October 2001

PRE-PUBLICATION PAPER

Ottawa 20/20 and Baroque Governance

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WORKING PAPER
01-54

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Introduction

The Smart Growth Summit of June 2001 in Ottawa was the kick-off to an 18-month process leading to a new Official Plan for the City of Ottawa. The old Official Plan of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, approved in April 1997, dealt with a large number of features that have remained stable since then, but there have been sufficient changes in the context and governance of the region to warrant a substantive review of the Official Plan challenging previously accepted assumptions.

To launch the process of consultation leading to the new Plan, the Summit has brought together a number of local and out-of-town experts to draw on their expertise, but it has also invited the people of Ottawa to share their ideas about the future of the city.

The purpose of this report is not to present a comprehensive review of all the issues debated in June, but to provide a synthesis of the major themes of the Summit, to elicit certain principles that would appear to emerge from the June discussions, and to put forward a series of recommendations that would appear to flow from these discussions.

Hopefully, this report will be useful in the preparation of the Ottawa 20/20 Directions document that is meant to serve as a basis for the public engagement in late 2001 and early 2002.
Messages from urbanologists

At the core of the Summit activities were the messages from a number of urban experts from Europe, the United States and the rest of Canada. They put forward some important suggestions derived from their studies of other terrains.

On the one hand, it is most certainly reductive to boil down their messages to a few lines, but, on the other hand, it would be even more unfair not to underline some of their key proposals that deserve being remembered.

Sir Peter Hall argued that cities are natural sites for “the innovative milieu”, and there lies their significance. Cities, he claims, will find creative solutions to the problems of the day (transportation, rich/poor divide) just as they did in the past. His central message suggests that it is in private-public-civic partnerships (at the mercy of uncertain politics and uncertain business cycles) that cities will find their capacity to generate such solutions. Even though there is no recipe for crafting creative cities, Hall suggests that it requires a mix of talented young people, much interaction at different levels (including arts and culture), and a wise integration between land use and transportation.

The central questions at the core of the design of such creative cities were addressed first by a quartet of reflective practitioners (Judith Maxwell, Jack Diamond, Andres Duany and Gilbert Lacasse). They all emphasized the central importance of the social technology as the foundation required for cities to thrive.

Judith Maxwell anchored her remarks into the notion of quality of life and suggested that a city must balance social and economic concerns if it is to succeed. Her emphasis on social capital as a condition for economic growth, and on the centrality of community in the quality of life equation reinforced the message of Sir Peter Hall that arts, culture, etc. are basic ingredients in economic creativity.

Architect Jack Diamond articulated a congruent message but he insisted on some of the obstacles (lack of public financial resources in particular) preventing cities from developing a sustainable high quality of life. He argued in favour of a significant redistribution of power (and commensurate resources) away from the provinces toward the cities, as the only way to ensure that cities can revitalize urban cores.

For Andres Duany, traditional neighbourhoods are the answer to the quest for sustainable high quality of life. Urban growth can be designed and shaped to create such planned communities. He suggested that high-density suburban communities are an alternative to sprawl.

Gilbert Lacasse added another dimension to the social technology necessary for smart growth in our region: the challenge of ensuring that both sides of the Ottawa River are able to work together so as to make the highest and best use of the available talent.
After a first day full of optimism focusing on the required social technology for smart urban growth, the second day was gloomier. Both Alex Marshall and Mike Burton shifted the emphasis from the social technology to the physical technology underpinning cities and expressed a strong sentiment that urban growth had to be contained.

In sharp contrast with the views of Duany, Marshall and Burton identified the transportation system as the source of the problems. They insisted that highways create sprawl and fragmented communities. Consequently, containing growth through a constraining transportation system is the solution if one wants a densely populated creative city.

Later on the second day, two practitioners – one from Winnipeg (Mayor Glen Murray) and the other from Chattanooga, Tennessee (Councilor David Crockett) went a bit further in exploring how one might be able to transform existing cities and make them more livable. Both of them reported on experiences that would lead one to believe that revitalizing decaying downtown cores and improving the quality of life by making downtowns environmentally friendly is neither technically impossible nor economically suicidal.

The last two urbanologists (former Vancouver Mayor and B.C. Premier Mike Harcourt and Carnegie-Mellon’s regional scientist Richard Florida) hammered a clear message emphasizing also the centrality of social technology in smart growth. They emphasized the point made by Judith Maxwell that social capital is a crucial element of the quality of life in cities that underpins economic growth. For them, the “quality of place” has become a major source of attractiveness for employees in a knowledge-based economy.

**Town hall issues**

The Smart Growth Summit also staged a number of town hall forums around key issues in the development of the city. These were forums where panelists and citizens were able to air their concerns in a freewheeling way. The content of the debates in these ten forums was rich in observations, denunciations, and recommendations. Even though the vox populi did not necessarily record any convergence of views, a few themes were recurrent.

In this report, a number of these concerns are highlighted for they represent what the citizens of the new city are worried about. They must be kept in mind when the new Official Plan is drafted, and they must inform the consultation period later this year since these are issues that are in the forefront of the consciousness of the citizenry.

While the forums were nominally dedicated to specific issues, there was inevitably much overlap and cross-fertilization as generic issues were brought forth under different rubrics. The notes on the forums will ensure that no good insights are lost, but our purpose here is to focus on elements of a certain generality.
One may usefully classify these forums in four categories:

- those focusing on the demands of citizens
  - preservation of the rural identity (2)
  - social needs (3)
  - livability (7)
  - sustainability (9)

- those focusing on certain “actions structurantes”
  - transportation infrastructure (1)
  - urban form: urban/suburban (4)

- those focusing on the prerequisites for economic growth
  - talent (5)
  - housing (8)
  - social capital (6)

- those focusing on governance (10)

The first four forums identified the fundamental demands of the citizenry.

Forum # 2 tackled rural/village development as a complement to the urban growth dynamic. There was much unanimity created around the need to respect “the rural identity”, but this was interpreted in a variety of ways. For some, the rural fringe has to be preserved as a niche as much as possible, while for others it has to be maintained by constraining economic development more strictly.

Forum # 3 dealt with the social needs facing the new city. The forum underlined the concerns of citizens about poverty, youth crime and safety, and the need to accommodate the growing social diversity through inclusive institutions.

The same points emerged in the forum around Forum # 7 -- elements of a livable city. It was felt that safe and enriching social support systems would not only make a city more livable but would entice all to participate more actively in creating such livable space.

Forum # 9 focused on building a sustainable community: environmental issues that call for a balance between economic growth, environmental protection and quality of life. The conclusions converge with those of forum # 3.

The second group of forums focused on broad macroscopic instruments to shape the city.
Transportation was the theme of Forum # 1. It underlined both the need to integrate land use and transport planning much better so as to create a sustainable city, and the thorny issue of private automobile versus public transit.

While a plurality of voices insisted on the magic quality of mixed land uses and of public transit, a significant (if less vocal) community remained skeptical about the effects of such instruments. Quite clearly crucial decisions on this front are within the ambit of the new city levers, but much critical thinking is required before defining specific actions because there are no quick fixes.

Forum # 4 – developing the urban/suburban core – dealt with the urban form, and the need to recognize that smart growth will entail both a strong focus on a mixed-use high-density downtown and a variety of focal points also densely populated and making the city a truly polycentric unit.

Again, there was no consensus on the urban form likely to generate the optimal solution. But quite clearly there was agreement on the fact that the urban boundary had to be shaped by public policy, not by private developers.

The third set of forums focused on the prerequisites for economic growth.

Forum # 5 dealt directly with economic growth in a knowledge-based economy. It underlined the crucial importance of competition for talent and revealed that social capital was crucial in this process. Arts, education and cultural infrastructures, vibrancy, and wellness play an important role in attracting knowledge workers.

Forum # 8 on housing was the focus of heated debates. The demand for housing will increase significantly over the next few years and there will be an important shortage of rental dwellings. While no solution was put forward, it would appear that public-private – civic partnerships are called for.

Forum # 6 focused on arts, culture and heritage. It dovetailed nicely with the economic growth forum in emphasizing the importance of the social, cultural and relational capital in any smart growth strategy.

The last forum (# 10) dealt with the governance of the city and the need for cooperation among the stakeholders in the political arena – the federal government, the NCC, the City, and the adjacent twin-city -- Gatineau. It was argued that changes in the governance structure may be required if smart growth is to be achieved, but there was no agreement about what it might look like.

It is not clear that any consensus emerged from these forums. Indeed, they can be regarded as echoing the very diversity of views that can be expected from the public engagement later this year. In a sense, there was no more harmony among participants in these forums than among the reflective practitioners.
A few key points

Any attempt at synthesizing this rich array of presentations and debates is, of necessity, somewhat idiosyncratic, but a few key points may not be contentious.

1. Cities are innovative milieux in a new knowledge-based economy, and smart growth will require that this creativity be nurtured. This requires attracting talent, and such a power of attraction depends as much on social and relational capital as on physical infrastructure.

2. It will not be easy to achieve this objective unless one agrees on an urban form for the city that all might regard as satisfactory in the pursuit of the multiplicity of objectives the different stakeholders strive for. In the titanesque opposition between those arguing for and against sprawl, there would appear to be the embryo of a compromise that would appear viable: a high-density core and a polycentric structure of densely populated peripheral centres with both units paying immense attention to the development of neighbourhoods and communities.

3. This urban form, likely to generate a smart growth city, is unlikely to emerge organically. Transportation and land use planning will have to shape it. But it is going to be an uneasy job because the different stakeholders within the new space have widely divergent frames of analysis and little taste for collaboration in this early phase of the development of the new city. Interest groups have voiced their concerns and made demands. They have not revealed that they welcome accommodation, and when they have, they do not appear to know how such compromises might emerge.

4. Consequently, much must be done to construct mechanisms for constructive citizen engagement and new governance structures capable of generating widely supported responses to these challenges. In this context, it is futile to hope that generalities will generate consensus, for such agreements have no roots and carrying power. Debates must therefore be focused on a few broad and many local issues, with the view that broad level instruments like transportation, land use planning etc. can be brought to bear on the former as meaningful responses, while more focused instruments based on relational capital are used to address local issues locally.

5. There has been an agreement of both experts and citizens on the need for basic principles to guide the process of plan definition. But there has been no agreement on a particular set of principles that might be agreeable to all at the Summit. In August 2001, the Greater Ottawa Chamber of Commerce has published in the Ottawa Business Journal a list of such principles. This is a useful starting point in the design of a more comprehensive and ambitious set of such principles likely to be supported by all the stakeholders, and capable of guiding discussion about the sort of action plan that is warranted.
6. Whatever might be the final list of recommendations as a result of the consultation process, it is crucial that a provisional list of tentative recommendations be drawn from a prudent reading of the proceedings of the Smart Growth Summit. This preliminary list should serve as a challenge for the city staff to examine them carefully to determine if they are viable and wise or unreasonable, but also as a way to focus the attention of the citizens when they are engaged in a dialogue over the future of the city later this year.

7. Finally, even though it has been somewhat lost in the debates, there are both constraints and opportunities that come with the status of capital city. And they must be explored systematically and thoroughly for Ottawa is such a special case. Each successful capital city is a social armistice among the pressures from the locals, the nationals and the denizens of the world. The locals benefit a great deal from the centrality of the capital and the redistribution of material resources toward them; the nationals consume nationally these local symbolic resources; and both of them export some of their tax burden to the denizens of the world who have a taste for exotic travel. These constraints have an impact on the development of the city for all these stakeholders make demands on the city. But these are matched by the extraordinary resources made available by these extra-urban layers of governance to the capital city. This defines the governance challenge, i.e., the challenge of effective coordination when resources, information and power are distributed, i.e., are in different hands.

Some guiding principles

In order to ensure smart growth, it may be useful to identify a vision and some guiding principles. The Greater Ottawa Chamber of Commerce has identified a vision statement that might be used as a starting point for the Fall-Winter discussions.

« The new City of Ottawa will be a livable community that is vibrant and prosperous in which the economic, environmental, cultural and political elements work together to achieve a high quality of life for all its residents »

However imperfect this vision might be, it puts the emphasis on two key points:

(1) A complex goal: prosperity, vibrancy and quality of life

(2) A route to this goal through collaboration by all the groups (private, public, civic) working together

The following principles might guide the process leading to recommendations:

1. Smart growth is rooted in a creative and innovative milieu.
2. Creative talents are attracted by quality of life, a diverse and heterogeneous environment, and good governance.
3. Quality of life depends both on physical and relational capital.
4. Diversity is a crucial asset in both learning and innovation.
5. Investment in education, health, and safety underpins relational capital.
6. Good governance requires smart growth to be managed through an open, participative, accountable and effective process.
7. Good governance requires true collaboration among private, public and civic sectors, but also among the different levels of government and with the Outaouais partner.
8. Transportation decisions are of paramount importance in shaping the material infrastructure and the urban form.
9. Arts, culture and vibrant communities are the foundation of relational capital.
10. The benefits of smart growth must be shared by the complement of all citizens.
11. Part of the benefits of smart growth is the possibility of enjoying alternative life styles.
12. The urban form that promotes smart growth is polycentric, avoids destructive sprawl, fosters the development of vibrant communities, and provides the basis for sustainable development.

Some special challenges for governance carpentering in a capital city

The complexity of the tasks faced by capital cities in general and by Ottawa in particular (because of its being nested at the border of two provinces) means that it would be unwise to expect that one source of authority would be able to perform the governing task alone. The governance of capital cities is a game without a master. The baroque (i.e., irregular, unusual, somewhat complex) arrangement that is required will also have to be different in the future from what it has been in the past.

In the Ottawa Citizen (18.06.2001), one finds reference to a study by Laurence Aurbach that celebrates the bossy style of the National Capital Commission (NCC) and the merit of autocracy (and the use of the power of eminent domain) by the NCC as an important contributor to the success of Ottawa as a vibrant and livable city.

There is no doubt that the NCC has done much to help steward the growth of Ottawa in liveable ways. It has contributed significantly to the smartness and aesthetics of the city. But the dynamics has changed with the emergence of fewer and more important players. The NCC cannot expect to continue to play its role in the future in the same way as it did in the past. In all organizations (private, public and civic), hierarchical and autocratic forms of leadership have been displaced by more collaborative and participative forms of leadership. Consequently the challenge for the NCC of the future is that it will have to become less a boss than a broker and an animateur. This new form of leadership is no less transformative than the earlier style, but it requires different skills -- more doigté and less of a heavy hand.
Special challenges must therefore be kept in mind as one is trying to find ways to improve the governance of capital cities like Ottawa.

1. Capital cities are city-regions. And in a globalized economy, city-regions are becoming more important economically as nation-state capitals are becoming relatively less important politically.

This paradoxical set of forces (that have given to Ottawa more importance on the world economic stage while its political role within Canada was diminished) means that no simple formula can be used to define the governance of capital cities. It depends a lot on the vernaculars – the characteristics of the localities. A composite city like Ottawa has gained world prominence through its high-tech sector over the last decades while it has lost much political clout through the erosion of the nation state that has lost power outward to transnational agencies, downward to regions, and sideways to multinationals. There is no way to govern this composite creature except through distributed governance.

2. Capital cities must strive for a distributed and shared governance regime that acknowledges the plurality of communities and stakeholders contributing to Ottawa’s growth.

The many roles of Ottawa on the international, national, federal, provincial and local scenes, and the variety of socio-economic forces (private, public, civic) at work within the area call for a governance regime that can accommodate these different roles and forces. This has to be a layered governance process that requires a degree of complexity commensurate with the degree of complexity of the system to be governed. Consequently, what is regarded by some observers as an unduly complex governance regime -- encompassing two separate municipal systems and a national capital commission -- may turn out to be exactly the sort of regime likely to provide comparative advantage.

3. Capital cities need collaborative governance and leadership

The need for a distributed governance regime comes with a price tag: the necessity to collaborate. This has been particularly difficult in the past with the multiplicity of towns over the territory of the national capital region. But collaboration can easily be facilitated in the new world where the number of players is reduced and a Troika is possible (coordination of the NCC, the City of Ottawa, and the City of Gatineau). Collaborative governance is transforming the traditional structure of accountabilities and calls for new forms of collaborative leadership.
4. Capital cities may require some decapitalization while retaining capital functions

The present schizophrenia of capital cities and the strong sentiment that the national/international roles are taking precedence over the local engagement have led to some questioning of the cost/benefit ratio of the burden of being a capital. While much of the whining is somewhat disingenuous, there is something to the malaise that accompanies the sense that, here and elsewhere, the national capital commissions are too uprooted from the local vernaculars. A certain degree of re-rooting in the communities might be useful.

5. What might be required for a Troika to work?

A number of plausible points come to mind:

- The recognition of the equal power of the three partners
- Real power being devolved by provinces to the city-regions
- A real territorial coordination authority granted by the federal government to the NCC
- A change in the composition of the board of the NCC to include more locals
- The recognition that partnerships and alliances are necessary
- Some pragmatic focus on modest objectives and creative tweaking, e.g. bridges
- A sense of the region as a counterweight to provincial and federal weights
- Some citizen education in order to get them to recognize the challenges ahead
- Transparency in explaining and collective reporting on the state of the region
- A true consultation philosophy and a true spirit of cooperation

None of this will evolve overnight. What is required is the development of a climate of trust and cooperation.

While much can be learned from the experiences of other countries, much has to be tailor-made for our communities.

The time may be appropriate for demonstration projects as a way to show to all that the baroque governance of the capital city really works.
A framework for recommendations

In order to present to the citizens an ensemble of recommendations that are likely to lead to fruitful discussions, a framework is necessary. We have therefore organized the recommendations that would appear to emerge from the Smart Growth Summit in a few categories according to the purposes they wish to achieve:

(1) To foster a creative and innovative milieu
   a. quality of life should be recognized as key to economic growth
   b. a strategy to develop, recruit and retain the best talent pool
   c. facilitate venture capital investment
   d. promote diversification both sectorally and geographically

(2) To improve the physical infrastructure and shape the urban form
   a. focus on the new bridges as part of a polycentric strategy
   b. widen the Queensway only as part of a comprehensive transportation overhaul that takes into account a refurbished public transit system including light rail, and the creation of a European-type ring road
   c. a new focus on the waterfronts (canal and rivers)
   d. develop a light rail system to link the different centres

(3) To improve relational and social capital
   a. incorporate a social (health, education, housing, culture, arts, libraries, recreation) plan in the Official Plan
   b. promote a culture of public transit
   c. promote a mix of commercial, residential and people services
   d. full broadband installation throughout the city, including the rural portion

(4) To ensure good growth management
   a. Council should ensure that Ottawa 20/20 will be a truly effective exercise in public engagement and that the Official Plan becomes a sliding plan modified smoothly over the coming years
   b. require Council to submit a report card on what was accomplished in realizing the Official Plan each year, together with a statement of the objectives for the year to come
   c. secure from the participation process a sense of what the priorities of the stakeholders are when it comes to growth strategies
(5) To ensure good governance

a. Troika of the Mayors of Ottawa and Gatineau and Chair of the NCC to meet quarterly to coordinate priorities and activities
b. more autonomy for neighbourhood decisions granted to Borough Committees
c. a yearly roundtable of the officials of the broad National Capital region to limit beggar-thy-neighbour strategies
d. transform the role of TOP to make it not only a truly representative sounding board but also an agency to engage the active commitment and creative contribution of the institutions represented

Detailed recommendations

The key objective stated at the Summit is building a sustainable liveable city. But to achieve that goal, it was argued that it cannot be “business as usual”. The status quo is no longer acceptable.

Therefore, we need a plan to manage growth in our community. The current economic downturn gives us some breathing room to sort out the impact of the changes on our level of growth and our high level of quality of life.

The following detailed recommendations are not exhaustive and may not do justice to all the components of the framework but they set the stage for useful and practical discussions.

Recommendation 1

That the City of Ottawa develop a Managing Growth Plan, consisting not only of an Official Plan (which includes land use planning, a Transportation Master Plan, and a Sewer and Water Plan), but also a Green Plan, a Social Plan (including housing and diversity), an Arts and Heritage Plan, a Talent Plan and a Smart City Plan with an explicit focus on creating the quality of life required to generate an innovative milieu.

We suggest that the Managing Growth Plan retain the Ottawa 20/20 “brand” for this purpose. This will provide continuity with the Smart Growth Summit and symbolically represent the emergence of a new way of doing things in the new City of Ottawa.
Recommendation 2

That the City of Ottawa’s Managing Growth Plan be constructed “bottom-up”, not “top-down”.

This is to be done through a serious public participation process to develop a Managing Growth Plan with the objective of developing a sense of public ownership of the Plan.

Recommendation 3

That Ottawa City Council approve a Managing Growth Plan by the end of 2002.

Recommendation 4

That in order to promote accountability, amendments to the Official Plan should require a vote of ¾ of Council (under the current composition, 17 members); any amendments to the Municipal Act or other legislation to bring about this recommendation should be sought from the Provincial Legislature.

Recommendation 5

That the City Council prepare an annual Managing Growth Report Card, and release the document in the first quarter of each year, beginning in 2004. The Report Card should include an Ottawa Sustainable Livability Index, along the lines of the Silicon Valley Index.

It is crucial that such a report card make a special effort to gauge the state of social and relational capital, and to determine as precisely as possible the success of the efforts of the City on this front.

Recommendation 6

That City Council study the possibility of creating 4 or 5 Borough Committees, to be composed of Councilors (voting) and community representatives (non-voting). These Borough Committees would make recommendations to Council on purely local issues. These recommendations could only be reversed by Council through a vote of ¾ of those at the subsequent Council meeting.

The philosophy that some issues are best dealt with “in the large” and some are best dealt with “in the small” still applies after amalgamation. The amalgamated city is working well, dealing with the large issues, and much inter-jurisdictional infighting has been eliminated, but we will soon be faced with harmonizing by-laws that need not be uniform. Neighbourhoods have their own set of complementary priorities. These priorities need an outlet where they can be expressed and enacted, providing that they do not conflict or overlap with other more encompassing priorities.
**Recommendation 7**

*That City Council incorporate into the process of public engagement for the Managing Growth Plan a major public debate on single-driver commuting in rush hour.*

We suggest that Council should not promote one side or another, but rather provide the necessary background and material for the public to make an informed decision.

Commuters are a very demanding group. They want the convenience of driving their car to work, parking it for the day and then driving back—without congestion and at low cost, as they live farther and farther from their workplaces.

One can either accede to those demands—at tremendous cost, both in financial terms on the structure of the city, and on the impact on air quality and the environment—or one may try to change the way Ottawans do things.

Clearly, if every single-driver commuter at a minimum doubled up with another, the road problem would largely be solved. Three or four in a car would save the City hundreds of millions of dollars. Such solutions are not likely to happen spontaneously. In order for such changes to occur, people will need to change their driving habits. However, in line with our basic belief in a bottom-up City governance, it is not proposed that a top-down solution be imposed. Rather, it is felt that the citizenry will need to address this question and come to a collective conclusion.

**Recommendation 8**

*That City Council should develop a transit infrastructure so that residents have a reasonable alternative to commuting to work by car.*

This can only be accomplished through a dual set of negative and positive actions that will require explicit discussions in the next year.

1) On the negative side, this may entail looking into the possibility of no new major roads being constructed until an equally convenient public transit alternative is in place. Exceptions should require a ¾ vote of the full Council.

One must provide for exceptions because there are additional road links that may well make sense in a balanced system. For example, the Terry Fox Drive extension might be a necessity or the Innes Road development, among others.

The City Council might also try to discourage the Provincial Government from widening the Queensway, or at least urge the province not to proceed until the City’s Transportation Master Plan has been completed. Only if the Transportation Master Plan identifies the widening as a priority should it go ahead. And if the Queensway is widened, then the Province might incorporate and pay for a light rail track down the middle.
Finally the City Council should not approve the proposal of a ring road around the city unless it is a true ring road in the European sense, i.e. there are no additional entry interchanges between entry and exit. A toll should be established to help pay for the cost of the road.

In the same spirit, the City Council may choose not to approve any road expansions beyond 4 lanes. Major roads could conceivably be wider than 4 lanes, but that should involve a dedicated bus lane or rail track (perhaps in the middle) or bicycle path or at the most a dedicated Multi-Occupancy Vehicle (MOV) lane (direction changing from morning to afternoon rush hour).

(2) On the positive side, this effort may entail a variety of initiatives to encourage a transformation in the “transit culture” through the development of an appropriate structure of incentives/disincentives.

For instance the City Council might examine appropriate ways to minimize the number of cars per household.

Or the City Council might undertake a series of actions to encourage the use of public transit, such as the following, that were proposed by town hall participants:

i) move toward cheaper public transit fares, with the objective of no fare;

ii) free transit passes for students (at least up to the end of high school)—this will also help reduce the pressure on multi-car ownership for families;

iii) free transit passes for seniors who do not own a family car;

iv) encourage employers to provide free transit passes to their employees, and eliminate free parking passes;

v) restrict parking availability downtown for commuters, e.g. a cheap rate for short-term parking, with an expensive rate for non-tourist all-day parking; and

vi) tolls at the city border on major roads into the city, e.g. at the city border at Road 174.

At the same time the City will need to work on improving its public transit system so that it can be a true alternative to car travel.

The City of Ottawa might also, prior to the completion of the Transportation Master Plan, develop a public transit strategy, putting an emphasis on light rail, and ensuring that when the system is complete, public transit will represent a reasonable and convenient alternative to car travel, especially in rush hours.

Other possibilities might be the construction of an east-west light rail link incorporating both western links to Barrhaven and Kanata, and the development of a light rail downtown loop concept, extended at least to the airport on the south and the Ottawa and Gatineau on the north. The financial support of the Provincial and Federal governments would be essential.
Recommendation 9

That as part of the Managing Growth Plan Ottawa City Council define an urban growth boundary that cannot be breached, except by a vote of 90% of Council members.

Recommendation 10

That City Council not approve any major development projects that are single-use. Instead it should ensure that new developments are mixed-use, and conform as closely as possible to a mix of 1/3 residential, 1/3 commercial, and 1/3 “people services”, including green space.

Recommendation 11

That City Council not approve any major development projects without a plan and available funding for the people services components. This recommendation includes the provision of public transit services that meet the test of real alternative to car travel.

Recommendation 12

That City Council require developers to install optical fiber during the construction of new major development projects in order to facilitate its integration in the smart community process.

Recommendation 13

That the Managing Growth Plan provide some standards on what residents can reasonably expect in their neighbourhoods, of the facilities and services that should be available within walking distance, and what can be available on a regional basis.

Recommendation 14

That the Managing Growth Plan promote economic diversification, both sectorally and geographically.

Recommendation 15

That the Managing Growth Plan promote diversity and tolerance in the community.

Recommendation 16

That the Managing Growth Plan integrate educational issues into economic growth decision-making. As a start, City Council should add a representative of the school boards to The Ottawa Partnership (TOP) Board.
Recommendation 17

*That the City Council undertake an educational campaign, in collaboration with the economic development agencies, to encourage the major banks to be more receptive to financing Smart Growth projects.*

One of the comments made by business representatives at the Summit was that many companies were interested in developing innovative projects, but were often hamstrung by the attitudes of the financial institutions that are the main sources of their funding. Too often, they indicated, the banks were not prepared to finance anything but “cookie-cutter” projects, based on designs and processes with which they were familiar and comfortable. If the banks were more open to new ways of building, then the developers might be ready to respond with more appropriate projects.

Recommendation 18

*That the Troika composed of the Mayors of the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau and the Chair of the National Capital Commission meet quarterly to coordinate priorities and activities.*

Recommendation 19

*That efforts be made to sensitize the community to the new centrality of arts, culture, heritage and aesthetic dimensions as basic assets of the region, and to encourage civic entrepreneurs to contribute to the development of social and relational capital.*

Recommendation 20

*That the City promote the generation of “green power” and alternative energy in the business plan of Hydro Ottawa, the use of alternative fuels in the City’s vehicles, including OC Transpo buses, and promote the use of “cleaner” energy by the general public.*

Recommendation 21

*That the private, public and civic sectors be encouraged to develop multifaceted and variegated partnerships (Talentworks, SmartCapital, etc.) in order to ensure that collective learning helps the three sectors to collaborate and co-evolve in ways that best serve the development and progress of the community.*
Conclusion

This is a very special moment of social learning in Ottawa.

Over the few days of the Smart Growth Summit, experts from other countries have shared their experiences with us; critical issues have been examined; ideologies have been denounced and propounded; town hall meetings have allowed the citizens to express their provisional views.

Some have closed their ears and minds to all this, or have simply chosen to denounce what they did not like. This is not good enough. There is a need for ears and minds to be open to the views of all the other stakeholders. This is the basic condition of effective social learning.

The baroque governance regime of Ottawa-Gatineau is not there yet, but it is en émergence, under construction. And there is a need for all the citizens of Ottawa to partake in this construction.

It is not clear that the guiding principles we have extracted from the Smart Growth Summit should be those retained in the final analysis, or that the recommendations we have distilled from town hall discussions and expert views should prevail. They were put forward to initiate an intelligent conversation with the citizenry, and to elicit complementary or additional suggestions.

This report is meant only to kick start a process of critical examination of what each and everyone might be able to do to help define what might be the most effective ways to make Ottawa the livable, vibrant and prosperous community the citizens wish it to be.

To get there, we need first and foremost good governance, i.e., “governance not by the best among all of us but by the best within each of us”.

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