

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: CF REGISTRY SITE DEVELOPMENT 70 NICHOLAS STREET OTTAWA

(EXCERPT FROM DESIGN BRIEF PREPARED BY ZEIDLER ARCHITECTS APRIL 29,2022)

Situated at the southeast corner of CF Rideau Centre, the proposed infill development is located at 70 Nicholas Street at the intersection of Nicholas Street and Daly Avenue. The site is currently occupied by the Registry Office, a registered heritage building. Along with the Arts Court complex across the street, this section of Nicholas Street forms an area of significant heritage value to the city of Ottawa. The western boundary of the site is formed by the existing Rideau Centre, and in particular a three storey precast concrete wall.

In addition to the existing heritage building, the site also provides loading dock access to CF Rideau Centre and Shaw Centre as well as parking access to the mall. These accesses are crucial to the functions of the mall and the convention centre and must be maintained during and after construction. The current configuration of vehicular access and the length of curb cuts creates an unfriendly pedestrian environment that poses another challenge to the site.

The proposed 21-storey building will feature the Registry Office as a focal point and provide 286 purpose built rental residential units to the Ottawa housing market. The development will also significantly improve the pedestrian realm leading up to the underpass below Mackenzie King Bridge.

One of the key elements toward reorganizing the site is to relocate the Registry Office approximately 20m to the north. This creates a larger separation from the vehicular access to the south and brings the heritage building closer to the intersection of Nicholas and Daly. Mimicking the street corner setback conditions at the Arts Court and Novotel, the proposed building will also be set back from Daly Avenue creating an entrance plaza at the proposed new entrance to the Rideau Centre and an outdoor seating area for a new commercial retail (café/bar) unit that will incorporate the Registry Office. The public space at this corner will also allow for required grade changes with public stairs and ramp from Nicholas Street to the new proposed interior ground floor level. At the ground floor, the ramp to the existing loading areas is reconfigured to minimize the impact along Nicholas Street. The ramp is also enclosed within the volume of the new residential block and the existing loading dock roof is extended towards the east.

The relocated Registry Office will be separated from the surrounding hard landscape areas by a buffer of soft landscape planting. This will allow for the maximum exposure of the existing rubble foundation of the Registry Office while creating a level access to the Registry Office interior from the adjoining retail unit.

The Registry Office will intersect the proposed building in a three- storey glass atrium. The generous space and volume will feature the Registry Office as a unique heritage

structure that will be featured in both the new residential lobby as well as the retail unit. The heritage building exterior will be maintained, the original brick and stone chimney which was demolished in a previous renovation will be rebuilt, and the interiors will be restored to their original design.

The existing Rideau Centre entrance off Nicholas is set back significantly from the street front. A new two storey high entrance atrium will be extended from the existing entrance to the new corner plaza at Daly and Nicholas.

The residential lobby entrance will be located to the south of the relocated Registry Office. Residential uses such as lounge and meeting areas will surround the southern half of the Registry Office. The Registry Office will be the primary feature for both entrances as well as a separation between commercial use and residential use on the site.

Directly in front of the residential lobby will be a vehicular drop-off and lay-by to minimize the impact to street traffic. It will also provide access to the below grade parking.

Both the plaza at the corner of Daly and Nicholas and the vehicular drop-off and residential entrance will feature a consistent landscape treatment minimizing the visual impact of the lay-by, parking, and loading entrances.

Access to the existing loading will be incorporated within the proposed building to create a uniform appearance. The existing roof over the loading area will also be extended to minimize the visual impact of the vehicular access to the mall and significantly improve the pedestrian experience along both Nicholas Street and along the north side of Mackenzie King Bridge.

The former City Registry Office (constructed in 1874) was designated by the City of Ottawa in 1978 under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. It will be relocated approximately 20m north and serve as a focal point for a new plaza along Nicholas Street as part of the Registry Site development. The architectural and site/landscape design proposal gives regard to the heritage values and character defining elements of the Registry Office by introducing the following measures:

1. The relocated position of the Registry Office maintains the building's (informal) spatial relationship to the three other buildings in the "Judicial District" (Carleton County Courthouse, Nicholas Gaol and Albion Hotel)
2. The Registry Office maintains its visual prominence in the public realm with a portion of its form (30%) imaginatively incorporated within a 3 storey atrium to permit the modest floor area to be repurposed with an active retail use.

3. The ground floor of the new residential mixed-use building is aligned with the level of the relocated Registry Office (67.00 masl) to provide universal access to the restored interior.
4. The structural columns on the new building's East façade are intercepted by a transfer beam at the 4th floor level to ensure that the volume of the Registry Office is unencumbered by the impact of the structure above.
5. The East façade of the new building's three storey atrium is a simple glazed curtain wall to create a neutral backdrop for the articulated form of the Registry Office and maximize the visual perception of the whole Registry Office volume (particularly at night).
6. The proposed ground plane setting of the Registry Office includes an outdoor terrace and an apron of soft landscaping to permit the stone foundation to be visible and reference the soft landscape setting of the former Courthouse in the "Judicial District".

The north wing of the building is set back from Nicholas Street to create the entrance plaza and feature the Registry Office. It is parallel to the Rideau Centre wall to the west and setback approximately 6.4m from it to allow residential units to open onto the space between the new building and the existing wall. The north wing will be 20 storeys high with an outdoor rooftop amenity accessed from the taller (21 storeys) south wing.

The south wing is angled towards the southeast to shield the residential entrance area from the mall parking entrance and to create a more generous separation from the existing Rideau Centre (Nordstrom) wall to the west. The resulting trapezoidal space on the Mackenzie King Bridge level will be developed as outdoor amenity space for the residential tenants.

This geometric kink in the building massing creates a subtle shift between the north and south wings with the north wing as a backdrop to the registry building. Balcony patterning further reinforces the two wings with simple linear balconies and flush glazing on the north wing while the south wing introduces a pattern of staggered balconies.

The building envelope system will be a window wall system of vision glass and spandrel glass panels. The balconies will have glass railings and with a frit pattern for the balconies at the North wing. A glass wind screen railing will be installed on the top exterior amenity level. In addition, bird friendly treatments will be used per the Ottawa Bird Friendly Guidelines.