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Planning Rationale for Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Application

245-267 Rochester Street



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Zoning By-Law Amendment & Site Plan Control

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

J.L. Richards and Associates Limited (Ltd.) has been retained by 3N Group Holdings Inc. to prepare a Planning Rationale and Design Brief in support of the proposed applications for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control to permit a 5-9 storey mixed-use, “apartment dwelling, mid-rise” (“mid-rise building”), at 245-267 Rochester Street. Section 1.1. of this Planning Rationale details the City’s requirements for this proposal, including the required planning applications.

Following a pre-application consultation meeting for an 11-storey high-rise building held on June 16th, 2022, involving City of Ottawa Staff and the Dalhousie Community Association, our client revised their proposal to a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building. With five (5) storeys proposed adjacent to the northerly property line and six (6) storeys proposed adjacent to the easterly property line, this proposal responds more appropriately to the local context and supports better height transition to the abutting mid-rise and low-rise properties. Section 3.1 of this Planning Rationale provides the proposal background.

Figure 1 shows the proposed redevelopment.



Figure 1: The proposed redevelopment at the northeast corner of Balsam and Rochester Streets

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The proposed redevelopment represents an excellent opportunity for city building and placemaking:

- It proposes the remediation and redevelopment of an underutilized, vacant brownfield site, where intensification is encouraged by provincial and municipal policy.
- It provides 130 purpose-built rental units, including a market-based range of unit types and sizes that offer living options for young professionals and young families.
- It offers a range of building heights through generous building step backs that ensure compatibility and provide appropriate transition to abutting mid-rise and low-rise properties.
- It provides high-quality architecture with building materiality that complements local character.
- It complements the existing mixed-used character of the surrounding area through the integration of a ground floor commercial (retail) use, that will offer local retail/ convenience.
- It promotes sustainability through extensive landscaping in outdoor and rooftop amenity spaces that are multi-purpose and multi-functional.
- It supports connectivity to multi-modal transportation network through the provision of bicycle parking beyond the minimum requirements and a reduction in vehicular parking, placing a greater reliance upon transit.

The subject property is found at the northeast corner of the intersection of Rochester Street and Balsam Street, within the Dalhousie Community, between the Little Italy and Centretown West Neighbourhoods, as shown in **Figure 2** below.

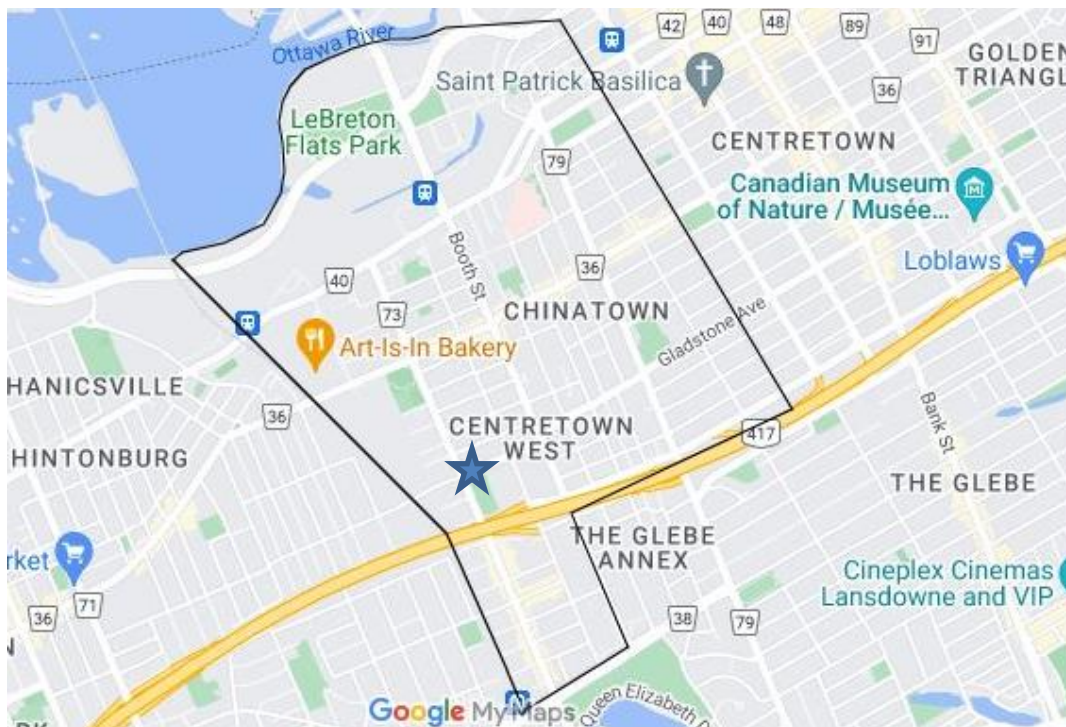


Figure 2: Dalhousie Community

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Section 2.2. of this Planning Rationale further explains the existing context. This area of the City is well-served by existing infrastructure, transit, parks and open spaces, community services and facilities and non-residential uses that would support the redevelopment and residential densification of the subject property. The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of uses and mix of building typologies, including multiple mid-rise buildings found within a one (1) block radius, a nearby high-rise building and a large City block to the southwest that has an as-of-right zoning permission for high-rise. The redevelopment of the subject property for 5-9 storey a mixed-use, mid-rise building is appropriate given that mid-rise development is typical of the local context. Given the presence of an abutting 7-storey mid-rise, the subject property resides on what can already be considered a mid-rise transition block, with Willow Street and Booth Street being the clear dividing line between mid-to-high rise buildings to the south and to the west, and the established low-rise neighbourhoods to the north and to the east. The proposed redevelopment also complements existing block patterns found within this area, where transition between different built forms (e.g. high-rise, mid-rise and low-rise) is commonly found on large City blocks.

The subject property is further considered a logical destination to support transition from the existing and emerging high-rise neighbourhoods found to the west of the subject property, within 400 metres (m) of the Corso Italia Light Rail Transit (LRT) station, and to the south of the subject property, along the Queensway (Hwy. 417). Mid-rise, by definition (5-9 storeys), is the most appropriate built form to provide transition between high-rise and low-rise contexts. Section 2.3 of this Planning Rationale further explains the evolving context, driven mainly by nearby development applications and policy. **Figure 3** below shows how the redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building achieves transition.

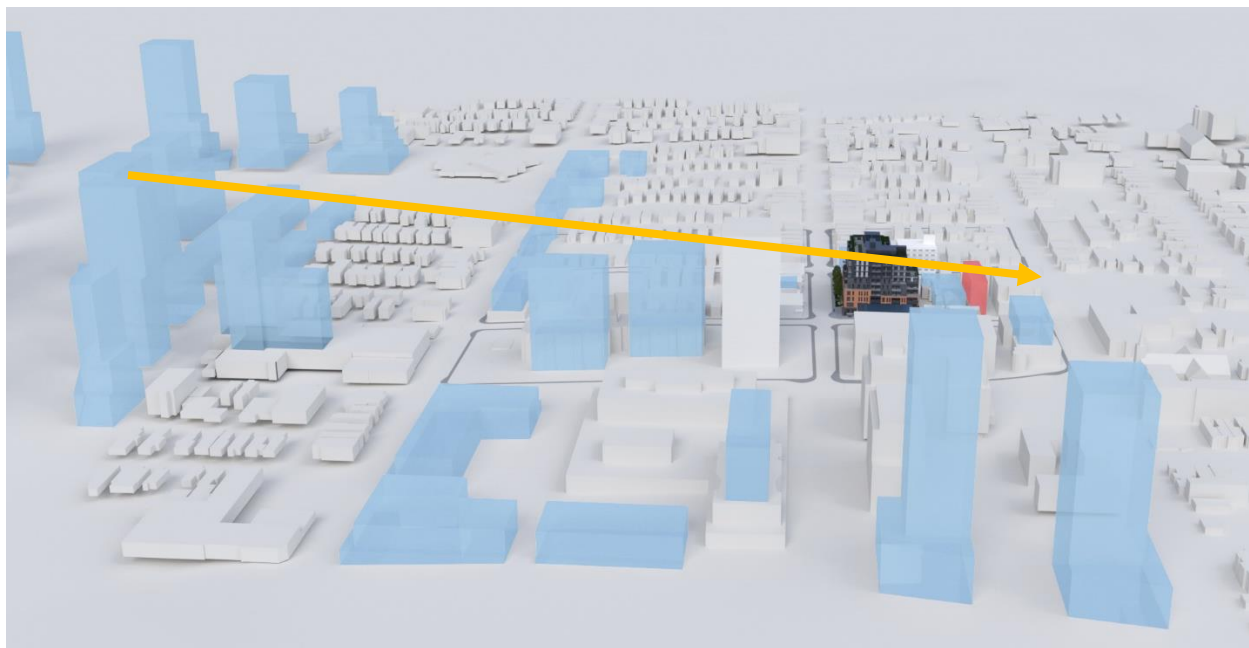


Figure 3: Transition Away from planned high-rise areas including the Corso Italia LRT Station, “Hub” and Queensway

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In addition to the existing and evolving context, we have reviewed the applicable policies and guidelines:

- The proposal is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020;
- The proposal conforms to both the existing Official Plan, 2003 as amended, as well as the City's New Official Plan, 2021, yet to be approved by the Minister;
- The proposal conforms to the general intent and provisions of Zoning By-law 2008-250, as amended; and
- The proposal adheres to the applicable guidelines of the City's Transit Oriented Development Guidelines.

Section 4.0. of this Planning Rationale further demonstrates how the proposed redevelopment adheres to the applicable policies and guidelines.

The proposed redevelopment achieves the City's policy objectives to encourage the redevelopment of underutilized brownfield sites, as well as to promote intensification within areas already characterised by taller buildings and in proximity to LRT Station areas. The proposed redevelopment will further support transition away from areas where high-rise development either exists or is encouraged based on what is considered allowable by policy and/or permitted by current zoning.

The proposed redevelopment of the subject property for a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building conforms to the applicable policies, responds to the existing and evolving height context, including nearby development applications, and will be consistent with the existing character and function of the City block on which the subject property resides.

It is therefore our professional opinion that the proposed redevelopment fits within this context and represents good land use planning.

1.1 Planning Applications & City Requirements

This section of the Planning Rationale explains the proposed planning applications and highlights the City of Ottawa's requirements for these applications, as has been communicated to our client to date.

The proposed planning applications are being submitted to the City of Ottawa during a transition period between the existing Official Plan No. 2003, as amended, and the City's New Official Plan 2021, adopted by City Council when they enacted By-Law no. 2021-386 on November 24th, 2021. The New Official Plan 2021 has not yet been approved by the Minister of Municipal Housing and Affairs and is therefore not in

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full force and effect. Regardless, the City's Transition Policies state that, for Zoning By-Law Amendments, both Official Plans are to be evaluated and Staff will apply the most restrictive policies of the two (2) policy documents.

We have reviewed the New Official Plan, 2021 document to identify if there were any new policies that would be more restrictive, or permissive of the redevelopment proposal. We have concluded that both Official Plans are equally permissive of the proposed redevelopment. Both the existing and new Official Plan documents allow for a height increase greater than four (4) storeys on a site when the area surrounding the site is already characterized by taller buildings. It is our professional opinion that the proposed redevelopment adheres to this policy given the existing height context, which includes multiple mid-rise buildings and a high-rise building found within a one (1) block radius. Additionally, there is a large City block zoned to permit taller buildings (high-rise), which is kitty corner to the subject property to the southwest. The proposed redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building is appropriate given that a mid-rise built form is typical of this context, including an abutting 7-storey mid-rise which resides on the same City block. Section 2.2 explains this context and Section 4.2 (Official Plan, 2003 as amended) and Section 4.3 (New Official Plan, 2021) explain the policy requirements.

We have further confirmed with Planning Staff that there is no requirement for an Official Plan Amendment. No requirement for an Official Plan Amendment was identified by Staff during the formal pre-application consultation meeting, confirmed in our review of the City's list of required plans and studies to deem these applications complete. The proposed redevelopment will therefore meet the policy requirements of both Official Plan 2003, as amended, and New Official Plan 2021.

Pursuant to Section 34 of the *Planning Act*, a Zoning By-law Amendment is required to permit the proposed use of a mixed-use, "apartment dwelling, mid-rise". Our client is seeking to rezone the subject property from "Residential Fourth Density (R4) Zone, Subzone 'UD', Urban Exception 1891, Schedule '275', Height 12.5 m - c" [R 4UD (1891) S275 H(12.5)-c] to "Residential Fifth Density (R5) Zone, Subzone 'B', Urban Exception XXXX, Schedule XXX" [R5B(XXXX) S(XXX)].

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment will establish a maximum building height of 5-9 storeys via a Zoning Schedule, which will form part of the proposed Site-Specific Zoning Exception. We propose the use of a site-specific zoning exception and a zoning schedule to accommodate various development standards related to the proposed redevelopment, including a reduced parking rate, maximum building heights, and minimum building setbacks and step backs. The proposed redevelopment will conform to the general intent of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-Law 2008-250. Section 4.5. of this Planning Rationale provides further details on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment.

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Pursuant to Section 41 of the *Planning Act*, a Site Plan Control Application is being submitted concurrently with the application for Zoning By-Law Amendment. On-site Parkland Dedication was not flagged as a requirement for the redevelopment of the subject property through the City's formal pre-application consultation process and there is a sufficient supply of adequate parkland found in the surrounding area. Section 2.5 of this Report provides a map which demonstrates that there is an adequate supply of parkland found in the surrounding area. Our client expects that parkland dedication will be resolved by way of cash-in-lieu, rather than the conveyance of land, in accordance with the existing Parkland Dedication By-law 2009-95, as amended. This requirement will be resolved through the Site Plan Control Approval process.

We also understand that, following *Planning Act* changes stemming from Bill 108, that the City's Section 37 guidelines are being replaced by the City's Community Benefit Charges policy, which will require a contribution at the time of building permit based on the value of the land for all development proposals that are 5 storeys or over, in accordance with the below:

*Staff expect that the City's former Section 37 regime will be replaced with a “**Community Benefits Charge**” of 4% of the land value, following provincial Planning Act changes through Bill 108. This charge will be required for all buildings that are 5 or more storeys or 10 or more units and will be required at the time of building permit, unless the development is subject to an existing registered Section 37 agreement or has been issued a building permit.*

This Planning Rationale & Design brief satisfies the City's Terms of Reference for the Design Brief and responds to all preliminary comments received from Planning and Urban Design Staff. The existing Terms of Reference for the Design Brief only requires the review of urban design-oriented policies under Official Plan 2003, as amended. However, Section 4.6 of the New Official Plan has been evaluated for consistency and conformity. Section 4.3 of this Planning Rationale provides this analysis. Attendance at the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) is not required for the proposed redevelopment as the subject property does not fall within a design priority area under either the existing Official Plan, 2003, as amended, or the New Official Plan, 2021.

This Planning Rationale also satisfies the City's Terms of Reference for Planning Rationales, including an analysis of how the proposed redevelopment is consistent with Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 and how the proposed redevelopment achieves the City's applicable policies and design guidelines. All supporting studies and plans, as required by City Staff, have been provided to support the applications for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control (See Section 1.2). A public consultation strategy has also been developed in accordance with the City's requirements (See Section 1.3).

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1.2 Summary of Supporting Studies & Plans

The following studies and plans have been prepared in support of the applications for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control, as required by City of Ottawa staff:

- A Transportation Impact Assessment prepared by J.L. Richards & Associates Limited (Ltd.) and dated October 3rd, 2022;
- A Pedestrian Level Wind Study prepared by Gradient Wind and dated September 26th, 2022;
- A Transportation Noise Assessment prepared by Gradient Wind and dated September 27th, 2022;
- Site Plan, Floor Plans and Elevations prepared by Simmonds Architecture and all dated October 7th, 2022;
- 3-D Architectural Renderings package prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, 2022;
- A Sun-Shadow Study prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, 2022;
- A Topographical Survey prepared by Farley, Smith & Denis Surveying Ltd., dated October 5th, 2022);
- Landscape Plans prepared by James B. Lennox & Associates Inc. and all dated October 7, 2022;
- A Full Servicing Brief, Servicing Plan, Grading & Drainage Plan, Roof Drainage Plan, Erosion and Sediment Plan, all prepared by D.B. Gray Engineering Inc. and all dated October 24, 2022;
- A Site Lighting Certificate (Package) prepared by Goodkey Weedmark Consulting Engineers and dated October 7, 2022;
- Phase 2 ESA and Record of Site Condition (RSC), prepared by Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc. and dated October 14th, 2022;
- A Geotechnical Investigation prepared by Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc. and dated October 17th, 2022; and
- A Planning Rationale, Design Brief and Public Consultation Strategy, prepared by J.L. Richards & Associates Limited (Ltd.) and dated October 27th, 2022.

We have reviewed the studies and plans above for consistency and can confirm that they meet the City's requirements. They further support the redevelopment of the subject property for a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building.

1.3 Public Consultation Strategy

The Public Consultation process for the required planning applications will follow the requirements of the *Planning Act* in relation to the required notices for submission and Public Meeting as set out in the Act for

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the Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control application. These steps are the responsibility of the City of Ottawa and will be co-ordinated with our team.

A Public Consultation Strategy is planned to ensure the adequate consultation of members of the community. At the time of application submission, the Province of Ontario is not in a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, but certain measures are still in place. As such, some in-person meetings and open houses may take place, but many will continue via virtual / online consultations for community members who do not feel safe. Accordingly, some components of the strategy will take place in person, while others will be adjusted to include more virtual connections.

Our client has reached out to nearby residents and has received positive feedback from the community on the redevelopment proposal, including the ground floor commercial component. The project team has completed the required Pre-application Consultation meeting with the City of Ottawa staff to identify the studies required to support the required applications, as noted above. The Dalhousie Community Association was also present for the discussion.

Our team will continue to reach out to the Councillor's Office, the surrounding BIA's and the Dalhousie Community Association to continue the discussions related to the proposal. Specifically, our team will work with Staff and the Councillor's Office to plan and facilitate a public open house.

The following steps in the consultation strategy are proposed following submission and receipt of a deemed complete letter from the City of Ottawa planning lead assigned to these planning applications:

- Email notifications to the Councillor's Office;
- Email notifications to the community associations;
- Posting of public signage, to be completed by City staff;
- Ongoing outreach with the neighbours;
- Online submission of comments through the City's Development Applications Portal;
- Public Meeting/ Open House, co-ordinated with the Local Councillor;
- Statutory public meeting at Planning Committee for Zoning By-law Amendment.

In partnership with the City of Ottawa, all public engagement activities will comply with *Planning Act* requirements, including circulation of notices and the Statutory Public Meeting.

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2.0 THE CONTEXT

2.1 Subject Property Description

The Subject Property is municipally known as 247, 249, 261, 263, 267 Rochester Streets and 27 Balsam Street, found at the northeast corner of the intersection of Rochester and Balsam Streets, as shown in **Figure 4**. As a corner lot, the subject property fronts onto both Rochester Street and Balsam Street and is one (1) block removed from both Preston Street and Gladstone Avenue.



Figure 4: Subject Property Location

There are multiple legal descriptions associated with the Subject Property:

- LT 210, PL 14; OTTAWA/NEPEAN
- PT LT 260, PL 16 , PART 1 , 4R1493 , T/W N631371 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN
- PT LT 260, PL 16 , PART 2 , 4R1493 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN
- PT LT 261, PL 16 , AS IN NS1464 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN
- LT 261, PL 16 , EXCEPT NS1464 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN
- PT LT 259, PL 16 , BEING THE W1/2, S/T N329529 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN

The Survey Plan is shown as **Figure 5** below.

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Figure 5: Survey Plan

The subject property is approximately 0.1832 ha (1,832 m²) in size and is situated north of Balsam Street, east of Rochester Street, south of a commercial use and west of an abutting seven (7) storey mid-rise and an abutting low-rise (residential dwelling). The subject property has forty-one (41) metres of frontage along Balsam Street and a lot of depth of forty-nine (49) metres, along Rochester Street.

The subject property is currently vacant and the previous commercial buildings were recently demolished with the proper permits obtained. The subject property is an underutilized brownfield that is being remediated to allow for residential development. A Record of Site Condition (RSC) is being submitted to the Province and both the Phase II ESA and Geotechnical Investigation prepared by Rubicon Environmental support the proposed planning applications to permit the redevelopment of the subject property for residential use.

2.2 Surrounding Area Context (Existing)

The subject property is situated between the 'Little Italy' and 'Centretown West' neighbourhoods in downtown Ottawa, at the heart of the Dalhousie Community, as shown in **Figure 6** below.

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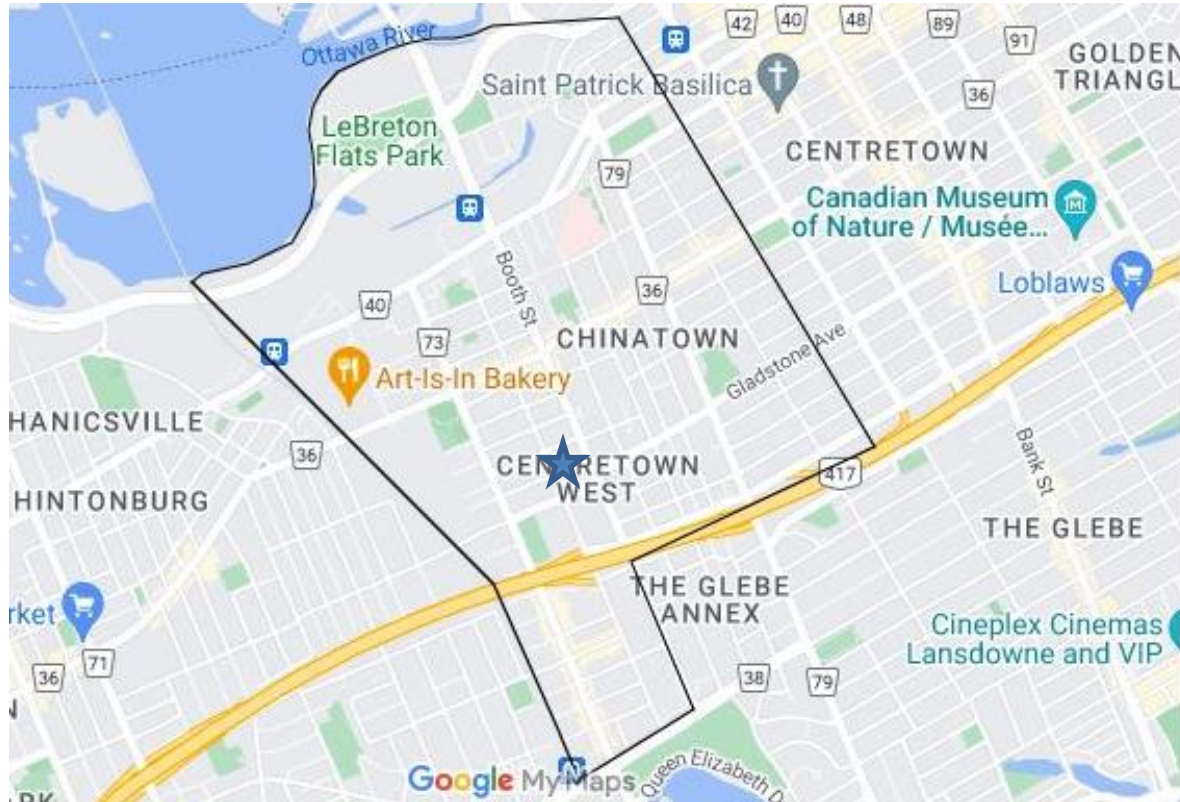


Figure 6: Subject Property Location within Dalhousie Community

The Dalhousie Community includes many neighbourhoods, including LeBreton Flats, Centretown West, Little Italy and Chinatown. This area of the City is experiencing immense development and growth pressures driven by the current housing crisis and policy direction from both the Province and the City of Ottawa, including several mid-to-high-rise development projects either planned and/or proposed along the Highway 417 and Preston Street Corridor, and within proximity of the LRT Stations currently under construction.

The subject property is in an area of the City where people want to live, work and play.

The subject property resides at the northeast corner of the intersection of Balsam and Rochester Streets.

Figure 7 below shows the aerial views of the site.

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Figure 7: Views of the Subject Property

The area surrounding the subject property is characterized by a mix of uses and mix of building typologies including low, mid and high-rise residential buildings. In the surrounding area, there are also mixed-use buildings, office buildings, commercial buildings and institutional uses, such as churches, schools and recreational centres.

This area of the City is well-served by existing infrastructure, transit, parks and open spaces, community services and facilities and non-residential uses that would support the redevelopment and residential densification of the subject property. The subject property is found at the edge of the 400 m radius of the Corso Italia LRT Station (under construction) and is within a short walking distance (550 m) as per current GeoOttawa open data. Section 2.4 further discusses proximity to the local transportation network and Section 2.5 discusses proximity to existing community services and facilities.

Gladstone Avenue and Preston Street are traditional main streets, housing a range of businesses that cater to local residents and tourists with a range of goods and services, forming the backbone of a strong local economy which is deeply cherished and significant to Ottawa's history. Medium-sized retail will continue to be prioritized along Preston Street and Gladstone Avenue, while the surrounding neighbourhoods are appropriate for more affordable, small-scale retail and local convenience options.

The surrounding neighbourhood is truly characterized by a mix of uses, as further discussed in 2.6 of this Planning Rationale.

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Infill and residential intensification have gradually occurred over the last decade within the area immediately surrounding the subject property, including the recently constructed 3-6 storey Ottawa Community Housing project found to the south, across Balsam Street. The surrounding area is already characterized by taller buildings, including five (5) residential buildings within a one (1) block radius that exceed four (4) storeys in building height, ranging between 6-21 storeys, as shown in **Figure 8** below.



Figure 8: Immediate Surrounding Height Context. Southeast facing view.

Four (4) of these buildings are mid-rise, including a 7-storey mid-rise that abuts the subject property to the east. This 7-storey mid-rise building could be redeveloped again for a 7-storey mid-rise building in the future based on this building height being grandfathered (legal non-complying). The redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building is appropriate given that mid-rise development is typical of this context, especially within a one (1) block radius.

One (1) building is a 21-storey high-rise that resides on a very large City block, extending between Rochester (east) and Preston (west). This entire property is zoned Residential Fifth Density Zone, Urban Exception "913", Height (55) [R5B(913) H(55)], which permits high-rise development up to a maximum building height of 55 metres (m). On this same block resides two, six (6) storey mid-rise buildings. The entire block could be redeveloped for multiple high-rise buildings based on the as-of-right zoning permissions for building height (55 m). This detail forms a key part of the existing local height context.

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The surrounding area is therefore defined by a mix of building typologies and uses, including low-rise and mid-to-high rise development ranging in height between 6-21 storeys. Low-rise development, four (4) storeys and under, only becomes the predominant form development north of Willow Street and east of Booth Street. These streets are considered the clear dividing lines between mid-to-high rise and low-rise contexts. The subject property falls within a natural “transition” area due to the existing character of the surrounding area and the current character of the block upon which the subject property resides, which again includes a 7-storey mid-rise building. The development of another mid-rise building would therefore be typical for this area of the City and for this block in particular.

This area is also characterized by large urban blocks where transition commonly occurs between different building typologies within the block. This creates blocks that house a mix of building typologies. In our opinion, it is important to consider how the future redevelopment of the subject property might relate to not only the existing character of the block on which it resides, but also the patterns of built-form transition already found on blocks within the surrounding area. **Figure 9** below shows nearby blocks and the transition lines established between different building typologies.



Figure 9: Block Character and Transition. East facing aerial view

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The block south of Balsam Street includes the recently developed Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) development, which provides transition between mid-rise and low-rise typologies within the block. The block to the southwest includes an existing 21-storey high-rise building which transitions to mid-rise, from Rochester Street to Preston Street.

The City block upon which the subject property resides is bounded by Willow Street to the north; Booth Street to the east; Balsam Street to the south; and Rochester to the west. This block is approximately 6,750 m² in total land area and already transitions between mid-rise and low-rise typologies. The subject property occupies approximately 27% of this land area and is the largest parcel recorded on the City block. The subject property commands more of the block than any other property found on the same block.

This City block has historically contained a mix of uses and building types, which already makes this City block a transitional piece of the urban fabric. The block is naturally divided into four quarters. This shows how the block currently transitions between different building heights. Further, Willow and Booth Streets are the clear dividing lines between this transition block, containing mid-rise and low-rise, and the established low-rise communities found to the north and to the east of this block, where no mid-rise buildings exist. In contrast, the existing mid-to-high rise communities are found south of Willow Street and west of Booth Street and includes the subject property. The future redevelopment of the subject property needs to respond to these two (2) contexts by providing a transitional building that will support the progression of the block in a way that is consistent with its current function and overall character.

Generally, transition between different building typologies can occur within large blocks, as there are normally multiple owners and land area is normally considered less of a constraint. The subject property is by no means “small” and can support a mid-rise built form. There is typically a need to provide multiple building typologies on a larger block to mitigate shadowing impacts and avoid creating a continuous wall of one type of built form. A mid-rise built form does not necessarily need to command a whole block within this type of context and replicability is not always a guaranteed outcome if taller buildings are appropriately designed to provide transition to lower typologies using podiums and building step backs. Providing transition between building typologies within a block also creates more opportunity for greening and mid-block connections. This demonstrates that the redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise would be appropriate based on existing block patterns found in this context.

In the surrounding area, Preston Street, Gladstone Avenue and Somerset Avenue will continue to be the priority destination for high-rise development, meaning that the adjacent neighbourhood blocks, normally found one (1) block over, play a critical role in providing transition from these streets to stable low-rise

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residential areas. The redevelopment of the subject property for a 5-9 mid-rise building will support this transition. The list below summarizes the abutting and surrounding land use context:

- **North:** Immediately north of the subject property is a two (2) storey commercial building, which is zoned to permit a maximum building height of four (4) storeys. Further north is Willow Street. On the opposite side of Willow Street is a stable, low-density residential neighbourhood, which continues north until Somerset.
- **East:** Abutting the subject property to the east is a 7-storey mid-rise apartment building and a site zoned to permit a building height of four (4) storeys. Booth street is found further east of the site. There is a range of housing types found along Booth Street, including small-scale retail, which is also sprinkled throughout the neighbourhood.
- **South:** To the south of the subject property, across Balsam Street, is a 3-6 storey Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) development. Southwest of the subject property is a 21-storey high-rise building and two (2) mid-rise residential apartments. Further south is Gladstone Avenue, an east-west major collector road. Further south of Gladstone Avenue are vacant Ottawa Community Housing parcels and institutional buildings, as well as the Piazza Dante neighbourhood park. The Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) lands, known as Rochester Heights, is a redevelopment in this area proposing mid-to-high rise buildings, located two (2) blocks from the subject property,
- **West:** There are low-density residential dwelling types found immediately west of the subject property, across Rochester Street. Less than 400 m further west of the subject property is the future Corso Italia LRT Station. Based on policy direction and development pressures, the lands west of Rochester Street, within 400 m of the Corso Italia LRT Station area, are anticipated to be intensified through primarily high-rise developments.

To further summarize the existing context, the subject property is in area of the City where people want to live, work and play, and where the directing policies, development pressures and the current housing crisis call for intensification, including purpose-built rental developments. The subject property is not within an area strictly characterized by low-rise. The subject property is within an area that is already characterized by taller buildings, including mid-to-high rise developments and an adjacent City block entirely zoned to permit high-rise. The subject property also resides on a large City block that already has the makings of a transition block. The redevelopment of this portion of the block for a mid-rise would be typical of this area and further consistent with the block patterns and building typologies found in the local context.

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2.3 Evolving Height Context: Development Applications & Policy

2.3.1 Nearby Development Applications

In our opinion, nearby development applications are critical to review to assess and better understand the evolving height context.

Figure 10 below shows the development applications that are considered “in the queue” with the City of Ottawa.

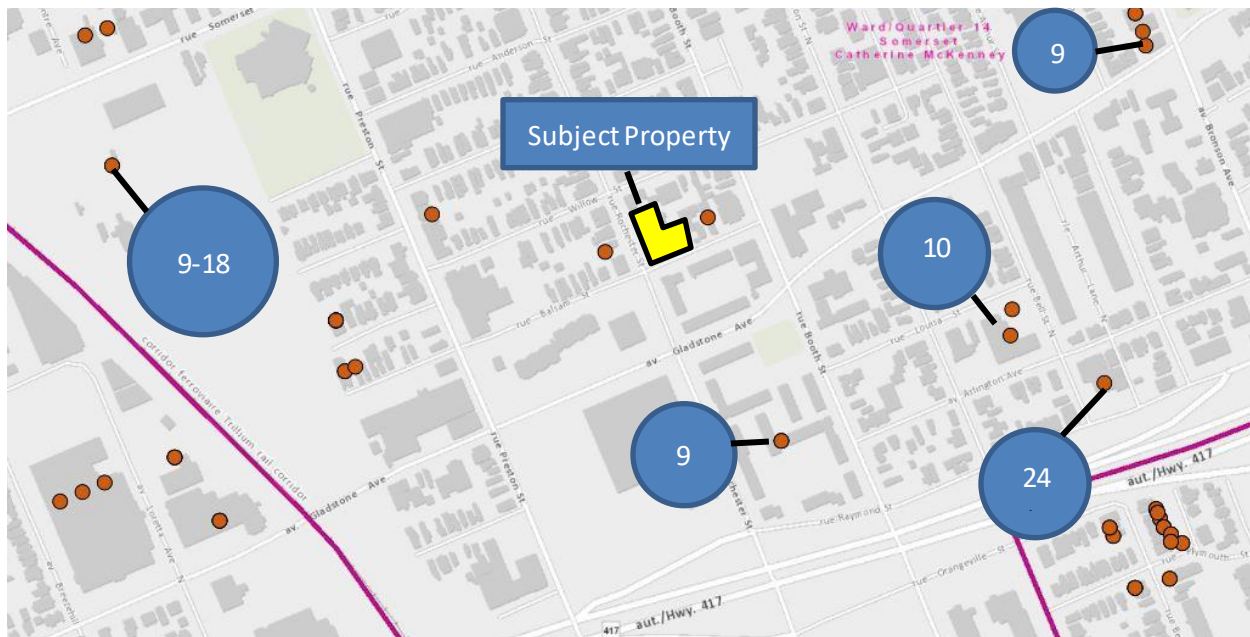


Figure 10: Nearby Development Applications and proposed building heights (storeys)

Figure 10 above shows the proposed heights of nearby development applications within the Dalhousie Community, which forms a part of the evolving height context. High-rise development is being contemplated and proposed in vicinity of the Corso Italia LRT Station and along the Queensway.

We understand that there was a previous Minor Zoning By-law Amendment (Fotenn) to permit a 5-storey mid-rise building at 13 Balsam Street, which resides on the same City block as the subject property. We understand that there is currently a Site Plan Control application for 3.5 storeys pending with the City of Ottawa. We have considered the previous rezoning request to permit a 5-storey to demonstrate that mid-rise development has been previously contemplated for this block. Simmonds Architecture has further showed the 5-storey massing on their submission materials to show how block progression could be achieved overtime because of the proposed redevelopment.

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The “bubble” showing “10” storeys in **Figure 10** above is 18 Louisa Street. A Zoning By-Law Amendment to permit an “apartment dwelling, high-rise”, of 10 storeys was recently approved by Council and an application for Site Plan Control is currently pending with the City of Ottawa. The proposed 10-storey building provides transition away from an existing 12-storey building (LIV Apartments) and will provide transition away from the Queensway, should sites abutting the north side of this highway be redeveloped for high-rise buildings greater than 10-storeys in building height.

It is safe to assume that high-rise development will proceed in this area given both the policies of the nearby Corso Italia Secondary Plan which allow up to 30 storeys in height along the north side of the Queensway and a recent application for Zoning By-Law Amendment that was filed with the City of Ottawa for a 24-storey high-rise building at 384 Arlington Avenue, as shown in **Figure 11** below.



Figure 11: Zoning By-law Amendment to permit 24-storeys at 384 Arlington Avenue

The proposal at 384 Arlington relies on the proposed 10-storey 18 Louisa Street and the existing 12-storey LIV apartments to justify an increase in height to 24-storeys without an Official Plan Amendment (OPA). This proposal is in an area of the City, north of the Queensway, that has not historically seen this

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scale of high-rise development, except for the existing 21-storey found immediately to the southwest of the subject property, across the intersection of Rochester and Balsam Street.

The proposed development at 18 Louisa Street is within a similar neighbourhood context as the subject property, as it is found within the Dalhousie Community, between the “Little Italy” and “Centretown West” neighbourhood, on the outskirts of the Corso Italia Secondary Plan. 18 Louisa Street also resides on a block that provides transition between different height contexts: high-rise and low-rise.

The example of 18 Louisa Street shows that high-rise/ mid-rise building typologies do not need to command an entire block. 18 Louisa Street does not constitute a full block redevelopment including a 10-storey building. The base area of the 10-storey building at 18 Louisa Street only commands approximately 1/3 of the City block upon which it resides, as shown in **Figure 12** below.



Figure 12: 18 Louisa Street block command and progression.

Although 18 Louisa Street and the Subject Property could be considered within a similar context, it is important to outline three major distinctions between the sites that should be noted:

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- 18 Louisa Street is a 750 m walking distance from the Corso Italia LRT Station, whereas the subject property is a 550 m walking distance from the Corso Italia LRT Station.
- 18 Louisa Street is 120 m from Gladstone Avenue, whereas the subject property is only a stone's throw away from this major collector road at approximately 80 m.
- Within a one (1) block radius of 18 Louisa, there is only one (1) existing building taller than four (4) storeys. In comparison, within a one (1) block radius of the subject property, there are five (5) buildings with building heights taller than four (4) storeys.

In comparison to 18 Louisa Street, the subject property resides on a larger City block and benefits from closer access to transit and immediate access to arterial and collector roads. The subject property is further within an area truly characterized by a range of taller buildings, between 6-21 storeys. These factors above also make the subject property a logical site for a 5-9 mid-rise building that supports transition.

Although compatibility and transition need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, the example of 18 Louisa Street shows that transition between different building typologies can occur within a City block and mid-to-high rise buildings do not need to command an entire block if they are carefully designed to facilitate transition to adjacent low-rise buildings.

2.3.2 Policy

Policy direction provided by the Corso Italia Secondary Plan and the City's New Official Plan, 2021, also illustrate the evolving height context.

The Corso Italia Secondary Plan was adopted under Official Plan 2003, as amended, on April 14, 2021. This policy has been readopted as a part of New Official Plan 2021.

Figure 13 below shows the Secondary Plan boundary and the maximum building heights permitted by the Schedule 'B' to the Corso Italia Secondary Plan.

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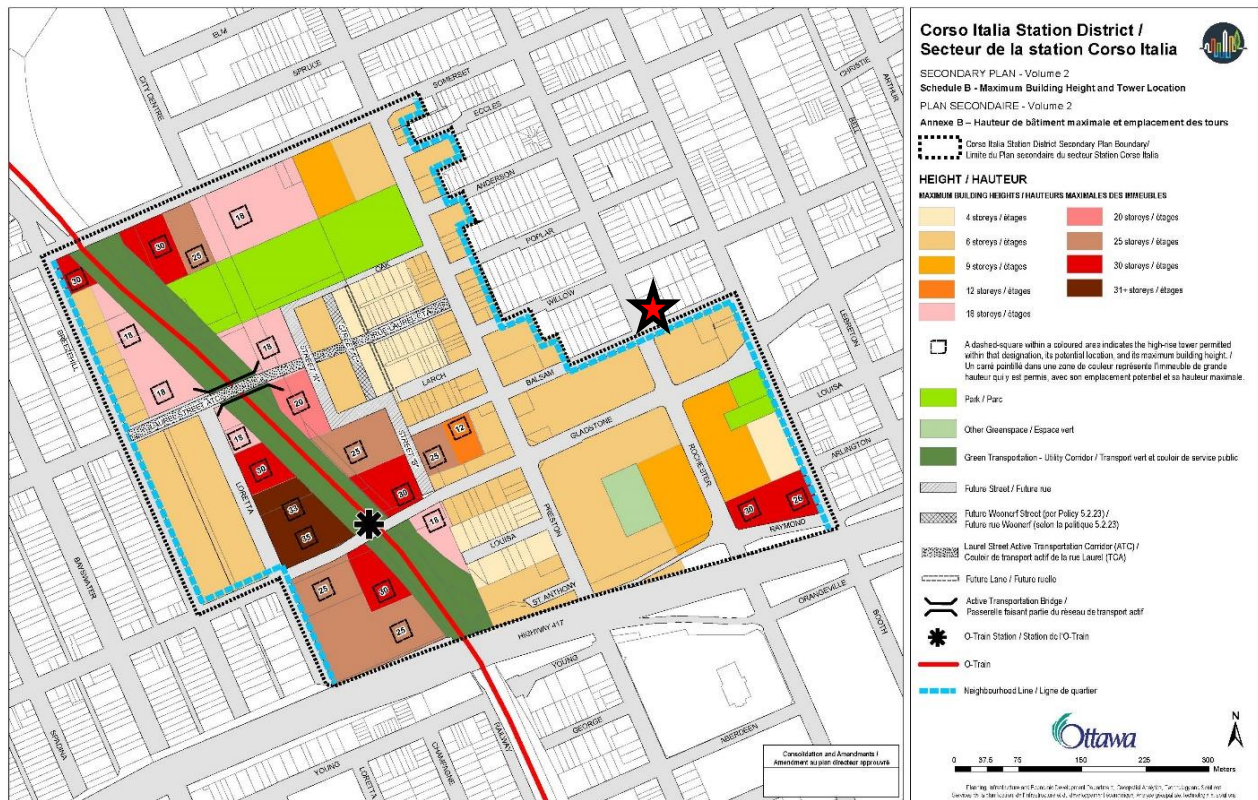


Figure 13: Maximum Building Heights from Schedule 'B' of the Corso Italia Secondary Plan

While the boundary of the Secondary Plan area stops at the centreline of Balsam Street, south of the subject property, the properties found within the Secondary Plan should be considered to get a deeper and fuller understanding of the context and neighbourhood character surrounding the subject property.

The proposed development complements the vision and goals of the secondary plan by creating a compact, livable, transit-oriented development that is vibrant, diverse, green and focuses on sustainable transportation as the primary means of mobility throughout the area.

The Corso Italia Secondary Plan generally shows that the greatest densities and heights (high-rise) should be located within 300-400 metres of the Corso Italia LRT Station, with mid-rise being the acceptable built form in the areas east of Preston and Rochester Street. This excludes the strip of land found immediately north of the Queensway, which permits high-rise, and the very large block to the southwest of the subject property, which could also be redeveloped for high-rise due to the current as-of-right zoning permission for a maximum building height of 55 metres (m). The proposed redevelopment generally complements the Secondary Plan vision for mid-rise being the appropriate built form to support transition in this area of the City, especially in the area east of Rochester Street.

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Figure 14 below shows Schedule B1 of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, as amended, which designates the subject property neighbourhood with an evolving overlay.

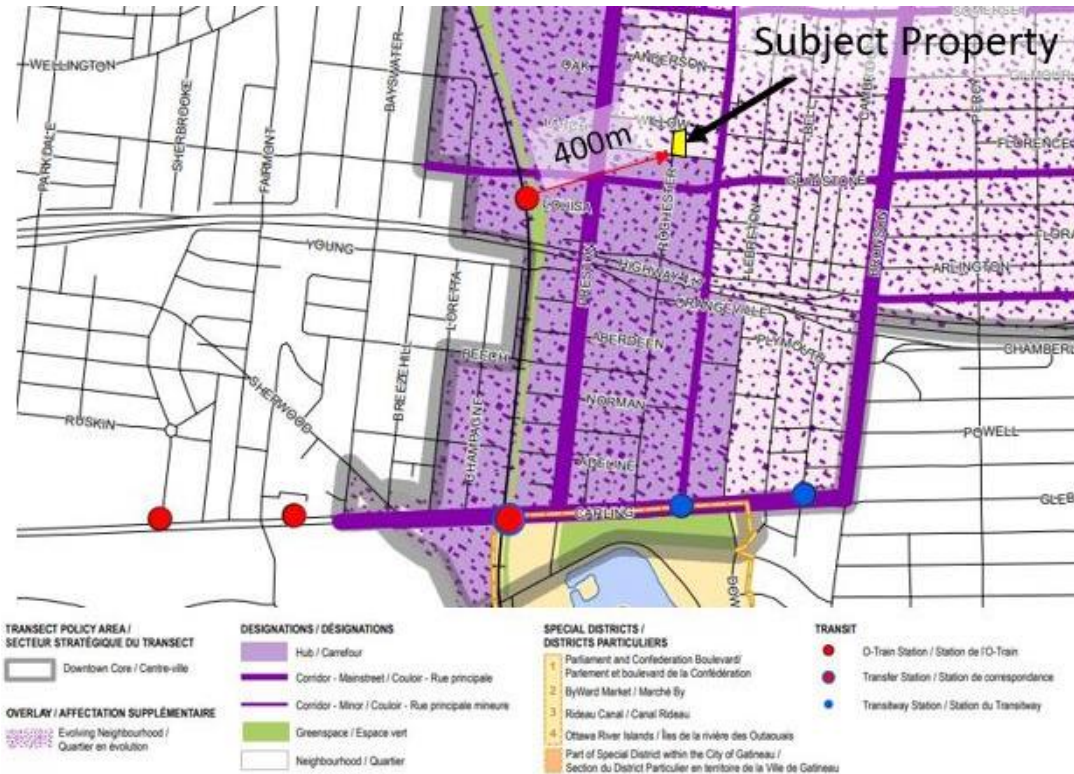


Figure 14: Schedule B1 of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, as amended.

The subject property abuts a “Hub” designation found within the Downtown Core Transect area, within the framework of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, as amended. The Downtown Core Transect policies for the Hub Designation are provided below:

Policy 5.1.3

1) High-rise buildings and High-rise 41+ may be permitted in the Downtown Core Hubs, subject to:

- Protected views specified in Subsection 4.6.2;
- Limits on building heights and massing established through secondary plans or area-specific policies, urban design policies in Subsection 4.6 or as a result of the application of heritage conservation policies in Subsection 4.5; and
- Resolution of any constraints in water, sewer and stormwater capacity.

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Policy 5.1.4

1) Maximum and minimum building heights in the Downtown Core where a Hub designation applies, except where a secondary plan permits or restricts otherwise, are as follows:

a) Up to 300 metre radius or 400 metres walking distance, whichever is greatest, of an existing or planned O-Train station, between 4 storeys and High-rise inclusive;

b) Despite Policy a), greater heights, in accordance with Subsection 5.1.3, Policy 1) may be considered subject to a zoning amendment on:

i) Lands that contain or are adjacent to, and within 100 metres walking distance of an O-Train station; or

ii) North of Nepean Street.

c) Outside the area described by a) and b), not less than 3 storeys and not more than 6 storeys;

and d) In order to provide a transition from the Hub to the adjacent built form, despite Policy c), on lands within and abutting the boundary of the Hub, heights may be restricted to the maximum height permitted by the Zoning By-law on the lands in the abutting designation.

Hubs in the Downtown Core Transect are the priority for high-rise development, with the abutting lands, residing within the “Neighbourhood Designation” and “Evolving Overlay”, being the most logical lands to support transition away from high-rise areas. The evolving overlay of the New Official Plan shows that abutting neighbourhoods and contexts are not divided by a hard line or boundary, such as a road or a Secondary Plan boundary. Rather, the evolving overlay, as per Section 5.6.1.1(1)(a) of the New Official Plan, 2021, recognizes that a gradual transition in built form and character needs to occur between contexts, such as the hub designation and more stable low-rise residential areas found in the neighbourhood designation. The subject property abuts the hub and is found one (1) block south of a stable low-rise neighbourhood. The redevelopment of the subject property should therefore facilitate transition from high-rise to low-rise. In the context of the New Official Plan, including the Urban Design policies of 4.6., a mid-rise built form is the most logical form of development to provide transition from the Hub designation. Any parcel within a Hub within the Downtown Core Transect could be considered for High-rise development in accordance with Policy 5.1.3. However, Policy 5.1.4 further provides that high-rise development be concentrated within a 300 metre (m) radius or a 400 metre (m) walking distance, whichever is the greater.

Properties within a 400 m walking distance of the Corso Italia LRT Station, which are currently restricted in building height by the Corso Italia Secondary Plan, could be granted a height increase in accordance with the policies of 5.1.3 and 5.1.4, subject to an Official Plan Amendment to the Corso Italia Secondary Plan. **Figure 15** below shows the potential high-rise properties near the subject property.

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Figure 15: Potential High-Rise Lots in vicinity of the subject property

As such, high-rise development is likely to occur as far east as Rochester Street, as it currently does, given both existing as-of-right zoning permissions for high-rise and the policy direction for hubs within the Downtown Core Transect. This evolving policy context needs to be closely examined to determine the appropriate building type for the subject property. Given the existing mid-rise typologies found on the blocks in the area east of Rochester and south of Willow Street, this area of the City will continue to be appropriate for mid-rise buildings, as will the “Rochester Heights” area found south of Gladstone Avenue, where nine (9) storeys mid-rise buildings are proposed. The redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building will ensure that this area of the City remains a transition area between the emerging high-rise areas to the west and to the south and the stable low-rise neighbourhoods found further to the east of Booth Street and north of Willow Street.

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As demonstrated throughout Section 2.3, intensification in the area east of the LRT corridor and north of Highway 417 (The “Queensway”), is generally encouraged by policy. Based on the imminent development pressures, the directing policies and the emerging context, including proposed and approved development applications, we anticipate that the area along the Queensway and the Corso Italia LRT Station will emerge as the priority areas for intensification through primarily high-rise development, as shown in **Figure 16**.



Figure 16: Neighbourhood Height Profile

Transition between these planned and emerging high-rise areas and the stable low-rise neighbourhoods will logically be achieved through the development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized development sites for mid-rise buildings, to preserve low-rise character in areas that are strictly considered “low-rise”. The redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building between 5-9 storeys will accomplish this.

In our opinion, the proposed redevelopment fits within both the existing and evolving context.

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2.4 Transportation Context

The location is desirable and supportive for intensification based on the site's proximity to nearby transit, roads, and cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. **Figure 17** below shows the transportation context based on:

- Schedule C (Primary Urban Cycling Network), Official Plan, 2003, as amended;
- Schedule D (Rapid Transit and Transit Priority Network), Official Plan, 2003, as amended: and
- Schedule F (Central Area/ Inner City Road Network), Official Plan, 2003, as amended:.



Figure 17: Transportation Context

The subject property resides just outside the 400 metres (m) radius of the Corso Italia LRT station and approximately 550 m in walking distance according to Google Maps. The planned Corso Italia Transit Station is part of the Phase 2 Trillium Line Extension, which will provide efficient and rapid transit connections between Riverside South (south), Bayview (north) and the Macdonald-Cartier Intentional Airport.

The station area is based on currently available GeoOttawa data, but we understand that the actual LRT platform is being constructed much closer to the northern edge of Gladstone Avenue. This would bring the subject property further into the 400 metre (m) radius of the Corso Italia LRT Station, as well as result

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in a reduced measured walking distance from the Corso Italia LRT Station to the subject property. The pedestrian connections to the Corso Italia LRT Station along existing sidewalks are safe and convenient.

In terms of existing access to transit, the nearest bus station is located at Gladstone and Rochester Avenue servicing OC Transpo Bus Routes #114 and #14. Bus stations for these two routes are located on both the north and south side of Gladstone Avenue, as shown in **Figure 18** below.

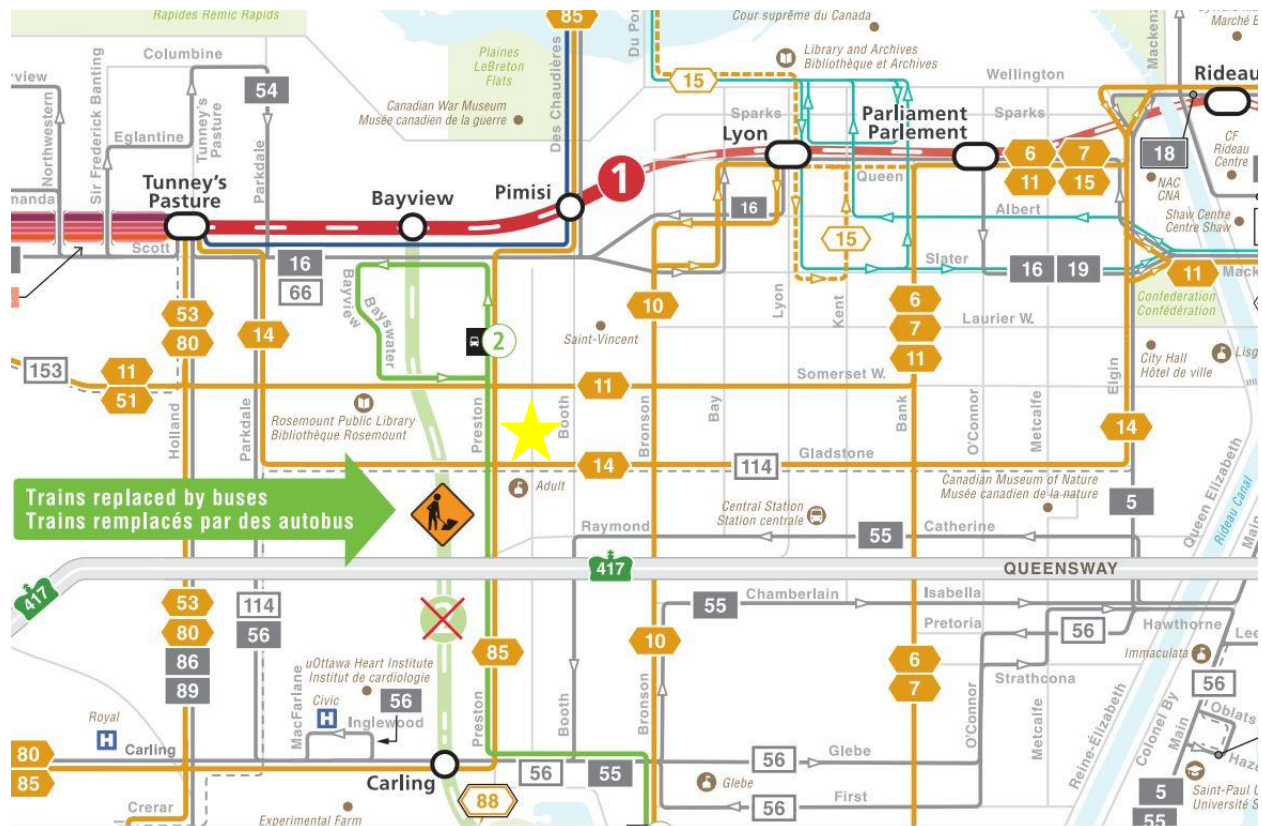


Figure 18: Access to Bus Transit

Bus Route #14 generally travels in an east-west direction, between St. Laurent O-Train Line 1 Station in the east and Tunney's Pasture O-Train Line 1 Station in the west. The route travels on a frequent schedule that is 15 minutes or better, providing connections for residents to several amenities that can not be easily accessed from O-Train Line 1. Bus Route #114 provides a local connection to residents with a handful of trips per day that travel in a south-east to north-west direction the Rideau Centre O-Train Line 1 Station at its east end and the Carlington neighbourhood at its terminus to the west. Further, another bus station is located southeast of the subject property at the intersection of Raymond Street and Lebreton Street North servicing OC Transpo Bus Route #55. Bus Route #55 generally runs in an east-

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west direction providing a local connection between the neighbourhood of Elmvale Acres in the east and the Westgate Mall in the west.

These three bus routes provide ample bus service to many destinations for current residents of the area, especially with connections to O-Train Line 1. Public transit connections in the neighbourhood and surrounding area will only continue to grow with the current expansion of O-Train Line 1 and Line 2. Access to existing bus routes and the future LRT Station will provide the opportunity for current and future residents to live in a walkable and transit-oriented area.

In addition to bus and future rapid transit, the subject property has immediate access to arterial and major collector roads, including a key artery of the City in Preston Street, as shown in **Figure 19** below.



Figure 19: Aerial view image looking west from the property to Preston Street

With frontage on Rochester Street, the subject property has convenient access to major east-west roads in Somerset Avenue (Arterial) to the north and Gladstone Avenue (Major Collector), which are both as mixed-use corridors. The property is approximately 80 metres (m) south of Gladstone Avenue (major collector road), 110 metres west of Booth Street (major collector road) and 190 metres east of Preston Street (arterial road). Schedule D (Rapid Transit and Transit Priority Network) of the Official Plan also identifies the portion of Gladstone Avenue and Somerset Avenue as Transit Priority Corridors with

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isolated measures. Intensification is generally encouraged by policy to occur within and around Transit Priority Corridors.

Arterial roads are intended to move traffic through the city in conjunction with lower-order roads. As an Arterial Road, Preston Street provides convenient vehicular connections to Scott Street and Pimisi Station to the north and, to the south, the Little Italy neighbourhood, Carling Avenue, Dow's Lake and to all its surrounding neighbourhoods. The subject property also has immediate access to another arterial road in Somerset Avenue via Rochester Street. This arterial provides convenient access to great neighbourhoods that form a part of Ottawa's downtown area, including Chinatown to the northeast and the Hintonburg / West Wellington neighbourhood to the west.

Bronson Ave, another north-south arterial road, is easily accessible from Gladstone Ave and provides local road connections, as well as broad connections to other areas of the City. To the east, Bronson provides access to Centretown and Ottawa South, including destinations such Lyon Station and LeBreton Flats to the North and, to the south, the Provincial Highway 417 (Queensway) and then eventually the City of Ottawa International Airport. Bronson Ave serves as a scenic-entry route in Ottawa, as identified on Schedule I of the City of Ottawa Official Plan.

Major Collector roads are intended to connect communities and distribute traffic between the arterial system and the local road system. These roads tend to be shorter and carry lower volumes of traffic than arterial roads. The design and construction of collector roads ensure that safe and efficient public transit services are provided. As Major Collector roads, Gladstone Avenue and Booth Street provide efficient vehicular, cycling and pedestrian connections to the Downtown core and to surrounding Arterial Roads, including Preston Street to the west, Somerset Avenue to the north and Bronson Avenue to the east. These roads contain businesses, services, amenities and features that create a mixed-use community. Future tenants of the proposed redevelopment will benefit from proximity to these roads.

The subject property is well-served by the greater cycling network (Figure 6). Pursuant to Schedule C (Primary Urban Cycling Network) of the Official Plan, the portions of Arlington Avenue, Booth Street and Gladstone Avenue are identified as cycling spine routes. Cycling spine routes provide increased access to the greater cycling network, promoting a multi-modal transportation neighbourhood. The subject property also benefits from its proximity to the National Capital Commission's multi-use pathway, which runs parallel to Preston Street along the LRT corridor. This multi-use pathway leads to the City's broader cycling network. As such, the subject property is well served by existing and planned transit, roads, and pedestrian and cycling facilities. The transportation context supports the redevelopment and residential densification of the subject property.

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2.5 Nearby Community Facilities and Services

The subject property is also well-served by Community Facilities and Services, as shown in **Figure 20**.



Figure 20: Proximity to Community Facilities and Services

Located directly west of the established Downtown core (“Centretown”) and east of the “Little Italy”, the subject property benefits from convenient access to many neighbourhood amenities including a variety of locally oriented commercial uses, such as diverse restaurants, retail shops, and coffee shops, primarily concentrated along Somerset Avenue, Gladstone Avenue and Preston Street. This surrounding area is also known as a place for work and business with the existing institutional and office buildings found further south past the Queensway. Proximity to transit and cycling spine routes will allow for future residents of the site to easily commute to work through a variety of travel modes.

The surrounding area is well-served by neighbourhood parks and community facilities and services. The subject property is within walking distance of Piazza Dante Park to the south, the McNabb Park and Recreation Centre to the east and Plouffe Park and Plante Recreation Centre to the north-west. The multi-use pathway along the current O-Train Line 2 acts a linear park, with ample green space provided between Bayview Station in the north and the Dominion Arboretum at Dows Lake in the south.

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There are several institutional uses, including schools and religious buildings. St Anthony Elementary and Cambridge Public School are found east of the site, while St Nicholas Adult High School is found to the south. Local religious buildings include St Anthony of Padua, the Parish of Our Lady of Kazan and the Protection of the Mother of God, Saint Hyacinth Roman Catholic Polish Church and the Ottawa Korean Community Church. The existing Community Facilities and Services signify a diverse community where people want to work, live and play.

2.6 Mixed-Use Character & 15-minute neighbourhood

Figure 21 below perfectly illustrates the mixed-use character of this area of the City and the potential to build upon the concept of 15-minute neighbourhood in this area.

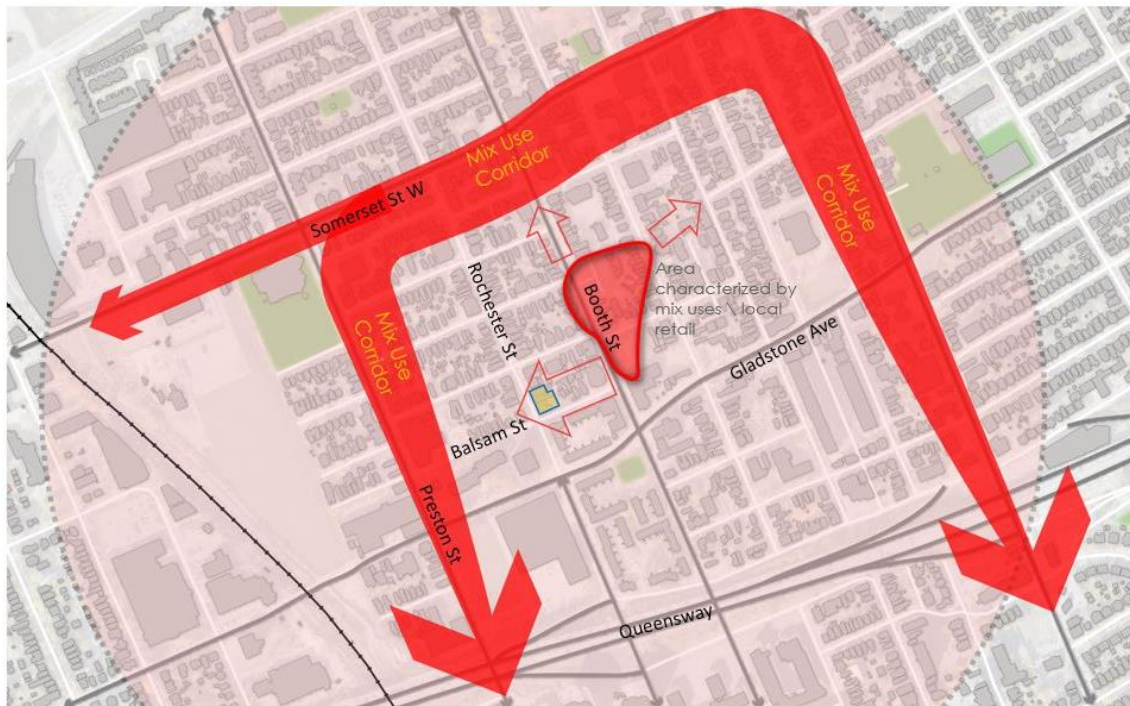


Figure 21: Mixed-Use Character and 15-minute neighbourhoods

The subject property could already be considered a part of the 15-minute neighbourhood based on the surrounding context as described in earlier sections of this report. 15-minute neighbourhoods are compact, well-connected places with a clustering of a diverse mix of land-uses; this includes a range of housing types, shops, services, local access to food, schools and day care facilities, employment, greenspaces, parks and pathways. Within the context of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, the development of the 15-minute community is encouraged.

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The subject property is found between three mixed use corridors to the north, east and west being Somerset St, Bronson Ave and Preston St. These roads are all mixed-use corridors that form the mixed-use character of the area. These roads will continue to be the priority for larger retail options and taller buildings, that respect the character and function of these streets.

Locating new, mixed-use development that provides sufficient built-form transition between these streets and the nearby low-rise neighbourhoods found within the interior of this 15-minute neighbourhood should also be a city-building priority. The location of the subject property makes it ideal for a mix-used development and intensification, with a building that supports transition between the mix-use corridors and the stable low-rise neighbourhoods located north of Willow Street and east of Booth Street.

The subject property and the surrounding area have historically contained a mix-of-uses. New residential development that incorporates small-format retail options on an internal local road will therefore support the existing character of the surrounding area and complement the City's desire to see 15-minute neighbourhoods, while providing more new rental units for people to live in proximity to transit and major commercial areas.

New purpose-built rental buildings should be encouraged within this area of the City to build upon the diversity of this neighbourhood and to accommodate a variety of incomes and family sizes in the building.

Therefore, the redevelopment of the subject property is a great opportunity to build much needed housing and to complement the existing mix-used character of this 15-minute neighbourhood.

3.0 DESIGN BRIEF

This section of the Planning Rationale satisfies the requirement for a Design Brief in accordance with the City's Terms and Reference for a Design Brief. With reliance upon the supporting studies and plans, as required, this Design Brief discusses the proposed redevelopment and its design evolution, its features and its relationship with both the existing and evolving contexts.

This Design Brief relies upon the supporting architectural and landscape materials to introduce and elaborate upon the details of the proposed redevelopment:

- Architectural Site Plan Package (Site Plan, Floor Plans, Elevations and Renderings) prepared by Simmonds Architecture with and dated October 7th, 2022; and
- Landscape Architectural Package, prepared by James B. Lennox & Associates Inc. and dated October 3rd, 2022.

All Site Plans, Floor Plans, Elevations, 3-D Renderings/ Perspectives and Landscape Plans have been provided separately in support of the required planning applications. The full servicing report and plans have been prepared by Gray Engineering in support of this development. These plans propose the water, wastewater and stormwater management of the site and conclude that the proposed redevelopment can be adequately serviced.

This Design Brief responds with a bullet-point response to the preliminary comments received from Planning and Urban Design Staff at the City of Ottawa, following a formal pre-application consultation meeting held on June 16th, 2022, and a subsequent meeting to discuss a revised proposal.

3.1 Background: Design Evolution & Timeline

The timeline associated with the future development on the subject property spans over many years. It is our opinion that the building design has evolved dramatically over this timeframe, ultimately resulting in a product that reflects the highest development potential of the subject property and responds sufficiently to local context, with an emphasis on design excellence and facilitating transition between contexts.

This section of the Design Brief provides a detailed timeline of the concepts that have been prepared and proposed to the City of Ottawa and the Dalhousie Community Association. This section of the Design Brief further demonstrates that alternative concepts have been considered for the future development of the subject property; therefore, meeting this requirement of the Design Brief in accordance with the City's Terms of Reference for Design Briefs.

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In 2019, there was an original pre-application consultation meeting where a previous owner requested a meeting with the City and the Dalhousie Community Association to discuss a proposal for a seven (7) storey, mid-rise residential building. We understand, from reading the pre-application consultation meeting minutes, that this development proposal was generally supported by Staff and the community.

Figure 22 shows the 7-storey development proposed in 2019.



Figure 22: 2019 Development Proposal

The 2019 development proposal resembled a box, with less attention paid to transition and compatibility with the adjacent residential buildings and very few moments of building articulation and step backs.

This building design would have ultimately created a canyon effect along Balsam and Rochester Streets and an intimidating wall next to the abutting low-rise properties. The building footprint proposed at the time would have maximized almost the entire area of the subject property with no step backs that gradually descend the building from 7-stories to the adjacent mid-rise and low-rise properties.

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Figure 23 below shows that storeys 4-7 were set back 1.5 metres (m) from the abutting lot lines.

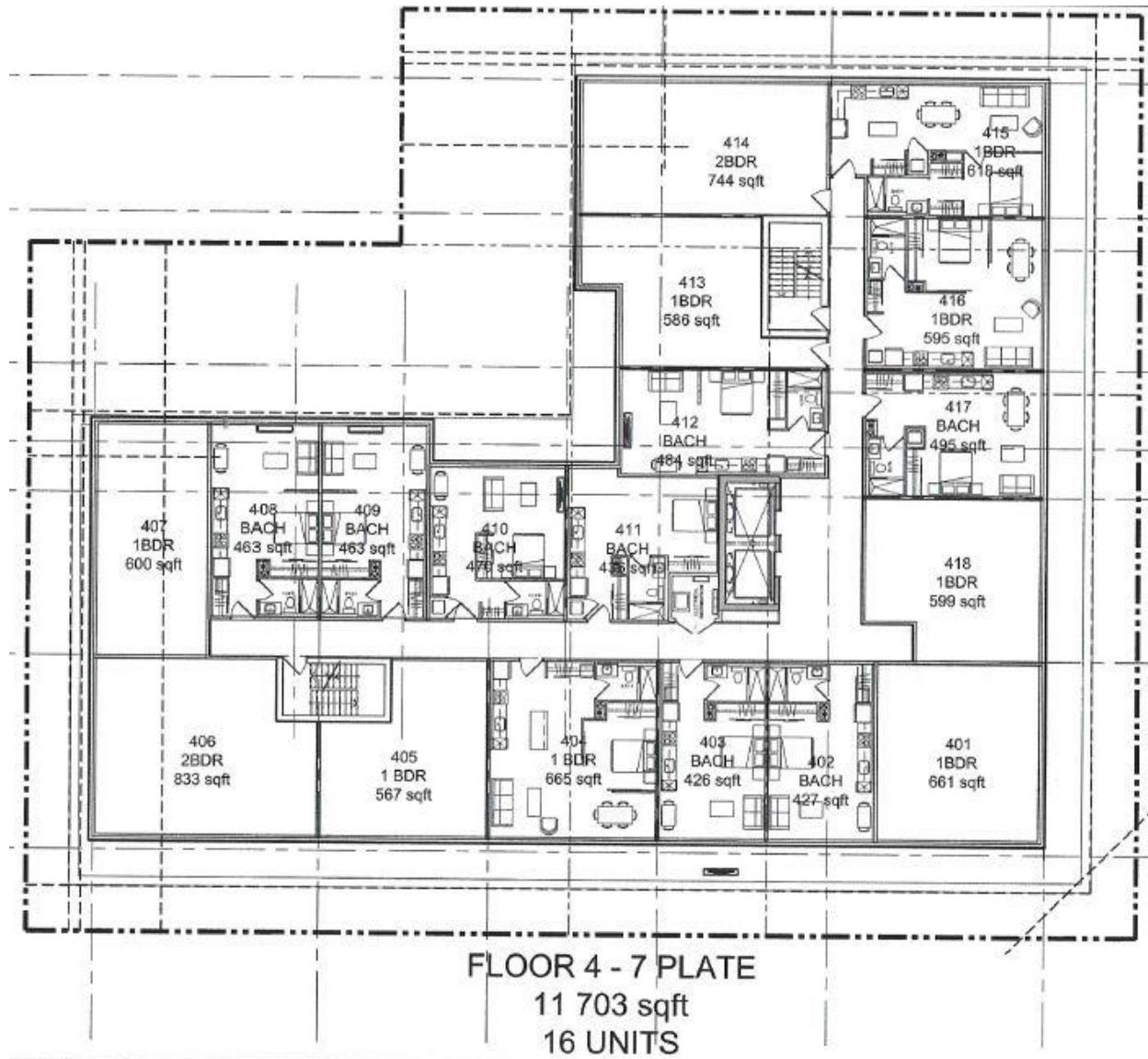


Figure 23: 2019 Development Proposal, floors 4-7

In June 2022, our client requested a pre-application consultation with the City of Ottawa to present an 11-storey high-rise building. This proposal was developed following some preliminary discussions with City staff which took place in the months prior. The proposal included a commercial component and an emphasis on distributing height vertically rather than horizontally to create a building that supported better transition from high-rise to the adjacent mid-rise and low-rise properties. The Dalhousie Community Association was also in attendance. There were several concerns raised by Staff and the Community Association regarding the proposal for a high-rise building, including height, transition, and compatibility.

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Figure 24 shows the 11-storey high-rise building that was proposed at this formal pre-application consultation meeting.



Figure 24: 11-storey high-rise building

Following receipt of the City's formal pre-application consultation comments, the project team revised the development proposal to a 5-9 storey mid-rise building with no commercial, as shown in **Figure 25** below.

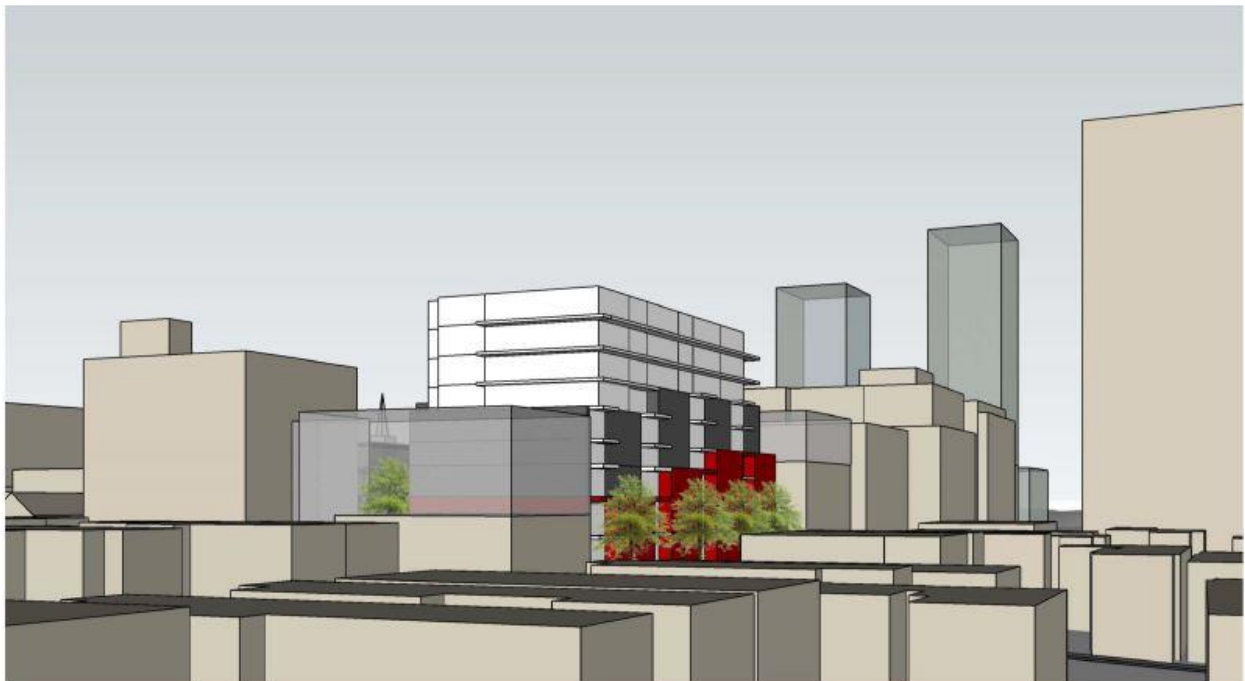


Figure 25: First 5-9 storey mid-rise development proposal

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Our client and the project team agreed with the City that a high-rise building was not appropriate for the subject property based on block character, surrounding context and the fact that the property does not have sufficient lot area which is normally required to meet the requirements of the City of Ottawa's Urban Design Guidelines for High Rise Buildings. The project team further agreed with the City that transition could be better achieved through the development of a mid-rise building.

Due to the redistribution of height and density horizontally, this second proposal prepared by the project team did remove the commercial component and a significant public realm treatment along Rochester Street, with less building articulations that signified transition to abutting building typologies.

This application for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control responds to the last comments received by Planning and Urban Design Staff. Section 3.6 of this Report provides a bullet-point response to the preliminary comments received. **Figure 26** below shows the proposed 5-9 storey mid-rise building.



Figure 26: Second 5-9 mid-rise building. Blue massing shows the height allowed by policy or permitted by current zoning.

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When compared to all earlier iterations of the proposed redevelopment, this redevelopment proposal for a 5-9 storey mid-rise building offers the best “fit” for the site based on lot area, context and the design elements that make it an exceptional “transition” building:

- a mixed-use component;
- generous step backs and building articulations that create a mid-rise building that ranges between 5 and 9 storeys in height and provides gradual transition in height; and
- an elevated building experience with proposed outdoor amenity spaces and the greened public realm.

The following sections speak to the proposed redevelopment.

3.2 The Proposed Redevelopment

Figure 27 below shows a south facing view of the proposed redevelopment.



Figure 27: Proposed 5-9 Mid-Rise Building. White massing shows height permitted by zoning

The proposed redevelopment is a 5-9 storey mixed-used, mid-rise building, with a commercial (retail) component proposed at-grade and 130 purpose-built rental units, ranging in type and size.

Our client intends to lease the proposed retail space to a local convenience operator who already has deep roots in the community. The integration of ground floor commercial will enhance the already active

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use of the street by pedestrians and cyclists, as observed on site visits. The proposed commercial use will help to facilitate a strong corner expression that accentuates the building and relates to the intersection. The site has been historically used for non-residential use and is being remediated for future use. The Phase II ESA and Geotechnical Investigation prepared by Rubicon in support of the required planning applications ultimately support the redevelopment of the subject property for residential use. A Record of Site Condition (RSC) is being submitted to the Province accordingly.

Storage, including waste removal storage for the proposed development, will be contained within the building to minimize any disruption to adjacent properties. All parking, loading and building servicing are underground and accessed from Balsam Street via a proposed two-way ramp.

The proposed redevelopment will also include an enhanced public realm, as well as two (2) significant private outdoor amenity areas: an at-grade courtyard and a communal roof-top terrace, as shown in **Figure 28** below.

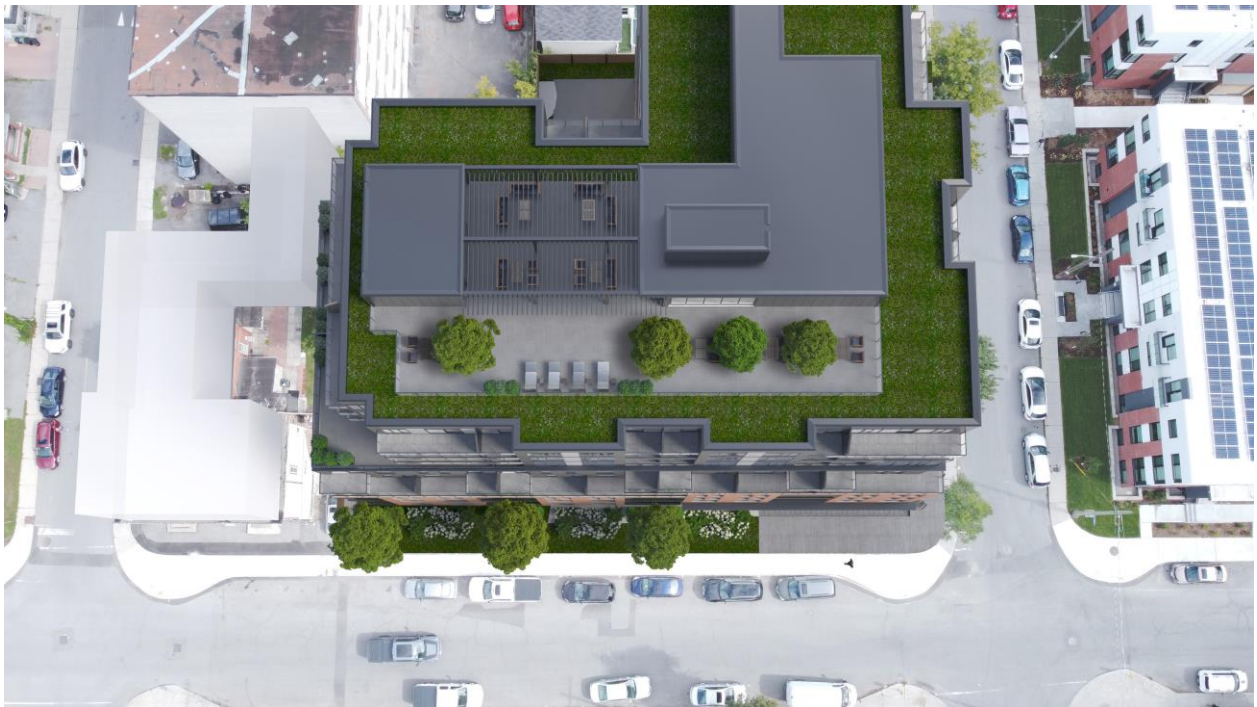


Figure 28: Outdoor Amenity Spaces on the roof-top and at-grade. Aerial view.

These development features provide substantial planting areas that green the exterior of the building. These outdoor amenity areas also soften the appearance of the building, reduce the impact on adjacent properties through buffering and screening, and elevate the experience of the building for its users. In the

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public realm, the streets will be lined with trees and plantings suitable for the local environment, including species that will thrive in shallow soil depths due to the grading and position of the underground garage. The landscape treatment proposed along Rochester Street will create a comfortable pedestrian experience that provides some separation between at-grade residential units and the public sidewalk, to enhance privacy. The area in front of the proposed commercial space is proposed to be multi-functional for building residents and for commercial patrons. The area closest to the intersection will be a destination open to the public given the proposed at-grade commercial use.

Generous setbacks and step backs are proposed through this redevelopment to ensure appropriate transition to the mid-rise and low-rise buildings found on abutting lands. The proposed interior side yard setback will be the same as required by the existing zoning for the subject property. The building steps back at the 6th floor along Rochester Street and at the 7th floor along Balsam Street to support transition to the adjacent low-rise buildings. These step backs result in a mid-rise building that ranges between 5-9 storeys, with the shortest heights adjacent to the low-rise buildings. The tallest building height (9 storeys) is concentrated at the northeast corner of the intersection of Balsam and Rochester Street to relate to the intersection and transition away from the existing 21-storey high-rise, kitty corner to the subject property.

Figure 29 below shows how the building descends away from the intersection to provide less building height along the lot lines shared with abutting low-rise properties.



Figure 29: 5-9 storey mid-rise building proposed on the northeast corner of the intersection

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This cascading or stepping down effect along Balsam Street creates a building that appears almost as a low-rise from a pedestrian or cyclist perspective, especially looking down Balsam Street, along the easterly property line. This complements the built-form recently established along the south side of Balsam Street. This creates a mid-rise building that is sensitive and geared to the human-scale. Overall, the proposed building design and proposed heights will allow for transition to occur within the block. **Figure 30** shows the Site Plan, prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, 2022.

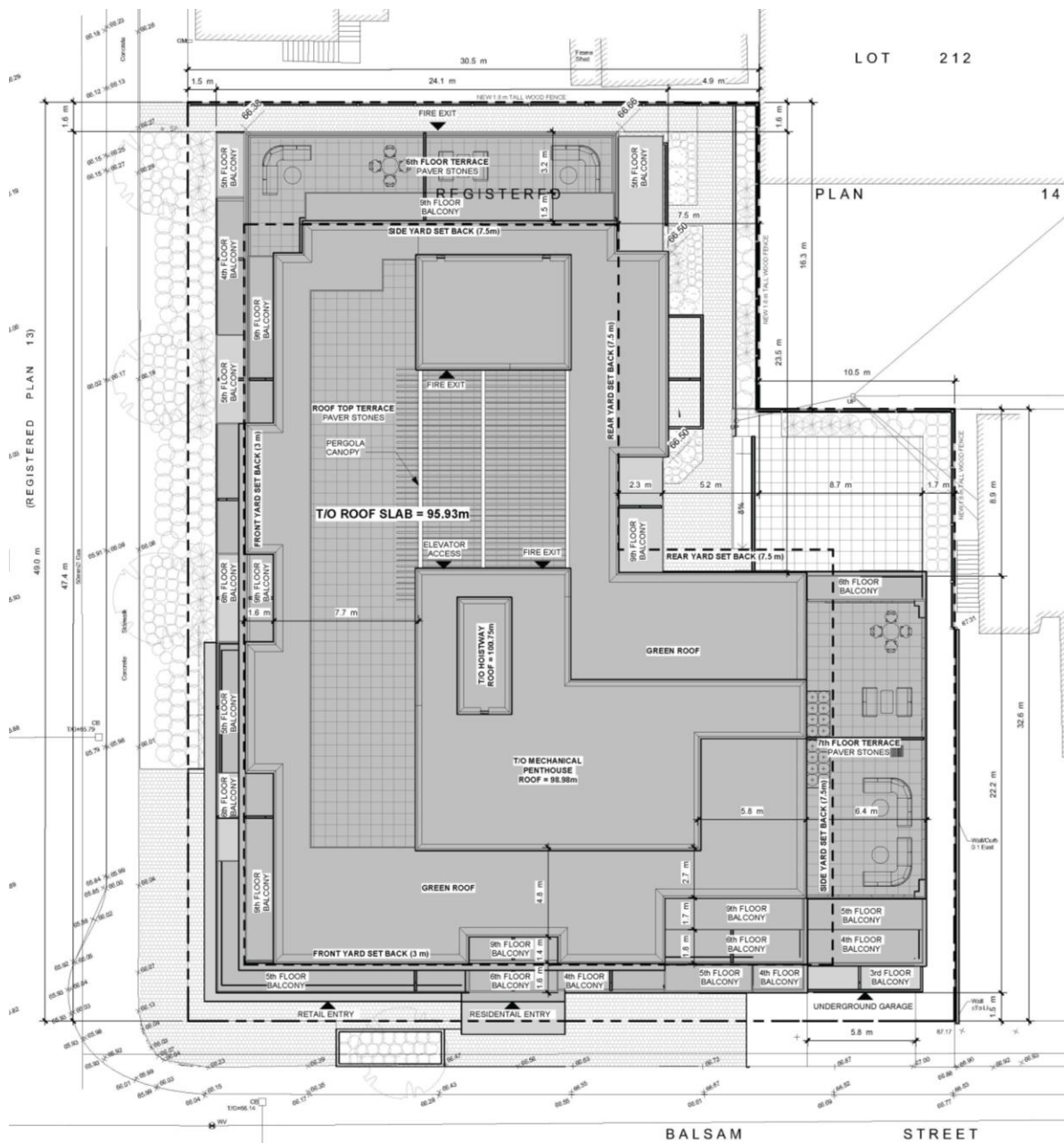


Figure 30: Site Plan, prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, 2022

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Table 1 below summarizes the development statistics of the proposed redevelopment based on the Site Plan prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, 2022:

Table 1: Development Statistics	
Building Area	1,330 m ²
Gross Floor Area (G.F.A)	8,370.6 m ²
Building Height	5-9 storeys (max. 29.2m)
Unit Count	130
Studio Bedroom	35
1-Bedroom	43
1-Bedroom, plus Den	31
2-Bedroom	21
Vehicle Parking Spaces	32
Bike Parking Spaces	210
Soft Landscape Area	580 m ² (30% of Lot Area)
Total Amenity Area	1,390 m ²
Communal Amenity Area	425 m ²

This development proposal provides an excellent opportunity for city building and placemaking with a focus on transition, sustainability, the human-scale experience of the building, with plans for an enhanced public-private realm that will benefit building users and the entire community. Our client will consider other opportunities for sustainable design (e.g. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations) as the project evolves through the City's application and approval process.

The proposed redevelopment resembles the type of development that this area of the City desperately needs given the current housing crisis and the evolving development and policy context: a mixed-use, mid-rise rental building that anticipates future development patterns and supports transition between different building typologies with excellent architecture, a range of building heights, and enhanced building programming.

It is our professional opinion that the proposed redevelopment fits within the context and will be consistent with the existing function and character of the block upon which the subject property resides. The proposed building heights along property lines abutting the adjacent low-rise properties will support the progression of the City block overtime. This is further elaborated upon in Section 3.3. of this Planning Rationale.

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3.3 Building Massing & Transition

The proposed redevelopment provides an important transition building for the neighbourhood, based on the context discussion provided earlier in this report. When considering the broader, evolving context, the proposed development fits, as shown in **Figure 31** below.



Figure 31: Supporting Transition within the Broader Context. Blue massing shows the height allowed by policy or permitted by current zoning.

In addition to providing a transition building at the edge of the 400 m radius of the Corso Italia LRT station, the proposed redevelopment supports transition between the emerging high-rise areas along the Queensway and the neighbourhoods to the north of the subject property, as shown in **Figure 32** below.

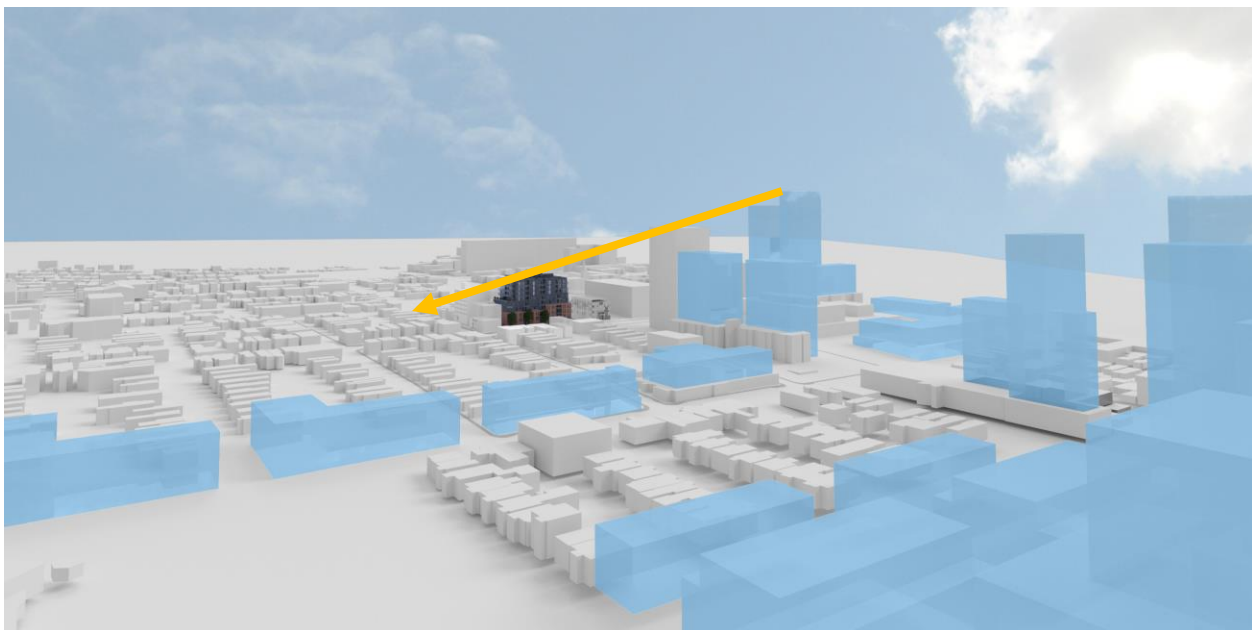


Figure 32: Supporting Transition between existing and emerging high-rise and stable low-rise neighbourhoods.

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Figure 33 below shows another view of how the proposed redevelopment anticipates the evolving context and supports built-form transition from existing and potential high-rise contexts, based on policy and current zoning permissions.

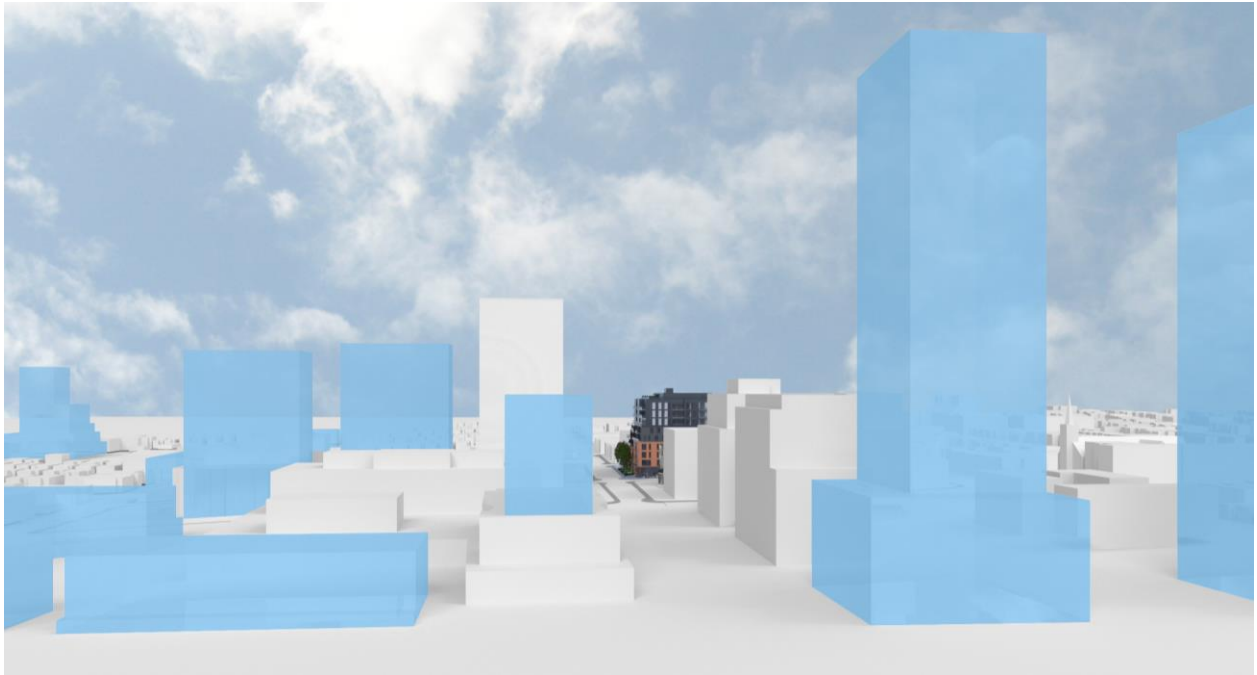


Figure 33: View of the Subject Property from the south side of the Queensway

Figure 34 below shows another angle of the proposed redevelopment from the southeast and its relationship with the existing and proposed mid-to-high context of which it forms a key part of.

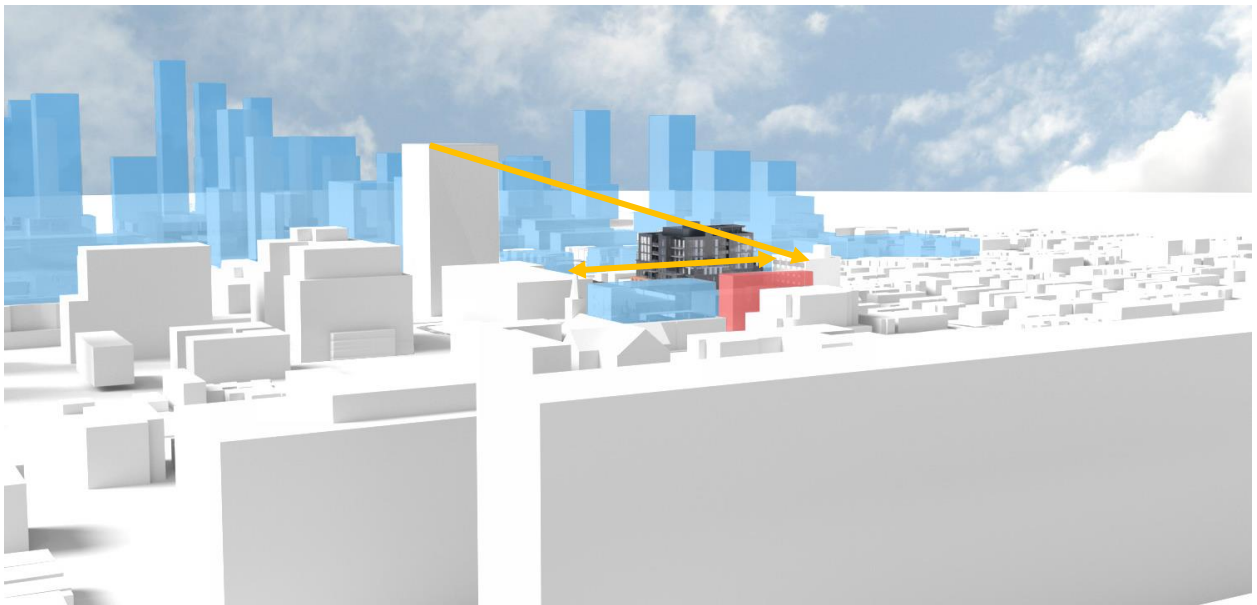


Figure 34: View of the Subject Property from the southeast direction, on the Queensway

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When considering the immediate surrounding context, the proposed redevelopment supports transition between the 21-storey high-rise and the abutting low-to-mid-rise properties, as shown in **Figure 35** below.

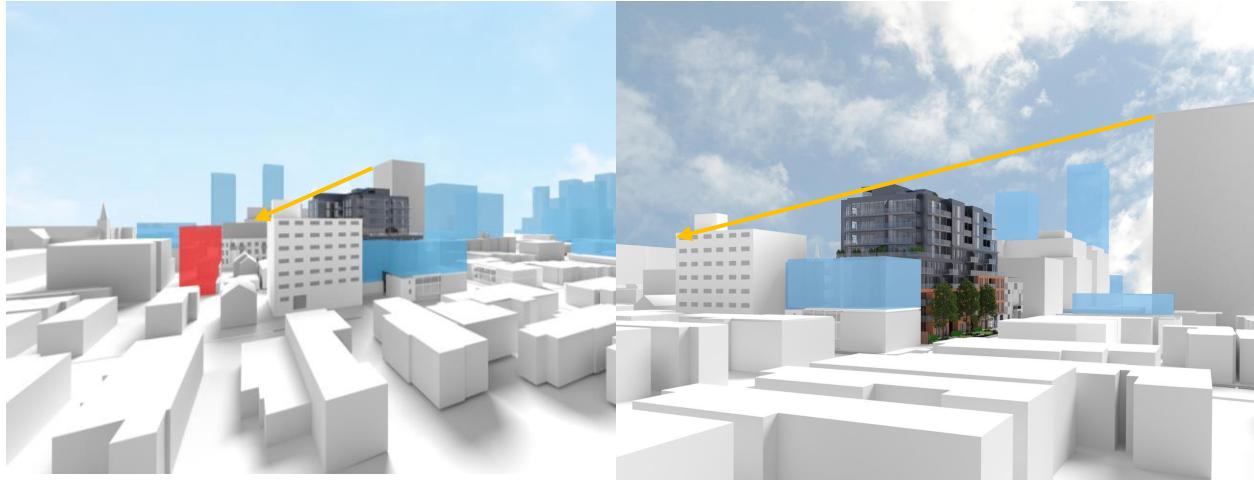


Figure 35: View of the Proposed Redevelopment from the north.

In the context of the City block upon which the subject property resides, the proposed redevelopment supports the progression of the block in a way that is consistent with its current function and character. As discussed earlier in this report, transition between different building typologies within large City blocks is commonly found within the surrounding context, especially where mid-rise to low-rise transition is concerned. The proposed redevelopment does occupy a significant portion of this very large City block. With the existing 7-storey mid-rise, the proposed mid-rise will command a significant portion of this block. Simmonds Architecture has prepared a sun/ shadow study and dated October 7th, 2022 showing the added shadows resulting from the proposed redevelopment. New shadows generally do not project north past Willow Street and are mostly casted onto the abutting properties. Given the size and fabric of this City block, the proposed redevelopment fits appropriately, as shown in **Figure 36** below.



Figure 36: Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from the east

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Figure 37 below also shows how the proposed redevelopment will fit seamlessly within this City block and complement the existing built-form emerging in the Rochester Heights development, south of Gladstone Avenue.



Figure 37: North Elevation along Willow Street, facing south.

The 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building is designed to reflect the overall theme of the proposed redevelopment: *transition*. In fact, the proposed transition building has a smaller building footprint than the 2019 development proposal and provides generous building step backs that provide ample separation from the abutting properties, which includes mid-rise and low-rise buildings, as shown in **Figure 38** below.



Figure 38: Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from the east showing transition.

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The proposed redevelopment is a 6-storey mid-rise building along the easterly property line. The step back is 6.4 metres (m) and allows the building to scale down and away from the tallest height, which is nine (9) storeys. A similar treatment is replicated along the Rochester Street side, as shown on **Figure 39**.



Figure 39: Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from the north showing transition.

The proposed development includes a “flowing” or “moving” brick building façade between the 3-4 storeys that provides an appearance of “stepping down” and “transition” to the adjacent properties (**Figure 40**).



Figure 40: Views from the southwest corner of the intersection showing transition along the building façade.

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These architectural details complement the existing character of the surrounding area. The application of vertical rectangular shapes on the building façade for the first 3-4 storeys mimic the street wall character found along Rochester Street and builds upon the history of the site and the palette of building materials generally found in the surrounding neighbourhood. The proposed podium makes the proposed development feel like a low-rise building for the first 3-4 storeys. The mid and upper storeys feel light and unimposing in this context.

On the building, rooftop terraces at the 6th and 7th floors are recessed, as shown in **Figure 41** below.



Figure 41: 5-9 storey mid-rise building proposed on the northeast corner of the intersection

The first five (5) storeys along the northerly property line and the first six (6) storeys along the easterly property line do not have projecting balconies. This design aims to mitigate overlooks and avoid compatibility concerns that will ultimately allow for future development on adjacent parcels. The proposed outdoors terraces at the 6th and 7th floors have been strategically designed to take advantage of sunlight exposure for users, while also reducing massing impacts for neighbouring residents. The residential component of the building also includes balconies on most sides, creating visual interest, variation and architectural articulation, while providing private amenity space. All units will be equipped with a private balcony / terrace.

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The subject property resides on a City block that is already a transition piece in this area. The proposed 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building clearly reinforces this by relating to the surrounding context and character, providing appropriately scaled transition to the abutting mid-rise and low-rise buildings.

3.4 Built-Form and Public Realm Views & Perspectives

The proposed development can be viewed from the Queensway to the South, Preston Street to the West, the Somerset bridge from the Northwest and Balsam and Booth Street. The most impressive view is taken from the southwest corner of the intersection of Balsam and Rochester Street, where the corner expression is strong and the edges of the building abutting existing low-rise scale down and away from the intersection, as shown in **Figure 42** below.



Figure 42: Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from the southwest corner (night view).

The view at this intersection demonstrates how the building step backs and how the brick façade complements the existing context and signifies transitions, even visible in the nighttime. The facades of the first 1-4 storeys showcase a lighter brick material that complements the existing character of the neighbouring buildings, including the common use of red brick found throughout the neighbourhood. The building design includes a range of materials, including brick and glass, and colours intended to create a unique but recognizable character that blends into the surrounding context. Specifically, the materiality has been chosen to carefully break up the building façade, delineating the podium from the mid-section and the upper floors of the building. The 3-4 storey podium is provided along all frontages and is reinforced through the high-quality materials that compliment the existing streetscape. The ground level façade for the commercial space is fenestrated to create a positive relationship and interface between the building and the public realm.

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Figure 43 below shows how the proposed redevelopment relates to the low-rise found opposite Balsam Street. The four (4) storey podium near the corner of Rochester and Balsam Street provides a building façade that responds well to the existing built form within this context.



Figure 43: Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from Gladstone Avenue.

Similarly, facing west from the intersection of Balsam and Booth Street, the proposed redevelopment relates well to the built form established north of Balsam Street, as shown in **Figure 44** below.

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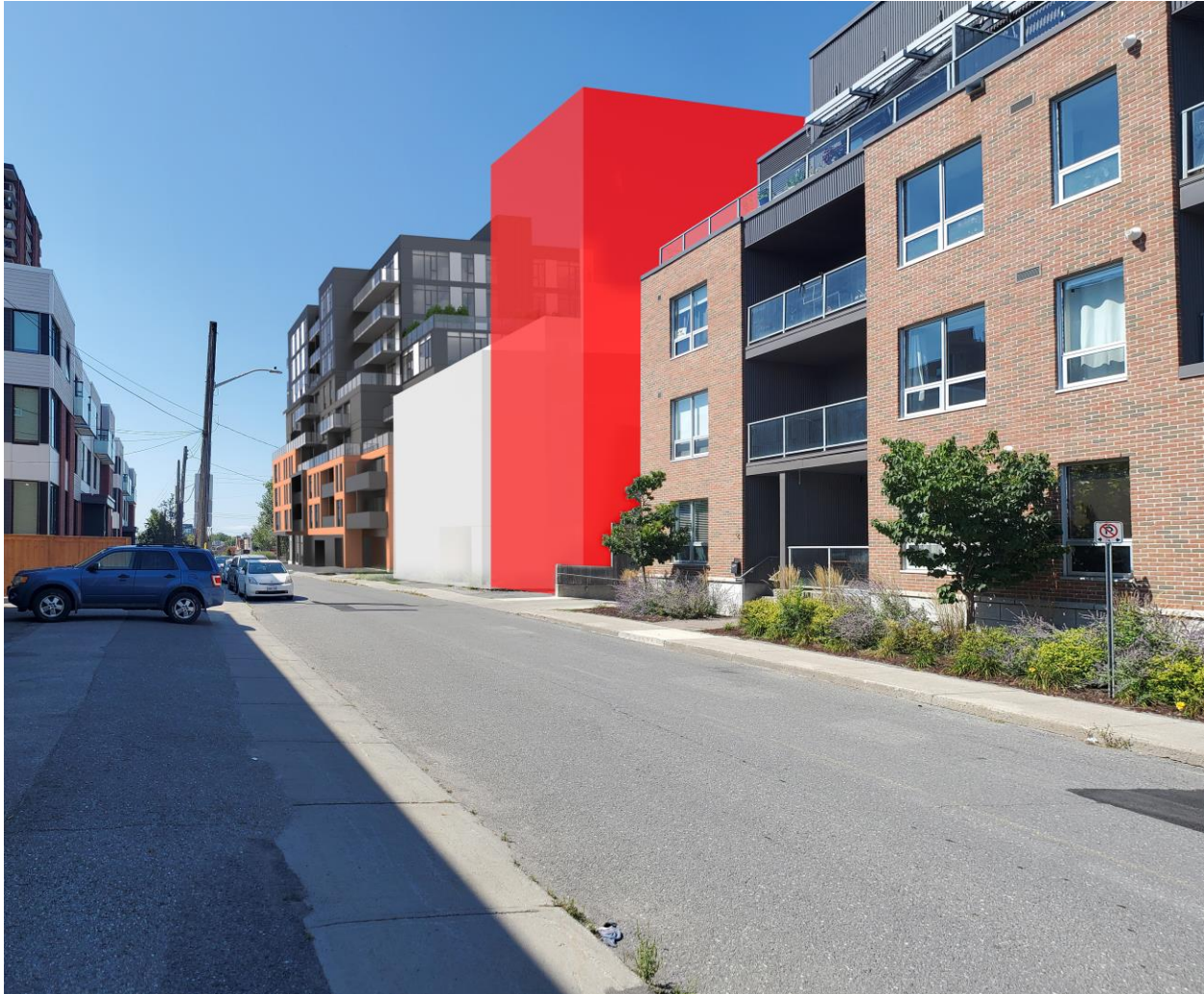


Figure 44: West facing Views of the Proposed Redevelopment from the intersection of Balsam and Booth Street.

There are no existing trees along the Rochester and Balsam frontages. The introduction of new street trees is somewhat challenged/ constrained due to the location of the underground parking garage. However, generous shrubs, trees, hardscape elements and general greenery are proposed along both frontages as much as possible. The use of glass at the first storey in front of the commercial space provides visual transparency and improved safety for pedestrians in the area. The proposed commercial use will animate the street and the area in front will be designed to enhance the pedestrian comfort level.

The design of the access/egress to the parking garage is proposed on Balsam Street away from the intersection, avoiding any interruptions in the active frontage along the street while reducing conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The entrance to the parking garage is both useable and safe. All parking, loading and building servicing can be found underground.

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The west-facing façades of the building along Rochester Street features the entrance to the residential building. Landscaping is being proposed along all frontages to reconstitute the public realm and create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians. **Figure 45** shows a night view of the at-grade residential units and the landscaped area proposed along Rochester Street.

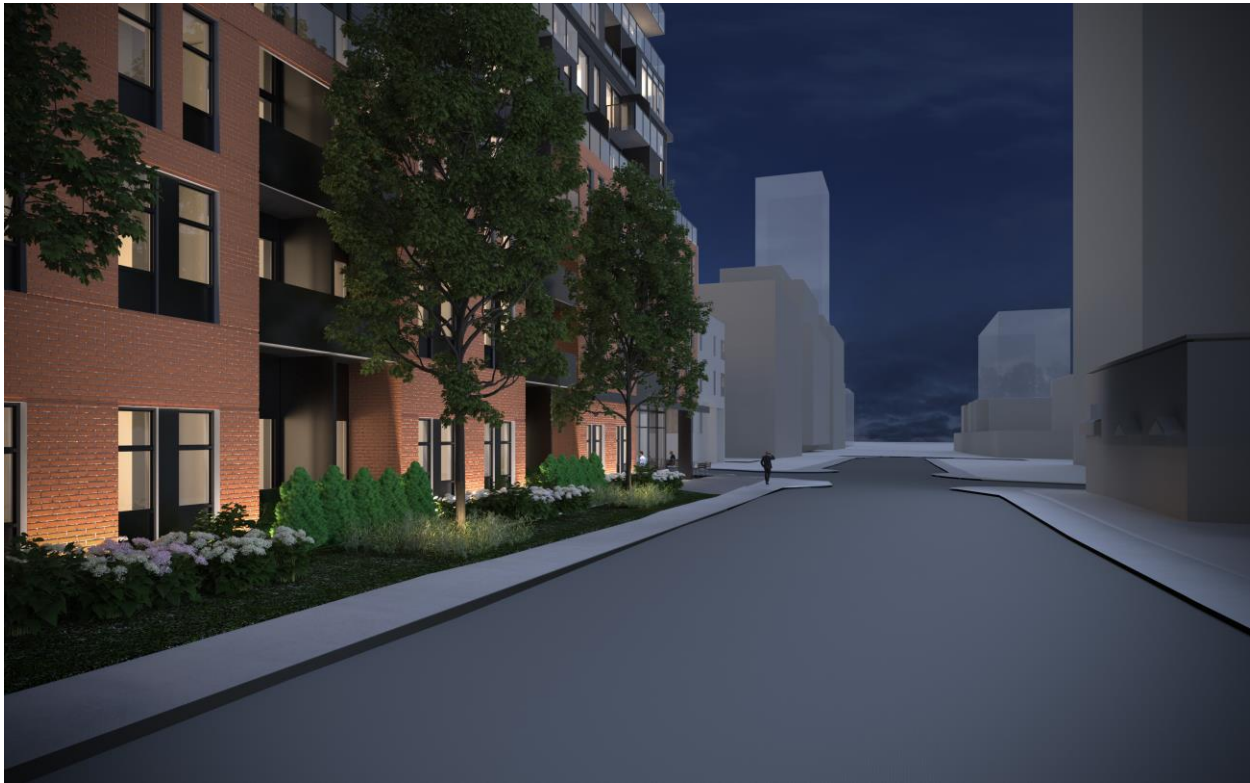


Figure 45: South facing Views on Rochester Street

The ground floor units will not have direct access onto Rochester Street and views of these units will be screened. The proposed development is intended to be enjoyed by both public and private users. As such, clear visual lines between public and private space have been drawn. Private areas are appropriately screened from public view and will be both useable and safe for building tenants.

The proposed redevelopment will integrate trees and shrubs where possible. The landscape materials have been selected to respond to the existing and proposed conditions of the site, including the harsh urban environment and the depth of the parking garage. The Landscape Plan prepared by James B. Lennox and Associates Inc. and dated October 3rd, 2022, provides the landscape palette, including deciduous trees, coniferous shrubs, perennials, sod, precast concrete and riverstone. The materials proposed will provide sufficient screening and greening throughout the site.

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Figure 46 below shows the Landscape Plan.



Figure 46: Landscape Plan prepared by James B. Lennox and Associates and dated October 3rd, 2022

As shown in the images provided above, the proposed redevelopment will complement the existing built-form and provide an enhanced public realm, with ample landscaping.

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3.5 Outdoor Amenity Spaces & Landscaping

Two (2) outdoor amenity areas are proposed on-site. A communal rooftop terrace and an internal courtyard (rear) have been proposed to provide the required amenity space as per Zoning By-law 2008-250 and to reduce the urban heat island effect and cool the building, as shown on **Figure 47** below.



Figure 47: Aerial View of Rooftop Terrace

The rooftop will be planted and greened to create a building that showcases sustainability and emphasizes tenant experience, with comfortable seating and exceptional views of the City (**Figure 48**).



Figure 48: View of Rooftop Terrace

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The rooftop will be landscaped in accordance with the rooftop landscaping plan prepared by James B. Lennox and Associates Inc. and dated October 3rd, 2022, shown as **Figure 49** below.

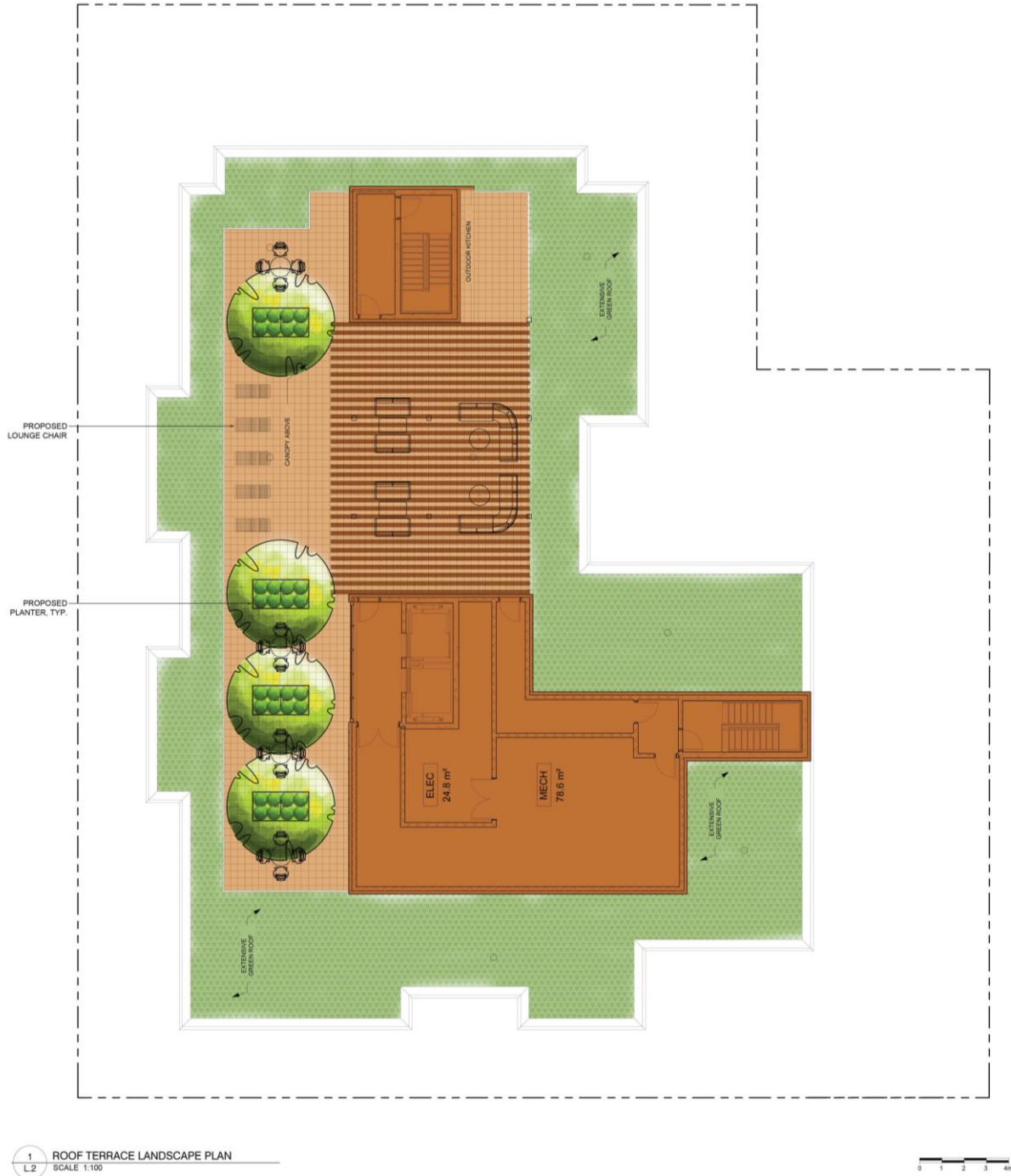


Figure 49: Rooftop Terrace Landscape Plan prepared by James B. Lennox and Associates Inc. and dated October 3rd, 2022

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The proposed rooftop landscaping plan shows that the rooftop will be a hybrid of a typical outdoor amenity area, paved with areas for rest and leisure, and landscaped areas, sodded to reduce urban heat island and cool the building.

The internal courtyard proposed at the rear of the property, will be screened with vegetation along the lot lines shared with the abutting properties; thereby mitigating any overlook impacts and ensuring privacy. This area will provide critical buffering and privacy for building residents and the adjacent properties.

This intentional location of this outdoor amenity area offers an intimate outdoor setting accessible for building residents.

Figure 50 below provides an example of the internal courtyard at the rear of the property.



Figure 50: View of the Internal Courtyard

To summarize, the proposed redevelopment is well-equipped with safe, greened, and multi-functional amenity areas that will ultimately enhance the experience of the building for its residents.

3.6 Response to Preliminary Comments from Planning and Urban Design Staff

Since the formal pre-application consultation meeting held on June 16th, 2022, our project team has received preliminary comments from Planning and Urban Design Staff at the City of Ottawa. We would note that much of the discussion that took place during the formal pre-application consultation meeting regarded the proposed building height of 11-storeys. As explained earlier, our client has revised their

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application to a 5-9 storey, mixed-use, mid-rise building. The project team agrees with the City that a high-rise building is not appropriate for the site and this context. The project team further agrees that transition could be better achieved through the development of a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building.

We have themed our responses to the comments received by the City's Planning and Urban Design team as follows:

1. Building Height and Building Setbacks:

- The proposal has been revised from 11-storey high-rise to a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise to provide better transition and relation with the existing context.
- The proposed building height is only two (2) storeys higher than an existing mid-rise building which abuts the subject property. The subject property is appropriate for two (2) additional storeys given its location at the northeast corner of the intersection of Rochester Street and Balsam Street, closer to an existing high-rise and an emerging high-rise area in the "hub" designation.
- The shortest building heights are proposed adjacent to the lot lines shared with the abutting low-rise properties.
- The proposed redevelopment offers an interior side yard setback which aligns with the current zoning permission.
- The proposed redevelopment offers building step backs that provide separation and a building height range between 5-9 storeys.

2. Replicability (Mid-Rise Typology):

- Mid-rise development is typical of the local context, south of Willow Street and west of Booth Street.
- With generous building step backs, the development proposal limits the development potential of adjacent properties by providing a 5-storey mid-rise building along the northerly property line and a 6-storey mid-rise building along the easterly property line. This means that replicability of 5-storey and 6-storey mid-rises to the north and to the east are likely. It is unlikely that the 9-storey height would be replicated based on the proposed building design, which ensures transition to lower mid-rise forms and low-rise.
- The building design ensures that the abutting properties transition to mid-rise and then low-rise as the block progresses in an eastward direction.
- This City block also consists of a 7-storey mid-rise building which abuts the subject property. This existing mid-rise will continue to support transition within the block (to the east).

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- We understand that a nearby property owner on this City block had previously applied for a rezoning to permit the development of a 5-storey mid-rise, meaning that mid-rise development has been previously contemplated for this block.

3. Block Pattern/ Character:

- The subject property resides on a very large City block. Mid-block transition, between different building typologies, including mid-rise to low-rise, is commonly found on City blocks in the surrounding area, meaning that not all blocks in this area have mid-rise buildings that command a whole block.
- 18 Louisa Street is a precedent in this area of the City which shows that a taller building does not need to command an entire City block to provide transition or support the progression of a City block overtime.
- The existing and planned context has been modelled to analyse potential conflicts with neighbouring properties. The building mass has been sculpted to reduce impacts on adjacent properties and to force transition to lower building typologies to the east. A sun/shadow study prepared by Simmonds Architecture and dated October 7th, confirms this.

4. Insufficient Street Front Design (commercial, landscape):

- The proposed redevelopment has re-incorporated extensive landscaping along Rochester as well as commercial space which will activate the ground floor and adjacent public realm.

5. Insufficient Amenity Space:

- A communal amenity space has been added to the rooftop to meet the required amenity space totals. The proposed amenity spaces are exceptional and will provide comfortable outdoor environments, confirmed by the noise and wind studies prepared in support of the planning applications.
- The dwelling unit mix has been further balanced to provide a greater variety in type and size of dwelling unit.

Based on context, proximity to transit and the emphasis placed on complementing and relating to local context and character, it is our professional planning opinion that the proposed redevelopment of the subject property for a mixed-use, mid-rise transition building ranging in 5-9 storeys reflects good urban design principles and is representative of good land use planning.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Section 4.0 of this Report introduces the policy context for the subject property. The proposed redevelopment is measured against the applicable policies to demonstrate consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 and conformity with the City of Ottawa's Official Plan 2003, as amended.

The new Official Plan, adopted by Council on November 24th, 2021 by by-law 2021-386, has also been reviewed for conformity to identify any policy changes that would affect this proposal given the transition between both documents, as explained in Section 1.1 of this report.

Finally, this section ends with a review of the City of Ottawa's Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines (2007) and Zoning By-law 2008-250, as amended, to demonstrate compliance. The details of the proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment are also provided.

4.1 Provincial Policy Statement 2020

We have reviewed Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 to evaluate consistency with its policies.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment, which will permit the proposed development as described earlier, is consistent with the vision and ideas of the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS) as issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*.

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The Planning Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements issued under the Act, which includes the PPS. The policies of the PPS support building strong healthy communities, wise use and management of resources, and protecting public health and safety.

Section 1.0 – Building Strong Healthy Communities contains policies that promote the efficient use of land and development patterns that aim to achieve strong, livable, healthy and resilient communities.

We have reviewed all the applicable policies of PPS 2020 and have determined that the proposed redevelopment is consistent with its policies, as follows:

- The proposed redevelopment is a form of residential intensification that is encouraged in urban areas, near major transit stations.

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- The proposed redevelopment represents an efficient use of land that is transit-supportive and can be supported by existing municipal services. Future residents will benefit from having immediate access to planned higher order transit as well as many bus routes, along with commercial and employment uses, and parks and open spaces.
- The proposed redevelopment promotes the use of alternative modes of transportation, including cycling and walking, by strengthening connections to and from transit stations, the multi-use pathway adjacent to the Trillium Line and other road connections. The subject property already benefits from superb access to existing and planned pedestrian and cycling connections.
- The proposed redevelopment focuses on creating a seamless transition between the different character areas of the neighbourhood through the redevelopment of the subject property for an appropriate built form. The subject property resides on an existing transition block.
- The proposed redevelopment will include a range of unit types which will help to diversify the local housing stock, specifically the lack of rental units. Studio and 1-bedroom units will allow for students, seniors and young couples, while 2-bedroom units will provide the opportunity young families to enter the market.
- The proposed redevelopment will bring people closer to jobs and entertainment (e.g. commercial), which will ultimately strengthen the local economy. In particular, the unit types and proximity to transit will allow for greater flexibility of employment, including Work -At-Home (WAH) opportunities.
- The proposed redevelopment constitutes the redevelopment of an underutilized brownfield site, where intensification is promoted and supported. The site is being decontaminated and will be suitable for residential use, as demonstrated by the Phase II ESA and geotechnical.

Overall, the proposed redevelopment provides additional residential intensification in an area of transition. The subject property is a logical destination for a 5-9 storey mix-use, mid-rise building that provides a neighbourhood commercial use and purpose-built rental units. The massing of the proposed redevelopment supports transition to the low-density residential neighbourhood to the north by providing proper setbacks and step backs which scales the building down toward the adjacent mid-rise and low-rise buildings; thereby, maintaining the existing character of the area. The subject property is found at the periphery of a 400m LRT radius and is close to transit. The proposed redevelopment will be transit supportive development, with an emphasis on supporting multi-modal transportation and connections through the provision of less vehicular parking than required and the addition of more bicycle parking than required. The subject property is steps away from arterial and major collector roads. The development makes efficient uses of the current infrastructure and municipal services found in the area. Therefore, the proposal is consistent with the policy direction provided by PPS 2020.

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4.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan 2003, as amended.

The City of Ottawa Official Plan, adopted by City Council in May 2003, had been updated and amended numerous times by both Council and the Ontario Municipal Board, now known as the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). For the purposes of this Planning Rationale, the on-line consolidated version of the Official Plan, including Amendment #150 and OPA #180 was used as reference.

Official Plan 2003, as amended, will remain in effect until the Minister of Municipal Housing and Affairs approves the City's new Official Plan, which was adopted by City Council when they enacted By-law no. 2021-386 on November 24th, 2021.

The following sub-sections explore the policies of Official Plan 2003, as amended, to demonstrate conformity.

4.2.1 Section 2 – Strategic Directions

Section 2 of the Old Official Plan outlines the broad policies that govern growth and change. It provides general directions regarding patterns and managing growth, building infrastructure, maintaining environmental integrity and building livable communities.

Section 2.1 – Patterns of Growth

Section 2.1 of the Official Plan addresses how population and employment growth is to be managed within the City of Ottawa, including the urban area and village boundaries. Growth should generally be directed to areas where services exist and where land can be efficiently used, creating compact developments that support a multi-modal transportation network. New infill development should be compatible with the existing context and contribute to the diversity of housing, employment, or services found in the area. New growth will be managed to create complete communities and accommodate the residential and employment needs of Ottawa's population.

The proposed redevelopment is compact and located where existing infrastructure and municipal services are provided, while ensuring compatibility within the existing context through design and height transition. The proposed redevelopment is mixed-use and provides purpose-built rentals in an area of the City that desperately needs it due to the current housing crisis. The proposed redevelopment will therefore support the local economy and bring people closer to existing and well-established employment and commercial uses found in the area.

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Section 2.2 – Managing Growth

The policies in Section 2.2.2 direct the management of intensification within the urban area. Residential intensification is defined as “the development of a property, building or area that results in a net increase in residential units or accommodation”. It is recognized that intensification is generally the most cost-effective pattern of development, making use of existing municipal services, transit and other infrastructure. Intensification is encouraged through the development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties, including brownfields. New growth in the urban area will be distributed in two ways to help strengthen the city’s livable communities:

- Intensification and Infill; and
- New development on vacant land in designated growth areas that contributes to the completion of an existing community or builds a new community(ies)

The Subject Property is located within the City of Ottawa’s urban area. Schedule ‘B’ of the Official Plan shows the subject property designated as General Urban Area, as shown in **Figure 51** below.

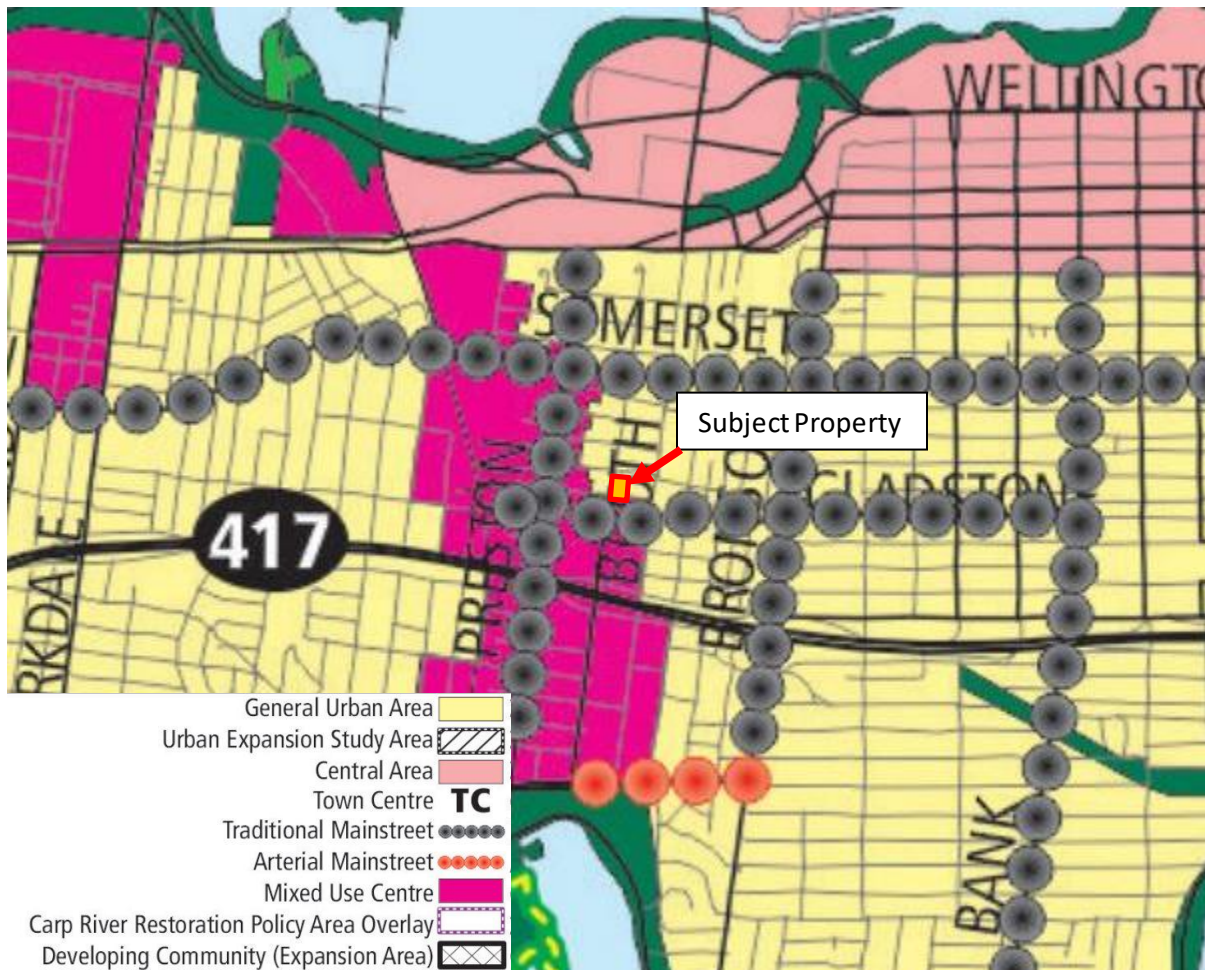


Figure 51: City of Ottawa, 2003, as amended, Schedule ‘B’

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The proposed redevelopment meets the intent of the Official Plan by providing new residential units through the redevelopment and intensification of a currently vacant brownfield site parcel, that previously contained commercial uses and is being decontaminated.

Lands that are designated General Urban Area permit the development of a full range and choice of housing types in combination with conveniently located employment, retail, service, cultural, leisure, entertainment, and institutional uses. The predominant form of housing in this area is intended to be low-rise at four (4) storeys. However, there are several areas across the City, found within the General Urban Area designation, which contain some existing high-rise and mid-rise buildings. Mid-rise development in the General Urban Area may be permitted if the surrounding context allows for it. Considering the character of the surrounding area is a key part of the determining factor of compatibility for a new development.

Section 2.2.2 of the Official Plan provides policies to manage intensification within the urban area. This includes where, how and the amount of the intensification should occur. The proposed redevelopment does not fall into a Target Area for Intensification. However, Policy 10 of Section 2.2.2 of the Official Plan recognizes that intensification may occur in a variety of built forms, from low-rise to high-rise, provided there is proximity to transit and urban design and compatibility objectives can be met.

Denser development, which often means taller buildings, should be located in areas that either already consist of taller buildings, or are transit-supportive and mixed-use, within proximity to the Rapid Transit and Transit Priority networks. As explained in Section 2.0 of this report, the transportation context and mixed-use character of the area surrounding the subject property would support intensification on-site.

Policy 11 of Section 2.2.2 further specifies that the distribution of appropriate building heights will be determined by:

- a) *The location in a Target Area for Intensification identified (Policy 4) **or proximity to a Rapid Transit station or Transit Priority corridor, with the greatest density and tallest building heights being located closest to the station or corridor; and***
- b) *The Design and Compatibility of the development with the surrounding existing context and planned function, as detailed in Section 4.11, with buildings clustered with other buildings of similar height.*

As mentioned, even though the subject property is not located within an identified Target Area for Intensification under Section 2.2.2, the subject property can support a taller building height due to the unique context, proximity to transit, and the configuration and size of the property. The proposed

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redevelopment of a 5-9 storey building will be clustered with another mid-rise building which is abutting the subject property to the east. The proposed redevelopment will therefore be compatible with the existing context.

The subject property is located just outside 400m from the Corso Italia LRT Station and is close to Gladstone Ave, a Transit Priority Corridor, as per Schedule 'D' of the Official Plan.

Figure 52 below shows Schedule 'D' of the City's Official Plan.

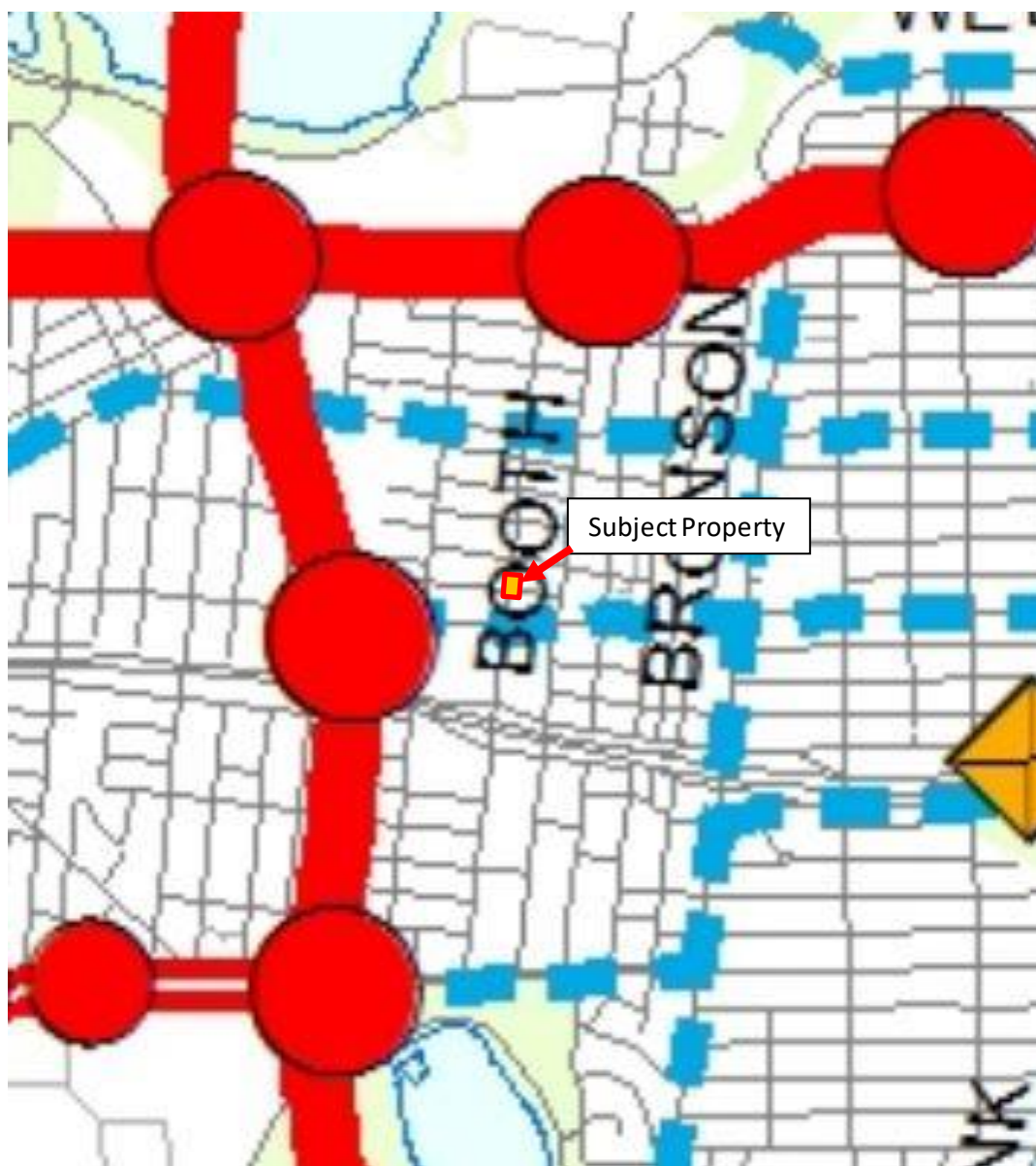


Figure 52: City of Ottawa, 2003, as amended, Schedule 'D'

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In the context of policies 10 and 11 of Section 2.2.2 above, high-rise development should be the priority for lands closest to the Rapid Transit Station. However, in the context of this OP policy, sites that are still in proximity but more within the range of 400-800 metres (m) from the station are still suitable for densification and built-forms that provide transition. In the context of Section 2.2.2, mid-rise development is the most logical built form to support this transition.

Policy 12 of Section 2.2.2 defines building heights as follows:

- Low-Rise: 4 storeys or less
- Mid-Rise: 5 to 9 storeys
- High-Rise: 10 to 30 storeys
- High-Rise 31+: 31 storeys or greater

The proposed redevelopment is between 5 and 9 storeys in height and is considered a mid-rise building based on Policy 12 above.

Given the context surrounding the subject property, including the abutting 7-storey mid-rise and low-rise buildings, mid-rise is the most appropriate built-form to provide transition from the existing and emerging high-rise areas west of Rochester, in the direction of the Corso Italia LRT Station.

The proposed redevelopment fits within its context and is compatible with the existing character of the area, providing proper transition between buildings of different heights. Therefore, the proposal conforms with the policy direction of Section 2.2 of the City's Official Plan, 2003, as amended.

Section 2.3 – Providing Infrastructure

Section 2.3 of the Official Plan prescribes policies to support and strengthen the connection between land use and infrastructure, including transportation facilities that influence where new development should be built to provide opportunities for live, work and play.

2.3.1 Transportation

Through the City of Ottawa's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and the Official Plan, the City's goal is to create a multi-modal transportation hub, one that relies less on vehicles and more on active modes and public transit.

This is reflected in Policy 2 and 7 and where active modes of transportation will be prioritized within 800m of a rapid transit station and 400m of a Transit Priority Network, to create liveable communities where these modes take priority. The proposed redevelopment is located within 800m of a rapid transit station

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and 400m of a Transit Priority Network and prioritizes these modes by placing people closer to transit. The proposed redevelopment also exceeds the minimum bicycle parking requirement as per Zoning By-law 2008-250 and provides much less vehicular parking than required to prioritize access to transit and cycling infrastructure, existing and planned. The design of the building prioritizes active modes and disincentives the use of a motorized vehicles.

In particular, the proposed redevelopment conforms to Policy 32 of Section 2.3.1, which regards managing the supply of parking for intensification, by reducing the total parking required on the site and locating the parking that is provided on-site within an underground parking garage.

Therefore, the proposal conforms with the policy direction of Section 2.2 of the City's Official Plan, 2003, as amended.

4.2.2 Section 3 – Designations and Land Use

Section 3 of the Official Plan sets out policies and detailed direction for the use of land within the city through several different designations.

3.6 Urban Designations

The subject property is found in in the General Urban Area designation. The policies of Section 3.6 apply to the subject property.

3.6.1 General Urban Area

The General Urban Area designation permits the development of a full range and choice of housing types, in combination with conveniently located employment, retail, service, cultural, leisure, entertainment and institutional uses. This facilitates the development of complete and sustainable communities. A broad scale of uses is found within this designation, from ground-oriented single-purpose buildings to mid-rise buildings with a mix of uses along Mainstreets or Transit Priority Corridors; from a dwelling or corner store to a shopping centre or office.

Policy 4 of Section 3.6.1 states that, new taller buildings may be considered for sites that:

- a. *front onto an Arterial Road on Schedules E or F of this Plan and which are:*
 - i) *within 800 metres walking distance of a Rapid Transit Station on Schedule D of this Plan, or*
 - ii) *on a Transit Priority Corridor on Schedule 'D' of this Plan. For the purposes of this policy only, the "Transit Street" defined in the Riverside South Community Design Plan is considered an Arterial Road;*

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b. are in an area already characterised by taller buildings or sites zoned to permit taller buildings

We have confirmed with City staff that Policy 4 of Section 3.6.1 is to be read as an a) or b) clause, meaning that one or both of these policies could be leveraged to justify an increase in height on a property.

Regarding Policy 4a), the subject property is within 800 metres of both a Rapid Transit Station but does not front onto an Arterial Road and is not on a Transit Priority Corridor, shown on Schedule 'D'. The proposed redevelopment does not satisfy this policy in its entirety, but does, however, partially meet its intent due to the proximity to the Corso Italia LRT Station and its location one block removed from an Arterial Road (Preston Street) and a Transit Priority Corridor (Gladstone Avenue). The proposed request for taller height and increased density is therefore logical based on proximity to an LRT station, a transit priority corridor and an arterial road.

Regarding Policy 4b), it is important to note here that this policy would technically support an increase in height for sites that are not in an area already characterized by taller buildings but are rather found in an area characterized by "sites zoned to permit taller buildings". This is certainly a distinction that is noteworthy. Fortunately for the proposed redevelopment, the subject property is found within an area that is already characterized by both taller buildings, as well as sites zoned to permit taller buildings.

As discussed in Section 2.0 of this report, the surrounding height context cannot be ignored. There are mid-rise and high-rise buildings found within a one (1) block radius of the subject property, ranging between 6-21 storeys in building height. The subject property abuts an existing 7-storey mid-rise and we understand that a 5-storey mid-rise had been previously contemplated on the same block via a rezoning request. Also, the entire City block to the southwest, bounded by Balsam, Rochester, Gladstone and Preston streets, is zoned to permit high-rise development, with a maximum building height of 55 m. The redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building between 5-9 storeys will ensure transition from this high-rise area west of Rochester Street. Therefore, the requested increase in height is justified and the proposal conforms to policy 4b) of Section 3.6 of the Official Plan.

Furthermore, policy 5 of Section 3.6.1 states that when considering a proposal for residential intensification through infill or redevelopment in the General Urban Area, the City will, among others:

- 1. Assess the compatibility of new development as it relates to existing community character so that it enhances and builds upon desirable established patterns of built form and open spaces;*
- and*

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2. Consider its contribution to the maintenance and achievement of a balance of housing types and tenures to provide a full range of housing for a variety of demographic profiles throughout the General Urban Area;

The proposed redevelopment conforms to Policy 5 above by providing a range of purpose-built rental units to increase the range and mix of housing supply to the area. The proposed redevelopment conforms to Policy 5 above by also building upon the desirable and well-established patterns and mix of built form that is already existing in the area surrounding the subject property and specifically on the City block upon which the subject property resides; thereby maintaining consistency with block character and pattern. The surrounding area is also well-served by parks and open space. The proposed redevelopment also reinforces the mixed-use character of the neighbourhood, while respecting abutting and nearby low-rise with a mid-rise built form that ranges between 5 and 9 storeys. The proposed built-form provides transition through generous building setbacks and step backs that further reduce overlook, shadow and noise impacts on adjacent properties.

The proposed redevelopment provides a design that is compatible with existing development and presents an appropriate building height and form. In our opinion, the proposed redevelopment conforms to the policies of Section 3.6 of the Official Plan.

4.2.3 Other applicable policies of Official Plan 2003, as amended

In accordance with the City of Ottawa's Design Brief Terms of Reference, the policies of Section 2.5.1 and 4.11 have been reviewed for conformity.

Section 2.5.1

Section 2.5.1 of the City's Official Plan provides direction on patterns, locations of land uses and issues related to urban design to be sensitive to and compatible with existing communities. Development applications in the General Urban Area must be evaluated in the context of Section 2.5.1.

The policies of Section 2.5.1 have been reviewed for conformity:

- The proposed redevelopment emphasizes place and community through the proposed commercial space and the design of the first 1-4 storeys, which responds to local character using brick on the building façade.
- The proposed redevelopment provides well-defined and multifunctional public and private spaces, including a gathering plaza/ space at the intersection of Balsam and Rochester, and two exceptional outdoor amenity spaces, one found on the rooftop and one found in an internal courtyard at the rear

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of the property. The internal courtyard is connected to Balsam Street through a covered laneway. Large private balconies and terraces are proposed at the 6th and 7th floors.

- The proposed redevelopment provides places that will be comfortable and prioritize the experience of the building tenant. Areas will be well-lit, well landscaped, and universally accessible.
- The proposed redevelopment is a mid-rise transition building ranging between 5 and 9 storeys in building height. The architectural design of the building, including building step backs, setbacks, materiality and articulations, provides a human-scale development that is visually interesting and responds well to local character.
- The proposed redevelopment considers adaptability and diversity by creating a purpose-built rental building that is mixed-use and supports the overall future progression of the block upon which it resides.

Section 4.11

Section 4.11 provides the Urban Design and Compatibility policy criteria that are to be adhered to through the development and redevelopment of all land in all parts of the city. The policies require consideration for compatibility, views, design, massing, and amenity space, among others, as key factors for assessing the relationship between new and existing development. The policies of Section 4.11 have been reviewed for conformity:

- The proposed redevelopment emphasizes transition and will be compatible with its surroundings using a range of building heights (5-9 storeys). The proposed redevelopment also relies on its building materiality to fit within the local context. Transitional elements are found throughout the building's massing including along building edges and façades. Balconies and terraces are recessed to mitigate overlook and privacy concerns.
- The proposed redevelopment is oriented to abutting streets and the design of principal entrances is intended to improve the experience of the adjacent public realm and the building's uses. Ground floor facades are intentionally designed with additional fenestration, while ground floor residential unit features at-grade private outdoor terraces with privacy screening through trees and other measures form the proposed plaza. These elements work together to enhance the interface with the street and improve safety through passive surveillance.
- The proposed redevelopment integrates all parking, loading and building servicing below ground in an underground parking garage to create a high-quality public realm experience at-grade and to avoid and conflicts with street users.
- The proposed redevelopment includes private balconies and terraces and two (2) significant outdoor amenity areas, which are exceptionally designed. These amenity areas are sensitively located to mitigate issues of overlook and privacy. All safety design measures will be in place.

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The proposed redevelopment conforms to the applicable policies of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, 2003, as amended.

4.3 The City of Ottawa Official Plan, 2021, adopted November 24, 2021

As previously discussed in Section 2.3 of this Report, both the Corso Italia Secondary Plan and City of Ottawa New Official Plan, 2021 have been reviewed to present the evolving height context stemming from the guiding policies. The Corso Italia Secondary Plan has been readopted as a part of New Official Plan, 2021. The subject property resides outside the Secondary Plan area but abuts the hub designation.

As per Schedule 'B1' of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, the subject property is designated "Neighbourhood" with an evolving overlay (**Figure 53**).

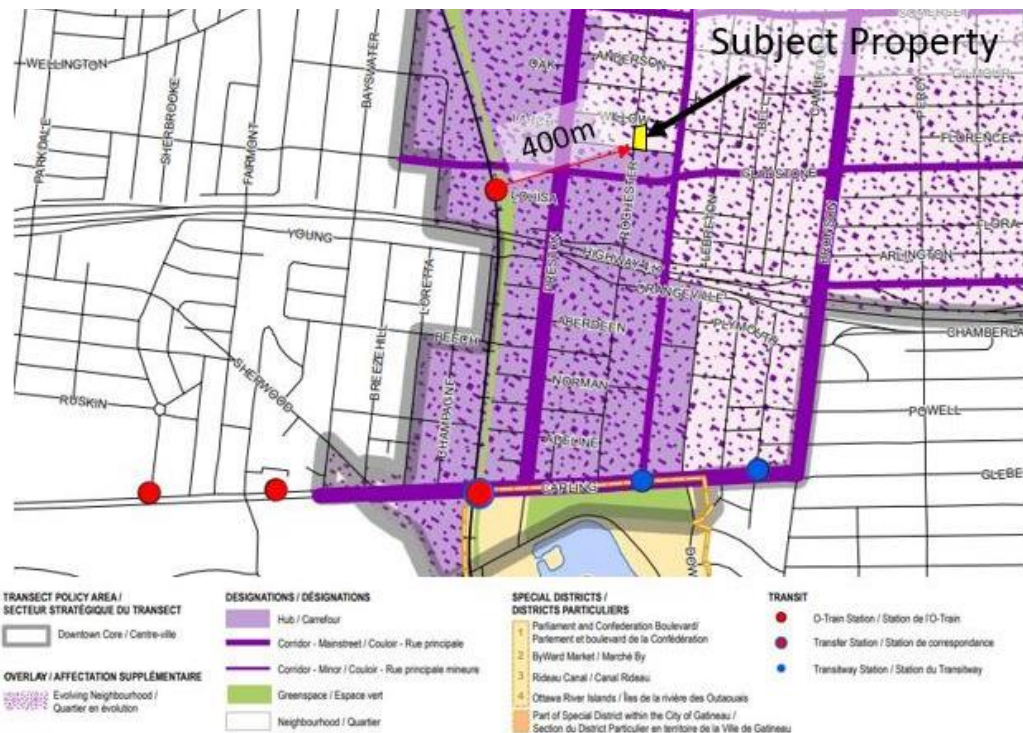


Figure 53: Schedule B1 of the City's New Official Plan, 2021, as amended.

Similar to the General Urban Area designation from the existing Official Plan, 2003, as amended, the Neighbourhood Designation prescribes a maximum building height of four (4) storeys, but allows for an increase in height for sites that are found in areas already characterized by taller buildings:

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Policy 6.3.1

2) *Permitted building heights in Neighbourhoods shall be Low-rise, except:*

- a) Where existing zoning or secondary plans allow for greater building heights; or*
- b) **In areas already characterized by taller buildings.***

As discussed in Section 2.2 of this report, the subject property is found within an area that is already characterized by taller buildings. The request for an increase in height is therefore justified based on the existing context.

The subject property is also subject to the “evolving overlay”. The evolving overlay is applied to sites abutting the “Hub” designation, where new urban built form patterns are generally encouraged. The evolving overlay, as per Section 5.6.1.1(1)(a) of the New Official Plan, 2021, recognizes that a gradual transition in built form and character needs to occur between contexts, such as the hub designation and more stable low-rise residential areas found in the neighbourhood designation. In our opinion, this policy supports the redevelopment of the subject property for a mid-rise building, as mid-rise is the most logical built form to support transition between a high-rise and low-rise areas and building typologies.

As discussed in Section 2.3 of this Report, Hubs in the Downtown Core Transect are the priority for high-rise development. Given that much of the land to the west is designated Hub and is within a 300 metre (m) radius, or 400 metre (m) walk distance of the Corso Italia LRT Station, whichever is the greatest, it is logical to assume that much of this land will be intensified through high-rise development. Abutting the Hub designation makes the subject property a logical destination for a mid-rise building that provides transition between the hub context and the mostly stable low-rise neighbourhood residing north of Willow Street and east of Booth Street, as discussed throughout this Report.

In accordance with the Urban Design policies of Section 4.6 of the New Official Plan, mid-rise is the most logical built form to provide transition between high-rise and low-rise (**Figure 54**).

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Figure 54: Urban Design Policies (Section 4.6.6)

Section 4.6.6 of the New Official Plan provides policy direction for mid-rise buildings:

7) *Mid-rise buildings shall be designed to respond to context, and transect area policies, and should:*

- a) *Frame the street block and provide mid-block connections to break up large blocks;*
- b) *Include a base with active frontages, and a middle portion that relates to the scale and character of the surrounding buildings, or, planned context;*
- c) *Be generally proportionate in height to the width of the right of way as illustrated in the Figure below, with additional height permitted in the Downtown Core Transect; and*
- d) *Provide sufficient setbacks and step backs to:*
 - i) *Provide landscaping and adequate space for tree planting;*
 - ii) *Avoid a street canyon effect; and*
 - iii) *Minimize microclimate impacts on the public realm and private amenity areas.*

In our review of the guiding policies above, the proposed redevelopment conforms to Section 4.6.6 for reasons already provided in the Design Brief (Section 3.0). The proposed redevelopment therefore meets the intent of the neighbourhood designation, the evolving overlay and the urban design policies of the New Official Plan by supporting transition from the potential high-rise areas in the hub designation.

Therefore, the proposed redevelopment conforms to both the existing Official Plan, 2003, as amended and the new Official Plan, 2021.

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4.4 City of Ottawa Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines (2007).

In September 2007, City Council approved design guidelines to address Transit-Oriented Development. The subject property is within a close walking distance of a planned LRT Station and a transit priority corridor, as per the City of Ottawa's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) – Ultimate Network. As such, the TOD guidelines are considered the most relevant guidelines.

The guidelines apply to all development throughout the City that is within 600 metres walking distance of a rapid transit stop or station. These guidelines further provide guidance for the proper development of these strategically located properties.

The guidelines address six elements of urban design including: land use, layout, built form, pedestrians and cyclists, vehicles and parking, and streetscape and environment.

We have reviewed all of the TOD guidelines and can confirm that the proposed redevelopment is consistent with all the guidelines prescribed therein. In particular, the proposed redevelopment prioritizes pedestrian circulation and provides ample bicycle parking to support the city's cycling network. Additionally, the proposed redevelopment incorporates less parking than what is required by the Zoning By-law 2008-250 and incorporates these parking spaces in an underground parking garage. All loading and building services are consolidated internally and provided underground. The proposed redevelopment is supportive of the transportation context and is consistent with the TOD Guidelines.

4.5 City of Ottawa Zoning By-Law 2008-250, as amended.

The subject property is currently zoned as "Residential Fourth Density (R4) Zone, Subzone 'UD', Urban Exception 1891, Schedule '275', Height 12.5 m - c" [R 4UD (1891) S275 H(12.5)-c]. This existing zoning permits a variety of low-rise residential buildings of four storeys, or smaller along with a commercial use. We have been instructed by City Staff to review the proposal's departure from the R4-UD zoning standards rather than those imposed upon the subject property by Zoning Schedule '275'.

Our team proposes to rezone the subject property from the current zoning to "Residential Fifth Density (R5) Zone, Subzone 'B', Urban Exception XXXX, Schedule XXX" [R5B(XXXX) S(XXX)]. This new site-specific zoning exception would permit the proposed 9-storey mid-rise building and allow for several site-specific exceptions, including a reduction in the required residential parking, reduced setbacks along most sides of the building, and a maximum building height 29.2 m. Our client will also be seeking a site-specific zoning provision to allow for a communal amenity space to project above the maximum permitted height limit, if not already permitted under Section 64 of Zoning By-Law 2008-250.

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We further propose that minimum and maximum building heights, step backs and setbacks be addressed through the use of a Zoning Schedule.

Table 2 below demonstrates compliance with the selected R5-B Zoning.

Table 2 – Proposed Development versus the requirements of the R4-UD and R5-B Zone				
Provision	Required (R4-UD)	Required (R5-B)	Proposed	Compliance To R5B
Permitted Use				
Apartment Dwelling,	Low-rise	Mid-rise	Mid-Rise	Yes
Table 162A – Zone Provisions for a Residential Use in the R4-UD vs R5-B				
Minimum Lot Width	15m	22.5m	>15m	Yes
Minimum Lot Area	450 m ²	675 m ²	1832 m ²	Yes
Maximum Building Height	14.5m	N/A	29.2m	No
Minimum Front Yard	4.5m	3.0m	1.5m	No
Minimum Corner Side Yard	4.5m	3.0m	1.5m	No
Minimum Rear Yard	7.5m	7.5m	1.6m	No
Minimum Interior Side Yard Setback	1.5m	7.5m	1.7m	No

Given the unique shape of the lot, the technical required rear yard setback based on zoning definition is measured from the northern lot line. This should, however, be treated as an interior side yard setback. The proposed interior side yard setback of 1.7 m from the easterly lot line (Balsam Street) and the proposed setback of 1.5 m from the northerly property line is consistent with the current zoning permission for an interior side yard setback. The non-technical “rear yard” is found in the area abutting the properties to the north and the east. In this area, the building is set back generously to provide separation and to ensure compatibility between built-forms.

We have also reviewed the general provisions of Zoning By-Law 2008-250 to determine compliance.

Table 3 below demonstrates compliance with the general zoning provisions.

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Table 3 – Proposed Development versus the general provisions of Zoning By-Law 2008-250			
Provision	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Parking (Inclusive of Type A accessible Parking spaces)			
Residential: 0.5 per dwelling unit (mid-rise or mixed-use building)	65	19	No
Residential Visitor Parking: 0.1 per dwelling unit	13	13	Yes
Retail: <200 m ²	0	0	Yes
Total Parking	78	32	No
Accessible Parking Ratio			
Type A – 3.4 m width	1	2	Yes
Type B – 2.4 m width	1	1	Yes
Bicycle Parking			
0.5 spaces per dwelling unit	65	210	Yes
Landscaping Provisions			
30% of Lot Area	549.6 m ²	580 m ²	Yes
Amenity Space			
6 m ² per dwelling unit for a mid-rise apartment building (Total = 780m ²)			
Community Amenity Area (50% minimum)	390 m ²	425.2m ²	Yes
Other: interior spaces and private terraces / decks	780 m ²	1390 m ²	Yes

Any other additional required site-specific zoning exceptions will be identified with Staff through the City’s process for Zoning By-law Amendment applications. To our knowledge, the proposed redevelopment complies with all other provisions of Zoning By-Law 2008-250 and, therefore, conforms to its general intent.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This Planning Rationale and Design Brief has been prepared in support of applications for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control for the proposed redevelopment of the subject property for a 5-9 storey mixed-use, mid-rise building.

We have reviewed the local and area-wide context, the proposed redevelopment, as well as the applicable policies and guidelines and have determined the following:

- The proposed redevelopment is consistent with Provincial Policy Statement 2020.
- The proposed redevelopment achieves the general policy and design objectives of the City's Official Plan and conforms to both Official Plan 2003, as amended, and Official Plan 2021. The proposed redevelopment is an appropriate form of brownfield redevelopment and intensification in the general urban area; is exceptionally and sustainably designed; is supportive of transit; and is both responsive to context and complementary to local character.
- The proposed redevelopment adheres to all other design policy criteria of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, and the Transit Oriented Development guidelines (2007).
- The proposed redevelopment is supported by the technical studies and plans prepared for the applications for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control.
- The proposed redevelopment will conform to Zoning By-law 2008-250 and the proposed setbacks are not a gross departure from those required under the previous zoning.
- The proposed redevelopment is well-served by existing and planned transit, open spaces, community services and facilities, and pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- The proposed redevelopment will command a significant portion of the City block upon which it resides, allowing for the progression of the block in a way that is consistent with its existing overall function and character and the pattern of nearby blocks.
- Through a mid-rise built form ranging in height between 5-9 storeys, the proposed redevelopment supports transition from existing and evolving high-rise contexts to provide greater compatibility with adjacent mid-rise and low-rise buildings and to respect existing local character.
- The proposed redevelopment offers at-grade retail which aligns with the existing mixed-use character of the surrounding area and supports the concept of the 15-minute neighbourhood.

Based upon the above, the proposed redevelopment represents good land use planning.

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