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Challenging the Traffic Reports by Faith Blacquiere

Both 80 Cope Drive and 6111 Hazeldean are being threatened by development proposals which will have major impact on their communities. I have identified some of the major problems, pulled in some relevant references, and done a quick Google search

Problems with City of Ottawa Traffic Reports:

- Are based on local roads and specific intersections
- Selection of the roads and intersections is discretionary e.g. Blackstone omitted Cope Drive
- Future roads and upstream development is excluded e.g. both 80 Cope Drive and 6111 Hazeldean use a 2% background growth rate, despite being in Kanata/Stittsville which has plans approved for Fernbank (30,000 people) and Kanata West (17,000 people) + Area 3 = Stittsville Main Street CDP + Hazeldean Road Arterial Mainstreet + more. The Cope Drive Extension and Michael Copeland Drive Extension were omitted in the 80 Cope Drive TIS. The Cope Drive Extension is the main traffic route through Fernbank south of the TC Trail and has 7 school sites planned along its length
- The traffic studies are hard to challenge because there is a standard process (with the TIA Guidelines and ITC standards) and model used by all consultants, however, the consultants make assumptions which may or may not be valid – these can be challenged
- Traffic count dates are discretionary and the following problems arise
 - Out-of-date e.g. Blackstone was using 2009 counts in the Nov 2011 report
 - Intersections within the TIS have traffic counts taken on different dates
 - Traffic counts do not give any idea of the growth in traffic
 - Dates are for the wrong time e.g. in summer, focusing on AM and PM – the 80 Cope Drive TIS has MD (mid-day) as well – the west end has different peak hours e.g. the 6279 Fernbank consultant claimed there were very few cars. Events which could have impacted that traffic count day are not identified. This is similar to consultants taking groundwater measurements and ignoring rainfall events which could have impacted the levels
 - Don't consider "event traffic" e.g. the Tanger TIS ignored CTC traffic (they later included it after I complained – Watson got caught in it on opening day and was not happy}
 - Consultants use standard peak periods without considering how long it actually takes to get from the various destinations. The TRANS studies have information on these and on screenlines which are used at the higher level of transportation planning

All of these are challengeable

- Consultants make assumptions about modal shares e.g. the percent of vehicles which will be reduced because people will take transit. The west end developments have always had transportation problems due to Kanata being long from north to south and Stittsville having limited options. The transit infrastructure was cancelled, bus routes were reduced, OC Transpo has \$ problems, yet the traffic studies are still approved as if the assumptions were valid, or the infrastructure would arrive soon

- The City does not require TIS reports for smaller developments, thereby the traffic cumulative traffic impact is not be addressed
- The City's "complete streets" policies are impacting the purpose of roads, e.g. arterials are intended to move traffic in an out – the City is intensifying along these and reducing the number of traffic lanes on the assumption that the live-work-play model will work and that it is relevant everywhere. They also don't recognize that the outlying satellite cities have different needs
- The Fernbank and Kanata West developers are using their own Transportation Master Plans, but traffic which will be using shared roads is not being brought into the other TIS reports
- Traffic from outlying communities will increase due to expansions and intensification e.g. Village of Richmond, Village of Carp, and Carleton Place, as well as more points outside these will increase traffic, as the province continues to widen the major highways
- None of them are doing the ultimate build-out or allowing for the fact that the urban boundary will expand again in future
- When I reviewed Parkdale condos downtown, none of them considered the H417 traffic or the impact that the developments would have on the H417 access ramps
- When I reviewed condos on Carling Avenue, which the City said needed intensification to support rapid transit, the traffic studies just depended on local traffic counts and didn't consider the fact that the Nortel and Booth Street Complex were not functioning at capacity, and were not considering all the other "traffic generators", such as hospitals, universities, etc.
- Planned road and transit infrastructure and Traffic Demand Management (TMD) improvements (road widenings, new turn lanes, traffic lights, etc) may not arrive "just-in-time". The TIS reports seem to focus on these TMD projects to resolve all traffic problems

Roads are designed for specific purposes e.g. a road in a local neighbourhood is not intended to be gridlocked. In my review of some downtown condos which had single access from multi-level underground parking lots, there was no concern of gridlock underground and residents for 1 application who complained of gridlock at intersections were told that people would let them merge in, therefore it was ok to add more traffic. These purposes are identified in the Official Plan

Schedule B Urban Road Network

<http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/dev012500.pdf>

Section 7 Annex 1

<http://ottawa.ca/en/official-plan-0/volume-1-official-plan/section-7-annexes/annex-1-road-classification-and-rights-way>

The *Regional Road Corridor Design Guidelines* are still on the City's website – these are good for finding the original intent of roads

<http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/con027786.pdf>

The City's *Road Corridor Planning & Design Guidelines*

<http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/con040685.pdf>

These and the other Guidelines can be useful for comparisons e.g. what are the requirements for AMs, TMs, vs local streets?

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/community-plans-and-design-guidelines/design-and-planning-0-1>

Knowing where people want to go and when is important when looking at traffic needs e.g. they want the closest direct line to their destination, they don't want to go west to get east, etc.

The TRANS Origin-Destination Surveys provide information on the major traffic patterns

<http://www.ncr-trans-rcn.ca/en/>

Traffic Counts – about the screenlines

<http://www.ncr-trans-rcn.ca/traffic-counts/>

I haven't looked at the Special Generators Survey but these are probably what the Regional government based the LRT system on. The 80 Cope Drive application is proposing reduced parking because people will work at home. This totally ignores their need to do shopping, get to schools, etc.

The *Report to PEC, ARAC and Council* indicates that the impacts are identified, but the local TIS only focuses on selected intersections

<http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2006/09-27/arac/ACS2006-PWS-TRF-0021.htm>

As part of the Development Review Process an applicant may be required to **identify and address anticipated impacts on the City's transportation network** as a result of a proposed development. This requirement is stated in the Planning Act and the City's Official Plan and is largely dependent on the nature and magnitude of the proposed development. Section 4.3 of the Council-approved 2003 City Official Plan (OP) speaks to the City's requirements for assessing the adequacy of the transportation network to meet the needs of proposed developments. Specifically, the OP states:

*“The City will require a transportation impact study to be submitted where **the City determines that the development may have an impact on the transportation network in the surrounding area**. The transportation impact study will be undertaken in accordance with the City of Ottawa Transportation Impact Study Guidelines. The scope of the study will vary depending on the nature of the development. Under most circumstances, a study will not be required for minor infill development in areas where the road network is fully established.”*

The three types of studies are further described below:

1. Community Transportation Study - addresses Official Plan amendment, Zoning By-law amendment, and Draft Plan of Subdivision related development (generating more than 75 peak hour trips) where the scale of development and scope and area of the traffic impact tends to be larger and at a higher level.
2. Transportation Impact Study – the standard impact study (150+ peak hour trips), requires the greatest detail and reporting, associated with road modifications and safety and operational issues.
3. Transportation Brief - a lower level analysis to address small developments (75 to 150 peak hour generated trips) that will have an impact on the road network, but are not significant and not likely to have a road modification requirement.

The Guidelines are in this document and also available at

<http://ottawa.ca/cs/groups/content/@webottawa/documents/pdf/mdaw/mtm3/~edisp/cap137401.pdf>

Google Search Results

The Fernbank Blackstone Nov 2011 TIS which omitted Cope Drive is at

http://webcast.ottawa.ca/plan/All_Image%20Referencing_Subdivision_Image%20Reference_Transportation%20Impact%20Study%20D07-16-11-0023.PDF

They said they used the Fernbank TMP for Fernbank growth and Pg 21 says “An annual background traffic growth rate of 2% was agreed to by City of Ottawa staff **to account for growth outside the study area along the major commuter routes**, i.e. Terry Fox Drive, Hazeldean Road and Fernbank Road”. What about the growth on the feeder roads to these routes?

Fernbank CDP Transportation Master Plan

<http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/ec/2009/06-09/5%20-%20Supporting%20Doc.%204%20-%20TMP.pdf>

This is the only mention of growth rate:

Pg 31 At the Hazeldean South Screenline, the current southbound peak hour directional traffic has been estimated at approximately 2800 pcus/hr of which approximately 800 pcus are classified as “through” and 2000 pcus/hr as “local”.

Based on a projected growth rate of approximately 2% per annum, reflective of the current general rural traffic growth, the peak hour “through” traffic can be expected to grow by approximately 60% by 2031, i.e., by the time of build-out of the Kanata West and Fernbank Communities.

At least the “Future” is 2031, but the Blackstone TIS only used 2020. 80 Cope Drive is using 2025. Development doesn’t always happen based on the “2% per annum” value

This one near Innes Road calculated it based on population, then used the 2% - this is the first TIS I have seen which does this

Traffic Statement *Erskine Dredge & Associates Architects Inc. Assured Automotive Repair Facility*

http://webcast.ottawa.ca/plan/All_Image%20Referencing_Site%20Plan%20Application_Image%20Reference_D07-12-14-0082%20Transportation%20Impact%20Study.PDF

Pg 9 6.0 ESTIMATED VOLUMES UP TO THE PROJECT HORIZON YEAR

The completion of the project is assumed to be within 5 years. Therefore, the volumes are projected up to the 2019 horizon year. Orleans is a part of the City of Ottawa, which has shown a 9% population growth from 2006 to 2011. By assuming uniform growth, an annual growth of 1.8% is calculated. A conservative 2% annual growth rate is assumed for the purposes of this study. The existing, background growth only, and total traffic volume scenarios used in the analysis are provided in Appendix C.

Fairwinds West, Ottawa, ON Transportation Impact Study Mattamy Homes

http://webcast.ottawa.ca/plan/All_Image%20Referencing_Subdivision_Image%20Reference_D07-16-07-0021%20Transportation%20Impact%20Study.PDF

Pg 8 **Background traffic growth in the study area will be explicitly accounted for based on known developments in the Study Area**

- A 2% per annum growth rate will be used to account for **growth outside of the immediate study area**
- The future background traffic volumes will be combined with the net increase in site traffic volumes to determine total future traffic volumes

Pg 12 Furthermore, existing turning movement count data that was collected prior to 2012 was adjusted to the current base year (2012) using a two percent per annum growth rate.

Greystone Village *Community Transportation Study (CTS)*

http://webcast.ottawa.ca/plan/All_Image%20Referencing_Zoning%20Bylaw%20Amendment%20Application_Image%20Reference_D02-02-15-0004%20Community%20Transportation%20Study.PDF

Pg 20 3.2 Historic Background Traffic Growth

It is considered highly likely that the **changes implemented as part of the Main Street Renewal project will have a significant effect on the traffic volumes along Main Street. Therefore, historic traffic counts were not considered as they will not yield an adequate growth rate within the study area.**

[NOTE: this is what should have happened for Blackstone when Hazeldean Road was being widened and Terry Fox was being extended]

The **rate of general background growth on Main Street has been established based on auto volume snapshots from the City of Ottawa's Long-range Strategic Traffic Forecast Model for the 2011 and 2031 years.** The auto volume snapshots suggest that with the Main Street Renewal project in place, traffic along Main Street will decrease at a rate of approximately 2.1% per year.

[NOTE: this is the first TIS I have seen which referred to this long-range forecast]

Auto volume snapshots from the City of Ottawa's *Long-range Strategic Traffic Forecast Model* are included in Appendix E.

For the purposes of this analysis, a +2% growth rate has been applied to all through movements along Main Street for the 2021 build-out and 2026 horizon years.

Pg 21 **3.3 Other Study Area Developments**

A Transportation Brief (TB) was submitted by Delcan in November 2013 for the site located immediately adjacent to the northern frontage of the subject lands (141 Main Street). The development proposal includes the redevelopment of residential townhomes and open space into a mixed use development consisting of approximately 140 residential units and 13,275 square feet of retail.

Traffic generated by the proposed development at 141 Main Street will be added to the background traffic for the 2021 build-out and 2026 horizon years. Relevant excerpts from the 141 Main Street TB are included in **Appendix F.**

[NOTE: this is the first TIS I have seen a TIS with this]