



Brampton

REPORT

Planning, Design & Development Committee

Standing Committee of the Council
of the Corporation of the City of Brampton

Date: May 5, 2005
File: P25 OV
Subject: **INFORMATION REPORT**
City of Brampton Official Plan Review
Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper
Contact: Tara Buonpensiero (874-2071)
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OVERVIEW:

- **This report presents the Brampton Official Plan Review Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper for the review of Planning, Design and Development Committee.**
- **This Discussion Paper is intended to invite input and comments from the public and stakeholders on the proposed changes to the environment and open space policies and related schedules of the Official Plan.**
- **With respect to policy, the proposed changes are to:**
 - **Ensure the policies clearly distinguish between environmental features and recreational open space;**
 - **Place more emphasis on the City being a leader in environmental responsibility;**
 - **Remove reference to outdated documents and terminology;**
 - **Provide the policy framework to implement the new Provincial initiatives such as the new Provincial Policy Statement and the Greenbelt Plan;**
 - **Provide the policy framework to implement new City initiatives such as the woodland strategy, Development Design Guidelines and Storm Water Management Guidelines; and,**
 - **Establish clear guidelines for determining buffers and setbacks from environmental features.**
- **With respect to mapping, the proposed changes are to:**
 - **Accurately reflect environmental features and recreational open space utilizing the best data available;**
 - **Ensure the mapping clearly distinguishes between environmental features and recreational open space; and,**
 - **Removal of the steep slope and hedgerows designations from Schedule D and removal of the Private Commercial Recreation designation from Schedule E.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the staff Report dated May 5, 2005 entitled “Information Report, City of Brampton Official Plan Review Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper” and attachments (File P25 OV) be received;
2. **THAT** staff be authorized to release the “Brampton Official Plan Review Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper” for public consultation to receive comments on the Discussion Paper before proceeding to revise the Official Plan;
3. **THAT** staff be directed to report back to Planning, Design and Development Committee with the results of the consultation, and final recommendations on changes to the environment and open space sections and schedules of the Brampton Official Plan; and
4. **THAT** the City Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this report and Council resolution to the Regions of Peel, York and Halton, the City of Toronto, the area municipalities of Mississauga, Caledon, and Vaughan, Credit Valley Conservation and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this staff report is to advise the Planning, Design and Development Committee of the results of the review of the environment and open space policies and schedules, which forms part of the City’s ongoing Official Plan Review. The attached Discussion Paper prepared by City staff proposes some changes to both the policies and the schedules of the Official Plan. It is recommended that the Discussion Paper be released for public consultation before staff proceeds to revise the Official Plan.

Although the environment and open space policies of the City’s Official Plan were written more than 10 years ago, for the most part, the policies are still relevant. For example, when the environmental policies were written, the City of Brampton had adopted an ecosystem approach based on subwatershed planning, which is still the practice followed by the majority of municipalities today. Over the years there has been an increased emphasis on the environment and open space system, and as such the policies should be made stronger to reflect the City’s ongoing commitment in this area. This commitment is evident by the City’s strategies for protecting urban trees and woodlots and preparation of Development Design and Storm Water Management Guidelines, all of which have been prepared over the past 5 years.

At the same time, changes to some Provincial policies and legislation including those brought about by the new Provincial Policy Statement, the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provide new opportunities for further strengthening Brampton’s environment and open space policies. The result of these initiatives needs to be incorporated into the Official Plan for implementation purposes.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper is arranged into two parts: Part A includes the background and policy context. This section provides a review of the environmental and open space policies in the Provincial, regional and local context and summarizes the environment and open space policies of other municipalities including: Oakville, Burlington, Markham, Mississauga and Vaughan to identify “best practices.”

Part B of the Discussion Paper suggests proposed revisions to the environment and open space policies and mapping based on the analysis conducted in Part A together with other City initiatives that are up for consideration as part of the Official Plan review.

Environment and Open Space Technical Committee

As part of the environment and open space review, a technical committee was established to review and comment on the current and proposed policy and mapping revisions. This committee consists of representatives from the City of Brampton, the Region of Peel, Credit Valley Conservation, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Brampton City Council.

In December 2003, the committee was asked to respond to a number of questions related to the Official Plan review specifically related to the environment and open space policies and associated schedules. Committee members were in agreement that the fundamental approach that the City of Brampton has adopted in the existing environmental policy framework, which is based on an ecosystem approach, is acceptable and that the City should continue to utilize this approach. Committee members were also in agreement that the City’s environmental and open space policies and schedules were in need of updating, and that the Plan should more clearly distinguish between environmental and recreational open space. Some comments were provided that identified the need to enhance and streamline some environmental policies to provide accuracy and clarity in interpretation.

The Technical Committee will continue to be consulted during the public consultation period of the Official Plan Review.

Policy Context

Provincial

Matters of Provincial interest as set out in the Planning Act, include among other issues, protection of the natural environment. This is reinforced by the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, which includes a number of new and revised policies related to the environment and open space. The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement includes stronger wording with respect to the provision of public spaces, protection of the natural features and conservation of energy and air quality. Although policies in the environment and open space sections of the Brampton Official Plan are largely

consistent with the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, some revisions may be necessary to protect these Provincial interests.

In February 2005, the Province of Ontario released the Greenbelt Plan, which delineated the final boundaries of the Greater Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt. Within Brampton, the Credit River Valley and associated buffers within North West Brampton have been included within the Greenbelt and have been designated Protected Countryside. The Greenbelt Plan identifies that lands within the Protected Countryside designation are intended to continue to accommodate a range of commercial, industrial and institutional uses serving the rural resource and agricultural sectors. The area subject to the Greenbelt Plan has been included on Schedule D and E, and also applicable policies will be included within the Environment and Open Space sections of the Official Plan to implement the Greenbelt Plan.

Regional

The *Planning Act* requires that a local area Official Plan must conform to the policies of an upper-tier municipality's Official Plan. The elements of the Region of Peel's Official Plan have been largely addressed by the current Brampton Official Plan. The Region of Peel is currently undertaking a strategic update of their Regional Official Plan related to their environmental mapping, specifically updating Schedule A – Core Areas of the Greenlands System in Peel to reflect the most accurate information available (referred to as ROPA 13). One of the most substantial changes being proposed as part of the Region of Peel's update to their environmental mapping are the sources of data being used to map the Core Valleylands. Within the Credit River watershed, the Region of Peel has used Credit Valley Conservation's Crest of Slope data, and within the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's jurisdiction, Fill and Fill Line Extension data was used.

The Region of Peel's update currently underway for Schedule A – Core Areas of the Greenlands System in Peel only includes features of Regional significance and is proposing to use the same environmental base data being used by the City of Brampton. As a result it is anticipated that the City's revised mapping will be consistent with that of the Region of Peel's.

Local (City of Brampton Strategic Plan)

Council adopted Vision Brampton - Strategic Plan 2003, in May 2003. The City's strategic plan sets out six priority goals (Pillars) to guide the City over the next 5 years. The six pillars are as follows:

- 1) **Modern Transportation Systems**
- 2) **Managing Growth**
- 3) **Protecting our Environment, Enhancing our Community**
- 4) **A Dynamic and Prosperous Economy**
- 5) **Community Lifestyle**
- 6) **Excellence in Local Government**

Although all pillars will indirectly affect the policies in the Official Plan related to the environment and open space, the most direct impact will be with respect to the third pillar: Protecting Our Environment, Enhancing our Community and the fifth pillar: Community Lifestyle. The review of the environment and open space policies are intended to implement the intent of the strategic plan by ensuring that the policies support an ecosystem approach to planning, utilizing best management practices and resulting in a higher level of excellence related to community lifestyle.

Conservation Authorities

There are two conservation authorities within the limits of the City of Brampton: Credit Valley Conservation (CVC); and, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). When reviewing the environment and open space policies in the Official Plan, the role, policies and regulations of the Conservation Authorities will be updated as appropriate. As new information becomes available from the Conservation Authorities, appropriate revisions to the Official Plan will be completed.

A complete listing of all of the applicable policies from the Provincial, regional, and local context can be found in Appendix A of the Discussion Paper.

Review of other Official Plans

To assist in the review of the City's environmental and open space policies, the Official Plans of a number of other municipalities were reviewed to identify policy directions that the City of Brampton may want to consider implementing. The environment and open space policies in the Official Plans of Oakville, Burlington, Markham, Mississauga and Vaughan were reviewed and compared to the current policies in the City of Brampton Official Plan.

Similar to Brampton, all municipalities reviewed are implementing an ecosystem-based approach to environmental planning. Through the benchmarking exercise, a number of areas were identified where the environment and open space policies of the City of Brampton Official Plan could be strengthened, specifically related to placing more emphasis on the municipality being a role model in environmental protection, setting specific guidelines to determine developable area/buffers, and recognizing the important environmental role that linkages and remnant natural features play in the overall health of the environment. A summary table outlining the key policy directions of each municipality reviewed can be found in Appendix B of the Discussion Paper.

Proposed Revisions

There are two components to the environment and open space review, the policy framework (Section 4.4 Environmental Management and Section 4.5 Open Space) and mapping (Schedules D Environmental Features and Schedule E Open Space).

With respect to policy, the proposed are to:

- Ensure the policies clearly distinguish between environmental features and recreational open space;
- Place more emphasis on the City being a leader in environmental responsibility;
- Remove reference to outdated documents and terminology;
- Provide the policy framework to implement new Provincial initiatives such as the new Provincial Policy Statement and the Greenbelt Plan;
- Provide the policy framework to implement new City initiatives such as Brampton's woodland strategy, Development Design Guidelines and Storm Water Management Guidelines; and,
- Establish clear guidelines for determining buffers and setbacks from environmental features.

Proposed policy revisions are summarized in the tables attached as Appendix A to this report.

With respect to mapping, the proposed changes are to:

- Accurately reflect environmental features and recreational open space utilizing the best data available;
- Ensure the mapping clearly distinguishes between environmental features and recreational open space; and,
- Removal of the steep slope and hedgerow designation from Schedule D as this information is too detailed for the scale of an Official Plan schedule and the removal of the Private Commercial Recreation designation from Schedule E.

Proposed Consultation Process

Upon authorization of the Planning Design & Development Committee, the Discussion Paper will be released for consultation with agencies (not represented by the Technical Committee), development community and the public at large. Consultation with the steering committee will continue to provide a forum for comprehensive input by the conservation authorities and Peel Region. Various opportunities will be provided to promote public participation including individual meetings/discussions with City Staff as appropriate, and a workshop session to receive comments and input from citizens and interest groups on the Discussion Paper will be scheduled for the middle of June.

Staff will report back to the Planning, Design and Development Committee with results of the consultation and final recommendations on changes to be made to the environment and open space policies and mapping of the Official Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the review to date, it appears that the fundamental approach that has been taken in drafting the existing environment and open space policies in the Brampton Official Plan are sound, however there are some key changes that are necessary. For example, the Official Plan needs to clearly distinguish between environmental and open space designations, and this should be achieved by having clear policy statements and associated designations on Schedules D and E. Brampton's environment and open space policies should clearly implement new Provincial policy initiatives as well as recent City initiatives.

There is an opportunity to provide the policy framework that puts the City of Brampton in the forefront of environmental protection as a community leader, providing an example for residents and businesses to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

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AGREED:

John B. Corbett MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning
Design and Development

Attachments:

- Appendix A: Brampton Official Plan Review Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper
- Appendix B: Summary Table of Proposed Changes to Environment and Open Space Sections of the Brampton Official Plan

Appendix A
City of Brampton Official Plan Review
Environment and Open Space Discussion Paper
(Under Separate Cover)

Appendix B
Summary Table of Proposed Changes to Environment and Open Space Sections
of the Brampton Official Plan

Section	Heading	Proposed Changes
4.4	Environmental Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the policies in Section 4.4 specific to Environmental Management and relocate policies related to recreational open space to the Open Space Section (Section 4.5).
	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Open Space (Section 4.5) for policies related to Recreational Open Space. • Revise to remove specific reports that are out of date. Add a more generic statement that the City will continue to monitor and incorporate new initiatives into the environmental planning process. • Remove reference to outdated Strategic Plan and replace with recently approved Six Pillars. • Continue to focus on ecosystem approach and expand on interconnectedness of environmental features. • Update Appendix O to more clearly reflect the Region of Peel's Core Greenlands (Schedule A.) • Consider placing more emphasis on the City being a leader in environmental responsibility.
4.4.1 4.4.2 4.4.3 4.4.4	Storm Water Management Water Supply and Conservation Groundwater Recharge/Discharge Soils Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include these sections under the heading Watershed and Subwatershed • Add a new section titled Subwatershed Study to discuss requirements, contents etc. • Reflect Storm Water Management Guidelines and Development Design Guidelines. • Refer to PPS Section 2.2 regarding water.
4.4.5 4.4.6 4.4.7 4.4.8 4.4.9	Valleylands, Watercourses and Natural Hazards Sensitive Areas Forestry, Trees and Planting Wetlands Habitat: Fisheries and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include these sections under the heading of Natural Features and Functions and discuss the features included in Schedule D. • Rename the valleyland category to valleyland/watercourse to accommodate important headwater tributaries that do not have defined valley corridors. • Consider placing more emphasis on the City being a leader in environmental responsibility. • Consider implementing guidelines for determining the limits of development. • Consider emphasising the importance of connectivity between environmental features and the importance of all natural features to the overall environmental system. • Refer to new PPS Section 2.1 Natural Heritage and 3.1 Natural Hazards. • Include policies to implement the Greenbelt Plan as appropriate.
4.4.10	Buffers, Setbacks and Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to reflect Environmental Buffers, Setbacks and Linkages.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a new section titled Environmental Impact Studies to discuss purpose, requirements and contents.

Appendix B

Summary Table of Proposed Changes to Environment and Open Space Sections of the Brampton Official Plan

Section	Heading	Proposed Changes
4.4.11	Noise and Vibration Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change reference in policies from Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to ORDC Railway. • Change terminology as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'noise level' to 'sound level' • 'N.E.F.' to 'N.E.F./N.E.P.' • Include other uses that generate noise and vibration such as some industrial and commercial uses. • Need to define unacceptable noise levels based on Ministry of the Environment Guidelines. • Update to reference the Toronto Pearson International Airport Operating Area and Composite Noise Contour map. • The Land Use Policy Near Airports document is no longer in publication and has been replaced with the Provincial Policy Statement. • Contact CN railway to determine if they have specific policies to be included in the OP. • Remove reference to specific documents that will be out dated and rely on the policy that states "all current guidelines and policies." • Appendix I is also out of date, as it referenced documents no longer in publication.
4.5	Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the policies in Section 4.5 specific to Open Space and relocate policies related to the environment to the Environmental Management Section (Section 4.4).
	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section needs to distinguish between recreational open space and environmental open space. • Revise designations on Schedule E as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Wide Parks • Community Park • Conservation Areas • Cemeteries • Area Subject to Greenbelt Plan • Refer to PPS Section 1.5 Public Spaces, Parks and Open Space • Refer to Environmental Management (Section 4.4) for policies related to Environmental Open Space. • Reflect Development Design Guidelines.

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Summary Table of Proposed Changes to Environment and Open Space Sections
of the Brampton Official Plan

Section	Heading	Proposed Changes
4.5.1	Open Space Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General objective that open space network will be designed to provide access to a variety of recreational opportunities, and to facilitate this access by providing pathway connections between open spaces. • Remove reference to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and replace with Culture Leisure and Recreation Master Plan. • Remove reference to the PACT Report and replace with Brampton's Pathways Master Plan. • Remove objectives and policies that reference environmental open space and instead reference Section 4.4 - Environmental Management.
	Recreational Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate policies currently included in Section 4.5.5 The Parks System to this section. • Revise to indicate that utility easements or rights of way will not be credited towards parkland dedication. • Remove policy that the City may purchase lands released by the school boards because in new development areas the schools are often located adjacent or within close to parks. • Reorganize to discuss recreational open space hierarchy (currently Section 4.5.6) in this section. • Include policies to implement the Greenbelt Plan as appropriate.
	Environmental Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocated policies related to recreational uses in environmental parks to Section 4.4
4.5.2	Conservation Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise introduction to reflect that the City of Brampton operates/maintains some conservation lands through separate agreements. Add a new policy to state that the City will work with the Conservation Authorities to maximize public access of conservation lands.
	Private Commercial Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is proposed that this section be removed as it is also proposed that this designation be removed from Schedule E.
4.5.3	Cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify introduction to specify that public and private cemeteries are shown on Schedule E and differentiate that public cemeteries provide secondary open space benefits while private cemeteries are not intended to be open to the public.

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Section	Heading	Proposed Changes
4.5.4	Secondary Plan Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identify the components that will be addressed in each Secondary Plan. • Remove the need for a pedestrian/cyclist circulation system analysis at the secondary plan level, as this will be addressed during the block planning process. • Remove the requirement for a Master Open Space Landscaping and Pedestrian Concept Plan as this is addressed during the block plan process.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a new section titled Block Planning Considerations
4.5.5	The Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine the section entitled the Parks System with the section entitled the Parks Hierarchy.
4.5.6	The Parks Hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine the section entitled the Parks System with the section entitled the Parks Hierarchy. • Remove reference to service level as it has already been stated previously in the plan. • All of the policies related to Parkettes, Neighbourhood Parks, Community Parks and City Wide Parks to be made more general and refer to the Culture Leisure and Recreation Master Plan. • Parkettes and Neighbourhood Parks –Include a policy that states that Schedules A and E will be updated semi annually to reflect new parkettes/neighbourhood parks without the need for an OPA. • Community Parks – Consider including a policy to specify that locations will be located at the intersection of major roads and that they will be accessible by transit. • Environmental Parks – This area should refer to Section 4.4 Environmental Management and just address recreational opportunities in environmental parks.
4.5.7	Open Space Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider placing more emphasis on the connectivity aspect of open space linkages and the potential benefit from an ecosystem connection perspective.