

PREPARED FOR:
Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc. and Two Sisters Resorts Corp.

APRIL

2026



Urban Design Brief

144, 176 and 200 John Street
East & 588 Charlotte Street

SGL



Planning
& Design
Inc.

1547 BLOOR STREET WEST
TORONTO, ON
M6P 1A5

✉ info@sglplanning.ca
T (416) 923-6630
F (416) 923-6916

PROJECT

JS.NL

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction	pg. 1
1.1 Purpose of the Brief	pg. 1
Section 2: Site and Neighbourhood Context	pg. 2
2.1 The Site	pg. 2
2.2 Surrounding Area Context	pg. 6
Section 3: The Proposal	pg. 8
3.1 Vision	pg. 8
3.2 Design Principles	pg. 8
3.3 Proposed Development	pg. 9
Section 4: Design Framework	pg. 11
4.1 Site Layout	pg. 12
4.2 Site Access and Circulation	pg. 13
4.3 Massing, Scale and Height	pg. 14
4.4 Architectural Design	pg. 14
4.5 Landscaping and Outdoor Amenity Space	pg. 15
4.6 Cultural Heritage	pg. 16
4.7 Servicing, Loading and Parking	pg. 17
4.8 Sustainability Measures	pg. 17
Section 5: Conclusion	pg. 19

Structure of the Brief

This Brief is structured as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Provides an introduction to the purpose and structure of the Brief.

Section 2: Existing Site and Surrounding Context

Describes the context of the site and surrounding area.

Section 3: The Proposal

Sets out the vision and design principles for the proposal and provides an overview of the development.

Section 4: Detailed Design Direction and Policy Analysis

Provides an analysis of how the proposed development is designed to meet applicable urban design direction, particularly from the Region, as well as how the redesign respects the site's cultural heritage elements and landscape. This section assesses how the development is appropriate for the site with respect to:

- 4.1** Site Layout
- 4.2** Site Access and Circulation
- 4.3** Massing, Scale and Height
- 4.4** Architectural Design
- 4.5** Landscaping and Outdoor Amenity Space
- 4.6** Cultural Heritage
- 4.7** Servicing, Loading and Parking
- 4.8** Sustainability Measures

Section 5: Conclusion

Provides a conclusion, demonstrating the ability of the proposed development to achieve its vision and design principles and support design direction from the Region.

1.0

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Brief

This Urban Design Brief (Brief) has been prepared by SGL Planning & Design Inc. on behalf of Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc. and Two Sisters Resorts Corp., in support of Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Amendment Applications for the development of the lands municipally addressed as 144, 176 and 200 John Street East and 588 Charlotte Street (“the site”) in the Old Town Community of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The site is located east of Railroad Street, south of Charlotte Street and west of John Street. A hotel, associated commercial uses and facilities, and medium density residential development associated with the hotel use (“proposed development”) is proposed for the site.

The Brief illustrates the design aspects of the proposed development and demonstrates site design and layout, pedestrian and vehicular connectivity, landscaping and open space, servicing, loading and parking, built form and cultural heritage compatibility within the site. The Brief identifies the overall vision for the hotel development, the corresponding cultural heritage attributes and the individual elements of the plan based on consideration for good urban design practices. The Brief also highlights the ability of the proposed development to implement relevant urban design direction set out by Niagara Region within their Model Urban Design Guidelines.

As described within this Brief, the proposed development represents good urban design, providing for compatible commercial and residential infill balanced with a meaningful open space network that reflects the existing character of the surrounding neighbourhood and heritage context of the site.



Aerial view of the site



The Site Location - 44, 176 and 200, John Street East and 588 Charlotte Street

2.0 Site and Neighbourhood Context

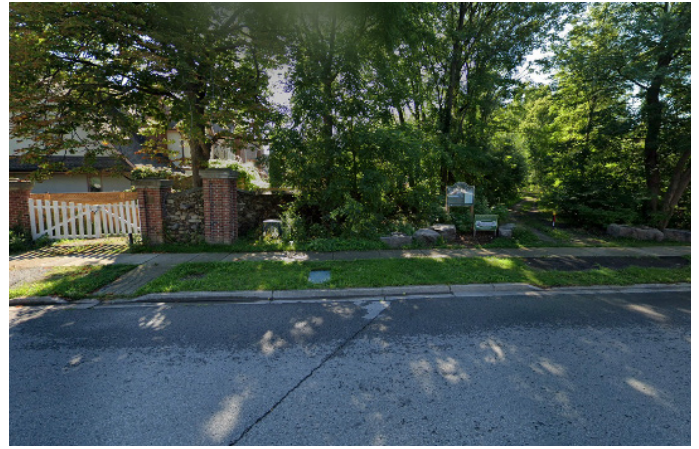
2.1 The Site

Situated within the Old Town urban area of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Site, approximately 14 ha in size, is located on the south side of John Street, between Charlotte Street and the Upper Canada Heritage Trail. A large portion of the Site consists of open space. The Site is part of a larger landholding known as the “Rand Estate”, which comprised of 144, 176 and 200, John Street East and 588 Charlotte Street, as well as two areas subdivided and developed as residential subdivisions known as Weatherstone Court and Christopher Court. The Rand Estate has been identified by the Town as a Cultural Heritage Landscape.

A large brick and stone wall, much of which continues to exist, defines the Rand Estate boundary. West of the wall is the Upper Canada Heritage Trail that extends throughout Old Town.



John Street Site Entrance



Charlotte Street Historic Entrance to Site and Upper Canada Heritage Trail

There are a number of remaining buildings, structures and landscape elements located on these properties that made up the Rand Estate Lands, and are described in detail below.

176 John Street East - Randwood House

144 John Street East

Buildings that currently remain on site include:

- The Devonian House; and
- Coach House (Folly)

200 John Street East

Buildings that currently remain on site include:

- The Lodge/Summer House;
- Bath House (Folly);
- The Carriage House; and
- The Tea House.



Heritage Buildings to be reused and commemorated



The Randwood House



The Devonian House



Calvin Rand Summer House



Carriage House/Garage



Bath House(Folly)



Tea Pavilion



Whistle Stop Wooden Gazebo

The property at 200 John Street East features remnants of the original Dunington-Grubb landscape around the existing swimming pool, as well as other limited landscape features. Another feature of the landscape includes limited remnants of a main walkway (referred to as the Whistle Stop Walk) which originally connected the rear of the Main House to the Whistle Stop and gate at the estate wall, along the Upper Canada Heritage Trail at the south end of the property.

588 Charlotte Street

Buildings and structures remaining at 588 Charlotte Street include:

- The Main Dwelling/Stables; and
- Four Outbuildings/Sheds.



Main House/Stables



Outbuilding #1



Outbuilding #2



Outbuilding #3

2.2 Surrounding Area Context

The surrounding area is characterized primarily by low rise residential neighbourhoods to the west, which contain single detached and townhouse dwellings. The north side of John Street East contains a number of features associated with the historic Old Town including the Butler's Barracks National Historic Site and The Commons public open space. To the south and east, the site is generally surrounded by large agricultural lots and an existing estate lot at 210 John Street. The Two Sisters Winery borders the site to the east.

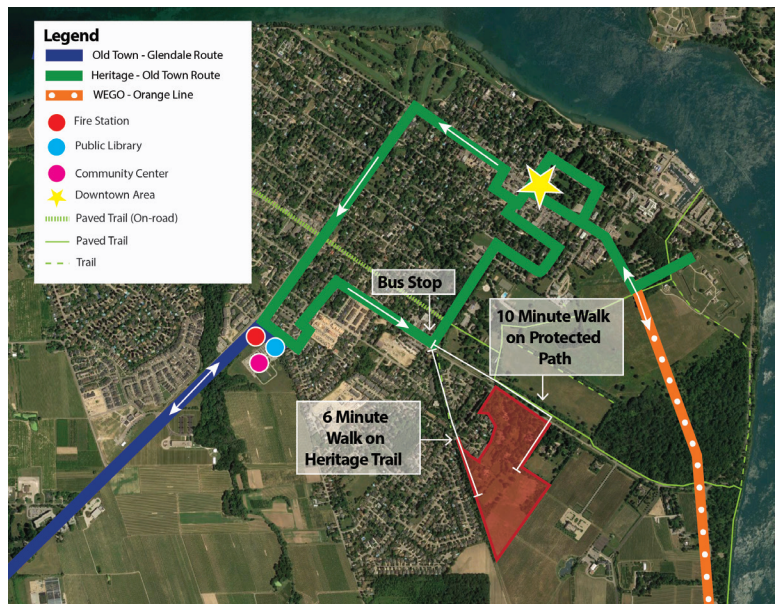


Existing Dwellings on Christopher Street - Abutting the Site to the East



Existing Townhouse Dwellings on Weatherstone Court - Abutting the Site to the East

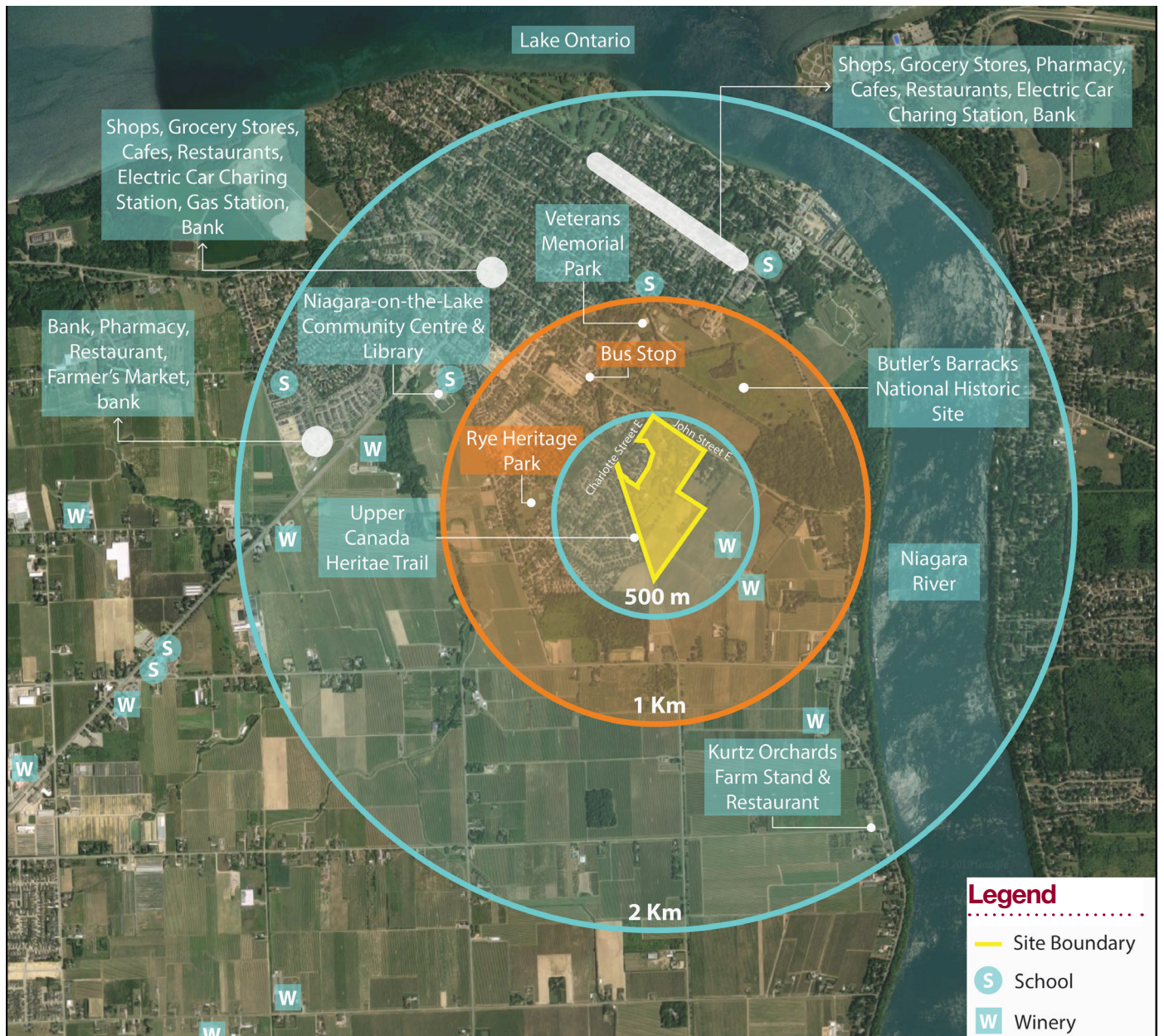
The site is within walking distance to transit services at King Street and John Street, which is an approximate 10-minute walk from the John Street entrance and a 6-minute walk from the Charlotte Street entrance along the Upper Canada Heritage trail. The site is also surrounded by paved and unpaved trails, including multi-use paths that extend from the site to the larger Regional trail network.





John Street Separated Walking and Cycling Path - Northeast of the Site

As part of the Old Town community, the site is well situated in proximity to a number of community services and facilities, including the Town’s Heritage District, which presents a diverse shopping and dining experience. A number of shops, grocery stores, pharmacies, cafes, restaurants and banks are located within a two kilometre radius of the site. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre and Library is located approximately one kilometre away from the site.



Surrounding Area Context Map

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 Vision

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel development will establish a significant amenity for Niagara-on-the-Lake. It presents a unique opportunity to enhance a vacant and underutilized site with historic value, while **strengthening tourism** in Niagara-on-the-Lake through the introduction of a hotel through adaptive reuse of an existing historic building, providing associated commercial uses for hotel use and intensified residential uses to accommodate the growth needs of the Town.

The proposed development will create a prominent presence along John Street through its **old-world classic charm and preservation of existing landscape and open space**, contributing to the unique historic character of Niagara-on-the-Lake and welcoming travellers to and from the Region and beyond.

Establishment of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and residential buildings will enhance the site with an emphasis on **high quality built form and landscaping**, while respecting both the historic context of the lands, as well as the eclectic character of the neighbourhood.

3.2 Design Principles

The proposed development is guided by the following principles:

- 

Accommodate compatible infill and intensification central to the site's open space to provide densified housing forms that are also designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood, respecting the established community fabric through connectivity, open space design and built form.
- 

Contribute to a high-quality public realm, respecting the unique sense of place of the previous estate, through heritage inspired landscape features and access to the preserved and commemorated cultural heritage features on site.
- 

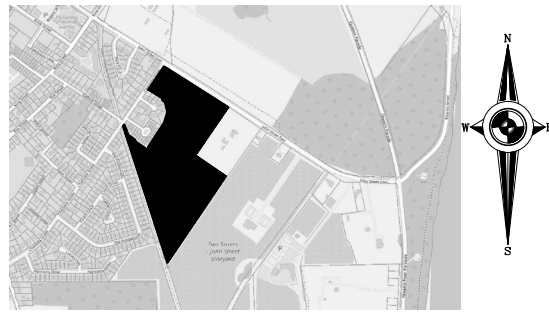
Contribute to the creation of a healthy and walkable community through site permeability and streetscape design, as well as access to parkland, open space areas and trails.
- 

Provide for more compact built form that preserves open space in the Town's existing urban area through the development of low-rise multi-unit dwellings that are appropriately located and massed to fit within their context.

3.3 Proposed Development

The existing Rand House will be transformed into a spa with a new hotel located to the north and behind the rear wall of the House. The hotel and spa consists of the existing Randwood House, the Devonian House, a brick pavilion, a wooden pergola, and the Coach House. The Devonian House is proposed to be repurposed as a restaurant, and the Coach House is proposed to be repurposed as a bridal shop. The Randwood House is proposed to be used as a spa, with additional spa facilities proposed to be located immediately to the rear of the house and east of the proposed hotel building.

The residential component of the proposed development consists of five 3-storey residential buildings, located to the south of the proposed hotel and spa uses. Outdoor amenities will be provided in association with the residential buildings, including tennis courts and a children's play area, which will be detailed at a future site plan approval stage of development. An outdoor pool and clubhouse for the residences is proposed adjacent to the outdoor spa facilities associated with the hotel. To the west of the buildings, a driveway leads to an additional surface parking area, next to a proposed stormwater management facility and sewage pumping station (serving both the residential and hotel uses).

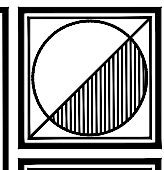
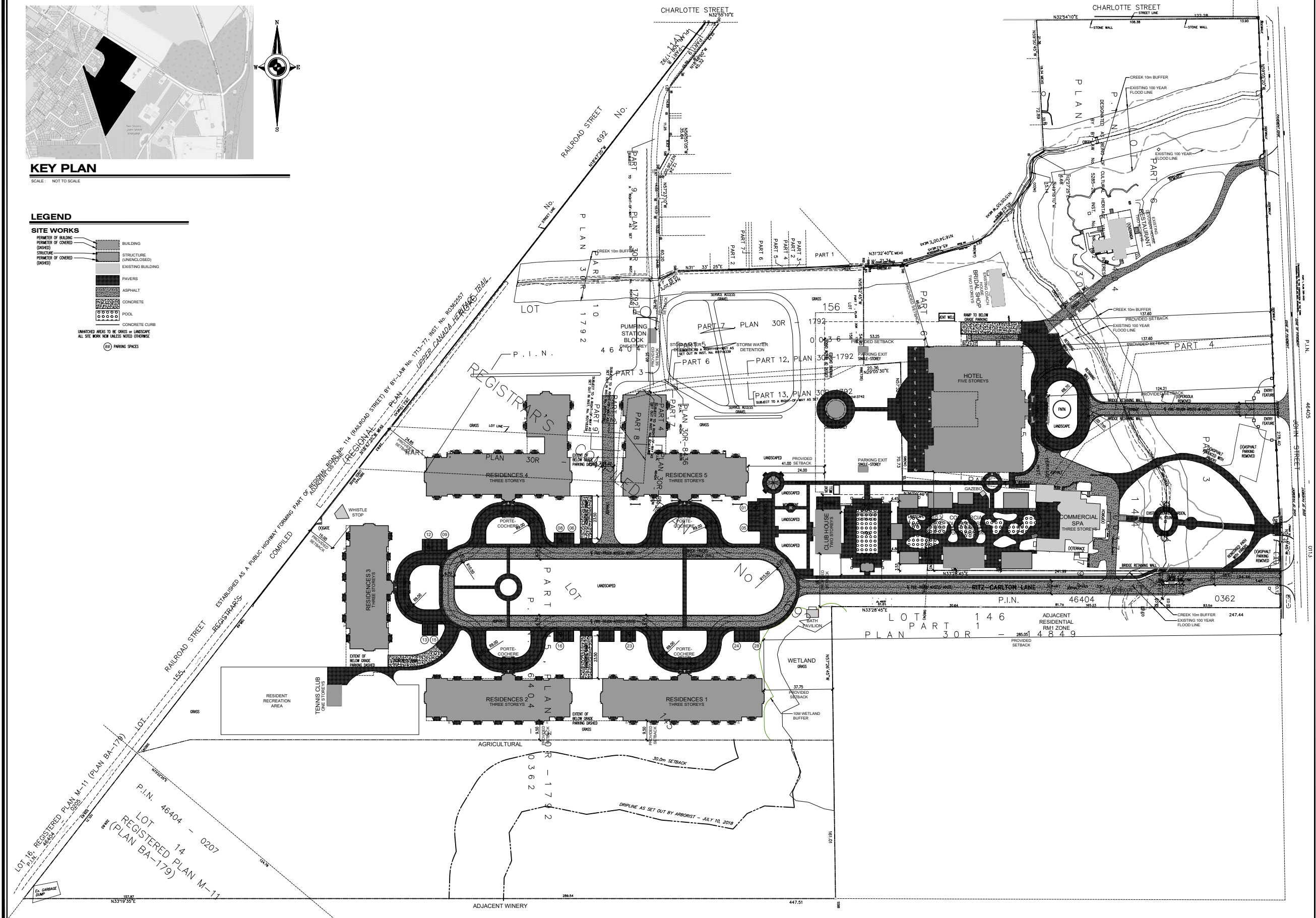


KEY PLAN

SCALE: 1:1000

LEGEND

- SITE WORKS**
- PERIMETER OF BUILDING (DOTTED)
 - PERIMETER OF COVERED (DOTTED)
 - STRUCTURE (UNENCLOSED)
 - PERIMETER OF COVERED (DOTTED)
 - EXISTING BUILDING
 - PAVERS
 - ASPHALT
 - CONCRETE
 - POOL
 - CONCRETE CURB
 - UNWATCHED AREAS TO BE GRADED OR LANDSCAPED
 - ALL SITE WORK NEW UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
 - PARKING SPACES



Peter J. Lesdow
architect



MASTER SITE CONCEPT PLAN
144, 176 & 200 John St.
856 Charlotte St.

DATE	REVISIONS	DATE	REVISIONS

DATE	REVISIONS	DATE	REVISIONS

**RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL,
SPA & RESIDENCES**
144, 176 & 200 John St., 856 Charlotte St.
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

DATE: Nov. 18/21
SCALE: 1:750
DRAWN BY: MW/OB
CHECK BY: PJL

25 - 01

A101

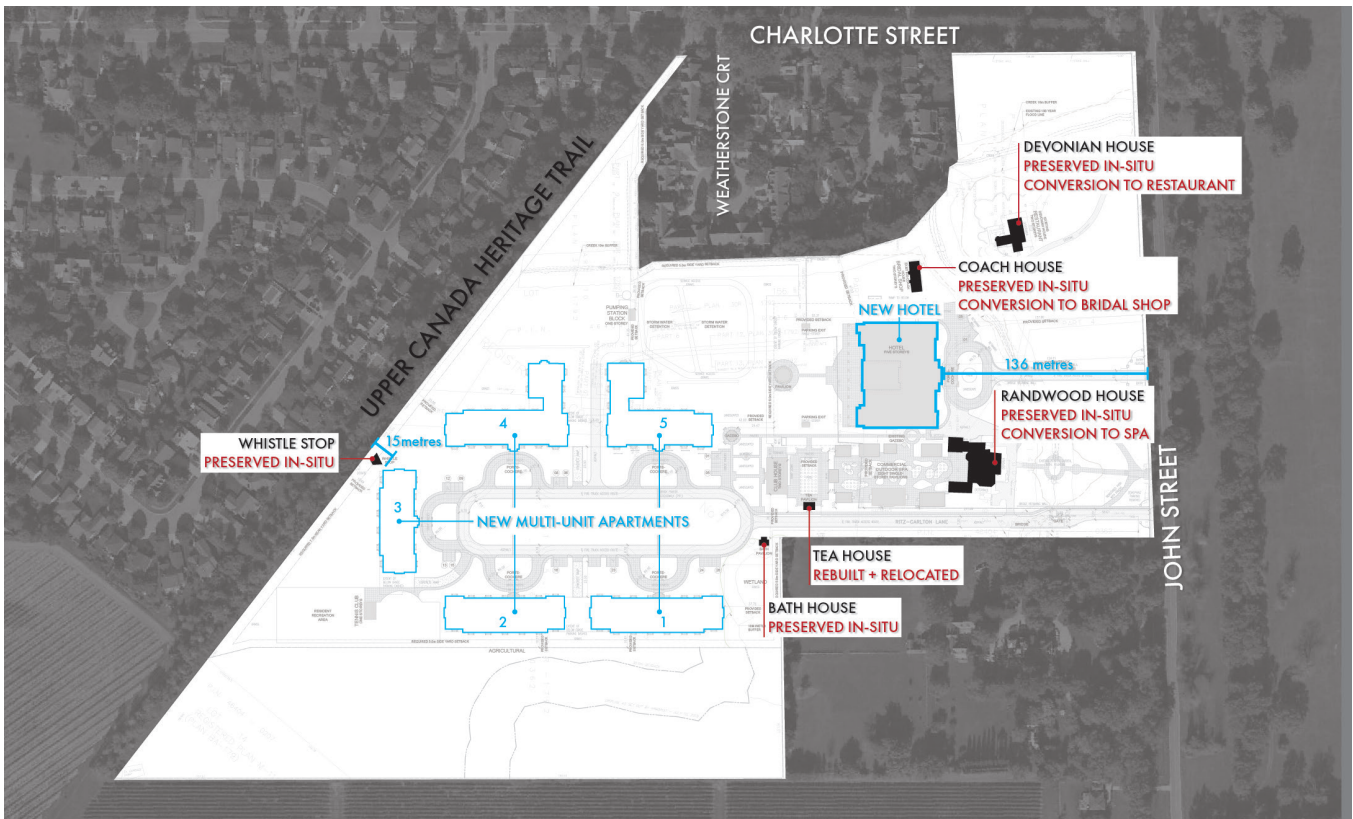
MASTER SITE CONCEPT PLAN
SCALE: 1:750

4.0 Design Framework

The following section provides an overview of the key elements of how the proposal supports design direction provided by the Town in their Official Plan, and Region within their updated Model Urban Design Guidelines (July 2025). In this regard, the following analysis responds to the general intent of the Model Urban Design Guidelines set out by the Region and provides references at the beginning of each sub-section below as appropriate.

The following sub-sections assess how the proposed development is appropriate for the site with respect to:

-
- 4.1** Site Layout
 - 4.2** Site Access and Circulation
 - 4.3** Massing, Scale and Height
 - 4.4** Architectural Design
 - 4.5** Landscaping and Outdoor Amenity Space
 - 4.6** Cultural Heritage
 - 4.7** Servicing, Loading and Parking
 - 4.8** Sustainability Measures



Site Layout

4.1 Site Layout

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 5.1.f, 5.3.b, 6.3.ac

According to the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines, neighbourhoods should be identifiable, interconnected, compact and walkable and diverse. The proposed layout of buildings are structured to preserve existing landscaped open space along John Street as well as existing heritage buildings throughout the site. A new hotel will be sited centrally and prominently on the property, setback approximately 136 metres from John Street. The hotel's associated spa, formerly the Randwood house, will be preserved in-situ maintaining its prominence along John Street. Other buildings and structures such as the Bath House, Coach House (to be used as a bridal shop) and Devonian House (to be converted into a restaurant) will also be preserved in-situ and integrated with the future use of the site. The Tea House will be moved from its current location and placed to the rear of the spa and associated outdoor spa amenity area to be adaptively reused as part of the hotel buildings.

Five new multi-unit residential buildings are proposed on the southern border of the site, accessed from a driveway (Ritz-Carlton Lane) further south along John Street. Placement of these buildings to the rear of the property with ample setback from property lines ensures transition to the established surrounding neighbourhood. Large setbacks as well as surrounding open space will ensure that views into the site will be buffered by existing and new landscaping allowing privacy for both new residents and the surrounding neighbourhood. Minimum separation between these buildings is at least 14 metres to maintain privacy for each new unit.

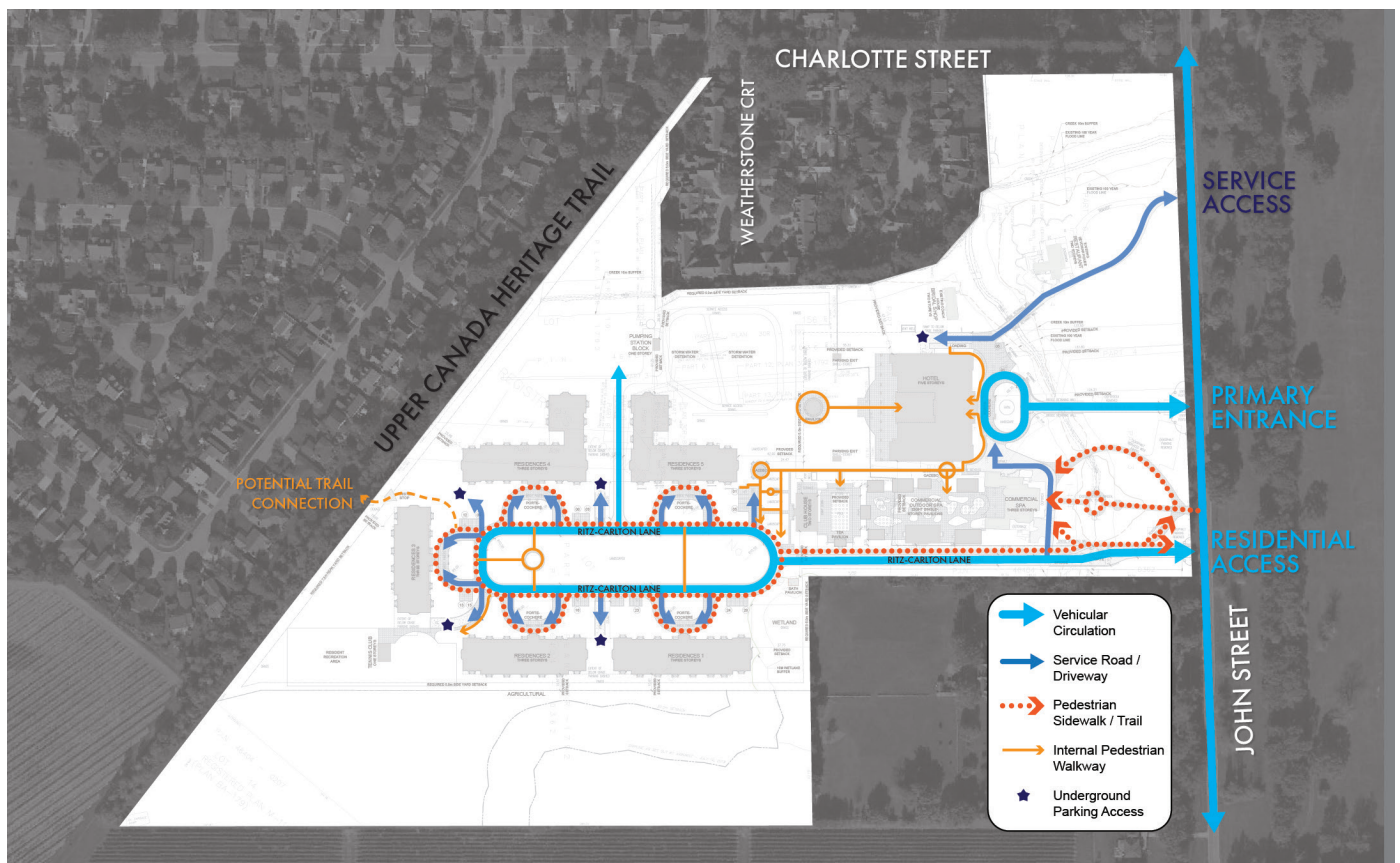
4.2 Site Access and Circulation

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 5.1.f, 7.2.c,

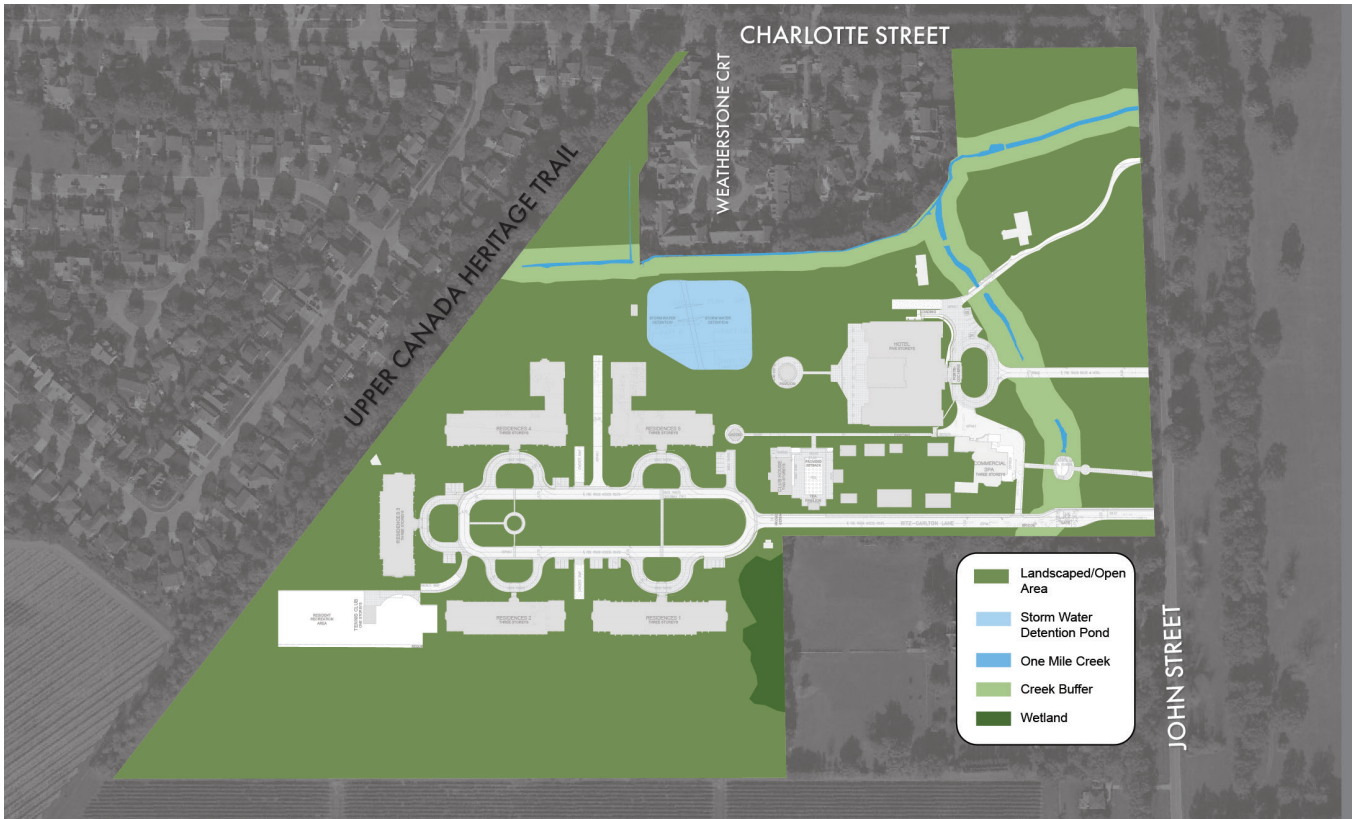
The primary access for vehicles to the hotel's main entrance is off of John Street. This main entrance will provide an attractive vista view of the hotel with a tree lined driveway and direct sightline to the new building. Access to the residential buildings is at the southmost entrance of the site, at the intersection of John Street and Ritz-Carlton Lane. The Ritz-Carlton Lane driveway provides a sidewalk on the north side of the street to accommodate access to the residential buildings and the site as a whole.

North of Ritz-Carlton Lane, a pedestrian access to the spa will be preserved and maintained, offering additional pedestrian connections from John Street into the larger property and uses. Lastly, a service access will be provided closest to the John Street and Charlotte Street intersection. This service access will lead into the hotel's underground parking ramp on the west side of the building.

The Model Urban Design Guidelines emphasize the importance streetscapes as pedestrian-oriented spaces as comfortable, safe and provide convenient connections to site amenities. Sidewalks have been provided on all sides of the Ritz-Carlton Lane ring road, and on the north side of Ritz-Carlton Lane extending from John Street. These sidewalks also connect to the internal pedestrian network throughout the site, facilitating walkability throughout the significant landscaped open space for future residents and visitors. There are also opportunities to provide pedestrian connections to the preserved Whistle Stop gazebo and gateway entrance to the Upper Canada Heritage Trail as illustrated below.



Vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation



Landscaping and Open Space

4.5 Landscaping and Outdoor Amenity Space

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 5.6.a, 5.6.b, 5.6.f, 5.7.e

Set in a vast open space with ample large trees, the proposed development will be sited in a haven of landscaped open space that will be a key amenity for future residents and visitors. In addition to the preservation of existing trees and landscaped open space primarily along John Street, the proposed development will provide new tree and shrub planting to create attractive and comfortable amenity spaces, will enhance the One Mile Creek that runs through the property, and will create spaces for residents and guests to enjoy.

Existing trees surrounding the development will be retained to the greatest extent possible. Existing large trees such as the ones around the Randwood House will be retained to keep the existing lush landscaped character of the Site. A large number of new trees and shrubs are proposed throughout the property adjacent to the hotel, spa, and new residential buildings to create an inviting landscape for future residents and visitors, and will allow for additional shade, creation of microclimates, and additional habitat for birds and bugs.



View of the Randwood House surrounded by large shade trees and open space



Tree lined driveways will be maintained wherever possible

The Model Urban Design Guidelines direct the implementation of outdoor amenity spaces for new residential developments that are accessible, receive sunlight while also receiving shade from ample landscaping, and facilitate spaces for gathering and play. The proposed development provides a dedicated outdoor amenity area for residents to the southwest corner of the site south of Residences 3. Features of this amenity area include tennis courts surrounded by shrubs, a children's play area and a turf play area. This amenity space connects to the Ritz-Carlton Lane sidewalk which also connects to the larger property overall allowing for passive programming on site.

4.6 Cultural Heritage

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 5.5.c, 6.2.a, 6.2.c, 6.2.g

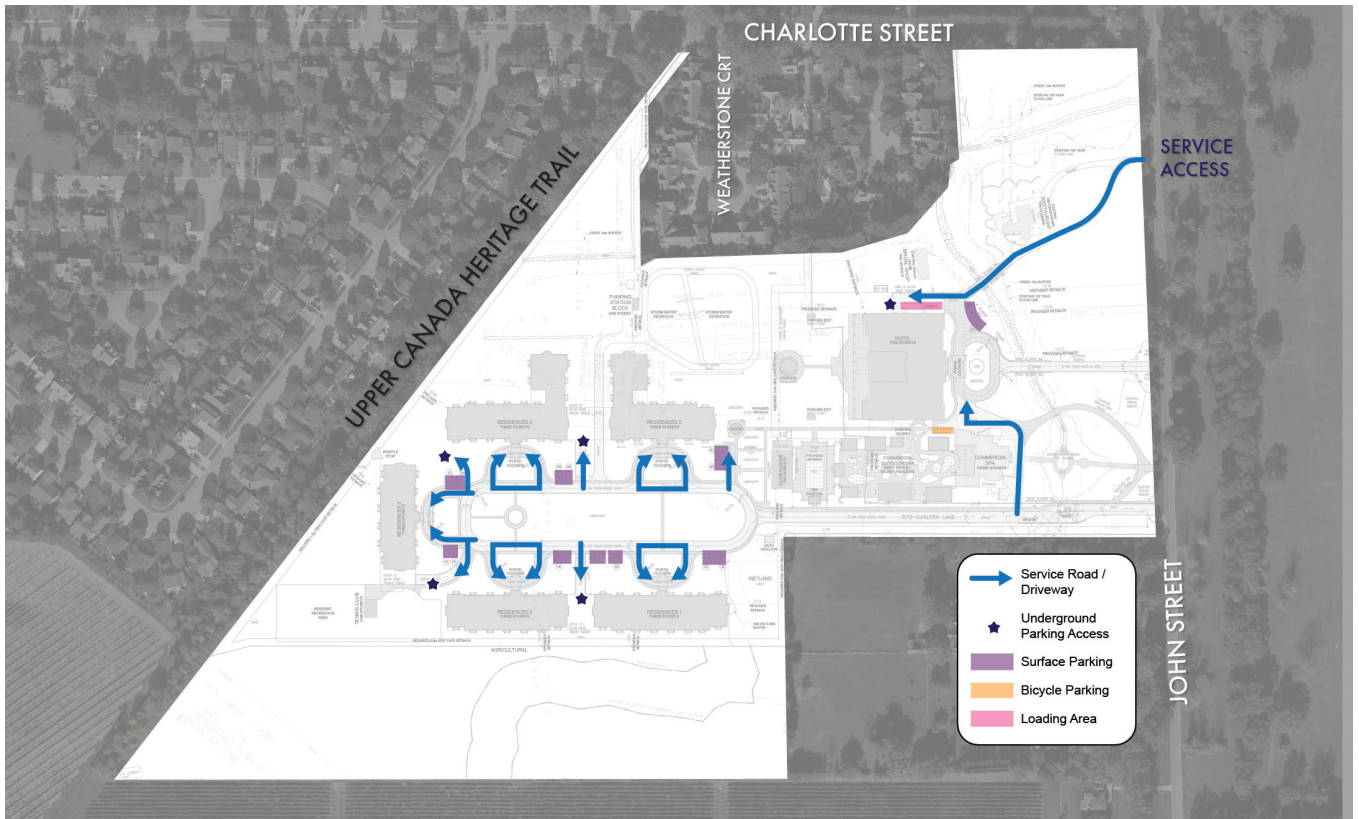
The preservation and integration of a number of key cultural heritage features on site will be instrumental in maintaining and continuing a unique sense of place for the proposed development.

As detailed within **Section 2.1** above, a number of the existing structures on site have been preserved or relocated on site in order to respect the cultural heritage context of the area and provide for improved access to these features.

The Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Stantec identified built cultural heritage resources including the Tea House, Bath House, Randwood House, Coach House and Devonian House that should be preserved and integrated with the proposed development. Additionally, landscape features on site such as the Randwood fountain and brick property gates along John Street should also be preserved and integrated into the design of the site to further maintain the site's sense of place as a historic gem in Old Town Niagara.



Existing features such as the Randwood Houses' fountain and entrance gates will be retained and revitalized as part of the proposed development, maintaining the site's unique sense of place and history



Servicing, loading and parking areas

4.7 Servicing, Loading and Parking

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 5.13, 7.2.e

Servicing and loading for all new buildings will be provided in underground parking garages for the new hotel, and new residential buildings. Some surface parking is provided as lay-by and visitor parking, however the emphasis of the site design is to minimize impervious surfaces wherever possible as directed by the Model Urban Design Guidelines.

4.8 Sustainability Measures

Key Model Urban Design Guidelines: Section 6.1

The design of the Site will contribute to the development of a sustainable community. The Model Urban Design Guidelines place an emphasis on support for environmental sustainability through the conservation of land and compact development within existing neighbourhoods. The proposed infill site is located within an existing urban area of the Town, and adjacent to an existing neighbourhood, which assists in the integration of land uses and the preservation of valuable natural features.

The Model Urban Design Guidelines also support the use of alternative modes of travel, which are encouraged within the proposed development by the various pedestrian connections



Existing One Mile Creek to be preserved and enhanced

throughout the site, access to outdoor amenity space and open space, as well as the design of high-quality streets with sidewalks, street trees and attractive streetscapes. Additionally, the site is well situated within the Old Town community, located within walking distance to an existing transit route (between the Court House, Fort George and Community Centre bus stops along John Street) and within walking distance to many of the Town's amenities and community services.

The proposed development will include a stormwater management pond to manage stormwater runoff on site. Additionally, an existing wetland will be protected from development, preserving habitat and natural heritage space while also providing an additional visual buffer to the neighbouring property. The One Mile Creek and associated tributary will also be preserved and improved through the implementation of a 10 metre wide buffer with culverts to manage flooding. Pedestrian crossings over the creeks will be provided through pedestrian bridges to facilitate walkability and further connection to the landscape open space.

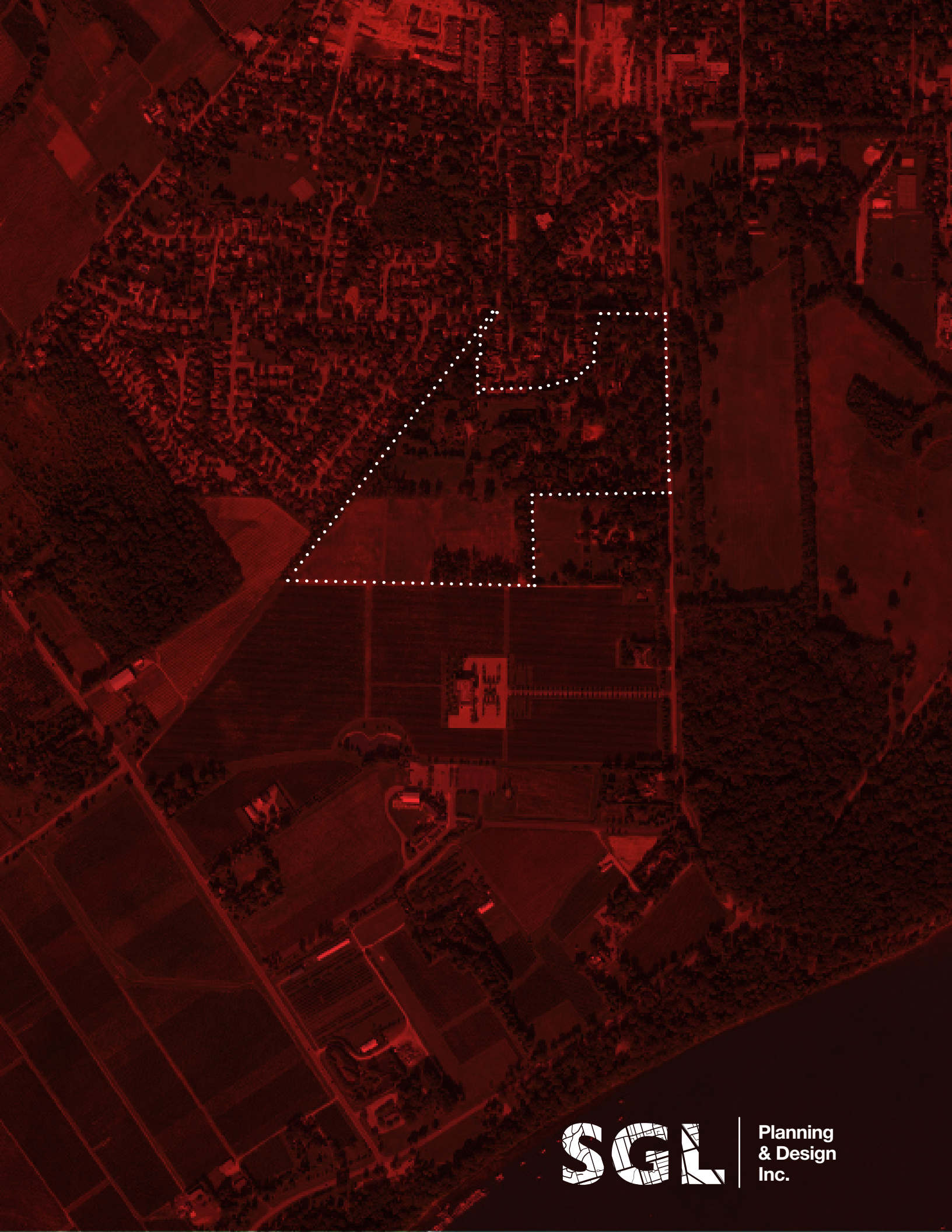
Access to landscaped open space provides the opportunity for residents and guests to enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. The preservation of the site's heritage context will also encourage residents and visitors to explore the grounds, socialize and educate themselves. The proposed landscape concept for the site will be further developed as part of the next stage of development to confirm the tree and plant species in accordance with Town standards. Species throughout the site will be selected to reflect the character of each individual landscaped area while respecting the heritage character of the site. Climate conditions and all seasons will be considered, and non-invasive, native species will be chosen that best respond to the local soil conditions to promote biodiversity and support a diverse and ecologically sustainable environment. Street trees provide shade, encouraging residents to walk, help with stormwater infiltration and create a visually appealing streetscape. Trees will also be preserved where possible to increase the urban tree canopy. These features provide the foundation for the future detailed sustainability features to be incorporated at the next stages of development.

5.0

Conclusion

The proposed development of 144, 176 and 200 John Street East and 588 Charlotte Street will contribute to the creation of a compatible new infill community that reflects the existing character of the surrounding neighbourhood and preserves the valuable heritage context of the lands.

This is achieved through a high-quality development that provides residential intensification and commercial uses in a compact form to preserve existing open space and trees while also providing a new attraction for future visitors. Consistent with the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines, the new hotel and spa has been designed as a walkable community hub offering housing, a new community use as well as adaptive reuse of existing heritage buildings that maintain the unique sense of place of the site.



Planning
& Design
Inc.