

Date: 2018-06-04

Subject: **Recommendation Report – Complete Neighborhood Audit Program**

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Recommendations:

1. **THAT** the report from Anand Balram, Planner, Brampton 2040 Vision, Planning and Development Services Department, dated June 6, 2018, to the Planning and Development Committee Meeting of June 25, 2018, **re: Recommendation Report – Neighbourhood Audit Program**, be received;
2. **THAT** staff be directed to develop a Neighbourhood Audit Tool in consultation with the community;
3. **THAT** planning staff be directed to engage and collaborate with other internal department and external agencies; and
4. **THAT** staff be directed to pilot the Neighborhood Audit Tool in three Brampton communities, and report back to City Council regarding the results of these audits before implementing a City wide program.

Overview:

- **The City of Brampton has developed in various stages. As such, some neighbourhoods are not complete or in sync with the needs of their current populations.**
- **The recent endorsement of the Brampton 2040 Vision recommends that the City of Brampton develop a Complete Neighbourhood Audit Program to systematically update and revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfort and sustainable living.**
- **This program will forge meaningful partnerships and innovative community planning practices.**
- **This recommendation report directly helps achieve focus area 2 of the City's**

Strategic Plan: Planning Vision (City Vision) and Recommendation 3-1 of the Council Endorsed Brampton 2040 Vision.

- **This recommendation report helps facilitate compliance with the Strategic Plan’s “Move and Connect”, “Smart Growth”, “Strong Communities”, and the “Good Government” priorities.**

Background:

In May 2017, the City sought the expertise of Larry Beasley, a world renowned planner and global urban visionary, to develop a Vision for what Brampton will become in 5, 10 and 20 years. As part of this process, staff undertook the City’s largest engagement campaign. A series of over 90 engagement events were held from Fall 2017 to Spring 2018, including: an interactive website, targeted workshops/focus groups, attendance at community events, a children’s drawing contest, and two intensive public workshops – amongst other tactics. Feedback from the community was foundational for transforming ideas into action.

The “Brampton 2040 Vision – Living the Mosaic” (Vision) consolidates the aspirations of more than 13,000 members of the community engaged throughout the process and the community members that devoted their weekends to participate in the weekend citizen workshops. The Vision was conceived as a vision for the people, by the people.

Recommendation 3-1 of Vision 3: *Neighbourhoods* of the Vision recommends a “Complete Neighbourhood Audit” to systematically update and revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfortable sustainable living. This recommendation was suggested as the City of Brampton has developed at various time periods. As such, some neighbourhoods are not developed to be “complete communities” nor do they reflect the needs of their current populations. The aim of the Neighbourhood Audit program is to daylight issues within neighbourhoods and to appropriately address them through the development of Neighbourhood Action Plans. Staff has decided to action this recommendation of the Vision early on because it sustains the goal of continued community engagement, fosters civic action and builds on the collaborative spirit the Vision is based upon. Furthermore, neighbourhood audits have the potential to positively impact the quality of life of Brampton residents.

A full implementation plan for the Vision will be brought forward to the new term of Council. Staff, however, are forging ahead with work in key areas. There are three broad streams of work developed, to categorize work that will help advance the Vision:

- 1) Work that is related to the Regulatory Framework,
- 2) Work related to process improvements; and
- 3) Project based work.

This report outlines the current opportunities within the third stream, Project based work.

Current Situation:

Concerns over public health, climate change, energy, and resource management have brought sustainability to the forefront for those planning, building and managing communities in Ontario. Provincial legislation, plans and policies now speak to this sustainability priority, as evident in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014), the Planning Act (Bill 51), and the Places to Grow Act, 2005. A number of municipalities in the GTA have developed Sustainability Guidelines, Standards or Metrics as one set of planning tools to achieve healthy, complete, sustainable communities.

Corporately, the City of Brampton has established the Sustainable Community Development Guidelines (SCDGs) and the Measuring Sustainability of New Development Program to evaluate the merit of new development through quantifiable metrics. These metrics inform the basics of good urban design through 5 comprehensive areas: Energy Management, Walkability and Mobility, Water Management, Local Food Production, and Natural Systems. This program, if applied to existing neighbourhoods, can provide staff with the foundations of quantified environmental sustainability and identify inherent gaps or issues within neighbourhoods as they relate to these five key areas.

Sustainability often has connotations of exclusively relating to the wellbeing of the natural environment, however, the term actually refers to four distinct areas: environment, economy, social issues, and culture. While these areas may be organized into four distinct groups, it is the linkages and integration of these areas that will drive sustainability, highlighting opportunities for innovation, resilience, collaboration and trust building, while reducing the duplication of efforts amongst city departments and regional partners.

Building on the SCDGs, the Complete Neighbourhood Audit tool will focus on several perception-based or qualitative areas vital to complete and characterful communities such as: land use and economy, health and the built environment, social issues, natural environment, arts and culture, and neighbourhood safety. Working with local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, local groups and institutions, staff seek to develop action plans to improve local neighbourhoods, build resiliency.

As the City of Brampton strives to build collaborative networks and citizens that work together on common goals, the hope is that by merging the four pillars of sustainability, the city can help retrofit existing neighbourhoods by encouraging sustainability, and enhancing the health and wellbeing of all citizens and of the natural world.

Partnerships and Opportunities

Through the development of Vision, a number of partnerships have been established to ensure the success of the Vision and any spin off projects:

Environment:

Environmental Policy Planning has been engaged to better understand synergies with the Measuring Sustainability of New Development Program and how these metrics can be used as a foundation for the Complete Neighbourhood Audit.

Partnerships with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority will be explored to better understand how the Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan (SNAP) can best be leveraged through the development of the Complete Neighbourhood Audit Program. The SNAP program is very robust and comprehensive as it relates to sustainable urban renewals and climate action.

Health:

Partnerships have been established with the Central West Local Health Integrated Network and Peel Public Health.

Peel Health has been a North American leader in the field of planning for Health and the Built Environment, and has proved to be a pivotal partner in the development of innovative tactics to combat health related diseases that impact residents of the City of Brampton and Region of Peel at large.

Two very foundational tools that will help inform the Complete Neighbourhood Audit Tool:

1. The Healthy Development Assessment Tool (HDA) that helps create healthy communities by creating complete, compact, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-supportive; and contains a mix of uses that support daily living; and enables physical activities through active transportation and associated metrics; and
2. Peel Public Health has developed a Walkability Audit Tool. The purpose of Walkability Audits is to create an inventory and assess quality of the built environment as it relates to active mobility and the built environment. Both of these tools and the knowledge of Regional staff will be pivotal to strengthening the Health component of the Complete Neighbourhood Audit Tool.

Social Issues:

On November 21, 2016 Brampton Staff committed to the development of Age-Friendly Strategy focusing on the eight primary domains of an age-friendly community which include: outdoor space, public transportation; housing; leisure, inclusion, employment and volunteerism, and communications. This has been reinforced, through the adoption of the Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 27: Health and the Built Environment and Age Friendly Planning. The Region of Peel Integrated Planning Department has committed to developing a baseline assessment of sample neighbourhoods across the Region according to age-friendly community criteria and identify gaps in built environment characteristics that promote aging-in-place, universal accessibility, and

active aging. There are opportunities here to collaborate, including and expanding the mandate of age-friendly communities as an indication of the social health of individual neighbourhoods.

Arts and Culture:

The City is currently in the process of developing its first ever Arts and Culture Master Plan. The process of engagement has been extensive and meaningful in engaging Brampton's artists, performers and creatives.

The City's Arts and Culture department will be an essential collaborative to help tap into the creativity and expression of Brampton's incredible diversity and youthful population. This diverse and youthful population means that the spectrum of cultural activities is huge, and that there is an opportunity to lead in terms of cross-cultural fusion and pioneering new forms of expression. This has the opportunity to allow for grassroots movements, manifesting creative expression within the built environment to better create complete and characterful communities.

Land Use and Economy:

Through the development of the Complete Neighborhood Audit Program and robust community engagement, there may be opportunities to develop City Initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments in collaboration with the City's Land Use Policy Planning Department and Economic Development.

Community Safety:

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a design based, crime prevention approach to community design. CPTED can be applied to businesses, such as shopping malls and industrial/commercial parks, residential areas, schools, institutions, parks and playgrounds. It is based on a simple theory; that the proper design and effective use of the physical environment can help reduce the incidence and fear of crime.

Peel Regional Police currently offer Crime Prevention Services for residential and commercial security audits. Security audits are designed to identify areas of vulnerability and risk of residents, and business to develop strategies to minimize risks. Through, leveraging the existing efforts of the Peel Regional Police and establishing a partnership, staff can strengthen the efforts of the Complete Neighbourhood Audit program, while reducing crime and instances of fear within neighbourhoods.

Based on benchmarking of existing neighbourhood audit, should all partners come to the table, this Complete Neighbourhood Audit Tool has the opportunity to be the most comprehensive neighbourhood audit tool in North America, Moreover, having various city departments, regional agencies, and community groups come together in an

unprecedented way will lead to more efficient service deliver along with a host of other community benefits. This multidisciplinary approach of the proposed Complete Neighbourhood Audit Program allows our staff and community partners to see beyond the limitations of their training, experiences and ambitions and provides staff with a list of areas for inquiry to promote innovation and collaboration at the neighbourhood scale.

This thoughtful and collaborative endeavor can develop from a pilot program to systematic Neighbourhood Audit, to develop neighbourhood actions plans, information sharing and meaningful budget allocation for improved communities.

Defining Neighbourhoods

While some neighbourhoods have been clearly defined, others have not been. Staff have conducted a preliminary study taking into consideration boundaries of natural heritage features and major roads; and applying a pedestrian shed, or catchment area, determined by the distance most people will typically be willing to walk (10 minutes) to the centre of each neighbourhood. The centre destination of these pedestrian sheds differ in various neighbourhoods, but are typically schools, local area retail/commercial, parks, community centres, or places of worship. This preliminary study has determined Brampton to have 58 distinct neighbourhoods based on these principles (inclusive of potential or new neighbourhoods). While this study is quite exhaustive, community engagement is essential to validating the study's findings.

Three neighbourhoods (old, middle aged, and relatively newly developed) will be chosen to pilot the Complete Neighbourhood Audit program to better understand the progression of development within Brampton communities to develop a baseline of information regarding Brampton development through the ages. The selection of these neighbourhoods will be informed by consultation with internal and external partners. The selection of the pilot neighbourhoods will be presented in a future report to Council.

Corporate Implications:

There are no corporate implications identified at this time.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications identified at this time.

Other Implications:

Other implications associated with this report will be identified and discussed in a future the report to council.

Strategic Plan:

This Recommendation Report directly helps achieve Focus Area 2 (Planning Vision) of the City's *Strategic Plan* as well as the *Strong Communities* portion by celebrating citizens and creating partnerships through arts, culture and social interaction.

This recommendation report also helps to facilitate compliance with the Strategic Plan's "Move and Connect" priority through the evaluation of existing mobility options within local neighbourhoods. The "Smart Growth" priority by building complete communities to accommodate growth for people and jobs and preserving and protecting natural and heritage environments with balanced, responsible planning. The "Strong Communities" priority through the celebration of citizens and the creation of partnerships through arts, culture and social interaction; creating connected spaces in the city for people to live, work and play; and supporting diversity and enabling the wellness of citizens through health and recreation. Lastly, this report helps achieve the "Good Government" priority by educating and engaging citizens in open and accountable ways that show value and enhance the image of the city, and investing in a collaborative environment with supportive organizational and governance practices and policies.

Brampton 2040 Vision – Living the Mosaic

Recommendation 3-1 of Vision 3: Neighbourhoods of the Brampton 2040 Vision, which recommends a "Complete Neighbourhood Audit" to systematically update and revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfortable sustainable living is achieved through this report.

Conclusion:

The Complete Neighbourhood Audit Pilot Program will help to systematically update and revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfortable sustainable living, focusing on the four pillars of sustainability. All while working with local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, local groups and institutions, to develop action plans to improve local neighbourhoods, encouraging innovation and building resiliency.

Approved by:

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