

City of Mississauga

Corporate Report



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| <p>Date: April 9, 2025</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee</p> <p>From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building</p> | <p>Originator's file: CD.21-CLA</p> <hr/> <p>Meeting date: April 28, 2025</p> |
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Subject

RECOMMENDATION REPORT (WARD 2)

Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area – Update and Next Steps

Recommendation

1. That the Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area – Master Plan contained in the report titled “Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area – Master Plan” dated November 20, 2024, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be endorsed in principle.
2. That the recommended policy direction contained in the report titled “Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area – Update and Next Steps” dated April 9, 2025, from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be endorsed.
3. That staff be directed to prepare Official Plan policies for the Clarkson GO MTSA addressing land uses, transportation, community services and parkland, and urban design.
4. That staff monitor changes to the Southdown Employment Area, and potential impacts to the Clarkson GO MTSA, and provide an update if warranted.

Executive Summary

- The Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area Master Plan (Clarkson Master Plan) was recommended by staff for endorsement at the December 9, 2024 Planning and Development Committee (PDC) meeting. Council referred the item to staff to review comments that were received and report back at a future meeting.
- The Clarkson Master Plan aims to strike a balance between building homes and protecting jobs and investment in the Southdown Employment Area. Full build out of the

Plan achieves this objective by planning for at least 5,000 additional homes and exceeding provincial minimum density requirements.

- In response to comments received at the December 9, 2024 PDC meeting, several policy modifications and recommendations are proposed. They include:
 - initiating a city-led local area review if significant changes occur in the mix of businesses in the Southdown Employment Area;
 - monitoring the health of the Southdown Employment Area and reporting back to PDC if warranted;
 - changing land use and height permissions for 913, 923 and 927 Southdown Road to permit a mid rise building; and
 - requiring new air quality studies to use the most technically advanced model approved by the Province.
- Requests were made for additional conversions. They are not recommended for approval. The sites would not meet the Province's recommended separation distance to nearby industry. Land use compatibility studies have identified significant noise, vibration and air quality impacts from industry. Recent economic indicators also show that the Southdown Employment Area is healthy and continues to grow.
- Industry have advised that they have no plans to re-locate from the area. Given the global economic climate, residential encroachment was seen as an additional burden that adds to the current economic uncertainty.
- Re-locating the Clarkson Works Yard is also not recommended. The City has plans to invest \$3 to \$4 million in its 2025-2027 Capital budget, and there are financial and logistical hurdles associated with re-locating the Works Yard.
- Staff intend to bring forward draft official plan policies following endorsement of the Clarkson Master Plan. A community meeting on the draft policies is expected in late Spring 2025. Official plan policies for the Clarkson GO MTSA will require provincial approval.

Background

In 2018, the City of Mississauga initiated the Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) Study for lands surrounding the Clarkson GO Station. A portion of these lands are within the Southdown Employment Area, a historic industrial area of Mississauga home to large and small businesses employing 6,300 people. Many of these businesses benefit from separation with sensitive uses (e.g. residential) to support operations, minimize complaints and reduce potential deleterious impacts to human health and safety. With existing all-day, two-way service on the Lakeshore West GO Line and plans to improve service, the need to update official plan policies was identified. A key objective of the Study was to identify opportunities for more housing in

appropriate locations near the Clarkson GO Station including in the Southdown Employment Area.

Since 2018, several Study milestones have been completed:

- Approval of the Clarkson GO MTSA boundaries by the Province
- Four community engagement meetings
- Transportation and infrastructure capacity assessments
- Land use compatibility studies
- Council endorsement of air quality findings
- Completion of the Clarkson Master Plan

RECOMMENDED CLARKSON MTSA MASTER PLAN

The Clarkson Master Plan is the culmination of community engagement, analysis of existing conditions, creation of development concepts and testing of those concepts with the community. It outlines a vision and set of guiding principles for the Clarkson GO MTSA, proposes urban design standards and recommends policy modifications to implement the vision. It also aims to strike a balance between building more homes and protecting jobs and economic investment in the area.

Full build out of the Clarkson Master Plan is conservatively estimated to accommodate a total of 15,200 people and 2,400 jobs with a density of 215 PPJ/ha. This would exceed provincial minimum density requirements of 150 PPJ/ha for the Clarkson GO MTSA. The Master Plan estimates that an additional 5,000 residential units could be built as a result of the proposed land use changes.

Comments

City staff recommended endorsement of the Clarkson Master Plan at the PDC meeting held on December 9, 2024 (See report in Appendix 2). Council referred the Clarkson Master Plan to staff to review comments that were received and report back at a future meeting. This report provides commentary on key issues that were raised at the PDC meeting and recommended direction for policies.

KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following offers an overview of key issues and staff's response, including recommended policy direction.

1. Additional requests for conversion

The Clarkson Master Plan identifies the lands to be removed from the Southdown Employment Area to build more housing – a process that is called an “employment area conversion” or “conversion”. Several deputations were made requesting additional lands be converted to allow for residential, mixed use development, and that the lands be

re-designated to Mixed Use Limited. This designation would allow residential uses subject to a land use compatibility analysis.

In total, four conversion requests were made. The sites are shown on a map attached as Appendix 1. A Land Use Compatibility Study, Air Quality Study and Noise Study were submitted in support of one of the four sites located at 2157 Royal Windsor Drive.

The following offers an overview of the City's approach to identifying lands for housing and staff's evaluation of the four conversion requests.

(a) Establishing a Vision

As part of the initial planning phases for the Clarkson GO MTSA Study, a vision was established for the area that emphasized a mix of uses and the development of a transit-supportive community. The achievement of this vision relies on securing a balance of people and jobs. Today, the Clarkson GO MTSA is home to both people and jobs. It has a mix of industrial and commercial uses west of Southdown Road and south of the Lakeshore West GO Line, and residential and commercial uses east of Southdown Road and north of the Lakeshore West GO Line.

(b) Identifying additional lands for housing

An evaluation was undertaken as part of the Study to identify opportunities to build more homes in the Clarkson GO MTSA. The evaluation included a land use compatibility assessment, public engagement with landowners, residents and businesses, and site visits. Based on this evaluation, the Study identified ~10 hectares of land that can be converted to build housing while preserving employment lands for jobs and industry as part of a mixed use community. With this change, the Clarkson GO MTSA would exceed provincial minimum density requirements without the need for additional lands to be converted.

(c) Evaluating the four conversion requests

Following the December 9, 2024 PDC meeting, an evaluation of the four conversion requests was completed, including a peer review of Studies submitted for 2157 Royal Windsor Drive. Staff also engaged nearby industry. They advised that industry is experiencing increased uncertainty given the current global economic environment. Pressure from residential encroachment was seen as an additional burden that contributes to this uncertainty.

At this time, approval of the conversion requests is not recommended. However, staff propose adding a policy that would commit the City to undertaking a local area review should significant changes occur in the mix of businesses.

Staff's evaluation identified the following issues with the conversion requests:

- i. the City's land use compatibility consultant, Dillon Consulting, found several potential air quality, odour and noise impacts from nearby industry;
- ii. approval of residential uses in these additional locations would not meet provincial guidance for recommended separation distances between residential and heavy industry;
- iii. industry contribute jobs, provide a stable tax base, and complement and support other employment uses in the area;
- iv. the ability of nearby industry to meet provincial environmental compliance obligations may be impacted;
- v. many industries in the Southdown Employment Area have special operating approvals and expensive capital requirements and cannot easily locate elsewhere. No major industry has communicated any plans to move, and Enbridge has recently announced plans that will help solidify their long-term operations in the area; and
- vi. a peer review of the Studies completed for 2157 Royal Windsor Drive found:
 - o deficiencies in the analysis that prevented the Peer Reviewer from supporting the findings;
 - o that not all heavier industries were properly assessed; and,
 - o that the proposed mitigation measures are not supported by the technical findings or have not been sufficiently justified.

The Mixed Use Limited designation is also not recommended. This designation allows the introduction of residential uses without an amendment to the Official Plan – subject to a land use compatibility assessment. The land use compatibility assessment undertaken as part of this Study does not support the conversion requests.

- ***Add a policy in the Official Plan that a local area review should be initiated by the City if there are significant changes in the mix of businesses in the Southdown Employment Area, including revising the boundary of the Clarkson MTSA if warranted.***
- ***The conversion requests and land use designation change are not recommended.***

2. Re-locating the Clarkson Works Yard

Two of the four properties requesting conversion are located within the provincially recommended separation distance (70 metres, 230 feet) of the Clarkson Works Yard. The City's land use compatibility consultant found significant potential air quality and noise impacts from operations at the Clarkson Works Yard. This is due to vehicular and equipment movements, fuel dispensing and storage, and onsite activities than can operate 24/7.

The potential of re-locating the Clarkson Works Yard was suggested to allow for the expansion of residential uses. Currently, the Clarkson Works Yard is one of four such

facilities owned by the City and is used by Transportation and Works to provide services for the majority of south Mississauga. During inclement weather, the Clarkson Works Yard is used 24/7 with snow clearing potentially occurring over several days. This may result in visual impacts to neighbouring properties from large snow stockpiles. Leaf collection occurs in the fall and during peak periods operations extend into the evening hours. In the summer, Community Services also uses the Clarkson Works Yard for parks maintenance.

There are several logistical and financial considerations to re-locating a Works Yard of this size. Prior to re-locating the Clarkson Works Yard, an alternative site would need to be found that is operations-ready (i.e., the use is permitted in the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, and the facilities are constructed). An alternative site would also need to be in an appropriate location to service the catchment area and of a comparable size to accommodate both transportation and park related uses.

The cost of re-locating a Works Yard would be substantial. Staff conservatively estimate the cost to be between \$70 and \$100 million. This estimate accounts for land costs and the cost of constructing new buildings and facilities. Additional costs may also be incurred for environmental cleanup (e.g. soil remediation). It is noted that the City has allocated \$3 to \$4 million in its 2025-2027 Capital Budget to improve the existing Clarkson Works Yard.

- ***Re-locating the Clarkson Works Yard is not recommended due to investments that have been approved in the City's Capital Budget for the site, and significant logistical and financial hurdles.***

3. Economic Health of Southdown Employment Area

Questions were raised regarding the economic health of the Southdown Employment Area. In response, the City has completed an economic analysis of the Southdown Employment Area using data from the City's 2024 Employment Survey and CoStar Group.

In 2024, the Southdown Employment Area was home to 298 businesses employing 6,300 people. Southdown Employment Area has a higher share of manufacturing, wholesale and transportation and warehousing activity than the city-wide average. Notable employers include:

- Johson Electric (formerly Stackpole International), which specializes in powder metal and fluid power solutions for the automotive sector and is a key contributor to Mississauga's automotive parts manufacturing cluster;
- Large industrial facilities such as CHR Canada (Ashgrove Cement), which manufactures cement, and Petro Canada Lubricants, which manufactures lubricants and is one of the world's largest base oil refineries;
- Corporate offices for the Independent Electricity Systems Operator (IESO) and Nestle Purina PetCare Canada; and,

- Transportation and distribution/warehousing companies such as Musket Transport and Amazon.

Overall, the Southdown Employment Area has experienced steady employment growth and a buildup of its industrial inventory over the past 10 years. Between 2014 and 2024, employment grew by 14.6% and six new industrial facilities were built adding over 1.4 million square feet of new industrial inventory. This represents a 57.7% increase in the total industrial inventory present in the area, far exceeding the 9.5% growth experienced in this category across Mississauga. New companies such as the Amazon Distribution Centre (880 Avonhead Road) continue to open and be attracted to the area.

- ***Monitor the health of the Southdown Employment Area and provide an update to PDC if warranted.***

4. Increase height permissions for 913, 923 and 927 Southdown Road

A deputation was made requesting a change in land use and height permissions for the properties located at 913, 923 and 927 Southdown Road to allow for a mid rise building. Current Official Plan policies allow for intensification of the properties, including low rise apartments up to 4 storeys in height. Adjacent properties contain detached houses, townhouses, low rise apartments and natural hazard lands.

Given the surrounding policy and built form context, staff recommend policy changes to allow a mid-rise building on the properties. The Official Plan has urban design policies that will help ensure an appropriate transition to surrounding properties.

- ***The Official Plan land use designation and height permissions for the subject lands should be revised to allow for a mid rise building.***

5. Industry concerns with technical models used in an air quality study

Industry representatives continue to express concerns with the type of dispersion models used for the Clarkson Air Quality Study (AERMOD, SCREEN 3 and SDM) that have been confirmed to be acceptable by provincial staff. Industry indicated that they use a more advanced model (i.e., CALPUFF) for their environmental compliance approvals and have requested that future air quality studies in the Clarkson GO MTSA use the same model.

- ***New policies are recommended requiring future air quality studies in the Clarkson GO MTSA and Southdown Employment Area use the most technically advanced model acceptable to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.***

NEXT STEPS

Following endorsement of the Clarkson Master Plan, staff will prepare Official Plan policies for the area. Policy changes to land uses in the Clarkson GO MTSA require provincial approval. The Province has a significant review period (90 days) before a municipality can hold a statutory public meeting on land use policy changes in MTSA's.

Staff will share draft policies with the Province at the earliest opportunity and plan to request they be implemented through the new Official Plan. Following circulation of the draft policies with the Province, a community meeting on the draft policies is targeted for late Spring 2025. A statutory public meeting will then be held to adopt the policies in Fall 2025. The final policies will be submitted to the Province for final approval.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the recommendations in this report.

Conclusion


The Clarkson Master Plan sets out a vision and policy recommendations to achieve a mixed use, transit supportive community in the Clarkson GO MTSA. It identifies land to be converted to build more homes while protecting investment and jobs in the area. It also recommends land use and building height changes that would allow the Clarkson GO MTSA to exceed provincial minimum density requirements.

Staff had recommended endorsement of the Clarkson Master Plan at the December 9, 2024 PDC meeting. The item was referred to staff to address issues that were raised. Following an evaluation of the issues, staff recommend several modifications. Specifically, it is recommended that the City commit to monitoring changes in the mix of businesses in the Southdown Employment Area and that a new local area review be initiated if such changes occur.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Clarkson GO MTSA Map

Appendix 2: Corporate Report titled "Clarkson GO Major Transit Station Area – Master Plan"
dated November 20, 2024



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

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