

School of Urban & Regional Planning

## REIMAGINING ORLÉANS TOWN CENTRE

A Vision for Implementing the 15-Minute Neighbourhood Concept

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# Executive Summary

## Objective

The City of Ottawa is currently transforming the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route from Blair Station to Trim Station into a Light Rail Transit (LRT) running in the median of Highway 174, set to be completed by 2024. It is anticipated that the sites surrounding the new stations will become hubs for development intensification that reflect transit-oriented development (TOD) practices. Also, the City has recently approved a new Official Plan (OP) which contains policies to achieve the 15-Minute Neighbourhood concept.

This report will propose a detailed plan for the Orléans Town Centre (OTC) Study Area surrounding the new Place d’Orléans LRT Station to exemplify how the 15-Minute Neighbourhood and TOD principles can be integrated in Orléans to not only exceed the City’s development targets, but create a socially, physically, economically, and environmentally sustainable neighbourhood.

## Vision

Our vision for the redevelopment of the OTC Study Area is to create a healthy community with an active public realm that balances the daily needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and drivers based on the 15-Minute Neighbourhood concept.

## Study Area

The Study Area for this report is defined by the 1,200m, or 15-minute, walking distance from each of the four selected nodes in and around the Town Centre: the Town Centre itself, Place d’Orléans

shopping centre, the Place d’Orléans LRT Station, and the prospective ghost station between Place d’Orléans and Trim Road.

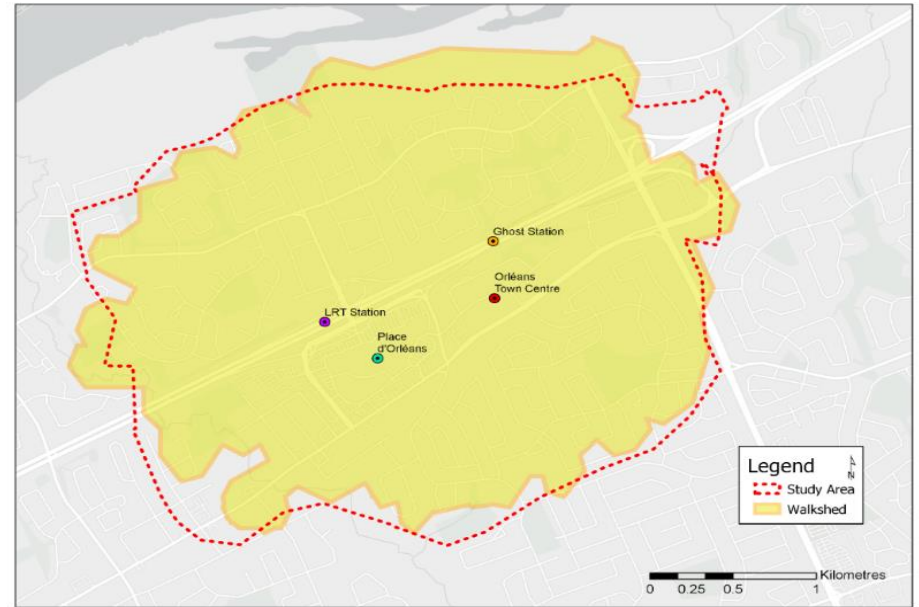


Figure 1 – Study Area defined through walkshed analysis.

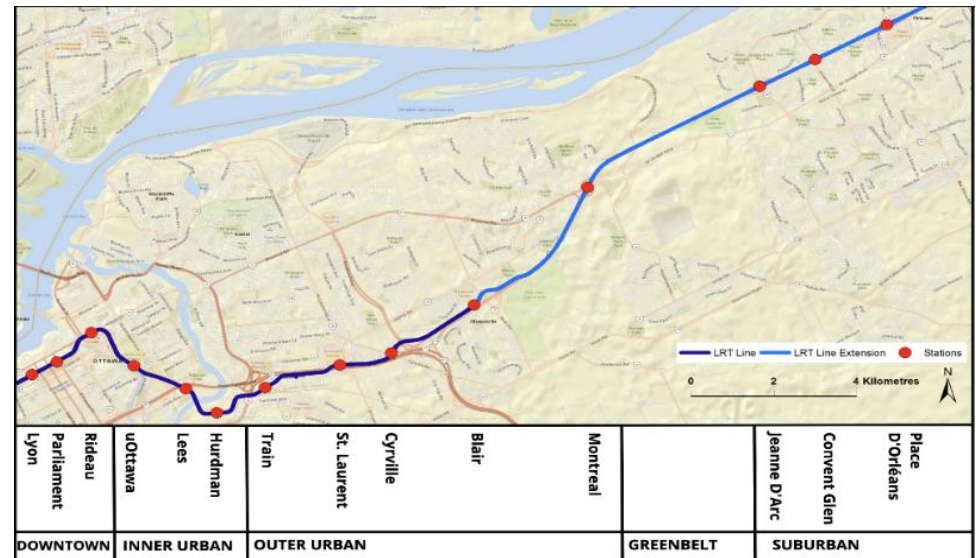


Figure 2 – Ottawa LRT Station Transect Map.

## Current Site State

Following analysis and site visit to the Study Area, it is evident that the OTC and surrounding areas lack in economic activity and diversity, pedestrian and other active transit connections, vibrant public spaces, and in mixed housing type offerings. This is explained further in a completed SWOC analysis.



## Guiding Principles

The following seven principles have guided the design process for the proposed OTC Study Area redevelopment, based on best research, interviews with stakeholders, site observation, and review of precedents that reflect the best examples 15-Minute Neighbourhood, TOD, and greyfield redevelopments:

- **Mobility:** Prioritize active transit and support the expansion of the LRT.
- **Place Making:** Establish a sense of place through design and heritage preservation.
- **Economic Diversity:** Support a range of commercial and office uses, reflecting the 15-minute neighbourhood concept.
- **Mixed Land Uses:** Provide a mix of land uses to create a complete community.
- **Environmental Resiliency:** Provide a range of environmental amenities and supports such as increasing the existing tree canopy, utilizing sustainable building materials, and implementing green vehicle charging networks.
- **Gender, Safety & Inclusivity:** Create safe places to support women the elderly.
- **Growth and Intensification:** Increase density near OTC and LRT station while providing a range of housing options (type, tenure, affordability).

## Design Proposal

The design concept for the OTC Study Area has derived from the project vision and principles with specific focus on the 15-Minute Neighbourhood and TOD practices. To achieve the vision for the OTC, the site was first divided into three separate districts, or precincts, based on land uses, built form characteristics, and

location. Next, concepts were constructed to transverse the barriers of Highway 174 and the escarpment to the south of St. Joseph Boulevard.

These steps were used to create the final design, to be completed in two phases, which will increase connectivity, enhance the quality of the pedestrian and cycling environment, and support mixed-uses throughout the site. The final design has a gross density of 273 people and jobs per gross hectare. Most taller buildings, and subsequently higher density buildings, were located near the Orléans LRT station, on the periphery of the Place d’Orléans Shopping Centre site, and parallel to Highway 174.

### Implementation

The proposed plan adopts a two-phased approach for redevelopment over a 30-year timeframe to accommodate the gradual replacement of the Place d’Orléans Shopping Centre in Phase Two once more commercial spaces are provided. Phase One will see the bulk of development with the densest intensification on sites directly surrounding the LRT station and along St. Joseph Blvd, while retaining the mall and parking structure and expanding on active transit infrastructure. Affordable housing units are proposed to be built on city owned parcels to attract people of all backgrounds to Orléans. Phase 2 will see the replacement of Place d’Orléans Mall with a pedestrian focused public realm that hosts a range of land uses. Increased density, a public plaza, and complete streets with active transit infrastructure will characterize the OTC area.

|   | EXISTING | PHASE 1 | PHASE 2 | MIN TARGET |
|---|----------|---------|---------|------------|
| Dwelling Units                                    | 1,411    | 9,521   | 11,838  | 11,562     |
| Net Density (dwelling units per net hectare)      | 18       | 121     | 151     | 150        |
| Number of Residents                               | 2,367    | 14,629  | 19,756  | 14,000     |
| Dwelling Units                                    | 4,272    | 8,854   | 12,830  | 10,000     |
| Gross Density (People and Jobs per gross hectare) | 50       | 178     | 247     | 120        |
| Large Dwellings in Intensification (%)            | N/A      | 13%     | 12%     | 5%         |
| New Affordable Housing Units                      | N/A      | 2,212   | 2,212   | 2,085      |
| Coverage of Developable Land                      | 26%      | 46%     | 42%     | 40%        |
| Floor Space Index                                 | 0.53     | 2.07    | 2.77    | 2.00       |
| Maximum Height                                    | 17       | 33      | 33      | 33         |

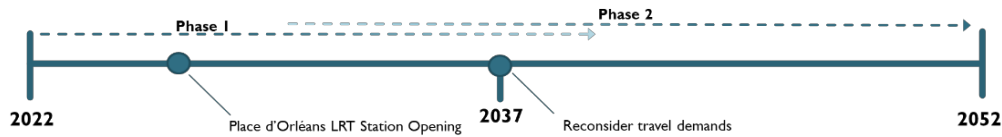




Figure 3 – Overhead view of redevelopment proposal within Phase 1.



Figure 4 – Overhead view of redevelopment proposal within Phase 2.



## Recommendations and Evaluation

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Land Use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezoning of study area</li> <li>Review of land use designations</li> <li>Highest density near LRT station</li> <li>Access to daily &amp; weekly amenities</li> </ul> | <b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mix of housing type &amp; tenure</li> <li>Second residential units</li> <li>Supply affordable housing units on City owned lots</li> </ul> | <b>Mobility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on active transportation</li> <li>Increase pedestrian access to the site</li> <li>Improve on site public transit</li> <li>Green vehicle charging stations</li> </ul> | <b>Urban Design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete streets</li> <li>Provide ground oriented units</li> <li>Supply open spaces and plazas scaled to the pedestrian</li> <li>Preserve sightline of church spire</li> </ul> |
| <b>Financing and Attracting Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize IOCIP</li> <li>Support Heart of Orléans BIA</li> <li>Negotiate POPS when possible</li> </ul>                                     | <b>Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain Franco-Ontarian heritage</li> <li>Supply new city parks and third places</li> <li>Support community events in plazas</li> </ul>  | <b>Environmental Resiliency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree canopy &amp; permeability</li> <li>Alternative energy sources</li> <li>Sustainable building standards</li> </ul>                                      |   |

| Existing | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Target | Criteria   | Principle                  |
|----------|---------|---------|--------|--|----------------------------|
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Mix of land uses   | Land Use                   |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | 15-minute neighbourhood  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Complete streets   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Mix of building type   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Urban design on a human scale                                      | Place Making               |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | High quality public realm  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Preservation of Franco-Ontarian history                            |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Supply of public spaces  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Wayfinding measures  | Mobility                   |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Ensure appropriate connections to abutting suburban neighbourhoods |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Pedestrian and cycling networks                                    |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Supply of trail networks   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Active transit options   | Economic Diversity         |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Connections to transit   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Cycling lanes and infrastructure                                   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Range of commercial and office uses                                |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Number of jobs   | Gender and Safety          |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Commercial at grade of mid- and high-rise buildings                |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Access to childcare and healthcare facilities                      |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | 8-80 principle   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Lighting on streets, paths, and bus stops                          | Growth and Intensification |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Pedestrian friendly sidewalks                                      |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | High Density   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Intensification near transit nodes                                 |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Affordable housing   | Environmental Resiliency   |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Mix of housing type  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Mix of housing tenure  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Tree canopy  |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Green spaces   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Environmental protection   |                            |
| ○        | ●       | ●       | ●      | Permeable surfaces   |                            |

Legend  
 ○ = No Conformity  
 ◐ = Poor Conformity  
 ◑ = Moderate Conformity  
 ◒ = Good Conformity  
 ● = Excellent Conformity