

**Subject: Zoning By-law Amendment – Adding Shelter Use to Zones within the  
Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban and Suburban Transects**

**File Number: ACS2025-PBDS-PSX-0032**

**Report to Planning and Housing Committee on 9 April 2025**

**and Council 16 April 2025**

**Submitted on April 3, 2025 by Derrick Moodie, Director, Planning Services,  
Planning, Development and Building Services**

**Contact Person: Solé Soyak, Planner II, Development Review All Wards**

**613-315-1597, Sole.Soyak@ottawa.ca**

**Ward: All Wards in the Urban Boundary.**

**Objet : Modification du Règlement de zonage – Ajout de l'utilisation de  
refuges aux zones dans les transects du cœur du centre-ville, du secteur urbain  
intérieur, du secteur urbain extérieur et du secteur de banlieue**

**Dossier : ACS2025-PBDS-PSX-0032**

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

**le 9 avril 2025**

**et au Conseil le 16 avril 2025**

**Soumis le 3 avril 2025 par Derrick Moodie, Directeur, Services de la planification,  
Direction générale des services de la planification, de l'aménagement et du  
bâtiment**

**Personne ressource : Solé Soyak, Urbaniste II, Examen des demandes  
d'aménagement tous les quartiers**

**613-315-1597, Sole.Soyak@ottawa.ca**

**Quartier : Tous les quartiers situées à l'intérieur du périmètre d'urbainsation**

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Planning and Housing Committee recommend Council approve an amendment to Zoning By-law 2008-250 for all Land in the Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban and Suburban Transects, as shown in Document 1, to permit emergency shelters and transitional shelters in all zones other than the EP – Environmental Protection, ME – Mineral Extraction, IH – Heavy Industrial zones, IG – General Industrial zones, IL – Light Industrial zones and IP – Business Park zones, to conform with the Official Plan, 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 April 16, 2025,” 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* visant tous les terrains dans les transects du cœur du centre-ville, du secteur urbain intérieur, du secteur urbain extérieur et du secteur de banlieue, comme illustré dans le document 1, pour permettre l’aménagement de refuges d’urgence et de refuges de transition dans toutes les zones autres que les zones de protection de l’environnement (EP), les zones d’extraction de minerais (ME), les zones d’industrie lourde (IH), les zones d’industrie générale (IG), les zones industrielles et logistiques (IL) et les zones de parc industriel (IP), afin de les rendre conformes aux dispositions du Plan officiel, comme l’expose en détail le document 2.
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 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 lors de la réunion du Conseil

**municipal prévue le 16 avril 2025, 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](#).

At the February 12, 2025, meeting, Council directed Staff to bring forward a proposed amendment to By-law 2008-250 that would permit shelter as a land use in all urban zones, consistent with the proposal in the draft comprehensive zoning by-law and Official Plan. At the same time, Council approved that “shelter” shall have the same definition as that in By-law 2008-250 until such time as that may be amended through a future new comprehensive zoning by-law and approved that regardless of the modification to By-law 2008-250 effected as a result of this motion, any shelter use at 40 Hearst Way would be required to seek a re-zoning to permit shelter as a use, and that staff provide the necessary zoning language to give effect to this direction. The zoning amendment will directly address the City’s Housing and Homelessness Emergency.

The motion also approved that “shelter” will have the same definition as that in the Zoning By-law 2008-250 until such time as that may be amended through a future new comprehensive zoning by-law and directed staff to define “emergency and transitional” shelter and “purpose built student housing” as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review, expected by Q1 2026. A copy of the motion is provided in Document 4.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Public consultation**

Notification and public consultation were undertaken in accordance with the Public Notification and Consultation Policy approved by Council. A newspaper advertisement was published in both the Ottawa Citizen and Le Droit on February 26, 2025, for a city-wide notification as the zoning by-law amendment affects multiple properties within the urban boundary. Staff received comments from two residents and four community associations. The comments generally support the amendment as it will address homelessness in the city; however, the following concerns and suggestions were outlined by the community associations:

- Clear definitions of emergency and transitional shelter are needed

- Ensure equitable distribution of shelters across the city
- Introduce zoning performance standards such as size, setbacks, number of beds, building design, CPTED, etc., to mitigate negative impacts.
- Have meaningful public consultations with the community to address concerns.
- Implement good neighbour policies for better engagement and communication with the community.

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

## **Official Plan**

Policy 4.2.4(2) of the Official Plan states that emergency and transitional shelters are a key component of the housing continuum. Furthermore, "Transitional Shelter" and "Emergency Shelter" shall be permitted in all urban designations and zones as an accessory or ancillary uses in institutional uses and not establish restrictions, including minimum separation distances or caps, that limit the opportunity to provide such housing forms.

Urban designations are located within the Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban and Suburban Transect Policy areas and in the urban boundary as per Schedule A of the Official Plan as noted in Document 5. Section 6 of the Official Plan identifies Hubs, Corridors (mainstreet and minor), Neighbourhoods, Industrial and Logistics, Mixed Industrial, and Special District designations as urban designations in which the zoning amendment will apply. However, staff recommend that lands within the Industrial and Logistics and Mixed Industrial designations be excluded as these designations do not permit sensitive land uses.

## **Planning rationale**

In 2018, the City declared a housing and homelessness emergency. At the time, the Official Plan direction was to permit shelters wherever a dwelling was allowed; however, their "size and location" were to be determined through Zoning By-law 2008-250. Section 134 of the Zoning By-law reflects the former policy by regulating shelters, with provisions such as minimum distance separation between lots containing shelters and between minor institutional zones containing a shelter adjacent to a residential zone.

The direction in policy 4.2.4(2) of the new Official Plan is far more permissive, which removes "restrictions, including minimum separation distances or caps, whose effect is to limit the opportunity to provide such shelter and housing forms" from the Zoning By-law. Therefore, the existing Section 134 does not implement the direction of the current Official Plan.

The proposed Zoning By-law amendment within Document 2 will replace Section 134 and will read similarly to Section 704 of Draft 1 of the New Zoning By-law, which permits shelters in all zones within the Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban and Suburban Transects, other than the EP – Environmental Protection, ME – Mineral Extraction, IH – Heavy Industrial zones. The amendment also introduces a new schedule identifying the transects to which the amendment applies and excludes, in addition to the zones mentioned above, IG – General Industrial, IL – Light Industrial and IP – Business Park zones, given that sensitive land uses are not permitted on those zones. Shelters located in residential zones will be subject to the zoning provision of Section 130 - Non-Residential Uses in Residential Zones, which state that “the non-residential use must comply with the residential zone regulations that apply to the highest density residential use permitted in that zone.” Additionally, as approved through the motion, Exception 1438 will also be amended to prohibit "shelter" as a permitted use; Exception 1438 applies to the lands at 40 Hearst Way.

Staff have also been directed to define “emergency and transitional” shelter and “purpose built student housing” as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review, expected by Q1 2026.

### **Provincial Planning Statement**

The recommended zoning by-law amendment is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement. Section 2.2.1 b)1 states that an appropriate range and mix of housing options is to be provided by Planning authorities by permitting housing options that meet the needs of current and future residents in terms of social, health, economic and well-being requirements.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications as the zoning by-law amendment only affects lands within the urban boundary.

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

All ward councillors have been notified of the Zoning By-law Amendment.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

As the proposed amendment to the Zoning By-law is city initiated, there is no appeal right should the amendment not be adopted by Council. Given the non-site specific nature of the zoning amendment, this amendment is subject to appeal by persons who make written and/or oral submissions with respect to such amendments. Should the

amendments be appealed, the duration of any hearing would be dependent upon the nature of such appeals.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct asset management implications associated with this report. As is usual practice, where more intense use of land is proposed, prior confirmation of the adequacy of servicing capacity will be required on a case-by-case basis.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no direct accessibility Impacts associated with this report.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

### **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.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS**

The statutory 90-day timeline for making a decision on this application under the *Planning Act* will expire on May 12, 2025.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Zoning Schedule

Document 2 Details of Recommended Zoning

Document 3 Consultation Details

Document 4 Official Plan Schedule A – Transect Policy Areas

**CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends the approval of this report as the amendment will bring the Zoning By-law into conformity with Official Plan policies that support transitional shelters in all zones.

**DISPOSITION**

Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to notify the owner; applicant; Krista O'Brien, Program Manager, Tax Billing & Control, Finance and Corporate Services Department (Mail Code: 26-76) of City Council's decision.

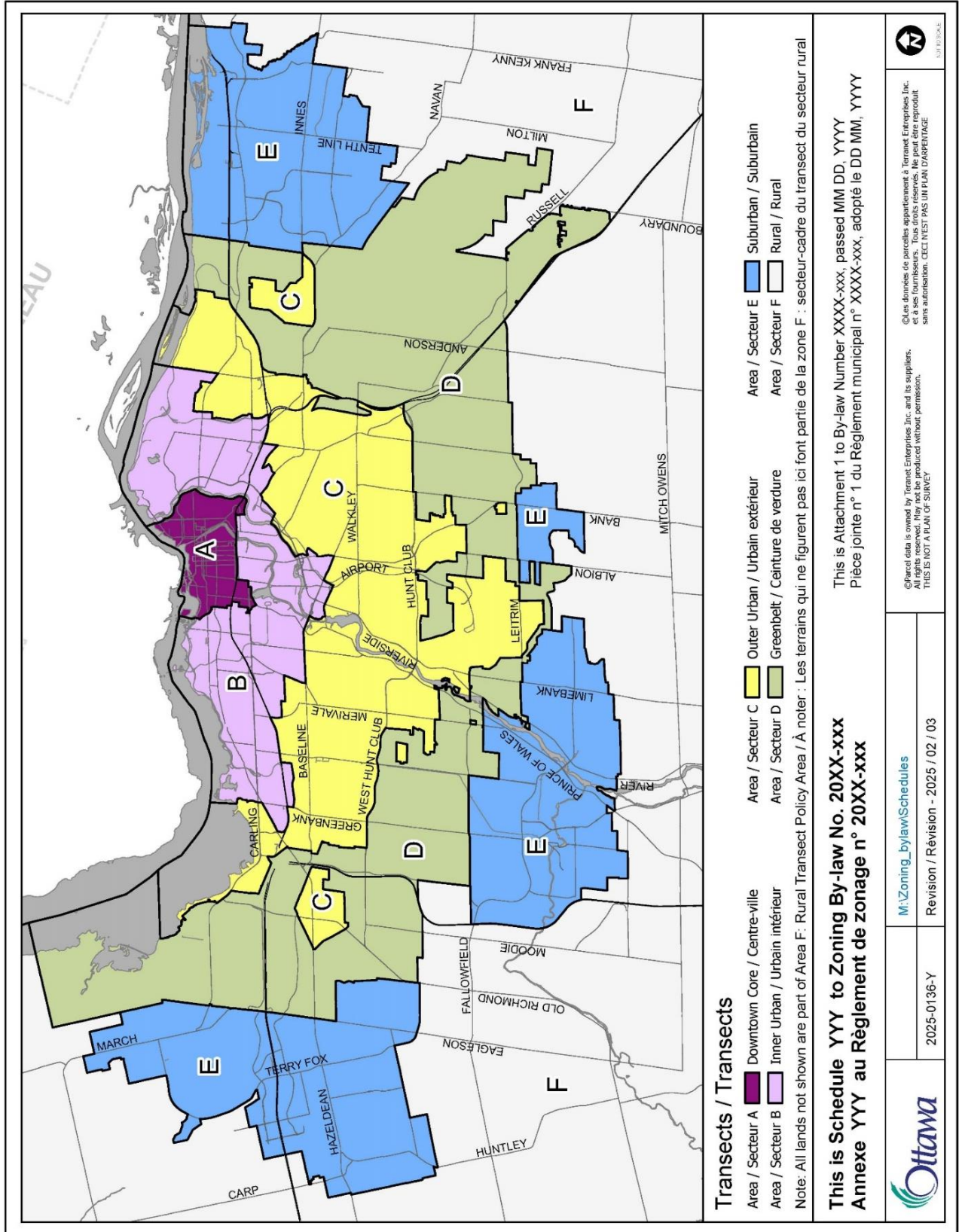
The Planning, Development and Building Services Department will prepare an implementing by-law and forward it to Legal Services.

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 Schedule

For an interactive Zoning map of Ottawa visit [geoOttawa](http://geoOttawa)





## Document 2 – Details of Recommended Zoning

The proposed change to the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law No. 2008-250:

1. Amend Section 134 of the Zoning By-law No. 2008-250 by replacing it in its entirety with the following:
  - a. “134.
    - (1) A shelter is permitted in all zones within the Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban and Suburban transects as shown on Schedule A1 – Transects, other than the EP – Environmental Protection, ME – Mineral Extraction, IH – Heavy Industrial zones, IG – General Industrial zones, IL – Light Industrial zones and IP – Business Park zones.
    - (2) When located in a residential zone, shelters are subject to the provisions of Section 130.”
2. Amend Exception 1438 of Section 239 – Urban Exceptions of By-law 2008-250 with the following:
  - a. In Column IV Exception Provisions – Land uses prohibited, add the text “Shelter”
3. Add Schedule YYY, as shown on Document 1, to Part 17 – Schedules of By-law 2008-250.

## **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.

Planning staff received comments from two residents and five community associations. A summary of the public comments received, and staff responses are provided below.

### **Public Comments and Responses**

#### Comment:

I'm writing to voice my support for the zoning change to allow shelters throughout the city. This seems like both a good overall move in the long term and an important response to the lack of affordable and appropriate housing right now.

#### Response

Staff acknowledge the amendment will provide the opportunity for shelter options that support vulnerable groups.

### **Community Organization Comments and Responses**

#### General Burns Community Association

What has stood out most clearly is the absence of social services supports to be provided to people requiring emergency and transitional shelter. As we have seen reported in media, many people in need also require much regular supervision either because of mental health issues or incapacity and absence of socially-acceptable behaviours. Written into the permission for shelters to be placed within any area of the city must be assurance that there will be accompanying daily (or 24 hours if required) supports to assist residents to integrate into the neighbourhoods.

#### Response:

The provision of support services for shelters is outside of the scope of the amendment or applications under the *Planning Act*. Planning staff have forwarded this comment to Community and Social Services staff for their information.

### The Lowertown Community Association (LCA)

The Lowertown Community Association (LCA) is pleased to provide feedback on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment (File No. D02-02-25-0011), which seeks to permit shelters in all urban zones within the Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban, and Suburban Transects, as well as allow them as an accessory or ancillary use in all institutional land uses.

The LCA recognizes the need to address the City's declared Housing and Homelessness Emergency. It supports the zoning amendment as an excellent first step to help provide services to vulnerable people by expanding shelter capacity across the city.

However, the city will need to do much more to address the housing and homelessness crisis. There needs to be safeguards against further concentration of shelters in overburdened areas such as Lowertown and priority given to long-term housing solutions over simply expanding shelter capacity. While shelters play a role in emergency responses, they are not the answer to homelessness. The city needs to build permanent, supportive, and deeply affordable housing.

While the LCA supports the proposed amendment, we also urge the city to adopt and implement a bylaw ensuring that:

1. No single neighborhood continues to bear the bulk of responsibility for emergency housing. The Official Plan provides for emergency and transitional shelter throughout the urban area with no limits to concentration, nor direction on how shelter use anywhere in the City will be regulated. There is no provision for equitable distribution, limits on clustering or concentration, nor policies to ensure appropriate community integration as required under the Provincial Planning Statement. All 24 wards play a role in addressing this crisis, including suburban and rural areas that have historically been excluded from the conversation. We urge the city to engage in a transparent process to define metrics and ensure fairness in shelter distribution.
2. Zoning performance standards are clear and enforced. To manage external impacts within the community, zoning also needs to address additional performance standard under the bylaw:
  - the number of beds (ie ZBLA for 333 Montreal Rd)
  - mitigate and better integrate shelter facilities in Ottawa's communities,

- client, resident and neighbourhood safety and security (CPTED II),
- need for local “ambassador” and outreach services (cf Zoning Bylaw Amendment, Holding bylaw provision and Site Plan Control agreement for 333 Montreal Rd), and
- take into account the scale of deliveries, garbage storage and other building services which have potential neighbourhood impacts.

These may include requirements for minimum lot size, building design and outdoor space including soft landscaping and trees. The bylaw must also include a clear site plan control process, holding provisions and ensuring appropriate client amenity spaces and safety, as well as measures to mitigate negative impacts as appropriate to the project and its scale.

3. All shelters, new and existing, must implement section 13.7 of the [OTTAWA EMERGENCY SHELTER STANDARDS](#), which require publicly available good neighbour policies to facilitate how shelters engage, communicate, and work with the surrounding community to foster a positive relationship.
4. The focus shifts from shelters to permanent, affordable housing, ensuring that emergency services remain a temporary measure, not the default solution.

Avoid narrow definitions of shelter types that fuel public mistrust. The proposed emergency and transitional housing bylaw also must define the land use proposed pursuant to the Official Plan, and needs to be clear that it includes, where appropriate, shelter use that is now variably described as residential care facility (eg Corkstown), safe distancing centre, newcomer reception centre and overflow centre (Grandmaitre Arena) etc.

Response:

The proposed zoning amendment will allow for shelters to be located throughout the city and can assist in ensure there is more equitable distribution by eliminating regulatory barriers trough zoning. Staff have been directed to implement Policy 4.2.4. 2c which removes any restriction on caps or separation distances as that would not be in conformity with the Official Plan, however, zoning can regulate land uses and built form such as setbacks to ensure development is context sensitive. Staff acknowledge the LCA’s suggestion to implement section 13.7 of the “Ottawa Emergency Shelter Standards” however, that is outside of the scope of Council’s direction. Staff has been

directed to define “emergency and transitional” shelter and “purpose built student housing” as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review at the end of the year.

The Vanier Community Association (VCA)

*REFERENCE: Councillor and Chair PHC Jeff Leiper (Bulletin 422 on Proposed Shelter Bylaw)*

*“I should clarify that a permitted use is different from the limits that zoning puts on the size and density of building. Things like limits on height, setbacks and density would all continue to apply – a low-rise neighbourhood isn’t going to host a large shelter in its midst if my motion passes. But if it passes Council, there will no longer be a question as to whether one type of occupant is allowed, but another not. We would do away with that form of “people zoning” just as our Official Plan directs.*

*It’s also important to note that not every proposed shelter will require a re-zoning. There may be other consultations that the City wants to undertake when deciding where to put one, but zoning may not require that.*

*Until the zoning is changed uniformly across the city, if applications are made to re-zone properties to allow shelter use Council has little choice but to approve those given the explicit language of the Official Plan. In many cases, those will be over the opposition of some residents who will almost certainly invest significant time in providing feedback to those applications. If the conclusion of those applications is almost always foregone that just exacerbates cynicism in the planning process.”*

SUMMARY: Council recently directed Staff to prepare an interim bylaw for emergency and transitional shelters, pending the adoption of the comprehensive Zoning Bylaw. As the PHC Chair recently indicated to residents, in general terms he sees the requirement for a new draft zoning bylaw for emergency and transitional shelters to establish permitted use throughout the urban area. His note refers to zoning performance standards and limits related to “height, setbacks and density”. The HPC Chair also foresees the need for a consultative process as to where to put shelters. As he notes, the *Planning Act* prohibits “people zoning”. However, the *Act* and the PPS in favour of good planning provide for the regulation of use and other performance standards, including through site plan control agreements (SPCA). The VCA believes that a new zoning bylaw needs to be specific regarding definitions (the City uses numerous definitions depending on the existing zoning) and performance standards for shelter typologies, scale of use, management of impacts and compatibility with the surroundings. In the past, this has been done in setting conditions (exceptions as per

the zoning bylaw schedule) related to a ZBLA, a temporary holding provision and other measures. The VCA argues that previous Council planning decisions permitting shelter use established exceptions and other conditions under the applicable bylaw to permit shelter use. These should be reflected in the new bylaw, together with City guidelines for such use, as appropriate for zoning, including for example, a provision similar to past holding bylaw conditions, perhaps in the form of a requirement for a suitably comprehensive SPCA.

Notwithstanding, the comments here, the VCA continues to call for Housing First. Lengthy stays for the homeless in emergency/transitional shelters, overflow centres or hotels do not meet the standards of Housing First nor accord rights to housing to shelter clients, including under the Ontario Residential *Tenancies Act*. Shelters are, moreover more expensive than housing and provide little supports to address health needs of clients, nor the addictions/mental crisis. The VCA continues to support the Community Coalition research results and recommendations on family homelessness (CMHC Housing Lab 2022).

The VCA provided detailed comments to the draft Official Plan concerning the terminology and provisions for emergency and transitional shelters, and transitional supportive housing as the draft described them. These comments were ignored. The Official Plan continues to ignore the goals of Housing First.

#### DETAILED COMMENTS:

Definitions: The City uses numerous terms for shelters and transitional shelters/housing. For shelters, terminology used by the City includes: emergency shelters, residential care facilities, safe distancing centres, newcomer reception and overflow centres. Emergency shelter data suggests stays of as long as 18 months while family shelters in hotels appear to be deemed temporary use with clients residing for lengthy periods. In the case of one such family shelter, the City made a sole source contract to remove shelter clients to a complex of apartment buildings leased at hotel rates for which the existing tenants were apparently renovicted. Drawing on the Official Plan, the Leiper motion refers to “transitional and transitional shelters”. Similarly, terminology for transitional housing or shelters is similarly vague. At its March 6, 2024 meeting, City Council approved a transitional housing project at 230 Queen St, expected to open in March, defining it as a “residential care facility” under the zoning bylaw (“The City will use the facility for the purpose of providing transitional housing which is considered a Residential Care Facility and permitted under the City of Ottawa Zoning Bylaw”). A staff report for the November 7 meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee

also confirmed for zoning purposes that the transitional housing facility at 1 Corkstown was a “residential care facility”. A new zoning bylaw for shelters and transitional housing should ensure appropriate definition to cover the applicable typologies and uses.

People Zoning: Councillor Leiper indicates that the OP does not permit “people zoning” and on this basis the Planning and Housing Committee has directed, for example, to remove the ward 12 cap on emergency shelters to support greater concentration of this land use in the ward but without considering the potential impacts and context.

However, the current City bylaw does not permit senior residences in some zones, for example. The issue in the case of the new shelter zoning bylaw is the need for relevant zoning performance standards for the proposed land use which should be well defined under the bylaw.

As part of the recommended Leiper motion as approved by Council , a direction sponsored by Councillor Plante states:

*DIRECTION TO STAFF (Councillor S. Plante) DIRECTION TO STAFF (Councillor S. Plante)*

*Report ACS2025-OCC-CCS-0002 will make the 2008-250 zoning bylaw consistent with Section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 of the city’s approved OP in advance of the new comprehensive zoning by-law slated for approval at Council this fall. The OP references “emergency shelter”, “transitional shelter” and “purpose built housing” but does not define them, and is relying on the existing shelter definition in By-Law 2008-250 s.54 and no definition of purpose built housing. Section 134 of the existing by-law, in order to make it consistent with the OP, has been rescinded.*

*That Staff be directed to define the terms ‘emergency and transitional’ shelter and ‘purpose built student housing’ as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review at the end of the year.*

The VCA welcomes this direction, but it is important to ensure that the interim and comprehensive bylaw on shelters also address land use. Staff use in recommending project approvals of terminology to avoid the term of shelter, namely the use, for example, of “residential care facility” appears intended to avoid the use of the term emergency and transitional shelters.

333 Montreal Road Emergency Shelter ZBLA Staff Report Site Plan Control Agreement and Holding Provision: The case of this approved application for a shelter provides a number of parameters for a new zoning bylaw on shelters in their various typologies and typologies. The November 2017 Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments for this

development on a traditional main street (TMZ) and the adjacent residential zone included a number of conditions established for shelter use at this site, including an on-going consultative process chaired by the City, a holding provision with 2 principal conditions, as well as detailed provisions in the Site Plan Control agreement which was concluded a number of years later (2022) before the property was finally acquired by the Applicant in 2023. In addition, the OMB/OLT decision on the SOS Vanier/Wabano appeal against the project provided relevant direction. It is also worth noting that the initial approval process was considered flawed by the then chair of the Community Services Committee, ultimately responsible for funding the services of the proposed facility, in that the process of approval limited to application of the *Planning Act* failed to consult with the committee despite, it seemed to the then Councillor and affected residents, the relevant provisions of the provincial planning policy statement and other considerations. Council subsequently stepped up with directions to staff to address the oversights.

In the view of the VCA, the typology and terminology/definitions applied by the City for the project, together with ignoring relevant provisions of the secondary plan, made the process further unsatisfactory. Justification of use based on calling it a “residential care facility” and a supportive housing component not as a residential apartment building which requires amenity space etc continues to raise concerns. The case of the residential development at 200 Baribeau in Vanier (now before the OLT) is another example of typology / definition misconstruction. The project was approved for a zoning bylaw approval as a townhouse PUD development but morphed for the site plan control process into a project which the City’s Legal Department apparently concluded represented a building typology of apartment blocks, not townhouses, and thus subject to the relevant zoning provisions for apartments.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO SHELTER USE:

Based on the outcomes of the review and approval of the emergency shelter at 333 Montreal Rd, a number of conclusions relevant to a new shelter bylaw can be identified:

- The ZBLA exceptions (2515 2516 2517) provided specific conditions including setbacks, parking and road access. 2515 also limited the size of the shelter space.
- The holding bylaw established 2 primary conditions to be met, including satisfaction of the General Manager (Planning) that:



- design Site Plan Control address safety design measures adopted as recommended by a CPTED II report;
- Implementation in Vanier, of the Ambassador program in place around the Salvation Army Shelter in Lowertown;
- The SPCA provided for a road modification to handle heavy truck delivery, parking spaces, indoor/outdoor amenity spaces for clients, security fencing, emergency services, shelter accommodation spaces, care facilities and accessory service delivery;
- Subsequent direction by Council (June 2022) to Housing Services to ensure that any future funding contracts between the City of Ottawa and the Salvation Army include the provision of “24/7 on site security and an active neighbourhood patrol to provide supports and response within a two-block radius of the facility.”
- Further undertakings include
  - Local consultation with the Community BIA, Police and community representatives;
  - Working closely with Housing Services staff to ensure the Ambassador Program in Vanier meets the requirements of the June 2022 Direction, including provision of 24/7 on site security and an active neighborhood patrol within a two-block radius of the facility.
  - To support the successful implementation of the Ambassador Program in Vanier, Housing Services staff will be looking at current and past community engagement programs to determine best practices as well as opportunities to leverage existing programs that the Salvation Army should consider for the facility at 333 Montreal Road.

It is worth noting that the shelter project at 333 Montreal Rd and, as forewarned during the OLT hearings, the prospect of such a large shelter continues to maintain an “overhang” affecting the Montreal Rd Revitalization project (still under way), property development, business investment and the availability of needed affordable housing in Vanier’s French Quarter and adjacent areas.

City Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Standards:

The VCA also calls for the zoning bylaw to incorporate relevant provisions of the City’s Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Standards for implementation through the

Site Plan Control process, with the Delegated Approval Report (DAR) and the subsequent SPC Agreement to require compliance under the bylaw. These include Good Neighbour agreements and other relevant conditions for the management impacts on neighbouring residents and properties as directed in past decisions of City Council.

[https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/oess\\_en\\_aoda.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/oess_en_aoda.pdf)

[https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/othps\\_en\\_aoda.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/othps_en_aoda.pdf)

Zoning Bylaw Performance Standards:

- Building set backs including increased setbacks in residential (R now proposed N/NMU) zones
- Adequate interior and exterior amenity space to reflect the number of beds
- Soft landscaping to reflect the size/number of beds of the shelter and meet CPTED standards for setbacks
- Suitable access for deliveries and emergency services with mitigated impacts on neighbouring residential properties
- Indoor garbage storage with suitable noise attenuation in the neighbourhood
- Suitable pedestrian access design to accommodate the flow of clients and visitors
- Adequate parking for employees, service providers and visitors
- Addition to Zoning Schedule with provisions to reflect typology and use (cf senior residences)
- Compliance with City Accessibility Standards
- Personal safety provisions for clients and staff

Accessory/Ancillary Use in Institutional Zones: The City Council direction does not refer to this proposal. As the VCA understands it, this represents permitted use as per Section 55, in effect extending shelter (habitation) use beyond the MD zone where it is permitted to a separate building. The staff review should address whether the maximum building size under Table (6) should not be limited in all zones while also taking into account suitable setback conditions in all zones. The 6 m building height limit may not

be appropriate in all zones but take into account angular plane/transition to adjacent properties, in addition to other impacts, in establishing setbacks

Community Consultation: The VCA believes that on-going consultation as stipulated in Council directions with respect to 333 Montreal Rd are required in the form of relevant Council directions to staff applicable for each project to be permitted.

Bylaw and Other Regulatory Enforcement: Bylaw enforcement both of the conditions approved for use and of on-going compliance with City bylaws concerning safety, building standards are important to contribute to the successful integration of shelters in a neighbourhood.

Delegated Authority: There should be clarity in respect of the new bylaw for withdrawal of delegated authority by the Ward Councillor.

Response:

Staff acknowledge the VCA's call for a "Housing First" approach to address homelessness in the City. The amendment seeks to expand permission from where shelters can be located which aligns with Official Plan Policy 4.2.4 with no caps or separation distance restrictions, which can assist in ensuring there is more equitable distribution of shelters. Matters such as CPTED II, appropriate setbacks and amenity requirements are outside of the scope of Council's directive and may be addressed through site plan control. While the *Planning Act* does not mandate public consultation for site plan control, the city provide notice of an application in accordance with the Council-approved [Public Notification and Consultation Policy](#) by posting a sign on the property and contacting registered community associations. Additional consultation is at the discretion of the proponent.

The reference to accessory or ancillary use in the Official Plan refers to shelters being secondary to an institutional use in the sense that a shelter can be co-located on a lot where a church or a community centre exists as opposed to accessory buildings and structures such as sheds, carport or garages which are regulated under Section 55 of the Zoning By-law. This policy was not part of Council direction to staff as part of the motion found in Document 4, but may be addressed in future.

Bill 109 removed the ability to withdraw Delegated Authority as of July 1, 2022.

## The Guildwood Residents Alliance (GRA)

On behalf of Guildwood Residents Alliance (GRA), we wish to comment on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment intended to “add shelter as a permitted use in all urban designations and zones”, in accordance with Policy 4.2.3 (2) of the Official Plan. Even though this Zoning By-law Amendment concerns land use, GRA believes that certain additional requirements must be incorporated in this ZBL Amendment to address specific operational needs of shelters, their impact on communities and their integration in neighbourhoods. A holistic approach is absolutely essential for shelter zoning.

### 1. Requirement for supportive services and operational standards

The Zoning By-law Amendment must specify operational requirements for shelters either directly or by incorporation by reference. These requirements include staffing levels, appropriate size limitations for effective community integration, security measures, and the provision of essential services such as mental health care, counselling, substance abuse treatment and employment training. The Zoning By-law Amendment must not remain silent on social infrastructure requirements. The Zoning By-law Amendment must also specify – directly or by incorporation by reference – performance standards to ensure that emergency and transitional shelters are operated in a manner that does not negatively impact the adjacent neighbourhood.

### 2. Requirement of Meaningful Community Engagement

Meaningful public engagement with the local neighbourhood is essential to address community concerns and build a positive relationship with neighbours. Public consultation must take place when the proposal for a shelter is still at a formative stage, and it must be carried out throughout the integration of the shelter in the community, in accordance with the guiding principles and practices of the City’s Public Engagement Strategy. Engaging with the local community at the start of a proposal is essential to ensure successful integration of the shelter within the community. Delegated authority for site selection of shelters should not preclude or prevent meaningful public engagement with the local community. The Zoning By-law Amendment should include a reference to the requirement of meaningful community engagement, continued monitoring and effective and timely resolution of issues.

### 3. Requirement of an ancillary Good Neighbour By-law

In order to balance the need for emergency and transitional shelters with the interests of the broader community and ensure enhanced accountability, GRA recommends that the City enact a Good Neighbour Bylaw similar to the by-law adopted by several cities of British Columbia, including Kamloops, Kelowna, West Vancouver, Mission, Penticton, Vernon and Abbotsford. A Good Neighbour Bylaw is intended to maintain community standards (property maintenance, noise control, public safety, etc.) and address the management of shelters. Such a By-law would contain a definition of nuisance that is broader than the current definition found in Ottawa's *Property Standards By-law*.

"NUISANCE" means any conduct, activity, or condition that unreasonably interferes with a Person's use and enjoyment of a public area or of land he or she owns or occupies, or which annoys or gives trouble, or is offensive, irritating, or a pest to anyone within the city.

(see <https://kamloops.civicweb.net/document/73376/> )

Thank you for your consideration of the above comments.

Response:

The proposed zoning amendment will allow for shelters to be located throughout the city and can assist in ensure there is more equitable distribution by eliminating regulatory barriers through zoning. Matters such as security requirements are outside of the scope of the Council direction. The city is bound by the regulations set out in the *Planning Act*. Section 34 of the *Planning Act* outlines the criteria and regulates the matters to be evaluated for a zoning by-law amendment. Supportive services and operational standards are beyond the scope of zoning.

Staff actively encourage applicant to pre-consultation with those who are potentially affected by future development prior to the submission of a proposal and to connect with the Ward Councillor. Public consultation has been undertaken in accordance with Section 34.(10.7) of the *Planning Act* and with the City's [Public Notification and Consultation Policy](#). All the registered community associations affected by this amendment were give a heads up followed by a formal circulation of the application. A newspaper ad was placed in The Ottawa Citizen and Le Droit to provide notice to the public of the upcoming zoning amendment including how to participate in the Planning and Housing Committee meeting.

### The Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa (FCA)

The Federation of Citizens' Associations (FCA) is pleased to bring to your attention its perspectives regarding the proposed amendment to the shelter zoning bylaw. We acknowledge the urgent need to address homelessness in our city and we continue to call for a Housing First approach with City resources focused on this goal.

The FCA supports the City's efforts, outlined in the Housing and Homelessness Plan, to divert the homeless, especially families, from emergency shelters and at least provide safe and secure transitional shelters to minimize emergency shelter needs and provide better outcomes for both singles and families. Transitional shelters should reduce the delays in obtaining housing while providing better support for the homeless who need social and health services.

The proposed emergency and transitional housing bylaw needs to define the land use proposed pursuant to the Official Plan, and the bylaw needs to be clear that it includes, where appropriate, shelter use that is now variably described as residential care facility (eg Corkstown), safe distancing centre, newcomer reception centre and overflow centre (Grandmaitre Arena) etc. The FCA welcomes Council's amendment to the Leiper motion to direct staff to ensure a review of definitions in its response.

Equitable Distribution: The Official Plan provides for emergency and transitional shelter throughout the urban area with no limits to concentration, nor direction how shelter use anywhere in the City will be regulated beyond the relevant residential, mixed, general, traditional and arterial mainstreet and institutional zoning provisions. There is no provision for equitable distribution, limits on clustering/concentration, nor policies to ensure appropriate community integration as required under the Provincial Planning Statement.

The FCA believes that shelters should be equitably distributed throughout the City to meet the needs of the homeless in their communities throughout Ottawa, together with other housing supports, including supportive housing. In the new zoning bylaw, staff have committed to equity among neighbourhoods. We urge the city to engage in a transparent process to define metrics and ensure fairness in shelter distribution, with particular attention to preventing overburdening of already vulnerable neighborhoods.

Shelter Size: The effectiveness of smaller versus larger shelters may be a subject of debate. We recommend an approach that considers the local context, client needs, and available resources when determining shelter size, with adequate funding and resources for comprehensive services. The relevant zoning where shelter use is to be

permitted, not unlike the schedule for senior residents, is expected to provide for typologies, size, height and accessory use, among others. Supportive housing which is covered by the provincial *Residential Tenancies Act* is already typically regulated as apartments to ensure adequate interior and outdoor amenity space for residents. Provision is made for medical services and security.

Provisions for transitional housing, not covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act* may require similar provisions under zoning consistent with the City's Transitional Shelter Standards and residential care facility use as applicable. Under the zoning bylaw schedule, emergency shelters need specific provisions for such typology. There are specific requirements for homeless clients, including support services, security and indoor and outdoor amenities. To manage external impacts within the community, zoning also needs to address additional performance standard under the bylaw: the number of beds (ie ZBLA for 333 Montreal Rd) and mitigate and better integrate shelter facilities in Ottawa's communities, taking into account security (CPTED II), need for local "ambassador" and outreach services (cf ZBLA, Holding bylaw provision and SPC agreement for 333 Montreal Rd) and take into account the scale of deliveries, garbage storage and other building services which have potential neighbourhood impacts. These may include requirements for minimum lot size, building design and outdoor space including soft landscaping and trees.

**Approval Process:** The requirement for added performance standards for the shelter typologies entails a robust site plan control process and agreement in the context of a Delegated Authority Report. It requires public consultation, on-going community engagement and removal of delegated authority by the Council as appropriate. While streamlining approvals is desirable, we caution against sacrificing thorough planning and community engagement for the sake of speed. We propose a balance that maintains on-going transparency and accountability while ensuring timely approvals.

**Prioritization of Permanent Housing:** We strongly support a "Housing First" approach and urge the city to prioritize permanent community housing solutions while recognizing the need for emergency and transitional shelters, transitional housing and supportive housing, as part of the continuum towards providing the homeless a home.

**Community Engagement:** We emphasize the importance of robust community engagement, education, and proactive strategies to address community concerns, and continued monitoring to mitigate potential conflict. Open communication and collaboration between shelter operators, residents, and the broader community are essential.

## Suggested Way Forward

We propose the following way forward to allow shelters in all urban areas while addressing community concerns:

- Ensure appropriate clarity under the bylaw of definitions for emergency and transitional housing, as directed by Council: Undertake analysis of appropriate typologies based on existing context and taking into account current and future zoning.
- Develop Clear and Transparent Equitable Distribution Policies: Establish specific guidelines and metrics for equitable shelter distribution, ensuring that no single neighborhood is disproportionately burdened. This includes more specific direction under the City's Housing and Homelessness Plan and the budgetary process. Ensure compliance and community updates of the Emergency Shelter Standards and the Transitional Housing Standards.
- Implement a Context-Sensitive Approach to Shelter Size and Use: Consider the specific needs of the local client population and available resources when determining shelter size, ensuring adequate funding and comprehensive services in the context of City emergency and transitional housing standards, policies and oversight.
- Provide for Council consideration appropriate zoning performance standards: This includes an outline of site plan control process, holding provisions and ensuring appropriate client amenity spaces and safety, as well as measures to mitigate negative impacts including ambassador and other programs as appropriate to project and its scale.
- Streamline Approvals While Maintaining Community Input: Balance the need for timely responses with thorough planning, especially site plan control and meaningful community engagement.
- Prioritize Permanent Housing Solutions: Adopt a "Housing First" approach while ensuring that shelters serve as a bridge to permanent housing, not a long-term solution. This includes for more supportive housing as well as increased number of rooming houses as part of neighbourhood zoning where appropriate.
- Foster Robust Community Engagement: Implement proactive strategies to engage diverse communities, address concerns, and promote positive relationships between shelter residents and the broader community.



We believe that by working together and considering these diverse perspectives, we can develop a comprehensive and compassionate approach to addressing homelessness in our city that benefits all residents.

Response:

Staff have initiated this change to zoning as a result of Council's direction at the Council meeting on February 12, 2025. At the same time, staff were directed to define "emergency and transitional" shelter and "purpose-built student housing" as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review, which is expected later this year.

Some matters in the letter are outside of the scope of the Council direction. Others relate to other City programs or operational activities. Staff in the Strategic Initiatives department who are responsible for shelter standards and housing development and funding have been made aware. Some shelters may be City-run while others are privately owned, developed and operated, with City oversight or funding.

File No. D02-02-25-0011 proposes to expand permissions for shelter locations. This aligns with Official Plan policy, and can assist in ensuring more equitable distribution by eliminating regulatory barriers through zoning. Section 4.2.4 Policy 2c also directs that zoning "*not establish restrictions, including minimum separation distances or caps, whose effect is to limit the opportunity to provide such shelter and housing forms*".

Zoning can regulate land uses and built form to ensure development is context-sensitive. Shelter size will not be regulated by caps or separation distances, as that would not be in conformity with the Official Plan, but can be evaluated for their fit based on lot size and functionality through either a building permit or site plan control.

Site plan control applications would be triggered when a shelter based on the City's Site Plan Control by-law for non-residential uses.

While the *Planning Act* does not mandate public consultation for site plan control, Ottawa provides notice by posting a sign on the property and contacting registered community associations, in accordance with the Council-approved [Public Notification and Consultation Policy](#). The *Planning Act* also requires that Site Plan approval be a staff decision, and the City of Ottawa has adopted a timeline target of 60 days.

**Document 4 – Transcript of Item 14.3 from Council Meeting dated February 12, 2025: Motion – Councillor J. Leiper – Shelter Use in all Zones**

File No.: ACS2025-OCC-CCS-0002 – Citywide

The item was put to Council and Carried on a vote of 18 Yeas to 3 Nays, with the following Direction to staff:

**DIRECTION TO STAFF (Councillor S. Plante)**

Report ACS2025-OCC-CCS-0002 will make the 2008-250 zoning bylaw consistent with Section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 of the city’s approved OP in advance of the new comprehensive zoning by-law slated for approval at Council this fall. The OP references “emergency shelter”, “transitional shelter” and “purpose built housing” but does not define them, and is relying on the existing shelter definition in By-Law 2008-250 s.54 and no definition of purpose built housing. Section 134 of the existing by-law, in order to make it consistent with the OP, has been rescinded.

**That Staff be directed to define the terms ‘emergency and transitional’ shelter and ‘purpose built student housing’ as part of the Comprehensive Zoning review at the end of the year.**

**Committee recommendation(s)**

**That Council:**

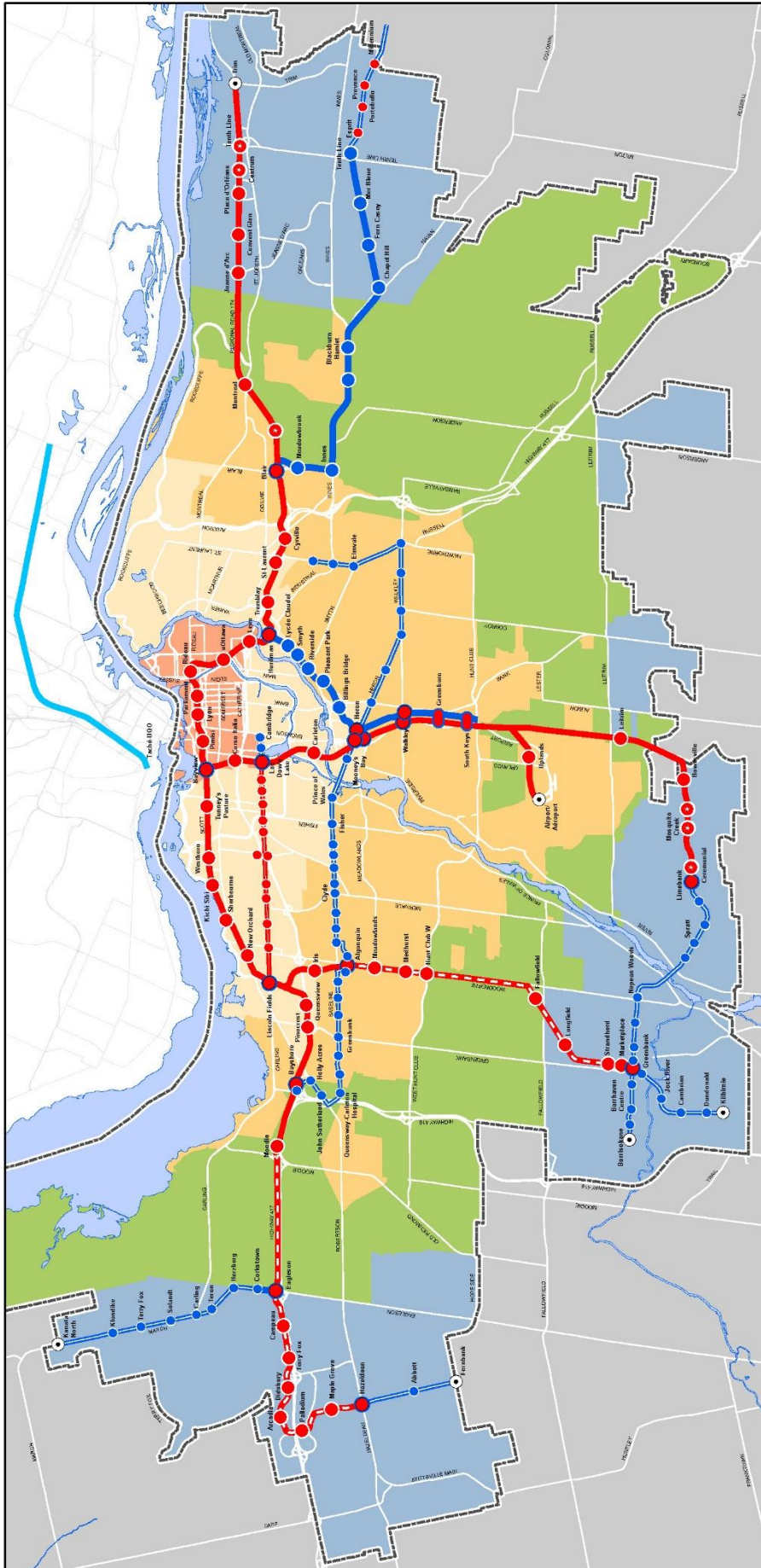
- 1. Direct staff to bring forward a proposed amendment to By-law 2008-250 that would permit shelter use in all urban zones, consistent with the proposal in the draft comprehensive zoning by-law and Official Plan, at the earliest opportunity; and,**
- 2. Approve that “shelter” shall have the same definition as that in By-law 2008-250 until such time as that may be amended through a future new comprehensive zoning by-law.**
- 3. Approve that regardless of the modification to By-law 2008-250 effected as a result of this motion, any shelter use at 40 Hearst Way would be required to seek a re-zoning to permit shelter as a use, and that staff provide the necessary zoning language to give effect to this direction.**

For (18): M. Sutcliffe, M. Luloff, C. Kelly, G. Gower, T. Kavanagh, L. Johnson, S. Devine, J. Bradley, T. Tierney, S. Plante, R. King, A. Troster, J. Leiper, R. Brockington, S. Menard, M. Carr, C. Kitts, and D. Brown

Against (3): D. Hill, S. Desroches, and W. Lo

**Carried (18 to 3)**

Document 4 – Official Plan Schedule A – Transect Policy Areas



### TRANSIT POLICY AREAS / SECTEURS STRATÉGIQUES DU TRANSECT

- Downtown Core / Centre-ville
- Inner Urban / Urban intérieur
- Outer Urban / Urban extérieur
- Greenbelt / Ceinture de verdure
- Suburban\* / Suburbain\*
- Rural / Rural

### TRANSIT

- O-Train and Station / O-Train et station
- Future O-Train / O-Train et station (futur)
- Transitway – grade separated / Transitway en site propre
- Transitway – at grade / Transitway – Voie à niveau
- Transfer Station / Station de correspondance
- Terminus Station / Station terminus

**Galmeau Rapibus – grade-separated / Rapibus de Galmeau en site propre**

Note: The Rapibus network on this Schedule is provided for reference purposes only. For transit network policy, please refer to Schedule C2 / Pour plus d'informations sur le réseau de Rapibus, veuillez vous référer à l'annexe C2.

**Urban Boundary / Périmètre d'urbanisation**

**Official Plan / Plan officiel**  
**Schedule A - Transect Policy Areas**  
**Annexe A Secteurs stratégiques du transect**

**Consolidation and Amendments / Consolidation et amendements**  
**#5 (09/2023) #34 (under appeal / en appel)**

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 km

Planning, Development and Building Services, Geographical Analysis, Technology and Data  
 Directeur général, Services de planification, Services d'analyse géographique, Technologies et Données