

**To:** Committee Chair Shawna Stolte and members of the Committee of the Whole - Workshop

**From:** Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

**Cc:** Tim Commisso, Interim City Manager, Heather MacDonald, Chief Planner and Director of City Building; Leah Smith, Manager of Policy and Research

**Date:** March 15, 2019

**Re:** Background on Downtown Motions for Official Plan Review Workshop, March 18

---

Dear colleagues,

In preparation for our discussion on Monday, March 18, regarding the Official Plan Review (OPR) Workshop, I wanted to circulate, as background, the motions related to the downtown that I brought forward during the last term of council. They were presented at the Jan. 23, 2018 Planning and Development Committee with a final vote at Council on Jan. 29, 2018.

Height and density in the downtown is a matter of significant concern for residents, and something we all heard about during the most recent municipal election.

These motions will form the basis of some of the items I'll want to discuss as part of the OPR. These motions aim to strike a better balance between growth and intensification downtown, and the community's vision for more moderate scale.

For clarity, I will not be putting these motions on the floor during the workshop but am simply giving advanced notice that I would like them to be included for discussion as part of the OPR work we are undertaking.

The key motions are:

1. Direct staff to discuss with the Region and Province the possibility of removing the mobility hub classification for the downtown and shifting the Urban Growth Centre (UGC) to the Burlington GO station;
2. Retain the current height restriction of 4 storeys (with permission to go to 8 storeys with community benefits) for the Downtown Core Precinct. It was approved in the new Official Plan at 12-17 storeys, inclusive of parking and/or office space;
3. Height restriction of 3 storeys along Brant Street with permission to go to 11 storeys along John Street frontage, only with the provision of community benefits;
4. Add the north west corner of Burlington Avenue and Lakeshore Road to the special planning area to match the north east corner — reduce height to 3 storeys;
5. Reduce the cannery district at the north east corner of Lakeshore Road and Brant Street to 15 storeys (was approved at 17 storeys, inclusive of community benefits);

6. In the Upper Brant Precinct: A. Remove east side of Brant from Blairholm to Prospect; and B. Remove west side of Brant from Blairholm to Olga;
7. Remove the special policy area (17 storeys versus existing 4-8) at the south east corner of Brant and James Street; and
8. Regarding the first item, recent information from our local MPP is that council can vote to remove the mobility hub designation for the downtown. We continue to need provincial approval to remove the UGC designation.

Motions that were approved by the previous council include:

1. Increased minimum tower separation requirement for tall buildings within the Downtown Mobility Hub of 30 metres;
2. Allow additional density in developments that preserve heritage buildings, as a factor of square footage preserved;
3. Include policy encouraging consideration of public-private parking partnerships in downtown developments in the Official Plan;
4. Incorporate an Official Plan policy that assigns a minimum target percentage (TBD) of residential dwellings contained within the mid-rise and tall buildings to be configured with 2- and 3-bedroom units with at least 10 per cent of the building containing 3-bedroom units to accommodate families with children;
5. Delete Chapter 3 Section 3.1.1 (2)(i) in the Official Plan, "more than 200 dwelling units," and add a target per cent of new mid-rise and high-rise units to achieve affordable, assisted and special needs housing, as defined in Halton Region's Annual State of Housing Report; and
6. Work with the Region of Halton to review the Downtown UGC boundaries and consider restoring original boundaries with the exception of Spencer Smith Park.

My complete memo, as circulated to the previous council during our votes on the downtown, is below along with the accompanying PowerPoint (with location maps) and post-meeting minutes showing what was approved.

In separate Official Plan meetings, I had proposed that the downtown be an innovation district and that the St. Luke's and Emerald communities be considered for Character Area Studies. Both failed, but I will bring back for discussion during this OPR. My article on the innovation district, with links to reports, is here: <https://mariannemeedward.ca/economic-development/motion-to-add-innovation-district-to-downtown-go-stations-fails-to-council-march-19-motion-to-add-downtown-uptown-go-stations-to-strategic-employment-areas-carries/>

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me or raise them during the workshop.

Sincerely,  
Marianne