

**Delegation by Gary Scobie to Planning & Development Comm.**

**Re: Downtown Mobility Hub & Proposed Official Plan**

**Date: April 24, 2018.**

I want to apologize for some wrong information I presented earlier to Council. I stated that both Downtown Burlington and the Burlington GO Station were Urban Growth Centres assigned by the Province. I have been corrected by Planning staff and I thank them for this. Only the Downtown has an Urban Growth Centre designation, much like downtowns in other cities. Oakville did move their Growth Centre to the Mid-town Trafalgar GO Station. We need to do the same in Burlington.

There is a rush to replace our Official Plan with a new one. There is also the feeling that the new Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, or LPAT, along with a new OP will help us gain control of our downtown redevelopment. Unfortunately this is not the case.

Developers are opportunistic. They see a current situation of a very flexible and malleable OP along with the protection of Urban Growth Centre and Mobility Hub designations for the downtown as guaranteeing the height they want to build over many blocks of the downtown. They are absolutely correct in their assessment.

The designations provide no height limits whatsoever on buildings. They provide minimum resident and job standards only, which the developers capitalize on with their arguments for continued height growth and proliferation of tall buildings downtown, against resident wishes.

The new Official Plan, without Transit and Transportation Plans will only be a shell of a document when it comes to protecting the downtown from over-intensification. Packing many people in a small geographic area of Burlington without a way for them to better move to the GO Station will not solve any problem of the downtown, only worsen the congestion problem.

The ideas of many precincts in the new Official Plan, each hand-picked for certain heights is the gift to developers that just keeps on giving. Developers know that their one-off projects in one location each time only need justification for that certain location.

The City must defend every precinct they have set up with complete, detailed proper justifications unique for each one. These they do not have. Developers need only point to the Urban Growth Centre and Mobility Hub minimum growth targets and other nearby buildings already approved or constructed, even in neighbouring precincts, as justification for height beyond what the City wants. The City will get no help from the Province in defending their new Official Plan as long as the twin designations loom above us, just as the twin gateway buildings will soon loom above us at the James and Brant corner.

We are currently stuck with a pretend Mobility Hub in the Downtown. We have a Council that says it cares about the downtown redevelopment, yet approves inappropriate height on

Brant Street and cannot present a valid case to the OMB to stop inappropriate height on Lakeshore Road. The over-arching demand of high density through proliferation of high buildings in the downtown is guaranteed to continue as long the Province has the hammer over our heads. Everything we do downtown in the future is governed by these intensification demands placed by the Province through the twin designations. The LPAT rules acknowledge this and the multi-precinct approach in the new Official Plan will lead to undefendable reasoning against the precedents already set and the lack of justifications to stop tall buildings where developers desire them.

We have only one defence available to regain control of our downtown for sensible, controllable growth. That is to petition the Province to remove the Mobility Hub designation from the Downtown and to move the Urban Growth Centre designation from the Downtown to the Burlington GO Station.

You can't do that effectively if you are passing a shell of a new Official Plan at the same time. You need to at least keep the current Official Plan in place as an example of our attempt to manage growth downtown in a gentler manner while you argue our case to the Province for removing the high intensification rules from the downtown.

Will you show the citizens in this meaningful way that you do care about our downtown and what it is to become and set this new Official Plan aside while you pursue a better avenue to protect our downtown from the over-intensification that is currently heading toward us like a freight train that will come off the rails?

Thank you.