

Final Draft (January 20, 2014) Preston-Carling Public Realm & Mobility Study
Comments from the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA)

Neighbourhood Expectations:

Residents of the Preston-Carling district take pride in their homes and neighbourhood and have built a liveable neighbourhood that attracts development. This district is therefore slated for a massive transformation from a primarily low-rise neighbourhood to perhaps the most “intensified” district in the City of Ottawa.

The majority of residents in downtown neighbourhoods such as the Preston-Carling district are in favour of intensification consistent with the principles of liveable communities:

- They believe that planning should include the basic building blocks of mixed-use communities that offer a wide menu of housing alternatives at different price ranges. This approach would be more consistent with the current demographics in Ottawa’s downtown neighbourhoods;
- They believe the city should invest in more and larger parks, so residents have breathing space and children have play space in their ever-more-crowded neighbourhoods;
- They object to zoning that permits 9+ storey buildings next to small downtown houses in small residential neighbourhoods;
- They do not think it makes sense to add thousands of residents to inner city neighbourhoods with no concurrent planning for the services that these residents will need; and,
- They think it is unacceptable that the residents of many downtown neighbourhoods, slated for intensification due to their proximity to rapid transit, have to get in their cars to drive to stores and services such as drugstores, food markets, clothing stores, and other retail stores because these services are not available in their neighbourhoods.

The Importance of the Public Realm & Mobility Study:

Our City Counsellor, Katherine Hobbs, has assured us that we will have “an increased enjoyment of our neighbourhood, even with the additional density”. However, to date, residents have been experiencing less & less enjoyment in their previously peaceful neighbourhood and are expected to absorb the mainly negative effects of this transformation on their lives and their homes (more traffic, more shade, more construction noise, less privacy, uncertain property values).

Residents therefore welcome most of the proposals presented in the Final Draft of the Preston-Carling Public Realm & Mobility Study as concrete acknowledgement that the city is serious about mitigating the negative effects of intensification on the liveability of their neighbourhood. The Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA) appreciates the innovative ideas with respect to streetscapes and green spaces and expects

that the City of Ottawa will move quickly to fund the improvements. Indeed, without the upgrades to the public realm amenities in the Preston-Carling district, residents would be left wondering if their significant contribution to the city's intensification goals is recognized.

Specific Comments:

The following are specific comments on the document:

Section 2:

Page 3, Para 2: While the document references transit as a viable option in urban centres, in reality the public transit service in the Preston-Carling district has been deteriorating over time. It is virtually impossible for residents of the district to efficiently bus to adjacent neighbourhoods such as the Glebe, Wellington West or Hintonburg where the closest grocery stores and other services are located. The bus routes are circuitous, infrequent and, outside of rush hour, they require at least one transfer. While it is possible to take the O-train to South Keys, the long walk from the transit stop to the grocery store at that shopping centre is a barrier to many older residents. South Keys is also the antithesis of a pleasant shopping experience as it has been designed primarily for cars.

Page 7, Para 3: The document references the importance of successful pedestrian spaces, noting that they "have activity at their edges with cafes & shops". The city must demand that developers include retail space at sidewalk level to ensure that new buildings offer current and new residents attractive and interesting cafes and shops.

Section 5:

Page 15, Para 3: CHNA would like to stress that it is very supportive of the notion of "Urban squares and courtyards [that are] well-lit and are activated by adjacent ground-floor uses, such as restaurants, cafes & shops."

Section 6:

Page 28 - 30: Consideration #1 makes reference to the decision re: not designating Bayswater, Beech & Champagne as collector streets. This reference is not only inadequate, but also incorrect. Never in any discussions with Councillor Hobbs or city officials was there any discussion or agreement re: "short term". The community was promised that this Public Realm & Mobility Study document would not only include a reference to this consideration but also reference the fact that this consideration was fully debated and was rejected. Nothing less will satisfy residents.

The following is suggested wording for Page 30:

(Suggested changes are in *italics/bold*.)

Through consultation with the community, it became clear that here was no support to implement some of the team's considerations. ***The following summarizes guidelines for the study and decisions taken from community consultations.***

- 1) Traffic generated by new development should be directed towards the area's arterial road network as efficiently as possible, ***while avoiding, to the greatest extent possible, the current local, residential streets such as Beech, Bayswater, Champagne and Hickory.***
- 2) [We disagree with the proposed bullet and suggest the following as a replacement.] ***Traffic studies have indicated that Carling Avenue is an under-utilized arterial so it should be considered as the primary route for vehicular and transit traffic and, to the greatest extent possible, developments should direct traffic directly to Carling while avoiding local, residential streets.***
- 3) The existing traffic signals at the Pamilla/Preston intersection should be relocated one block south to the Preston/Adeline intersection to align with the planned ***pedestrian-bicycle-only*** bridge over the O-train. This will provide continuity in the east-west pedestrian network with a safe, protected crossing of Preston Street. ***It should be noted that despite strong objections from the community, future consideration of a road bridge at this location has not been removed from the Study. The community continues to oppose this plan as it will undermine the objective of a "safe" and "protected" crossing for pedestrians and cyclists at the intersection of the MUP and at Preston Street and will direct more development traffic onto local, residential community streets.***
- 4) No suggested changes.
- 5) No suggested changes.
- 6) (New Bullet) ***After extensive consultations with the community, any current or future consideration of Beech Street between Preston and Bayswater Place, Champagne south of Beech Street, and Bayswater north of Sherwood to Gladstone, as collector roads has been permanently removed from the Transportation Master Plan.***
- 7) (New Bullet) ***After extensive consultations with the community, the Prince of Wales to Carling Avenue connecting road has been permanently removed as a future consideration as it would direct more traffic onto local, residential community streets.***
- 8) (New Bullet) ***Traffic diversion and calming measures will be provided to alleviate traffic pressures on local streets from new developments.***

Page 35: As the community is underserved in terms of City of Ottawa parks, and there are limited locations available for Parks, the community strongly supports the enhancement of the neighbourhood through the identification of potential parks, urban squares and courtyards and strongly encourages the city to ensure that these new parks are part of future development proposals. CHNA is particularly interested a gateway park at the southeast corner of Bayswater and Sherwood.

Page 47: The map/illustration shows two *Existing Retail Frontage* segments in the triangle lot bordered by Sherwood, Carling & Bayswater, on the south side of Sherwood and the east side of Bayswater. This is incorrect; the only retail frontage is on Carling.

Section 5:

Page 51: As a community-driven demographic study of Bayswater Avenue south of the Queensway identified almost 50 children living on the street, CHNA residents would welcome the proposed addition of play facilities at the southeast corner of Bayswater and Sherwood.

Section 7:

Page 61: Under 3. Special Streets, Bayswater Avenue should be listed under Type G as a Local Street.

Page 61: Beech Street from the O-train to Bayswater Place should be listed as a Type E street.

Page 87: A renewed Ev Tremblay Park is very important to the community. But this small park will be inadequate to the needs of this “intensified” community. The community has been hearing that the City might consider purchasing adjacent properties to expand the park, and would support this. However, realistically, there is little if any expectation from residents that such a purchase will ever take place.

While it would be appreciated if a bocce pit could be included in the design to pay homage to the Italian heritage of the community, it is not a show-stopper.

Residents appreciate the innovative ‘table top street condition’ around the park, but worry that it might be a danger to younger, less aware children. The community would prefer that Champagne Avenue be closed at Champagne and Beech – this would also provide additional space for park expansion.

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