

# Official Community Plans

## WHAT ARE THEY?

Official Community Plans (OCPs) are created by local governments to outline long-term visions for communities - they typically have a 20-year time frame. They set objectives, priorities, and policies that guide decisions made by city council, particularly planning and land use decisions.

OCPs often include planning policies that aim to progress economic, social, and environmental priorities. Once an OCP is put in place, decisions made by elected officials and staff should align with the plan's goals - but local governments are not required to action or implement what is included in the plan.

## WHAT GOES INTO AN OCP?

What is included in an OCP is largely dictated by the needs of each municipality. Generally, an OCP will include:

- Housing plans to meet anticipated housing needs over a 5-year period, including policies for affordable housing, rental housing, and housing for people with a disability
- Land use guidelines for commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and infrastructure zones
- Development and land use restrictions
- Plans for major roads, sewers and water systems
- Proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites
- Targets, policies, and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions



## WHY SHOULD RESIDENTS CARE ABOUT OCPS?

- 1 If you're curious what the priorities are of your city, and what the council is likely to prioritize - the OCP can give you a great starting point.
- 2 If city council is making decisions that don't align with the priorities of the OCP, you can refer to it in your correspondence. For example, if the OCP says they are prioritizing rental housing but council is voting against affordable rentals - you can raise that.
- 3 OCPs provide an opportunity to embed critical frameworks across city services and projects, for example, applying an equity and reconciliation lens to all your city's priorities.
- 4 Find out when your community is updating their OCP next, and see how you can provide input. Participate in surveys, attend community engagement sessions, or join the OCP committee to shape the future priorities of your community.



[www.womentransformingcities.org](http://www.womentransformingcities.org)  
[info@womentransformingcities.org](mailto:info@womentransformingcities.org)

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