

141 GEORGE STREET

PLANNING RATIONALE

MINOR ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

NOVEMBER 2, 2016

PLANNING RATIONALE

223 McLeod Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 0Z8
613.730.5709
fotenn.com



INTRODUCTION

FOTENN Consultants is acting as an agent on behalf of Claridge Homes (the “Owner”) for the preparation of a Temporary Minor Zoning By-law Amendment Application for the property known municipally as 141 George Street in the City of Ottawa. The amendment is requested to permit the temporary use of a surface parking lot, not to exceed a period of three (3) years. The existing Site Plan Control application on the subject site includes the development of a 22-storey mixed-use building, though the owner is not ready to proceed with construction at this time. As such, a temporary surface parking lot would occupy the site until the project is ready to proceed or until the expiration of the temporary use.

APPLICATION HISTORY

The subject property has previously been approved for Site Plan Control (#D07-12-12-0199), which includes other adjacent lands (110 York, 321-325 Dalhousie), for the conversion of an existing office building to a hotel (completed) and the development of a 22-storey mixed-use (commercial/residential) building on the subject site (137-141 George).

The project also includes the development of an underground parking garage that will serve the hotel and residential components.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located on the north side of George Street between Dalhousie Street and Cumberland Street. The site has a frontage of approximately 15.09 metres on George Street and a total lot area of 1015.34 m². The site is currently vacant and is the future site of a 22-storey mixed-use building with commercial spaces at grade and 282 residential units located on the floors above.

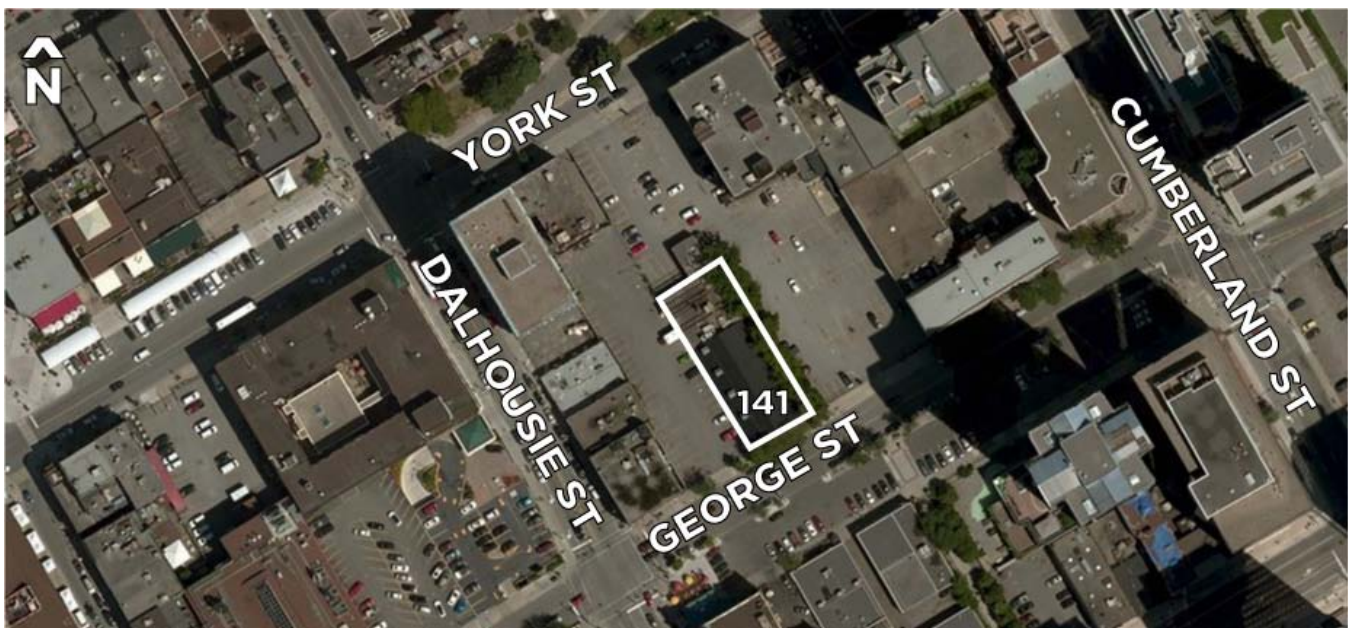


FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF SUBJECT SITE

SITE CONTEXT

The site is located in the Lowertown neighbourhood in the City of Ottawa. As one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Ottawa, it is characterized by a mix of heritage buildings and new development. In both cases, buildings generally have commercial uses on the ground floor with complementary uses such as offices and residential units on the upper levels. As the neighbouring Byward Market is a major tourist attraction in Ottawa, many restaurants, hotels and other tourist-oriented businesses are located in close proximity to the subject site.

The following is an inventory of the adjacent land uses and buildings:

North

North of the site is a pay-and-display surface parking lot. Further north, there are small commercial uses including retail stores, restaurants and cafes with residential units on upper floors, as well as some standalone apartment buildings.

South

South of the site are a variety commercial uses including retail stores and restaurants. Further south is Rideau Street, which contains a variety of uses including retail stores, restaurants, cafes, personal service establishments as well as high-rise residential apartment buildings.

East

Immediately east of the subject site is a pay-and-display surface parking lot. Further east is the Salvation Army and several low-to-high residential apartment buildings.

West

Immediately west of the subject site is 137 George Street, currently a surface parking lot and part of the future site of the aforementioned 22-storey mixed-use building. Further west are a variety of commercial uses along Dalhousie Street including restaurants, personal service establishments and a hotel.

Road Network and Transit

The site is located one (1) block north of Rideau Street, an arterial road identified on Schedule F (Figure 2) of the City of Ottawa Official Plan. Rideau Street is also a Rapid Transit, Transit Priority, and Road Project identified in Annex A of the City's 2013 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and Schedule D of the Official Plan (Figure 3). This four-lane roadway carries significant traffic, including buses in reserved lanes during peak periods. It connects Wellington Street in the west and Montreal Road in the east and acts as a major commercial spine for the surrounding community.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The proposed Minor Zoning By-law Amendment is seeking to temporarily establish the use of a surface parking lot on the subject site for a period not exceeding three (3) years. The site, in conjunction with the abutting site to the west (137 George Street), is the future location of a 22-storey mixed-use building. As the project is not yet ready to proceed, a surface parking lot with 77 total spaces is proposed to ensure the site is not underutilized in the interim. A total of 35 parking spaces are located on the portion of the parking lot at 141 George Street.

Our understanding is that 137 George Street benefits from a legal non-conforming right to use the lot as a surface parking lot and is therefore not a part of this application.

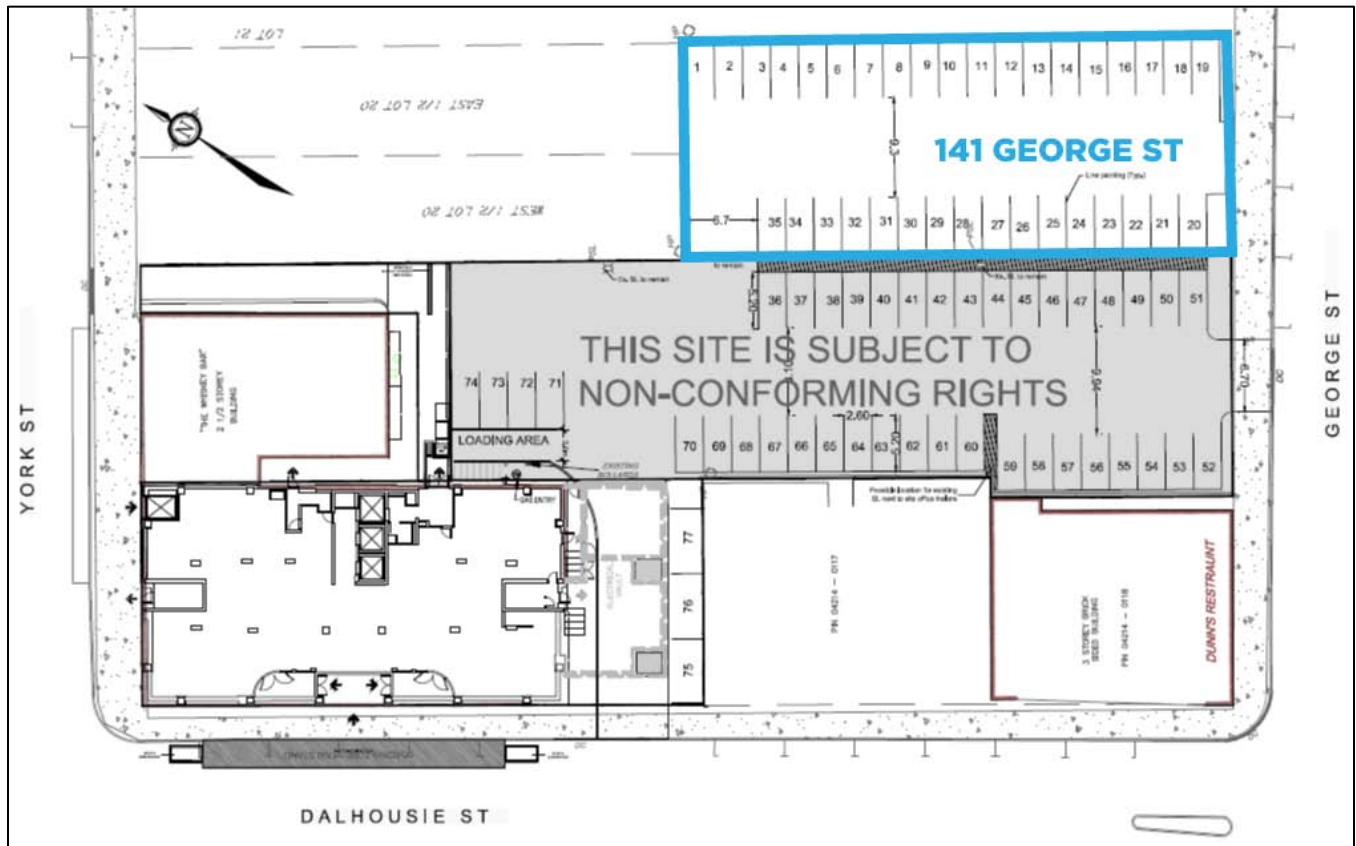


FIGURE 2: PROPOSED PARKING LAYOUT

POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

City of Ottawa Official Plan (2013, as amended)

The subject site is designated **Central Area** in the City of Ottawa Official Plan as shown on Schedule B - Urban Policy Area, below. The **Central Area** is the economic and cultural heart of the city and contains a unique combination of employment, government, retail, housing, entertainment and cultural uses. The policies of the **Central Area** designation promote its vital role in the city and encourage a broad range of land uses to maintain its role as a vibrant urban community.

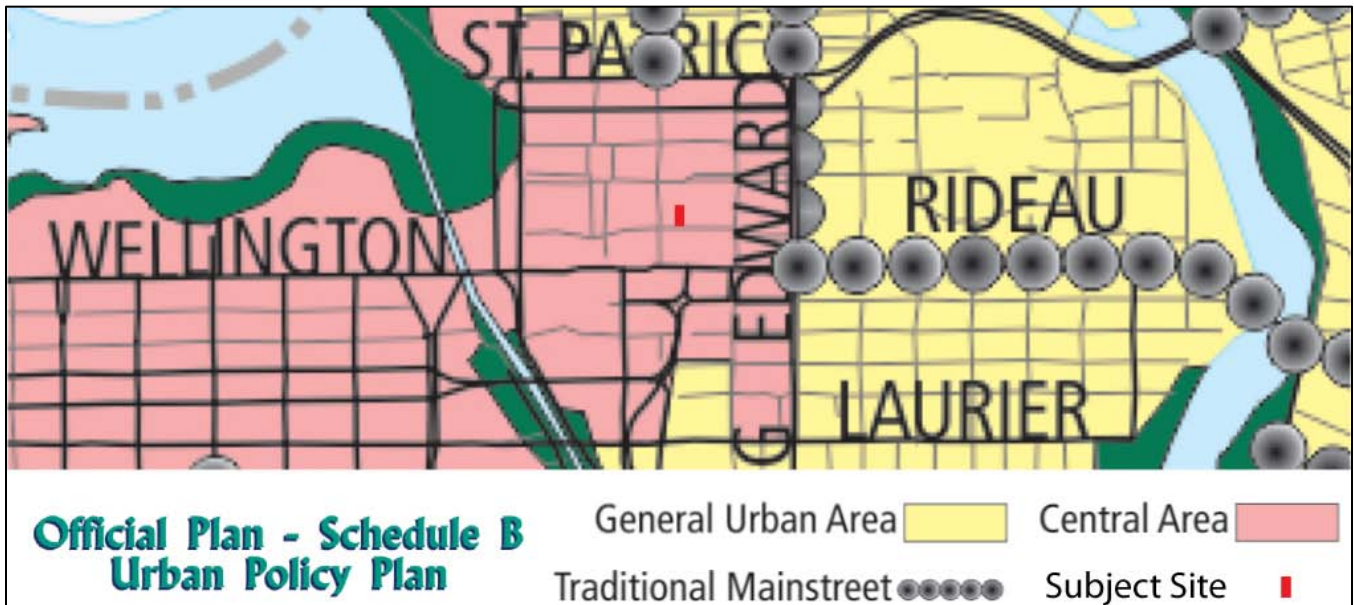


FIGURE 3: SCHEDULE B - URBAN POLICY PLAN, CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN.

Policy 9 of Section 3.6.6 (Central Area) addresses the requirements for parking areas, including the establishment of temporary parking facilities. The following is a discussion of Policy 9 and how the proposed temporary surface parking lot meets the intent of the policy:

- a. Facilitating, possibly with partners, the provision of moderately-priced, short-term parking and loading facilities to serve the retail and commercial sectors and the tourism industry and limiting the provision of long-term parking that would be attractive to commuters;

The site is located in close proximity to several commercial businesses including restaurants, retail stores and personal service establishments. Although the temporary surface parking lot is primarily intended to serve the hotel, the parking lot is also expected to provide short-term parking for tourists to support tourist activity in the Byward Market area as well. Parking is essential to supporting and sustaining activity in the Byward Market.

- b. Discouraging the provision of temporary surface parking lots on vacant sites, and requiring new temporary surface parking lots within the Central Area to obtain a rezoning to assess their impact on the pedestrian environment, particularly abutting pedestrian corridors or theme streets. Theme streets are predominantly linear shopping streets with associated land uses, a unique physical character and a unifying theme. Where temporary surface parking is permitted by a rezoning, the City will require that the visual appearance of such parking areas is enhanced and screened through the use of substantial vegetation, while ensuring adequate public safety;

George Street is not identified as a theme street, though the design of the parking lot is mindful of the pedestrian environment and as such, no new curb cut is proposed. This will ensure the existing pedestrian environment is not impacted by the proposed parking lot. Further, adequate landscaping and screening will be implemented to ensure a pleasant visual streetscape appearance along George Street. As the parking lot is to be used by the neighbouring hotel for valet parking, the constant activity on the site improves public safety by ensuring "eyes on the lot".

- c. Requiring all permanent parking required by or associated with new development to be located within a parking structure above or below grade;

The proposed surface parking lot is temporary. Underground parking is proposed as part of the redevelopment of the site and it is anticipated that it will serve both the hotel use and the 22-storey mixed-use building.

- d. Reclaiming the public right-of-way where it is encroached upon by existing surface parking lots, for tree planting and landscaping;

The proposed temporary surface parking lot does not encroach in the right-of-way. Trees and other forms of landscaping are proposed to provide screening so as to enrich the pedestrian experience and to ensure the streetscape along George Street is not negatively impacted by the presence of a surface parking lot.

- e. Implementing this parking policy, subject to the following design criteria, when reviewing development proposals:
 - i. Where such parking is provided above-grade within a structure, the exterior design of the development, particularly the lower levels, shall contribute to an enjoyable street environment by creating visual interest through the use of architectural detail, materials, and/or texture, and by respecting the character of nearby buildings,
 - ii. The interior design of parking areas shall maximize safety and minimize potential crime or vandalism through such measures as the provisions of appropriate lighting, visibility, and security features,
 - iii. For mixed-use developments containing residential units, parking area should be dedicated for the exclusive use of residents and separated by design or distance from other parking areas or other uses except where parking facilities can be shared with these other uses so as to provide adequate, safe, secure and convenient parking for residential use.

The proposed temporary surface parking lot is not located within a structure. The design of the parking lot, including the location of light sources, is cognisant of safety concerns including the internal circulation of vehicles, pedestrians coming to and from vehicles, and potential crime and vandalism. Further, as the activity in the parking lot is connected to the hotel including valet parking, there are “eyes on the lot” which help minimize concerns about safety.

Official Plan Amendment 150 (OPA 150)

In 2013, the City of Ottawa undertook the review of its Official Plan resulting in numerous policy changes. Ottawa Council adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 150 in December 2013, and it received Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing approval April 24, 2014. Subsequently, OPA 150 was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, where the matter remains unresolved. Therefore, the current policies of the City of Ottawa Official Plan 2003, consolidated May 2013 remain in full force and effect.

The policies referenced in the section above remain unchanged under OPA 150.

Central Area Secondary Plan

The subject site is located in the **Lowertown Character Area** on Schedule B – Central Area Character Areas and Theme Streets, in the Central Area Secondary Plan.

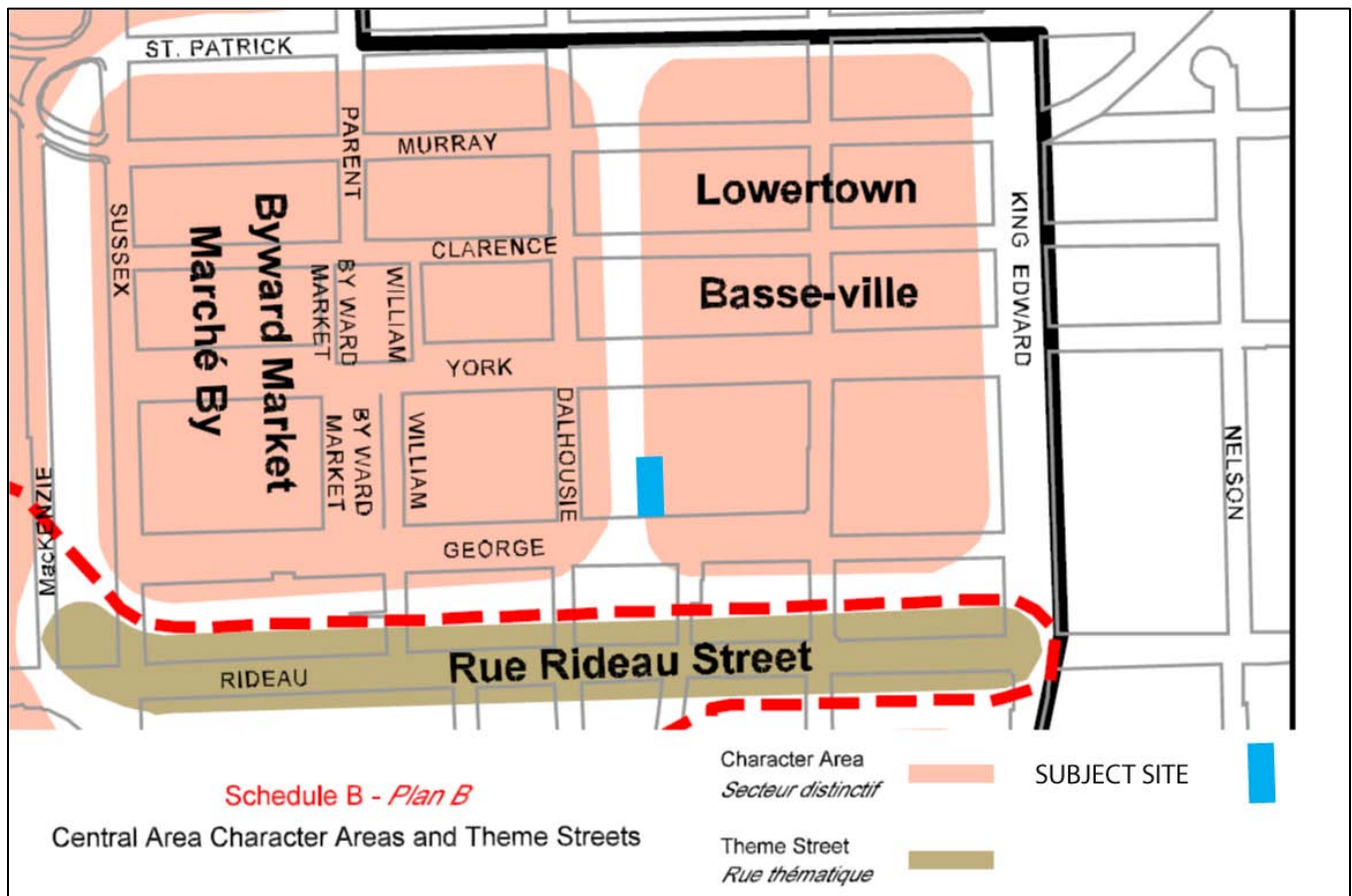


FIGURE 4: SCHEDULE B - CENTRAL AREA CHARACTER AREAS AND THEME STREETS

In regards to the proposed temporary surface parking lot, the following policy applies:

- / City Council may permit, within mixed use development along suitable edges of the Village, sensitively integrated short-term public parking facilities which may also serve adjacent areas. Council shall ensure that traffic generated by such parking does not exceed the capacity of connecting roadways, and shall minimise potential vehicular impacts on nearby residential uses.

The proposed temporary surface parking lot is located on a lot approved for a much more intensive development that includes an underground parking garage. Further, the Traffic Study completed as part of these previous approvals confirmed there are no concerns. As the underground parking will accommodate more parking (227 spaces) than this temporary surface lot (77 spaces), and no issues were identified within the Traffic Study completed as part of that report, no adverse traffic impacts are anticipated from the proposed temporary surface parking lot. Further, the temporary surface parking lot is located on the edge of the Lowertown Character Area, and can provide vehicular parking for both the Lowertown and Byward Market Character Areas.

City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2008-250

The subject site is zoned *Mixed-Use Downtown Zone, Exception 2031, Schedule 307 (MD2[2031] S307)*.



FIGURE 5: ZONING

The purpose of the MD zone is to support the **Central Area** as the central place in the region for employment and shopping while also allowing residential, cultural and entertainment uses. The MD zone allows for a wide range of uses including retail, restaurants, personal services and residential uses. Exception 2031 sets out several provisions specific to the future 22-storey tower on the site.

The proposed surface parking lot is not currently permitted in the MD2 zone, which only permits parking garages. However, the proposed surface parking lot is only a temporary lot, which will be replaced by a development which has received zoning and site plan approvals.

The following table shows the proposed surface parking lot's compliance with the provisions of the Zoning By-law for a parking area:

Part and Section	Performance Standard	Required	Provided	Compliance
Part 4 - Sec. 106	Width of Parking Space	2.6 m (min.) 2.75 m (max.)	2.6 m	Yes
Part 4 - Sec. 106	Length of Parking Space	5.2 m (min.)	5.2 m	Yes
Part 4 - Sec. 107	Width of driveway to a parking lot	6.7 m for double-traffic lane	6.7 m min.	Yes
Part 4 - Sec. 107	Vertical clearance of driveway	2 m	No obstruction (>2 m)	Yes
Part 4 - Sec. 110	Width of landscaped buffer around parking lot	3 m abutting the street 1.5 m no abutting the street	TBD	TBD

TABLE 1: ZONING COMPLIANCE TABLE

The owner is proposing landscaping and screening adjacent to the pedestrian environment to ensure the temporary surface parking lot does not negatively impact pedestrians along George Street. The

provided landscaping and screening will enhance the streetscape along George Street and contribute to, rather than take away from, the pedestrian experience. There is no additional curb cut proposed, hence no additional interruptions to the pedestrian environment. However, the full landscaping required under Part 4 – Section 110 is not provided as the parking lot is not permanent and all landscaping will eventually be removed for the construction of the 22-storey tower. The provided landscaping buffer, which will be identified on the forthcoming landscaping / parking layout plan is sufficient for the purposes of ensuring the property mitigates any potential adverse impacts on neighbouring properties and pedestrians along George Street.

CONCLUSION

The proposed temporary surface parking lot is not anticipated to generate any potential negative adverse impacts on abutting properties, while providing a temporary increase in the total parking in the area. The approved site plan includes underground parking totaling more spaces than the proposed surface lot, and as such, there are no expected traffic impacts with the proposed lot. Further, landscaping buffers ensure the proposed surface lot does not negatively impact the streetscape and will properly screen the site and mitigate any glare from vehicles. Finally, the site is well situated in respect to the surrounding Byward Market and Lowertown areas. The parking lot will be actively used by the hotel and will provide short-term parking to support the tourism industry, which is critical to the market and its long term viability.



Jacob Bolduc, M.PL
Planner
FOTENN Consultants Inc.



Katherine Grechuta, MCIP RPP
Manager, Planning + Design
FOTENN Consultants Inc.