

320 Bren-Maur Road West

Urban Design Brief
November 2025



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

01

Project Description

The low-rise development proposed at 320 Bren-Maur Road West seeks to develop an architecture intervention which creates an integrated connection with its natural surroundings.

The three (3) storey, 35-unit low-rise apartment building’s footprint has been articulated into an ‘H’ shape form, creating two bar buildings joined by a glazed central link. Beneath the building is a parking garage containing 45 vehicular parking spaces (41 resident parking and 4 visitor parking), 20 bike parking spaces and 14 storage lockers. The ramp to the parking garage is accessed off Bren-Maur Road West and is located between the building and Longfields Drive, allowing the building to sit further away from Longfields Drive. An additional two (2) vehicular parking spaces are provided at grade, with four (4) parallel parking spaces (not included within parking calculations) proposed in the R.O.W. Each of the three (3) residential levels also contain four (4) storage lockers each, totaling 12 above grade.

Within the negative space of the ‘H’ shaped building, a clear sightline has been established through the glazed central link entry and amenity lobby towards the Jock River and rear amenity area along the Jock’s shore. The rear amenity area steps down to join an at grade amenity area comprised of a landscaped path network for residents in the rear yard between the building and the top of the slope down to the river.

The ‘H’ shape of the building’s form breaks down its mass into smaller elements, reducing its perceived scale from the North and South. The elevations are clad in durable brick veneer for the first two stories and lap siding on the upper story. Aluminum panel is proposed in various locations such as corner windows and on the central link. The brick is articulated into a grid and animated with a combination of punched windows with precast concrete lintels and vertically stacked windows, joined with aluminum panel, and wrapped in precast concrete surrounds. The front entry and rear amenity exterior access are defined with feature stone and copper accents. The building features a mansard-like roof which transitions from a hip along its perimeter, to flat roof in the middle, lowering the building’s perceived height. The building’s modest height speaks to the existing low-rise residential context across the Jock River to the South and the residential development to the west.

Of the building’s 35 units, nearly 70% are larger 2-Bedroom + Den units and the average unit size over the entire building is 107 square metres. Each unit contains a sizable private balcony or terrace and feature large windows to capture views of the picturesque natural features surrounding the site.

Project Information	
Building Height (Floors)	3 Floors
Building Height (m)	13.82m
Building Footprint	1,460m ²
Lot Coverage (%)	34.1%
Gross Floor Area	4,354m ²
Leasable Floor Area	3,741m ²
Communal Amenity	815m ²
Private Amenity	257m ²
Total Amenity	1,072m ²
Parking Spaces	47 spaces (+ 4 in R.O.W) 41 resident parking 6 visitor parking
Bicycle Parking	20 spaces
Storage Lockers	26 lockers

Unit Breakdown	
1-Bedroom	7 (20%)
1-Bedroom + Den	1 (3%)
2-Bedroom	3 (8%)
2-Bedroom + Den	24 (69%)
Total Units	35 (100%)

DESIGN DIRECTIVES

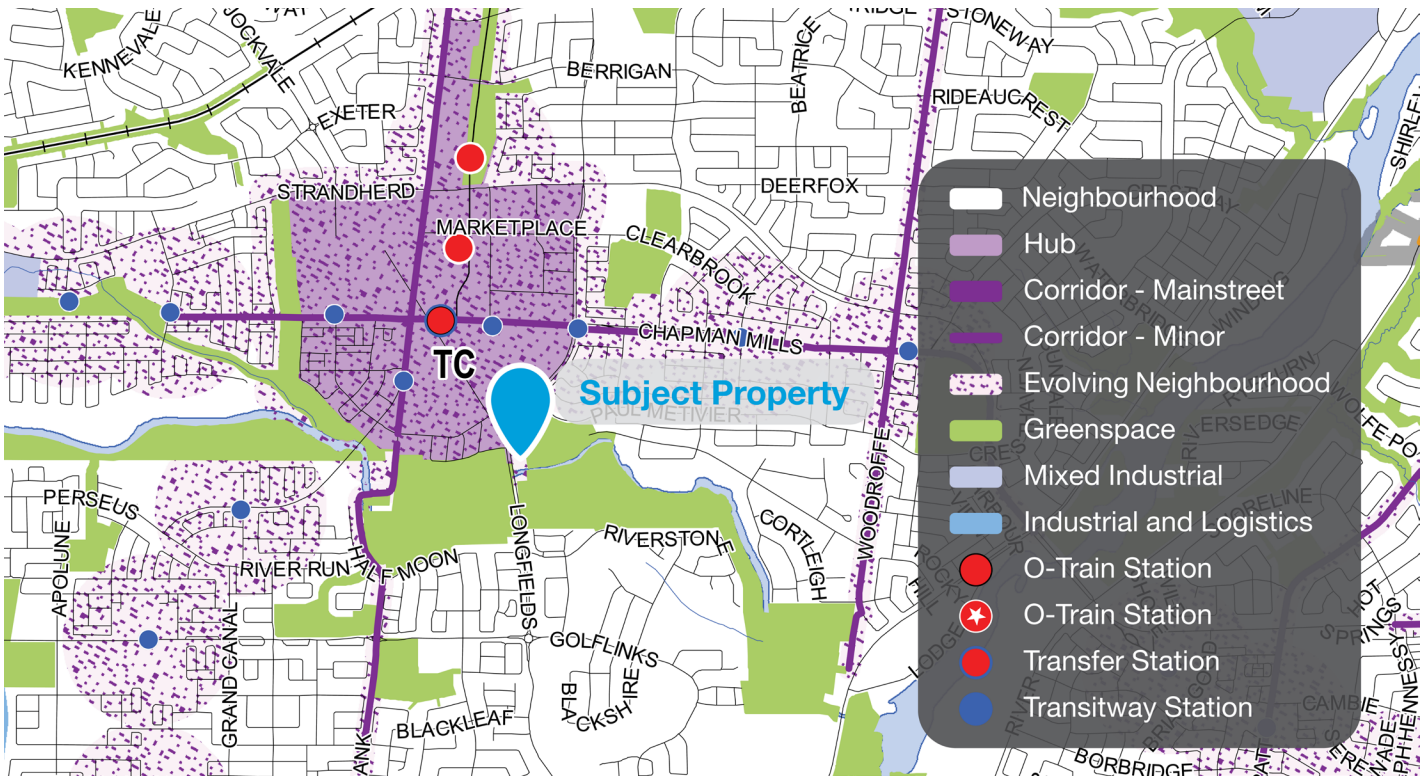
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Official Plan and Zoning By-law Summary

Official Plan (2022, as amended)

The proposed redevelopment, consisting of low-rise residential intensification, is located on lands designated Neighbourhood and subject to the Evolving Neighbourhood Overlay within the Suburban Transect of the City’s Official Plan. The proposal aligns with Official Plan policy direction that encourages the introduction of new building forms and the evolution toward a more urban built form pattern within suburban areas, while remaining contextually sensitive to the surrounding community.

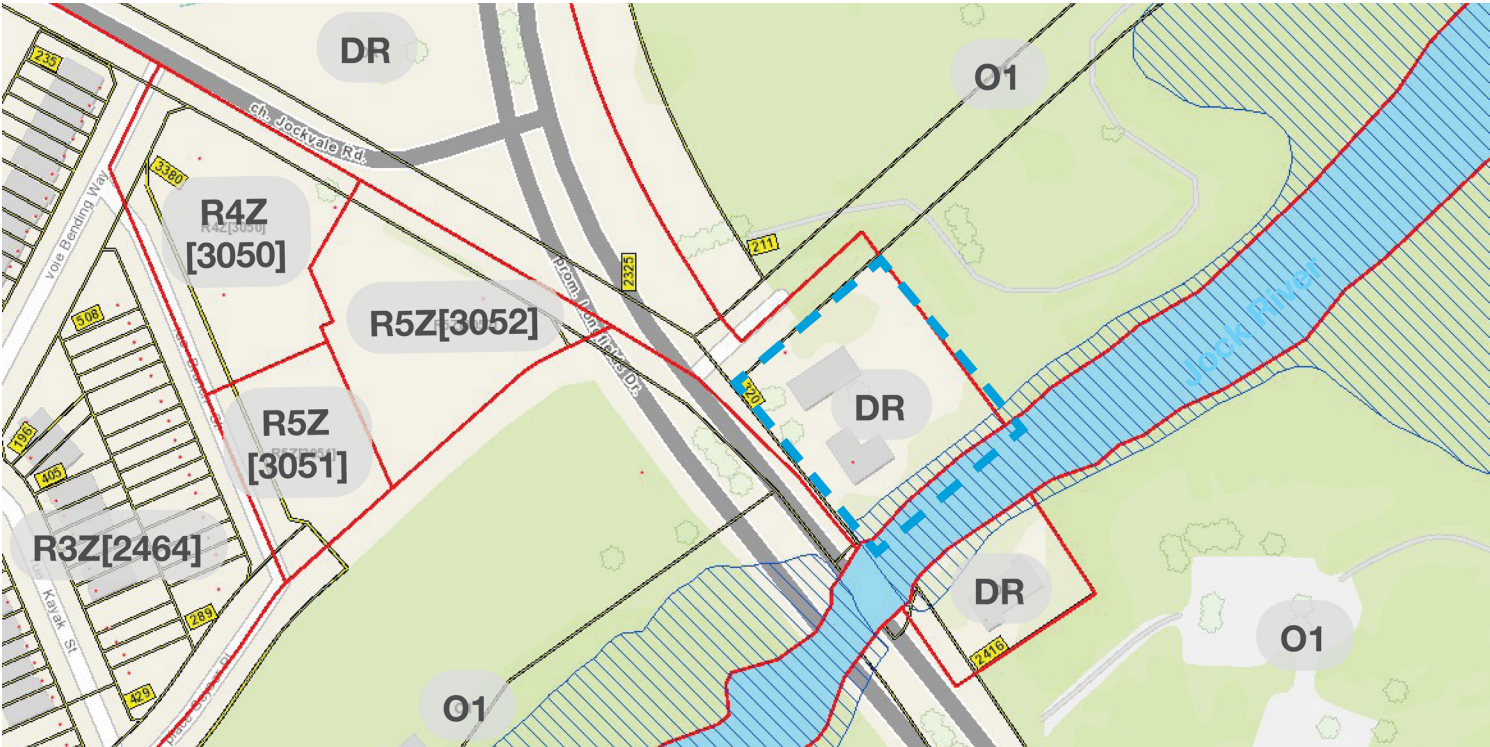
Residential intensification on the subject property is appropriate given its current underutilization and its location within proximity to an established 15-minute community that includes commercial, employment, and institutional uses, as well as access to public and active transportation networks. The proposed development achieves a residential density of 81.4 units per net hectare, which is considered both appropriate and desirable given the site’s strategic location along Longfields Drive, a designated arterial road that supports higher-capacity transportation infrastructure and more compact forms of development.



Schedule B6 - Suburban (Southwest) Traset from the City of Ottawa Official Plan

Zoning By-law (2008-250)

The ZBLA application seeks to rezone the subject property from Development Reserve Zone (DR) to a site-specific Residential Fourth Density, Subzone Z (R4Z-XXXX). Three amendments to the zoning by-law are proposed to reduce the resident parking from 42 to 41 spaces, reduce the visitor parking from 7 spaces to 6 spaces, and permit front yard visitor parking. The Planning Rationale discusses the appropriateness of the requested relief.



Current Zoning, Zoning By-law 2008-250

Urban Design Guidelines for Low-rise Infill Housing (draft)

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Urban Design Guidelines for Low-rise Infill Housing



The draft Urban Design Guidelines are currently available for public review and comment. The final version is anticipated to be completed in December 2025 and presented to Council for approval in February 2026. The updated guidelines aim to enhance design outcomes for low-rise infill housing, promoting high-quality development that reflects current best practices. The following guidelines are applicable to the proposed low-rise apartment building on the subject property:

1.1.6 Blank walls: Design all sides of a building that face public streets and open spaces to a similar level of quality and detail. Avoid large blank walls that are visible from the street, public spaces, or adjacent properties.

1.2.3 Sunlight/sky views: Consider shadow and sky view effects on adjacent private amenity areas and streets-capes.

1.6.1 Select a limited, coherent palette of durable, low carbon materials (e.g., brick, stone, wood, high quality fiber cement) that express depth, recesses, lintels, and sills, especially at grade level.

3.1.2 Make entries legible with canopies or weather protection and lighting.

3.1.5 Coordinate finished floor elevation with grading to minimize ramp length and stair rise (generally target 3–5 risers where feasible). Where ramps are required, integrate them with landscape and avoid placing between the façade and public street or reducing re-quired soft landscaping.

3.2.1 Provide secure, weather protected resident bike park-ing; avoid locating resident bike racks in front yards where they can clutter the streetscape. Limit visitor bike parking in this location.

3.3.5 Below grade parking structures should not encroach into setback areas needed for planting and tree growth.

3.4.1 Locate shared spaces where they are visible from pri-mary entries and living spaces and directly accessible via barrier free routes; avoid isolated, irregular, or resid-ual areas.

3.5.1 Avoid refuse storage visible from the street or public spaces; integrate and screen within buildings or rear/ side yards while maintaining safe access for collection.

3.6.2 Where removal is unavoidable, replacement planting and compensation should follow the Tree Protection By law; design the site to accommodate replacement canopy from the outset.

3.6.6 Yards not occupied by permitted elements should be soft landscaped to support infiltration and tree health.

The proposed development demonstrates strong compliance with the City's Urban Design Guidelines through its careful integration with the surrounding public realm, including both street frontages, the Jock River, and the adjacent stormwater pond. The site design prioritizes landscaping and environmental stewardship, incorporating a diverse selection of native plant species and increasing overall tree canopy coverage to 40%. Functional elements such as refuse storage and parking garage entrances have been discreetly located and screened from view to maintain an attractive streetscape. Building materials feature a mix of complementary textures and neutral tones, creating visual interest and contributing to a high-quality pedestrian experience consistent with the intent of the guidelines.

Response to Urban Design Directions

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Pre-consultation Comment #5. Comments on Preliminary Design:

- a. The site is situated in an exceptional natural setting, the landscape program and architecture of the building should reflect this.

Response: The design team agrees that the site is situated in an exceptional natural setting. With storm water ponds to the North East and the Jock River to the South, there are plenty of views to capture while designing the landscape and architecture to be sensitive to the location. The building's mass has been articulated in an H-Form to reduce its visual impact on the South and North frontages. The roof line of the building also transitions from a hip, to a flat roof to reduce the building's perceived height. Quality materials such as masonry, stone and wood siding are also proposed while providing large private balconies and large windows to capitalise on views to the natural surroundings.

- b. Landscaping and street trees should be provided along public roadway frontages and onsite. Please keep in mind that there are overhead wires on Longfields.

Response: Street Trees are to be provided along Longfields Drive to create a landscape buffer between the proposed garage ramp and the public realm.

- c. Look for opportunity to retain mature vegetation on the site.

Response: While the ecological setback associated with the top of slope along the Jock River significantly reduces the potential for built floor area on the site, the building's footprint has been articulated to save a mature Silver Maple along the Bren-Maur Road West frontage. The mature treeline along the Jock River's shore and within the ecological setbacks shall remain untouched.

- d. Please provide a walkway connection from the new cul-de-sac to existing pathways in the open space. This will be a desire line for residents.

Response: The Design Team agrees that a desire line will exist between the proposed development and the existing stormwater ponds and walking paths within the open space to the North/East. A circular path is proposed around the new cul-de-sac with two branches which respect existing planting and foliage within the ROW. One directs East to direct pedestrians into the open space, and another directs West to direct pedestrians towards the entrance of the open space path network and Longfields Drive.

- e. The Longfields frontage should have glazing at grade.

Response: Glazing has been provided at grade along Longfields.

- f. Please consider balcony locations. Projecting balconies may not be appropriate on the south and east facades from an environmental perspective.

Response: Large balconies are an important design feature for the project to allow for private exterior spaces to take advantage of the site's scenic natural setting. Over 60% of the project's proposed balconies are completely internal to the project's-built form. The remaining 40% of the balconies features modest projections of 0.6m from the extent of the building envelope on the East, West and North frontages. Two projecting balconies are proposed on the south frontage but are completely contained within the project's proposed exterior amenity courtyard to the south. The Southern exterior amenity courtyard itself proposes a cantilevered terrace which projects approximately 1.8m towards the river, but as seen on the site plan, respects the present ecological setbacks of concern. This projecting patio is a key design element of the project which emphasises connection to the Jock River and acts as an extension of the clear sight line towards the river from the building's primary entrance to the North.

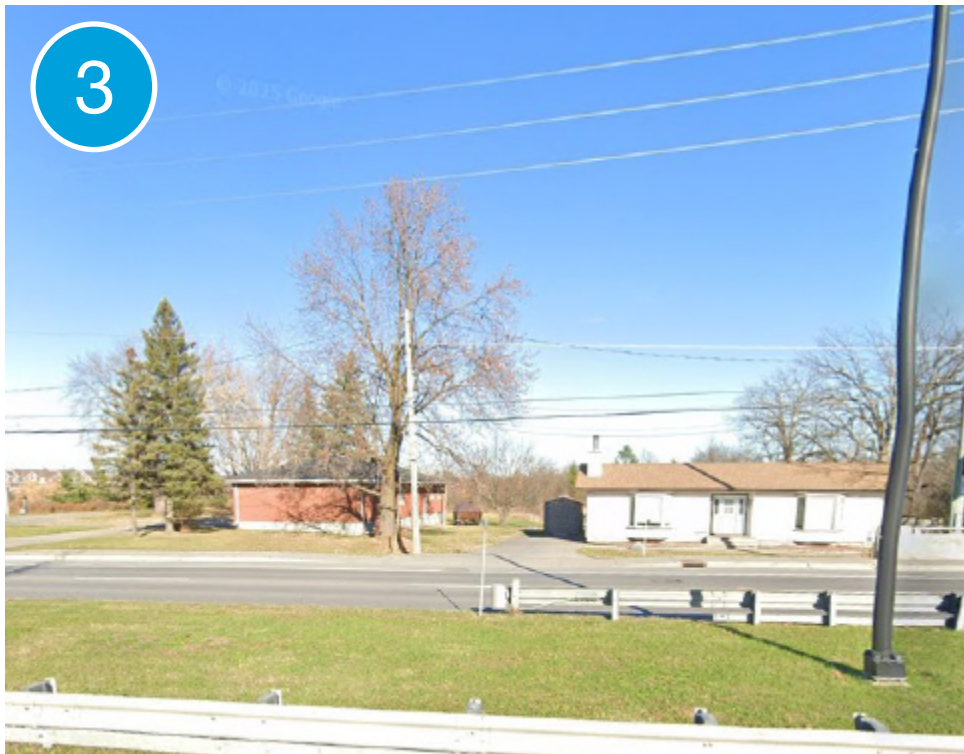
- g. Please remove the 3 parking spaces fronting Longfields to allow for additional landscaping.

Response: The scope of exterior parking has been reduced by 66% throughout the design process. Only 2 parking spaces for visitor parking are now proposed at grade and are located internal to the parking garage access lane, from Longfields Drive.

SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

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Site Photos





Perspective Images



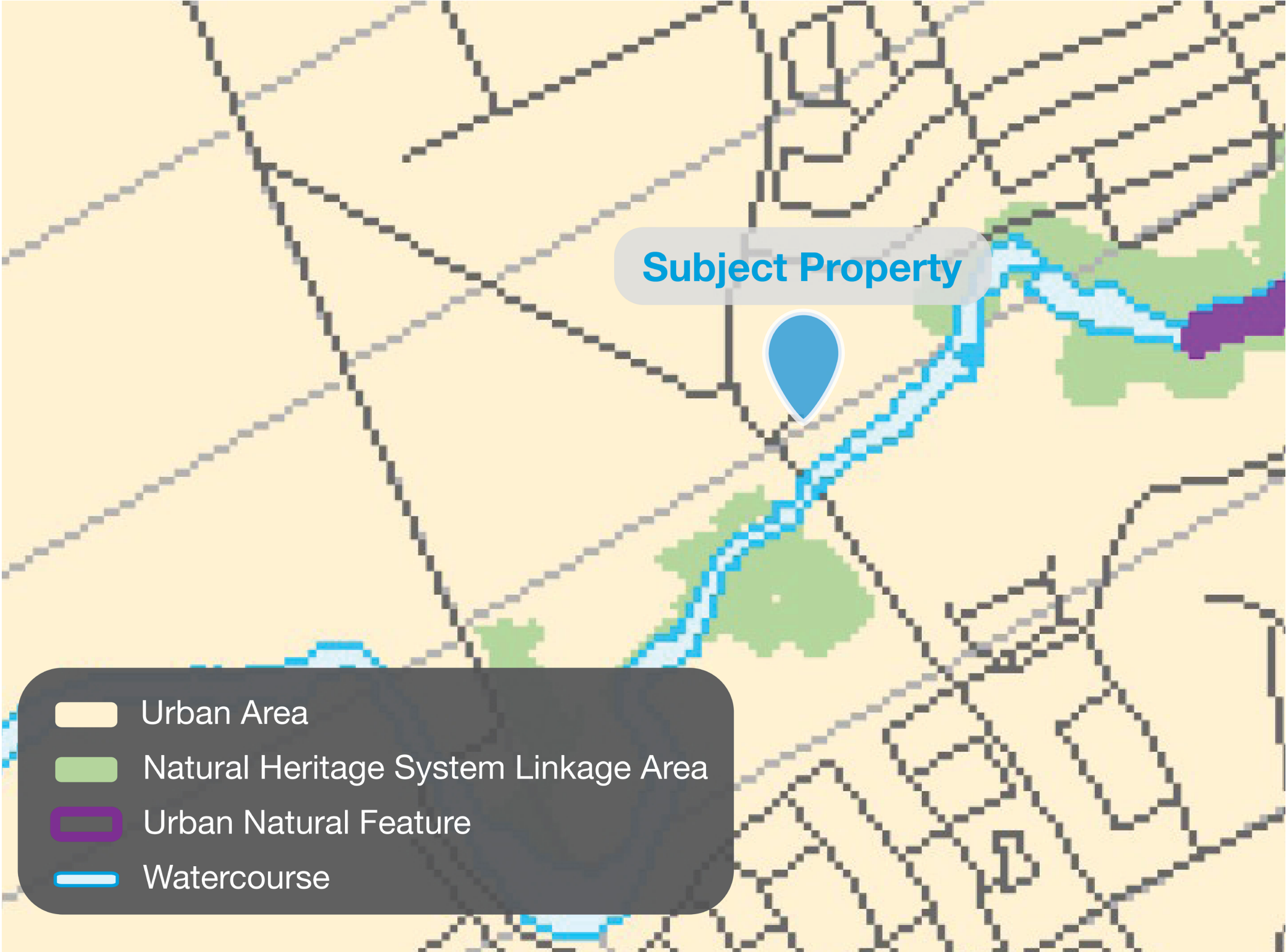
Natural Heritage Assets

The subject property is designated Urban Area per Schedule 11-C - Natural Heritage System (East) of the Official Plan.

No portion of the subject property is identified as a part of the Natural Heritage System Linkage Area.

Jock River abuts the subject property to the south. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) was prepared by Muncaster Environmental Planning Inc., which recommended the orientation of the apartment building away from the river. Based on the study’s findings, a minimum 15 metre setback from the top of the riverbank slope was identified as appropriate to maintain the ecological integrity of the Jock River corridor. This recommended setback has been fully incorporated into the redevelopment’s design, ensuring adequate separation between built form and the natural environment.

The EIS concluded that, with the implementation of the recommended mitigation and best management practices during construction and ongoing site operations, the proposed development is not anticipated to have any adverse effects on the features or functions of the local natural environment. This includes the Jock River corridor to the south and the wooded areas located west of Longfields Drive, both of which will continue to function as important components of the area’s natural heritage system.



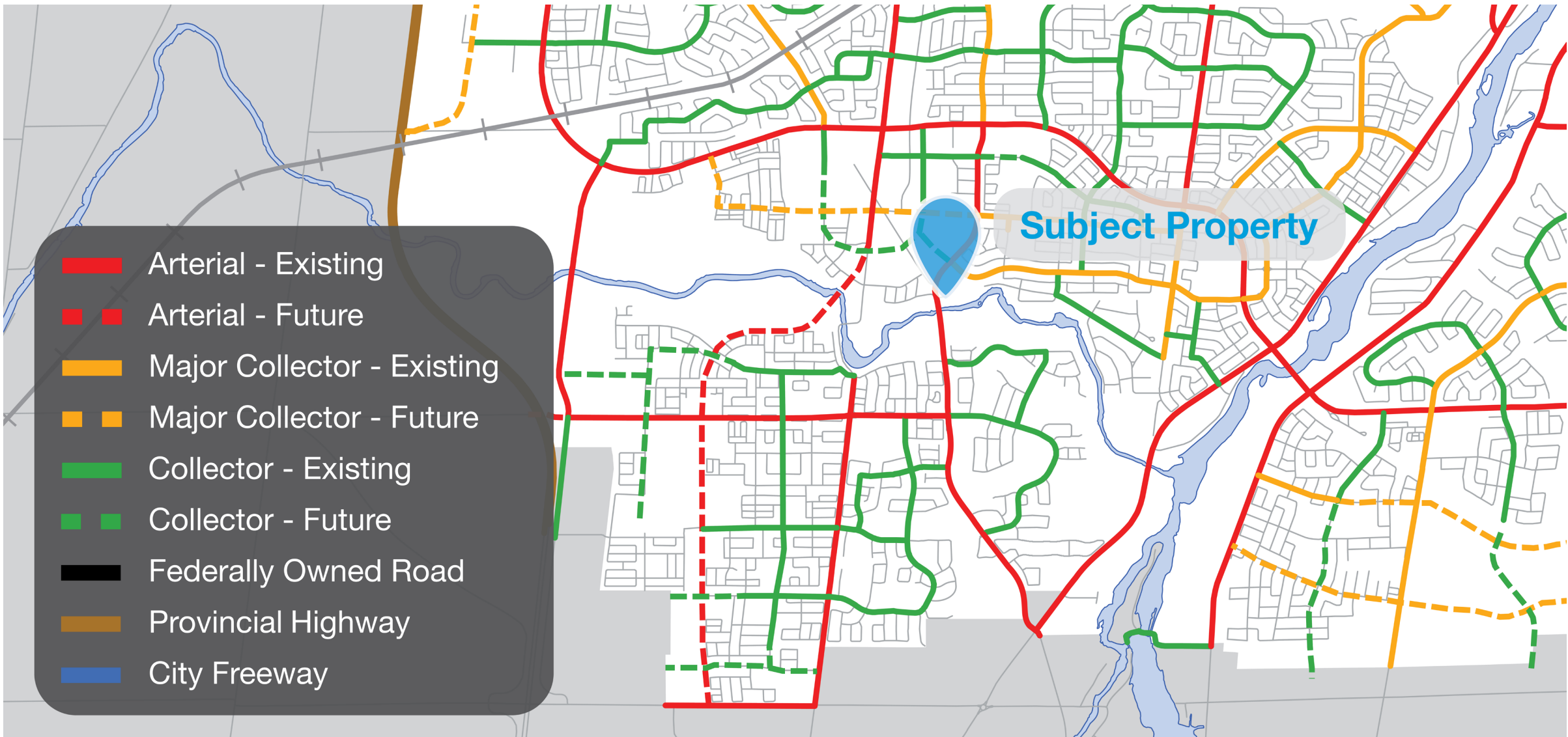
Surrounding Amenities



Street Network

As per Schedule C4 of the Official Plan, Longfields Drive is an arterial road.

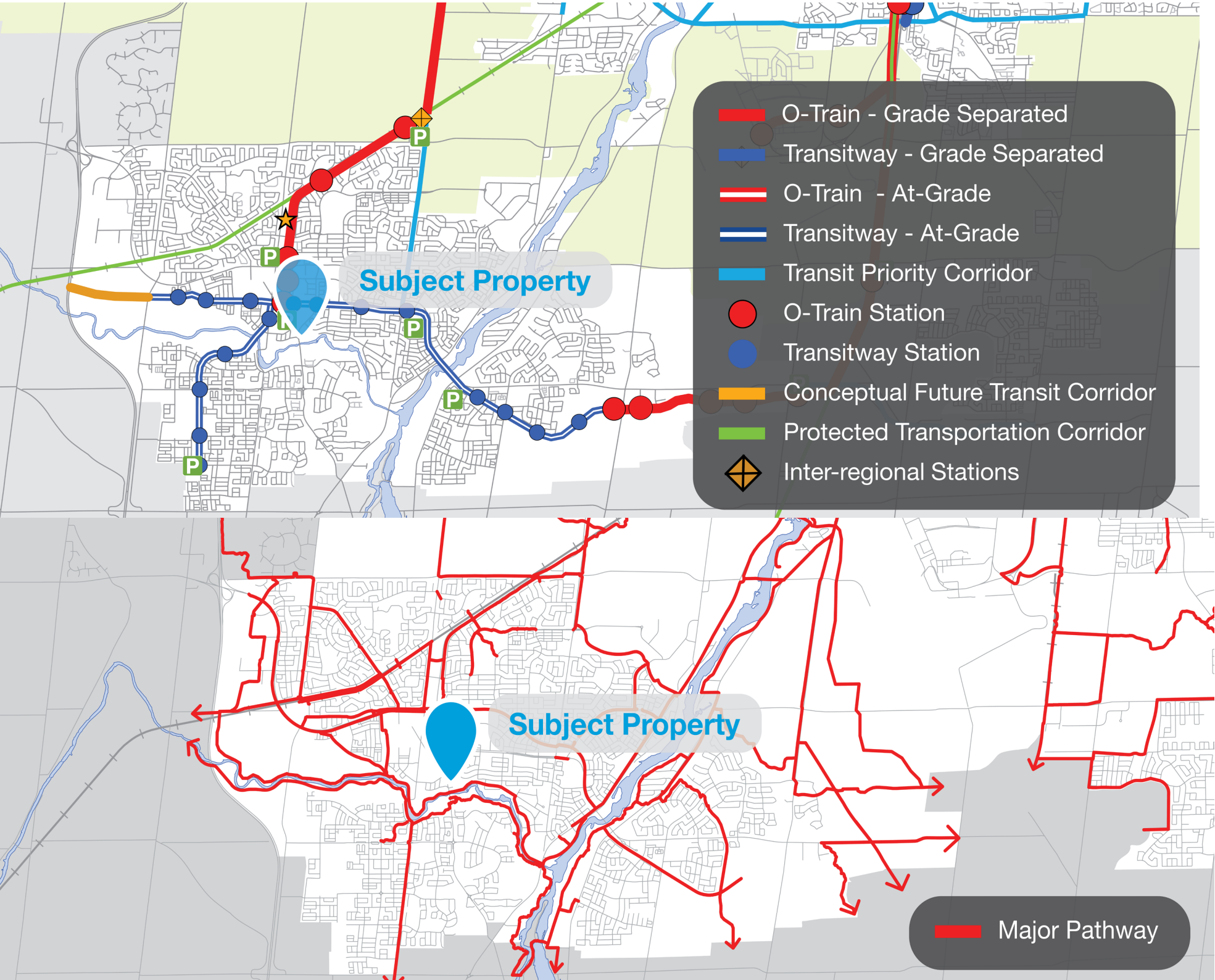
Ingress and egress to the site will be from Bren-Maur Road West, a local road.



Public & Active Transportation

Transit Network

A bus stop serving 8 bus routes is situated along the subject property's Longfields Drive frontage. The subject property is approximately 1,400 metres from the Barrhaven Town Centre BRT Station. A future expansion of the LRT's Confederation Line is planned to extend the railline from Baseline Station to Barrhaven Town Centre.



Active Transportation

To the northeast of the subject property, a walking path follows the curvature of the stormwater pond connecting the property to Bren-Maur Road West and Paul Métivier Drive. Dedicated bicycle lanes along Longfields Drive provide access into the neighbourhood bicycle network.

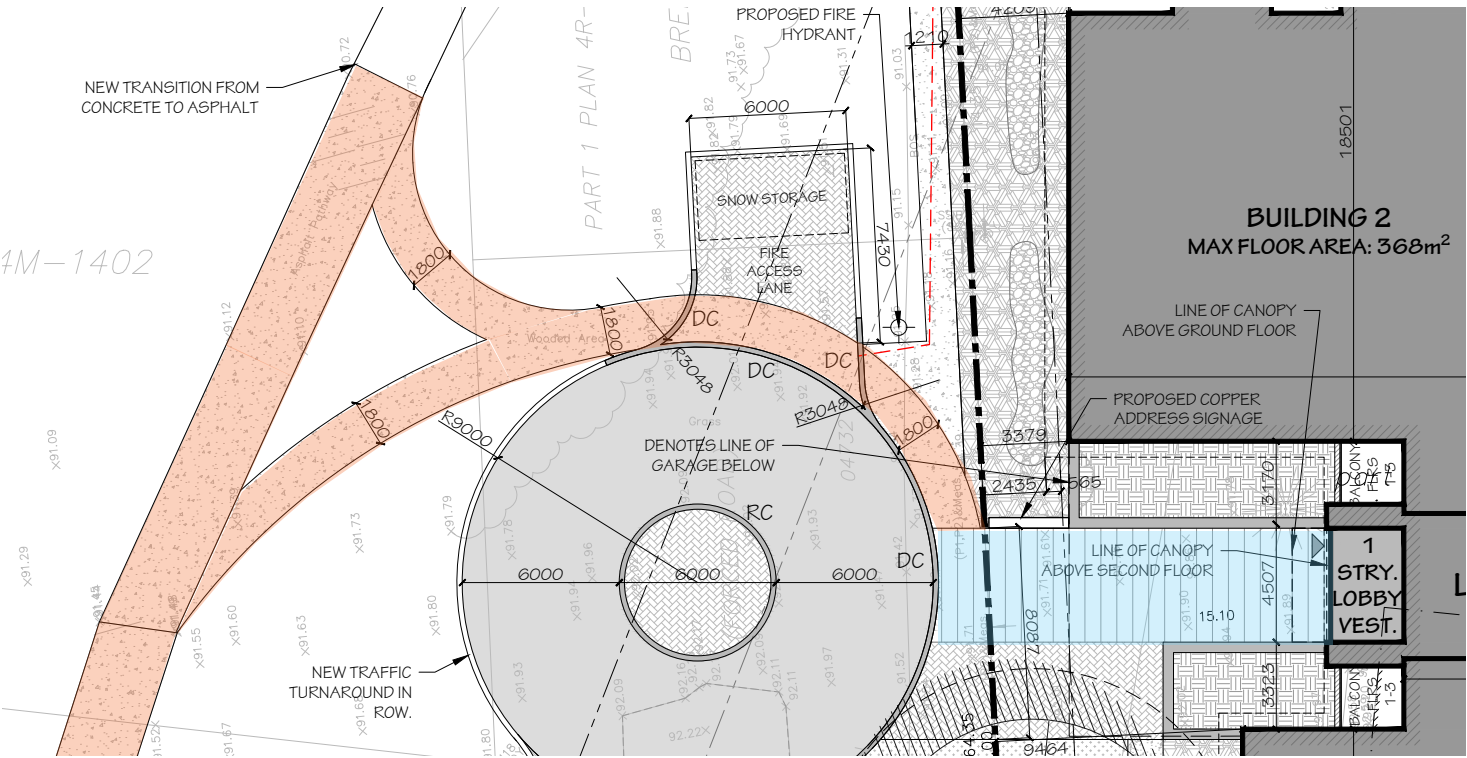
DESIGN RESEARCH

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Response to Public Realm

The proposed development will improve the abutting public realm on Longfields Drive and Bren-Maur Road to the west and north respectively. Longfields Drive abutting the subject property is a four-lane divided road with a sidewalk and guardrail where the Bruce MacNabb Bridge spans over the Jock River. There is currently little vegetation on the property abutting the sidewalk with trees concentrated closest to the Jock River. The proposed landscape plan will add trees along Longfields Drive on the property to increase pedestrian comfort and provide screening between the building and the road.

Furthermore, a sidewalk connection is proposed from the building entrance to the existing multi-use pathway around the pond north of Bren-Maur Road West. The pedestrian pathway can be seen in the diagram below, highlighted in orange.



Existing condition of the public realm abutting 320 Bren-Maur Rd.



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PARKLAND DEDICATION

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Parkland Dedication

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To satisfy the requirements of the Parkland Dedication By-law (2022-280), the development shall provide Cash-In-Lieu (CIL) of Parkland.

The required conveyance shall not exceed an amount equivalent to 10% of the gross land area. The subject property is 4,283.9 square metres.

The surrounding area is well serviced by a series of parks around the Jock River and the stormwater management area to the northeast. Providing CIL shall promote parkland development in other areas of the city that are less served by parkland.

QUALIFICATIONS

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Qualifications

This Urban Design Brief was prepared by Fotenn Planning + Design in partnership with Hobin Architecture Inc.

The Urban Design Brief was prepared in accordance with City of Ottawa Urban Design Brief Terms of Reference received on November 15, 2024 following the pre-consultation meeting held November 8, 2024.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at bates@fotenn.com.

Sincerely,



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