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The development of the new Civic campus of the Ottawa Hospital will shape both the future of healthcare in our city and the urban fabric, particularly for the communities neighbouring the site at Dow's Lake. To ensure that we have a healthy and vibrant city, we must not sacrifice the latter for the former. This is a city-building project, and we must ensure that a thoughtful and progressive planning philosophy is applied.

The location of the new Civic campus was unfortunately selected with much political interference. It will include the current site of Queen Juliana Park, as well as part of the Central Experimental Farm. An important development the scope of the Civic campus must be undertaken with sensitivity and acknowledgement of the reality that central Ottawa is already lacking sufficient greenspace.

The initial plans for the new Civic campus released by TOH are impressive in some respects. It is clear that there is a desire to create a modern and forward-looking healthcare institution. However, it is also clear that insufficient consideration has been given to development from a city-building perspective, and that the needs of residents of this city have not been fully weighed and balanced against the inclinations of the hospital developers.

The office of city councillor Shawn Menard believes that there is a way forward—that we can have a development that serves the needs both of the patients, visitors and staff of the hospital, and of the city.

To assist TOH in the design and construction of an improved Civic campus plan, we offer the following five points that will help both the hospital and the city live up to this goal.

Four Fewer Parking Storeys

In the northeast section of the site, TOH is currently planning to build a four-storey parking garage. This is not an appropriate use of the land across from Dow's Lake. This parking garage will be built upon what is currently a small parking lot, as well as Queen Juliana Park. It will also remove an important section of the Trillium Line Multi-Use Path.



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The parking garage will cut off views of Dow's Lake, and segregate Carling Avenue from Dow's Lake and, by extension, Commissioner's Park. It will not only tower over Dow's Lake, but also over the Dow's Lake Pavilion.

The intention of TOH is to move Queen Juliana Park to the top of the parking garage, greening the roof and providing outdoor space. While this is better than a layer of asphalt staring up to the sky, it does not serve the needs of residents, nor does it sufficiently replicate the current greenspace on offer.

A park is a destination, but just as importantly, it is a refuge. It offers relief from the noise, heat, concrete and traffic of the city. It is welcoming. It invites residents to enter, linger and stay. A four-storey trek to the top of a parking garage has none of these offerings.

City liveability has as much to do with serendipity as it does central planning. We cannot fully program how people will use the city and use public space. All we can do is make it accommodating and inviting. We do create city dynamism; we provide the opportunity to flourish. But serendipity does not scale four storeys and livability does not thrive atop four floors of cars.

Residents came to understand that TOH was not intending on surface parking—that designs would seek underground parking, burying it so that the site could flourish. However, instead of burying parking, we will be stacking parking on top of parking.

During the recent public consultation, TOH representatives suggested that we needed to create the four-storey parking garage for the tradespeople who would be working on the overall development and construction of the site. This is a sadly short-sighted approach to parking and transportation management. Certainly, we can find alternatives for tradespeople and construction workers. Surely, we shouldn't build a permanent, enduring structure for the sake of short-term parking.

In addition to this low-rise parking building, TOH also intends to build, or pave, numerous surface parking lots along the perimeter of the site. We recognize the need for parking at the campus, but we also recognize this is an opportunity for TOH to throw off the failed assumptions of transportation plans past and build a healthy hospital campus that supports patients and healthy transportation options.

We believe this would be achieved by the burial of the vast majority of parking capacity and the minimal use of surface parking, for only when it is absolutely a necessity.

We can do this, especially if we take a closer look at the transportation planning of the site.



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The Need for Brave Transportation Planning

When the city, TOH and federal agencies embarked on an honest and thoughtful analysis of potential locations for the new Civic campus, one thing became clear—it needed to be on a major transit line and serve as a transit hub.

The original idea to move the campus across the street into a working part of the Experimental Farm was quickly and neatly discarded, and while the location analysis demonstrated Tunney's Pasture as the optimal site for a new campus, the location by Dow's Lake was also identified as a viable location due to being situated right above the Trillium Line of the O-Train. In addition, Carling Avenue has been earmarked for its own transformation in the coming decade, in which it will serve as an active transportation-prioritized corridor with integrated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

The location is also at the intersection of the Trillium MUP (as mentioned above), the Madawaska-Fifth-Clegg bicycling corridor, the Rideau Canal MUP, and the Sherwood bicycling network, which brings a connection to the newly re-built Jaqueline Holzman Bridge over the Queensway at Harmer Avenue.

Despite being a natural hub for all forms of sustainable transportation, TOH has decided, instead, to design a car-centric campus, better suited to a mid-century suburb than the Ottawa of the 21st Century.

It is disappointing. We know not everyone will bus, train, bicycle, walk, scooter, or taxi to the campus, however, thinking 20-30 years into the future requires bold planning to induce healthy transportation for visitors, staff, local residents and yes, some patients. Proper connections, transit stations and accommodations must be made from the outset to meet the modal share goals.

Surrounding the Civic will be significant intensification of people through much more development in this area. This includes the Claridge Icon (45 storeys), Mastercraft Soho Italia (30 storeys), Richcraft Sky at the former Dow's Lake Honda (3 towers - 55 storeys, 45 storeys, 18 storeys). In addition to these are the Canada Lands Company projects at the Booth Street Complex and at 299 Carling Avenue, the Katasa tower at 265 Carling, and the proposed development at 770-774 Bronson Avenue/557 Cambridge Street. The hospital along with these developments will add very significant numbers of people to the area. This requires significant and unparalleled attention to transportation planning and studies which are rigorous and consulted on extensively with neighbourhoods. Mitigation for these confluence of factors is not yet apparent and major ongoing concern for residents in Capital Ward.



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We believe that TOH needs to re-adjust it's planning in relation to transportation.

Better Emphasizing Transit

Transit users should be prioritized when it comes to transportation planning for the site. Transit offers services to wide-ranging locations. Park-n-rides further extend the populations that can be served by transit. People, when they need to travel to the hospital, should always *want* their first choice of transportation to be either bus or train.

We can achieve this through a variety of changes to the site and to transportation planning in this city.

The O-Train is the future of mass transit, especially to suburban populations, in this city. And while Dow's Lake is not on the busier Confederation Line as Tunney's Pasture is, it is right on the Trillium Line, which connects with Confederation just a few stops to the north at Bayview.

The biggest change that should happen is that the Dow's Lake Trillium Line stations should move from the north side of Carling Avenue to the south side and be fully-integrated with the site. Residents should not have to travel outside, crossing a busy street like Carling or navigating some sort of skywalk or underground passage two football fields away to access the hospital. We have the chance to bring those in need directly to the hospital, but we are eschewing it.

Consideration should also be given to creating a bus loop on-site, similar to what we have at the General campus. Carling is, and will continue to be, an important spine route in our bus system.

Finally, we should begin running LRT 24 hours-a-day, and extend the running times of important buses along Carling, such as route 85. People will be arriving at and departing from the hospital at all hours of the night. A parent with a small child should not be forced to wait hours in a bus shelter in order to get home after an emergency hospital visit.

This change will require cooperation from the City of Ottawa and OC Transpo, but it is something for which TOH should be advocating. If TOH were to put a greater emphasis on transit use, expanding reliable and convenient transit service would be of greater urgency to the city.

Integration of Active Transportation

As mentioned above, there is a convergence of bicycling and walking routes at Dow's Lake. The Glebe, the Civic Hospital Area, Little Italy, the Glebe Annex...these are just some of the immediate neighbourhoods that are connected by active transportation, but if you expand outwards, you will see that areas like Old Ottawa East, Sandy Hill, Vanier and Gloucester are



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connected to the east; Central Park, Bel-Air Copeland, Pinecrest and even Kanata are connected to the west; Mooney's Bay, Fisher Heights and Parkwood Hills to the south; Wellington Village, Mechanicsville and Lebreton Flats to the north. So many people will be able to access the new Civic campus by so many modes of transportation.

But in order to facilitate this access, designs need to be modified. First and foremost, the new Campus should not remove the current Trillium MUP from Carling to Prince of Wales. This is an important connection for residents of Ottawa.

Further, we need to ensure that local streets that serve as important active transportation routes are not over-run with parking and traffic. Sherwood Avenue will need better traffic calming and proper, protected bicycling infrastructure.

And we must ensure that there is proper active transportation parking on site that can be easily accessed. While the current plans go into great detail on car parking and car access, the bicycling parking is far less clear. There should be multiple locations for bicycle parking, depending on one's origin and destination. Much of that parking should be covered or underground, for when there is inclement weather and be designed for all types of bicycles, including cargo bikes and tricycles. No one should be shut out from accessing a public hospital due to poor active transportation infrastructure.

Healthy Tree Cover for a Healthy City

The new civic development for the Ottawa Hospital proposes to remove 680 trees, 320 of which are distinctive, with a diameter of over 30cm. A substantial number of the trees to be removed are to make way surface parking lot at the north end of the site close to Carling Avenue. While the environmental site assessment provides an inventory of tree species and wildlife, it does not speak to larger questions of habitat connectivity and with the arboretum and experimental farm, or the impact on overall species diversity through the area.

[Carleton students](#) have found that the green space of the experimental farm area has a significant effect on ambient air pollution and mitigates extreme heat events. With dense apartment towers planned adjacent to the site, it is essential from a human health and ecological standpoint to minimize tree loss, through exploring options like underground parking and reconfiguring the site plan to retain more trees close to Carling Avenue.

Losing half of the trees in this dense urban area is not tenable. The City of Ottawa's tree canopy cover target in the new Official Plan is 40%, with the current average coverage at 31%. Based on staff's 2017 inventory of the urban forest, tree canopy covers 23.4% of the site. We support



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the city position for a target of 40% coverage as soon as possible. As well as mitigating tree loss, considerable replanting will be necessary.

Summary

The Ottawa Hospital is a renowned expert on the provision of healthcare. The work that TOH is doing is the pride of Ottawa. The hospital saves lives, conducts important research and provides necessary services to residents of Ottawa, Eastern Ontario and beyond. We believe TOH will develop an inspiring Civic campus that will serve the healthcare needs of residents for generations.

However, we must also ensure that the development serves the needs of residents. As a development project, the new Civic campus must also promote a healthy Ottawa. The development, too, should be inspiring. We should be creating a leading-edge facility, not only in terms of healthcare provision and research, but also be on the leading edge of city-building.

Myself and my office look forward to working with the Ottawa Hospital, city staff and the many engaged and thoughtful residents who have expressed their thoughts on this project.

Sincerely,

Shawn Menard
City Councillor, Capital Ward