

Mount Pleasant Village



A New Transit-Oriented Neighbourhood in Brampton

A new kind of development is being built on the outskirts of Brampton, in the Greater Toronto Area. Urban and livable, focused around transit, compact and walkable, with a strong character, Mount Pleasant Village represents the new face of greenfield development in Ontario and it is a demonstration of Brampton's work for smarter growth and more sustainable and liveable development.



The Context



The Village is located in the northwest area of Brampton, around the new Mount Pleasant GO commuter train station along the inter-city, heavy rail line connecting Toronto with Georgetown and in the future extending to Guelph and beyond. Mount Pleasant acts as a mobility hub connecting inter-regional GO service (rail and bus) with Brampton local transit, including the upcoming Züm bus rapid service along Bovaird and the new bus service to the communities being developed to the north.

The large Mount Pleasant Community (1000 ha/2200 acres) received Council approval recently and features extensive environmental restoration, a complex urban structure with a series of mixed-use nodes along a strong transit spine, a variety of transit supportive built forms and the Mount Pleasant Village transit-oriented development (TOD) as its centre.



The Concept and Plan

Mount Pleasant Village is an "urban transit village", a new neighbourhood developed around and based on transit and active transportation. The Village, square and amenities are highly walkable and also has significant features in support of other active transportation forms such as cycling.

The Village plan has a strong and clear structure, a layout focused around the new square being built just to the north of the GO station and has two main spines – one along the main bus transit route connecting with the new community to the north-west and a second green spine connecting to the city-wide park and the integrated natural areas to the north. The radial pattern of development allocates higher density forms along the main streets and around the square and distributes less denser forms towards the edge.



Built Form

With a mix of urban forms including live-work, a variety of townhouses, semis and single-family homes, Mount Pleasant is fully walkable with all the residents living within five minutes of the GO and transit station. The Village is centred around a landmark public amenity complex – a cultural and education centre including a community centre located within a reconstructed Brampton train station (the former downtown CPR station), a library and a two-storey elementary school sharing facilities with the library and community centre. At the heart of the Village is the public square framed by a three-storey row of live-work units that are accommodating commercial and service space. The west side will include future compact, dense development in Phase 2, while on the south side of the tracks the urban, transit-oriented development is expected as well.



Open Space and Streetscape



The square represents the main feature of the Village – an amenity and key contributor to the character of the area. The square offers ample opportunities for public enjoyment for all times and seasons including a pond/skating rink, playground, major public art features and spaces to sit and interact, all with a contemporary design and high-quality street furniture and landscaping. A variety of smaller open space parkettes are located within the neighbourhood. One of the main pedestrian/active transportation streets connects to the green spine of the entire Mount Pleasant Community to the north which includes a City-wide park,

integrated woodlots and renaturalized areas. A variety of streets have been developed with consistent urban elements.

Design, Character and Identity

The Village was carefully planned and designed very urban, inspired by the best rail/streetcar suburbs of the golden age of urbanism in the early 20th century, when transit and walkability were paramount. The character and identity are defined by elements such as the landmark tower, consistent architecture and high-quality streetscape, wayfinding and signage, creating a place for all ages and interests.

The design theme is based on the railroad/train idea and is visible in the materials, styles and streetscape and in particular in the public art. The character extends into the neighbourhood with an urban but small-scale atmosphere, with a variety of townhouses, semis and singles fronting onto the street, prominent, well scaled streetscape, and residential styles well articulated and using careful detailing with a dominant craftsman style.



Innovation

Mount Pleasant Village includes innovative live-work forms, amenities within walking distance, a very strong public realm, the unique cultural-educational complex, “alternative development standards” resulting in narrow streets, reduced setbacks and laneways.



Planned over a period of time in a joint effort between the City of Brampton and Mattamy Homes, this project has used innovative planning tools such as a design-based block (tertiary) plan, complete with detailed Community Design Guidelines, strong architectural control and new development standards.

Implementing such new concepts in a very short time required the use of innovative delivery methods including extensive partnerships, project management and organization. Developed and built by Mattamy

Development Corporation (residential, subdivision work) with the City of Brampton (square, transit station, cultural amenity), Brampton Library Board, and Peel District School Board (school), the Mount Pleasant Village project has used fast tracking delivery methods and has benefited from funding from the North –West Brampton Landowners Group , the City and senior levels of government through the Federal Infrastructure Stimulus Fund.

Conclusions

Although Mount Pleasant Village represents only the first phase of the emerging urban centre that will be the focus of the entire community in West Brampton, it is a demonstration of a new type of more intensive, urban development of greenfields in the GTA. This is not a conventional “suburban development” and is attracting a very urban lifestyle, focused on transit and active transportation. The Village also demonstrates the use of innovative planning and delivery tools in achieving the goals of smarter growth and a more sustainable, livable and healthy development.



Based on “Brampton’s Mount Pleasant Village – Emerging Transit-Oriented Neighbourhood” article by Alex Taranu in Ontario Planning Journal, Vol. 26, No. 6, 2011

Mount Pleasant Village, Brampton, ON

Key data:

Location: Northwest Brampton, on the Toronto-Georgetown GO line, around the Mount Pleasant Station

The Village: 39 hectares (96 acres), approx. 1,300 dwelling units

Mount Pleasant Secondary Plan: 1000ha (2200ac), approx. 50,000 population at completion

Elementary School: 600 pupils including kindergarten

Cultural amenity, library (20,000 sf)

Transit hub with 6 bays and clock tower; GO commuter rail and bus service; Brampton Transit service

Credits:

Main developers:

Mattamy Development Corporation (residential, live-work)

City of Brampton (Transit hub, Library, cultural space, square)

Peel District School Board (school)

Project Management:

Mattamy Development Corporation, City of Brampton with Peel District School Board

Consulting:

STLA Inc/NAK Design Strategies, Toronto (urban design, landscape)

Makrimichalos Cugini Architects, Toronto (School, Library, cultural amenity and transit hub)

Gagnon-Law Planners, Brampton (subdivision)

Construction:

REMO General Contracting, Brampton (school, library, cultural amenity)

Hermanns Contracting, Schomberg (square and mobility hub)

More information:

City of Brampton project page:

<http://www.brampton.ca/en/Business/planning-development/projects-studies/Pages/Mount-Pleasant-Village.aspx>

Mattamy Homes development page:

<http://www.mattamyhomes.com/GTA/Communities/Brampton/Mount-Pleasant/>

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