



Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City
in association with
the Overbrook & Castle Heights Community Association
Presents:

AN OVERBROOK & CASTLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

January 2022

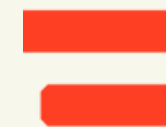


THANK YOU!

*The creation of this
Community Sustainability Plan
could not have been possible without the
generous contributions of both
the **Ottawa Community Foundation** and
the **TD Friends of Environment Foundation**.
Thank you!*



Association communautaire
d'**OVERBROOK**
Community Association



**OTTAWA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**



**TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation**

WHAT IS A BIOSPHERE ECO-CITY?

The **Biosphere Eco-City (BEC)** is an urban-centred region where people and organizations create a **culture of sustainability**. Biosphere means “**sphere of life**” and is the Earth’s outer shell of land, water and atmosphere that **supports all life**. The term **Eco-City** refers to an international movement for sustainable cities.

Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City

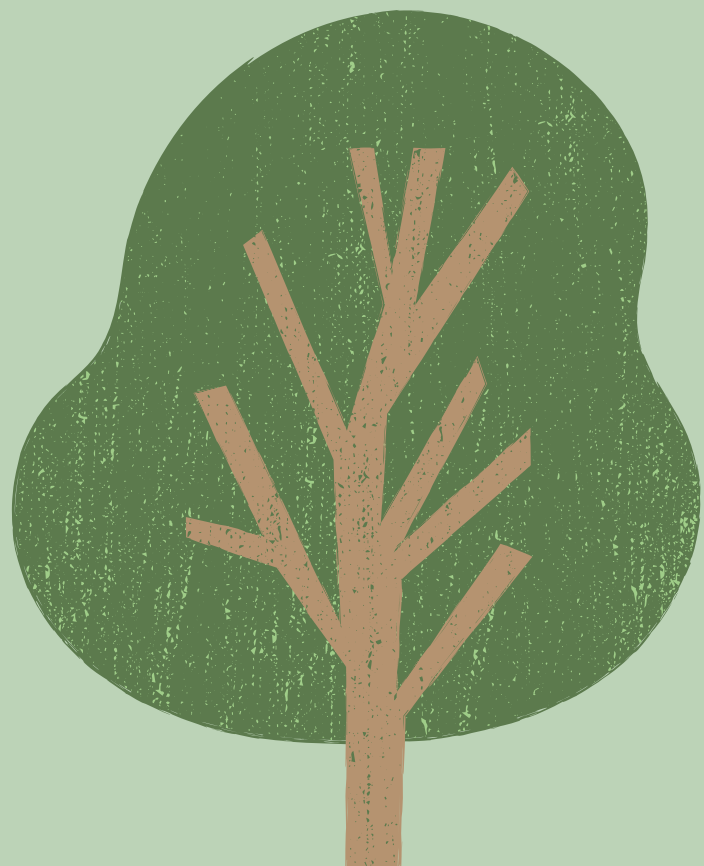
The Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City (OBEC) is a **local, grassroots charity** that engages with **community members, partners and stakeholders** for sustainability. OBEC pursues several initiatives including: a **database** of hundreds of sustainability projects, a self-guided **Ottawa Sustainability Tour**, public **workshops** on individual Themes of Sustainability, **Sustainability Plans**, and a **Council of Stakeholders** where anyone can share ideas for sustainability. More details may be found on the website (obec-evbo.ca).

Let's define 'Sustainability'



***Sustainability** is the ability of things to **continue to exist**. It applies to **natural** and **human** dimensions. We use the **earth's resources** to meet our **needs**, but we also want to **leave enough** of the natural resources for **future generations** to live **healthy and happy lives**. It is the **coexistence** of all dimensions of life living **responsibly**.*

What we do matters. YOU impact the environment—the environment impacts YOU.






Introduction to Overbrooke & Castle Heights Community Sustainability Plan

*The **Overbrook and Castle Heights** Community Sustainability Plan (CSP) workshop took place on **Saturday, January 15th, 2022**, online via zoom.*

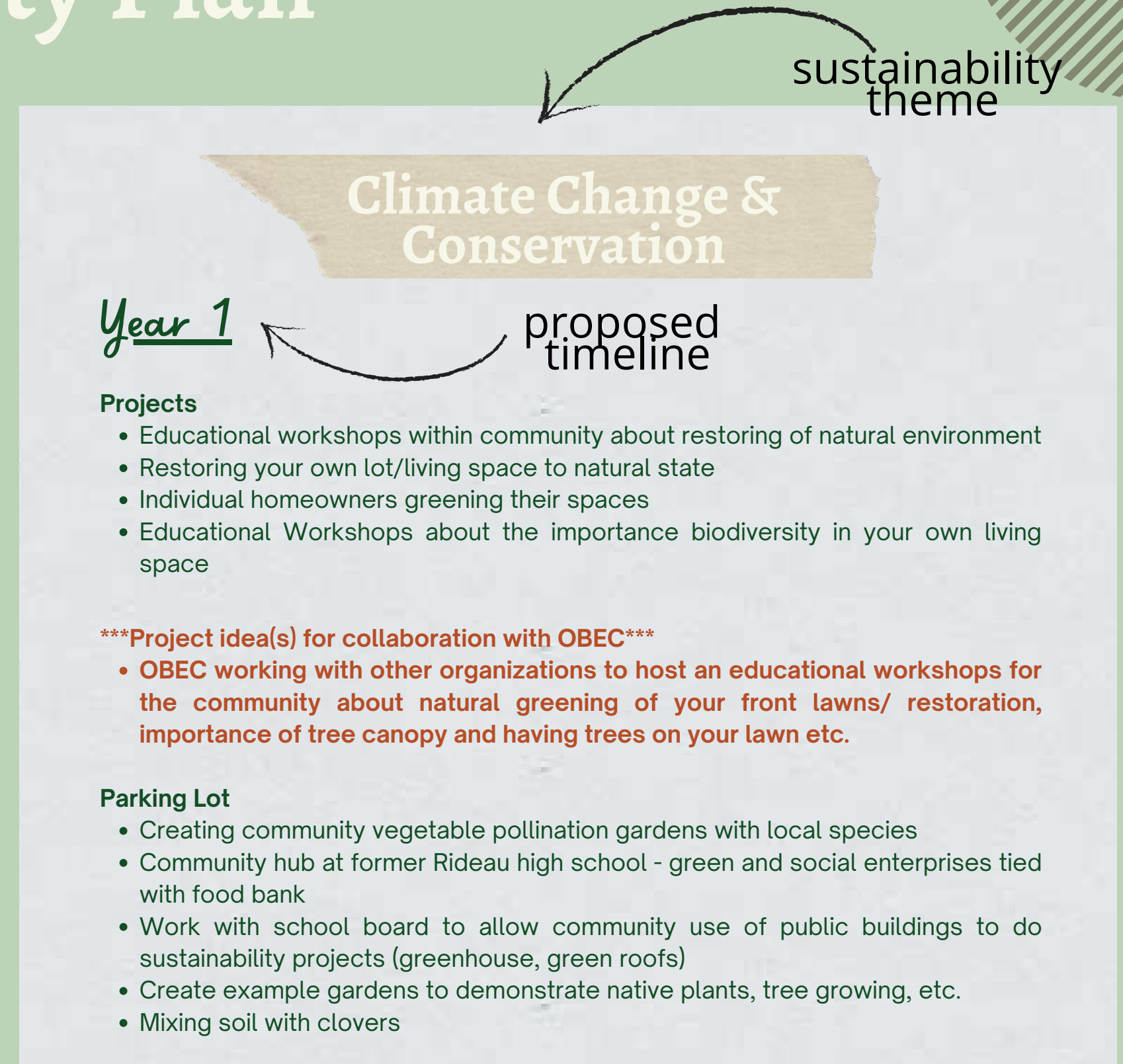
*This document is meant to be used as a preliminary draft of the CSP. It is a **LIVING** document that will be updated regularly with **ongoing input** from the **community**.*



If, while reading this plan you have further ideas, projects, or issues you want to address, please share them with us by emailing sabrina.obecintern@gmail.com.

How to Use the Sustainability Plan

- The sustainability plan is an **agenda for action** – sustainability practices and projects that people in each community can do individually or collectively to positively impact the level of sustainability of their community.
- During the Overbrook and Castle Heights Workshop, community members identified what they thought were key sustainability issues in their community and came up with projects to address these issues. The plan is split up into **5 Themes of Sustainability** (see page 8) and each theme is split into “**PROJECTS**” and “**PARKING LOT**” ideas which are then further split into **1 year, 3 year, and 5 year timelines**.
- The biggest difference between the PROJECTS and PARKING LOT sections is that the Parking Lot is for all project ideas the community may have whereas the Project Section is for more concrete ideas that one or many community members are willing to lead and may just need more resources, support, time, etc.
- However the ‘PROJECTS’ section is still made up of suggestions, and does not mean that they will be implemented - it is a catalogue of projects you might try, both at an individual and community level.
- Note, community projects are marked in **BLUE** and individual projects are in **GREEN**. In some sections, there are also additional projects that OBEC can support which are marked in **ORANGE**



● Individual ● Community ● w/ OBEC

How to Use the Sustainability Plan Cont'd

As you read the plan, you may find a Theme, Issue and/or Project you want to address. Or you may think of an idea for something different.

What you do is up to you, but the plan is meant to be a tool for your reference to help you think of ideas and get started. Write your Issue and Project on the last page. This becomes your personal sustainability plan.

This is a LIVING document, and created through community consultation. We would LOVE more input from the community, so please do not hesitate to reach out if you have ideas you want to add to the plan!



5 THEMES OF SUSTAINABILITY

THIS WORKSHOP IS CATEGORIZED INTO 5 THEMES OF SUSTAINABILITY
THAT WERE CHOSEN SPECIFICALLY FOR THEIR RELEVANCE
TO THE OVERBROOK & CASTLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY



ENERGY AND TRANSPORTATION

Transportation focuses on the movement of goods and people. It addresses issues surrounding: travel options and distance, car-reliant cities, safety, mobility, accessibility, and fossil fuel dependency. Energy focuses on how we as individuals and collectives use, create, waste, and distribute energy.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSERVATION

This theme examines how the effects of climate change are affecting the neighborhood (the urban heat island due to the lack of green space etc.) as well addresses preserving and connecting natural spaces to urban areas, increasing native biodiversity, and encouraging the recreation and maintenance of greenspaces for all species.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

The theme of Waste examines at the lifecycle of waste as a whole. From the design, materials, processing, usage, to disposal- and rethinking our current linear system to a circular, closed loop of resources.



DESIGN AND SENSE OF PLACE

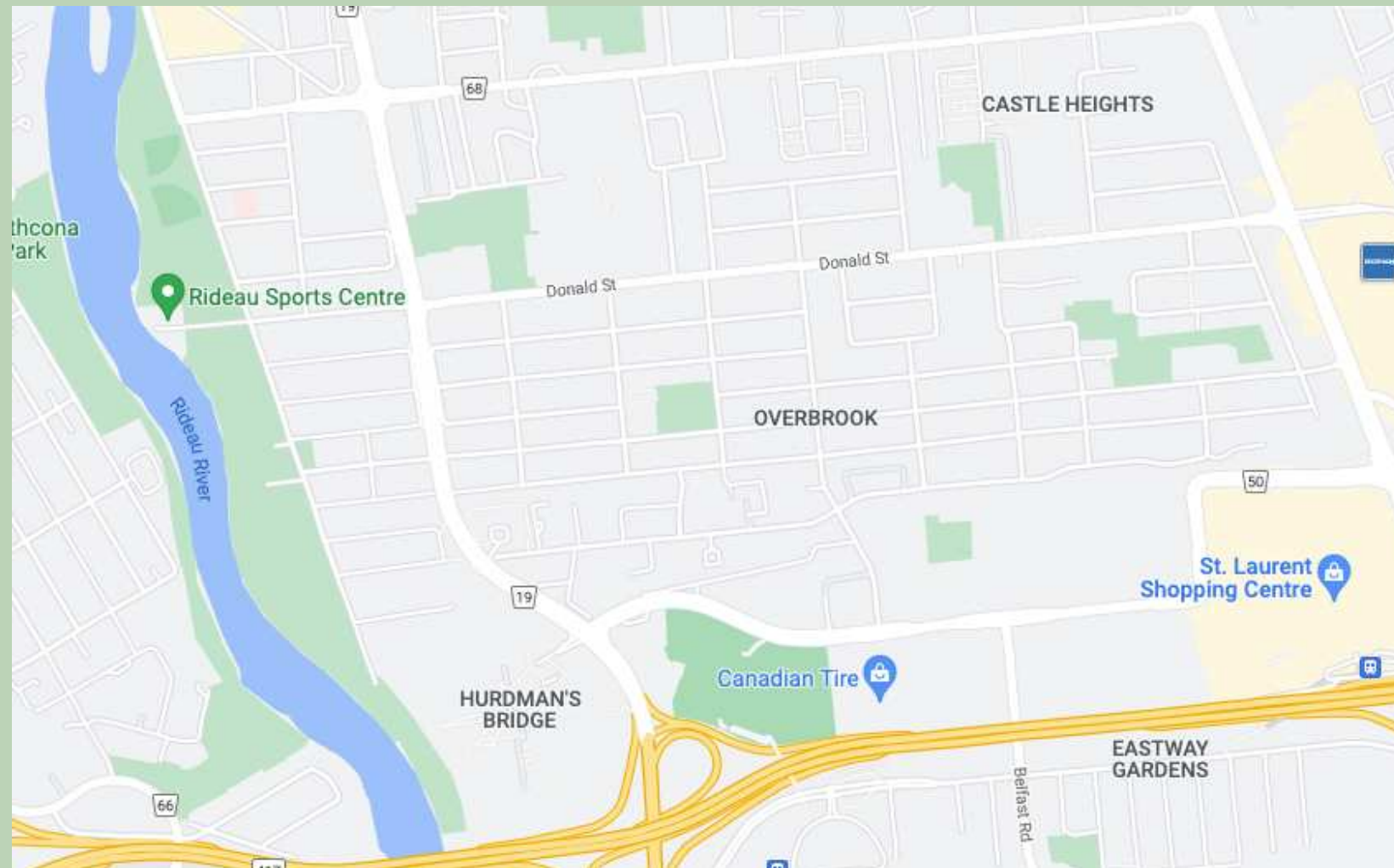
Sense of place is the sense of belonging, community, and stewardship one can find in natural spaces and through participation in sustainable activities. Design refers to the built environment of landscapes, from cities to specific projects

FOOD SECURITY AND URBAN AGRICULTURE



This theme looks at our relationship with what we eat, where it came from, the impacts associated with this, and how to mitigate our influence individually and collectively. This can relate to agricultural practices, supply, and supporting locally produced food. Also touches on issues of food insecurity.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE OVERBROOK & CASTLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY



Overbrook and Castle Heights are urban neighbourhoods in the Rideau- Rockcliffe ward of Ottawa. It is a very dense and diverse neighbourhood with a high population of new immigrants, francophone, and Indigenous peoples.

In terms of the natural environment, the amount of public green space and tree canopy coverage in the Overbrook and Castle Heights community is quite low. There is only 17% tree canopy coverage in these neighbourhoods compared to the city of Ottawa 34% tree cover canopy. This low tree canopy coverage also leads to Overbrook and Castle Heights being some of the hottest areas in Ottawa according to the City of Ottawa Urban Heat Island map. This low amount of green space and tree canopy coverage gives room for environmental and sustainability initiatives.

The Overbrook and Castle Heights community has many incredible resources, organizations and great initiatives already started. There are many initiatives with the City of Ottawa already underway to help revitalize the neighbourhood with better infrastructure that supports more green space, housing, and economic development. This plan will consist of a lot more individual and community level sustainability projects, versus bigger capital projects.



Association communautaire
d'**OVERBROOK**
Community Association



Climate Change and Conservation Issues & Challenges

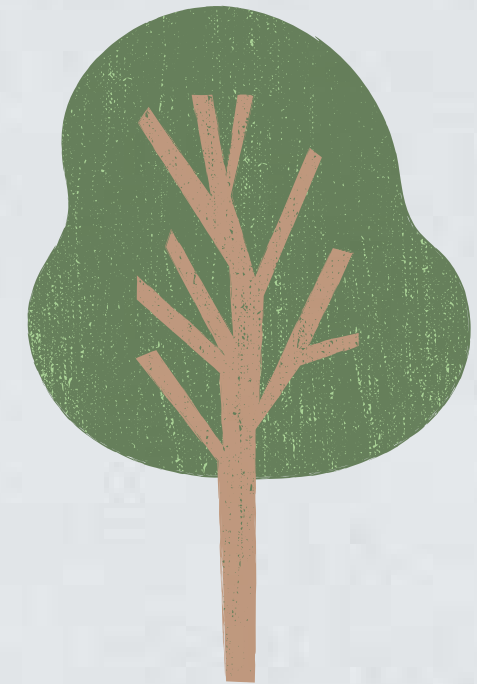


Issues Identified:

- *Need incentives to naturalize and to NOT cut trees on lawns*
- *We lack urban biodiversity!*
- *Planting tends to be single species, golf course style*
- *city policies on trees are more reactive than proactive*
- *Invasive Species (plant and animal)*
- *Many landowners want zero trees*
- *Builders using dark colours are heat sinks, black is all the rage but in some cities is prohibited*
- *Need more large trees along some streets (for example, sections of Prince Albert)*
- *We are losing private and public trees steadily*
- *City plants little, scrawny and non native trees*
- *Using renewable energy in public buildings and schools*
- *Heat island - St.Laurent Centre worst in city and needs fix to address this,*
- *Education required to help people recognize nature environment as a good, and wetlands too*
- *Lack of urban canopy/tree cover downtown*
- *Individual lots are paved over and especially small rental buildings need incentives to change. Education is not enough*

Year 1

Climate Change & Conservation



Projects

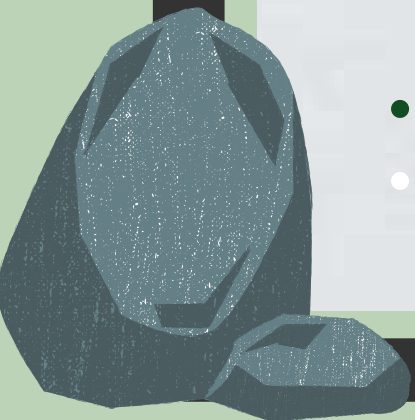
- Educational workshops within community about restoring of natural environment
- Restoring your own lot/living space to natural state
- Individual homeowners greening their spaces
- Educational Workshops about the importance biodiversity in your own living space

Project idea(s) for collaboration with OBEC

- OBEC working with other organizations to host an educational workshops for the community about natural greening of your front lawns/ restoration, importance of tree canopy and having trees on your lawn etc.

Parking Lot

- Creating community vegetable pollination gardens with local species
- Community hub at former Rideau high school - green and social enterprises tied with food bank
- Work with school board to allow community use of public buildings to do sustainability projects (greenhouse, green roofs)
- Create example gardens to demonstrate native plants, tree growing, etc.
- Mixing soil with clovers instead of grass, both at city and individual level



Year 3

Climate Change & Conservation Cont'd

PROJECTS

- Using native plants and trees; drought resistance and less watering.
- School projects to educate kids about diversity
- Create a path of pollinator gardens (à la Suzuki Butterfly Rangers)
- Identify incentives for businesses to apply green solutions
- Project to identify heat islands and report back
- Demonstration projects on alternatives to driveway paving
- Urban garden tours to demonstrate techniques
- Create a group of business owners interested in green solutions -- demonstrations for other businesses

Project idea(s) for collaboration with OBEC

- **Create a group of business owners interested in Green Solutions**
- **Inventory of businesses, could reach out to BIA in surrounding areas**

PARKING LOT

- Transportation Master Plan - "Shadeway" - King George Street (Lawson Park to Overbrook Park)
- increasing native biodiversity on roadsides/curbs rather than grass
- how about a collective approach to tree management - a lot of land owners just cut them down so they don't have to deal with them
- Show facts on climate change in the neighbourhood

Year 5

PROJECTS

- Green streets policy - Examples from other cities like Toronto etc.
- Change city policy on Trees, to include native and fruit bearing trees that do not drop fruit

PARKING LOT

- Schools boards should invest in renewable sources of energy in schools with student involvement
- Green Roof on St. Laurent Mall



Food Insecurity & Urban Agriculture



Issues Identified:

Main Issue: People who most food insecure are people who know the least about preparing nutritious food. Difficult to provide education/training - Need more education and access to healthy food options!

- Addressing the intersection of food insecurity and class/income
- Lack of access to affordable and local healthy and nutritious foods
- 1 in 7 households in Ottawa food insecure!
- Tree canopy target of 40% - creates shade - conflicts with urban backyard sunshine needs for vegetable gardens
- Soil analysis by Ontario government focuses on chemical composition of soil, not microbiome.
- City did not allow fruit trees on public property - Figure out how to get them to allow fruit trees!
- People attracted to markets and education tend to be higher-income not food insecure.
- Healthy soil for healthy food

Year 1

Food Insecurity & Urban Agriculture



PROJECTS

- Adopting a park
- Identify who is food insecure in Overbrook and Castle Heights
- Demonstration on rainwater collection, Rain Barrel Project
- Overbrook Garden Tour event in the summer
- [Converting basement space as gardens. Need LED and recycled water](#)
- OTSS has raised beds which require maintenance during off school times and summers, community members work with OTSS on maintaining them.

Project idea(s) for collaboration with OBEC

- **Demonstration on rainwater collection and Rain Barrel Projects, help host educational workshops on gardening!**
- **Work with OTSS and community to facilitated the maintenance of the gardens in the summer**

PARKING LOT

- Recognize gardens publicly
- Make garden boxes and seeds and workshops available to people in Ottawa Community Housing
- Gardens in school yards and city parks
- Creating pilot project with grocery to supply low-cost sustainable food

Food Insecurity & Urban Agriculture Cont'd

Year 3

PROJECTS

- Soil analysis project for urban agriculture microbiome focused
- more farmer's markets in community and ensuring they practise restorative agriculture
- Urban agriculture no-till demonstration project
- Integrating agroforestry in urban agriculture
- Connecting with local grocery stores to reduce their food waste i.e. donating good-quality food that would otherwise be thrown out

PARKING LOT

- Create a grocery store in the Old Sears location at St Laurent
- For 15 minute neighbourhood concept, easier pedestrian access to store like the one on McArthur, which used to be accessible to Overbrook residents via the back and side
- The ability to plant fruit-bearing trees - previous grants lost
- Mall Parking lot convert into a Weekly food market

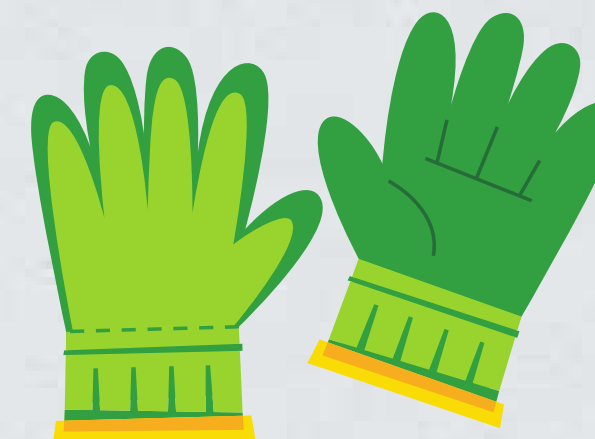
Year 5

PROJECTS

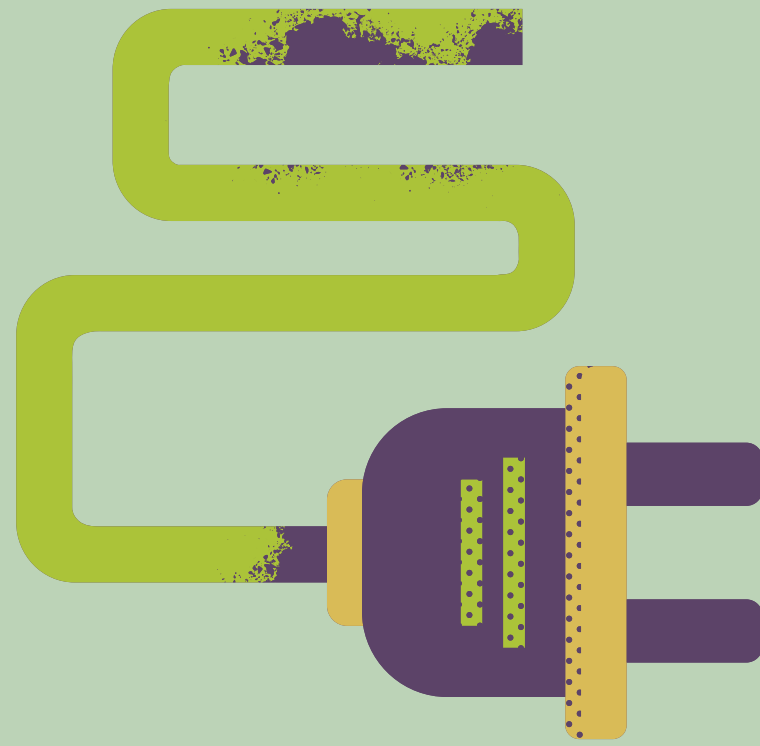
- The food bank at Rideau Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre needs more support!

PARKING LOT

- Opening up your garden to support food banks: there are organizations that will invite people to come and pick the fruit off trees that will otherwise spoil (e.g. apples, Saskatoon berries, cherries, etc.)



Transportation & Energy



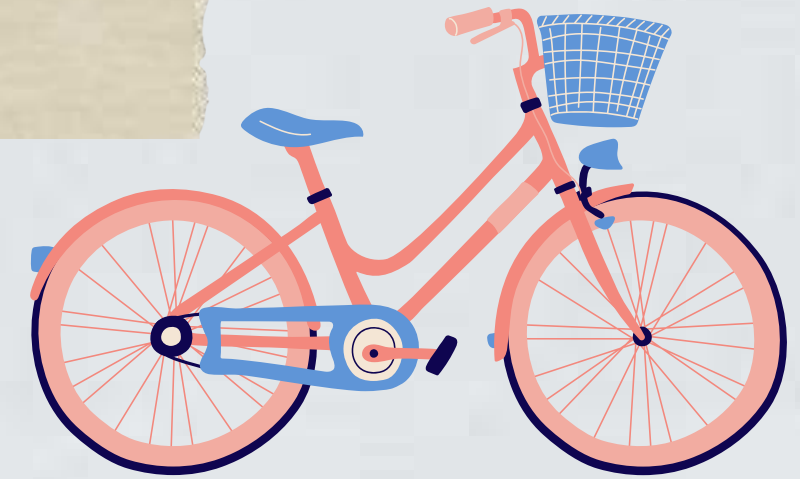
Issues Identified:

Main Issues: The City of Ottawa is extremely Car Centric and there is not as much reliable access to public transit and bike lanes.

- Ottawa is a very car-centric city
- Unsafe crossings from Overbrook to LRT stations i.e. St. Laurent and Max Keeping bridge
- Speeding on residential streets
- Public transportation is very expensive
- No direct walking route to LRT
- Become familiar with city initiatives on busses; conversion to electric lawnmowers, snowblowers and tractors
- Oppose Provincial Plans to generate electric by burning gas
- Oppose city plans to extend sprawl -- for example along March Road in Kanata
- Restore provincial electric vehicle subsidies
- It feels scary/ unsafe to bike downtown

Transportation & Energy

Year 1



PROJECTS

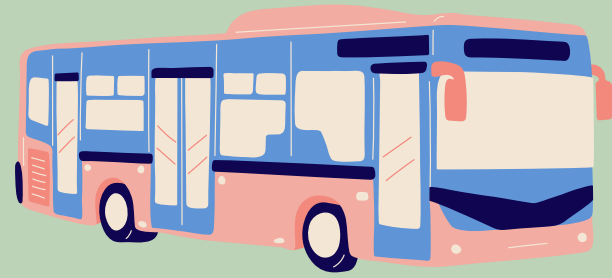
- Need more charging station
 - Share Ecology Ottawa's Charging Map
- Publicize incentives available to businesses and homeowners to electrify their heating
- Join the free transit campaign and the Ottawa Transit Riders Group
- Oppose Provincial Plans to generate electricity by burning gas
- Project to create walking map of Overbrook to show groceries, medical centres, community services, etc.
- Create an updated digital map of neighbourhood of important organizations/services!

*****Project idea(s) for collaboration with OBEC*****

- **Create/ UPDATE a walking map of Overbrook to show resources!**

PARKING LOT

- Salt ruins bicycles (and pets and kills trees) - Ottawa needs to change Salt Standards in Winter
- Need to secure funding in Transit Master Plan for new sidewalk and pathway projects in Overbrook. Not just "policy words" but money to implement the projects.
- Enable transport of cross country skis on LRT/buses with racks (see Oslo)
- How about a sponsored give away of grocery carts to facilitate walk/shop



Transportation & Energy Cont'd



Photograph of McArthur Avenue bike lanes
Source: City of Ottawa

Year 3

PROJECTS

- Bicycle friendly roads and facilities such as parking lots
- Shortcut links needed, like north-south pathway through Gil-O-Julien Park
- Enforce zoning by-law provision preventing "new" full front yard parking - having excessive parking spaces encourages more cars. Enforce on Ontario Street.

PARKING LOT

- More winter bus shelters and/or benches
- Community coffee shop within walking distance
- City needs to switch to many smaller buses that have more flexible schedules than driving so many large buses that seem to be empty most of the time. AI can be used to create on-demand transit

Year 5

PARKING LOT

- City of Ottawa goal of 1100 electric busses by 2036

Waste Management



Issues Identified:

Main Issues: There needs to be more education around proper waste diversion, as well as more access to public bins!

- Low landfill waste diversion
- It's important to have education on how to recycle effectively, so the items don't get transferred over to garbage. i.e. cleaning plastics, etc.
- Better education around composting/starting your own backyard compost.
- More public recycling, composting and waste bins.

Waste Management

Year 1

PROJECTS

- Demonstration project to show circular system for food to avoid waste
- Partnering with grocery store - collecting leftover produce and having a community kitchen
- [Personal composting projects](#)
- Multilingual handout with clear recycling + "Take it Back" info . OBEC can put on a webinar on Recycling for Newcomers -- perhaps a starting point for such a pamphlet
- Grocery stores donate 'ugly' food to different organizations/people etc.
- Demonstration project to show preparation of locally produced nutritious food.

PARKING LOT

- Some governments legislated against food waste from stores (France)
- Repair and repurpose shops or services could be promoted, as it is becoming much more popular in many communities.
- Reducing produce bag usage/taking them out of stores

Year 3

PROJECTS

- Community composting with schools & community organizations
- [Advocacy to reduce packaging in markets](#)

PARKING LOT

- Reducing produce bag usage/taking them out of stores

Year 5

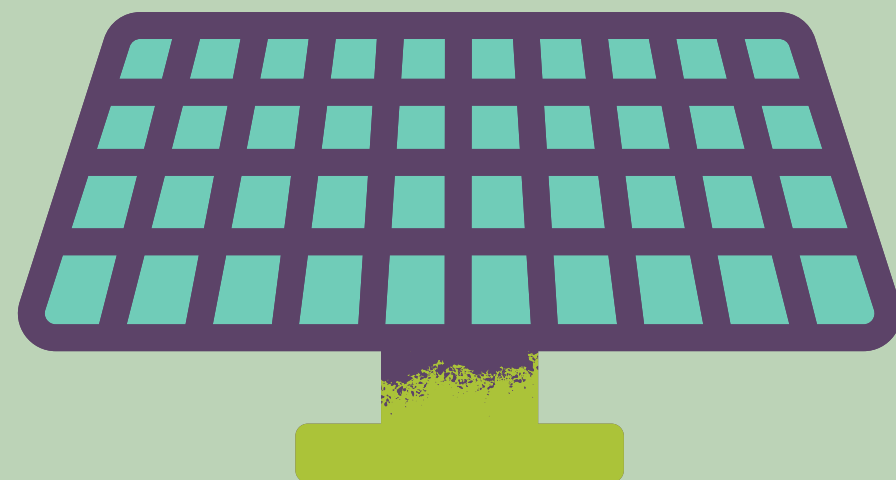
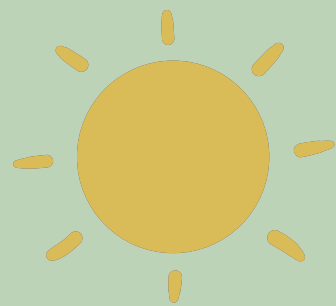
PROJECTS

- Recycle bins along Rideau river south using the example by Sandy Hill group. NCC arrangement and permission needed
- Producer Responsibility for the removal of waste!

PARKING LOT

- New pending provincial policy: producers will be responsible for removal of waste - in 3-5 years
- Landfill for bio-wastes

Design & Sense of Place



Issues Identified:

- Diverse, different senses of place in Overbrook. Overbrook is much more eclectic and diverse. Also significant Inuit population. How can we reflect this?
- People are more disconnected to nature now
- Community gardens and community kitchens bring people together
- Community Theatre Overbrook the Musical open air concerts.
- Overbrook Manual on how to organize community
- Not enough adequate amounts of greenspaces to connect with the community and with nature

Design & Sense of Place

Year 1

PROJECTS

- Bring older people into schools (post Covid) to share their life experience with students.
- Individual project: research the history of your residence.
- Murals in Overbrook -- show life and history in the community
- Overbrook Festival to bring the various diverse communities together.
- OCA's newsletter ConneXions needs more promotion of who we are as a community - our sense of space.

PARKING LOT

- Overbrook Cultural Festival to bring people, communities together.

Year 3

PROJECTS

- Public art work is needed, e.g. at Coventry Road fire station and other public lands. Will make Overbrook unique - our sense of space.
- Four corners (Lola and Queen Mary), and Adàwe Crossing and RSC, these are place making locations. Work to improve.
- Community Needs Assessment done to figure out what services are needed in the area.

PARKING LOT

- Redesign Lola Street (Coventry to Donald) to face street (not side yards) to reflect how this is a key spine street into the community.

Year 5

PROJECT

- Work with the school of social innovation at St. Paul University – solidarity and community building are part of their mandate they might be able to provide social innovation projects
- Greening of St. Laurent mall and baseball stadium provides ideal community space



SO WHAT'S NEXT?

That last section of the Community Sustainability Plan broke down the different issues, project ideas, and 'parking lot' ideas that were discussed and proposed during the workshop.

Hopefully some of these ideas inspires you!

If any of them do, the next section of the CSP will provide resources and guidance on how to start the implementation process of project ideas!

The 5 Types of Environmental Stewardship

The U.S National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) has categorized environmental stewardship projects into 5 categories. Dividing stewardship projects into different categories helps provide a framework to guide community stewardship projects.

1 | Citizen Science:

refers to the monitoring and collection of environmental data by community members to improve available local, environmental information.
i.e., EDDMapS, iNaturalist, Leafsnap, Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas, eBird, Journey North, Bumble Bee Watch, Globe Observer, Zooniverse, Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas

2 | Civic Action:

refers to initiatives taken to inform governments and organizations on the specific sustainability concerns of the community.
i.e., letter writing, petitioning, meeting with elected officials

3 | Community Awareness:

refers to initiatives to address community-level issues. This can be done by providing residents with information and taking direct action to address community-level sustainability issues. i.e., host educational events, run awareness campaigns on local issues and initiatives, work as a community to create resources to improve sustainability at the local level (pick-up locations for non-standard waste, Bring Your Own Mug campaign)

The 5 Types of Environmental Stewardship

The U.S National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) has categorized environmental stewardship projects into 5 categories. Dividing stewardship projects into different categories helps provide a framework to guide community stewardship projects.

4 | Everyday Choices:

refer to initiatives taken to improve sustainability at the consumer/resident level. This includes efforts to reduce household waste and carbon footprint.

i.e., use active/green transportation, carpool, use public transit, use reusable bags/water bottles/containers, use energy-efficient appliances, dispose of waste properly

5 | Restoration & Protection:

refer to initiatives taken to restore degraded habitat and protect green spaces in the community.

i.e., run a community-wide garbage clean-up, remove invasive species, create local green spaces (community gardens/city orchard)

Next Steps & Conclusions

The Overbrook and Castle Heights CSP was designed to give you ideas on how to take sustainability action at home, at work or in your neighbourhood. You can now make it your personal plan for action.

Please think of an issue that is meaningful for you. Then choose a project that addresses that issue. It could be something written in the plan, or something you invented. Once you have something started, let us know what you are doing.

We want to share updates on project progress, because it inspires others and gets momentum going. By reaching out to us, we can also get you connected to team leaders (on aforementioned projects) and help you recruit volunteers.

What you do for sustainability will enrich your life, support your community and contribute to the world. Let's get started and build a sustainable future in your community together!

Your priority sustainability Issue(s)

Your Proposed Project(s)

Send your information to:
sabrina.obecintern@gmail.com

Community Resources

Overbrook Community Association

They are a great community resource to help improve the neighbourhood. They run great programs, services and a newspaper!

ConneXions

Get all the latest news and happenings around Overbrook with the local newspaper.

Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre

They provide a range of social supports and services that enable the empowerment of residents, community resilience, and the inclusion of all

Overbrook Community Centre

Runs programs for the Overbrook Community!

Just Food

Just Food’s mission is to work towards vibrant, just and sustainable food and farming systems in the Ottawa region, They have great resources for starting community gardens!

FIVE BIG MOVES OF THE CITY OF OTTAWA In Relevance to Biosphere Eco-City (BEC) Themes

BIG MOVE	BEC THEME OF SUSTAINABILITY
Growth Management – More by intensification than greenfield development, providing complete communities and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Design– Food (preserving food land)– Natural Capital (preserving green space)– Sense of Place (complete communities)
Mobility – By 2046 majority of trips by sustainable transportation (walking, cycling, and public transportation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transportation
Urban and Community Design – More sophisticated to create good urbanism at all scales (largest to smallest)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Design
Climate, Energy and Public Health – Integrate all these in planning, and foster health and wellbeing, with resiliency of the natural and built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Energy– Design– Natural Capital– Health
Economic Development – Opportunities for economic development, with policies for employment lands, industrial <u>areas</u> and knowledge-based campuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Design (develop employment areas)

Thank you for reading!

*The Overbrook and Castle Heights Community Sustainability Workshop & Community Sustainability Plan
were both facilitated and created by Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City,
a local grassroots charity in partnership with Overbrook Community Association*

Check us out on social media:



@ OTTAWA BIOSPHERE ECO-CITY



@ OTTAWA BIOSPHEREECOCITY



@ OTT BIOECOCITY



@ OTTAWA BIOSPHERE ECO-CITY

**Donate to help us create more
Community Sustainability Plans across
Ottawa!**

*(click the hand
to be taken to our donation page)*



Canada Helps – Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City