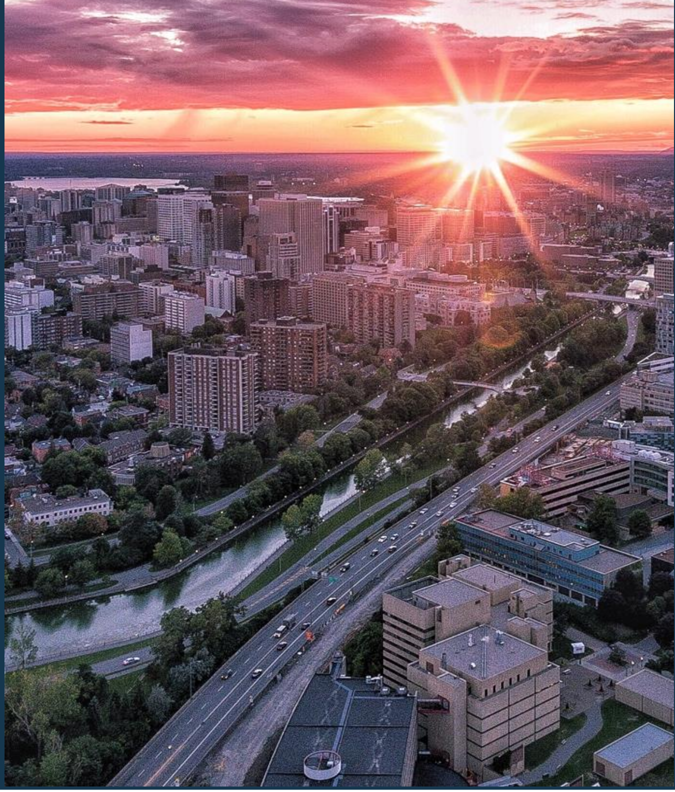
A Living Capital:
Investing in Downtown Ottawa for a Dynamic Future

An Agenda for Aligned Action

June 5th, 2024



Presented by:

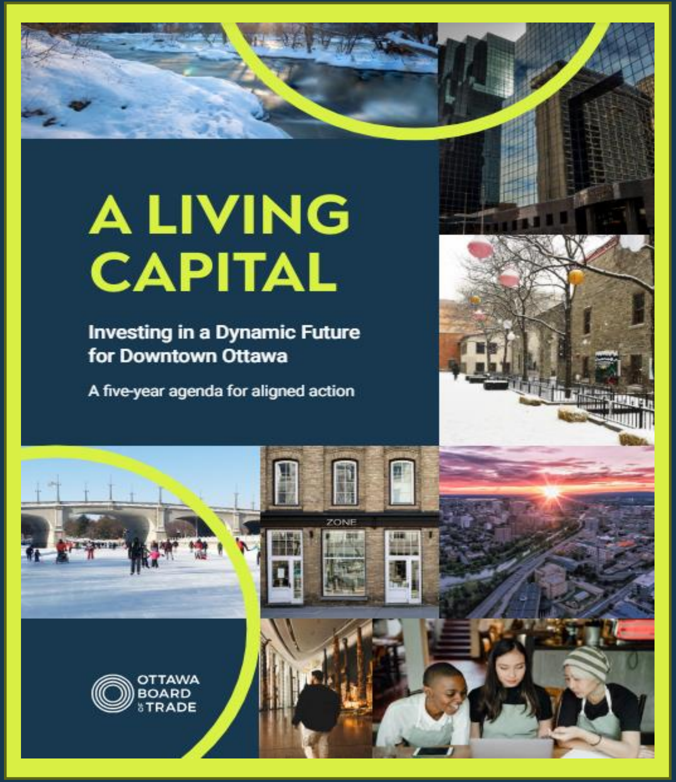
OTTAWA BOARD OF TRADE

Created by:

Canadian Urban Institute
Institut Urbain du Canada

In partnership with: City of Ottawa, Ottawa Tourism, Invest Ottawa, BOMA Ottawa, National Capital Commission

Launch of Action Agenda



Released May 22, 2024

https://livingcapitalottawa.ca/

Timeline

Nov 23, 2023 Downtown Summit

- Identified and refined immediate actions
- Workshopped medium and long-term actions

May 22, 2024

- Launched report

Sept 2023

- Launched research

Dec 2023-April 2024

- Stakeholder engagement: partners, implementers, actors
- Refined immediate actions and roles for implementation
- Consolidated input and refined medium, long-term actions
- Established a stewardship/leadership model
- Participated in convenings with federal agencies and Gatineau stakeholders (Good Neighbours Summit)
- Drafted Action Agenda with data, context, Call to Action
- Refined implementation plan with steps, roles, timing

Importance for Downtown

Ottawa's Downtown significantly contributes to regional economy:

- Downtown commercial tax base heavily supports overall municipal tax base
- Revenue loss impacts the municipality's ability to fund core services across the region
- Impacts to regional economic growth in turn impacts ability to reinvest in our community

Call to Action

Agenda for Aligned Action sets out a leadership path to transform downtown:

- To become economically viable
- Attractive to workers, residents and visitors
- Produce the tax revenues that National Capital Region depends on
- Support a robust mix of drivers to stimulate economic and cultural diversity

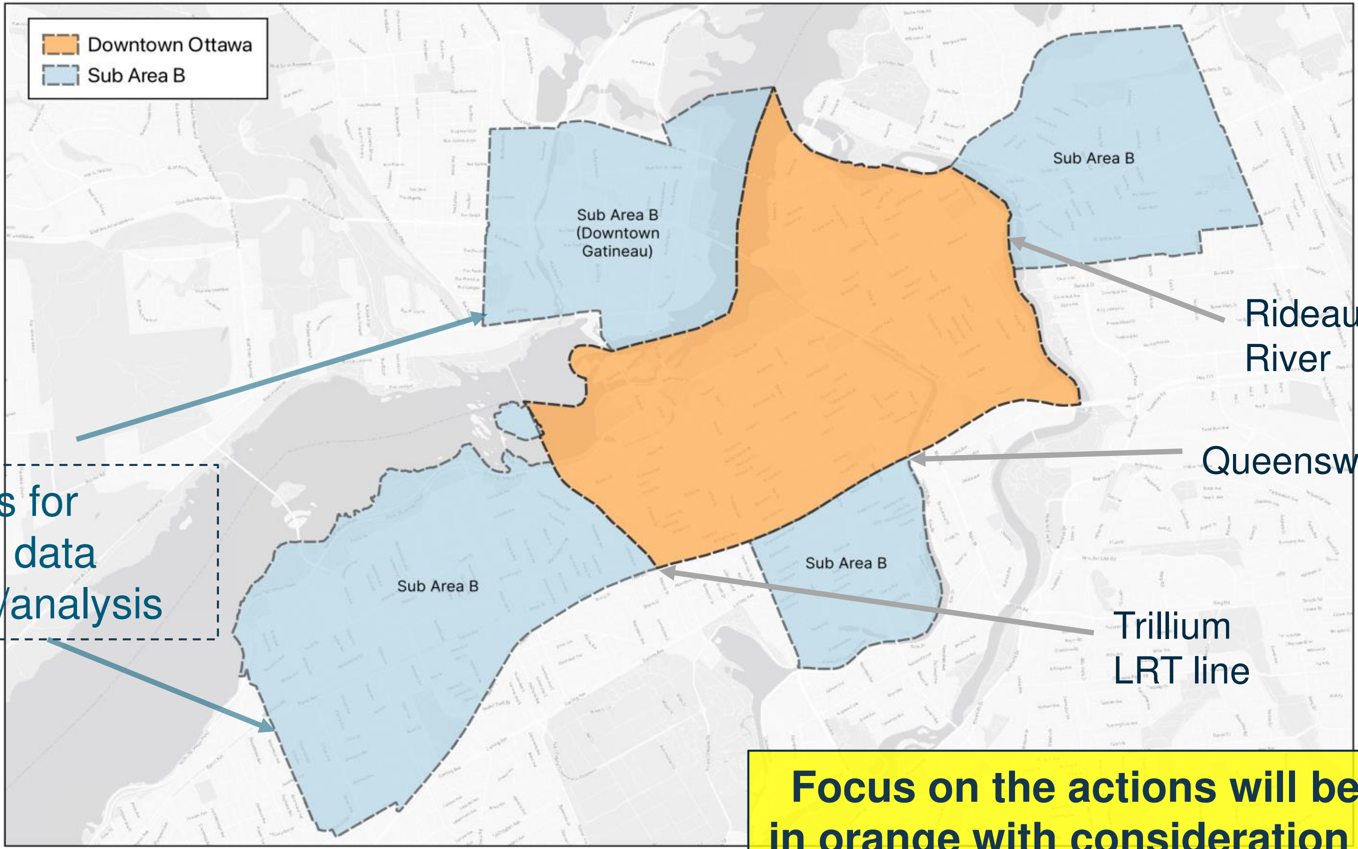
Vitality and diversity are critical to the wellbeing of every citizen in our Nation’s Capital for generations to come.

Vision

Downtown Ottawa and its core neighbourhoods are the historic, cultural, and economic centre of the city.

The evolution of downtown will **leverage Ottawa's cultural and natural assets**, **enliven the commercial core** and surrounding neighbourhoods to **create mixed-use districts with unique characteristics, a diversity of uses and users, vibrant public spaces, economically-sustainable businesses, civic landmarks and institutions** that are easy to access and build equity and climate resilience.

Downtown Ottawa boundaries and sub-areas for analysis, adjacencies and consideration



Data Sources: Statistics Canada, OpenStreetMap

Sub-areas for additional data collection/analysis

Rideau River

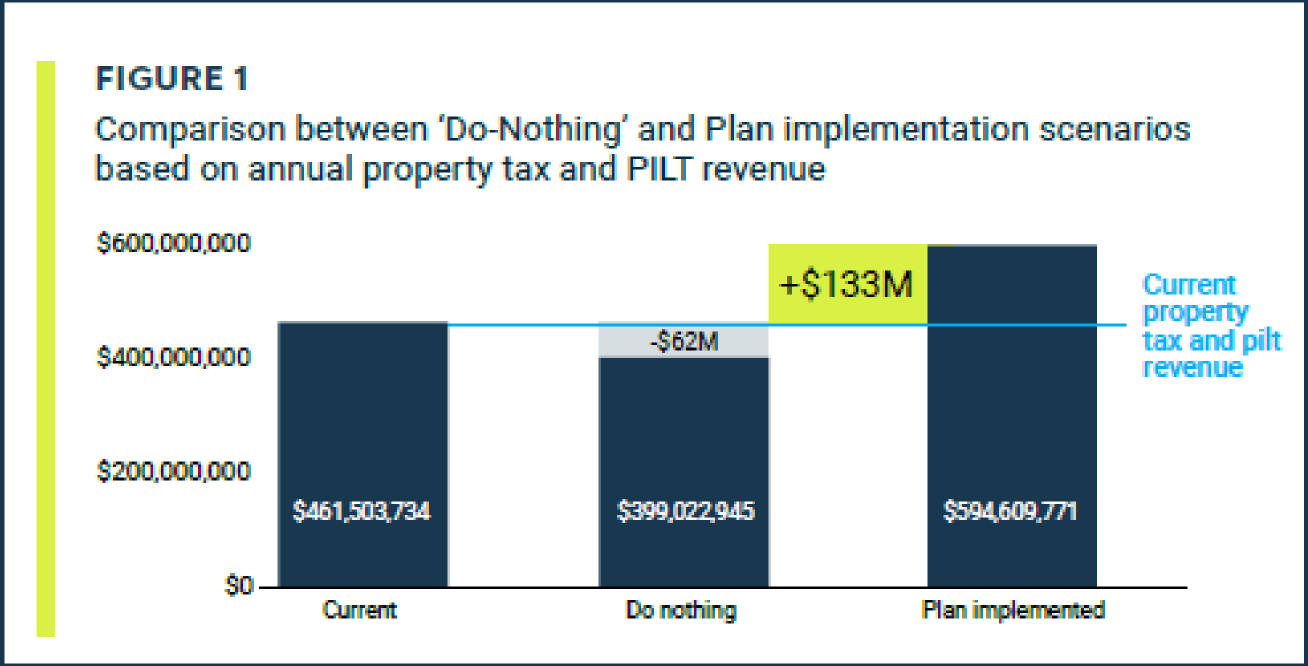
Queensway

Trillium LRT line

Focus on the actions will be for areas in orange with consideration of impacts to areas in blue.

What happens if we do nothing?

The Risk of Do-Nothing Scenario (annually)



The Do-Nothing scenario results in a potential annual loss of up to $62 million requiring increased property taxes across the City.

Framework for Action

- Build on existing **commercial, cultural, institutional and natural assets**
- Optimize connections and **mobility** in, out, across
- Invest in **public realm** and **street-level** action
- **Prioritize approvals** for adaptive reuse, new projects and businesses
- Renew relationships with public institutions to join **‘big tent’** to provide **bold leadership** from all sectors
- Reinforce **Public** and **Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) priorities** of climate resilience, equity, reconciliation and inclusion

How do we do it? Big Moves

- 40,000 new residents
- 50,000 more jobs
- $500M investment
- Catalytic anchors:
  - ByWard Market and Sparks public realm
  - Arts and Culture corridor/district
  - Business incubation district

Return on Investment (annually)

In total:
$1.2B in new local spend, **$133 million** in annual property tax revenue or more than **$1.3 billion total**

- 40,000 new residents adding $900M in local spend and new property taxes.
- 1 million new tourists adding $80 million in downtown spend.
- 50,000 jobs yielding $360M in local spend and new property taxes.
- 15,000-20,000 in new transit riders.

How do we do it?

- **16 Actions** – to leverage and augment work underway
- **60 steps to implementation** – to detail and guide implementation
- **10 Best Practices** – to inform best choices
- **5-year timeframe to initiate** – to ensure change in the near term

How do we do it? Outcomes

Desirable: *Affordable, walkable amenity rich communities*

Resilient: *Public and private investment in infrastructure, public realm and placemaking*

Robust: *Employment growth and economic diversification*

Inclusive: *Safety and security for workers, residents, visitors and vulnerable people*

Desirable: *Affordable, walkable amenity rich communities*

Immediate action

1. **Prioritize Housing** including new development, adaptive-re-use of buildings and leveraging public land for housing and consideration of fee reductions
2. **Repurpose Federal Buildings** for new uses to stimulate economic growth
3. **Enhance Neighbourhood Services and Amenities** to attract and retain residents and visitors

Resilient: *Public and private investment in infrastructure, public realm and place making*

Immediate actions

1. **Fund for the Future -** establish a diversity of funding mechanisms and coordinate efforts
2. **Improve Regional Mobility -** commit to efficient / accessible mobility choices: federal and provincial transit gap funding, incentivize transit use, employee transit passes and active transportation investments
3. **Engage the Design Community** in urban design, public art and placemaking including design competitions
4. **Prioritize Public Realm Investment for All Seasons -** enhance the city's appeal and functionality, and develop a Vibrancy Office to revitalize NCR downtown cores
5. **Invest in Future Resilience -** buildings and infrastructure for climate resilience, greening, and attractiveness

Robust: *Employment growth and economic diversification*

Immediate action

1. **Position Downtown Nationally and Internationally** - apply a national and international lens for attractiveness and place-identity, and to build momentum and economic activity
2. **Support Main Streets -** foster vibrancy and economic opportunity including business retention, pop-up uses and track progress
3. **Support an Inclusive Economy -** provide procurement access for local, small, and BIPOC-owned enterprises
4. **Enhance Post-Secondary Institutions Downtown -** increase role / presence of post-secondary
5. **Promote an Arts and Culture -** establish district /corridors for arts, culture, and entertainment
6. **Develop a business incubation district -** designate space to diversify the downtown economy

Inclusive: *Safety and security for workers, residents, visitors and vulnerable people*

Immediate action

1. **Address Homelessness, Addiction and Mental Health -** Commit to a focused, results-oriented program with funding from all levels of government to address homelessness, mental health and addictions challenges affecting the livability and resilience of Downtown

2. **Ensure Safety and Accessibility -** Incorporate safety and accessibility measures into public realm planning including traffic calming, community engagement teams, CPTED, accessibility to serve residents, businesses, vulnerable individuals and visitors

Next Steps

- **Establish Leadership Team**
- **Refine implementation plan**
- **Kick-start implementation**

Illustration: WXY Studio

Downtown Champion(s)

(*Role: mediates to get decisions made*)

Steering Committee + Secretariat

3 levels of government + sectors

Ex Officios:

Elected officials

(*Role: Nominate Steering Committee representatives*)

Liaisons (Implementation Team):

City, NCC, Other Federal, Economic Development Organizations and other implementation representatives

Seed funding: Funding from all levels of govt as well as the private sector to establish leadership and begin the work

Project list + workplans

Budget asks

$500M

Investment Fund

Implementation Partners:

Action Agenda partners – structured around 4 Action outcomes