

Planning Rationale in Support of Application for Site Plan Control



**1994 St. Joseph Boulevard
City of Ottawa**

Prepared by:

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in collaboration
with
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Woodman Architect & Associates Ltd. on behalf of its client, M.J. Pulickal Holdings Inc. (the "Applicant"), to prepare a Design Brief in support of the redevelopment of the property known municipally as 1994 St. Joseph Boulevard (the "Subject Property"), in Innes Ward (Ward 2) of the City of Ottawa.

The Applicant's proposal is to construct a two-storey building to be occupied by a personal service business with parking to be contained at grade on the east and south sides of the new structure (collectively the "Proposed Development").

We are given to understand that the Proposed Development triggers an Application for Site Plan Control—Application for New Development, Standard Non-Rural (Staff Approval, No Public Consultation).

The Subject Property is legally described as:

PT LT 6, CON 1 OF, PART 4, 5R2697; PT RDAL BTN CONS 1 OF & 2 OF, PART 2, 5R6397, AS CLOSED BY BYLAW NS164061; S/T NS176236 GLOUCESTER (PIN 044170105)

The Subject Property consists of a roughly rectangular-shaped vacant lot with 31.34 metres of frontage on the south side of St Joseph Boulevard, just east of Jeanne D'Arc Boulevard South. St. Joseph Boulevard is an undivided 4-lane roadway in front of the Subject Property. At the intersection with Jeanne D'Arc Boulevard South there is an elevated median, which marks the entrance to a multi-lane roundabout, which was constructed about 10 year ago.

The adjacent land uses are described as follows:

- To the north: A retail strip plaza on the north side of St. Joseph Blvd. containing multiple commercial retail units.
- To the east: Dairy Queen and Cash Money contained within a single free-standing structure which appears to be set back approximately 15 metres from the St. Joseph Boulevard sidewalk and approximately 9.5 from its northern property line.
- To the west: Petro-Canada gas station and convenience store with a handful of mature trees on its eastern border. A wood fence would appear to exist, roughly delineating the property line with the Subject Property.
- To the south: Multi-unit residential buildings, accessible from Notre-Dame Street which is to the east of the Dairy Queen / Cash Money building. Immediately abutting the southern property line of the Subject Property is surface parking for the lowrise residential building located at 6632 Notre-Dame Street.



Exhibit A: Google Earth Photos of the Subject Property (outlined in yellow)

Depicted below, in **Exhibit B**, are photographs of the Subject Property as seen from the south side of St. Joseph Boulevard. You will note a concrete pedestrian sidewalk runs along the south side of St. Joseph Boulevard and that there are hydro wires across the frontage of the Subject Property. There are currently depressed concrete curbs providing vehicular access to the Subject Property, on either side of an existing utility pole.



Exhibit B: Site Photographs

1.2 Description of Proposed Development

Exhibit C depicts an excerpt from the site plan drawing (SP01) which forms part of the submission package.

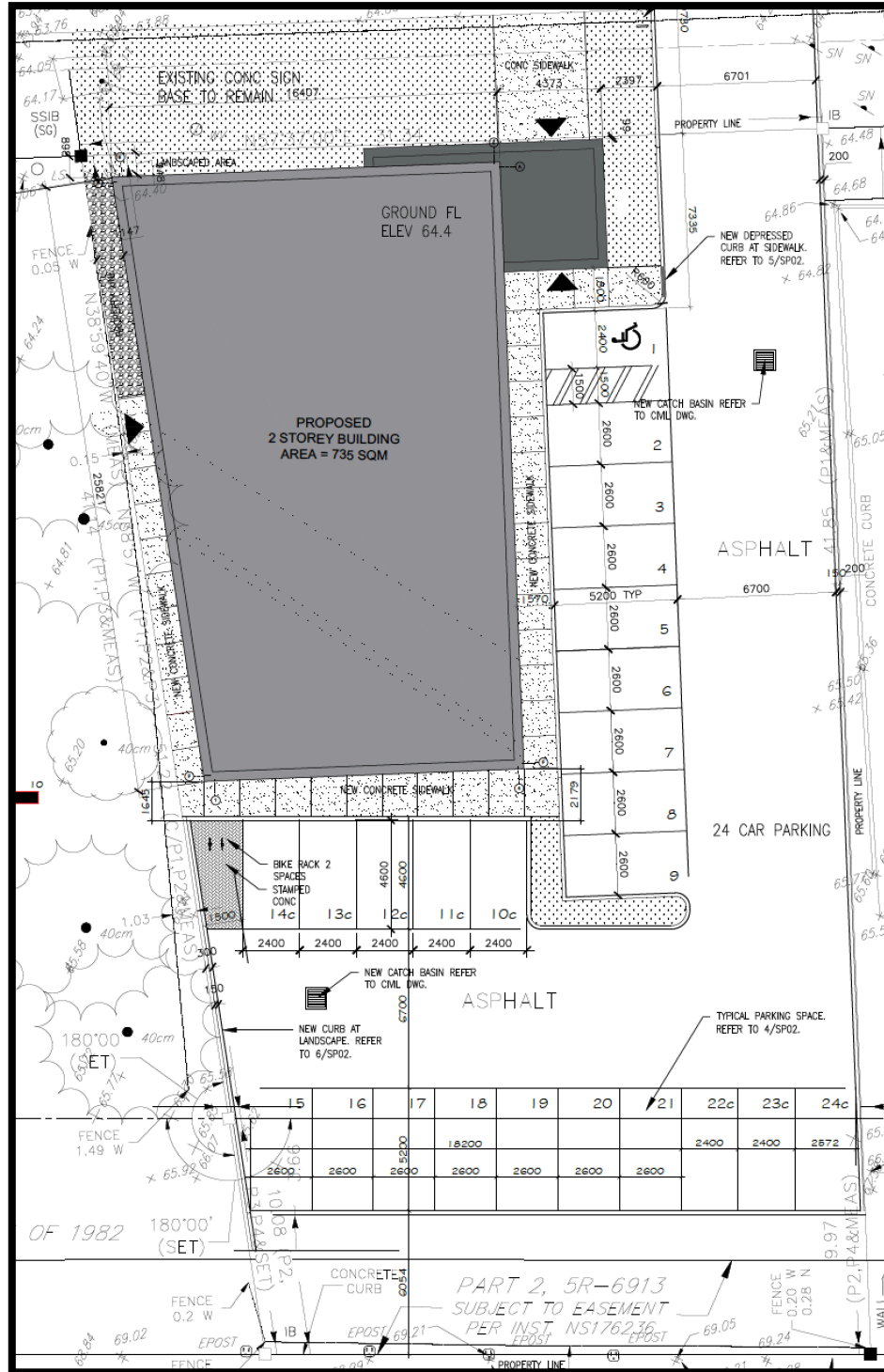
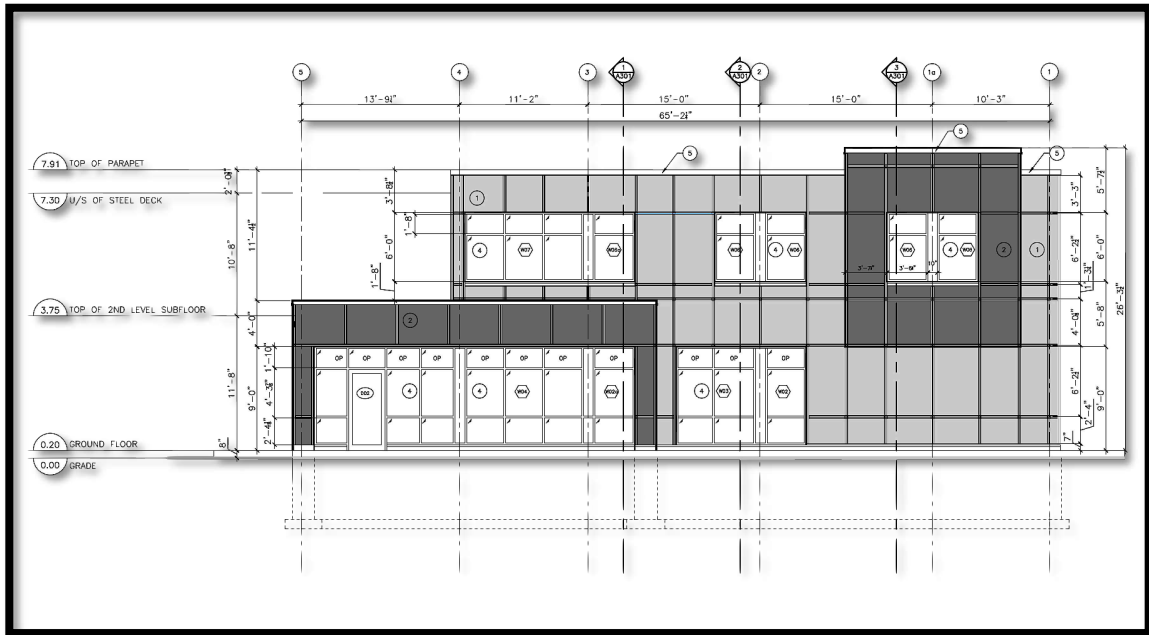


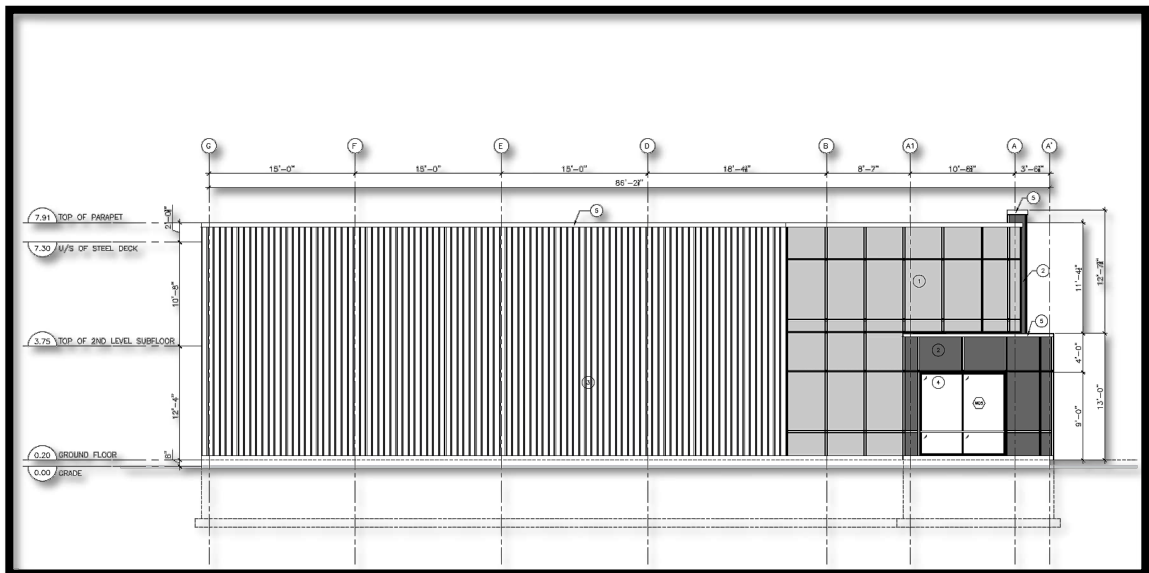
Exhibit C: Proposed Site Plan

Exhibit D depicts elevation drawings of the proposed building which features a prominent and inviting entrance design from St. Joseph Boulevard.

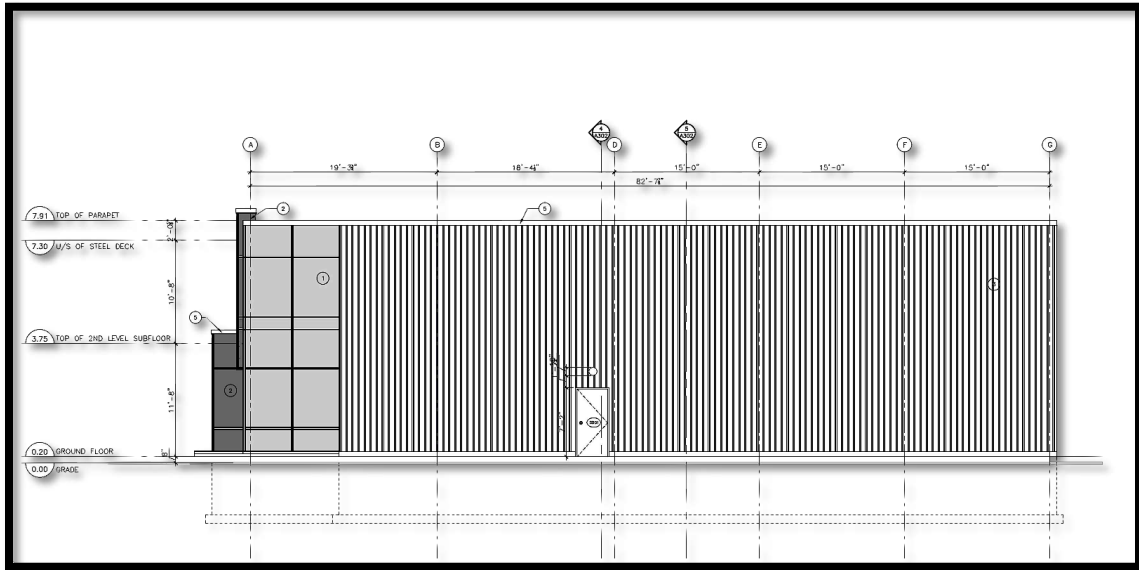
North Elevation (facing St. Joseph Boulevard)



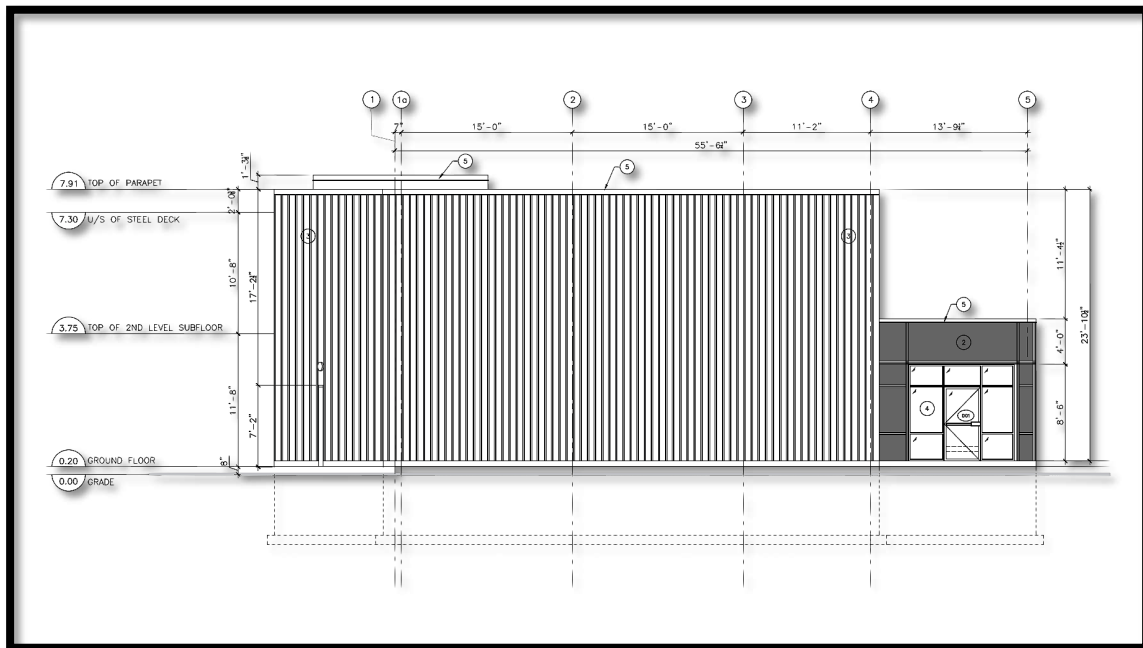
East Elevation (facing side yard parking lot)



West Elevation (facing Petro-Canada)



South Elevation (facing rear parking lot)



As noted above, the Proposed Development will consist of a slab-on-grade, 2-storey structure with 581.8m² of gross floor area, the entirety of which will be occupied by a personal service business (the "Building"). Vehicular access will be from a single 2-way approach at the eastern extremity of the frontage of the Subject Property with 24 surface parking stalls, including 2 accessible stalls. Pedestrian access to the Building from the parking lot will be available on the south and east sides and there will be direct pedestrian access to the north side of the Building from the sidewalk along St. Joseph Boulevard.

The perimeter of the Building is surrounded by an elevated concrete sidewalk. A bicycle storage rack is located on the south side of the building on the stamped asphalt portion of the parking lot.

2.0 Planning and Policy Context

2.1 Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act and came into effect May 1, 2020, replacing the Provincial Policy Statement issued April 30, 2014. It provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial “policy-led” planning system.

According to the PPS, the vision for Ontario's land use planning system is to carefully manage land to ensure appropriate development to satisfy current and future needs. In addition, land planning must promote efficient development patterns, which promote a mix of housing, employment, open spaces and multimodal transportation. The PPS ultimately aims to encourage communities that are economically strong, environmentally sound, and that foster social wellbeing. The PPS sets a time horizon of up to 25 years during which time there should be a sufficient supply of land for housing, employment opportunities and other uses to meet the demand of communities. The supply of land is to be controlled through three mechanisms: redevelopment, intensification and designation of growth areas.

Section 1.1.1 of the PPS provides that “healthy, liveable and safe communities” can be sustained by promoting “efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term”.

According to Section 1.1.3.1 of the PPS, “settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development”. Settlement areas are defined as “urban areas and rural settlement areas within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets)” that are “built-up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses”. Section 1.1.3 of the PPS provides that “the vitality and regeneration of settlement areas is critical to the long-term economic prosperity of our communities.”

According to Section 1.1.3.2, land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which

- “efficiently use land and resources”;
- “are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion”;

According to Section 1.1.3.4, “appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.”

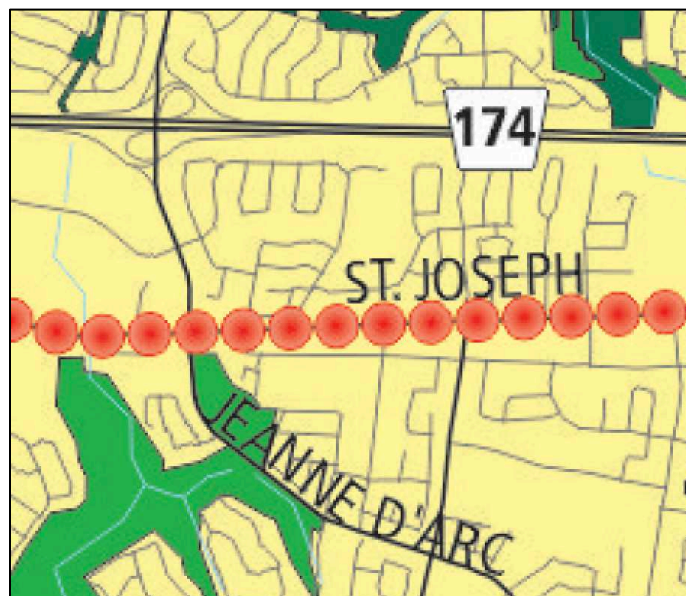
According to Section 1.7.1 long-term prosperity should be “supported by...promoting opportunities for economic development” and by “maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets.”

It is our opinion that these policies, as well as the PPS overall, are respected by the Proposed Development which will result in the revitalization of a vacant site along a mainstreet and which will introduce a personal service business in a building of compact form that will service the needs of the surrounding residential communities, thereby promoting social wellbeing and a healthy community.

The next section of this Planning Rationale addresses the Proposed Development in the context of the Official Plan, which according to Section 4.6 of the PPS, is the most important vehicle for implementation of the directives of the PPS.

2.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan

As depicted in **Exhibit E**, the Subject Property is contained within an area designated by the City of Ottawa Official Plan (the “OP”) as Arterial Mainstreet.



Arterial Mainstreet 

Urban Natural Features 

General Urban Area 

Exhibit E: Excerpt from City of Ottawa OP – Urban Policy Plan (Schedule B) with the Subject Property marked by a white star.

Section 3.6.3 of the OP indicates that Mainstreets are diverse corridors that “*traverse long areas of the city, connecting different communities and changing in character along their length*” and should be the focus of intensification. Redevelopment along Mainstreets must “*take into account character of the street and adjacent areas.*”

The OP identifies two general types of Mainstreets:

- Traditional Mainstreets which have pre-1945 characteristics. These are typically pedestrian friendly environments with on-street parking that consist of a tightly-knit urban fabric with small scale buildings set close to the street with narrow frontages.
- Arterial Mainstreets which have post-1945 characteristics. These automobile-oriented corridors typically consist of larger lots and buildings with varied setbacks and are envisioned to evolve through redevelopment and infill with a higher-density building format that encloses and defines the street edge, creating an improved pedestrian environment.

The Arterial Mainstreet designation permits a broad range of uses including retail and service commercial uses, residential, offices and institutional uses “*that may be mixed in individual buildings or occur side by side in separate buildings.*” Furthermore, the policies of Section 3.6.3 encourage redevelopment and infill. It is our view that the Proposed Development is a modest form of intensification and that the proposed building format satisfies the policies of the OP by enclosing and defining the edge of St. Joseph Boulevard by providing direct pedestrian access to the sidewalk.

Development proposals on Mainstreets will be evaluated in the context of the Design Objectives and Principles set out in Section 2.5.1 as well as the Compatibility policies in Section 4.11 of the OP.

Compatible development, according to Section 2.5.1 of the OP, means development that, “*although it is not necessarily the same as or similar to existing buildings in the vicinity, can enhance an established community through good design and innovation and coexists with existing development without causing undue adverse impact on surrounding properties*”. In our view, the Proposed Development presents a welcome departure from much of the aging streetscape along certain sections of St. Joseph Boulevard which consists of various forms of commercial developments that are separated from the street edge by expansive parking lots. That being said, the modest size and welcoming design of the Building can coexist with the existing fabric of development and will be complementary to the attractive landscaped roundabout at the intersection of St. Joseph Boulevard and Jeanne D’Arc Boulevard.

Section 4.11 of the OP sets out objective criteria to evaluate compatibility in order to ensure high quality urban design. Our commentary with respect to these criteria, as they relate to the Building, are as follows:

- The principal façade and entrance of the Building is oriented to St. Joseph Boulevard and features plentiful glazing;
- The architectural design accentuates the main building entrances as they protrude from the mass of the two-storey structure and provide an inviting interface with the public realm;
- A variety of colours and materials are evident in the architect’s renderings which add an element of character to the surrounding area which is one of the important gateways to the St. Joseph Boulevard corridor.
- While the Building has greater massing than the structures on either side of it, there is sufficient separation distance such that the impact is mitigated.

Accordingly, it is our view that the design is an appropriate form of development for the Subject Property and is compatible with the existing fabric of development on St. Joseph Boulevard.

Pursuant to Schedule E (Urban Road Network) of the OP, St. Joseph Boulevard is designated as Existing Arterial roadways. Annex 1 of the OP identifies the protected rights-of-way sufficient to provide for streetscape elements and to meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Per Annex 1 of the OP, St. Joseph Boulevard, from the western limit of the East Urban Community to Edgar Brault Street is classified as an urban arterial roadway with a 32 metre protected right-of-way. Based on our measurements using the GeoOttawa website, it would appear that right-of-way is approximately 34 metres and accordingly the intended widening of St. Joseph Boulevard has already been taken and is thus accounted for in the design.

In the summary, it is our view that the Proposed Development complies with the policies of the OP.

2.3 Urban Design Guidelines for Development along Arterial Mainstreets

The Urban Design Guidelines for Development along Arterial Mainstreets were approved by City Council on May 24, 2006. These guidelines set out the intention to facilitate the evolution of Arterial Mainstreets “over time to a more balanced vehicular and pedestrian environment with the streetscape defined and supported by buildings and landscape.”

Historically, development along Arterial Mainstreets was set back from the street and was characterized by large separation distances between buildings with large parking lots. The objective is to promote an improvement to this condition over time by introducing intensification and creating a more inviting pedestrian environment. As noted above and below, and as illustrated in **Exhibit F**, it is our opinion that the Proposed Development satisfies this objective.

Our assessment of the Urban Design Guidelines for Arterial Mainstreets in the context of the Proposed Development is as follows:

1. Streetscape: The Building is set close to the northern property line of the Subject Property, adjacent to a pedestrian sidewalk and within proximity to the public street edge;
2. Built Form: The Proposed Development is compatible with the general physical character of the surrounding land uses along the St. Joseph Boulevard corridor and enforces a coherent streetscape. Based on the renderings it would appear that a combination of glazing, projections, texture and colour are featured.
3. Pedestrians and Cyclists: Connections within the Proposed Development are clearly defined and thus minimize the possibility of conflict with vehicular traffic. Bicycle storage racks have been provided at the building entrance.
4. Vehicles and Parking: A single private approach reduces the extent of interruption along the sidewalk and the streetscape. Surface parking has been located at the side and rear of the Building and a consistent width of landscape and pedestrian areas is provided across the front of the Proposed Development.
5. Landscape and Environment: Trees, shrubs and other vegetation will be selected in consideration of their resiliency to urban conditions. A generous buffer of landscaping exists at the southern property line of the Proposed Development which borders a residential development.
6. Signs: Building-mounted signs will respect building scale, architectural features and established streetscape design objectives. Given the single-use nature of the Building, visual clutter is not expected to be an issue with respect to signage.
7. Servicing and Utilities: HVAC systems for the buildings will be roof-mounted. Garbage and recycling facilities will be within a utility room in the Building and will thus be screened from the arterial mainstreet and private properties to the rear.



Rendering of North (St. Joseph Boulevard) facade



Rendering of East facade

Exhibit F: Architect's Renderings

2.4 St. Joseph Boulevard Corridor Study

The St. Joseph Boulevard Corridor Study (the "Corridor Study") is the Council-approved guide for development and long-term growth of the St. Joseph Boulevard corridor. The Corridor Study, dated March 2003, was intended to *"establish a framework to guide the evolution of a new form of development along St. Joseph Boulevard to create a lively, vibrant and diverse district with a mix of places to live, work, shop and play."*

The Subject Property is within the Neighbourhood Commercial District which contains a wide range of commercial uses inclusive of auto repair facilities, offices, medical centres, retail/commercial, restaurants and even some older residential uses. The Corridor Study acknowledges the widely varying conditions along the street as a result of development that has occurred, on a site-by-site basis, over a few decades. Section 3.0 of the Corridor Study sets out a strategy for revitalization which involves a transition into a more urban model with intensification and an environment that is more inviting to pedestrians.

The Subject Property is located at one of the defined "gateways" to the corridor and the Corridor Study encourages new built form to establish a more urban character with buildings located close to the edge of the right-of-way to define the street edge. The Proposed Development is consistent with this directive and furthermore features a generous amount of glazing and an entrance with direct accessibility to a landscaped pedestrian zone. Surface parking has been located in such a manner that it will not dominate the street edge.

3.0 City of Ottawa Zoning By-law (the "Zoning By-law")

The Subject Property is zoned Arterial Mainstreet Subzone 3, AM3. Refer to **Exhibit G**.

The stated purpose of the Arterial Mainstreet Zone is to: *"accommodate a broad range of uses including retail, service commercial, offices, residential and institutional uses in mixed-use buildings or side by side in separate buildings in areas designated Arterial Mainstreet in the Official Plan" and to "impose development standards that will promote intensification while ensuring that they are compatible with the surrounding uses."*

The AM3 Subzone is referred to in the Zoning By-law as the "St. Joseph Boulevard Subzone" and it prohibits the following uses: automobile dealership, automobile rental establishment, car wash and gas bar.

The range of permitted non-residential uses within AM3 includes the following:

- ❖ animal care establishment
- ❖ animal hospital
- ❖ bank
- ❖ bar
- ❖ community health and resource centre
- ❖ convenience store
- ❖ day care
- ❖ instructional facility
- ❖ medical facility
- ❖ municipal service centre
- ❖ office
- ❖ personal service business
- ❖ place of assembly
- ❖ place of worship
- ❖ recreational and athletic facility

- ❖ research and development centre
- ❖ restaurant
- ❖ retail food store
- ❖ retail store
- ❖ school
- ❖ service and repair shop
- ❖ training center

The relevant performance provisions in AM3 are as follows:

Mechanism	Required	Provided	Compliance
Min. lot width with direct access to St. Joseph Blvd.	24.0 m	31.34 m	Yes
Max. front yard setback for non-residential building	4.0 m	0.12 m	Yes
Max. floor space index	3.0	$581.8 \text{ m}^2 / 1,459.6 \text{ m}^2 = 0.40$	Yes
Min. building height	Only applies to gateway sites		N/A
Min. rear yard setback	7.5 m	24.0 m	Yes
Min. interior side yard setback	No min.	0.9 m (west) 9.20 m (east)	Yes
A minimum of 50% of the width of a lot, measured at the building setback, must be occupied by a building face	$31.34 \text{ m} \times 50\% = 15.67 \text{ m}$	20.657 m Therefore 665 provided	Yes
A minimum of 50% of the length of the ground floor elevation must consist of openings such as windows and customer entrances	Building façade = 20.657 m Therefore 10.329 m required	Openings = 13.186 m Therefore 64% provided	Yes
Vehicle parking: personal service business	$3.4/100 \text{ m}^2 = 20$	24 (incl. 1 accessible)	Yes
Bicycle parking: personal service business	$1/500 \text{ m}^2 = 1.2$	2	Yes



Exhibit G: GeoOttawa map identifying the zoning for the Subject Property, marked by a white star, as Arterial Mainstreet Subzone 3, AM3.

The Proposed Development meets the requisite performance standards of the Zoning By-law and the proposed use (a personal service business) complies with the range of permitted non-residential uses. Given the vast amount of retail strip development along the St. Joseph Boulevard Corridor and given the extensive amount of retail floor space within the Place d'Orleans Mall, the proposed use should be promoted as a positive outcome for the St. Joseph Boulevard corridor.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Proposal is to develop the Subject Property, currently a vacant lot, with a 2-storey building to be occupied by a personal service business. This is a permitted use under the Arterial Mainstreet zoning designation for the Subject Property and is furthermore an entirely appropriate use for this section of St. Joseph Boulevard.

The Proposed Development will conform to the policies of the PPS and the OP and, in our view, will be highly favourable for the Subject Property and the surrounding area. Given the close proximity of the Subject Property to one of the key gateways to the St. Joseph Boulevard Corridor, the manner in which it is developed is of critical importance to the revitalization contemplated by the Corridor Study. The Building will envelop the street edge and will feature an inviting façade with prominent entrances that will reinforce the transition of the corridor to a more urban development fabric.

It is our professional opinion that development of the lands with the Proposed Development constitutes sound land use planning and will represent a desirable outcome for the Subject Property and, more generally, an incremental improvement to the St. Joseph Boulevard corridor.

Sincerely,

Woodman Architect & Associates Ltd.
In collaboration with
Holzman Consultants Inc.

Robert J. Woodman
OAA, OAQ, NSAA, MRAIC

Tino Tolot
B.E.D.S, B ARCH, OAA, MRAIC