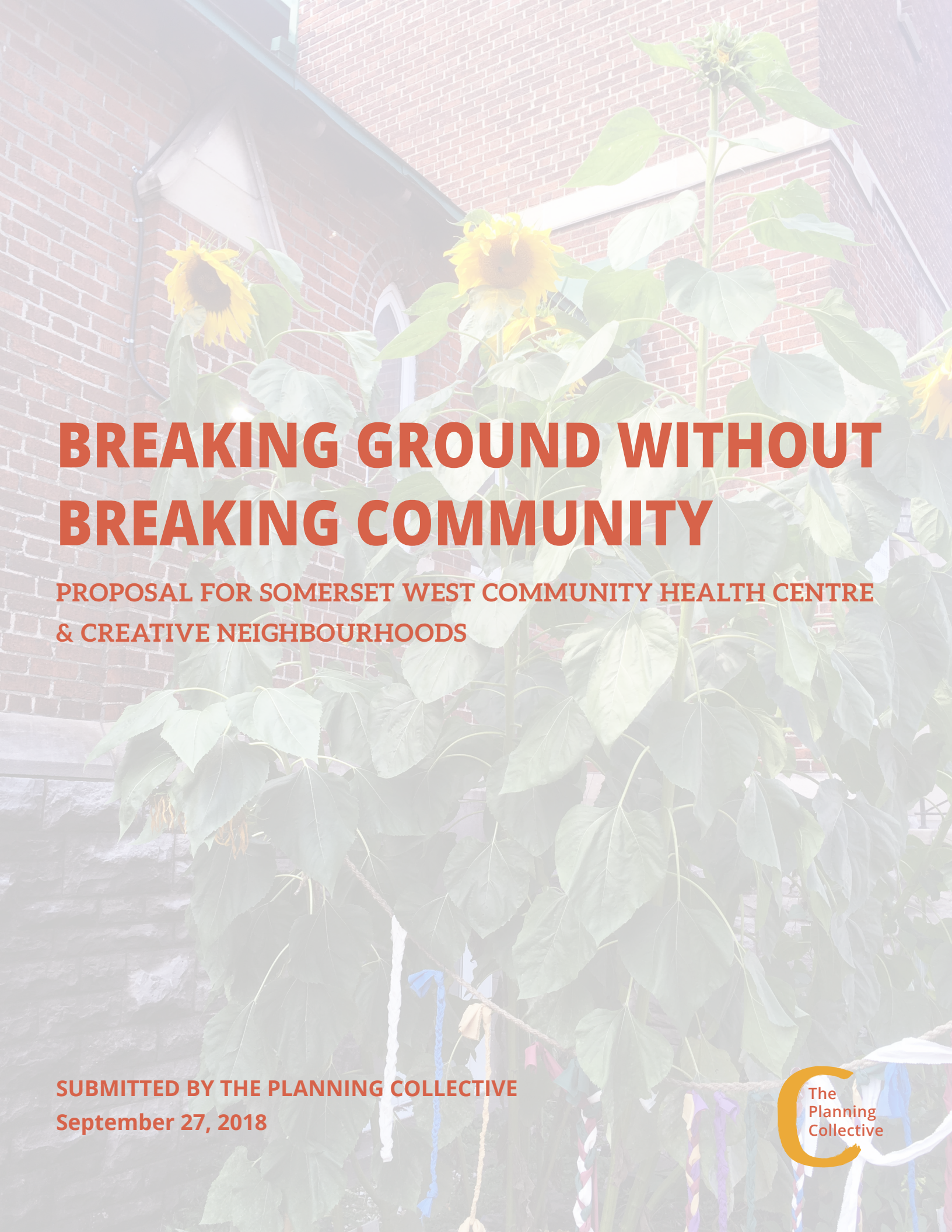


The background of the entire page is a photograph of several tall sunflowers with large green leaves and bright yellow heads. They are positioned in front of a red brick building. A string of colorful prayer flags (white, blue, yellow, red, green) is visible at the bottom of the frame, partially obscured by the sunflowers. The overall image has a slightly faded, ethereal quality.

BREAKING GROUND WITHOUT BREAKING COMMUNITY

**PROPOSAL FOR SOMERSET WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
& CREATIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS**

SUBMITTED BY THE PLANNING COLLECTIVE
September 27, 2018





September 27, 2018

Emilie Hayes
Somerset West Community Health Centre
55 Eccles Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 6S3

Dear Ms. Hayes,

The Planning Collective team is pleased to submit a proposal to draft a neighbourhood affordable rental housing strategy for the West Centretown neighbourhood of Ottawa. The proposal outlines our understanding of the context and project mandate, our planning approach, as well as our methodology and work plan.

The Planning Collective has the right toolset for this project. Members of our team have previous experience working with affordable housing policy and affordable housing providers in Ontario and British Columbia. Our team has also established skills in public outreach, graphic design, and spatial mapping using geographic information system (GIS) software.

Our team was drawn to the West Centretown Affordable Housing project because of our deep commitment to social justice and grassroots community development. We believe that every citizen has the right to a safe, suitable and affordable home, and are confident that, based on our past experiences and dedication to our work, we can help to ensure that, as West Centretown goes through a period of transition, nobody will be left without access to adequate housing.

We hope that this proposal satisfies your terms of reference. We are excited to work with the Somerset West Community Health Centre to maintain a strong, inclusive community in West Centretown.

Best regards,

Olwen Bennett, Cameron Bourne, Meghan Doucette, Chantal Gougain, & Anna Sokolowski
The Planning Collective

CONTENTS

ABOUT US	7
TEAM MEMBERS	8
PROJECT MANDATE	13
CONTEXT	14
OUR APPROACH	15
METHODOLOGY	16
WORKFLOW CHART	19
SCHEDULE	20
ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES	21



ABOUT US

The Planning Collective is a team of urban planners based at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. We bring perspective from across Canada and internationally to solve complex urban issues. As a team of community-builders, our approach is always collaborative and rooted in social justice. We value community knowledge and lived experience. We apply an equity lens to all of our projects, checking in throughout the planning process to ensure we are creating something that will benefit those who are most marginalized. Our team brings experience in planning, affordable housing, law, sociology, and community development, ensuring that you have a range of expertise to draw on for the duration of the project.

At The Planning Collective we understand the need for secure, dignified, affordable housing. We have worked on affordable housing projects across North America and our team of urban planning and policy specialists will provide you with the skills you need to complete your project.



TEAM MEMBERS

The Planning Collective team brings a wide range of experience and expertise to your project.

OLWEN BENNETT

olwen.bennett@mail.mcgill.ca



Olwen Bennett is a motivated urban planning Master's student in McGill's School of Urban Planning. After working for 3 years in public engagement at a non-profit nature conservation organization in Toronto, Olwen pursued a career at an urban planning consulting firm in New York City. In this position, Olwen collaborated on a variety of projects, including working with a public agency to explore potential affordable housing relocation options for a low-income community living in a flood zone. Olwen also contributed to the public consultation process for resilience plans for several U.S. cities. Olwen worked as a summer intern at a non-profit affordable rental housing developer called New Commons Development, where she researched the planning context for projects and prepared feasibility studies at the early stages of a project. Olwen is completing a concentration in Urban Design & Urban Development as part of her Master's degree with a focus on affordable housing.

CAMERON BOURNE

cameron.bourne@mail.mcgill.ca



Cameron is deeply committed to solving the issue of housing affordability in Canada. Cameron brings years of professional experience to his search for affordable housing solutions. Most recently, Cameron was a member of the Community Planning team at the District of North Vancouver in British Columbia, where he was involved in policy planning and development review. A key component of his role with the District of North Vancouver was working on affordable housing initiatives. Through this work, Cameron became familiar with municipal tools for encouraging the provision of affordable housing, including lease agreements for affordable rental housing and density bonusing. In addition to his work in policy planning, Cameron brings to the table a legal background, earning a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of British Columbia, and work experience at the law firm of Norton Rose Fulbright in Vancouver. Cameron is excited to bring his knowledge of both the policy and legal frameworks around affordable housing to this project.

MEGHAN DOUCETTE

meghan.doucette@mail.mcgill.ca



Meghan Doucette is passionate about creating equitable cities. She has a year and a half of professional experience as an Office Manager at Shelter Nova Scotia, a charitable non-profit based in Halifax, Nova Scotia that provides shelter, supportive housing, and community-based residential facilities for those in need. Working at Shelter Nova Scotia gave her many insights into the experience of those facing extreme poverty and marginalization in our society. Meghan's other professional experience includes working for a municipal planning department where she coordinated stakeholder engagement sessions, conducted research for community energy planning and parks and open spaces planning, and supported community development activities. Most recently, Meghan was the Interim Executive Director for the Halifax Cycling Coalition, where she led advocacy efforts to encourage a better network of bicycle infrastructure that is accessible for people of all ages and abilities in Halifax. Meghan is excited to give her expertise to the Ottawa West Centretown Affordable Housing Project.

CHANTAL GOUGAIN

chantal.gougain-poblete@mail.mcgill.ca



Having grown up in Vancouver, Chantal has been exposed to the issue of housing affordability for many years. She first became interested in the issue when she volunteered at the Immigrant Services Society of BC during her undergraduate years helping newcomers find affordable adequate housing in the city. Before continuing her studies in planning at McGill University, Chantal worked as a Social demographics assistant at the Municipal institute of Los Cabos (IMPLAN) in Mexico, where she was exposed to working with social housing and informal settlements. This past summer, Chantal was able to translate that experience into the Canadian context while working with Sanford Housing Society as a research assistant on a new affordable housing project in the District of North Vancouver. Additionally, she worked as the Housing Accessibility Coordinator for the Disability Alliance of BC on the Right Fit Pilot Project for Metro Vancouver. The aim of the project works to house wheelchair users with adequate affordable housing through a partnership with BC Housing and multiple social housing providers.

ANNA SOKOLOWSKI

anna.sokolowski@mail.mcgill.ca



With a background in environmental studies and urban sustainability, Anna is committed to approaching all planning projects from a social justice perspective. She is passionate about sustainable community-led development that engages the public in meaningful ways. Her professional experience includes delivering the Public Life Public Space (PLPS) survey in Toronto, which included observing people in public spaces. She also has professional planning experience with the City of Toronto Planning Division where she collected employment data to analyze the changing economic and land use patterns that will inform future planning and service provision. Anna has experience working with vulnerable populations through a research project conducted with McGill University in the spring of 2018, where she conducted interviews with Indigenous communities around Montreal and produced a report about their experiences. Her personal interest in affordable housing is rooted from her family's own history with rental housing in Toronto, a rental market that is becoming increasingly unaffordable. She is eager to apply her knowledge, skills, and passion towards developing a proactive strategy that will improve rental housing affordability in Ottawa.

PROJECT MANDATE

The primary objective of our work is to develop an affordable rental housing strategy for the West Centretown neighbourhood. Our team will adopt an equity lens to develop a strategy that will protect the area's diversity, maintain affordability, and promote inclusivity. These goals will be met through the following secondary objectives:

- I.** Conduct a context analysis for West Centretown and surrounding areas to assess the current status of affordable housing provisions by dwelling type and density.
- II.** Map and identify socio-demographic trends as well as current and anticipated developments within West Centretown and surrounding areas.
- III.** Assess the projected impact of future development and growth in regards to potential population growth, demographic trends, and associated demand for services.
- IV.** Analyze existing planning tools, incentives, and regulations that may support an increase in affordable rental housing options in the City of Ottawa. This will include developing an inventory of existing services and resources currently available.
- V.** Research case studies to identify successful affordable housing models and effective public engagement strategies from other cities in Canada or abroad. Provide recommendations of best practices that could be applied in West Centretown.
- VI.** Conduct interviews with local stakeholders and consult residents using a participatory planning approach. This will include the facilitation of a planning workshop with stakeholders and "pop-up" public consultations.
- VII.** Apply all research and feedback from stakeholders and the general public to develop an affordable rental housing strategy with a call to action.

The Planning Collective is dedicated to delivering a strategy that will best serve the needs of the local community. Drawing from our team's expertise in affordable housing and innovative public engagement strategies, we will bring forth a strategy that will accomplish the objectives detailed above.

CONTEXT

West Centretown is a densely populated neighbourhood that is home to approximately 12,000 residents with 6,197 people per square km. Centrally located in the City of Ottawa, it is bounded by the Ottawa River to the north, Carling Avenue to the south, Bronson Avenue to the east, and the O-Train line and Bayswater Avenue to the west. The diverse neighbourhood has traditionally been known as an immigrant receiving area and includes the communities of Chinatown, Little Italy, Rochester Heights, and Nanny Goat Hill. Over 35% of residents are visible minorities and 30% are immigrants. There is also a high proportion of non-permanent residents and recent newcomers. The diversity is reflected in the local economy of the area, with multiple varied Asian (mostly Vietnamese and Chinese) businesses located along Somerset Street, and Italian businesses along Preston Street. Dragon dances and Buddhist parades frequent Somerset Street, as does the annual Chinese Autumn Festival.

The area currently supports 1,471 social/affordable housing units, with over 25% of residents living on low income. The surge of newcomers into the area is intensifying the process of gentrification - an affluent incoming population is quickly displacing the existing one (mainly immigrant and low-income). Affordable housing in the area is decreasing with the ongoing loss of rooming houses and newly refurbished buildings. Low-income tenants, in particular, are being forced out of their community by a surge in property values and unaffordable rents, while those who remain are experiencing marginalization due to cuts in community ties and difficulty accessing services. Rooming houses remain one of the few options for affordable rental housing in the area. However, these units are mainly owned by private landlords, making it difficult to regulate the poor conditions of the units that are regularly being reported.

West Centretown has a significant amount of public land owned by the three levels of government. Approximately 30% of the land base is available for development in addition to privately-owned parcels. This provides an opportunity to identify sites that would be suitable for future affordable rental housing projects. The Ottawa Community Housing Corporation recently purchased federal lands to build a new mixed-income community. The ongoing Gladstone Village development will re-initiate the Gladstone Station Community Design plan process.

The Province of Ontario recently granted municipalities the option to implement inclusionary zoning, requiring affordable housing units as part of residential developments. This creates an opportunity to discuss with City officials how inclusionary zoning could be implemented in Ottawa.

OUR APPROACH

Our approach supports our core team values of collaborative, engaged, and evidence-based research and analysis. We will maintain close communication with the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) and Creative Neighbourhoods Inc. to ensure that the project will achieve the desired goals and outcomes.

We will begin with initial research to orient our team members to the complexity and particularities of the housing market and demographic changes taking place in West Centretown. During this phase of our research, we will visit the study area to gain an understanding of the built form, the developments that are underway, and the mix of activities currently taking place in the neighbourhood.

The subsequent phase of our approach will involve outreach to local groups and individuals to begin conversations around what the perceived problems are in relation to housing affordability. This phase will help us to understand some of the lived experiences of housing insecurity, and the measures that are currently underway to help ease the effects of rapid gentrification. In this phase of our research process, we will engage with local stakeholders and residents to ensure that our findings are situated strongly in West Centretown and that we are capturing the local experiences and concerns around the rapidly changing housing market in the area. We will conduct local public engagement through a variety of approaches, including:

- a) **Interviews** with local social service organizations, government employees, the local Councillor, residents, real estate agents, and developers;
- b) **Public outreach** in the neighbourhood through surveys, asset mapping, and other engagement tools designed to encourage conversation and idea-sharing;
- c) **Meetings** with the Steward's Table to gain organizational insights and to understand problems and concerns that are shared among different stakeholder groups.

After gathering and synthesizing the quantitative data and qualitative research, we will prepare a report of recommendations based on available planning tools and interests of the local community.

Throughout our research and outreach processes, our team will take an open-minded approach that puts at the forefront the ideas and concerns of local people. Given the personal and complex nature of an issue such as affordable rental housing, our team will make every effort to be respectful of privacy needs and will handle conversations about housing affordability in a sensitive manner.

METHODOLOGY

We will complete the Breaking Ground without Breaking Community Project in five phases. Our methodology will provide you with a robust affordable rental housing strategy for the West Centretown neighbourhood in Ottawa.

PHASE 1: RESEARCH

During phase 1, background research will be conducted on residential development in the study area, including developments that are underway, approved building permits, and anticipated future developments. Demographic change will be assessed based on 2006 and 2016 census data. All of this information will be mapped using ArcGIS.

Research will be conducted on existing planning tools and policies in Ottawa that could support the provision of affordable rental housing. We will develop an inventory of existing services and resources available to people who are in need of affordable rental housing, and identify gaps. Affordable housing strategies from other cities in Canada, as well as academic literature, will be reviewed to identify best practices.

Output: GIS maps, written content for draft affordable rental housing strategy



PHASE 2: ENGAGEMENT

In the second phase of the project we will engage with stakeholders and community members, including:

- o Sample of residents
- o Steward's Table (representatives of community organizations)
- o Representatives of Dalhousie Community Association
- o Representatives of Business Improvement Area(s) - Somerset Street Chinatown, Little Italy, etc.
- o Representatives of Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC)
- o Representative of Rochester Heights (Ottawa Community Housing Corporation)
- o City Councillor: Catherine McKenney (Ward 14 Somerset)
- o City Planning & Transportation staff
- o Sample of real estate agents and developers with projects in the study area.

Our team will conduct interviews with stakeholder groups and do “pop-up” engagements with local residents at community gathering places or events.

Output: Preliminary report

PHASE 3 DRAFT STRATEGY COMPLETE

Phase four of the project will consist of compiling findings from phases two and three into a draft affordable rental housing strategy for Ottawa's West Centretown neighbourhood. The draft affordable rental housing strategy will be presented to the client and the Steward's Table during this phase. We will consult with attendees to gather feedback on the draft strategy.

Output: Draft strategy, presentation

PHASE 4: FINAL STRATEGY & PRESENTATION

In the fourth phase of the project revisions will be made to the affordable rental housing strategy based on feedback received from the client and members of the Steward's Table. We will present the strategy to colleagues and the client at McGill University in Montreal. Following the presentation we will revise the strategy again and submit the final version.

Output: Affordable housing strategy, presentation



WORKFLOW CHART

PHASE 1 Research

- 1.1** Research & Map Development & Demographic Changes
- 1.2** Research Relevant Planning Tools
- 1.3** Case Studies of Precedents & Best Practices
- 1.4** Literature Review
- 1.5** Update Steward's Table with Findings

PHASE 2 Engagement

- 2.1** Interviews with Stakeholders
- 2.2** Preparation for Public Engagement
- 2.3** Pop-up Public Engagement in Ottawa
- 2.4** Analysis of Findings

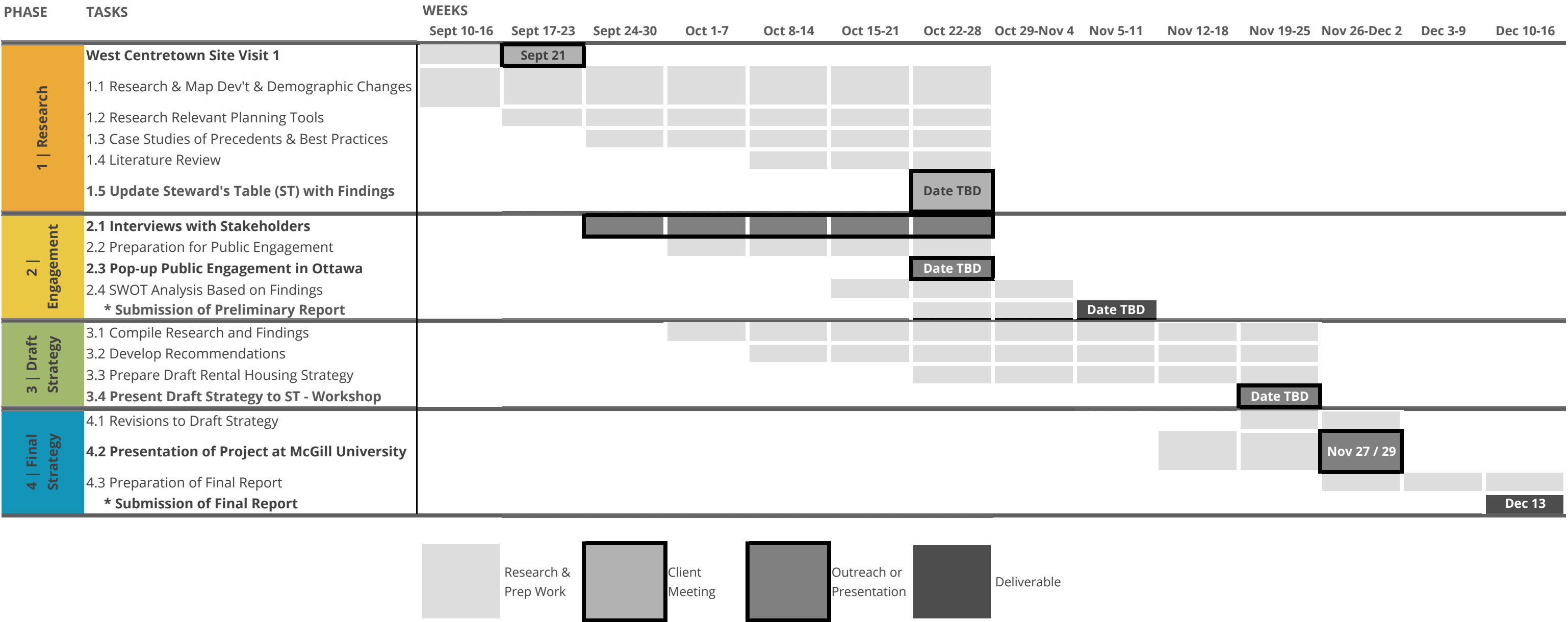
PHASE 3 Draft Strategy

- 3.1** Compile Findings
- 3.2** Develop Recommendations
- 3.3** Prepare Draft Strategy
- 3.4** Present Draft Strategy & Deliver Workshop

PHASE 4 Final Strategy

- 4.1** Revise Draft Strategy
- 4.2** Presentation at McGill University
- 4.3** Final Report

SCHEDULE



ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

TASKS	O. BENNETT	C. BOURNE	M. DOUCETTE	C. GOUGAIN	A. SOKOLOWSKI	TOTAL
PHASE 1 - RESEARCH	30	30	30	40	40	170
1.1 Research & Map Development & Demographic Changes	0	20	0	10	0	30
1.2 Research Relevant Planning Tools	20	0	0	10	0	30
1.3 Case Studies of Precedents & Best Practices	0	0	20	10	10	40
1.4 Literature Review	0	0	0	0	20	20
1.5 Update Steward's Table with Findings	10	10	10	10	10	50
PHASE 2 - ENGAGEMENT	45	45	45	40	40	215
2.1 Interviews with Stakeholders	10	10	10	10	10	50
2.2 Preparation for Public Engagement	10	10	10	5	5	15
2.3 Pop-up Public Engagement in Ottawa	20	20	20	15	15	90
2.4 SWOT Analysis Based on Findings	5	5	5	10	10	35
PHASE 3 - DRAFT STRATEGY	70	70	70	80	80	370
3.1 Compile Research & Findings	15	15	15	30	30	105
3.2 Develop Recommendations	10	10	10	20	20	50
3.3 Prepare Draft Rental Housing Strategy	20	20	20	15	15	40
3.4 Present Draft Strategy to Steward's Table - Workshop	25	25	25	15	15	105
PHASE 4 - FINAL STRATEGY	60	60	60	50	50	280
4.1 Revisions to Draft Strategy	10	10	10	20	20	70
4.2 Presentation of Project at McGill University	25	25	25	15	15	105
4.3 Preparation of Final Report	25	25	25	15	15	105
TOTAL	205	205	205	210	210	1035

