

REPORT

LIVABLE OAKVILLE (OFFICIAL PLAN) COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: MARCH 20, 2017

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: March 6, 2017

SUBJECT: Speers Road Corridor Study

LOCATION: Speers Road

WARD: Multiple Wards: 1 and 2

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RECOMMENDATION

That the report titled *Speers Road Corridor Study*, be received.

KEY FACTS

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Livable Oakville Plan identifies Speers Road as a corridor that should be studied to confirm long-term land uses and opportunities for suitable intensification.
- On May 11, 2015, Planning and Development Council received a report at a special public meeting commencing the Five Year Official Plan Review. The report identified that the Speers Road Corridor Study would form part of the Employment and Commercial Review (municipal comprehensive review) being undertaken as part of the Official Plan Review.
- On November 1, 2016, the subcommittee received the consultant team's Employment and Commercial Review report. The report provides recommendations for the Speers Road Corridor. The Employment and Commercial Review is ongoing and is being considered by staff.
- This is the first report on the Speers Road Corridor Study. It provides a review of the policy documents and plans which may impact the long-term land uses and intensification opportunities along Speers Road. The report also provides a preliminary analysis of the conditions along the corridor.

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- Throughout this report, future intensification opportunities are considered to be employment and commercial intensification opportunities.
- The review highlights that the Speers Road Corridor is unique and broadened commercial and service commercial land use permissions should be provided.
- The review highlights that Speers Road is an emerging Transit Priority Corridor and a key component of the region-wide transportation network. The integration of all transportation modes, including active transportation and transit, will be a key priority for the corridor.
- The review highlights the need for a greater urban design focus in order to achieve a transit-supportive environment, and the need to consider compatible development abutting the adjacent residential areas to the south.
- The review identifies that there are generally three distinct districts along the corridor with varying land uses and lotting patterns being: Bronte Road to Third Line, Third Line to Fourth Line, and Fourth Line to Kerr Street.
- Based on this review, a number of policy directions are provided for consideration as part of a future policy development phase for the Speers Road Corridor.

OVERVIEW

For ease of reference, this report is broken out into the following sections:

- Background
- Study Area
- Study Purpose and Scope
- Policy Context and Plan Review
 - Provincial Context
 - Regional Context
 - Local Context
- Speers Road Corridor Context Analysis
- Recent Development Applications
- Zoning and Conformity
- Assessment and Directions
- Next Steps
- Conclusion and Considerations

BACKGROUND

Livable Oakville Plan

The Livable Oakville Plan identifies Speers Road as a Special Policy Area - Corridor. Section 26.4 of the plan describes corridors as “general linear areas along major arterial roads. These areas provide a linkage between nodes and can provide for various functions including support for *employment areas* or as a buffer to residential neighbourhoods. Corridors generally contain a mix of uses, many in transition, and many unrelated or connected in form or function. Corridors are recognized for their potential for *intensification* due to their location along major transit routes and, in many cases, because they contain numerous vacant or underutilized lands.”

Section 26.4.2 of the plan states that “the corridor located along Speers Road should be further studied to confirm long-term land uses and opportunities for intensification suitable for this area.”

Official Plan Review – Special Public Meeting

On May 11, 2015, Planning and Development Council received a staff report launching the Five Year Official Plan Review. The report identified that the Speers Road Corridor Study would form part of the Employment and Commercial Review (municipal comprehensive review). The staff report states the study “will provide a detailed analysis of Speers Road to confirm long-term land uses and opportunities for intensification suitable for this area. In studying the intensification potential of this area, its context and continued function as an employment area will be a key objective.”

Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee – Official Plan Review Workshop

On April 18, 2016, the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee (subcommittee) met to discuss emerging themes to be addressed as part of the Official Plan Review. One of the topic areas discussed at the meeting included employment and commercial areas. The subcommittee noted several items for considerations as part of the Speers Road Corridor Study including the:

- Zoning permissions along Speers Road and its role as a business incubator;
- Existing context and land uses along Speers Road and the area’s needs;
- Uniqueness of Speers Road within the town’s context;
- Impact of allowing a greater commercial mix along the corridor; and,
- Transition between the corridor and adjacent residential areas.

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Official Plan Review – Work Program

On October 3, 2016, the subcommittee received an updated Official Plan Review work program. It identified the following timeline and key milestones for the Speers Road Corridor Study:

Q1: 2017 – Directions Report

Q2: 2017 – Public Consultation

Q3: 2017 – Statutory Public Meeting (Draft Recommended OPA)

Q4: 2017 – Decision Meeting

This report satisfies the Q1 direction report, and provides a baseline of information and draft policy considerations that will inform the ongoing study process. The timeline noted above is subject to change and must be coordinated with other ongoing Official Plan Review projects and emerging policy direction from the Province and the Region of Halton.

There are several broader policy frameworks that continue to emerge at the Provincial, Regional, and the local level. As such, the broader policy framework may change which could result in the development of the official plan amendments beyond Q4 2017.

STUDY AREA

Speers Road, under the jurisdiction of the Town of Oakville, is an important east-west corridor across the town between Bronte Road in the west to Cross Avenue in the east. Speers Road provides a direct link between the town's two major transit stations being the Bronte GO station and Oakville GO station. The Bronte GO station area is recognized in the Provincial Growth Plan and identified in the Region of Halton Official Plan as a Major Transit Station Area, and is emerging as a potential new area to focus future intensification. The Oakville GO station forms part of Midtown Oakville, the town's Urban Growth Centre and a Metrolinx Mobility Hub.

Staff have identified a study area as depicted in **APPENDIX A**. The extent of the study area may be refined through further review. The general limits of the study area are:

North: Railways tracks
 West: Kerr Street
 South: The boundary between the existing employment area and the existing residential uses to the south
 West: Bronte Creek

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The map also shows the conceptual area of the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area identified with a star symbol. The Major Transit Station Area is identified in the Region of Halton Official Plan and is an emerging area for future intensification recognized through the proposed amendments to the Provincial Growth Plan and the town's ongoing Urban Structure Review. As part of the Speers Road Corridor Study, a draft study area for the future Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area study has been identified for consideration, as shown in **APPENDIX B**.

The study area limits were determined by applying a 500 metre buffer distance from the main buildings providing pedestrian access to the Bronte GO Station platforms. The 500 metre buffer is applied as per the definition provided in the Provincial Growth Plan which defines a Major Transit Station Area as:

The area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within a settlement area; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Major transit station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500m radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

After applying the 500 metre buffer, the study area was aligned to the property parcel boundaries of any property located within all or a portion of the 500 metre buffer area. The boundary excluded any property within the 500 metre buffer that is located within the existing stable residential communities to the south.

STUDY PURPOSE & SCOPE

As stated in the Livable Oakville Plan, the Speers Road Corridor Study is to confirm the long-term land uses and opportunities for suitable future intensification. Given that land use and intensification opportunities should be considered with the provision of transit, the study will assess land use policy to determine appropriate long-term land uses for the corridor that harmonize transportation and land use planning objectives.

The study will assess the suitability of the existing Livable Oakville Plan land use designations and policies and make recommendations for new or revised designations and policies in coordination with other ongoing reviews. The study may also make recommendations for appropriate zoning by-law amendments to further implement proposed Livable Oakville Plan policy changes.

The scope of work consists of reviewing the following areas and may include additional analysis, evaluation or research if deemed necessary during the ongoing study process:

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Policy and Emerging Policy Review – A review of existing and emerging planning documents and policies from the Province, Region and Town will be reviewed to establish the context around the role of Speers Road in the larger planning framework.

Land Use and Intensification – The evaluation of existing land uses including the range, intensity and mix of land uses will be reviewed. The study will also evaluate the suitability of existing permissions and consider new or revised commercial and employment use permissions. Opportunities for suitable employment and commercial intensification will also be reviewed. This will include a review of parcel fabric, lot sizes, and the surrounding context. Through the determination of appropriate areas for employment and commercial intensification, the study may recommend official plan policy amendments.

Compatibility – As part of the review of land use permissions and intensification opportunities, consideration will be given to the compatibility between uses along the corridor and adjacent areas, particularly the existing residential communities to the south. Policies may be developed which offer direction to mitigate impacts of future development.

Recent Development – Current planning applications and recently approved developments along the corridor will be reviewed. Recent pre-consultation meeting requests for proposed development within the vicinity of the study area may also be evaluated.

Transportation – Transportation Master Plans (Region and Town), ongoing and emerging transportation initiatives, as well as the completed Speers Road Environmental Assessment Study (2009), will be reviewed. The study will consider approved and anticipated road improvements as part of potential future official plan amendments.

Urban Design – The corridor will be reviewed from an urban design perspective with the intent to visually and functionally enhance the corridor for all users. The review may result in new urban design policies or direction which provides a framework for the review of development applications along the corridor. Urban design elements which may be considered include the built form, setbacks, height, scale, site arrangement including parking, the integration of transportation initiatives, the public realm, and the relationship between buildings and the street.

Implementation Tools – A review of implementation tools and strategies through the use of the zoning by-laws, urban design direction, and other strategic documents may be explored to further strengthen employment opportunities along the corridor.

POLICY CONTEXT AND PLAN REVIEW

Provincial Context

Provincial Policy Statement 2014

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) sets out the Province's land use vision. The PPS states that healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by, among other matters;

- Promoting efficient, cost-effective development and land use patterns that minimize land use consumption; and,
- Accommodating an appropriate range and mix of employment uses (including industrial and commercial).

The PPS directs planning authorities to base its land use patterns on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land and resources, supportive active transportation, and are transit-supportive where transit is planned, exists or may be developed. The policies support, encourage, and require opportunities for intensification in identified locations, including corridors.

The PPS supports a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach to planning in municipalities including coordination between upper and lower-tier municipal boundaries. The policies identify that where transit corridors exist or are to be developed, that minimum density targets for areas adjacent or in proximity to these corridors be provided.

The PPS directs planning authorities to promote employment, economic development and competitiveness by providing an appropriate mix and range of employment uses, encouraging compact mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses, and ensuring necessary infrastructure is available to support current and projected needs.

The PPS directs planning authorities to protect and preserve Employment Areas to support current and projected needs over the long term, with specific reference given to Employment Areas in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses requiring those locations.

From an energy conservation, air quality and climate change perspective, the PPS directs planning authorities to provide land use and development patterns which focus major employment, commercial and other travel intensive land uses on sites which are well served by transit where it exists or is to be developed, or designing these land uses to facilitate the establishment of transit in the future.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 as amended, (the Growth Plan), provides the framework for implementing the Province's land use vision for managing growth, and guides policy and land use decision making in the GTHA. All municipal official plans (Regional and Local) are required to conform to the Growth Plan.

The Growth Plan is currently being reviewed as part of the Province's Coordinated Land Use Review. In May 2016, the Province released proposed changes to the Growth Plan for public comment. At the time of writing this report, final plans have yet to be released. The emerging policy framework in the Growth Plan represents a significant shift from the existing plan, and brings forward a number of new concepts which may have impacts on the planning and policy framework for the Speers Road corridor.

First, the concept of "priority transit corridors" is proposed. They are defined as "emerging *higher order transit* corridors identified as a focus for planning and *intensification*. *Priority transit corridors* are shown in Schedule 5". Schedule 5 indicates that Speers Road may emerge as a priority transit corridor which is to be delineated in the official plan.

The proposed transit corridor policies note that when planning lands adjacent to higher order transit corridors, municipalities are to identify and protect lands that may be needed for future transit infrastructure enhancement or expansion. Policy 2.2.4.9 goes on to state that "lands with easy access to frequent transit service, including *higher order transit*, should be identified as *strategic growth areas* and should be planned and developed to be *transit-supportive*, including through setting minimum density targets to reflect existing and planned transit service levels where no minimum density target is specified in this Plan." The transit corridor policies are also closely linked with the coordination and planning of *Major Transit Station Areas*, which includes the Bronte GO Station. Under the proposed policies, the area around Bronte GO may be required to be planned to achieve, by 2041 or earlier, a minimum gross density target of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

Second, the proposed Growth Plan policies identify a new classification of employment lands. This includes prime employment areas, employment areas, and office parks. The following definitions are provided:

Prime Employment Area: Areas of employment within *settlement areas* that are designated in an official plan and protected over the long-term for uses that are land extensive or have low employment densities and require these

locations, including manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities.

Employment Area: Areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. (PPS, 2014)

Office Parks: *Employment areas* designated in an official plan where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities.

Upon examination of the Speers Road corridor, it is likely that the majority of lands would fall within the “employment area” category and definition.

Metrolinx - Bronte GO Station Master Plan (June 2013)

At the time of writing this report, the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area, identified in the Growth Plan, the Regional Official Plan and through the town’s emerging Urban Structure Review, will be subject to its own study to guide growth and change in that area. This area is identified in the “Study Area” section earlier in this report.

Regardless of being subject to a separate study, the Bronte GO Station Master Plan, prepared by Metrolinx in June 2013, has been reviewed as part of the Speers Road Corridor Study as it may provide direction and help inform policies along Speers Road.

The recommended conceptual station layout provided in the Master Plan is guided by the overall vision to provide a higher level of customer service, improve access for a range of transportation modes, and plans for increased capacity to support anticipated ridership growth. Key changes to the Bronte GO station, as part of the preferred conceptual station layout, includes:

- The relocation of the bus loop to the south side of the station;
- Providing a bus-only access from an exclusive access point from Speers Road; and,
- A larger main station building on the south side of the rail tracks in close proximity to the bus loop.

With these station area changes, there is likely to be impacts on transit and pedestrian movements along Speers Road. These improvements should be considered through any land use policy changes for this area.

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Metrolinx – GO Rail Station Access Plan (December 2016)

Similar to the Bronte GO Station Master Plan, the GO Rail Station Access Plan, prepared by Metrolinx in December 2016, has been reviewed. The access plan was prepared in response to the Provincial commitment to Regional Express Rail (RER) which will increase GO service in several areas, including to Bronte GO.

The 2016 plan is intended to be used by Metrolinx to help inform decision making on capital investments, coordinate between stakeholders, support multi-modal access, and monitor the progress and success of investments and strategies over time. The plan provides recommended improvements to the Bronte GO Station for the short, medium, and long term. The plan provides a number of recommendations for consideration. Those excerpted below are highlighted in relation to potential policy direction for the Speers Road Corridor Study:

Access Mode: Walking

Medium Term – Encourage the town to explore options to introduce a pedestrian and cycling connection from Speers Road to Trafford Circle to the south.

Medium Term – Encourage the town to review intensification policies for the station area to align with potential changes arising from the Coordinated Review of the Growth Plan. Specifically, as part of the planned Speers Road Corridor Study, consider changes that support development of pedestrian oriented higher intensity non-residential and mixed-use development that increase walk-up ridership and provide employment and other destinations in walking distance of the station.

Access Mode: Transit

Short Term – As part of the planned redevelopment of that station site, consider relocating and expanding the bus loop to the south with a dedicated access off of Speers Road.

Access Mode: Cycling

Medium Term – Encourage the town to consider extending the bikeway along Speers Road east to Third Line.

Access Mode: Drive & Park / Carpooling

Medium Term – Consider expanding parking south of Speers Road to off-set the parking area lost from the development of a new bus loop on the south side of the station.

Regional Context

Region of Halton Official Plan

The Region of Halton Official Plan identifies the lands along the Speers Road corridor as an employment area. An objective of employment areas is to provide for a fully-diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses. The Region requires local municipalities to promote intensification and increased densities in employment areas by facilitating compact, transit-supportive built form and minimizing surface parking. Employment areas are not permitted to be converted to non-employment uses including major retail uses unless considered through a municipal comprehensive review.

The Region's Official Plan considers corridors 'intensification areas' and more specifically 'intensification corridors' which consist of arterial roads identified in local official plans. Among the many objectives for intensification areas, they are to provide an urban form that is complementary to existing developed areas, use space more economically, promote live-work relationships, foster social interaction, enhance public safety and security, reduce travel by private automobile, promote active transportation, and are to enhance environmental sustainability. The objectives also state that intensification areas are:

- To provide a range of employment opportunities, facilities and services in centralized locations that are readily accessible by public transit;
- To cumulatively attract a significant portion of population and employment growth,
- To generally achieve higher densities than the surrounding areas; and,
- To achieve an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas.

The Region's Official Plan requires local municipalities to prepare detailed official plan policies or an area-specific plan for the development of a new intensification area or the redevelopment of an existing intensification area. The plan also identifies Bronte GO Station as a Major Transit Station Area which will require further study. The Halton Region Official Plan Review is underway. An adoption date by Regional Council is currently targeted for the year 2020.

Halton Region Transportation Master Plan

The Region's Transportation Master Plan (TMP), completed in October 2011, provides a transportation strategy for infrastructure improvements to address the travel needs of the region. An essential goal in the Region's transportation strategy

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is to achieve a 15 - 20% transit modal split by 2031. The town plays a major role in the Region's transit modal split goal through the future planning of key land use and transportation corridors such as Speers Road.

Speers Road falls under the jurisdiction of the Town of Oakville. As such, the Region's TMP includes recommendations for local road improvements for consideration by the town. The Region's TMP recommends Speers Road be widened from 4 to 6 lanes for the provision of exclusive transit services only.

Prior to the completion of the Region's TMP, the town completed an Environmental Assessment for the Speers Road corridor from Bronte Road to Kerr Street which is discussed later in this report.

Mobility Management Strategy for Halton

On February 8, 2017, the Region of Halton Planning and Public Works Committee received the Mobility Management Strategy for Halton. On February 15, 2017, Regional Council endorsed the strategy. The strategy was developed to guide the evolution of a region-wide transportation network over the next 25 years to 2041 in alignment with many supporting provincial, regional and local transportation initiatives.

The strategy introduces a region-wide priority transportation network which builds upon the Higher Order Transit Corridors identified in the Regional Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan documents throughout the Region (with some additions and extensions). The priority transportation network is intended to provide opportunities to implement infrastructure, technology and operational improvements to improve travel speed, reliability, and convenience of transit service in the corridors. The network is recognized as being a vital component to connect people to existing and planned Regional designations including urban growth centres, mobility hubs, employment lands, and major transit station areas.

As part of the overall network, Transit Priority Corridors are identified and Speers Road is considered as a Transit Priority Corridor. These corridors are recognized as being able to offer opportunities to implement transit supportive measures such as transit signal priority, queue jump facilities, bus shelters and other transit stop improvements. Where road widening is planned, opportunities to consider HOV, BRT or LRT are recognized so as to provide transit with the opportunity to bypass auto traffic, improve travel speed, and improve reliability for buses using the corridor.

The next step in the Mobility Management Strategy for Halton includes an assessment of the region-wide grid network, including Speers Road, and the

infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the Major Transit Station Areas. The findings would ultimately be integrated into the next Regional Transportation Master Plan update to 2041 which is being developed concurrently with the Region's 2041 Growth Management Strategy and Regional Official Plan Update.

Local Context

Livable Oakville Official Plan, 2009 as amended

The Livable Oakville Plan identifies the Speers Road corridor as a Special Study Area to be further studied. The plan states that, "corridors represent general linear areas along major arterial roads. These areas provide a linkage between nodes and can provide for various functions including support for *employment areas* or as a buffer to residential neighbourhoods. Corridors generally contain a mix of uses, many in transition and many unrelated or connected in form or function. Corridors are recognized for their potential for *intensification* due to their location along major transit routes, and as in many cases, because they contain numerous vacant or underutilized lands."

More specifically, the Plan states that "the corridor located along Speers Road should be further studied to confirm long-term land uses and opportunities for *intensification* suitable for this area."

Schedule C, Transportation Plan, identifies Speers Road as a Multi-purpose Arterial. Multi-purpose Arterials are meant to serve a mix of functions of major and minor arterials, act as a major transit corridor, be 4 to 6 lanes, and accommodate high volumes of traffic typically between 40,000 to 60,000 vehicles per day. Multi-purpose Arterials are intended to have an intermediate degree of access control (driveways), have a 35 metre right-of-way, and are encouraged to have transit-supportive land uses along the right-of-way.

Schedule D, Active Transportation Master Plan, identifies that bikes lanes are proposed along the full length of Speers Road.

The lands along the Speers Road Corridor are almost entirely located within the town's employment area, except for a small portion of lands within the Kerr Village Main Street Growth Area in the east end of the study area.

The plan's general employment policies encourage development in employment areas to be transit-supportive with a compact built form and minimized surface parking areas. The policies require that development be compatible with adjacent uses, indicating that height and built form is to be regulated by the implementing

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zoning by-law. Buffering and landscaping is also required to ensure visual and physical separation between employment uses and adjacent uses.

The policies identify the Bronte GO Station as a higher order transit station and the surrounding area as a major transit station area where employment intensification including major office and appropriate institutional uses are to be directed.

All of the town's employment land use designations are found along Speers Road: Office Employment, Business Employment, Industrial, and Business Commercial. The variety of land uses permit a diverse range of employment and service commercial type uses, including motor vehicle related uses. The arrangement of land use designations along the corridor direct industrial uses and outdoor storage away from adjacent residential areas.

Official Plan Review - Employment and Commercial Review

A town-wide Employment and Commercial Review is being conducted as part of the town's Five Year Official Plan Review (municipal comprehensive review). The review involves the assessment of the employment and commercial lands and policies throughout the town, particularly in terms of the overall commercial and employment hierarchy, the role, function and range of permitted uses, current demand and future needs, including the implementation of the Provincial Growth Plan. The review will also determine if any conversions of employment lands are warranted.

In late 2014, a multi-disciplinary team led by Dillon Consulting Inc. was retained by the town to lead the Employment and Commercial Review. On March 21, 2016, the subcommittee received a preliminary directions report which was referred back to staff for further review.

In response, staff held two workshops with the subcommittee on July 25 and September 6, 2016 to discuss the technical findings of the Employment and Commercial Review and provide the subcommittee with an opportunity to provide input and guidance.

On November 1, 2016, the subcommittee received a Summary Report prepared by Dillon Consulting. The report highlights the macro economic and market trends impacting the town, as well as key findings from the commercial and employment supply and market demand analyses to the year 2041. The report includes the input received from the subcommittee workshops and represents the consultants' final technical study, recommendations and policy directions. Several policy directions are provided including, among other matters:

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- That the town should encourage employment land intensification and more efficient use of employment lands;
- That the town consider a broader range of amenities within employment areas; and,
- That the town consider updating policy areas related to compatibility and design guidance.

Specific direction for lands along the Speers Road corridor were provided as outlined below:

Revitalize the lands around the Bronte GO Station Area: The lands around Bronte GO Station are largely developed and function as stable general industrial lands. Significant investment would be required before the area can be re-envisioned as a mixed use, transit supportive neighbourhood. The Town should undertake a detailed Station Area Plan to identify the long term potential for this area to evolve into a transit supportive node.

Recognize the existing function of Speers Road: Speers Road has been identified in the Livable Oakville Plan as a corridor, to be further studied to confirm long-term land uses and opportunities for suitable intensification. The Speers Road Corridor Study should consider its function as a transitional area and identify suitable land use designations to accommodate an appropriate and compatible range of commercial uses. It should also include the preferred design from the Speers Road Environmental Assessment, streetscaping, urban design and pedestrian realm improvements, and the promotion of transit supportive development.

The report also provides highlights on the intensification of employment lands. Page 61 of the report notes that “it is recognized that a portion of forecast employment on employment lands growth will be accommodated through intensification. Over the 2015-2041 period, an estimated 10% of the Town’s overall employment growth is expected to be accommodated through intensification” and that the “majority of this intensification will be accommodated through infill and expansion of existing developed properties” including “take-up of current vacant industrial and office GFA.”

Staff continue to review and assess the consultants’ final recommendations as well as the employment land conversion requests received as part of the municipal comprehensive review. One conversion request was received by the town that is located within the Speers Road Corridor study area. The conversion request is generally located at the south east corner of Bronte Road and Speers Road and is seeking a conversion from the Business Employment and Business Commercial designation to the Community Commercial designation.

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Staff note that as part of the Employment and Commercial Review, launched in 2014, the proposed changes to the Growth Plan were outside the scope of the consultant's study. The development of official plan policy amendments for the employment and commercial areas of the town is ongoing. The broader land use policy amendments which are introduced into the Livable Oakville Plan as a result of the Employment and Commercial Review will be considered in the Speers Road Corridor Study.

Official Plan Review – Urban Structure Review

In February 2016, a town-wide Urban Structure Review was initiated in response to increasing growth pressure throughout the town and to determine how to accommodate required growth to the year 2041. The review will assess and provide direction for how to manage growth and change across the entire town – including employment growth.

On November 1, 2016, the subcommittee received a draft discussion paper for the ongoing Urban Structure Review. It includes a discussion of key structural components which could be included in the town-wide urban structure. All options build on the urban structure established in the Livable Oakville Plan and the North Oakville Secondary Plans.

The report discusses Employment Areas and asks “what is the most appropriate approach for Oakville to the categorization of employment areas?” The report states:

Oakville has an evolving macro-economy premised on lower industrial growth potential and increased demand in the office sector which differentiates it from other municipalities. ... The categorization of the Town's employment areas must be looked at through this lens. There is still a need for areas of traditional industrial development, but much less so than in other municipalities. In particular, the Speers/Cornwall Roads corridor is already accommodating a mix of uses which do not reflect traditional industrial development. In terms of the urban structure, does the unique nature of this area need to be recognized?

The report goes on to identify options for consideration as part of the urban structure. The report identifies Speers Road (including Cornwall Road) as part of a network of priority transit corridors which require enhanced coordination of land use, transportation planning and investment. Speers Road is also identified as a corridor which would support the optimization of transit investments. The report identifies the existing policy commitment to complete the Speers Road Corridor Study, identifies

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its unique nature as an employment mixed-use context, and suggests to expand the study area along Cornwall Road. Specifically, the report states:

Speers/Cornwall Road Employment Mixed Use Corridor

The Speers/Cornwall Road Corridor is recognized as an area with a diversity of employment and commercial uses. Given its character, it should be recognized as a unique employment mixed use area in the urban structure. The Speers Road Corridor Study which is to commence in 2016 should consider also the Cornwall Road Corridor. That process will confirm long-term land uses and intensification opportunities in support of transit and other objectives of the Town related to urban design and streetscape options.

The Urban Structure Review is still a work in progress. However, the draft direction for the Speers Road Corridor continues to suggest that a study for Speers Road is warranted as per the existing Livable Oakville Plan policies. Further direction may still arise from the Urban Structure Review as it proceeds to being finalized and would be incorporated into the Speers Road Corridor study, as applicable. In the interim, there is nothing in the draft report which would indicate that the town should not proceed with reviewing the Speers Road Corridor.

Speers Road Environmental Assessment

The Speers Road Environmental Assessment Study, completed in September 2009, was undertaken for Speers Road from Bronte Road to Kerr Street. The purpose of the study was to address various issues along this portion of Speers Road including but not limited to: existing and future travel demand, land servicing needs, pedestrian, cycling and transit facilities, operation and infrastructure deficiencies, and approved and proposed changes in land use.

A preferred design was prepared giving consideration to technical requirements of the town, community input, as well as environmental and economic constraints. Based on the evaluation of the alternative design concepts, Speers Road is recommended to be reconstructed to 5 lanes throughout with a centre turning lane, plus auxiliary turn lanes at major intersections as required, with dedicated bike lanes, boulevards and sidewalks along both side of the corridor.

The detailed design phase of the project is ongoing including the evaluation of property impacts and negotiations with affected property owners. The area between Third Line and Fourth Line is currently in the detailed design phase. The area near the Bronte GO station was identified in the Mobility Management Plan for Halton as an area where defined transit priority requirements are to be identified, including a Speers Road Environmental Assessment Addendum. This speaks to the evolving policy framework for Bronte GO as a major transit station area.

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Town of Oakville Transportation Master Plan

Switching Gears, Oakville's Transportation Master Plan (TMP), February 2013, aims to develop a more balanced transportation system providing a variety of travel options including public transit, walking, and cycling along with strategic roadway improvements. The town's TMP addresses short and long-term opportunities and challenges to 2031.

The town's TMP recommends a number of integrated elements to support intensification and growth directives:

- Land use and transportation planning;
- Transportation demand management strategies;
- Cycling and pedestrian facilities;
- Transit service expansion, transit priority measures;
- Road network capacity improvements; and,
- Urban sustainable design standards.

In the long-term, the town's TMP recommends that Speers Road be widened to 6 lanes as part of the road-specific infrastructure improvements, as also indicated in the Region's TMP. However, the town's TMP recognizes the previously approved Speers Road Environmental Assessment Study and notes that at present time Speers Road is to be widened to 5 lanes.

Active Transportation Master Plan

The Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) was approved in 2009 and recommends an extensive network of on-road and off-road active transportation facilities throughout the town. The ATMP forms part of the town's Livable Oakville Official Plan on Schedule D. Speers Road is proposed to have bike lanes along the entire corridor within the study area.

In 2016, staff began a review to update the ATMP to assess current conditions, make updates, and develop an improved implementation plan to expand the network and promote cycling and walking in Oakville. Baseline information collected to inform the ATMP update indicates that Speers Road currently has low cycling and pedestrian trips. It also indicates that Speers Road currently has a low walkability index and moderate bikeability index based on preliminary analysis.

As part of the ongoing update, the review is looking to confirm the appropriateness of existing planned active transportation facility types. Proposed modifications for Speers Road are beginning to emerge through this work indicating buffered bike

lanes for Speers Road. A cycling network phasing plan is also beginning to emerge as part of the update. It suggests that improvements to Speers Road from Bronte GO to Kerr Street should be in the short term (0-10 years), with the segment from Bronte Road to Bronte GO station in long term (+10 years) given bike lanes have already been implemented in this location.

Zoning By-law 2014-014

In February 2014, Council passed Zoning By-law 2014-014 to implement the policies of the Livable Oakville Plan. The following zones are found along the Speers Road Corridor which implement the Livable Oakville Plan land use designations:

- E1** - Office Employment
- E2** - Business Employment
- E3** - Industrial
- E4** - Business Commercial
- MU3** – Urban Centre (forming part of the Kerr Village Growth Area)
- MU4** – Urban Core (forming part of the Kerr Village Growth Area)

The majority of the corridor is zoned under the Employment zones, with the full range of employment uses, including service commercial uses, being permitted within the various zones located along the corridor.

Within the employment zoning regulations, there are several regulations which prohibit or regulate uses, built form, height, and buffering in relation to adjacent residential zones to support compatible development.

The Employment zones and zoning regulations are attached in **Appendix C**. A review of zoning in contrast with existing uses along the corridor is provided in the 'zoning and conformity' section of this report.

Economic Development Strategy

In order to better inform and align potential future policy amendments for Speers Road, the town's Economic Development Strategy (2009-2019) was reviewed. The strategy was approved by Council in July 2009 putting in place a high level plan that sets the overall direction and priorities for the municipality in regard to economic development. The strategy is based on three overarching goals:

1. Attract knowledge-based industries in the professional services, advanced manufacturing and life sciences sectors.

2. Respond to the needs of the business community in order to foster business retention and expansion.
3. Explore international business opportunities.

There is a wealth of data outlining the opportunities and challenges for the town as a whole. This research informs several broad based objectives and actions to bolster economic development in Oakville, improve the customer experience, and streamline the development process. Staff note that at present time there are no specific strategies targeting the employment area along Speers Road. However, there is an emerging direction which is exploring options to undertake a brownfield redevelopment strategy for private lands, which may assist Speers Road.

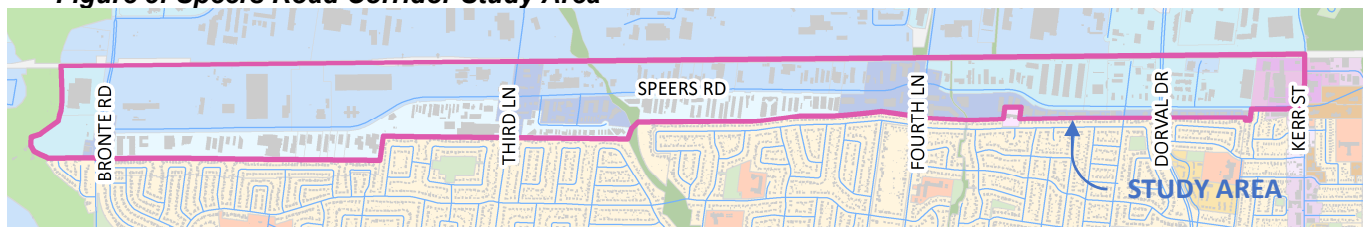
SPEERS ROAD CORRIDOR CONTEXT ANALYSIS

In the fall of 2016, staff began to assess the existing context of Speers Road to gain a better understanding of the corridor and collect baseline information which may help to inform the study and any future policy directions and changes. Staff have completed a review of conditions present within the Speers Road Corridor study area. Some of the findings contained in this section stem from the 2015 Halton Region Employment Survey data, as well as the Employment Land Supply assessment, completed by a consulting team led by Dillon Consulting, which forms part of the ongoing Employment and Commercial Review. These data sources have been used to better understand any general trends that exist along the corridor.

Study Area and Land Use

The study area, shown in **Figure 2**, is approximately six kilometres in length containing approximately 217 hectares of land (gross). **Figure 3** shows that Speers Road contains all of the town's employment land use designations including:

Figure 3: Speers Road Corridor Study Area



Office Employment

Shown in light blue and located on the south side of Speers Road.

<i>Business Employment</i>	Shown in medium blue and located west of Bronte Road, as well as north of Speers Road between Fourth Line and Kerr Street.
<i>Industrial</i>	Shown in dark blue and located north of Speers Road between Bronte Road and Fourth Line.
<i>Business Commercial</i>	Shown in the darkest blue clustered at Third Line and at Fourth Line, as well as south of Speers Road between Fourth Line and Kerr Street.

The arrangement of land uses suggest that land use compatibility has been considered in the designation of properties. Only Office Employment and Business Commercial designations are located on the south side of Speers Road adjacent to existing residential areas. These uses do not allow for the types of employment uses that are otherwise permitted in the Business Employment and Industrial designations, such as outdoor storage or heavier industrial uses. This limits potential conflicts between employment uses and sensitive land uses.

Property Parcels

Property parcels and lotting pattern are discussed below across three segments of the corridor from west to east: Bronte Road to Third Line, Third Line to Fourth Line, and Fourth Line to Kerr Street. In general, a variety of parcel sizes are found along Speers Road. Most of the existing buildings along Speers Road are proportional to their lot size and have maximized the surface area of the lot (e.g. buildings, driveways, parking areas, landscape areas).

Bronte Road to Third Line (Figure 4)

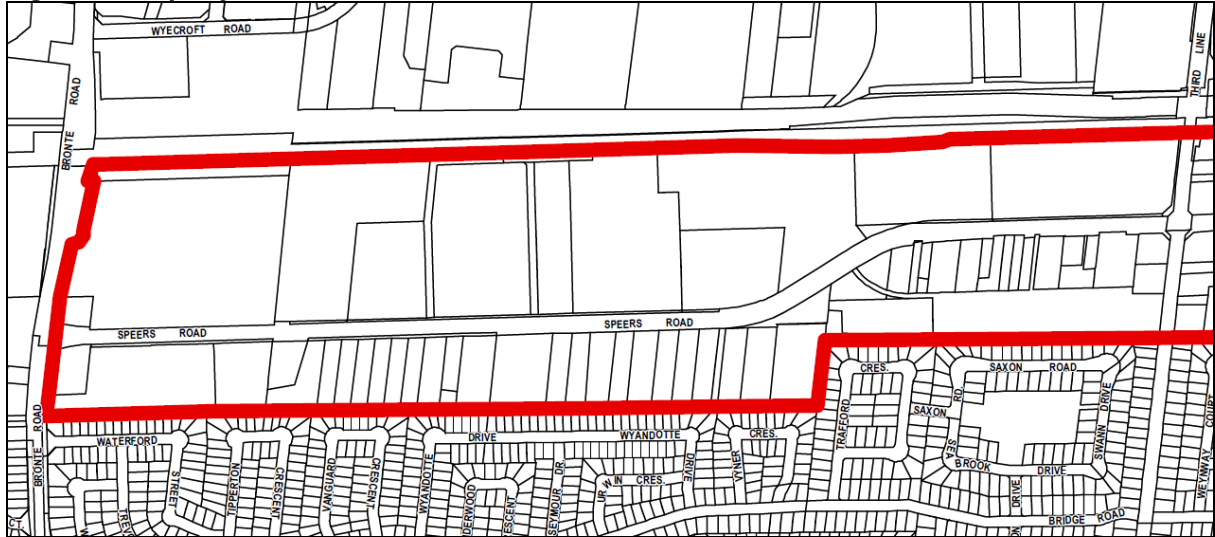
From Bronte Road to Third Line on the south side of Speers Road, a variety of property parcels exist but are generally characterized by narrow deep lots with property frontages of approximately 20 to 35 metres, and lot depth of approximately 100 metres and greater. This lotting pattern results in several driveway accesses on the south side of the corridor. Closer to Bronte Road, lot widths increase substantially and this area is generally characterized by large lots.

Nearly all lots have direct access to Speers Road, with one very large lot directly adjacent to the residential area having its primary accesses from Third Line.

On the north side of Speers Road, property parcels are characterized by very large industrial lots with large frontages and lot depths. This area contains some of the largest lots and lot frontages of the entire Speers Road Corridor. Many of the lots

are underutilized based strictly on a visual examination of lot size to building proportions.

Figure 4: Property Parcels from Bronte Road to Third Line



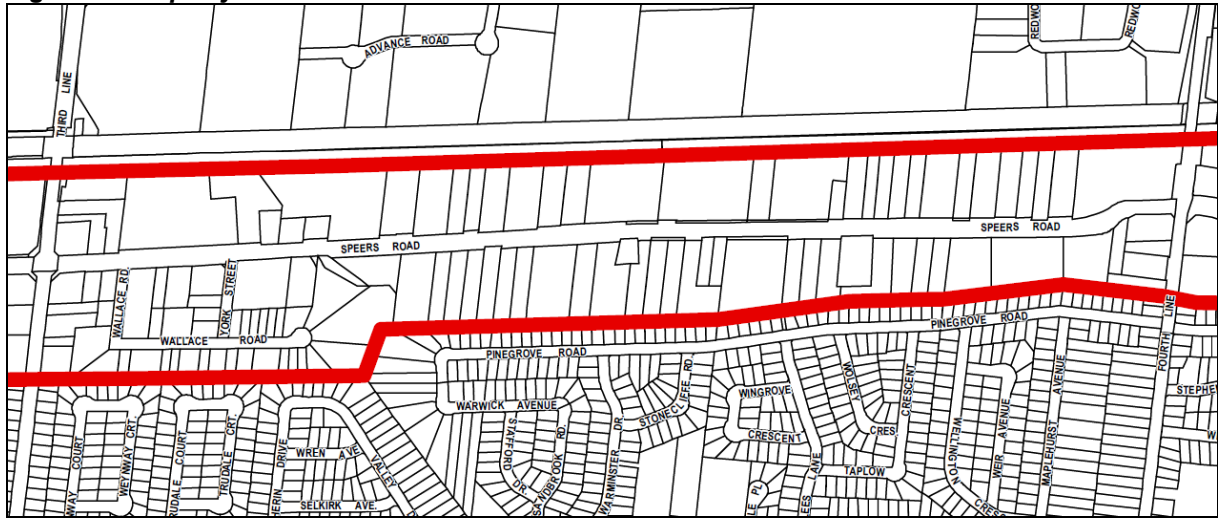
As identified in the Employment Land Supply analysis as part of the Employment and Commercial Review, several properties on the south side of Speers Road are less than 0.4 hectares in size (1 acre) with a concentration of these small lots on the south side of Speers Road near the Bronte GO station.

Third Line to Fourth Line (Figure 5)

Between Third Line and Fourth Line west of Fourteen Mile Creek, a variety of property parcel sizes and a varied lotting pattern are present. South of Speers Road is particularly unique in the context of Speers Road given there is a small network of side streets, namely Wallace Road and York Street. Property parcels in this area address the side streets and are small in size creating a finer grain lotting pattern. Many lots have small frontages and shallow lots depths, particularly those abutting the residential area to the south.

Between Third Line and Fourth Line east of Fourteen Mile Creek, on both the north and south sides of the street, a variety of property parcel sizes exist. However, the dominate lotting fabric is characterized by narrow deep lots with frontages of approximately 30 metres and lot depths of approximately 120 metres and greater. This lotting pattern results in several driveway access points to Speers Road.

Figure 5: Property Parcels from Third Line to Fourth Line



As identified in the Employment Land Supply analysis as part of the Employment and Commercial Review, several properties along Third Line, Wallace Drive, and York Street are less than 0.4 hectares in size (1 acre). As well, approximately 20 lots east of Fourteen Mile Creek are less 0.4 hectares, including the properties south of Speers Road fronting Fourth Line (west side).

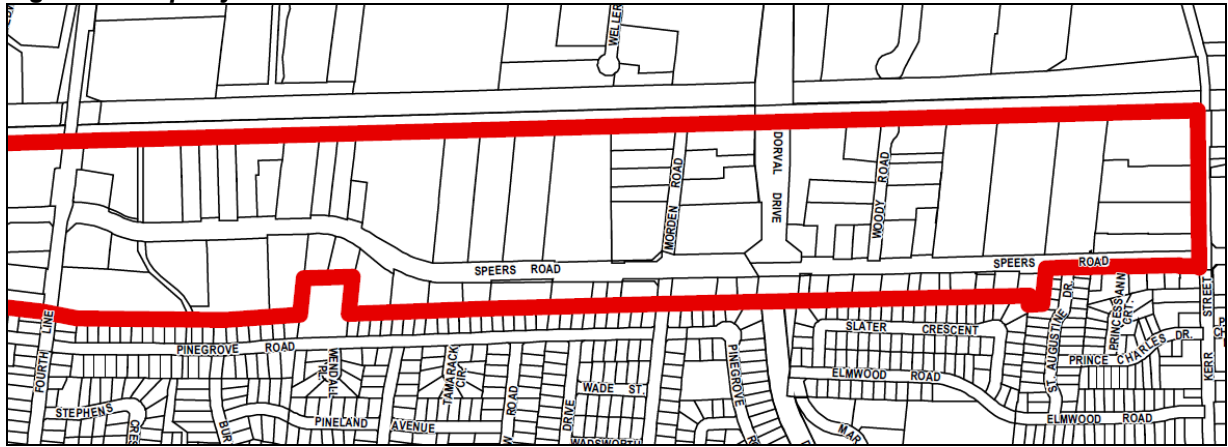
Fourth Line to Kerr Street (Figure 6)

Between Fourth Line and Kerr, the curvature of Speers Road veers south resulting in shallow lot depths on the south side of Speers Road of approximately 40 metres. Property parcels on the south side of the street are relatively small with lot frontages reducing as you travel eastward toward Kerr Street. This lotting pattern results in several driveway access points to Speers Road.

The north side of the street is characterized by several large deep lots, some in excess of 200 metres in depth. Two side streets, being Morden Road and Woody Road, run north from Speers Road on either side of Dorval Drive, with a variety of lot sizes present off of these streets.

As identified in the Employment Land Supply analysis as part of the Employment and Commercial Review, nearly all properties on the south side of Speers Road east of where Speers Road veers south, are less than 0.4 hectares in size (1 acre).

Figure 6: Property Parcels from Fourth Line to Kerr Street



Transportation and Active Transportation

The following section looks at the existing elements of the roadway and the broader transportation network and connections.

Vehicular Access

Along the six kilometre stretch of the Speers Road, there are six signalized intersections providing vehicular access to Speers Road from adjacent streets. Five intersections are with arterial roads running north-south located at Bronte Road, Third Line, Fourth Line, Dorval Drive, and Kerr Street. These roads provide broader connections into the surrounding community, three of which provide direct highway access to the QEW, being Bronte Road, Third Line, and Dorval Drive. Vehicular access is also provided to Speers Road from Morden Drive in the south.

Parking Areas

Based on a review of air photos with property parcels overlaid, most properties along Speers Road have front yard parking which includes either one or two rows of parking and a drive aisle between the building and the public right of way. Many of the existing parking areas encroach into the public right-of-way.

Given that many lots along the corridor are narrow and deep, many properties have parking which extends down the length of the side yard. Many parking areas seemingly blend and straddle across property lines creating large asphalt areas and larger parking areas for the business located on those sites.

Few properties are seen to have delineated parking in the rear yard. Generally, the rear yards consist of paved areas which are not specifically marked for parking stalls.

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Subject: **Speers Road Corridor Study**

Parking areas typically have individual driveway accesses to Speers Road from each property parcel, with several properties having more than one driveway access onto Speers Road.

Pedestrian Access

Along the corridor, there are eight existing traffic signals providing pedestrian crosswalks. Pedestrian crosswalks are currently provided at: Bronte Road, Bronte GO station, Third Line, Fourth Line, 450 Speers Road, Morden Road, Dorval Drive, and Kerr Street. Considering Speers Road is six kilometres in length, this represents limited pedestrian crossing opportunities. For example, for a person travelling on foot between Third Line and Fourth Line, a pedestrian crossing point is not provided for two kilometres. This represents an approximate 25 minute walk to the next signalized crossing.

Pedestrian sidewalks are generally provided along the full length of the corridor. However, due to the high number of driveway access points from individual properties and several paved parking areas that are adjacent to or encroaching on the public right-of way, the pedestrian sidewalk becomes indistinguishable from paved driveways and parking areas in a number of locations along the corridor. This is particularly evident in the segment of the corridor just east of Fourteen Mile Creek.

Cycling Facilities

Bike lanes are currently provided along the roadway between Bronte Road and just west of the Bronte GO Station. However, this does not represent the ultimate cross section as per the Speers Road Environmental Assessment. Bike lanes are to be provided along the full length of the corridor.

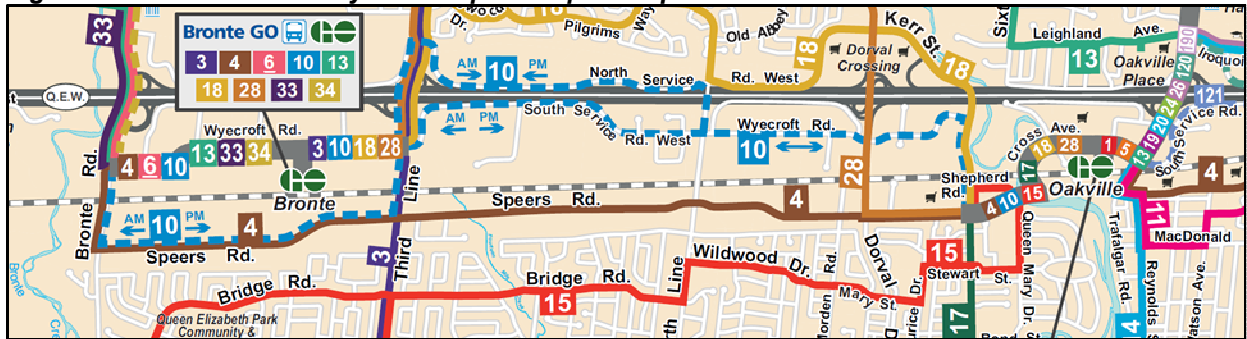
Transit

Council approved the Oakville Transit Five Year Plan in July 2015. The plan focuses on creating a transit network that operates with greater frequencies and service levels on high demand corridors. This included a strengthening of service along the Speers/Cornwall corridor. Route 4 – Speers/Cornwall, is the main bus route along Speers Road. It operates from Bronte GO station in the west, to Oakville GO station, and continues further eastward along Cornwall Road. At weekday peak times (rush hour), the route operates at a 15 minute frequent service. During weekday midday, the route operates at 30 minute frequent service.

Numerous connections to other bus routes and to GO Train services are found at both the Bronte GO and Oakville GO stations. Other bus routes are also found along Speers Road, or intersect with Speers Road, providing connections to the broader community including: Route 3 – Third Line and Route 28 – Glen Abbey North.

As identified the Bronte GO Station Master Plan (June 2013), the plan looks to relocate the existing bus loop to the south side of the station. With this change, many of the existing bus routes surrounding the station will likely require adjustments to their routing, placing more routes directly on Speers Road.

Figure 7: Oakville Transit System Map Excerpt for Speers Road

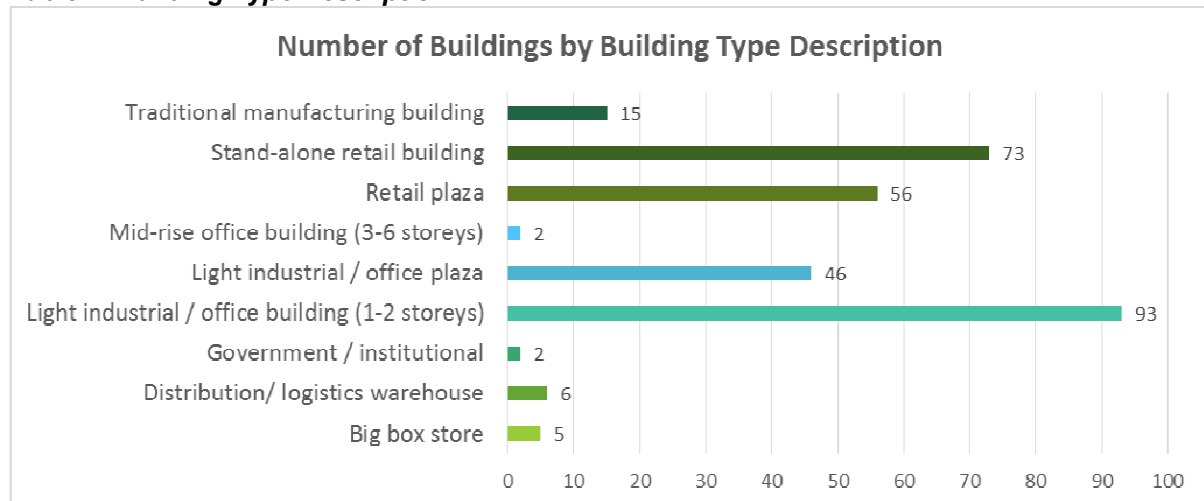


Building Types and Forms

The following data was obtained through the 2015 Halton Region Employment Survey. The Speers Road Corridor study area contains approximately 258 individual property parcels. There are approximately 298 buildings within the study area indicating that several properties contain more than one building.

Table 1 shows how the 298 buildings are described by building type as per the employment survey.

Table 1: Building Type Description



The largest percentage of buildings within the study area are described as *light industrial / office building (1-2 storeys)* at 31% of total buildings. This is followed by

buildings described as *stand-alone retail* (25%) and *retail plazas* (19%). When *stand-alone retail* and *retail plazas* are combined, they make up approximately 43% of the total buildings found within the study area. The five buildings described as *big box store*, making up less than 1% of total buildings, contain existing home supply stores.

The smallest percentage of building types are those described as *mid-rise office buildings* (3-6 storeys) and *government / institutional buildings* both at 0.01% of total buildings.

Table 2: Building Heights

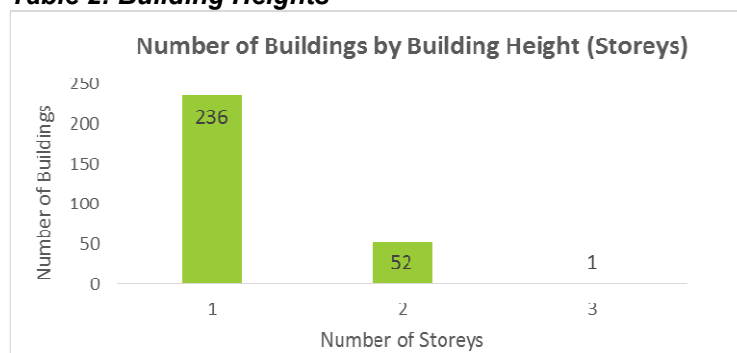
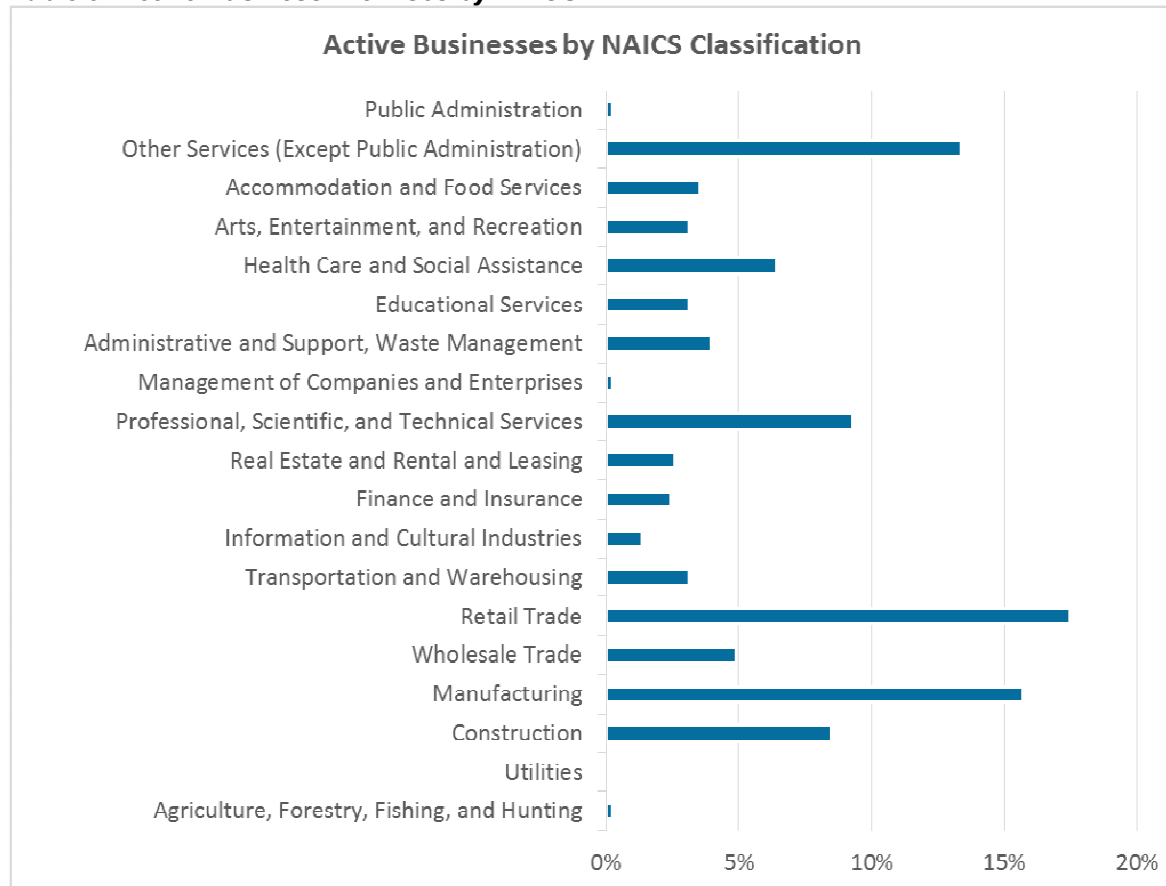


Table 2 details the buildings heights within the study area. The majority of buildings are one storey in height, with only one building reported to be greater than two storeys. Nine properties did not report on building heights within the employment survey. Upon review of the data, the building located at 465 Morden Road is reported in **table 1** as a *mid-rise office building* (3-6 storeys). However, under building height it was reported as, and is confirmed to be, two storeys.

Employment, Jobs and Space

The employment survey indicates there are approximately 732 active businesses in the study area. **Table 3** shows the active businesses by industry sector according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

The data reveals that the 'Retail Trade' sector represents the largest percentage of businesses located along Speers Road (17%) followed by 'Manufacturing' (16%) and 'Other Services' (13%). Under the NAICS classification system, these sectors include businesses such as:

Table 3: Active Business Premises by NAICS

Retail Trade: used car dealerships, automotive parts and accessories stores, home furnishing and supply stores, meat markets, optical goods stores, gas stations and convenience stores, among others.

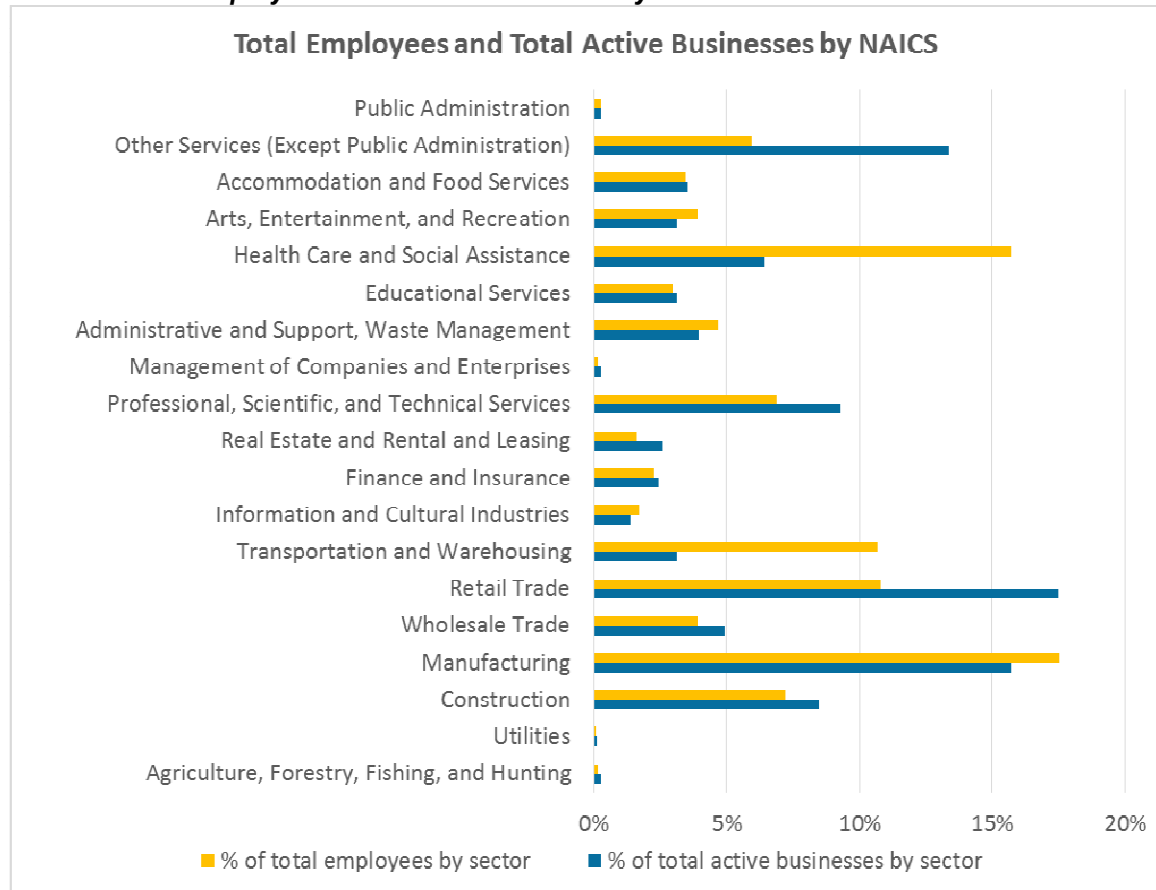
Manufacturing: breweries and wineries, printing shops, machine shops, and a range of manufacturing and fabrication shops including chemicals, medical equipment, wood cabinets, signs, and engine parts.

Other Services: general automotive repair including painting and interior repair, household goods repair, personal service establishments, dry cleaners, pet care establishments, and religious or social organizations.

In regard to jobs and employees, the survey indicates that there are approximately 6,760 employees working within the study area; 4,834 employees are full time, 1,409 are part time, and 517 work seasonally. These jobs are broken out across the

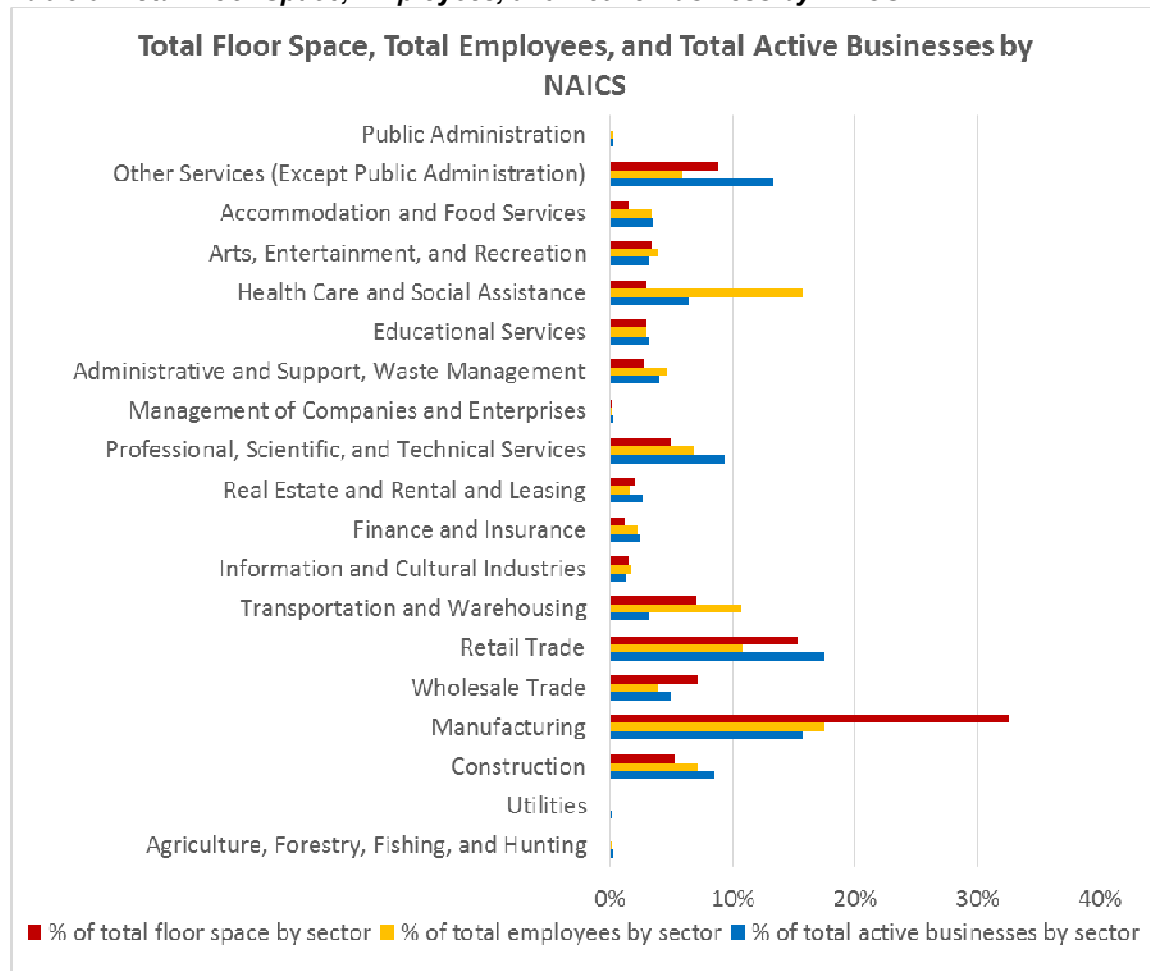
range of industry sectors. **Table 4** contrasts the percentage of total employees and the percentage of total businesses by industry sector.

Table 4: Total Employees and Total Businesses by NAICS



The comparison helps demonstrate the average number of employees per business over each industry sector. It shows that certain industries employ more people per business resulting in a higher average number of employees per business. For example, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry employs many people compared to the number of business premises within the study area. This indicates that, within the study area, this industry sector has a high average number of employees per business. It also demonstrates that industries such as Retail Trade and Other Services, which represent a significant proportion of the businesses in the study area, have a lower average number of employees per business.

The data also provides information on total floor space for active businesses. When showing this information by industry sector, an overall picture of employment density begins to emerge. **Table 5** provides a comparison.

Table 5: Total Floor Space, Employees, and Active Business by NAICS

When contrasting the percentage of floor space to the percentage of employees in each industry sector, **Table 5** shows that the Manufacturing sector has significantly larger floor space requirements per employee than other industry sectors. This results in typically lower employment densities per business. Notwithstanding, the manufacturing sector is still identified as one of the highest employers by percentage of employees within the Speers Road study area.

Industry sectors such as the Health Care and Social Assistance, and Transportation and Warehousing show relatively high employment densities given their overall space requirements. However, when looking at these industry sectors, employee data was collected for employees that worked “onsite” and “offsite”. In both cases, these sectors have employers that have a large portion of offsite employees that contribute to what might otherwise attribute to high employment densities. In the Health Care and Social Assistance Sector, a large employer reported numerous off-

site part time and off-site seasonal workers who travel to residents' homes to provide health care services. In the Transportation and Warehouse sector, many employees were listed to work offsite providing deliveries (Canada Post).

When considering employment density across the entire study area, the study area is approximately 217 hectares (gross) and the total number employees within the study area is approximately 6,760 (all employees). As such, there would be an overall job density of approximately 31 jobs per hectare. However, given the dynamic nature of employment and employee working conditions, this does not necessarily provide the fulsome picture of employment densities in this area.

Vacant Land

There are very few vacant parcels of land within the Speers Road corridor study area. According to the Employment and Commercial Review – Employment Land Supply, there are only four vacant parcels of land within the study area. Since the time the supply inventory was conducted, the property located at 209-233 Speers Road, identified as vacant in the review, has been developed into a two story office plaza with accessory service commercial uses. Of the three remaining vacant parcels identified, all are located on the south side of Speers Road with two designated Office Employment, and the other Business Commercial.

Given the limited availability of vacant land, intensification that takes place within the study area will likely be a result of property redevelopment, a change of use of the property to a more intense use, the expansion of existing buildings, or the result of property consolidation and redevelopment.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

A review of recent development applications along the Speers Road Corridor was conducted. There have been a limited number of recent development applications. The following table provides an overview of the most recent applications. The review did not include applications to the committee of adjustment.

There have also been a few recent pre-consultation meetings with prospective applicants looking to also expand existing facilities on Speers Road or redevelop the property for service commercial and office type uses. There are no known applications imminent or occurring that have triggered a development process larger than a site plan application.

From: Planning Services Department
 Date: March 6, 2017
 Subject: Speers Road Corridor Study

Location	Application Type	Description of Proposal	Status
235 Speers Rd	Site Plan	To construct four, two-storey commercial/office buildings.	Approved
427 Speers Rd	Site Plan	To add a second story addition.	In circulation
529 Speers Rd	Site Plan	To construct a 621sq.m addition to an existing 880sq.m industrial building.	In circulation
2285 Speers Rd	Site Plan	To construct an addition to an existing metal fabrication facility.	Completed
1060 Speers Rd	Site Plan	To build a one storey addition at the back of an existing two storey building.	In circulation

ZONING AND CONFORMITY

Since Zoning By-law 2014-014 was approved by Council, various zoning conformity issues have been brought to staffs' attention along Speers Road, with various uses no longer conforming to the zoning by-law. Given this, a zoning conformity review was undertaken to see if any trends in the types of uses along Speers Road which no longer conform to the zoning by-law are apparent.

To complete the review, staff used the 2015 Halton Region Employment Survey data and compared the NAICS description of each business against the applicable zoning on the property and its associated permitted uses.

29 businesses were flagged as "not conforming," meaning the business, as described by the NAICS description, does not conform to the permitted use of the property when given a comparative defined use in Zoning By-law 2014-014. An additional 49 businesses were flagged as "unsure" given the unknown nature of the specific businesses.

From: Planning Services Department
 Date: March 6, 2017
 Subject: Speers Road Corridor Study

The following table describes the flagged “non-conforming” uses found by zone:

Zone	NAICS Description	Comparative Use under Zoning By-law 2014-014
E1	Other home furnishings merchant wholesalers	Wholesaling
	Red meat and meat product merchant wholesalers	
	Professional machinery equipment and supplies merchant wholesalers	
	Toy and hobby goods merchant wholesalers	
	Pet care (except veterinary) services	Pet care establishment
	Automotive glass replacement shop	Motor vehicle repair facility
	General automotive repair	
	All other automotive repair and maintenance	
E2	Gasoline station with convenience store	Motor vehicle service station
	All other gambling industries	Place of entertainment
E3	Passenger car rental	Motor vehicle rental facility
	Used car dealers	Motor vehicle dealership
	Motorcycle boat and other motor vehicle dealers	
E4	Stationary and office supplies merchant wholesalers	Wholesaling
	Office and store machinery and equipment merchant wholesalers	
	Plumbing heating and AC equipment and supplies merchant wholesaling	
	Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	Manufacturing
	Wood cabinet and counter top manufacturing	
	Commercial and service industry machinery manufacturing	
	Other plate work and fabricated structural product manufacturing	
	Other ornamental and architectural metal product manufacturing	
	General warehousing and storage	Warehousing

Staff visited each of the sites deemed “non-conforming” based on the table top exercise noted above. During the site visits and a visual inspection of the property, four businesses looked as though they would conform given their retail nature within the Business Commercial E4 zone (e.g. wood cabinet and counter top

From: Planning Services Department
Date: March 6, 2017
Subject: Speers Road Corridor Study

manufacturing), and three businesses had closed and were replaced by new businesses.

In review of the general types of uses that were flagged as either “not conforming” or “unsure,” the majority of uses fell into the category of wholesaling, while a lesser number of uses being a motor vehicle related use. A few anomalies such as pet care establishments and places of entertainment were also identified.

ASSESSMENT & DIRECTIONS

Speers Road is an important east-west corridor across the town between Bronte Road in the west to Cross Avenue in the east. It provides a direct link between the town’s two major transit stations being the Bronte GO station; an emerging Major Transit Station Area and focus for future intensification, and Oakville GO station; the town’s Urban Growth Centre and Metrolinx Mobility Hub.

The Livable Oakville Plan identifies Speers Road as a corridor and a Special Study Area. The plan states that “corridors represent general linear areas along major arterial roads. These areas provide a linkage between nodes and can provide for various functions including support for *employment areas* or as a buffer to residential neighbourhoods. Corridors generally contain a mix of uses, many in transition and many unrelated or connected in form or function. Corridors are recognized for their potential for *intensification* due to their location along major transit routes, and as in many cases, because they contain numerous vacant or underutilized lands.” As evidenced through the policy review and contextual assessment of Speers Road, the Speers Road corridor is accurately described by this statement in the Livable Oakville Plan.

While already identified as a corridor, the policy review highlights the emerging importance of Speers Road as a transit priority corridor and a key component of the region-wide priority transportation network. This is evidence in many emerging Provincial, Regional and local planning documents and plans. As such, an emphasis on increased transit access and mobility along Speers Road should be a key priority for future policy, including transit-supportive, mixed-use employment and commercial development.

The policy review has brought forward interesting contrasts in planning for the corridor as it is considered both an “Employment Area” and an “Intensification Area” in the Region of Halton Official Plan and the town’s Livable Oakville Plan. Various policies under these two frameworks do not fully align with one another creating a unique opportunity to further establish these frameworks as they apply to Speers Road.

The contextual assessment of Speers Road indicates that there are numerous types of employment and commercial uses located along the corridor, many of which are unrelated or connected in form or function. A review of existing uses indicates that there is a large number of retail trade, manufacturing, and general services along the corridor, many of which focus on home repair and improvement, motor vehicle parts and repair, and other motor vehicle related uses. Several existing uses do not conform to the existing policies and/or zoning.

Property parcels for a wide stretch of the corridor have relatively narrow and deep lots with a reasonably consistent lotting pattern having direct frontage on Speers Road. This lotting pattern presents a challenge in that it requires many driveway access points to individual properties. This may create undesirable conditions for transit, vehicular, and pedestrian movements along the roadway, including challenges from a streetscape perspective.

The west end of the study area between Bronte Road and Third Line has a unique character defined by larger property parcels on the north side of Speers Road, and includes lands which will form part of the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area. Uses located in this area trend toward larger industrial type uses compared to other areas along the corridor. The east end of the study area between Fourth Line and Kerr Street has a unique character defined by relatively small lots on the south side of Speers Road which will create challenges for intensification and the uses that can locate there given the property parcels are small and directly abut an existing residential community. This area trends toward having a larger commercial employment mix.

There are very few vacant parcels of land along the corridor, and the majority of buildings are one storey in height. This indicates that should intensification take place along the corridor, it would have to occur through the expansion to existing uses, the redevelopment of a property, a change in use to a more intense use, or parcel consolidation and redevelopment. To encourage intensification to take place, policies should focus on these methods of intensification.

The table below provides an assessment of the various elements identified through the Speers Road Corridor report, and provides a corresponding policy direction to be considered as the Speers Road Corridor study advances to future phases of review. This list is not exhaustive and further directions may be identified as the review continues.

From: Planning Services Department
 Date: March 6, 2017
 Subject: Speers Road Corridor Study

Assessment	Policy Direction for Consideration
Policy Format	
<p>The Livable Oakville Plan identifies Speers Road as a corridor and Special Policy Area.</p> <p>Speers Road is an emerging transit priority corridor under the Provincial Growth Plan, Halton Region's Mobility Management Strategy, and the town's ongoing Urban Structure Review.</p> <p>The Region of Halton Official Plan identifies Speers Road as an Intensification Corridor (as identified in local official plans) and requires that these areas have area-specific plans or policies.</p>	<p>Provide a specific policy section in the Livable Oakville Plan dedicated to the Speers Road Corridor. This section should include a vision statement, goals, objectives, and development concept for the corridor. This section may also include functional policies, a planned minimum density commensurate with planned transit levels, land use policies and exceptions as the case may be.</p>
Transportation and Active Transportation	
<p>A number of transportation plans, strategies and related infrastructure considerations continue to emerge for Speers Road including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of Speers Road as a <i>transit priority corridor</i> in the emerging Growth Plan, the Region of Halton Mobility Management Strategy, and the town's ongoing Urban Structure Review; • The Region of Halton Transportation Master Plan recommends Speers Road become 6 lanes for the provision of exclusive transit services; • The Town of Oakville Transportation Master Plan recommends a 6 lane cross-section for Speers Road but recognizes the previously approved Speers Road EA which contemplates a 5 lane cross section; and, 	<p>Provide policies which focus on the broad transportation objectives for the corridor, including the alignment of any transportation related improvements.</p> <p>Provide policies which work to guide or direct the future components, use, and width of the right-of-way to ensure Speers Road can achieve its function as a transit priority corridor that supports transit and multiple modes of travel including cycling and walking.</p>

From: Planning Services Department
 Date: March 6, 2017
 Subject: Speers Road Corridor Study

Assessment	Policy Direction for Consideration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town's Active Transportation Master Plan provides for bike lanes along the corridor. Findings of the ATMP update suggest the potential for buffered bike lanes. 	
<p>The next step in the Mobility Management Strategy includes an assessment of the region-wide grid network, including Speers Road, and the infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the Major Transit Station Areas. The findings would ultimately be integrated into the next Regional Transportation Master Plan update to 2041 which is being developed concurrently with the Region's 2041 Growth Management Strategy and Regional Official Plan Update.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to incorporate findings from the ongoing assessment work into policies for Speers Road.</p> <p>Provide policies which consider directions for future road improvement alternatives for Speers Road beyond the approved Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>Provide this report to the team that will assess Speers Road through this process as background information.</p>
<p>Encouraging pedestrian activity along Speers Road will be a challenge. As indicated in the ongoing Active Transportation Master Plan update, the walkability index along the corridor is low, and pedestrian volumes are low. The existing conditions along Speers Road create a challenge to address increased pedestrian movements given there are limited pedestrian access points to Speers Road from adjacent areas, there are limited pedestrian crosswalks, and with several vehicular driveways along Speers Road to adjacent business, the pedestrian environment is minimized.</p>	<p>Provide policies which focus on enhancing the public realm for pedestrians.</p> <p>Provide policies which encourage new mid-block pedestrian crossings.</p> <p>Provide policies which would act to limit the interface of vehicular driveways and areas with the pedestrian activity zone within the streetscape such as encouraging shared driveways.</p>
Land Use	
<p>The ongoing Employment and Commercial Review will consider new or revised land use policies for Employment and Commercial designations that may</p>	<p>Coordinate the development of land use policies and permitted uses for Speers Road with the ongoing Employment and Commercial Review. In this context,</p>

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<p>provide guidance for the development of land use designations for Speers Road.</p> <p>The Employment and Commercial Review directs that future policies for Speers Road recognize its existing function and should consider its function as a transitional area, identifying suitable land use designations to accommodate an appropriate and compatible range of commercial uses.</p>	<p>consider a land use policy framework that is applicable only to Speers Road given its unique character distinct from other employment areas.</p> <p>Provide policies which permit additional opportunities for commercial and service commercial type uses along the corridor.</p> <p>Continue to prohibit large format retail uses as per existing policy.</p>
<p>Through the review of existing businesses along Speers Road, the most recurring types of uses include a range of retail trade, manufacturing, and general service type uses.</p>	<p>Permit broader land use permissions along the corridor to reflect the unique context of Speers Road.</p>
<p>The Region of Halton Official Plan section 78(11) states that an objective for Intensification Areas, and more specifically for Intensification Corridors, is to accommodate local services, including recreational, cultural and entertainment uses.</p>	<p>Provide policies which consider opportunities for the integration of local services, including recreational, cultural and entertainment uses within an Employment Area context.</p>
Intensification	
<p>Through the contextual review of Speers Road there are challenges identified which may limit intensification opportunities including that there are few vacant parcels of land along the corridor, and several properties have small lot areas and/or frontages. However, most buildings in the study area are one storey, representing an opportunity.</p> <p>Given these characteristics, intensification along the corridor could occur through the expansion to existing uses, the redevelopment of a property, a change in use to a more intense use, or</p>	<p>Provide policies which encourage intensification throughout the corridor which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging property consolidation for the purpose of future redevelopment; • Discouraging severances which further fragment the lotting fabric and preclude future intensification opportunities; and, • Requiring a minimum building height of 2 storeys at the time of property redevelopment.

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parcel consolidation and redevelopment.	Consideration may also need to be given to provide permissions for one storey building heights for industrial type uses such as warehousing or a similar type of associated use that is typically located within a one storey structure.
<p>The contextual review shows that Speers Road is approximately six kilometres in length and has one bus route along the full length of the corridor. This creates a challenge for where to focus intensification efforts.</p> <p>However, Speers Road has three north-south intersections with arterial roads that have direct access to the QEW including Bronte Road, Third Line, and Dorval Drive. These roads also have transit routes that connect to the broader community. The area around Third Line also forms part of the future Bronte GO Major Transit Station study area. Speers Road also intersects with the Kerr Village Growth Area which is already planned to accommodate future mixed-use development and provides for numerous transit connections and transit-supportive developments. As such, these locations may be strategic locations to accommodate growth and focus future employment/commercial intensification along the corridor.</p>	Provide policies which direct intensification to specified locations along the corridor that have direct access to broader transportation connections including transit, and to the east end to the study area adjacent to the existing Kerr Village Growth Area.
Compatibility	
The entirety of the corridor is located adjacent to an existing residential community to the south. As such, compatibility considerations are required.	<p>To encourage a compatible transition between the residential area and employment area, provide policies which may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the types of uses that may cause adverse impacts to adjacent residential properties;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider lower building heights adjacent to residential properties; and, Consider appropriate landscape buffering.
Urban Design	
<p>Given the emergence of Speers Road as a transit priority corridor, an increasing focus to encourage and integrate active transportation options, and given the ongoing Speers Road Environmental Assessment detailed design work, urban design elements should be considered which work to enhance the design and function of the corridor.</p> <p>Further, the Region of Halton Official Plan section 81(4) b) requires that local municipalities develop urban design guidelines for intensification areas to promote active transportation and transit supportive land uses.</p>	<p>Provide urban design policies which promote active transportation and transit supportive land uses including things such as land use integration with transit and transportation facilities, public realm improvements, mobility and built form.</p> <p>Provide a policy which commits the town to develop urban design guidelines for the Speers Road corridor to be included as part of the Livable by Design Manual.</p>
Parking	
<p>Existing policies in both the Region of Halton Official Plan and the Livable Oakville Plan encourage the minimization of surface parking areas as a means to promote intensification and transit-oriented built form and uses.</p>	<p>Provide policies which address the preferred arrangement of parking facilities along the corridor such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting reduced surface parking; Encouraging underground parking; and, Encouraging parking areas which contribute to transit-supportive built form and an enhanced streetscape including limiting front yard parking.
Zoning	
<p>The zoning conformity exercise revealed that there are several existing uses along the corridor that do not conform to their applicable zoning. These uses typically</p>	<p>As per the 'Land Use' section of this table, provide additional opportunities for commercial and service commercial type uses along the corridor so as to establish</p>

Assessment	Policy Direction for Consideration
included wholesaling, and motor vehicle related uses. A few anomalies such as pet care establishments and places of entertainment were also identified.	appropriate use permissions to be implemented through updated zoning. Furthermore, provide policies which consider opportunities for the integration of local services, including recreational, cultural and entertainment uses within an Employment Area context.
Other Studies, Strategies or Processes	
Bronte GO Station is identified as Major Transit Station Area and is recognized as a separate study under the Official Plan Review Work Plan.	Consider the draft study area for the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area project, as presented in Appendix B of this report, as a basis for when the project commences.
Given the existing uses within the Speers Road corridor study area, there may be contaminated sites or areas which place challenges on any intensification objectives for the corridor.	Provide policies to encourage brownfield remediation. Encourage that any Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy developed for the town provide a focus on Speers Road so as to help achieve broader intensification objectives for the transit priority corridor.

NEXT STEPS

On October 3, 2016, the subcommittee received an updated work plan for the Five Year Official Plan Review. The work plan indicates the following for the Speers Road Corridor Study:

- Q1 2017 – Directions Report
- Q2 2017 – Public Consultation
- Q3 2017 – Statutory Public Meeting (PDC)
- Q4 2017 – Decisions Making Meeting (PDC)

This timeframe is aggressive and must continue to be coordinated with larger implementation projects such as the town's Urban Structure Review and Employment and Commercial Review, the Region of Halton's ongoing Mobility Management Strategy and its Official Plan Review. Several policy changes to the

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Growth Plan through the Province's ongoing Coordinated Land Use Review may also have policy implications for Speers Road. It is likely that this review will extend beyond Q4 2017.

The next steps for the Speers Road Corridor study is public consultation. Public consultation is an essential part of the planning process in Oakville. This study will likely require a range of consultation meetings, open houses, or workshops to gather input from the public, business owners, land owners, and other technical agencies. Staff continue to explore public consultation options that would produce valuable input and feedback and suggestions from the subcommittee are welcomed.

Given the large number of planning initiatives underway which touch on Speers Road in some capacity, staff are considering convening a technical advisory team of internal town and regional staff to discuss all the various projects and explore opportunities to coordinate these planning efforts.

CONCLUSION

This is the first report on the Speers Road Corridor Study providing a review of the policy documents, plans and current development context which may impact the long-term land uses and intensification opportunities along Speers Road.

The review highlights that Speers Road has a unique character that is different from other employment areas and that broadened commercial and service commercial uses should be provided. The review highlights that there are generally three distinct districts along the corridor from Bronte Road to Third Line, Third Line to Fourth Line, and Fourth Line to Kerr Street. These three districts, defined by their distinct uses, locational context, and lotting patterns, may provide insight for future policy development.

The review highlights that Speers Road is an emerging Transit Priority Corridor and a key component of the region-wide transportation network. The integration of all transportation modes, including active transportation and transit, will be a key priority for the corridor. A greater urban design focus is required in order to achieve a transit-supportive environment, and to consider compatible development for lands adjacent to existing residential neighbourhoods.

CONSIDERATIONS

(A) PUBLIC

There will be public engagement opportunities built into the Speers Road Corridor Study process. Staff continue to explore options for engaging the public.

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(B) FINANCIAL

None arising from this report.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Coordination with other departments will be required as part of the study.

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- be accountable in everything we do
- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

The Speers Road Corridor Study will work to enhance the social, economic and environmental aspects of the community.

APPENDIX A – Speers Road Corridor Study Area

APPENDIX B – Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area – Study Area

APPENDIX C – Zoning By-law 2014-014, Employment Zones

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