

Riverwalk Area Urban Design Master Plan

Meeting Summary for Public Information Session #2

March 17, 2021

To begin the Riverwalk PIS, Michael Heralall from the City of Brampton presented a brief overview of the project, and representatives of the project consultant, DTAH, presented the draft master plan and demonstration plans, and then an independent facilitator fielded questions and led discussion.

Riverwalk is a project for improvement and revitalization of downtown Brampton, for the purpose of removing the flood risk for the area, and to then remove the Special Policy Area designation, which was made by the provincial government.

The area is not fit for intense construction, due to the flood risks. The Etobicoke Creek bypass channel, built in the 20th Century, is to be reconfigured, making it deeper and wider, to allow drainage of the creek in increasingly high flood risk events, caused by climate change.

The removal of the SPA designation will allow for increased development of the several blocks around the intersection of Queen and Main Sts.

The project was initiated in 2011, with feasibility studies, an economic impact study, an Environmental Assessment in 2018, the beginning of a master plan in 2019, a draft, with engagement and consultation in 2020, and continuing consultation, advocacy and engagement in 2021. Starting later in 2021, detailed design will begin, with potential start of construction in 2023.

There will be further opportunities to provide feedback, such as ongoing City-led engagement with stakeholders and residents.

A draft summary of feedback was sent out to participants to provide a synopsis of views expressed by participants.

The Riverwalk Vision is to create a “new riverfront”, to act as a catalyst for city-building, community building, ecology, resilience and sustainability.

The design principles and objectives are:

- intensification and integration
- programming and recreation
- links and connections
- protection, preservation and enhancement
- sustainability and resilience
- discovery, education and interpretation

- character and identity

There are four aspects of the plan:

- flood protection environmental assessment
- urban design/open space master plan
- economic development
- advocacy and engagement

Feedback from participants fell under three themes:

- Strong support for the processed approaches to enhancing sustainability and protecting nature
- Concerns about too much concrete
- Interest in culture, identity, programming, and future engagement.

Detailed summary of feedback:

- **Overall project**
- Why is the design for the project different from the DBFP EA? First concrete, now grass and tiered sides? EA doesn't preclude designers from making adjustments, as long as it meets hydraulic modelling requirements.
- Would a bigger bridge at Church St. Be a better flood prevention measure? No, changes made in one area affect up and downstream.
- **Sustainability and nature**
- Interest in seeing improved water quality in the creek and fish swimming upstream. Mini waterfall will be removed, allowing fish movement upstream. Rocky rapids are being considered.
- Support for controlling access and balancing protection of the environment. How will you protect natural environment from increased traffic? Controlled access, such as fencing, look-outs, formal paths, will deter creation of informal paths, erosion, and trampling of plants.
- The UDMP should identify additional strategies to help protect the natural environment. Signage regarding information, services, rules, etc., should be added, along with sufficient garbage bins. The City is planning interpretive signage and interactive features, as well as well-placed garbage bins, to prevent water pollution.
- Concern about too much concrete in draft recommendations. Some of the built-up areas of the project look overdone, and out of place, in this presently natural

and beautiful space, and a more natural, softer, greener treatment would be better, particularly in Rosalea Park. The recommendations aim to reduce pavement, and have more greenery, though the graphics don't show this to advantage. They are for demonstration purposes, and not detailed. Sustainable materials will be explored in the detailed design phases.

– **Programming**

- Engage local schools, daycares, seniors' centres, and libraries and form a “Friends of Riverwalk” group.
- Concern about proposed bandshell. It's too close to the seniors' housing. Propose a playground instead.

– **Character and Identity**

- Riverwalk should reflect Brampton's unique cultural scene and align with the City's Culture Master Plan.... Brampton could become a niche place where interesting experiences happen, eg food trucks, busker spaces, live music. Engage with local cultural community. San Antonio River Walk has been looked at but the river is much bigger. Spring run-off changes Etobicoke Creek from a trickle to a torrent. It's hard to manage boats and restaurants.
- Consider naming Riverwalk after Robert Nutbrown, who conceived of the plan 18 years ago.

– **Transportation**

- Consider building a bridge from Meadowlands Drive to Clarence Street and Beatty Avenue, which would be useful for cyclists. This area is outside the scope of the project, but a potential bridge is being proposed just north of Clarence, in keeping with the concept of strengthening connections throughout Riverwalk.
- With respect to an error in the presentation, clarify that Council approved bus rapid transit on Queen St., and LRT on Main St., and make sure that project materials accurately reflect Council's decisions.
- Is the area going under the railway bridge wide enough to safely accommodate AT paths? There is ongoing consultation with Metrolinx.

– **Process and Implementation**

- Are there any plans for community benefits included with the Federal investment for the Riverwalk? Not at the moment, but community benefits are part of the project's objectives. They were included in the application to the Federal government, and later plans will provide more detail.
- Concern about displacement of the existing homeless population. Has this been addressed, either with the homeless population or agencies that deal with them?
Not directly with them, but with agencies, yes. The recommendations have considered how to make spaces safe for all users.

- Future infrastructure should be robust, resilient and require minimal maintenance.
- Consider placing any major infrastructure away from the water's edge, to protect the creek.