

November 13, 2024

Guelph Council Public Meeting

Dear Mayor and City Councillors,

**Re: Comments on Draft Ontario Reformatory Heritage Conservation District Plan, Report 2024-487**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have reviewed the background planning work contained within the 2023 OR Conservation District Study and the material being presented today. From all this, I would encourage you to create and then adopt a robust, complete and clear guidance conservation district plan for the remnant lands/buildings contained within the original Ontario Reformatory grounds. This is a unique piece of land/waterways that are worthy of preservation, protection and repurposed for use by Guelphites, and visitors from across the province/country and the rest of the world. The significance of the site from a cultural historic perspective is well documented.

The conservation of the area can provide the nucleus for a future urban national park that can provide innumerable public benefits to the Guelph community as well as the rich natural ecosystems that currently exist along the Eramosa River and Clythe Creek in the area. This future park would be a wonderful commemoration of Guelph's founding 200 years ago, and could serve as a resource for indigenous reconciliation, public park access for an intensified city, natural systems protection and tremendous tourism development opportunities. I envisage this core park resource being possibly the start of a river systems nation park system stretching throughout the City along the Eramosa and Speed Rivers.

In terms of specific commentary on the conservation plan before you, I will limit my comments to the land use topic. I would urge you **not** to support the inclusion of residential uses within this designated Employment Area of your Official Plan, i.e., the Adaptive Re-use OP land use designation should not have residential uses. The expansion of potential residential uses for this area would put additional development pressure here, away from its protection as a space for commemorative human and natural community uses. Guelph has ample residential development opportunity sites/lands in other parts of the City.

I wish you all the best in completing this important work for Guelph.

Sincerely,

Paul Kraehling MCIP RPP (Ret.)