

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 11 January 2000

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator, Planning and Environment Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner of Planning and Development Approvals

SUBJECT/OBJET **COREL AREA STUDY**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning and Environment Committee recommend that Council direct staff to complete the detailed studies described as Next Steps in this report, and to prepare a draft Official Plan Amendment for the Corel Area in consultation with the public and consistent with the findings of these studies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Committee of the conclusions and implications of the “Economic Opportunity Study of the Corel Centre Area”. The report also describes the steps needed for implementation of the recommendations, including those already in progress.

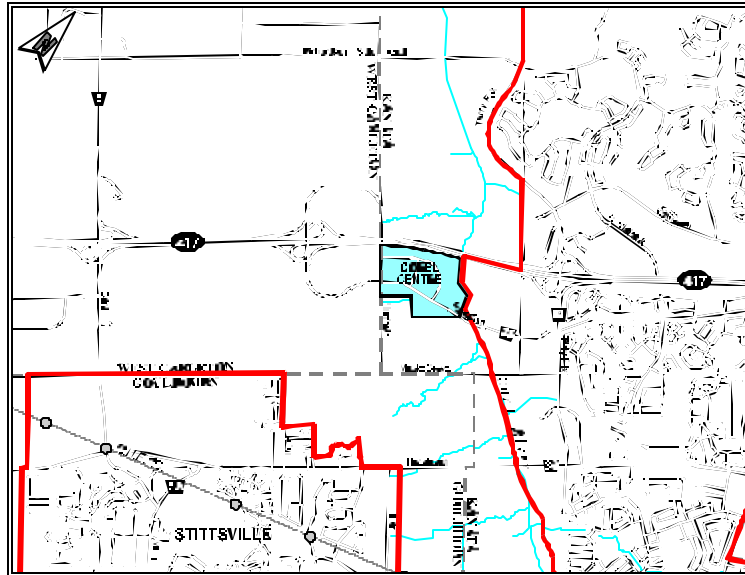
BACKGROUND

The Economic Opportunity Study of the Corel Centre Area was commissioned in January 1999 to carry out policy 17 of Section 4.1.2 of the Regional Official Plan:

“Council shall undertake a study in conjunction with the Townships of Goulbourn and West Carleton, the City of Kanata and affected landowners to investigate if and how the Corel Centre can be used as the basis for increased economic activity and employment opportunities. The study would consider:

- a) boundaries of the area;
- b) transportation and servicing requirements and cost;
- c) locational factors that would influence development in the area;
- d) revenues to the RMOC and local municipalities from such development.”

A Steering Committee, comprised of four landowner representatives, three regional staff, and a representative from each of West Carleton, Goulbourn, and Kanata, was established in September 1998. The first task of the Steering Committee was the preparation of the Study Terms of Reference and selection of the consultant, Malone Given Parsons Ltd., with planning and infrastructure expertise provided by Delcan Corporation. The Terms of Reference more specifically directed the consultants to determine whether there is a unique opportunity created by the presence of the Corel Centre as well as the interchange at Highway 417 and Huntmar Drive, shown on the map below:



Corel Centre Study Area

The consultants began work in January 1999 and finalized their report in November 1999. A copy of the report has been previously distributed to members of Council.

HIGHLIGHTS OF STUDY

The main conclusion of the Study is summarised in section 9 of the Report as follows:

“There is an economic opportunity at the Corel Centre Area to create new employment, to generate more new tax revenue, to efficiently utilise infrastructure, and to strengthen the local and regional economy. This, however, would be at the expense of agricultural land resources and would require modification of existing regional and local planning policies.”

Economic opportunity

Can the Corel Centre and associated Highway 417 interchange be used to generate increased economic activity and employment?

Three key conclusions were reached:

1. The Corel Centre, by itself, generates limited direct spinoff. The opportunities directly related to the existing Corel Centre market are possible within the existing site development permissions. Existing permissions include zoning on the 40 ha Corel Centre site for hotel, office space not exceeding 12,000 square metres, and retail space not exceeding 5,580 square metres.
2. Opportunities exist for other uses which are associated with the Corel Centre, but not necessarily dependent on it. Activities which fall within this category include leisure, sport, entertainment, tourism, and theme/specialty retail uses. They are uses which can exploit the existing Corel Centre market (drawing on a similar customer base) and at the same time could broaden and strengthen its market appeal (reinforcing the sports and entertainment theme of the Corel Centre through joint marketing).
3. Opportunities of location primarily related to the interchange include high tech business park uses. This third type of economic activity is not related to the Corel Centre market but rather, is linked to the attractiveness of the interchange to serve high-profile businesses drawing on the reputation of Kanata's high tech culture.

Area Boundaries

The consultants identified an area of about 550 to 570 ha north and south of Highway 417 to represent the general extent of the influence of the Corel Centre and Huntmar Drive interchange. Boundaries shown in the report are described as general and for illustration purposes only; the exact land area and its boundaries would be subject to a detailed planning study.

Four options for developing this area are evaluated: a status quo option based on current permissions at the Corel Centre site (40 ha); a leisure, sport and entertainment option south of Highway 417 (160 to 170 ha) which is intended to capitalise on the regional role of the Corel Centre; a high tech business park option north of Highway 417 (250 to 260 ha) which relates to the high tech economy of the western area of the Region; and a multi-use employment node (550 to 570 ha) which embraces the first three options plus a business park south of Maple Grove Road.

Locational Factors

The report finds the Corel Centre Area has a unique combination of characteristics not found elsewhere. These include the high tech reputation of Kanata and the western area of the Region; the Highway 417 interchange and excellent automobile access; sufficient land to create a planned business park; proximity to an educated work force; proximity to a growing Town Centre; opportunity to provide transit service; and the gateway icon of the Corel Centre.

Infrastructure

Apart from the status quo option, each option requires additional infrastructure. Option 2, the leisure, sport and entertainment option, likely requires the following transportation improvements:

- widening of Highway 417 west from Moodie Drive to Terry Fox interchange to six lanes (already committed by MTO - the Ontario Ministry of Transportation)
- widening of Terry Fox to four lanes in those sections that are currently two lanes between Hazeldean Drive and Campeau Drive (already identified by the Region in the Transportation Master Plan)
- extension of Huntmar Drive south to Hazeldean Road as two lanes (not in the Transportation Master Plan or the Regional Official Plan)

Development of a business park north of Highway 417, as in Option 3, requires the following transportation infrastructure:

- widening of Highway 417 west from Moodie Drive to Huntmar Drive to six lanes (already committed by MTO)
- widening of Terry Fox to four lanes in those sections that are currently two lanes between Hazeldean Drive and Campeau Drive (already identified by the Region in the Transportation Master Plan)
- extension of Huntmar Drive south to Hazeldean Road as four lanes (not in the Transportation Master Plan or the Regional Official Plan)
- extension of Campeau Drive west to Huntmar Drive as four lanes (not in the Transportation Master Plan or the Regional Official Plan)
- extension of the Transitway from Kanata Town Centre to Huntmar (not in the Transportation Master Plan or the Regional Official Plan)

Even with additional road capacity, there would not be sufficient road capacity adjacent to the site or possibly downstream on Highway 417 to accommodate projected traffic, with projected volumes exceeding capacity by about 40%. Alternatives include reducing automobile use, reducing the area of land developed, reducing densities or changing the proposed land use to those which generate less traffic, or a combination of these. Development of a bridge across the Ottawa River in the western part of the Region could also mitigate the shortfall in capacity.

Development of Option 3 would accommodate approximately 13,000 jobs and thus would require development of a transitway station, in keeping with policy 4.3.2 which requires a location adjacent to an existing or proposed transitway station for Primary Employment Centres with potential for 5,000 or more jobs. If the transitway yielded ridership of 20%, rather than 10% assumed in the analysis without the transitway, the balance between traffic generation and ridership would approach a balance.

Option 4, the combination of all options noted above plus development of a business park south of Maple Grove, requires all road network modifications of Option 3. Shortfalls in capacity would also be experienced, with solutions found in the same alternatives as described in Option 3.

The report finds that a collector sewer through each area to the Signature Ridge pumping station and an upgrade to the station and forcemain would be required for each option. Twinning of a portion of the Main Street Sewer would also be required for Option 4. Water supply would be through a looped

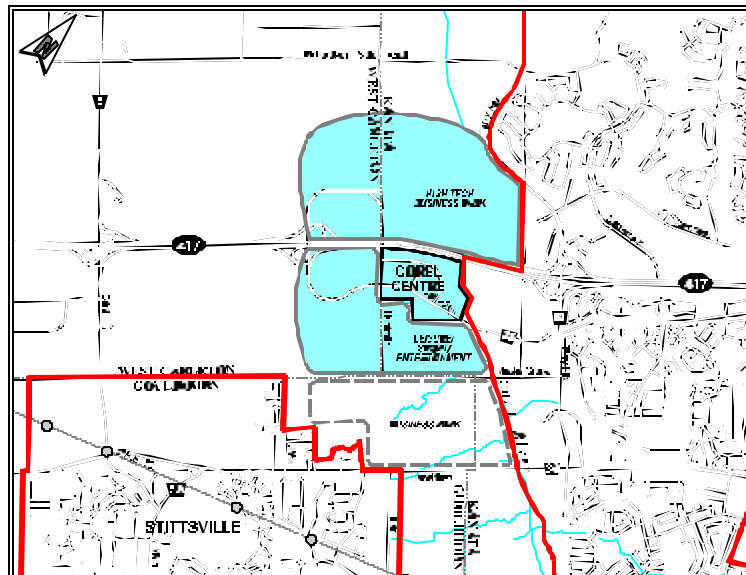
feeder watermain through each area. A sub-watershed study would also be required for Option 4 and possibly Options 2 and 3. The report notes its requirements are broadly based and more detailed servicing and costing studies are needed.

Costs and Benefits

The report concludes that the more development that takes place in the Corel Centre Area, the greater the net benefit to the region. Option 4, for example, requires \$41.3 million in infrastructure improvements which would be off-set by development charges estimated at \$21.63 million and estimated annual property taxes of \$32.4 million. Costs and benefits are estimated based on a very high level of analysis. For example, benefits do not take into account costs associated with off-site infrastructure, operating and maintenance costs of infrastructure, or the conveyance of education tax dollars to the province.

Study Recommendations

The consultants' recommended option shown below was based on Option 4, but proposed that business park uses south of Maple Grove proceed as a later phase of development.



Development Option Recommended by Economic Study of the Corel Centre Area

Two principal recommendations are put forward:

- If economic growth is permitted in the Corel Centre Area, then a dual focus strategy of business park development and leisure, sport, entertainment is recommended. Drawing on the conclusion that there are substantial economic benefits from the development of the Corel Centre Area, the consultant envisions development of Option 4 shown on the map above, as follows:
 - a. development of 370-390 ha for a high tech business park north of Highway 417 to be implemented within the next 5-10 years;

- b. a leisure, sport, entertainment focus south of Highway 417 and adjacent to the Corel Centre to be implemented over the next 10 years;
 - c. a future business park area between Maple Grove Road and Hazeldean Road which would be developed after the high tech business park north of Highway 417 has been established (an additional 180 - 200 ha approximately).
- If economic development is permitted in the Corel Centre Area, its objectives should be clear. In particular, the consultant recommends a list of implementing policies which include, among others:
 - a. the establishment of a gateway to the Region;
 - b. a comprehensively planned and developed high tech business park north of Highway 417 that is of sufficient scale to have a strong regional presence but is within the capacity of the existing and potential road and transit system;
 - c. controls on use and built form;
 - d. establishment of high urban design standards;
 - e. an appropriate balance between development intensity and transportation capacity..

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN

Responding to the economic opportunities at the Corel Centre Area would require an amendment to the Regional Official Plan. The affected area is not included within the urban area and presently includes lands designated General Rural and Agricultural Resource.

An amendment to extend the urban boundary requires a need and justification study to comply with Section 1.1.1c) of the Provincial Policy Statement and Sections 1.6.10 of the Regional Official Plan, described as follows:

- The Provincial Policy Statement 1997 states: “Urban areas and rural settlement areas will be expanded only where existing designated areas in the municipality do not have sufficient land supply to accommodate the growth projected for the municipality...Expansions into prime agricultural areas are permitted only where:
 - a. there are no reasonable alternatives which avoid prime agricultural areas; and
 - b. there are no reasonable alternatives with lower priority agricultural lands in the prime agricultural area.
- The Regional Official Plan states: “When considering amendments to this Plan, Council shall have regard, among other things, to the following criteria:
 - a. the impact of the proposed change on the achievement of Council’s goals, objectives and policies expressed in this Plan;
 - b. the need for proposed change in light of the Regional Development Strategy and Provincial Policy Statement;
 - c. the effect of the proposed change on the need for Regional services and facilities.”

An amendment would also take into account other key policies in the Regional Official Plan, including, for example, those in:

- Section 2 supporting the regional development strategy, and the goal of 1.1 jobs per household

- Section 4 which favour building on economic strengths to facilitate job growth
- Section 4 which support Town Centres
- Section 6 which include objectives for Entry Routes
- Section 7 which protects Agricultural Resource lands
- Sections 9 and 10 which deal with the efficient use of infrastructure

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications of development around the Corel Centre are only broadly described in the Consultant report, and are outlined above. With regard to the financial implications of carrying out the next steps, funds exist in the Servicing and Economic Analysis Studies budget (Account 900005) to do phase 2 work on need and justification, detailed land use and infrastructure studies. Additional budget will be sought for subsequent environmental assessment work for identified infrastructure improvements, as needed.

CONSULTATION

The study was guided by a steering committee which included landowners representatives as well as three municipalities and the Region. Three information meetings were held at key points during the study to inform the public and obtain comments. These meetings were advertised in *The Ottawa Citizen*, *Le Devoir*, *The Ottawa Sun* and in community newspapers. The consultation is summarised in the study report and public comments are available for viewing in the Resource Centre.

In general, the information meetings were well-attended by area landowners, with extremely strong support expressed for the study recommendations and speedy approval of an expansion of the urban boundary. Several participants spoke to the need to extend Huntmar Drive between Maple Grove and Hazeldean, which would also serve to reduce traffic on John Street. Goulbourn residents also said the business park proposed south of Maple Grove should proceed in the short term, rather than follow development north of Highway 417, as recommended in the report.

The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority commented that conceptual planning for the area should recognize that the flood plain for the Carp River is quite broad in some areas and also noted that a watershed/subwatershed study of the area was being explored.

The Katimavik-Hazeldean Community Association noted, among other matters, that improvements to Terry Fox would be needed, that the proposed development should not delay development of other lands in Kanata, and that costs of development must be shown to be a benefit to the taxpayer.

Landowners outside the study area also wrote to ask that their lands be considered for future development.

The Region's Environmental Health Advisory Group expressed the need for potential social and environmental effects of the proposed land use changes be carefully assessed; that a single planning approach (not piece-meal) is needed to address development issues, including infrastructure costs; and that ongoing public engagement is required. The group said Corel Centre area development should not proceed until a detailed environmental assessment is performed.

Council for the City of Kanata has adopted a motion to request Regional Council to approve a Regional Official Plan amendment in the year 2000 to expand the urban boundary generally in the study area. The precise geographical limits of the area and a detailed land use plan would be determined later through subsequent studies. They also request that Regional Council study as soon as possible the infrastructure required to service the expanded urban area. Kanata Council supports the report and specifically, proposed option 4 which would treat the land south of Maple Grove in the same time frame as the land north of Maple Grove. The consultants' recommended option suggests the land south of Maple Grove would be developed for business park as a later phase of development.

NEXT STEPS

The Report prepared by Malone Given Parsons/Delcan provides a good overview of the Corel Centre Area. From its inception, this study had been viewed as the first phase of work needed to implement the Official Plan requirement set out in Section 4.1.2. High-level analysis has been completed on the key elements of: market demand, land use, infrastructure, and benefits/costs. On this basis, the study concludes that economic development in this area should be promoted during the next five to ten years. In order to prepare for this, a number of key steps have to be taken ~ some of which are already in process.

1. Justification for an urban expansion amendment to the Official Plan

A marketing consultant is currently working to determine whether or not the demand for business park land for the high tech industry can be accommodated on urban lands already designated for this purpose. Interviews with key industry representatives can assist us in understanding their locational requirements and how well such requirements match up with our existing inventory of 40 years supply of vacant urban business park land. Similarly, justification for additional lands for sport, leisure, and entertainment is being looked at, along with the viability of the concept. This step is expected to be completed within 6-8 weeks.

2. Determination of additional land requirements

More study is needed to determine the amount of additional land, the time period when these lands are required, and their configuration. An urban boundary expansion requires the definition of precise boundaries. As described, the Malone Given Parsons Report provides generalised boundaries for illustration. At the end of this step, staff should be able to conclude whether an urban expansion can be justified with respect to the Provincial Policy Statement and the Regional Official Plan .

3. Detailed planning and engineering work

The Malone Given Parsons study was first and foremost a study of economic opportunity. Following the determination of the need for an urban boundary expansion, more work will be done to prepare a land use plan based on the characteristics of the site(s) in question. A review of the impacts on Regional Official Plan policies, including the Regional Development Strategy will also be included. Similarly, the transportation, water, and wastewater requirements will require more

detailed investigation once land uses are planned. The question of how much development, if any, may occur utilising existing infrastructure still needs to be answered. A more specific plan for phasing of development is also needed. Planning and infrastructure studies will take into account both regional and local requirements, in anticipation of the responsibilities of the new City.

4. Detailed financial assessment

The financial impact, including a consideration of options for financing infrastructure, will be completed in keeping with the responsibilities of the new City, so that all infrastructure (“regional” and “local”) has to be taken into account.

5. Related studies

Ongoing work in the region must be taken into account. For example, the Economic Generators Study expected in April should provide a useful context for the overall discussion on the high tech industry. The Terry Fox extension and alignment may have implications for the urban area boundaries as well as transportation requirements to service potential new developments. Similarly, the Carp River watershed/sub-watershed study will provide important information on environmental features and functions, which in turn will guide how development will take place.

6. Official Plan Amendment

The final step would be preparation of an Official Plan Amendment, based on the findings of the above work.

CONCLUSION

The public meetings showed strong support for an urban expansion in the Corel Area. The studies described under Next Steps are needed to move forward on a Regional Official Plan amendment to expand the urban boundary. Once these studies are complete, staff will be able to draft the amendment to facilitate public review and comment.

*Approved by
N. Tunnacliffe, MCIP, RPP*