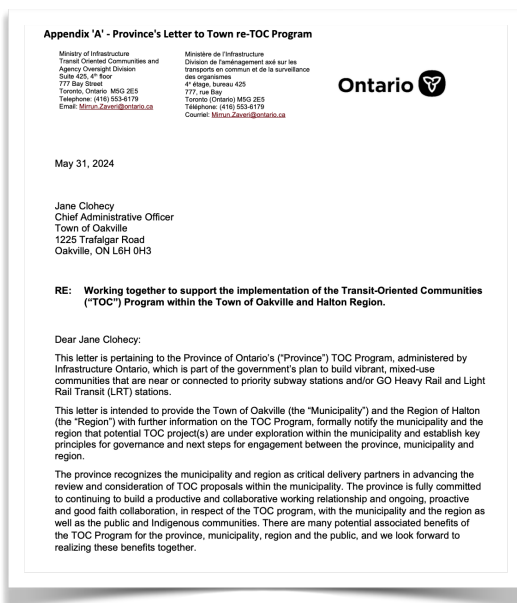


# SAVE MIDTOWN

## WHAT IS A TOC?

At the June 3rd Special Meeting of Council on Midtown Oakville, a surprise announcement was made by the Town's Chief Administrative Officer, Ms Jane Clohecy, announced that Infrastructure Ontario had formally notified the Town of Oakville and the Region of Halton that a potential *Transit-Oriented Community Program* (TOC) was under exploration within Oakville and that the ministry wished to establish key principles for governance as well as next steps for engagement between the province, the town and the region.



*(Click on the image to read the entire document)*

## Overview of the TOC Program

In 2020, the Government of Ontario introduced a program called *Transit Oriented Communities* (TOC), which it described as being designed to build vibrant, mixed-use communities that will bring more housing (including affordable housing options), jobs, retail, public amenities and entertainment within a short distance of transit

stations. These transit-oriented communities, and other transit development opportunities, will be located along the province's four subway projects, GO Transit and Light Rail Transit (LRT) projects.

It was suggested the Transit-Oriented Communities Program would:

- increase transit ridership and reduce traffic congestion
- increase housing supply (including affordable housing) and jobs
- stimulate the economy through major projects
- bring retail and community amenities (for example, community centres) within a short distance of public transit stations
- offset the cost of station construction, which would save taxpayers' money

The TOC web site also states: *Benefits of transit-oriented communities are subject to negotiations and determined on a site-by-site basis with input from the local municipality, the public and Indigenous partners.*

You'll note in the above bulleted list, the Ontario government states the structure of the TOC program would save taxpayers money because costs for station construction would be offset. Here's why:

- *With every TOC undertaken, Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx partner with a developer who is willing to make a substantial financial investment. Infrastructure Ontario's TOC web information says ... "To create opportunities to get even more housing built around GO and LRT, municipal and developer engagement and transactions at GO/LRT TOC sites will be led by IO wherever there is an opportunity to create more housing supply".*

At the outset, TOC sites were all located on subway lines and many are located on subway expansion sites. **It is unusual that Oakville's GO Station at Midtown has been selected for a TOC program. Why was Oakville selected? Good Question.**

## **How Does it Work?**

First and foremost it is important to know that the Government of Ontario is in control of the TOC. The province provides oversight to Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx, the agency partners working to deliver these transit projects.

**The rules, roles and responsibilities include the following:**

- **the province will decide the boundaries** of the TOC. (In the case of Midtown, it could range from a small area immediately adjacent to the GO Station, or a much wider scope that would encompass much of the current Midtown delineation).
- **the province spearheads the negotiations and selection of the third-party developer** and acts as the single commercial interface at the TOC site.
- the province requires Oakville and Halton Region to enter into a Mutual Confidentiality Agreement and **Non-Disclosure Agreement** with the province. **Only approved information may be shared with municipal councils or the general public.**

- **the public engagement process, when undertaken is under the control of the province.**

## **What More Do We Know?**

1. Oakville's GO Station is already delivering an impressive number of daily users. In fact, Oakville GO is the second busiest station in the entire system, being outnumbered only by Union Station.
2. Although Midtown was not specified in the letter from the Ministry of Infrastructure, Oakville CAO sought clarity from the Ministry and has confirmed that the area around the Oakville GO station is the area under consideration, including the lands subject to development appeals and applications by Distrikt Developments.
3. Not all TOCs undertaken to date have been full of pleasure and enjoyment for the municipalities involved. In both Markham and Richmond Hill, the level of density, building height and other aspects of the government's plans were not seen to be in line with the planning being undertaken by the municipalities to meet their growth requirements. Both municipalities undertook to register their opposition. Both municipalities were then hit with a "Enhanced Ministers Zoning Order", which resulted in permitted building heights of 80 storeys.

We are awaiting additional information on timing of the TOC program - when public engagement would take place, when additional information details will surface, etc.

Until we have a better definition of the boundaries of the TOC, the identity of the developer selected as the TOC partner and more details - such as a preliminary plan, we cannot formulate any sort of response.

**Stay Informed. Stay Connected.**