



## West Carleton Community Sustainability plan

In association with West Carleton Community & The Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City (OBEC) completed: 2018 June 27

### WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability is the ability of things to continue to exist. It applies to natural and human features. We use the earth's resources to meet our needs, but we also want to leave enough natural resources and beauty for future generations to live healthy and happy lives. What we do matters. You impact the environment—the environment impacts you.

### WHAT IS THIS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN?

This sustainability plan is an agenda for action – things that we can do individually or collectively. In an evening of discussion, people who live or work in West Carleton identified what they thought were Key Issues and Projects to address the issues, for each of Ten Themes of Sustainability (see below). The sustainability plan contains their suggestions for projects you might try. Those suggestions are contained in a table of Key Issues and Sustainability Projects, beginning on page 3. You'll notice that some projects are small, and others are larger and more complex. As well, there will be a difference in who would likely do each project.

- a) Community
- b) Individuals/Families

As you read the plan, you may find a Theme, Issue and Project you want to address. Or you may think of an idea for something different. What you do is up to you. Write your Issue and Project on the last page. This becomes your personal sustainability plan. Please tell OBEC ([obec-evbo.ca](http://obec-evbo.ca)) what you plan to do, so they can share lists of projects with the community.

### BIOSPHERE ECO-CITY

The Biosphere Eco-City (BEC) is an idea for 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. The Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City (OBEC) began in 2009 as a pilot study for an international program. It is a volunteer-based charity that partners with other organizations for sustainability. OBEC has created a number of initiatives including: a database of hundreds of sustainability projects, a self-guided Ottawa Sustainability Tour, public workshops on individual Themes of Sustainability, School Sustainability Plans, and a Council of Stakeholders where anyone can bring ideas for sustainability. Details may be found on the website ([obec-evbo.ca](http://obec-evbo.ca)).

### THEMES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Dividing sustainability into ten Themes makes it much easier to understand. These are all the areas of direct action for sustainability. The Themes provide a framework for people to link their individual interests to sustainability. And they allow people with common interest to come together and develop solutions to issues. The Themes are **Transportation, Energy, Design, Habitat, Food, Natural Capital, Waste, Health, Recreation and Sense of Place**. You will find them defined briefly below the Theme titles beginning on page 3 of this plan. Projects may relate to more than one Theme. For example, projects to reduce waste can also save energy. But thinking in terms of the Themes helps to identify opportunities for action.

## WEST CARLETON

West Carleton is the beautiful, sprawling and much-loved green countryside that makes up the rural west of Ottawa. A historic township founded in 1974, it was amalgamated into the larger city of Ottawa in 2001. It is made up of thousands of hectares of farmland, combining a number of smaller communities and townships and sitting now on an area of 623.47 square kilometres. It boasts a population of 18, 520 people (as per the 2006 Canadian census). West Carleton is bounded by the Carp Hills to the south-east and the Ottawa river to the North, and is recognized for its rural heritage, rich wetlands, and diverse wildlife.

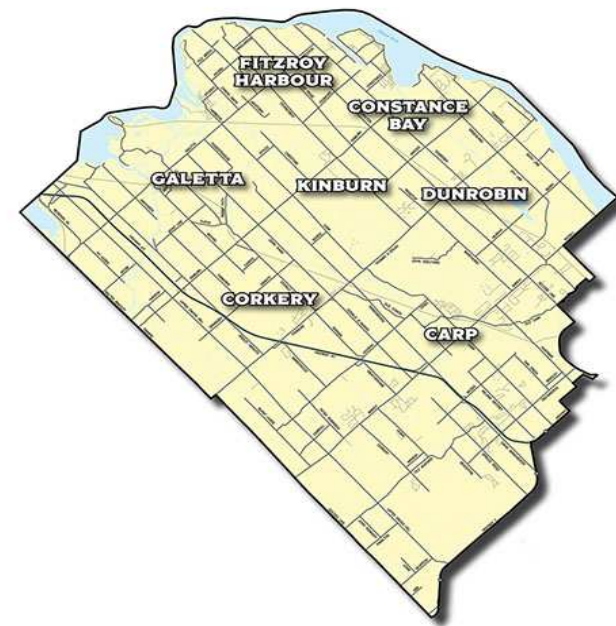
## SUSTAINABILITY VISION FOR WEST CARLETON

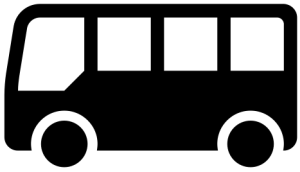
West Carleton has become a beacon of sustainability for rural Ottawa, and already has a number of great sustainability initiatives going on related to food and conservation. However, being such a natural part of Ottawa, it also has enormous potential to continue to better concentrate its efforts in the protection of its natural habitats (wetlands and farmlands), wildlife, and resources and become an exemplary rural part of a Biosphere Eco-City. The people of West Carleton can take up any community and individual/family projects in one of the 10 Themes of Sustainability or any project inspired from the plan. The sustainability plan is meant to inspire West Carleton people to engage in sustainability. This will create more sustainable flows of energy, systems of living, farming and evolving. It could also reduce the pressures of encroaching development, with its threats to biodiversity and lifestyle.

## OTTAWA AND WEST CARLETON

As mentioned, West Carleton was amalgamated into Ottawa in 2001. West Carleton, nevertheless, maintains its distinct heritage as a rural township separate from Ottawa. Eli El-Chantiry is the Ottawa councillor of West Carleton. West Carleton supplies local foodstuffs and agricultural products to the City of Ottawa and many of its residents' commute to Ottawa for work. West Carleton and Ottawa continue to develop their relationship in all spheres.

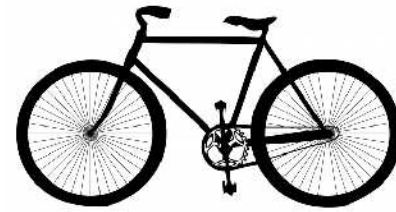
## MAP OF WEST CARLETON





# TRANSPORTATION

(Movement of goods and people)



**Key Issue:** Affordable and flexible access to transportation for seniors and students

## Community Projects

1. Promote the app/website, [ottawaridematch.com](http://ottawaridematch.com) (free to use), to local seniors and students
2. Connect students so they can drive seniors and use their cars for other needs
3. The community could partner with school bus drivers to make buses available to seniors while children are in school
4. Work with OC Transpo to increase/modify services to better suit the needs of residents



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Create a pamphlet for the Community Centre that outlines all the possible alternatives of public transit → for example using apps and website for ride share
- 2.1. Create a program where seniors and students could sign up to work with each other
- 3.1. Reach out to the school board to pitch the idea of the use of school buses for seniors when they are not in use for school
- 4.1. Write to OC Transpo about changing the busing schedule that would better suit the community of West Carleton

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Use more environmentally friendly ways to travel
2. Use rideshare websites more often when travelling, and create your own carpool Facebook group
3. Use public transit



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Buy a bike to use to get to work/school/etc.
- 1.2. Purchase an electronic or hybrid vehicle
- 1.3. Carpool to school, work, and sports
- 2.1. Create a Facebook page for carpooling and ride shares and add your friends, family, and neighbours to the page
- 2.2. Use websites such as *Kangaride* to travel (carpooling website)
- 3.1. Familiarize yourself with the public transit that is offered to West Carleton

# HABITAT

(Urban and rural places for wild animals, & plants)

## Key Issue:

- Preservation of West Carleton's Wetlands
- Endangered plant and wildlife species
- Encroaching Development
- Annual floods

## Community Projects

1. Creating an environmental alliance network
2. Create habitat workshops in schools and community associations
3. Get governments to designate protection areas to the wetlands and other sensitive regions in the community
4. Create a local awareness campaign for habitat

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Reach out to all community associations to hold a meeting, and have them spread the word to their specific communities and raise awareness and project ideas; get cohesion between competing interests
- 2.1. Meet with school board and community associations to plan annual West Carleton habitat education workshops
- 3.1. Working with groups connected with government to get designated protected areas, and provide alternative spaces for people to do their activities
- 4.1. Gather volunteers to create posters about the importance of habitat and wildlife. Distribute these around the community and assign a group of people to publicly speak about these issues at events and festivals



## Individual/Family Projects

1. Create green spaces at home to encourage natural wildlife
2. Educate yourself on endangered species in your area. For example, feed wildlife responsibly, take care of wildlife habitats, and be more cautious when driving to prevent further wildlife deaths.

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Plant native trees/bushes/flowers at home
- 1.2. Plant flowers that attract natural wildlife like butterflies and bees
- 1.3. Don't spray lawns - pesticides in the spray contaminates the soil and water and poisons insects, and animals
- 2.1. Inform yourself on the local endangered species, and their natural habitat. Implement measures in your home/garden so you are not ruining their nests.
- 2.2. Slow down when driving, and be wary of wildlife running onto the road
- 2.3. Feed birds up until spring, once spring arrives birds should have an abundance of food available. Do not feed mammals like deer, racoons, etc.
- 2.4 Do you not trim bushes and trees during the spring, this is the season for birds to start nesting and giving birth, and doing so will disturb their nesting season

# NATURAL CAPITAL

(Land, water, soil, natural material)

## Key Issue:

- Habitat loss, biodiversity loss, representing loss of ecosystems
- Surface water management
- Loss of green space and trees due to development
  - Air quality effects
  - More water run off and contamination
  - More soil erosion

## Community Projects

1. City orchard, regeneration gardens, butterfly gardens
2. Mandate an assured amount of green space and trees for every new development, maybe a “one-to-one” rule and/or native species focus
3. Retain forest cover
4. Clean up streams

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Dedicate a space in the community to growing trees, and a diversity of plants and flowers to attract insects and wildlife.
- 2.1. Speak to your major and City Hall about creating a mandate for a certain allotment of property to be dedicated as a “green space”
- 3.1. Lobby for protection of forest areas in West Carleton from development
- 4.1. Gather residents in the community to pick up garbage around streams

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Practice better water management
2. Structure biodiversity in backyard
3. Practice using less chemicals in the home and garden

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Turn off taps - rinse in bowl or sink
- 1.2. Spend less time in shower
- 1.3. Install low flush toilets, and flush toilet only when needed
- 1.4. Install rain barrels to collect rainwater for lawns/gardens, household needs
- 1.5. Avoid contaminating water by taking unused pills to pharmacy; don't flush
- 2.1. Naturalize your lawn, and create/keep “wild gardens” (i.e., plant native species, and untamed), this will reduce excessive irrigation and lessen the use of water
- 2.2. Create a pond (this will provide habitat for a variety of species)
- 3.1. Use natural cleaning detergents at home
- 3.2. Garden organically; don't use chemicals on your lawns and gardens. Chemicals such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, and pesticides contaminate the soil and water, therefore poisoning insects, birds, and fish.





# WASTE



(Processing of wastes, recycling, design, and conversion to energy)

## Community Projects

1. Promote existing local reduce and reuse options (i.e., clothing drop-offs and exchange, giveaway days, Freecycle, WC, garage sales, book exchange, donate excess food to local food cupboard)
2. Coordinate Spring/Fall Hazardous Waste Days in West and identify local electronic waste depots
3. Encourage annual garage sale in each community (similar to the Glebe Community model)
4. Develop a Bike Exchange in West Carleton and pilot a mobile repair service in West Carleton (i.e., Velofix)



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Use local newspaper websites to post upcoming reduce and reuse events
- 1.2. Develop Facebook website, 'West Carleton Exchange', and establish a 'Community of communities' to share ideas between West Carleton communities to reduce, reuse and recycle waste
- 2.1. Request Ottawa Ward Councillor to promote reduce, reuse, and recycle each month in monthly newsletter
- 2.2. Encourage local business to be members of the City of Ottawa's ["Take it Back"](#) program. Advise residents of local businesses that are participating (i.e., City of Ottawa Waste Explorer site)
- 3.1. Ask people in the community to come together to create a committee to plan an annual garage sale
- 4.1. Develop a committee to plan a bike exchange

## Key Issue:

- Too much waste generated
- Lack of communications to residents on options available to reduce and reuse waste (i.e., Waste Explorer)
- Lack of Communication to Residents on the existing City of Ottawa Waste Management Programs (Giveaway days, Hazardous/Electronic Waste)
- Limited markets for some recyclable products (i.e., single use plastics)

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Practice better waste management at home; take time to separate waste
2. Try not to use single-use plastics or try the "Zero-Waste Life" challenge
3. Integrate permaculture design on rural properties to reduce yard and garden waste for curbside pickup



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Buy separate containers for each waste category (toxic substances, garbage, compost, paper, plastic, cans, glass, etc.), and inform yourself on how to recycle properly
- 2.1. Avoid individually wrapped items
- 2.2. Bring lunches in Tupperware
- 2.3. Use only recycled plastic
- 2.4. Bring your own to-go cup when purchasing drinks
- 3.1. Build a compost bin, or use a food digester to compost organic matter

# DESIGN

(Built environment)



## Key Issue:

- Need to increase green spaces at home
- Lack of infrastructure and innovative design to overcome weather (i.e., heat in the summer, and cold in the winter)

## Community Projects

1. Provide pamphlets to members of the community about sustainable home design
2. Create bike lanes/trails to encourage green transport
3. Plant trees along the sides of the road and highway. The trees will naturally cleanse the pollution left behind from the cars



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Build an informational pamphlet on ways to design a more sustainable home, and have this readily available at the community centre for all residents
- 2.1. Involve many stakeholders in the community to build a plan in creating bike trails and lanes in the community.
- 3.1. Gather residents of the community together to speak with City Hall, to initiate this plan

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Install green/sustainable technology into the infrastructure of your home
2. Move your home outside in the summer. Cook and eat outdoors for the health benefit of living with nature
3. Incorporate nature into your home; naturally cleanse the air
4. Find innovative ways to overcome weather sustainably



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Use of solar panels
- 1.2. Install green roof on your house
- 1.3. Build an outdoor water shower, and warm collected water from rainfall with a solar water heater
- 2.1. Build a veranda, pergola, or gazebo to cover outdoor living space
- 3.1. Grow house plants at home (flowers, succulents, trees, etc.)
- 4.1. Keep your yard cool, by weaving burlap sheets in your fence and watering them on a hot day. When the wind goes through the fence it will provide cool breeze on a hot day
- 4.2. Create a natural airflow of wind in the home by opening windows in the summer

# HEALTH



(Clean air & water, safety, healthy environmental access for everyone)



## Key Issue:

- Many tick-infested areas (dangerous for Lyme disease)
- Radon-prone zone
- Lack of engagement/connection with nature/environment which in turn affects health

## Community Projects

1. Community education on issue and health benefits of vaccination for ticks
2. Radon detection programs in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health department
3. Community events outdoors - picnics, hiking or camping trips, etc.



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Advocacy and awareness campaigns by Community Associations (i.e. Friends of the Carp and Huntley Community Association (Kathy Fischer)) and/or in conjunction with the Ottawa Public Health department and with the Medical Centre
- 2.1. Get in touch with City of Ottawa about Radon Detection technology & program to educate the community
- 3.1. Do weekly group sessions with family, friends, neighbours; assign a sport/activity or theme to reflect on & discuss every week; an opportunity to re-energize

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Report tick-sightings
2. Test your home/business for radon gas and take remedial measures as needed. Radon is deadly.
3. Engage in an activity once a week to get active outdoors and appreciate/reflect on nature; good for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Mark off on a map of locations where you have spotted ticks. You can post this on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. to share with friends in your community
- 2.1. Firstly, test your home for radon. If necessary take remedial measures and create ventilation to remove the gas. (Note: Radon enters easily in sand basements)
- 3.1. Schedule a time in the evening or weekend to do an activity such as walking, bike riding, hiking, etc. Make plans with friends, family, or neighbours to meet once a week to hold yourself accountable.

## Community Projects

1. Create a Community Hub with all groups & associations in West Carleton - that can plan and come together for events, projects or when emergencies happen (ex. floods)
2. Identify key needs of seniors to address them and make them feel acknowledged
3. Habitual community events/sports outings to bring people together & build community
4. Revitalize West Carleton Community Centre (WCCC) - can then be better used for community events such as West Carleton Euchre Game & others
5. History and Heritage Project for West Carleton
  - a) Senior residents of West Carleton can speak at schools/community gatherings to connect young people & others to WC's history & heritage
  - b) History booth at Farmers Market and at the Carp Fair
  - c) Interview new and old residents along a main road (ie., Old Carp Road)
  - d) Develop a West Carleton App for iPhone and Android
  - e) Create & promote wildlife or adventure tourism In West Carleton

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Create a monthly gathering with community associations and members or an online platform to network & connect
- 2.1. Have interview sessions with seniors (an association or volunteers can do this) and collect that data and pass it on to the community to address
- 3.1. Talk to key community members and get people to lead (ideally, good event planners) on doing community events (potlucks, BBQs, sports events)
- 4.1. Reach out to key players to revitalize WCCC
- 5.1. Get leads (knowledgeable senior residents) to take lead on history & heritage projects

# SENSE OF PLACE

(Sense of belonging & stewardship)



### Key Issue:

- Lack of network/sense of solidarity among separate communities in West Carleton
- Senior's often feel their needs are neglected in the community
- Not enough recreational groups/activities to bring people together
- West Carleton Community Centre (WCCC) not so inviting/accessible
- West Carleton history and heritage not so well known by its own residents or greater Ottawa

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Get to know your neighbours
2. Get involved with your community associations
3. Build solidarity with community by working on long-term projects together
4. Learn about, engage with and reflect on your community

## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Invite neighbours over meals, share your local produce, etc. Get your neighbours, friends in the community, etc. together once a week/once a month for meals, sports, walks, events, outings, etc.
- 2.1. Visit your local community centres and inform yourself on local activities, events, volunteer
- 3.1. Volunteer on local project, community gardens, events, etc. together
- 4.1. Create an online blog, photography projects, awareness campaigns within the community, write to local papers, etc.

# RECREATION

(Urban and rural recreation, including farm visits)

## Key Issue:

- Bad walkability (no safe sidewalks/cycling lanes)
- Lack of recreational activities for adults
- Stigma against walking as a recreational activity!



## Community Projects

1. Making sidewalks more safe & creating more bike lanes
2. Promote hiking trails along the Carp River
3. Encourage recreation for adults in the community such as walking for pleasure, dance classes, weekly for-fun sports, etc.
4. Create walking groups for youth to create a culture of walking from a young age



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Reach out to City Councillor about improving road infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists
- 2.1. Put up posters in community buildings or links online (on social media apps, for example) of hiking trails in Carp
- 3.1. Interested person(s) take lead on recreational activities for adults in the community
- 4.1. Talking to kids at school about walking culture; having community association create a weekly kids walking group

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Go out more often & do recreational activities outdoors: picnics, walks, sports, etc.
2. Monthly Family Hikes along Carp River trails
3. Canoe & kayaking trips on Ottawa river with friends & family

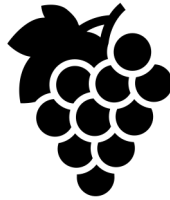
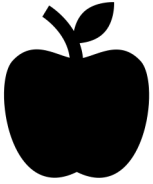


## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Plan regular picnics & sport activity with friends, family & neighbours
- 2.1. Learn about hiking trails in West Carleton, invest in hiking gear, plan hiking date
- 3.1. Learn about Ottawa river; buy/rent canoe/kayaks, set up a date with friends & family

# FOOD

(Farms & urban markets, heritage crops/animals, urban gardens)



## Key Issue:

- 1. Lack of easy access to food outlets (physical barriers) and to healthy, local, natural & organic foods
- 2. Reducing food waste
- 3. Conservation of agricultural/farming land

## Community Projects

1. Creating community gardens for fresh, local produce
2. Community Food & Produce Exchange
3. Community lunches/dinners
4. Local Food Business Focus Groups



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Learn about gardening, local plants and vegetables, buy seeds, prepare yard/soil, plant, maintain, harvest
- 2.1. Create a community catalog of who grows what in their gardens and do some good old-fashioned bartering of goods!
- 3.1. Rent out a space once a week or once a month, where community members can get together, cook, serve and eat food together (with fresh ingredients from their own garden perhaps!!)
- 4.1. Connect with local business owners, stakeholders, etc. and set up a focus group of community to start up/invest in more local food-related businesses or food CO-OPs in West Carleton with models that work for rural areas

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Start local food business or CO-OP
2. Neighbourhood potlucks, picnics, BBQs, etc.
3. Pursue plant-based diets
4. Donate Unused Foods
5. Organic Farm/Garden

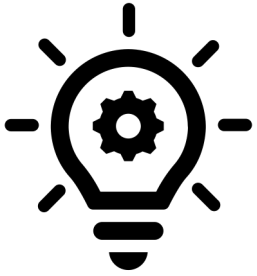


## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Brainstorm small local food business or co-op ideas you could potentially take on, acquire investments and resources, come up with business/co-op model, launch, etc.
- 2.1. Invite your neighbours out to regular potlucks, picnics; share ideas, get materials, food, recipes, etc. and set up place and date
- 3.1. Try Meat once-a-week challenge or giving vegetarianism a go
- 4.1. Regularly donate intact, unused foods (from your home, your farm/garden, your local business, etc.) to friends, family, neighbours, local charities/organizations, etc.
- 5.1. Learn & practice more organic and agro-ecological methods of farming (i.e. finding alternatives to chemical pesticides and sprays)

# ENERGY

(Buildings, production, energy sources)



## Key Issue:

- Lack of renewable energy sources
- Wasteful energy consumption habits, items, resources etc.
- Carbons Emissions (especially in farming, transportation, homes, etc.)

## Community Projects

1. Energy-saving workshops
2. Install solar panels in schools & local businesses



## Implementation Plan

- 1.1. Find an expert in energy saving, and create a small workshop with the community to discuss on energy-saving
- 2.1. Communicate with school board and local business on creating a budget to install eco—friendly means of energy such as installing solar panels

## Individual/Family Projects

1. Installing skylights, solar panels
2. Harness natural light through windows
3. Use energy efficient light bulbs
4. Use sensors to turn lights on/off
5. Turn off lights when leaving a room
6. Use energy efficient appliances
7. Power down electronic devices after use
8. Re-insulate family home
9. Recycle waste heat in home
10. Retrofit buildings with more sustainable infrastructure
11. Greenhouses



## Implementation Plan

- 1-11. Simple research/instructions for many of these; for others, requires a little bit more investment of time, energy and money, but the essential steps are: research, plan, gather tools and materials, build, and maintain

## GET INVOLVED – YOUR PLAN FOR ACTION

- The West Carleton Sustainability Plan was designed to give you ideas on how to take action at work, at home, or in your neighbourhood. You can now make it your personal plan.
- 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.
- Then let us know what you are doing – Theme and project. We'll be sharing statistics on what is happening, because it inspires others
- If you have a project idea and need volunteers, you can ask us to put that up on our website and ask people to contact you directly or indirectly.
- Send your information to: <https://forms.gle/WZdx1Ae6DvQycRC1A>

Your priority sustainability issue(s):

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Your proposed project(s) is (are):

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Thank you for contributing to the sustainability of your community.

**Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City and the Ottawa Community Foundation**



"We achieve sustainability together"



Report by: Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City