

Inspiring the Creative Redevelopment of a Local Residential Street: Zoning and transportation solutions for the future growth of Armstrong Street, Ottawa, Ontario

A Request for Proposals to McGill University School of Urban Planning Studio III Fall 2015

August 19, 2015



HINTONBURG



Clients:

Wellington West Business Improvement Area

Hintonburg Community Association (HCA)

City of Ottawa

Creative Neighbourhoods

1. The Study Area

The study area (see map, Fig. 1) generally stretches along Armstrong St. from Bayview Ave. to the East and Parkdale Ave. to the West, including all properties abutting Armstrong St. The study area also includes all properties to the South of Armstrong that front on streets intersecting Armstrong. It also includes properties abutting both sides of Grant St. from Parkdale Ave. to McCormick St.

Armstrong St. is located within the community of Hintonburg in the commercial neighbourhood of Wellington West, Ottawa. The street runs approximately 1.13km East and West – in parallel with Wellington St. West. Currently the street is a mix of primarily residential (R4) with minor commercial (-c). The City of Ottawa has placed a hold zone for 12 months (-h) on study area development until such a time that an area specific study can be completed, or if an area specific study can be demonstrated as unnecessary for development.



2. Study Aims & Vision

The Armstrong study will explore **zoning** and **transportation** solutions for the future growth of Armstrong St. The study should generally address the appropriateness of the zoning within the study area, including the additional commercial uses proposed in the Local Commercial Zoning Study, and recommend optimal zoning for the area. The study should examine the use of Armstrong St. as a designated cycling route and as a pedestrian route, particularly as it relates to Wellington St. West. This should also include addressing improvements to the Streetscape.

Aims

1. Carrying out an assessment of current conditions
2. Determining the appropriate range and mix of commercial and residential
3. Determining the appropriate heights and massing for buildings
4. Examining how to facilitate the development of this area as an “incubator” for new businesses that complement the more established businesses on Wellington St. West
5. Determining how to encourage development on empty lots and parking lots
6. Examine whether zoning is appropriate on “through lots” that abut Armstrong St. and Wellington St. West, particularly with respect to the prohibition of commercial uses adjacent to Armstrong St.
7. Recommend measures to facilitate and improve the use of Armstrong St. as an active cycling and pedestrian route, and to improve the streetscape

Zoning and Transportation

Armstrong St. represents potential to develop a plan that will create both residential and commercial opportunities for infill and already existing properties. By reviewing the current uses of the street in the context of City of Ottawa plans, the Armstrong Study will provide zoning recommendation to incentivize commercial incubation opportunities and a variety of residential options and heights.



Wellington West is situated as a gateway to the National Capital Commission network of active use trails. Due to this, and a variety of other modal factors, Wellington West is experiencing an increase of cycling traffic. The study will explore and make recommendations on how to better utilize Armstrong St. for cycling.

Armstrong St. is parallel to a commercial main St. and main transportation artery (Scott St. / Tunney's Pasture Transit Station) and is also situated as a gateway to the neighbourhood

3. The Planning Challenge & Opportunities

Developing a plan for Armstrong St. is a sensitive task; both the North and South side of the street represent a mix of residential, commercial, and development interests. Any proposed plan must present strategies to encourage appropriate redevelopment of the numerous empty lots and parking lots, to support existing commercial uses, to encourage appropriate residential intensification, and to develop a strategy to encourage an appropriate commercial mix, especially with "incubator space" for less-established business that cannot afford a location on the main street. In addition, although Armstrong is designated as a cycling corridor, there is no signage or even minimal cycling infrastructure, and access is poor.

Challenges

- North and South side of the street have distinct challenges
- Neighbourhood in transition
- Connecting the adjacent areas with Armstrong
- Site is centrally and strategically located, yet isolated
- Legacy of earlier land use planning efforts

Opportunities

- Nearby neighbourhood is thriving
- Wider neighbourhood identity
- Located in close proximity to main commercial street
- Located in close proximity to the Transitway and O-train (LRT)
- Local community and councillor support
- Business, community, and political leadership (BIA / HCA / City of Ottawa)

4. Recent and Ongoing Plans and Infrastructure Upgrades

In 2014-2015 the City of Ottawa engaged in a zoning consistency study (Local Commercial Study) through the Planning and Growth Management Department. Existing shops and stores, such as convenience stores, barber shops, small Laundromat, florist, and café's are often located in residential areas where present zoning may not permit these businesses beyond what currently exists. The study proposed a rezoning for such sites, where appropriate, to permit these businesses to continue to contribute to their community. The study also considered possible new locations for, scale of, and provisions for, neighbourhood focused commercial uses that might fall between a home-based business and a full-fledged retail store.

The Armstrong St. Study is intended to refine and expand upon the results of the Local Commercial Study recently concluded by the City of Ottawa and approved by City Council in June, 2015. Several areas that were recommended for zoning changes that added a set of local commercial uses to residential areas lie along Armstrong St.

Both the Hintonburg Community Association, Inc. (HCA) and the Wellington West Business Improvement Area (WWBIA) submitted comments, in which both argued that a more detailed study was required of that area, due to its being adjacent to the Wellington West main street area, its function as a narrow transitional zone between this commercial street and the solidly residential area to the north, the possibility of its serving as an “incubator” area for new businesses, and its designation as a major cycling route. In response, the Planning Committee passed an amended recommendation that placed holding zones on the areas recommended for new zoning pending a more detailed study.

5. Relevant Documents

In addition to the Local Commercial Zoning Study (2015), several other recent studies have addressed the Armstrong St. area of adjacent areas and should be taken into account in the present study. These studies and associated documents include:

- [Wellington West Community Design Plan](#)
- [Scott St. Community Design Plan](#)
- [Wellington West Business Census](#)
- [Wellington West Modal Survey 2014](#)
- [City of Ottawa Local Commercial Zoning Study](#)
- [City of Ottawa Design and Planning Guidelines](#)
- [City of Ottawa GeoMaps](#): City of Ottawa and National Capital Commission Map; Kitchissippi Ward Map; Zoning map; Traffic Map

6. Studio III Objectives

The Studio III team will be expected to produce a preliminary area-specific plan identifying optimal zoning and transportation options and recommendations to support a future City of Ottawa land use plan for Armstrong St.. Armstrong St. is off the main commercial street, Wellington St. West. The study will ensure that any plan is respectful of the surrounding community development plans, City of Ottawa planning strategies, and National Capital Commission plans.

7. Studio III Activities

- 1) Review relevant materials
- 2) Review and analyze existing conditions
- 3) Interview local stakeholders (client will facilitate interviews with stakeholders)
- 4) Review comparable projects in other urban centres
- 5) Conduct stakeholder consultation to attract interested parties and to assess potential uses
(Client will assist with consultation planning and execution)
- 6) Draft plan
- 7) Presentation to the project steering committee and municipal representatives
- 8) Submit revised plan
- 9) Final presentation (audience to be determined)

8. Studio III Deliverables

- 1) Preliminary report on analysis of background document, situational analysis, stakeholder interviews, and case studies (activities 1-4)
- 2) Draft plan incorporating results of a stakeholder consultation and community design workshop and offering preliminary recommendations and options (activities 5 and 6)
- 3) Presentation of draft plan and findings (activity 7)
- 4) Final draft and presentation of recommendations and options (Activities 8 and 9)

9. Studio III Budget

The client will reimburse out-of-pocket expenses associated with the delivery of the assignment. It is anticipated that these expenses will include travel between Montreal and Ottawa by car as well as printing costs. Any other non-incidentals costs must be submitted to the client for approval in advance. Total expense budget will not exceed \$1000.00 exclusive of taxes. All receipts must be submitted to be reimbursed.

10. The Client

The Studio III team will work with members of the project steering committee comprised of the Hintonburg Community Association, Wellington West Business Improvement Area, Creative Neighbourhoods, and the office of the Kitchissippi Ward Councillor.

- Jay Baltz Hintonburg Community Association,
- Zachary Dayler, Executive Director, Wellington West Business Improvement Area, ed@wellingtonwest.ca
- Michel Frojmovic MCIP RPP PMP, Director, Creative Neighbourhoods, michel@acaciaconsulting.ca
- Con. Jeff Leiper, Ward 15 Councillor, City of Ottawa, Jeff.Leiper@ottawa.ca



The Wellington West Business Improvement Area was formed in 2008 to promote the Wellington St. West commercial area, which includes Hintonburg, Parkdale Market and Wellington Village. Wellington West is one of Ottawa's largest BIAs, rich in diversity, creativity, and community (www.wellingtonwest.ca)

HINTONBURG

The Hintonburg Community Association (HCA) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-led group of local citizens, who are eager to make a difference in our community. Meetings are normally held the first Monday of every month at the Hintonburg Community Centre -- all members are welcome to attend.



Kitchissippi Ward (Ward 15) is a city ward in the city of Ottawa, Canada. It gets its name from the Algonquin name for the Ottawa River, meaning Great River. The ward is slightly west of downtown, and covers the neighbourhoods of Champlain Park, Civic Hospital, Hampton Park, Highland Park, Hintonburg, Island Park, McKellar Heights, McKellar Park, Mechanicsville, Westboro Beach, Westboro, Wellington Village, and Wellington St. West.



Creative Neighbourhoods is an Ottawa-based non-profit dedicated to improving the use and design of public space.