

# Planning Rationale:

## Site Plan Control Application 99 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa





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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This Planning Rationale has been prepared by J.L. Richards & Associates Limited (JLR) on behalf of Brigil – operating as 11034936 Canada Inc. (Brigil) to support an application for Site Plan Control at 99 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa.

In support of this Site Plan Control application, the following reports, studies and plans have been submitted:

- Site Servicing Plan, prepared by JLR;
- Grade Control and Drainage Plan, prepared by JLR;
- Transportation Impact Study, prepared by JLR;
- Storm Water Management Report, prepared by JLR;
- Site Servicing Study, prepared by JLR;
- Geotechnical Study, prepared by Paterson Group;
- Erosion and Sediment Control, prepared by JLR;
- Noise Study, prepared by JLR;
- Wind Study, prepared by Gradient Wind;
- Site Plan, prepared by Roderick Lahey Architects;
- Landscape Plan, prepared by Rudy Levestek Ltd.;
- Survey Plan, prepared by Annis, O'Sullivan, Vollebakk Ltd.;
- Architectural Building Elevation Drawings, prepared by Roderick Lahey Architects;
- Plan showing layout of Parking Garage, prepared by Roderick Lahey Architects;
- Sun Shadow Study, prepared by Roderick Lahey Architects; and,
- Phase 1 ESA, prepared by GHD.

### **1.1 Background**

In 2012, the land was subject to a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment that re-zoned the property to allow the proposed residential building. The property is presently zoned R5B[1929] S284-h by Zoning By-law 2008-250. This zone permits a variety of residential uses, including a high-rise apartment building with a maximum height of 84 metres (or 28 stories). As such, the zoning for this property predates both the Scott Street Secondary Plan and the Scott Street Community Design Plan.

Urbandale Corporation had submitted and received Site Plan approval, by the City of Ottawa, on April 18, 2013 subject to the conditions outlined in the approval report, including the condition that

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the registered owner enters into a Site Plan Agreement with the City. Subsequently, revisions were approved on December 22, 2016 and this approval was further extended to January 31, 2019. The City has confirmed that this approval has since lapsed.

### **1.2 Development Proposal**

Brigil acquired the property and is proposing to build a 28 storey high-rise apartment building at 99 Parkdale Avenue. The building will contain 240 units consisting of:

- 24 studios,
- 103 1-bedroom units, and
- 113 two-bedroom units.

Vehicular parking to the site's underground parking structure will be accessed via a shared entrance at 121 Parkdale Avenue. This joint access is via the municipal lane that is found immediately east of the subject site. This lane extends from Burnside Avenue to Emmerson Avenue. The previous site plan had a separate access to the garage for 99 Parkdale.

A shared access easement and maintenance and liability agreement will be required. In total, the 220 parking spaces for 99 Parkdale will be distributed within six (6) levels of underground parking (197 residential parking spaces and 23 visitor parking spaces). In addition, a total of 131 bicycle parking spaces will also be provided as part of this development.



**Figure 1 - West Elevations (99 & 121 Parkdale)**

The architecture of the proposed building contains elements typical of contemporary high-rise developments, with a clearly defined building podium, tower and top. The majority of the buildings' tower has been squared off with a defined top resembling the design at 121 Parkdale (also a Brigil development). The building will be constructed of various and complementary materials including steel, glass and masonry.

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The tower and the top of the proposed building will sit on a two (2) storey podium which will serve as the primary interface at street level. As a means to articulate the buildings' podium, the tower has been stepped back at the third floor, creating a strong base that frames the street edge (along both Parkdale and Burnside Avenues) and visually reduces the buildings' mass at grade. The development will be integrated with 121 Parkdale as both sites are now being developed jointly. The podium will incorporate amenity spaces, locker facilities, rental office, refuse collection area and mechanical rooms, accessed directly from Parkdale Avenue and the lane way. The second floor will include eleven (11) apartment units and twenty-seven (27) additional storage lockers for residents. Similar to 121 Parkdale, the primary entrance to the residential building will be accessed from Parkdale Avenue. Access to the future retail/commercial space on the abutting 121 Parkdale development has also been designed to be at grade along Parkdale and Burnside Avenues. Together, these elements will assist in assuring and maintaining an active and animated street front along both Parkdale and Burnside Avenues.

The experience at street level will be further enhanced through the use of hard and soft landscaping. Both Parkdale and Burnside Avenues will feature a combination of tree and shrub planting that will help to soften the podium and other hard building elements. Vehicular access to the site will be provided from the existing City owned laneway; reducing conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians along Parkdale Avenue (accessing parking structure). Furthermore, the landscaping has been designed as a continuation of that along 121 Parkdale in an effort to provide continuous and uninterrupted landscaping along Parkdale Avenue (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2 - Parkdale Ave. Perspective View**



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The third floor of the building will include eight (8) residential units as well as 620 square feet of communal amenity area. In addition to this, the building will offer residents a large exterior amenity area on the top of the two (2) storey podium. It is envisioned that a swimming pool be provided at this level for residents. The remainder of the floors will consist of dwelling units.

The tower of the building will be set back from the edges of the podium and rise a further 26 storeys (approximately 84 m, excluding the mechanical rooftop penthouse). The tower will be set back approximately 1.9 metres to the northern property line, approximately 3.0 metres to the eastern property line (abutting the municipal laneway), approximately 9.4 metres from the southern property line (abutting 121 Parkdale)) and approximately 4.5 metres from the western property line along Parkdale Avenue all in accordance with the Schedule that was included in the Zoning By-law (see Figure 7). By pulling the tower from the edges of the podium, it reduces the visual impact of the building at grade and allows for light, air and views between adjacent properties to filter through.

The top of the tower will be approximately six (6) metres in height and will contain the buildings' mechanical equipment as well as a roof top amenity area. The shape of the tower, combined with a large amount of fenestration will help to minimize the perceived impact of the buildings' height.

The building's tower and top have been designed to reduce the perception of the building's size. Overall, the building achieves the appropriate transitions by incorporating a two-storey podium, thereby fitting into the existing and planned streetscape context of Parkdale Avenue. The site will be perceived as an extension to 121 Parkdale Avenue where it's ground-oriented work/live units with direct access to the street and the proposed non-residential use at grade will help animate the streetscape. Further, the landscaping features will help to soften the overall mass of the tower and enhance the experience for pedestrians. Overall, the building will function within the surrounding context and will introduce a new modern aesthetic to the existing community.

## **2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

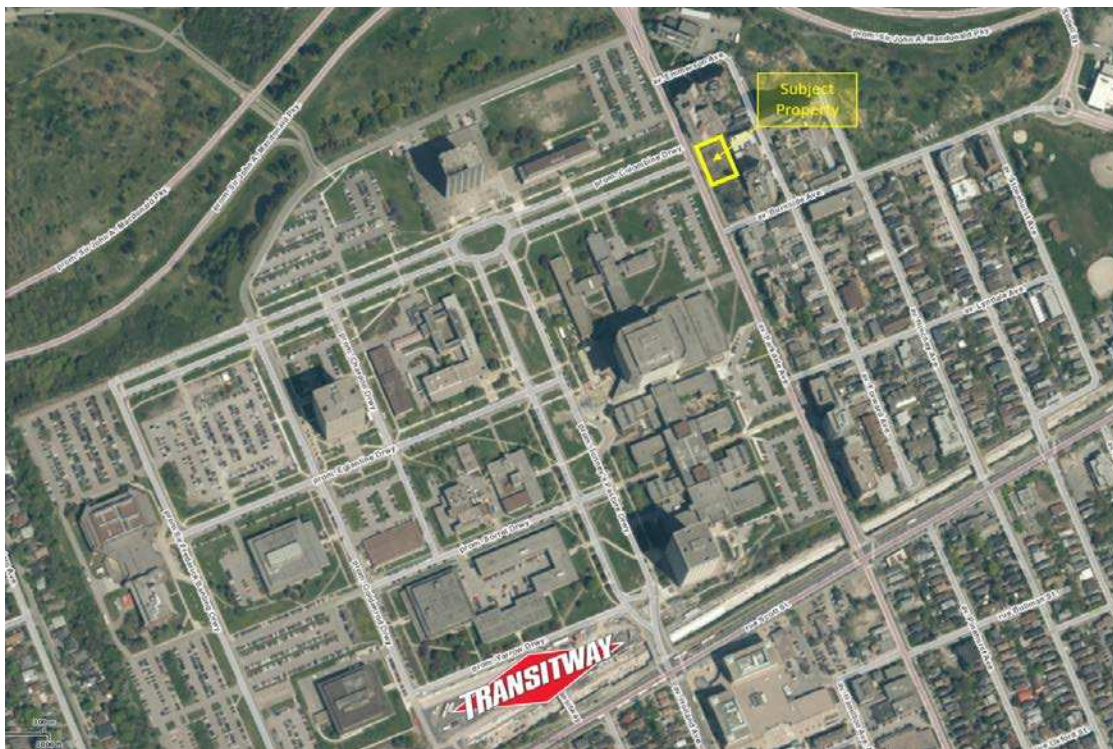
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### **2.1 Site Location**

The Subject Property is located in Mechanicsville at 99 Parkdale Avenue and is within the Tunney's Pasture Mixed Use Centre identified in the City of Ottawa's Official Plan (See Figure 5).

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**Figure 3 - Aerial View and Area Context**

The land subject to development has a total area of approximately 1,373 m<sup>2</sup> with a lot frontage of approximately 15.29 metres along Parkdale Avenue.

The site is located northeast of the Tunney's Pasture Light Rail Transit Station and at the east end of Colombine Driveway, as illustrated on Figure 3. The site fronts onto Parkdale Avenue, which is an arterial road, with sidewalks on both sides.

Parkdale Avenue will be the primary access to the site from Scott Street and both the east and westbound Sir John A. MacDonald Parkway, while the building itself will have vehicle access from the rear lane. The site is on the eastern edge of the residential portion of the Mixed Use Centre, Mechanicsville, and abuts Tunney's Pasture to the west.

The site is connected to surrounding amenities and facilities in the area by sidewalks on both sides of Parkdale Avenue. The Parkdale Avenue sidewalks provide direct access to the transit station at Tunney's Pasture. A public multi-use pathway, owned and maintained by the City of Ottawa, runs adjacent to the Transitway. The northerly terminus of Parkdale Avenue also

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provides an on-street cycling connection directly to the multi-use pathway along the Ottawa River Parkway.

The site is directly across Parkdale Avenue from the Tunney's Pasture employment complex, which is one of the largest nodes of federal government employment outside of the downtown core and employs over 11,000 people. These lands encompass some 58 hectares (143 acres) that have been developed over the past 60 years and include over a dozen large offices and laboratories as shown on Figure 4. The potential to add significant employment to this area can be derived from this figure. The site has substantial undeveloped lands that can add more employment for this mixed-use centre. Tunney's Pasture also includes some large buildings, including the R.H. Coats and Jean Talon Buildings. These buildings, and numerous others on the site, house many Federal Ministries and Agencies, including:

- Statistics Canada
- Health Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Libraries and Archives Canada
- Measurement Canada
- Canadian Criminal Justice
- Department of National Defense.



Figure 4 - Tunney's Pasture Aerial 2008 (Wikipedia)

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Figure 4 also shows the roofline of Holland Cross in the foreground (lower right). The shadows of existing apartment buildings along Parkdale Avenue can be seen along the east side of the photograph. The east side of Parkdale is primarily high-rise apartment buildings, from Scott Street to the Western Parkway. Figure 4 highlights the extensive nature of this employment area, including the undeveloped lands, and the supporting residential development in Mechanicville, particularly along Parkdale, Burnside and Forward Avenues.

Development along the east side of the Parkdale corridor includes a number of high-rise apartment buildings. This infusion of height can be seen continuously along Parkdale Avenue's east side from Scott Street to the Western Parkway. This form of development is also evident in the block immediately east of the Subject Property on both sides of Forward Avenue.

Immediately to the north of the Subject Property is 50 Emmerson Avenue, a 60-unit high rise apartment building constructed in 1985. This building is 11 storeys at the north end, 10 storeys in the central portion, and has a parking garage entrance at the southern limit of the property where it abuts the Subject Property. The side of the building that faces 99 Parkdale Avenue has no windows or balconies.

Immediately to the south of the Subject Property is 121 Parkdale Avenue, a mixed use high-rise building currently under construction. This building will be 32 storeys with 283 residential units and 351.8 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial/retail space. The building has an underground parking garage entrance at the northeast limit of the property where it abuts the Subject Property. The parking garage is accessed by the rear lane via Burnside Avenue. The parking structure will be connected underground with the parking garage of the Subject Property and 99 and 121 Parkdale will share this new access ramp to the underground parking facilities. It is envisioned that the roof top of the two storey podiums (99 & 121 Parkdale) would also be connected to provide a shared amenity space for either building.

Mid and High-rise developments characterize the east side of Parkdale Avenue. In the block between Burnside and Lyndale there are both a 6 storey apartment at 131 Parkdale, and an 8 storey apartment at 151 Parkdale. There is a 7 storey apartment at 191 Parkdale in the block between Lyndale and the transitway and the new 4 storey high rise 'Soho' building which houses 124 apartment units located at 215 Parkdale Avenue.

To the east of the Subject Property are three (3) other high-rise apartments. Immediately east of the Subject Property is a three-storey parking garage which services an eleven-story, 100-unit apartment building at 110 Forward Avenue. The residential portion of this tower is at the

intersection of Burnside Avenue and Forward Avenue. There is also a 12 storey apartment, housing 39 units, at 44 Emmerson Avenue.

Likewise, there is a large 15 storey apartment on the east side of Forward Avenue, just east of the site. Located to the immediate south are two (2) low rise apartment buildings and 2 single family homes.

### **3.0 POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

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#### **3.1 Provincial Policy Statement**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* spells out key Provincial interests with regard to land use planning. Decisions made by all approval authorities in the Province on planning applications must be consistent with the policies of the Statement.

Generally, the PPS focuses growth within settlement areas and away from areas that are either significant resources or may pose a significant threat to public health and safety.

The following is a brief commentary on the application with regard to the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement.

Part I of the PPS sets out Provincial policies on land use.

Section 1.1.3.1 indicates that settlement areas are to be the focus of growth. The subject lands are within Ottawa's Urban Area, a settlement area, and its development should be promoted as per the PPS.

Section 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns in settlement areas shall have densities and land uses that efficiently use land appropriately for the services that are available. Brigil's proposed development presents appropriate land uses and densities that make efficient use of the land and of the available municipal services.

Section 1.1.3.7 indicates that new development should take place adjacent to the existing built up area. The proposed development is directly adjacent to existing development.

Section II of the PPS calls for the protection of natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral and cultural, and archaeological resources. No natural heritage features have been identified on the subject lands.

Section 3 of the PPS requires that development be directed away from areas of natural and man-made hazards. There are no natural or human-made hazards on the subject lands.

Brigil's proposed residential development is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The proposed revisions to the PPS, draft at the time of this report, do not include any changes that would affect the consistency of this application.

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## 3.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan

The City of Ottawa Official Plan, adopted by City Council in May 2003, has been updated and amended numerous times by both Council and the Ontario Municipal Board. For the purposes of this planning rationale, the on-line consolidated version of the Official Plan, including Amendments No. 150 and 180, were used.

The Subject Site is located within the urban boundary of the City of Ottawa and is part of the settlement area for the City. Schedule 'B' of the Official Plan shows the site designated as Mixed Use Centre (refer to Figure 5) within the Urban Area.

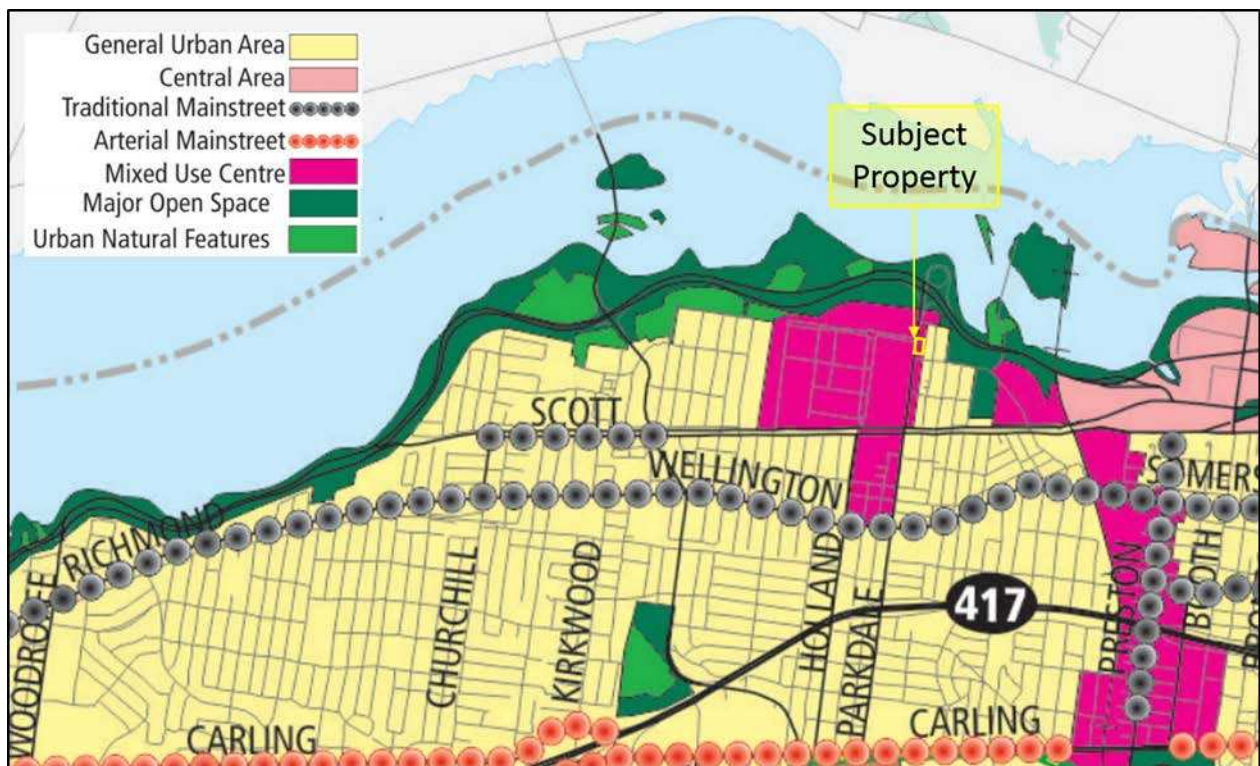


Figure 5 - City of Ottawa Official Plan, Schedule B: Urban Policy Area

The City's growth strategy supports infill development and other intensification within the Urban Area, and in particular, within the Mixed Use Centres (MUC), in a manner that enhances and complements existing desirable characteristics to ensure the long-term vitality of the many existing communities that make up the City. Development that is transit-supportive such as high-density residential uses are encouraged. The Official Plan considers buildings of 10 storeys or more as high rises.

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The MUC designation in the OP applies very specifically to areas that have been identified as strategic locations on the rapid-transit network and which lie adjacent to major roads. The City has identified very few of these areas, each of which is clearly intended to be developed extensively. The policy for these lands notes:

"They act as focal points of activity, both within their respective communities and within the larger municipal structure. Mixed-Use Centres constitute a critical element in the City's growth management strategy, being areas with high potential to achieve compact and mixed-use development. They are limited in number and represent opportunities for substantial growth."

The intent of the Official Plan has been recognized through the zoning, which is already in place, to permit the development of high-rise apartments. The 99 Parkdale Avenue building is a compact vertical form, which is more respectful than a large horizontal mass when examining the views of residents in the existing tower which face towards the west.

The proposed development will introduce a significant landmark building, which is a clear objective of the City's High Rise Guidelines. The Subject Property is found at the end of the main east-west collector road for Tunney's Pasture, thus introducing a significant architectural statement building at the end of Colombine Driveway. This positional approach is similar to the layout within the Tunney's Pasture complex where the Brooke Claxton office building was sited at the end of Tunney's Pasture Driveway. The dual towers at 99 and 121 Parkdale also provide an excellent statement when viewed from the Parkway. This continuation and reinforcing of a pattern of development is also an implementation of the High-Rise guidelines.

The proposed building will be designed to provide an interesting form to implement the Guidelines for High Rises. The tower has been offset to the north of the site to lessen the impact of the tower on views for those to the east (110 Forward Avenue). The tower has purposely been placed opposite the parking structure of 110 Forward Avenue and not opposite the residential portion of the building. The tower is also adjacent to the parking garage for the building to the north at 50 Emmerson Ave.

Section 5.2.6 of the Official Plan requires all new development on Design Control Highways, identified on Schedule "L", to be reviewed by the Urban Design Review Panel. It is our opinion that the proposed design meets the intent of the City's Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Housing, and will be presented to the Urban Design Review Panel.

The City's urban design guideline objectives include the concept of compatibility and relationship between high-rise buildings and their existing or planned context. This site is

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clearly a part of a higher density area of both the City and this local community. The proximity to employment, the transitway and the core all make this an appropriate site for high-density housing. This location also represents a perfect example of where higher density can be integrated into the community to provide housing in a building with a unique form, which can add to the character of the neighbourhood. The architect has been able to integrate parking, services, utilities, and public transit into the design of the building and the site, while creating a human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly street along Parkdale Avenue. The street front will implement the City's intent to provide for an attractive public space that contributes to liveable, safe and healthy communities.

The Guideline for High-rise Housing also promotes the development of high-rise buildings that contribute to views of the skyline and enhance orientation and the image of the City. The creation of this distinct building, at this location, will provide a focal point in the centre of this Mixed Use area.

The design also includes the opportunity for street trees and has units with direct access to the street to provide legible entrances and interaction with the street. This design contributes to making the building interact with the street. The entrance to the building lobby also includes a canopy for protection from the elements and a visual point of interest at the mid-point of the building.

### **3.3 Scott Street Community Design Plan and Scott Street Secondary Plan**

The Scott Street Community Design Plan (CDP) was considered by the City's Planning Committee on November 28, 2014 and subsequently approved by City Council on January 22, 2015. Official Plan Amendment No. 131 was brought forward with the purpose of implementing the components of the Scott Street Community Design Plan (CDP) by adding the Scott Street Secondary Plan to Volume 2A of the Ottawa Official Plan.

The Scott Street CDP was initiated in February 2013 to develop policies and guidelines to:

- Implement the strategic directions of the Official Plan such as:
  - mixed use and opportunities for growth,
  - high density (including, provisions for higher profile buildings),
  - attention to quality design and architecture, and
  - place-making and public realm.
- Clearly delineate a fixed Neighbourhood Line separating areas that are intended for significant intensification from established neighbourhoods where only small scale change is expected.



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- Direct greater intensification and high-rise buildings to the Mixed Use Centre, closest to the transit station.
- Transition Scott Street away from a physical barrier between the north and south sides towards a unifying element of the area and of the Transitway (future Light Rail Transit (LRT)).
- Ensure that development will occur in a manner that is supportive to the successful and sustained operation of the future LRT station to be located at the existing Tunney's Pasture bus rapid transit station.
- Guide the transition of Scott Street toward a stronger role in the communities it traverses in terms of its functions, design, densities and the public and recreational spaces that it can contribute.
- Establish a guide for future public work projects including mapping the infrastructure necessary to support the movement and connectivity of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists between the study area and its external context to achieve the above objectives.

The proposed development meets certain core principles identified in this CDP. Notwithstanding, as a site specific zoning was established for the subject property in 2012 with Urban exception 1929 and per Schedule 284 of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law, the approved zoning for the site predates the approval of the Scott Street Secondary Plan and Scott Street Community Design Plan.

### **3.4 Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Buildings**

The Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Buildings were approved by City Council on May 23, 2018. Per the City of Ottawa Official Plan, the proposed building is considered a high-rise building. The proposed development also meets the definition of a high-rise building in that it has three primary components that are integrated into the whole of the design: a base or podium; a middle or tower, and a top. The base is the primary interface with the city context of the street, people, and services. The tower is sized, shaped, orientated and clad to respond to functional and contextual requirements as well as the lifestyle of the residents. The top integrates the mechanical equipment, and contributes to sky views.

The proposed development meets several objectives of these urban design guidelines. As indicated above, a site specific zoning was established for the subject property in 2012 with Urban exception 1929 and per Schedule 284 of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law and the proposed development conforms to the Zoning By-law.

### **3.5 Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines**

The Urban Design Guidelines for Transit-Oriented Development document was approved by Council on September 26, 2007. The guidelines apply to all development throughout the City within a 600 m walking distance of a rapid transit stop or station to provide guidance to the proper development of these strategically located properties. The guidelines address six (6) components including: Land use; Layout; Built Form; Pedestrians and Cyclists; Vehicles and Parking, and; Streetscape and Environment.

The proposed development meets the following applicable design guidelines, among others:

- The proposed development includes transit-supportive land uses within a 600 m walking distance of a rapid transit station or stop including apartments. (Guideline 1)
- The proposal creates a multi-purpose destination by contributing a mix of housing types to the area where residents can meet many of their daily needs locally, thereby reducing the need to travel. (Guideline 3)
- The proposed development meets the intent of the Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines by providing for a higher density close to the rapid transit network. (Guideline 8)
- The proposed building's orientation will provide direct pedestrian access with no conflict with vehicles. (Guideline 10)
- The building steps back at the 3<sup>rd</sup> storey in order to maintain a more human scale along the sidewalk and to reduce shadow and wind impacts on the public street. (Guideline 11)
- The proposal respects a building setback along Parkdale that will be consistent with the abutting development at 121 Parkdale. This setback will help to define the street edge and provide space for pedestrian activity and landscaping. (Guideline 13)
- The building provides architectural variety on the lower storeys of the building to provide visual interest to pedestrians. (Guideline 14)
- The development incorporates windows and doors to make the pedestrian level façade of walls facing the street highly transparent in order to provide ease of entrance, visual interest and increased security through informal viewing. (Guideline 15)
- The design and location of the entrance to the underground parking lot minimizes the number of vehicle crossings over primary pedestrian routes and is not expected to impede pedestrian flow. (Guideline 16)
- The design of the ground floor will be appealing to pedestrians. (Guideline 28)
- Bicycle parking within the building and hence protected from the weather. There will also be a bicycle storage room at grade, accessed from the back of the building. (Guideline 29)
- The underground parking structure will be accessed by the rear of the building. (Guideline 35)

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- The access driveway will be provided by a Municipal Lane that will be shared by the abutting 121 Parkdale development, thereby helping to improve the pedestrian environment. (Guideline 36)
- The streetscape environment will feature tree planting and other landscaping measures to help reduce urban heat and create a more comfortable pedestrian environment. (Guideline 52)

### 3.6 City of Ottawa Zoning By-Law 2008-250

The subject site is currently zoned R5B [1929] S284-h – Residential Fifth Density Urban Exception 1929 subject to Schedule 284 and a Holding Provision, in the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2008-250 as shown on Figure 6.



Figure 6 - City of Ottawa Zoning Schedule (Geotatawa)

Permitted uses for said zone include several uses, but not limited to:

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • apartment dwelling, low rise    | • park                      |
| • apartment dwelling, mid rise    | • planned unit development  |
| • apartment dwelling, high rise * | • residential care facility |
| • bed and breakfast               | • retirement home           |
| • detached dwelling               | • rooming house             |
| • diplomatic mission              | • secondary dwelling unit   |
| • duplex dwelling                 | • semi-detached dwelling    |
| • dwelling unit                   | • shelter                   |
| • group home                      | • stacked dwelling          |
| • home-based business             | • three-unit dwelling       |
| • home-based daycare              | • townhouse dwelling        |
| • linked-detached dwelling        | • urban agriculture         |

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Specific podium and tower heights as well as podium and tower setbacks were incorporated into the Zoning By-law as Schedule 284 (see figure 7).

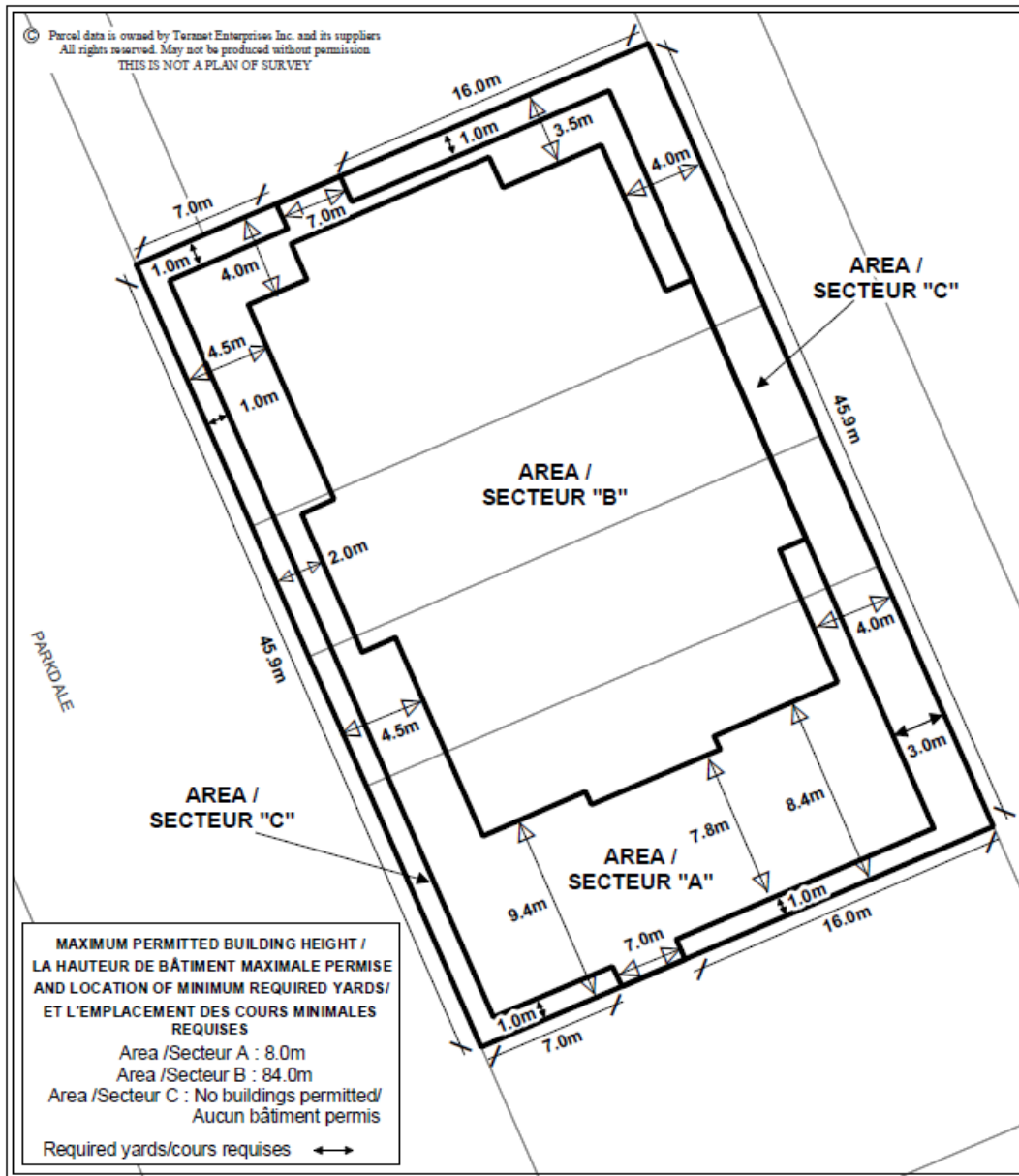


Figure 7 - Zoning Schedule 284

The proposed Site Plan has been designed to comply with the zoning standards of the R5B [1929] S284-h zone, specific heights and setbacks of Schedule 284 and all other relevant provisions including the General, Parking and Loading requirements. The holding-h provision will need to be lifted once Site Plan approval is granted in accordance with the provisions of Exception 1929.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

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The development of a residential apartment building at 99 Parkdale Avenue is a strategic response to a unique site within the context of the urban centre of Ottawa.

From a planning perspective, the subject site is located strategically with respect to road, transit, cycling and pedestrian forms of transportation. It is also located within close proximity to a mixed-use community and is designated as a mixed-use centre.

This surrounding context encourages a building that enhances intensification objectives while responding to the urban design guidelines for “Transit-Oriented Development” and “Urban Design Guidelines for High-Rise Housing”.

The building Brigil is proposing will be a 28-storey tower on top of 2 storey podium abutting and connected to their 32-storey mixed-use apartment tower which is currently under construction at 121 Parkdale Avenue. The building at 99 Parkdale will have 220 units with an underground parking garage entrance and amenities being shared with 121 Parkdale.

It is our professional planning opinion that the proposed Site Plan constitutes good planning and is appropriate.

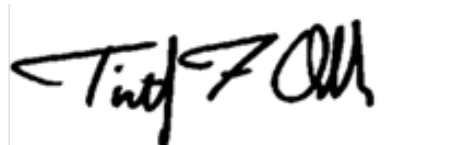
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