

Date: 2021-05-13

Subject: **Recommendation Report**

Secondary Title: Recommendation Report
City-initiated Official Plan Amendment
Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study
Ward: 10

Contact: Michelle Gervais, Policy Planner, Planning and Development Services, michelle.gervais@brampton.ca

Report Number: Planning, Bld & Ec Dev-2021-507

Recommendations:

1. **THAT** the report from Michelle Gervais, Policy Planner, Planning and Development Services, dated May 13, 2021, to the Planning and Development Services Committee Meeting of June 7, 2021, re: “**Recommendation Report: City-initiated Official Plan Amendment – Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study, Ward 10** be received; and
2. **THAT** the Official Plan Amendment attached hereto respectively as Appendix 2 be adopted, on the basis that it represents good planning, including that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Region of Peel Official Plan and Brampton’s Official Plan for the reasons set out in the Planning Recommendation Report, May 13, 2021.

Overview:

- **Toronto Gore is a low density, low intensity residential community characterized by large, individual lots that do not require full urban services. It is an area in Brampton that offers a rural lifestyle in an urban setting, adds to the City’s diverse housing choice and it provides a sense of identity.**

- **Toronto Gore is designated “Estate Residential” and “Open Space” in the Official Plan. The “Estate Residential” designation permits only single detached dwellings on a minimum lot area of 2.0 acres.**
- **In the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore (between McVean Drive and The Gore Road and north of Castlemore Road) there are large parcels of vacant land that have not been subdivided into estate residential lots. This undeveloped area is located in the City’s “Designated Greenfield Area”.**
- **The City hired SGL Planning & Design Inc to undertake the Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study to assess the existing established estate residential area with a focus on protecting community character and to assess the undeveloped lands in the southern quadrant to determine if there is potential to introduce urban densities on full urban services.**
- **The Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study concluded that estate residential housing will have a limited role in fulfilling future housing demand in Brampton and that any demand for estate residential housing can be accommodated within the existing supply of estate residential housing and the vacant estate residential lots.**
- **There is clear policy direction to move away from estate residential housing within settlement areas and to promote development that is more compact and makes efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities.**
- **This report recommends for approval a City-initiated Official Plan amendment that proposes to redesignate the undeveloped lands located in the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore from “Estate Residential” to “Residential” in the Official Plan. The “Open Space” designation on the undeveloped lands will remain in place.**
- **The proposed “Residential” designation will permit a full range of housing types on lots that are less than 2.0 acres (0.8 hectares) in size, will allow land within the City’s Designated Greenfield Area to be used more efficiently and will allow for the creation of complete communities.**
- **Prior to any development occurring on the undeveloped lands in Toronto Gore, a Secondary Plan shall be prepared to appropriately consider matters such as density, built form, appropriate transition between the established estate residential community and the undeveloped lands, road and pedestrian connections, parks and open space, the natural heritage system, cultural heritage, urban design and servicing.**
- **The proposed Official Plan Amendment does not include any policy recommendations for the established estate residential area. Additional analysis and public consultation on this component of the Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study will be undertaken in Q3/Q4 2021.**
- **The proposed policy recommendations were presented at two open house meetings and at a statutory public meeting on April 12, 2021.**

Background:

The Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study (the “Study”) was initiated in 2016 to assess both the existing established estate residential community with a focus on protecting community character and to assess the undeveloped lands in the southern quadrant to determine if there is potential to introduce more urban densities on full urban services. SGL Planning & Design Inc. was hired by the City to complete the Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study.

The Study includes the lands that are generally bounded by Countryside Drive to the north, The Gore Road to the east, Castlemore Road to the south, and Goreway Drive to the west, along with two areas north of Countryside Drive (see Appendix 1 – Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study Area Boundaries).

Area Characteristics

The Toronto Gore is a community of approximately 600 homes located on large, estate properties. The average lot size in the Toronto Gore is approximately 0.8 hectares (2.0 acres). There are a number of vacant lots scattered throughout the Toronto Gore community and larger vacant parcels of land in the southern quadrant, located between McVean Drive and The Gore Road and north of Castlemore Road, which have an approximate area of 80 hectares (198 acres).

The Toronto Gore community is characterized as an estate area based on its rural characteristics, such as roads lined with mature vegetation, limited access points to major arterial roads, large single detached dwellings situated away from the road, considerable building setbacks to adjacent dwellings and the expansive views across the community into the adjacent valleys.

Recommendation Report

A Recommendation Report on the Study was approved by Planning and Development Committee in January 2019. The purpose of that Report was to present the Phase 1 & 2 Report – Supply and Demand & Recommendations Report prepared by SGL Planning and Design Inc. The January 2019 Report provided a policy overview, a summary of the analysis that was completed to date and it included preliminary policy options. The Report also recommended that staff undertake public consultation to present the preliminary findings and options of the Study.

Public Open House Meetings

A public open house meeting was held on March 20, 2019 at Professor’s Lake Recreation Centre to introduce the Study, discuss findings from the background research and analysis and receive feedback from residents on what elements and qualities they felt were important and contributed to the character of their neighbourhood.

The policy options that were presented at the first open house meeting focused primarily on redesignating the undeveloped lands in the Official Plan from “Estate Residential” to “Upscale Executive Housing”, which would permit predominantly single detached dwellings with a minimum frontage of 15.2 metres (50 feet) and a maximum net density of 14.5 units per hectare. One of the policy options presented included redesignating a small pocket of land adjacent to The Gore Road from “Estate Residential” to “Residential” to permit a maximum density of 25 units per net hectare. In addition, there were policy recommendations presented to strengthen the Official Plan policy intent to protect the character of the established estate residential area.

After the first open house meeting, the Province released a new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in May 2019 and later an office consolidation in August 2020. A new Provincial Policy Statement was also released by the Province in May 2020. Given the provincial policy direction to build more compact greenfield communities in order to reduce the rate at which land is consumed, SGL amended the proposed policy recommendations for the undeveloped lands after the first public open house meeting. The policy recommendations were amended to propose that the undeveloped lands be redesignated from “Estate Residential” to “Residential” to permit a range and mix of housing types (not solely upscale executive housing) and that an appropriate and gradual transition of residential lot sizes be provided between the future residential development and the established estate residential area. These proposed policy recommendations are explained in greater detail within this report.

An on-line presentation was available for the public to view on the City’s study webpage on July 16, 2020. The on-line presentation provided an overview of the study, a summary of the comments that were provided at the first open house meeting and a summary of the proposed policy recommendations for the Toronto Gore established estate residential area and the undeveloped lands. Residents were able to provide feedback on the proposed policy recommendations until August 21, 2020.

A summary of the comments received at the two open house meetings, as they pertain to the proposed policy recommendations for the undeveloped lands, can be found in SGL’s Phase 1, 2 & 3 Supply and Demand & Recommendations Report attached in Appendix 3 and can also be found in Appendix 6.

Current Situation:

A Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Report (Phase 1, 2 & 3 Supply and Demand & Recommendations Report) has been prepared by SGL Planning & Design Inc., which discusses the characteristics of the Toronto Gore community, a policy overview, the supply and demand of estate residential housing, considerations for future growth (i.e. servicing, open space, transportation) and final policy recommendations. The Phase 1, 2 & 3 Supply and Demand & Recommendations Report prepared by SGL can be found in Appendix 3.

As noted above, the scope of work of the Study was to assess both the established estate residential area and the undeveloped lands in Toronto Gore. Given the public comments received to date on the draft Study recommendations related to the established estate residential area, it is premature at this time to advance any amendments to the Official Plan to protect the character of this area without undergoing additional analysis and consultation with the public. Further analysis and public consultation on the established estate residential area will occur in Q3/Q4 2021.

Planning Analysis - Undeveloped Lands in the Southern Quadrant

The majority of Toronto Gore, which is designated as “Estate Residential” in Brampton’s Official Plan, has been developed for estate residential purposes, with the exception of some vacant lots scattered through out the community and the large contiguous vacant parcels of land in the southern quadrant that total approximately 80 hectares.

The Official Plan acknowledges that in spite of their appeal, there are constraints to the future development of estate residential housing in Brampton. As such, the City does not encourage further expansion of the designated estate residential development areas beyond their current locations. However, the continued but limited development of the balance of the areas designated for Estate Residential, either by a plan of subdivision or consent, is essential to promoting diversity and choice in housing forms in Brampton.

The contiguous undeveloped lands located in the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore would constitute as forming the majority of the land referred to as “*the balance of the areas designated Estate Residential*” in the Estate Residential policies. Although the Official Plan recognizes the importance of providing estate residential housing to achieve a diverse range of housing in Brampton, there has been a lack of demand for 2.0 acre estate residential lots over the past 20 years (refer to supply and demand analysis included in SGL’s Recommendation Report found in Appendix 3).

There is also clear provincial policy direction to move away from estate residential housing development within settlement (urban) areas. Estate residential housing in settlement areas does not contribute to the development of compact built form and does not make efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities (i.e. recreation, police and fire protection, health and educational programs).

The undeveloped lands are located within the City’s “Designated Greenfield Area” where new communities are to provide a diverse range of land uses and create an urban form that supports walking, cycling and transit. New communities are to be well designed to meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, public service facilities, and a full range of housing to accommodate a range of incomes and household sizes. As described in SGL’s Report (Appendix 3) there are local services, public service facilities and infrastructure that either exist, or are planned for, to support the development of urban densities on the undeveloped lands.

Given the provincial, regional and municipal policies and regulations to build complete communities that efficiently use land, infrastructure and public services, and the conclusions of SGL's Report that estate residential housing will continue to have a limited role in fulfilling future housing demand in Brampton, it is recommended that the undeveloped lands in the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore be redesignated from "Estate Residential" to "Residential" in the Official Plan. The proposed redesignation will allow a range and mix of housing options, along with complementary uses such as schools, day care centres and retail uses.

Secondary Planning

The undeveloped lands are located within the boundaries of the Toronto Gore Rural Estate Secondary Plan Area 26 shown on Schedule "G" – Secondary Plan Areas in the Official Plan. Although this Secondary Plan area is shown on Schedule "G", no Secondary Plan has been adopted by Council for Area 26. In areas that are designated for residential purposes within the City's "Designated Greenfield Areas", the Official Plan requires that the lands shall not be developed for such purposes until a Secondary Plan and associated studies have been formulated by means of an amendment to the Official Plan. The Official Plan amendment that is attached as Appendix 2 to this Report proposes that the undeveloped lands be removed from the Toronto Gore Rural Estate Secondary Plan Area 26 boundaries as shown on Schedule "G" and that a new Secondary Plan for the undeveloped lands be added to Schedule "G" known as the Gore Meadows Secondary Plan Area 56.

Although the Phase 1, 2 and 3 Recommendation Report prepared by SGL includes a high-level review of what the development of urban densities on the undeveloped lands will have on the transportation network and servicing infrastructure, and the adequacy of parks and open space areas, it is through the preparation of a Secondary Plan where more detailed background component studies will be prepared, such as a master environmental servicing plan, transportation master plan, a park and open space strategy, urban design guidelines, heritage, financial and phasing, community services and residential and housing allocation. These background component studies are necessary to prepare the Secondary Plan land use schedules and policies.

Proposed Amendments to the Official Plan

This report recommends that an amendment to the Official Plan be approved to implement the Study recommendations to permit urban densities on the undeveloped lands in the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore. The Official Plan amendment that is being recommended for approval includes the following amendments:

1. *To Redesignate the Undeveloped Lands from "Estate Residential" to "Residential"*

The proposed amendment redesignates the undeveloped lands from "Estate Residential" to "Residential" on Schedule A – General Land Use Designations and

adds a policy to the Residential section of the Official Plan to specify that these lands are to be comprehensively planned as part of a future Secondary Plan in accordance with the policies contained in Section 5.4 – Secondary Plans of the Official Plan.

2. *To Provide Policy Direction for the Future Secondary Plan*

The proposed Official Plan amendment includes a policy to direct that a Secondary Plan be undertaken to comprehensively plan for the undeveloped lands. The amendment proposes to add the following new policy to the Residential section of the Official Plan:

“The Secondary Plan for the Toronto Gore undeveloped lands shall include the following policies:

- a) To provide a gradual and sensitive transition in density between the adjacent established estate residential area and the Gore Meadows Secondary Plan area;
- b) To provide a diverse range and mix of housing options, including affordable housing;
- c) That no vehicular connections between the adjacent established Estate Residential Area and the Gore Meadows Secondary Plan area shall be provided;
- d) That the extension of Ryckman Lane shall be prohibited;
- e) That vehicular access to and from the Gore Meadows Secondary Plan area will be from McVean Drive and The Gore Road;
- f) That development within the Gore Meadows Secondary Plan area shall be on full urban municipal services;
- g) That the existing Natural Heritage System shall be protected and enhanced; and
- h) That pedestrian and cyclist linkages between the Natural Heritage System and Gore Meadows Community Centre shall be provided where it has been demonstrated that the functions of the Natural Heritage System will not be adversely impacted.”

3. *To Remove the “Unique Communities” Designation*

The Toronto Gore Estate Residential Area is designated as a “Unique Community” on Schedule 1 - City Concept of the Official Plan because it offers a rural lifestyle within an urban setting, it adds to the City’s diverse housing choice as well as it contributes to Brampton’s identity. With the proposed amendment to redesignate the undeveloped lands from “Estate Residential” to “Residential”, the “Unique Communities” designation is no longer applicable, as these lands are intended to be developed at similar densities that can be found in other areas of the City and therefore would no longer meet the intent of the “Unique Communities” designation. The proposed amendment deletes the “Unique Communities”

designation on the undeveloped portion of Toronto Gore. The underlying designations of “Communities” and “Open Space” on Schedule 1 are to remain in place.

4. To Add a New Secondary Plan Area

The proposed amendment removes the undeveloped lands from the Toronto Gore Rural Estate Secondary Plan Area (SP #26) as shown on Schedule G – Secondary Plan Areas and identifies them as a new Secondary Plan Area known as “Gore Meadows”.

The proposed policy amendments for the undeveloped lands are found in the Official Plan amendment attached as Appendix 2.

Analysis Summary

The proposed Official Plan amendment is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and in conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe as well as the Region’s Official Plan. The proposed Official Plan amendment is also generally consistent with Brampton’s Official Plan, and appropriately considers matters of provincial interest as set out in Section 2 of the *Planning Act*. A full planning analysis can be found in Appendix 4.

Virtual Statutory Public Meeting

Notice of the virtual statutory public meeting was circulated to property owners within 240 metres of the undeveloped lands in the southern quadrant of Toronto Gore as per *Planning Act* requirements. The virtual statutory public meeting for the City-initiated Official Plan amendment was held on Monday, April 12, 2021. There were no members of the public that spoke at the public meeting.

Correspondence from members of the public was received pertaining to the City-initiated Official Plan amendment that was presented at the statutory public meeting. This correspondence can be found in Appendix 7.

Corporate Implications:

No corporate implications have been identified at this time.

Financial Implications:

No financial implications have been identified at this time.

Economic Development Implications:

There are no economic development implications identified at this time.

Term of Council Priorities (2019-2022)

This report is consistent with the “A City of Opportunities” theme by proposing an Official Plan amendment that redesignates a large portion of vacant estate residential land to allow for a full range of housing types on lots that are less than 2.0 acres (0.8 hectares) in size, to allow land within the City’s “Designated Greenfield Area” to be used more efficiently and to allow for the creation of complete communities.

Living the Mosaic – Brampton 2040 Vision

This Report has been prepared in full consideration of the overall vision that the people of Brampton will ‘Live the Mosaic.’ The Brampton 2040 Vision identifies the need for *“complete new neighbourhoods to expand out to the less developed and still greenfield edges of Brampton, clustering around their nearby Town Centres. These new neighbourhoods model the most contemporary image of intimate livability and responsible sustainability. Each has its own local centre. They nestle within the green setting.”*

The Brampton 2040 Vision identifies a Town Centre near the Gore Meadows Community Centre. This Town Centre is intended to develop as a complete, full-service, mixed-use node with a full range of housing types located in close proximity. The proposed Official Plan Amendment that redesignates the undeveloped lands, including a portion of land to the north of the Gore Meadows Community Centre, from “Estate Residential” to “Residential” is intended to support the development of complete communities and the Town Centre.

Conclusion:

Estate residential housing will continue to have a limited role in fulfilling future housing demand in Brampton. Given the policy directives to efficiently use land, infrastructure and public services in urban areas, this report presents for approval a City-initiated Official Plan amendment to redesignate the undeveloped lands in Toronto Gore from “Estate Residential” to “Residential” to provide a diverse range of housing options.

Staff is satisfied that the proposed Official Plan amendment represents good planning, including that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020), the Region of Peel’s Official Plan and Brampton’s Official Plan.

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Toronto Gore Density Policy Review Study Area
- Appendix 2: Official Plan Amendment
- Appendix 3: Toronto Gore Recommendation Report prepared by SGL Planning dated April 2021
- Appendix 4: Planning Analysis
- Appendix 5: Virtual Statutory Public Meeting Minutes – April 12, 2021
- Appendix 6: Summary and Response to Comments Received
- Appendix 7: Statutory Public Meeting Correspondence Received
- Appendix 8: External Agency Comments