

Good evening Mayor Burton, Council and Ms. Clohec, CAO:

Attention: Town Clerk

Following are my comments and questions after reviewing the Feb. 27, 2024 report; and Midtown Q/As: Resident Associations Meeting (February 22, 2024).

As a layperson (a former architect), it appears to me that staff have tried to be comprehensive in their response, in particular the Feb. 22nd Q's/A's. (Note: Since I'm not an urban planner, the following terms that I have used such as density may need amending by you, Ms. Clohec, as you are schooled in the lexicon of urban planning language.)

Comment: Mayor Burton and Council - Population - Ward 3 councilors and RPA's have spoken to the magnitude of the planned population density forecasting by staff, most recently projected to be at 4 times the provincial and regional density requirement; comparable to Urban Growth Centres (UGC's) in Toronto. This issue arose in the May 2023 at a public meeting in council chambers. Subsequently, the foundational issue has been raised repeatedly with staff, but to the best of my knowledge, no credible staff response has been provided to date.

Question:

1. What is your rationale for the magnitude of this population forecast?
2. What is your motive in supporting this population forecast?

Comment: Level Playing Field - My *first principles* comments are to try to avoid becoming mired in the process-driven rigid framework of provincially, regionally and municipally prescribed methodologies.

Why: Because there are significant open-ended locked-in multi-jurisdictional assumptions/precedents/process being cited by staff as a rationale for their approach. However, there is little focus on positive product outcomes to achieve livability.

Question: Livable/Livability -

What is Oakville Council's and staff's quantifiable measurable definition for livable/livability?

Comment: There does not appear to be a defined quantitative livability metric for optimal population including optimal mobility numbers (Transportation Study). ***As it stands, staff and reporting consultants are not accountable for achieving effective livability.***

Comment: OPA Developable Land - Whatever the population assumptions embedded in the current draft OPA scope of work, the **population density baseline** should include at a minimum the developable 41.7 hectares (ha), of the 103.6 ha Midtown Oakville study area, including the **Home Depot site**, and other potentially exempted sites, if any.

Based on my assumption that developable land exemptions, such as Home Depot's, may vary over the duration of the OPA, the 41.7 ha developable area may be reduced from 41.7 ha cap to 25 ha+/- to 30 ha+/- at the lower end.

Questions:

1. On the consultant's previous 3D axonometric presentation drawing, why did the consultants show population density excluding the Home Depot site?

2. **Planning Rationale:** What is the planning rationale for exempting the Home Depot site and/or any other site before this draft OPA becomes law?
3. **Legal Rationale: Surety** - Is there an enforceable legal agreement, such as an irrevocable financial letter of credit or other legal instrument, in place with the owner(s) of the Home Depot site or other potential developers to guarantee that sites will not be developed to a higher and better use during the OPA's time horizon?
4. Given the lack of certainty by staff regarding the range of developable area, what is the impact on population density at a lower range of 25 ha+/- to 30 ha+/- instead of 41.7 ha?
5. Is this significant?
6. **Livable or Unlivable:** Will lower end developable land at 25 ha+/- to 30 ha+/- result in livable or unlivable conditions?
7. If more developments take place during the OPA's duration on 'exempted' lands such as Home Depot's, what is the impact on the upper end of population density?
8. Is there an upper population density capacity to achieve livability?
9. What is it?
10. **Contingency:** Has staff allowed for contingency planning on population forecasts +/- and coverage/density +/-?
11. In other words, has a sensitivity analysis been done?

Comment: Potential Precedents- Neil Garbe cited Vaughn as a precedent in an email to me.

Questions:

1. What Urban Growth Centres (UGC's) are being looked to for setting precedents?
2. What Canadian urban precedents are being utilized by staff?
3. What other jurisdictional precedents are being utilized by staff for inspiration?

Comment: The Toronto Chamber of Commerce recently identified an \$11B impact on commerce because of significant traffic challenges. Ideally, Transportation Study outcomes should be addressed before the draft OPA is complete to be able to effect optimal harmonization for positive outcomes. Otherwise, there will be a significant knowledge gap for effective decision making.

Question: Since the Draft OPA has not undertaken a robust transportation study as evidenced by current master planning drawings that do not show future linkages from the existing and proposed road networks, what is staff's action plan to address this material deficiency?

Comment: Population, Jane Clohecy, CAO - Ward 3 councilors and RPA's have spoken to the magnitude of the planned population forecasting by staff, most recently projected at 4 times the provincial and regional density requirement. This issue arose in May 2023 at a public meeting in council chambers. The issue has been raised repeatedly with staff, but to the best of my knowledge, no credible staff response has been provided to date.

Question:

3. What is the rationale for the magnitude of this population forecast?
4. What is your motive in supporting this population forecast?

Comment: Metrolinx (GO train and bus) ridership has been significantly impacted by the recent pandemic. Anecdotally, a significant number of people (70%?) are driving compared to transit users. Ridership may slowly improve. At some point, Metrolinx will probably develop the Oakville GO train and busway site to include commercial, retail and high-rise development. This will effectively increase the population density beyond the current planned Midtown Oakville OPA density as Metrolinx is included in the Non-Developable Land at 61.9 ha.

Question:

1. Has Metrolinx shared key current and forecasted planning information regarding ridership with staff to allow you to effectively plan for immediate, short-term and long-term infrastructure including roads, et al ?
2. Has Metrolinx provided the potential site capacity +/- for development of future commercial, retail and high-rise residential at their development site? (Note: As I recall, Metrolinx is exempted from population capacity limits [please see data at the end of this email], so the only limitations will be technical issues such as structural).

Midtown Oakville 103.6 ha Study Area

Developable Area 41.7 ha

Non-Developable Land 61.9 ha

- Public roads: 26 hectares (ha)
- Utilities / Rail Corridor / MTO lands: 21 ha (**includes GO Train & Busways**)
- Parks (Existing and Proposed): 12.8 ha
- Natural Heritage: 1.4 ha
- Other non-developable areas: 0.7 ha (includes, for example, public rights-of-way between privately owned lands and the QEW left over after street realignment).

Best regards,

Bill McCreery, Oakville