

I would like the following letter added to the Committee of the Whole agenda for July 3, 2024 and request that I be added as a delegation to speak at the meeting for Item 7.1 Mayoral Direction B3 Strategic Real Estate Partnerships:

Your Worship and Council,

The Old University Neighbourhood has welcomed increased density to help the City of Guelph meet its housing target in the form of many secondary units, subdivided residential properties, and new construction.

However, we call on you to build on parking lots-- not in parks.

As the number of residents increases, the demand for park space in our neighbourhood will continue to grow. New residents living in rental units will seek out Hugh Guthrie Park to play with their children, walk their dogs, and pursue recreational opportunities. Reducing the available parkland in the area is contrary to your goal of building a dense and sustainable neighbourhood. Fulfilling a housing target is more than just adding units, it requires planning for future needs including investments in more parkland, cycling infrastructure, and transit.

The staff report is silent on the issue of the landfill beneath Hugh Guthrie Park and the risk of developing on this property. This must be thoroughly examined prior to any decision by council.

The staff report also under-estimates the percentage of the park being proposed for residential development. A significant portion of the 4.5 acre park is not conducive to active or passive recreation because of its steep slope (along Forest Street), and the planting of dense naturalized areas along the north and east sides of the park. Rather than removing 29 percent of the park, the proposed development would constitute almost half of the usable parkland.

Finally, prioritizing construction on parkland before completing an evaluation of municipal parking lots is contrary to sound planning principles contained in the Official Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the Climate Adaption Plan. All of these documents were prepared with extensive public input and reflect the desires of Guelph residents.

I urge the committee and council to **RECEIVE AND TAKE NO ACTION** with regards to the proposed development in Hugh Guthrie Park.

Regards,

Debra Newcombe

