



June 30, 2021

Mayor Watson & City Council
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Watson and City Councillors,

RE: Lansdowne Park Partnership: Path to sustainability and next steps

On behalf of the Glebe Community Association (GCA), we are writing to submit our preliminary feedback to the *Lansdowne Park Partnership: Path to sustainability and next steps* report being considered by the Finance and Economic Development Committee on July 6, 2021 concerning the revitalization of Lansdowne Park.

The Glebe Community Association (GCA) is a volunteer, non-profit, membership-based, and City-recognized organization advocating for a liveable, sustainable, diverse urban neighbourhood. We inform, consult, and engage with residents and other groups in the Glebe on issues of importance and promote the interests of our community with all levels of government and other organizations.

Lansdowne Park is adjacent to the Rideau Canal at the heart of our community in downtown Ottawa. This urban park is a city-wide asset with a long history of bringing residents together for sports, exhibitions, entertainment, as well as a weekend farmers' market.

The GCA has been working with the City of Ottawa, the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) as well as the Glebe BIA for many years to enhance the vibrancy of Lansdowne Park and improve the site so that it can continue to benefit our community and residents across the City. We are pleased to be active members of the Lansdowne Community Working Group and more recently, the Lansdowne Stakeholder Sounding Board.

The GCA Board of Directors has considered the revitalization plans for Lansdowne Park that were presented to the Stakeholder Sounding Board on June 16, and our preliminary feedback reflects these initial conversations.

The GCA strongly believes that the priority for revitalization should be placed on the beloved heritage buildings at Lansdowne Park, specifically the significant structural repairs that are required to the historic Aberdeen Pavilion, including the roof and the floor, as well as improvements to the Horticulture building. These designated heritage buildings are considered

by many in our community as the “crown jewel” of our neighbourhood and we are pleased to see that the City will be preserving their heritage for decades to come. These repairs cannot come soon enough and must be the first order of business when it comes to any revitalization efforts at Lansdowne Park.

Another priority to our community association is the protection of the city-owned lands and portions of the park, and as such, we oppose any development on the Great Lawn and public realm at Lansdowne, including Aberdeen Square. Should additional development in the form of housing be considered, that housing should be built on pre-existing development (such as the already constructed retail shops). In other words, we oppose expanding the built footprint on Lansdowne Park, and any future housing that may be considered should go above or within existing buildings. Furthermore, if additional housing is considered at Lansdowne, the City should insist on a mix of affordable and deeply affordable housing.

Concerning the rebuild of the Civic Centre and the north stands, the GCA has not yet taken a position nor have we arrived at the conclusion that a complete rebuild is required. We look forward to continuing the conversation through the Lansdowne Stakeholder Sounding Board about the merits of any forthcoming proposal that OSEG might submit. We also suggest the City and OSEG continue to consult broadly on this question. Once we have seen a detailed proposal, we will review and consult with the community and inform the members of Council of our position. Whether the arena/stadium north stands are kept as is or completely rebuilt, the GCA feels it is vital that the arena and the stadium should remain publicly owned city assets. Since the sale of air rights would compromise and limit future public uses of Lansdowne, we would question whether this would be appropriate and in keeping with the guiding principles of the Lansdowne Partnership Plan.

At this point in time, what the GCA does support, is for the stadium and an arena (Civic Centre) to remain at Lansdowne Park as a pivotal asset to the site and we are concerned that a complete rebuild of the arena and the stadium's north stands will have an impact on the sports teams that compete at Lansdowne Park, particularly the Ottawa 67s and the Ottawa RedBlacks. We would also like to encourage OSEG to reinstate the very popular bubble tent on the stadium lawn during the winter months for public use.

When considering the revitalization of Lansdowne Park, the GCA believes that that City and OSEG should contemplate enhancing the safety of pedestrians and cyclists by eliminating cars entirely from the site (except for emergency vehicles) and maintain the ways in and out of the parking garage from Queen Elizabeth Drive on the east side and the access off Bank Street on the west side. We further support better integration of Lansdowne Park with the Rideau Canal with the installation of a docking area for boats and canoes to provide access from the canal.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Lansdowne Park has become an even more important part of our community where residents have been gathering in a safe, outdoor space not too far from home. Sadly, what’s currently missing from Lansdowne is some basic social infrastructure to enhance the vibrancy of the site. This is why our community association strongly supports

revitalization plans that include the addition of more shade by planting additional trees, and installing canopies and sails, outdoor seating, tables and flower planters. There is also support for more community gardens at Lansdowne Park. This social infrastructure will meet a basic, but real and important need for our residents that will encourage community engagement in a shared space. Given that many in our neighbourhood have limited or no private outdoor space, the addition of outdoor furniture to the site will offer everyone in our community the opportunity to meet and gather safely outside. This includes the many apartment dwellers, students, young families, and seniors who live nearby. We believe this will help revitalize the historic Aberdeen Square at the heart of Lansdowne and accommodate the need for a pedestrian friendly site. It will also bring increased foot-traffic and additional visitors to Lansdowne.

The Glebe and surrounding neighbourhoods have an abundance of talented professional and amateur artists and there is support for a permanent spot at Lansdowne Park where local artists can display their work. This idea builds off the widely popular community pop-up gallery at Lansdowne that the GCA, the Glebe BIA and OSEG collaborated on over the past year. We believe that additional public art throughout the site will enhance its beauty and attract residents from across the National Capital Region.

Finally, we were very pleased to learn about the City's proposed public engagement strategy during the June 16th meeting of the Lansdowne Stakeholder Sounding Board and fully support the inclusive and robust consultation plans as presented. Residents in our neighbourhood and throughout the city will want to weigh in on the revitalization plans for Lansdowne Park and we very much support meaningful public consultations in the months and years ahead.

On behalf of the GCA, thank you for working collaboratively on this important City-wide asset. It is critical that we continue to engage with one another on the revitalization plans in order to ensure the desired improvements are not only achieved, but also make Lansdowne Park an even more safe and vibrant public space that will benefit our entire community for years to come.

Yours sincerely,



Laura Smith
President, Glebe Community Association



Anthony Carricato
Chair, Glebe Community Association
Lansdowne Committee

Copy to:

Steve Willis, General Manager, Planning, Finance and Economic Development, City of Ottawa
Dan Chenier, General Manager, Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services, City of Ottawa
Mark Goudie, CEO, Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG)