

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

MEETING #2: Concept Options Workshop– Wednesday November 8, 2023 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

The purpose of the exercise was to explore with this advisory group made up of community representatives as well as members of community organizations, what each concept had to offer and to express what one liked or disliked and ideas on what specific features should be contemplated for the future.

PAC WORKSHOP

On Wednesday November 8, 2023, Canada Lands Company (Canada Lands) and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) hosted an in-person Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting to explore three draft concept options for the redevelopment of Confederation Heights.

The meeting, which was a workshop-style format, started with a presentation from Canada Lands and PSPC followed by a presentation by the consulting firm Fotenn Planning + Design*, supported by heritage consultant ERA Architects Inc.

Members then sat at round tables and reviewed all three concept options with a Fotenn Team facilitator and notetaker who recorded the comments and feedback during each table discussion. This meeting report summarizes those discussions.

THE CONCEPTS AND SUPPORTING BACKGROUND WORK: HOW DID WE GET TO THIS POINT

The last public information meeting was held in June 2022 and since then the consulting team has been hard at work piecing together the feedback received from the public as well as the various stakeholders in addition to feedback from both the City of Ottawa and National Capital Commission (NCC) in order to formulate the three draft concept options.

Upon commencing the workshop, the Fotenn team provided a presentation that included the necessary background information supporting each of the concept options and clarified that at this stage of the project each of the three concept options are exploratory for the purpose of gathering feedback and dependent upon further technical analysis.

The Confederation Heights Master Plan Guiding Principles, reviewed by the public and stakeholder groups form the basis of the concept plans.

*Fotenn Planning + Design is supported by a team of subconsultants from a range of technical expertise necessary to support the development of a Master Plan.

**CONFEDERATION
HEIGHTS**

Realize the potential

**BUTTES DE LA
CONFÉDÉRATION**

Réaliser le potentiel



Canada Lands Company
Société immobilière du Canada



Public Services and
Procurement Canada

Services publics et
Approvisionnement Canada

During the information sharing portion, important factors were considered:



The **Tilley Building** has an ongoing federal use that requires perimeter securitization.



For the **Sawmill Creek** area, there is an interest in consolidating the ownership of these lands with the NCC to facilitate environmental stewardship.



The **Taxation Data Centre** at 875 Heron Road will be rehabilitated for continued use by the Canada Revenue Agency.



The Master Plan team has proposed to the NCC to protect **the woodlot behind the Tupper Building** by adding it to the Hog's Back Park, while exploring development potential on current NCC lands at the Brookfield Road/Hog's Back intersection with Riverside Drive (found in Concept Option One).



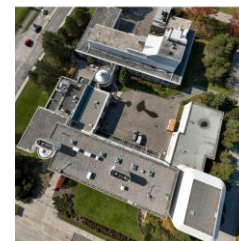
The **RA Centre** has a long-term lease, ending in 2054, which is beyond the horizon of the Master Plan. The focus for the Confederation Heights Master Plan is on enabling connections and complementary and supportive uses, allowing for the RA's ongoing operations to align with its future vision and lease terms.



The NCC parks both **Vincent Massey** and **Hog's Back Park**, will continue to operate as federal parks, and the Master Plan will not drive major changes to the parks. There are opportunities for improvements to vehicular access and to create new active transportation connections.



Canada Post is a stakeholder of the Confederation Heights Master Plan with its owned land currently serving as its headquarter location, as a federal Crown Corporation. Canada Lands and PSPC have been engaging with Canada Post about the future of their lands within the Master Plan. Engagement activities will continue as Canada Post considers the future needs for its real estate assets at the headquarter location.



Health Canada is a stakeholder of the Confederation Heights Master Plan with its owned lands serving as specialized laboratory facilities. Health Canada will continue to own and operate this property in the future, and there are no planned changes for the site. Canada Lands and PSPC will continue to engage to ensure that Health Canada's needs at this property are integrated in the Master Plan.

KEY THEMES OF THE DISCUSSIONS

During the PAC Meeting, comments from each concept discussion were captured under the following 6 themes:

1. General Comments
2. Heritage
3. Character and Density
4. Land Use
5. Open Spaces
6. Mobility and Connectivity

CONCEPT ONE: GATEWAY TO THE CAPITAL

1. General Comments:

- Underground infrastructure and tunnels should be considered in terms of feasibility and overall cost at this early phase.
- Opportunity for the Tupper Building parcel as a potential Indigenous hub to include housing, health care and services for women, a school and daycare.
- Concerns raised with what is proposed in the concept plan and how more residents and density will impact the existing community.
- Majority in favour of moving Energy Services Acquisitions Program (ESAP) to another location to create a better interface with Central Heating and Cooling Plant (CHCP) building and Light Rail Transit (LRT) station.

2. Heritage:

- Concerns about the adaptive reuse of Tupper Building for the following reasons: it may contain asbestos; be below current building code standards; and its building footprint is too narrow for residential use in light of city's housing crisis.
- Support for maintaining the heritage character for Tupper Building was expressed.
- Support for Infill development around Tupper Building appropriate - building single loaded apartments along its narrow floor plans.
- Heritage celebrations were appreciated. Include archeological sites/routes identified on NCC parks narrative.

3. Character and Density:

- General consensus on building high rises on the site, but concerns there may be too many and should be strategically located near transit and outskirts, but not where topography is higher.
- Mid-size buildings should be a priority.
- Consider the Zibi project in terms of mix of units, shared units and co-living space to contribute to affordable housing.
- Avoid wind tunnels and over shadowing by mindfully orienting buildings.

4. Land Use:

- A healthy mix of uses well distributed throughout the site is necessary to achieve accessibility and inclusivity for all.

5. Open Spaces:

- A mix of opinions as some felt a larger central park would encourage more active recreational uses, while smaller parks in greater numbers would be best for accessibility, quiet moments and aging populations.

6. Mobility and Connectivity:

- Consider a roundabout instead of a signalized intersection at Heron Road and Bronson Avenue for continuous reduced flow.
- Concerns raised about roundabouts unsafe for pedestrians and disabled.

CONCEPT TWO: RECREATIONAL DISTRICT

1. General Comments:

- Accessibility and age-friendly designs are really important due to the rising population of older adults in Ottawa over the next 10 to 20 years. Entertainment area at 1500 Bronson suggested such as: planetarium, aquarium as in destination uses.
- Welcoming plaza at LRT Station, animate with non-residential uses.
- Support for moving the CHCP elsewhere.

2. Heritage:

- Tupper building turned into a mixed-use building such as The Cross-Town Concourse, Memphis TN.

3. Character and Density

- Build Community gardens.
- Incorporate Indigenous art installations.
- Commission mural art on sides of 1500 Bronson.

4. Land Use:

- Affordable housing must account for family-oriented units.
- Need for schools in the area.
- Animate space through public art, public uses and small businesses
- Ensure affordable rents to attract small local businesses.
- Turn Canada Post cafeteria into a piazza and community centre and connect to LRT Station's welcoming plaza.
- Provide and ensure access to medical services within the site.
- Desire for community focused retail, small services, pubs, coffee shops, to attract young people and families.

5. Open Spaces:

- Given NCC already has large parks and as density increases, it is important to have small parks spread out throughout the site (dog parks and children's playgrounds).
- Hog's Back underutilized – interest in seeing community uses i.e., boardwalk, marina and a cultural facility.
- Activate Sawmill Creek for community use or an ecological sanctuary with bees.

6. Mobility and Connectivity:

- Preference for some for roundabouts (i.e. Netherlands) to signalized intersection but others noted safety concerns for pedestrians with current roundabout at Brookfield Road
- The 'Arch' design explained as intent on vehicle use vs. active transportation use.
- Make tunnels, underground or above ground path systems connecting to buildings accessible and used as a gallery space.



- Interest in car free superblocks.
- Active transportation and mobility are easier to facilitate in finer-grain (short) road blocks.
- Build woonerfs (a type of road design that encourages multimodal transportation and blends pedestrian and vehicle space),
- Institute a shuttle service for individuals with mobility issues to access local services.
- Plan and design for steep graded changes around RA Centre, 875 Heron and 1500 Bronson, LRT station to Heron Road and/or incorporate an elevator system.
- Support for dropping Bronson Avenue to grade with Heron Road, need to know feasibility and financial implications.
- As the human scale is paramount, much support for this concept as it features increased connectivity throughout the site.
- Segregated paths for pedestrians and cyclists. E-scooters need to be regulated on streets and sidewalks.
- Need bridge over Sawmill Creek to residential and billings bridge areas.
- Plan for all season active transportation.

CONCEPT THREE: INTENSIFY AND URBANIZE

1. General Comments:

- Sloping land and erosion may cause concerns with respect to proposed development close to Heron Park.
- Site would be good candidate for planetarium and/or aquarium.
- Consider permeable pavement.
- Federal employees working and living in the area is beneficial.

2. Heritage:

- Questioned feasibility of fully demolishing the Tupper Building given its heritage designation.
- Embodied carbon considerations of demolishing Tupper Building.

3. Character and Density:

- Build wide spaces for pedestrians for walking and good for retail (i.e. Barcelona and Copenhagen).
- Refer to Netherlands gentle slopes accessible underpasses and UK tunnel networks and Algonquin College pedestrian overpass, accessible to cyclists.
- Tupper parking lot is a good location for higher density, close to Heron Road BRT.
- Maintain clear sightlines to 1500 Bronson.
- Some were surprised by the amount of density suggested.

4. Land Use:

- Consider reuse of Tupper Building for student housing.
- Existing courtyards are a positive feature if converted to housing of the Tupper Building.
- Consider building near Health Canada Building.
- Agreed to development around the CHCP (close to transit station).
- Grade changes may prove difficult to build in some areas.
- Brookfield should be developed as a mainstreet, but development should not exceed the existing 9-storey building.

5. Open Spaces:

- Agreed to have high rises around transit stations but must have parks, amenities, and public spaces.

6. Mobility and Connectivity:

- Ensure access to pedestrian tunnels/bridges including the rail line across the site.
- Preference given to Heron Road and Bronson Avenue remain at different levels.
- More intersections slows down traffic speeds.
- Heron Road is too wide for pedestrian crossing.
- Appears car-centric with so many intersections.
- Consider roundabouts instead of some of the intersections; others noted safety concerns with roundabouts.
- Build accessible above or below grade for pedestrian crossing, avoiding people interacting with traffic.
- Interconnect buildings.
- Install walk signal/bikes before cars like downtown Ottawa.
- Better to build segregated paths for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Accessing the Airport Parkway appears to be difficult.
- Are the road changes illustrated financially feasible noting it is currently impossible to turn left at Riverside Drive and Heron Road impeding navigation through the site.
- Could Riverside Drive be widened to allow a left turn onto Bronson Avenue?
- Are the road changes and investments required for removing loops around Bronson Avenue and Riverside Drive worth the costs considering the parcel sizes that could be developed?

WORKSHOP QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following questions were raised to the Confederation Heights Master Plan team for discussion and consideration as the project advances to evolve the concept options. This section also captures additional feedback including general comments, articles of interest and suggest examples for design precedents from PAC members received through the project website contact portal following the workshop.

- Are there noise levels surrounding CHCP to consider?
- There were concerns raised about the City of Ottawa's investments in rapid transit. Will all their plans be fully realized, which this Master Plan depends on?
- Have soil studies been compiled to inform what can be built?
- If it passes, what would the impact of Bill 23 have on Confederation Heights?
- Noting the many vacancies in other areas of the City, is there much demand for mixed-use, office and commercial space?
- Define what is meant by affordable housing and what are the intended affordable targets?
- Applicable to Concept 1: Gateway to the Capital, will site lines of 1500 Bronson change if Bronson Avenue and Heron Road are at grade?
- Is the City on board with the proposed road changes?
- Can Riverside Drive be widened to allow for a left turn onto Bronson Avenue as it may encourage many drivers to use smaller streets, making it unsafe for pedestrians?
- Is there any workforce hiring targets or local workforce targets yet?
- There is support for narrowing roads and slowing vehicles on arterial roads such as Bronson, Heron, Riverside to reduce noise and make roads safer for drivers.
- Ensure streets are safe enough for children to move around their neighbourhoods independently.
- Consideration for future designated lands to support school requirements to ensure the street leading up to the school, does not permit cars ("a school street") thereby encouraging a safer area allowing for active transportation and improving air quality, local community building and social connection.
- For high volume streets consider the Dutch style roundabout (examples shown in Mobycon's seminar on best designs for protected roundabouts).



- Use wide segregated facilities instead of multi-use pathways for active transportation pathways bringing people to or moving people through this area and making cycleways as wide as possible to accommodate children's needs and side-by-side riding and passing.
- Prioritize connecting adjacent neighbourhoods with active transportation pathways.
- Use raised continuous sidewalks in low-volume street intersections to physically slow drivers and increase accessibility.
- Parked cars should be placed underground or in existing above ground facilities. Ample bike parking should be provided.
- Spread mixed-use-commercial services throughout the neighbourhood.
- It is understandable to seek to reduce the number of ramps that dot the landscape around Confederation Heights.
- Concern with idea of a district or any district with a focus on a single use is not sustaining 24 hours a day.
- Brookfield Road is not engaged as a street in its current condition. Should be a 'complete street' prioritizing active mobility.
- Need to understand how the newly proposed parks would be managed and the intended process.
- RA Centre is not in a strategic location for the activities and amenities they offer. It is difficult for people to access it without a car.
- Canada Post existing parkade is convenient when there are event in the area such as at Mooney's Bay.
- There is an interest in understanding the targets for the number of residential units.
- There is a concern with how intensification in Confederation Heights will impact the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Your density targets should match the City's Official Plan. Concern that densities are too high in the proposed options and built form to accommodate those densities would lead to a forest of high-rise/skyscrapers.
- There was strong support by many participants for dropping Bronson Avenue to the same grade as Heron Road. This was noted that this was the most dramatic element of all three options and should be showcased. However, some members had concern that the proposals to bring Bronson Avenue to grade with Heron Road will block the flow of traffic.
- Transitioning Confederation Heights into a community would be more favorable to allow traffic to bypass the community rather than to direct traffic into the community. Think of these arterial roads as conduits carrying unwanted traffic away from the community.
- The development has an opportunity to provide destination attractions, arts and culture uses, in addition to amenities such as food shopping, schools and medical facilities.
- Encourage the Project Team to think outside the box and be innovative with options.

NEXT STEPS

Closing remarks were provided by Canada Lands and PSPC, who encouraged the PAC members to provide and submit additional feedback on the three concept options. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Canada Lands and PSPC will continue to engage with the PAC throughout 2024. In the meantime, our Project Team will work towards preparing a preferred master plan concept option for Confederation Heights based in part on the feedback received to date.

