



Public Meeting 1 Summary

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

6:30 – 9:00pm

Loafer's Lake Recreation Centre, Gymnasium

30 Loafer's Lake Lane

OVERVIEW

On May 3, 2016, the City of Brampton hosted the first of two public meetings as part of the development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Brampton (PRMP). About 40 people participated in this first public meeting, including Regional Councillor Michael Palleschi and City Councillor Gurpreet Dhillon. The purpose of the meeting was to seek feedback to help identify gaps, opportunities and priorities with regard to parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs in the City of Brampton. Feedback from this meeting, along with feedback collected through other consultation activities (e.g. public survey, stakeholder workshops and survey, citizen panel meetings, etc.) will be used to help inform the development of the PRMP. The draft PRMP recommendations will be tested through a second round of consultation activities, to take place in late 2016 / early 2017.

The meeting started with a presentation from the project consultants, outlining the purpose of the PRMP and the process through which it will be developed. The presentation also featured highlights of six future challenges and opportunities that will be considered in the development of the plan. The meeting then turned to a discussion where participants were asked to provide their views on the best things about Brampton's parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs; how they could be improved, and; the main priorities that Brampton should address in providing for parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs.

This summary of participant feedback was written by Swerhun Facilitation, a third-party facilitation firm that is part of the consultant team led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC). **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.** A draft of this report was shared with participants for review before being finalized.

KEY THEMES FROM THE REPORT BACK

The key themes below reflect feedback that multiple participants raised during the report back of table discussions. A more detailed summary of feedback is included in the section that follows.

- **Facilities**

The quality and number of facilities was identified as both one of the best things and as an area to improve. Participants generally felt that facilities are well maintained, however, they felt that there were some specific sites where quality could be improved and that more facilities (and potentially multi-purpose facilities) should be added, as Brampton grows.

- **Access**

Access to facilities was also identified as both one of the best things and as an area to improve. Participants generally felt that parks and facilities are well located and accessible by car and transit. There was interest in seeing a better balance of facility types across the city to ensure Bramptonians don't have to travel too far to access a wide range of programs.

- **Programs**

The diversity and range of programs offered by the City was identified as one of the best things about parks, recreation and sport facilities and programs. Participants had some suggested improvements, like improving the times that programs are offered, giving priority time slots to youth and ensuring adequate access to programs for seniors.

DETAILED SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Participant feedback has been organized into the following five categories: (1) best things; (2) areas to improve; (3) main priorities; (4) consultation process advice; and, (5) 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?

Facilities

- Participants felt that Brampton had clean, well-maintained and well-organized facilities and a variety of quality parks and open spaces. Gore Meadows Community Centre and Cassie Campbell Community Centre were cited as examples of high- quality facilities.

Access

- Participants talked about how parks and facilities are generally well located and accessible by cars and transit. They also felt that programs were generally affordable and that parks and facilities were places where a variety of Bramptonians can come together, meet one another and feel welcomed.

Programs

- Participants said that they liked the diversity of programs offered and felt that the quality of instructors was high. They also liked that there are programs for a variety of age groups, including youth and seniors.

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

Facilities

- Several participants felt that the number of facilities needs to increase as Brampton's population grows and needs evolve. Some of these participants emphasized, for example, that adding more field hockey facilities that could be used year-round.
- Participants also talked about building higher quality facilities to help attract high quality tournaments and events, raising Brampton's profile. Some participants talked about creating a "sport park" with high quality facilities for many types of sports and offices that could be used by provincial or national sport organizations.
- A few participants identified facilities that they felt had been neglected in terms of maintenance.
- One participant felt that the Bramalea area is underserved and suggested that the Howden Recreation Centre be rebuilt with a full-sized swimming pool, weight room, fitzone, multi-purpose rooms, fitness / dance studios and a youth room for drop-in activities.

Access

- A few participants talked about ways that access to facilities could be improved, including ensuring a better balance of programs across all facilities so that residents don't have to travel to facilities too far from their homes.
- Participants also talked about issues with parking capacity at some facilities and limited access to certain types of facilities (e.g. tennis courts and Chinguacousy Park which are kept locked and exclusive to tennis club members).

Programs

- Participants had a number of suggestions for improving programs, including:
 - Discounted fees and rates for Brampton residents
 - Improving the times that programs are offered (e.g. mother / child programs that start in the morning)
 - Better engaging youth and giving preference to youth programs in peak hours
 - Ensuring that seniors have adequate access to programs, including inter-generational programs
 - Improving community engagement and involvement in programs
 - Improving the website to make it more user-friendly

Working with Others

- Participants suggested that the City could better coordinate with school boards to provide programs and access to facilities for community use.

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

Facilities

- Several participants said that the City should focus on building more facilities over the next 15 years, particularly since the population of young children will be growing.
- Participants said that there was a need for more swimming pools (rectangular swimming pools) and field hockey facilities.
- They also felt that there was a need for multi-purpose facilities in older parts of the City, similar to Cassie Campbell Community Centre.

Access

- Participants felt that the City should continue to focus on making its parks and facilities safe and happy places, accessible and welcome to all. They also suggested that the City look at better connecting parks and facilities to public transportation.

Programs

- Participants had a number of suggestions related to program priorities, including further diversifying program offerings, increasing hours, including more drop-in programs and further focusing on seniors, children and teenagers.

Environment

- Several participants talked about increasing the focus on environmental protection and sustainability, both in terms of seeking to involve youth, adults and seniors in park and open space clean up days and also in terms of building upgrades like LED lighting and solar panels.

Economic Driver

- It was suggested that the City focus on sport as an economic driver and seek out ways to support high performance tournaments and sporting events.

Consultation Process Advice

Communication

- A few participants strongly felt that the City should explore ways to better communicate consultation opportunities for the Master Plan. One participant felt that the community meeting could have been better advertised through things like mailings and large signs in community centres.

Survey

- A few participants had specific concerns about and suggestions for improving the survey. One participant felt that the questions are too vague and consequently, the responses could be open to broad interpretation. Another felt noted that field hockey was not amongst the activities listed in the survey and should be added in.

Questions of Clarification

Throughout the meeting, participants asked questions of clarification. Responses from the City and/or consultant team are *in italics*.

- ***In reading through the minutes of a Council Committee, it looks like there's consideration for an LRT through the Etobicoke Creek Valley. Will the Parks and Recreation Master Plan therefore consider transit?*** *The Master Plan will take a number of different City studies and plans into consideration. We look at public transit specifically as a layer of access to facilities. Access by public transit could be one of the criteria we look at when making recommendations for additional parks or facilities.*
- ***How will recreation needs be measured and evaluated?*** *Partially through tonight's meeting and other consultations (e.g. stakeholder workshops, survey). Through these mechanisms, we will be looking to identify where there are needs and what trends are emerging. We will also look at how current facilities are being used, e.g. are they fully booked and if not, why.*
- ***For the remainder of the survey period, will there be additional advertising to help get the word out?*** *The City has been sending out e-blasts through a master plan newsletter, printing flyers and asking people to retweet the survey link. Also, posters will be going up in all community centres and there will be advertisements in the newspaper and on public transit. In the past we've found that one of the most effective ways to get the word out is when community members post the link to their social media accounts.*
- ***Is it possible to send an email to people enrolled in programs?*** *The master plan team will coordinate with Recreation Services to see if the enrolment list can be used to help advertise the survey. **Note added after the meeting: Staff investigated this idea and it was determined this could not be done for reasons of confidentiality.***
- ***What role will Brampton Sports Alliance play in this process?*** *We would like them to come to the stakeholder workshops next week. It's a mechanism for specifically for sports associations.*
- ***What will the City do to make our recreation centres safer?*** *The skate park has been neglected and it is very unsafe. The quality and safety of facilities is a consideration in the master plan. One option for improving safety is to locate facilities in areas that are highly visible so that people walking by can easily see what is going on.*

NEXT STEPS

The meeting concluded with a brief overview of next steps in the process. Participants were reminded that the study team would be undertaking analysis over the summer and developing the draft plan in the fall of 2016. A second public meeting will then be held in early 2017 to test the draft Master Plan. **The City of Brampton wish to thank all those who attended this meeting. Your input is invaluable!**