

Planning Rationale & Urban Design Brief



360 Laurier Avenue West

Site Plan Control Application



**CLV GROUP
DEVELOPMENTS**

www.clvdevelopments.com

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Introduction

This Planning Rationale and Urban Design Brief has been provided to demonstrate how the proposed development at 360 Laurier Avenue is consistent with the Official Plan, relevant secondary plan, Council adopted plans and policies, and Provincial Policy Statement.

CLV Group Development Inc. In Trust has retained several consultants to assist with the submission requirements. The following reports and plans have been prepared in support of the site plan control application:

- Site Plan – Linebox Studio
- Architectural Drawings, including Elevations and Parking Garage – Linebox Studios
- Planning Rationale & Design Brief – CLV Group Developments Inc.
- Landscape Plan – CSW Landscape
- Stormwater Management and Servicing Report (scoped) – LRL
- Site Servicing Plan & Grade Control and Drainage Plan – LRL
- Transportation Impact Brief (scoped) – CGH Transportation
- Traffic Noise Study – Gradient Wind Engineering
- Survey (Topographic) – J.D Barnes
- Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment – Paterson Group
- Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment – Paterson Group

Site Context



Figure 1: Site Context Map

The subject property is municipally known as 360 Laurier Ave West, Ottawa, in Ward 14, Somerset (see Figure 1). It contains an existing 11-storey building previously used for office, with some commercial/retail on the ground floor. CLV Group Development Inc. In Trust (CLV Group) intends on repurposing the building for residential use with some retail uses on the ground floor.

The property is located in Ottawa's downtown. 360 Laurier Ave West is within a mixed-use neighbourhood known as Centretown. This is well established neighbourhood comprised of residential, retail and office uses with a strong focus on Federal office operations.

Laurier Avenue is between Gloucester Street and Slater Street. It is an arterial road with two-way traffic and a dedicated bicycle lane located on both sides of the road. The subject property is well serviced by public transit, there are several major bus routes within a short walking distance (Bank/ Slater Route, Parliament/ Bayshore Route and Carleton/ St-Laurent Route). It is located within 600m of both Lyon and Parliament stations servicing the Light Rail Transit – Confederation Line (LRT). There are many walking routes that connect pedestrians to commercial, public transit and various public amenities.

The following uses surround the site (see Figure 1):

North – Laurier Ave and 20-storey office building occupied by the Federal Government (365 Laurier Ave)

East – 13-storey office building occupied by the Federal Government (340 Laurier Ave West)

South – Parking lot and 22-storey residential building (199 Kent Street), beyond is Gloucester Street; and

West – Convenience store/retail space (380 Laurier Ave West), 22-storey residential building (199 Kent Street), beyond is Kent Street.

The below represent perspective views that correspond to Figure 1, to further illustrate the existing context surrounding the building.

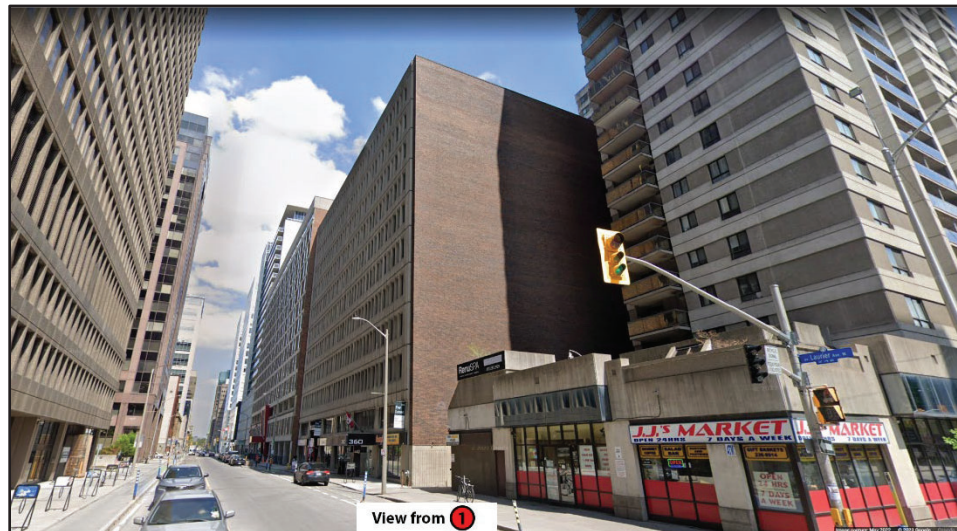


Figure 2: Refer to Figure 1, View from 1

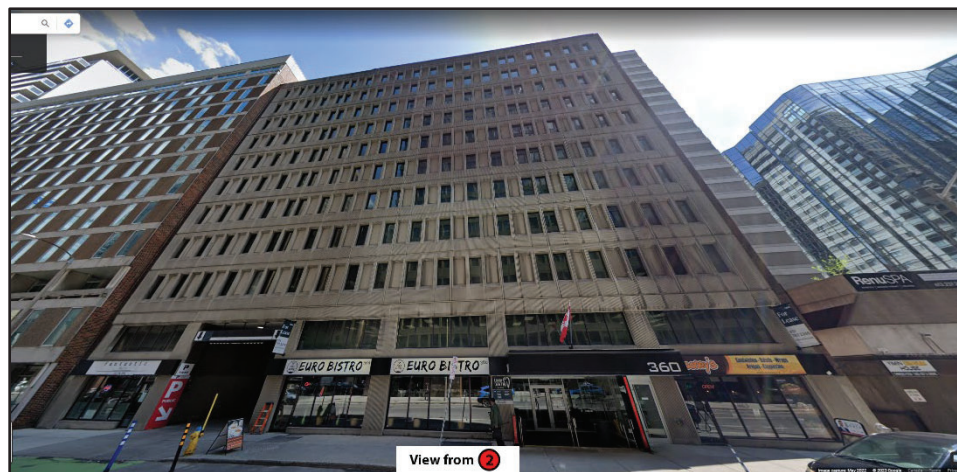


Figure 3: Refer to Figure 1, View from 2

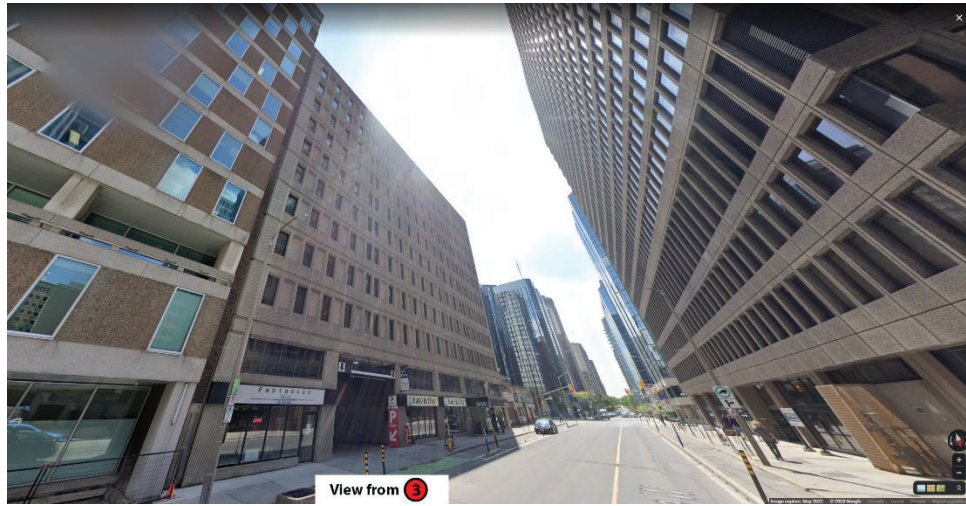


Figure 4: Refer to Figure 1, View from 3

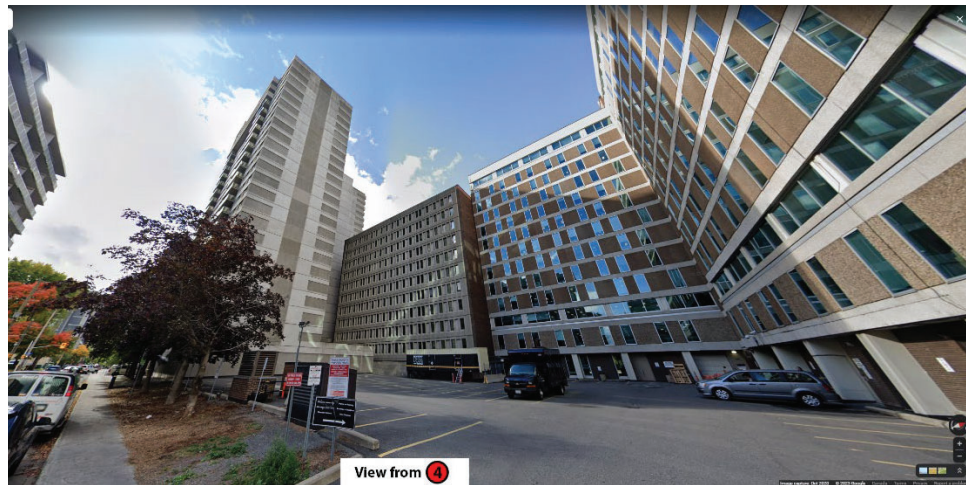


Figure 5: Refer to Figure 1, View from 2

Proposal

Description

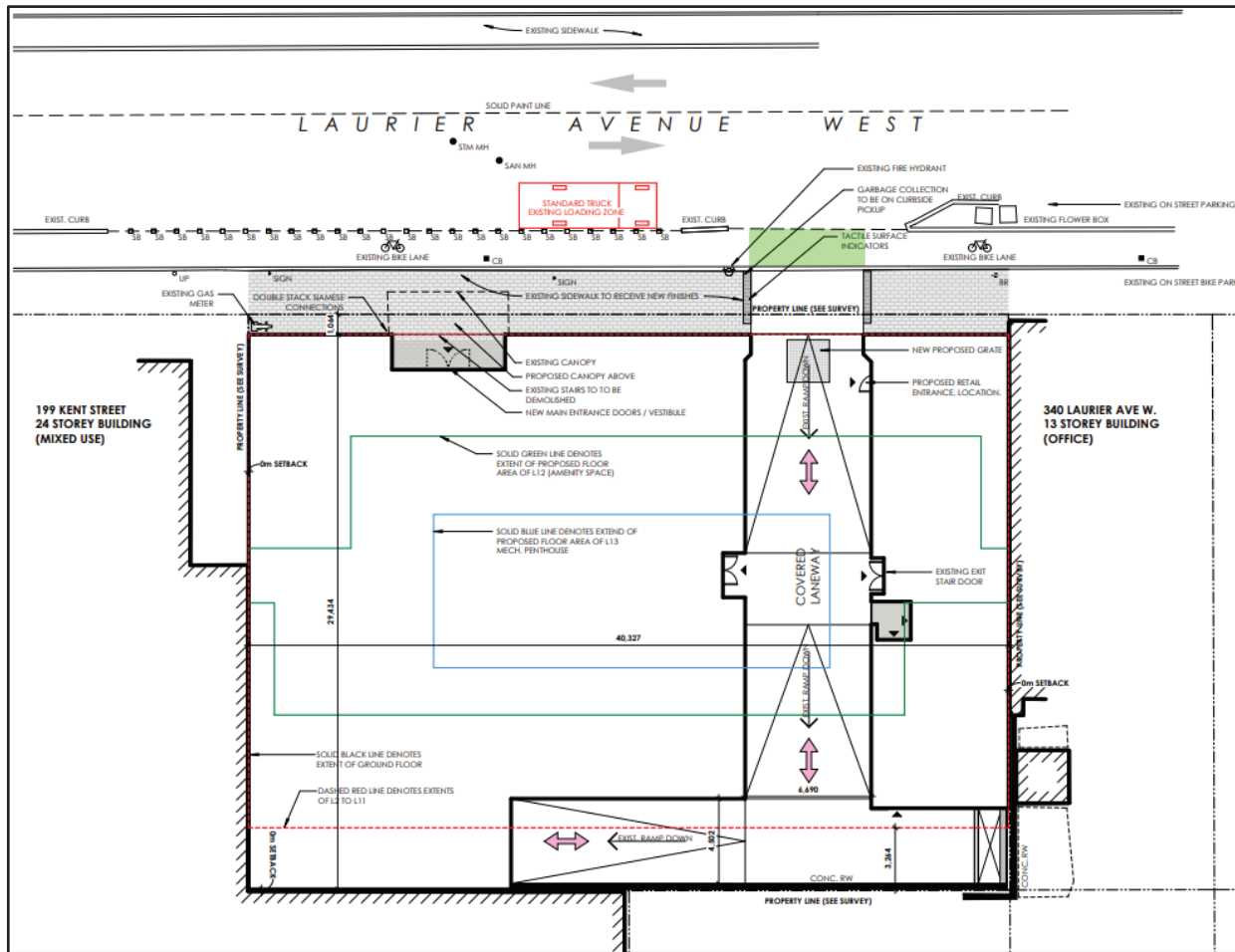


Figure 6: Site Plan of 360 Laurier Ave West

The proposal is for the adaptive reuse of an existing 11-storey commercial/office building located at 360 Laurier Avenue. The 11-storey building (not including 1 storey mechanical penthouse) will remain on site and undergo a renovation to convert it into a residential building. The mechanical penthouse area is proposed to be enlarged for rooftop amenities bringing the height to 12 storeys. A new mechanical penthouse, improvements to the façade, streetscape and interior of the building are also proposed.

The conversion will consist of 139 residential units, 133 square metres (1,451 square feet) of commercial space in the form of a rental leasing office and a general retail space. The unit mix will include studios, one (1) bedroom, one plus den (1.5), two (2) bedroom and two (2) plus den units. The objective for this proposal is to utilize as much of the existing building to make the project as sustainable as possible by reducing waste. The majority of the existing precast concrete panels will be maintained, lessening the architectural intervention while still adding subtle touches to add visual interest. As noted above, an additional level will be added which will strictly be used for amenity purposes. No residential units will be located on level 12. Amenities will be provided on the ground floor and rooftop level in the form of interior and exterior spaces.

The proposal will utilize the existing underground parking structure containing 59 vehicular parking spaces of which 13 will be used for visitor parking. The development will yield a total of 78 bicycle parking spaces.

Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides direction on provincial interest relating to land use planning and development. It is required that development or land use be consistent with policy under this Act.

The PPS recognizes that increasing housing supply, supporting jobs and streamlining development approvals are priorities for the government. The proposed development meets the following provincial interests:

- [Policy 1.1.1 (b)] Accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment, institutional, recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;
- [Policy 1.1.1 (f)] Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;
- [Policy 1.1.3.2] Proposes a land use pattern within a settlement area that has densities and a mix of uses which efficiently use land and resources, are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion, support active transportation, are transit supportive, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed;
- [Policy 1.4.1] To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area; and
- [Policy 1.5.1] Promote healthy, active communities.
- [Policy 1.6.3 (b)] Before consideration is given to developing new infrastructure and public service facilities, opportunities for adaptive re-use should be considered, wherever feasible

The proposed development is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement. It will utilize building, formally operated as an office, and repurpose it to include residential and commercial/retail uses. The proposal will use existing infrastructure creating a time-effective development aimed at increasing housing supply in Ottawa. In addition, the proposal will activate the street front and tie into existing road, transit, and active transportation networks.

Official Plan

The subject property is designated Downtown Core on Official Plan *Schedule A – Transect Policy Areas* and both Hub and Evolving Neighbourhood on *Official Plan Schedule B1— Downtown Core Transect*.

This area is recognized as a main tourist destination within the City. The Downtown Core designation strives to create a vibrant community combining employment, government, retail, housing, entertainment, and cultural activities. It is a mature built environment with characteristics of high-density mixed uses, which are to be maintained and enhanced. Important objectives

include improving the pedestrian environment, preserving character neighbourhoods, enhancing active transportation, and providing a mix of uses. Sustainability and environmental features in the downtown are also encouraged to ensure climate resiliency.

The Hub designation is planned around existing or future rapid transit stations. Hubs include lands that are within up to a 600-metre radius or 800-metre walking distance from an existing or planned rapid transit station or major frequent street transit stop. Hubs are concentrated around higher density development with mixed uses to support public transit ridership. This designation is identified as a Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA). As noted, appropriate densities are critical to make transit (The LRT, bus routes) viable in this area. Residential and commercial are supported uses in a Hub designation.

The Downtown Core aims to protect the visual integrity and symbolic primacy of the Parliament Buildings and other national symbols. As such, buildings constructed in the areas under height control as set out on *Schedule C6-A – Views, Viewsheds and View Sequences of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols* of the Official Plan, must not rise above the ridgeline of the Centre Block, and thus do not visually mar the silhouette of the Parliament Buildings and other national symbols. This building falls within *Schedule C6-A* however, the building is existing and does not obstruct views of Parliament or other national symbols.

This development proposal conforms to the vision as set out in the Official Plan. It will bring density to support public transit and activate the public realm in the downtown core. This will be achieved by incorporating at grade uses in the form of retail, a leasing office, active amenity uses and introducing more residential to the neighbourhood. It will provide building enhancements which will contribute to the overall character of the neighbourhood, proposed through some façade/exterior changes discussed below in the Urban Design Brief portion of this report.

Secondary Plan

The subject property also falls within the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan. It is classified as Core on *Schedule A – Character Areas*. The Core's main objective is to promote activity in the City and within the downtown. Development should be designed to maximize activity by including lively and dynamic street frontages.

360 Laurier Avenue West is designated Downtown Mixed-Use on *Schedule B – Designation Plan*. This designation supports the Downtown Core Transect's role as the main hub of the National Capital Region's activity. This area requires a mix of uses, including residential and commercial which will contribute to the animation of the neighbourhood. This designation also supports lively and dynamic street frontages to ensure each property is contributing to the goal of keeping and encouraging activity in the downtown.

The proposal to convert 360 Laurier Avenue West from office to residential conforms to the objectives set out in this plan. The building will contain residential, and retail uses that will facilitate all day activity. Residents will be entering and existing the building bringing people to the neighbourhood at all times of the day, instead of only during business hours. The proposal includes a leasing office, retail and active amenity uses along the street front, which will bring liveliness to Laurier Avenue.

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

The subject property is zoned MD S25 (Mixed-Use Downtown), which permits a wide range of residential uses including high-rise apartments and commercial/retail. Conforming to the Official Plan, the intent of the Mixed-Use Downtown Zone is to support the Downtown Core, facilitate vibrancy and to activate the downtown with a variety of uses while protecting the visual integrity and symbolic primacy of the Parliament Buildings.

The MD zone requires 50% of the ground floor of any building to be occupied by commercial/retail. The intent of this is to enhance and activate the pedestrian-oriented environment at the street level.

The lands are also located within *Schedule 401 to Zoning By-law No. 2008-250 – Lands that are not subject to the provisions of high-rise buildings in Section 193 (3)(j)*. As such, 360 Laurier Ave West is not subject to the provisions of high-rise buildings which requires minimum setbacks and tower separations for buildings 10-storeys or higher.

Schedule 25 to Zoning By-law 2008-250 denotes the maximum building heights that elevations must not exceed for the block bounded by Laurier Avenue, Kent Street, Gloucester Street and Bank Street. For the section of the block where 360 Laurier Avenue West is located the building elevation must not exceed 150-151 EASL (elevation above sea level).

The property falls within the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay. This section of the by-law is intended to maintain the low-rise nature of well-established neighbourhoods and to preserve/enhance the local streetscape. 360 Laurier Avenue West is an existing commercial building with a concrete focused design and a poor streetscape experience. Changes to the façade will better relate the building to the neighbourhood by giving it a warmer residential feel and enhancing the local streetscape with elements such as lighting and unit pavers.

The conversion generally meets the intent of the By-law, variances will be required to legalize the existing condition of the drive aisle width and reduce the retail requirement on the ground floor. See below for a Zoning Matrix/ compliance with the Zoning By-law for the property.

Item	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Lot Area	Minimum 540 m ²	1233.35 m ² (existing)	Yes
Lot Frontage	18m (lot width)	40.32 m (existing)	Yes
Setbacks			
<i>Front</i>	0m	1.02m (existing)	Yes
<i>Rear</i>	0m	0m (existing)	Yes
<i>Interior Side</i>	0m	0m (East), 0m (West) (existing)	Yes
Building Height As per Schedule 25	150m – 151m EASL	Heights unchanged; proposed change to use as follows: 109.3m EASL to top of main roof (unchanged) 113.4m EASL to top of amenity penthouse (L12) (currently mech penthouse) 117.7m EASL to top of mechanical/elevator penthouse	Yes
Amenity space	6 m ² / dwelling unit =834 m ²	Ground Level, Interior: 238.48m ² L12, interior: 424.47m ²	Yes

		L12, exterior: 452.60 m ² Total: 1,115.55 m²	
Parking	<u>Residential:</u> Maximum: 1.5 per unit = 209 spots <u>Visitor:</u> 0 for 1st 12 units, then 0.1 per dwelling unit = 13 spots	<u>Residential:</u> 116 Spots <u>Visitor:</u> 13 visitor	Yes
Bicycle Parking	<u>Residential:</u> 0.5 per unit = 67 spaces	<u>Residential:</u> 78 spaces	Yes
Loading Space	<u>Residential:</u> 0 spaces (min) <u>Retail (350-999m²):</u> 0 spaces (min)	<u>Residential/Retail:</u> 1 Loading Zone	Yes
Drive Aisles	<u>Double Traffic Lane:</u> Minimum: 6m; Maximum: 3.6m for less than 20 parking spaces, 6.7m for 20 or more parking spaces	3.0m to 6.0m	No
Landscaped Area	No Minimum	0 m ²	Yes
Retail Area	50% of Ground Floor: =284.57m ²	23.4% of Ground floor = 133m ²	No

Figure 7: Zoning Matrix

Urban Design Brief

This Urban Design Brief has been prepared in conjunction with the Planning Rationale to highlight key design changes to the existing building and to demonstrate how they improve or address the following items building transition and massing, materials, streetscape and public realm and landscape. As noted in the Pre-Application Consultation Meeting Minutes & Preliminary Comments dated February 23, 2023 the site is located within a Design Priority Area however, this proposed conversion will be exempt from the Urban Design Review Panel process.

Building Transition and Massing

The building was constructed in the 1960s, and the design was heavily focused on concrete materials as it was previously used for office.

Since the proposal is utilizing the existing building, no changes to the building transition or massing are proposed. The building envelope will remain largely untouched. The existing mechanical penthouse will be enlarged using a light steel material and transformed into indoor amenity area and a new mechanical penthouse will be constructed on top. Figures 8-11 highlight the elevations and perspective views for the conversion project.



Figure 8: Perspective Views of The Proposed Conversion

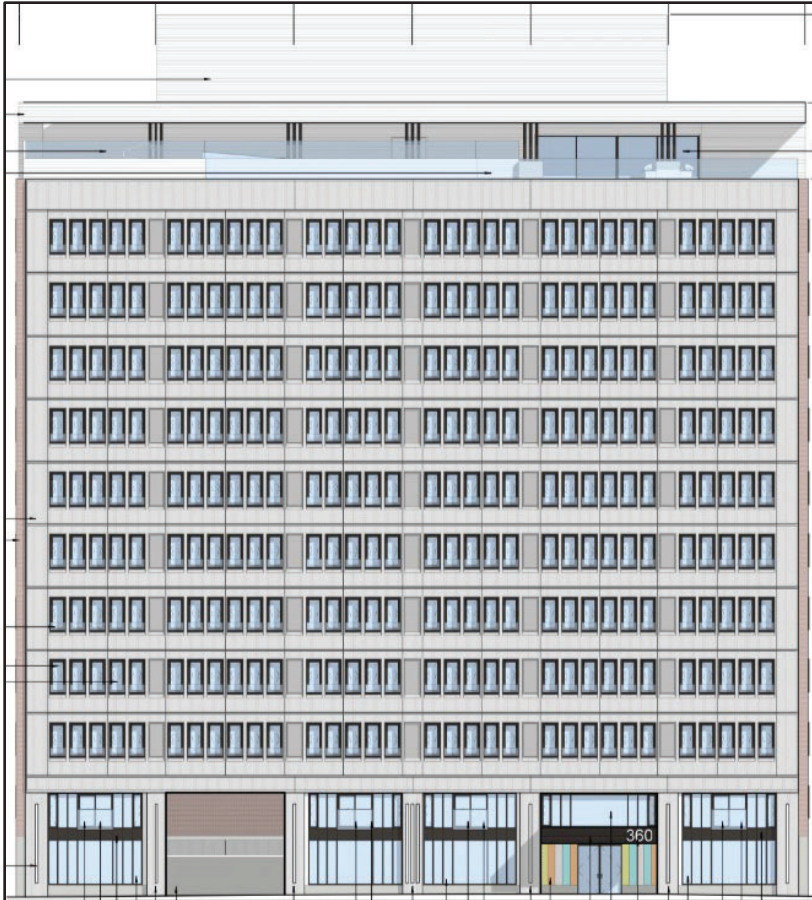


Figure 9: North (Laurier Ave W Elevation)

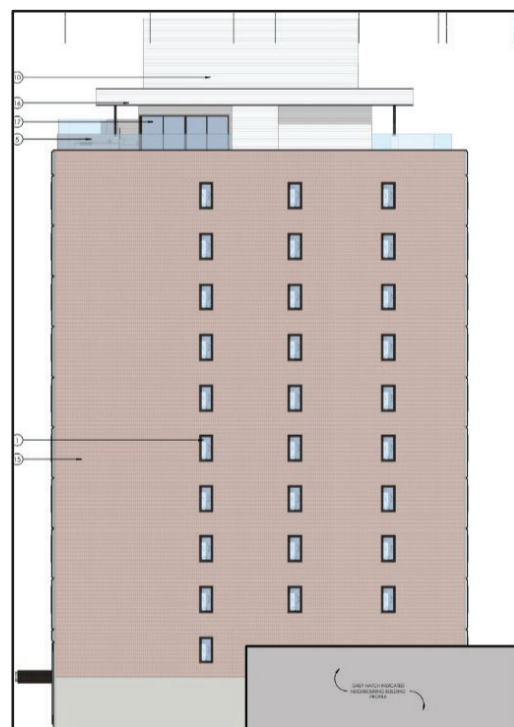
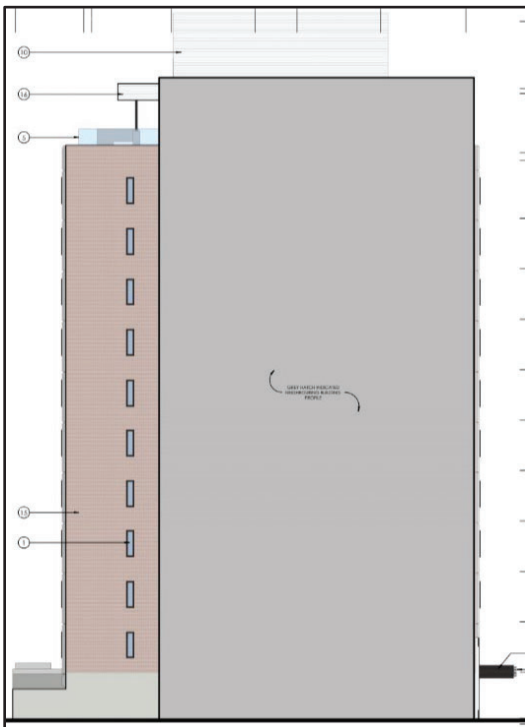


Figure 10: East and West elevations

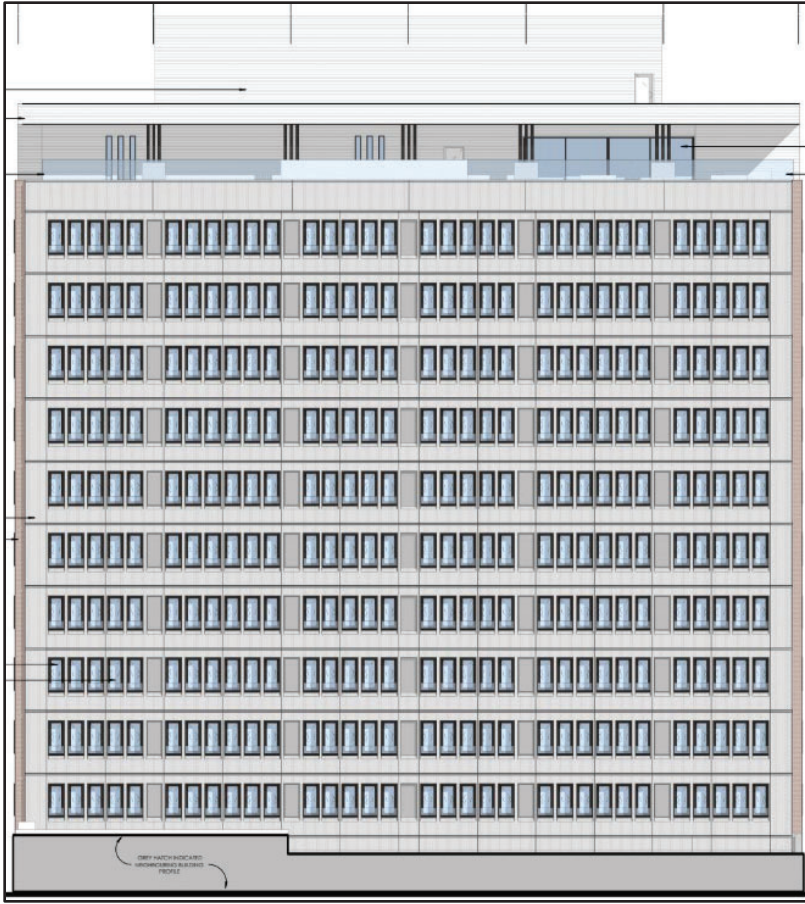


Figure 11: South Elevation

Materials

The material and design changes proposed are taking a different approach to creating a more residential feel. The design of the building will maintain most of the precast concrete panels, and they will be cleaned or repaired where necessary. The objective is to maintain as much of the existing building as possible while still making it visually appealing from the street front. The project is striving to be sustainable by reducing its environmental impact. The minimal intervention to the precast concrete panels will generate a reduced amount of concrete/construction waste.

The overall design of the north and south elevations will be respected and treated with subtle touches to add visual interest. A light play with projecting window shrouds will create a restrained undulation to the building (see Figure 12).



Figure 12: Concept of 360 Laurier Window Concept

Providing access to fresh air was an important feature for this project. The previous non-operable windows will be replaced with new energy efficient, operable windows. Additional openings will be created by punching out the precast panels where possible and infilling them with operable windows. Each window will require a guard. To avoid any obstructing visuals, the required guards will be made out of glass with minimal metal details.



Figure 13: Examples of Change of Window With Guards

At the base of the building the proposal contemplates maintaining the existing entrance location, below a canopy. The new entrance doors are stepped away from the existing sidewalk, limiting the impact on the public realm while providing shelter. The entrance contemplates incorporating some colour tints on the windows surrounding the main entrance doors to further add visual interest at the street level.

Streetscape and Public Realm

The building was constructed very close to the property line and does not have a strong street presence. To activate the streetscape and public realm at the ground floor, the enhanced glazing proposed on the first floor will help to create a more inviting environment. It will allow for natural light to enter the building and create a sense of security through the creation of eyes on the street. Working with the architectural features and lighting, the aim is to draw attention to the spaces inside the building to highlight a beautiful lobby and amenity area that is visually open to the public walking by along Laurier Avenue.

These design changes will improve the connection to the street by combining residential, commercial/retail and amenity uses to activate the space throughout the day.

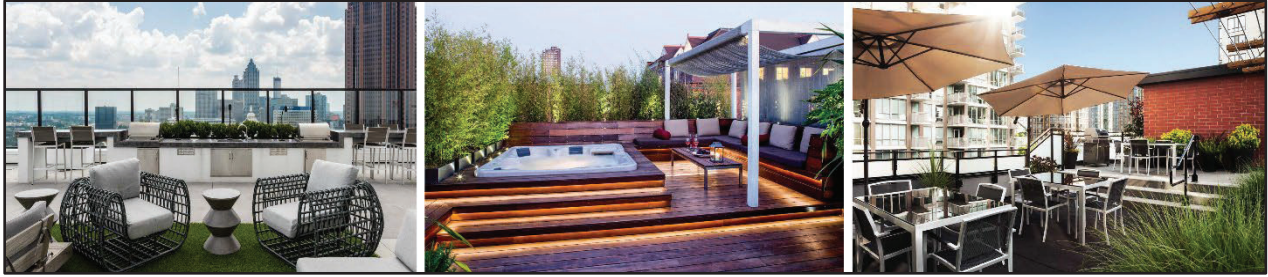


Figure 14: Amenity Concepts (resident seating areas, BBQ station and hot tub area)

To create an amenity offering in the building, the entire rooftop level will be dedicated for resident use. The rooftop provides a unique opportunity to offer views of the Ottawa skyline while creating a space where residents can gather. Planting will be incorporated on the rooftop level to shield some of the activity from the street where possible. Amenities such as a resident lounge, common areas (dining areas, lounging areas, a hot tub, pet areas and fitness spaces) will be provided to residents for use.

Landscaping

Since the building was constructed very close to the property line and there is a grade change from the sidewalk into the ground floor of the building, the existing conditions limit the types of landscape interventions that can be incorporated into the design. Fixed features such as planters or public art would reduce the generous pedestrian realm along Laurier Avenue and minimize the window views at grade impacting the interior/ exterior interaction.

As noted above the proposal contemplates utilizing the architectural features of the building and lighting to draw attention to the interior spaces. Additionally, to break up the concrete sidewalk and add some visual appeal along the building frontage, unit pavers will be constructed along the building edge, see Figure 15.

As noted in the section above, exterior elements on the rooftop amenity level, such as a communal garden, barbecues, outdoor lounge areas, outdoor dining areas, and outdoor active spaces will bolster a sense of community between all users.

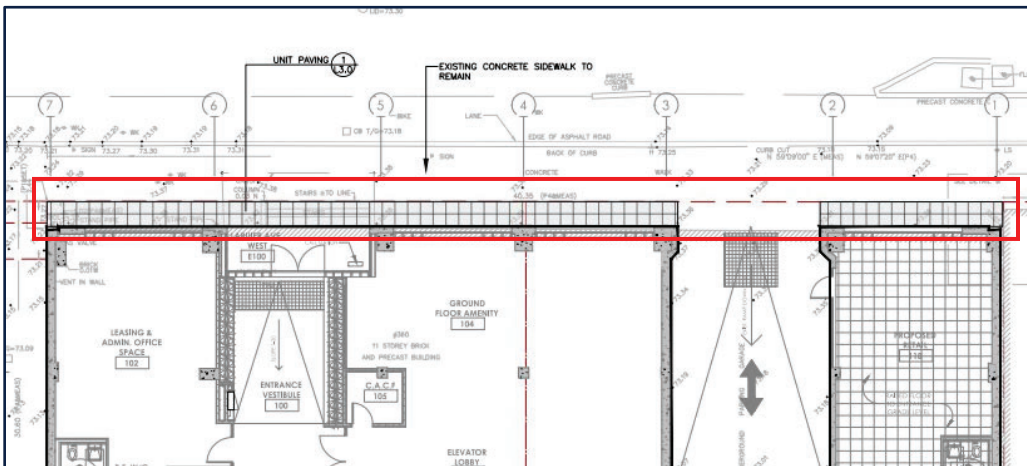


Figure 15: Snip of Landscape Plan Prepared by CSW Landscape Highlighting Unit Pavers on Ground Floor

Conclusion

It is our professional opinion that the proposed site plan application for an adaptive re-use of 360 Laurier Avenue West represents good planning and is in the public interest for the following reasons:

- The proposal is consistent with the policies set out in the Provincial Policy Statement. More specifically, the proposal aims to increase housing supply and support jobs which are priorities for the Province;
- The proposed development conforms to the Official Plan policies, including the policies for the Downtown Core and Hub designations;
- The proposal conforms to the vision set out in the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan; and
- The proposal meets the general intent of the zoning by-law (minor variance required to legalize existing conditions).

Sincerely,



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Senior Development Planner/Project
Manager



Jenn Morrison, RPP, MCIP
Director of Development