

Document 3- Consultation Summary and Comments Received

Web Page

A [project page](#) for the Update to the Lowertown West and ByWard Market Heritage Conservation Districts was created on the City's website in 2021. The site was updated at various project milestones.

Public Meetings

As part of the update to the Lowertown West and ByWard HCDs, three formal public meetings/information sessions were held for each HCD as well two "Pop-Up" sessions.

The "Pop-Up" sessions were held in Summer 2022 in the George Street Plaza and in Bingham Park. These sessions provided an informal opportunity for residents to speak with staff about the importance of the HCDs.

The first formal public meeting was a virtual kick-off meeting held via Zoom in November 2021. This was a joint session for both HCDs. At this meeting, Heritage staff provided an overview and purpose of the project, explained the planned update process and how members of the public could participate, and an overview of the background related to the original designation of the HCDs. Members of the public were able to ask questions of staff. Approximately 75 participants attended the kick-off meeting.

In June 2023, two in-person open house sessions were facilitated—one for each HCD. These sessions were provided to share the first draft of the HCD Plans and the results of the review of the inventory. Staff provided an overview of the project to date and an introduction to the draft Plans. Members of the public were able to ask questions informally of staff and the consultant in the open house. Copies of the draft HCD Plans were available online or by request. Approximately 45 participants attended for the ByWard Market session and 50 attended for Lowertown West.

A third meeting was held virtually via Zoom on September 5, 2024 for the ByWard Market HCD and September 12 for the Lowertown West HCD. These meetings were to present the revised HCD Plans. Staff provided an overview of updated draft statements of cultural heritage value, lists of attributes, statements of objectives and a summary of policies and guidelines. A copy of the draft HCD plans were posted the City's website and made available by email to owners or other interested parties upon request. Approximately 15 participants attended the information session for the ByWard Market and 35 attended for Lowertown West.

Notice of public meetings was delivered by mail to property owners, and circulated by the community association and Ward Councillor.

Online Survey

An online survey was sent to owners within both HCDs and shared broadly via the community association. The survey asked questions about what features or characteristics respondents believed were important or special in the HCDs and why, the results of which helped inform the preparation of the HCD Plans. As We Heard It Reports summarizing the results for both the [ByWard Market](#) and [Lowertown West](#) HCDs were compiled and posted on the project page.

“Office Hours”

Heritage staff coordinated several virtual “office hour” sessions in addition to the Zoom public meetings in September 2024. These offered an opportunity for individuals to meet with a heritage planner in a one-on-one setting to review questions about the HCD plan policies and guidelines.

Working Groups

In late 2021, staff contacted stakeholders from a mix of perspectives in the local community to request their participation on a working group/advisory committee for each HCD update.

Each of the groups were made up of 13 members including representatives from By Ward Market District Authority (previously Ottawa Markets), the National Capital Commission, business owners, the development industry, owners/residents, the community association, heritage conservation experts as well as the Ward Councillor and their assistant. The groups met for the first time in 2022. At this meeting, staff and the advisory committee discussed concerns in the HCD, what the goals and objectives of the new plan should be, and how those goals and objectives could be achieved.

Between 2021 and 2023, five virtual working group meetings were held for each HCD to discuss different sections of the plan as it evolved. Some correspondence was received via email as well. Staff shared summaries of the discussions and comments with the consultant to help inform the development of HCD Plan.

As the process proceeded, the Lowertown Community Association representatives expressed an interest in having briefings with staff separately from the established working groups. Several briefings were held as the project progressed. Representatives

provided comments on behalf of the LCA on early directions for the Plans as well as the draft versions in June 2023 and Fall 2023. Staff have worked closely with the LCA to address concerns, as appropriate, in the final revised HCD Plans.

Consultation with Development Industry

Given the complex and changing policy framework in the ByWard Market and Lowertown area and the need to accommodate for growth within the HCD, in late 2023 and early 2023 staff also offered individual briefings with representatives of the development community who are property owners within the HCDs as the Plans evolved. Uptake on these meetings was low.

Changes since June 2023 Drop in Open Houses

Copies of both HCD Plans were made available to the public at the open houses in June 2023; copies were also posted online. Staff received a number of comments, questions and suggestions at, and following the meetings.

Heritage staff have reviewed and considered all feedback and have worked with our consultant to make changes to the Plans, when it was determined to be appropriate. The following provides a summary of comments received group by theme. Additional changes, general formatting and copy edits were made throughout the document to ensure it could be easily understood and implemented as well as for consistency with other City of Ottawa documents.

Comments Summary for the Draft HCD Plans for the ByWard Market and Lowertown West HCDs

- *Clarification of terms, general reorganization*

Several comments requested additional explanation of terms used throughout the HCD. To address these comments, some additional terms were added in the glossary or replaced for clarity. The draft Plans were also reviewed to ensure that the terms were being used consistently. In some cases, the Plans were reorganized with policies or guidelines being relocated in the documents, if it was determined to be more appropriate.

- *Modifications to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and List of Attributes*

Staff received a number of comments relating to the Statements of Cultural Heritage Value and Lists of Attributes. A number of comments recommended recognizing

additional values that had not been identified through the original designation. For example, for the ByWard Market, it was suggested that that the HCD had cultural heritage value beyond its primary role as the early commercial center in Ottawa and site of one of the first public markets and for Lowertown West, beyond its role as an early residential working-class neighborhood. Comments noted that both HCDs were significant for their:

- association with key events in Ottawa’s history,
- association with different cultural organizations significant in Ottawa,
- association with organizations that had a role in the development of the areas,
- their role as hubs for newcomers to Canada and Ottawa.

For Lowertown West in particular, additional detail about the importance of French and English cultures and proximity to the surrounding waterways were important values that were raised as well. Accordingly, the Statements of Cultural Heritage Value were revised to reflect these types of themes.

Additionally, some comments recommended modifications to the list of attributes to recognize some that had been overlooked (e.g, proximity to the Rideau River) or to provide additional specificity about which elements expressed the revised statements (e.g, the arrangement and elements of ground floor storefronts, cantilevered balconies). Some attributes were reframed or elaborated on to provide additional clarity and to help convey both districts’ important sense of place.

Some comments were received that expressed a desire to include a more detailed history of both HCDs in their Statements of Cultural Heritage Value. Where this was suggested, staff reviewed the comments against the draft Statements to ensure that any related overarching themes had been appropriately captured. Ultimately, it was determined that the inclusion of extensive elaboration was not appropriate to include within the HCD Plan documents. Instead, the Plans refer to additional resources held on file with the Heritage Planning Branch including the original Heritage Conservation District studies for both HCDs.

- *Policies related to patios*

A number of comments were received related to the installation of patios in both HCDs, but particularly in relation to the ByWard Market. The drafts shared in June 2023 included a section related to the introduction of patios and their elements, intended to provide companion policies and heritage context to the City’s Patio By-law and Urban Design Guidelines for Commercial Patios. These sections have since been revised to

provide additional clarity about compatible materials, appropriate location of patio elements, and other design-related guidance. Some comments received requested that the HCD Plans include tightly prescribed policies by which to evaluate proposals for patios. It was determined that these types of prescribed requirements were not appropriate to include in an HCD Plan. Staff will continue to work with internal colleagues in the Public Realm Permits and Agreements Unit to implement the HCD policies (if approved) through the administration of the patio permit program.

- *Scope of an HCD Plan & Alignment with the City's Official Plan, By-Laws and Documents*

Some comments received suggested that the HCD Plans should include specific regulations for owners to improve and enhance the attractiveness of the HCDs, or that the Plans should outline penalties that the City could impose on owners who do deviate from approvals. These types of requirements are beyond the scope of an HCD Plan. The Plans can provide the framework by which to evaluate applications for alterations, but they can not force an owner to undertake work. Further, it was determined that enforcement is more appropriately outlined in the OHA itself (Section 69), which provides for offences or contraventions of the *Act*.

Some comments also recommended that the HCD Plans should supersede other City bylaws or documents in order to provide a simple, single source for how an area should grow and change. Staff appreciate the complexity of the policy framework in this area and recognize that it can be confusing to know where to look for the appropriate direction. However, the components of an HCD Plan are prescribed by the OHA; in staff's opinion, deviating too far from these increases the risk of legal challenges. Further, often other tools are better suited to managing certain content/subject matter, given the existing framework in place. In staff's opinion, the City's suite of policy documents are intended to work alongside each other and one should not take precedence over another, but instead work towards the same objectives. For these reasons, it was determined that the HCD Plans should focus on supporting and complementing related bylaws and documents and to provide context from a heritage perspective, where it was determined to be appropriate.

- *New construction, infill and intensification*

A number of comments were received relating to the draft policies for new construction within the HCDs. Some comments suggested that the draft policies be revised to be more prescriptive to require new buildings to use certain types of material (i.e brick or

stone). Concerns were also raised regarding the potential for impact of larger/taller buildings in the HCDs. The HCD Plans were reviewed to ensure that the policies and guidelines provide an appropriate degree of direction as well as some discretion for a range of materials. They were also reviewed to ensure that HCDs' cultural heritage values and attributes could be appropriately conserved through their implementation.

Additional comments were raised in relation sections of the Plans' that provided direction on height, scale and mass of new buildings, as well as the potential location for taller buildings, noting concern for increased height in the core of both HCDs. The Plans have been drafted to be consistent with the City's Official Plan directions regarding intensification goals. In doing so, critical thought was given to how and where intensification could occur sensitively within the HCDs. Staff are of the opinion that the proposed policies provide appropriate direction for the conservation of the HCDs while also meeting the City's intensification goals (see staff report above).

- *Contextual category for Lowertown*

The Lowertown Community Association and some members of the working group provided comments suggesting that the inventory for the Lowertown West HCD should include a third "Contextual" category, similar to what is recommended for the ByWard Market HCD Plan. Staff have considered the creation of this third category and are of the opinion that taking a binary approach to categorization of properties is the most appropriate approach for Lowertown West. For the ByWard Market, the theme of reconstruction and taking inspiration from historic buildings is more prominent, and speaks to early philosophies in heritage conservation. For the Lowertown West HCD, buildings are more varied in typology, with influences from a range of styles. Accordingly, it was determined to proceed by following the City's recent practice for categorizing properties as being contributing or non-contributing.

- *Interpretations and Commemoration*

Staff received a number of comments related to the desire to enhance and more clearly recognize the areas within both HCDs. While the HCD Plans do not require interpretation elements, they do include objectives and guidelines that would facilitate a variety of interpretation approaches (i.e commemorative plaques, hydro box wrapping, street signage), should members of the community, or stakeholders wish undertake them.