

Subject: Advancing the ByWard Market: A Revitalization Framework and Coordinated Redevelopment Program

File Number: ACS2026-SI-ED-0001

**Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 3 March 2026
and Council 11 March 2026**

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Ward : Rideau-Vanier (12)

Objet : Promotion du marché By : Structure-cadre de revitalisation et Programme de réaménagement concerté

Numéro de dossier : ACS2026-SI-ED-0001

Rapport présenté au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels le 3 mars 2026

et au Conseil le 11 mars 2026

Soumis le 20 février 2026 par Debbie Stewart, Directrice générale, Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend Council:

- 1. Approve the ByWard Market revitalization framework and action plan, and direct staff to seek required funding sources for foundational actions, as described in this report.**
- 2. Approve the ByWard Market public realm redevelopment program and its objectives, and direct staff to implement its priority actions, as described in this report, and including as follows:**
 - a. Approve the increase in capital budget authority of \$2.7 million, funded by the Citywide Capital Reserve and repaid from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Tourism Reserve, to implement the design phase of 55 ByWard Market Square and the tenant transition plan;**
 - b. Approve the capital budget authority of \$4.5 million, funded by the Citywide Capital Reserve and repaid from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Tourism Reserve, to implement the design phase of the York Street Plaza;**
 - c. Approve the capital budget authority of \$200 thousand, funded by the Parking Reserve, to implement a parking replacement and access strategy;**
 - d. Direct staff to undertake an options analysis for 70 Clarence Street, including options to:**
 - i. Develop a destination building concept, including a competitive process to identify qualified operating, tenant, and delivery partners, residential integration analysis; and**
 - ii. Maintain a parking facility at the site;**
 - e. Direct staff to explore partnership, sponsorship, philanthropic and other funding opportunities and propose a financing model;**
- 3. Direct staff to report back to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and Council in 2027, as described in this report, and including**

as follows:

- a. The results of the options analysis for 70 Clarence Street and recommended next steps;
 - b. An update on the design of 55 ByWard Market Square and York Street Plaza
 - c. A recommended parking and access strategy for the ByWard Market;
 - d. A recommended financing model for the redevelopment program;
 - e. A recommended project sequencing schedule;
4. Delegate authority to the General Manager, Strategic Initiatives to negotiate, finalize and execute all agreements and deliverables required to support the ByWard Market revitalization framework and redevelopment program, as outlined in this report.

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des finances et des services organisationnels recommande au Conseil municipal :

1. d'approuver la Structure-cadre et le Plan d'action pour la revitalisation du marché By et de demander au personnel de faire des démarches pour financer, le cas échéant, les interventions fondationnelles, conformément aux modalités exposées dans le présent rapport.
2. d'approuver le Programme de réaménagement du domaine public du marché By et ses objectifs et de demander au personnel de mettre en œuvre ses interventions prioritaires, conformément aux modalités exposées dans ce rapport, à savoir :
 - a. approuver l'augmentation de l'autorisation du budget des immobilisations de 2,7 millions de dollars, financée par le Fonds de réserve pour immobilisations de la Ville et à rembourser à même la Réserve pour le tourisme de la taxe municipale d'hébergement afin de mettre en œuvre la phase de l'étude du 55, place du marché By et le plan de transition des locataires;

- e. **du calendrier recommandé pour la séquence des travaux du projet;**
- 4. **de déléguer à la directrice générale des Initiatives stratégiques le pouvoir de négocier, de finaliser et de signer tous les accords et tous les documents obligatoires pour justifier la Structure-cadre et le Programme de réaménagement pour la revitalisation du marché By, conformément aux modalités exposées dans ce rapport.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ByWard Market is one of Ottawa’s most important civic, cultural, and economic assets. It is a defining feature of the city’s national identity, a major tourism destination, and a shared community space for residents. Despite all of this, the district is experiencing a convergence of challenges related to safety and access, public confidence, underperforming public spaces, and aging municipal infrastructure that cannot be addressed through incremental or isolated interventions.

Although there are signs of recovery, the ByWard Market continues to experience the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, changes in work and travel patterns, affordability pressures, substance use and mental health challenges, and visible homelessness. These issues intersect most acutely in the public realm and are frequently raised by businesses, residents, and visitors as affecting day-to-day activity in the district and public confidence. Effectively addressing these challenges will require a holistic, cross-departmental approach rather than isolated or single-departmental responses.

This report is organized into two sections: The first focuses on a Revitalization Framework for the ByWard Market, while the second outlines the Public Realm Redevelopment Program, a core component of the broader Revitalization Framework.

The revitalization framework and coordinated multi-asset redevelopment program presented in this report collectively respond to long-standing Council direction and advance the implementation of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan in accordance with the ByWard Market Special District Policies in the Official Plan. Together, they consolidate established priorities into an integrated program that addresses immediate challenges while positioning the ByWard Market for long-term revitalization.

The Framework establishes a clear, integrated, and outcome-focused approach to revitalization. It articulates a shared vision for a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive

historic market district supported by five interrelated areas of focus: welcoming access, destination quality, cultural identity, safety and well-being, and long-term public realm transformation.

The Action Plan operationalizes this vision through prioritized and sequenced actions aligned with City capacity and impact. In the short-term, the Action Plan focuses on addressing immediate priorities such as safety and well-being, while piloting new uses and activations that establish a foundation for transformational public realm redevelopment over the longer term. Among these short-term measures, several actions have been identified as foundational to revitalization due to their potential to deliver visible, high-impact change and build public confidence. These early initiatives are intended to accelerate progress toward key outcomes and renewed ByWard Market vitality. By sequencing high-impact actions first, the plan establishes momentum and creates the conditions necessary for sustained long-term transformation.

Foundational Actions of the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework identified to deliver immediate high-impact results include:

- **District-wide placemaking initiative:** The 2026 district-wide placemaking initiative will activate plazas and underutilized public spaces in the ByWard Market using temporary, adaptable elements to support daily use, seasonal programming, and winter-friendly activation. Delivered with the ByWard Market District Authority, it aims to showcase the “Best of the ByWard,” reinforce existing businesses, extend activity to emerging destinations, and inform future permanent public-realm investments.
- **District-Wide navigation, access and parking strategy:** Improving access and mobility in the ByWard Market is a priority revitalization action focused on maintaining connectivity and supporting visitation during redevelopment. Near-term interim measures, including converting the 70 Clarence Street garage to three-hour pay-and-display, will be implemented alongside enhanced parking communications and exploration of an integrated multimodal navigation platform, while longer-term parking and mobility strategies are developed
- **Implementation of the Unsheltered Homelessness Outreach Model:** The enhanced outreach model will utilize a collaborative, multi-partner approach, strengthening and streamlining connections with community partners and other key collaborators to enhance situational awareness, coordinate responses, improve information sharing, and streamline interventions while ensuring

appropriate responses for people based on need. This approach will also enhance responsiveness to community concerns and greater trust by establishing more structured, consistent and accessible engagement with residents and businesses. The unsheltered homelessness outreach model supports the safety and social pillar of the City's downtown revitalization strategy with a dual focus on physical and economic transformation, as well as the social conditions that fundamentally shape the downtown experience for everyone.

- **Enhance Safety and User Experience along the Rideau–Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station Corridor:** Enhancing key routes and entry points, including the Rideau–Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station, will improve first impressions, safety, and accessibility through short-term interventions like public art, lighting, cleaning, safety features, and temporary 200th-anniversary activations. These measures will strengthen connections to public spaces and businesses, encourage greater use throughout the day and evening, and lay the groundwork for longer-term gateway and corridor improvements.
- **Commercial Heritage Façade Improvement Program:** Expanding the Centretown Heritage Façade Improvement Program into the ByWard Market will enhance storefronts, reinforce the area's historic character, and encourage private investment in accessibility, heritage conservation, and building upgrades. By improving streetscape cohesion, addressing derelict properties, and strengthening business visibility, the program will support economic vitality, cultural identity, and a safer, more engaging street-level experience.

Key Components of the Recommended Redevelopment Program

The recommended ByWard Market Redevelopment Program is a coordinated set of redevelopment objectives, concepts, and priority actions focused on three core municipal assets, supported by enabling strategies to ensure business continuity, access, and long-term district viability.

Historic Market Building at 55 ByWard Market Square

Rehabilitation and re-imagining of the historic market building to unlock its full potential as a vibrant, accessible, food-focused civic anchor that supports local vendors, community programming, and year-round activity, while addressing significant lifecycle and accessibility deficiencies.

Municipal Parking Garage at 70 Clarence Street

Advancement of two concurrent streams of work for the municipally owned parking garage site, including:

- Evaluation of a potential cultural and arts hub with active ground-floor uses, potential residential integration, and integrated parking solutions
- Analysis of options to maintain a parking facility on the site

Together, these streams will inform a recommended long-term use, funding strategy, and parking approach for future Council consideration.

York Street Plaza (between Sussex Avenue and William Street)

Transformation of York Street into a flexible, people-centred civic plaza, coordinated with required sewer and water renewal, capable of supporting daily use, cultural programming, winter amenities, and major events, while improving safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

The redevelopment program is supported by:

- A comprehensive parking and access strategy to address business, resident, and visitor needs during and after construction
- A Business and Tenant Support Strategy focused on predictability, early communication, and continuity supports and
- Upcoming work with the ByWard Market District Authority to review operating capacity and funding alignment in support of long-term district management

Together, these elements ensure that physical renewal, access, business continuity, and district operations are advanced in a coordinated manner.

Potential Outcomes

Should Council ultimately pursue the implementation of the redevelopment program, independent analysis indicates the program could:

- Generate approximately \$255–\$345 million in regional economic output and 1,000+ jobs during construction
- Deliver \$254–\$371 million in user benefits through improved public-space comfort, circulation, and visitor experience

- Produce \$441–\$540 million in health benefits from increased walking, outdoor activity, and safer public spaces and
- Achieve measurable environmental gains through expanded tree canopy and green infrastructure

Collectively, these outcomes position the redevelopment as a city-building investment that strengthens public safety, economic vitality, social wellbeing, and public-realm quality.

Rationale and Phasing

The revitalization framework and coordinated multi-asset redevelopment program presented in this report respond to long-standing Council direction and advance the implementation of the Council-approved ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, consistent with the ByWard Market Special District Policies of the Official Plan. An assessment report demonstrates that reinvestment in the ByWard Market can deliver measurable long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits. This conclusion is consistent with findings from leading urban research, which show that successful downtown revitalization requires coordinated action across land use, economic development, public realm quality, housing, and community well-being, rather than isolated interventions. Research also demonstrates that improvements to safety, cleanliness, programming, and the physical environment are most effective when advanced together, creating mutually reinforcing impacts on visitation, investment, and business performance. Furthermore, a technical, financial, and market feasibility analysis undertaken in 2025 confirms that maintaining the status quo for public-realm assets is not cost-neutral and that significant capital investment is required. This unavoidable reinvestment provides a clear opportunity to build back better by aligning required lifecycle work with broader revitalization, placemaking, and economic objectives.

The revitalization framework and Action Plan therefore prioritize short-term improvements to safety and well-being while piloting new uses and activations that lay the foundation for transformational public-realm redevelopment. Evidence from comparable North American downtowns indicates that focusing on a single lever such as enforcement, capital upgrades, or marketing alone does not produce sustained recovery. Instead, integrated approaches that combine public realm renewal, economic activation, social supports, housing strategies, and governance alignment generate more durable increases in foot traffic, investor confidence, and tax base stability.

Next Steps

Subject to Council direction, staff will execute the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework and Action Plan and advance priority redevelopment implementation work. Staff will report back with:

- A revitalization measurement framework annual report, summarizing key trends, progress towards objectives, and areas requiring attention
- The results of the options analysis for 70 Clarence Street and recommended next steps; an update on the design development of 55 ByWard Market Square and the York Street Plaza, informed by continued public and Indigenous engagement
- A recommended parking and access strategy for the ByWard Market
- A recommended financing model for the public-realm redevelopment program
- A coordinated project sequencing schedule

If new funding opportunities for revitalization Action Plan initiatives emerge, staff will bring forward proposed funding approaches to Council for information. This work will be supported by project-specific Business and Tenant Support Plans to ensure predictability, continuity, and clear communication as designs and actions advance.

SYNTHÈSE ADMINISTRATIVE

Le marché By est l'un des actifs citoyens, culturels et économiques les plus importants d'Ottawa. Il s'agit d'une infrastructure définitoire de l'identité nationale de la Ville, d'une importante destination touristique et d'un espace communautaire commun pour les résidents. Malgré tout, le quartier est l'objet d'une convergence de difficultés liées à la sécurité et à l'accès, à la confiance du public, à la contreperformance des espaces publics et au vieillissement des infrastructures municipales, et ces difficultés ne peuvent pas trouver de solution dans des interventions progressives ou isolées.

Malgré les signes de reprise, le marché By subit toujours les effets persistants de la pandémie de COVID-19, des changements dans les habitudes de travail et de déplacements, les pressions qui pèsent sur l'abordabilité, les difficultés dans la consommation de substances et dans le domaine de la santé mentale, ainsi que l'itinérance visible. C'est dans le domaine public que ces difficultés s'expriment avec le plus d'acuité, et elles sont souvent évoquées par les entreprises, les résidents et les visiteurs parce qu'elles influent sur les activités courantes du quartier et sur la confiance du public. Pour résoudre efficacement ces difficultés, il faudra adopter une approche

globale, réunissant toutes les directions générales de la Ville, au lieu de mener des interventions isolées ou faisant appel à une seule direction générale.

Le présent rapport comprend deux sections : la première est consacrée à la Structure-cadre de la revitalisation du marché By, alors que la deuxième décrit dans ses grandes lignes le Programme de réaménagement du domaine public, élément essentiel de l'ensemble de la Structure-cadre de revitalisation.

La Structure-cadre de revitalisation et le programme concerté de réaménagement des différents actifs dont il est question dans ce rapport donnent collectivement suite à la directive de longue date du Conseil municipal et promeuvent la mise en œuvre du [Plan du domaine public du marché By](#) conformément aux politiques sur le secteur spécial du marché By du [Plan officiel](#). Ensemble, ces documents regroupent les priorités établies dans un programme intégré qui fait état des difficultés immédiates dans le positionnement du marché By pour sa revitalisation à long terme.

La Structure-cadre constitue une approche claire, intégrée et axée sur les résultats pour la revitalisation du marché By. Elle exprime une vision commune pour l'aménagement d'un quartier animé, accueillant et inclusif dans ce marché historique, étayée par cinq secteurs prioritaires intimement liés : un accès accueillant, la qualité de la destination, l'identité culturelle, la sécurité et le bien-être, ainsi que la transformation à long terme du domaine public.

Le Plan d'action opérationnalise cette vision grâce aux interventions priorisées et séquencées, qui cadrent avec la capacité de la Ville et l'impact à produire. Dans le court terme, le Plan d'action fait essentiellement état des priorités immédiates comme la sécurité et le bien-être, en mettant à l'essai de nouvelles vocations et activations qui établissent un socle pour le réaménagement transformationnel du domaine public à plus long terme. Parmi ces mesures de court terme, plusieurs interventions ont été jugées essentielles à la revitalisation du marché By parce qu'elles pourraient produire un changement concret et très retentissant et bâtir la confiance du public. Ces premières initiatives sont destinées à accélérer les progrès accomplis pour produire les résultats essentiels et pour renouveler la vitalité du marché By. En menant d'abord, dans la séquence des activités, les interventions très marquantes, le Plan établit la progression et crée les conditions nécessaires pour pérenniser la transformation à long terme.

Voici les interventions fondationnelles de la Structure-cadre pour la revitalisation du marché By définies pour produire dans l'immédiat des résultats très marquants :

- **Initiative de réaménagement de l'espace dans l'ensemble du quartier :**
L'initiative de réaménagement de l'espace de l'ensemble du quartier, adoptée en 2026, permettra d'animer les esplanades et les espaces publics sous-utilisés du marché By en faisant appel à des éléments adaptables temporaires pour en assurer l'utilisation journalière, la programmation saisonnière et l'animation en hiver. Réalisée par l'Autorité du district du Marché By, cette initiative vise à mettre en vitrine « ce qu'il y a de mieux dans le marché By », à renforcer les entreprises existantes, à étendre l'activité aux destinations émergentes et à éclairer les investissements permanents projetés dans le domaine public.
- **Stratégie de navigation, d'accès et de stationnement dans l'ensemble du quartier :** L'amélioration de l'accès et de la mobilité dans le secteur du marché By est une intervention de revitalisation prioritaire, destinée à maintenir la connectivité et à promouvoir les visites pendant les travaux de réaménagement. Des mesures provisoires de court terme, dont la conversion du garage du 70, rue Clarence en stationnement intérieur doté de distributrices de billets de stationnement pour un maximum de trois heures, seront mises en œuvre de concert avec les activités améliorées de communication sur le stationnement et l'exploration d'une plateforme de navigation multimodale intégrée, pendant que le personnel mettra au point des stratégies de stationnement et de mobilité de plus long terme.
- **Mise en œuvre du Modèle de rapprochement pour les personnes en situation d'itinérance sans refuge :** Ce modèle de sensibilisation actualisé fera appel à une approche collaborative avec de nombreux partenaires, renforçant et simplifiant les liens avec les partenaires communautaires et autres intervenants clés, pour améliorer la conscience situationnelle, coordonner les interventions, améliorer le partage d'informations et rationaliser les interventions tout en veillant à ce qu'elles soient appropriées aux besoins des personnes. Cette approche améliorera aussi les réponses aux préoccupations des membres de la communauté et la confiance grâce à des consultations plus structurées, constantes et accessibles avec les résidents et les commerçants. Le modèle consolidera le pilier sécurité et vie sociale de la Stratégie de revitalisation du centre-ville de la Ville; il sera axé sur la transformation d'un point de vue physique et économique, et sur les conditions sociales qui façonnent profondément les expériences vécues au centre-ville.

- **Amélioration de la sécurité et de l'expérience des utilisateurs dans la passerelle Rideau-Sussex et dans le couloir de la station Rideau :** Le réaménagement des principaux parcours et points d'entrée, dont la passerelle Rideau-Sussex et la station Rideau, permettra d'améliorer les premières impressions, la sécurité et l'accessibilité grâce à des interventions de court terme comme l'installation d'œuvres d'art public, l'éclairage, le nettoyage, les fonctions de sécurité et les activités temporaires du bicentenaire. Ces mesures viendront conforter les liens avec les espaces publics et les entreprises, favoriseront une plus grande utilisation du marché le jour et le soir et prépareront le terrain pour les améliorations à apporter à plus long terme à la passerelle et au couloir.
- **Programme d'amélioration des façades patrimoniales commerciales :** L'extension du Programme d'amélioration des façades patrimoniales du centre-ville au marché By permettra d'améliorer les devantures, de renforcer le caractère historique du secteur et d'encourager l'investissement privé dans l'accessibilité, la conservation du patrimoine et la modernisation des bâtiments. En améliorant la cohésion du paysage urbain, en réaménageant les propriétés délabrées et en renforçant la visibilité des entreprises, le programme permettra de promouvoir la vitalité économique, l'identité culturelle, en plus d'améliorer la sécurité de l'expérience dans les rues et d'en faire des lieux plus rassembleurs.

Les éléments essentiels du Programme de réaménagement recommandé

Le programme recommandé pour le réaménagement du marché By est un ensemble concerté d'objectifs, de concepts et d'interventions prioritaires dans le réaménagement, consacrés à trois actifs municipaux essentiels; ce programme est étayé par des stratégies qui apportent les moyens d'assurer la continuité des entreprises, l'accès et la viabilité du quartier à long terme.

Édifice historique du marché au 55, place du marché By

Il s'agit de réaménager et de repenser l'édifice historique du marché pour en faire fructifier tout le potentiel comme point d'ancrage citoyen animé, accessible et gastronomique, qui appuie les commerçants de la localité, la programmation communautaire et l'activité qui se déroule toute l'année, tout en corrigeant les importantes lacunes du cycle de la durée utile et de l'accessibilité.

Garage de stationnement municipal au 70, rue Clarence

Il s'agit de promouvoir deux volets parallèles de travaux pour le site du garage de stationnement qui appartient à la municipalité, à savoir :

- l'évaluation d'un carrefour culturel et artistique potentiel, doté d'aménagements actifs au rez-de-chaussée, intégration résidentielle potentielle et solutions de stationnement intégrées;
- analyse des options pour conserver un garage de stationnement sur le site.

Ensemble, ces volets de travaux viendront éclairer la vocation à long terme recommandée, la stratégie de financement et l'approche à adopter pour le stationnement, à soumettre éventuellement à l'étude du Conseil municipal.

Esplanade de la rue York (entre la promenade Sussex et la rue William)

Il s'agit de transformer la rue York pour en faire une esplanade municipale souple et adaptée aux piétons, en concertant les travaux avec la réfection obligatoire des conduites d'éégout et d'aqueduc, pour permettre d'en assurer l'utilisation journalière, d'offrir une programmation culturelle, d'aménager des aires de commodités en hiver et de tenir des événements majeurs, en améliorant la sécurité, l'accessibilité et la connectivité.

Le programme de réaménagement est étayé par :

- une stratégie complète de stationnement et d'accès pour répondre aux besoins des entreprises, des résidents et des visiteurs pendant et après les travaux;
- une stratégie de soutien des entreprises et des locataires, axée sur la prévisibilité, sur la communication rapide et sur la continuité;
- les prochains travaux réalisés de concert avec l'Autorité du district du Marché By pour revoir la capacité opérationnelle et le cadrage du financement dans le cadre de la gestion à long terme du quartier.

Ensemble, ces éléments permettent de veiller à promouvoir, de manière concertée, le renouvellement, l'accès, la continuité des entreprises et les opérations du quartier.

Résultats potentiels

Si le Conseil municipal décide en définitive de mettre en œuvre le programme de réaménagement, l'analyse indépendante indique que ce programme pourrait :

- produire des retombées économiques régionales de l'ordre de 255 millions à 345 millions de dollars et créer plus de 1 000 emplois pendant les travaux;

- produire des retombées comprises entre 254 millions et 371 millions de dollars pour les utilisateurs grâce à l'amélioration du confort de l'espace public, de la circulation et de l'expérience des visiteurs;
- produire des bienfaits pour la santé compris entre 441 millions et 540 millions de dollars grâce à l'accroissement des déplacements à pied et des activités en plein air et à l'amélioration de la sécurité des espaces publics;
- réaliser des gains environnementaux mesurables grâce à l'expansion du couvert forestier et des infrastructures vertes.

Ensemble, ces résultats positionnent le réaménagement comme un investissement dans l'édification de la ville qui renforce la sécurité publique, la vitalité économique, le bien-être social et la qualité du domaine public.

Justification et phases des travaux

La Structure-cadre de revitalisation et le programme concerté de réaménagement des différents actifs dont il est question dans ce rapport donnent suite à la directive de longue date du Conseil municipal et promeuvent la mise en œuvre du Plan du domaine public du marché By approuvé par le Conseil municipal conformément aux politiques sur le secteur spécial du marché By du Plan officiel. Un rapport d'évaluation permet de constater que réinvestir dans le marché By peut faire rejaillir, à long terme, des retombées sociales, économiques et environnementales mesurables. Cette conclusion cadre avec les constats posés dans d'éminents travaux de recherche urbaine, qui montrent que pour réussir à revitaliser les centres-villes, il faut mener une intervention concertée dans l'ensemble de l'aménagement foncier, du développement économique, de la qualité du domaine public, du logement et du bien-être de la collectivité, plutôt que des interventions isolées. La recherche nous apprend aussi que c'est lorsqu'on les apporte de concert que les améliorations de la sécurité, de la propreté, de la programmation et de l'environnement physique sont le plus efficaces, en produisant des impacts qui se renforcent mutuellement sur les visites, l'investissement et le rendement des entreprises. En outre, une analyse de la viabilité technique, financière et marchande réalisée en 2025 confirme que le maintien du statu quo pour les actifs du domaine public n'est pas neutre du point de vue des coûts et qu'il faut investir considérablement dans les infrastructures. Ce réinvestissement incontournable offre clairement l'occasion de reconstruire pour le mieux, en accordant les travaux obligatoires du cycle de la durée utile avec l'ensemble des objectifs de la revitalisation, de la spatialisation et de l'économie.

C'est pourquoi la Structure-cadre de la revitalisation et le Plan d'action priorisent les améliorations à apporter à court terme à la sécurité et au bien-être, en mettant à l'essai les nouvelles vocations et activations qui constituent le socle du réaménagement transformationnel du domaine public. L'information probante apportée par les centres-villes nord-américains comparables indique que la priorisation d'un seul levier comme l'application des règlements, la modernisation des infrastructures ou le marketing ne permet pas à elle seule de produire une reprise soutenue. Il faut plutôt faire appel à des approches intégrées qui regroupent le renouvellement du domaine public, l'activation économique, les aides sociales, les stratégies de logement et le recentrage de la gouvernance, qui produisent des augmentations plus durables dans l'achalandage piétonnier, dans la confiance des investisseurs et dans la stabilité de l'assiette fiscale.

Prochaines étapes

Sous réserve de la directive du Conseil municipal, le personnel exécutera la Structure-cadre pour la revitalisation du marché By et le Plan d'action correspondant et fera la promotion des travaux prioritaires de mise en œuvre du réaménagement. Le personnel déposera un compte rendu avec:

- un rapport annuel sur la Structure-cadre de la mesure de la revitalisation, qui fera la synthèse des grandes tendances, des progrès accomplis dans la réalisation des objectifs et des secteurs auxquels il faut être attentif;
- les résultats de l'analyse des options pour le 70, rue Clarence et les prochaines étapes recommandées; un compte rendu sur l'élaboration de la conception du 55, place du marché By et de l'esplanade de la rue York, éclairé par la consultation continue du grand public et des Autochtones;
- une stratégie recommandée pour le stationnement et l'accès du marché By;
- un modèle de financement recommandé pour le programme de réaménagement du domaine public;
- un calendrier concerté pour le séquençage des travaux du projet.

Si de nouvelles possibilités de financement se font jour pour les initiatives du Plan d'action sur la revitalisation, le personnel soumettra au Conseil municipal, pour information, les approches de financement proposées. Ces travaux seront étayés par les plans d'aide destinés aux entreprises et aux locataires dans le cadre de ce projet

afin d'assurer la prévisibilité, la continuité et la clarté de la communication à mesure que les travaux d'étude et les interventions progressent.

BACKGROUND

Reimagining the ByWard Market through Holistic Revitalization

Strategic Alignment

Recognizing its central role in Ottawa's economy, culture, and civic identity, the City of Ottawa has made the ByWard Market's revitalization a strategic priority in the **City of Ottawa Strategic Plan 2023–2026**. The Strategic Plan seeks to *reimagine the ByWard Market* by supporting economic activity, strengthening public spaces, and fostering safe, vibrant, and inclusive communities. This direction acknowledges both the long-term structural changes affecting downtowns across Canada and the need for coordinated, place-based responses tailored to Ottawa's unique role as a national capital.

The City's approach to revitalization of the ByWard Market is grounded in and supported by several additional Council-approved strategies, policy directions, and external plans developed by key interest holders, such as the Ottawa Board of Trade's *Downtown Action Agenda*. Collectively these plans guide placemaking, economic development, and social supports in Ottawa's urban core. Key documents include:

- [Official Plan](#) (2021)
- [ByWard Market Public Realm Plan](#) (2021)
- [ByWard Market Heritage Conservation District Plan](#) (2024)
- [Downtown Ottawa Urban Design Strategy](#) (2004)
- [Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan](#) (2024)
- [Nightlife Economy Action Plan](#) (2023)
- [Ottawa Police Community Outreach, Response and Engagement \(CORE\) Strategy](#) (2024)
- [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#) (2021-2031)
- [10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan](#) (2020-2030)
- [Transportation Master Plan and Active Transportation Plan](#) (2025)

These plans establish a strong policy foundation for ByWard Market revitalization and underscore the importance of coordinated implementation to respond to current conditions while advancing Council's long-term objectives for the city's core. To support this, a revitalization framework enables the City to:

- Prioritize actions across all focus areas to deliver visible, meaningful impact
- Sequence initiatives such that immediate needs are addressed first, and early actions set the conditions for future success
- Identify gaps in planned actions and propose measures to address them, ensuring coordinated progress across physical, social, cultural, and economic objectives

Importance and Current State of the ByWard Market

The city of Ottawa is built on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation. This includes the ByWard Market. As one of Canada's oldest public markets, the ByWard Market is one of Ottawa's most recognized civic areas and a defining feature of the city's national identity. It is where visitors often first experience the city, where residents gather, and where Ottawa's history is most visibly expressed.

The district includes approximately 1.5 million square feet of commercial space, more than 535 business locations, and is home to over 3,000 residents. It attracts more than 25 million visits annually and is supported by approximately 6,000 hotel rooms within or adjacent to the area and represents the City's second-highest tax base, with roughly \$800 million in assessed property value and over \$17 million in annual property tax revenue. Ongoing private-sector investment and major nearby development activity further reinforce the demand for high-quality public spaces and amenities.

Beyond its direct economic contribution, the ByWard Market plays a critical role in shaping Ottawa's broader economic resilience, competitiveness, and reputation as Canada's capital. Research consistently shows that vibrant, safe, and well-functioning downtowns support diversified local economies by attracting private-sector investment, enabling tourism growth, and strengthening the city's ability to attract and retain skilled talent. Central market and entertainment districts, in particular, function as economic multipliers by supporting small businesses, creative industries, hospitality, and cultural sectors that are less easily relocated and more resilient to economic shifts.

As Ottawa's most recognizable urban destination, the ByWard Market is often the lens

through which visitors, investors, and prospective residents experience the city for the first time. Its condition directly influences perceptions of Ottawa as a place to live, work, visit, and invest. A safe, welcoming, and animated Market supports corporate investment decisions, reinforces confidence in the downtown core, and contributes to the city's ability to compete nationally for high-skill employment and major events.

The Market also serves as a shared civic gathering place for residents across all wards, supporting social cohesion, cultural expression, and community life. In a national capital context, the ByWard Market carries additional symbolic importance as a space that reflects Canada's identity, Indigenous presence, Francophone heritage, and Bytown history. Ensuring that this district functions well is therefore not only a local concern, but a matter of municipal and national pride, with implications for Ottawa's tourism appeal, cultural vitality, and long-term economic sustainability.

Despite its vibrancy, the ByWard Market's full potential is constrained by interrelated public-realm, safety, and social challenges. As part of recent public engagement for the renewal of William Street and ByWard Market Square, the City conducted surveys and in-person consultations with residents, businesses, and visitors. This engagement indicated that a significant share of respondents reported negative impressions compared with pre-pandemic levels. Environmental conditions are also a concern. For example, tree-canopy coverage (only 6 per cent in the ByWard Market) remains well below urban targets, contributing to heat, comfort challenges, and reduced livability. Safety and accessibility perceptions remain significant; with many respondents indicating they do not feel safe walking or cycling in the ByWard Market and perceiving the district as difficult to navigate for people with disabilities. Public right-of-way allocation remains vehicle-dominant, limiting space for pedestrian comfort, amenities, and programming. At the same time, complex social challenges including visible public drug use and encampments, contribute to well-being concerns and are reflected in broader neighbourhood equity indicators.

Current Conditions and Ongoing Challenges in the ByWard Market

Despite recent stabilization in select indicators such as increased foot traffic, available data, interest holder feedback, and public sentiment continue to point to a district facing significant structural, operational, and social challenges. Collectively, these conditions underscore the need for sustained and coordinated revitalization.

Pedestrian Volumes and Visitation Patterns

Visitation data collected by the ByWard Market District Authority indicate that overall foot traffic has increased in recent years; however, activity remains uneven and highly concentrated around peak tourism months, major events, and celebratory programming. ByWard Market District Authority monthly visitation tracking shows that outside of summer and event-driven periods, foot traffic drops off materially, particularly during weekdays, evenings, and shoulder seasons.

Business owners and residents, through ongoing engagement with the City and the ByWard Market District Authority, consistently report inconsistent daily foot traffic and reduced dwell time, limiting the ability of the ByWard Market to function as a reliable, year-round destination. These qualitative insights are reinforced by observed patterns in pedestrian counters and business operating hours, which suggest that the district remains event-dependent rather than self-sustaining.

Retail Vacancy, Turnover, and Business Stability

While downtown Ottawa retail vacancy rates have recently improved (9.1 per cent in 2024, 7.6 per cent in 2025), these headline figures mask continued fragility within the ByWard Market. Market-area storefronts experience elevated business turnover, short-term leases, and interim or non-traditional uses, particularly at grade.

Feedback gathered through City-led business engagement, BIAs, and the ByWard Market District Authority indicates that operator confidence continues to be affected by current economic conditions including inflationary pressures, hybrid work and recent public sector workforce reductions. These factors have reduced weekday activity and discretionary spending in the district. As a result, businesses continue to face challenges related to:

- Inconsistent foot traffic
- Public-realm conditions
- Safety and cleanliness concerns
- Rising operating costs

In addition, the loss of major retailers and ongoing challenges in filling anchor retail spaces have further contributed to decreased foot traffic patterns and investor confidence, amplifying impacts on surrounding businesses in the ByWard Market. Even

where formal vacancy rates appear low, the frequency of tenant churn and limited long-term investment signal that structural issues persist, constraining the district's ability to support a diverse and resilient retail mix.

Tourism Activity and Visitor Experience

Tourism performance data from Ottawa Tourism and regional hotel market reports show that visitor demand has rebounded primarily during peak summer months, with continued softness outside the high season. Visitation in the ByWard Market has exceeded pre-pandemic levels during peak periods, aligned with a city-wide hotel occupancy rate averaging 72 per cent in August 2025, one of the largest occupancy increases among major cities in Canada. While regional hotel occupancy rates provide an important indicator of overall visitor volumes, they do not necessarily translate into sustained engagement within the ByWard Market.

Visitor surveys, destination feedback collected by Ottawa Tourism, and recurring media coverage highlight mixed perceptions of the Market experience, particularly related to:

- Cleanliness and maintenance
- Availability and condition of public amenities
- Wayfinding and legibility
- Personal safety, especially during evening hours

As a result, the ByWard Market is often experienced as a short-duration stop rather than a full-day or evening destination, limiting its economic contribution despite its role as a signature civic and tourist area.

Transit Ridership and Downtown Accessibility

OC Transpo ridership data indicates that system-wide routes remain below pre-pandemic levels, reflecting broader shifts in commuting patterns, remote work, and downtown activity. While network-wide ridership has increased year-over-year, fall 2025 boarding data show usage at approximately 80–85 per cent of comparable 2019 levels. Interest holder feedback gathered through City consultations and transit user surveys also points to concerns related to:

- Service reliability
- Perceptions of safety on transit vehicles and at stations

- The overall convenience of accessing the Market without a private vehicle

This accessibility constraints continue to affect who visits the ByWard Market, how often, and for how long.

Public Safety Conditions and Perceptions

Ottawa Police Service (OPS) Open Data shows that while some categories of reported incidents in the ByWard Market have declined year-over-year, violent and confrontational incidents remain a concern, and overall incident volumes remain elevated relative to other parts of the city. Increases in robbery and assault categories, alongside persistent calls related to disorder, continue to place pressure on the district.

Equally important, perceptions of safety have not improved at the same pace as select crime indicators. This is reflected in:

- Interest holder and resident feedback provided to the City and the ByWard Market District Authority
- Media reporting
- Community surveys conducted by the City and partner organizations

These perceptions directly influence visitation decisions, business investment, and residential desirability, reinforcing a cycle that undermines broader revitalization objectives.

Taken together, these indicators, drawing from administrative data, market reports, interest holder engagement, and public sentiment, demonstrate that while the ByWard Market retains strong underlying assets, it continues to operate below its potential. Persistent structural constraints, inconsistent activity patterns, public-realm deficiencies, and sustained social and safety pressures present a clear opportunity to reinforce confidence, increase visitation and dwell time, and translate renewed foot traffic into stronger economic and social outcomes. The Market's recovery is occurring unevenly, reinforcing the need for a focused revitalization approach that addresses not only physical improvements and social, but also governance, coordination, and long-term place management.

Why Change Is Needed Now

Downtowns and central market districts play an important role in the economic and social health of cities. National and international research consistently demonstrates

that cities with safe, vibrant, and well-managed downtowns are better positioned to attract corporate investment, increase knowledge-based employment, and recover from economic fluctuations. In Ottawa, the ByWard Market is a defining component of the downtown ecosystem and a key driver of the city's visitor economy. When the Market underperforms, the impacts extend beyond local businesses to affect tourism spending, transit ridership, office demand, and the city's ability to compete for talent and investment. Conversely, strategic reinvestment in the Market has the potential to generate city-wide benefits by strengthening city vitality, improving perceptions of safety, supporting small and independent businesses, and reinforcing Ottawa's identity as an inclusive, world-class capital city.

The ByWard Market Redevelopment Scenario: Benefits Assessment Report (Document 4) was prepared with strategic advice from Bloomberg Associates and Colliers Project Leaders, to develop the case for change and reinvestment in the ByWard Market. The analysis demonstrates that reinvestment can deliver measurable, long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits, including improved visitor experience, accessibility, safety, year-round activity, business performance, cultural infrastructure, civic pride, and public health outcomes, as well as environmental gains through building rehabilitation and enhanced tree canopy.

Economic Performance and District Vitality

While foot traffic remains significant, aging infrastructure, fragmented public spaces, and social challenges limit the Market's potential as a resilient, mixed-use district. Short dwell times, inconsistent visitation, and limited programming reduce economic performance and weaken the connection between activity and business success. Coordinated public realm and asset renewal, integrated with programming and operations, can increase pedestrian volumes, extend dwell time, improve safety, and position the Market for sustained economic growth and competitiveness.

Public Realm, Safety, and Visitor Experience

Current limitations in lighting, seating, weather protection, accessibility, and pedestrian circulation, combined with social pressures such as homelessness, substance use, and mental health challenges, constrain how the ByWard Market is used, particularly outside peak periods. Strengthening public spaces with improved lighting, sightlines, flexible areas, and sustained programming enhances real and perceived safety, encourages longer visits, and supports positive social interactions. Public realm renewal is a critical

tool to reinforce economic and cultural vitality and create a welcoming, inclusive environment for residents, visitors, and businesses.

Social, Cultural, and Community Outcomes

The ByWard Market's role as a civic and cultural gathering place has been diminished by spaces difficult to animate and adapt. It is also shaped by its role as a focal point for a high concentration of social services, emergency supports, and affordable housing access within the downtown, adding complexity to public realm management. Research and lessons from comparable urban districts indicate that pairing physical improvements with investments in housing, mental health supports, and social services strengthens community outcomes and reduces pressures on public spaces.

Revitalization presents an opportunity to embed and celebrate the Market's cultural identity, reflecting Ottawa's national capital role, Francophone, and Indigenous heritage, and Bytown history. Flexible programming, events, and informal gatherings can enhance inclusion, civic pride, and community connection. Comparable districts, such as Granville Island (Vancouver) and the Distillery District (Toronto), demonstrate how integrating heritage, art, and cultural activation animates spaces and attracts diverse users year-round.

Council and Policy Direction related to the redevelopment program

The ByWard Market is a long-standing, Council-endorsed city-building priority anchored in multiple approved strategies and policy frameworks. Through Council-approved initiatives, the City has already formally identified the ByWard Market as:

- A cornerstone of the City's Official Plan vision for placemaking, and downtown revitalization
- A priority district for public realm investment through the Council-approved Public Realm Plan
- A strategic economic engine through the City's Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan, particularly for tourism, culture, hospitality, and small business growth
- A priority of this 2023–2026 Term of Council and City's Strategic Plan
- A Heritage Conservation District designated for historical value as the city's oldest commercial area and site of one of the city's first public markets

Specifically, Council previously approved:

- [ByWard Market Public Realm Plan \(ACS2020-PIE-RHU-0027\) \(2021\) report](#), this report approved:
 - **55 ByWard Market** - The historic ByWard Market building was identified through the Council approval of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan as a high-impact and medium-term project with the existing heritage Market building renewal (55 ByWard Market Square) as a capital improvement project with partners. This report seeks Council approval of the recommended redevelopment concept.
 - **70 Clarence Street** - The redevelopment of the 70 Clarence Street municipal parking garage into a destination building was approved as part of the Council approval of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan. It was identified as a short-term project (to conduct a Request for Information to understand market potential) and as capital improvement medium-term project. This report seeks Council approval of the recommended redevelopment concept.
 - **York Street Plaza** - The York Street Flex Plaza and York Street Market Plaza concepts were approved as part of the Council approval of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan. The construction of the York Street Plaza was identified as a transformative capital improvement medium-term project, to be aligned with infrastructure renewal. This report seeks Council approval of the recommended redevelopment concept.
 - **Replacement parking options** - Council directed staff to investigate partnerships according to the Parking Replacement Strategy for ByWard Market, as described in the 2021 report. Further work is required, as described in this staff report.
- [ByWard Market Strategic Alignment Initiative and Public Realm Plan Update \(ACS2023-PRE-RHU-0023\) \(2023\) report](#), which resulted in the creation of the ByWard Market District Authority to improve district governance and the coordination of services and programming. In addition, with the approval of this report, William Street and ByWard Market Square street renewal, the creation of York Street Plaza, and the redevelopment of the 70 Clarence Street municipal parking garage were all confirmed as priority projects for partner government funding.

- [Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan Implementation Update \(ACS2025-SI-ED-0001\) \(2024\) report](#), which provided a status update on William Street and ByWard Market Square streetscape renewal, and the scope of the technical and financial feasibility analysis, with a commitment to report back to Council in Q1 2026.

DISCUSSION

Section 1: ByWard Market Revitalization Framework

This section presents the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework, outlining its governance structure, key objectives and their anticipated impacts, and the actions prioritized for near-term implementation.

ByWard Market Revitalization Steering Committee

Recognizing that revitalizing the ByWard Market requires a whole-of-City approach, involving multiple City departments, including the Ottawa Police Service, and Ottawa Public Health, as well as collaboration with other levels of government and the broader interest holder community, a Steering Committee was established in February 2025 to provide centralized oversight and decision-making for all City-led initiatives in the ByWard Market.

The Steering Committee is comprised of the most senior levels of leadership within the organization and was intentionally convened to identify, champion, and drive the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework forward. The Committee is co-chaired by the General Manager, Strategic Initiatives Department, and the General Manager, Community and Social Services Department.

The Steering Committee was established to enhance the effectiveness and expediency of the planning and implementation of City and City board-led initiatives focused on revitalizing the ByWard Market and its surrounding areas. As a central decision-making body, the Committee provides strategic oversight for scope, communication, alignment, and resource and funding allocation.

ByWard Market Revitalization Framework

To inform the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework outlined in this report, the Steering Committee undertook a consolidated review of all existing plans and initiatives, and strategically prioritized and sequenced actions based on their projected impact and operational feasibility across the short-, medium-, and long-term. This included

identifying potential gaps in current plans and proposed measures to address those gaps with the aim of delivering immediate, high-impact, and high-visibility actions that produce tangible results.

The Framework is designed to function as an integrated strategy, ensuring collective progress toward its broader objectives, and is tailor-made to address the specific challenges facing the Market. This integrated approach reflects established best practice in downtown revitalization, which emphasizes that economic recovery, public realm renewal, safety and well-being, housing, cultural vitality, and governance must be advanced concurrently to achieve durable impact. Leading urban research organizations, including the Brookings Institution and the International Downtown Association, have found that coordinated, multi-dimensional strategies outperform single-focus interventions in restoring visitation, investment confidence, and long-term resilience.

Underlying the Framework's vision of a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive historic market district for all, is a unifying set of themes – people, places, and culture – that inform and connect the five areas of focus:

- *People* are at the centre of the Framework, emphasizing safety, well-being, accessibility, and inclusivity for residents, workers, visitors, and businesses, and recognizing that revitalization must improve day-to-day experience and confidence for all users of the Market.
- *Places* refer to the physical environment of the ByWard Market, including streets, public spaces, routes, and civic assets, and reflect the role of high-quality, well-designed public realm and buildings in supporting economic activity, social interaction, and a strong sense of place.
- *Culture* encompasses the Market's identity, heritage, and lived character, celebrating Ottawa as the nation's capital as well as its Francophone and Anishinabe Algonquin histories and ongoing presence, Indigenous contributions, local traditions, and contemporary creativity, while supporting animation, programming, and storytelling that distinguish the Market as a unique and authentic destination.

These themes provide a consistent lens through which actions are assessed and prioritized, ensuring that investments reinforce one another and contribute to a cohesive, people-centered revitalization strategy.

The Framework is organized around five interrelated areas of focus that guide efforts to achieve the desired impact, vision and outcomes informing investment and action:

- 1. A Reimagined Market Destination for All**
- 2. A Compelling Cultural Identity**
- 3. Safety and Well-being for All**
- 4. Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry**
- 5. Places and Spaces that Transform**

Document 1 – *ByWard Market Revitalization Framework and Action Plan* outlines the full suite of actions required to achieve the vision of a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive historic market district. Actions are organized by area of focus and phased across short- (within 12 months), medium- (two to three years), and long-term (four or more years) timeframes.

Short-term actions are intentionally designed to support longer-term transformation. Early investments in public realm improvements, activation, and safety measures improve real and perceived safety, increase foot traffic, and establish the conditions needed for more complex medium- and long-term initiatives.

Foundational actions identified through the Framework focus on initiatives with the greatest potential to improve experience and perception in the short-term, closing gaps and complementing initiatives that have already been approved and funded. These actions, including enhancements to gateways, coordinated navigation, targeted placemaking in key areas of the Market, and façade improvements are designed to deliver tangible results, build confidence among residents, businesses, and visitors, and advance the Framework’s broader revitalization outcomes in 2026.

1. A Reimagined Market Destination for All

As one of Canada’s oldest public markets and a central mixed-use district, the ByWard Market has long played a role in daily life for residents, workers, and visitors. As Ottawa’s most visible gathering place, the ByWard Market is a city-wide asset that plays a critical role in shaping perceptions of the city, supporting tourism, and attracting investment and talent to sustain a diverse and resilient local economy. In recent years, changing mobility patterns, evolving consumer preferences, and competition from other destinations have challenged its traditional role.

As the Market evolves alongside changing mobility patterns and visitor expectations, there is a significant opportunity to reimagine how its public spaces, streets, and destinations come together to create a more compelling and welcoming experience. By enhancing comfort, animation, and accessibility, the Market can better support everyday use, family-friendly activity, and year-round vibrancy.

The revitalization framework responds by intentionally enhancing how people of all ages arrive, move through, and experience the ByWard Market throughout the day and year, creating the conditions and draw needed to attract a broader mix of users, inspire exploration, and showcase the very best of the Market's businesses, culture, and heritage.

Foundational action to advance in 2026 to support *A Reimagined Market Destination for All*

District-Wide navigation, access and parking strategy

Supporting *A Reimagined Market Destination for All*, this initiative improves how people arrive, move through and experience the Market, making it easier and more intuitive for residents and visitors to access businesses, events and public spaces. Improving access and mobility in the ByWard Market is a priority revitalization action aimed at enhancing navigation and supporting visitation during redevelopment. Near-term measures, including interim parking actions such as converting the 70 Clarence Street garage to three-hour pay-and-display, will help maintain convenient access while longer-term parking and mobility strategies are developed, with a commitment to report back to Council in 2027. These actions will be supported by clearer communications on parking expectations and exploration of a unified navigation platform integrating walking, cycling, transit, and parking. In addition, the City will explore complementary measures such as enhanced transit service, digital parking guidance, event shuttles, and expanded bicycle parking. This multi-modal approach will improve ease of access, reduce friction for visitors, support business vitality, and advance a more pedestrian-friendly Market over time. This action establishes a foundation to support future activations, improve visitor experience, and enable the gradual evolution of the Market into a pedestrian-oriented destination.

Other short-term actions in this area of focus include:

- **Arts, Culture and Entertainment (ACE) District Launch:** The launch of the downtown ACE District in 2026 will connect existing institutions, creators, businesses, and communities while reinforcing the ByWard Market as a premier

destination for arts, culture and entertainment. It will leverage and expand existing cultural and nightlife assets, introduce new public art installations and innovative placemaking activations to stimulate new cultural and entertainment experiences.

Table 1: A Reimagined Market Destination for All - Objectives and Impacts

Objective	Impact
<p>Reposition the ByWard Market as an active, pedestrian-oriented destination that supports multi-modal access, thriving local businesses and welcomes people of all ages and abilities, by improving navigation, and overall visitor experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase foot traffic and longer visitor stays by enhancing the appeal for diverse users, families, seniors, and people with disabilities, through accessible amenities, inclusive public-realm activations, and pedestrian-friendly design. • Stronger connections between destinations that encourage exploration, shopping, and repeat visits throughout the Market. • Increase local economic activity for local businesses by attracting residents, visitors, and workers to the area through innovative mobility and parking.

2. A Compelling Cultural Identity

The ByWard Market is rich in cultural meaning, reflecting Anishinabe Algonquin and Indigenous presence, the history of Bytown, and its role within the National Capital. Situated at the foot of Parliament Hill, the Market also offers a unique opportunity to celebrate this defining aspect of our national identity. While these stories are embedded in the area, they are not consistently visible in the public realm, programming, or visitor experience, limiting how clearly the ByWard Market's cultural significance is perceived by residents and visitors. Successful public-realm destinations such as Toronto's Distillery District, demonstrate how embedding local culture into everyday spaces can

strengthen a district’s identity and appeal to visitors seeking authentic, place-specific experiences. The ByWard Market has a similar opportunity to showcase what is uniquely Ottawa, creating a stronger sense of place for residents while enhancing its appeal as a cultural destination.

Short-term actions include:

- **ByWard Market Brand Identity Plan (City/BMDA):** Joint initiative to co-create and implement a cohesive brand that strengthens the Market’s identity as a distinctive destination rooted in Ottawa’s local and Canadian heritage.
- **Launch of Heritage Walk (OAG/200th):** Walk to visit local galleries, meet artists and curators, and engage with the community, as part of Bytown 200th celebrations.

Table 2: A Compelling Cultural Identity - Objectives and Impacts

Objective	Impact
<p>An identity that engages residents and visitors alike, celebrating who we are through culture, heritage, and national capital iconography, including Canada’s capital city role, Francophonie, Anishinabe Algonquin and Indigenous Peoples, and Bytown origins.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility of Anishinabe Algonquin, Francophone, and Bytown histories through coordinated programming, public art, and interpretive elements that make the Market’s stories easy to see and experience. • Strengthen connections between cultural assets, businesses, and public spaces through consistent narratives expressed in streetscape design, public spaces, activations, visible heritage, public art, and programming. • Reinforce the Market’s unique character and cultural significance through visible heritage, public art, and programming that make its identity tangible, multi-generational, and distinct within the National Capital Region.

3.Safety and Well-Being for All

The ByWard Market has been experiencing increased challenges related to safety, social disorder, and community well-being affecting perceptions of the area, reducing visitation, and placing strain on businesses, residents, and frontline services. The revitalization framework addresses these conditions by establishing a safer, more welcoming ByWard Market supported by coordinated frontline resources, proactive interventions, and inclusive public spaces. Safety and well-being are advanced through a combination of physical design and social supports, ensuring all people feel welcome, respected, and supported throughout the district.

Foundational action to advance in 2026 to support *Safety and Well-being for All*

Implementation of the Unsheltered Homelessness Outreach Model

The city-wide model will utilize a collaborative, multi-partner approach, strengthening and streamlining connections with community partners and other key collaborators to enhance situational awareness, coordinate responses, improve information sharing, and streamline interventions while ensuring appropriate responses for people based on need. The model remains housing focused, driven towards moving people into long-term housing. Key measures of success will be the number of people housed through outreach interventions and the model's direct contribution to improving safety-related conditions and enhancing the overall sense of safety in public spaces.

This approach will also enhance responsiveness to community concerns and greater trust by establishing more structured, consistent and accessible engagement with residents and businesses, supporting timely identification of issues with more coordinated and effective municipal responses. The unsheltered homelessness outreach model supports the safety and social pillar of the City's downtown revitalization strategy with a dual focus on physical and economic transformation, as well as the social conditions that fundamentally shape the downtown experience for everyone.

Other short-term actions in this area of focus include:

- **Community Outreach, Response and Engagement (CORE) Team:** Establish a dedicated full-time team of officers focused on reducing crime by addressing root causes through community engagement and collaboration with local stakeholders.

- **Increased Special Constable Deployment:** Expanded presence along Rideau Street to enhance visibility and day-to-day enforcement.
- **Private Security Pilot Program:** Targeted security presence during peak periods to improve responsiveness and support a safe environment.
- **AI-Enabled Service Request Pilot:** Deployment of AI tools to analyze service data, enabling more targeted responses and improved resource prioritization.

Table 3: Safety and Well-Being for All - Objectives and Impacts

Objective	Impact
<p>Establish a safer, more welcoming ByWard Market supported by coordinated frontline resources, proactive interventions, and inclusive public spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve real and perceived safety through increased visible presence (police foot patrols, Special Constables, private security pilot). • Improve the sense of safety and create a more welcoming environment that encourages regular, positive use through placemaking initiatives, high-quality public-realm design, and upgrades to derelict properties that attract unwanted behaviours. • Enhance responsiveness and service coordination through proactive deployment of enforcement, security, and outreach resources.

4. Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry

The ByWard Market is accessed through multiple streets, gateways, and transition points from surrounding neighbourhoods and destinations, including downtown, Parliament Hill, Lowertown, and Gatineau. Meanwhile, Rideau Station serves as a major gateway for those arriving by public transit, shaping first impressions as people enter directly into the Market's core. Currently, these routes and entry points vary

significantly in quality and legibility, making navigation into and within the Market less intuitive and weakening first impressions for residents and visitors alike.

The revitalization framework prioritizes the creation of clear, intuitive and welcoming routes that guide people seamlessly into and through the ByWard Market, reinforcing its role as a pedestrian-oriented district. The framework advances coordinated improvements to facades, streetscape character, gateway treatments, lighting and wayfinding to strengthen visual cues and reinforce pedestrian priority. These people-first design interventions will create safer, more coherent and easily navigable routes, improve overall experience and support broader revitalization efforts, fostering an environment that is welcoming and economically resilient.

Foundational actions to advance in 2026 to support *Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry*

Enhance Safety and User Experience along the Rideau–Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station Corridor

This foundational action advances the focus area of Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry by strengthening key gateways and corridors through place-by-design features such as clearer wayfinding, improved lighting, and upgraded building facades. These improvements will create a welcoming first impression of the ByWard Market and guide visitors along safe, well-defined routes. The Rideau–Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station are among the most visible and heavily used entry points, particularly for transit users arriving directly onto William Street. While Rideau Station is relatively new, opportunities exist to strengthen its visual character, sense of arrival and overall perception of safety through targeted interventions and activation.

Planned improvements at the Rideau–Sussex Gateway focus on enhancing accessibility, improving pedestrian and cycling connections, and establishing a clearer, more intuitive gateway into the Market. This includes enhancements to the Rideau–Sussex underpass which will strengthen connections to surrounding destinations, including the ByWard Market. Public realm improvements such as beautification, enhanced lighting and placemaking installations will improve safety, accessibility and overall user experience.

These visible, people-oriented improvements will create a more welcoming and intuitive route, reinforce pedestrian priority and encourage greater use throughout the day and evening. As these routes become more vibrant and well-used, they are expected to increase visitation and lay the groundwork for continued activation and public realm

enhancements over the medium- and long- term. These actions will also inform permanent gateway upgrades, strengthen pedestrian and cycling connections, and support the development of a cohesive, district-wide wayfinding and public realm strategy.

Commercial Heritage Façade Improvement Program

Supporting the focus area of Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry, this action improves the safety and visual cohesion of streets and corridors by strengthening the street-level experience and reinforcing active, well-maintained building frontages. In 2025, Council approved the creation of the Centretown Heritage Façade Improvement Program under the Ontario Heritage Act as part of the Centretown Street Safety and Revitalization Action Plan. Given the success of the pilot program, expanding it to include designated commercial properties within the ByWard Market would support storefront enhancements, reinforce the area's historic character, and encourage private investment in accessibility, heritage conservation, and building upgrades such as signage, lighting, windows, doors, and masonry. Providing financial incentives to property owners through this program would complement public realm investments by improving streetscape cohesion, addressing the negative impacts of boarded-up or derelict buildings that attract unwanted activity, enhancing perceptions of safety, and attracting increased pedestrian activity.

Led by Planning, Development and Building Services with Strategic Initiatives support, the program will strengthen business visibility and improve the consistency and quality of the public-facing environment. It also supports the restoration and conservation of heritage attributes that contribute to the ByWard Market's sense of place, aligning with the framework's Compelling Cultural Identity focus area and the nomination of the Market as a National Historic Site. The Planning, Development and Building Services Department will implement this action by developing an expanded program under Sections 39 and 45 of the Ontario Heritage Act for approval by Built Heritage Committee and Council in spring 2026.

Other short-term actions in this area of focus include:

- **Implement York Street Asphalt Art Initiative:** Introduce bold visual treatments to enhance wayfinding and reinforce York Street's role as a key Market corridor for pedestrians.

- **Implement wayfinding initiatives:** Clear, intuitive wayfinding that guides visitors into and through the Market along safe, well-defined routes, supported by lighting, signage, and animation.

Table 4: Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry - Objectives and Impacts

Objective	Impact
<p>Clear, intuitive wayfinding that guides visitors into and around the Market through gateways and along safe, well-defined routes, supported by lighting, signage, and people-first design principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve ease of access and navigation through welcoming routes, clear gateways, and strengthened multimodal transportation options. • Safer, more comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and multi-modal connections, enabling consistent day-to-day use of the Market by a broader range of users. • Enhance visitation by improving safety along routes and points of entry through people-first design principles that support confident movement and a more even distribution of activity.

5. Places and Spaces that Transform

Several City-owned assets in the ByWard Market are underperforming relative to their prominence and potential, creating opportunities to introduce new public spaces, establish anchor destinations, and strengthen district-wide activation. The revitalization framework prioritizes high-quality placemaking and animation, alongside the transformation of key City sites into compelling destinations including a reimagined market building, a new York Street plaza, and a potential future landmark building at 70 Clarence. Near-term actions focus on advancing the enabling work required to repurpose these assets and implement lasting public realm improvements. Collectively, this approach optimizes City-owned properties to support the Market’s evolution into a permanent, high-quality environment that enhances comfort, accessibility, and overall visitor experience.

Foundational action to advance in 2026 to support *Places and Spaces that Transform*

District-Wide Placemaking Initiative

The City will partner with the ByWard Market District Authority to deliver a 2026 district-wide placemaking initiative that will activate plazas and underutilized spaces by integrating programming, temporary design interventions, family-friendly amenities and partnerships with local operators. Adaptable elements, such as seating, lighting, landscaping, and scalable infrastructure, will support daily use, seasonal programming, and winter-friendly activation, while providing a nimble approach that can be adjusted based on business needs and feedback. It will attract families and people of all ages to eat, shop, linger and return, while laying the groundwork for permanent public realm renewal. The initiative aims to create a more vibrant ByWard Market experience in the lead-up to the 200th anniversary, broaden visitation, support business activity, improve safety through greater everyday presence, and inform future public realm investments.

Table 5: Places and Spaces that Transform - Objectives and Impacts

Objective	Impact
<p>Prioritizes high-quality placemaking and animation, while developing long-term plans to transform underperforming City assets into new destination spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of public spaces that attract people and encourage longer visits, supporting sustained district activity and return visitation. • Improved pedestrian-focused streets and plazas that enhance comfort, accessibility, and usability, enabling everyday use by residents, workers, and visitors. • Demonstrate long-term commitment through visible improvements to City-owned assets, creating more versatile anchor destinations for events, programming, cultural activations, and overall support of business vitality

Public Realm: Long-Term Transformation and Interim Conditions

The public realm is central to the revitalization of the ByWard Market, serving both as a long-term City-owned transformation and an immediate opportunity to enhance experience, safety, and vitality. Priority, high-impact revitalization actions planned for 2026 complement longer-term public realm redevelopment program by improving perceptions of safety, navigation, and attractiveness. Together, these interim and permanent public realm investments directly advance the ByWard Market's cohesive, high-quality vision, delivering meaningful benefits to improve the experience for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

Section 2: ByWard Market Public Realm Redevelopment Program

Purpose

This section of the report responds to Council direction on the redevelopment of key ByWard Market municipal assets and advances the implementation of the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework. It presents feasibility findings, the case for change and investment, and seeks Council endorsement of a recommended redevelopment program and approval to advance implementation.

Guided by the revitalization framework, the proposed redevelopment is centered on creating a safe, vibrant, and accessible district that serves the needs of residents first, encouraging a broader range of repeat users including families and local patrons to explore, linger, eat, and shop in the ByWard Market throughout the year.

The ByWard Market is a city-wide asset that is important to overall economic, social and cultural vibrancy of the city. By strengthening the ByWard Market's role as a daily destination for residents of Ottawa, the redevelopment is also intended to enhance its appeal to visitors seeking authentic local experiences.

Redevelopment Objectives

The recommended redevelopment program is a coordinated city-building investment that supports public safety, economic vitality, cultural infrastructure, heritage conservation, environmental resilience, and small-business sustainability, while reclaiming the ByWard Market as a welcoming, accessible, and vibrant civic place.

To ensure this investment delivers on Council-approved policy direction referenced in the strategic alignment section of this report, a set of redevelopment objectives was established. These objectives synthesize guidance from the Official Plan, the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan, the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, and the ByWard Market Heritage Conservation District Plan, and were used to shape the recommended redevelopment program for 55 ByWard Market Square, 70 Clarence Street, and York Street Plaza.

Table 6: Redevelopment Objectives

Objective	Key Actions and Outcomes
Design Excellence and Public Spaces	Deliver architectural and urban design excellence that reinforces ByWard Market's role as a civic, cultural, and national asset while enriching the historical urban fabric. The redevelopment program will conserve and enhance the ByWard Market's historic character and prioritize inclusive and human-scale design that strengthens the public realm.
Economic Vitality and Small Business Support	Support the local economy by increasing job growth, driving foot traffic, and spending at local businesses, and elevating positive national and global awareness of ByWard Market and Ottawa.
Destination Appeal and Cultural Activation	Integrate and celebrate Ottawa's unique culture and heritage throughout the public realm, and deliver permanent arts and performance spaces, flexible event infrastructure, daily programming, and public art that engage locals and visitors that strengthen the ByWard Market as a year-round cultural and economic destination.
Safety, Accessibility and Quality of Life	Improve the day-to-day experience for those living, working, and visiting the ByWard Market. Improve lighting, sightlines, pedestrian comfort, accessibility, multi-modal improvements, and street furniture.
Financial and Operational Sustainability	Diversify revenue through partnerships, shared management agreements, sponsorships, and revenue-generating uses; implement long-term maintenance plans to reduce costs and risks.
Environmental Stewardship	Expand tree canopy, implement green roofs/walls and stormwater features, improve energy efficiency and waste reduction, and adapt to future climate hazards to enhance environmental performance, user comfort and climate resiliency.

These objectives provide the guiding framework for future implementation, including detailed design, tenant and partner selection, programming, operations planning, and performance measurement, ensuring that subsequent project decisions remain aligned with Council's vision and the broader ByWard Market Revitalization Framework.

Recommended Redevelopment Program

The recommended redevelopment program reflects Council direction from 2021 and 2023 and is informed by multi-year public and Indigenous engagement undertaken through the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, the William Street and ByWard Market Square streetscaping design, and ongoing dialogue with the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Consultative Culture Circle and the ByWard Market Revitalization and 200th Anniversary Anishinabe Algonquin Advisory Circle, as well as market testing and comprehensive technical, financial, and business-case analysis. Together, this work confirms the need for coordinated reinvestment in City-owned assets, supports a partnership-based delivery model, and advances long-standing priorities related to safety, accessibility, cultural identity, and year-round economic vitality in the ByWard Market.

In 2022, the City issued a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) for the redevelopment of 70 Clarence Street, which did not generate the anticipated industry response, reflecting the complexity of the site, height constraints, and the absence at that time of a clearly defined program including subterranean parking options, cost framework, and funding strategy. Since then, the City has undertaken substantial technical, financial, and market analysis, and has repositioned 70 Clarence Street within a coordinated redevelopment program alongside 55 ByWard Market Square and York Street Plaza. This integrated, multi-asset approach reduces delivery risk, clarifies public investment, and positions the City to pursue a more targeted and viable partnership-based engagement in the next phase.

Drawing on global best practices from leading market halls, cultural districts, and civic plazas, the proposed redevelopment program is technically and financially feasible, culturally aligned, and responsive to community and market interest. The program establishes redevelopment concepts with clear design objectives for 55 ByWard Market Square and York Street Plaza and advances concurrent planning and feasibility work for 70 Clarence Street, while retaining flexibility to adapt through detailed design, partner selection, changing economic conditions, and ongoing public and Indigenous engagement.

Parking considerations and replacement options are also addressed as part of the coordinated redevelopment program. The recommendations are informed by the *Key Findings and Financial Business Case* prepared by Colliers Project Leaders, provided as Document 3.

Case for Change and Reinvestment

Redevelopment is more than a physical upgrade; it is a city-building investment with measurable returns. The case for change and reinvestment is demonstrated through the *ByWard Market Redevelopment Scenario: Benefits Assessment Report*, prepared with strategic advice from Bloomberg Associates and informed by Colliers Project Leaders' Economic Benefit Assessment in (Document 4). The study incorporated feasibility analysis findings, benchmarking and economic impact assessment, field research, and policy alignment to establish the proposed redevelopment scenario's technical and strategic foundation. This analysis provides a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of social, environmental, and economic considerations. It integrates public-realm design, safety, economic vitality, health, and social conditions within a single framework, a level of analysis rarely undertaken for urban market districts in Canada. This integrated evaluation is particularly important in the ByWard Market, where the complexity and interconnection of issues require coordinated action. The findings demonstrate that coordinated redevelopment of all key municipal assets together is a high-impact lever under the City's control, capable of addressing multiple, interrelated challenges simultaneously and advancing district-wide revitalization across safety, economic vitality, and social well-being.

A program logic model was developed to map the relationships between proposed redevelopment scenario activities, outputs, and expected outcomes. The capital investments in 55 ByWard Market Square, 70 Clarence Street, and York Street, the anticipated outputs, and outcomes of the proposed redevelopment concept were modeled and studied alongside Colliers Project Leaders' economic impact assessments. The five quantitative and qualitative indicators include: Economic, social, and environmental benefits were assessed using both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Economic analysis considered employment, spending, and property value uplift, while social and environmental dimensions were evaluated through indicators such as accessibility, safety perception, civic participation, and environmental performance. A more detailed methodology of the economic impact assessment is available in the appendix of Document 4.

As elements of the proposed redevelopment scenario are further defined in subsequent phases, staff can undertake more tailored assessment of anticipated impacts, maximization of benefits, and risk mitigation measures.

Recommended Redevelopment Concept - 55 ByWard Market Square

Background

The recommended rehabilitation responds to documented building-condition risks, accessibility deficiencies, and underutilization of the City's primary market hall asset. Constructed in 1926 and designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, 55 ByWard Market Square is a 3,500 m², historic market building with a second-floor mezzanine. It houses 17 commercial tenants and accommodates the offices of the ByWard Market District Authority. The building does not facilitate basic loading and delivery, is not universally accessible and lacks an elevator, limiting public access to the mezzanine. Incremental changes over time have reduced publicly accessible space and constrained its role as a central, inclusive gathering place.

Functional Program and Vision

The proposed concept repositions 55 ByWard Market Square as a vibrant, all-day destination that brings the 'market' back to the ByWard Market. The historic building will be rehabilitated to feature a bright central hall, space for nostalgic food-based anchor tenants such as a local specialty grocer and bakery, rotating food and beverage vendors, and flexible event space to support community gatherings, cultural programming, and celebrations.

Enhancements include skylights, improved circulation, and full accessibility, including a new elevator and universal washrooms. The mezzanine will be reimagined with a feature staircase and potential opportunities to activate the second-floor mezzanine. The basement will be upgraded for structural, mechanical, and storage needs. This renewal transforms 55 ByWard into a welcoming, inclusive hub that showcases the best of what is unmistakably 'Made in Ottawa', day and night, enabling detailed design and moving the project closer to implementation.

Rationale for Rehabilitation and Functional Program and Vision

The recommended rehabilitation of 55 ByWard Market Square is grounded in Council-approved policy direction and informed by recent technical assessments. The ByWard Market Public Realm Plan identifies renewal of the historic market building as a critical component of the ByWard Market's evolution and calls for "putting the market back into

the market” by reinforcing the building’s role as a food-focused anchor, supporting local vendors, enhancing patios and surrounding public spaces, and improving the overall visitor experience. Advancing this investment aligns with planned public-realm improvements and supports coordinated implementation of the broader ByWard Market redevelopment.

The last comprehensive renewal of the building occurred between 1996 and 1998, bringing it to its current architectural form. Since then, new operational and infrastructure pressures have emerged. A 2023 Building Condition Assessment identified approximately \$5.7 million in immediate (0–3 year) renewal needs that are still outstanding and an additional \$6.5 million in lifecycle requirements over the following two decades, including upgrades to accessibility, electrical, plumbing, mechanical systems, and washrooms. Renewal is therefore required to sustain baseline operations and to address long-standing deficiencies, such as inadequate basement storage and loading mechanisms, which retailers identified as a barrier to successful operations.

The proposed rehabilitation, featuring a renewed central public hall, flexible vendor spaces, new local-first anchor tenants, improved loading and basement storage, and upgraded building systems, positions the building to attract strong tenants, increase lease revenues, and support expanded year-round programming. Collectively, these improvements create opportunities for higher and more stable revenue relative to current conditions, where aging infrastructure and limited functional space constrain tenant performance and rental value.

The concept aligns with the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan’s goals to enhance accessibility, strengthen heritage character, support small businesses, and create a welcoming, community-oriented destination.

Future design phases will be guided by engagement with residents, businesses, potential programmers, the ByWard Market District Authority, and Heritage Planning staff to ensure that alterations respect the building’s character-defining elements.

Preliminary Cost Estimate

Estimated rehabilitation costs are \$40.2 million (Class D estimate), including the \$5.7 million in immediate (0–3 year) renewal requirements and an additional \$6.5 million needed over years 4 to 20 years, identified as part of the 2023 Building Condition Assessment. To date, \$1.6 million has been secured for design, with an additional \$2.7 million recommended as part of this report to continue to advance this work. The Class

D cost estimate and detailed cost breakdown for 55 ByWard Market Square is provided as Appendix 1 of Document 3: Key Findings and Financial Business Case.

The table below provides a high-level summary of estimated project costs.

Table 7: 2025 Class D Capital Cost Estimate for 55 ByWard

Category	Estimated cost
Total Construction Cost	\$40.2M
Funding Available	\$1.6M
Amount to Finance	\$38.6M

Table notes:

- \$1.6 million has been secured through the 2025 Capital Close exercise, with an additional \$2.7 million recommended to advance the design phase and public engagement.

Recommended Redevelopment Concept – York Street Plaza

Background

The construction of the York Street Plaza aligns required infrastructure renewal with the delivery of a Council-approved signature civic space. York Street Plaza is located within the City-owned right-of-way between Sussex Drive and William Street. Currently, this segment functions primarily as a transportation corridor, comprising two vehicular lanes, three discontinuous sidewalks, angled surface parking, and loading areas. A small plaza at the west end provides views to Parliament Hill and the illuminated “Ottawa” sign. While occasionally used for events or temporary installations, the corridor is not yet configured as the people-centered, flexible public space envisioned in the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan. Planned infrastructure upgrades, including watermain replacement, will take place following the ByWard Market’s 200th anniversary in 2027, providing an opportunity to integrate plaza construction efficiently.

Conceptual Vision

The York Street Plaza redevelopment envisions a people-centered, all-season public space that encourages discovery, connection, and community engagement. Defined by a bold paving pattern and a canopy of tall, arching trees, the design frames sightlines to the Peace Tower, reinforcing the plaza’s symbolic presence. The space will be flexible, with permanent event infrastructure to support cultural festivals, seasonal markets, and everyday community activities, and offers the opportunity to incorporate purpose-built features for winter amenities to maintain vibrancy year-round. The plaza will strengthen connections between 55 ByWard Market Square and 70 Clarence Street, linking the historic market with the broader ByWard Market district. The proposed plaza will also connect directly to the National Capital Commission’s courtyards, Confederation Boulevard and Major’s Hill Park, further reinforcing the area’s prominence within the Capital’s ceremonial and cultural landscape. Complementary retail, patio zones, and adaptable seating will support day-to-day use while enhancing street vitality.

Rationale for Construction and Functional Program and Vision

The creation of the York Street Plaza delivers one of the highest priorities of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan and is central to achieving its vision of a vibrant, flexible, and people-focused public realm. The Official Plan identifies York Street as a signature entrance and promenade within the ByWard Market Special District, to be redesigned in accordance with the Public Realm Plan and equipped to host a wide range of events.

At present, York Street functions primarily as a vehicular corridor with limited pedestrian amenities. Its conversion into a high-quality plaza, with permanent event infrastructure and significantly improved public space, will transform it into the active, accessible civic gathering place envisioned in Council-approved plans and increase its programming and revenue potential relative to current conditions.

Given the prominence of the site and its role as a civic gateway, future design and procurement processes will incorporate design excellence criteria, including four-season usability, architectural quality, durability, accessibility, connectivity to adjacent Federal lands, and integration with the surrounding National symbols and heritage context. These criteria would guide future design outcomes and would be used to assess proposals through subsequent competitive processes supporting this design phase.

Endorsement of this concept enables staff to advance the design phase and consider design excellence in recognition of this National Capital Placemaking opportunity. This includes renewed engagement with residents, businesses, partner organizations, and the National Capital Commission to plan the York Street Plaza in coordination with the City's planned 2028 sewer and watermain renewal, which will already require full road reconstruction from Sussex Drive to Dalhousie Street. Integrating the plaza design with this infrastructure work maximizes cost efficiency and minimizes disruption.

Coordination with the future redevelopment of 70 Clarence Street is also required, necessitating careful phasing of streetscape improvements.

Preliminary Cost Estimate

A Class D cost estimate and detailed cost breakdown for York Street Plaza is provided as Appendix 4 of Document 3: Key Findings and Financial Business Case. It is based on the Class D cost estimate prepared as part of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan with costs escalated to 2025. The total estimated redevelopment cost is \$34.2 million.

This estimate reflects the anticipated scope of plaza-specific public-realm improvements, including streetscape reconstruction, surface treatments, permanent event infrastructure, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, and associated civil works required to deliver a high-quality, flexible civic space. It is intended to support early decision-making and financial planning and will be refined through subsequent phases of design, public engagement, and technical coordination.

The next phase of work will focus on advancing the plaza from concept to a more defined and implementable design, informed by public engagement, coordination with

the National Capital Commission, adjacent landowners, and relevant area studies, as well as more detailed technical analysis.

Table 9: 2025 Class D Capital Cost Estimate for York Street Plaza

Category	Estimated cost
Total Construction Cost	\$34.2M
Funding Available -	-
Amount to Finance	\$34.2M

Table notes:

- \$4.5M recommended to advance the design phase and public engagement.
- Construction of the plaza is anticipated to be coordinated with planned sewer and watermain renewal works, which is expected to generate efficiencies and minimize disruption; these potential efficiencies will be confirmed through design.
- Design excellence and landmark status may increase costs.

Recommended Redevelopment Concept - 70 Clarence Street

Background

70 Clarence Street is a municipally owned four-storey parking garage built in 1973, containing 289 stalls and approximately 1,114 m² of retail space across seven ground-floor units. The structure has reached the end of its functional service life and requires significant capital investment to maintain safe operations beyond 2028. As a result, the City is advancing work on the site through two concurrent and coordinated streams: (1) evaluation of a potential redevelopment into a destination building, and (2) analysis of options to maintain parking capacity on the site through rehabilitation or replacement.

Part of the structure encroaches on the historic right-of-way of York Street Plaza. The property is subject to Official Plan Schedule C6-A – Views, Viewsheds, and View Sequences of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols, limiting permissible building height, and is considered a non-contributing property within the ByWard Market Heritage Conservation District. The ByWard Market Public Realm Plan identifies the site as a strategic opportunity for a future destination building, subject to further feasibility, funding, and Council approval.

Functional Program and Vision

As part of the redevelopment stream of work, the proposed concept explores transforming 70 Clarence Street into an anchor legacy arts hub that performs as a new iconic destination in Ottawa. The concept includes a publicly accessible ground-floor atrium for events, markets, rotating exhibitions, and community programming, with upper floors dedicated to immersive arts, maker spaces, and learning studios. The building will be designed to integrate with York Street Plaza, with accessible exterior spaces that can facilitate programming that appeals to a diverse range of visitors, including families.

Residential uses on the upper floors are identified as a potential opportunity to enhance street vitality and contribute to the long-term operational and financial sustainability of the building. The current concept illustrates capacity for approximately 18 units within the protected view-plane envelope, but the precise number, tenure, and delivery model will be determined through further feasibility work and partnerships in the next phase of work.

A defining element of the program is the inclusion of two complementary but distinct cultural uses, as outlined below:

- The first is a public-facing storytelling and immersive arts environment designed to host interactive exhibitions, digital and sensory-based experiences, and creative programming that engages audiences in new ways. This space is intended to support rotating content, collaborative production, and creative experimentation, helping to grow audiences and reinforce the ByWard Market as a contemporary cultural destination.
- The second is an educational arts learning hub featuring studios, classrooms, flexible labs, and shared production facilities. These spaces will support instruction, career development, and creative entrepreneurship by providing artists, instructors, administrators, and technical staff with opportunities to work, learn, and collaborate in a purpose-built environment that strengthens Ottawa's cultural workforce.

Both program elements are supported by a publicly accessible ground-floor atrium that will serve as a shared gathering and community programming space overlooking York Street Plaza, along with active ground-floor retail that contributes to street-level vitality and integration with the surrounding ByWard Market. Below-grade parking has also been identified as a potential component that would address near-term operational

needs and enabling York Street Plaza to function as a major civic gathering space. Subterranean parking feasibility and the proposed approach for considering parking replacement, business continuity, and transition management are discussed in more detail below.

Rationale for Redevelopment and Functional Program and Vision

The City's Official Plan identifies 70 Clarence Street as a future site for a signature destination building that complements the historic market building and strengthens the district's cultural and economic role. The ByWard Market Public Realm Plan similarly identifies the site as a high-priority opportunity for reinvestment. In parallel, the City is also assessing options to maintain parking capacity on the site, recognizing the importance of access and parking supply to the Market's ongoing vitality.

Redevelopment provides an opportunity to transform an underperforming asset into a financially sustainable, mixed-use arts hub that aligns with best practices for destination buildings and with the evolving needs of the ByWard Market. The proposed program integrates flexible cultural and creative spaces, immersive and digital experiences, and complementary ground-floor uses overlooking the future York Street Plaza, reinforcing the ByWard Market as a year-round cultural anchor within the Arts, Culture and Entertainment (ACE) District.

Residential use on the upper levels represents an opportunity to create value for the project and advance broader City housing objectives. While the flexible concept illustrates approximately 18 units within the protected view-plane envelope, no decisions regarding tenure, affordability, ownership, or delivery models are currently being sought. The next phase of work will evaluate a range of approaches, including partnership models, mixed-income options, and air-rights disposition, to determine how best to integrate housing in a way that supports both the cultural vision and the City's strategic housing priorities.

The vision for a legacy arts hub directly advances the goals of the Ottawa 2020 Arts and Heritage Plan, A Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage, and Culture (2013–2018), and the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, particularly in expanding access to arts and culture, celebrating Ottawa's identity, and investing in creative places and spaces that respond to demand from the public and business community to attract a broader range of users to the district. A cultural anchor in this location will attract residents and visitors, support local businesses, strengthen tourism, and contribute to a more diverse daytime and evening economy in the ByWard Market.

Staff reviewed low and high-density mixed-use development, and single use concepts such as an event venue. These options were found to either underperform against Council-approved objectives, present heightened delivery or market risk, or limit the City’s ability to shape long-term outcomes. The legacy arts hub integrates the strongest elements of the viable options including cultural activation, flexible programming, and financial sustainability while retaining City ownership of a strategic asset in the ByWard Market’s core and positioning the site for a competitive, partnership-based delivery model.

Preliminary Cost Estimate

A Class D cost estimate and detailed cost breakdown for 70 Clarence Street is provided in Appendix 2 of Key Findings: Financial Business Case. The total estimated redevelopment cost is \$71.2 million, which does not yet account for design excellence and excludes subterranean parking. The costs are proposed to be financed through a combination of debt, senior government contributions, and delivery partnerships.

The table below provides a high-level summary of estimated project costs.

Table 81: 2025 Class D Capital Cost Estimate for 70 Clarence Street

Category	Estimated cost
Total Construction Cost	\$71.2M
Funding Available	-
Amount to Finance	\$71.2M

Table notes:

- Architectural excellence and landmark status will impact costs.

Parking Replacement, Business Continuity, and Transition Management

Parking is a critical concern for ByWard Market businesses and property owners, particularly during construction and transition periods. The recommended approach treats parking as a business support function within a broader access and mobility strategy. The demolition or redevelopment of 70 Clarence Street will not proceed until Council has approved a comprehensive parking strategy confirming how access needs will be met during and after construction, including both vehicle access and multi-modal travel to and within the district.

The strategy will evaluate shared-use agreements with private garages, pricing and curb-management tools, construction-phase mitigation measures, digital wayfinding, and replacement parking options, including parking-only and redevelopment-related scenarios. It will also identify opportunities to strengthen multi-modal access such as walking, cycling, transit connections, loading and deliveries, and barrier-free access so that the overall mobility network continues to support business continuity and visitor access during transition and long-term operations. This phased approach allows Council to defer irreversible capital commitments until demand, partnership, and financial conditions are fully understood, while providing predictability and confidence for businesses and property owners. The parking strategy will be developed and applied in coordination with the redevelopment phasing plan to ensure that access, business continuity, and construction sequencing are aligned.

A fully developed, evidence-based parking strategy, aligned with the Official Plan, the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, Municipal Parking Management Strategy, and Council's broader mobility objectives, will be completed before any decision regarding demolition at 70 Clarence Street.

At this stage, Council's endorsement is sought only to advance the technical, financial, and partnership work required to develop a more implementation-ready redevelopment option. Identifying operating and financial partners is essential to this next phase and it is necessary to present Council with credible alternatives to the anticipated investment of more than \$29 million that would otherwise be required to extend the service life of the existing garage in 2028.

These changes are consistent with Council direction to transition the ByWard Market toward a more people-focused public realm while maintaining balanced access and business support.

To inform future decisions, a Parking and Subsurface Investigation by Parsons Corporation reviewed district-wide parking supply, demand, and the technical feasibility of replacement options. The review confirmed that the broader ByWard Market District contains more than 5,100 publicly accessible parking spaces, including over 3,700 private off-street spaces, and that overall utilization remains below functional-capacity thresholds, including during peak periods. The analysis also confirmed that a limited underground facility beneath 70 Clarence Street, estimated at approximately 190 spaces, is technically feasible. Larger underground facilities and parking beneath York Street were determined to be constrained by utilities, right-of-way limitations, and cost, and were therefore not advanced beyond conceptual analysis.

Preliminary Cost Estimate

A Class D cost estimate and detailed cost breakdown for the proposed underground facility is provided as Appendix 3 of Document 3: Key Findings and Financial Business Case.

Table 10: 2025 Class D Capital Cost Estimate for Subterranean Parking Garage at 70 Clarence Street

Category	Estimated cost
Total Construction Cost	51.4M
Funding Available	0
Amount to Finance	\$51.4M

The total estimated cost of an integrated, subterranean parking facility is \$51.4 million, which includes \$7.2M of required demolition costs for the existing structure at 70 Clarence Street.

Parking implementation decisions are not being sought through this report. A phased approach is appropriate to allow further analysis of future demand, confirmation of partnership opportunities, alignment with broader mobility initiatives, and risk-managed financial planning, including coordination with the O-Train Line 1 East extension in 2026.

Staff will return to Council prior to demolition of 70 Clarence Street with a comprehensive parking strategy that will examine:

- Partnerships with private operators and shared-use agreements.
- Pricing, curbside management, and loading and delivery solutions.
- Opportunities to offset potential subterranean construction costs.
- Digital tools and wayfinding to optimize existing supply.
- Construction-phase mitigation measures.
- Multi-modal access improvements and network integration.

Financial Business Case

The City's ByWard Market portfolio including 55 ByWard Market Square, 70 Clarence Street, and York Street is constrained by aging infrastructure, limited leasable space, and reliance on surface parking. Current annual revenues include:

- **55 ByWard Market Square:** Approximately \$555,000 (legacy below-market leases)
- **70 Clarence Street:** Approximately \$1.2 million (parking fees and retail tenants)
- **York Street:** Approximately \$175,000 (primarily from 84 surface parking spaces)

This baseline revenue provides little capacity to support reinvestment, modernization, or enhanced public programming.

Cost of the “Do-Nothing” Scenario

Maintaining existing assets without redevelopment is not cost-neutral:

- **70 Clarence Street:** Approximately \$29.5 million in capital renewal required by 2028 to maintain safety, with a two-year construction period, producing no additional revenue or improvements.
- **55 ByWard Market Square:** Approximately \$5.7 million in immediate renewal and approximately \$6.5 million over two decades to sustain basic operations; these works are unfunded and would not modernize the building, improve accessibility, or expand programming.
- **York Street:** Critical sewer and watermain infrastructure must be replaced by 2028, at an estimated cost of approximately \$11.2 million, resulting in repeated construction and inefficiencies if undertaken in isolation.

The do-nothing approach will require significant investment to support the status quo, delivering no new revenue, no enhanced public realm, and no progress on Council priorities for downtown revitalization, placemaking, or heritage stewardship.

Investment alignment and strategic overview

The ByWard Market redevelopment program represents a major civic investment, with total estimated capital costs of approximately \$197 million across four coordinated projects: 70 Clarence Street (destination building and potential parking facility), 55

ByWard Market Square rehabilitation, and the York Street Plaza. This figure includes the City's Class D contingency of 40 per cent. To date, \$1.6 million has been secured through the 2025 capital close exercise to advance design for the 55 ByWard Market Square rehabilitation, with the remaining \$195.4 million anticipated to be financed through a combination of municipal debt, senior government contributions, parking reserve funds, and partnership, sponsorship, and philanthropic contributions. Based on current assumptions, a scenario in which the capital program was financed entirely through municipal debt would result in an estimated annual debt servicing requirement of approximately \$10 million. This full debt-financing scenario is presented as a conservative baseline to illustrate the scale of potential municipal exposure and to inform Council's consideration of alternative funding, partnership, and revenue strategies to be advanced in subsequent phases.

Revenue Structure Under the Redevelopment Program

Over the 40-year analysis period, the redevelopment scenario materially strengthens and diversifies the portfolio's revenue base:

- **55 ByWard Market Square:** Approximately \$165 million in total nominal revenue
- **70 Clarence Street (destination building without parking):** Approximately \$429 million in total nominal revenue
- **York Street Plaza:** Approximately \$37.7 million in total nominal revenue

These gains reflect expanded leasable areas, new residential opportunities, enhanced cultural programming and festivals, and increased event and activation capacity. While 55 ByWard and the York Street Plaza remain public-interest civic amenities with structural deficits, both generate significantly more revenue than under the existing conditions, improving long-term operating performance and helping to offset costs.

Financial Performance

A 40-year financial analysis was completed for each asset and for the redevelopment program overall. For analysis purposes, the model assumes the City carries full capital and operating costs. A funding and partnership strategy will be developed to support delivery as part of the next phase of work.

Key highlights:

- By 2030, the portfolio is projected to generate approximately \$9.4 million in annual revenues, with operating expenses of \$4.5 million, resulting in operating income of approximately \$4.9 million before debt servicing. Over the 40-year analysis period, the net present value (NPV) of cashflows is estimated at –\$45.9 million.
- Importantly, the financial performance is uneven across the asset mix.
 - The 70 Clarence Street destination building (excluding parking) is projected to generate positive long-term cashflow, producing approximately +\$44.3 million in nominal net cashflow, positioning it as the financial anchor of the overall program.
 - In contrast, 55 ByWard Market Square (–\$24.2 million) and the York Street Plaza (–\$62.4 million) are forecast to operate with structural deficits, reflecting their deliberate role as public-interest civic amenities.
 - These components nonetheless improve revenue performance relative to current conditions by increasing rental, programming, event, and activation revenues while delivering substantial public realm and heritage value.
 - The proposed subterranean parking facility at 70 Clarence Street is identified as the largest financial pressure point, with projected long-term net cashflow of –\$68.9 million. While it would provide a stable, City-managed parking supply supporting district businesses, its capital and lifecycle costs exceed its revenue potential under current assumptions.

Table 11: Portfolio Financial Summary (40-year Outlook)

Item	Status Quo (No Redevelopment)	Redevelopment With Underground Parking	Redevelopment Without Underground Parking
Capital Requirement – Lifecycle (Nominal)	≈ 124.7 million	≈ 87.6 million	≈ 64.3 million
Capital Requirement – Development (Nominal)	-	≈ 197.2 million	≈ 145.7 million
Annual Revenues by 2030	≈ \$3 million	≈ \$9 million	≈ \$8 million
40-Year Net Cashflow (Nominal)	≈ (\$120.3M)	≈ (\$111.2M)	≈ (\$42.3M)
40-Year Net Cashflow (NPV)	≈ (\$41.3M)	≈ (\$45.9M)	≈ (\$25.9M)
NPV Cashflow Benefit Over Status Quo	-	≈ (\$4.7M)	≈ \$15.4M

Table notes:

- Redevelopment significantly increases annual revenue, but the program does not breakeven without financial derisking.
- Performance improves substantially when underground parking is removed.

Funding and Financial Derisking

Partnership based funding, including other levels of government will be pursued which may include sponsorships, financial partnerships and philanthropic contributions to

improve the financial profile of the program. In addition, the financial business case identifies scope refinement opportunities that strengthen the project's long-term financial performance. This includes increasing the residential capacity within the 70 Clarence Street building while maintaining protected view planes. The financial analysis demonstrates that removing the subterranean parking component would reduce required capital by approximately \$51.5 million and improve the portfolio's 40-year NPV from -\$45.9 million to -\$25.9 million. The inclusion of subterranean parking as a component of asset redevelopment will be further evaluated to ensure that a balance is achieved between cost savings and the value of providing public parking to visitors of the ByWard Market.

The business case also estimates that full asset disposal of 70 Clarence Street could generate limited upfront value (estimated at \$4.5–\$7.5 million) due to height restrictions, and existing structural conditions, and would undermine the City's ability to achieve revitalization objectives. As residential integration is explored further in the next phase of work, staff will assess a range of tenure and partnership models, including air-rights disposition, to identify an approach that best supports both project viability and the City's broader housing objectives.

Further, there is strong alignment between the program's cultural, housing, tourism, and public-realm objectives and current federal and provincial funding priorities, improving the likelihood of senior government participation, and staff will continue to monitor opportunities to align scope and sequencing with available support in the next phase.

The analysis demonstrates that the program is directionally viable and financially improvable. The 70 Clarence Street destination building functions as a revenue-generating anchor, and the broader portfolio can reasonably approach breakeven through a combination of targeted scope refinements, partnership structures, senior government funding, and sponsorship or philanthropic contributions. Collectively, these findings provide a credible, staged foundation for advancing the project toward implementation while responsibly managing financial risk.

William Street and ByWard Market Square Streetscaping

In response to Council direction, the City secured \$11.8 million through the Ontario–Ottawa Agreement to complete detailed design for William Street and ByWard Market Square and to construct William Street in 2026. Detailed design is complete, and engagement with residents and businesses was undertaken within the Council-approved framework of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan and Official Plan.

Public-realm investment remains a cornerstone of the City's long-term strategy for the ByWard Market. At the same time, current economic conditions and the concentration of small, independent businesses in the district underscore the importance of carefully sequencing construction activity. Businesses and property owners have noted that advancing this project ahead of other redevelopment initiatives could place additional strain on operations during a period of economic fragility. To balance near-term business continuity with long-term renewal, William Street and ByWard Market Square streetscaping will now be phased at a later date to align delivery with broader infrastructure coordination and market conditions.

As major infrastructure projects mobilize across the ByWard Market, the City will work with the ByWard Market District Authority and local businesses to advance the 2026 placemaking initiative. Programming, temporary design interventions, and partnerships with local operators, will activate plazas and underutilized public spaces, support foot traffic, and showcase the best of the ByWard Market's food, culture, music, and local businesses. This approach builds momentum in the near term, supports economic activity, and informs permanent renewal as implementation advances.

The City has also submitted a \$14.4 million application to the Government of Canada's Active Transportation Fund to support construction of the ByWard Market Square segment and is awaiting a decision. While this work is not included in the recommended redevelopment scenario, it remains an important complementary public-realm initiative, and implementation timing will be reassessed as part of future Council direction and overall phasing of the ByWard Market revitalization.

Procurement Planning and Partnerships

The next phase will advance a competitive process to identify qualified operators and delivery partners for the ByWard Market redevelopment scenario and to test market interest and capacity to deliver the proposed programs. This process will confirm partnership structures, operating models, and financial participation to ensure a balance between public benefit and long-term financial sustainability.

Potential partnership opportunities include:

- Cultural organizations for the legacy arts hub at 70 Clarence Street that were part of market sounding (such as the Ottawa School of Art and Immersive International), as well as private and non-profit partners for the residential component.

- At 55 ByWard Market Square, the ByWard Market District Authority will continue to manage existing leases, with City staff working closely with the ByWard Market District Authority to align tenant mix, activation, and programming with the redevelopment objectives.

The outcomes of operator engagement, partner selection, and financial testing will be reported back to Council in 2027 through a project implementation report that will recommend partnership models and integrated funding strategies. Subsequent to the next Council report, procurement and construction of 55 ByWard Market Square, York Street Plaza, and 70 Clarence Street will follow the City's standard procurement and financial policies to ensure transparency, competitiveness, and value for money.

Following Council approval of the redevelopment scenario, the Key Findings and Financial Business Case (Document 3) provides a framework to actively pursue partnerships, sponsorships, and philanthropic contributions to reduce the municipal funding burden. Staff will seek authority to prepare professional investment materials that translate Council-endorsed concepts into compelling narratives, strengthen partner engagement, and position the projects for senior government funding.

Project Phasing and Council Decision Points

The recommended ByWard Market redevelopment program aligns asset condition realities, infrastructure renewal requirements, and Council decision-making within a coordinated, risk-managed phasing approach. The program has been structured to allow design, approvals, and technical readiness for all three priority assets to advance in parallel, while sequencing construction to minimize cumulative impacts and avoid inefficient reinvestment in end-of-life infrastructure. Document 7 is a map of the redevelopment program projects.

At 70 Clarence Street, the municipally owned parking garage continues to receive targeted investment to maintain safety and serviceability and is monitored through regular condition assessments. A short-term investment of approximately \$1.9 million in 2026 is required to maintain safe operations through approximately 2028. Extending the facility beyond this period is estimated to require over \$29.5 million in capital investment, in current-day dollars, to address structural, mechanical, and life-safety deficiencies, and would require a full closure of the garage for an estimated two-year period. As a result, 2028 represents a fixed and unavoidable decision point for the future of the asset, regardless of whether redevelopment or continued parking

operations are pursued. Demolition of 70 Clarence Street therefore remains the primary schedule driver for the overall program.

In parallel, the York Street Plaza must be coordinated with planned watermain and sewer renewal anticipated between 2028 and 2030. The estimated cost of planned watermain and sewer renewal is approximately \$11.2 million. Advancing the design phase now allows the City to align plaza construction with underground infrastructure work, reduce disruption, and ensure the public realm reflects the approved vision and engagement outcomes. In the preliminary phasing scenario, construction of York Street Plaza would follow demolition at 70 Clarence Street to minimize cumulative impacts on parking supply, businesses, visitor access, and district programming.

With William Street streetscaping work being re-phased, the City is reviewing an approach that would combine the rehabilitation of 55 ByWard Market Square with related streetscape improvements on William Street and ByWard Market Square, allowing the work to be coordinated.

By proceeding with the design phase of 55 ByWard Market Square now, the project could be technically shovel-ready by 2028. However, delivering multiple major construction packages simultaneously would create excessive cumulative impacts on businesses, residents, access, and public programming in the neighbourhood. As a result, construction of 55 ByWard Market Square and its surrounding streetscape would likely need to be sequenced after the major works associated with 70 Clarence Street.

This approach supports efficient procurement, coordinated construction staging, and protection of new public-realm investments, while providing Council with clear, staged decision points before irreversible actions are taken. While this phasing reduces risk and disruption, it also carries trade-offs, including delayed visible change at 55 ByWard Market Square. Timing estimates reflect the best information currently available and will continue to be refined through technical work, procurement planning, and partnership discussions, with no irreversible decisions required prior to further reporting to Council in 2027.

The table below summarizes the indicative phasing and key Council decision points for each component of the ByWard Market redevelopment program, providing a consolidated view of how design, approvals, and construction are expected to be sequenced across the three priority assets.

Table 12: Indicative Project Phasing

Asset	2026	2027	2028	2029+
55 ByWard Market Square and streetscaping	Advance design (55 ByWard Market Square)	Council checkpoint	Shovel-ready (no construction)	Sequenced after major works at 70 Clarence and York Street
York Street Plaza	Advance design	Integrate with underground infrastructure design and Council checkpoint	Demolition at 70 Clarence; coordination with underground works	Construction of plaza and streetscape
70 Clarence Street - Destination Building	Partner selection	Financial framework, parking strategy, Council decision to proceed	Demolition/repair (fixed schedule driver)	Construction
70 Clarence Street - Parking Garage (if no redevelopment)	Interim investment	Council decision on garage repair vs redevelopment	—	—

Business and Tenant Support

The City recognizes that redevelopment in the ByWard Market will result in phased and location-specific impacts to businesses, tenants, and vendors. The nature and duration of impacts will vary by project and construction staging and may include direct impacts to City-owned assets, operational impacts to adjacent businesses during construction, and indirect district-wide impacts related to visibility and customer perception.

As such, the City has developed a Business and Tenant Support Strategy (Document 5), which will provide a coordinated framework for managing impacts across all priority projects. The Strategy focuses on tools within existing City authority and will be implemented through project-specific action plans that reflect differences in timing, location, and scale of impact. Key measures of the Strategy include:

- Early and proactive communication
- Advance notice of construction staging and timelines
- Regular updates and a dedicated business contact
- Clear access, routing, and parking information
- Access and visibility support such as wayfinding and directional signage
- District-wide business support such as coordinated marketing, programming, seasonal promotions, and digital tools
- Targeted tenant support (55 ByWard Market Square and 70 Clarence Street) such as early information on notice periods and timelines, guidance on relocation and transition planning and referrals to advisory services

The City, working closely with the ByWard Market District Authority, will proactively manage these impacts through early communication, coordinated mitigation measures, and business continuity supports.

Impacts to Current Tenants, Businesses, and Vendors

The ByWard Market District Authority administers the master lease agreements for tenants at 55 ByWard Market Square (19 units) and 70 Clarence Street (7 units). Under all redevelopment scenarios, the City will continue to respect existing lease terms, including provisions related to notice, relocation, and termination associated with municipal construction. There are no immediate impacts to tenants, and support measures are intentionally designed to be predictable and comprehensive.

Construction and associated impacts have been purposely staged to avoid major activity during the ByWard Market's 200th anniversary. Redevelopment impacts are anticipated to commence in 2028, with 70 Clarence Street affected first, followed by York Street Plaza, and 55 ByWard Market Square at a later stage subject to detailed design, funding, and staging.

ByWard Market District Authority Capacity and Operating Model

As ByWard Market redevelopment progresses, a review of the ByWard Market District Authority's operating model and capacity will help ensure that the organization is well positioned to support the district's long-term success.

With the redevelopment of 55 ByWard Market Square, 70 Clarence Street, and the York Street Plaza, the district will see new public spaces, expanded programming opportunities, and increased expectations related to placemaking, activation, and business support.

A review will enable the City and the ByWard Market District Authority to work together to identify how best to align future operations with these spaces. This review will include an assessment of revenues and operating costs, opportunities to maximize new funding sources, integrating placemaking, special events, and programming in ways that support the redevelopment, reflect the ByWard Market District Authority's mandate, and strengthen business participation. Document 6 provides an overview of the current role of the ByWard Market District Authority.

Public Engagement

The redevelopment concept reflects multiple inputs gathered to date, including recent business case research, best practices, market sounding with operators and partners, and public feedback collected both prior to the approval of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan and during the 2025 William Street and ByWard Market Square streetscaping engagement.

As the redevelopment scenario advances, several public engagement opportunities will occur at key design and decision-making stages. Each project will have its own tailored public engagement plan suited to its scope, complexity, and project phase.

This phase of engagement is essential not only to refine each project but also to ensure the redevelopment remains grounded in community values, operational realities, and Council's vision for a revitalized, inclusive, and resilient ByWard Market.

For each engagement process, staff will publish a "What We Learned" report. An update will be provided to Committee and Council in 2027 for information. Economic Development Services will work with Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations (Community and Social Services), and the City's Accessibility Office to ensure an equity, diversity and inclusion lens is applied, Indigenous rights are respected, and accessible accommodations are offered. These partners will also assist in identifying

appropriate outreach channels such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee, disability community partners and boards, neighbourhood networks, and local social-service agencies. Additional considerations are outlined in the Accessibility Implications and the Indigenous, Gender and Equity Implication sections.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A structured performance measurement framework has been established to monitor conditions in the ByWard Market and assess whether revitalization actions are delivering meaningful improvements over time. The framework links vision, objectives, actions, and measurable indicators across key focus areas including visitor activity and spending, business performance, public-space use and activation, safety and public order, mobility and access, community support services, and overall district perception. It draws on existing datasets from City departments, boards, and partners, with baseline data in place to track trends, identify emerging risks, and inform adjustments to operational, placemaking, and capital investments. Council will receive annual reporting on progress and areas requiring attention. Early results demonstrate the framework in action, with increases in foot traffic, improved retail occupancy, growth in tourism and transit use, and reductions in reported incidents, providing evidence that coordinated, place-based interventions are contributing to improved activation, economic vitality, mobility, and select safety outcomes. The full framework is included in Appendix 2 to support transparent, long-term monitoring.

ByWard Market Revitalization: Performance Measurement Framework and Evidence of Change

A structured performance measurement framework has been established to monitor conditions in the ByWard Market and assess the effectiveness of revitalization actions over time. The framework enables consistent, transparent, and comparable reporting, supports evidence-based decision-making, and provides Council with a clear picture of whether investments are translating into meaningful improvements for residents, visitors, and businesses.

How the Framework Works

The framework links vision → areas of focus → objectives → actions → measurable indicators → outcomes. Each area of focus has defined objectives, advanced through coordinated actions, and measured using both quantitative and qualitative indicators. These include:

- **Visitor activity and spending** – Track annual number of visitors and total visitor expenditures to measure district draw and economic vitality
- **Business performance** – Monitor commercial occupancy and retail vacancy to assess economic health
- **Event programming and activation** – Record number of days of public events, activations, and use of public space (e.g., patios) to evaluate engagement
- **Community outreach and support services** – Measure delivery and reach of services provided by the City and its partners
- **Safety and public order** – Track reported incidents and service requests to assess objective safety trends
- **Resident and visitor mobility** – Monitor transit use and peak parking occupancy to evaluate accessibility
- **District perception and sentiment** – Capture positive sentiment, ease of navigation, comfort, and overall experience

Together, these indicators provide evidence of whether actions are achieving intended outcomes, and whether district conditions are improving over time.

Data Sources

The framework leverages existing, reliable datasets from multiple City departments, boards, and partners, including:

- **ByWard Market District Authority** – visitor volumes, activation activity, commercial vacancy
- **Ottawa Police Service** – calls for service, incident types, patrol activity
- **City Departments** – Public Works (cleanliness and maintenance), Community and Social Services (service coordination), Ottawa Public Health (harm reduction), OC Transpo (ridership and accessibility trends)

Baseline data have been established for all indicators to track trends over time, allowing Council to see both directionality and emerging risks.

Evidence-Based Decision Making

The framework is designed not only to report progress but also to inform targeted interventions. For example:

- **Wayfinding** enhancements may be informed by trends in visitor navigation, orientation, and ease-of-movement indicators
- **Placemaking and programming** adjustments may be guided by patterns in activity levels, participation, and spatial distribution across the district
- **Safety-related improvements** may be informed by changes in incident data, service requests, and perception-based measures of safety and comfort

This approach ensures that measurement is actionable and directly tied to operational and capital decisions.

Accountability and Reporting

Council will receive annual reports summarizing key trends, progress toward objectives, and areas needing attention. Clear roles in data stewardship and reporting are assigned across City departments and partners, ensuring reliability and accountability.

By linking indicators to actions and intended outcomes, staff can assess whether:

- **Increased visitor activity and spending** support the local economy
- **Improved business performance** lowers vacancies and strengthens revenue
- **Expanded programming and activation** enhances cultural and economic vitality
- **Enhanced public-realm investments** improve everyday experiences for residents and visitors
- **Effective safety initiatives** reduce incidents and increase confidence in the district
- **Broader community outreach and support** reaches intended populations
- **Improved mobility** facilitates access via transit, parking, and pedestrian circulation

- **Stronger district perception and sentiment** boost comfort, navigation, and overall experience

The full Measurement Framework is included as Document 2, detailing all indicators and providing a foundation for transparent, long-term monitoring of ByWard Market revitalization outcomes.

ByWard Market Public Realm Redevelopment Program

Staff have embedded ongoing monitoring and evaluation into the redevelopment scenario and all associated projects outlined in this report. This includes an update back to Committee and Council, continued internal governance provided through the ByWard Market Steering Committee and Redevelopment Scenario Advisory Committee, and assessing the long-term impacts of these ByWard Market projects through public engagement and periodic checkpoints to understand how perceptions, comfort, safety, and overall experience in the ByWard Market evolve over time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The report includes financial implications including priority actions (immediate 2026 needs), preliminary cost estimates (Class D), and financial business case for 55 Byward Market Square, York Street Plaza and 70 Clarence Street.

This report is only seeking the immediate 2026 needs. Staff will report back in 2027 that will include a recommended financing model for the redevelopment program. The financing model may include a combination of municipal debt, senior government contributions, parking reserve funds, partnership, sponsorship, and philanthropic contributions.

As detailed in the report, 70 Clarence requires a short-term investment of approximately \$1.9 million is required to maintain safe operations through approximately 2028. This is funded from within existing budgets, funded by the Parking Reserve.

The following table outlines the total preliminary costs, funding secured to date, estimated cost remaining, and the immediate 2026 needs (in millions):

Project	2025 Preliminary Cost Estimate (Class D)	Funding Secured To Date	Estimated Cost Remaining	Immediate 2026 Needs
55 ByWard Market Square	\$40.2	\$1.6	\$38.6	\$2.7
York Street Plaza	\$34.2	\$0.0	\$34.2	\$4.5
70 Clarence Street	\$71.2	\$0.0	\$71.2	\$0.2
70 Clarence Subterranean Parking	\$51.4	\$0.0	\$51.4	\$0.0
Total	\$197.0	\$1.6	\$195.4	\$7.4

Upon Council approval, new capital accounts will be set up and capital budget authority of \$7.4 million will be added in 2026. The \$2.7 million and \$4.5 million for 55 Byward Market Square and York Street Plaza respectively, will be funded by the Citywide Capital Reserve in 2026 and repaid from the Municipal Accommodation Tax Tourism Reserve, which is forecasted to be repaid in 3-4 years. The \$200 thousand for the Parking Replacement and Access Strategy will be funded from the Parking Reserve.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendations in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR

The ByWard Market Revitalization Framework and Coordinated Redevelopment Program is a welcome discussion and long-overdue reset in the hopes of focusing much of staff attention on this jewel in the heart of Ottawa's downtown. It is the first place I found a job when I moved to Ottawa in 2004 and holds special meaning for myself and many others who call this neighbourhood home. But that specialness has long been overshadowed by headlines of crime, the redlining of social services into Ward 12,

empty storefronts and attempts to “revitalize” the Market with endless and interminable plans, working groups, task forces, advisory leadership tables, roadmaps, strategic alignment exercises, and so on. I have sat on many of these committees and the lack of actual implementation and visible change was one of the reasons I ran for office.

The general consensus among those who live in or run a business in the ByWard is that it suffers not only from terrible headlines, but from terrible follow-through. We are very good at meeting to discuss problems. We are less good at implementing solutions with any urgency or seriousness.

Most people around said tables do not live in the area, meaning their personal safety, property values and daily quality of life are not tied to any of the outcomes. It has been a longstanding joke for those of us who do that the ByWard keeps the lights on in community centres in the wards where the people making decisions about it do not experience its daily realities.

When the City held a Rural Summit, we rightly centered rural voices. The same respect should apply here.

To its credit, this report is thoughtful and comprehensive. It acknowledges that revitalization cannot occur in isolation from housing, homelessness, substance use, public health and safety. It recognizes that the Market’s challenges are interconnected and that social disorder is not separate from economic viability.

However, after 73 pages, residents, families and businesses deserve more clarity on what will actually change in the next 12 months.

We are presented with a framework, a steering committee, a measurement framework, a 2027 report back, and multiple future decision points. What we are not yet presented with are firm commitments on some of the most consistent public asks: a plan to better distribute low-barrier social services throughout the city (St. Joseph and Queen St transitional housing are not low-barrier), a public washroom plan beyond the Market building, and a pedestrianization schedule with defined dates and parameters. There is also no mention of the downtown truck route along Nicholas, Rideau St and King Edward which has been a consistent source of frustration for residents, businesses, tourists, students and truckers themselves and no acknowledgement that those who work and live in the Byward, also need city services that respond to their needs like daycares: [Night-time childcare essential to shift workers — and a great ByWard Market goal | Ottawa Citizen](#)

Temporary and permanent pedestrianization through retractable bollards has been discussed since 2018. Consultation feedback was clear. If we believe the ByWard is a people-first district, while balancing the need for deliveries, accessibility and convenience, then we need to move beyond pilots and into predictable implementation. Our Canada Day pilot and the recent Barbegazi street closures are examples of how this flexibility is both workable and welcome, and many business owners have expressed a willingness to collaborate with the BMDA, myself and the City to make this permanent and structured.

One additional concern is the degree of governance concentration embedded in the plan. The governance model centralizes significant authority within senior staff and the Steering Committee, but it does not formally embed structured coordination with the local elected representative. While informal collaboration may occur, there is no defined mechanism for ongoing engagement with the ward Councillor as key scope, or how partnerships and programming decisions will evolve. Given the scale and impact of this initiative on one neighbourhood, that gap should be addressed to ensure transparency, accountability and alignment with community realities.

Given the scale and visibility of this initiative, I would also suggest the creation of a dedicated public-facing webpage that tracks decisions, milestones, timelines, financial updates and consultation results in one place. Residents and business owners should not have to navigate multiple reports and committee agendas to understand what is happening in their neighbourhood. If this is truly a city-building project, it should be tracked with the clarity and transparency that such projects warrant.

On the financial side, the business case is directionally promising, but it is also built on a series of assumptions that require careful scrutiny. The total capital envelope approaches \$200 million. The 40-year net present value remains negative. The underground parking component alone adds significant financial pressure. The report assumes senior government contributions, partnerships and refined revenue models that are not yet secured. That does not make the proposal wrong, but I worry that it will cause further delays while we wait for funding and partnership arrangements to materialize.

Most importantly, we cannot design our way out of concentrated social realities. Lighting, plazas, activation and heritage façades matter. But if the Ward 12 continues to absorb a disproportionate concentration of social services without a broader citywide governance conversation, then we are placing too much weight on capital projects to solve structural challenges.

Revitalization must be interdisciplinary and citywide. If a steering committee model is appropriate for the ByWard, then that same integrated governance lens should be applied across housing, public health, substance use and economic development more broadly, not siloed within one ward.

This plan is an opportunity. But opportunity must translate into visible, measurable action. Residents and business owners have been patient. They deserve timelines and transparency, not just frameworks. They deserve a financial plan that is both ambitious and honest about risk, and a serious conversation about the ByWard's role as one of the city's highest tax-generating districts. If it is good enough to carry the city's balance sheet, it is good enough to receive sustained and strategic reinvestment.

The ByWard is a significant financial engine for the city and the front door for millions of visitors. It is time our actions match its contribution, both for those dependent on its economic importance and the people who call it home.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

Specific advisory committees were not consulted as a part of the development of this report. However, as projects are implemented, specific committees will be engaged as needed.

CONSULTATION

Consultation

Staff undertook targeted internal and external consultation to inform the recommended redevelopment scenario, including coordination with City departments, quiet market sounding with cultural, private, and non-profit partners, and interviews with public market and placemaking organizations across North America. These engagements confirmed operational requirements, identified technical constraints, and validated market and partnership opportunities, including strong interest in cultural and local-first uses and the likelihood that a City-led or partnership model will be required. This work was complemented by insights from previous public engagement, which is outlined below.

The ByWard Market Revitalization Framework is grounded in and supported by a suite of Council-approved plans, strategies, and policy directions; each developed through extensive consultation with external partners. Additional consultation details are available in previously approved plans.

Public engagement

From 2018 to 2020, extensive public engagement occurred in the development of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan and involved various engagement techniques to reach as many potentially interested parties as possible. More than 2,300 people submitted feedback over the course of the planning process and over 20,000 data points were collected and analyzed.

In 2025, the City conducted public engagement on the detailed design of William Street and ByWard Market Square streetscape renewal project which involved various public engagement techniques (such as an online survey, in-person pop-up engagement booths, and online public engagement session). This public engagement built upon the previous public engagement conducted as part of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan and included the public and targeted engagement with the ByWard Market District Authority Business Advisory Committee, businesses along William Street and ByWard Market Square and in the ByWard Market building, and an external technical advisory committee with representation of key industry partners. Approximately 700 people provided feedback into this project. Additional engagement included:

- In May 2025, the Strategic Initiatives Department and Community and Social Services Department presented at the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Consultative Culture Circle, informing the Circle of ByWard revitalization and 200th Anniversary engagement opportunities. Following this presentation and based on the feedback received at the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Consultative Culture Circle, a ByWard Market Revitalization and 200th Anniversary Anishinabe Algonquin Advisory Circle is being established to seek Anishinabe Algonquin Nation input and engagement on public realm redevelopment plans and on 200th anniversary.
- Engagement with the Accessibility Office and partners in the disability community, including a site visit with members from the blind and low vision community.
- Information was also shared with Community and Social Services distribution network that includes community associations and social service agencies, and with Indigenous service organizations.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The City of Ottawa follows a legislative accessibility framework and, as such, the

redevelopment project described in this report will adhere to the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)* of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, as well as the City's Accessibility policy, the Accessibility Design Standards (ADS) and other accessibility-related procedures, guidelines and best practices.

Economic Development Services will continue to work with the City's Accessibility Office and leverage their expertise, guidance, and participation in project specific internal technical advisory committees to include an accessibility lens on each infrastructure project. Staff will continue to engage with potentially interested parties such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee and community organizations, groups and individuals as recommended by the Accessibility Office to receive advice and feedback. For example, in the design phase of William Street and ByWard Market Square, the Accessibility Office and members of the blind and low-vision community participated in an onsite walkthrough with the City project team to receive direct feedback.

Engagement with interested community partners, including people with disabilities and older adult, will help identify and mitigate barriers and challenges from a cross-disability perspective to understand the unique needs of residents and visitors with disabilities and support the reduction or elimination of barriers and challenges faced by them in enjoying the City's people centered and active public spaces.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The ByWard Market redevelopment enables a coordinated asset strategy that aligns lifecycle risk, capital investment, and long-term City objectives. From an asset management perspective, the project allows the City to avoid inefficient reinvestment in assets approaching end of service life, while strategically renewing heritage assets intended for long-term ownership.

The report recommends replacing existing, aged assets with new, enhanced facilities and renewed infrastructure. These asset enhancements and renewals will be incorporated into the analysis and financial forecasts in the next update of the relevant service-based Asset Management Plans.

70 Clarence Street – Municipal Parking Garage

Structural reviews and investigations completed between 2018 and 2025 confirm that the parking garage has transitioned to a fair to poor condition, with advancing deterioration across multiple structural systems. While interim repairs have mitigated

immediate safety risks, continued operation requires ongoing capital investment to manage serviceability and public safety concerns.

Recent investigations identify increasing areas of concrete distress and structural deterioration that, if left unaddressed, would elevate the risk of injury or property damage. Maintaining the garage in a safe and serviceable condition through approximately 2028 requires interim capital investment, without providing long-term value or extending the asset's service life.

From an asset management perspective, Council approval of the redevelopment concept supports a managed decline strategy for 70 Clarence Street, whereby capital investment is limited to essential short-term safety measures pending redevelopment. Full life-cycle rehabilitation is not recommended given the scale of required investment and the City's long-term redevelopment objectives. Should redevelopment timelines extend materially beyond current assumptions, a further structural adequacy review would be required to reassess risk and minimum investment thresholds.

55 ByWard Market Square – Historic Market Building

The 2023 Building Condition Audit confirms that 55 ByWard Market Square remains structurally stable but is affected by widespread age-related deterioration across the building envelope, roofing, mechanical, electrical, and interior systems. Continued status quo maintenance would result in escalating lifecycle costs, operational inefficiencies, and increased risk of system failures over the medium term.

The proposed rehabilitation and re-imagining of the building represents a planned lifecycle reset, consolidating multiple future renewal requirements into a coordinated capital investment. This approach addresses long-standing functional deficiencies, supports heritage conservation objectives, and significantly reduces long-term asset risk. Unlike 70 Clarence Street, 55 ByWard Market Square is intended to remain a long-term City-owned anchor asset, and proactive reinvestment aligns with sound asset management practice.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

The proposed redesign and redevelopment of the ByWard Market will influence both the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the ability to adapt to future climate conditions.

The combined efforts of removing the parking facility, shifting the public realm to more pedestrian and active mobility and improving transit options is anticipated to impact the

Markets overall GHG emissions. Additional emission reductions may be achieved by exploring opportunities for community or district energy systems and by incorporating the City's high-performance design standards into the Market's detailed design.

The primary climate hazards of concern, those with the greatest potential impact on the Market include extreme heat events, increased precipitation and flooding, smoke from wildfires and extreme weather events such as ice storms or power outages.

The City of Ottawa approved [Climate Ready Ottawa](#) (CRO), the City's climate adaptation strategy in 2025. The CRO's objectives that align with the proposed redevelopment include:

- Helping key tourism destinations adapt and prepare for changing climate conditions
- Increasing access to water fountains and fill-stations in high pedestrian traffic areas
- Integrating shade, cool surfaces and other cooling amenities into urban design plans, community buildings, and the public realm

To enhance climate resiliency as the initiative proceeds with detailed design, it would be beneficial to incorporate cooling amenities, such as increased shade structures, drinking water access, and refuge spaces during extreme events into the public realm and buildings' design.

Designs for the renewal of the York Street Plaza's sewers and watermains may also need to account for the potential impacts of future climate conditions identified in the Asset Management Plans, as well as opportunities for on-site stormwater management and cooling amenities.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

Delegated authority is included within City by-laws, including the City's Procurement By-law 2000-50 as amended, as well as the Delegation of Authority By-law 2025-69 and will be implemented as required pursuant to such by-laws for the purposes of this report. This report also recommends delegating authority to the General Manager of Strategic Initiatives to conclude any agreements required to support the By Ward Market redevelopment strategy and revitalization framework as outlined in this report as necessary.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The ByWard Market precinct, an important commercial, residential and tourist area in the heart of downtown, has weathered numerous headwinds over the past five years including pandemic and convoy related impacts and the effects of hybrid work models on daytime pedestrian traffic. The ongoing escalation in homelessness, opioid and mental health crisis, and street level disorder has disproportionately affected the area and impacted resident and visitor experience. However, notwithstanding these challenges, the ByWard Market continues to be a destination of choice for residents and visitors with recent restaurant and hotel openings, new safety initiatives, and exciting events and placemaking initiatives delivered by the ByWard Market District Authority contributing to increases in visitation and accompanying improvements to overall destination appeal.

The ByWard Market is a shared community asset and one of Ottawa's most high-profile visitor attractions. Advancing the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan is essential to preserve the heritage and commercial significance of the area. The Public Real Plan provides a vision and framework to guide investment and revitalization opportunities to ensure the ByWard Market remains a unique, pedestrian friendly destination and significant contributor to the local economy. A renewed ByWard Market contributes to quality of life in the Nation's Capital, which is a key consideration for business, investment, talent, student and immigrant attraction and retention.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Existing environmental conditions in the ByWard Market are characterized by the dominance of hardscape and extremely limited tree canopy coverage (approximately 6 per cent). There are an estimated 243 street trees in the ByWard Market (2022) equating to approximately 1 tree for every 375 square metres of public space. City of Ottawa Urban Heat Island data (2023) suggests a direct correlation between these factors and urban heat in the ByWard Market. Approximately 44 per cent of all public right of way space in the ByWard Market is dedicated towards vehicular functions alone (i.e., travel lanes and on-street parking). The public realm of the ByWard Market is distinctly vehicle oriented.

The proposed redevelopment and in particular, the realization of the York Street Plaza is expected to improve the ByWard Market's environmental conditions through the reconfiguration and addition of new people centered and active public spaces, reducing the presence of motor vehicles in the Market core and promoting active modes of

transportation, and significant new tree planting that provide shade, improve air quality, add to local biodiversity, and assist in stormwater management. Environmentally sustainable materials will be used wherever feasible. The new destination building at 70 Clarence Street will be designed with energy efficiency taken into consideration. The rehabilitation of 55 ByWard Market Square will follow the highest possible standards of conservation and adaptive reuse where feasible, reducing embodied carbon. These efforts will not only improve the experience of visitors to the ByWard Market, but other improve local health outcomes.

Redevelopment scenario projects will comply with City, Provincial and Federal environmental policies, standards, regulations, and legislation.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Development Services will work with Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations (Community and Social Services), and the City's Accessibility Office to ensure an equity, diversity and inclusion lens is applied, Indigenous rights are respected, and accessible accommodations are offered. These partners will also assist in identifying appropriate outreach channels such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee, disability community partners and boards, neighbourhood networks, and local social-service agencies.

Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and other Indigenous Engagement

Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and all other Indigenous engagement will occur as distinct and parallel processes. Economic Development Services will continue to work with Cultural Development and Initiatives (Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services) regarding the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Consultative Culture Circle and with the Indigenous Relations team (Community and Social Services) to identify opportunities for engagement through established advisory groups such as the ByWard Market Revitalization and 200th Anniversary Anishinabe Algonquin Advisory Circle and relationships with the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and urban Indigenous organizations. This work will help ensure redevelopment and revitalization planning is respectful of Indigenous rights and reflects Anishinabe Algonquin and Indigenous perspectives, cultural protocols, and opportunities for ongoing collaboration in the ByWard Market's revitalization.

Equity, diversity and inclusion and accessibility

Public engagement for each project will be designed to be inclusive, accessible, and bilingual, with visual materials and messaging reviewed by Public Information and Media Relations. Engagement activities will include a mix of in-person and virtual opportunities, scheduled at varied times to support broad participation. Communications will be empathetic and sensitive to the social realities affecting residents, businesses, and visitors in the ByWard Market area.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Redevelopment of the ByWard Market involves a range of operational, construction-related, and security considerations that will be managed through established City processes, detailed design, and phased implementation planning. In addition, project delivery is subject to funding availability, cost escalation, and approval-related risks, which will be managed through staged business cases, regular reporting to Council, and ongoing financial due diligence.

Public safety remains a fundamental consideration for all public realm projects in the district. As the redevelopment advances into detailed design, staff will continue to work with qualified security and public safety professionals to ensure that appropriate measures are applied in proportion to the level of risk. This may include integrating design elements that support crowd management, emergency access, passive surveillance, and, where required, vehicle-mitigation strategies, while maintaining the day-to-day accessibility, openness, and attractiveness of the ByWard Market as a civic gathering place.

The phased nature of the redevelopment, combined with ongoing collaboration with the ByWard Market District Authority and continued engagement with interest holders and the public, will support active monitoring and management of project risks throughout planning, design, and delivery. This approach also allows scope, phasing, and partnership structures to be adjusted as market conditions, funding opportunities, and Council priorities evolve.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct Rural implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There is no direct technology implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Revitalizing downtown and the ByWard Market is a strategic priority for this [2023–2026 Term of Council Priorities](#). Specifically, the redevelopment scenario projects fall under:

- *Strategic Priority: “A city with a diversified and prosperous economy.”*
 - Strategic Objective #23 which is “Reimagine the downtown and ByWard Market” in the City’s [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#).

Through this, Council seeks to achieve by 2026, a “increased economic activity, safety and tourism” in the ByWard Market. The redevelopment scenario projects, will support local businesses, and also create new job opportunities with the creation of the destination building. In addition, the new uses proposed as part of the redevelopment scenario will help contribute to new and diversified economy.

More broadly, the redevelopment scenario projects, also contribute to the strategic priorities of:

- A city that is green and resilient: With the addition of increased greenery through the use of new trees in the ByWard Market being one of the cornerstones of the ByWard Market Public Realm Plan.
- A city that is more connected with reliable, safe, and accessible mobility options: Increasing accessibility in all of the redevelopment public spaces is a main component and will be realized through this project.
- A city that has affordable housing and is more liveable for all: As proposed through the redevelopment of 70 Clarence Street into a destination building, currently proposes 18 residential units.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Separate supporting documentation to the report:

ByWard Market Revitalization Framework

- Document 1: ByWard Market Revitalization Framework and Action Plan
- Document 2: ByWard Market Revitalization Measurement Framework

ByWard Market Redevelopment Program

- Document 3: Key Findings and Financial Business Case
- Document 4: ByWard Market Redevelopment Scenario: Benefits Assessment Report
- Document 5: Business and Tenant Support Strategy
- Document 6: Role of the ByWard Market District Authority
- Document 7: Redevelopment Program Projects Map

DISPOSITION

Subject to Council approval, staff will implement the recommendations, and implementation plans for the Public Realm Redevelopment Program and the ByWard Market Revitalization Framework as outlined in the report. The General Manager of Strategic Initiatives Department, will ensure that updates are provided to Members of Council, as outlined in this report.