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Planning Rationale (Design Statement)

Site Plan Application: Bank of Nova Scotia – 119 Rideau Street

Design Objectives

The new bank facility will commence construction in April 2017. It is important however to establish the principles by which the design will be developed in the future to ensure that the Station Headhouse design will be compatible with BNS's corporate objectives of brand identification, accessibility, transparency, and to part of, and respectful of the community in which it is located.

The design principles which will guide the design of the BNS and which are to be used to finalize the design of the Station Headhouse are as follows:

- The Station Headhouse and the new Bank building are to be viewed as a single unified composition.
- The Station Headhouse is to be as transparent as possible to permit views through and from the Station Headhouse into the Bank premises.
- The elevation of the ground floor to the Station is to be set such that barrier free access into the Bank premises can be accommodated from William Street, Rideau Street and the station itself.
- The design of the ground floor slab and the station below it will accommodate the escalator, elevator pits, structural loading requirements, and servicing requirements of the BNS (sanitary, water, storm, hydro, gas, voice and data), with the understanding that access to these services will be from the BNS premises.
- The roof slab of the Station Headhouse forms and will be integrated with the second floor of the BNS building.
- The design of the building is respectful of the community context, but reflective of the time in which the facilities are being designed and constructed.
- The design and construction of the Station will ensure that the activities of the station, noise vibration, and air movement do not impact the operation of the BNS, as previously agreed to by both parties.

City of Ottawa Official Plan

- The development of the Bank will be subject to a Site Plan Approval application and Design Review procedures (UDRP).
- Section 2.5 Building Livable Communities – 2.5.1 Urban Design and Compatibility sets out design objectives and principles.
- Section 3.6 Urban Designations Schedule B denotes the lands as being in the 'Central' district.
- Section 4.11 Urban Design and Compatibility sets out the criteria used to evaluate compatibility including: height, bulk or mass, scale relationship, and building / lot relationships, such as the distance or setback from the street, and the distance between buildings, more specifically as stated in 11.

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

A presentation was made to the Urban Design Review Panel on April 2, 2015.

- The design presented at that time was a three storey building, which has not been amended to two-storey. The UDRP requested that the design team find means to screen the roof-top louvre. The revised design has responded to that comment by increasing the floor to floor height of the second floor, and increasing the height of the façade parapet to align with the top of the arched windows of the building adjacent on Rideau Street to the east. Not only does this screen the louvre more, it supports the continuation of an historic datum line.
- The height extension of the curtainwall façade will wrap around the north façade which the UDRP rightly points out, will be visible. This height extension will screen the OLRT exhaust vents. These vents will be set back from the north façade, and the final design will incorporate a suitable means of screening them.
- Concern was expressed regarding the delineation of the LRT station and the bank. The LRT Station Headhouse is distinct from the bank in that it incorporates a canopy structure directly delineating the façade of the station head. The bank is distinctly clad in curtainwall, and its entrance on Rideau Street is expressed as an arched opening in the curtainwall. On the William Street façade, a secondary entrance is distinctly for the bank due to its placement adjacent to ATM machines and the bank's signature red wall.
- It should be noted that the placement of the OLRT canopy and the wall inset to accept it, were carefully designed by the OLRT group to reflect the cornice framing the entrance of the building immediately to the west on Rideau Street. These lines have been carried through the curtainwall to provide continuation of these historic datum lines.
- A related concern expressed by the UDRP was the relationship of the OLRT station with the bank. The use of curtainwall glazing for both the station and the bank forms a cohesive treatment of the façade.
- The bank will be clad in a highly transparent and high quality curtainwall system, designating it as a jewel on the streetscape. The design intent is to use fritted glass in order to elevate the building from a typical office treatment to an interesting and vibrant participant in the community. A mullion-less exterior expression is proposed to enhance the transparent aspect of the building.

City of Ottawa Zoning By-law

- The site is zoned MD Mixed-Use Downtown Zone.
- A bank is a permitted use.
- 100% of the ground floor fronting on Rideau Street, excluding lobby area for a depth of a minimum of 3 metres must be used for bank purposes. The City planning department has determined that the Station Head area is exempt from this policy.
- There is no minimum lot area, lot width, or setbacks.
- Height is governed by Schedule 80 which sets a maximum height of 130.5 m above sea level, which permits a 67.25 m high building.
- There is no maximum floor space index –governed by lot size and height.
- There are no requirements for loading spaces as the lot abuts Rideau Street (Sec. 113 (1)).
- There are no requirements for parking as the property fronts on Rideau Street (Sec. 100 (3)(a)).
- The city requirements for bicycle parking are 1 per 250 m² of gross floor area. Using a GFA of 825 sm (344 main + 48 upper), 33 sm = 4 bicycle parking spots are required. (Sec. 111)