

# ByWard Market Reimagined

Vision: A vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive historic market district for all



**PEOPLE**



**PLACES**



**CULTURE**

## ByWard Market Strategic Areas of Focus

### **A Reimagined Market Destination for All**

A vibrant, historic market where thriving local businesses, innovative mobility and parking, and welcoming spaces come together to attract a diverse mix of residents and visitors, inspiring them to gather, shop, dine, and return time and time again.

### **A Compelling Cultural Identity**

An identity that engages residents and visitors alike, celebrating who we are through culture, heritage, and national capital iconography (e.g., Canada's capital city, Francophonie, Indigenous Peoples, Bytown).

### **Safety and Well-being for All**

A safer, more welcoming environment for all market users, supported by enhanced frontline resources that improve safety, wellbeing, and reduce social disorder.

### **Welcoming Routes and Points of Entry**

Clear, intuitive wayfinding that guides visitors into and through the Market along safe, well-defined routes, supported by lighting, signage, and people-first design principles.

### **Places and Spaces that Transform**

Transform underperforming city assets into new destination spaces and implement activations that attract people of all ages.

**ByWard Market Revitalization Framework and Action Plan**  
**Vision: A vibrant, welcoming and inclusive historic market district for all**

AREAS OF FOCUS	A Reimagined Market Destination for All	A Compelling Cultural Identity	Safety & Well-being for All	Welcoming Routes & Points of Entry	Places and Spaces that Transform
<p align="center"><b>SHORT-TERM</b> 12 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop district-wide navigation, access and parking strategy</li> <li>• Launch of Arts, Culture, Entertainment (ACE) District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of Heritage Walk (OAG/200th)</li> <li>• Co-create and implement ByWard Market brand identity plan reflective of Ottawa’s local and Canadian heritage (City/BMDA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Unsheltered Homelessness Outreach Model</li> <li>• Establish full-time team of officers (CORE)</li> <li>• Increased Special Constables in the Rideau Street area</li> <li>• Increased security in the ByWard Market</li> <li>• Use AI tool to enhance response to 311 service requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance Safety and User Experience along the Rideau–Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station Corridor</li> <li>• Implement a Commercial Heritage Façade Improvement Program</li> <li>• Implement York Street Asphalt Art Initiative</li> <li>• Implement wayfinding initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement district-wide placemaking initiative</li> </ul>

AREAS OF FOCUS	A Reimagined Market Destination for All	A Compelling Cultural Identity	Safety & Well-being for All	Welcoming Routes & Points of Entry	Places and Spaces that Transform
<p><b>MEDIUM-TERM</b> 2-3 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop parking replacement strategy during redevelopment of municipal assets</li> <li>• Hold 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and activations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate cultural identity and storytelling into wayfinding (200<sup>th</sup>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and advance supportive spaces that provide safe access to services and supports for people with high acuity needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate lighting, seating, and public-realm enhancements along key wayfinding routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin 70 Clarence redevelopment</li> </ul>
<p><b>LONG-TERM</b> 4+ years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch York Street pedestrianized plaza</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designation of the ByWard Market as a National Historic Site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement prioritized deployment process for time-sensitive service requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement multi-modal transportation strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelop 55 ByWard Market Square</li> <li>• Redevelop William St.</li> <li>• Redevelop York Street Plaza</li> </ul>

<b>Short-Term Actions (12-months)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
A Reimagined Market Destination for All	Develop district-wide navigation, access and parking strategy	To better support Market businesses, a short-term parking strategy will be developed to increase access to short-term parking close to storefronts. The strategy will balance the availability with loading needs and traffic flow while promoting multi-modal transportation options for accessing and navigating in the market. A unified navigation platform, supported by a public awareness campaign, will integrate all transportation options and provide clear guidance on how to access and move through the district.	Strategic Initiatives, Public Works
	Launch of Arts, Culture, Entertainment (ACE) District	Promote the Market as a destination for ACE experiences by leveraging and expanding existing cultural and entertainment assets.	Strategic Initiatives
A Compelling Cultural Identity	Launch of Heritage Walk	As part of the Bytown 200 <sup>th</sup> celebrations, the Ottawa Art Gallery, the ByWard Market, and the National Gallery of Canada will jointly coordinate a walk beginning at the National Gallery of Canada and through the ByWard Market, allowing participants to visit local galleries, meet artists and curators, and engage with the community.	ByWard Market District Authority (BMDA)
	Co-create and implement ByWard Market brand identity plan reflective of Ottawa's local and Canadian heritage (City/BMDA)	A joint branding initiative to strengthen the Market's identity and coherence as a destination, to which the City and BMDA leadership would collaborate to advance this work.	Strategic Initiatives
Safety and Well-being for All	Establish full-time team of officers (CORE)	Focused on reducing crime by tackling root causes and enhancing public safety through community engagement and collaborations with local interest-holders.	Ottawa Police Service

<b>Short-Term Actions (12-months)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
	Increased Special Constables in the Rideau Street area	Increase number of special constables present in the Market to strengthen safety measures and improve responsiveness to improve real and perceived safety.	Transit Services
	Increased Security in the ByWard Market	As part of the Mayor's Public Safety Action Plan, a pilot will use private security to address gaps in service hours and coverage at key locations in the Market.	Mayor's Office
	Implement Unsheltered Homelessness Outreach Model (UHOM)	A coordinated and streamlined street outreach system that better connects people who are unsheltered to the housing and supports they need with an enhanced role in liaising with businesses, housed residents, and community associations through a public engagement strategy.	Community and Social Services
	Use AI tool to enhance response to 311 service requests	In partnership with the Service Optimization team in CMO, this pilot would test AI-enabled analysis of service request data to better identify recurring issues and support more timely deployment to time-sensitive service requests.	Strategic Initiatives
Welcoming Routes & Points of Entry	Enhance Safety and User Experience along the Rideau-Sussex Gateway and Rideau Station Corridor	The Rideau Station Gateway is among the most visible and heavily used entry points into the ByWard Market. Enhancing the route between Rideau Station and Rideau-Sussex underpass will improve navigation and support safer and more comfortable movement. High-impact, targeted improvements to Rideau Station will enhance both real and perceived safety, as well as the overall visitor experience. Potential interventions include public art, lighting, programming, enhanced cleanliness, and activation.	Transit Services, Planning Development & Building Services
	Implement a Commercial Heritage Façade Improvement Program	Expand the Centretown Façade Improvement Grant Pilot (or a similar program) into the Market to directly support storefront improvements and reinforce the historic character and visual cohesion of the district.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Short-Term Actions (12-months)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
	Implement York Street Asphalt Art Initiative	This initiative provides an opportunity to introduce bold visual treatments to enhance wayfinding and reinforce York Street's role as a key Market corridor for pedestrians. Long-term vision includes permanent streetscape and wayfinding investments.	Strategic Initiatives
	Implement wayfinding initiatives	Implement clear, intuitive wayfinding that guides visitors into and through the Market along safe, well-defined routes, supported by lighting, signage, and animation.	Strategic Initiatives, Public Works, Transit Services
Places & Spaces that Transform	Implement a district-wide placemaking initiative	The district-wide placemaking initiative would activate the ByWard Market through temporary and adaptable public realm enhancements, such as seating, lighting, landscaping features and scalable infrastructure as a pilot program. This initiative is intended to increase public use, seasonal activities and business spill out, while informing future public realm investments.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Medium-Term Actions (2-3 years)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
A Reimagined Market Destination for All	Develop parking replacement strategy during redevelopment of municipal assets	An interim strategy that supports visitation during construction and redevelopment phases of 70 Clarence and pedestrianization of York Street Plaza. Key considerations include converting 70 Clarence parking garage to three-hour-pay-and-display parking, implementing public-facing wayfinding and navigation tools.	Public Works
	Hold 200th anniversary celebrations and activations	The commemorative Bytown and ByWard Market 200th anniversary celebrations, delivered in collaboration with Ottawa Tourism and other key interest-holders, will include signature events, local festivals and activations, Indigenous commemorations, and more.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Medium-Term Actions (2-3 years)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
A Compelling Cultural Identity	Integrate cultural identity and storytelling into wayfinding (200th)	Integrate elements of the ByWard Market's cultural identity into wayfinding initiatives, both within the Market and in the navigation tool, to curate storytelling, reinforce the Market's identity, and improve the visitor experience.	Strategic Initiatives
Safety and Well-being for All	Identify and advance supportive spaces that provide safe access to services and supports for high acuity needs	Launch a Safe Spaces pilot project, focused on implementing peer-led daytime recreational programming to engage individuals in structured, low-barrier activities such as art, sports, and music as well as life skill training. These programs aim to provide alternatives to street engagement and reduce pressure on public spaces, and ease demand on over-capacity day services.	Community and Social Services
Welcoming Routes & Points of Entry	Integrate lighting, seating, and public-realm enhancements along key wayfinding routes	To create a more welcoming and vibrant environment, public realm enhancements will be installed along key routes to better support navigation to and within the Market.	Planning, Development & Building Services
Places and Spaces that Transform	Begin 70 Clarence redevelopment	Transform 70 Clarence Street into a bold, landmark arts and culture hub overlooking York Street Plaza, featuring a publicly accessible ground-floor atrium connecting directly to the plaza for events, markets, rotating exhibitions, and community programming, and upper floors dedicated to immersive arts, maker spaces, learning studios and potential residential uses.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Long-Term Actions (4+ years)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
A Reimagined Market Destination for All	Launch York Street pedestrianized plaza	The plaza will be a people-centered, all-season public space 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, to support events and everyday community activities all year-round.	Strategic Initiatives
A Compelling Cultural Identity	Designate ByWard Market as a National Historic Site	As one of the city's first public markets that has a national historical significance, the ByWard Market was nominated as a National Historic Site for its 200 <sup>th</sup> anniversary.	Strategic Initiatives
Safety and Well-being for All	Implement prioritized deployment process for time-sensitive service requests	Building on the pilot that applies AI to analyze 3-1-1 service request data in the Market, a second phase would focus on using the tool to improve service response times by creating process efficiencies.	Strategic Initiatives
Welcoming Routes & Points of Entry	Implement multi-modal transportation strategy	This strategy will provide the public with multiple transportation options across multiple modes to enhance access to and navigate within the ByWard Market, complementing the parking replacement strategy.	Strategic Initiatives
Places and Spaces that Transform	Redevelop 55 ByWard Market Square	Redevelop the square as a vibrant, all-day destination featuring a bright central hall and flexible event space to support community gatherings, cultural programming, and celebrations.	Strategic Initiatives
	Redevelop William Street	Begin construction to transform William Street into a flexible space that supports daily use, cultural programming, winter amenities, and major events, while improving safety, accessibility, and connectivity.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Long-Term Actions (4+ years)</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
	Redevelop York Street Plaza	The plaza will be a people-centered, all-season public space 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, to support events and everyday community activities all year-round.	Strategic Initiatives

<b>Ongoing Operational Initiatives</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
Safety and Well-being for All	Nightlife Ambassador Program	Night Ambassadors will be present in the ByWard Market on Fridays and Saturdays (9:30 pm to 4 am) to enhance community safety and well-being in the district. Ambassadors practice bystander intervention, de-escalation and support patrons access essentials including connecting with emergency and social services.	Strategic Initiatives
Safety and Well-being for All	Market Safe	This initiative is a seasonal effort to increase uniformed presence through a community-engagement approach within the bar and entertainment district, helping to create a safer environment.	Ottawa Police Services
Safety and Well-being for All	Needle Hunters Program	Ottawa Public Health works in collaboration with City departments, community groups and residents to address discarded needles and drug use equipment to ensure they are safely recovered and disposed of.	Ottawa Public Health
Safety and Well-being for All	Enhanced Cleanliness and Maintenance Program	During summer operations (mid-April to mid-November), increased operational staff provided in the ByWard Market, King Edward and known hotspots (for example around safe injection sites) to provide enhanced debris and litter cleanup. Working with the private corporations to improve waste removal services to improve the overall aesthetic of the Market.	Public Works

<b>Ongoing Operational Initiatives</b>			
<b>Strategic Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>
Safety and Well-being for All	Community Engagement Team (CET)	A mobile frontline social services team supporting people experiencing homelessness/unsheltered homelessness in Ottawa's downtown by addressing immediate needs, connecting individuals to housing and health supports, and providing community response to requests from residents, businesses, and local agencies.	Community and Social Services
Safety and Well-being for All	Mounted Police	Increase officer presence to strengthen responsiveness and support safer public spaces, to improve real and perceived safety.	Ottawa Police Services
Safety and Well-being for All	Harm Reduction Services - 179 Clarence Street	Direct service delivery in the ByWard Market area through 179 Clarence Street, offering fixed, mobile and outreach services.	Ottawa Public Health