

FOTENN

29 ROBINSON AVENUE



December 11, 2018

Planning Rationale
and Design Brief

Site Plan Control
and Minor Variance



Prepared for:

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LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**
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December 11, 2018

Fotenn Consultants Inc., acting as agents for Robinson Village II Limited Partnership, is pleased to submit the enclosed Site Plan Control application for the sites municipally known as 27, 29 and 31 Robinson Avenue (“the subject lands”) and herein referred to as 29 Robinson Avenue. Subsequent to receiving and incorporating staff feedback on the Site Plan Control application, an application for Minor Variance will be made to the Committee of Adjustment.

1.1 Robinson Village Community Building Plan

Included with this Planning Rationale is the *Robinson Village Community Building Plan*, which was developed by Fotenn upon City staff request to provide additional context for future development proposals in this neighbourhood in response to recent and anticipated development.

The *Community Building Plan* draws from the existing suite of policy documents affecting the subject lands, including the City of Ottawa Official Plan, the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, and the Lees Station Transit-Oriented Development Plan. It reiterates the height and density targets established in the aforementioned documents, and provides a vision of redevelopment in accordance with these policy documents and recognized best practices in community development planning.

Moreover, the *Community Building Plan* recognizes the unique characteristics of the Robinson Village area and proposes a number of interventions aimed at improving the neighbourhood’s open space network, urban design quality, and its connectivity to the rest of the City of Ottawa.

2.0 SURROUNDING AREA AND SITE CONTEXT

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2.1 The Site

The subject lands consist of 3 sites on Robinson Avenue:

- / 27 Robinson Avenue (PLAN 190 LOT 32), occupied by an ungainly low-rise building that is either a low-rise apartment or potentially a stacked dwelling, with an accessory garage in the rear yard,
- / 29 Robinson Avenue (PLAN 190 LOT 29), occupied by an older single-detached dwelling,
- / 31 Robinson Avenue (PLAN 190 LOT 26), also occupied by an older single-detached dwelling.

Each of the three sites has 10.97m of frontage on Robinson Avenue and a depth of 34.59m, resulting in a combined frontage of 32.9m and a total area of 1138.8m².

2.2 Context

The subject site is located in a low-rise residential enclave in the southeast corner of the neighbourhood of Sandy Hill, bounded to the north by Robinson field, to the east by the Rideau River, and to the south and west by Highway 417. Vehicular access to the area is limited to a single roadway passing beneath the Lees Avenue overpass.



Figure 1: Context.

North of the site is Robinson Field which is linked with several community gardens and Robinson Park on the Rideau River shoreline. Beyond it is Strathcona Heights, an Ottawa Community Housing development in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood.

South of the site are the varied low-rise residential uses ranging from single-detached dwellings to low-rise apartments, and varying in age and architectural style. On the south side of the Robinson Avenue loop is Hurdman Yard, a public works facility owned and operated by the City of Ottawa. Highway 417 is beyond.

East of the site are low-rise residential uses. The east end of the Robinson Avenue loop consists primarily of more recent townhouses and stacked dwellings.

West of the site are low-rise residential uses including detached dwellings and townhouses. Robinson Avenue and Hurdman Road intersect west of this site; Hurdman Road comes to a dead end and Robinson Avenue passes beneath the Lees Avenue overpass to connect with Lees Avenue further west.

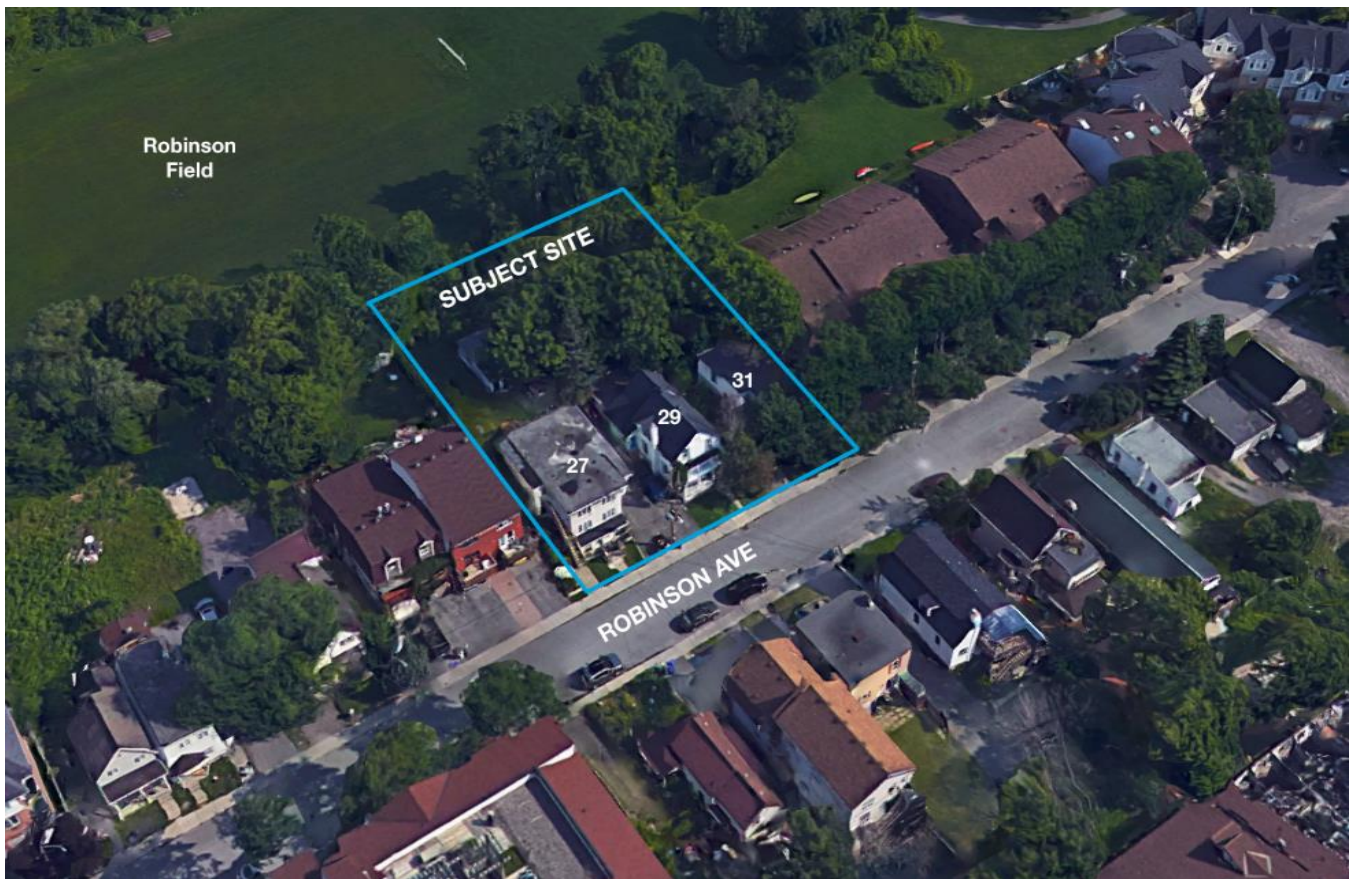


Figure 2: Aerial view of the subject site.



Figure 3: Existing conditions on the subject lands. 31 Robinson Avenue is obscured by the tree at right.



Figure 4: North of the subject site – Robinson Field.



Figure 5: South of the subject site – various low-rise residential uses on Robinson Avenue.



Figure 6: East of the subject site – various types of townhouse along Robinson Avenue.



Figure 7: West of the subject site – Robinson Avenue streetscape, with Lees Avenue overpass and high-rise housing beyond.

2.3 Community Amenities

The subject property is in close proximity to public open space in the form of Robinson Field, which is situated immediately to the north and can be accessed via a footpath at the western end of Robinson Avenue. The site is also in close proximity to several community gardens, a multi-use pathway and linear greenspace along the Rideau River, the Sandy Hill Arena and the Lees Campus of the University of Ottawa.

As the nearby Lees LRT Station and the corresponding Transit-Oriented Development Plan is anticipated to incentivize dense, mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the surrounding area, the subject site is well positioned to take advantage of the neighbourhood's future evolution.

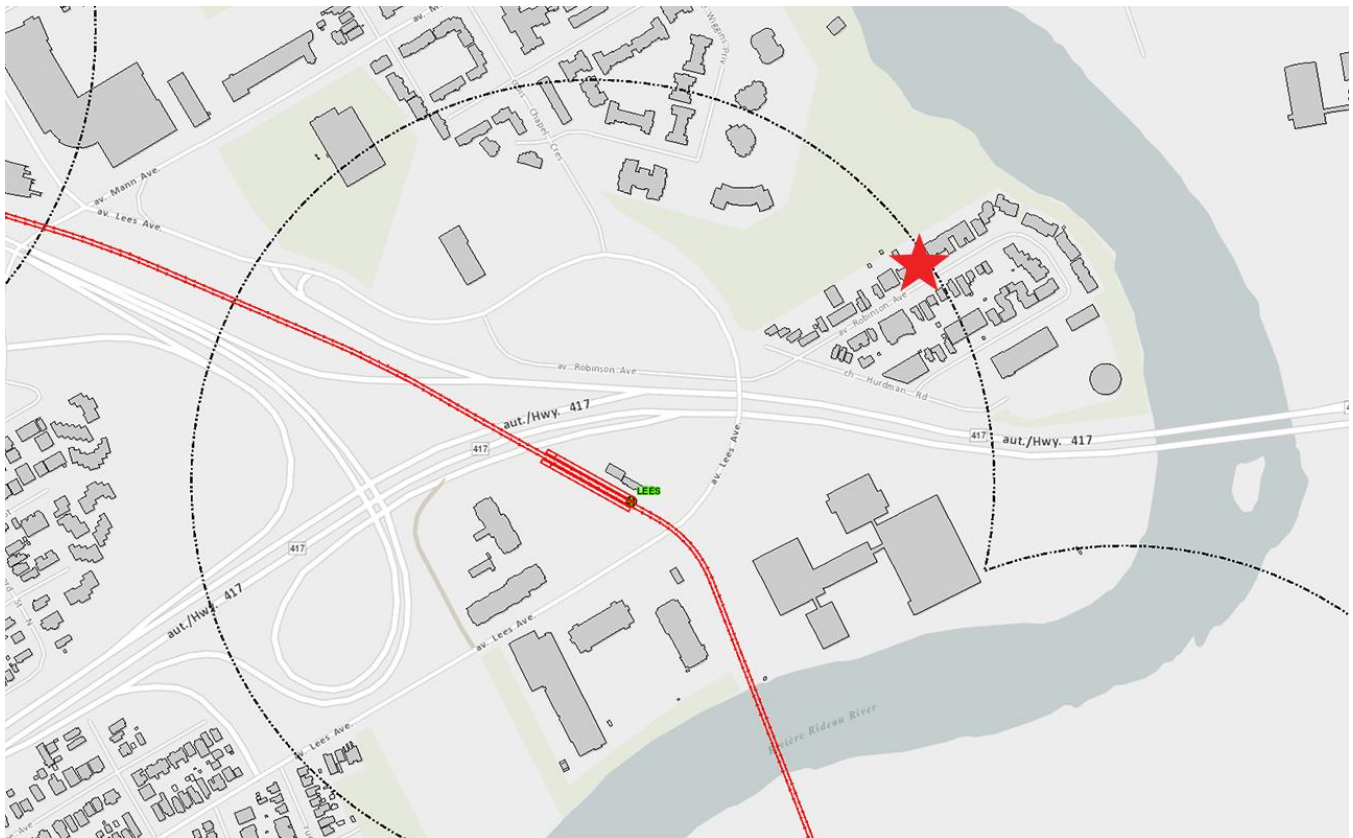


Figure 8: Site is located within a 400-metre radius surrounding Lees LRT Station.

2.4 Transportation Network

2.4.1 Active Transportation

The nearest bus stop to Robinson Village is located on Lees Avenue, and is served by several major bus routes, including routes 6, 16, 95, 98, 101 and 103. Moreover, the site will soon be within walking distance of the Lees LRT Station as shown in Figure 8.

Pedestrian and cycling connectivity for Robinson Village is poor, due to the area's limited connection to the City of Ottawa's overall street grid; presently there is one pedestrian path leading northwest, out of Robinson Village, and links to the multi-use pathway along the Rideau River to the east. There is no sidewalk on the westerly extension of Robinson Avenue as it links to Lees Avenue and only an informal pathway that manages to connect to a cross-walk on Lees Avenue by navigating the slope along its eastern embankment. In light of this, improvements to pedestrian connectivity are a priority of the *Robinson Village Community Building Plan*.

2.4.2 Road Network

The area surrounding the subject site is relatively isolated despite its location in a central neighbourhood of the City of Ottawa; its only connection to the road network is via Robinson Avenue, which passes underneath and then connects to Lees Avenue, an arterial.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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Robinson Village II Limited Partnership is proposing to construct a three (3) storey apartment building at 29 Robinson Avenue. The proposed building is to have 51 residential units distributed across three storeys and a raised basement level. Vehicular access to the site is provided via a 4.05-metre-wide driveway through the side yard. This widens to a 6-metre-wide drive aisle giving access to four visitor parking spaces, including one accessible space. Twenty-six (26) bicycle parking stalls are available at the end of the drive aisle.

Amenity space is provided in the rear and side yard (180m²), on a rooftop terrace (148m²), and on north-facing private balconies (56m²). A raised planter is provided in the front yard to add greenery to the streetscape.

Waste management is internal to the building, with a 9.46m² garbage room in the basement.

The proposal was developed with regard for numerous design guidelines and policies, including:

- / City of Ottawa Official Plan
 - o Managing Growth policies (Section 2.2.2)
 - o Building Liveable Communities policies (Section 2.5.1)
 - o General Urban Area policies (Section 3.6.1)
 - o Compatibility policies (Section 4.11)
- / Sandy Hill Community Design Plan (CDP)
- / Sandy Hill Secondary Plan
- / Lees Avenue Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan
- / Official Plan Amendment 150

Conformity with these policies is discussed in detail in Section 4.



Figure 9: Perspective of proposed building.



Figure 10: South (front) elevation of proposed building.



Figure 11: North (rear) elevation of proposed building.



Figure 12: East (side) elevation of proposed building.



Figure 13: West (side) elevation of proposed building.

[illegible]

Figure 14: Proposed site plan.

POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Provincial Policy Statement (2014)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) was issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act in April 2014. It 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.

The PPS emphasizes the intensification of built-up areas to promote the efficient use of land, existing infrastructure and public service facilities to avoid the need for unjustified and uneconomic expansion. Planning authorities must pursue land use patterns that support active transportation and existing or planned transit [Policy 1.1.3.2] and identify and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment [Policy 1.1.3.3].

The proposed development capitalizes on an opportunity for mixed-use development and intensification within the City’s built-up area. It minimizes the consumption of new land for development and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure and public services, brings residential intensification to an underutilized site and adds housing in an area where public transit is easily available, and promotes densities that contribute to more sustainable land use patterns.

4.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan 2003, as amended

The City of Ottawa Official Plan is composed of eight sections, each addressing a different aspect of the planned function of the City as a whole. Section 2 of the Official Plan provides Strategic Directions for growth and development within the City.

Ottawa’s population is projected to grow by up to 30 percent by 2031. The City plans to meet this growth challenge by managing it in ways that support liveable communities and healthy environments. In other words, the City is striving to create ‘complete’ communities in which residents do not need to drive for everyday activities and where jobs, shopping, recreation and social activities lie within walking or cycling distance.

More specifically, the Plan pursues strategic directions in four key areas, two of which are relevant to the proposal:

1. Managing Growth
 - / The City will manage growth by directing it to the urban area where services already exist or where they can be provided efficiently, including development on previously underutilized lots;
 - / Growth in the urban area will be directed to areas where it can be accommodated in compact and mixed-use development, and served with quality transit, walking and cycling facilities.
2. Creating Liveable Communities
 - / The City will provide opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing throughout the rural and urban areas;
 - / Growth will be managed in ways that create complete communities with a good balance of facilities and services to meet people’s everyday needs, including schools, community facilities, parks, a variety of housing and places to work and shop;
 - / Attention to design will help create attractive communities where buildings, open space, and transportation work well together.

These strategic directions are developed further in the policies of Section 2.2 (Managing Growth) and 2.5 (Building Liveable Communities), and are discussed below.

4.2.1 Managing Growth

Section 2.2.2 of the Official Plan deals specifically with the management of growth within the urban area and recognizes that intensification is generally the most cost-effective pattern of development for the provision of municipal services, transit, and other infrastructure.

Policies 1b and 1c of Section 2.2.2 cite redevelopment of underutilized lots in existing built-up areas and infill development as forms of residential intensification, while Policy 4 names Transit-Oriented Development Areas (defined in Annex 6 of the Official Plan) as target areas for intensification.

The Lees Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan was approved by Council on January 2014, but is not included in Annex 6 of the Official Plan as there is no accompanying Secondary Plan to the TOD Plan. The target density for the Lees TOD Area is 175 people and jobs per gross hectare by 2031.

4.2.2 Building Liveable Communities

Section 2.5 of the Official Plan describes the basics of liveable communities – good housing, employment, ample greenspace, and a sense of history and culture – and proposes to create more liveable communities by focusing on community design and collaborative community building. Community design engages with the details of how buildings and landscapes relate.

The proposed development relates to key design objectives and principles in Section 2.5.1 as follows:

- / Defines quality public and private spaces through development;
 - o The proposed development takes the place of several dwellings of varying massing and character, and in doing so promotes a more cohesive urban fabric.
 - o The proposed development more strongly addresses the street and contributes to a continuous street frontage
- / Considers adaptability and diversity by creating places that can adapt and evolve easily over time and that are characterized by variety and choice.
 - o Residential intensification helps achieve a more compact urban form over time and concentrates people in a central part of the city where they can walk, cycle, or take transit to employment opportunities, schools and services.
 - o Adding more housing to the neighbourhood helps accommodate the needs of a range of people of different incomes, lifestyles, and ages.

4.2.3 Land Use Designation

The subject property is designated General Urban Area on Schedule B – Urban Policy Plan in the City of Ottawa Official Plan. Under Section 3.6.1 of the Official Plan, the General Urban Area can permit all types and densities of housing.

Residential intensification of the General Urban Area through infill or redevelopment is to relate to existing community character, apply policies of Section 2.5.1 and Section 4.11, and contribute to the balance and range of housing types and tenures. Impactful uses (“that may generate traffic, noise or other impacts”) are to be directed to locations along the rapid transit system. While the proposed development is of a size and scale appropriate to General Urban Areas anywhere in the city, the policy speaks to the fact that transit-adjacent areas are seen as ideal for higher-density development.

4.2.4 Compatibility

Section 4.11 of the Official Plan sets out criteria which are used to evaluate the compatibility of proposed developments. These criteria include: traffic, vehicular access, parking requirements, outdoor amenity areas, loading areas, service areas and outdoor storage, lighting, noise and air quality, sunlight, microclimate, supporting neighbourhood services. Not all criteria apply to every proposal.

The most applicable compatibility criteria are discussed in the following table:

Table 1. Compliance with Section 4.11 of the Official Plan

COMPATIBILITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
VEHICULAR ACCESS:	A 4.05m wide driveway is provided from Robinson Avenue.
PARKING REQUIREMENTS:	Under the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law, twenty (20) resident parking spaces are required, but none are provided. Given the location of this site in close proximity to rapid transit an alternate approach to parking is appropriate. Four (4) visitor parking spaces are required, and are provided to the rear of the proposed building which will not only detour street parking pressure from visitors but also from deliveries and loading demands.
OUTDOOR AMENITY AREAS:	The at-grade amenity spaces of the proposed development are situated at the rear of the site, and abut a public park. Rear-facing balconies also face this public open space, minimizing overlook of neighbouring private amenity spaces. The shared rooftop patio is set well back from the edges of the rooftop, minimizing overlook and privacy impacts.
SUNLIGHT:	The proposed development is a low-rise apartment building consistent with the low-rise planned function of the neighbourhood. No undue adverse impacts are anticipated.

The proposed development conforms to the City of Ottawa Official Plan and the policies therein. It is consistent with the character of the surrounding General Urban Area and adds infill housing that contributes to a liveable and more compact development pattern.

4.3 Official Plan Amendment 150

4.3.1 Sections 2.5.1 and 4.11

Section 2.5.1 remains largely unchanged in OPA 150 except to provide more flexibility in how its objectives are addressed. It clarifies that “compatible development” is not necessarily the same as or similar to existing buildings in its vicinity, and can enhance the established community through good design and innovation. Proponents are “free to respond in creative ways to the Design Objectives” and are not limited to approaches suggested in the Official Plan.

Section 4.11 has been significantly modified. As such, Table 2 assesses the proposed development with regard to the relevant policies of the revised Section 4.11.

Table 2. Compliance with Section 4.11 of OPA 150

COMPATIBILITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
VIEWS:	The building will not impact any protected views. [Policies 2, 3, 4]
BUILDING DESIGN:	The proposed development is a three-storey residential building with a height and setback that is well within the planned profile for development in Robinson Village. The façade is articulated with varying materials, including a two-storey brick volume that echoes the massing of surrounding smaller buildings and helps the proposed building relate to the street [Policies 5, 9];

	The principal façade and entrances are oriented to the street, and windows are visible from the public realm [Policy 6].
MASSING AND SCALE:	The proposed building fits within the prescribed height for development in the General Urban Area, and its massing is broken up visually with articulation and varied materials [Policy 12];
OUTDOOR AMENITY AREAS:	The proposed development will have no undue impact on the amenity spaces of adjacent residential units. [Policy 15].



Figure 15: Façade of proposed building.

4.4 Sandy Hill Secondary Plan

The Sandy Hill Secondary Plan is intended to preserve and enhance Sandy Hill as an attractive residential neighbourhood, provide for a broad range of socio-economic groups, accommodate a modest increase in population, and maintain the functions of Sandy Hill locally (as a primarily residential neighbourhood) and over a wider area (the Rideau Street corridor and the University of Ottawa).

The height maximum for the subject site is given as “medium-profile” in Schedule J of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, which indicates development of five to nine stories is appropriate. Schedule L provides a more detailed height plan for the Robinson Village area, and specifies a maximum height of 6 storeys and a minimum density of 150 dwelling units per net hectare.

In Section 5.3.2 of the Secondary Plan, the pertinent policies on residential land use are:

- / To preserve and enhance the existing stock of good housing.
- / To distinguish among types of new housing on the basis of scale, and to locate the different types in areas appropriate to them.
- / To provide a wide variety of housing, including accommodation for low-income people, the elderly, the handicapped and others with special needs.

In Section 5.3.6 of the Secondary Plan, the pertinent policies on site development are:

- / To ensure that the scale, form, proportion and spatial arrangement of new development cause minimal intrusion on the sunlight, air and aspect enjoyed by existing adjacent development. Wherever possible, such new development shall contribute to the overall physical environment.
- / To ensure that new development shall provide for internal and external on-site amenity areas.
- / To enhance development with landscaping, especially for parking and loading areas and as a buffer between dissimilar land uses.

The proposed development meets the policies of the Secondary Plan in that it adds to the stock of good housing, is scaled appropriately for its area, and provides rental units that can accommodate a variety of potential residents. It surpasses minimum density targets while fitting within the proscribed height profile for these lands.

4.5 Lees Transit-Oriented Development Plan



Figure 16: Lees TOD Study boundary in yellow; a 600-metre radius is shown around the proposed station

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans set the stage for future transit-supportive or “intensified” land development in priority areas located near future LRT stations. The plans establish a broad growth strategy for achieving transit supportive communities. A primary goal of the TOD Plans is to promote public transit usage by employing effective urban design techniques in the planning and design of the communities surrounding the stations.

The subject site is part of an area identified in the Lees TOD Plan as sub-area 4, “Robinson Village West,” which is identified as an area of existing low- and mid-rise residential development on mostly small and individually-owned lots. The TOD Plan assigns these lands, including 29 Robinson, a maximum building height of six (6) storeys, or 20 metres. It is specifically noted that the TD1 code describing the Robinson Village West area is used to denote height and not necessarily density or use.

4.6 Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is a mix of moderate to high-density transit-supportive land uses located within an easy walk of a rapid transit stop or station that is oriented and designed to facilitate transit use. The guidelines for TOD are to be applied to all development within a 600-metre walking distance of a rapid transit stop. The proposed development is in the area of influence of Lees Station.

The TOD Guidelines encourage transit-supportive land uses (Guideline 1), including high residential densities such as apartments, which generate pedestrian and cycling traffic and provide extended hours of activity throughout the day and week. Buildings are to be located close to each other and the front of the street (Guideline 7) to encourage ease of walking.

TOD Guidelines also make reference to reduced automobile use and limiting the supply of parking spaces (Guideline 32) and locating parking lots to the rear of buildings (Guideline 35).

The proposed development meets the objectives of the TOD guidelines by increasing the residential density of lands within walking distance of transit.

4.7 Community Building Plan

A Robinson Village Community Building Plan was prepared to provide more detailed direction and guidance for the development of Robinson Village than is currently provided in the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan or the Lees Station TOD Plan, and to address the effects of residential intensification on an area that is relatively isolated and which, until recently, has not experienced the same demand for residential development as surrounding areas.

The Community Building Plan is currently at a draft stage, and will evolve through consultation with City of Ottawa planning staff and the public, but even in its early stages it allows for consideration of how the proposed development will interact with a Robinson Village that functions as a whole.

For lands designated TD1 in the Lees TOD Plan, the Community Building Plan reiterates that low- to mid-rise building heights are appropriate. Complementary architectural treatment of buildings, high-quality landscaping and greenery, and reduced automobile dependency are all prioritized in the Community Building Plan. With its increase in residential density over the existing buildings on site, contemporary architectural style, and emphasis on cycling infrastructure over private vehicle parking, the proposed development at 29 Robinson represents an early step in the direction favored by these policies.

4.8 City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250)

The subject site is zoned Residential, 5th density zone, subzone K (R5K) in the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law. A 20-metre height limit is in place, but applies only to mid- and high-rise buildings.

The purpose of the R5 zone is to allow a wide mix of residential building forms up to high-rise apartments and including other residential uses to provide additional housing choices; to permit ancillary uses to allow residents to work at home and accommodate convenience retail and service uses of limited size, and to regulate development in a manner that is compatible with existing land use patterns.

Exception 2133 applies to the subject site. The exception prohibits a residential care facility, shelter, utility installation, or convenience store; alters performance standards for mid-rise buildings, and alters a number of performance standards for specific uses (e.g. different side yard setbacks for PUDs) or under specific conditions (e.g. when a rear lot line abuts a side lot line) that are not triggered by the present application.

The following table summarizes the proposal's compliance with the current zoning:

Table 3: Zoning Compliance for low-rise apartment in R4S [480] Zone

Provision	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Minimum Lot Area (m²)	450m ²	1,139m ²	✓
Minimum Lot Width (m)	15m	32.92m	✓
Building Height (m)	14.5m	10.8m	✓
Minimum Front Yard (m)	3m	3.8m	✓
Minimum Rear Yard (m)	25% of the lot depth but need not exceed 7.5 metres	7.5m	✓
Interior Side Yard (m)	For any part of a building located within 18 metres of a front lot line, where the building wall is equal to or less than 11 m in height: 1.5 m In all other circumstances the minimum required interior side yard setback is 6m.	1.5m, stepping to 6m	✓
Landscaped Area (s.163)	30%	25%	✗
Parking (s.101)	Area X, Inner Urban 0.5/unit, excepting first 12 = 20	0	✗

Provision	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Visitor Parking (s.102)	Area X, Inner Urban 0.1/unit, excepting first 12 = 4	4	✓
Aisles & Driveways (s.107)	Min. 3m driveway Min. 6m aisle	4.05m driveway 6m aisle	✓
Bicycle Parking (s.111)	0.5/unit = 26	26	✓
Amenity Area (s.137)	15m ² per dwelling unit up to 8 units plus 6m ² per unit in excess of 8 = 120m ² + 258m ² = 378m ² Communal: 100% of the amenity area required for the first 8 units = 120m ²	384m ² total; 144m ² communal in rear yard	✓

Variances are required to accommodate the proposed building as follows:

- / Whereas s.163(9) of the Zoning By-law requires 30% of the lot to be dedicated to landscaped area, the proposed development has 25% landscaped area.
- / Whereas s.101 of the Zoning By-law requires 20 resident parking spaces, the proposed development provides none.

While a minimum landscaping requirement may serve to discourage over-development in the R5 zone and to ensure that sufficient amenity area and greenspace is provided at grade, it should be noted that the proposed building is well below the established maximum height in its zone, meets all amenity area requirements, and has easy access to ample public greenspace including Robinson Field and multi-use paths along the Rideau River.

Though Area X parking requirements (0.5 parking spaces per unit) apply to the subject site, it is located in close proximity to rapid transit at Lees Station, where Area Z requirements (no resident parking required) would normally apply. Notwithstanding this, the full complement of visitor parking is provided.

Fotenn believes that the proposed minor variances represent good planning, and that the proposed development maintains the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law and the remaining tests under Section 45 of the Planning Act. An application for Minor Variance will be submitted after the proponent has received and incorporated City of Ottawa staff feedback during the Site Plan Control application process for this project.

The proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the Provincial Policy Statement, such as the provision of a range of residential uses to meet current and projected needs, the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities that will meet the long-term needs of the community, and is proposed in a settlement area that is within an existing built up area and is within an area soon to be defined by convenient access to rapid transit.

The proposed development conforms to the policies of the Official Plan with regards to context-appropriate infill and intensification in the General Urban Area, fits within the height limit established in the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, and meets the policies and guidelines established for transit-oriented development.

The development is also reflective of the area-wide policies proposed in the draft Robinson Village Community Building Plan, which is intended to ensure that development in this area results in a future Robinson Village that functions as an attractive, cohesive whole.

The proposed development follows the general intent of the Zoning By-law, complies with the majority of zoning provisions, and the variances that will be required for compliance are minor.

Overall, the proposed development advances several key policy objectives at the Provincial and Municipal levels, including optimizing the use of serviced lands, promoting residential intensification within the existing urban boundary, and promoting transit-oriented development. Based on the above analysis, it is our professional opinion that the proposed development represents good planning and is therefore in the public interest.

Please feel free to contact the undersigned at 613.730.5709 x288 or x235 respectively should you have any additional questions or require any additional materials.

Sincerely,



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