Executive Summary

This report examines and compares the growth of two arterial mainstreets in Ottawa since the implementation of mainstreet policy designations. New developments are identified and analyzed along two arterial mainstreets to gain insight into the recent growth of each mainstreet, and how this growth compares to the goals of the public policy designation specified within the City's *Official Plan* (OP).

Research Questions

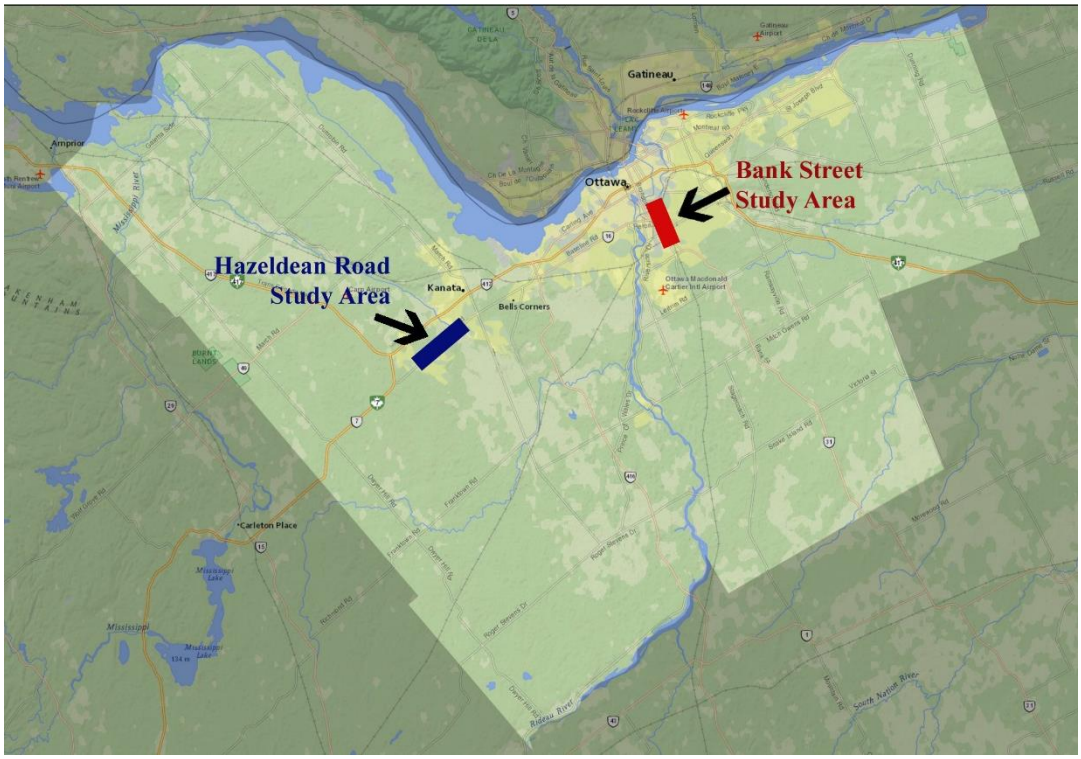
1) *How does the implementation of Ottawa's arterial mainstreet policies compare in the cases of Hazeldean Road and Bank Street?*
2) *Can existing public policy documents be updated to better address current development issues?*

The strengths and limitations of municipal policies that encourage the intensification of the built environment along arterial mainstreets are evaluated. This report furthers the understanding of the impact that arterial mainstreet urban design guidelines have had on intensifying suburban areas of major transportation routes in Ottawa. It also compares this to policies within other planning documents designed to guide future growth along Bank Street.

Methods

The findings of this report apply only the sections of Hazeldean Road and Bank Street designated as arterial mainstreets. The recommendations pertain exclusively to these mainstreets, and cannot be applied to other arterial mainstreets in Ottawa. Research methods which inform this report include comparative case studies, a policy review, and interviews.

Map Exec-1: Regional Map of the Municipality of Ottawa indicating study area locations



The main focus of this report, the comparative case studies, are evaluated based on criteria derived from the municipality's *Urban Design Guidelines for Arterial Mainstreets*. These 53 guidelines are divided into seven categories including: Streetscape, Built Form, Pedestrians & Cyclists, Vehicles & Parking, Landscape & Environment, Signs, and Servicing & Utilities.

Case Studies

Three case studies were compared and analyzed against the arterial mainstreet urban design guidelines (UDGs) and the mainstreet policy goals in Ottawa's OP. This includes Hazeldean Road, Bank Street, and the *Bank Street Community Design Plan* (CDP). Hazeldean Road was selected due to the large extent of recent development along the mainstreet. Bank Street was selected because of its different context being closer to downtown, and because of the existence of the Bank Street CDP. The Bank Street CDP is a specialized planning document that defines specific public policies regarding Bank Street at the neighbourhood scale. The CDP policies are designed to guide future development patterns along the corridor. Therefore, the Bank Street CDP is included in this report as a third case study. These three case studies provide a comparison of the existing conditions of both mainstreets, as well as the potential future conditions of Bank Street. The sections of each arterial mainstreet which compose each case study are indicated in the modified OP schedule B map, shown above.

Analysis

The analysis was broken down into eight sections:

1) Streetscape
2) Built Form
3) Pedestrians and Cyclists
4) Vehicles and Parking
5) Landscape and Environment
6) Signs
7) Servicing and Utilities
8) Case Study Patterns

Recent developments along Hazeldean Road and Bank Street resulted in similar scores for most categories of guidelines (Table Exec-1). This is somewhat surprising due to the different contexts of each mainstreet. The predominant type of new development for both mainstreets was single-storey commercial buildings, which were not representative of the mainstreet policy goals in Ottawa's OP. The Bank Street CDP scored better overall in most guideline categories. The policies within the CDP, if applied to future developments, improve on the observed single-storey commercial developments observed on Bank Street, and represents a step towards achieving Ottawa's mainstreet policy goals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The implementation of Ottawa's arterial mainstreet policies differed between recent developments and projected future development patterns. Policies in the Bank Street CDP resulted in stronger scores than recent development along either mainstreet. Recent development along Hazeldean Road primarily included greenfield developments, while new construction along Bank Street was limited to infill developments. The difference in development typologies and mainstreet locations did not result in variations between Hazeldean Road and Bank Street case study scores. These differences also did not affect recent development patterns, most notably the prevalence of new single-storey commercial buildings.

Table Exec-1: Comparative Case Study Evaluation

Urban Design Guideline	Hazeldean Road	Bank Street	CDP
Streetscape			
1) Buildings on street edge	◕	◐	◐
2) Sidewalk, boulevard, landscaped area	◕	◐	◕
3) Trees in boulevard	◕	◕	●
4) Continuous streetscapes	◕	◐	●
5) Amenities between building & curb	◐	◐	◕
6) 0-3 metre setbacks	◐	◕	◕
Built Form			
7) Protect existing fabric	○	○	◕
8) Features at empty corner sites	○	○	◕
9) Building height to road width ratio	○	◕	◕
10) Internal circulation patterns	◕	◐	●
11) Intensified, mixed-use development	○	○	●
12) Coherent streetscapes	◐	◕	●
13) Building on lot frontage	◐	◐	◐
14) Transition scale & density of built form	●	◐	●
15) Landscape building walls	◐	◕	◕
16) Human scale buildings	◕	◐	◕
17) Facades facing street	○	◕	◕
18) Transparent facades	◕	◐	◐

Pedestrians & Cyclists			
19) Connecting walkways	◐	●	●
20) Access from sidewalks to front entrances	◐	◕	◕
21) Pedestrian walkways	◕	◕	◕
22) Weather protection	◕	◐	○
23) Sidewalks across driveways	●	●	◕
24) Site furnishings	◕	◕	◕
Vehicles & Parking			
25) Shared vehicle access	◐	◐	◕
26) Linked parking lots	◐	◕	●
27) Surface parking	◕	◕	●
28) Parking structures	○	●	○
29) minimized traffic aisles	◕	◕	◐
30) Consistent pedestrian areas along frontage	◕	◕	●
Landscape & Environment			
31) landscaped walkways in parking areas	◐	◐	○
32) Vegetation tolerant to urban conditions	◐	◐	◕
33) Trees away from curbs	◕	◕	◕
34) Coordinate trees & utilities	○	●	●
35) Landscaped areas adjacent to residential uses	●	●	◕

36) Landscaping buffering parking areas	◐	◐	◕
37) Unbuilt areas	◐	◐	◐
38) Green building technologies	○	○	○
39) Heritage and mature trees	○	○	◕
40) Areas between building and sidewalk	◕	◕	◕
41) Landscaped areas along side and rear yards	◕	◐	○
42) Street trees	◕	◐	●
Signs			
43) Respects streetscape	◐	◕	◕
44) Eliminate visual clutter	◕	◕	●
45) Task-oriented illumination	◕	◕	●
46) Pedestrian-friendly environment	◕	◐	◐
47) Limit influence of corporate signs	◕	○	◐
48) Restrict temporary & portable signs	◕	◐	◕
Servicing & Utilities			
49) Service & utility areas	◐	○	◕
50) Screen utility equipment	◐	◕	○
51) Preventing glare	◕	●	●
52) Pedestrian focused lighting	◕	◐	●
53) Secondary doors	◕	○	○

○	Poor	◕	Fair	◐	Good	◕	Very Good	●	Excellent

Existing public policy documents should be updated, and new documents be created, to better address current development issues observed along Hazeldean Road and Bank Street. The clear benefits of the Bank Street CDP policies over recent development patterns along either mainstreet indicate that a CDP should be created for Hazeldean Road. This is the most important recommendation in the report, and represents the most direct method of achieving the OP mainstreet policy goals along Hazeldean Road through affecting future development patterns.

Table Exec-2: Short-Term Recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
• Conflicting intentions of CDP signage policies between pedestrian-oriented environment and business interests • A few automotive-oriented signs can have a strong impact on the built environment	1) Innovative design concepts for both building and ground-mounted commercial signs should be developed by municipal planning staff and added into the *Urban Design Guidelines for Arterial Mainstreets*.
• Lack of snow removal limited access to pedestrian amenities • Some pedestrian pathways not cleared of snow	2) The pedestrian infrastructure along Hazeldean Road and Bank Street, particularly internal pathways and amenity areas, must be prioritized and cleared of snow and ice during winter months to maintain an all year round pedestrian-oriented environment.
• Prominent and conspicuous placing of utility boxes and metres along both mainstreets • Screening of utility boxes and metres primarily consisted of ineffective plantings of small shrubs • CDP does not include policies regarding the screening of utility equipment.	3) The Urban Design Guidelines for Arterial Mainstreets should be amended to include specific design concepts for the effective screening of utility boxes and utility metres.

Table Exec-3: Long-Term Recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
• New buildings along Hazeldean Road do not reflect mainstreet policy goals of compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development • Stronger CDP scores may result in more UDGs built into future development projects	4) A Community Design Plan should be developed for the section of Hazeldean Road designated as an arterial mainstreet.
• CDP does not include policies for UDGs regarding screening of utility equipment, secondary doors, green building technologies, and parking structures • CDP policies specific to study area where as UDGs are for all mainstreets, resulting in gaps between policies and UDGs	5) The Bank Street Community Design Plan should be amended to include additional policies regarding the screening of all utility equipment, the integration of secondary doors into building facades, the incorporation of green building technologies into new developments, and the location of parking structures towards the interior of lots.
• Maximized surface parking areas along both mainstreets • UDGs not enough to limit surface parking along either mainstreet • CDP does not immediately affect existing surface parking areas	6) Official comprehensive parking strategies that minimize existing surface parking areas and introduce new parking structures should be developed by municipal planners, in collaboration with local business interests, for both arterial mainstreets.
• New developments not reflective of mainstreet policy goals • New buildings do not reflect compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development • Almost all new development are single-storey commercial buildings	7) A minimum building height of two storeys (six metres) for all new development fronting onto either Hazeldean Road or Bank Street should be formalized into existing and future public policy documents regarding the two mainstreets.