries and community centres**

Our budget proposes access to psychotherapy services be made available through city libraries and community centres, as a way of making mental health services more affordable and accessible. The intended outcome of providing safe and accessible help is to decrease a variety of issues like burdening mental health related hospital emergency visits, building stronger support network for suicide prevention and related cases, addressing violent tendencies, and providing victim support. They can hold hours in local libraries or community centres, spaces that are already designed to be accessible and available in every neighbourhood.

### **Provide and service free gender neutral washrooms in select parks, available 24/7**

Ottawa has a severe lack of public restrooms and lack of safe spaces to go can cause health issues, especially in the homeless and trans communities, for whom bathrooms are not accessible. Dignified and safe access to restrooms is also a gendered issue as many women and trans people need access to safe clean spaces during menstruation, for children and during pregnancy. Independent public washrooms exist in cities like Vancouver and Montreal with little to no issues.

### **Provide support workers in public libraries and community centres to assist community members in navigating bureaucracy and accessing programs**

There are many barriers to accessing government services. New immigrants, for example, have to navigate services and eligibility requirements in languages that may not be familiar to them. They may also face barriers such as lack of transportation, cultural differences, or fear of consequences if the correct process is not followed. Trained support workers in public spaces can help direct and navigate the system and provide support for those trying to access government or city services.

### **Invest in new domestic emergency response service for queer and trans people that incorporate support services and shelter bed for 25 adults and youth.**

Bringing in domestic violence shelter beds for the rainbow community would allow people to escape to safety when home is not a safe place to be. Emergency responses are expensive and not the solution to the housing crisis, therefore this measure is proposed with caution that in coming years better pathways out of violence and into safe, affordable housing will be established with decreased need for shelters.

### **Create a monthly direct cash transfer for food purchases to households experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity**

Our budget proposes a direct money transfer (\$240/month) to moderately and severely food insecure families in Ottawa to enable them to choose their own food investments, whether that be in a neighbourhood garden, canning supplies, transportation or direct purchase. Residents will be able to choose the most culturally appropriate, nutritionally complete foods without always having to rely on choices made available through food banks.

**Municipal Broadband Program that leverages the City's own assets to offer \$10-\$30/month internet for low to moderate income households**

Ensuring that all households have access to the Internet will make working from home, online school, accessing remote health services and staying connected with loved ones more accessible to all families and individuals.

**Harm-reduction programs**

Harm reduction programs are inclusive and accessible programs that provide non-judgmental support, have proven to minimize harm, and reduce substance-related deaths<sup>68</sup>. The services offered would include 4 safe consumption sites and safe supply programs. In addition, the program would employ Harm-Reduction Community Developers whose roles it would be to heal relationships between neighbours, drug using and non-drug using, in all neighbourhoods and close to consumption sites. In addition, there would be Grief Community Response teams across the city which would offer whole care support following overdose death experiences. This would include emergency, short-term (partners, witnesses, family), and long-term supports (grief trainings, wellness spaces) to cater to all experiences.

**Investments in arts, music, and culture programs**

Alongside mental health professionals, libraries and community centres should host more arts, music, and culture programs to bring people together and provide a sense of community, social connection, and civic engagement.



# Transit

**Table 5: Transit Proposed Actions**

| Action                                                                                           | Cost          | Result                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fare Free transit                                                                                | \$200M        | Better access to work, social, and cultural life for people with low income. Less GHG reduced pollution from cars. |
| Increase weekend buses to 50, create new 'neighbourhood' buses, and add 40 para-transpo vehicles | \$40M         |                                                                                                                    |
| Expand bus-only lanes                                                                            | \$1M          | More reliable transit, increasing use, and decreasing GHG and pollution.                                           |
| <b>Total:</b>                                                                                    | <b>\$241M</b> |                                                                                                                    |

## Background

Public transit is vitally important to the residents of Ottawa. Roughly 20 – 25 percent of the population doesn't own a car, most of whom are living under the poverty line and are racialized<sup>69</sup>. In addition, for the city's 161,000 people with disabilities, the very limited ParaTranspo service, where wait times can be as long as two hours, is often the only option to get around.<sup>7071</sup>

These residents depend on public transit to get to work and appointments, shop, visit friends, and to participate in the social and cultural life of the city. At the same time public transit has a critical part to play in addressing climate change which is a growing threat to our wellbeing. The transportation sector accounts for almost 40% of Ottawa's (and Ontario's) carbon footprint<sup>72</sup> almost 90 percent of which comes from private cars. Replacing car travel with public transit will reduce emissions by two thirds on a per trip basis. For both of these reasons it is essential that Ottawa have a public transit system that is a real alternative to relying on private transportation; one that is affordable, quick, reliable, safe and welcoming to all of the city's residents.

The importance of public transportation for low-income households is underscored by spatial distribution patterns – which is to say, access to public transportation plays a significant role in determining habitation patterns and incidents of poverty in cities<sup>73</sup>. Studies suggest that neighbourhoods with better access to public transport have a higher proportion of low-income households, therefore policies that improve access to transit in underserved areas can expand residential opportunities for low-income people and reduce spatial inequities in urban centres<sup>74</sup>.

Transportation should be accessible to those who have limited choices, which includes youth, elderly, people with disabilities, and lower income residents. The average commute time in Ottawa is approximately 84 minutes, with residents spending more than 2 hours on public transport every day – more than other big cities in the country<sup>75</sup>. OC Transpo, Ottawa’s regional transit commission, is a critical part of transport in Ottawa, serving more than 315,000 riders weekly, with youth and seniors making up about 14% of the riders<sup>76</sup>. Unfortunately, the transit system in Ottawa, specifically the light rail train (LRT) is not reliable and is unsafe for public use. The LRT is prone to derailing, leading to months-long city-wide shutdowns and no alternative mode of transport for the communities affected<sup>77</sup>. When the \$2.1 billion LRT was first launched in 2019, it was deemed unfit for Ottawa’s harsh winters, with its brakes, bogies, and panels jamming up during periods of snowfall<sup>78</sup>. Transport is of little concern to the Ottawa city council, who voted against a judicial inquiry into the LRT program despite the many issues that have arisen without obvious cause<sup>79</sup>.

## Role of the City

The City of Ottawa’s public transit system is far from what we need. The city’s transportation planning has long been centred around private cars. In the 1960s, Ottawa’s rail station was relocated several kilometers from downtown.<sup>80</sup> In the same decade construction on Highway 417 began, encouraging debilitating East-West sprawl.

Public transit is very much a secondary system, designed merely to get people with regular 9 – 5 jobs in the downtown core to and from work. Ottawa’s transit fares are among the highest in the country<sup>81</sup> and subject to regular increases. In 2022, a single fare will be \$3.70 and a monthly pass \$125.50. At the same time, the system is slow and notoriously unreliable. Meanwhile, parking fees have been frozen since 2008.

The arrival of the LRT has not changed this. It has prioritized low construction and maintenance costs while compromising quality. The contract was written in a way that allowed a company [in this case SNC Lavalin] to be awarded the second stage contract despite failing to meet the technical requirements due to their low price tag.<sup>82</sup> Not surprisingly, Stage One has proven unreliable, and together with the reorganization and reduction of bus services, has made using public transit more difficult for many people.

Meanwhile, 1 in 10 elderly people say they cannot go out as often as they wish, and indicate that inability to pay and inaccessible transit are among the top reasons why.<sup>83</sup> A student at Carleton University could pay more than 10% of their yearly fees to access a student bus pass.<sup>84</sup> Someone who is just above the qualification for a low income bus pass (the Equipass), would spend a crippling amount of their income on a monthly bus pass.<sup>85</sup>

COVID-19 has put significant pressure on city revenues as a whole, but transit in particular. The decline in transit ridership was expected to account for \$120M of the City’s 2020 projected COVID – 19 related deficit of \$190M.<sup>86</sup> With reduced fare revenue due to lower ridership, transit is vulnerable to service cuts that would further reduce ridership and usability. This would have a major adverse impact on Ottawa’s transit dependent residents and seriously compromise the City’s efforts to address climate change.

It is time for this situation to change. Ultimately, public transit must become the heart of our transportation system; it must be viewed as a true public service that is free at the point of use and meets all our transportation needs – much like health care, education, fire services and even sidewalks. The following are our priorities to achieve that system:

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

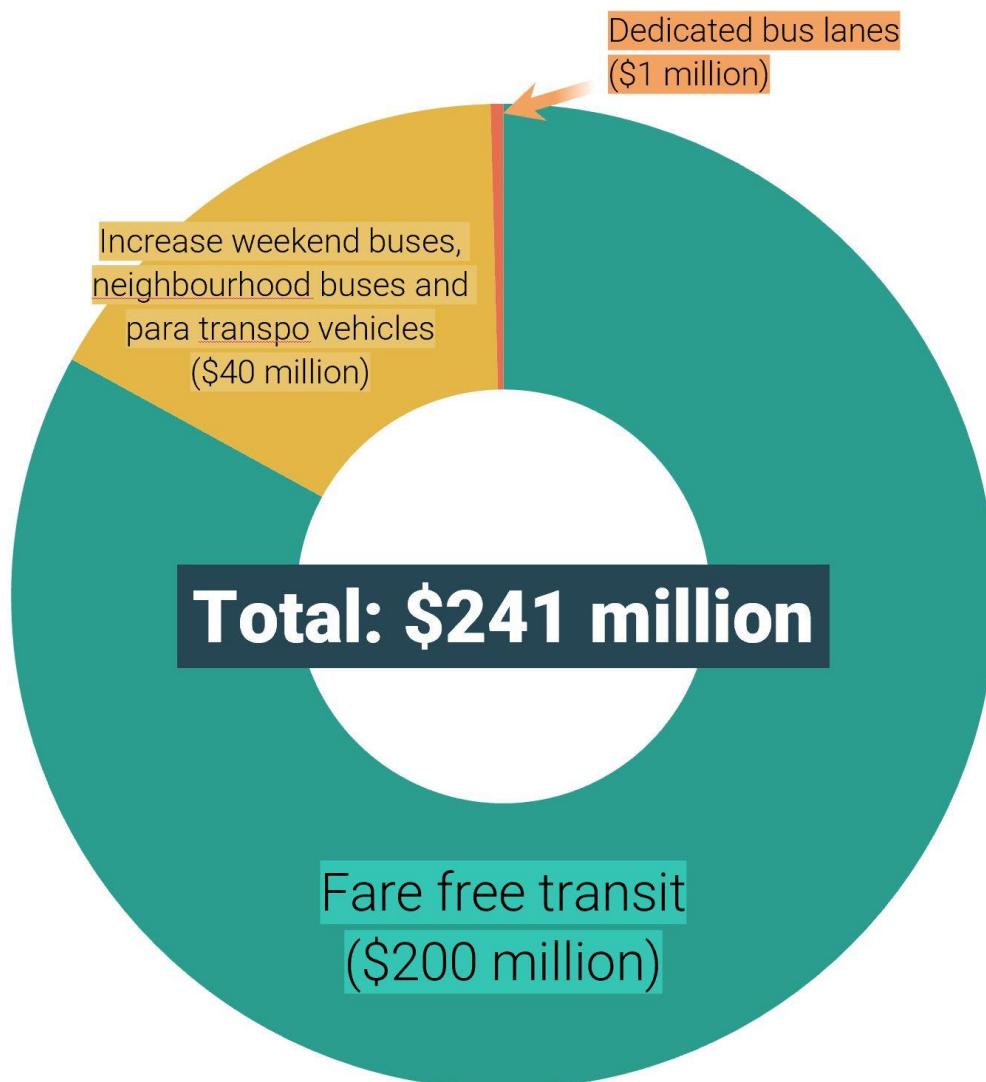


Figure 5: Proposed Transit Actions

### Fare Free transit

No single change leads more people to use public transit than making it fare free<sup>87</sup>. This dramatic and impactful change will require provincial and federal funding sources to replace lost fare revenue. These governments will need to spend well in excess of \$100 M annually for the foreseeable future to stabilize the transit system in light of the impact of COVID-19 on fare

revenue, and with a modest additional amount, the OC Transpo's total fare revenue of \$200 M could be replaced.

### **Increase weekend buses, neighbourhood buses and para transpo vehicles**

In order to better serve the community, OC Transpo must add 50 more buses on weekends; 27 'neighbourhood' buses in Vanier and Bay Ward linking citizens to local health and social services, shopping, and entertainment; and 40 more Para Transpo vehicles. The increase to the Para Transpo represents a 20% increase to the current fleet. Adding 50 buses to weekend service would be 1 per each 'Frequent' and 'Local' bus route currently operating. The creation of new 'neighbourhood' bus routes would begin in priority areas such as Vanier and Bay Ward. This would involve adding 27-28 regular buses.

### **Providing dedicated bus lanes during rush hour**

Making public transit 'free' is not enough. It also needs to be developed into an attractive and safe system that actually meets people's transportation needs. These specific improvements have been advanced as they prioritize the transportation needs of those working irregular hours and/or likely to be transit-dependent. Prioritizing public transit with expanded routes and dedicated bus lanes will make public transit a viable alternative to private vehicle ownership. Bus only lanes should be enforced during rush hours on Bank, Montreal Road, Laurier, Carling, Woodroffe, Merivale, Hunt Club and Riverside Drive to increase the reliability of the most habitually late buses.

# Climate

**Table 6: Climate Proposed Actions**

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Cost     | Result                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Endowment Fund divested from fossil fuels and stock markets, and re-invested in the local economy, creating jobs in Ottawa.</b>                                                                                                        | -\$190M  | Access to extraordinarily affordable financing for the City, businesses, and individuals for green infrastructure.                                                                            |
| <b>Creation of the Ottawa Climate Finance and Economic Development Corporation.</b>                                                                                                                                                       | \$130M   | <p>\$20M first annual capital contribution;</p> <p>\$90M a one-time capitalization of revolving loan fund;</p> <p>\$60M invested in local renewable energy generation with stable return.</p> |
| <b>Implementing EE's 20 projects and unlock funding &amp; finance from other levels of government &amp; other sources.</b>                                                                                                                | \$2M     | 20 EE projects staffed to initiate implementation and apply for counterpart funding.                                                                                                          |
| <b>Investments in walking &amp; cycling infrastructure</b>                                                                                                                                                                                | \$50M    | Walking and cycling infrastructure leads to an improved environment, healthy society, and sustainable poverty reduction.                                                                      |
| <p><b>Adding a climate objective to the City's Comprehensive Capital Asset Implement a climate policy for management, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adding a climate rubric to the city's</b></li> </ul> | \$50,000 | Climate goals are integrated into long-term financial decision making.                                                                                                                        |

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                                 |                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>procurement policy;<br/>and</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establishing a carbon budget for the City</b></li> </ul> |                                                                 |                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Develop a City-wide adaptation and resilience plan.</b>                                                                              | \$50,000                                                        | Increases the City's capacity for adaptation which will have positive implications for the ongoing impacts of climate change. |
| <b>Implementing a citywide food strategy.</b>                                                                                           | \$7.75M                                                         | Local food production to reduce transport emissions through zoning, urban farming, and community gardens.                     |
| <b>Achieve a 40% tree canopy expansion.</b>                                                                                             | \$0.25M                                                         | The City's urban tree planting program provides more shade and reduces the amount of heat retained in built infrastructure.   |
| <b>Total:</b>                                                                                                                           | \$0<br><br><b>(\$190M divested<br/>→ \$190M<br/>reinvested)</b> |                                                                                                                               |

## Background

According to the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report,<sup>88</sup> global temperatures have risen 1.1 degrees since pre-industrialization, with temperature continuing to rise. Canada, as a northern country, is expected to warm faster than other parts of the world. Much of this warming is said to be "locked-in" both because it will take centuries for current GHG emissions to dissipate from the atmosphere, and because GHG emissions show no sign of abating. This means that not only does the City have to do everything it can to reduce its emissions to stop further warming but it also has to plan for how climate change will impact residents.

One notable way climate change is already impacting residents is through the urban heat island effect. The heat island phenomenon is due to the materials used in the built infrastructure of cities, like concrete and asphalt, retaining heat well in excess of naturally occurring landscapes. This leads to cities experiencing temperatures higher than rural areas, and some neighbourhoods—especially racialized and low-income neighbourhoods—are often disproportionately impacted. The uneven effect across neighbourhoods is due to things like the cost of electricity rising due to ACs being used more and because these neighbourhoods tend to have fewer mature trees and green spaces to mitigate localized heat retention. Further, this can also lead to a feedback loop, where people trying to deal with hotter temperatures increase their use of AC units. If the electricity used to power those AC units is coming from a carbon emitting source, and Ontario does have natural gas ‘peaker plants’ for times when electricity demand spikes (like on extremely hot days), this can lead to further emissions contributing to further warming and localized air pollution.

Health concerns due to heat are also a factor, as seen recently in the BC heat wave. This is especially the case for those who don’t have access to AC due to the type of building they live in or because of the cost of an AC unit and its running expenses (i.e., electricity).

Food production and consumption has significant impacts on the environment. In Ottawa, the City can begin to address these impacts by producing more food locally (although not at the expense of green space), which reduces transportation emissions.<sup>89</sup> On the consumption side, the City can aim to reduce the distance residents travel to pick up groceries in line with the 15-minute neighbourhood standard already adopted by the City. The latter means residents have to travel shorter distances to get food which, in turn, leads to less emissions if they choose to drive but also a much greater chance they’ll choose to walk or use transit. Indeed, there are many neighbourhoods in Ottawa which fit the description of what’s been called an “urban food desert” as there are no easily accessible grocery stores within walking distance.<sup>90</sup> These programs also have the benefit of enhancing personal health.

Environmental inequity is the concept of an environmental burden that is borne primarily by disadvantaged populations. In Ottawa, this looks like racialized and low-income communities bearing the brunt of polluting industries and other environmental hazards, like sewage dumping and oil refineries. Studies have found links between poor health, environmental hazards, and racialized communities dating back decades. The effects of environmental hazards are plentiful – poor mental health, cancer, asthma, diabetes, and low birth weights to name a few<sup>91</sup>.

In order for Ottawa to stop this cycle of environmental inequality, it needs to divest from fossil fuels to reduce carbon dioxide production, and instead increase energy efficient measures by reinvesting in corporate building and home retrofits. Retrofits include improvements like replacement of windows and doors, sealing air leaks and adding insulation, as well as improving heating and cooling systems<sup>92</sup> which benefit home residents as well as communities. Retrofits and clean energy models should be accessible to all communities, and should be an incentive provided by the City for all residents.

## Role of the City

44% of GHG emissions in Ottawa come from transportation. Getting more people out of personal vehicles and onto transit, using bikes, and walking is required to reduce these emissions and the harms caused by resource extraction (e.g., oil spills, lithium mining for batteries, etc.). This requires the City to commit to fulfilling the policy of 15-minute neighbourhoods, which it has already adopted. It also means making active transportation more appealing than driving, and more generally “rescaling” the city for human movement rather than car movement.<sup>93</sup> This starts with ensuring that people using active transportation methods (like walking or biking) that are safe, and personal vehicle use is discouraged.

We also call on the City to take on initiatives that specifically promote climate justice. The highest polluting sectors in the City of Ottawa are the building and transportation sector. Combined, these two sectors are projected to account for roughly 75% of cumulative emissions reductions from now until 2050. Targeting emissions in these sectors can not only help us meet our emissions targets, but also promote the welfare of low-income and marginalized residents. These measures include making transit free, allocating land within 1km of transit hubs for deeply affordable housing (reducing urban sprawl), offering energy retrofits for social and supportive housing, and using Community Improvement Plans to provide incentives for small businesses to locate and provide missing amenities in 15 minute communities.

45% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Ottawa come from buildings and homes, mainly from heating fuels. As a means to both reduce the City's corporate emissions and to demonstrate the potential for ‘green buildings’ the City should invest in deep retrofits. These retrofits should target all the buildings the City owns to something like the Canada Green Building Council's (CGBC) Zero Carbon standard<sup>94</sup> in cases where they are not already and the building standard for new City-owned buildings should also reflect something like the Zero Carbon standard.

That said, City-owned buildings are a small fraction of the buildings in Ottawa. Residential buildings in particular, which are primarily heated with natural gas, are a much bigger source of GHG emissions in Ottawa. The City should therefore create a financing program to incentivize residential retrofits, as other cities have already done, by partnering with FCM and leveraging their home retrofit program.

## Alt Budget Actions and Explanations

### **Endowment Fund divested from fossil fuels and stock markets, and re-invested in the local economy, creating jobs in Ottawa**

Access to extraordinarily affordable financing for the City, businesses, and individuals for green infrastructure.

### **Creation of the Ottawa Climate Finance and Economic Development Corporation**

A key element of our vision is the creation of a new vehicle, the Ottawa Climate Finance and Economic Development Corporation (CFEDC). The CFEDC's exclusive purpose will be to finance



equitable local climate actions. Like Ottawa Hydro, it will be wholly owned by, and accountable to, the City of Ottawa.

Through investments, CFEDC will create hundreds of local jobs and generate positive long-term economic yields in the community. It will provide low interest loans (with rates close to zero) with long pay-back time frames (of 30 to 50 years) to fund climate resilient and low or zero carbon infrastructure projects. CFEDC will offer low-interest financing and rebate programs to incentivize business owners and individuals to undertake retrofits. The corporation will also fund profitable, local renewable energy projects related to solar, wind, hydro energy and energy storage.

CFEDC's initial funding will come from the City's Endowment Fund. For years, community groups in Ottawa have advocated for divestment from fossil fuel investments in the Endowment Fund. We support this and propose that the funds should instead be invested locally, stimulating our economy. Of the \$190M in the fund, \$130M will be used as initial capitalization for CFEDC, and \$60M will be earmarked for investment in local renewable energy initiatives. CFEDC would then leverage this financing to seek other funding from the federal and provincial governments, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Infrastructure Bank of Canada, EDC, and community, private and philanthropic partners.

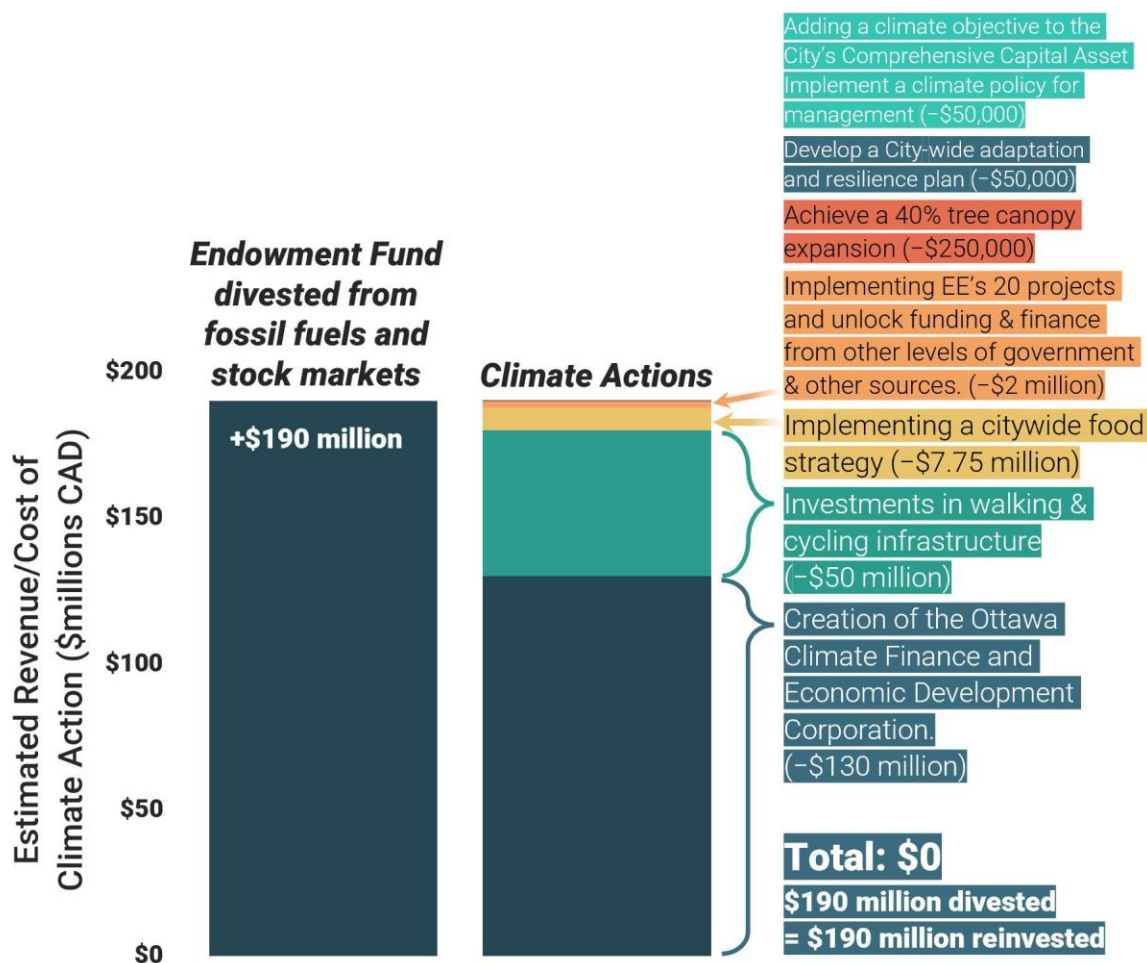


Figure 6: Divestment from the Endowment Fund and Proposed Climate Actions

## **Implementing EE's 20 projects and unlock funding & finance from other levels of government & other sources.**

Expand investments in deeply retrofitting the City's corporate buildings to the CGBC's Zero Carbon standard under Energy Evolution, in part by leveraging available loans and grants from FCM's Community Buildings Retrofit initiative, and enhance the current City building standard to the same level.<sup>95</sup> Create a program to help residents retrofit their homes, leveraging FCM's Community Efficiency Financing initiative.

### **Investments in walking & cycling infrastructure**

We propose an additional investment of \$50M on the capital budget side to improve cycling and walking environments, towards health benefits and the shift to a low-carbon economy. This can include speed limit reductions to 30km/h, physical traffic calming measures, quick-build cycling safety improvements on 29 identified intersections, and snow and ice clearing of walking and cycling paths. We propose an expansion of walking, cycling and public space on streets as part of the pandemic response. Climate action must always be coupled with climate justice so that no individual or community is left behind. As a result, the principles of a "just transition" must be at the heart of the energy and socioeconomic transition ahead.

The City should invest in retrofitting all intersections to be 'protected intersections' and to eliminate beg buttons.<sup>96,97</sup> In addition, they should retrofit and standardize continuous sidewalks on non-arterial roads to calm traffic, discourage driving, enhance accessibility, and improve pedestrian safety. Sidewalks should widen for the same reasons.<sup>98</sup> Other measures include building more multi-use pathways and protected bike lanes both within the core as well as outside of it to better connect suburban neighbourhoods to transit stops, commercial and recreation spaces, and to other neighbourhoods. Finally, they should enhance the budgets currently allocated to councillor offices for traffic calming measures (these include things like planter boxes near roads, temporary bollards and delineators in the middle of roads, as narrowing streets has been shown to reduce speeds and traffic volume) and the budget for snow and ice removal on sidewalks, multi-use pathways, and protected bike lanes, in winter.

### **Adding a climate objective to the City's Comprehensive Capital Asset Management Policy Implement a climate policy for management**

Lastly, we envision a path forward for the City where officials apply a climate lens to city initiatives. This includes considering climate in the City's Comprehensive Capital Asset Management Policy and its procurement policy. This also includes establishing a City carbon budget, and allocating long-term funding to the Climate Change Master Plan in the City's Long Range Financial Plan. A low-carbon economic development strategy can create hundreds of local jobs, generate positive long-term economic yields and build local resilience.

### **Develop a City-wide adaptation and resilience plan**

The city must plan investment in stormwater infrastructure, urban forestry and emergency preparedness, as well as prioritize investments in low-income and dense neighbourhoods. These initiatives increase the City's capacity for adaptation.

### **Implementing a citywide food strategy**

This involves the creation of a program for urban farming and the expansion of community gardens, creating greater incentives for local markets to be located in under-served neighbourhoods, and using zoning and other measures to incentivize the establishment of small neighbourhood groceries in residential areas. In some locations, this may simply be the expansion of a convenience store to include more produce and other foodstuffs. In others, new stores may have to be established.

**Achieve a 40% tree canopy expansion**

The City must enlarge its urban tree planting program. This will provide shade and reduce the amount of heat retained in our built infrastructure. Trees also have other benefits, such as acting as carbon sinks, providing shelter for animals, and have even been shown to help with mental health. Fruit trees could even be used as a means to produce food. The City must also create better plans for cooling centres for extremely hot days when those without air conditioning are unable to escape the heat. This is especially the case for low-income neighbourhoods where temperatures tend to already be higher due to the lack of a tree canopy and where fewer homes have AC units.

# Economic Development

**Table 7: Economic Development Proposed Actions**

| Action                                                         | Cost          | Result                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Expand grants for targeted populations.</b>                 | \$0.6M        | Designing policies to aid those who are marginalized or disadvantaged will bring about systemic change and mobilize those who have been disenfranchised and excluded from resources.                             |
| <b>Increase funding for employment services.</b>               | \$3.5M        | Additional funding for employment services will be targeted towards youth entering the workforce (particularly youth without a post-secondary education) and individuals with lapsed labour force participation. |
| <b>Support for workers to transition into low-carbon jobs.</b> | \$1.5M        | Facilitating a green transition in Ottawa.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Totals:</b>                                                 | <b>\$5.6M</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Background

Health and well-being are strongly correlated with socioeconomic status and are influenced by employment, income, and access to basic necessities<sup>99</sup>. Early 2020 saw the closure of non-essential businesses, schools and daycares, and stay-at-home measures which led to unemployment, a decrease in job seeking, and income loss for the residents of Ottawa.

Economic development in the City of Ottawa, much like the rest of the province, has been severely impacted by COVID-19. Ottawa's labour force experienced a sharp decline in March 2020, followed by marginal gains in the fall of 2020<sup>100</sup>. June 2020 saw 11% of Ottawa residents out of work due to the pandemic, but by October 2020 more than half of those residents had been employed again<sup>101</sup>. January 2021 through to July 2021 saw steep declines in employment due to rising COVID-19 cases and retail and service restrictions in Ontario.

The unemployment rate in early 2020 in Ontario increased across all groups, but it increased the most amongst those aged 15 to 24 years old. As restrictions eased in the latter half of 2020,

employment increased particularly for men of this age group<sup>102</sup>. According to economist Armine Yalnizyan, the COVID-19 economic crisis has severely impacted women and could last much longer than the health crisis<sup>103</sup>. Yalnizyan refers to the phenomenon as a “she-cession” since women disproportionately lost paid employment. Women’s participation in the Canadian labour force is at its lowest levels in three decades as of early 2020, and has been rebounding at a slower rate than men’s<sup>104</sup>. In addition to bearing the brunt of losing paid employment, women bore the majority of unpaid labour during the pandemic, such as homeschooling, senior care, and household duties as school and long-term care home closures extended<sup>105</sup>. Further to this, survivors of economic abuse, who are mostly women, experienced severe disadvantages in Ottawa over the course of the pandemic: “93% of victims that participated in an Ottawa survey said their abuser took away paychecks, tax refunds, disability, or other support payments.”<sup>106</sup>

Ottawa residents were surveyed in October 2020 to examine income shocks from sudden job losses or decreased working hours. Over a quarter of residents had decreased household income due to the pandemic, while 58% reported no change<sup>107</sup>. Of the residents that reported household income decreases, 32% had household incomes under \$60,000, while 20% had incomes over \$160,000. It is evident that people with lower incomes were hit hardest by the pandemic. People with disabilities and people identifying as LGBTQ2S+ were impacted much more when compared to people without disabilities and those who do not identify as LGBTQ2S+<sup>108</sup>. These groups also accessed income assistance at a higher rate than their counterparts due to hardships caused by the pandemic.

In October 2020, one in five Ottawa residents expressed difficulty paying for basic living costs, and over a third said that putting money into savings or investments was somewhat or very difficult<sup>109</sup>. People with lower incomes, visible minorities, identifying as LGBTQ2S+, and people with disabilities were amongst those with high rates of difficulties paying for basic living costs. As of February 2021, Ottawa’s employment rate had seen its highest point since the start of the pandemic, though it was still considerably below pre-pandemic rates<sup>110</sup>.

Economic stimulus – when done responsibly – in a way that prioritizes workers rather than developers and business owners can have meaningful impacts in a community. Wages and employment income are key determinants of whether or not a family experiences food insecurity. Income is also a key determinant of housing security, which has severe health repercussions. By putting workers first in pandemic recovery, Ottawa can insulate its residents against negative shocks and grow its tax base.

Ottawa’s two major sectors are high technology and the federal government, which offer stable high-paying jobs, but are not very diverse<sup>111</sup>. One in five workers in Ottawa is in a sales and service occupation, with business, finance and administration, law and social, community and government services, and natural and applied sciences occupations making up nearly 50% of total jobs<sup>112</sup>.

Co-developing policies with the populations they target is foundational to trauma-informed policymaking that brings about systemic change and mobilizes those who have been disenfranchised and excluded from resources. Employment programs and skill formation and training programs, combined with decent wages and good work conditions can fill employment gaps. While the quantity of available work is important, emphasis should also be placed on

increasing equity, security, dignity, and freedom in workplaces as well as employment programs and skill formation and training.<sup>113</sup>

Reallocating money away from developers and business interests increases the livability of the city. Research shows that BIAs exacerbate gentrification, increase both residential and commercial rental rates in the area and harm low-income residents and small business owners ([Elmedni 2018](#)).

## Role of the City

In Ottawa, the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development department is responsible for “the city-building priorities from planning and delivering growth opportunities and infrastructure, to managing City assets and investments, to fostering economic prosperity” ([Municipal Budget 2021](#)). A core focus of Ottawa’s current development plan focuses on the small and medium enterprises (SME) in all sectors that impact residents’ everyday lives such as retail, construction, legal, finance, insurance, and real estate. In their economic development strategy, the City acknowledges that these SMEs do not drive the overall economic growth but rather respond to the evolving needs of Ottawa residents. This distinction is important – and that logic will be foundational to our recommended changes to Ottawa’s development strategy. Currently, the primary stakeholders in their strategy are the Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) (organized collectively through the Ottawa Council of BIAs,) the Board of Trade, and Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale (RGA).

## Alternative Budget Actions and Explanation

### Expand grants for targeted populations

The Alternative Budget proposes expanding the municipal granting pool to create new grants, specifically targeted towards the populations identified above. In total we propose allocating an additional \$600,000 to targeted grants.

The current criteria which qualifies an organization for economic development grants are:

- Registered as a non-profit organization;
- Operated in a non-discriminatory manner, as set out by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- Governed by a democratically elected Board of Directors;
- Efficient, effective, and fiscally responsible; and
- In good financial standing with the City of Ottawa.

These criteria do not ensure that grants are serving the most marginalized populations, and can instead be used by developers. Existing grants that cannot conform to the equity requirement should be eliminated and their funding should be reallocated. Examples of funding that will be

reallocated if current recipients cannot meet the equity criteria include the \$120,000 allocated to BIAs, the \$4.4 million for Invest Ottawa and the \$1.5 million to Ottawa Tourism.

We propose strengthening this criteria to include an equity component particularly targeted towards supporting; individuals with disabilities, Black individuals, Indigenous individuals, new immigrants, refugees, current and/or former drug users, formerly incarcerated individuals, those previously in care, and those exiting the shelter system. All policy has economic ramifications, but the first priority should always be entrenching human rights.

### **Increase funding for employment services**

We propose increasing funding for employment services by \$3.5 million annually. The purpose for this increase is to create new, targeted employment services, specifically designed to help youth and those with lapsed labour force participation re-skill or up-skill so as to be better equipped to enter into the workforce.

### **Support for workers to transition into low-carbon jobs**

We propose putting an additional \$1.5 million received through federal funding towards supporting workers in carbon intensive industries transition into low-carbon jobs through the establishment of transition centres. This recommendation is in line with those put forward in the 2019 report by the Task Force on Just Transition for Canadian Coal Power Workers and Communities<sup>114</sup>, though we do not limit our target policy demographic to only coal workers. Transition centres have been used throughout time and across North America to support workers and communities during periods of rapid labour market change. The centre itself should be centrally located, easily accessible by transit, and staffed by individuals who previously worked in carbon intensive sectors. Additionally, the centre should house all relevant programs and services including support for navigating unemployment benefits, programs for individuals to re-skill and/or upskill, along with more traditional employment services such as resume editors and job search aids. As our economy moves towards decarbonization, the need for services to support a just transition will continue to grow. It is for this reason that we suggest the immediate establishment of the transition centre, along with a commitment to its funding for the next 5 years.



# Appendix A

## Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST)

| Foreign Owned Condos<br>(Purchased Annually) | Price of Condos | Value of Foreign Owned | 20% NRST         |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 50                                           | \$ 424,717.00   | \$ 21,284,765.64       | \$ 4,256,953.13  |
| 204                                          | \$ 725,512.00   | \$ 147,879,213.47      | \$ 29,575,842.69 |

Data source (housing price): <https://www.agentinottawa.com/stats/>

Data note: This is assuming that the share of houses owned by non-residents is the same as condominiums.

## Vacancy Tax

| Average Price<br>Residential<br>Homes | Total Private<br>Dwellings | Value of Housing  | Value of Vacant<br>Homes (average<br>rate) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| \$ 633,683                            | 421,665                    | \$267,201,942,195 | \$ 7,967,476,095                           |

Assumption: Average Vacancy Rate 2010-2020

|                |
|----------------|
| 5% Vacancy Tax |
| \$ 398,373,805 |

Data note: Data are from  
October 2020.

Source (private dwellings + housing prices): <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Geo2=PR&Code2=01&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&TABID=1&B1=>

Source (housing price): <https://www.agentinottawa.com/stats/>

## Parking Fees

|               | Current Fee   | Increase      |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|               | \$ 4.00       | \$ 5.00       |
| Total Revenue | \$ 17,100,000 | \$ 20,528,550 |
| Demand        | 4,275,000     | 4,105,710     |
| New Revenue   |               | \$ 3,428,550  |

Data Source: Campaign Details from Free Transit Ottawa



Data source ( fee revenue 2019): <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/pandemic-cost-city-of-ottawa-8-million-in-parking-fees-1.5443147>

Data Source (reduction in demand):

[https://www.google.com/search?q=how+much+does+increasing+parking+fees+decrease+demand&rlz=1C1YQLS\\_enCA915CA915&oq=how+much+does+increasing+parking+fees+decrease+demand&aqs=chrome..69i57j33i10i160l3.8956j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=how+much+does+increasing+parking+fees+decrease+demand&rlz=1C1YQLS_enCA915CA915&oq=how+much+does+increasing+parking+fees+decrease+demand&aqs=chrome..69i57j33i10i160l3.8956j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

## Property Tax

Residential Property Tax w/ Flat Tax (3 percent increase) \*taking into account 2022 city budget

| Housing Bracket | Lowest Value of Home in Bracket | Highest Value of Home in Bracket | Number of Homes in Bracket | Average Value (\$) of Home in Bracket | Current Property Tax Rate | Current Property Tax (\$) for Avg Home Value | Current Revenue Generated (2016) |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1               | -                               | <270,000                         | 91,428                     | 209,172.90                            | 1.116213                  | <b>2,334.82</b>                              | 213,467,475.17                   |
| 2               | 270,000.00                      | <360,000                         | 87,666                     | 322,219.30                            | 1.116213                  | <b>3,596.65</b>                              | 315,304,244.59                   |
| 3               | 360,000.00                      | <490,000                         | 87,742                     | 417,518.40                            | 1.116213                  | <b>4,660.39</b>                              | 408,912,348.10                   |
| 4               | 490,000.00                      | <1,000,000                       | 64,714                     | 579,493.00                            | 1.116213                  | <b>6,468.38</b>                              | 418,594,497.41                   |
| 5               | 1,000,000.00                    |                                  | 23,104                     | 1,002,719.00                          | 1.116213                  | <b>11,192.48</b>                             | 258,591,054.03                   |
| Total           |                                 |                                  | 354,654                    | 408,679.20                            |                           |                                              | \$1,614,869,619.30               |

| Housing Bracket | Lowest Value of Home in Bracket | Highest Value of Home in Bracket | Number of Homes in Bracket | Average Value of Home in Bracket | New Property Tax | New Property Tax (\$) for Avg Home Value | Current Revenue Generated (2016) | New Revenue Generated (estimate) |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1               | -                               | <270,000                         | 91,428                     | 209,172.90                       | 1.184190         | <b>2,477.01</b>                          | 213,467,475.17                   | 226,467,626.68                   |
| 2               | 270,000.00                      | <360,000                         | 87,666                     | 322,219.30                       | 1.184190         | <b>3,815.69</b>                          | 315,304,244.59                   | 334,506,246.90                   |
| 3               | 360,000.00                      | <490,000                         | 87,742                     | 417,518.40                       | 1.184190         | <b>4,944.21</b>                          | 408,912,348.10                   | 433,815,076.14                   |

|       |              |            |         |              |          |                  |                    |                    |
|-------|--------------|------------|---------|--------------|----------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 4     | 490,000.00   | <1,000,000 | 64,714  | 579,493.00   | 1.184190 | <b>6,862.30</b>  | 418,594,497.41     | 444,086,867.54     |
| 5     | 1,000,000.00 |            | 23,104  | 1,002,719.00 | 1.184190 | <b>11,874.10</b> | 258,591,054.03     | 274,339,227.74     |
| Total |              |            | 354,654 | 408,679.20   |          |                  | \$1,614,869,619.30 | \$1,713,215,045.00 |

## Rideshare Surcharge

| Policy                    | Surcharge per trip | Number of rides in 2019* | Total projected revenue |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Status Quo                | \$0.07             | 9,257,142                | \$450,000.00            |
| Doubling of the surcharge | \$0.14             | 9,257,142                | \$1,295,999.88          |
| Recommended Surcharge     | \$0.30             | 9,257,142                | \$2,777,142.60          |

Data note: There is not reliable data on number of rides for 2019. This estimate was made by taking the total contribution made by uber in 2017 (\$450,000) and dividing that by the 7-cent surcharge to arrive at an estimated number of rides. Ride share saw a ridership increase of 44% between 2017 and 2019. We apply this percentage increase to our figure to arrive at our final estimate.

## Development Charges

*Costing estimate provided by Free Transit Ottawa*

Increase the development charges for transit by 10% on all housing starts and by 15% on single family houses.

**\$6.5 million**

### Development Charges

*Costing estimate provided by Free Transit Ottawa*

Eliminate developer subsidies like Brownfield and Mainstreet grant programs.

**\$7 million**

### User Fees

|                                                                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Estimate for user fee revenue from the areas of Recreation, Culture and Swimming | \$ 15,000,000.00        |
| Estimate for user fee revenue from police services                               | \$ 24,700,000.00        |
| <b>Total (estimate) cuts from user fees</b>                                      | <b>\$ 39,700,000.00</b> |

## Municipal Land Transfer Tax

| Ontario LTT                     |       | Ottawa Municipal LTT            |                 |
|---------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Value of Consideration          | Rate  | Value of Consideration          | Rate (proposed) |
| Up to and including \$55,000.00 | 0.50% | Up to and including \$55,000.00 | 0.50%           |
| \$55,000.01 to \$250,000.00     | 1.00% | \$55,000.01 to \$250,000.00     | 1.00%           |
| \$250,000.01 to \$400,000.00    | 1.50% | \$250,000.01 to \$400,000.00    | 1.50%           |
| Over \$400,000.00               | 2.00% | \$400,000.00 to \$700,000.00    | 2.00%           |
| Over \$2,000,000.00             | 2.50% | Over \$700,000.01               | 2.50%           |

| Transfer Value of Property - Municipal LTT |                     |                                |                              |                      |                        |                               |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                            | \$250,000 and under | from \$250,000.01 to \$400,000 | from \$400,000.01 to 700,000 | \$700,000.01+        | All Transfers          | <u>Total Rev Gen</u>          |
| <b>2019 Q1</b>                             |                     |                                |                              |                      |                        | <b><u>\$88,514,050.81</u></b> |
| <b># of transactions</b>                   | <b>42</b>           | <b>629</b>                     | <b>836</b>                   | <b>118</b>           | <b>1,625</b>           |                               |
| <b>transactions value</b>                  | <b>\$9,349,979</b>  | <b>\$218,124,686</b>           | <b>\$411,099,582</b>         | <b>\$118,000,000</b> | <b>\$756,574,247</b>   |                               |
| <b>LTT paid</b>                            | <b>\$93,500</b>     | <b>\$3,271,870</b>             | <b>\$8,221,992</b>           | <b>\$2,950,000</b>   | <b>\$14,537,362</b>    |                               |
| <b>LTT as % of sales</b>                   | <b>1.00%</b>        | <b>1.50%</b>                   | <b>2.00%</b>                 | <b>2.50%</b>         | <b>1.92%</b>           |                               |
| <b>2019 Q2</b>                             |                     |                                |                              |                      |                        |                               |
| <b># of transactions</b>                   | <b>42</b>           | <b>758</b>                     | <b>1,608</b>                 | <b>134</b>           | <b>2,542</b>           |                               |
| <b>transactions value</b>                  | <b>\$9,349,979</b>  | <b>\$263,949,621</b>           | <b>\$831,599,196</b>         | <b>\$134,000,000</b> | <b>\$1,238,898,796</b> |                               |

|                           |              |               |               |               |                        |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <b>LTT paid</b>           | \$93,500     | \$3,959,244   | \$16,631,984  | \$3,350,000   | <b>\$24,034,728</b>    |
| <b>LTT as % of sales</b>  | 1.00%        | 1.50%         | 2.00%         | 2.50%         | <b>1.94%</b>           |
| <b>2019 Q3</b>            |              |               |               |               |                        |
| <b># of transactions</b>  | <b>0</b>     | <b>524</b>    | <b>1,383</b>  | <b>228</b>    | <b>2,135</b>           |
| <b>transactions value</b> | \$0          | \$183,249,738 | \$726,374,309 | \$228,000,000 | <b>\$1,137,624,047</b> |
| <b>LTT paid</b>           | \$0          | \$2,748,746   | \$14,527,486  | \$5,700,000   | <b>\$22,976,232</b>    |
| <b>LTT as % of sales</b>  | #DIV/0!      | 1.50%         | 2.00%         | 2.50%         | <b>2.02%</b>           |
| <b>2019 Q4</b>            |              |               |               |               |                        |
| <b># of transactions</b>  | <b>78</b>    | <b>706</b>    | <b>1,542</b>  | <b>300</b>    | <b>2,626</b>           |
| <b>transactions value</b> | \$17,049,953 | \$238,149,647 | \$786,149,229 | \$300,000,000 | <b>\$1,341,348,829</b> |
| <b>LTT paid</b>           | \$170,500    | \$3,572,245   | \$15,722,985  | \$7,500,000   | <b>\$26,965,729</b>    |
| <b>LTT as % of sales</b>  | 1.00%        | 1.50%         | 2.00%         | 2.50%         | <b>2.01%</b>           |

Provincial LTT:

[https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/bulletins/ltt/2\\_2005.html](https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/bulletins/ltt/2_2005.html)

2019 housing stock data: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-data/data-tables/housing-market-data/absorbed-units-price-range>

# Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> User fees are defined as fees paid by community members to access services, for example, renting ice to play hockey, renting a room in a community centre, or public transit fares..

<sup>2</sup> Graham, Katherine & Phillips, Susan. (2008). "Who Does What" in Ontario: The process of provincial-municipal disentanglement. Canadian Public Administration. 41. 175 - 209. 10.1111/j.1754-7121.1998.tb01536.x.

<sup>3</sup> Josh Pringle. (2021, March 25). *Ottawa ends 2020 with budget surplus despite \$238.5 million in COVID-19 related costs*. Ottawa. <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-ends-2020-with-budget-surplus-despite-238-5-million-in-covid-19-related-costs-1.5361932>

<sup>4</sup> Deachman, B. (2021, May 15). *Why COVID-19 may come calling at your door but not your neighbour's*. Ottawacitizen. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/why-covid-19-may-knock-at-your-door-and-not-others>

<sup>5</sup> Willing, J. (2021, March 25). *Provincial budget answers part of the city's \$153-million question for 2021*. Ottawacitizen. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/provincial-budget-answers-part-of-the-citys-153-million-question-for-2021>

<sup>6</sup> *Budget information 2022 | City of Ottawa*. (2021). City of Ottawa. <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/budget-finance-and-corporate-planning/budget-information-2022>

<sup>7</sup> Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). (2021). *The State of Canada's Cities and Communities 2012*. Fcm.Ca. [https://data.fcm.ca/documents/reports/The\\_State\\_of\\_Canadas\\_Cities\\_and\\_Communities\\_2012\\_EN.pdf](https://data.fcm.ca/documents/reports/The_State_of_Canadas_Cities_and_Communities_2012_EN.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> City of Ottawa. *Taxi and Limousine Regulation and Service Review: Policy Options*. [https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/documents/otlr\\_policy\\_en.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/documents/otlr_policy_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Chianello, J. (2017). *Taxpayers gave developers \$70M in last decade through brownfields policy*. Cbc.Ca. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-pays-70m-brownfields-grants-10-years-1.4319688>

<sup>10</sup> Johan, S., Alwani, K., Thirgood, J., & Spiro, P. (2019). *Rethinking Municipal Finance for the New Economy*. Peelregion.Ca. [https://www.peelregion.ca/finance/\\_media/rethinking-municipal-finance-new-economy.pdf](https://www.peelregion.ca/finance/_media/rethinking-municipal-finance-new-economy.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Josh Pringle. (2021b, May 26). *\$2.9 million tax break for Ottawa Porsche dealership receives the green light*. Ottawa. <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/2-9-million-tax-break-for-ottawa-porsche-dealership-receives-the-green-light-1.5443787>

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The province offset it again with a one-time fund of 2.6M in 2021, which is referenced in the Children's Services 2022 workplan for this year (p. 32):

<https://app05.ottawa.ca/sirepub/cache/2/j3zkc5okriuqrw0dcwi45vm5/71530611152021092104701.PDF>. Note that the department explicitly called for advocacy to reverse these cuts: "There is also a need for continued advocacy for the reversal of the previously announced provincial change on the spending threshold for program delivery /administration funding:" (p. 32)

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