

City Invites Traffic Chaos at Hunt Club Intersection

Traffic congestion along Prince of Wales Drive at Hunt Club is about to get a lot worse as the City of Ottawa contemplates rezoning a vacant lot across from the Metropolitan Bible Church to allow a car dealership. The only road access to the lot, and exit from it, will be right next to one of the City's top ranked intersections for collisions. Traffic engineers have been unable to solve the problem of how to reduce collisions, and this rezoning will only make matters worse.

The City has posted a rezoning application for the property at 2175 Prince of Wales Drive (POW). The rezoning is from general mixed use to industrial-commercial. City planners have let it be known that those seeking the rezoning wish to establish a car dealership on the site. Planners had long assured the Glens community that they would never support such a development. So what has changed?

Prince of Wales Drive (POW) and Hunt Club Road are busy at the best of times. The intersection where they meet creates stop-and-go traffic at the morning and afternoon rush hours. It is already very congested. A car dealership one hundred meters from the intersection will create a traffic nightmare.

Customers coming southbound along (POW) to go to the dealership must cross three lanes of northbound traffic on POW. As they wait to turn safely, southbound traffic will pile up behind them. Cars will jockey for position to get into the right-hand lane as drivers try to get around the stopped traffic. Incidents of road rage and fender benders are sure to follow.

Customers leaving the dealership realistically will have only one turn option. They must turn north directly into the recently constructed merge lane on POW to Hunt Club Bridge. This lane was meant to help solve congestion issues. Drivers attempting to turn into it during morning or afternoon rush hours will be tempting fate. Traffic can be merciless during rush hours. And if any drivers attempt to exit southbound on POW, they will do so at their peril.

City planners responsible for zoning applications tend to focus on the property in question rather than the road and traffic implications of rezoning. In this case, it would be a serious oversight not to bring in City traffic engineers immediately to study the feasibility and safety implications of developing this site. It is surely not a responsible course of action to add to the already dangerous traffic congestion and risk of collisions at this location.

As well, the City should look more seriously at what a car dealership would do to the City's southern gateway next to the Rideau River. What is now a green and welcoming gateway would be replaced by an industrial auto plant right beside a designated world heritage site. Is this the public image that the City wants to convey to tourists traveling along the southern scenic route into Ottawa?

We might ask: What risks does a car dealership pose of allowing toxic fuel and other effluents to enter the stormwater system and otherwise slowly seep along the surface and sub-surface into the Rideau River? What kind of trouble down the road is the City inviting by rezoning this property?

Residents of Waterbend Lane would see their peaceful existence suddenly disrupted by allowing a car dealership to pop up next door. Expect vehicles coming and going from early morning to late evening, increased noise and bright nighttime lighting! Residents have already experienced a many fold increase in traffic along Prince of Wales in recent years with all the development in the City's south end. But a car dealership right next to Waterbend Lane and the historic Rideau River – that's the last straw!

For more information, contact: Glens Community Association, Tel. 613-226-9576. Email: executive@glenscommunity.ca

Version: May 18, 2018