

Memo

To: Mayor Burton and Members of Council
From: Planning, Design and Development
CC: Neil Garbe, Commissioner, Community Development Services
Date: 11 April 2024
Subject: Urban Growth Centre (UGC) comparators to Midtown Oakville

Comments

This memo responds to a request out of the February 27, 2024 Special Council meeting seeking Urban Growth Centre (UGC) comparators where located adjacent to a GO station. The comparators identified do not have subway stations.

Municipalities, regardless of the stage of their policy regime, continue to receive development applications within their UGCs for OPAs three to four times the maximum heights or densities permitted per their in-effect Official Plans. For example:

- The City of Oshawa received a [2023](#) OPA/ZBA application for a 21 storey development within the UGC (maximum permitted: 8 storeys).
- The City of Markham received a [2020](#) OPA/ZBA application for multiple towers up to 55 storeys within the UGC (maximum permitted: 15 storeys).

These examples highlight the increasing level of development interest in UGCs that has exceeded municipalities' expectations and resulted in development intensity that was not appropriately planned for when Official Plans were initially developed. Few municipalities have fully updated their Plans to respond to recent provincial policy changes that impact UGCs and Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs). Bill 150, the *Official Plan Adjustment Act, 2023* passed in the Legislature on December 5, 2023 permits municipalities to implement maximum heights and densities in PMTSAs.

Municipalities are in the process of updating their Plans. The City of Brampton brought a report to their Planning and Development Committee on April 8, 2024 proposing modifications to the OP's MTSA policies to implement maximum heights and densities, and locations for unlimited heights and densities, as appropriate. Most UGCs – like Midtown Oakville - are at various stages of updating their Plans to recalibrate the original policy visions to conform with provincial policies, and to appropriately plan for growth and deliver components of a complete community.

Table 1: Urban Growth Centre (UGC) Comparators to Midtown Oakville

UGC Comparator	Ha	Gross Planned Density (to 2051)	Height / Density Permissions & Date of OPA Adoption
Downtown Burlington	86 Ha	284 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 2 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 30 storeys (in-effect). Maximum 45 storeys (proposed OPA & CPP By-Law pending 2024 Council decision). No maximum on 'Urban Employment' lands.</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum FSI: 4 FSI (in-effect).</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: Council adopted on April 26, 2018. Region approved November 30, 2020. Proposed OPA & CPP By-Law pending decision.</p>
Downtown Milton	139 Ha	200 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 4 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 33 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Minimum FSI: 2.0 FSI (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum FSI: 6.0 FSI (in-effect).</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: Adopted by Council in August 1996. Approved by the Region in 1997.</p>
Downtown Brampton	92 Ha	580 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 4 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: No maximums (in-effect). Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) policies through Brampton's new OP, adopted November 1, 2023 has unlimited height and density for all MTSA's.</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A.</p> <p>Maximum FSI: No maximums (in-effect). MTSA policies through Brampton's OP (2023) has unlimited height and density for all MTSA's.</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: November 1, 2023.</p>

UGC Comparator	Ha	Gross Planned Density (to 2051)	Height / Density Permissions & Date of OPA Adoption
Downtown Oshawa	106 Ha	310-350 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 4 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 25 metres (82 feet), or 8 storeys.</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A.</p> <p>Maximum FSI: FSI of 3.0 (with exception of the Central Oshawa Transportation Hub (FSI of 2.5)).</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: City Council adopted June 17, 1985. Approved by Region on November 20, 1985. Approved by Minister on February 12, 1987 with modifications. OP consolidation: December 2023.</p>
Downtown Pickering	67.5 Ha	200 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 3 – 16 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 37 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Minimum FSI: 0.75 FSI (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum FSI: 5.75 FSI (in-effect).</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: 1997 (first adopted); March 2022 (current OP adopted).</p>
Downtown Hamilton	105.1 Ha	500 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 2 storeys except for Pedestrian Focus Streets (minimum 3 storeys) (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 30 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Maximum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: July 9, 2009. Effective as of August 16, 2013 except for policies, schedules & appendices under appeal.</p>
Downtown Mississauga (City Centre)	37.8 Ha	400 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 3 storeys (OPA 143 Region of Peel approved on April 11, 2024).</p> <p>Maximum Height: Mississauga's MTSA OPAs 143 and 144 were approved by the Region of Peel on April 11, 2024, introducing height maximums (35 storeys).</p>

UGC Comparator	Ha	Gross Planned Density (to 2051)	Height / Density Permissions & Date of OPA Adoption
			<p>Previous approval of the three mixed use towers (61, 61 and 81 storeys) in City Centre, part of the Downtown Mississauga Master Plan, was under the previous City Centre District policy regime (OPA 20) and the implementing zoning (Zoning By-Law 0005-2001), adopted by City Council on January 17, 2001. OPA 20 and the implementing zoning removed any limits to density or height within most of City Centre.</p> <p>Minimum FSI: Individual development proposals within a PMTSA do not need to meet the minimum 1.0 FSI (OPA 143 – Region approved April 11, 2024).</p> <p>Maximum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: MTSA OPAs 143 & 144 were Region approved April 11, 2024).</p>
Downtown Kitchener		225 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: N/A</p> <p>Maximum Height: In-effect OP notes that generally no building will exceed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 10 storeys or 32 metres on lands designated Mixed Use identified as a City Node or a Community Node. b) 8 storeys or 25 metres on lands designated Mixed Use as an Urban Corridor. c) 4 storeys or 14 metres on lands designated Mixed Use identified as a Neighbourhood Node. <p>Proposed changes to building heights within Kitchener’s Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGA A: no building will exceed 8 storeys. SGA B: no building will exceed 25 storeys. SGA C: no maximum building heights. <p>Minimum FSI: 1.0 for City Centre District within Downtown Kitchener UGC (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum FSI: 3.0 FSI within City Centre; 7.5 FSI maximum for lands within ‘Multi-Modal Transit Hub’, both in UGC (in-effect).</p>

UGC Comparator	Ha	Gross Planned Density (to 2051)	Height / Density Permissions & Date of OPA Adoption
			Date of OPA Adoption: June 30, 2014. OP consolidation: April 27, 2023.
Uptown Waterloo		200 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 2 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 25 storeys on lands designated High Density (in-effect).</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Maximum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: 2012. OP consolidation: February 2024.</p>
Markham Centre		250 P+J/Ha	<p>Minimum Height: 3 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Maximum Height: 15 storeys (in-effect).</p> <p>Draft Markham Centre Secondary Plan Update (2023) proposes maximum heights within UGC of up to 40 storeys (on lands designated mixed use high rise).</p> <p>Minimum FSI: N/A</p> <p>Maximum FSI: FSI 3.0, or heights / densities as otherwise specified in Area Specific Plan (in-effect).</p> <p>Draft Markham Centre Secondary Plan Update (2023) proposes maximum density per block up to 10.0 FSI.</p> <p>Date of OPA Adoption: December 10, 2023. Region approved June 12, 2014. City appealed new OP to the OMB. Partial Approval Order issued by the OMB and updated by the LPAT on April 9, 2018. Until a Tribunal decision to approve all or part of the new OP, the 1987 OP must be used.</p>