

Heron Gate Secondary Plan: Community Visioning Session Summary

Date of Event: April 7, 2018

April 2018



HERON GATE VISIONING WORKSHOP EVENT CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Date: April 7th, 2018, 9am-12pm

Location: Heron Road Community Centre, Ottawa

As part of the Heron Gate Secondary Plan process, City of Ottawa Councillor Jean Cloutier hosted a second Public Visioning Session on April 7, 2018 to provide an opportunity to members of the public to contribute their thoughts and ideas to help inform the development of the Heron Gate Secondary Plan. This session, one of several public engagement sessions to be held for the project, followed an earlier Public Visioning session held at Featherston Drive Public School on February 24th, 2018.

The Visioning Session was moderated by David Sherwood from PACE consulting. Introductions to the project were made by Councillor Cloutier and an overview of the Secondary Plan process was provided by City of Ottawa Planner, Melanie Gervais. In addition, John Loubser, from property owner Timbercreek, presented an overview of on-going community initiatives and Antonio Gomez-Palacio from the consultant group DIALOG, provided a summary of what was heard at the last visioning session and introduced emerging vision, principles and conceptual frameworks for the community design.

These presentations were followed by a series of table discussions, organized by topic areas. The topics at each table included:

- 1) Land Use;
- 2) Built Form;
- 3) Public Realm;
- 4) Transportation; and
- 5) Community Engagement

Each visioning working session lasted 20 minutes, then groups rotated to a new topic table. Topic specific information panels were set up at each table and aerial maps, analysis graphics, and opportunities diagrams were made available for reference and to start the table discussion. Materials related to a community wellbeing framework, to be explored throughout the design process, were also made available at all tables.

The following summarizes the emerging ideas from the table discussions. It should be noted that this is not a verbatim recording of the comments expressed, but reflects the common ideas and recurring comments which were shared during the discussions.

LAND USE

- Manage new building height to avoid wall of towers
- Retail nodes are desirable on corners
- Open space should be spread across the site (village like), not concentrated in one area
- Pursue concept of park space “stretched” across the site
- Create a forest and plant more trees across site
- Create open park spaces with good visibility
- Create good frontages interior to the site, towards parks and internal streets
- Spread retail across the site, not just on Walkley
- Need a parking solution to support any new retail
- Include parking options to serve residents and retail businesses
- Provide mixed-use interior to the site, provide eyes on the street and park
- Heron Gate study needs to consider plans for Canada Lands site
- Desire for new community centre and/or a major community hub
- Land uses should relate to and provide benefits to the broader community
- Make new community a destination
- Avoid duplicating big retail & amenities that exist around the site. Consider the larger context
- Consider ways to integrate the new development with larger community to avoid it feeling like an island.
- Explore how existing facilities can be improved/enhanced
- Provide place in the park to sit and gather, and have picnics and BBQ
- Provide a park dog area

BUILT FORM

- Provide a variety of housing forms and styles and ownership to encourage a mix of demographics, variety of ages, and families, including ability for aging-in-place
- Provide a mix of heights throughout
- Study shadow and wind impacts of new buildings
- Make buildings kid friendly - for young children, teens and parents/caregivers
- Include convenience retail and mixed use, such as a coffee shop close to community open spaces to support walkability and bring eyes to the street/park
- Provide a community hub / community centre in the park
- Include consistent frontages that are articulated and dynamic. No blank walls, provide variation, and fine-grain
- Accessibility to all units and services throughout buildings and the community. Provide scooter circulation and storage. Electrical connections for equipment.
- Avoid creating a concrete jungle - provide good amount of planting, entry to units at ground level, materials: brick, stone, wood
- Embrace cultural diversity in the design of the architecture and community
- Include setbacks for front yards and planting
- Harness opportunities along Walkley and Heron Rd. for varied massing, commercial and improved public realm to alleviate poor pedestrian experience.
- Design a complete community with easy access to public transit for other larger scale services like major shopping
- Encourage community members to be part of maintaining and keeping the neighbourhood beautiful and safe

PUBLIC REALM

- Create open Space links to parks where they are needed.
- Desire for community hub / central park
- Reinforce streetscapes as important as links to park spaces.
- Include paved and lit pathway connection through Sandalwood Park to Heron Gate mall.
- Create good pathway connectivity and accessibility throughout community
- Include more seating and gathering places in public realm areas
- Include Park equipment for all ages
- Propose parks of all sizes
- Areas for natural play and creative play
- Include rubberized accessible surfaces
- Public “ownership” of parks/open space. There is a public and individual responsibility
- Establish a lighting policy to support winter maintenance
- Recommend good safety measure including panic buttons in parks
- Create public squares/community hubs around transit nodes
- Provide public washrooms & drinking fountains
- Provide mixed-uses adjacent to open space and parks
- Phase open spaces to meet community needs
- Provide an off-leash dog area
- Provide community gardens at grade and on roof tops
- Create a multi-purpose event space
- Initiate a major tree planting program for parks and wider community
- Provide proper conditions for the establishment of healthy trees
- Pedestrian experience on Walkley Rd. needs to dramatically improve

TRANSPORTATION

- Future on-street parking should be designed to be safe for pedestrians and cyclists
- New internal street designs should address issues of speeding and poor sightlines and prioritize safe crossings.
- Locate bus stop at the community centre/ senior centre
- Improve visibility and safety of all intersections points along Walkley Rd. and Heron Rd. to reduce accidents.
- Reduce car speeds on Heron and Walkley Rds.
- Improve crossings on Heron Road and Sandalwood pedestrian (e.g. signal duration)
- Add vehicular connection to Community centre from Baycrest or other internal roads
- Desire for improved transit services and bike infrastructure
- Parking structures and underground parking preferred over surface lots.
- Avoid parking fees on lots to lower rate of on-street parking.
- Desire for BRT on Heron to access LRT/cycle tracks to form a complete street
- Desire for car share lots/access
- Investigate ways to limit vehicles cutting through community and north of Heron Rd. during congestion periods.
- Study area for transportation needs to be bigger than just site.
- Concerns that current bus service is too infrequent (e.g. #44 bus)
- Bus connections too far away from Community centre/Senior centre
- Plan for future incorporation of Heron Road Bus Rapid Transit.
- Design for winter, with accessible paths and appropriate snow storage

COMMUNITY ISSUES

- Build trust by fostering early, frequent, and open communication
- Offer timelines for future changes asap
- Create a group of residents to continue discussion
- Seek to maintain the diversity within the neighbourhood when redeveloping, including low income
- Integrate more space for community events/ use in redeveloping
- Explore reinstating the Community Police Center / increase security
- Continue community events and great that TC is hiring community youth
- Help residents with relocation:
 - Pay movers/deposits up front
 - Arrange bulk moving company pricing
 - Avoid school year and winter moves

NEXT STEPS

Public engagement will continue throughout the Secondary Plan Process.

A focused and tailored visioning event will be held on site for Heron Gate residents followed by an Open House session later this Spring. Details to follow.

SECONDARY PLAN PROCESS



