

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: June 19, 2020 To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee	Originator's files:
From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building	Meeting date: July 27, 2020

Subject

INFORMATION REPORT (WARDS 4 AND 5) – Uptown Node Capacity Review

Recommendation

1. That the following report titled “Uptown Node Capacity Review” dated June 19, 2020, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be received for information.
2. That staff prepare an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) for the Uptown Node to address the key challenges identified in this report and ensure the Uptown Node can support proposed development.
3. That staff are authorized to undertake community engagement to support this work, including holding a public meeting at an upcoming Planning and Development Committee meeting in the fall.

Report Highlights

- The Uptown Node is under significant development pressure. There are currently 14 towers under construction and/or application in the Node, which would provide over 5,000 new units (see Appendix 2 & 3). The City has also received some large scale preliminary applications on key redevelopment sites.
- This report seeks to understand the cumulative impact of proposed developments on the provision of infrastructure and services in the Node by bringing together advice from all of the City's infrastructure providers.
- The report identifies the following key challenges for the Node: road connectivity, creating an urban block pattern, securing land for parks, affordable housing and retaining retail and office functions.
- Staff are seeking Council authorization to prepare an OPA that would include a Block and

□ Road Concept Plan to help address these challenges and support proposed development.

Background

Uptown Node is centered on the intersection of Hurontario Street and Eglinton Avenue. The Node is a focal point for retail, office and medium to high density residential development and will soon be served by the Hurontario Light Rail Transit (LRT). See Appendix 1 for a context map.

The Uptown Node has 12,300 residents and 2,200 jobs. The City's approved growth forecast project a population of approximately 20,000 by 2041. Existing zoning permissions in the area allow for approximately 25,000 people.

The Node is currently seeing development proposals beyond these planned levels. There are currently 14 towers under construction and/or application in the Node. The City has also received some large scale preliminary applications on key redevelopment sites south of Eglinton that contemplate the development of another dozen or so towers.

Taking all of that potential growth in the pipeline into account, the Node could have a population of 30,000 people, in other words support a town the size of Orillia. If growth continues along the current trajectory the population could increase further to 40,000 or 50,000. Appendix 2 and 3 provides detailed information on all the active development applications and buildings currently under construction in the Node.

In response to this development pressure, staff undertook preliminary work to understand the cumulative impacts of this higher amount of growth in the Uptown Node on the provision of infrastructure and services. Planning and Building staff reached out to each of the City's infrastructure providers to identify any capacity concerns and develop strategies to manage these pressures moving forward.

Staff are now seeking authorization from Council to move ahead with developing further policies and plans that could help to manage some of this growth and ensure that the Uptown Node can thrive as a complete, vibrant and well served community into the future.

Comments

UPTOWN NODE'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Uptown Node has an existing policy framework in the City's Official Plan that has helped to guide and manage growth. Highlights include:

- Identified as a *Major Node*, and intended to accommodate significant levels of development.

- Allows heights up to 25 storeys, with larger buildings permitted if certain policy requirements can be met.
- Striving to achieve a density target of 200-300 people plus jobs per hectare.
 - The Province has also set a minimum density target for Uptown Node of 160 people plus jobs per hectare in order to support the LRT.
- Aiming to provide a range and mix of housing.
- A balance between population and employment (or a 2:1 ratio).
- Aiming to provide a high quality urban environment and quality transitions in the built form to surrounding neighbourhoods.

Staff's recommendation to undertake a municipally initiated OPA is intended to build on these existing policies, recognizing the transitional nature of this character area in the city's urban structure hierarchy.

KEY POLICY AND CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS

To understand capacity in the Node and the key policy considerations for the area, staff from Planning & Building received feedback from the City's Community Services and Transportation and Works Departments, along with Mississauga's services and infrastructure providers - the Peel District School Board, the Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board, Region of Peel and Alectra.

Based on this feedback, the following city building and capacity issues were identified:

Fine Grained Road Network

A high level transportation assessment was undertaken to review potential growth thresholds in the Node. The assessment reviewed six key intersections and found that they have capacity to support existing populations, but as the area continues to develop these intersections will be under increasing pressure. The assessment identified that the area would benefit from greater connectivity and a finer grained road network for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. Staff are exploring options for the OPA to implement a finer grained network of local streets (see attached Appendix 4).

The Uptown Node is comprised of many large "super" blocks, and it will be important to break up these blocks to create an urban scaled grid network to support mobility and pedestrian movement in the area, along with dispersing congestion. While density and built form on these blocks will be determined through the development process, staff are exploring options for a future OPA to establish a maximum block size of approximately 90 metres x 100 metres to create a permeable network of streets.

Additional work will be undertaken over the long term to examine the role of Eglinton Avenue in supporting multi-modal travel. This includes potential for a MiWay Express route and/or higher order transit along the corridor. In addition, a different mix of land uses to change internal trips and improvement to pedestrian safety is under consideration. In the shorter term, operational improvements, such as transit priority measures and an increase in amenities (i.e. bus shelters) is under review.

Parkland Provision

The minimum target parkland provision for the area is 12%, or approximately 12 hectares of parkland. The Uptown Node currently contains approximately 4 hectares of parkland, resulting in a deficit of approximately 8 hectares (19.5 acres) of parkland, with approximately 3.5 hectares expected through the development application process. The City also aims to provide playgrounds spread out within the area (within 400 m walking distance). Two additional playgrounds are required in the Node's southern quadrants.

Staff are exploring ways an OPA can work within provincial framework to secure future parkland and playgrounds, as well as ensure this parkland is provided as part of an interconnected system of greenspace. Where a park cannot be secured, pocket parks and POPS (Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces) could be considered.

Retail Function and Commercial Function

The Uptown Node is intended to foster a mix of uses and a range of employment opportunities. However, active development applications in the Node have included limited, if any, proposals for office and/ or commercial space. Staff are exploring ways that an OPA could allow the Node to, at minimum, retain its existing office and key commercial space to ensure it can function as a complete community.

Building Height

The current planning framework in the Uptown Node allows for height permissions up to 25 storeys, with the opportunity to develop taller buildings if criteria can be met. Given the growth emphasis placed on Uptown Node, the policy framework guiding heights in the Uptown Node is considered sufficiently robust and would not be addressed as part of this OPA.

Housing Mix and Affordability

As the Node develops and the LRT is constructed, it will be an ideal location for affordable housing. Staff are exploring ways the OPA could support affordable housing contributions, prior to the introduction on Inclusionary Zoning. At the request of the City, some landowners have already proposed forms of affordable housing as part of their plans.

Master Planning Requirements

Development master plans are a tool identified in the Mississauga Official Plan that allows the City to review development proposals on a holistic basis. Examples include the Lakeview Waterfront and Port Credit West Village master plans. For large sites in the Uptown Node development master plans should be required so that matters such as height and density, the location of new streets and site phasing can be assessed prior to the approval of a development application. The OPA could enforce this type of requirement.

Peel District School Board (PDSB) School Site

There is an immediate need for a new PDSB elementary school and the Board is examining options both inside the Node and in the surrounding area to support the substantial growth occurring in the Hurontario corridor. Staff will continue to support the PDSB in working to secure elementary school/s in the City's fastest growing areas through development applications.

OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT TO GUIDE FUTURE GROWTH

Staff are seeking authorization to develop an OPA to address policy and capacity issues identified throughout this report (e.g. road connectivity, creating an urban block pattern, securing land for parks, affordable housing and retaining commercial and office functions).

A key component of the proposed OPA would be a preliminary Block and Road Concept Plan, which would help to map out and illustrate these key policy concepts within the Node. Specifically, this Plan would aim to address the need for a more connected road network and securing of physical parkland. A draft Block and Road Plan has been included in Appendix 4.

Staff propose to work closely with stakeholders, land owners and the public in developing this OPA and the Block and Road Concept Plan.

It is anticipated staff will report back to Planning and Development Committee with a Public Meeting and draft OPA in the fall of 2020.

Financial Impact

Not applicable at this time.

Conclusion

Staff from across various departments, as well as agency groups, have identified challenges for the Uptown Node, including parkland and playground deficiencies, the need for a finer-grained road network and improved pedestrian connections, improved housing mix, and the need for protection of office and commercial space.

To address these challenges and ensure future growth in the Uptown Node supports a complete and connected community, staff recommend the development of an OPA that includes a Block and Road Plan. Staff seek Council's authorization to commence the process to develop this OPA, along with permission to consult the community and hold a public meeting.

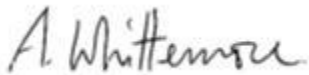
Attachments

Appendix 1: Context Map of Uptown Node

Appendix 2: Active Application Summary

Appendix 3: 3D Development – Active Applications

Appendix 4: Draft Uptown Node Block and Road Concept Plan



Andrew Whitemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building

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