

Special Council Meeting  
Tuesday, October 29, 2024

**Comments Received Regarding Item 5.1**

Town initiated  
Draft Official Plan Amendment - Midtown Oakville

**From:** [Residents Associations Midtown Oakville](#)  
**To:** [stephen.crawfordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:stephen.crawfordco@pc.ola.org)  
**Cc:** [effie.triantafilopoulos@pc.ola.org](mailto:effie.triantafilopoulos@pc.ola.org); [Members of Council](#); [Town Clerks](#); [Mayor Rob Burton](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Flawed TOC Process Endangers Midtown Oakville  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 2, 2024 6:01:56 PM

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Dear Mr. Crawford,

On July 28, the Joint Residents Associations for Midtown, and WeLoveOakville wrote to you expressing our serious concerns and opposition to the Transit Oriented Community initiative that the Ministry of Infrastructure is imposing on Oakville, and the process by which it is being carried out.

Two months have elapsed since we sent you this letter, without an acknowledgement or response. Our concerns and those of citizens across Oakville have intensified exponentially.

Our concerns resonate with the findings in an article in the Toronto Star published on September 21 by investigative reporter Sheila Wang. In this article Ms Wang points to a number of practices currently employed in the TOC process that create an ever-mounting level of distrust of the process and our provincial legislative body.

*“The government has made a series of moves to make it easier for the developers’ work to proceed, overriding opposition from local governments who said they don’t have the infrastructure to support the proposed 64 new condo towers”.*

*“The terms of those deals, however, are secret — and are even being withheld from the ... municipal governments most affected by the decisions”*

*“Developers have been amassing land where new stations will be.”*

*“With the TOC designation, the developers proposed to build about 18,000 additional condo units than they would’ve been able to before the province stepped in.”*

*“In April 2022, the province sealed the fate of the two TOCs by wielding another of its developer-friendly tools.”*

*“It has also resurrected some of the same concerns that surrounded the Greenbelt scandal, where decisions disproportionately favouring certain developers were sprung on local communities, leaving them questioning whose needs were being prioritized.”*

We see the same thing happening here in Oakville.

Three additional facts have set our alarm bells ringing at full force.

- In a letter dated May 31, 2024 Mirrun Zaveri, Assistant Deputy Minister Transit Oriented Communities and Agency Oversight Division Ministry of Infrastructure writes that the province is committed to: *“Spearheading negotiations with third-party building partners related to prospective TOC proposals and acting as the single commercial interface with the third-party building partners at the TOC sites”.*
- A July 2, 2024 report from the planning and development department of the Town of Oakville stated it was confirmed that the area around the Oakville GO station being considered for a TOC included lands subject to development applications and appeals by *Distrikt Developments Inc.*
- The very same Distrikt Developments has filed applications to build **11 high-rise towers** in Midtown containing approximately 6,300 units **on 5 hectares of land**. Using a people per unit assumption of 2.0, would result in **12,600 people** living in these buildings and **a density of 2,520**

**per hectare.** *These applications would produce a level of density that is 12.6 times greater than the minimum provincial density target of 200 people per hectare and is completely unacceptable.*

Oakville's residents are openly wondering what secret back room planning decisions and "commercial arrangements" are being negotiated by your government, with Distrikt Developments Inc.? Will this result in Greenbelt 2.0 right here in your riding?

This process is fatally flawed and must stop. There must be full transparency and accountability on a project of this importance, size and complexity. And, to quote the Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Minister of Legislative Affairs. "We're not going to micromanage and dictate a one size-fits-all approach across the province. Municipalities know their communities best – they know where it makes sense to build homes".

**A winning solution: integrate the TOC with the Town's recently issued OPA for Midtown.**

Last Friday, the Town's planning staff released a proposed Official Plan Amendment for Midtown together with a timetable for public consultation, statutory meetings, and approval by council.

As you know, Midtown is a very challenging site from a development perspective. To develop a complete and liveable community in Midtown, it must be planned as a whole, and chaos will result if the province independently plans and manages the development of 5 hectares of land with the Town developing the remaining 38 hectares of developable land and supplying the infrastructure, parks, schools and amenities for all 43 hectares.

**The better way is to halt the current TOC initiative and integrate it into the overall OPA for Midtown so that we have an integrated set of policies and planning parameters for Midtown that comply with provincial planning guidelines and targets and will guide its development over the next 30+ years.**

It is in this spirit of finding a winning solution for everyone that we seek an urgent meeting with you to discuss this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,

George Niblock, on behalf of WeLoveOakville  
[www.weloveoakville.org](http://www.weloveoakville.org)

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**From:** Michael Young

**Sent:** Friday, October 4, 2024 12:28 PM

**To:** David Gittings <[david.gittings@oakville.ca](mailto:david.gittings@oakville.ca)>; Janet Haslett-Theall <[janet.haslett-theall@oakville.ca](mailto:janet.haslett-theall@oakville.ca)>

**Cc:** Town Clerks <[TownClerk@oakville.ca](mailto:TownClerk@oakville.ca)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Midtown Official Plan

**Councillors:**

Although I do not live in your ward, I would like to offer a few observations on the proposed

amendment to the Mid Town Official Plan.

Overall I find the by-law thorough, although it does vary a bit in the level of detail it carries.

One significant omission in my view is that it makes no mention of communications infrastructure, particularly high speed fibre-optic provision. I believe this subject should be an integral part of any Official Plan to ensure that good communication is facilitated from the outset.

Under the Tall Building heading there is reference to Architects and the standards demanded of them. I believe this admonition should also be extended to the Professional Engineering profession. (Full disclosure: I am a retired professional engineer.)

Also when considering Tall Buildings there are a number of specific considerations that Oakville may wish to ensure, or at least emphasise:

- Tall buildings can sway significantly. Standards for the amplitude and frequency should be set with something standard related to the human perception of the motion. I have encountered this phenomena, and as a person who gets seasick can vouch for the disturbing effect it can have.
- Accessibility: standards should be set for the provision of elevator service to all floors being available for 99.99% of the time, possibly through the inclusion of sufficient redundancy to ensure this target.
- Passive fire extinguishers through sprinklers should be a requirement in all dwelling units. Think Grenville Towers. This may go beyond building code requirement though.

Being mindful of past problems elsewhere, the engineering of the support of any surface carrying landscaping to meet the “green” requirements should not only carry the potential load but be designed to account for all water retention and drainage to avoid costly damage repairs and also potential long term corrosion. A clause to highlight this would give guidance, and avoid future problems emerging.

Under a general heading of safety and security emphasis should be placed on the need for full lighting over all public areas. Lighting is mentioned but the level of illumination is left open. Further, no consideration is given to the idea of baked-in CCTV coverage of public areas to ensure the security of the area. I would favour a police presence in the residential precinct to pre-empt any possibility of a crime hot-spot developing.

No reference is made for provision of parking of supply chain trucks delivering inventory to all the active facades/retail/commercial, which should take place during the day to avoid the noise of diesel trucks at night. Similarly, although the provision of screened garbage removal is mentioned, the provision for parking for the trucks in the daytime is not referenced specifically. Garbage removal should occur during the day as it is a noisy activity.

Although not part of the Official Plan documentation, an adjunct to the By-Law is the need to be able to inspect for conformance. Building inspectors, both reviewing the plan proposals and also the physical inspection on site, will need adequate training and education to guaranty

conformance. Alternatively, this process can be contracted out to specialist consultants. The by-law is only as good as its oversight.

I hope these comments offers something to the review of the new Official Midtown Plan By-Law.

Michael Young