

February 4, 2026

Re: The Minor Variance Application of Sandra Lapierre and Adrian Gregorich for the residential property at 1248 Collins Avenue, Ottawa

To the Committee of Adjustment:

We respectfully submit this Minor Variance Application for our property at 1248 Collins Avenue, Ottawa ON K1V 6E1.

### Introduction

The driveway/parking space at the front of our house was installed to make our home safer for our daughter, who has special needs. She cannot sense danger and has a strong tendency to run suddenly and without warning. At times we must carry her. Having closer access to the house on a quieter street helps us keep her safe.

### Context

#### Existing Driveway on Edge Hill Place

1. Our property is on the SW corner of the intersection of Collins Avenue and Edge Hill Place. The existing driveway and garage, which will remain, face Edge Hill Place, a residential street that connects two major thoroughfares – Heron Road and Alta Vista Drive – and has increasingly heavy, fast, and noisy traffic. The garage and the close fencing on both sides of the driveway confine access to a vehicle, making it difficult for us to carry our daughter, lift her in and out of a vehicle, and load and unload her bulky equipment. To add to the congestion, a Canada Post community mailbox is located on our side of the street between our driveway and the intersection of Edge Hill and Collins, and opposite the mailbox is a traffic calming zone that narrows the street, at times creating a bottleneck for moving vehicles at the end of our driveway and a hazard when people don't slow down.

#### Rationale for a Driveway on Collins Avenue

2. Our young daughter has a documented medical condition that places her at particular risk on and near street settings. She has an Accessibility Parking Permit that allows, for example, for her to be safely transferred to and from vehicles at school and treatment centres. We desire the same safety for her at home.

3. Her medical condition can cause her to react quickly and without warning to unusual sensory inputs, such as loud noises or sudden movements, and to confined spaces, so that she could unexpectedly and very quickly run into the path of a passing vehicle, with the likelihood of serious injury or death. This is a very real possibility when she is transferred to or from a vehicle on our Edge Hill driveway.
4. An Occupational Therapist has provided a letter documenting this condition and recommending conditions for the safe transfer of our daughter to and from vehicles (see attached).

#### New Collins Avenue Driveway

5. We hired a contractor to install a new driveway/parking space at the front of our house, opening onto Collins Avenue, not knowing that a permit was necessary for this work. The work, completed in July 2025, is attractive and of good quality, consisting of an interlock paving stone driveway integrated with a pre-existing walkway from the street to the front step of our house.

#### Notice of Violation

6. Ottawa Bylaw Enforcement inspected our property on September 8, 2025, and issued a Notice of Violation (SR#202557242886) requiring removal of the driveway by October 30, 2025. We subsequently consulted extensively with various City of Ottawa staff and were advised to apply for a minor variance to allow the driveway.
7. Bylaw Enforcement agreed to suspend the compliance deadline for removal of the driveway if we submitted a Minor Variance Application by October 30, 2025.

#### Minor Variance Application

As per Section 45 of the Planning Act, we describe below how our situation meets each of the four criteria.

##### A. Desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure

Our property is a detached, single-family house in a residential neighbourhood. The minor variances we are requesting will allow minor exterior development in keeping with the neighbourhood's appearance that ensures that our property functions safely and appropriately for our family's circumstances and needs. Having parking access close to the main entrance of our house supports our daughter's daily routines and enables safe transfers between house and vehicles.

##### B. General intent and purpose of the Zoning By-Law

The intent of the by-law is to maintain safety, order, and consistent land use. More specifically, our house is located in an R2-Residential Second Density Zone, whose purpose as it relates to our minor variance application is to “regulate development in a manner that is compatible with existing land use patterns so that the ... residential character of a neighbourhood is maintained or enhanced.” The minor variances we are requesting would allow front-yard parking that:

- is consistent with residential land use, respects the residential character of our neighbourhood, and has no negative effects on neighbouring properties
- maintains the look of the neighbourhood, which includes many detached and semi-detached houses with front-yard parking
- enhances the street appearance of our house, which is on a prominent corner lot, and contributes modern design to a compact older neighbourhood in transition
- maintains street safety and order by helping to reduce traffic congestion on Edge Hill Place adjacent to our house
- contributes to community safety by ensuring that our home functions safely with our daughter’s special needs in mind.

#### C. General intent and purpose of the Official Plan

- Our request aligns with the Official Plan’s objective of fostering inclusive, accessible, and safe communities. Allowing this small front driveway/parking space supports equal access for a child with special needs, ensuring she can safely enter and exit her home and transfer to and from a vehicle, while maintaining the appearance and character of the neighbourhood.
- Section 2, Strategic Directions, of the Official Plan identifies Healthy and Safe Communities as one of six cross-cutting issues affecting all policy streams, recognizing that physical layout helps shape human health and well being, from the city scale down to individual properties. Our front-yard driveway/parking space is an improvement in the physical layout of our property that protects the safety and well being of our daughter with special needs.
- Section 4, City-Wide Policies, states that housing that meets needs across ages, incomes and backgrounds and supports accessibility needs is a key requirement for health and well-being. Our special needs child has clearly defined accessibility needs related to safe transfer to and from vehicles that are answered by our front driveway.
- Our request complies with environmental principles outlined in Ottawa’s Official Plan, including preserving mature trees and ensuring proper water drainage.

#### D. Minor in nature

The variances we are requesting to allow our front parking space are minor in nature in that:

- Driveway installation required the removal of 11.7 m<sup>2</sup> of soft landscaping, which comprised just 12.3 % of the total area of the large front yard. Well kept symmetrical gardens front the house on both sides of the step, separating the driveway from the house and presenting a pleasing view from the street.
- The driveway causes no loss of light, privacy, view, or space for any of our neighbours and no change in water-drainage patterns. No trees were removed in its installation, preserving the tree-shrub privacy screen between our house and our next-door neighbour.
- The driveway is in proportion to our small house and does not change the general appearance or residential character of our street or wider neighbourhood.
- The front-yard parking space reduces traffic congestion on Edge Hill Place, a connector street, particularly during peak times when people go to and return from work and pick up their mail. At the same time, it does not significantly affect traffic patterns on Collins Avenue nor eliminate on-street parking in front of our house.

Thank you for reviewing our application and for considering our daughter's needs in reaching your decision. Granting our variance requests would make a significant and meaningful difference in ensuring her daily safety and accessibility at home.

Sincerely,

*Sandra Lapierre*      *AGregorich*

Sandra Lapierre and Adrian Gregorich