



283 and 285 McLeod Street, Ottawa

Urban Design Brief
Site Plan Control
January 25, 2024



Prepared for REZY Properties Inc.

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1.0 Introduction

Fotenn Consultants Inc. (“Fotenn”) has been retained by REZY Properties Inc. to prepare this Urban Design Brief in support of a Site Plan Control application on the properties municipally addressed as 283 and 285 McLeod Street in the City of Ottawa (the “subject site”).

The proposed development seeks to redevelop the subject site with a five storey, 31-unit mid-rise residential apartment building. The project includes a total of eight (8) vehicular and 31 bicycle parking spaces. The proposed development seeks to demolish the existing heritage buildings and replace them with the new residential building, which includes two (2) two-and-a-half storey forms replacing the existing structures.

To accommodate the proposed development, Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Heritage Permit applications have been prepared and approved. The Heritage Permit (D09-04-22-0069, D09-04-22-0070, D09-04-22-0071) applications were approved by Built Heritage Committee on November 6, 2023, and both the Official Plan Amendment (D01-01-21-0014) and Zoning By-law Amendment (D02-02-21-0084) applications were approved by Planning and Housing Committee on November 15, 2023, and by Council on November 22, 2023. The appeal period ended on December 20, 2023, with no appeals filed, and as such the amended zoning is now in full force and effect.

1.1 Development Application

1.1.1 Site Plan Control Application

A Site Plan Control application is required to permit development of the subject site. The subject site is zoned **R5B [2917] H(19)** and designed to meet all zoning provisions associated with this zone. The Site Plan Control application process will review the proposal to ensure that it is a safe, functional, and orderly way to develop the subject site. This Urban Design Brief has been prepared as a requirement of the Site Plan Application to demonstrate how the development proposal aligns with municipal policies and guidelines.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Context

2.1 Subject Site

The subject site consists of a land assembly of two contiguous properties municipally known as 283 and 285 McLeod Street, located in Somerset Ward (Ward 14) of the City of Ottawa. The site is a generally P-shaped lot with a total area of approximately 832.38 square metres with approximately 31 metres of frontage along McLeod Street along the southern edge (Figure 1). The subject site is located approximately 30 metres east of the intersection of O'Connor Street and McLeod Street. Located in the Centretown neighbourhood, the site currently contains two (2) three-storey commercial use buildings at 283 McLeod Street and 285 McLeod Street, with both primary entrances located at the interior sides of the buildings. As the site is located within the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan, both properties are Designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The existing buildings are reflective of an early pattern of development in the Centretown neighbourhood, however, as discussed herein, many original and character defining elements have since been removed. The remainder of the site contains a central access from McLeod Street leading to a surface parking lot in the rear, with front yard landscaping along McLeod Street. A combined hydro pole and light standard is located to the southeast corner of the site, outside of the property boundaries, while a sidewalk runs continuous along the southern edge of the property.



Figure 1: Site context

2.2 Surrounding Context

The following land uses are located in proximity to the subject site:

North: Immediately north of the subject site is an eight-storey hotel occupying a large corner site at O'Connor Street and Gladstone Avenue. East of this, along the southern edge of Gladstone Avenue are three-storey residential townhouses. Further north are low-rise residential and mixed-use buildings along east-west local roads, with some low-rise commercial buildings located along O'Connor Street. This residential condition continues north through the Centretown neighbourhood, with some mid-rise and high-rise residential buildings located throughout, and building heights increasing through to the Downtown Core.

East: Immediately east of the subject site are low-rise detached, semi-detached, townhouse, and low-rise apartment dwellings along McLeod Street, with a high-rise apartment building located at the corner of Metcalfe Street and Gladstone Avenue. Further east are generally low-rise and high-rise residential uses, with some small scale commercial and institutional uses throughout. This condition continues through to Elgin Street, where mixed-use and commercial uses are located along either side of the street. Low-rise residential dwellings, high-rise apartment buildings, and several local parks are located in the neighbourhood on either side of Elgin Street, and east through to the Rideau Canal.

South: Immediately south of the subject site are lands containing the Canadian Museum of Nature bounded by McLeod Street, Elgin Street, Argyle Avenue, and O'Connor Street. The lands immediately south of the site are occupied by landscaped area and a surface parking lot, where the museum building is located southeast of the site. Further south is the Taggart Family YMCA, containing a community centre, daycare, and recreation facilities. Surrounding this are low- to high-rise residential, mixed-use, and commercial buildings through to Catherine Street and Highway 417.

West: Immediately west of the subject site are two low-rise residential dwellings at the corner of O'Connor Street and McLeod Street, across which is a low-rise commercial building containing a funeral home and a nine-storey mid-rise residential building. The site containing the funeral home is occupied by a surface parking lot and is highly undeveloped. Further west is low-rise and nine-storey mid-rise residential building through to Bank Street, which contains mixed-use and commercial buildings typical of a Traditional Mainstreet along both frontages. Further west into the Centretown neighbourhood are generally low-rise and mid-rise residential buildings, with some commercial and high-rise buildings throughout.

3.0 Proposed Development & Urban Design Brief

3.1 Proposal Overview

The proposed development includes the infill development of a five storey, mid-rise residential apartment building, transitioning to a three storey low-rise built form along McLeod Street. The proposed development contains a total of 31 residential units with eleven (11) proposed as two-bedroom units, fourteen (14) as one-bedroom units, and six (6) as studio units. The two existing three storey commercial buildings at 283 and 285 McLeod Street are proposed to be removed and replaced by contemporary three storey massing, designed to complement the streetscape along McLeod Street and act as podium which transitions from to the proposed mid-rise building at the rear of the site. The residential dwellings are proposed to contain separate accesses for individual uses along McLeod Street, and to a lobby accessing the mid-rise building. Vehicular access to the site will be provided from McLeod Street to an underground parking structure containing one level of underground parking with eight (8) vehicle parking spaces, seven (7) for residential use and one (1) for visitor use, and 31 bicycle parking spaces. The proposed development will contain communal amenity space in addition to private balconies and at-grade outdoor space and indoor amenity areas.

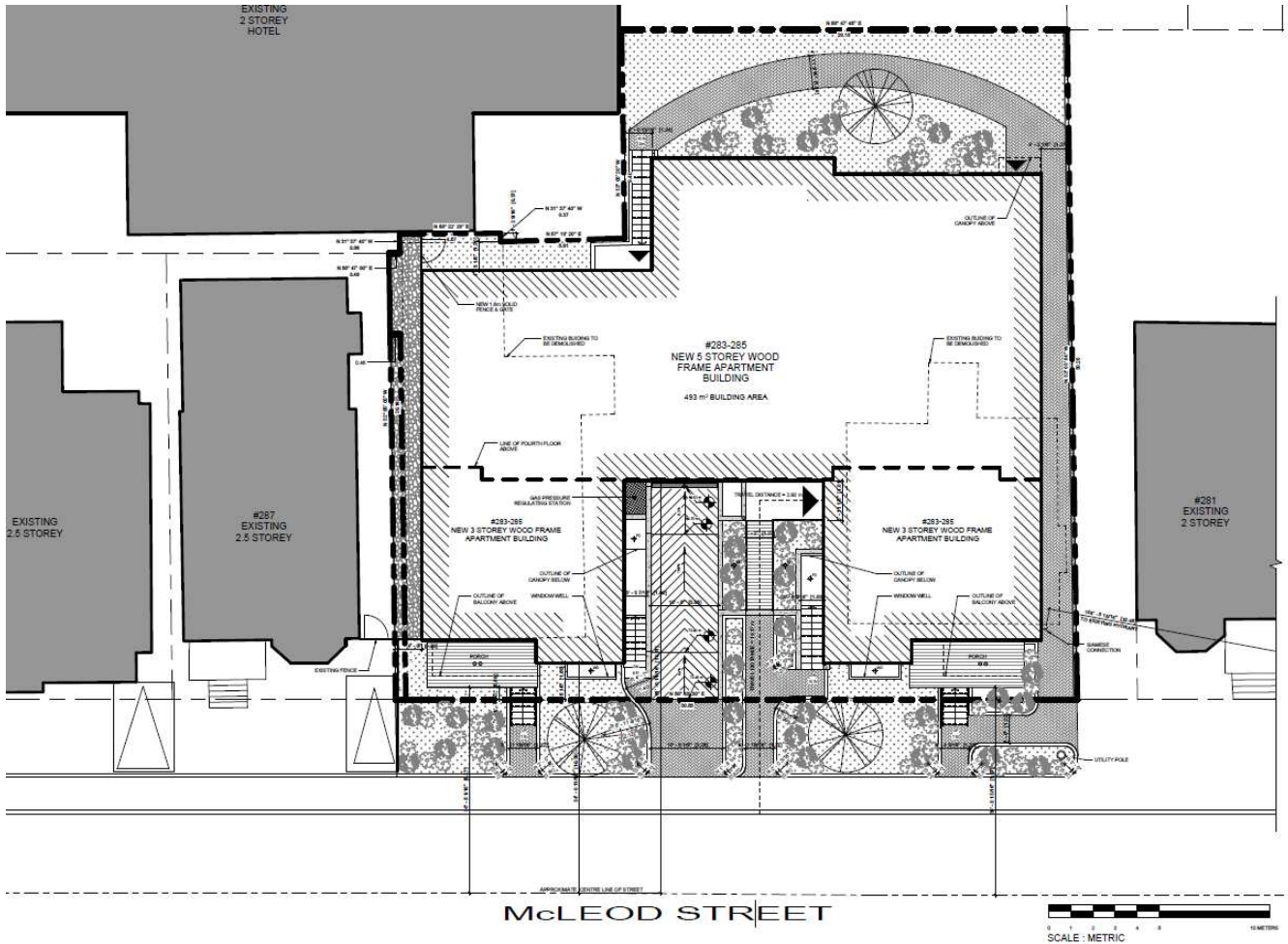


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

3.2 Design Evolution

The proposed development has undergone significant revisions since the initial pre-application consultation in January 2020. The revised architectural plans are a result of numerous discussions with City of Ottawa Planning, Heritage, and Urban Design Staff through previous application submissions, resulting in substantial changes to the development approach for the subject site. Figure 4 below illustrates the revisions to the proposed development since an initial pre-application consultation in 2020 for the Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Heritage Permit applications.



Figure 3: Design evolution of proposed development.

Retention and adaptive reuse were extensively explored for the existing buildings on site, however, to ensure the most appropriate infill mindful of both streetscape and public realm, demolition was ultimately proposed by Heritage Staff. This was supported by both Urban Design and Planning Staff as the existing buildings on site have been heavily altered from their original design and intention.

The main revisions from the original August 2021 submission to present include:

- / The proposed demolition of both of the existing two-and-a-half-storey buildings along McLeod Street, to be replaced by a similar scale, form and massing along this frontage;
- / A reduction in maximum building height from eight-storeys (25 metres) to five-storeys (18 metres), continuing to transition down to a two-and-a-half-storey front facade along McLeod;
- / A revision to accommodate a total of 31 residential dwelling units, with eleven (11) proposed as two-bedroom units, fourteen (14) as one-bedroom units, and six (6) as studio units;
- / The removal of a parking elevator to a central ramp out of concern for long-term performance and maintenance cost;
- / A reduction from ten (10) vehicle parking spaces to eight (8) vehicle parking spaces (7 residential and 1 visitor) to accommodate the ramp, bicycle parking spaces, and utilities and building services;
- / An increased setback of the upper (five storey) portion by approximately 4.5 metres to ensure the low-rise frontage is well incorporated into the existing streetscape context;
- / Increased interior side yard setbacks, exceeding the existing condition and initial submission;

- / Removal of the roof top amenity space to address privacy and noise concerns expressed regarding the initial submission;
- / Due to the revised unit layouts and concerns from 287 McLeod Street, window locations have been revised;
- / Maintenance of the ‘domestic’ front entry and porch condition prevalent on McLeod Street by situating the primary apartment entries in a manner which does not conflict with this existing character;
- / Design enlargement and refinement of the entry courtyard; and
- / Removal of the sunken amenity space in the rear yard.

The revised design further provides refinement and improvement to the overall building articulation and materiality, incorporating elements such as:

- / Masonry materiality, with a red/orange brick matched as closely as possible to the colour and size of bricks found on the existing buildings along McLeod Street;
- / Incorporation of black / charcoal grey materials (synthetic vertical ‘rib-textured’ wood), which responds to existing roof colours of buildings along McLeod Street;
- / Refinement of texture and materiality on the side elevations to increase visual interest from the public realm;
- / Aligning the entrance pathway and further animating the main entrance with night lighting, a canopy, a sculpture, and possible wall fountain to ensure visibility and visitor access consideration; and,
- / Inclusion of light grey materials (‘panelized’ concrete board or metal siding), which both softens the built form while responding to the streetscape of McLeod Street.

The development statistics of the proposal are as follows:

| Site Statistics | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Lot Area | 832 m ² |
| Lot Width | 30.83 m |
| Building Height | 18.6 metres (two and a half storeys at front, stepping back to five storeys at rear) |
| Use | Residential Mid-Rise Apartment |
| Breakdown of Units | 31 units (15 one-bedroom, 11 two-bedroom, 5 studio) |
| Parking Spaces | 8 parking spaces (7 residential, 1 visitor) |
| Bicycle Parking Spaces | 31 bicycle parking spaces |
| Amenity Area | Total: 259m ² Private: 33m ² Communal: 263m ² |

3.3 Building Massing & Design

The project consists of a low-rise built form along McLeod Street with a mid-rise built form setback, conserving the vernacular residential character along McLeod Street while complementing the existing and planned mid-rise condition surrounding the site. The low-rise portion of the building consists of two proposed three-storey residential built forms which replace the existing buildings at 283 and 285 McLeod Street. The two-and-a-half storey portions of the building are proposed to contain eight units. The scale and massing of the three-storey built form and the facade materials and fenestration patterns are designed to complement and reference the cadence and character of the historic residential buildings along McLeod Street.

The front facade of the mid-rise portion is setback 9.88 metres from the front property line, providing a strong transition and conserving the character of the streetscape along McLeod Street. The upper floors of the mid-rise portion are stepped back and articulated with a differential colour pallet and materiality and balconies to soften the upper corners of the building. The mid-rise built form responds to the low-rise condition along McLeod Street and provides a design which respects the existing buildings along Gladstone Avenue to the north. Through feedback from City staff and as part of Heritage Permit approval, the side elevations of the buildings have been refined to incorporate additional materiality and texture to increase visual interest from the public realm and neighbouring properties.

Setbacks, step backs and the architectural articulation are carefully considered to shape the building to fit on the street in a complimentary and non-intrusive manner. The scale and massing of the five-storey building is sensitive for a new development in relation to the neighbourhood's existing and future context, which include many buildings that are greater in size, scale and height. The built form of the project preserves the lower scale massing of a street friendly fabric. The mid-rise is expressed in a contemporary architectural language, sensitively setback from the street to showcase the heritage buildings along McLeod Street. The design uniquely combines a heritage and contemporary architectural approach.



Figure 4: View from across McLeod Street, looking North towards the proposed development within its context.

3.4 Streetscape and Public Realm

The proposed development incorporates many positive attributes and architectural elements through rigorous design sessions with multiple stakeholders. Of great importance, the proposed development responds to comments obtained during public information sessions with neighbouring property owners, including decreasing the overall height of the building from eight (8) to five (5) storeys, removing the communal outdoor terrace on the second floor, maintaining an appropriate rear yard setback and incorporating stepbacks to reduce impacts on abutting properties.



Figure 5: Proposed condition along McLeod Street, looking West

Other notable design features which contribute to the streetscape, public realm, and surrounding context include:

- / Preservation of a scale-appropriate streetscape with improvements to enhance the existing heritage fabric.
- / Provision of residential units with street-facing entrances and active frontages with 2-storey porches.
- / Aligning the three storey building facades along McLeod Street with the facades of the adjacent buildings to form a consistent street-fronting edge.
- / Landscape treatments will articulate the walkways to the residential units with autonomy. The landscaping is intended to connect with the public realm seamlessly, transitioning from the private realm and providing a united landscaped strip along McLeod Street.
- / The large existing 'gap' in the streetscape containing a surface parking lot between the existing buildings has been eliminated, replaced with a public-facing courtyard which responds to and enhances the character of the streetscape.
- / A 5.8 metre rear yard setback is maintained, where the backyard open-space corridor is consistent with the existing rear yards of this portion of McLeod Street. This space will act as a 'backyard', designed as common amenity space for the residents.
- / The number of parking spaces provided conforms to Official Plan policies, supporting the viable active transportation character of the area.
- / The overall design is aimed to be pedestrian friendly for the residents, neighbours and pedestrian along McLeod Street.

3.5 Heritage



Figure 6: Proposed condition along McLeod Street, looking East

The built context along McLeod Street is consistent in that residences are typically two-and-a-half storeys in height, brick clad, with one or two storey porches, bay windows, with gables facing the street. The building styles range from vernacular Victorian, Queen Anne, Edwardian, Prairie, and Art Deco (Appin Apartments). Although both buildings at 283 and 285 McLeod Street are proposed to be demolished, the proposed development has been designed to provide reference to the existing buildings while complementing the two similar historic single-family residences neighbouring the subject site at 287 and 289 McLeod Street.

The proposed low-rise portion of the building has been designed to be in keeping with the scale and massing of the adjacent historic houses. The front facade will align with the facades of the adjacent buildings while maintaining and transforming the existing open space between the buildings into a more naturalized space from asphalt parking. This design approach will result in a consistent street-fronting edge with the red/orange brick masonry matches the colour and size of bricks found on the existing buildings along McLeod Street. Fenestration patterns will also compliment the adjacent heritage facades.

The facade of the mid-rise will be clad in a lightweight warm colour metal cladding material, with vertical seams that add a subtle texture to the building. Incorporating black / charcoal grey materials (synthetic vertical 'rib-textured' wood), responds to existing roof colours of buildings along McLeod Street. The use of light grey materials ('panelized' concrete board or metal siding) softens the built form while responding to the streetscape of McLeod Street.

3.6 Sustainability



Figure 7: View into entry court from McLeod Street, looking West

The building is designed holistically with fundamental principals of sustainable development as follows:

- / **Siting, Building Form, and Orientation of the Building:** the proposed building is carefully designed to adapt to the compact site with its relatively compact form, especially the massing of the five storey mid-rise. The apartment units have large and operable windows which allow for natural light and fresh air.
- / **Energy Performance:** The building will be designed to achieve a 15% decrease in energy consumption relative to the 2017 National Energy Code for buildings.
- / **Operational Systems:** The building site is located in close proximity to multiple bus routes and bus stops all within a 5-minute walk or less; notably Gladstone Avenue to the North, Bank Street to the West, and Elgin Street on the East. This encourages tenants to use public transportation, which in turn lessens the load on parking spaces and contributes to greenhouse gas reduction. Cycling is also encouraged. A lockable bike storage room located in the parking garage will attract tenants who cycle.

In addition, specific energy performance strategies for this project include:

- / A storm water management system.
- / Air to Air Heat Pumps operated to efficient exterior temperatures, and digital remote controls on individual unit HVAC system.
- / High-efficient LED lighting throughout building common areas.
- / Automatic dimming controls for lighting in stairwells and parking garage.
- / Faucets, showers, and water closets within the suites to be selected for ultra-low water consumption.
- / Durable building envelope, thermally broken window frames with low-E glazing, and punched windows.

3.7 Urban Design and Compatibility

Section 4.6 of the Official Plan sets out a framework for built form and the public realm. Urban design plays an important role in supporting the City's objectives including building 15-minute neighbourhoods, growing the urban tree canopy, and developing resilience to climate change. New developments should be designed to make healthier and more environmentally sustainable living accessible for people of all ages, genders and social statuses. The proposed development meets the following Urban Design policies, among others:

- 4.6.5.1** Development throughout the City shall demonstrate that the intent of applicable Council approved plans and design guidelines are met.

The proposed development is compatible with the intent of the Official Plan's Transect and Urban Designation policies. Further, the development is in conformity with the policies of the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan and meets the policies and several of the guidelines of the Centretown and Minto Park HCD Plan.

- 4.6.5.3** Development shall minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and improve the attractiveness of the public realm by internalizing all servicing, loading areas, mechanical equipment and utilities into the design of the building, and by accommodating space on the site for trees, where possible. Shared service areas, and accesses should be used to limit interruptions along sidewalks. Where underground parking is not viable, surface parking must be visually screened from the public realm.

The proposed development internalizes, where possible, all servicing areas and has located parking below-grade, accessible via a ramp from McLeod Street. Parking is located beneath the proposed development to conceal parked vehicles from public view.

- 4.6.5.4** Development shall demonstrate universal accessibility, in accordance with the City's Accessibility Design Standards. Designing universally accessible places ensures that the built environment addresses the needs of diverse users and provides a healthy, equitable and inclusive environment.

The development considers accessibility through the site by providing at-grade amenity areas and a ramp to the main entrance.

- 4.6.6.4** Amenity areas shall be provided in residential development in accordance with the Zoning By-law and applicable design guidelines. These areas should serve the needs of all age groups, and consider all four seasons, taking into account future climate conditions. The following amenity area requirements apply for mid-rise and high-rise residential:

- a) Provide protection from heat, wind, extreme weather, noise and air pollution; and
- b) With respect to indoor amenity areas, be multi-functional spaces, including some with access to natural light and also designed to support residents during extreme heat events, power outages or other emergencies.

The proposed development provides residential amenity areas as outdoor private and communal amenity spaces. The plan has been revised to remove the sunken courtyard to provide a more accessible rear yard for residents.

- 4.6.6.6** Low-rise buildings shall be designed to respond to context, and transect area policies, and shall include areas for soft landscaping, main entrances at-grade, front porches or balconies, where appropriate. Buildings shall integrate architecturally to complement the surrounding context.

The proposed "low" mid-rise development is designed to relate to the context of the surrounding neighbourhood. The building is appropriately set back from all property lines and has ample space to achieve the proposed landscaping treatment. The building frontage along McLeod Street is designed with a distinct entrance and ample windows facing the public realm to animate and enliven the street frontage.

3.8 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan (2022)

The Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan provides the strategic planning direction to guide future development and redevelopment within the Central and East Downtown Core. The subject site is located within the Centretown Character Area, and conforms to the following principles:

- / **Maintain and Respect the Character of Centretown's Neighbourhoods:**
 - The Secondary Plan recognizes the centre of Centretown (between Kent and Elgin Streets) as a more eclectic neighbourhood where intensification will occur. The proposed development recognizes this and responds with a massing that is appropriate for this location. The proposed development respects the character of the existing buildings on the subject site and of the surrounding area in its architecture and materiality. The materiality and streetscape design responds to the nearby heritage designated buildings under Part IV and V (individual) in Centretown, specifically along McLeod Street.
- / **Accommodate Residential Growth:**
 - The proposed development includes 31 new residential units that will support the targets for intensification in Centretown and will redevelop an underutilized property that is currently used as a surface parking area and low-density residential properties to a combination of a three- and five-storey residential development.
- / **Accommodate a Diverse Population:**
 - The development will feature a mix of unit types, adding to the diversity of housing options in the neighbourhood and allowing more people to live in proximity to the jobs, services and amenities in the Downtown Core.
- / **Reinforce and Promote Commercial Activity:**
 - Although there are no commercial components proposed for the development, the subject site is located in a highly walkable neighbourhood in proximity to the Bank and Elgin corridors. The proposed development will draw new residents to the area, allowing for a greater population to support nearby existing and future commercial businesses.
- / **Enhance the Public Realm:**
 - The proposed development will improve the streetscape abutting the development through landscaping improvements, a public-facing courtyard at the front of the site, and a built form that encloses the street and creates a comfortable, secure pedestrian environment. The proposed development responds to a consistent built form pattern along the McLeod streetscape.
- / **Encourage Walking, Cycling, and Transit Use:**
 - The proposed development includes a low parking ratio and includes ample bicycle parking to encourage cycling and will integrate with the existing pedestrian network in Centretown. The subject site is also located near transit priority corridors on Bank, Elgin, and Somerset Streets. Further, the proposed building is located just south of the City's downtown core, allowing future residents to walk and cycle to meet their day-to-day needs.
- / **Promote Design Excellence:**
 - The proposed development has been carefully designed to create a project that fits well within its surroundings and respects the character of the surrounding community. The choice of materials reflects the heritage of Centretown while also providing a modern building.

The proposed development responds to several of the policy objectives of the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan.

3.9 Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan

The subject site is located within the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan, an updated study to replace the 1997 Centretown Heritage Conservation District report. Updates to the study include the classification of both contributing and non-contributing properties identified in the inventory. Contributing properties are considered to have design, historic and/or associative value or contextual value, as determined through the inventory. Non-contributing properties identified in the inventory are those that do not express or reflect the area's heritage character. The subject site is identified as Contributing property, and responds to the following policies and guidelines:

Section 5: Demolition and Relocation:

Policies:

- / Any application to demolish an existing building must be accompanied by plans for its replacement. New construction must be compatible with, and sympathetic to, the character of the HCD and meet the policies and guidelines of this Plan (**Policy 2**);
- / At least one of following must, as determined by Heritage Staff, be included as part of a complete application under the Ontario Heritage Act for the demolition of a Contributing building:
 - o Confirmation through an assessment that there is structural instability or damage resulting from an extraordinary circumstance;
 - o Confirmation through an assessment that the building is damaged, compromised, or altered to the extent that it no longer contributes to the cultural heritage value of the HCD;
 - o An analysis of the building that demonstrates that alternative retention options (such as preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, reinvestment, adaptive re-use, mothballing etc.) have been meaningfully considered (**Policy 3**).

Retention and adaptive reuse were extensively explored, however, to ensure the most appropriate infill that is mindful of streetscape and public realm, demolition was ultimately supported in favour of a sensitive design. This was highly influenced by Heritage, Planning and Urban Design staff. An updated Cultural Heritage Impact Statement supports the submission and provides further detail, considerations related to the removal of the buildings related largely to impacts to their integrity from previous renovations as well as the unreasonable cost and opportunity to successfully restore and incorporate these buildings into a redevelopment of the site.

The proposed development will replace these Contributing buildings with a similar low-rise built form, which has been designed to be compatible with and enhance the character of the HCD and meet the policies and guidelines of the Plan, as outlined below.

Section 9: New Construction

Policies:

- / New buildings shall contribute to, and not detract from the heritage character of the area as outlined in the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and the list of the District's heritage attributes (**Policy 1**);
- / The design of new buildings must respect and be sensitive to the HCDs' cultural heritage value and attributes in terms of:
 - o exterior materials and cladding;
 - o architectural elements and treatments such as window patterns and design, location of datum lines, roof profile and roof lines, overall vertical and/or horizontal proportions;
 - o existing pattern of building setbacks;
 - o massing, height and scale (**Policy 3**);
- / The front yard setback of a new building shall be consistent with its adjacent neighbours to ensure the continuity of the streetscape (**Policy 4**); and,

- / Respect the site's historic context and surrounding Contributing properties when constructing a new building by providing meaningful elements of transition between the new development, any existing heritage resources on site, and surrounding properties. This can be accomplished through the use of design measures such as, but not limited to:
 - o the incorporation of setbacks, stepbacks, architectural details and the use of complementary materials;
 - o the sensitive placement of new buildings on the site to provide appropriate distances between them and existing heritage resources or surrounding Contributing buildings; and,
 - o maintaining architectural proportions and visual relationships within, and to the streetscape (**Policy 5**).

Guidelines:

- / **Guideline A:** Property owners are encouraged to retain an architect who has experience in projects located in heritage conservation districts.
- / **Guideline B:** New buildings should aim to be an appropriate balance between replication of historic character and pointed contrast.
- / **Guideline C:** Traditional building materials in the Districts include brick, stucco or wood. New buildings should either include these materials or use materials that complement them in colour and texture.
- / **Guideline D:** Windows may be wood, metal clad wood, or steel.
- / **Guideline E:** Consider the transparency and opacity of proposed materials. Lighter materials can be used for upper floors to help provide massing and visual relief when new buildings are of greater height and mass than existing heritage resources.

The proposed development is a new construction within the Centretown HCD, designed to meet high quality design standards through selection of building materials, continuous building lines, articulation, and fenestration, while helping to define and improve the streetscape along McLeod Street. A consistent front yard setback is provided, while public realm and landscaping improvements are introduced along the streetscape of the building.

The massing and scale of the proposed development is designed with traditional materials to complement the public realm and provide a distinct built form which enhances and contributes to both the low-rise and mid-rise context of the site. Masonry materiality, with a reddish orange brick matches the colour and size of bricks found on the existing buildings along McLeod Street, and the inclusion of light grey materials ('panelized' concrete board or metal siding), both softens the built form while responding to the streetscape of McLeod Street.

Section 9.1: New Houses and Apartment Buildings

Policies:

- / Conserve and be sensitive to the character of surrounding Contributing properties, the cultural heritage values and attributes of the HCD, particularly within, or across the street from identified intact streetscapes (**Policy 1**);
- / Ensure that new construction on the east-west streets will be compatible with the HCD in terms of the building's position on the lot, scale, massing, fenestration pattern and design, datum lines and other architectural elements (**Policy 2**).

Guidelines:

- / **Guideline A:** New low-rise building types should reflect the rhythm of early lot development, with gables, balconies or other features providing an appropriate scale.
- / **Guideline B:** The roof profile and location of eaves lines or the roof parapet of new buildings should be designed so that the apparent overall height and form is compatible with that of neighbouring buildings.
- / **Guideline D:** Consideration should be given to U and H-shaped buildings for larger walk-up apartment buildings to reflect the character of earlier apartment buildings.
- / **Guideline E:** Consider the typical historic window designs and materials found on nearby buildings when choosing windows for new construction.

- / **Guideline F:** When new residential development is proposed across several lots, the proposed massing should be broken up or articulated to reflect the historic built form patterns and rhythms on the street.
- / **Guideline G:** The foundations and ground floor elevations of new construction should be designed so that their height above grade is compatible and consistent with that of neighbouring properties.
- / **Guideline H:** New parking is generally discouraged. If permitted, minimize impact by providing garages or carports that are not attached to the residential building and located at the rear or side of the property. New uncovered parking spots, when provided, should be similarly located.

The proposed apartment building respects the surrounding varied scale and context of the historic Centretown neighbourhood. Setbacks, stepbacks, podium heights, and architectural details, including a gable roof, dormers, two-and-a-half storey porches, and bays and canopies are incorporated to enhance the public realm along McLeod Street, specifically where new residential uses are designed at a scale consistent with the existing streetscape. The proposed mid-rise apartment provides a U-shaped built form, where the rear addition is setback from the frontages along McLeod Street and provides a built form and massing which transitions from McLeod Street to a low-rise and mid-rise context to the north. An increased setback from the existing west interior side yard setback is provided to transition the proposed development to the abutting properties. Finally, parking is located underground, away from the public realm, accessed internally to the subject site.

Section 9.3: New Construction, Mid and High Rise Buildings

Policies:

- / The conservation of the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the HCD and Contributing properties surrounding and across the street from a new mid or high rise building may constitute a limiting factor in terms of the height, scale or massing of development on the designated property (**Policy 1**);
- / New buildings must respect a property's historic context and provide meaningful transition between existing and pro-posed buildings. Accordingly, mid and high rise buildings must be located on a lot of sufficient size and appropriate shape that can adequately provide such transition in massing, scale, and height on the subject site (**Policy 2**);
- / When a mid or high rise building is proposed adjacent to, or across the street from a lower scale Contributing property, careful consideration must be given to the use of podium/base sections as well as their architectural treatment to ensure the new building can be sensitively integrated into its historic context (**Policy 3**);
- / Conserve and maintain the established front yard setback on the street. In the instance of a corner lot consider the established setbacks on both streets (**Policy 5**).

Guidelines:

- / **Guideline A:** New mid rise proposals should consider the guidelines outlined in the Centretown Community Design Plan with respect to how to achieve meaningful transition.
- / **Guideline C:** Reduce overshadowing and provide a human scale pedestrian environment by considering the use of podium for multi-storey new construction.
- / **Guideline D:** Proposals for new mid and high rise buildings should focus on integration and compatibility of the lower floors/base with surrounding Contributing properties and streetscape, as these areas will have the greatest impact on character of the HCD. This can be achieved by using the patterns of the surrounding built form in terms of using similar and compatible materials, reflecting datum lines in cornices or other horizontal features, window designs or other references to the HCD.
- / **Guideline E:** When new residential development is proposed across several lots, new development should be articulated to reflect the historic built form patterns and rhythms on the street.

The proposed development provides a compatible built form to the existing buildings along McLeod Street, where heritage attributes are incorporated in the design of the new building. Materials, colours, and architectural elements have been

carefully considered as to provide a development which is complementary, yet distinctive from existing conditions on site and surrounding the property.

Section 9.6: Museum of Nature Special Character Area

Policies:

- / New development will respect the established front yard setbacks on the surrounding streets to preserve the established street walls that encircle the museum (**Policy 1**);
- / New development will have regard for the character-defining elements identified in both the Museum's Federal heritage and Part IV designations (**Policy 2**);
- / The north side of McLeod Street forms a strong urban edge across from the Museum of Nature's front façade. New development on the north side of McLeod Street will strengthen the urban edge and reflect the predominantly low-scale residential character of the street, complementing current heights and setbacks (**Policy 4**);
- / New development will not create adverse impacts on the Landscape of Canada Garden, which was developed as part of the renovations to the Museum in 2016 (**Policy 5**);

Guidelines:

- / **Guideline A:** New development should frame the views of the Museum from Metcalfe Street looking south to its main entrance, and from the entrance looking north on Metcalfe Street.
- / **Guideline B:** New buildings on the streets surrounding the Museum should be subordinate to it in character and design, allowing the Museum to remain the focal point.
- / **Guideline C:** Buildings should be clad in brick, stucco or wood to complement the stone of the museum. New buildings should not be clad in rough-cut stone to ensure the visual primacy of the Museum.
- / **Guideline D:** Development or additions in the rear yards for properties on the north side of McLeod and the west side of O'Connor Streets should be designed to ensure that the low-rise character of the streetscape continues. New development should be no more than two storeys taller than the existing building on the properties.

The design of the building and site layout takes reference from the neighbouring properties and the Museum of Nature through the public-facing landscaped courtyard and by using red brick materials similar to surrounding heritage buildings. The mid-scale development at the rear of the building strengthens the urban edge, while design features including materiality, balconies and stepbacks reflect the predominantly low-scale residential character of the street. The proposed development meets the front yard setbacks of the surrounding lots.

Per Guideline D, development in the rear yards of properties on the north side of McLeod Street allows for building heights which are two storeys taller than the existing buildings on the property. As the existing two and a half storey buildings on site are proposed to be replaced with a three-storey massing. The low-rise form along the streetscape and additional five storey building height located at the rear of the subject site responds to this guideline and the surrounding streetscape character along McLeod Street.

Overall, the proposed development achieves the objectives of the applicable policies and guidelines within the Centretown and Minto Park HCD Plan.

Responses to Pre-Consultation Comments

This section provides a response to comments received from Urban Design staff on November 15, 2023, following the pre-con meeting on November 7, 2023.

Planning

1. With regards to the sunken areas, we note that they are generally discouraged if they can be avoided.
 - a. Negative impacts to the front yard and streetscape posed by the sunken area can be avoided with appropriate landscaping treatment.
 - b. The sunken amenity area at the rear appears as though it could be avoided.

Response: The two sunken entries located in the entrance courtyard should not have a negative impact on the McLeod Street streetscape with the implementation of appropriate landscape elements. In reality, these entrances are minimally 'sunken' as they follow the slope of the ramp allowing for an abundance of natural light into the lower level units, making them more livable. More importantly, these two entry conditions help to animate the entrance courtyard.

The rear yard sunken amenity space has been eliminated.

2. There are potential conflicts between automobiles and pedestrian where the sunken driveway is paired with the unit access to its left (west).

Response: With an appropriate curb height for the ramp, there should not be any safety issues/conflict with the two apartment entry conditions, especially given that the ramp is heated, there are only eight underground parking spaces and the ramp is 3.6 metres wide encouraging reduced vehicle speeds.

3. Ensure accessibility standards are met when considering access pathways through the site. The rightmost pathway seems to be leading to an at-grade amenity area at the rear, so accessible access should be expected.

Response: The easterly pathway to the rear yard varies in width from 1.21m to 1.54m, however, in accordance with OADS 3.3.1 (Rest Areas), there are two 1.8m x 1.8m rest areas which are located 21 metres apart.

4. Look for opportunities to consolidate walkways where/if possible.

Response: Pathways have been consolidated and are consistent with the 'rhythm' of entrance pathways along McLeod Street.

5. Encroachment agreement will be needed for proposed features projecting within the ROW at the front of the property.

Response: Acknowledged. This will be obtained prior to building permit application.

6. Site Plan should show all applicable dimensions and setbacks. Please include a zoning matrix in future submissions which outlines how the proposed development is in conformity with the applicable zoning standards.

Response: The updated Site Plan shows all required information.

Urban Design

Comments:

7. This proposal does not run along or does not meet the threshold in one of the City's Design Priority Areas and need not attend the City's UDRP. Staff will be responsible for evaluating the Urban Design Brief and providing design direction.

Response: Acknowledged.

Comments related to design:

8. Sunken Courtyard/amenity space: We continue to have concerns about the sunken courtyard, its livability and access to natural light. We recommend removal of the rear yard amenity if it does not represent part of the required area and use the space instead for landscaping and trees. Alternatively, if the amenity is to remain at that level for accessibility reasons, consider stepping the bounding walls to create a more welcoming terraced condition.

Response: The rear yard sunken amenity space has been eliminated.

9. Unit access adjacent to parking ramp: We continue to have concerns about the potential conflict between cars accessing the underground parking and the pedestrians accessing the conjoined western basement unit. We recommend relocating the access to a more protected location, perhaps further to the west, or providing sufficient separation between cars and pedestrians at this location.

Response: With an appropriate curb height for the ramp, there should not be any safety issues/conflict with the two apartment entry conditions, especially given that the ramp is heated, there are only eight underground parking spaces and the ramp is 3.6 metres wide encouraging reduced vehicle speeds.

10. Main entrance clearly visible from the street/canopy: The main entrance for the majority of the building occupants is not directly visible from the street. We recommend providing additional features (ie. Canopy and exterior lighting) to ensure visibility and visitor access consideration.

Response: The following elements have been incorporated to 'announce' the apartment entry:

- **A Canopy**
- **A Sculpture, with a possible wall fountain**
- **Night lighting**
- **Alignment of the entrance pathway, including its bridge**

11. An Urban Design Brief is a required submittal. The Urban Design Brief should be structured by generally following the headings highlighted under Section 3 – Contents of these Terms of Reference. Please see the Urban Design Brief Terms of Reference provided and consult the City's website for details regarding the UDRP schedule (if applicable).

- a. Note. The Urban Design Brief submittal should have a section which addresses these pre-consultation comments

Response: Acknowledged.

5.0 Conclusion

As outlined in this Design Brief, it is our professional opinion that the design of the proposed development is appropriate, functional, and meets the applicable policies of the Official Plan for a Neighbourhood development within the Downtown Core Transect, as well as policies related to the Centretown Character Area within the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan. Further, the proposed development conforms to the policies and applicable guidelines of the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan, as well as other applicable Council-approved guidelines. The design of the development integrates visually and functionally with its surroundings and is suitable for the subject site.

Sincerely,



Jillian Simpson, M.PL
Planner



Nathan Petryshyn, MCIP RPP
Senior Planner