



**350  
SPARKS/137  
BAY**

**PLANNING RATIONALE**

**MINOR ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT  
& SITE PLAN CONTROL APPLICATIONS**

**JUNE 2015**



**FOTENN**

**PREPARED BY:**

**FOTENN**  
PLANNING+DESIGN

**FOTENN Consultants Inc.**

**223 Mcleod Street**

**Ottawa, ON K2P 0Z8**

**(613) 730-5709**

---

**PREPARED FOR:**

**Morguard**

**Morguard Canada**

**55 City Centre Drive**

**Mississauga, ON L5B 1M3**

**(905) 281-3800**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>1</b>
THE SITE .....	1
SITE LOCATION .....	2
ROAD NETWORK AND TRANSIT:.....	4
<b>DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT .....	7
<b>POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>7</b>
PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2014) .....	7
CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN (2003, AS AMENDED ) .....	8
CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 150 (2014) .....	14
URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HIGH-RISE HOUSING .....	14
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES .....	15
CENTRAL AREA SECONDARY PLAN.....	16
CITY OF OTTAWA ZONING BY-LAW 2008-250 .....	17
<b>SUPPORTING PLANS &amp; STUDIES .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>19</b>



## INTRODUCTION

FOTENN Consultants Inc., have been retained by Morguard Corporation to prepare a Planning Rationale in support of a Minor Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control application for the lands located at 350 Sparks Street and 137 Bay Street in the City of Ottawa. The intent of this Planning Rationale is to assess the proposed development against the applicable policy and regulatory framework, and determine if the development is appropriate for the site and compatible with adjacent development and the surrounding community.

A Design Brief, completed by WZMH Architects and included under a separate cover, provides further design detail and context for the proposed development.

## OVERVIEW

### *THE SITE*

The 7,463 square metre (0.7463 hectare) site is known as 350 Sparks Street and 137 Bay Street (referred to herein as “the site”). The site encompasses an entire city block and measures approximately 60 metres by 123 metres. The site is currently occupied by a 12-storey office building on the eastern portion of the site, a recently vacated 17-storey hotel on the western portion of the site, and a three (3) storey residential apartment building on the southwest corner of the site. The site also contains a large underground parking garage.



FIGURE 1 - LOCATION MAP



**FIGURE 2 - 350 SPARKS/137 BAY BLOCK FACING NORTHEAST WITH PLACE DE VILLE TOWER C IN THE BACKGROUND**

### *SITE LOCATION*

The site is located in downtown Ottawa and is bound by Sparks Street to the north, Bay Street to the west, Queen Street to the south, and Lyon Street to the east (Figure 1). The site is in close proximity to the Parliamentary Precinct and the Sparks Street Pedestrian Mall. Downtown Ottawa is the City’s central business district, with large numbers of office complexes, hotels, and commercial uses. It should be noted that residential uses are a growing trend in the downtown area. The downtown area is also the centre of Ottawa’s Rapid Transit Network, which is currently being converted from Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to Light Rail Transit (LRT). Known as the Confederation Line, the LRT will feature a tunnel through the City’s downtown core.

The surrounding uses vary and can be described as follows.

#### **North:**

Immediately north of the site, across Sparks Street, is the five (5) storey West Memorial Building. Further north of the site is the Library and Archives Canada complex and the Parliamentary Precinct. Northwest of the site is the Garden of the Provinces and Territories, a large open space area.



**FIGURE 3 - WEST MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**East:**

The lands to the east of the site currently consist of the Place De Ville office complex, anchored by the 29-storey (112 metre) Place de Ville Tower C directly across Lyon Street from the site. The complex also includes the 24-storey Ottawa Delta City Centre hotel on Lyon Street and the 29-storey Ottawa Marriott hotel. Northeast of the site is St. Patrick's Basilica, the oldest English speaking Roman Catholic Church in Ottawa.

**South:**

South of the site, across Queen Street, are an existing 14-storey residential apartment building and a proposed development consisting of three high-rise (22-28 storey) residential buildings.

**West:**

West of the site, across Bay Street is St. Peter's Lutheran Church (constructed in 1954). Lands further to the west are under construction and known as the Cathedral Hill mixed-use development, which includes a 21-storey residential high-rise building and a 12-storey mixed-use building (office and commercial).



FIGURE 4 - ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Design Brief, submitted under a separate cover, provides a Context Plan further outlining the surrounding environment of the site.

### *ROAD NETWORK AND TRANSIT:*

#### *Roads:*

The site is well serviced with respect to the existing road network. The site is bound by City of Ottawa streets on all four sides (Bay, Sparks, Lyon, and Queen). Lyon Street is classified as an Arterial Roadway on Schedule F (Inner City Road Network) of the City of Ottawa Official Plan, while the other three (3) streets are classified as Local Roads.

#### *Ottawa Light Rail Transit:*

As part of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) transportation initiative, the City of Ottawa has commenced construction on the Confederation Line - an east/west transit line that will run from Tunney's Pasture Station in the west to Blair Station to the east and will integrate into the existing Bus Rapid Transit system. The entire route will include thirteen (13) stations and will run for approximately 12.5 kilometers, with ten kilometers above ground and the remaining 2.5 kilometers located in an underground tunnel running below Queen Street in the downtown core. Three (3) stations are proposed for the downtown tunnel: Lyon, Parliament, and Rideau. Lyon Station will be located below the Queen Street right-of-way at the intersection of Lyon Street, and will extend to the eastern portion of the subject site. At the time of the writing of this document, station entrances are planned on Queen Street at Place de Ville and at the Delta Hotel. The anticipated completion of the downtown tunnel is June 2017.

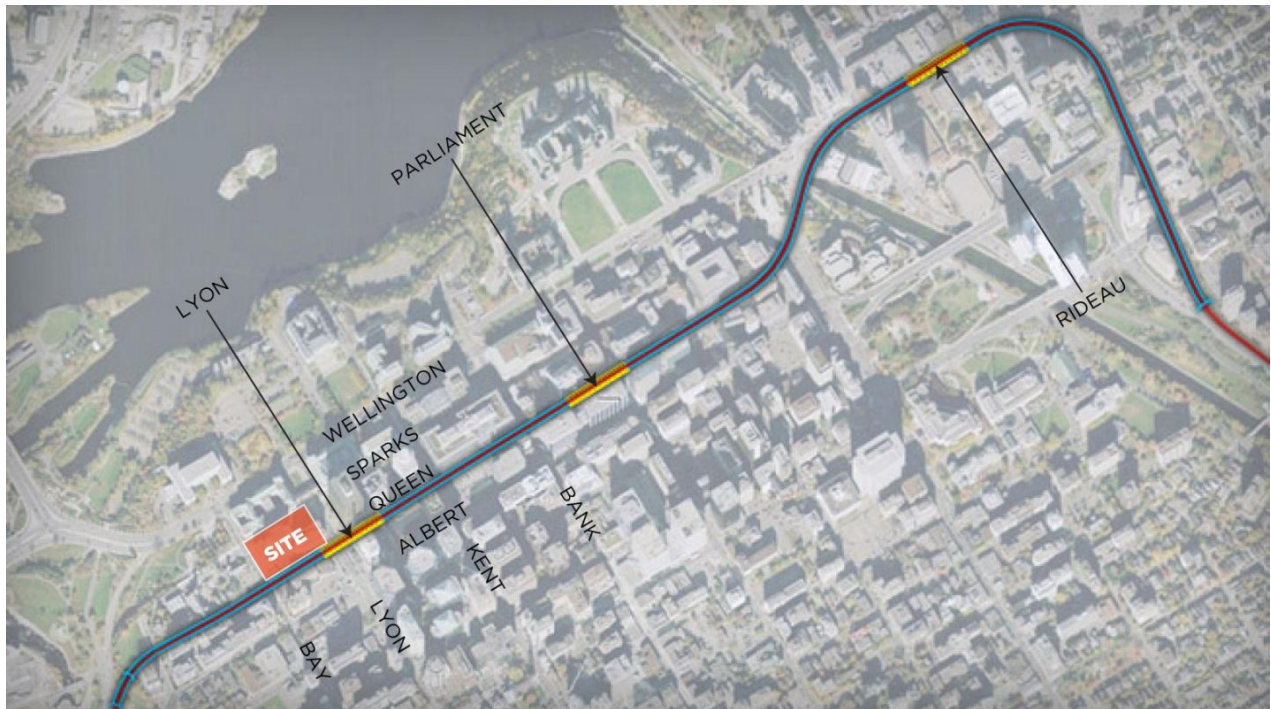


FIGURE 5 - CONFEDERATION LINE AND FUTURE STATIONS

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Morguard Corporation is proposing a redevelopment of its site at 350 Sparks Street and 137 Bay Street, which currently houses two conjoined hotel towers on the west side of the site, an office tower on the east side of the site, and a small residential apartment building on the southwest corner of the site. The current proposal includes the demolition of the two hotel towers and residential apartment building, which will be replaced with separate residential and hotel towers. The existing office tower will remain, with minor interior and exterior improvements proposed at grade level. The two proposed towers will share a common podium, entry plaza and parking access. The podium is comprised of grade level retail, hotel amenities and private residential amenities.

At 250 units, the residential tower occupies the northwest portion of the site and sits on a six (6)-storey podium base with an overall height of 77.55 metres (23 floors plus mechanical) and a total Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 14,744m<sup>2</sup>. The proposed 303 suite hotel tower is located on the southwest corner, at Queen Street and Bay Street, with an overall height of 84.55 metres (27 floors plus mechanical) including a three (3)-storey podium with a total GFA of 18,618m<sup>2</sup>.

The proposed podium heights reflect the adjacent contextual characteristics and are intended to create an appropriate compatibility of scale and urban composition. The proposed towers' heights fall within the absolute height limit dictated by the City of Ottawa as outlined in Annex 8A of the City of Ottawa Official Plan. Visual interest is added to the skyline by lowering the height of the north residential tower, resulting in a subtle transition of scale in the south north direction. Views from the Museum of Civilization, Portage Bridge and Confederation Boulevard have not been compromised.



The solid architectural language with the elegantly proportioned window openings of the West Memorial Building and Library Archives Canada inspired the exterior façade articulation of the proposed towers. The towers include a solid lattice layer which wraps the exterior glass skin to create a visual continuity in a contemporary fashion. At grade, the interior planning and organization takes careful consideration of the pedestrian experience and promotes an active and lively street edge by maximizing the street frontage and establishing clear sight lines to building entry points.



**FIGURE 6 - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The introduction of a Public Open Space at the corner of Sparks Street and Bay Streets on the northwest corner of the site embraces the opportunity to improve relationship between the building and the pedestrian public realm, enhances the overall streetscape and visually relates to the Garden of the Provinces and Territories. A generous outdoor entry plaza centrally located within the development block and accessed from Queen Street functions as the main access point and drop off area for all three project components (hotel, residential and office). A secondary access for the residential building and office is provided on the Sparks Street frontage.

Access to an underground parking garage is located off Sparks Street. The existing access point to the garage on Queen Street will be demolished and replaced with a pedestrian entry to the existing office tower lobby. Three (3) levels of below grade parking include 348 spaces broken down as follows: 142 spaces serving the existing



office building, 93 spaces for hotel parking, and 113 spaces for residential parking (including 15 visitor spaces and the potential for three car share spaces).

A total of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> of amenity space is provided throughout the residential tower and podium in the form of both private and communal amenity space. The application proposes a total of 750m<sup>2</sup> of communal amenity space, in the form of a rooftop terrace and interior space on the 4th floor and 750m<sup>2</sup> of private amenity space in the form of balconies.

The 350 Sparks Street redevelopment provides a welcomed public realm improvement that puts in consideration to the significance of the adjacent context and its urban characteristics establishes an appropriate relation to the built environment at street level and adds a subtle playfulness to Ottawa's skyline. Overall, the proposed development will extend qualities of the Sparks Street liveliness and will promote an enhanced mixed-use environment that is appropriate to the location and its established community.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

In order to proceed with the development proposal as described above, Minor Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBLA) and Site Plan Control applications are being submitted.

### ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

The Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to increase the permitted maximum building height on the western portion of the subject site, currently set at 64 metres. As such, the following amendment is being requested:

- To permit a maximum building height of 85 metres (158.31 metres Above Sea Level) for the hotel tower and 78 metres (151.61 metres Above Sea Level) for the residential tower whereas the maximum height limit is 64 metres.

## POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

### PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2014)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act* came into effect as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning. As such, decisions affecting planning matters *shall be consistent* with policy statements issued under the act.

A fundamental tenet of the PPS is the intensification of built-up areas to efficiently use land with existing infrastructure and public service facilities to avoid the need for unjustified and uneconomic expansion. As a result, planning authorities must identify and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment [Policy 1.1.3.3]. In addition to meeting the fundamental tenet of the PPS of concentrating growth within the urban area where infrastructure is available, the proposed development meets the following Provincial Policy interests:

- Promotes efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term [Policy 1.1.1.a];
- Promotes cost-effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs [Policy 1.1.1.e];
- Efficiently uses the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available [Policy 1.1.3.2a];



- Identifies and promotes opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock and areas [Policy 1.1.3.3];
- Directs development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs [Policy 1.4.3.c];
- Promotes densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities and support the use of alternative transportation modes and public transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed [Policy 1.4.3.d];
- Promotes land use patterns, density and mix of uses that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support current and future use of transit and active transportation [Policy 1.6.7.4];
- Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designated built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes [Policy 1.7.1 (d)]; and,
- Supports energy efficiency and improves air quality through land use and development patterns which promote the use of public transit and other alternative transportation modes and improving the mix of employment and housing uses to decrease transportation congestion [Policy 1.8.1.b through 1.8.1.c];

*The proposed development is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement as:*

- *The proposal capitalizes on an opportunity for redevelopment and intensification within the City's built-up and Central Area where services are readily available.*
- *The proposed development promotes intensification and new housing in an area where public transit is currently available.*
- *The proposed development promotes densities that contribute to more sustainable land use patterns and contribute to the range and mix of residential housing types.*

### **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 City of Ottawa Official Plan 2003 provides Strategic Direction for growth and development within the City. The Plan anticipates that much of the demand for new housing after 2006 will be for smaller units such as apartments. It is expected that two-thirds of the added housing stock located outside of the Greenbelt will be in the form of single-detached homes, while in the Greenbelt, one-third of housing growth will be in the form of apartments.

Ottawa expects to support this growth by managing it in ways that support healthy, liveable communities. Growth will be directed towards key locations with a mix of housing, shopping, recreation and employment and which are easily accessible by transit. The City anticipates that by pursuing a mix of land uses and a compact form of development, the City will be able to support a high-quality transit service and make better use of existing roads and other infrastructure.

In order to meet these and other objectives of the Official Plan, the City has committed to pursuing strategic directions in four (4) key areas, two (2) of which are applicable and relevant to this proposal.



### *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.
- 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.

### *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.

### **2.2.2 Managing Growth within the Urban Area**

The policy direction of the City's Official Plan is to promote an efficient land-use pattern through intensification of locations that are strategically aligned with the transportation network and in particular the rapid transit network. This section discusses the opportunities that exist for intensification and generally that the City will support such intensification.

Section 2.2.2 outlines that growth will be directed to locations with significant development potential, specifically those designated **Central Area**, Mixed-Use Centres, Employment Areas, Enterprise Areas, Developing Communities and Mainstreets.

### **3.6 Land Use Designations**

The property is designated **Central Area** on Schedule B - Urban Policy Plan (Figure 7) in the City of Ottawa Official Plan. The Central Area is recognized as the economic and cultural heart of the city due to its combination of employment, government, retail, housing, entertainment and cultural activities, as well as its heritage attributes. The policies associated with the Central Area are meant to ensure that it continues to play a vital role in the city and supports a broad range of uses. Further, the Central Area encourages a range of day/night and year-round activities and supports the staging and creation of cultural facilities, festivals, theatre, music, public art, commemorations and other activities and special events.

In order for the significance of the Central Area to be recognized, walking, cycling, and transit will play vital roles in its development. A more developed pedestrian and cycling system on downtown streets as well as an upgrade from rapid bus transit to LRT will assist in minimizing car traffic through the downtown.

New development in the Central Area will have regard for the Central Area Secondary Plan policies to enhance the physical character, identity and unique heritage resources of the Central Area's distinctive streets (including the symbolic Confederation Boulevard), theme streets, character areas, and heritage conservation districts; as well as design criteria in Sections 2.5.1 and 4.11. Further, development will maintain a human-scale of development and focus on improvements to the pedestrian environment.

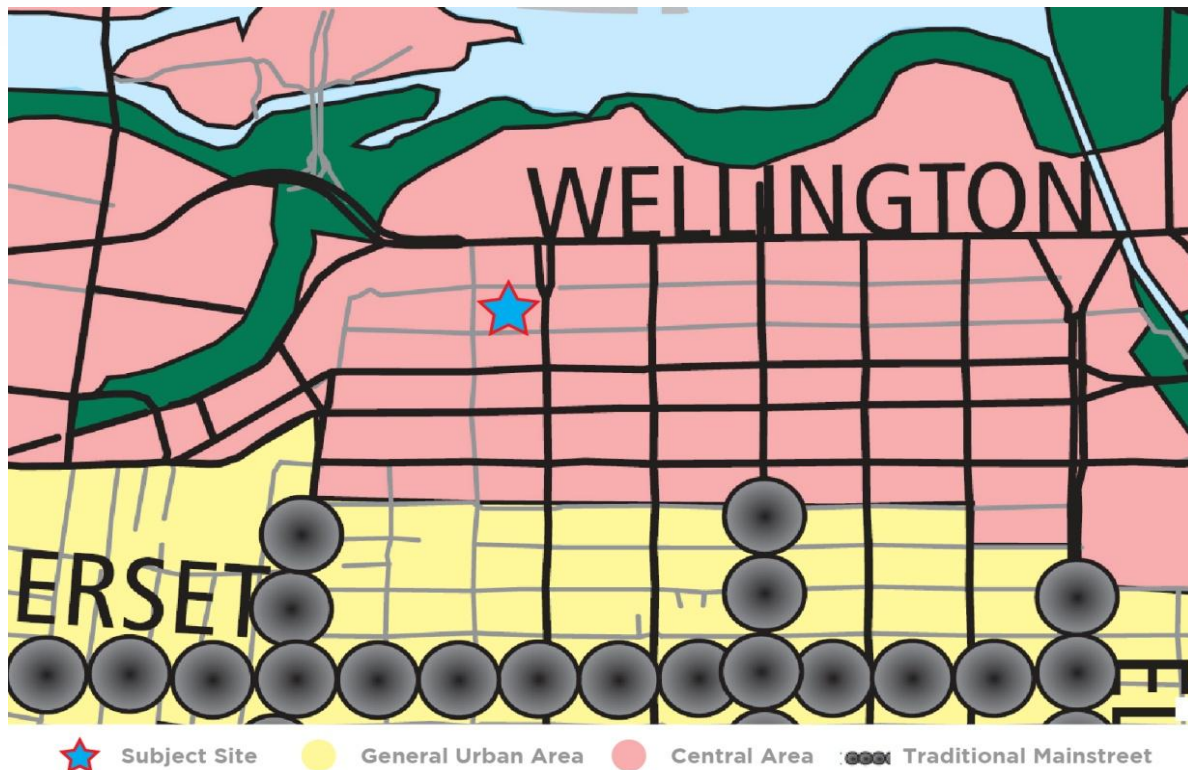


FIGURE 7 - SCHEDULE B: URBAN POLICY PLAN IN THE CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN

One of the most important considerations in the Central Area is to protect the visual integrity and symbolic primacy of the Parliament Buildings and other national symbols as seen from Confederation Boulevard and the main approach routes to the Central Area. These considerations are further identified on Annex 8A – Central Area Key Views and View Sequences of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols, which shows a small section of the western portion of the property as Area of Foreground Height Control, whereas the majority of the property is identified as an Area of Background Height Control. Buildings located in Areas of Foreground Height Control should not visually obstruct the foreground views of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols as seen from the key viewpoints and view sequences on Annex 8A. Annex 8B – Central Area Maximum Building Heights/Angular Planes on the other hand does not directly apply to the subject site in terms of providing height controls in metres above sea level (ASL). It should be noted however that in circumstances where buildings do not specify angular height planes on Annex 8B, permitted heights should be consistent and compatible with building heights generally in the area where no height planes apply, and permitted heights are in keeping with the intent and aim for those areas that are set out by the Central Area Secondary Plan.

An analysis by the City of Ottawa was completed to set maximum ASL heights for the proposed development in order to protect for visual integrity, be consistent and compatible with other developments in the area, and to meet Background Height Control policies. The analysis determined that the proposed buildings should not exceed a range of 153.93 ASL to 159.80 ASL, increasing from the northeast corner to the southwest corner, on the site.

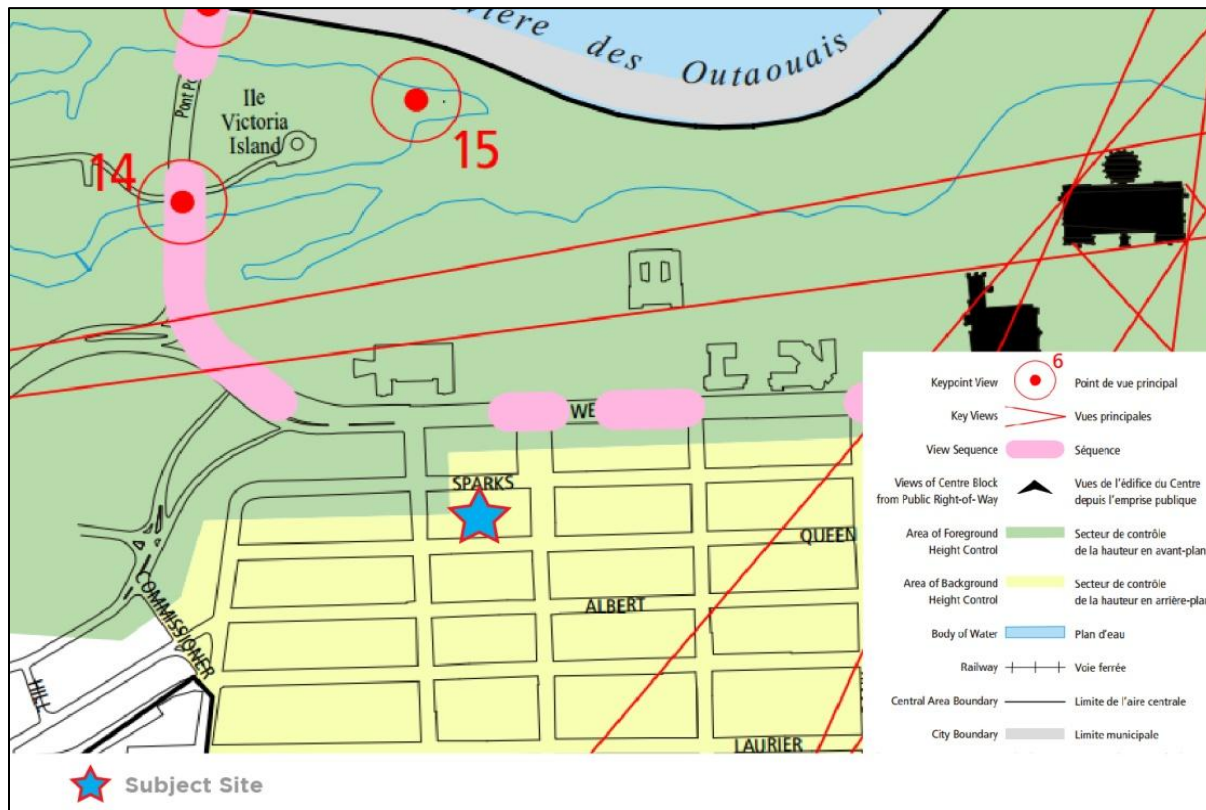


FIGURE 8 - ANNEX 8A CENTRAL KEY VIEWS AND VIEW SEQUENCES

The proposed development conforms to the policies of City of Ottawa Official Plan as:

- The proposed development achieves development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure, quality transit service, and is situated in an area that promotes a complete community with a good balance of facilities and services.
- The proposed development is located in a designated area of intensification (Central Area).
- The proposed development considers the development's contribution to the maintenance and achievement of a balance of housing types and tenures to provide a full range of housing.
- The proposed development complies with the maximum ASL heights as determined by the City and in accordance with Section 3.6.6 of the Official Plan.

### 2.5.1 and 4.11 Urban Design and Compatibility

Section 2.5.1 provides urban design guidance and on how to appropriately incorporate infill development into existing built up areas. According to the definition provided in the OP, 'compatible development' is development that is not necessarily the same as or similar to existing buildings but development that enhances and coexists with existing development without undue adverse impacts. It is development that 'fits well' and 'works well' with its surroundings. The OP emphasizes that the above objectives are achievable without designing a development to be the same as existing developments.



Within Section 2.5.1 a variety of design principles are presented to guide development. The most applicable principles for this development include:

- Promote quality consistent with a major metropolis, and a prime business and tourist destination.
- Create distinctive places and appreciate local identity in patterns of development, landscape and culture.
- Recognizing every building as being part of a greater whole that contributes to the overall coherency of the urban fabric.
- Encourage a continuity of street frontages.
- Address the relationship between buildings and between buildings and the street.
- Integrate new development to complement and enliven the surroundings.
- Allow the built form to evolve through architectural style and innovation.
- Complement the massing patterns, rhythm, character, and context.
- Achieve a more compact urban form over time.
- Allow for varying stages of maturity in different areas of the city, and recognize that buildings and site development will exhibit different characteristics as they evolve over time.
- Accommodate the needs of a range of people of different incomes and lifestyles at various stages in the life cycles.

The above noted principles support the seven (7) design objectives presented in Section 2.5.1. The proposed development meets the applicable objectives including:

- Enhance the sense of community by creating and maintaining places with their own distinct identity;
- Define quality public and private spaces through development;
- Create a place that is safe, accessible, and easy to move through; and,
- Consider adaptability and diversity by creating places that can adapt and evolve easily over time and that are characterized by variety and choice.

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.

The most applicable compatibility criteria are discussed below:

1. **Traffic:** A Transportation Study has been completed by BA Engineering. The access to the underground garage has been relocated to the Sparks Street frontage from the existing entrance on the busier Queen Street in order to mitigate additional traffic volumes.
2. **Vehicular access:** The parking entrance has consolidated and relocated to Sparks Street to remove conflicts with access/egress from the LRT Station on Queen Street and the heavier traffic movements of Bay and Lyon Streets.
3. **Parking requirements:** The proposed development meets the parking requirements as outlined in the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law 2008-250, while not 'over-parking' the development based on its location to rapid transit. All parking is provided in an existing underground garage, with one centralized access/egress in order to minimize disruptions to pedestrians at grade.
4. **Outdoor amenity areas:** The proposed development will not have an adverse affect on neighbouring residential outdoor amenity areas. The small floorplate of



the proposed high-rise towers and their orientation ensures that shadows will move quickly and not adversely affect any neighbouring open space.

5. **Loading Areas, Service Areas and Outdoor Storage:** The proposed development consolidates main loading and garbage collection in one area (off Bay Street). This area will be screened from public view.
6. **Sunlight:** A sunshadow study has been prepared and is included in the supporting architectural plans. The proposed tower will result in increased shadowing, however, the proposed tower design, with a minimal building footprint and increased setbacks, will allow for ample sunlight penetration and quick moving shadows, particularly during the summer months. The shadowing is consistent with other developments in the central core area of the City.
7. **Microclimate:** A wind and snow loading study has been completed by Gradient Microclimate Engineering. No adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposed development.
8. **Supporting neighbourhood services:** The subject site is situated in a location that is very well served by a range of amenities and services. This includes shops and restaurants within the immediate vicinity, various parks open space, and the future LRT. Additional residential uses may provide opportunities for further amenities and services.

#### Building Profile

Section 4.11 of the Official Plan includes policies addressing the location, design and integration of tall buildings into the existing urban fabric. Tall buildings are defined as buildings 10 storeys or greater. Policy 4.11.8 allows consideration of high-rise buildings within the Central Area (4.11.8.a).

#### Building Profile and Transition

When considering the proposals compatibility and “fit” within the existing community, regard must be given to Policy 11 which states that high-rise buildings will be considered as both an example of architecture in its own right and as an element of urban design within a wider context. The following measures will be considered in evaluating high-rise proposals:

- a. How the scale, massing and height of the proposed development relates to adjoining buildings and the existing and planned context for the surrounding area in which it is located;
- b. How the proposal enhances existing or creates new views, vistas and landmarks;
- c. The effect on the skyline of the design of the top of the building;
- d. The quality of architecture and urban design, particularly as expressed in Council-approved design guidelines; and
- e. How the proposal enhances the public realm, including contribution to and interaction with its surroundings at street level (e.g. the provision of publicly accessible landscaped area, amenity space and pedestrian respite areas, street trees public art, active land use frontages, legible entrances and views to the street, canopies, awnings and colonnades for continuous weather protection).

*The hotel and residential heights fall within the height limit dictated by the City of Ottawa as outlined in Annex 8A of the City of Ottawa Official Plan. Views from the Museum of Civilization, Portage Bridge and Confederation Boulevard have not been compromised.*

*Visual interest is added to the skyline by varying the heights of the proposed towers, resulting in a transition of scale in the south north orientation. Additionally, the exterior façade articulation of the proposed towers, which includes a solid lattice layer exterior, creates visual continuity in a contemporary fashion.*





*The proposal enhances the public realm through two key features, the introduction of a Public Open Space at the corner of Sparks Street and Bay Streets on the northwest corner of the site and a generous outdoor entry plaza centrally located within the development block and accessed from Queen Street.*

*Overall, the proposed development conforms to the policies of General Urban Area in the City's Official Plan, to the Urban Design and Compatibility criteria in Sections 2.5.1. and 4.11.*

### **CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 150 (2014)**

Official Plan Amendment 150 (OPA 150) has recently been approved by both Ottawa City Council and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The OPA is currently under appeal. Though not in full force and effect, all new applications must 'have regard' for the revised policies of OPA 150. Section 3.6.6, Central Area, has remained unchanged in the context of this application. This section summarizes the other applicable revised policies.

#### *Section 2.5.1 - Designing Ottawa*

This Section has been revised to simply address urban design and revises the Section to present the earlier noted "Design Principles" as the seven (7) design objectives of how the City wants to influence the built environment. The majority of the portions related to compatibility have been left to Section 4.11.

#### *Section 4.11 - Urban Design and Compatible Development*

Section 4.11 continues to guide the design of development in conjunction with Section 2.5.1. Section 4.11 primarily aims to encourage high quality urban design and compatibility within the city's neighbourhoods. With regards to the application at hand, this revised section focuses on good building design that successfully contributes to the skyline of the city and the neighbourhood through proper integration, compatibility with the surrounding context and building design elements such as massing and scale.

Depending on its location, such as in the Central Area of the city, applications for high-rise buildings will be evaluated in part on its contribution to and enhancement of the skyline while also ensuring that any protected views are maintained.

*Overall, the proposed development also conforms to the revised policies of OPA 150 including Section 2.5.1 - Designing Ottawa and 4.11 - Urban Design and Compatible Development.*

### **URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR HIGH-RISE HOUSING**

The City of Ottawa Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Housing were adopted in October 2009 and addresses seven (7) elements of design: Context, Built Form, Pedestrians and the Public Realm, Open Space and Amenities, Environmental Considerations, Site Circulation and Parking, and Services and Utilities.

The proposal meets the overall intent as well as the following applicable guidelines:

- Integrates into the context and addresses compatibility within the existing and planned context through the massing, setbacks, transitions in building height, and through the design qualities and character.
- Maintains a building line along the street that is similar to neighbouring buildings.
- Defined lower portion with a base that is similar in height, proportions and rhythm to the neighbouring buildings to visually unify the street.
- Lower portion of building complex provides for a human-scaled streetscape.



- Pedestrian entrances are located at-grade and are directly accessible, clear, and prominent.
- Design includes an inviting open space on the corner of Bay and Sparks Street.
- Sufficient separation between towers (20 metres) to allow for adequate light and privacy.
- Towers have been designed with compact floor plates (under 750m<sup>2</sup> each).
- Maintains a similar form and design as surrounding buildings.
- Located to preserve and not block or detract views to Parliament Buildings.
- Uses clear windows and doors to make the pedestrian level façade highly transparent and accessible.
- Building has architecturally detailed facades, where publicly visible, with no blank or featureless sides.
- Creates accessible, barrier-free pedestrian links that connects to the public street.
- Provides required amenity spaces, including communal amenity spaces.
- Provides amenities at building entrances.
- Provides a direct, safe, continuous and clearly defined pedestrian walkway to the public sidewalk.
- Walkways are distinguished from driving surfaces.
- Open spaces have been integrated with other indoor and outdoor active uses.
- Parking is provided within the building and below grade.

*The proposed development meets the general direction and overall intent of the applicable policies within the High-Rise Guidelines.*

### **TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The City of Ottawa Urban Design Guidelines for Transit-Oriented Development were adopted in September 2007 and addresses six (6) elements of design: Land Use, Layout, Built Form, Pedestrians & Cyclists, Vehicles & Parking, and Streetscape & Environment.

The proposal meets the overall intent as well as the following applicable guidelines:

- Provides transit supportive land uses within a 600 m walking distance of a rapid transit stop or station.
- Creates a multi-purpose destination for both transit users and local residents through providing a mix of different land uses.
- Provides a high-density mixed-use development directly adjacent to a transit station.
- Locates buildings close to other buildings and along the front of the street to encourage ease of walking.
- Buildings are stepped back above the podium in order to maintain a more human scale along the sidewalk.
- Provides architectural variety through windows, projections and building materials along the podium and throughout the building.
- Uses clear windows and doors to make the pedestrian level façade of walls facing the street highly transparent.
- Ground floor is designed to be appealing to pedestrians, with active uses at grade.
- Provides shared parking.
- All parking is provided underground and away from public view.
- Landscaping along the façade will improve the pedestrian realm.

*The proposed development meets the general direction and overall intent of the applicable policies within the Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines.*



## CENTRAL AREA SECONDARY PLAN

The subject site is located within the Central Area Secondary Plan, which constitutes a more detailed policy direction beyond the Official Plan for select areas within the Central Area of Ottawa. The Central Area Secondary Policy Plan defines area-specific visions, objectives, and policies for identified Character Areas and Theme Streets.

Further policy guidance for the subject site is found in *The Core Precinct* policies of the Central Area Secondary Plan as shown on Schedule B – Central Area Character Areas and Theme Streets. The Core's vision primarily focuses on employment since it is the location of several major corporations, financial organizations and diplomatic missions; a greater diversity of uses to create a more lively and vibrant environment, including the addition of housing in mixed-use projects particularly to support a growing variety of pedestrian-oriented uses at grade; to respect the integrity of heritage resources and prominent views to Parliament and other National Symbols; to enhance the pedestrian environment throughout the precinct; and, to take advantage of the City's largest infrastructure investment with respect to the Light Rail Transit system, that will run straight through the precinct in an effort reduce carbon emissions and alleviate traffic issues in the downtown.

Some of the core policies that will help to achieve the vision and objectives of The Core precinct will be:

- City Council shall ensure a variety of commercial uses, mixed-use residential uses, and pedestrian uses at grade along pedestrian corridors;
- Pedestrian-oriented uses will encourage building entrances to be directly accessible to pedestrians along pedestrian corridors, shall be designed with high visibility, and ensure that at-grade uses provide direct access to the street.
- Medium to high profile development will be considered for The Core area however these high-rise developments should respect the visual integrity and symbolic primacy of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols as defined Annex 8A in the Official Plan.
- Development shall respect and complement existing heritage buildings.
- Development in The Core area will ensure a high quality of design through design criteria such as roof treatment, human-scale development, sunlight, weather protection, wind, barrier-free design, art, parking, lower floor articulation, entranceways, building frontages, parking entrances, and setbacks.
- An enjoyable and comfortable pedestrian experience will be promoted through development in a manner that gives pedestrians the priority at grade by ensuring large sidewalks, streetscape elements to enhance the core, and to ensure the provision of at-grade pedestrian linkages.
- Development shall promote and ensure the provision of a variety of usable open spaces and pedestrian amenity areas particularly on corners, in the Core, such as, green pocket parks, plazas, rooftop terraces and/or indoor winter gardens.

Since the Central Area Secondary Plan does not identify specific heights for development in The Core precinct, it is understood that development will need to consider other policies in the Official Plan, the Zoning By-law 2008-250, and be consistent with many of the existing building heights in the surrounding area.

*The proposed development meets the general direction and overall intent of Core precinct policies of the Central Area Secondary Plan. From a development height standpoint, it is consistent with the applicable policies of the City of Ottawa Official Plan and permitted maximum heights as established by the City regarding Annex 8A.*

### CITY OF OTTAWA ZONING BY-LAW 2008-250

The subject site has a split zoning in which two (2) different zones apply and split the subject site in half. The west half of the subject site is currently zoned **MD H(64) – Mixed-Use Downtown, Maximum Height Permitted is 64 metres**. The east half of the subject site is zoned **MD – Mixed-Use Downtown** (Figure 9).



FIGURE 9 – ZONING MAP

The MD zone permits a wide range of residential and non-residential uses including: apartment dwelling high-rise, hotel, restaurant, office, and retail.

The purpose of the MD zone is to:

- Support the Central Area, as designated in the Official Plan, as the central place in the region for employment and shopping while also allowing residential, cultural and entertainment uses;
- Ensure that the Character Areas in the Central Area, namely the Core Area, the Parliamentary Precinct, the ByWard Market, the Rideau/Congress Centre, the Canal Area, Lowertown, Upper Town, Sandy Hill West, LeBreton Flats and the four Business Improvement Areas, Rideau, Sparks, ByWard Market and Bank Streets, continue to serve as primary business or shopping areas and maintain their distinct character;
- Facilitate more intense, compatible and complementary development to ensure that the active, pedestrian-oriented environment at street level, particularly along Bank Street, Sparks Street and Rideau Street is sustained; and
- Impose development standards that will protect the visual integrity and symbolic primacy of the Parliament Buildings and be in keeping with the existing scale, character and function of the various Character Areas and Business Improvement Areas in the Central Area while having regard to the heritage structures of the Central Area.



Table 1: Zoning Conformity for Proposed Development			
Provision	Requirement	Proposed	Compliance (✓ or ✗)
Minimum Lot Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	No minimum	7,463.70	✓
Minimum Lot Width (m <sup>2</sup> )	No minimum	1826.82	✓
Maximum Building Height (m)	64	85 (158.31 ASL) - hotel tower 78 (151.61 ASL) - residential tower	✗
Minimum Front Yard Setback (m)	No minimum	N/A	✓
Minimum Rear Yard Setback (m)	No minimum	N/A	✓
Minimum Corner Side Yard Setback (m)	No minimum	N/A	✓
Percentage of ground floor uses occupied by those listed in Section 193.2	50-percent	83-percent in the redeveloped portion of the site	✓
Amenity Area (Section 137)	Total Amenity Area: 6 m <sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit (1500 m <sup>2</sup> ).	1,500 m <sup>2</sup>	✓
	Communal Amenity Area: Minimum of 50% of the required total amenity area (750 m <sup>2</sup> ).	750 m <sup>2</sup>	✓
Minimum Residential Parking Space Rates (Section 101)	None	98 spaces	✓
Minimum Visitor Parking Spaces (Section 102)	None	15 spaces	✓
Minimum Commercial Retail or Restaurant Parking Spaces (Section 101)	None	None	✓



Table 1: Zoning Conformity for Proposed Development			
Provision	Requirement	Proposed	Compliance (✓ or ✗)
Minimum Hotel Parking Spaces (Section 101)	0.5 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> of GFA. (93 spaces required)	93 spaces	✓
Minimum Office Parking Spaces (Section 101)	0.75 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> of GFA. (142 spaces required)	142 spaces	✓
Loading Space (Section 113)	2 in the re-developed section of the site	3	✓
Bicycle Parking (Section 111)	0.5 spaces per residential dwelling unit (125 spaces required)	125 spaces	✓
	1 per 250 m <sup>2</sup> of GFA of restaurant/retail (1 required)	1 space	✓
	1 per 1000m <sup>2</sup> of GFA for hotel (19 spaces required)	19 spaces	✓

## SUPPORTING PLANS & STUDIES

Technical studies to analyze the proposed development have been completed and submitted under separate cover for this application. These studies include Site Servicing Plan/Study, Grade Control and Drainage Plan, Transportation Study, Stormwater Management Report, Geotechnical Study, Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, Confederation Line Proximity Study, Design Brief, Noise/Vibration Study, Wind Analysis, Cultural Heritage Impact Statement, and Phase 1 ESA.

## CONCLUSIONS

In assessing the appropriateness of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment, it is FOTENN's professional opinion that the applications represent good land use planning, are appropriate for the site, and are in the public interest for the following reasons:

- *The proposed development is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement which promotes efficient and appropriate development on lands within the urban boundary. The proposal capitalizes on an infill opportunity within a built up area where services are readily available, promotes intensification and new housing in an area where public transportation is readily available, and promotes densities that contribute to more sustainable land use patterns and contribute to the range and mix of residential housing types.*
- *The proposed development achieves the goals, policies, and objectives of the City of Ottawa Official Plan, specifically the applicable policies of the Central Area designation and Sections 2.5.1 and 4.11 relating to Urban Design and Compatibility*



- *The proposed development complies with the maximum ASL heights as determined by the City and in accordance with Section 3.6.6 of the Official Plan.*
- *The proposed development is also appropriate under the revised policies of OPA 150.*
- *The proposed development meets the general intent of the City's Urban Design Guidelines for High-Rise Housing and for Transit-Oriented Development.*
- *The proposed development complies with the general intent of the policies and direction of the Central Area Secondary Plan.*
- *The proposed development meets the vast majority of the performance standards and meets the purpose and intent of the MD zoning, which supports high-rise apartment dwellings and development. The requested height variance is within the realm of the pre-determined height controls on the site.*
- *The application is supported by a number of independent studies completed in accordance with the Official Plan requirements, all of which support the proposed development and demonstrate that it is appropriate within the subject site's context.*
- *Overall, the proposed development is a well-designed, high-density redevelopment of an underutilized building. It achieves a good fit within the Central Area's planned function. It will contribute to the streetscape by introducing active at-grade uses while sensitively increasing the site's height and density to meet the City of Ottawa's intensification goals and policy objectives of managing growth.*

Carl Furney, MCIP RPP AICP  
Senior Planner  
FOTENN Consultants Inc.