

Long Range Vision for Rideau Hall (2017 to 2067)



A collaboration between the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General
and the National Capital Commission



Foreword by the Governor General of Canada

Gabrielle Léger once said: “The most ephemeral thing at Rideau Hall is the governor general; all the rest is history.”

And she was right—history is ever-present in this house and on these grounds. Every government since Confederation has been sworn in here, and—as the portraits lining the walls of the Tent Room remind us—the office predates Canada itself. Rideau Hall is—and has been for generations—a place for and of people. It is a gathering place for families in all four seasons, to walk and picnic, ski and skate. It is a welcoming place for distinguished visitors from around the world—kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers. It is a place of celebration, where we recognize Canadians for their extraordinary efforts.

Rideau Hall belongs to the people of this country, and Canada’s 150th birthday in 2017 provides us with an opportune moment to cast our eyes ahead with a vision for the future of this precious heritage precinct. A 50-year horizon will allow for long-term planning to bring form and function together in a holistic way. There are many exciting possibilities to enhance conservation, openness and accessibility, sustainability and relevance for generations to come. This is particularly important for a heritage building such as Rideau Hall, which was originally designed and built in 1838 as a private residence by Thomas MacKay, and which has grown in the absence of a long-range vision in the intervening years.

During our time at Rideau Hall, my wife, Sharon, and I have welcomed hundreds of thousands of Canadians to Rideau Hall for all manner of events, ceremonies and tours. It truly is the symbolic home of the people of Canada. My predecessor Roméo LeBlanc once observed: “Very few of us in this country share the same past, but all of us share the same future.” And we also share this historic building and grounds.

With this in mind, I commend the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and the National Capital Commission for their wise stewardship and careful planning. I am pleased to lend my support to this long-range vision for Rideau Hall, the home of the people of Canada.



Foreword by the Chief Executive Officer of the National Capital Commission

Almost every country of the world has an official residence where civil society and officialdom meet to celebrate and recognize the very best of their nation. In Canada we are fortunate that this place is Rideau Hall, the official residence of Canada's Governors General since Confederation. It is a deep and respected tradition that both honours, and is honoured by, all Canadians.

Since Confederation, Rideau Hall has grown in step with our country, adding incrementally to its original nucleus to support the expanding public role of the Governor General. The residence's friendly atmosphere, quiet dignity, and generous grounds have evolved over this period to become a true reflection of our nation.

The National Capital Commission (NCC) and its predecessors have been responsible for the planning and stewardship of Canada's Capital Region for more than a century. Since 1986, the NCC has been responsible for and devoted to the preservation and maintenance of Canada's six official residences located in the Capital, including the Rideau Hall estate. This role includes property management activities, interior design, the Crown Collection, and the grounds and greenhouses, as well as long-term planning and capital improvements.

Over the past 30 years, through careful planning and investments, Rideau Hall has seen significant progress in addressing health and safety conditions, the protection of its heritage character, and improvements to its infrastructure. During this period, the NCC has significantly improved its environmental sustainability.

This year the NCC launched the *Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017-2067*, the result of a lively nation-wide consultation. I am delighted that the contemporaneous long-term plan for Rideau Hall, so wonderfully expressed below, will complement and substantiate this compelling vision for Canada's capital.

I applaud the leadership of His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston and Mrs. Johnston, for inspiring and guiding this vision plan. It is a true reflection of the close cooperation between the Office of the Secretary of the Governor General and the NCC. With this shared vision, Rideau Hall will continue to provide a worthy and secure setting for Canadian hospitality at its highest level, as well as comfortable home and workplace for future Governors General. This plan will help to ensure that this national treasure continues to serve and inspire future generations of Canadians.

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Introduction



The Ballroom, originally built to host cultural events, and the Tent Room, originally built as an indoor tennis court, today serve as backdrops to the major ceremonial moments in the life of our nation.

Since 1867, Rideau Hall has been the living residence and workplace of twenty-eight governors general. Steeped in history and open to the world, it is one of the finest historic sites in the country and the symbolic home of the people of Canada.

As Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary, the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General (OSGG) and the National Capital Commission (NCC) have developed a 50 year vision for how the grounds and buildings of this iconic precinct can be used to their fullest potential.

This jointly-agreed document outlines the forward purpose of Rideau Hall and a strategy for its further development. It includes a statement of guiding principles and directions for seven separate areas of the precinct: the Sussex Entrance, the Ceremonial Site, the Princess Entrance, the Public Celebration Site, the Horticultural Showcase, the Main Residence and Rideau Cottage.

The Vision is informed by the NCC's *Plan for Canada's Capital 2017-2067*. It is a companion document to the *Rideau Hall Landscape Design and Site Management Guidelines (version 2017)*. It benefits from the suggestions and support of the NCC Board of Directors, staff of the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and the NCC and the NCC Advisory Committee on Official Residences. It was presented to and endorsed by The Right Honourable David Johnston, Canada's 28th Governor General, and Dr. Mark Kristmanson, Chief Executive Officer of the National Capital Commission. Consistent with the *Plan for Canada's Capital 2017-2067*, the NCC will develop 10 year implementation plans for Rideau Hall based on the policy directions set out in the Long Range Vision and resource capabilities.

150 Years of History

The home and workplace of the Governor General, Rideau Hall has played a prominent historical and constitutional role in Canada since Confederation. For more than 150 years, this heritage site has been the Official Residence of Canada's Governors General. Rideau Hall began in 1838 as an eleven-room regency villa built by Thomas MacKay, a local industrialist who helped to construct the Rideau Canal. In 1864, the property was leased as a temporary home for the Governor General and, in 1868, this arrangement became permanent when the property was purchased from the MacKay estate for \$88,000.



The front of Rideau Hall prior to the addition of the Front Façade in 1911 - 1913

Successive Governors General added to the main house and improved the grounds.

- *Monck Wing – built in 1865 as the first addition to the villa by Viscount Monck to allow for additional living space*
- *Greenhouse – the first one built on site during the Monck mandate.*
- *Tent Room, Ballroom and Skating Rink – built in 1870s, during the tenure of the Earl of Dufferin, as an indoor tennis court, theatre and winter space for the public to enjoy.*
- *Minto Wing – built in 1898 - 1899, when the Earl of Minto arrived with his large family and household*
- *Governor General's Study – built in 1906 by Earl Grey to balance out the curved bay of the original MacKay villa.*
- *Mappin Wing – built between 1911 – 1913, during the mandate of the Duke of Connaught, to link the Ballroom and Tent Room to offer a more visually harmonious entrance, with a stately front façade, porte-cochere and long gallery.*
- *Administration Wing – in 1941, during the Second World War, the working offices of the Governor General and staff on Parliament Hill were relocated to Rideau Hall.*
- *Private gardens – expanded significantly during the mandate of the Duke of Connaught; rock gardens enhanced the space, first by Lady Byng in the 1920s, and then by Mrs. Michener in 1968; the Clarkson mandate launched the 'Canadianisation' of the gardens we enjoy today.*



Aerial view of Rideau Hall main residence and surrounding buildings.

There are several other structures (27 in total) on the grounds including:

- *Rideau Cottage – built in 1866 as the residence of the Secretary to the Governor General;*
- *The Gate Lodge – built between 1864 - 1867, this octagonal building is the first that visitors see as they pass through the main gates;*
- *The Guard House – used during the summer by the Governor General’s Foot Guards;*
- *The Stable Building – built in 1867, it was recently rehabilitated to accommodate OSGG administrative functions;*
- *The Dome Building – originally a « gasometer » built in 1877 - 1878 to store coal gas to fuel light fixtures in the residence, it is now used for OSGG staff; and*
- *The Dairy Building – built in 1895, rehabilitated in 2016, and inaugurated as the Rideau Hall Winter Pavilion in 2017.*



Skating parties at Rideau Hall, 1902

Today, Rideau Hall comprises:

- 32 hectares (79 acres) of grounds,
- a main building with about 175 rooms covering approximately 8,825 m² (95,000ft²),
- 27 outbuildings, many of national heritage significance.

The following buildings on the grounds have a « Classified » heritage status: Main Building (and greenhouses), the Front Gate and Fence (1868 portion) and the Grounds. The following have a « Recognized » heritage status: Rideau Cottage, the Stable Building, the Dairy Building, the Dome Building, the Cricket Pavilion, the Gate Lodge and secondary gates and fences. These designations were made by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office because of important historical associations, design qualities, landmark status and environmental significance



From left to right: The Dome Building, the cast iron fence that surrounds Rideau Hall, and the Visitor Centre.

The Purpose of Rideau Hall

This historic residence and its surrounding grounds are a symbol of Canadian values, and act as a stage for telling Canada's stories. It is where Canada welcomes queens and kings, presidents and prime ministers. And, since the birth of Canada, it is where hundreds of thousands of people participate in activities and events.

Rideau Hall is the centre of operations for the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and the headquarters of the NCC's Official Residences Division.

Rideau Hall is not a museum. It is a place where Canadians can enjoy, and be inspired and awestruck by the extraordinary events that happen there every day. It is a place that uniquely combines our national history and heritage, our democratic roots and our spirit as a nation.

It is a *meaningful* place, filled with *picturesque* and *natural* wonders, in an environment that is *thriving and connected*.



Presentation of the First Poppy of the Remembrance Campaign

Rideau Hall is where Canadian leaders of culture, academia, business, science, innovation, civil society and philanthropy are celebrated. It is the home where heroes - firefighters, peace officers, the armed services, and everyday people - are honoured.

Rideau Hall is not just a building and its grounds; it is what we as a people invest in Rideau Hall that makes it splendid. Every stone, every tree, every painting and every room is part of a living history, where a new chapter is written every day. Stories reaching back in time, stories unfolding daily, and those that will be told tomorrow, that is what Rideau Hall is, and can be, for every Canadian.

Rideau Hall is a unique residence, workplace, historic landmark and symbolic home of the people of Canada. And in so being, it serves a broader purpose.

Rideau Hall provides:

A Portrait of Canada: Rideau Hall brings together Canadians of all ages and backgrounds. Canadians from all walks of life and those who serve their country at home and abroad are honoured and celebrated there. Tribute is paid to Canadians on some of their best and worst days through celebrations and commemorations held there. By connecting with Canadians in this place, a sense of pride and belonging is created. Together, these people create a portrait of the best of Canada.

A Meaningful Experience:

Rideau Hall is committed to ensuring that all guests and visitors are welcomed in a warm and authentic manner to experience the working residence of the Governor General. It is the pinnacle of prestige and honour and is a unique site that captures history unfolding on its grounds. Access is free and every experience is one that showcases our national treasures, artifacts and works of Canadian art and culture. It truly is a historic oasis in the middle of the National Capital Region.



Rideau Hall Movie Nights

Since Confederation, Rideau Hall has set the scene for:

Celebration: Rideau Hall commemorates Canada's accomplishments, milestones and successes from across the country by organizing public events that celebrate Canadian themes, products and values.

Recognition of People: Rideau Hall is the home of Canada's recognition of everyday people. These people are from all walks of life; and their achievements, efforts, challenges, struggles and experiences are recognized through honours such as the Order of Canada. Rideau Hall is instrumental in providing people with an inside look at the Nation's most inspirational Canadians, from Military recognitions to Civilian ones - Rideau Hall continues to honour those amongst us.



HM The Queen meets with the Diefenbaker Cabinet

Continuity of the Crown:

Rideau Hall is Canada's physical connection to the Monarchy. As the representative of the Sovereign, the Governor General ensures that Rideau Hall brings to life the traditions, pageantry and protocol of the Royal Family and the Canadian Crown. It is the ceremonial seat of Canadian diplomacy and the official Canadian home that welcomes international diplomats and political leaders.

Building a better country: Rideau Hall is committed to nurturing a sense of belonging and national identity. The institution convenes people and connects them to each other and to Canadian values. Rideau Hall is the symbol of that national identity.

Living history:

Rideau Hall is the symbolic home of our free and open society. Rideau Hall invites all Canadians to walk where world leaders walked, to explore the rooms where they have met to discuss the issues of the day, to actually touch the trees that many of them planted. That's the magic of a living history. Rideau Hall is a place of ceremony, of gathering, and of reflection, that brings to life these three words: connect, honour and inspire.



*Ceremonial tree planting by United States
President John F. Kennedy*

Rideau Hall - history happens here.

Objectives

As Rideau Hall moves towards Canada's bicentennial, four objectives will guide the long-term planning of property and buildings:

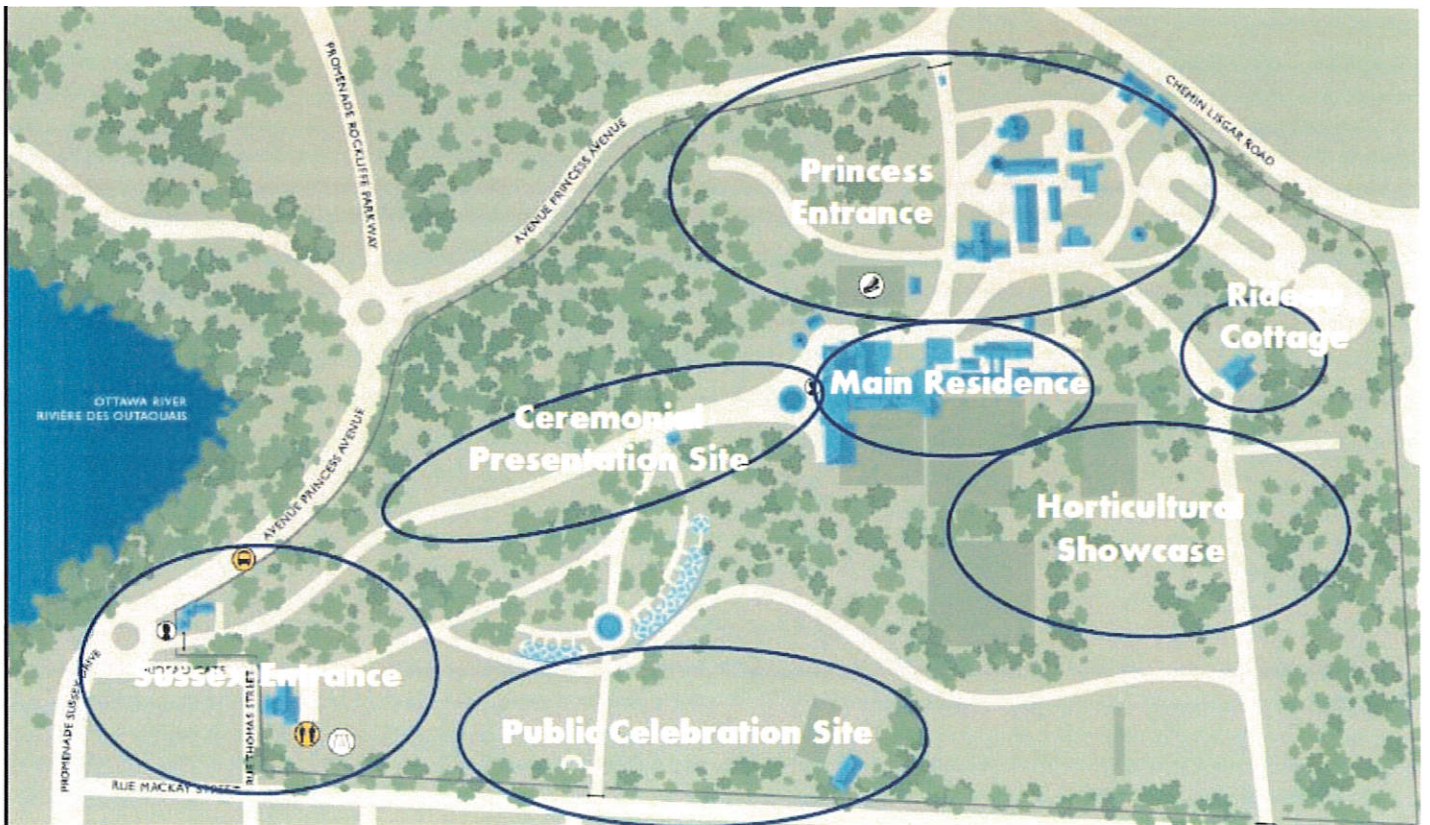
1. *To promote and deliver on the core mandate of the Governor General*
2. *To provide an informative and memorable experience for visitors*
3. *To support the day-to-day work and life of the Governor General and the vice-regal family*
4. *To efficiently and respectfully accommodate employees – OSGG, NCC, RCMP - and the services they deliver within the capacity of the site.*

Guiding Principles

The four guiding principles are:

- Conservation
 - The historic integrity and living heritage of Rideau Hall will be preserved and enhanced.
- Openness and Accessibility
 - As the 'home of the people of Canada', Rideau Hall is where everyone will be welcome and everyone can participate.
 - Persons with disabilities will find leading standards of universal accessibility.
- Sustainability
 - Rideau Hall will strive for environmental excellence by transforming a historic landmark into a showcase of sustainability.
- Relevance
 - Rideau Hall's core purpose will be reflected in all planning decisions.
 - Canadian identity, excellence and versatility will be promoted.
 - Relationships of the site - to the traditional lands of the Algonquin people, to the Rockcliffe Park and New Edinburgh neighbourhoods - will be fostered.
 - The contribution of Rideau Hall to a resilient, dynamic and liveable Capital region will be promoted.

Key Policy Directions



Areas of Strategic Focus for the Long Term Vision

1 | The Sussex Entrance



Sussex Forecourt

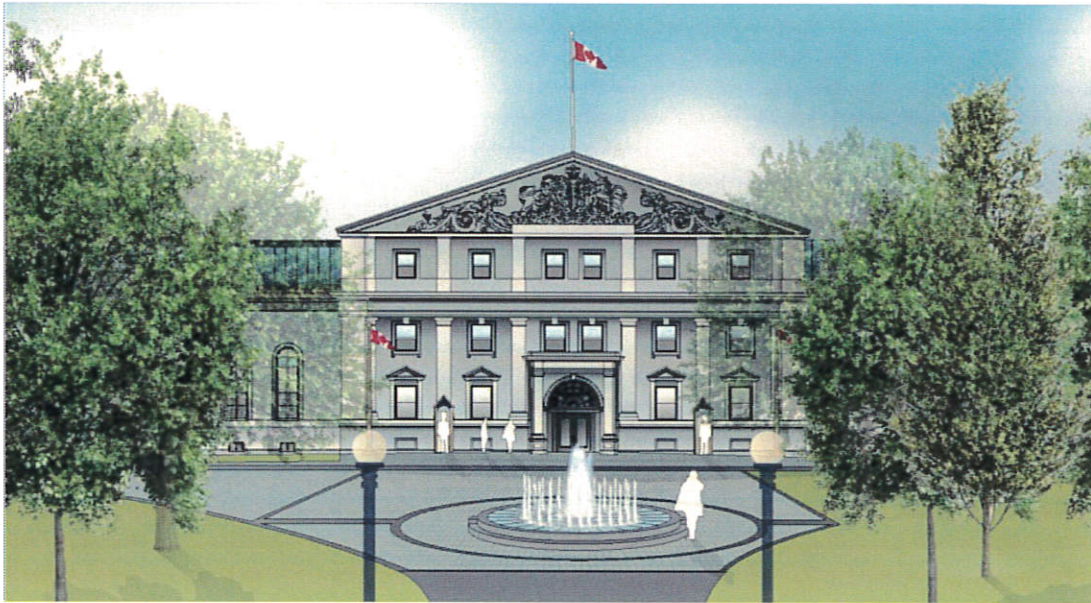
Current Situation

This area is our window to the public, but its understated footprint and subtle visual presence often go unnoticed by visitors. The distance of the residence from the gates inhibits the immediate visitor recognition of the site, unlike in the case of other State Houses, such as The White House and Buckingham Palace. Even when visitors do determine where they are, it is not obvious how they should discover the site – they can use different gates, just wander the grounds or take a tour. Great opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation for the history and wonder of the place are being missed as a result.

Policy directions:

- Strengthen the visual identity and branding of Rideau Hall within or near the Sussex Entrance.
- Explore the development of a Sussex precinct, as an anchor to Confederation Boulevard, to showcase our system of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy, and to tell the story of Canada.
- Study and design ways to improve and expand the visitor experience and service facilities, with a particular focus on promoting and celebrating our national symbols and culture, leveraging the strategic locations and architecture of the Gate Lodge and Visitor Centre.

2 | Ceremonial Site



Front Forecourt of Rideau Hall and the Fountain of Hope

Current Situation

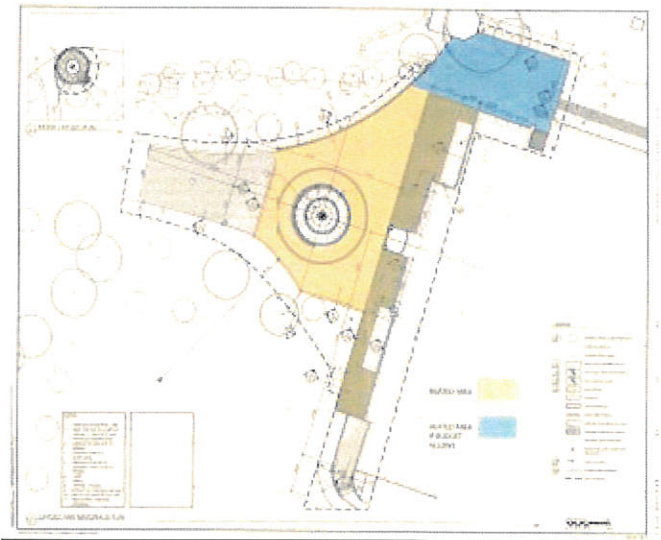
The recent development of the Front Forecourt rehabilitation has set the stage for a dramatic re-envisioning of the front entrance of Rideau Hall. The forecourt has served to welcome visiting Royalty and Heads of State, but it can be much more. Properly staged and lit, it will take its place as one of the most recognizable buildings in the country. The renewed Fountain of Hope will be a fitting counterpart to the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill. Inside Rideau Hall, events are limited to fewer than 200 guests; the new forecourt will be able to accommodate hundreds more guests seated in a space steeped in cultural and architectural significance, consistent with the level of pomp and ceremony required of a state or national house.



From left to right: Rideau Hall welcomes Canadians to Rideau Hall Movie Nights, the Inspection of the Ceremonial Guard and the Swearing in of the 23rd Prime Minister of Canada.

Policy Directions

- Upgraded utilities (lighting, electricity) along the main drive will facilitate the enhanced interpretation of the ceremonial drive to amplify its history and dignity.
- The forecourt will become a dynamic, technologically-integrated celebration and ceremonial presentation site that is an expression of who we are as a country.
- The lighted façade of the Rideau Hall will provide a welcoming night time atmosphere to complement the daytime experience.



Plans for the 2017 rehabilitation of the Front Forecourt

3 | Princess Entrance



Princess Entrance, circa 2017

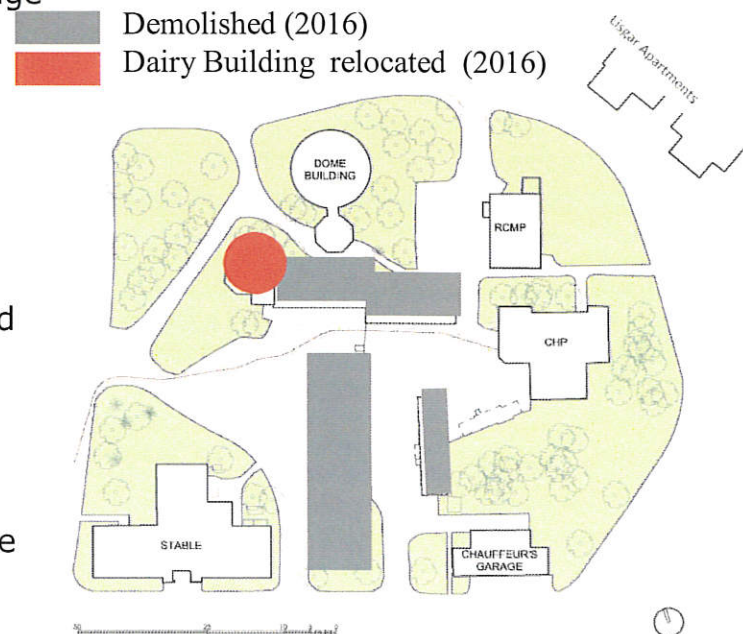
Current Situation

The layout, infrastructure and operations of the Princess Entrance area (which includes the Princess Gate, Sugar Bush, Operations Zone and Lisgar Buildings) need to ensure a balance between operations, administration and programming. This area is not well integrated or optimized in the overall site activity plan.

The newly-restored Winter Pavilion will provide an enhanced public space to highlight Rideau Hall in winter, with expanded exhibit, programme and event capacity space in the other seasons.

Policy Directions

- The architectural integration and coherence of buildings in this area will take best advantage of their heritage character.
- Maximize healthy, effective and safe workplaces for all staff of the OSGG, the NCC and the RCMP.
- Explore leveraging new construction and existing buildings for staff accommodation, like the Chauffeurs Garage for the RCMP and the Lisgar Buildings for the Chancellery, for example.
- The area will offer appropriate access for guests, staff, trucks, equipment, deliveries, and reflects an integrated curb-appeal of the buildings and public spaces.



4 | Public Celebration Site



From left to right: Story Time at Rideau Hall and picnics on the grounds

Current Situation

This natural space has significant potential for increased use by the public, either independently, or as part of the visitor experience and expanded special public events, but currently lacks the services such as power, lighting, water, fibre optic, parking and security infrastructure to support this expanded use.

Policy Directions

- Preserve the historic English parkland identity in keeping with the *Rideau Hall Landscape Design and Site Management Guidelines* while intensifying outdoor summer and winter activities, and offer greater accessibility and services for the use of third parties and the public.
- Expanded services will enable increased use for large public events with decreased impact on the natural features of the area. These enhancements create a continuous, integrated, high-quality visitor experience from the Sussex Entrance to the Ceremonial and Public Celebration sites.
- As a complement to the recently developed Winter Pavilion, a companion space that could serve as a multi-purpose structure offering improved facilities for visitors partners, would enhance and increase the capacity of public spaces for interpretation, exhibits, education, meetings and events. Consideration should be given to repurposing existing structures if possible.

5 | Horticultural Showcase

Current Situation

While the gardens, greenhouse and farmland have been painstakingly rehabilitated, developed and maintained, they are largely inaccessible to and under-utilized by the public.



Lower Terrace perennial gardens

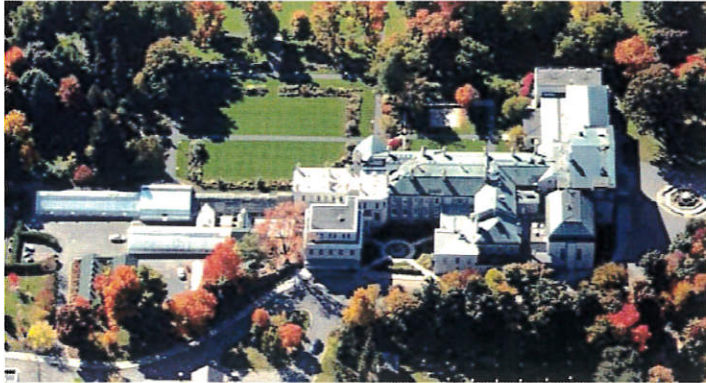
Policy Directions

- By integrating and enhancing our monitoring capacities in this area (ie. security and infrastructure), visitors will have the opportunity to explore the gardens and greenhouses as part of an expanded daily visitor experience and special public events (like Savour Fall), while still preserving the private use of these spaces by the vice-regal family.
- The expansion of agricultural activities (kitchen garden, nut grove, sugar bush and farmland) will enable Rideau Hall food products to be further highlighted in our official and public events. The visitor experience of the farmland will increase food literacy and highlight the historic uses of the property.



Preserves made from products from the organic kitchen garden.

6 | Main Residence



The main residence at Rideau Hall, circa 2017

Current Situation

Over the years, the main residence has become a less-than-optimal space for events and exhibits, a less-than-ideal working space for employees, and a less-than-private space for the vice-regal family. As the building has aged, the programming and staff complement has expanded, but not in an integrated way, so the use of the building and the space itself has not been maximized to its potential. Public and private spaces need to be modernized for greater accessibility, and to create a better balance between living, programming and working spaces.

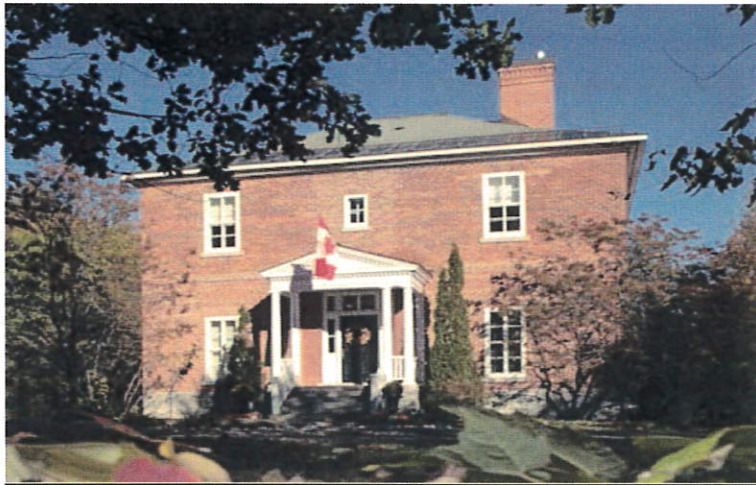
Policy Directions

- Develop a comprehensive, long-term ceremonial space and accommodation plan for the main residence.
- Ensure all interventions made in the building reflect the highest standards of sustainability and universal accessibility, while respecting the heritage character and defining elements.
- Study portions of the building that have low/no heritage value and explore enhancements that are purpose-built for future operational, administrative and ceremonial requirements.
- Modernize and update infrastructure and public spaces to enhance ceremonial, event and exhibition capacity, including creating separate and dedicated ceremonial, visitor and administrative entrances.
- Redesign and modernize a more functional and flexible Private Quarters to create a sense of privacy and intimacy, designed with versatility in mind, to allow for mandate-by-mandate preferences of principal vice-regal residence on the site.
- Renovate the building to better accommodate staff as well as to better facilitate the arrival and departure of people and materials at separate and appropriately appointed entrances.

7 | Rideau Cottage

Current Situation

Rideau Cottage is a heritage building, traditionally the residence of the Secretary to the Governor General and currently the temporary residence of the Prime Minister. Renovated in 2013 and with recent security and infrastructure upgrades, Rideau Cottage offers a mix of representational and residential space.



Rideau Cottage, circa 2015

Policy Directions

- The overall footprint of the building should remain residential in nature but demonstrate versatility in design and use, to meet the requirements of different occupants over time.
- The vice-regal family could make this building their primary residence, with the occasional use of more functional private quarters at Rideau Hall for punctual daily needs. The choice of living space could differ from mandate to mandate.
- When not being used by the Vice-Regal family or other occupants, representational spaces on the main floor will be leveraged for use by key partners for specialized meetings, retreats, events or conferences, while residential spaces will be maintained on the upper level as a complement to private accommodations at Rideau Hall or 7 Rideau Gate.



Glimpses you will see when strolling the grounds of Rideau Hall – tree lined pathways, an inukshuk, a totem pole and interpretive panels that orient you as you discover the site.

From Vision to Reality

The Long Term Vision will guide all major changes to the Rideau Hall precinct in the coming decades. A working group of the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and the National Capital Commission will assume custodianship for the plan going forward and ensure detailed priorities and initiatives are jointly established. The NCC, with advice and support from its' Advisory Committee on the Official Residences, will lead the development of long-term investment and implementation plans in consultation and collaboration with the OSGG. The Long Range Vision document will be reviewed at least once per vice-regal mandate. Already, the vision is taking shape through projects such as the Forecourt and Winter Pavilion. Taken together, the directions set out in this document will secure Rideau Hall as a place of welcome and pride for all, a place where history happens.

In Conclusion

As His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston has pointed out, landscapes and built environments have "the power to bring us together and raise our spirits," in part by reflecting our heritage and respecting our natural surroundings. As a living heritage property where history happens daily and people from across Canada and around the world gather in a beautiful setting, Rideau Hall is one such place.

In looking ahead toward the next 50 years, both the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and the National Capital Commission are conscious of their important stewardship role. Rideau Hall must remain accessible to all Canadians and a meeting place and location for ceremonies and events of national significance, all while serving as a comfortable home for the vice regal family and an attractive workplace for employees.

This long term vision is a roadmap to help to ensure Rideau Hall continues to develop in a thoughtfully planned and sustainable way. With this roadmap in hand, this important national treasure will continue to serve as the home of the people of Canada for generations to come.

September 2017