



83 – 91 Sweetland Avenue

Planning Rationale & Urban Design Brief
Zoning By-Law Amendment &
Site Plan Control Applications
February 11th, 2025

Prepared for Upscale Homes

Prepared by RJH Architecture + Planning (legally *Rosaline J. Hill Architect Inc.*)
Architecture, Urban Planning, and Development Consultation
414 Churchill Avenue North,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 5C6
613-262-5480
www.rjhill.ca
www.rjhurbanplanning.ca

February 11th, 2025

The information contained in this document produced by RJH Architecture + Planning (RJH) is solely for the use of the Client identified above for the purpose for which it has been prepared. As such, RJH undertakes no duty to, or accepts any responsibility to, any third party who may rely upon this document.



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1 Executive Summary	1
1.1 Subject Property	1
1.2 Site Context.....	2
1.3 Consultation Strategy.....	5
1.4 Development Proposal	6
2 Project Statistics	9
3 Official Plan Designation	10
Policy Justification.....	10
4 Provincial Policy Statement	10
5 Strategic Directions & Growth Management (Official Plan)	13
5.1 Land Use Designation.....	13
5.2 Strategic Directions	17
5.3 Growth Management Framework	18
5.4 City-Wide Policies.....	19
6 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan.....	20
7 The Transportation Master Plan	23
8 The Climate Change Master Plan	25
Urban Design Brief.....	26
9 Design Directives.....	26
9.1 Official Plan (2021).....	26
9.2 Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing (2023)	28
9.3 Urban Design Directions Provided by City Staff.....	28
10 design Research	30
10.1 Approach to Sustainable Design.....	30
Conclusion	30

List of Figures

Figure 1. Street view of the Subject Property in its current condition..... 1

Figure 2. Broader neighbourhood context of the Subject Property..... 2

Figure 3. Land uses East, West, South and North from the Subject Property..... 3

Figure 4. Bus access (left), and transit network from the Official Plan (2021), Schedule C2 (right)..... 4

Figure 5. Map of the nearby road network from the Official Plan (2021) Schedule C4 – Urban Road Network. 4

Figure 6. Map of services and amenities surrounding the Subject Property from Google Maps..... 5

Figure 7. Proposed Site Plan. 7

Figure 8. 3D model of the proposed development..... 8

Figure 9. Excerpt from the Official Plan (2021), Schedule B1 – Downtown Core Transect. 10

Figure 10. Proposed Landscape Plan 18

Figure 11. Excerpt from the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan (2021), Schedule B – Designation Plan..... 20

Figure 12. Rendering of the Proposal 26

Figure 13. View of facade looking up the street 27

Introduction

1 Executive Summary

This Planning Rationale was prepared in support of concurrent Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications to facilitate the development of an 84-unit 4-storey plus basement low-rise apartment building located on 83 – 91 Sweetland Avenue (“Subject Property”). The building will architecturally complement the neighbouring homes on Sweetland with thoughtful façade articulation and four active entrances facing the street. The alternating use of three colours of brick and shifting plains results in a rhythm that echoes the volumes and spacings of surrounding homes. The fourth storey of the proposed building is angled back to soften the visual impact from the street. The design will result in a pleasant pedestrian environment along Sweetland Avenue, with terraced planters, landscaping and street trees. One parking space is proposed in the side yard of the building accessed from Sweetland. The proposed development will increase the residential density of a transit-served neighbourhood and provide dwelling units of a range of types and sizes.

The subject property is zoning R4UD[480] in Area X as per Schedule 1A, legally Lots 18 and 19 of Plan 42717. To proceed with this proposal, we require a minor rezoning to the R4UD[xxxx] with a site-specific exception to:

- Reduce the required number of resident parking spaces to 1
- Reduce the required number of visitor parking spaces to 0
- Eliminate the required front setback of steps projecting into the front yard

1.1 Subject Property

Figure 1. Street view of the Subject Property in its current condition.



87-89 Sweetland was listed on the City's heritage register. A Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) has been conducted and concluded that there is no heritage significance to the building and the City has agreed to therefore remove it from the list. Refer to the CHER included with the submission of these applications.

1.2 Site Context

The Subject Property is located in the neighbourhood of Sandy Hill, in Ward 12 (Rideau-Vanier). The Property is in an area bounded by Sweetland Avenue to the west, Somerset Street East to the south, Russell Avenue to the east and Osgood Street to the north. The surrounding context of the Subject Property is predominantly characterized by low-rise residential uses, with a mix of commercial, recreational and educational uses nearby.

Figure 2. Broader neighbourhood context of the Subject Property.

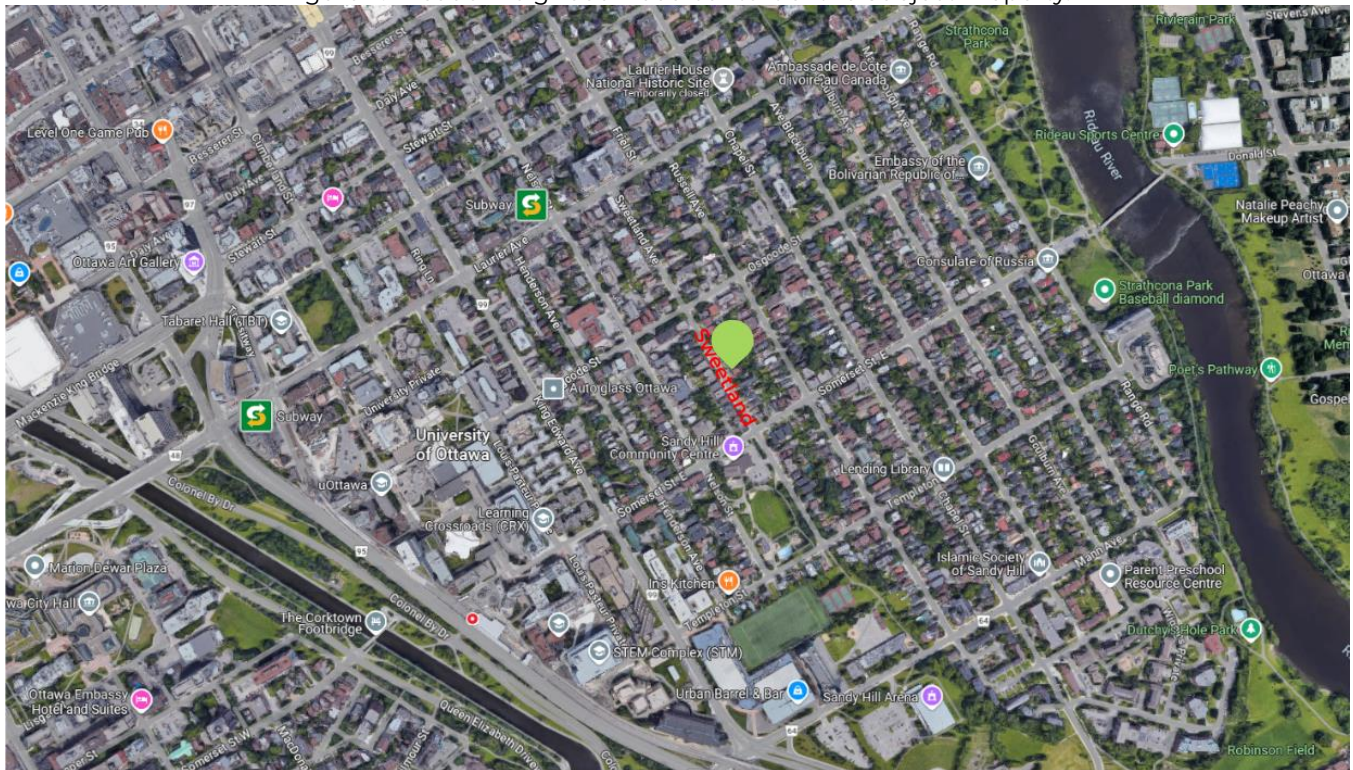


Figure 3. Land uses East, West, South and North from the Subject Property.



View 1: Looking north from the Subject Property along Sweetland towards Osgood Street.



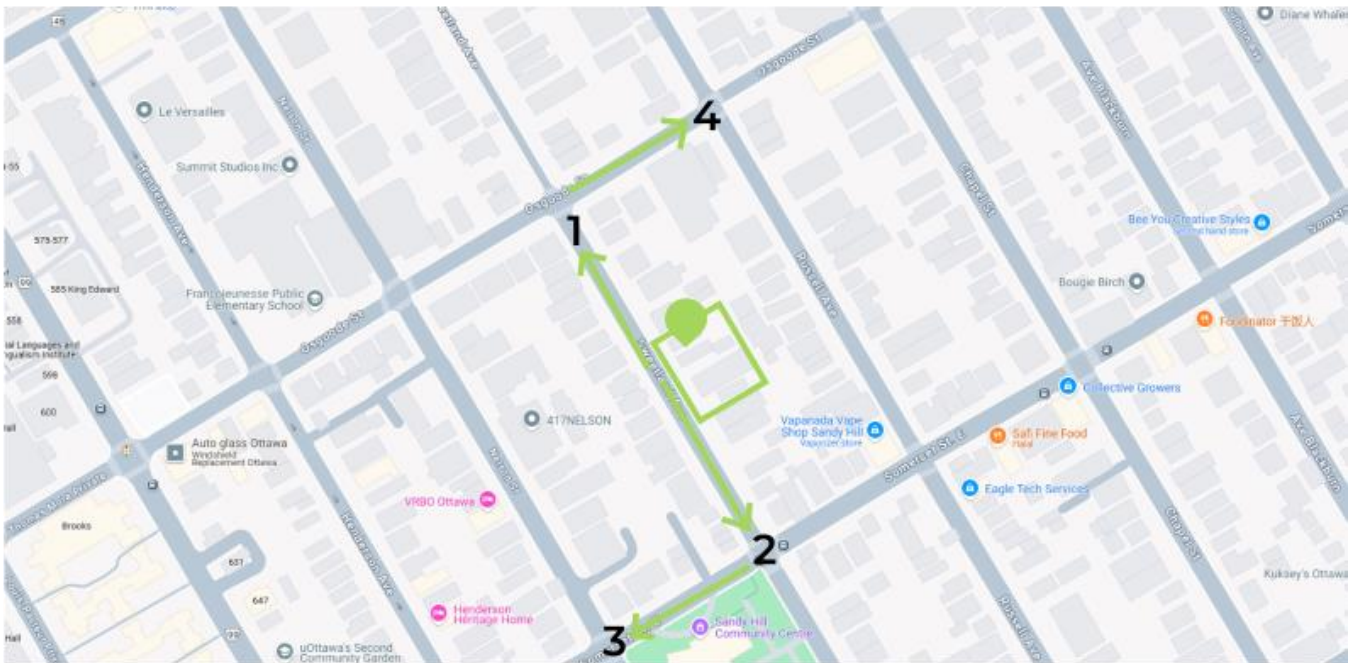
View 2: Looking south from the Subject Property along Sweetland towards Somerset Street East.



View 3: Looking east towards the Sandy Hill community center along Somerset Street East.



View 4: Looking west along Osgood Street.



View 1: North of the Subject Property along Sweetland Avenue are several 2 and 3-storey apartments among other single-family homes.

View 2: South of the Subject along Sweetland are low-rise residential buildings.

View 3: East of the Subject Property down Somerset are bus stops, the Sandy Hill Community Centre and park, and more low-rise residential buildings. Further down Somerset is the No Forks Given restaurant, the campus pharmacy and the University of Ottawa.

View 4: West of the Subject Property along Osgoode Street are low-rise residential buildings.

The surrounding neighbourhood is predominantly represented by low-rise residential buildings, as well as commercial, recreational and educational opportunities.

1.2.1 Public Transit & Active Transportation

The Subject Property is a 120m walking distance from Bus Route 16, which can take residents, who are intended to be students, directly to the University of Ottawa campus or the University of Ottawa O-Train Station. Alternatively, the Subject Property is also only an 11min walk from the O-Train Station.

Figure 4. Bus access (left), and transit network from the Official Plan (2021), Schedule C2 (right).



1.2.2 Road Network & Access

The Subject Property has frontage on Sweetland Avenue, a local street. It is in proximity to Somerset Street East, which is designated a Collector Road.

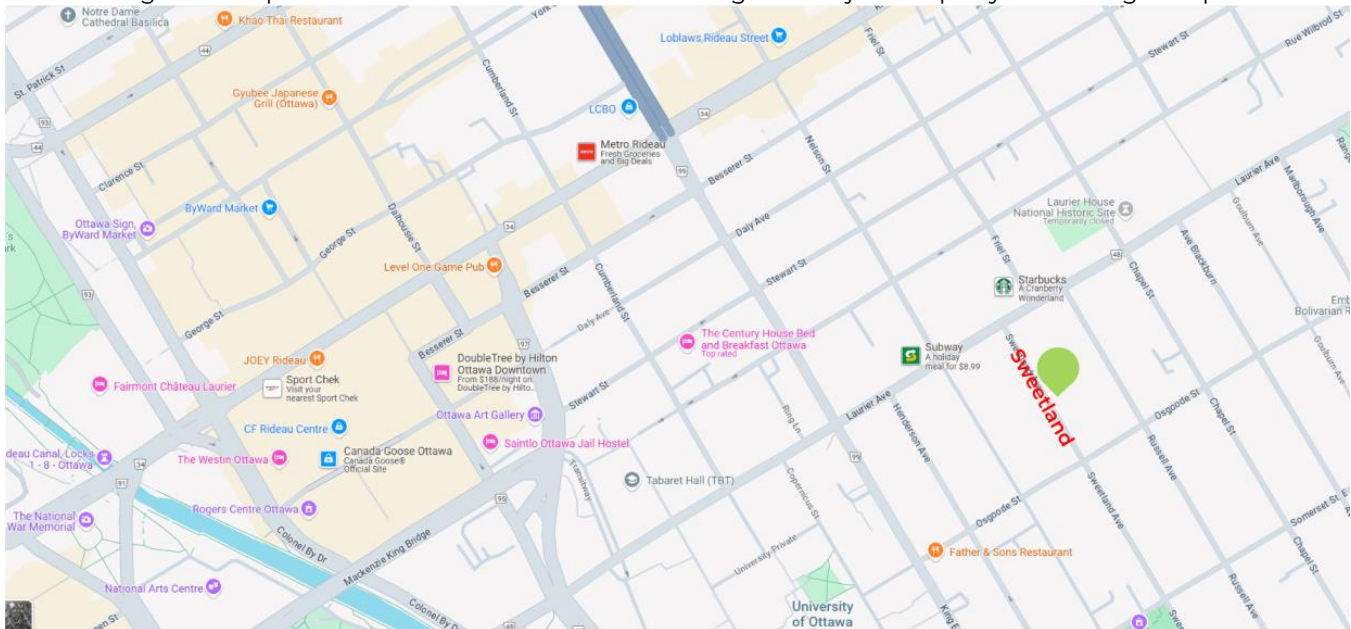
Figure 5. Map of the nearby road network from the Official Plan (2021) Schedule C4 – Urban Road Network.



1.2.3 Access to Services, Amenities & Recreation

In the heart of Sandy Hill, the Subject Property is located in proximity to commercial and recreational uses such as bars, cafes, restaurants, parks, and the Sandy Hill Community Centre. To the west along Somerset Street are the “Safi Fine Food” and “Foodinator” restaurants, and the “Bee You Creative Styles” second hand store. To the east along Somerset Street is the “No Forks Given” restaurant, and many student services and amenities, including the “University Tavern”, “Campus Pharmacy”, uOttawa’s “Community Garden”, a “Thai Express”, as well as the University of Ottawa itself. To the west of the Subject Property along Osgoode Street are more restaurants and a convenience store. The “North Market” grocery store is a 10min walk or 5min bus ride from the Subject Property, and the “Loblaws” and “Metro” grocery stores are 12min and 16min walks away. Because the Subject Property is so well serviced by public transit, there is easy access to other amenities located more centrally downtown, such as the Rideau Centre and ByWard Market.

Figure 6. Map of services and amenities surrounding the Subject Property from Google Maps.



1.3 Consultation Strategy

Pre-Application Consultation

On April 25, 2024 the RJH Team had a formal pre-application consultation meeting with City of Ottawa Staff. The RJH Team received feedback with regards to planning, urban design, engineering, and transportation. Some key themes that arose during this consultation was the need for active entrances, strengthening the character of the neighbourhood, providing bicycle parking at a 1:1 ratio and the location of bike parking, garbage storage, the scale of the building viewed from the south, and landscaping in the front yard.

Public Consultation

On January 21st, we consulted with both Action Sandy Hill Community Association and the Ward Councillor, Stephanie Plante. These were two separate meetings on the same day.

On February 6th, approximately 60 letters were distributed to surrounding neighbours on both sides of the properties on Sweetland Avenue, across the street, and properties at the rear on Russell Avenue. Some of these buildings had multiple tenants. The letter described the development proposal and the need for a Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan approval, with an invitation to reach out with questions or comments about the proposal.

Furthermore, it is our understanding that neighbours will be informed by the City through the legislated public consultation requirements, which includes a sign posted on the site and the posting of the application on the City's DevApps website (upon submission).

1.4 Development Proposal

The proposed development for the Subject Site is a 4-storey 84-dwelling unit low-rise apartment building. 1 parking space is proposed to be provided for the purpose of maintenance and loading, accessed from Sweetland Avenue. The proposed building will include 18 3-bedroom units, 3 2-bedroom units and 63 bachelors. The front façade is equipped with 4 active entrances, façade articulation and alternating brick colours to reflect the rhythm of the surrounding neighbourhood. The top floor is angled back to reduce its visual impact from the street. Bicycle parking will be provided at a 1:1 ratio, with all 84 spaces located in an indoor bike room. All garbage storage is also located in an indoor garbage room.

A Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment Application is required in order for this project to proceed. A site-specific exception to the R4UD Zone of the Subject Site is necessary to provide relief from zoning provisions to reduce the required number of parking spaces from 36 resident spaces and 7 visitor spaces to 1 parking space in total.

A detailed Site Plan Control Application is required to facilitate the development on the Subject Property and is being filed as part of this submission. The proposed development will require the demolition of the existing buildings, modifications to side grading, drainage and landscaping.

Figure 8. 3D model of the proposed development.



1.4.1 Proposed Site-Specific Changes to the R4UD Zone

Parking

The By-Law Section 101, Table 101, Row R11 requires a minimum of 36 resident parking spaces (0.5 per dwelling unit for units in excess of 12). The By-Law Section 102, Table 102 requires a minimum of 7 parking spaces for visitors (0.1 per dwelling unit for units in excess of 12). In total, 43 on-site parking spaces are required. The City of Ottawa's Official Plan states that surface parking lots are prohibited in the Downtown Transect, where the Subject Property is located, and the City has advised that providing a surface parking lot would trigger an Official Plan Amendment Application. Underground parking is prohibitively expensive, and future residents will not need to own cars in this walkable neighbourhood. As a result, we are requesting a site-specific exception to the R4UD zone to permit 1 parking space for maintenance and loading, and 0 visitor parking spaces.

The proposed development is targeted to a mix of residents including students and is a 11min walk from the University of Ottawa campus and the uOttawa O-Train Station. In addition, the Subject Property is within a 120m walking distance of Bus Route 16, which also goes to the University, as well as across the city all the way to Westboro. In addition, 81 bike parking spaces are provided in an indoor bike room using CycleSafe's Quad High Density Bike Rack.

Projection of Steps into the Front Yard

The By-Law Section 65, Table 65, Row 5 requires that, in the case of steps projecting into a front yard, they may be no closer than 0.6m to the lot line. The front yard has been carefully designed to accommodate the required barrier free ramps and entries to the ground and basement floors, while protecting the exit facilities. Locating the steps close to the front lot line allows space for terraced planters between the barrier free ramp and the sidewalk. These tiered terraced planters animate the front yard and enhance the visual impact of the proposed development.

2 Project Statistics

Table 1. Project Statistics.

Zone/Subzone	R4-UD, Low-Rise Apartment Building (9+ units), By-Law 2008-250	
Zone Provisions	By-Law Requirement	Provided
Principal Land Use(s) <i>Table 162A</i>	9-unit+ Apartment	81-unit Apartment
Lot Width <i>Table 162A</i>	15m min.	43.8m
Lot Area <i>Table 162A</i>	450m ² min.	1650m ²
Building Height <i>Table 162A</i>	14.5m max.	14.5m
Front Yard Setback <i>Section 123(1b)</i>	4.09m min. (average of neighbours)	4.14m
Interior Side Yard Setback <i>Table 162A</i>	1.5m min.	2m, 3.3m
Rear Yard Setback <i>Table 144A</i>	30% of the lot depth (11.3m)	11.35m
Two+ Bedroom Units <i>Section 161(16b)</i>	25% min. (21)	18 3-bedrooms 3 2-bedrooms
Resident Parking Spaces <i>Section 101(3a)</i>	0.5 per du in excess of 12 (36)	1
Visitor Parking Spaces <i>Table 102</i>	0.1 per du in excess of 12 (7)	0
Driveway Width <i>Section 107(1a.i)</i>	2.6m min.	2.6m
Bicycle Parking Rates <i>Table 111A(b.i)</i>	0.5 per du (40)	81
Amenity Space <i>Table 137</i>	None	None
Soft Landscaping in the Front Yard Including Walkways <i>Table 139(1), Section 139(4d)</i>	40% min.	64.5%
Soft Landscaping in the Rear Yard <i>Section 161(15b.iii)</i>	50% min.	91%

Aggregated Rectangular Area of Soft Landscaping <i>Section 161(15e)</i>	25m ² min.	Provided
Projection of Steps into the Front Yard <i>Table 65(5b.i,2)</i>	No closer than 0.6m from the lot line.	0m from the lot line.

3 Official Plan Designation

The Subject Property is in the Downtown Core Transect, designated Neighbourhood.

Figure 9. Excerpt from the Official Plan (2021), Schedule B1 – Downtown Core Transect.



Policy Justification

4 Provincial Policy Statement

The 2024 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on land use planning and development matters of provincial interest, in order to meet the needs of a growing province. All decisions affecting planning matters “shall be consistent with” policies issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act.

Chapter 2, *Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities* of the PPS sets out the policies for planning for people and homes, housing, settlement areas and expansions, strategic growth areas, rural areas, employment, and energy.

Policy 2.1.6 of the PPS states that:

“Planning authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by:

- a) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses (including schools and associated child care facilities, long-term care facilities, places of worship and cemeteries), recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;*
- b) improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and*
- c) improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.”*

The proposed Minor Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control applications will facilitate the development of a low-rise apartment building on the Site. The proposed development is consistent with Policy 2.1.6 as it will contribute to diversifying the mix of housing options in the neighbourhood, with units ranging from bachelor's to 3-bedrooms. 15% (or 12) of the units proposed will be barrier free, including four 3-bedrooms and eight bachelors.

Policy 2.2.1 of the PPS states that:

“Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

- b) permitting and facilitating:*
 - 1. all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and wellbeing requirements of current and future residents, including additional needs housing and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and*
 - 2. all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas) for residential use, development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment, which results in a net increase in residential units in accordance with policy 2.3.1.3;*
- c) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation; and*
- d) requiring transit-supportive development and prioritizing intensification, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations.”*

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications will facilitate the development of a range of unit options capable of housing a diversity tenants with a range of income and accessibility needs. The proposal represents much-needed intensification in a developed area with significant access to public transit and other services and amenities.

Policy 2.3.1.2 of the PPS states that:

"Land use patterns within settlement areas should be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- a) efficiently use land and resources;*
- b) optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;*
- c) support active transportation;*
- d) are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and*
- e) are freight-supportive."*

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications represent an efficient use of land and resources that optimizing existing infrastructure and service facilities. The existing lots are all connected to municipal services. The proposed development is located in a walkable neighbourhood in close proximity to amenities such as grocery stores and a university. The Subject Property is very well-served by public transit, being steps from a frequent bus line as well as walking distance from the University of Ottawa O-Train Station.

Policy 2.3.2.3 of the PPS states that:

"Planning authorities shall support general intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities, including by planning for a range and mix of housing options and prioritizing planning and investment in the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities."

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications would support the neighbourhood becoming a more complete community through the added residential density of the proposed apartment building. The businesses in proximity to the Subject Property will be supported by the new residents, who will also be contributing to increased transit ridership.

Policy 2.4.3.1 of the PPS states that:

"Planning authorities shall plan for intensification on lands that are adjacent to existing and planned frequent transit corridors, where appropriate."

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications represents intensification in proximity to the O-Train rapid transit network.

Policy 2.9.1 of the PPS states that:

“Planning authorities shall plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through approaches that:

- a) support the achievement of compact, transit-supportive, and complete communities;*
- b) incorporate climate change considerations in planning for and the development of infrastructure, including stormwater management systems, and public service facilities;*
- c) support energy conservation and efficiency;*
- d) promote green infrastructure, low impact development, and active transportation, protect the environment and improve air quality; and*
- e) take into consideration any additional approaches that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build community resilience to the impacts of a changing climate.”*

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications supports compact urban development that will contribute to increased transit-ridership and facilitate the development of a complete community. The shared walls, floors and ceilings between units of the proposed development are energy-conserving in terms of heating and cooling of the homes. 8 rear yard trees are proposed to be retained, 4 rear yard trees are proposed to be planted, and 5 trees are proposed to be planted in the right-of-way on Sweetland Avenue, improving overall air quality as well as quality of the pedestrian environment.

5 Strategic Directions & Growth Management (Official Plan)

5.1 Land Use Designation

The Subject Property is designated Neighbourhood in the Downtown Core Transect as per Schedule B1 of the Official Plan (see Figure 10).

5.1.1 The Downtown Core Transect

Section 5.1 of the Official Plan (2021) sets our general policies and guidance for proposed development in Neighbourhoods within the Downtown Core Transect.

Section 5.1.1 of the Official Plan aims to maintain and enhance the built form, site design and a mix of uses within the Downtown Core Transect. Policy 1 states that:

“The Downtown Core’s established and intended built form is urban as defined by Table 6. All development shall maintain and enhance the urban pattern of built form and site design.”

Table 6 of the Official Plan identifies the following characteristics of urban built form:

- “Shallow front yard setbacks and in some contexts zero front yards with an emphasis on built-form relationship with the public realm
- Principal entrances at grade with direct relationship to public realm
- Range of lot sizes that will include smaller lots, and higher lot coverage and floor area ratios
- Minimum of two functional storeys
- Buildings attached or with functional side yard setback
- Small areas of formal landscape that should include space for soft landscape, trees and hard surfacing”

The proposed development aligns with all the characteristics of the urban pattern of built form identified in Table 6. The proposal includes a shallow front yard setback of 4.1m, matching the immediate neighbours of the Subject Property. There are four active entrances on the front façade, and the lot coverage of the proposed development is 51%. The proposed building will be 4-storeys tall, with a total of 5 functional storeys including the basement. Both side yards are functional, one with a walking path leading to the rear yard and some communal patio space, and the other serving as a parking space for maintenance vehicles. Formal landscaping features are included in the front yard as terraced planters and walking paths. Most of the rear yard is composed of soft landscaping dedicated for trees, as well as a communal patio area for residents.

Section 5.1.1 Policy 2 of the Official Plan states that:

“The Downtown Core shall continue to develop as healthy 15-minute neighbourhoods within a highly mixed-use environment, where:

- a) Hubs and a dense network of Corridors provide a full range of services;
- d) Residential densities are sufficient to support the full range of services noted in Policy a).”

The proposed development is designed to establish increased residential densities on the Subject Property that will promote opportunities to access a variety of services, activities, and recreational spaces within a 15-minute walking distance of home (see Figure 6). The proposed development of a low-rise apartment building on the Subject Property complements the desirable characteristics of abutting properties along Sweetland Avenue, is appropriate for the existing and planned community context and is consistent with policies of the adopted Official Plan for Neighbourhoods within the Downtown Core Transect.

Section 5.1.1 Policy 5 of the Official Plan states that:

“To offset its inherently dense built environment and the high proportion of built-up and hardscaped land, particular measures to ensure climate resilience in the Downtown Core Transect should consider the following attributes in the review of a development application:

- a) Reducing the urban heat island effect through cool or green roofs, light coloured reflective materials, retention of mature trees, tree planting and other urban greening;

- c) High-quality and intensive urban greenspace, such as parks, shaded public realm and access to cooling amenities to provide relief from the heat, especially for those without air conditioning;
- d) On-site stormwater management to mitigate increased imperviousness; and

The proposed development will maintain most of the mature trees located in the rear yard and will plant 9 more total on the site. The 5 trees proposed to be planted in the right-of-way along Sweetland Avenue and will contribute to shading the public realm and improving the pedestrian environment. Approximately 450m² of soft landscaping is also being provided in the rear yard, as well as high-quality landscaped green space in the front yard. 91% of the rear yard and 65% of the front yard are soft landscaped and able to absorb stormwater.

Section 5.1.1 Policy 6 states that:

"The Downtown Core is planned for higher-density, urban development forms where either no on site parking is provided, or where parking is arranged on a common parking area, lot or parking garage accessed by a common driveway. The following policies apply to private approaches:

- b) Maintaining or enhancing unbroken curb space for short-term, visitor and permit-zone street parking and other common purposes and front yard space for trees and intensive landscaping, is given priority over private approaches;
- c) *Further to the above, development applications may be required to*
 - i. Reduce the number and/or width of private approaches on a site;
 - ii. Re-use existing private approaches; or
 - iii. Relocate and/or combine existing private approaches with no net increase in number or width."

The proposed development includes one private approach for one parking space intended for maintenance vehicles. Currently, the five existing properties of 83, 85, 87, 89 and 91 on Sweetland Avenue each have their own private approach. As a result, the proposed development will reduce the number of private approaches on the Subject Property by 4, thus increasing the amount of unbroken curb space significantly while prioritizing landscaping in the front yard.

Section 5.1.2 Policy 3 of the Official Plan states that:

"Motor vehicle parking in the Downtown Core shall be managed as follows:

- a) Motor vehicle parking shall not be required in new development, other than visitor parking for large-scale residential development;
- e) When the City receives proposals for significant reductions in parking below what is required in the Zoning By-law, the City may seek compensatory provision of enhanced bicycle parking."

The proposed development is requesting a reduction in the required number of parking spaces from 43 spaces to 1 parking space intended for maintenance vehicles. Instead of

parking, the proposed development includes 84 bicycle parking spaces (1:1 ratio) located in an indoor bike room.

Section 5.1.3 Policy 2 of the Official Plan states that:

“The Zoning By-law shall set out permissions, maximum building heights and appropriate density thresholds within Neighbourhoods to allow:

- a) Building types that provide for high-density development while maintaining a low-rise form from a minimum of 2 storeys to a maximum of 4 storeys;”*

The proposed development meets the Zoning By-Law requirement of a maximum of 14.5 metres in height and aligns with the Official Plan intent for a maximum of 4 storeys. The 14.5m and 4-storey limits are met despite the changes in grade across the site. Careful consideration was given to the design of the building to ensure that where the grade changed towards the south of the site revealing more of the basement, the proposed development still maintains the low-rise character of the surrounding buildings. This was accomplished by angling the top floor of the front façade back to reduce its visual impact from the street, as well as changing the exterior of the 4th storey material and colour.

Section 5.1.5 Policy 1 of the Official Plan states that:

“Neighbourhoods located in the Downtown Core shall accommodate residential growth to meet the Growth Management Framework as outlined in Subsection 3.2, Table 3b. The Zoning By-law shall implement the density thresholds in a manner which adheres to the following:

- a) Allows and supports a wide variety of housing types with a focus on missing-middle housing, which may include new housing types that are currently not contemplated in this Plan;*
- b) The application, as appropriate, of Zoning By-law development standards to be applied as one lot for zoning purposes to support missing middle housing;*
- c) Provides for a Low-rise built form, by requiring in Zoning a minimum built height of 2 storeys, generally permitting 3 storeys, and where appropriate, will allow a built height of up to 4 storeys to permit higher-density Low-rise residential development;*
- d) Building on Table 6, provides an emphasis on regulating the maximum built form envelope that frames the public right of way; and*
- e) In appropriate locations, to support the production of missing middle housing, prohibit lower-density typologies.”*

Section 3.2, Policy 3 of the adopted Official Plan identifies “Neighbourhoods” as one of the target areas designated for residential intensification in the City of Ottawa. The proposed development of a low-rise residential apartment building with a variety of unit types and sizes on the Subject Property will establish a form of missing middle housing that is consistent with permitted building heights within the Neighbourhood designation and Downtown Core Transect.

5.2 Strategic Directions

Section 2.1 of the Official Plan sets out the broad strategic directions for the city, based on policy directions towards becoming the most liveable mid-sized North American city.

Big Policy Move 1 is to:

“Achieve, by the end of the planning period, more growth by intensification than by greenfield development.”

The Official Plan aims to increase the share of future growth within Ottawa existing built-up areas by 60% by 2046 by increasing the variety of low-rise housing options close to corridors and promoting the evolution of 15-minute neighbourhoods. The proposed 4-storey apartment building represents appropriate intensification in a Neighbourhood of the Downtown Core Transect. The proposal for the Subject Property will contribute to this policy objective by establishing a greater diversity of unit types in the neighbourhood in proximity to transit and other services and amenities.

Big Policy Move 2 is to:

“By 2046, the majority of trips in the city will be made by sustainable transportation.”

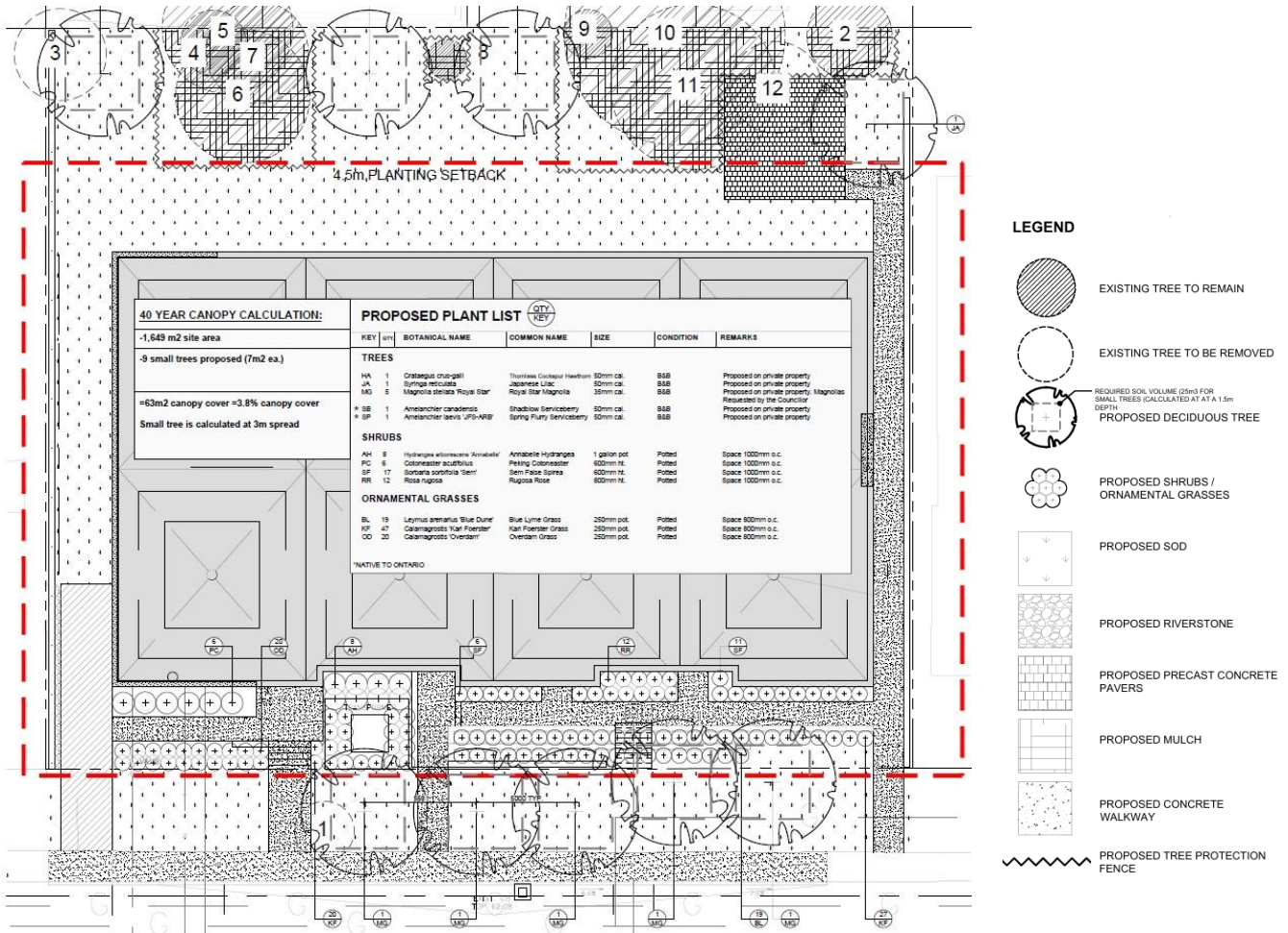
The proposed development contributes to the objectives of Big Policy Move 2 by providing intensification in proximity to transit in support of the transition to a 15-minute neighbourhood. In addition, we are proposing to reduce the number of vehicle parking spaces provided, while doubling the amount of bicycle parking spaces from what is required by zoning, to achieve a 1:1 bike parking ratio. The Subject Property is also within walking distance of many daily/weekly destinations of residents, including grocery stores, restaurants, and the University of Ottawa. The proposal is further contributing to the pedestrian environment by planting 5 trees in the Right-of-Way along Sweetland Avenue that will contribute to providing more shade on the street.

Big Policy Move 4 is to:

“Embed environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy into the framework of our planning policies.”

The proposed development will contribute to the city’s 40% urban forest canopy cover through both tree planting and preservation. A total of 9 trees will be planted on the Subject Property. In addition, the design of the site has ensured the preservation of 9 rear yard trees. The proposed building also aims to achieve 25% energy efficiency greater than what is required by Building Code.

Figure 10. Proposed Landscape Plan



5.3 Growth Management Framework

Section 3 of the Official plan sets out policies to direct growth to target areas for intensification. Most projected growth between 2018 and 2046 is directed within the urban boundary, representing 93% of all new development. 47% of the growth allocation is directed to take place within existing built-up areas inside the urban boundary where services are available or can easily be provided for new development to accommodate the creation of jobs, housing and increased transit use.

Section 3.2, Policy 3 of the Official Plan identified “Neighbourhoods” as one of the target areas designated for residential intensification in the City of Ottawa. The Subject Property is designated as a Neighbourhood within the Downtown Core Transect as per Schedule B1. The proposed development of a low-rise residential apartment building on the Subject Property is consistent with growth objectives of the Official Plan.

Section 3.2, Policy 10, Table 3B of the Official Plan sets out residential density targets that apply to Neighbourhoods, and states that the residential density targets are 80 to 120 dwellings per net hectare in the Downtown Core Transect. With a proposed 81 dwelling units on a 1650m² lot, the Subject Property would comprise 490 dwelling units per net hectare, well exceeding the target density. Table 3B also sets out the target for large-household dwellings (3+ bedrooms or equivalent floor area) at 25%. The proposed development meets the intent of this target for all of intensification in the City of Ottawa between 2018 and 2048 by providing eighteen 3-bedroom units and three 2-bedroom units, totalling 25% of dwelling units.

5.4 City-Wide Policies

Section 4 of the Official Plan sets out city-wide policies to be considered where all new development is proposed.

Section 4.1.2, Policy 1 of the Official Plan sets out the framework for establishing 15-minute neighbourhoods across the City and states that:

"In general, this Plan equates a walking time of:

- a) 5 minutes to be equivalent to a radius of 300 metres, or 400 metres on the pedestrian network;*
- b) 10 minutes to be equivalent to a radius of 600 metres, or 800 metres on the pedestrian network; and*
- c) 15 minutes to be equivalent to a radius of 900 metres or 1,200 metres on the pedestrian network."*

The Subject Property is located fully within less than 300m of transit stops along bus route 16 at the intersection of Sweetland Avenue and Somerset Street East. In addition, the Subject Property is within a 750m network distance representing a 11-minute walk from the UOttawa O-Train Station.

Section 4.1.2, Policy 6 of the Official Plan states that:

"New developments will provide direct connections to the existing or planned network of public sidewalks, pathways and cycling facilities."

The proposed development provides direct connections to the existing and planned network of public sidewalks via pathways from entranceways. In addition, a 1:1 bicycle parking ratio is being provided with indoor bike storage facilities.

Section 4.2.1, Policy 9 of the Official Plan states that:

"Proponents of development shall provide an adequate number of bicycle parking facilities as follows:

- a) Long-term bicycle parking facilities shall be secure, sheltered and usable by all types of cyclists. Where located inside buildings, long-term bicycle parking facilities shall provide safe, accessible, direct and convenient access to the exterior.

One bicycle parking space is provided for every dwelling of the apartment building. They are all proposed to be provided in an indoor bike room (per CycleSafe's Quad High Density Bike Rack). The bike room is also equipped with a bike repair area.

The proposed Minor Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications conform to the policies of the City of Ottawa Official Plan (2021).

6 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan

The Subject Property is designated a Local Neighbourhood in the Sandy Hill character area as per the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan.

Figure 11. Excerpt from the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan (2021), Schedule B – Designation Plan.



Section 2.1 Policy 1 of the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan states that: *"Local Neighbourhoods are primarily residential. They may include small-scale commercial and institutional uses that are meant primarily to support local residents' every needs..."*

The proposed development of a low-rise residential apartment building aligns with the primary residential use of the Local Neighbourhood designation.

Section 3.1 Policy 1 of the Secondary Plan states that:

“Development will contribute positively to the entire adjacent public realm. It should maximize the activity visible from the public realm and the activity easily accessible to it.

Measures include but are not limited to:

- a) Functional main entrances directly accessible from the public realm for each unit on the ground floor. For further specification, this includes residential, retail and commercial units.
- b) Usable indoor and/or outdoor amenity areas where possible. These amenities are meant to encourage people to linger in or within view of the public realm. Examples include patios, porches, atria, stoops, etc.
- c) Lower floor articulation with a high degree of transparency and functional permeability.
- d) Notwithstanding Section 3.1 - Built Form, Policies 1) b) and f), residential units at or near the ground floor and their private outdoor amenity spaces should provide a comfortable degree of privacy, while also accommodating easy interaction with the public realm.
- e) A lack of blank walls, or designs which do not contribute to the activity of the public realm. In particular, retail stores shall not be permitted to block or cover any windows or transparent doorways with posters, opaque glass, the backs of shelves, or anything that obstructs the full and clear view of the interior of the store from the sidewalk, other than up to 10 per cent window coverage by temporary posters or advertisements.
- f) Visual and functional variety from the sidewalk. Street-level frontage widths for individual non-residential units should be narrow.
- g) The inclusion of art in the public realm where possible.
- h) Buildings must front onto all their adjacent streets.
- i) Vehicular facilities must minimize all visual and functional impacts on the public realm.
- j) Further to Section 3.1 - Built Form, Policy 1) i), surface parking and surfaces likely to be used as surface parking in front of buildings are prohibited.
- k) Increased setbacks in front of buildings occupying a large portion of a block should be provided. The setback will be dedicated to widened pedestrian and public realm facilities.”

The proposed development includes four active entrances along the façade of the building. The main ground floor entrance and the basement entrance both have direct access to the street, while all entrances have a positive relationship to the public realm via walkways and landscaping in the front yard. The proposed landscaped features in the front yard including terraced planters, trees, as well as the porch entries to ground floor units encourage people to linger within view of the public realm. The building is architectural articulated with shifting planes and materials, and ground floor glazing into units and porch entries offer a welcoming view from the street as well as visual interest and variety. No surface parking is proposed and there is one parking space meant for maintenance vehicles that is discreetly tucked away in the northern side yard.

Section 3.3.2 Policy 18 states that:

“Development will minimize the provision of motor vehicle parking. Alternatives should be prioritized over increases in the parking supply.”

The proposed development includes a reduction of the required vehicle parking spaces from 41 spaces to 1 parking space intended for loading and maintenance vehicles. As an alternative, a 1:1 bicycle parking space ratio is being provided in an indoor bike room.

Section 4.7 of the Central and East Downtown Secondary Plan sets out the policies for the Sandy Hill Character Area.

Section 4.7.2 General Objectives for the Sandy Hill Character Area are:

- “To preserve and enhance Sandy Hill as an attractive residential neighbourhood, especially for family living.
- To provide for a broad range of socio-economic groups.
- To accept a modest increase in population, primarily as a way of housing some of the growth in the Central Area labour force.
- To maintain and coordinate both the local functions of Sandy Hill (primarily as a residential neighbourhood) and the functions that serve a wider area (e.g., the mainstreet mixed-use area along Rideau Street and the University of Ottawa)”

The proposed development will maintain and enhance the Sandy Hill residential neighbourhood through high-quality architectural design that is sensitive to the surrounding context in terms of the rhythm of the materials, colours and architectural articulation that reflects the massing of nearby buildings. The proposed apartment building includes a diverse range of unit types and sizes intended to meet the housing needs of tenants from a broad range of socio-economic groups and household sizes. The increase in residential density as a result of new tenants in the area will support the nearby commercial functions of the neighbourhood.

Section 4.7.3 sets out the policies for land use and built form in the Local Neighbourhood designation.

Policy 99 aims to: “Preserve and enhance a stock of good housing.”

Policy 100 aims to: “Distinguish among types of new housing on the basis of scale, and to locate the different types in areas appropriate to them.”

Policy 101 aims to: “Provide a wide variety of housing, including accommodation for low-income people, the elderly, the handicapped and others with special needs.”

The proposed development will increase the stock of good housing in the neighbourhood by providing much-needed rental units in a central, walkable and transit-served area in proximity to many daily destinations, services and amenities. These features of the surrounding community make a low-rise apartment building a very appropriate form of development in this neighbourhood. The proposal will provide a wide variety of unit types

and sizes that will meet the needs of a range of socio-economic groups. There are 12 accessible dwelling units provided in the building, accessible via barrier-free entrances, ramps and an elevator.

Schedule C of the Central and East Downtown Secondary Plan indicates that a maximum of 4-storeys is allowed on the Subject Property. The proposed development aligns with this limit.

7 The Transportation Master Plan

The Transportation Master Plan (2023) sets out the policies that guide the development of the City's transportation network and mobility goals.

Policy 2-2 of the TMP to *Promote Healthy Communities Through Transportation Planning* states that:

"One of the primary ways in which the transportation system can support public health goals is by encouraging active transportation as a form of physical activity."

The proposed development encourages the use of active transportation since the Subject Property is located in a very walkable area, in close proximity to destinations like grocery stores, restaurants and the University of Ottawa. In addition, a 1:1 bike parking ratio is being provided in an indoor bike room, encouraging the use of bicycles.

Policy 5-2 of the TMP to *Prioritize Modes of Travel That are Space-Efficient* states that:

"As Ottawa continues to grow and intensify, the transportation network will need to move more people and goods using the space available today. (...) the City will need to accommodate this growth through more space-efficient modes including walking, cycling, and transit to maximize the capacity of the network."

The proposed development prioritizes modes of travel that are space-efficient such as walking by increasing the residential density of a walkable area. In addition, each unit in the proposed building will be provided a bicycle parking space, while a reduction in vehicle parking is being requested. The proposed development is also located within close proximity to the public transit network, a few feet from OC Transpo Route 16, and a 750m walking distance from the UOttawa O-Train Station.



Policy 5-3 of the TMP to *Encourage Sustainable Transportation Through Community Planning and Design* states that:

“Exhibit 9. These elements contribute to the perceived safety and enjoyment of walking. An overarching objective is to create a sense of place and character in neighbourhoods by fostering human-scaled design and creating “Healthy Streets” that are welcoming places to be, rather than simply move through. These objectives and key elements apply to both new and existing communities.”

Exhibit 9. Elements that Contribute to the Quality of the Pedestrian Environment.

The proposed development encourages sustainable transportation use through community planning and design by contributing to the development healthy, welcoming streets through the design of the proposed development and its positive impact on the surrounding public realm. The proposed development:

- Has appropriate height and massing that fits into the surrounding neighbourhood (1),
- Increasing passive supervision in the neighbourhood by increasing the residential density and providing high-quality outdoor spaces in the front yard (2),
- Provide an active frontage along Sweetland Avenue through high quality architectural design and materials, façade articulation and landscaping (8),
- Include lighting at the four street facing entrances, (9)
- Increase the number of people walking by increasing the residential density (10), and
- Eliminate driveways and reduce surface paving for parking (11).

Policy 7-9 of the TMP to *Require Adequate, Secure Bicycle Parking in New Developments* states that:

“Bike ownership is a prerequisite to utilitarian cycling in Ottawa. However, people are less likely to purchase a bicycle if they have no place to store it. Bicycle storage is of particular concern for people living in apartments and condos. Floor space is limited, modifications to units are difficult, and transporting a bicycle to and from a unit can be a major deterrent. (...)

Ottawa’s minimum bike parking rates should support long-term cycling mode share targets and associated bike ownership levels. The current rate of 0.5 bike parking spaces per unit in multi-residential buildings is not expected to be adequate based on experience in other cities.”

The proposed development exceeds the required 0.5 bike parking spaces per unit by providing a 1:1 bicycle parking ratio. In addition, all of those bike parking spaces are provided in a secured bike room in the building.

8 The Climate Change Master Plan

The Climate Change Master Plan (2020) sets out the policies and framework by which the City will mitigate and adapt to climate change in the coming decades.

Section 4 of the Climate Change Master Plan, *Mitigation* discusses community GHG emissions, and states that:

“In 2018, 90 per cent of Ottawa’s [community] emissions came from the building and transportation sectors. (...)

In order to align with the IPCC target to limit global average temperature increases to 1.5°C, a new long-term commitment to reduce community emissions 100 per cent by 2050 is required.”

The proposed development contributes to the emissions reduction goals set out in the Climate Change Master Plan with regards to both building and transportation. Multi-unit residential buildings save energy through shared walls, floors and ceilings, and the client aims to achieve an additional 25% energy efficiency above what is required by the Ontario Building Code. In terms of transportation, we are reducing the number of parking spaces that are required and are instead providing a 1:1 bicycle parking space ratio.

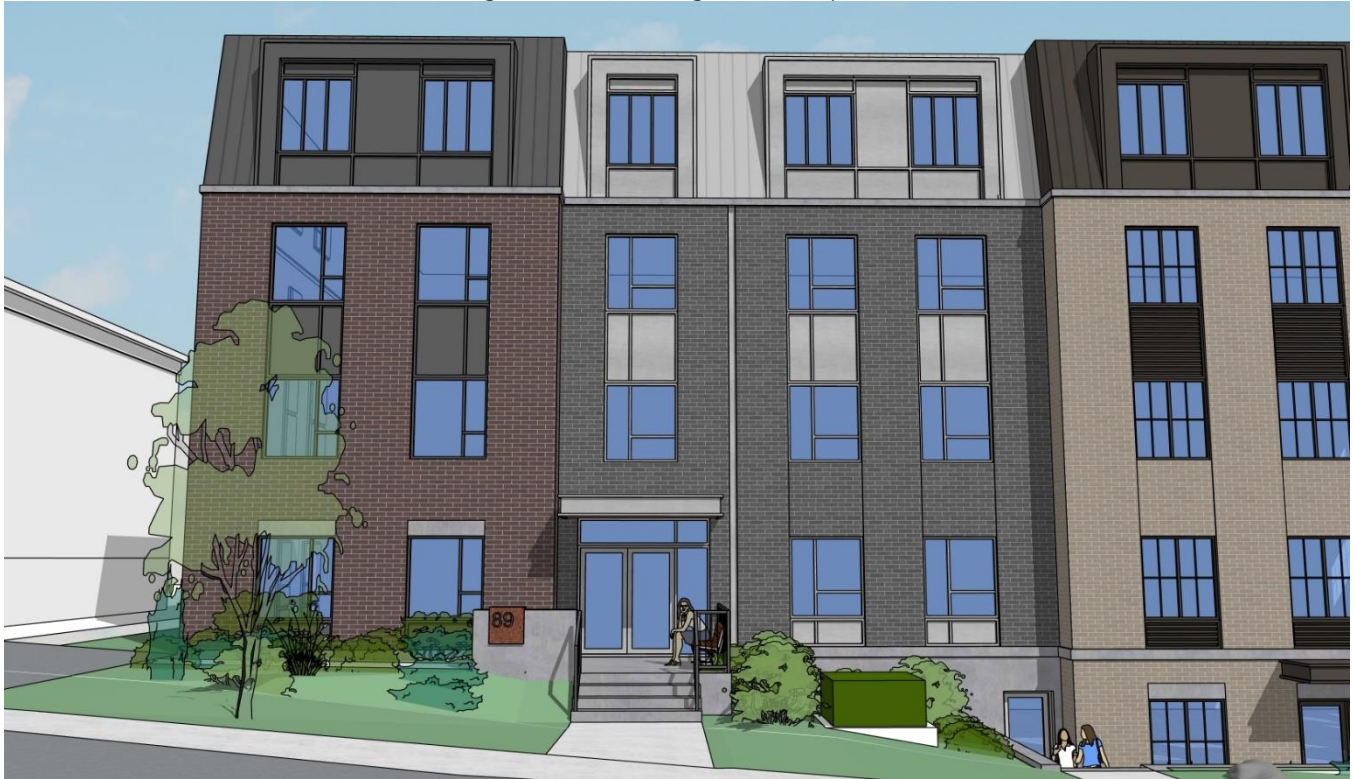
Section 5 of the Climate Change Master Plan, *Adaptation and Resiliency* discusses the impacts and changes Ottawa is projected to experience as a result of climate change, and states that:

“Ottawa is experiencing warmer, wetter and more unpredictable weather. On average, summers are getting hotter and winters less cold. While total annual precipitation has increased on average, precipitation varies greatly in terms of both where and when it falls.”

The proposed development contributes to the City’s general capacity to deal with increases in temperature by mitigating the impacts of urban heat island through the retention of large rear yard canopy trees and planting of 9 trees on-site. In addition, the proposed development contributes to resilience from increases in precipitation and on-site flooding by exceeding the soft landscaping requirements (91% soft in the rear yard and 64.5% in the front yard).

Urban Design Brief

Figure 12. Rendering of the Proposal



See sections [1.1 Subject Property](#) and [1.2 Site Context](#) for perspectives to and from the site.

9 Design Directives

9.1 Official Plan (2021)

Section 4.6 of the Official Plan sets out policies related to Urban Design and is intended to promote design excellence in Design Priority areas, encourage innovation in site planning and building design, support the objectives of Corridors, Hubs and neighbourhoods and enable integration of new development with existing communities.

Section 4.6.5, Policy 3 of the Official Plan states that:

“Development shall minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and improve the attractiveness of the public realm by internalizing all servicing, loading areas, mechanical equipment and utilities into the design of the building, and by accommodating space on the site for trees, where possible. Shared service areas, and accesses should be used to limit interruptions along sidewalks. Where underground parking is not viable, surface parking must be visually screened from the public realm.”

Direct pedestrian access to the Subject Property is provided from the principal building entrance to the public sidewalk along Sweetland Avenue, as well as three other dedicated entrances. Soft landscaping features such as terraced planters are provided along the front, between the barrier free ramp and the sidewalk for visual appeal. One driveway and parking space is being provided for servicing and maintenance of the building. A single driveway access reduces potential conflicts and improves the safety, accessibility, and movement of pedestrians and vehicles to and from the Subject Property. The proposed development has been designed with all mechanical equipment and storage internal to the building or on the rooftop, with the exception of Hydro Ottawa's proposed pad-mounted transformer surrounded by ornamental grass (see Landscape Plan).

Section 4.6.6, Policy 6 of the Official Plan states that:

"Low-rise buildings shall be designed to respond to context, and transect area policies, and shall include areas for soft landscaping, main entrances at-grade, front porches or balconies, where appropriate. Buildings shall integrate architecturally to complement the surrounding context."

The proposed development has been designed to compliment the existing low-rise scale of the surrounding community along Sweetland Avenue in accordance with policies of the Official Plan in Neighbourhoods within the Downtown Core Transect. Soft landscaping is provided within the building setbacks in the front and rear yards. Entrances to residential units are provided along the front facade to enhance the interface with the public realm. The building is designed to integrate in the existing context with complimentary materials and building massing. The façade is designed with multiple colours of brick, divided into sections at a spacing that echoes the width of nearby brick buildings.

Figure 13. View of facade looking up the street



9.2 Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing (2023)

- 1.1 Ground floor: Contribute to an inviting, safe, and accessible streetscape by emphasizing the ground floor and street façade of infill buildings. Locate principal entries, windows, porches, and key internal uses at or close to street level.*
- 2.2 Building massing and scale: the massing and scale of infill buildings should consider the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of building setbacks, building width and length, and the relationship between buildings and the public realm. New infill housing should utilize architectural treatment and articulation to replicate the predominant scale and built form of the surrounding neighbourhood.*
- 3 Low-rise, multi-unit buildings are popular with families with children and pet owners. Developments with well-designed and located shared amenity areas, such as children's play spaces, facilities for pets and other shared elements like communal gardens, allow residents to experience and share in their collective property.*

The proposed development meets the intent of the Guidelines to provide appropriate infill that responds to the surrounding neighbourhood. The proposed development has been designed such that the front facade is visually broken up through architectural detail, with multiple active entrances and shifting planes to be more sensitive to existing buildings in the surrounding context. The upper floor is clad in high quality roofing materials with window trimming and detailing, such that this floor stands apart from the rest of the building below and will be perceived within the roofscaping of the neighbourhood. The 3-brick-clad storeys of the building compliment the scale of brick buildings in the immediately surrounding neighbourhood. The top floor is also angled back to reduce the visual impact from the street. The ground floor of the proposed development contributes to an active streetscape with the integration of active entrances, architectural articulation and terraced planters in the front yard. In response to the demand for more multi-unit buildings that cater to the needs of families with children and/or pets, shared space is provided in the rear yard. In addition, front facing walk-out basement units have entry doors facing the street.

9.3 Urban Design Directions Provided by City Staff

The proposal should include articulation to reduce the impacts of the proposed building. When working through the design of the building, the materiality, massing, and articulation should be considerate of the surrounding context.

The street facing facade is divided along its length, with sections that are setback further from the street, with changes in materials and colours. As a result, the length of the building is diminished, and the differently articulated sections are at a scale that compliments the size of older neighbouring buildings. The top floor facade is angled back and clad in a metal roofing material, and the floors below compliment the surrounding building heights.

Garbage storage external to the building. Is there enough provided?

There is no garbage storage provided external to the building. All garbage is to be stored internally. The proposed garbage room is sized as per the city's guidelines. Garbage will be removed from the room along the side yard to the curb-side for pickup.

Bike parking within landscaped area. Weather protected? On concrete pad? i. It is difficult to keep bike parking facing the public right-of-way from looking like a mess.

There is no bike parking within a landscaped area proposed. All bike parking is being provided in an indoor bike room in the walk-out basement.

How are the basement units at the north getting light?

There are no basement units in the north end of the building proposed. See Floorplans.

How does this very large massing fit in with the character of the neighbourhood? The five-storey wall facing south becomes out of scale to the low-rise neighbourhood. We recommend considering a step back of the top floor on the southern façade to mitigate the five-storey built form with exposed basement.

To reflect the narrower widths of nearby buildings and maintain the rhythm of the street, the front façade has been visually broken up through architectural detail including shifting planes, articulation, and alternating materials. The top floor is angled and clad in roofing materials, and the floors below compliment the neighbouring building heights.

Our design team used a 3D context model during the design process to fully understand the sloping street and relationship of the top floor at the south of the proposed building. At this down-hill end of the building the side facade is 5 storeys in height, with a narrow side yard to the neighbour. But given the relatively narrow street and shallow front lawns, the view of this side wall is very limited - this can be seen in the 3D model (see Figure 8). The top floor of the proposed building is visible from a distance above the southern neighbour, and has therefore been designed to be perceived as roof-like, with metal roof cladding. The impact of the proposed building height on the south end is appropriate and fits well within this hilly neighbourhood.

We recommend putting all bike parking within the building and/or weather protected in the rear yard including any visitor spaces.

All bike parking is being provided in an indoor bike room in the basement.

We recommend providing landscaping in the front yard.

Rows of terraced planters are proposed in the front yard in between the barrier-free ramp and the sidewalk. In addition, 5 trees are proposed to be planted along Sweetland Avenue.

10 design Research

10.1 Approach to Sustainable Design

The building will be developed to achieve energy efficiency that is 25% above Ontario Building Code requirements. In addition, there is significant greenspace and soft landscaping proposed on the site.

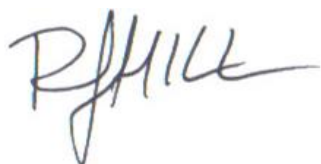
Conclusion

The proposed low-rise development is appropriate to support growth objectives and residential intensification targets within the urban area of the City of Ottawa. The design is contextually sensitive, will animate the street, works well with the steep slope and will provide much needed housing. The proposed Minor Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control applications will have no negative impacts to natural heritage and features, natural resources, or cultural heritage resources. The requested Minor Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control applications are consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement.

The proposed development of a low-rise residential apartment building conforms with the general intent of policies of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan and the Central and East Downtown Secondary Plan. This Planning Rationale demonstrates the proposed development is consistent with the intent and policies of the Neighbourhood designation within the Downtown Core Transect of the Official Plan and is compatible with surrounding land uses. Site-specific zoning is proposed for the Subject Property to bring the proposed development into conformity with the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law.

The proposed Minor Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control applications are appropriate for the Subject Property and represent good land use planning.

Regards,



Rosaline J. Hill
*BES, BArch, RPP, OAA,
MRAIC, OPPI, MCIP*