

Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area

Discussion Summary – Questions and Answers

Transportation

Q. Will the plan provide for bike lanes on all new streets?

- A. All major roads within the Bronte GO MTSA are planned to have bike lanes, including Wycroft Road, Speer Road, Third Line, and the proposed extension of Westgate Road, in addition to connections directly to the Bronte GO Station. These facilities are to be provided as buffered bike lanes or multi-use trails. Several of the on-road proposed facilities have already been identified from previously completed Environmental Assessments, and in the Active Transportation Master Plan.

Specific infrastructure has not been determined by the area specific plan for the proposed local street network. The plan provides that additional active transportation routes, not shown on the plan schedules, may be identified on future local roads as part of detailed transportation studies.

In addition to on-street facilities, there is also an extensive active transportation network proposed providing off-street facilities which provide for north-south and east-west connections, associated with proposed linear open space areas, and along the rail corridor.

Q. Does the plan include pedestrian safety barriers at railway crossings?

- A. Railway crossings within the plan are contemplated as grade-separated crossings, where pedestrians are physically separated above or below the railway by either a bridge or tunnel. Although it is not contemplated, should there be a location where a pedestrian crossing is required at grade, it would be developed in accordance with safety standards identified by Metrolinx and CN Rail.

Q. Does the plan provide for active transportation linkages to the existing residential area?

- A. Active transportation linkages are identified on the plans, west of Third Line, between the Bronte GO MTSA and the established residential neighbourhood to the south. The policies enable and protect for active transportation connections (walking and cycling) within future developments south of Speers Road and the residential neighbourhood to the south. The objective of these linkages is to create enhanced walkability, and shorter walking distances, to and from the GO Station for residents in the area.

Although the opportunity for connections are identified, staff note that securing these connections within the established residential neighbourhood may be challenging given the existing residential lotting pattern and property ownership in the area.

Environment

Q. Are there any brownfield sites within the study area? Is site remediation anticipated?

- A. As part of the Bronte GO MTSA Study, there were no additional technical studies completed to identify site contamination within the study area. However, given the existing industrial uses within the area, it is anticipated that site remediation will be required.

The Region of Halton has a [protocol for reviewing development applications with respect to contaminated or potentially contaminated sites](#), as may be updated from time to time. This protocol would be applied as part of privately-initiated development applications, as applicable. The protocol includes the required completion of an Environmental Site Screening Questionnaire, and based on its findings may also require a Phase 1 Environment Site Assessment, Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment, and Record of Site Condition, prepared in accordance with provincial regulation. This process ensures that lands are cleaned up to specific standards, prior to redevelopment being permitted.

Q. Could site remediation impact development phasing as considered in the Area Specific Plan?

- A. The Area Specific Plan proposed two development phases for the introduction of mixed use development, based on land use compatibility buffers around existing Class II and Class III industrial facilities. Phase 2 was predicated on certain industrial uses moving away from the area, thus allowing for the introduction of mixed use development.

However, without knowing when an existing industrial operation may leave the area, the approach to “phase” certain lands was not pursued in the draft OPA. Instead, an approach which is based on land use compatibility assessments, and prohibiting sensitive land uses within the required buffer areas of existing industrial facilities, was used instead. This approach provides for flexibility within the policy framework to allow the area to transition over the long-term in response to evolving circumstances, such as the identification of site contamination and site remediation requirements, among other factors. This approach ensures that land use compatibility is maintained and assessed at all points during the planning application process.

Q. Was air quality and land use compatibility associated within the QEW considered in the plan?

The Air Quality Impact Assessment, prepared to inform the development of the Area Specific Plan for the Bronte GO MTSA, identified that sensitive land uses should be set back 150 metres from high traffic freeways, including the QEW/Highway 403. As such, mixed use land use designations (e.g. those that permit residential uses) are not permitted within 150 metres of the QEW. Employment uses continue to be planned adjacent to the highway, which maintains their engagement with the highway, providing presence and exposure along the QEW corridor.

Although the QEW was considered in the land use decision making process, the presence of industrial facilities within the area, including the Mid-Halton Wastewater

Treatment Facility, require more extensive buffering, and have a greater influence on proposed land uses.

Land Use and Design

Q. Why is the building height range of 5-20 storeys so large? Should the range be smaller and higher to better reflect that we want tall buildings in close proximity to the Bronte GO Station?

A. The lower end of the building height range (i.e. 5 storeys) reflects minimum building heights. The policies allow the tallest buildings in close proximity to the Bronte GO Station, up to 20 storeys. It is anticipated that as part of future redevelopment, the taller building heights will be realized. The draft OPA also considers building heights of up to 24 storeys in certain instances where a combination of roads, parks or office uses, are provided as part of a redevelopment.

Providing a range of building heights is appropriate as it provides a broad range of opportunities in land use; enabling stand-alone office buildings which are generally 6 storeys in the Oakville context, and opportunities for creative built-form; including mid-rise buildings in association with taller point towers as part of large scale redevelopment projects. The range provides flexibility in regard to future land use and design, while ensuring densities are achieved.

Q. Should there be a larger range in building heights in the plan, in particular the large area identified for building heights of 3-8 storeys?

A. The goal statement for the Bronte GO major transit station area, establishes that the area will transition over time into a vibrant, urban, pedestrian-oriented place, and will be a focus area for employment growth while introducing compatible mixed use development, including residential uses, primarily through mid-rise development.

Following this, the plan provides for a range of permitted building heights of 3-8 storeys throughout a large portion of the study area. Proposed policies also provide that areas which are required for roads, park, or in developments that provide additional office space, building heights of up to 4 additional storeys, up to 12 storeys, may be permitted. 12 stories is the upper-end of the “mid-rise” built form range within the town’s Livable by Design manual. As such, a variation of building heights between 3 to 12 stories would be permitted in this area, providing a range of mid-rise built form opportunities.

The urban design policies of the Livable Oakville Plan also strongly encourage variations in buildings heights in new growth areas.

Taller buildings are permitted closest to the Bronte GO Station, and provide for the establishment of the Station District as a central node of activity, as well as a “height peak” within the skyline. All buildings must transition down from the “height peak” to surrounding areas.

Q. The Bronte GO MTSA is envisioned as an urban, pedestrian-friendly place. What regulatory policy can be provided for in the Official Plan to ensure we achieve this vision?

- A. The draft Official Plan Amendment provides policies which establish an overall goal and development objectives for the Bronte GO MTSA, which provide a foundation on which all development related decision making is to be made. The goal and objectives establish that pedestrians and active transportation facilities are prioritized.

Policies that enable a pedestrian-friendly place are multifaceted, and are addressed through many policy sections including transportation and urban design.

For example, proposed policies regarding transportation provide that future transportation studies and environmental assessments should establish appropriate right-of-way widths for vehicular movements, while enabling a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

Proposed policies regarding urban design provide that development and public realm improvements shall be evaluated in accordance with the urban design direction provided in the Livable by Design Manual, and any other Council endorsed policies and documents relevant to the Bronte GO major transit station area. The policies also enable the creation of additional urban design direction for the Bronte GO major transit station area.

Proposed policies also ensure that the Bronte GO major transit station area shall provide pedestrian-oriented streetscapes through a combination of wide sidewalks, landscaping, tree plantings, and street furniture including benches, transit shelters and bike racks, appropriate for an urban context.

The overarching policies in an official plan are further implemented through zoning, and are guided by design direction. All of these measures together create a policy and regulatory environment which can create lively, vibrant, urban spaces that are pedestrian-friendly.

Population and Employment Densities

Q. What is the minimum density that is required to be achieved?

- A. The Province's Growth Plan requires that the Bronte GO Station be planned to achieve a minimum gross density of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare. The Bronte GO MTSA has been delineated to include approximately 146 hectares of lands.

Q. Why was a 500 and 800 metre radius used to determine the boundary of the major transit station area (MTSA)?

- A. Major Transit Station Areas are a defined term of the province's Growth Plan, and are premised on the concept of walkability and walking distances. The Growth Plan defines a major transit station area as:

The area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within a settlement area; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Major transit station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

The policies of the Growth Plan also provide that major transit station areas should be planned in a transit-supportive manner that maximizes the size of the area and the number of potential transit users that are within walking distance of the station.

The proposed boundary of the MTSA was delineated in coordination with Halton Region, who is responsible for determining MTSA boundaries.

Q. What are the existing number of residents and jobs in the Bronte GO MTSA?

A. There are currently zero residents, and approximately 3,124 jobs as per the most recent Halton Region Employment Survey.

Q. How many residents and jobs does the Bronte GO MTSA plan to accommodate?

A. The Bronte GO MTSA is planned to accommodate approximately 5,800 residential units and 997,000 square metres of retail, service commercial and employment space, resulting in approximately 8,200 residents and 18,600 jobs, for an estimated 26,800 residents and jobs.

Q. Why is the proportion of jobs to residents so high? Are we planning for too many jobs and under intensifying residential opportunities?

A. The vision established in the area specific plan is that the Bronte GO MTSA is to be a focus area for employment growth while introducing compatible mixed use development. As such, maintaining a focus on employment development has been considered in the plan.

The proportion of jobs to residents was considered in the transportation assessment to support the functional aspects of the plan. Employment uses are considered a bigger driver of transit use compared to residential uses, and the higher ratio of jobs in the area ensured that the broader transportation network was functional, as it is dependant on increasing modal splits (e.g. higher percentage of people who use transit and active transportation as a means to get around).

The plan also considers policy direction in the provincial Growth Plan, which requires that as part of the redevelopment of employment land, redevelopment must retain space for a similar number of jobs to be accommodated on site. Given this, the plan provides that nearly all redevelopment in the Bronte GO MTSA will need to include some form of space to provide jobs.

Staff recognize that plans for growth to the year 2051 are long-term, and many things can and will change between now and then. Staff are aware that the way municipalities accommodate employment growth is evolving and dynamic, particularly in response to Covid-19. Flexibility will be required within our policy frameworks to ensure municipalities are resilient in responding to these challenges.

The overall mix of jobs and residents is to be achieved over the long-term, and will be monitored as part of future Official Plan Reviews. The ratios may change as trends and markets evolve, new information becomes available, and the area grows and changes over time.

Coordination with Metrolinx

Q. Is Metrolinx aware of the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area Study?

- A. Staff from the Metrolinx Transit-Oriented Communities Division have been involved throughout the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area study process, and were members on the town's Technical Advisory Committee. Town staff have also been involved with ongoing updates to Metrolinx documents and plans, and continue to advise Metrolinx of the ongoing Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area study as part of its comments. Ongoing co-ordination with Metrolinx will be essential to realize the evolution of the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area, as envisioned through the town's plan. Detailed station area planning and a parking managing strategy, in coordination with Metrolinx, are proposed as future implementation items as part of this plan.