

REPORT

LIVABLE OAKVILLE (OFFICIAL PLAN) COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: August 31, 2017

SUBJECT: Speers Road Corridor Study - Draft Policies

LOCATION: Speers Road

WARD: Multiple Wards: 1 and 2

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RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the report titled *Speers Road Corridor Study - Draft Policies*, be received;
- 2) That staff proceed to engage with the public on the draft policies in coordination with public consultation events being held for the Employment and Commercial Review.

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 commencing the Official Plan Review and identified that the Speers Road Corridor Study would form part of the Official Plan Review.
- On March 20, 2017, the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee received a report titled "Speers Road Corridor Study". The report provided a detailed review of policies and plans which may impact planning for the corridor, including a detailed assessment of the corridor. The report provided policy directions for consideration during the policy development phase of the study.

- Since the March 20, 2017 report, various policy frameworks have continued to emerge and new policies have come into effect including the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017).
- This report brings forward draft policies for the Speers Road Corridor Special Policy Area for discussion purposes and future public consultation.

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.”

Study Area

The study area includes the lands within the boundary created by the following:

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

The study area is comprised of the employment area located along Speers Road as well as a small portion of the Kerr Village Main Street Growth Area for contextual purposes in order to assess opportunities for land use compatibility and integration with this adjacent mixed use area. The draft policies for the Speers Road Corridor Special Policy Area would apply only to the lands within the existing employment area. The lands within the Kerr Village Main Street Growth Area continue to be subject to their own detailed policies in the Livable Oakville Plan which are currently under review as part of the Kerr Village Growth Area Review.

POLICY CONTEXT UPDATES

Since the Speers Road Corridor Study report was provided to the Subcommittee on March 20, 2017, various policy documents have continued to emerge and some have come into effect. The following section provides an update on these documents.

Province of Ontario - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017)

The Province released the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) in May 2017 and it came into effect July 1, 2017. 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 decisions made on or after July 1, 2017 in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter must conform to the Growth Plan, subject to any legislative or regulatory provisions providing otherwise. As such, municipal official plans are required to be updated to conform to the Growth Plan.

Under the Growth Plan and as directed by the Town's emerging urban structure (discussed in the next section of this report), the Speers Road Corridor is both a strategic growth area and an employment area. The area around the Bronte GO Station, which is located along the corridor, is identified as a major transit station area on a priority transit corridor (i.e. Lakeshore West GO Line). These terms are defined in the Growth Plan as follows:

Strategic Growth Areas – Within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic growth areas include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.

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.

Major Transit Station Area – 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 500 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

In developing draft policies for the Speers Road Corridor, the policies of the new Growth Plan (2017) have been reviewed and incorporated where applicable. The following are a sample of relevant policies for the Speers Road Corridor Study:

2.2.2 Delineated Built-up Areas

4. All municipalities will develop a strategy to achieve the minimum intensification target and intensification throughout delineated built-up areas, which will:
 - a) encourage *intensification* generally to achieve the desired urban structure;
 - b) identify the appropriate type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas;
 - c) identify *strategic growth areas* to support achievement of the intensification target and recognize them as a key focus for development;
 - d) ensure lands are zoned and development is designed in a manner that supports the achievement of *complete communities*;
 - e) prioritize planning and investment in *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* that will support *intensification*; and
 - f) be implemented through official plan policies and designations, updated zoning and other supporting documents.

2.2.4 Transit Corridors and Station Areas

3. Major transit station areas on priority transit corridors or subway lines will be planned for a minimum density target of:
 - c) 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by the GO Transit rail network.
6. Within *major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors* or subway lines, land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of the minimum density targets in this Plan will be prohibited.

2.2.5 Employment

1. Economic development and competitiveness in the GGH will be promoted by:
 - a) making more efficient use of existing *employment areas* and vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities;
 - c) planning to better connect areas with high employment densities to transit; and
 - d) integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.
2. *Major office* and appropriate major institutional development will be directed to *urban growth centres, major transit station areas* or other *strategic growth areas* with existing or planned *frequent transit* service.
3. Retail and office uses will be directed to locations that support *active transportation* and have existing or planned transit.
4. In planning for employment, surface parking will be minimized and the development of *active transportation* networks and *transit-supportive* built form will be facilitated.
5. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, will each develop an employment strategy that:
 - a) establishes a minimum density target for all *employment areas*, measured in jobs per hectare, that reflects the current and anticipated type and scale of employment that characterizes the employment areas and aligns with policy 2.2.5.1;
 - b) identifies opportunities for the intensification of *employment areas* on sites that support *active transportation* and are served by existing or planned transit; and
 - c) will be implemented through a *municipal comprehensive review*, including official plan policies and designations and zoning by-laws.
7. Municipalities will plan for all *employment areas* within *settlement areas*, with the exception of any *prime employment areas*, by:

- a) prohibiting residential uses and limiting other *sensitive land uses* that are not ancillary to the primary employment use;
 - b) prohibiting *major retail* uses or establishing a size or scale threshold for any *major retail* uses that are permitted and prohibit any *major retail* uses that would exceed that threshold; and
 - c) integrating *employment areas* with adjacent non-employment areas and developing vibrant, mixed-use areas and *innovation hubs*, where appropriate.
11. Any change to an official plan to permit new or expanded opportunities for *major retail* in an *employment area* may occur only through a *municipal comprehensive review* undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.5.9.
12. The retail sector will be supported by promoting compact *built form* and *intensification* of retail and service uses and areas and encouraging the integration of those uses with other land uses to support the achievement of *complete communities*.

Town of Oakville Official Plan Review – Urban Structure

The Town's Urban Structure Review has continued to emerge. A Statutory Public Meeting was held at Planning and Development Council on June 12, 2017 where council received a draft Official Plan Amendment that would, if approved, introduce a newly revised Urban Structure into the Livable Oakville Plan.

The draft amendments provide a framework for how the town will accommodate required growth to 2041, while protecting natural heritage, open space and cultural heritage, maintaining the character of residential areas and directing growth to an identified system of nodes and corridors.

With regard to Speers Road, the urban structure identifies the Speers Road Corridor as an Employment Area and Employment Mixed Use Corridor which is to provide for a mix of employment uses and non-traditional employment development. Employment areas are to be planned to accommodate more compact, transit-supportive development which is pedestrian-oriented with a range of employment-supportive amenities.

The urban structure also identifies the Speers Road Corridor as a Major Transportation Corridor and a Transit Priority Corridor which form the foundation of the Town's multi-modal transportation system, providing connectivity throughout the Town and Region. As a Transit Priority Corridor there is an additional focus on

connecting people via transit to local destinations including nodes, mobility hubs, major transit station areas and employment areas. Transit priority corridors provide a focus for transit-supportive development.

Town of Oakville Official Plan Review – Employment and Commercial Review

The Town-wide Employment and Commercial Review has continued to emerge. Draft policy changes and directions for related projects have now been prepared by staff following an assessment of the consultant's completed work and the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) which was released and put into effect after the consultant's study was completed.

The staff direction from this ongoing review continues to indicate that Speers Road is an employment area and should recognize the existing function and uses along the corridor which provide for a broader mix of uses compared to other employment areas. The Speers Road Corridor Study has been closely aligned with this review and has been coordinated to the extent possible.

Transportation Related Matters

Speers Road is currently classified as a Multi-Purpose Arterial in the Livable Oakville Plan and permits a 35 metre right-of-way. However, the policies in the Plan note that additional road rights-of-way may be required to provide lands for pedestrian and cycling facilities and transit priority measures, among other matters. These matters are beginning to emerge for the Speers Road Corridor.

The Speers Road Environmental Assessment Study, completed in September 2009, was undertaken for Speers Road from Bronte Road to Kerr Street. A preferred design recommended the roadway be reconstructed to a 35 metre right-of-way with 5 lanes throughout containing 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.

However, the Halton Region's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) completed in October 2011, and the Town's TMP completed in February 2013, recommend that Speers Road be widened to 6 lanes as part of road-specific infrastructure improvements. Nonetheless, 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 (35 metres).

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In February 2017, Speers Road was identified as a Transit Priority Corridor in Halton Region's Mobility Management Strategy, providing a vital corridor for inter-regional transportation connections. The strategy also identified the area near the Bronte GO station as an area where defined transit priority requirements are to be identified, including a Speers Road Environmental Assessment Addendum.

Furthermore, on July 10, 2017, Town Council approved an update to the Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) with public comment being accepted through to August 25, 2017 before finalizing the document. The ATMP recommends sidewalk connections and buffered bikes lanes along the entire length of Speers Road, which provides enhanced facilities over the previous ATMP. These improvements are to be phased in over the short and long term.

Speers Road is evolving and will continue to evolve over the coming years with further work to be undertaken through updates to Halton Region's Mobility Management Strategy, TMP, and road rationalization process, as well as updates to the Town of Oakville TMP. In the interim, policies have been devised to assist in protecting lands for future anticipated improvement works.

DRAFT POLICIES

The draft policies for the Speers Road Corridor are attached as **Appendix A**. The format and policy numbering suggests that the policies would form part of Part E Section 26, Special Policy Areas, in the Livable Oakville Plan.

The draft policies are for discussion purposes only. They are intended to solicit feedback from the subcommittee as well as from the public, stakeholder and agencies at a future public consultation event. The draft policy changes will be subject to future revisions, deletions and additions as necessary and appropriate.

The policies have been formulated based on:

- findings and policy directions from the Speers Road Corridor Study report received by the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee on March 20, 2017;
- input received by the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee;
- ongoing review of new and emerging policies including the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017), the town's emerging Urban Structure, and ongoing transportation related projects at the Region and Town; and,
- consultation with various town departments, Halton Region by way of input through the Employment and Commercial Review, and initial meetings with property and business owners located on Speers Road.

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Transitional Land Uses

As part of the development of draft policies for the Speers Road Corridor Study, the area of Speers Road adjacent to the Kerr Village Main Street Growth Area has been identified as a transitional area. This area is to be a focus for compatible intensification opportunities which integrate the employment area with the adjacent growth area to create a vibrant, mixed use area. These draft policies are per the direction of Growth Plan policy 2.2.5.7 c).

As this area continues to evolve, and given there are a number of small lots in this area, specifically on the south side of Speers Road, further exploration of appropriate transitional uses could be explored to enable a viable mixed use area.

NEXT STEPS

On June 12, 2017, 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 – Completed and presented on March 20, 2017

Q3: 2017 – Draft Policy Changes / Public Consultation

Q4: 2017 – Statutory Public Meeting (Draft OPA) (Planning & Development Council)

Q1: 2018 – Decision Meeting (Planning & Development Council)

This report satisfies the Q3 draft policy changes report and provides a starting point for discussions and public consultation to help further inform the development of a draft Official Plan Amendment. The timeline noted for Q4 is subject to change and must be coordinated with other ongoing Official Plan Review projects such as the Employment and Commercial Review. It is currently anticipated that the Decision Meeting for the Speers Road Corridor Special Policy Area will occur in **Q1 2018**.

CONCLUSION

This is the second report on the Speers Road Corridor Study and provides draft policy changes for discussion purpose to act as a starting point for soliciting public comment.

The draft policies highlight that Speers Road has a unique character that is different from other employment areas and that broadened arterial commercial and service commercial uses should be provided. The policies highlight that there are 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

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distinct uses, locational context, and lotting patterns, will influence available development opportunities in these areas.

The draft policies note that Speers Road is to become a Transit Priority Corridor and a key component of the region-wide transportation network and work toward integrating all transportation modes, including active transportation and transit, as a key objective for the corridor.

CONSIDERATIONS

(A) PUBLIC

There will be public engagement opportunities built into the Speers Road Corridor Study process in coordination with the Employment and Commercial Review. Staff continue to explore options for engaging the public.

(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 – Draft Policies: Speers Road Corridor Special Policy Area

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