

July 16, 2018

Mayor Goldring and Members of Council
City of Burlington
426 Brant Street
PO Box 5013
Burlington, Ontario
L7R 3Z6

Via email: debbie.hordyk@burlington.ca

Dear Mayor Goldring and Members of Council:

**RE: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP – JULY 12, 2018
Aldershot GO and Appleby GO Mobility Hubs (Staff Report PB-65-18)**

MHBC is retained by Penta Properties (“Penta”) in relation to the properties located at 4415, 4445, and 4460 - 4490 Fairview Street, 4450 and 4480 Paletta Court and 1200 King Road, in the City of Burlington. These properties are located in the Appleby and Aldershot Mobility Hub Special Policy Areas.

As a major landowner in the mobility hub areas, Penta has continued to participate in the mobility hub studies over the past two years and has submitted numerous written comments to staff and Council. They have also met with the mobility hub staff to discuss their concerns and we recently presented comments on April 23, 2018, in relation to the above noted properties, as part of Council’s consideration of the City’s new Official Plan.

We understand Council participated in a workshop related to the updated draft precinct plans for the Aldershot GO and Appleby GO mobility hubs on July 12, 2018. The staff report provided ahead of the upcoming Council workshop (PB-65-18) provides updated draft precinct plans and policy directions for Council’s review and input. While we are supportive of the development of the Special Policy Areas through a comprehensive planning process, we believe there are a number of general questions as well as specific ones related to Penta’s properties, that we would like to highlight for Council given that we cannot delegate to Council at this meeting.

In our opinion, there is a concern that directions will be entrenched within the precinct plans before a proper foundation has been laid for those plans. There is a fundamental difference in approach between what staff has undertaken to date and what we believe is essential to grounding the plans in fact. Without a more thorough and rigorous understanding and integration of the facts “on the ground”, there is a strong likelihood that whatever plans are adopted by Council, they will not be able to be implemented and will, therefore, not be practical guides for future development that contribute to the City’s planning objectives for the mobility hubs.

Plans disconnected from realistic development opportunities and constraints do not advance visionary planning- they impede it. We would welcome the opportunity to speak to these fundamental concerns with Council before commitments are made and directions are entrenched.

General Questions and Concerns

- 1) The three mobility hub studies were commenced in April 2017 based on a work program approved by Council in July 2016 (PB-48-16). In the initial work program there was a detailed outline of the phasing for the development of the plans including a Technical Review (Phase 1) which was to establish the land use and design framework. One of the most important elements of any comprehensive land use planning study is a capacity/constraints analysis which should include an inventory of existing uses. This study, along with several other studies (market value and land economics, office study, water and wastewater analysis, functional servicing, environmental evaluation) were to be completed to establish the planning framework. The results of this work was to be summarized.
- 2) There are a series of memorandums (appendices to PB-76-17) that are noted as summarizing the technical review. These memorandums address projected density for the hubs and confirm the existing servicing infrastructure for the areas. Having reviewed the summary memorandums, we would request that the full studies that were undertaken as part of this technical work be provided for public review. It is not clear that any technical work or analysis related to the capacity for growth was undertaken in the hub. There are no land use inventories completed and it is not clear how the integration of land uses is and phasing of redevelopment to create complete communities is being achieved?
- 3) Following the limited technical work completed, detailed plans have now evolved for public input. The feasibility of these plans, however, is yet to be tested in relation to actual constraints and market analysis. This is clearly stated in the current staff report. We believe from our experience in developing land use plans, the more appropriate approach to the development of the plans is to first define all parameters of constraints and capacity in order to develop a plan that is evidence based. The next step would be to present that plan to the public and stakeholders to determine, within that framework, the level and form of intensification that is possible. It is not clear that the current plans have been based on this approach.

Given the methodology used by staff, how will changes to the plans impact the preliminary projections? If land use constraints are identified at this later stage, how will the plan accommodate the growth needs?

There has been no analysis of the feasibility of the form and heights of the proposed “urban employment” uses or the compatibility of the retention of the “employment” uses given the nature of such uses. Again, should development constraints from studies of existing employment uses establish areas of influence related to noise and emissions, how will staff address these issues given that they have already fixed development blocks with heights and densities for uses? We believe this should have been a fundamental first step in the planning process.

- 4) Staff have indicated that transportation studies are currently being completed. These studies have therefore not informed the appropriateness of the proposed land uses and locations or capacity. Again, the technical work required to ground the feasibility of the land use framework has yet to

be completed and we question how valid the assumptions are that have been used to frame the precinct plans at this stage.

Appleby GO

As noted, Penta is a major landowner in the Appleby GO mobility hub. As such, specific comments and questions on the Appleby GO mobility hub preferred concept have been forwarded to staff and we would appreciate Council's discussion of the following:

- 1) 4450 Paletta Court should be included in the mobility hub area. This has repeatedly been requested as it is under the same ownership as the neighboring 4480 Paletta Court property which is included. In order to allow for any future redevelopment opportunities, both properties should be considered within the Area Specific Plan.
- 2) On the property located at 4415 Fairview Street, the plans now identify a symbol for a future park. Again, park needs, sizes and locations should be established once the precinct plan has been established based on a full technical review. We believe that it is premature to predetermine park sizes or approximate locations, without a full capacity and compatibility assessment.
- 3) The draft precinct plan shows the property at 4480 Paletta Court as "Urban Employment". The term "Urban Employment" is not defined other than a reference to compact built form. Given the shift towards knowledge based jobs that require a range of supportive uses, including residential to be integrated as part of a complete community, why are such uses not defined or discussed?

As noted in past comments, we question why staff are advancing a detailed land use plan, ahead of any detailed studies, at this stage. It is acknowledged by City staff that this mobility hub is significantly constrained due to the existence of very little vacant/undeveloped land. Future redevelopment will be very gradual. If the City wants to see redevelopment in this area, as one of the City's main intensification areas, a much greater level of flexibility should be considered to encourage redevelopment and intensification opportunities, while still protecting the City's employment needs.

Aldershot GO

Our comments and questions on the Aldershot GO mobility hub precinct plan are as follows:

- 1) Why are there no land uses shown on the western portion of 1200 King Road? This property is an important part of the Aldershot GO mobility hub as one of the only undeveloped parcels of land but remains noted as "Under Review". We are advised that these lands were addressed as part of Minutes of Settlement between Paletta and the City back in 2009. It is unclear how the proposed precinct plan reflects those Minutes.
- 2) Why is the future south service road not shown on the precinct plan? Has the City decided that this road is no longer needed? We are advised that this is not consistent with the 2009 Minutes of Settlement. It is important that the plans for these lands be advanced in alignment with the future policy framework.

We look forward to continuing to work with staff through the process which should appropriately consider future land uses and opportunities in a comprehensive, transparent and collaborative way. In our opinion,

it is essential that Council hear directly from stakeholders at this critical juncture before directions in the plans are entrenched. We thank Council for their consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,

MHBC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dana', written over the printed name.

Dana Anderson, MA, MCIP, RPP
Partner

Cc: Angelo Paletta, Penta Properties
Scott Snider, Turkstra Mazza
Rosa Bustamante, City of Burlington