
SAVE MIDTOWN

Frequently Asked Questions

When the Midtown Growth Area was identified almost 20 years ago, 'tall buildings' in Oakville represented structures that were 13-20 storeys. The scale of what is now being proposed for Midtown far exceeds what was previously contemplated.

The tall-towers approach from developers who have filed development applications to date are for buildings now stretching to over 60 Storeys. If allowed to develop at this pace, the latest estimates see over 90,000 residents housed in an area of one square kilometre. That isn't liveability!

Question: Exactly Where is Midtown Located?

Midtown's boundaries are Chartwell Road in the East, QEW in the North 16 Mile Creek in the West and Cornwall Road in the South. The **total area** of Midtown is **approximately 103 hectares**, however due to the presence of the railway, a hydro corridor, the natural 16-Mile Creek area and other restrictions, the **total amount of developable land is about 43 hectares**.

Question: What Do Provincial Planning Rules Direct Us to Achieve in Midtown?

The PPS (Provincial Planning Statement), 2024 eliminates the "Urban Growth Centre" policy framework from the Growth Plan. Instead, the PPS, 2024 focuses on major transit station areas (MTSA), while also encouraging the identification of other Strategic Growth Areas. All planning authorities must delineate MTSA boundaries in official plans and plan for minimum densities as previously set out in the Growth Plan.

For Midtown, that means Oakville should plan to achieve a combination of **200 people and jobs per hectare**. Using the commonly accepted ratio of 65% residents to 35% jobs, that would translate to **13,390 people and 7,210 jobs**. However, we must also plan for the future and in that vein, Oakville Town Council directed planning staff to **focus an Official Plan Amendment on a total of 35,000 people and jobs**, as it felt that would represent reasonable growth and density for Midtown's small size of only 43 square hectares of developable land. Council's directed increase in density would translate to **22,750 people and 12,250 jobs**.

Question: Why Does Midtown Have To Be a Growth Area?

Some years ago, around 2005, the Province of Ontario directed municipalities across the GTHA to look at their land planning documents and identify areas that could be potential "smart growth" areas. These would be areas located near higher orders of transit and as well, would represent areas where intensification could take place - thus relieving the pressure to continually expand the municipality's expansion of its growth boundaries into green areas, farmland, etc. As one of its growth areas, Oakville identified Midtown and named it as such, given its position directly adjacent to the GO Rail Station. Oakville's GO is the second busiest station in the system, outpaced only by Union Station.

Question: How Tall are the Skyscrapers Developers Want to Build?

As of mid-2024, development applications on file have requested buildings that reach **over 60 storeys**. If we use a measurement in feet, Vancouver reported on two of its buildings in 2019, The Shangri-La building on West Georgia St at 60-storeys was **659-foot tall** and the 63-storey Trump Tower also on West Georgia Street measured **616 feet**. **These buildings are about 1/3 of the height of Toronto's CN Tower.**



Question: How Do Those Towers Translate to Number of People?

Here's an example. Distrikt, one the Midtown developers, has applications for a total of **11 towers** which would produce **6,309 units**. Using an average of 2 people per unit (PPU) that would translate to **12,618 people in those 11 buildings alone**. If we use the 22,750 people



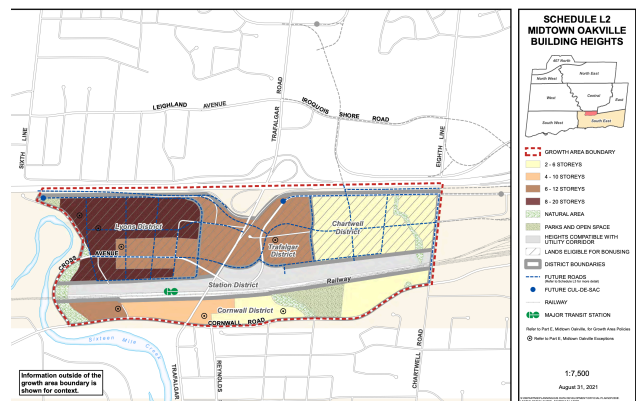
computed in Council's request to staff, **these 11 towers would equal 54% of the total**. **Given the fact that other developers in the area also have applications for buildings of similar heights, it is easy to see how the population numbers they create will balloon to numbers that far exceed anything ever envisioned for Midtown.**

Question: How Can the Town Ensure the Right Mix of Units Are Being Built so that Midtown Becomes a Real Community, Not Just a "Transient Assemblage"?

Good question! The tall towers described above are built with a majority of 1-bedroom units that often average about 550-600 square feet. They aren't aimed at attracting empty nesters, newly weds or young families - they are aimed at attracting investors. They are the cheapest units offered and appeal to the investor who wants to buy one to rent at a high rental rate for a better than average return. That's not liveability.

We need buildings that are suited to people at all stages of life. That means a plentiful supply of 2 and 3 bedroom units, green space on-site, places to exercise pets, soft play spaces for kids and we need the commercial spaces below and around us to be the size that will accommodate the daily needs of life - things like medical services, retail shops, and more. Typical retail spaces range in size from under 800 to 2,500 sq. feet. Even today’s small-format grocery stores need 10,000 square feet and appropriate access for deliveries and storage.

The Town of Oakville can’t dictate what each developer must do. BUT, ***we can pressure our elected representatives to support what we see as our vision for Midtown. That means adhering to building heights and densities outlined in our Land Use Schedules. We envisioned Midtown to be a complete community with buildings ranging from low rise, through mid-rise to taller buildings of 20 storeys. Including those kinds of building with other taller buildings that we know will find their way into Midtown as a result of appeals, can help us deliver the liveability new residents of Midtown deserve.***



Question: Can Developers Be Required To Provide Cash or Land For Parks, Schools, Daycare Facilities, etc?

The development charges that Oakville collects can be only be used for those things identified by the Province as being eligible. These include the following:

- Services related to a highway
- Transit Services
- Fire Protection Services
- Parks and Recreation Services
- Library Services
- Growth Studies (administration)

The challenge we face is that the development charges Oakville will collect will not be sufficient to meet the needs of the kind of density that current development applications indicate. There will be a shortfall and that will have to be covered by increased property taxes.

[You Can Learn More About Oakville’s Development Charges Here](#)