



LAWSON

Ottawa deserves better.

ALEX LAWSON FOR MAYOR

Fix the basics.

The Lawson plan for rural Ottawa. Nineteen commitments across six areas, built on one principle: the city tests its standards against rural conditions before it adopts them, not after.

POLICY PAPER

AUGUST 2026

One standard, two operating environments.

More than 80 percent of Ottawa's land mass is rural. The city applies a single set of citywide standards to two very different operating environments, and rural communities live with the results.

There are 906 farms inside the city boundary working 234,774 acres and generating \$223 million a year in farm cash receipts. The city is responsible for more than 6,000 kilometres of road and roughly 5,400 kilometres of roadside ditch.

RURAL LAND

80%+

Of Ottawa's land mass lies in the rural area

City of Ottawa Official Plan and rural area materials.

FARMS

906

Working 234,774 acres inside the city boundary

Census of Agriculture, 2021, Ottawa census subdivision.

FARM RECEIPTS

\$223M

A year in farm cash receipts

Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ottawa Local Snapshot.

FATAL COLLISIONS

1 in 3

More than a third happen in rural areas

Ottawa Fatal Collision Review Committee, 2020 Annual Report.

Traffic control warrants are calibrated to urban volumes and pedestrian counts. Road renewal priority is weighted by traffic volume. Zoning limits on farm business activity are set as a fixed area rather than a share of the property. Drainage maintenance is dispatched from a centralized model against a request-driven queue. Each of these works as intended inside the urban boundary. Each produces an outcome in the rural area that the standard did not intend.

The common mechanism is volume. Where a standard uses traffic counts, pedestrian counts, or population density as the qualifying test, the rural area does not qualify, regardless of the physical condition of the asset or the consequence of leaving it.

Ottawa is two kinds of ground inside one boundary.

None of this is news to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, and this document does not pretend otherwise. ARAC and Ottawa's rural councillors have a serious record on exactly this problem. The 2024 Rural Summit, the first in seventeen years, brought more than 250 residents to the table and produced ten commitments. The second of those ten was to strengthen the committee's own mandate, framed at the time as clarifying its role so that urban solutions stop being applied to rural areas. That work was

delivered. ARAC is now generally responsible for matters outside the urban boundary, including oversight of rural ditching and the new rural ditch maintenance levy, and every city department now carries a named rural lead. The ditching budget doubled. The process for assessing rural intersections was reviewed and improved in June 2026.

That is the correct diagnosis and real progress against it, and this campaign says so plainly.

The limitation is structural rather than a question of effort. ARAC reviews rural matters after a citywide standard has already been written, and corrects for it case by case, one intersection, one budget line, one rezoning at a time. A committee working downstream of the standard can win the individual file and still face the same problem again on the next one. The commitments below are largely about moving that work upstream, so that the rural test happens before adoption rather than after the outcome, and the committee spends less of its time repairing standards and more of it governing.

This document sets out nineteen commitments across six areas: rural road safety standards, on-farm business zoning, drainage and ditch maintenance, rural road renewal, landowner information, and the review step that ties them together. Every figure is sourced in Section 10.

Two positions already on the record are referenced where relevant and not restated here: the southern ring road as a provincial 400-series highway, and OC Transpo-operated on-demand service for rural communities.

02 / THE ROAD STANDARDS PROBLEM

Rural intersections are assessed against urban thresholds.

Traffic control at an intersection or crossing is installed when the location satisfies a warrant. Warrants count vehicle volumes, pedestrian crossings in the busiest hours, and collision history against fixed thresholds. Ottawa's all-way stop criteria include a threshold of nine recent collisions.

Those thresholds are calibrated to urban and suburban volumes. Rural locations carry fewer vehicles and far fewer pedestrians, so they satisfy the volume elements infrequently regardless of the physical conditions of the road.

Collision severity does not follow the same distribution as volume. **More than a third of Ottawa's fatal collisions happen in rural areas, on roads that see fewer than one in ten of the city's collisions overall.** And the city's own road safety annual report shows serious collisions falling citywide while the rural share of them rises: one quarter of Ottawa's fatal and major-injury collisions now happen in the rural area, up from about one in five a decade earlier.

Three locations illustrate how the current process performs.

Nixon Drive and Dalmeny Road, south of Osgoode. Eight collisions over two years, against a nine-collision criterion. The location did not qualify for an all-way stop. Following two serious collisions weeks apart in June 2026, the second of which was fatal to an eight-year-old child, the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and council approved a motion installing an all-way stop and directing staff to monitor the location.

The committee also approved an enhanced process for rural intersections at that time. Speed studies are now consistently included in rural signal assessments. Volume data collection extends to the highest eight hours within a sixteen-hour period, reflecting longer rural commutes and earlier departures. New all-way stop criteria were added for collector-to-collector and local-to-collector intersections. These are improvements to the inputs of the existing model.

Flewellyn Road and Shea Road, near Stittsville. Thirty-four collisions between March 30, 2017 and November 16, 2022. An all-way stop is not physically possible because the intersection is offset by more than a hundred feet. Interim measures installed to date are speed boards, flashing lights, and repainted lines. The permanent fix, realigning Shea Road and building a roundabout, is targeted to begin construction in 2028, with land acquisition and utility relocation identified by staff as capable of extending that.

Constance Bay Road and Dunrobin Road. Ranked first of twenty-two locations in the city's 2020 Safety Study of Ottawa Rural Skewed Intersections, on collision history, road grade, sightlines, and traffic control. A single-lane roundabout was recommended. The modification is proceeding under a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

COMMITMENT 01

Adopt a rural road safety standard.

Within the first year, adopt a standard for rural intersections and crossings that weighs operating speed, sightlines, road geometry and grade, school walking routes, and heavy truck volume alongside collision history, rather than treating volume as the primary qualifying test. The Ontario Traffic Manual provides for the application of engineering judgment; this standard makes that application consistent and reviewable rather than case by case.

COMMITMENT 02

Automatic engineering review at half the collision threshold.

Any rural location reaching half the applicable collision threshold triggers an engineering review without a resident request, with a published finding and a date for any recommended work. This replaces the current outcome, in which a location below threshold receives a determination that it does not qualify and no further assessment.

COMMITMENT 03

Publish the rural safety backlog.

Publish all twenty-two locations from the 2020 skewed-intersections study with current status, funded year, and expected completion, updated quarterly, alongside every rural location with an open safety review.

COMMITMENT 04

Publish interim measures with completion dates.

Where a permanent fix is more than two years out, the city publishes an interim safety package for that location with a completion date: lighting, advance warning systems, sightline clearing, and rumble strips on rural road types where they are effective. Interim measures are tracked and reported on the same schedule as the capital project they precede.

The limit is set by area, not by the size of the farm.

Sixty-six percent of Ottawa's farms report less than \$100,000 a year in revenue. The average farm in this city is 259 acres. At that scale, most operations carry secondary business activity: snow clearing, excavating, trucking, storage, equipment repair, a market stand.

Ottawa's zoning by-law caps the combined area of all agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses at **one hectare per lot**. That hectare must accommodate the buildings, structures, outdoor storage, parking areas, and the well and septic systems associated with the use. Any increase requires a zoning by-law amendment.

One hectare is 2.47 acres. On the average Ottawa farm that is under one percent of the property.

Provincial guidance for prime agricultural areas applies a **two percent of the property** size test for on-farm diversified uses, measured as the land area rendered unavailable for agricultural production, and requires that the use remain secondary to the principal agricultural use. Ottawa's fixed cap is more restrictive than the provincial test on any farm larger than approximately 123 acres, which describes the majority of farms in this city.

The practical effect is that a common operating arrangement requires a rezoning. In one Manotick case, an application to permit established secondary businesses on fewer than ten acres of a 480-acre farm was refused by council in November 2025 and subsequently resolved through mediation, after the family had carried the costs of consultants, applications, and legal representation.

Scaling the limit to the size of the property keeps secondary activity on low-capability ground and reduces the number of farms that reach a point where the operation is no longer viable. Prime agricultural land remains protected under the Official Plan and provincial policy; nothing in this section changes that designation.

COMMITMENT 01

Replace the fixed one-hectare cap with the provincial percentage test.

Bring forward a zoning by-law amendment scaling the permitted area for on-farm diversified and agriculture-related uses to a percentage of the lot, consistent with provincial guidance for prime agricultural areas, retaining one hectare as a floor so that no smaller property loses permitted area it holds today.

COMMITMENT 02

Permit low-capability siting as of right.

Applications that locate the use on lower-capability soil, an existing farmyard, or previously disturbed ground are permitted as of right within the size test, without a zoning by-law amendment. Applications that would displace prime agricultural land continue to require an amendment.

Establish a rural business permitting stream with a service standard.

A single rural business stream within the permitting system, with a published turnaround standard, one point of contact, and delegated approval authority at the staff level for applications that meet the size and siting tests.

04 / THE DRAINAGE PROBLEM

The money has gone up. The delivery model has not.

Ottawa maintains roughly **5,400 kilometres of roadside ditch**. Drainage determines whether farmland drains, whether basements stay dry, whether road shoulders hold, and whether a road ices over in the spring.

Following the 2024 Rural Summit, the city doubled the ditching and drainage budget, adding \$1.8 million for a total of \$3.6 million. The 2026 budget carries \$3.6 million specifically for rural roadside ditch maintenance, and total ditching and drainage investment is projected to reach \$5.6 million by 2027. A new stormwater fee structure approved for 2027 removes the stormwater charge from rural tax bills and replaces it with a levy dedicated to rural drainage maintenance.

That is real money and this campaign is not going to pretend otherwise. The problem is what the money buys.

At \$3.6 million across 5,400 kilometres, the city is spending roughly \$670 per kilometre of ditch per year. The constraint on that spending is not only the budget line. It is crew hours, equipment availability, and the time it takes to move equipment to a rural work site. The city's own 2026 ditch work plan identifies the same constraint: it lists additional staffing, **contracted service support**, and **equipment procurement** among the changes required to deliver the increased budget.

The prioritization framework has a gap. Ottawa triages ditch issues into three categories. Priority A, blocked drainage causing flooding and an immediate safety hazard, is targeted for completion within four hours. Priority B, partial blockage causing intermittent backup without immediate hazard, is targeted within 30 days. **Priority C, drainage system deterioration with no immediate hazard, is added to the ditch maintenance list and completed "as soon as practicable."**

Priority C is where most rural ditch deterioration sits, and it is the only category without a service standard. Work is identified through service requests, routine visual inspection, and spring flooding response, which means the system is largely request-driven: a ditch is maintained after a resident notices a problem and reports it.

There is a second source of capacity available in the rural area that the city does not systematically use. Ottawa's rural landowners and farm operators already own excavators, tractors, mowers, and float trailers, and already operate them within a few kilometres of the ditches in question. Their equipment is idle in exactly the seasonal windows when ditching is done. A local operator mobilizes to a rural work site in minutes; a centrally dispatched crew spends a meaningful share of the working day travelling to it and back.

This is not a novel arrangement. Ontario municipalities routinely deliver ditching, brushing, grading, and roadside maintenance through contracted local operators alongside in-house crews. What Ottawa lacks is the procurement instrument that would let it buy that capacity at scale.

COMMITMENT 01

Set a service standard for Priority C and report against it.

Assign Priority C ditch maintenance a target completion window and publish performance against it quarterly, by ward. "As soon as practicable" is not a standard, cannot be measured, and cannot be held to account. Every other priority level in the system has a number attached to it.

COMMITMENT 02

Establish a rural maintenance roster at published unit rates.

Create a qualified supplier roster for rural roadside maintenance, open to any operator who meets the qualification, with unit rates published in advance: per metre of ditch cleaned to specification, per kilometre of brushing, per culvert flushed. Work is issued as call-ups against the roster rather than through a separate tender for each segment, which is what currently makes small rural packages uneconomic to contract. Operators bid to maintain defined segments within a service radius of their base of operations, set so that mobilization time is minimal and the same operator returns to the same segments year over year, which builds local knowledge of where the water actually goes.

COMMITMENT 03

Scale qualification and insurance to the size of the contract.

The single largest barrier to a local operator bidding on city work is an insurance, bonding, and prequalification package written for a multi-million dollar contractor. Tier those requirements to contract value, publish the tiers, and run an annual qualification session in the rural wards. A roster nobody local can qualify for delivers nothing.

COMMITMENT 04

Protect the standard, and the integrity of the arrangement.

Contracted ditch work is performed to the city's grade and slope specification, inspected and signed off by a city inspector before payment, and subject to the same Ditch Alteration Policy, Conservation Authority permits, and in-water timing windows as city crews. Municipal drains under the Drainage Act remain the responsibility of the drainage superintendent and are outside the roster. Where a contracted segment abuts the operator's own property, the arrangement is disclosed on the public roster, the segment is flagged, and it is audited at a higher rate than the balance of the roster. Unit rates are public. Roster membership is published. The alignment between an operator's own interest in a working ditch and the city's is the reason the model performs; the disclosure is what keeps it defensible.

Volume enters the prioritization three times.

Ottawa is responsible for more than 6,000 kilometres of road and more than \$10 billion in road infrastructure. Roads are renewed on the basis of a five-year plan generated by the city's pavement management process.

Traffic volume enters that process at three separate points.

At inspection. Pavement condition is measured by an Automatic Road Analyzer on a cycle set by traffic volume and vehicle weight: every two years for Highway 174, transitways, and bus lanes; every three years for arterials and collectors; **every five years for local roads**. A rural local road's condition record is, by design, up to five years old.

In the software. The pavement management application performs its calculations using road type, pavement condition, traffic volume, and cost.

At shortlisting. Staff build the short list on considerations including traffic volume, current condition, and road type, and in the city's own description of the process, "the higher-use roads, such as highways, arterials and collectors, receive a higher priority."

Each of those steps is defensible on its own. Applied in sequence, they produce a predictable result: a low-volume rural local road is inspected least often, scored lowest, and shortlisted last. It is not that these roads are assessed and found to be in acceptable condition. It is that the framework is not built to surface them.

The city resurfaced approximately 75 kilometres of rural road in 2025 and runs a gravel road upgrade, surface treatment, and preservation program. Neither is published in a form that lets a resident determine when a specific rural local road is scheduled.

Preservation is also the fiscally conservative position. Surface treatment and crack sealing applied on cycle cost a fraction of the full reconstruction required once a road has failed. A framework that reaches low-volume roads only after they have deteriorated past the preservation window is a framework that buys the expensive repair every time.

COMMITMENT 01

Inspect rural local roads on the collector cycle.

Move rural local roads from a five-year to a three-year condition assessment cycle, matching arterials and collectors. A road cannot be prioritized on current condition when its condition data is four years old.

COMMITMENT 02

Establish a protected rural renewal allocation.

Set a defined annual allocation within the road renewal program for rural local and surface-treated roads, so that those roads are ranked against one another on condition rather than competing against urban arterials on volume. The allocation is reported annually against kilometres delivered.

COMMITMENT 03**Publish the rural road renewal list with funded years.**

Publish the rural component of the five-year renewal plan by road segment, with current condition score, treatment type, and funded year, updated annually. A resident should be able to look up their road and find a year.

COMMITMENT 04**Fund preservation on a published cycle.**

Commit the gravel road upgrade, surface treatment, and preservation program to a published return interval by road class, and report treated kilometres annually. Preservation applied on schedule is the cheapest kilometre of road the city will ever buy.

06 / THE LANDOWNER INFORMATION PROBLEM

Route information covering private property is held under a confidentiality agreement.

The Alto high-speed rail corridor is a federal decision. The route is not within municipal jurisdiction.

The information the city holds about that route is. The City of Ottawa's General Manager of Planning signed a non-disclosure agreement with Alto, stating: "I have signed an NDA on behalf of the City of Ottawa to gain access to the detailed mapping and route planning options under consideration, to ensure our most senior planning staff have access to all relevant information."

That scope includes mapping and route options covering private property. Neighbouring municipalities reviewed the same agreement and did not sign. The mayor defended Ottawa's decision publicly. Council subsequently passed its own motion seeking additional transparency from Alto.

Alto's consultation has produced roughly 18,000 comments on an interactive corridor map, of which 118 were removed and attributed by the corporation to human error. Rural landowners have reported land access requests and drone activity over their properties.

The position of record for this campaign, taken in July 2026 and unchanged, is that Alex Lawson will not sign a non-disclosure agreement that withholds from residents information about their own property. City-owned land is the city's to negotiate over. Private property is not.

COMMITMENT 01**Condition any agreement whose scope reaches private property.**

The city will continue to sign confidentiality agreements covering its own assets, commercial terms, and security information. Where a proposed agreement's scope includes mapping, route options, or studies covering private property, the city signs only on the condition that affected landowners receive the same information on the same timeline. Where a proponent will not accept that condition, the city does not sign.

COMMITMENT 02

Establish a rural landowner notification service.

Free and opt-in. Where a corridor study, environmental assessment, or route option covers a registered roll number, the city notifies that owner directly by mail and email at the point the city becomes aware, rather than at a subsequent public information session.

COMMITMENT 03

Publish the register of corridor agreements.

Every agreement the city signs with a proponent working in a rural corridor is listed publicly with its scope stated in plain language, on the same searchable basis as the public contracts list already committed to by this campaign.

07 / THE REVIEW PROBLEM

Citywide standards are not tested against rural conditions before adoption.

The five preceding sections describe the same mechanism. A standard is calibrated to the conditions of the urban and suburban area, adopted citywide, and applied in the rural area without a prior assessment of how it performs there. The gap is identified afterwards, through a collision record, a rezoning application, a flooded field, a failed road, or a signed agreement.

There is currently no step in the city's decision process at which that assessment is required. Strengthening the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee's mandate, as council did following the 2024 Rural Summit, put a rural review in the right place in the committee structure. It did not put one in the report that reaches the committee.

This commitment supplies the missing input rather than a new body to receive it.

COMMITMENT 01

Require a rural impact assessment in staff reports.

Before council adopts any citywide standard, warrant, fee schedule, service level, or prioritization framework, the staff report includes a one-page assessment, in plain language, of how the proposal performs in the rural area. Where it performs differently, the report returns with a rural variant or a stated reason one is not required. This is an addition to the standard report template. It requires no new department, no new position, and no new spending.

08 / WHAT WE WON'T DO

Three things off the table.

We will not commit to reversing decisions outside municipal jurisdiction. The Alto corridor is federal. The southern ring road requires Queen's Park to build and maintain it as a 400-series highway,

which is why this campaign has asked for it on that basis. Commitments in this document are limited to what a municipal government can deliver.

We will not reduce farmland protection. Scaling the on-farm diversified use limit applies to secondary activity sited on low-capability ground. The Agricultural Resource Area designation, and the provincial policy underlying it, are unchanged by every commitment in Section 03.

We will not contract out rural maintenance to avoid paying for it. The roster in Section 04 is additional delivery capacity alongside city crews, not a replacement for them. Ottawa's public works workforce is not the reason ditches go unmaintained, and this plan does not treat it as such. The roster exists because 5,400 kilometres is more ground than any single centralized crew structure covers on a schedule.

09 / WHY ALEX

I know what things cost.

I build things for a living. I run framing crews on job sites across this city, urban and rural, and I have spent my career delivering work inside a budget and on a schedule.

Every code and standard I work with exists for a reason. A specification that performs on one site can fail on the next, because the ground underneath it is different. That is not a criticism of the specification. It is the reason engineering requires site conditions to be assessed before the specification is applied.

I also know what it costs to move equipment. On a job, the machine that is already on site is worth more than the better machine two hours away. That is the whole argument of Section 04, and it is the kind of thing you learn from scheduling work rather than from reading a report about it.

Ottawa is two kinds of ground inside one boundary. The standards it applies should account for that before they are adopted, not after a review is triggered by the outcome.

We've got a lot of work to do.

Ottawa deserves better.

10 / SOURCES & VERIFICATION

Every figure here is sourced.

RURAL SHARE OF OTTAWA'S LAND MASS

Over 80 percent of Ottawa's land mass lies within the rural area of the city's boundaries, home to more than 2,000 businesses including roughly 1,000 farming operations. City of Ottawa Official Plan and rural area materials.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/official-plan-and-master-plans/official-plan>

OTTAWA FARM COUNT, ACREAGE, AND FARM CASH RECEIPTS

906 farms as of the 2021 Census of Agriculture. 234,774 acres of farmland. Average farm size 259 acres. \$223 million in farm cash receipts. 66.0 percent of farms are small farms with less than \$100,000 in revenue. Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ottawa Local Snapshot, drawing on OMAFRA 2021 County Profiles.

<https://ofa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Local-Snapshot-Ottawa.pdf>

RURAL SHARE OF FATAL COLLISIONS

More than one-third (31) of the 84 fatal collisions reviewed occurred in rural areas, which accounted for 9.4 percent of reportable collisions. Ottawa Fatal Collision Review Committee, 2020 Annual Report. Restated in ARAC's February 2024 Rural ASE Strategy motion: rural Ottawa represents over one third (37 percent) of all fatal collisions and only 9 percent of all reportable collisions.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ottawa-fatal-collision-review-committee-2020-annual-report/collisions>

SERIOUS-COLLISION TREND

Rural fatal and major-injury collisions were 149 of 598 citywide (25 percent) for 2019 to 2023, up from 157 of 743 (21 percent) for 2013 to 2017. Total serious collisions are falling citywide while the rural share of them rises. City of Ottawa Strategic Road Safety Action Plan Annual Report, ACS2024-PWD-TRF-0005, Transportation Committee, November 28, 2024.

<https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=213255>

NIXON DRIVE AND DALMENY ROAD

Eight collisions over two years at the intersection south of Osgoode, against a nine-collision criterion for a four-way stop. Two serious collisions occurred in June 2026, the second of which was fatal to an eight-year-old child on June 28, 2026. Councillors subsequently approved a motion to install an all-way stop and directed staff to monitor the intersection.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/councillors-vote-to-install-4-way-stop-at-rural-intersection-after-8-year-old-s-death-9.6934737>

ENHANCED PROCESS FOR RURAL INTERSECTIONS

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee approved an enhanced process for evaluating traffic signals and all-way stops at rural intersections: speed studies included consistently in rural signal assessments, volume data collection extended to the highest eight hours within a sixteen-hour period, and specific all-way stop criteria added for collector-to-collector and local-to-collector intersections.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-approves-enhanced-process-evaluating-traffic-signals-all-way-stops-rural-intersections>

FLEWELLYN ROAD AND SHEA ROAD

Thirty-four collisions between March 30, 2017 and November 16, 2022 at the staggered intersection near Stittsville. An all-way stop is not possible because the intersection is offset by more than 100 feet. The permanent fix, realigning Shea Road and constructing a roundabout, is targeted for construction start in 2028, with land acquisition and utility relocation identified by city staff as potentially extending the timeline.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/crooked-intersection-remains-dangerous-despite-safety-upgrades-1.7566499>

CONSTANCE BAY ROAD AND DUNROBIN ROAD

Included in the City's 2020 Safety Study of Ottawa Rural Skewed Intersections, where it ranked first out of twenty-two locations for relative safety risk and priority for remedial action. A single-lane roundabout was recommended. The intersection modification is proceeding under a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

<https://engage.ottawa.ca/constance-bay-road-and-dunrobin-road-intersection-modifications-environmental-assessment>

ALL-WAY STOP COLLISION CRITERION

The City of Ottawa's criteria for an all-way stop include a threshold of nine recent collisions, which the Nixon Drive and Dalmeny Road intersection did not meet at eight. Warrant criteria derive from the Ontario Traffic Manual, which municipalities apply alongside professional engineering judgment and local policy.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/councillors-vote-to-install-4-way-stop-at-rural-intersection-after-8-year-old-s-death-9.6934737>

OTTAWA'S ONE-HECTARE CAP ON ON-FARM DIVERSIFIED USES

The maximum combined area of all agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses on a lot is one hectare, including any buildings, structures, outdoor storage areas, parking areas, and well and septic systems associated with the use. A zoning by-law amendment is required for any increase. City of Ottawa Zoning By-law, Part 13, Rural Zones, and the city's On-Farm Diversified Uses By-law Provisions page.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/rural-ottawa/business-and-tourism/farm-diversified-uses-law-provisions>

PROVINCIAL TWO PERCENT SIZE TEST

Provincial guidance for prime agricultural areas applies a two percent size limit for on-farm diversified uses, measured on the total land area rendered unavailable for agricultural production, expressed as a percentage of lot coverage. The one-hectare fixed cap equals two percent of a lot at approximately 123 acres; on any larger farm the fixed cap is the more restrictive test. OMAFRA Publication 851, Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas.

<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-04/omafra-publication-851-guidelines-on-permitted-uses-in-ontarios-prime-agricultural-areas-en-04-02-2024.pdf>

MANOTICK FARM ZONING APPLICATION

Council voted in November 2025 to refuse a zoning amendment that would have permitted the family's established secondary businesses on fewer than ten acres of a 480-acre farm. The matter subsequently proceeded to mediation and the parties reached an agreement. The family's cost figure circulating publicly is withheld from this document pending verification against the record.

2024 RURAL SUMMIT AND THE ARAC MANDATE

Ottawa's Rural Summit was held November 2, 2024, the city's first in seventeen years, attended by more than 250 people. The mayor and the city's five rural councillors outlined ten commitments, including strengthening the mandate of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee so that urban solutions are not applied to rural areas, and a dedicated rural lead in every city department. The committee's mandate was subsequently expanded to include all reports with significant rural implications, making it generally responsible for matters outside the urban boundary, including oversight for rural ditching and the new rural ditch maintenance levy.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-updated-commitments-made-2024-rural-summit>

ROADSIDE DITCH NETWORK AND BUDGET

Ottawa has roughly 5,400 kilometres of roadside ditches. Following the 2024 Rural Summit the city doubled the ditching and drainage budget, adding \$1.8 million for a total of \$3.6 million. The 2026 budget included \$3.6 million specifically to maintain rural roadside ditches, with total ditching and drainage investment anticipated to reach \$5.6 million by 2027. A new stormwater fee structure approved for 2027 removes the stormwater charge from rural tax bills and replaces it with a levy dedicated to rural drainage maintenance. The \$670 per kilometre figure follows from \$3.6 million divided across 5,400 kilometres.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-updated-commitments-made-2024-rural-summit>

2026 DITCH WORK PLAN

The 2026 ditch work plan includes additional staffing, contracted service support, equipment procurement, proactive maintenance planning, and improved coordination across departments. The city has identified rural leads in each department, and staff are working with each rural councillor to identify priority drainage projects.

<https://www.ward21.ca/news/ditch-maintenance-what-rural-residents-should-know>

DITCH MAINTENANCE PRIORITY LEVELS

Priority A, blocked drainage causing flooding and an immediate safety hazard, is targeted for completion within four hours. Priority B, partially blocked drainage causing intermittent backups without immediate safety hazard, is targeted within 30 days. Priority C, drainage system deterioration with no immediate safety hazard, is added to the ditch maintenance list and completed "as soon as practicable." Issues are identified through service requests, routine visual inspections, and spring flooding response.

<https://www.ward21.ca/news/ditch-maintenance-what-rural-residents-should-know>

ROAD NETWORK AND PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The city is responsible for more than 6,000 kilometres of road and maintains more than \$10 billion of existing road infrastructure. Pavement condition data is collected by Automatic Road Analyzer every two years for Highway 174, transitways and bus lanes, every three years for arterials and collectors, and every five years for local roads. The pavement management software calculates using road type, pavement condition, traffic volume, and cost. The short list is made on considerations including traffic volume, current condition, and road type, and "the higher-use roads, such as highways, arterials and collectors, receive a higher priority."

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/ottawas-roadmap-resurfacing-success>

RURAL ROAD RESURFACING AND PRESERVATION

The city resurfaced approximately 75 kilometres of rural roads in 2025 and tenders a gravel road upgrade, surface treatment, and preservation program annually. The 75-kilometre figure is the city's own program reporting; treat as approximate pending the city's year-end reconciliation.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/construction-and-infrastructure-projects/road-renewal>

ALTO NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

The City of Ottawa's General Manager of Planning signed a non-disclosure agreement with Alto, stating: "I have signed an NDA on behalf of the City of Ottawa to gain access to the detailed mapping and route planning options under consideration, to ensure our most senior planning staff have access to all relevant information." The mayor publicly defended the decision. Alto received roughly 18,000 comments on its interactive corridor map, of which 118 were removed, which the corporation attributed to human error. Rural landowners have reported land access requests and drone activity over their properties.



<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-mayor-defends-city-s-decision-to-sign-alto-nda-9.7222665>

Authorized by the official agent of the Alex Lawson campaign.