



Citizen Panel Meeting 1

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

6:00 – 8:30pm

Brampton City Hall

West Tower, Boardroom WT2C

OVERVIEW

On March 22, 2016, the City of Brampton hosted the first of four Citizen Panel meetings as part of its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Over the course of the Master Plan process, the Citizen Panel will be asked to provide feedback on needs and opportunities, the results of the engagement process, the draft vision, principles, goals and objectives, and the draft master plan. The Citizen Panel is composed principally of members that come from the existing City of Brampton Citizen Advisory Committees and have been selected based on their interest or background in parks and recreation. 14 Panel members participated in the meeting (see attached participant list).

At this first meeting, Citizen Panel members were provided with an overview of the Master Planning Process and the project team's views on parks and recreation challenges and opportunities. Following these presentations, Citizen Panel members engaged in a facilitated discussion guided by a series of focus questions (see attached agenda for more detail). This summary was written by Swerhun Facilitation, a third-party facilitation firm that is part of the consultant team led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC), and was shared with participants in draft before being finalized. This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead provides a high level summary of the perspectives and advice provided by participants during the facilitated discussion.

SUMMARY OF ADVICE – FOR PARTICIPANT REVIEW

The perspectives and advice provided by Panel members have been grouped into the following 4 categories: 1. best things; 2. areas to improve; 3. opportunities and challenges; 4. master plan process advice; and, 5. additional questions of clarification. Responses from the project team to questions of clarification are denoted by *italics*.

1. What are the best things about Brampton's parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs?

- Several Citizen Panel members said that the quality and range of facilities and programs is one of the best things about parks and recreation in the City of Brampton.
- Some spoke positively about how Brampton has invested in and expanded its offering of parks, sports and recreation facilities compared to other cities.
- Others felt that Brampton has a good mix of community-focused and city-wide facilities. Others still lauded neighbourhoods that are built around parks (e.g. Peel Village).
- Maintenance of most facilities is very good, as are the people who work in the recreation centres
- One member felt that the way the City works with minor league organizations, to find playing fields / facilities and assist with special events, is one of the best things about parks and recreation in Brampton.
- One member said that one of the best things about parks and recreation facilities in Brampton are the north-south links between them and suggested that these connections should continue in new growth areas.
- A few members said that they liked how the design of the Cassie Campbell Community Centre and Chinguacousy Wellness Centre allowed visitors to see the wide variety of activities that people participate in and that this helps raise awareness about recreation opportunities.

2. How can Brampton's parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs be improved?

- Panel members talked about improving the quality and range of facilities, including ensuring timely maintenance / accessibility updates for older facilities (e.g. Memorial Arena), ensuring that outdoor facilities and parks have adequate shelter structures and washrooms, making improvements to the amenities within facilities (e.g. adding kitchens to community centres like at Gore Meadows and formerly at Century Gardens), and providing for greater variation in park amenities (e.g. adding splash pads, benches, BBQ pits).

- The City should think about developing another major “destination” park (like Ching Park) to assist in hosting festivals and other large events
- One Panel member cited Sandalwood and Mississauga Road as an area in need of a new recreation centre.
- Some felt that Concessions should be open longer at the various facilities – responsive to when the centres are open and being sued
- Some expressed the concern that the parks we are building are not sufficiently diverse – we need more variation in the infrastructure we are putting in the parks
- Establish criteria and service levels for what you put in and why
 - *Staff noted recent efforts around the topic of shade structures and the establishment of shade structure [locational criteria](#)*
- Designs that support dual-usage of facilities is a challenge (e.g. cricket with soccer)
- Another member felt that the City could improve how it partners with private and public organizations that also provide facilities (e.g. gyms). It was noted that perhaps we are perhaps duplicating services offered in the private sector (e.g. fitness) and questioned if we should continue to do this?
- Other members talked about the need to improve access to facilities, including existing parking challenges at specific facilities when they are at peak use (e.g. Cassie Campbell and Chris Gibson Recreation Centres) and planning for non-car trips (i.e. public transit, cycling, walking) as Brampton grows to 800,000 people.
- Promotion and incorporation of transit to and from destination facilities was also discussed
- Other members felt that the City could do more to promote awareness of opportunities to participate in free play (e.g. using recreation facilities like basketball courts in parks in an unstructured way) and for public ownership of parks and facilities to help discourage vandalism.
- It was noted that the promotion of ‘what we have now’ could be improved; the city’s web site was one area specifically noted that improvements could be made

3. How can Brampton best respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with its park and recreation facilities and programs? Are there additional challenges and opportunities that should be considered?

- Panel members said that it was important for the Master Plan to be driven by the anticipated population growth and demographic changes. One Panel member felt it was particularly important to understand how intensification may produce a different set of needs for parks and recreation facilities than the predominantly 'greenfield' growth of the past.
- One member felt that activity is being engineered out of people's daily lives as a result of increasingly longer commutes between home and work and that this trend would be heightened with the anticipated high residential growth and lower employment growth in Brampton. In light of this, it was felt that reintegrating recreation into people's daily lives should be a priority of the Master Plan.
- A Panel member felt that it is very important for the Master Plan to include reinvestment in existing facilities and that this should take precedence over investment in new facilities. The Panel member felt that these facilities are a key part of many neighbourhoods and their cultural identity and that they need to be well maintained and in some cases, require major renovations (e.g. beyond the work that was recently done at Century Gardens).
- Several Panel members felt that it is important that the Master Plan take into account the needs of Brampton's diverse population, including those who are aging, those who have immigrated to Canada, and youth.
- Some particularly underlined the growth in the number of young families, reflected in demand for schools, and suggested that the City have conversations with the development community to better understand who is buying new residential units.

4. Over the next fifteen years, what are the main priorities that Brampton should address in providing for parks, recreation and sport?

- Several Panel members discussed the importance of both larger, multi-use facilities and smaller, neighbourhood focused facilities.
- One Panel member felt that it is important to have larger facilities, but expressed a preference for fewer larger facilities and a greater number of local facilities.

- A Panel member discussed categorizing the differences between community centres and sports plexes, suggesting that the number and type of programs offered could be one way of defining differences.
- It was suggested that the City should design facilities so that they can be efficiently maintained and operated, with some criticism for current facilities with vaulted ceilings and other features that may have been costly to construct and may be costly to operate and maintain.
- Panel members felt that it will be important to engage youth, religious organizations (particularly those that provide facilities), and sports user groups through the Master Plan process.
- There was a range of views on how development charges and cash-in-lieu of land payments are used to fund new parks and recreation facilities. One Panel member felt that development charges should be increased to fund 100% of new park and recreation facilities in new growth areas. Another member felt that development charges are already high and that the money collected should be spent more wisely. It was also suggested that the City should explore cash-in-lieu payments only in areas of the City where there are constraints on the size of land that would otherwise be secured (e.g. in downtown where redevelopment sites are smaller).
- A couple of members talked about how the City is reinvesting in the *Flower City* theme for its upcoming sesquicentennial and suggested that this theme should be carried through all parks and recreation investment and that there could be potential sponsorship opportunities associated with this.
- A further comment was made – if you can't afford to maintain it adequately, then don't build it.
- A couple of Panel members highlighted cricket and kabaddi as emerging sports that may need new facilities to match the level of interest. One member noted that there are some cricket facilities already in Brampton, however they may not be widely known.

Engagement Process Advice

- It was suggested that the project updates could be sent to Panel members every 15-30 days so that they could stay on top of developments and come to meetings as well prepared as possible.
 - *Project staff will include the Panel in the monthly updates we are sending around internally to staff and Council*

- Panel members suggested that the Recreation Planning Areas (RPAs) should be identified by letters and / or colour rather than numbers. They felt that this would help members of the public better visualize the RPAs as distinct from the City's wards.
 - *Staff and the consultant team agree and will make this change.*
- It was further suggested that the City partner with religious and cultural organizations to help get the word out about the Master Plan.

Additional Questions of Clarification

- A member asked the project team why the 2007 Master Plan was not approved by City Council.
 - *Staff responded, noting that Council had concerns that the plan might be too restrictive and that the consultation process wasn't as successful as had been hoped, leading them to 'receive' the plan for information. Although the plan was not fully endorsed by Council, the City has been able to use its recommendations to help guide work on developing parks and recreation over the following years.*
- A member asked what criteria are used to determine if a park is needed in a particular neighbourhood.
 - *Staff responded, noting that when planning new communities, the City looks at overall population, density, the inventory of existing facilities and service level criteria. Developers of those communities are then required to convey land to the City at ratios set out in the Planning Act. The City sometimes receives cash-in-lieu of land and uses this money to assemble properties to provide larger parks.*
- A member asked if the Master Plan would be tied into the Official Plan and Secondary Plans.
 - *A member of the project team responded that the City is currently undertaking a mandated review of the Official Plan and that this review process will be informed by the Master Plan process and vice versa.*
- Citizen Panel members sought clarification on the components that would be included in the Master Plan scope, including greenbelt lands, urban forest / open space that are naturalized, and implementation related to non-municipal assets / co-located assets.
 - *The project team indicated that although greenbelt lands can serve a passive recreation function, planning for these areas will largely be dealt with through the Official Plan Review. The results of that process will help inform the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and vice versa. With regard to urban forest / open space that is naturalized, some of these areas will be included within the Master Plan and some will not – a determination will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the recreation function that these areas provide. Lastly, the Plan will make recommendations on potential partnerships with non-municipal providers (e.g. school boards).*

- Panel members were interested in better understanding what kind of data will be used to determine utilization and help make decisions about changes to facilities. A member noted that some facilities are reputed to be under-used but have full parking lots when visited. Another member suggested that user permits could be one source of utilization data.

NEXT STEPS

The meeting concluded with a brief overview of next steps in the process. Panel members were asked to help get the word out about the resident survey that will run from April 1 to June 3. Panel members were also told that a Master Plan Launch Event, Public Meeting and series of stakeholder workshops are planned for April and May 2016. Lastly, Panel members were informed that the second Panel meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2016.

Citizen Panel Meeting 1 Participants

The following is a list of Citizen Panel members (members are listed alphabetically by last name). All of the members below attended the first meeting.

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| 1. Patrick Doran - Brampton School Traffic Safety Council | 9. Joe Pimentel - Inclusion and Equity Committee |
| 2. Daminder Ghumman - Brampton School Traffic Safety Council | 10. Frank Raymond - Accessibility Advisory Committee |
| 3. Angela Johnson - CaraBram | 11. Mario Russo - Brampton Sports Hall of Fame Committee |
| 4. David Laing - Environmental Advisory Committee | 12. Rajinder Saini - Inclusion and Equity Committee |
| 5. Michael Lobraico - Brampton School Traffic Safety Council | 13. Ken Wilde - Heritage Advisory Committee |
| 6. Kevin Montgomery - Cycling Advisory Committee | 14. Laila Zarrabi Yan - Environmental Advisory Committee |
| 7. Ron Noonan - Brampton Sports Hall of Fame Committee | |
| 8. Karyn Pelkie - Accessibility Advisory Committee | |

Citizen Panel Meeting 1 Agenda

6:00pm Sign-In and Light Refreshments

6:30 Welcome
City of Brampton

6:35 Introductions and Agenda Review
Alex Heath, Swerhun Facilitation

6:50 Overview Presentation
City of Brampton and Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

7:10 Questions of Clarification

7:20 Facilitated Discussion

Focus Questions:

What are the **best things** about Brampton's parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs?

What in Brampton's parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs **be improved**?

How can Brampton best **respond to the challenges and opportunities** associated with its park and recreation facilities and programs? Are there additional challenges and opportunities that should be considered?

Over the next fifteen years, what are the **main priorities** that Brampton should address in providing for parks, recreation and sport?

8:20 Wrap Up & Next Steps

8:30 Adjourn