

**Subject: Zoning By-law Amendment – 214 Somerset Street East**

**File Number: ACS2024-PDB-PSX-0032**

**Report to Planning and Housing Committee on 4 December 2024**

**and Council 11 December 2024**

**Submitted on November 28, 2024 by Derrick Moodie, Director, Planning Services,  
Planning, Development and Building Services**

**Contact Person: Margot Linker, Planner II, Development Review All Wards**

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**Ward: Rideau-Vanier (12)**

**Objet: Modification du Règlement de zonage – 214, rue Somerset Est**

**Dossier : ACS2024-PDB-PSX-0032**

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

**le 4 décembre 2024**

**et au Conseil le 11 décembre 2024**

**Soumis le 28 novembre 2024 par Derrick Moodie, Directeur, Services de la  
planification, Direction générale des services de la planification, de  
l'aménagement et du bâtiment**

**Personne ressource: Margot Linker, Urbaniste, Examen des demandes  
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**Quartier: Rideau-Vanier (12)**

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Planning and Housing Committee recommend Council approve an amendment to Zoning By-law 2008-250 for 214 Somerset Street East, as shown in Document 1, to rezone the subject property from Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 2488, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[2488]-c) and Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 480, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[480]-c) to Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 'xxxx', Maximum Building Height 11.5 Metres, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5)-c), to permit a four-storey low-rise apartment building with an accessory office use, and site-specific performance standards, as detailed in Document 2.
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 December 11, 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 d'approuver une modification du Règlement de zonage 2008-250 afin de faire passer le zonage du 214, rue Somerset Est, un bien-fonds illustré dans le document 1, de Zone résidentielle de densité 4, sous-zone UC, exception urbaine 2488, suffixe de quartier résidentiel à vocation commerciale (R4UC[2488]-c) et de Zone résidentielle de densité 4, sous-zone UC, exception urbaine 480, suffixe de quartier résidentiel à vocation commerciale (R4UC[480]-c) à Zone résidentielle de densité 4, sous-zone UC, exception urbaine 'xxxx', hauteur de bâtiment maximale de 11,5 mètres, suffixe de quartier résidentiel à vocation commerciale (R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5)-c), et ainsi permettre la construction d'un immeuble résidentiel de quatre étages (faible hauteur) assorti d'une utilisation accessoire de bureau et de normes fonctionnelles propres à l'emplacement, comme l'expose en détail le document 2.

2. Que le Comité de la planification et du logement donne son approbation afin que la section du présent rapport consacrée aux détails de la consultation soit incluse en tant que « brève explication » dans le résumé des observations écrites et orales du public, qui sera rédigé par le Bureau du greffe 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 prévue le 11 décembre 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.

## BACKGROUND

Learn more about [link to Development Application process - Zoning Amendment](#)

For all the supporting documents related to this application visit the [link to Development Application Search Tool](#).

### Site location

214 Somerset Street East

### Owner

Ottawa Community Housing (c/o Barron Meyerhoffer)

### Applicant

Fotenn Consultants Inc.

### Architect

CSV Architects

### Description of site and surroundings

The subject site is located at the southwest corner of the Somerset Street East / Nelson Street intersection in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood. The immediate area is generally characterized by a mix of low-rise residential development. Further north is Francojeunesse Public Elementary School and some commercial uses. To the east is the Sandy Hill Community Centre and further east is low-rise residential buildings and Strathcona Park. Further south is the Minto Sports Complex Fitness Centre and Viscount Alexander Public School. Further west is the University of Ottawa and the uOttawa O-Train Station.

The L-shaped site has 14.1 metres of frontage on Nelson Street and 30.48 metres of frontage on Somerset Street East, with a lot area of approximately 535 metres squared. There is a notable grade that slopes eastward down Somerset and to the south down Nelson. The site was previously occupied by rooming units, which are now vacant. There are hydro wires located in front of the property on the Somerset frontage and a hydro pole on the Nelson frontage. The site is currently split zoned R4UC[2488]-c and R4UC[480]-c.

### **Summary of proposed development**

The purpose of this application is to facilitate the development of a four-storey low-rise apartment building with 1,235 metres squared gross floor area, containing 23 studio supportive housing units and an accessory office under Ottawa Community Housing (OCH). Rents are anticipated to be the maximum shelter allowance established under the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works Program (OW) for 50 years, funded through OCH and the City of Ottawa through the Housing Accelerator Fund. The existing building will be demolished to accommodate the new building.

The supportive housing project will include multiple fully accessible units, a communal kitchen, multi-purpose room and shared laundry facilities as well as office space for Options Housing staff. Zero resident and visitor vehicle parking spaces are proposed, and 23 covered bicycle parking spaces are proposed in the rear yard. Site-specific design and details will be confirmed through a subsequent site plan control approval process.

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

The Zoning By-law Amendment application seeks to rezone the subject property from Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 2488, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[2488]-c) and Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 480, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[480]-c) to Residential Fourth Density, Subzone UC, Urban Exception 'xxxx', Maximum Building Height 11.5 Metres, Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix (R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5)-c), as shown on Document 1, to permit a 23-unit low-rise apartment building with an accessory office use, and to add the following site-specific zoning exceptions:

- Office, accessory to permitted residential uses is added.
- Existing Average Grade is measured pursuant Clause 139(5)(b). Where an existing building is located where the measuring points are intended to be taken from, the nearest available existing measuring point can be used instead.

- Minimum lot width for a low-rise apartment: 14.10 metres.
- Subclause 161(16)(b)(i) is not applicable.
- An interior yard area required by Clause 144(5)(b) is not applicable.
- A garbage and recycling accessory structure is permitted to be located 0 metres from the principal building and be set back 0 metres from the westerly interior side lot line.
- A bicycle parking enclosure is permitted to be located 0 metres from another building and be set back 0 metres from the westerly side lot line and rear lot line.
- Despite any provision to the contrary, no motor vehicle parking spaces or visitor parking spaces are required.
- Subsection 141(4) is not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Public consultation**

Two comments on the subject application were received through circulation.

For this proposal's consultation details, see Document 3 of this report.

### **Official Plan**

The subject property is within the Downtown Core Transect Policy Area per Schedule 'A' and designated 'Minor Corridor' per Schedule 'B1' in the Official Plan. The Downtown Core is intended for higher density development where the urban context supports it. The Official Plan directs intensification towards Corridors within the built-up urban area to support housing growth and an evolution towards 15-minute neighbourhoods. This area prioritizes alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling and transit. The Minor Corridor designation permits low-rise buildings that support intensification within proximity to services and amenities. An identified part of healthy and inclusive communities in Section 2.2.4 in the Official Plan is to provide different housing options including working with community partners to include affordable housing which strives to meet the City's targets under its 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. Further, Section 4.2 of the Official Plan speaks to encouraging a range of flexible and context-sensitive housing, affordable housing unit targets, and assistance for non-profit housing providers through Zoning By-law amendments.

### **Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan**

The subject property is located within the Sandy Hill Character Area and designated Corridor with a maximum building height of four storeys within the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan. This area is intended to preserve the residential nature of the neighbourhood while providing for a broad range of socio-economic groups. As part of the site development, the scale, form, and proportion should have regard for sunlight and air.

### **Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing**

The Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing are applicable to the proposal. The purpose of the guidelines is to help create low-rise infill that results in a more compact urban form and achieves a good fit in existing neighbourhoods. The guidelines encourage new low-rise development to be designed to face and animate the public street by orienting principal entries, windows, porches and key internal uses at street level. It also encourages continuing a uniform setback along the street to better fit into the neighbourhood pattern, as well as considering the scale and massing of the adjacent surrounding dwellings.

### **Planning rationale**

The proposed development contains affordable housing units with an accessory office use and is located along a corridor in close proximity to a Hub area and the uOttawa O-Train station, responding to Official Plan policies regarding healthy and inclusive communities with a mix of housing options and densities that will support local shops and services.

Section 4.2 of the Official Plan speaks to prioritizing affordable housing, coordinating with goals of the City's Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, with a toolkit of incentives including alternative development standards and application processing priority. Section 4.2.1 of the Official Plan speaks to appropriately balancing the value to the public interest of development application requirements against the impact to housing affordability. Section 4.2.2 references targets within the City's Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, which this proposal assists the City in reaching.

The Downtown Core Transect and the Minor Corridor designation support a mix of uses. The proposed development will include an office for Options Housing Staff located on level 1. The office space is proposed to be 7.64 square metres in size and while abutting Somerset Street East, it will be below grade and will not have an impact on the public realm or street activation. The accessory office use is an appropriate small-scale, non-residential use that will support the affordable housing development. The purpose of the permitted accessory use is to ensure that the building is still reviewed as a low-

rise apartment dwelling, despite having a non-residential use within it. The proposal is supported by the Official Plan and represents good planning.

In reference to Section 4.2, the Department has reviewed the proposed amendments with some flexibility when applying development standards, including eliminating parking requirements on the subject property. Section 4.1.4 of the Official Plan supports minimum parking requirements to be reduced or eliminated where a site is within proximity of rapid transit. The site is within 5 minutes walking distance of the uOttawa O-Train station. There is direction to prioritize alternative modes of transportation, especially when in proximity of services and amenities.

Ottawa Community Housing has identified a specific demand for affordable housing in the form of studio units in this area of the city. The organization provides larger unit types in other buildings that they own. The requirement for two-bedroom units under Section 161(16)(b)(i) should not apply to this proposed affordable housing development.

The development proposes to achieve increased density and affordable housing within a low-rise built form through an increased building height to 11.5 metres, whereas the current maximum building height is 11 metres for a low-rise apartment building. The Official Plan directs the highest densities and tallest heights towards Corridors, per Section 6.2.1.

The zoning provisions for corner lots do not contemplate L-shaped lots like the subject site. The way that the proponent has oriented the building and rear yard amenity area is an appropriate way to handle the typical interior yard area requirement on this specific site. The proposed building appropriately accounts for the interior side yard conditions on abutting properties and is sensitive to the rear yard of 442 Nelson Street by not providing windows directly abutting this yard.

The garbage and recycling enclosures, as well as the covered bicycle parking, will include the retaining wall against the abutting properties to the west due to the significant grade change on the site. The waste will be stored in a structure below 159 and 210 Henderson Street's grade and will abut the principal building to minimize impacts on 442 and 444 Nelson Street.

It is proposed to maintain the Residential Neighbourhood Commercial Suffix, which exists in the current zoning codes, to permit a variety of small, local-oriented convenience and service uses on this site which will support the evolution towards 15-minute neighbourhoods and to align with supporting policies which encourage mixed-use development. While such non-residential uses are not currently proposed, the suffix would allow for some flexibility in the redevelopment of the subject property. Given the complicated grading of the site, if a small-scale commercial use is proposed facing

Somerset Street East, this might be considered the second storey, whereas it is typically only permitted on the ground floor or basement. Limitations of the commercial location is proposed to be removed from the subject site.

The proposed development represents intensification in a low-rise built form and in close proximity to transit, amenities and services, all in accordance with Official Plan policies noted above.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that it is consistent with the 2024 Provincial Policy Statement.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

Councillor Plante is aware of the application and will be meeting with all relevant stakeholders. Comments will be submitted after-the-fact.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS**

There were no advisory committee comments received.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendation.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no servicing constraints identified for the proposed rezoning at this time. Servicing capacity requirements to be confirmed at time of site plan. Sanitary capacity is only provided as a guide at time of rezoning. Allocation of sanitary capacity is typically committed on a first come first served basis at time of site plan application.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications.



## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no anticipated accessibility impacts associated with the recommendations of this report. The proposed development is subject to the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and the Ontario Building Code (OBC) as it pertains to accessibility standards. Accessibility will be reviewed and confirmed prior to Site Plan approval and the issuance of building permit.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment will be reviewed upon a Site Plan Control submission.

## **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priorities:

- A city that has affordable housing and is more livable for all.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS**

The statutory 90-day timeline for making a decision on this application under the *Planning Act* will expire on December 16, 2024.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Zoning Key Map

Document 2 Details of Recommended Zoning

Document 3 Consultation Details

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed development is in keeping with the direction of the Official Plan, Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan, and Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Rise Infill Housing. The proposed zoning will permit the advancement of provision of affordable housing units in the Downtown Core transect. In consideration of applicable Official Plan policies and compatibility of the use in the area, the Zoning By-law Amendment is recommended for approval.

## **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

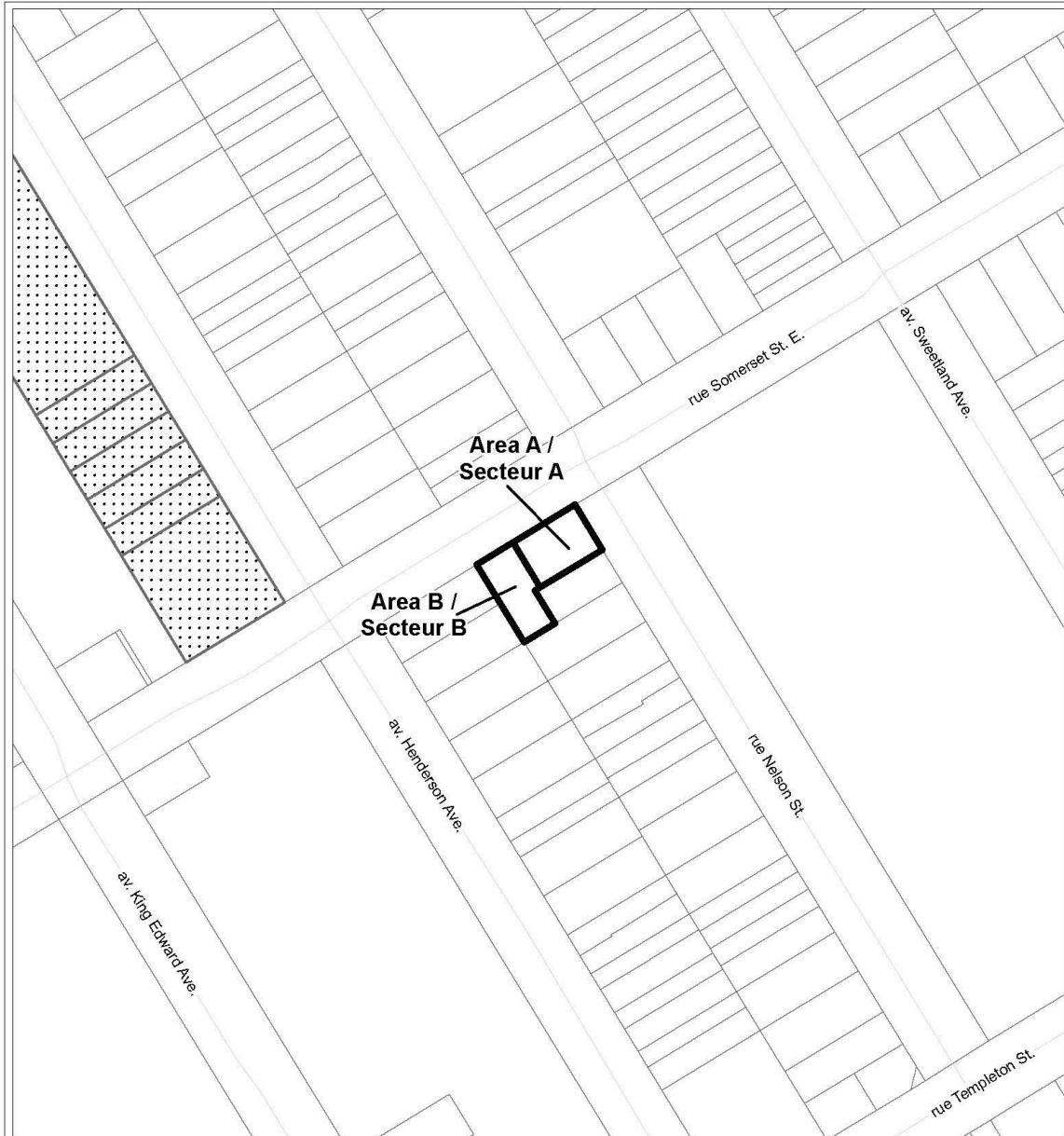
O'Brien, Program Manager, Property Assessment and PILTS, Finance and Corporate Services Department (Mail Code: 26-76) of City Council's decision.



The Planning, Development and Building Services Department will prepare an implementing by-law and forward it to Legal Services.

Legal Services, City Manager's Office to forward the implementing by-law to City Council.

Planning Operations, Planning Services to undertake the statutory notification.

Document 1 – Zoning Key Map



		LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION ZONING KEY PLAN / SCHÉMA DE ZONAGE	
<b>214 rue Somerset St E.</b>		Area A to be rezoned from R4UC[480]-c to R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5) -c Le zonage du secteur A sera modifié de R4UC[480]-c à R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5) -c Area B to be rezoned from R4UC[2488]-c to R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5) -c Le zonage du secteur B sera modifié de R4UC[2488]-c à R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5) -c	
D02-02-24-0047      24-1279-D		[Dotted Pattern]      Heritage (Section 60) Patrimoine (Article 60)	
I:\CO\2024\ZKP\Somerset_214		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)	
<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>			
<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>			
REVISION / RÉVISION - 2024 / 11 / 12			

## Document 2 – Details of Recommended Zoning

The proposed change to the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law No. 2008-250 for 214 Somerset Street East:

- 1) Rezone the lands as shown in Document 1;
- 2) Add a new exception xxxx to Section 239 – Urban Exceptions with provisions similar in effect to the following:
  - a) In Column I, Exception Number, add the text “xxxx”
  - b) In Column II, Applicable Zones add the text “R4UC[xxxx] H(11.5)-c”
  - c) In Column III, Additional land uses permitted,
    - “Office, accessory to a permitted residential use.”
  - d) In Column V, Provisions, add the text:
    - Existing Average Grade is measured pursuant to Clause 139(5)(b). Where an existing building is located where the measuring points are intended to be taken from, the nearest available existing measuring point can be used instead.
    - Subclause 161(16)(b)(i) is not applicable.
    - Minimum lot width for a low-rise apartment: 14.10 metres.
    - An interior yard area required by Clause 144(5)(b) is not applicable.
    - A garbage and recycling accessory structure is permitted to be located 0 metres from the principal building and be set back 0 metres from the westerly interior side lot line.
    - A bicycle parking enclosure is permitted to be located 0 metres from another building and be set back 0 metres from the westerly side lot line and rear lot line.
    - Despite any provision to the contrary, no motor vehicle parking spaces or visitor parking spaces are required.
    - Subsection 141(4) is not applicable.

## **Document 3 – Consultation Details**

### Notification and Consultation Process

Notification and public consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Public Notification and Public Consultation Policy approved by City Council for Zoning By-law amendments. Two public comments were received during the circulation of the file.

### Public Comments and Responses

#### **Comment:**

There was a comment noting that the neighbourhood was previously single detached dwellings and is now predominantly students with the exception of a shelter for women. The resident questioned if the proposed tenants will be students or families, and were concerned how low-income, subsidized apartments will mix with a student population. The resident suggested that these new units could be used for students due to the proximity to the campus and fit into the community.

#### **Comment:**

There was a commenter who noted that the existing building is owned by OCH and were concerned about the previous conditions returning, such as the fire, ambulances and police departments responding to emergencies. The resident is concerned about the ability to manage potential issues that come out of the supportive housing building, and the impacts on the existing residents in the area. The resident was also concerned about increasing density and apartments in this neighbourhood. They noted nearby buildings that cause a lot of commotion, landlords who neglect the garbage, and the transient neighbourhood. The commenter was concerned about the existing addiction, mental health and hygiene issues in this neighbourhood, and how the proposed development will fit into the area. They were also concerned that the City does not know who the clients are going to be that are getting supportive housing.

The commenter also raised concerns regarding not requiring parking on the subject site and the resulting on-street parking from visitors and tenants.

#### **Response:**

- The existing zoning on the subject site permits the construction of a low-rise apartment building. The Zoning By-law amendment proposes to make deviations to the performance standards for a low-rise apartment building.

- The subject site is located within the Downtown Core, along a Minor Corridor, and less than 400 metres from an O-Train Station. This area is intended to accommodate higher density development due to the close proximity and access to amenities and services.
- The intent is to accommodate affordable housing on site. Ottawa Community Housing has noted a demand for studio units in their housing stock, and they will determine the tenants for this building. The requested Zoning By-law amendments relate to adding an office use and built form. OCH will determine unit types and the tenant profile.
- There are other city by-laws in effect which may apply, such as property standards and noise.
- A property developed without parking is intended to attract tenants that do not own vehicles. The subject site is located in close proximity to transit, cycling infrastructure, and walking distance of services and amenities.