

Let's choose the best site for our new hospital

The site selection for the new Ottawa Hospital overruled the recommendation of a six-month study of 12 locations conducted by the National Capital Commission and the public input of 8,000 affected voters. The process by which this was done is unclear. The current plan will have an “irreversible impact” on a National Heritage Site, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It will create significant traffic, access and cost issues and massive loss of urban greenspace.

LOCATION IS POOR

The NCC study rated the site “Poor” due to “multiple heritage considerations.” The hospital’s own 2008 study ranked the Carling location as the worst of the four options they considered on the Experimental Farm.

More than 600 trees, many of them mature and specimen trees, will be cut.

The site is on an earthquake fault line and has a 20-metre difference in elevation.

Managing traffic for the hospital and 21 new or planned high-rise sites are likely to require additional expensive and intrusive roadworks. The traffic impact study did not include 12 nearby sites slated for high-rise development and assumes that vehicle traffic to the hospital, now 85%, will be reduced to 35% by the hospital’s completion.

REASONS FOR THE CHANGE ARE UNKNOWN

Within a few days of the NCC recommendation of Tunney’s Pasture, the Hospital Board held an emergency meeting and rejected it. A few days later, an announcement was made by Mayor Jim Watson, supported by 17 Liberal politicians, that the site would be at Dow’s Lake and take 40 acres of the Experimental Farm. The reasons given were unsupported.

CITIZENS ARE ASKING:

How is it possible that 40 acres of a national historic site and more than 600 mature trees are being sacrificed for a hospital when another site was better?

Reimagine Ottawa is a volunteer group of citizens. We are calling for a public inquiry to investigate the reasons for overturning the NCC’s recommendation, particularly in view of the fact that the decision secured several billion dollars of development potential at Tunney’s Pasture.