

We understand that a special Oakville Town Council meeting has been scheduled for Monday, July 29 on the Transit Oriented Community initiative launched by the Province and that the agenda for this meeting will be a verbal update provided to Council in camera.

We are writing to register our strong opposition to this process of secrecy and to ask all recipients of this letter, especially our elected provincial members of parliament, to do whatever they can to change this process so there is proper transparency and accountability.

We do not understand why this meeting and the TOC initiative should operate in secrecy, hidden from public view by means of a confidentiality agreement. This needs to change. There must be full transparency and accountability on a project of this importance, size and complexity. We understand that certain information may need to be kept confidential, but the process should operate in the sunlight not in back rooms behind closed doors.

It is well known that a lack of transparency and accountability creates an environment in which the participants often cut corners, write their own rules and pursue their own self interests and not the overarching objectives. The lack of transparency also erodes and impairs stakeholder and public trust in the process, especially when some of the participants stand to make substantial financial gains.

We appreciate that Council is being briefed on this project. But unfortunately this makes Council complicit in this secretive process. This places Council in an awkward and difficult spot, and in an untenable position if serious performance issues arise.

While we are in early stages with respect to this TOC, public trust in this process is already low and falling. So it needs to be changed now.

The solution is straightforward, change this process so that there is proper transparency, stakeholder engagement, and accountability.

We recognize that this process has been imposed upon Oakville by the Province. Nevertheless, residents, landowners, Council and our elected MPP's should all aggressively push back and demand that it be changed.

While this meeting on July 29 is on the TOC initiative, we ask that council also ask staff for a status report on their progress on the revised response to Council's petition and their targets for completing the revised OPA for Midtown. These are very important projects and performance must not slip due to the pressures being exerted by the Province in the TOC initiative.

Sincerely,

Joint Residents Association for Midtown
&
WeLoveOakville