

**Subject: Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment – 265 Catherine Street**

**File Number: ACS2024-PRE-PS-0055**

**Report to Planning and Housing Committee on 3 July 2024  
and Council 10 July 2024**

**Submitted on June 21, 2024 by Derrick Moodie, Director, Planning Services,  
Planning, Development and Building Services**

**Contact Person: John Bernier, Planner II, Development Review Central**

**613-580-2424 ext.21576, John.Bernier@ottawa.ca**

**Ward: Somerset (14)**

**Objet: Modification du Plan officiel et du Règlement de zonage – 265, rue  
Catherine**

**Dossier : ACS2024-PRE-PS-0055**

**Rapport au Comité de la planification et du logement**

**le 3 juillet 2024**

**et au Conseil le 10 juillet 2024**

**Soumis le 21 juin 2024 par Derrick Moodie, Directeur, Services de la planification,  
Direction générale des services de la planification, de l'aménagement et du  
bâtiment**

**Personne ressource: John Bernier, Urbaniste II, Examen des demandes  
d'aménagement centrale**

**613-580-2424 ext.21576, John.Bernier@ottawa.ca**

**Quartier: Somerset (14)**

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Planning and Housing Committee recommend Council approve:
  - a. An amendment to the Official Plan, Volume 2C, for 265 Catherine Street, to permit a mixed-use development including three high-rise towers up to 32, 34, and 36 storeys, respectively, and land for a new public park, subject to the criteria of an area specific policy, as detailed in Document 2.
  - b. An amendment to Zoning By-law 2008-250, as amended, for 265 Catherine Street, as shown in Document 1, to permit a mixed-use development including three high-rise towers up to 32, 34, and 36 storeys, respectively, and land for a new public park, as detailed in Document 3.
2. That Planning and Housing Committee approve the Consultation Details Section of this report be included as part of the 'brief explanation' in the Summary of Written and Oral Public Submissions, to be prepared by the Office of the City Clerk and submitted to Council in the report titled, "Summary of Oral and Written Public Submissions for Items Subject to the Planning Act 'Explanation Requirements' at the City Council Meeting of July 10, 2024," subject to submissions received between the publication of this report and the time of Council's decision.

## RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

1. Que le Comité de la planification et du logement recommande au Conseil municipal d'approuver :
  - a. une modification du volume 2C du Plan officiel, concernant le 265, rue Catherine, visant à autoriser un aménagement polyvalent, comprenant trois tours de grande hauteur d'un maximum de 32, 34 et 36 étages, respectivement, et un terrain destiné à un nouveau parc public, sous réserve du respect des critères d'une politique sectorielle, comme le précise le document 2;
  - b. une modification du *Règlement de zonage 2008-250*, tel que modifié, concernant le 265, rue Catherine, comme l'indique le document 1, visant à autoriser un aménagement polyvalent, comprenant trois

**tours de grande hauteur d'un maximum de 32, 34 et 36 étages, respectivement, et un terrain destiné à un nouveau parc public, comme le précise le document 3;**

- 2. Que le Comité de la planification et du logement approuve l'inclusion de la section du présent rapport consacrée aux détails de la consultation en tant que « brève explication » dans le résumé des observations écrites et orales du public, qui sera rédigé par le Bureau du greffier municipal et soumis au Conseil dans le rapport intitulé « Résumé des observations orales et écrites du public sur les questions assujetties aux “exigences d'explication” aux termes de la *Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire* à la réunion du Conseil municipal du 10 juillet 2024 », à la condition que les observations aient été reçues entre le moment de la publication du présent rapport et le moment de la décision du Conseil.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Staff Recommendation**

Planning Staff recommend approval of the Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment for 265 Catherine Street to permit the redevelopment of the former bus depot block into a mixed-use development, consisting of high-rise towers of 32, 34, and 36 storeys, with commercial spaces at grade and a new public park.

Through the Official Plan Amendment, a site-specific policy will be added to the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan to permit the proposed heights via the provisions of the recommended zoning applicable to the site. The amendment includes modifying an existing provision for privately owned public space to account for the dedication of parkland. Several schedules within the Secondary Plan will be updated to reflect these changes.

The existing General Mixed-use Zone (GM[1875] S271) was implemented in 2011 and allows two, 25-storey high-rise buildings along Catherine Street, and two mid-rise buildings oriented towards Arlington Avenue. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment, includes a replacement of Schedule 271, the rezoning of the northeast corner to Parks and Open Space (O1), and amendments to the site-specific exception, which include: allowing an amenity structure to project above the permitted heights, a reduction in vehicle parking, an increased bike parking rate, relief from provisions related to the setback of terraces for the townhomes, and a requirement for the non-residential uses

on the ground floor provide active entrances facing the street with a minimum of 50 per cent of the façade comprised of glazing.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

### **Recommandation du personnel**

Le personnel chargé de la planification recommande l'approbation de la modification du Plan officiel et de la modification du Règlement de zonage concernant le 265, rue Catherine, afin de permettre le réaménagement de l'ancien îlot servant de dépôt d'autobus en un aménagement polyvalent, comprenant des tours de grande hauteur de 32, 34 et 36 étages, des espaces commerciaux au niveau du sol et un nouveau parc public.

Grâce à la modification du Plan officiel, une politique propre au site sera ajoutée au Plan secondaire du cœur et de l'est du centre-ville, afin d'autoriser les hauteurs proposées au moyen des dispositions du zonage recommandé pour le site. La modification inclut le changement d'une disposition relative aux espaces publics appartenant à des intérêts privés, afin de permettre l'affectation de terrains à la création de parcs. Plusieurs annexes du Plan secondaire seront mises à jour pour refléter les changements en question.

Mise en place en 2011, la zone d'utilisations polyvalentes générale (GM[1875] S271) autorise la construction de deux immeubles de grande hauteur (25 étages), le long de la rue Catherine, et de deux immeubles de moyenne hauteur, orientés dans le sens de l'avenue Arlington. La modification du Règlement de zonage proposée prévoit le remplacement de l'annexe 271, le rezonage du coin nord-est à Zone de parc et d'espace vert (O1) et des changements touchant l'exception propre à l'emplacement : autorisation d'inclure dans le projet une structure des commodités dépassant les hauteurs permises, réduction du stationnement pour véhicules, hausse du nombre de places de stationnement pour vélos, dispense des dispositions encadrant le retrait des terrasses pour les maisons en rangée, ajout d'une exigence en matière d'utilisations non résidentielles au niveau du sol qui permet des entrées actives faisant face à la rue et impose un vitrage couvrant au moins 50 pour cent de la façade.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Site location**

265 Catherine Street

**Developer**

Brigil Construction Inc.

**Applicant**

GBA Group c/o John Moser

**Architect**

BDP. Quadrangle

**Description of site and surroundings**

The subject property is located north of the Highway 417 (the Queensway), situated on the southern edge of the Centretown community.

The subject property was previously occupied by the former Greyhound bus depot, which has since been demolished. The site includes the entirety of the block, bordered by Catherine Street, Lyon Street, Arlington Avenue, and Kent Street. The rectangular lot is approximately 10,300 square metres, has a lot width of 170 metres, and a lot depth of 60 metres.

The area surrounding the subject property features a diverse mix of uses. To the south, commercial land uses line Catherine Street and the Queensway, with the Glebe community further beyond. To the north and west, along Arlington Avenue and Lyon Street, are low-rise residential areas. East of the site is Kent Street and Glashan Public School. Bank Street, approximately 150 metres to the east, serves as a corridor with various service and retail uses, amenities, and major bus routes.

**Summary of proposed development**

The proposed development at 265 Catherine Street includes a mixed-use development consisting of three high-rise towers (Towers 1, 2, and 3) with two 6-storey podiums (Buildings A and B) and three-storey townhouses (Building C) along Arlington Avenue.

Tower 1: 32 storeys, on Building A, fronts Catherine Street.

Tower 2: 36 storeys, on Building B, also fronts Catherine Street.

Tower 3: 34 storeys, on Building B, faces Lyon Street.

The development concept offers 1,134 units in total. There are two phases of construction proposed: Phase 1 includes Tower 1 with about 400 units, and 144 underground parking spaces; Phase 2 includes Towers 2 and 3 with around 730 units, along with seven townhouse units in Building C, and will add 216 underground parking spaces. Unit types include a mix of bachelor, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, with an intention for 100 of these to be affordable units.

The site will feature a total of 360 parking spaces in a two-level underground garage and 1,164 bicycle parking spaces, more than double the minimum bicycle parking requirement. A minimum of 15 per cent privately owned public space will be provided in the form of a woonerf-style lanes, patios, and gardens, in addition to an approximately 1,000 square metre public park at the northeastern corner.

### **Summary of requested Official Plan Amendment**

The Official Plan Amendment seeks to amend the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan – Volume 2A for 265 Catherine Street, and include the following:

- Amending Section 4.4.6 – Public Realm, Policy 20, reducing the minimum Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) requirement for this site from 25 per cent to 15 per cent, and recognizing the 10 per cent lot area as parkland dedication;
- Amending Section 4.4.9 – Land Use and Site Development to allow three high-rise buildings of 32, 34, and 36 storeys, in accordance with the recommended zoning;
- Amending Schedule B – Designation Plan to redesignate the northeast corner from ‘Corridor’ to ‘Park’;
- Amending Schedule C – Maximum Building Heights to lower the northern portion from nine to six-storeys, and designating the northeast corner ‘unspecified’ for a public park; and
- Amending Schedule E to include a new park on the northeast corner of the site and titling it as “13. Arlington and Kent Park.”

### **Summary of requested Zoning By-law Amendment**

The Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to rezone the portion of the subject property intended for parkland conveyance from General Mixed-Use Zone, Exception 1875, Schedule 271 (GM [1875]] S271) to Parks and Open Space Zone (O1). The remainder of

the property will retain the existing zoning designation, with exception 1875 being amended with provisions described below, and Schedule 271 being replaced to reflect the 32-, 34-, and 36-storey heights. Further details are provided in Documents 3 and 4.

Summary of the recommended rezoning include the following:

- Rezone the northeast corner of the property to O1 for the portion of the site intended for parkland dedication (via Site Plan).
- Replace Schedule 271 to include a new schedule that identifies the minimum yard setbacks, minimum building setbacks, and maximum building heights, as per the proposed development, as shown in Document 4.
- Amend Urban Exception 1875 to remove 'bus station' as an additional permitted use, maintain 'drive-through facility' as a prohibited use, and identify site-specific zoning provisions including, but not limited to the following:
  - Provisions to be removed:
    - Restrictions related to the location of office uses on the ground floor.
    - Restrictions specific to the former bus station.
    - Relief regarding the minimum visitor parking space for the first 12 units for a dwelling unit contained within a building also containing non-residential uses.
  - Provisions to be added:
    - Increasing the minimum bicycle parking rate from 0.5 to 1 space per unit.
    - Reducing the minimum parking rate for a dwelling in a mixed-use building, from 0.5 to 0.2 spaces per dwelling unit.
    - Relief from Section 64 to allow the proposed enclosed rooftop amenity space to project above the height limits to a maximum of 7.5 metres and be limited to a gross floor area of 320 square metres.

- Relief from Table 55 regarding the setback requirements for the terraces proposed on the townhouse building.
- Provisions to be maintained:
  - Relief from permitted projections, and projections above the height limits (Section 64 and 65), for elements such as balconies and awnings, a bridge, and any mechanical equipment that may project beyond the setbacks and heights described on Schedule 271.
  - Requiring active entrances for all uses on the ground floor to face a public street or park.
  - Requiring each non-residential uses on the ground floor facing a public street or park to provide a minimum of 50 per cent of its façade comprised of windows and its main entrance.
  - Specifying that maximum building heights and minimum yard setbacks included in the General Mixed-use Zone are not applicable and are as shown on Schedule 271.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Public Consultation**

#### Notification and Consultation Process

Notification and public consultation were undertaken in accordance with the Public Notification and Public Consultation Policy approved by City Council for Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments.

Approximately 40 comments were received regarding the proposed development. Concerns were raised regarding the following: the built form (height), increased density, insufficient number of parking spaces, increased traffic, housing affordability, removal of existing trees, the lack of multi-family housing options, sustainability, and the overall impact on the surrounding community. Comments received in support of the application cited the need for more housing in the downtown core, the need for density and intensification in Centretown, and the development's ability to maximize land use while taking advantage of existing infrastructure and amenities.



The Applicant conducted three visioning workshops prior to submission, and an additional open house was held following submission. These meetings were attended by members of the public, the Centretown Community Association, and the Ward Councillor's Office. The Applicant has documented these meetings in the submitted Planning Rationale, along with the general responses heard from the public. The Applicant considered these comments and implemented many of the changes in the development proposal, such as: increasing tree plantings, introducing community and art spaces, providing car-share parking spaces, expressing a commitment to include approximately 100 affordable units, creating retail spaces that are oriented to local and small businesses, increasing the bike parking rate, and providing publicly accessible washrooms for the users of the park. Some of these elements will be secured through conditions of Site Plan approval, where possible.

For this proposal's consultation details, see Document 5 of this report.

### **Official Plan designation(s) and policies**

Per Schedule A and B1 of the Official Plan (OP), the subject property is designated as a Minor Corridor within the Downtown Core Transect. The site is also subject to the Evolving Neighbourhood Overlay.

#### **Section 2.2.1: Intensification and Diversifying Housing Options**

Residential growth in Ottawa should be focused on existing urban areas to support 15-minute neighbourhoods. Intensification efforts should target hubs, corridors, and surrounding neighbourhoods to enhance access to services and amenities.

#### **Section 2.2.4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities**

Encourage the development of 15-minute neighbourhoods that offer a variety of housing options, services, and amenities. These neighbourhoods will differ based on context but should include a mix of housing types, densities supporting local shops and services, public spaces such as community centers and libraries, neighbourhood commercial uses, access to healthy food, and supportive housing. Developments shall incorporate high-quality urban design with a human scale that fosters a sense of place.

#### **Section 3.2: Support Intensification**

Intensification should account for 51 per cent of the targeted residential growth in urban areas and can take various forms and heights, including high-rise developments. Focus

intensification efforts on hubs and corridors to support 15-minute neighbourhoods, especially on former commercial sites.

#### Section 4.1: Mobility

Growth management and economic development should recognize the connection between land use and transportation. This section underscores Council's commitment to equitable, safe, and healthy communities and climate action. The City will prioritize space- and cost-efficient transportation modes to accommodate growth, deliberately reducing space for automobiles in favor of public transit and active transportation. The policy advocates for a Safe Systems Approach to reduce collisions and aims to create neighbourhoods where living car-light or car-free is feasible, supported by the Transportation Master Plan.

#### Section 4.6: Urban Design

Development proposals are required to demonstrate the intent of applicable Council-approved plans and design guidelines. New high-rise developments should achieve compatibility through height transitions with strategic massing which include appropriate setbacks and stepbacks. High-rise buildings should be designed with a well-defined base, middle, and top, with tower floorplates generally limited to 750 square metres. Site planning on Corridors should frame the street with active entrances oriented to the street.

#### Section 5.1: Downtown Core Transect

Development in the Downtown Core Transect should sustain and enhance the urban built form pattern, while evolving as a 15-minute neighbourhood which prioritizes active and transit-supportive modes of transportation. The tallest buildings and highest densities should be located in this transect, with Minor Corridors generally having a minimum height of two storeys and a maximum height of nine storeys. Greater heights may be allowed through a Secondary Plan, provided appropriate height transitions and stepbacks are included.

#### Section 5.6.1: Evolving Neighbourhoods

Areas in close proximity to Hubs and Corridors are intended to evolve over time, transitioning from a suburban to an urban typology that supports intensification.

#### Section 6.2.2: Corridors

Generally, this designation applies to lands along specific streets that are planned for higher density, mixed-use developments, that are supportive of transit and active transportation networks.

### **Other applicable policies and guidelines**

#### Central and East Downtown Secondary Plan (Secondary Plan)

The property is also within the boundaries of the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan, within the broader Centretown Character Area, on Schedule A. The site within the South Character Area, as identified on Annex 1 - Centretown Character Areas. This plan is meant to provide a framework for change as the neighbourhood experiences intensification.

#### Section 3.1: Built Form

Development within the Central and East Downtown Core will contribute to active street life and pedestrian convenience through its design function and activity. Measures shall be taken to improve the vibrancy of the street by; orienting all active entrances towards the street, locating indoor and outdoor amenity spaces abutting the street, avoiding blank walls, designing vehicular facilities to minimize the impact on the street, and providing building setbacks that allow for wider sidewalks.

#### Section 4.4.5: Mobility

Centretown presently contains a large number of arterial roads which are focused on supporting the movements of vehicles between the downtown core and the Queensway. The plan encourages the reduction of automobile use and their impacts by providing for a program of complete streets that encourage walking, cycling, and transit use.

#### Section 4.4.6: Public Realm

Centretown's public realm is to be protected and enhanced through the creation of new parks, POPS, and other public spaces. Policy 20 is specific to 265 Catherine Street, requiring future development to comply with the height limits of the zoning in place on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, and includes a requirement for a minimum of 25 per cent of the lot area to be dedicated to privately owner public spaces (POPS).

#### Section 4.4.8: Housing

Developments within Centretown shall provide a broad range of housing choices to accommodate the expected increase in population size. The City will work with private developers to ensure adequate housing supply and will seek to retain affordable rental housing.

#### Section 4.4.9: Land Use and Site Development

The intent of Corridors within the Centretown South Character Area is to maintain employment uses while encouraging infill and high-rise development that provides a buffer between the Queensway and the established neighbourhoods to the north. Permitted uses shall include apartment buildings, townhouses, offices, small-scale and large-format retail, hotels, bulk good outlets, wholesale operations and other commercial operations that serve the needs of travellers, commuters and Centretown residents.

Maximum heights are intended to achieve transition to the mid-rise and low-rise areas to the north. As identified on Schedule C – Maximum Building Heights, the maximum building height on the subject property is nine storeys on the northern portion, fronting on Arlington Avenue, and 25 storeys on the southern portion, fronting Catherine Street.

#### Centretown Community Design Plan (CDP)

##### Section 5.2.2: Creating New Community Parks of the Centretown Community Design Plan

This section identifies the subject property as a prime location for the development of a park to address the open spaces deficiency in the area. The Centretown CDP envisions this area as green open space (soft landscape) to operate as a community park and include space for informal recreating and playing. The CDP states that the community park may be part of a wider redevelopment of the area and brought forward in conjunction with some of the larger redevelopment opportunities. This section also highlights the priority to revitalize Catherine Street's linear landscape to provide a green edge to the neighbourhood and buffer zone to the Queensway.

##### Section 6.1: Land Use

The Centretown CDP designates the subject property as Catherine Street Mixed Use area. This designation accommodates a variety of uses that require a larger floor format/floorplate, including residential, commercial, office, retail, open space etc., to serve the needs of residents and commuters of the city. Ground-related commercial uses are

encouraged. To create a buffer between the Queensway and residential areas, taller building formats are encouraged.

## Section 6.2: Building Approach

This section establishes standard policies for maximum buildings heights and appropriate transitions to the low-rise residential area. This policy states that taller residential buildings should be restricted to two zones: the Catherine Street Corridor and the Apartment Neighbourhood. The Catherine Street corridor permits buildings as tall as 50 to 77 metres (16 to 25 storeys). It is suggested that taller buildings should be located along the Queensway, where the existing context is taller, and transit is strongest. The recommended building height fronting on Arlington Avenue as set out in Section 6.2.2 – Overall Height Approach, is 30 metres (9 storeys) to ensure transition and integration with adjacent residential areas.

### Urban Design Guidelines for High-Rise Housing

The [Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Buildings](#) were reviewed for consistency. The Council-approved guidelines provide a framework with which to review high-rise development. They are intended to guide review with respect to compatibility of existing and planned context, creation of human-scaled streets and public spaces, and coordination of development with transit and site services such as parking and utilities, among others.

### Zoning By-law 2008-250

In 2011, the site was rezoned (By-law 2011-342) from Transportation Facility Zone to General Mixed-use. The proposal at the time was for a mixed-use development consisting of two, 25-storey high-rise towers on the southwest and southeast corners of the site, supported by three to six-storey podiums, and two, six-storey bar buildings along Arlington Avenue. Schedule 271 was established to describe the heights and setbacks permitted throughout the site, and identified mid-block connections that represented a minimum lot area of 25 per cent to be dedicated as ‘publicly accessible open space’.

## **Urban Design Review Panel**

The site is within a design priority area as defined on Schedule C7A and therefore the application was subject to the Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) process. An informal meeting was held prior to application on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A formal meeting was held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. An additional voluntary meeting, at the request of Staff, was held on

February 2nd, 2024, to further refine the building design. A summary of the Panel's recommendations for the formal meetings can be found in Document 6.

The UDRP was successful in aiding in the implementation of the following:

- Providing guidance on appropriate tower heights, orientation, and separations.
- Refining the podium design to contribute to the public realm.
- Improving the relationship between the built form and the park, as well as the design of the POPS throughout the site.
- Enhancing the building design through better choices in materiality.

## **Planning rationale**

### Official Plan

The proposed amendments generally align with the policies of the Official Plan. As an underutilized site on a Corridor within the Downtown Core Transect, this location is ideal for intensification and meets residential growth targets contained within Section 3.2.

The proposed mixed-use development has a 15-minute neighbourhood score of nine out of nine, which indicates a high degree of access to services and amenities. It further supports the evolution of a 15-minute neighbourhood by providing a variety of housing options while complimenting the local amenities through the introduction of commercial spaces on the ground floor and the dedication of a new public park (Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.4). The commercial spaces provided are designed to be suitable for community uses and small businesses, complete with publicly accessible washrooms next to the proposed park, which enhances the safety and animation of this space. This proposal will foster a vibrant community atmosphere and will support the creation of a complete community as envisioned in the Official Plan (Sections 3.2, 5.1, and 6.2).

Regarding urban design (OP Section 4.6 and the Urban Design Guidelines for High-rise Buildings), the proposal incorporates key elements of a well-defined base, middle, and top. The base adheres to policies recommending a maximum podium height equal to the width of the right-of-way (ROW), intended to provide enclosure without overwhelming the street. Greater heights are permitted if the development includes appropriate setbacks, step backs, and articulation, especially for wider and deeper lots like the subject site. The 22-metre podium heights are greater than the surrounding 18.5-metre ROWs but are

consistent with the existing permitted heights in the Secondary Plan and Zoning By-law. The podium provides a continuous edge along all four frontages, with appropriate breaks in the built form to increase the site's porosity and sun exposure, while creating street-level interest through variations in materiality and volumetric differences in heights, step-backs, and setbacks.

In the middle, the recommended minimum separation of 23 metres between towers minimizes shadow and wind impacts, reduces the loss of sky views, and allows natural light into interior spaces. The proposal includes a 46.1-metre separation between Tower 1 and Tower 2 and a 26.8-metre separation between Towers 2 and 3, exceeding the minimum requirement. The guidelines also limit residential high-rise tower floor plates to a maximum of 750 square metres to ensure sufficient separation, helping the towers integrate with and enhance the local character, mitigate impacts—especially in terms of shadow impacts—on public and private spaces, promote energy efficiency, and respect the development rights of neighbouring properties.

The tops of the towers are designed to create subtle interest that contributes to the overall skyline of the city without distracting from more prominent buildings. The tallest tower will include an enclosed rooftop amenity area with a small outdoor terrace. Interior lighting will highlight the elongated bays of this crowning element, in accordance with the guidelines.

The proposal is consistent with guidelines and policies related to transition, achieving this by maintaining setbacks contained within the existing zoning and incorporating a variety of step backs in the podium. Building heights along Arlington Avenue have been reduced from nine storeys to three to six storeys, introducing breaks in the massing for the publicly accessible areas, and providing park space to offer a better transition to the low-rise areas to the north

A shadow analysis supports the proposal, assessing its compatibility with the surrounding area. The study demonstrates that the slim tower design, ample building separation, and step backs, along with lower building heights abutting Arlington Avenue, will create sweeping shadows that will have minimal impact on the adjacent properties and park space. Additionally, a wind study supports the proposal by demonstrating that these spaces will be comfortable and adequately protected.

Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan

Although an Official Plan Amendment is required, the proposed development is consistent with the policies of the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan.

The Secondary Plan generally allows greater building heights in the northern and southern character areas (south of Gloucester Street and along Catherine Street), while the central area is designated for low to mid-rise developments to accommodate sensitive infill. Heights of up to 25 storeys are currently permitted along Catherine Street, recognizing both the development potential of larger commercial parcels along this corridor and the function that high-rises serve in buffering the Queensway from the adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods. Therefore, the assessment regarding the amendments should focus on the suitability of the proposed increase in height and density rather than the appropriateness of high-rise development itself

The proposal maintains the intent of Schedule C – Maximum Building Heights by directing the density and height to the southern part of the site while reducing the permissible heights from a maximum of nine storeys to a maximum of six storeys for the northern portion of the property. This strategy of density redistribution improves the relationship with existing low-rise residential buildings along Arlington Avenue.

The proposal aligns with Section 4.4.6 (Policy 19 and 20), requiring future development of the site to include a minimum of 25 per cent privately owned public space, which is provided through the full 10 per cent dedication of a public park, and the inclusion of publicly accessible, at-grade, amenity areas. The site maintains permeability and public access with various entry points from Arlington Avenue, Catherine Street, and Kent Street. The interior features a variety of landscaped areas, each offering a unique experience, such as a central area framed by amenity spaces and low-rise townhouses with patio spaces and treed gardens. Additionally, a woonerf-style lane bisects the development, providing controlled access for loading and waste collection while prioritizing pedestrian experience. This is enhanced through varied surface treatments, trees, commercial entrances, and balconies and terraces, which contribute to the animation and safety of the space. An at-grade pedestrian link through the podium connects the privately owned public spaces to the public park, further enhancing accessibility and integration with the surrounding urban fabric. The park, absent from the original development plan that established the zoning, will be secured through Site Plan approval conditions, along with public access easements for the amenity spaces.

The Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) has recognized the project's success in supporting high-rise development and creating a positive human-scale condition along



street edges. The UDRP's focus on strengthening human-scale design treatments and public spaces underscores the project's alignment with urban design principles.

Staff are of the opinion that the proposed increases in heights and densities are consistent with Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies

#### Zoning By-law

As detailed in Document 3 and 4, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment has the effect of rezoning the site to include site specific provisions as well as a new zoning schedule. The following summarizes the site-specific zoning provisions and planning rationale:

- The property is intended to maintain its present GM[1875] S271 with the exception of the parkland which will be rezoned to O1. Site-specific exceptions that do not relate to this development will be removed from Exception 1875 with further relief added, as detailed below.
- The proposed maximum building heights, minimum yard setbacks, and stepbacks are as shown on Schedule 271, and were formed based on a comprehensive assessment of compatibility and appropriate urban design discussed previously. These parameters will facilitate the construction of a building that frames all of the streets that it fronts on, while providing adequate space for sidewalks, tree planting, public realm, and public realm improvements. The variation in the building setbacks, stepbacks and heights further supports the public realm by creating an interesting and pedestrian-friendly urban environment that is consistent with the Secondary Plan (Section 4.4.6).
- The requested parking reduction from 0.5 spaces per mixed-use, dwelling unit in a high-rise building to 0.2 spaces per unit, combined with the proposed increase to the bicycle parking from 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit to 1 space, are appropriate for the site given its location within the Downtown Core and its proximity to amenities, services, places of employment, as well as transportation networks (active and transit). Minimum visitor parking rates and parking rates related to the commercial units will continue to apply, as per the Zoning By-law, to ensure that the visitors to the site will have minimal parking impacts throughout the surrounding neighbourhood. These amendments are supportive of the Secondary Plan (Section 4.4.5) which encourages a modal split that favours active and transit supportive modes and align with Official Plan policies which promote reductions in parking spaces on corridors (OP Section 4.1.4).

- Amendments include relief from Sections 64 and 65 – Permitted Projections Above Height Limits and Permitted Projections into Required Yards, respectively. This provision is being carried forward from the previous zoning exception to ensure that there are no compliance issues related to balconies and mechanical structures that may project above and beyond the heights and setbacks contained within the propped Schedule 271. Additional wording has been added to this exception to permit the proposed enclosed amenity space and associated washrooms on the rooftop of the 36-storey tower, shown as Area I in Document 4, to be considered a permitted projection. This has been thoroughly assessed through a comprehensive design review and will result in a functional and attractive development (OP Section 4.6).
- A minimum bicycle parking at 1 space per dwelling unit encourages sustainable transportation options, aligning with city policies promoting active transit (OP Section 4.1 and Secondary Plan Section 4.4.5)
- Relief from Table 55 (8) for the townhouse building, shown as Area D in Document 4, which requires terraces to be set back from the building edge. The intention of this zoning requirement is to limit the impact that amenity spaces have on adjacent properties in terms of overlook and noise. The two-storey terrace is located interior to the site and will not have an impact on existing residential properties. Furthermore, these lower terraces will contribute to the increase the safety and animation of the interior spaces
- Require the ground floor area facing a public street to contain an active entrance for each unit. This design principle fosters street-level activity and engagement, enhancing the pedestrian experience (OP Section 4.6 and Secondary Plan Section 3.1).
- Ensure non-residential ground floor units have at least 50 per cent of their façade comprised of windows and an active entrance. This transparency and accessibility contribute to a vibrant street presence and commercial viability (OP Section 4.6 and Secondary Plan Section 3.1).

A Site Plan Control application for this proposal is currently being reviewed by Staff and will be consistent with the commitments mentioned above.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that it is consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

### **CONSULTATION**

Notification and public consultation were undertaken in accordance with the Public Notification and Consultation Policy approved by Council for Development Applications. Correspondences were received from 40 individuals, 12 of which were in full support of the proposal. Of those in opposition, concerns were raised related to built form, height, shadowing, parking, traffic, and greenspace.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR**

Councillor Ariel Troster provided the following comments:

I want to commend the applicant for their rigorous and thoughtful consultation, and I believe that this level of community consultation has strongly improved the project – especially with regard to the public realm and podium, which I look forward to discussing further should this application be approved. While I seldom object to applications only on the basis of height, I continue to find the height of this project challenging. This level of height is unique to this part of the neighbourhood, and this level of density should be accompanied by a significant affordable housing component.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

With the passage of Bill 185, as amended, an official plan amendment and/or a zoning by-law amendment is only subject to appeal by “specified persons”, essentially utility providers and government entities, and the registered owner of a parcel of land subject to the amendment(s). If Council determines to refuse the amendments, reasons must be provided. It is anticipated that a hearing of up to five days would result. It would be necessary for an external planner to be retained and possibly also an external architect or professional with expertise in urban design.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Servicing capacity requirements to be finalized at time of Site Plan. However, the existing services were demonstrated to be adequate to serve the development and staff have no concerns.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications. In the event the applications are refused and appealed, it would be necessary to retain an external planner. This expense would be funded from within Planning Services operating budget.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

The development will be required to meet the accessibility criteria as detailed within the Ontario Building Code. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements for site design also apply and will be implemented through the subsequent Site Plan Control application and Building Permit processes.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

An Environmental Site Assessment was provided in support of this application, and no impacts are anticipated from the development of this site. A record of site condition will be required for the introduction of the more sensitive land uses, being residential and park.

**TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priorities:

- A city that has affordable housing and is more liveable for all
- A city that is green and resilient
- A city with a diversified and prosperous economy

**APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS**

These applications (Development Application Numbers: D02-02-23-0042 and D01-01-23-0008) were not processed by the "On Time Decision Date" established for the processing of Official Plan amendments and Zoning By-law amendments due to the complexity of

the proposed policy and zoning amendments and several revisions made throughout the review process based on consultations lead by the Applicant Team.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 – Location Map

Document 2 – Details of Recommended Official Plan Amendment

Document 3 – Details of Recommended Zoning

Document 4 – Zoning Schedule

Document 5 – Consultation Details

Document 6 – Urban Design Review Panel Recommendations

Document 7 – Renderings

Document 8 – Site Plan Excerpt

## **DISPOSITION**

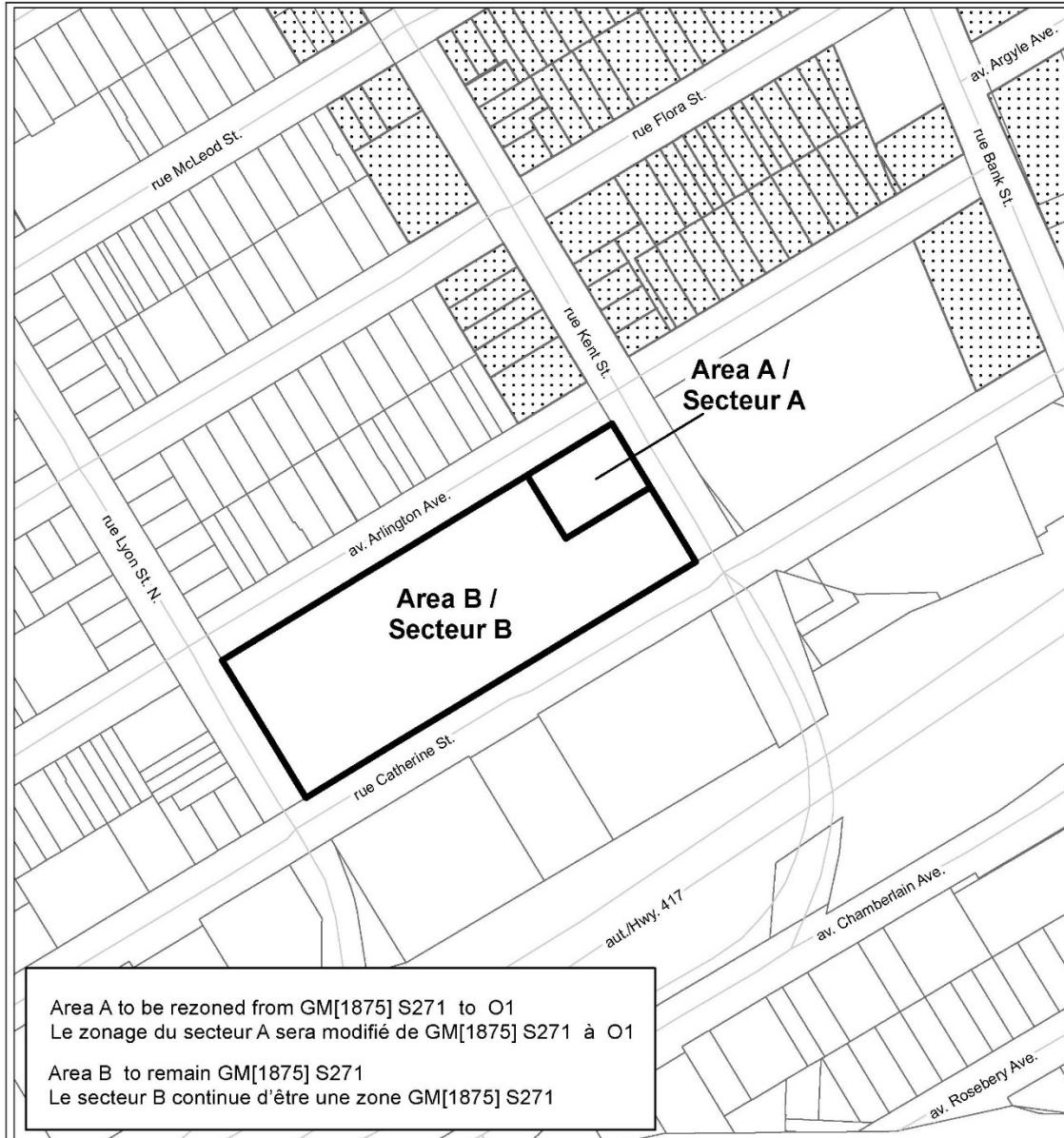
Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to notify the owner; applicant; Ottawa Scene Canada Signs, 13-1920 Merivale Road, Ottawa, ON K2G 1E8; Krista O'Brien, Program Manager, Tax Billing & Control, Finance Services Department (Mail Code: 26-76) of City Council's decision.

Zoning and Interpretations Unit, Policy Planning Branch, Planning Services to prepare the implementing by-law and forward to Legal Services.

Legal Services, Innovative Client Services Department to forward the implementing by-law to City Council.





Planning Operations Branch, Planning Services to undertake the statutory notification.

Document 1 – Location Map



Area A to be rezoned from GM[1875] S271 to O1  
 Le zonage du secteur A sera modifié de GM[1875] S271 à O1

Area B to remain GM[1875] S271  
 Le secteur B continue d'être une zone GM[1875] S271

		LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION ZONING KEY PLAN / SCHÉMA DE ZONAGE	
D02-02-23-0042	24-0524-X	 <b>265 rue Catherine Street</b>	
I:\CO\2024\Zoning\Catherine_265			
<small>©Parcel data is owned by Teranet Enterprises Inc. and its suppliers                  All rights reserved. May not be produced without permission                  THIS IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY</small>		 Heritage (Section 60) Patrimoine (Article 60)	
<small>©Les données de parcelles appartient à Teranet Enterprises Inc.                  et à ses fournisseurs. Tous droits réservés. Ne peut être reproduit                  sans autorisation. CECI N'EST PAS UN PLAN D'ARPENTAGE</small>		Entire map area is affected by the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay (section 139) / Tout le secteur de la carte est touché par la Zone sous-jacente de quartiers établis (article 139)	
REVISION / RÉVISION - 2024 / 05 / 15			

**Document 2 – Details of Recommended Official Plan Amendment**

**Official Plan Amendment XX to the  
Official Plan for the  
City of Ottawa**

**INDEX**

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**THE STATEMENT OF COMPONENTS**

**PART A – THE PREAMBLE** introduces the actual amendment but does not constitute part of Amendment No. XX to the Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

**PART B – THE AMENDMENT** constitutes Amendment XX to the Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

**PART A – THE PREAMBLE**

PURPOSE

LOCATION

BASIS

RATIONALE

**PART B – THE AMENDMENT**

INTRODUCTION

DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT

IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

**PART C – THE APPENDIX**

SCHEDULE A

SCHEDULE B

SCHEDULE C



## **PART A – THE PREAMBLE**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this amendment is to amend the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan within Volume 2A of the Official Plan with site-specific policies for 265 Catherine Street. The proposed amendments would permit a mixed-use development, including: three, high-rise buildings with heights of up to 32, 34, and 36 storeys; a six-storey podium; a public park; and a minimum of 15 per cent of the site to be dedicated as privately owned public spaces (POPS). The summary of proposed amendments are as follows:

- (a) Amending Section 4.4.6 – Public Realm, Policy 20, which requires any future development plans at 265 Catherine Street to include a minimum of 25 per cent of its lot area as a POPS, and revising this to acknowledge the dedication of parkland by requiring a minimum of 15 per cent of the lot area as a POPS and for 10 per cent of the total lot area to be dedicated as a public park.
- (b) Adding site-specific wording within Section 4.4.9 – Land Use and Site Development to allow for three, high-rise buildings of up to 32, 34 and 36 storeys, respectively at 265 Catherine Street, tied to the recommended zoning.
- (c) Schedule B – Designation Plan is to be amended to redesignate the northeast corner from ‘Corridor’ to ‘Park’.
- (d) Amending Schedule C – Maximum Building Heights for the northern portion of the 265 Catherine Street to lower the maximum permitted height from ‘nine-storeys’ to ‘six-storeys’, and the northeast portion of the site to change the maximum permitted height from ‘nine-storeys’ to an unspecified height (indicated as white area within the schedule) for a public park.
- (e) Amending Schedule E – Greening Centretown to add a new park to ‘New Parks and Open Spaces’, to be titled as “13. Arlington and Kent Park” and adding the park symbol and number to the southwest corner of Kent and Arlington Avenue.

## 2. Location

The proposed Official Plan Amendment includes changes only applicable to the 265 Catherine Street. The subject lands are bounded by Arlington Avenue (north), Kent Street (east), Catherine Street (south), and Lyon Street (west).

## 3. Basis

The amendment to the Official Plan was requested by the Applicant in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the subject property for a mixed-use development consisting of three, high-rise buildings with heights of up to 32, 34, and 36 storeys, a six-storey podium, a three-storey townhouse, at-grade privately owned public spaces, and a public park.

## 4. Rationale

The proposed Official Plan amendment to the Secondary Plan represents good planning through appropriate intensification within a target area for growth. The increased heights will achieve the Secondary Plan's objective of built form that provides a buffer between the Queensway and the established neighbourhoods to the north. The provision of amenities and housing options will contribute to and support 15-minute neighbourhoods and are consistent with Minor Corridor policies contained within the Official Plan. Furthermore, the inclusion of a public park and privately owned public spaces will define this site as a focal point within the local community.

## **PART B – THE AMENDMENT**

### **1. Introduction**

All of this part of this document entitled Part B – The Amendment consisting of the following text constitutes Amendment No. XX to the Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

### **2. Details**

The following changes are hereby made to the Official Plan, Volume 2, Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan is hereby amended as follows:

- a) Section 4.4.6 – Public Realm, Policy 20 is amended by replacing the wording with the following:

“Any future development of 265 Catherine Street will include a minimum of fifteen percent of the lot area as a POPS and ten percent of the lot area is to be dedicated as a public park. Approval of a site plan for such development will be required and the community will be consulted by the City during this process.”

- b) Section 4.4.9 – Land Use and Site Development is amended by adding a new policy as follows:

“In the case of the property municipally addressed as 265 Catherine Street, any high-rise development on the site is only permitted the maximum buildings heights of 32-, 34-, and 36-storeys, respectfully, in accordance with the zoning provision of the GM [1875] S271 zone, By-law No. 2024-XXX”.

- c) Schedule B – Designation Plan is amended to redesignate the northeast corner from ‘Corridor’ to ‘Park’, as shown in Schedule A.
- d) Schedule C – Maximum Building Heights is amended to redesignate the northern portion of 265 Catherine Street from ‘9 storeys’ to ‘6 storeys’, and the northeast corner from ‘9 storeys’ to an unspecified height, as shown in Schedule B.
- e) Schedule E – Greening Centretown is amended to add a new park to ‘New Parks and Open Spaces’, “13. Arlington and Kent Park” to the southwest corner of Kent and Arlington Avenue, as shown in Schedule C.

3. Implementation and Interpretation

Implementation and interpretation of this Amendment shall be in accordance with the policies of the Official Plan for the City of Ottawa.

**SCHEDULE A**

Attachment 1



Prepared by: Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department,  
 Bureau de la planification, de Géographie Analytique, Technologie et Solutions



Préparé par: Infrastructure et de développement économique,  
 Analyse géographique, technologie et solutions

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Scale - N.T.S. / Echelle N.A.E.

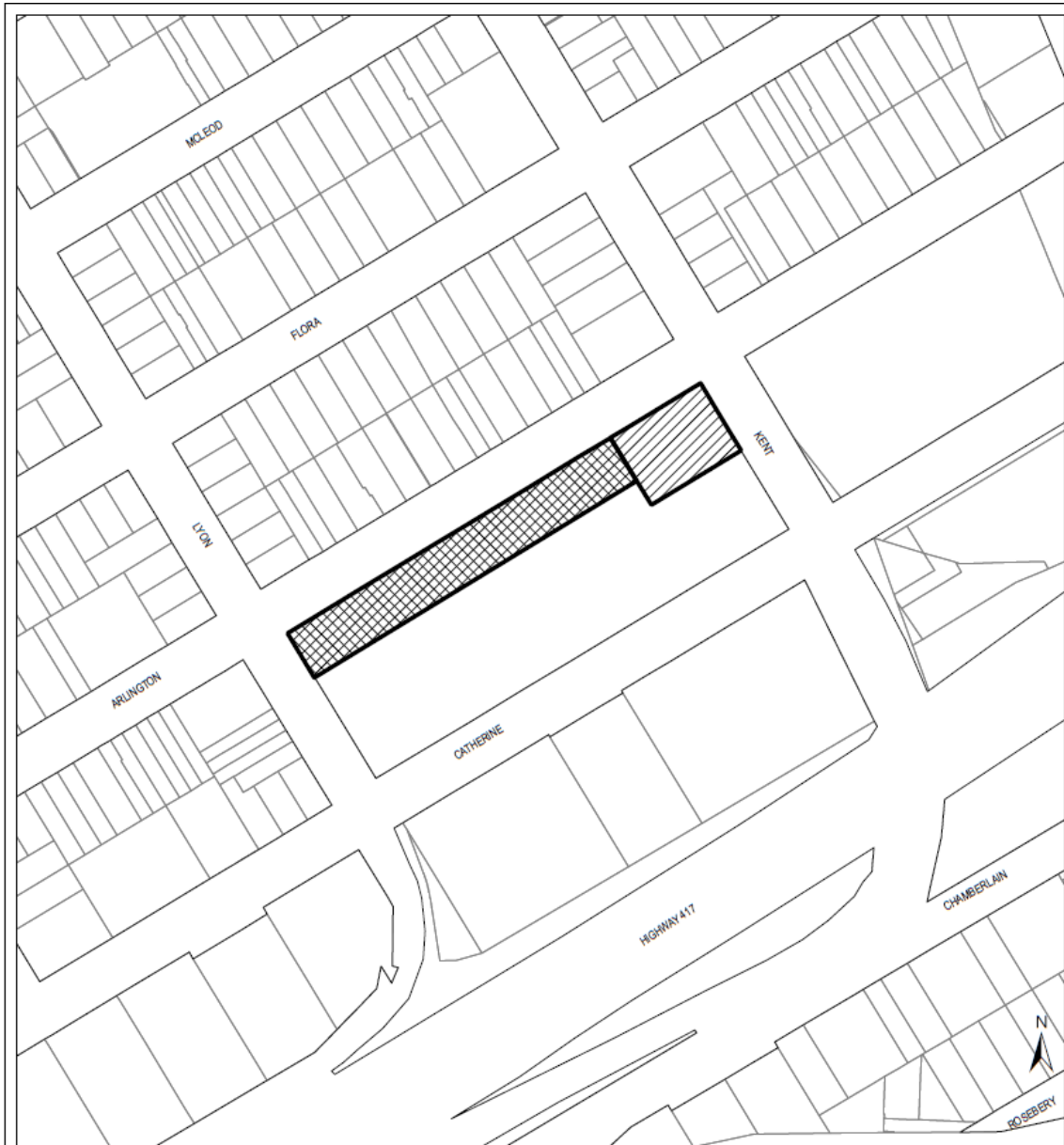
**SCHEDULE A to  
 AMENDMENT NO.**  
 to the OFFICIAL PLAN  
 for the CITY OF OTTAWA  
 Amending Volume 2A  
 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan  
 Schedule B - Designation Plan



LANDS TO BE REDESIGNATED FROM "CORRIDOR" TO "PARK"  
 TERRAINS À REDESIGNER À « COULOIR » À « PARC »

**ANNEXE A de  
 L' AMENDEMENT No.**  
 au PLAN OFFICIEL  
 de la VILLE D'OTTAWA  
 Modification du volume 2A  
 Plan secondaire de Centre-ville et centre-est  
 Annex B - Plan de désignation

**SCHEDULE B**



Prepared by: Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department,  
 Service de la planification, de l'analyse spatiale, de la technologie et de l'économie



Préparé par l'Infrastructure et de développement économique,  
 Analyse spatiale, technologie et économie

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**SCHEDULE B to  
 AMENDMENT NO.**

to the OFFICIAL PLAN  
 for the CITY OF OTTAWA

Amending Volume 2A  
 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan  
 Schedule C - Building Heights

**ANNEXE B de  
 L' AMENDEMENT No.**

au PLAN OFFICIEL  
 de la VILLE D'OTTAWA

Modification du volume 2A  
 Plan secondaire de Centre-ville et centre-est  
 Annex C - Hauteurs maximales des immeubles



LANDS REDESIGNATED FROM "9 STOREYS" TO "6 STOREYS"  
 TERRAINS DONT LA DÉSIGNATION EST PASSÉE DE « 9 ÉTAGES » À « 6 ÉTAGES »



LANDS REDESIGNATED FROM "9 STOREYS" TO "HEIGHT UNSPECIFIED"  
 TERRAINS DONT LA DÉSIGNATION EST PASSÉE DE « 9 ÉTAGES » À  
 « HAUTEUR NON SPÉCIFIÉE »

**SCHEDULE C**



Prepared by: Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department,  
 Services de la planification, de Coopération Analytique, Technologie et Solutions



Préparé par: Infrastructure et développement économique,  
 Analyse et solutions, technologie et solutions

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**SCHEDULE C to  
 AMENDMENT NO.**

to the OFFICIAL PLAN  
 for the CITY OF OTTAWA

Amending Volume 2A  
 Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan  
 Schedule E - Greening Centretown

**ANNEXE C de  
 L' AMENDEMENT No.**

au PLAN OFFICIEL  
 de la VILLE D'OTTAWA

Modification du volume 2A  
 Plan secondaire de Centre-ville et centre-est  
 Annex E - Écologiser le centre-ville



ADDITION OF A NEW PARK TO THE "NEW PARKS & OPEN SPACES" DESIGNATION TO BE  
 NAMED ARLINGTON & KENT PARK  
 AJOUT D'UN NOUVEAU PARC À LA DÉSIGNATION « NOUVEAUX PARCS ET ESPACES OUVERTS »  
 POUR ÊTRE NOMMÉ PARC DE ARLINGTON ET KENT

### Document 3 – Details of Recommended Zoning

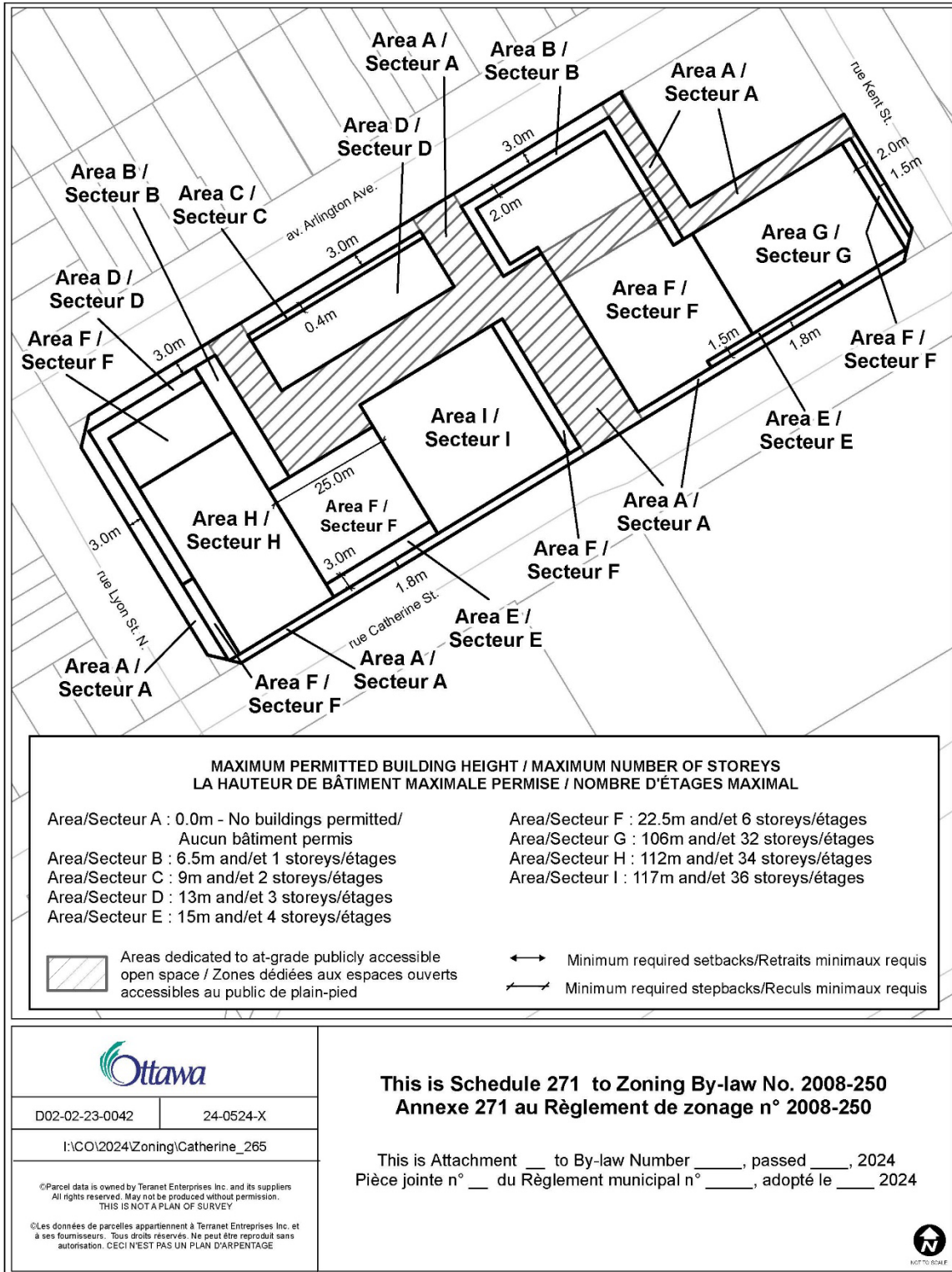
The proposed changes to the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law No. 2008-250 for 265 Catherine Street are as follows:

- Rezone the land as shown in Document 1.
- Replace Schedule '271' to Part 17 – Schedules with the amended Schedule 271 as shown in Document 4.
- Amend exception '1875' to Section 239, Urban Exceptions, with provisions similar in effect to the following:
  - In Column III, Additional Land Uses Permitted, remove 'bus station' as a permitted use.
  - In Column V, Provisions, delete the text and replace it with the following text:
    - i. Maximum building height and minimum yard setbacks and step backs are as shown on Schedule 271.
    - ii. Permitted projections listed in Section 64 and 65 are not subject to the height limits identified on Schedule 271, and Area I permits a projection above the height limit that may include indoor amenity spaces with associated washroom facilities to a maximum height of 7.5 metres, and a maximum gross floor area of 320 square metres.
    - iii. Minimum bicycle parking: 1 space per dwelling unit;
    - iv. For dwelling units in a mixed-use building, the minimum vehicular parking rate is 0.2 spaces per dwelling unit.



- v. Table 55 (8) does not apply to Area D on Schedule 271.
- vi. For all uses, the ground floor area of the wall facing a public street must contain an active entrance to each unit and in the case of a corner lot, the active entrance may be at an angle at the corner of the building facing a street intersection.
- vii. For each non-residential unit on the ground floor, the ground floor area of the wall facing a public street must have at least 50 per cent of its façade comprised of windows and its active entrance, and, in the case of a corner lot, the active entrance may be at an angle at the corner of the building facing a street intersection.

Document 4 – Zoning Schedule



D02-02-23-0042

24-0524-X

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**This is Schedule 271 to Zoning By-law No. 2008-250  
Annexe 271 au Règlement de zonage n° 2008-250**

This is Attachment \_\_\_ to By-law Number \_\_\_\_, passed \_\_\_\_, 2024  
Pièce jointe n° \_\_ du Règlement municipal n° \_\_\_\_, adopté le \_\_\_\_, 2024



NOT TO SCALE

## **Document 5 – Consultation Details**

### Notification and Consultation Process

Notification and public consultation were undertaken in accordance with the Council-approved Public Consultation Policy approved by City Council for Official Plan amendments. Five open house meetings (described as visioning workshops) were held by the Applicant Team virtually and included the general public, Ward Councilor, and the Centretown Community Association. They were held during the following dates:

- Visioning Workshop One with Ward Councillor, Centretown Community Association representative and neighbours: August 30, 2021
- Visioning Workshop Two: September 13, 2021
- Visioning Workshop Three: October 7, 2021
- Visioning Workshop Four: June 30, 2022
- Public Open House: October 11, 2023.

Staff received approximately 40 public comments during the comment period, with a total of 15 residents voicing support for the proposed application. Below is a summary of the comments along with a staff response.

### **Comments of Support:**

- I support the high-density housing proposed for this location, and support making any changes/amendments to the city plan needed to achieve this.
- After reviewing the documents, I support this project. The housing crisis is ongoing, and as someone who would enjoy cheaper rent or lower housing costs, Ottawa's number of housing starts does not fill me with optimism. One way to make costs cheaper and hopefully lead to more starts is to make efficient use of land. This project and its density does that. These look like relatively large units, I appreciate the mix of one, two and three bedroom units, and it seems a large amount of amenities will be within walking distance.
- I see the number of winners as a result of this approval as being very large, and it would be a place I'd welcome in my own neighbourhood or would enjoy living in

myself. I hope the city will move expediently to approve the requisite changes to advance this project.

- This proposal is a highly unique opportunity to transform a vacant block with housing of various types and commercial space.
- I am in support of this proposal, including the request for increased building heights, and look forward to seeing it come to fruition and new residents accommodated in Centretown in the years ahead.
- I would like to express my wholehearted support for this proposal. It checks many of the boxes required for intensification.
- I am highly satisfied that this project, with large units, good location, and a non-car oriented parking plan, is a good addition to the city. It seems like better space use than the current use.
- I support this development. The trees/parkland open to the public will be nice for the area. The tower heights are suitable for being so close to a major highway - in fact they will probably help block noise, and provide much needed housing and housing density.
- I am in support of this proposed development, as it addresses the housing shortage. Would be great to see this get approved quickly so that new housing can start being built.
- It's a great use of land and should help get more residents into the area who will be able to support those local gems.
- This city needs housing and the 1032 new units will go a long way to filling the demand in the city's core, along with bringing much needed customers for the local businesses.
- I'm glad to see a design that provides plenty of housing in this area. This is an excellent proposal that significantly raises the bar for development in Ottawa.
- Fantastic proposal. Possibly the best I've seen from an urban perspective. I think this looks amazing and strongly support its approval. My only comment would be the inclusion of more large trees and shade.

- I would like to express my support for this project, and to encourage the City to push for greater building height/density, especially on parcels such as this one.
- I would like to voice my unqualified support for this development. It is innovative, maximizes land use, is close to transit, amenities, and the central commercial and business district.

Staff Response:

For the reasons outlined in the report above, staff are recommending approval of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments.

Comments of Concern:

**1. Building Height and Shadows**

- The excessive height of the proposed buildings (40 and 36 storeys) is seen as an aesthetic eyesore and will cast significant shadows.
- Reduction of natural light for surrounding properties, particularly in winter months.
- The building height in front of Lyon Street North would cast a significant shadow, resulting in a considerable reduction of natural light in our living space, which is especially important for us during the winter time.
- Two blocks to the north will be deprived of sunlight between 10 am and 3 pm in March and September. Reduced height would alleviate that significantly.
- Concerns about buildings exceeding existing zoning guidelines and setting a precedent for future developments.
- Suggestion to reduce building height to alleviate shadowing effects on neighboring properties.

Staff Response:

The proposed building heights have been adjusted to 32, 34, and 36-storeys in response to the concerns. While taller than the current zoning allows, the heights are mitigated through thoughtful design elements such as slimmer towers, significant building separations, and step-backs. A comprehensive shadow analysis demonstrates that shadows cast by the towers will be sweeping, minimizing prolonged shadowing on adjacent properties and public spaces. This design approach ensures that while

accommodating higher densities, the impact on sunlight access is minimized. Additionally, the reduction of building heights along Arlington Avenue to three to six storeys helps transition the development to the lower-rise residential areas, further mitigating shadow impacts.

## **2. Housing Affordability and Types**

- Need for affordable housing provisions, either through rent or sale, and collaboration with non-profit housing agencies.
- Request for more family sized three-bedroom apartments to accommodate families (current proposal of 4 per cent is deemed insufficient).
- My only uninformed nitpick is that it might be nice to have more three-bedroom apartments. I'm not sure what the big picture of housing for families looks like but it would be unfortunate if we forgot to build housing for families.

### Staff Response:

The proposal includes a commitment to provide approximately 10 per cent of the units as affordable housing, addressing the need for more accessible housing options within the downtown core. While the initial proposal includes 4 per cent three-bedroom units, the developer has indicated a willingness to adjust the unit mix to better accommodate families. This will be further refined through ongoing discussions and conditions set during the Site Plan approval process.

## **3. Greenspace and Trees**

- Insufficient provision of park space and green areas for the number of new residents.
- The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (approved by Council in October 2021) calls for two hectares over 1000 residents of park space. Assuming an average occupancy of one and a half persons per unit, the 1,542 new residents should expect three Modification du Plan officiel et modification du Règlement de zonage – 265, rue Catherine three hectares or 30,000 square metres. What is proposed amounts to 3.3 per cent of what should be. Even if one would count all 25 per cent of publicly accessible open space claimed, that would still only amount to 2,500 square metres or 8.3 per cent of what should be expected.

- Concerns over the loss of trees (26 trees to be cut down, only five to remain) and the need for more conservation efforts.
- It is unacceptable to reduce landscaping when the city wants to create more green space.

Staff Response:

The development will provide a new an approximately 1,000 square metre public park, fulfilling the maximum 10 per cent parkland dedication requirement contained within the Parkland By-law No. 2022-280. This new green space, along with the 25 per cent privately owned public spaces (POPS), will enhance the local environment and offer recreational areas for residents. Furthermore, the development includes a comprehensive landscaping plan that compensates for tree loss by increasing the number of trees and green spaces within the site, promoting urban biodiversity and ecological balance.

#### **4. Sustainability and Energy Efficiency**

- Lack of information in the Design Brief regarding energy efficiency measures.
- Expectations for buildings of this size to demonstrate leadership in energy efficiency and potentially be designed to be net-zero.
- What impact does the sun's glare off the windows have? Has a sun study be conducted.

Staff Response:

The developer has committed to integrating sustainable building practices and energy-efficient technologies within the development. Measures include high-performance building envelopes, energy-efficient HVAC systems, and the use of renewable energy sources where feasible. These commitments align with the City's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainable urban development. A sun study examining the reflection of sunlight is not required for this development application.

#### **5. Increased Density**

- Overwhelming increase in density in a small area, affecting the livability of the neighbourhood.

- The project seeks to add potentially over 2000 new members to our small community.
- Risk making the area unlivable due to such massive increase in density
- Concerns about impacts on-street parking, green space, and daylight received by existing units.

Staff Response:

The proposed increase in density is consistent with the City's Official Plan and Secondary Plan, which encourage intensification within the downtown core to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and services. This development supports a vibrant, transit-oriented community, reducing reliance on personal vehicles and fostering a walkable urban environment. The mix of residential, commercial, and public spaces within the development is designed to enhance the overall livability and functionality of the neighbourhood.

## **6. Parking and Travel Modes**

- Insufficient car parking spaces for the real-life needs of tenants (request for at least 700 parking places).
- Influx of new residents and parking will increase in traffic.
- Concerns about the balance between bike and vehicle parking are less than one per unit.
- Acknowledgment of the need for more available parking, despite efforts to promote biking and jogging.
- Current residents and their guests can already find restricted parking in the vicinity, and the developer isn't providing enough parking for the amount of foreseeable increased demand.

Staff Response:

The reduction in parking is balanced by providing 1,164 bicycle parking spaces and promoting sustainable transportation options. The site's proximity to major transit routes and the future transit priority lane on Catherine Street supports a reduced reliance on personal vehicles. The developer's Transportation Demand Management strategy



includes car-share programs and enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to further mitigate parking concerns.

## **7. Construction and Demolition**

- Worries about and potential damage (e.g., cracked foundations) from construction. Some buildings are built in the early 90s and may be prone to permanent damage.
- Concerned about the noise and disruption onto resident's daily lives.
- Concerns about the impact of construction on the neighbourhood's character, given most buildings are only two to three storeys high.
- We hope that the construction will be conducted within reasonable hours.

### Staff Response:

The developer is required to adhere to stringent construction management plans that mitigate noise, dust, and other disruptions. Construction activities will be restricted to reasonable hours, and measures will be taken to protect adjacent properties from damage. Site Plan conditions ensure that excavation and blasting activities are compliant with provincial policies, including pre- and post-blasting monitoring. .

## **8. Neighbourhood Character and Building Design**

- Lack of respect for current community members and the family-friendly atmosphere. Which will deteriorate the close-knit community.
- Proposed towers are dramatically outside the norm for the neighbourhood and will result in a significant shift in character.
- Allowing an increase in height from the existing 25 storeys to 50 storeys is totally unreasonable. The result would look like a monstrosity tower over the adjacent neighbourhood and completely out of character.
- Concerns about promotional materials not accurately reflecting the post-construction site.
- The current low-density character of housing supports the neighbourhood's quality of life, which includes walkability and a sense of community.

- The tight-knit neighbourhood of homeowners who put a lot of effort into keeping up their houses and gardens to make it a friendly location for young families will be negatively impacted by this project.
- Residents would prefer a more subdued building design (adhering to current zoning 25 storeys) for the site that better fits the nature of the Centertown neighbourhood.

Staff Response:

The design of the proposed development has been thoroughly vetted by the Urban Design Review Panel and through community consultation. It incorporates architectural elements that respect and enhance the existing character of the neighbourhood. The use of materials such as "Rideau Red" brick and the inclusion of step backs and varied building heights ensure the new buildings integrate well with the surrounding urban fabric. The introduction of public and community spaces within the development fosters a sense of community and belonging.

## **9. Heritage Character**

- Desire to maintain the historical and cultural character of the neighbourhood amidst new developments.
- Ask the developer to respect the historical/current atmosphere of the neighbourhood.
- Do not destroy the skyline and flow of Centertown.
- There is absolutely no demand for this sort of development downtown. There is a plethora of other high-rise proposals. What Brigil wants to build is excessive.
- Request to adhere to the current maximum building heights set out in the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan.

Staff Response:

The development is supported by a design brief that examines the historical and cultural character of the Centertown neighbourhood. The design incorporates elements that complement the existing architectural style. The project includes public spaces and amenities that celebrate the local heritage and contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the area.

## 10. Infrastructure

- Concerns about the capacity of main sewage lines and stormwater systems to accommodate more residents and commercial businesses.

### Staff Response:

A comprehensive infrastructure assessment has been conducted, confirming that the existing sewage and stormwater systems can accommodate the proposed development. Any necessary upgrades will be undertaken to ensure the infrastructure meets the increased demand, maintaining service levels for both new and existing residents and will be further examined through Site Plan review.

### Centretown Community Organization Comments and Responses

#### 1. Letter dated July 20, 2023 (Mary Huang)

We urge City Council to reject the application for the proposed redevelopment of the former bus depot block at 265 Catherine.

The CCA is opposed to the significant height increase of two out of three proposed residential towers from 25 to 36 and 40 storeys.

We understand more dwelling units are desperately needed across the City and in the downtown core, and do not oppose reasonable changes in what currently is a vibrant and livable community. However, densification should not come at the expense of the wellbeing of residents. The proposed towers of the 265 Catherine block will dwarf the surrounding neighbourhood. We call on the developers to respect requirements set out by the Zoning and the Secondary Plan, and encourage them to heed the UDRP's warning of a "stark contrast of high-rise buildings in a predominantly low-rise neighbourhood."

In this application, the Modernist "tower in the park" morphology has been exaggerated into "multiple towers over a parkette." With minimal breathing room in and around the massive block the proposal feels insular. It would cast long shadows over the surrounding neighbourhood, and over the proposed "open space" between the built masses. As it stands, it is not designed for integration with the wider community.

We would like the developer to consider the local context: the block they are proposing to transform is close to schools, walking distance to public transit, and home to diverse households, including seniors and families. To meet community needs a variety of unit types ought to be provided beyond minimum requirements, including accessible units,

accommodations for aging in place, family-sized units of three bedrooms, and affordable housing. We encourage the developer to collaborate with non-profit housing providers and local organizations to offer the latter.

Intensification should be paired with appropriate soft and hard infrastructure and community services, with safety and well-being in mind.

The extreme density will bring an influx of traffic to the area, even with the reduced parking provisions in the proposal. We question whether the neighbourhood's existing arteries can accommodate increased vehicular traffic safely, and are concerned with increased congestion, pollution, and noise. While we appreciate the lower number of proposed parking, we seek assurance that car-sharing options will be explored, that visitor parking will be appropriate to accommodate care workers, and that there will be planning for charging stations to accommodate EVs. As supporters of active modes of transportation we urge the developer to offer a ratio of bicycle storage to least 1:1 per unit.

Notably, the proposed development, with very high densities, is devoid of commitments to sustainability and energy efficiency. Beyond minimizing the wall-to-window ratio of the tower facades, there is no mention of environmentally sustainable design and building systems. A building of this scale ought to consider green systems and net zero. We expect major buildings of this size to show leadership and take responsibility for minimizing the carbon footprint they will produce.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Sincerely,

Mary Huang  
President,  
Centretown Community Association  
c.c. Ariel Troster, Councillor

Joel Harden, MPP

Yasir Naqvi, MP

Gilles Desjardins, President, Brigil

2. Letter dated October 17, 2023 (Mary Huang)

Developer Brigil recently presented to the CCA the current iteration of its proposal for 265 Catherine Street.

While there are improvements to the design, the tallest towers, reaching to 36 and 40 storeys, are far too high. As the UDRP said, these towers are a “stark contrast of high-rise buildings in a predominantly low-rise neighbourhood.” The developer should respect requirements set out by the zoning and the secondary plan.

As well, we question whether the traffic study understates the traffic impacts of such a massive development. Centretown is seeing a plethora of huge new towers being built or proposed, and they inevitably will generate traffic congestion on arterial roads adjoining this site — Catherine, Kent and Lyon.

We also wonder whether balconies on the Queensway face of the buildings make sense. Given the constant traffic noise arising from the Queensway, will anyone want to be out on those balconies?

We appreciate some of the changes the developer is proposing. The podium now has strong vertical massings that reflect the tall red-brick houses and shops dating from the Victorian and Edwardian eras, a hallmark of this heritage community.

We appreciate the commitment to grow big trees on the site wherever possible. Brigil may wish to consult the CCA’s NeighbourWoods Group, for advice on species that will add to the diversity of the urban canopy.

The developer speaks of pursuing sustainability and energy-efficiency beyond the minimums required in the building code. A development of this magnitude and enduring impact should be designed to incorporate the latest technologies for climate adaptation and mitigation. As well, the developer speaks of including affordable and accessible housing units beyond the minimum requirements. We applaud Brigil’s interest in addressing Ottawa’s declared housing and environmental emergencies.

The design provides a low ratio of car parking spaces and a good ratio of bike parking spaces (1.0 per unit). This is excellent.

Brigil’s proposal, as it has evolved, offers much of interest. However, the highest towers still are far too high.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Sincerely,

Mary Huang  
President,  
Centretown Community Association  
c.c. Gilles Desjardins, President, Brigil

Ariel Troster, Councillor

Joel Harden, MPP

Yasir Naqvi, MP

Staff Response:

The proposed redevelopment of 265 Catherine Street has been reviewed and modified to address community concerns and align with city policies. The building heights proposed in the original design have been adjusted to maintain the density being sought. The heights have changed from 26, 40, and 36-storeys, to the proposed 32, 36, 34- storeys, listed from Towers 1-3 respectively. The proposed heights are balanced by design elements such as slimmer towers, significant separations, and step-backs to minimize shadow impacts, with reduced heights (from as-of-right) along Arlington Avenue for better transition. The development includes various unit types, including family-sized and affordable units, and emphasizes sustainable transportation with ample bicycle parking, car-sharing options, and EV charging stations. Sustainability features include energy-efficient systems and renewable energy sources. The design respects the neighbourhood's character with appropriate materials and building forms, while integrating public and community spaces. The inclusion of a new public park and extensive landscaping enhances local amenities and urban greenery. Staff will continue working with the Centretown Community Association to ensure the project meets community needs.

## Document 6 – Urban Design Review Panel Recommendations

### [265 Catherine Street | Formal Review | Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control Application | Brigil, BDP Quadrangle, GBA Group](#)

#### Key Recommendations

- The Panel appreciates the thorough submission materials, especially the information on the transformation of the project through consultation with stakeholders.
- The Panel supports the proposal's ambitious program and most of the project design.
  - The Panel appreciates the proposal as a significant piece of city building in this evolving neighbourhood.
  - The Panel supports many aspects of the proposal; the public spaces, inclusion of arts and markets, and active frontages are most appreciated by the Panel.
- The Panel generally supports the treatment of the streetscape and built form along Arlington Avenue.
  - The Panel recommends further studying ways to reduce the effect of the podiums on the townhouses and park space, and allowing for more light in those spaces.
- The Panel highly recommends a stronger tower-podium relationship is needed along Catherine Street.
  - The Panel recommends more articulation of the sections between the towers with some variation in the heights needed.
- The Panel recommends pairing the two taller western towers with similar design and architectural expressions, while retaining a separate design for the smaller eastern tower.
- The Panel strongly supports the use of "Rideau Red" brick, particularly along Arlington Avenue.

- The Panel recommends refining the material palette of the podium façades along Catherine Street to read more as a rich streetscape and less as a pastiche of façades.
- The Panel recommends further collaborating with the City on the shared condition of the park space, particularly with regard to the timing of the programming and executing it successfully.
- The Panel strongly recommends further developing the sustainability strategy of the proposal, particularly with regard to resiliency in adverse weather events and on-site energy generation.
  - The Panel strongly recommends adding a sustainability lens to the proposal for the next stage of the development review process will be important.

### **Site Design and Public Realm**

- The Panel strongly supports the ambitious program for the site. It has the potential to become an exemplary development in Centretown if well executed.
- The Panel stresses the prominence and importance of the views to and from the site.
- The Panel has some concerns with the proposed development as it relates to the surrounding context and offers the following:
  - The Panel recommends further developing and refining the ground plane and the connections to the surrounding streets.
  - Consider the following: What is the ground plane relationship with the surrounding area? What are the desire lines for pedestrians to walk through the site? Where might pedestrians be coming from and going to? How does this site draw in or facilitate pedestrian movement/connectivity?
- The Panel recommends further refining the public realm landscaping and street-tree planting to ensure a viable and robust landscaping plan throughout the block.



- Consider more of a rhythm that paces you down the street rather than clumps of trees and plantings where viable.
- Consider a stronger green edge along Catherine Street, and capitalize on more of a rhythm to the green edge characteristic along that streetscape.
- The Panel appreciates the initiative to include public art within the site, noting the site should be considered as a whole (including the public park) in order for the ground plane design to mesh seamlessly as an entire block.
  - Consider the potential of the public art initiative as one of many layers that helps tie the whole block together.
  - Collaborate with Ottawa Parks Planners to achieve a seamless integration of the park with the site's ground plane design/function.

### **Sustainability**

- The Panel recommends further developing the sustainability plan for the site, with a particular focus on the resiliency of the site and the potential for energy generation on site.
  - Consider the huge opportunity for sustainable strategies with a full block site.
  - Consider the potential for blue-green roofs given the large expanse of roof space.
  - Consider heat exchange systems, ground source energy, combined with the use of the roof spaces. Could be game-changing and more sustainable and resilient in the short and long-term.
- The Panel strongly recommends exploring low impact development principles as part of the proposal's sustainability strategy, particularly with regard to providing a robust tree canopy and softscaped planting beds as a mitigation to heat island effect and stormwater management.

### **Built Form and Architecture**

- The Panel appreciates the inclusion of the Parliamentary viewshed studies.

- The Panel appreciates the disposition of the buildings on the site, and the articulation and exterior expression of the buildings.
- The Panel suggests the expression of the centre tower is particularly elegant and strong.
- The Panel recommends applying the same treatment/expression of the centre tower to the second tower next to it on the Lyon Street corner, while maintaining the third tower by the park/Kent Street as its own unique expression.
  - The Panel recommends investigating a development in Toronto at Bathurst and St-Clair for by the same architects which parallels particularly well with regard to developing a multiple tower block with generous public amenity space and programmable opportunities.
- The Panel appreciates the articulation of the façades, however, consider giving each of the 3 towers their own podium bases which are uniquely articulated.
  - Consider that each street edge treatment has a slightly different context, and the podium heights should reflect those nuances.
- The Panel recommends lowering the podium portions between the towers by one-storey to help with the articulation of the podium and realize the intended effect, while still providing large surfaces for outdoor amenities.
- The Panel appreciates the townhouse scale along Arlington Avenue and the relationship they have to the existing streetscape.
- The Panel appreciates the Arlington Avenue view and how the Arlington Avenue edge of the site has been successfully integrated with the streetscape and neighbourhood.
- The Panel appreciates the use of the “Rideau Red” brick in the podium level to help relate the development to the heritage brick buildings of Centretown.
  - The Panel appreciates how the “Rideau Red” brick helps to anchor and define the podium while simultaneously quieting the expression by relating well with the surrounding red brick context.
- The Panel has concerns with the expression of the podium along Catherine Street appearing a bit too much like a pastiche.

- The Panel appreciates that finding the right balance between unity and differentiation in the podium expression along Catherine Street is challenging.
- The Panel recommends a bit less differentiation in materiality and tone along Catherine Street to help unify the podium expression, deploying an architectural expression and articulation of the individual segments that creates a unique yet unified rhythm along the streetscape.
- The Panel suggests some refining of the podium along the Catherine Street façade is needed. Consider a series of architectural details and complementary materials. Often, main street City blocks have similar materials with different architectural details.
- The Panel recommends modifying the massing of the 'white building' along Arlington Avenue and adjacent to the park in order to allow for a more sunlight to come through to the park space.
  - Consider a step-back at the upper level(s) or reducing the height of the podium in that area by one-storey. As currently proposed, this portion of the podium will cast shade on the park, particularly in the mid- and late-afternoon.
  - Consider varying the heights and depths in the podium massing to create architectural interest and break up the podium mass.
- The Panel appreciates the amount of amenity space provided at the podium roof level.
- The Panel recommends expressing the two western towers in a similar manner, as they share a podium, and expressing the lower eastern tower in its own singular expression.
  - Consider pairing similar architectural expressions together rather than splitting them up.
- The Panel has concerns with the streetwall's height and consistent mass, which is a departure from the current rhythm of buildings and façades in Centretown.

- The Panel recommends addressing and mitigating the six-storey 'wall-like' appearance of the podium with a podium which has a range of heights. One approach could be to have the towers rest on their own podiums, creating infill podiums between the towers with some variety and rhythm and with one reduced floor.
- The Panel has concerns with the livability of the townhouses along Arlington Avenue and how they tie into the rest of the site design.
  - The Panel recommends exploring options to make a transition to the side streets with the townhouses, particularly along Lyon Street and Arlington Avenue.
  - The Panel recommends some podium areas should be dropped around the townhouses and park space. Consider the potential to provide more sunlight into the interior laneways and public spaces as well.
- The Panel appreciates the use of red brick materiality, particularly along Arlington Avenue, and supports a more extensive use of brick materials throughout the site.

[265 Catherine Street | Formal Review | Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control Application | Brigil, BDP Quadrangle, GBA Group](#)

**Key Recommendations**

- The Panel appreciates and supports how the project has come along through multiple reviews and the proponent's willingness to attend Urban Design Review Panel for multiple reviews.
- The Panel appreciates the multiple reviews and correspondence this project and the proponent team has accommodated to improve the proposal.
- The Panel appreciates and supports the strong attention to detail apparent in this high quality and highly urban proposal, and are hopeful to see that carry through to the build out of the site.
- The Panel supports and appreciates the changes that have been implemented since the previous Urban Design Review Panel's review.

- The Panel appreciates the lowering of the podium heights and revised massing.
- The Panel appreciates the refinements made to the material and colour palette of the podium's architectural expression(s).
- The Panel appreciates the refinements made to improve the public realm, landscaping, and pedestrian experience through the site.
- The Panel recommends a refined focus on the details of the design, especially regarding the nuances of colour and textures in the materiality, in order to deliver on the high-quality architectural details of the proposal.
  - In particular, the Panel recommends giving considerable attention to the white material in the podiums, and suggest in general to maintain a varied masonry materiality in the podium.
- The Panel recommends revisiting the scale of the townhouses in the project and ensuring that they can hold their own in the block plan.
  - Consider perhaps a more modern typology, such as stacked or back-to-back towns.

### **Site Design and Public Realm**

- The Panel appreciates the unique proposal for the site and the dynamic programming on the north side.
- The Panel recommends ensuring a 4.5-5 metre height clearance is provided for the underpass between the art space and market space, to provide the link between the parkland dedication and the interior of the site adequate breathing room.
- The Panel appreciates that the grade level paving treatments, details, and landscaping were well thought through in designing a cohesive block.
- The Panel appreciates the proponent's approach to the at-grade relationship between interior and exterior spaces, and how they interact.

## Built Form and Architecture

- The Panel has concerns with the white material in the podium along Catherine Street, and how it will contrast the various red and brown brick and tones in the rest of the podium.
  - The Panel encourages using a masonry material for the white podium material, and recommends a certain nuance to the white material is necessary as it currently pops out too much from the rest of the podium design in the renderings.
- The Panel recommends the proponents spend considerable time and effort on determining what will be the right type and quality of bricks and materials, particularly in the podium, to ensure the varying architectural expressions are high quality and do not come across as a pastiche of sorts.
  - The Panel recommends the proponents consider playing on the types of masonry used in the podiums—e.g., glazed brick and rougher brick.
- The Panel has concerns that the linear white striped expression of the towers appears too institutional in character, especial in the eastern and western towers.
  - The Panel recommends exploring more of a punched brick element in the towers' architectural expression.
  - Consider integrating the tower expressions more closely with the architectural expression(s) in the podiums.
- The Panel appreciates that there is a balance of both a variety and unity in the architecture of the three towers.
- The Panel expressed that a refined attention to the brick detailing, corbeling, and framing in the podiums architectural expression(s) will be extremely important in ensuring that the desired effect is achieved at the build out stage.

Document 7 – Renderings











Document 8 – Site Plan Excerpt

