

4.0 Concept Plan

The following section provides a summary of the concept-planning portion of the Community Design Plan. Guiding principles, concept plan assumptions and three concept plans and analysis are presented.

4.1 Guiding Principles

At the time the Concept Plan alternatives were prepared, a series of guiding principles were established as the framework for this portion of the Plan Process. The following principles form the basis for the Community Design Plan and Design Principles presented in Sections 5 and 6.

- Achieve a sustainable mix of uses – a place where people can live, work and play, which contribute to the diversity and vibrancy of the East Urban Community.
- Create a compact mixed-use urban form making efficient use of land resources and existing and planned infrastructure.
- Support and reinforce high quality transit service by providing transit oriented development and efficient links to the two transit stations at Mer Bleue and 10th Line Roads.
- Facilitate walking, cycling and recreation by creating an integrated pedestrian trail and sidewalk network throughout the community, which will link to adjacent communities.
- Provide opportunities for 4,000-5,000 jobs, with the majority at high densities located within 400 metres of the transit stations.
- Provide an opportunity for a mix of residential housing types, with a maximum of 60% singles and semis, and a minimum of 10% apartments, and the remainder as multiple dwellings other than apartments. The housing mix will also include a certain number of affordable housing units, per the requirements of the Official Plan.
- Aim for an overall residential density of 31 units per net hectare in the area designated in the Official Plan as 'General Urban Area'.
- Ensure that parks contribute to the green space network and neighbourhood fabric of the East Urban Community and that all homes are located within 400 metres of Greenspace (incl. parks, schools, open space). Parkland shall be provided at a rate of 1 ha per 300 dwelling units.
- Development will have regard to potential environmental considerations and constraints such as flood plains and soils.
- Ensure that future development minimizes impacts on surrounding natural heritage features.
- Provide opportunities for centrally located community facilities.
- Provide a safe and efficient road network in accordance with the principles of transportation demand management and approved City standards.
- Preserve and enhance, where possible, the natural function of McKinnon's Creek.

4.2 Concept Plan Assumptions

During the preparation of the Mer Bleue Community Design Plan, three Concept Plan Alternatives were prepared in order to examine different ways the area could develop, and the resultant impacts, and to gather public input on different land use options. The Concept Plan Alternatives were based on certain assumptions generated following the review of existing conditions for the area. These assumptions are as follows:

CDP Area Boundary & Mixed Use Centre

The Community Design Plan area corresponds to the southern limit of the urban boundary as defined in Schedule B of the Official Plan (2003), to Mer Bleue Road, Tenth Line Road and the northern boundary of the future transit line.

In addition, it was assumed that the Mer Bleue CDP would include lands designated Mixed Use Centre (MUC) and as such would fulfill of the requirement to conduct a separate consultation process for these

lands. The portions of this Plan related to the Mer Bleue MUC will form part of a separate document, to be prepared in support of an Official Plan Amendment to allow development of this area.

Location of the Stormwater Management Pond

In order to make most efficient use of land located within the urban boundary it was agreed that the required stormwater management pond would be located outside the urban boundary. This is in keeping with the approved Master Drainage Plan for the area.

Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension

In 1999, the former Region of Ottawa-Carleton completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the extension of the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass east to Trim Road. The EA recommended a preferred alignment for the Bypass, which was used as a basis for the Concept Plans and considered fixed. A right-of-way of 40 metres was protected.

East-West Corridor Light Rail Transit Project

The corridor for the future expansion of the East-West transit line, as it affects the Mer Bleue CDP, is fixed between Mer Bleue Road and Tenth Line Road, south of the hydro corridor. An Environmental Assessment CDP is currently being undertaken for this transit project and will determine the preferred location of future transit stations, as well as the design of the system itself (corridor and technology).

For the purpose of this CDP, it was assumed that the corridor was fixed and that a transit stations would be located at Mer Bleue Road and Tenth Line Road. The right-of-way reserved for the transit corridor is 40 metres. However, if the EA recommends a reduced corridor, then adjoining lands could be enlarged. If appropriate, the transit guidelines contained in this CDP may need to be revised to reflect the recommendations of the EA.

OPA No. 35 and Planning Policies

Official Plan Amendment No. 35 which allowed the conversion of the CDP Area to a mix of a General Urban Area and Mixed Use Centre, assumed that certain density targets would be met as part of the CDP. These targets are integral to the planning framework for the three alternatives and ultimately the CDP. The targets are as follows:

Employment: An employment target of 4,000 to 5,000 jobs has been set for the build out of the CDP Area in accordance with OPA 35. Sufficient land will have to be set aside to ensure this target is met.

Housing: The lands designated 'General Urban Area' are to adopt the density targets associated with the 'Developing Community' Official Plan land use designation. As such, a range of housing types should be provided including a maximum of 60% singles and semis, and a minimum of 10% apartments, and the remainder as multiple dwellings other than apartments.

The minimum density for singles, semi-detached and row dwellings shall be 29 units per net hectare.

Geotechnical Information

A preliminary geotechnical assessment has revealed challenges for the development of certain areas. The south-central portion of the CDP Area will require particular attention given grade raise restrictions of between 0.5 and 0.8 metres. It was assumed that higher density uses and buildings which do not require basements; featuring non-wood frame construction could be more appropriate for these areas.

McKinnon's Creek

Although the analysis prepared by NEA has revealed little in terms of significant natural areas or species within the CDP Area, the development of lands within the Floodplain will require further discussions with and approval by the South Nation Conservation Authority.

Community Integration and Linkages

The lands east and west of the CDP Area are currently being developed for residential/community purposes. The integration of the CDP Area through the proposed road network, pathways and community amenities will be key to the success and sustainability of the Mer Bleue area.

Future Snow Disposal Facility

The future snow disposal facility at the northwest corner of the hydro corridor and Mer Bleue Road will restrict the location of future residential uses within the CDP Area at the Mer Bleue transit station. In accordance with the Gloucester Zoning By-law no residential uses are permitted within 300 metres of the facility.

Servicing

Servicing of the CDP Area will present certain manageable challenges given the grade raise restrictions created by soil conditions and the presence of McKinnon's Creek within and downstream from the CDP Area.

School Needs

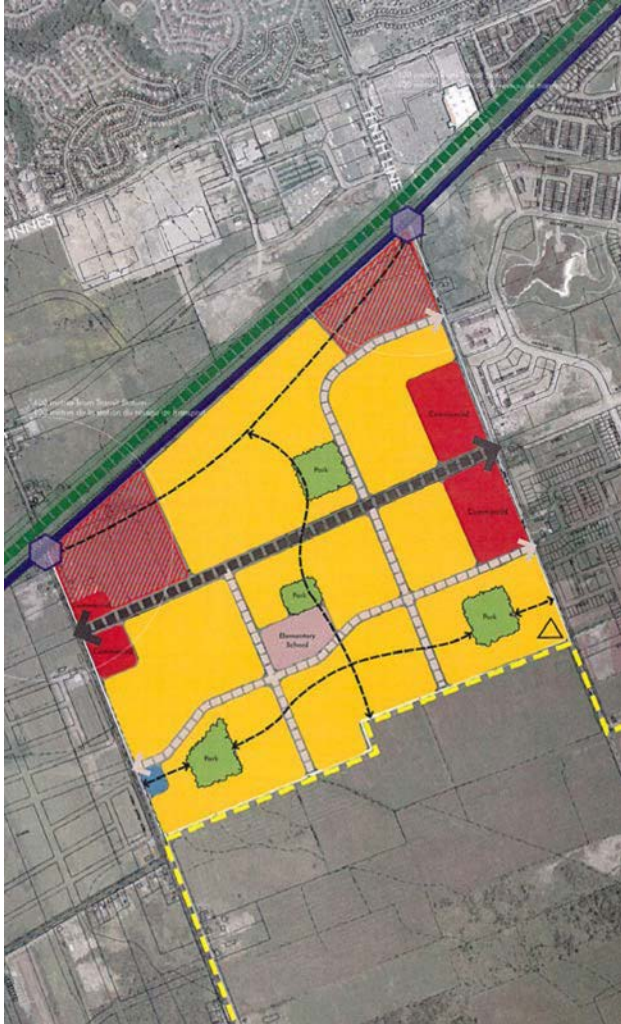
The Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board (OCCSB) has expressed the need for an 8.1 ha site to accommodate a new intermediate/high school in the Mer Bleue area. In addition, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) has requested a 2.8 ha site for a future elementary school.

4.3 Concept Plan Alternatives

Concept 1

This Concept proposed a collector road network having two intersections onto the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension. Mixed Use nodes were proposed at each future transit station.

A series of dispersed neighbourhood parks were proposed linked via a network of pathways or sidewalks. Most commercial land was located along Tenth Line Road.

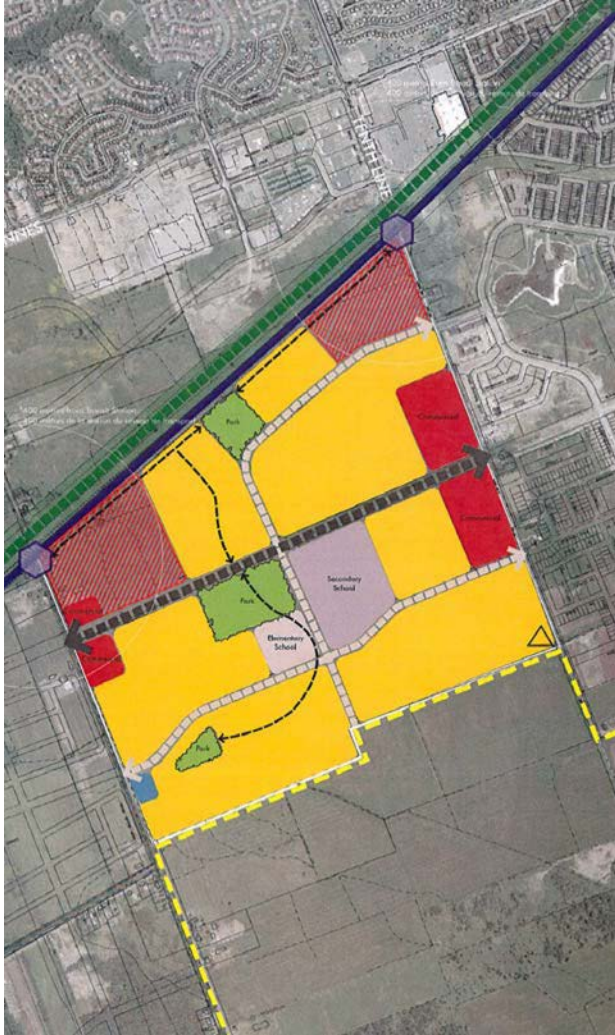


Concept 1

Concept 2

This Concept illustrated a land use plan focused on a large centralized community node south of the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass. A large community park, elementary school and secondary school anchored the southern section of the single intersection to the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass.

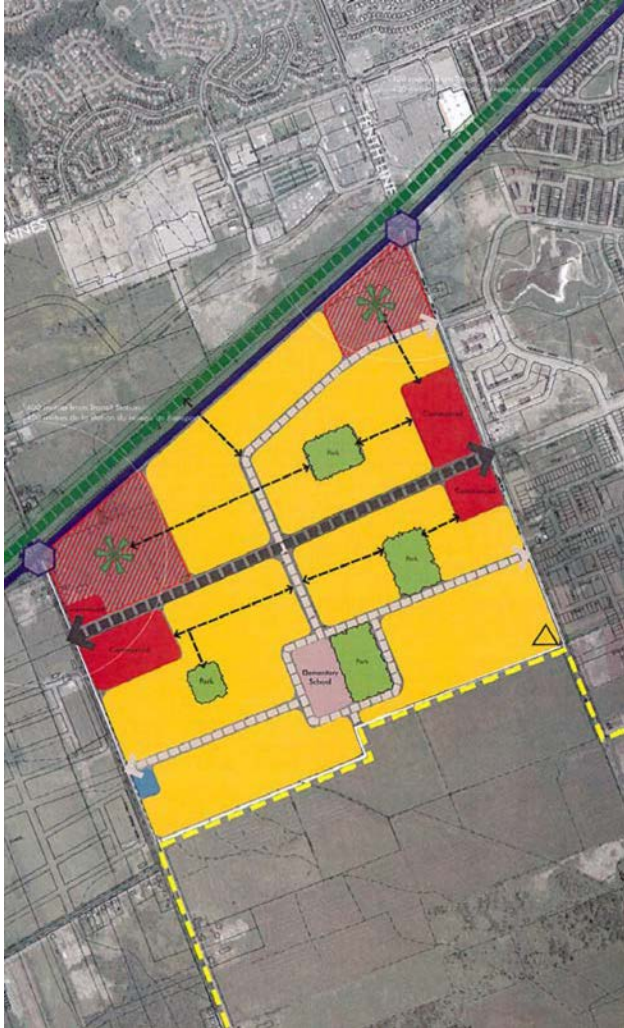
The northern portion of the pathway system paralleled the future transit line linking both Mixed Use nodes.



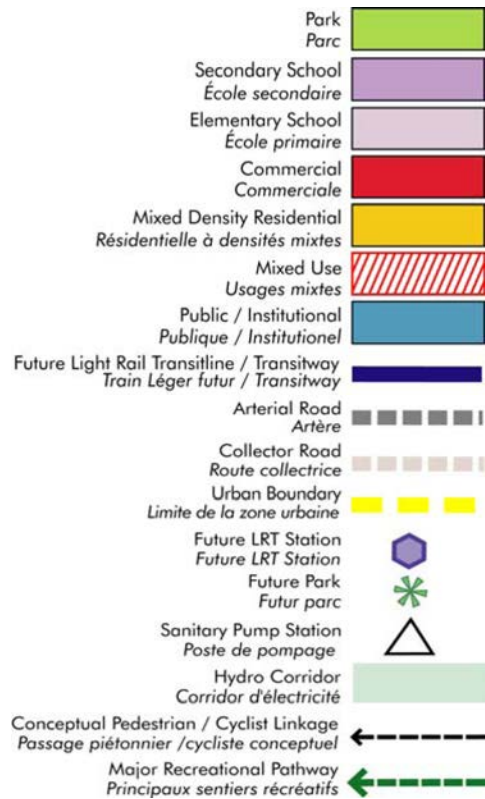
Concept 2

Concept 3

A third Concept proposed a single intersection to the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass with a road network based on a more rigid grid. The southern portion of the collector road network wrapped around a community park and elementary school. Commercial lands were dispersed more equally between Mer Bleue and Tenth Line, with Mixed Use nodes remaining at each future transit station. The pathway system included a direct (underpass or overpass) connection to the Hydro corridor. Each Mixed Use Node featured a central public square.



Concept 3



4.4 Concept Plan Analysis

The Land Use Table and an Analysis Summary are provided in Appendix A and B. Following the completion of this analysis and the review of public comments received after Public Open House No. 1, the Project Team determined that Concept 1 was preferred. This Concept became the basis for the Community Design Plan presented in the following section.