

OHS Policy on Public Interventions

Developed June 2021

Adopted by OHS Board on 18 October 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the Board of the Ottawa Horticultural Society on future interventions into public policy. This document seeks to answer the questions:

- On what issues should the OHS intervene to share its views on public policy?
- What are the broad outlines of the OHS's perspective(s) with respect to public policy?
- How and when should this policy statement be used?
- What are the limits to OHS interventions into public policy?

On What Issues Should the OHS Express its Views on Public Policy?

The OHS is a charitable organization representing several hundred individual and family members, most of whom are homeowners. The mission of the Ottawa Horticultural Society is to cultivate an interest in plants and gardening in order to create a beautiful community.ⁱ Its mandate is to represent those Ottawa citizens interested in the preservation and cultivation of gardens in the urban environment.ⁱⁱ As such, its expressions of views on public policy should be limited in both scope and nature to reflect the mission and mandate of the Society.

Scope

The OHS can legitimately comment on issues within the City of Ottawa that impact the quality and amount of greenspace available to residents.

Broad Outlines of OHS's Perspectives

In general, public policy interventions by the OHS should:

- Promote the maintenance and expansion of public and private gardens, particularly in areas where the City of Ottawa has a policy of "densification";
- Promote the expansion of the City of Ottawa's tree program to ensure that more trees are planted;
- Promote the use of native plants wherever possible in both municipal plantings, and in street trees offered or planted by the City;
- Advocate for the contribution of gardens, natural areas and green spaces to physical and mental health, wellbeing and resilience;
- Promote the use of horticultural and landscaping practices that are sustainable, environmentally friendly, and that promote biodiversity;
- Support the conservation of natural areas and green spaces that support biodiversity and food production;
- Support the expansion of the City's community gardens network, including making space available for community gardens within walking distance of all areas of the city; and
- Oppose plans for urban construction and development that contravene the City's own master plan goals of preserving green space.

Use of this Policy

- Use of this policy for official OHS statements requires approval of the Board.

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Limitations to OHS Expressions of Public Policy

The OHS should not:

- Comment on issues that do not affect the City of Ottawa;
- Comment on issues of general policy that do not directly concern the maintenance of expansion of green spaces; or
- Align with any particular political party.

i. ¹From the OHS website, opening statement ***Who we are***

ii. ²From OHS Record of a Board Resolution concerning the City of Ottawa's Draft Official Plan November 2020.