

Ward 3 Delegation Feb 27 2024 Final

- We are a collective of four Resident Associations with a shared message on Midtown.
- We vigorously support the need for growth in Midtown but we have heard very strongly from our residents that the Midtown OPA is heading in the wrong direction.
- This vision for Midtown strays from Oakville's plan to be Canada's most livable city.
- Midtown is located in the centre of Oakville and is surrounded by stable established residential neighbourhoods on all sides. The impact of hyper-density in Midtown will negatively affect residents from all parts of town.
- Our vision for Midtown is a high-density, not hyper-density, complete community attracting a diverse demographic, with a heavy focus on livability at a human scale, offering walkability to core services, transit, retail, schools, jobs, parks, and attractions for residents.

1. Revised Plan:

Residents are still demanding to see a real alternative to the hyper-dense, skyscraper plan presented by the consultant team.

The OMG delegation presented a concept with a mix of low to mid-rise buildings grouped around central courtyards. They showed us how, through a reduction in road allocations, the use of laneways and POPs (privately-owned but publicly accessible spaces), they can achieve the livable, human-scale Midtown that we have been asking for. They can also achieve a *defensible* population density without skyscrapers. Residents strongly support this approach. In the push to speed through this process, the Town has paid lip-service to alternatives. For the largest development in Oakville's history, this is not good enough.

2. Population:

Residents have also shown Town staff where opportunities exist to re-allocate some of Midtown's hyper-density across south Oakville to Bronte GO, Speers Road as well as above shopping and commercial plazas. We have been told these plans do not conform to the council approved '*Urban Structure*'. Perhaps it is time to revisit this plan.

The Midtown population estimate of 20,000 people and jobs from a few years ago has now ballooned to 74,000 people and jobs. This is hyper-density. It is not reasonable. It will not be livable in such a small area.

The newly increased Oakville 2051 population number of 442,941 people is based on a choice by Town staff to use the Provincially mandated population allocation and add the 33,000 Housing Units Pledge on top. We have discovered that other jurisdictions do not treat these numbers cumulatively. Why is this being done for Oakville?

The Town has further compounded the hyper-density of Midtown by increasing the population projections to account for an assumed 30% of the total developable land that will not be developed by 2051. This methodology compounds the total population density and is not consistent with what has been done in other growth nodes.

3. People Per Unit / PPU:

The Town's PPU assumption for Midtown is 1.7. This is based on out-of-date 2016 census data for Oakville. We believe that this needs to be re-examined. A PPU of at least 2.0 would be more in-line with developments in other cities undergoing similar growth such as Peel Region. Getting the PPU wrong will not only result in an overly-dense area, with buildings that are too tall, but it will mean that there won't be enough schools, services, shops etc to service the actual population. This number needs to be forward thinking, not backward. PPU must project the rapidly occurring changes to our demographics.

4. Transportation:

The lack of a Transportation plan is another major item we have heard from residents. Midtown is effectively an island, locked into the center of Oakville, with limited roads into and out of the area.

Transportation issues should be considered as a limiting factor for Midtown's population density. Residents already know the limitations to movement at rush-hour in this area. Add 74,000 people and we have a total disaster.

With additional population growth in the Trafalgar Road north corridor, access to the GO station will be severely hindered for all surrounding neighborhoods.

We also believe that to achieve a livable, walkable, human-scale community, you cannot have six lane roads running through the area. It is critical to include a plan to get the bus terminal moved to the east side of Trafalgar Road.

Metrolinx. Developing a plan around an MTSA without Metrolinx as part of the process is going to result in poor urban planning.

6. Financial Implications for Taxpayers:

Many of our residents were shocked to learn that the financial implications of the proposed Midtown OPA will not be considered until after the OPA is approved. The impact on the Town finances and the long-term implications for the tax-base should be disclosed prior to a decision.

7. Planning:

Residents are concerned that it may be decades before anything resembling a 'complete community' starts to emerge. To achieve a successful, livable community and attract a diverse demographic, parks and schools need to be provided early, not late in the development of the community.

We have requested that the Community Planning Permit System be examined as a tool to ensure that Midtown planning is controlled by the Town and not by developers.

8. Green Standards:

We are in a climate emergency. Residents want to see how Midtown is going to be built as a forward looking community in the fight against climate change through the implementation of green building standards and a District Energy plan to meet the goals of the Town's Community Energy Strategy within Midtown.

CONCLUSION

To date staff and consultants have engaged with the public regarding Midtown per their public engagement strategy. They have gathered input and responded to questions. What they have not done is to integrate any meaningful change into the proposed concept for Midtown. What we see presented has the same problems that residents started out saying they wanted fixed many months ago. We look forward to a renewed initiative from council to bring forward an Midtown OPA concept that is not just defensible, but also supportable.