

Dear Mayor Guthrie and City Council,

My name is Allie Mayberry and I am a resident of Ward 2 and daily user of the Ontario Reformatory land trails within Ward 1. This letter is to express my concerns regarding the final draft Ontario Reformatory Heritage Conservation District and purchase of Ontario Reformatory (OR) lands south of York Road.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to key proposed recommendations in the Ontario Reformatory Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines (ORCHD), namely the inclusion of residential development guidelines. In addition, I have concerns regarding the recreational, natural and cultural heritage impacts of the City of Guelph's proposed purchase of the 3.35 acre strip of land on the south side of York Road.

As summarized in Section 2.3 of the ORCHD, mayor and council have consistently received feedback from the public (its constituents and taxpayers) that the recreational, cultural, and natural heritage values of the OR lands are significant to the community and must be prioritized in decision-making regarding the site's future land uses and designations. Specifically, the public has noted that:

- the green space is highly valued and effectively functions as a parkland
- the proposed residential land use (especially in Adaptive Re-use Area A) is not supported
- there is strong community support for the establishment of a National Urban Park on these lands

Despite this, the ORCHD guidelines continue to include "parameters for development so that City staff have the ability to contemplate and control residential use if it were to arise." (p.19) and dismisses community aspirations for the preservation of these values via the establishment of an Urban National Park on the basis that it is out of scope and subject to a separate approval process. In short, the final draft ORCHD pays lip service to the public's wishes (preservation of recreational, cultural and natural heritage values) while simultaneously recommending guidelines that do the opposite (facilitate the option to pursue residential development).

I do not support residential development anywhere on the OR lands now, or if it were to arise in the future and ask that Council not approve the final draft ORHCD until these are replaced with natural and cultural heritage guidelines that are consistent with the public's wishes.

In addition to this, I am concerned by the City's plans to purchase a 3.35 acre / 10-12 meter wide strip of land along the south portion of York Road in support of the York Road reconstruction program. To be clear, I support the addition of bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of York Road between Victoria and Watson Parkway S, due to the current safety risks for pedestrians and cyclists using this portion of the road. However, there is no publicly available information on the anticipated impacts to the cultural and natural heritage values overlapping this area, including the heritage stone walls and Clythe Creek. In particular, I am concerned about:

- potential realignment of, or impacts to, Clythe Creek including alteration of the surrounding floodplain

- a reduced vegetative buffer between the OR property “blue trail” and road, presenting increased safety risks for trail users during- and post- construction.
- removal of, or impacts to, the heritage stone walls
- impacts to the species at risk that have the potential to use this portion of the OR lands, including for sensitive life processes, such as snapping turtles (nesting), eastern meadowlarks (nesting), monarch butterflies (reproduction), various bat species (maternity roosting)
- permanent loss of vegetation and whether or not there will be efforts to offset this

Pending the successful purchase of these lands, and in the spirit of meaningfully considering the public’s desire to protect the OR lands, **I ask that the City of Guelph provide opportunity for the public to review and comment on an assessment of recreational, cultural, and natural heritage impacts prior to the finalization of any construction design or plans for this stretch of land.**

Thank you kindly for taking the time to review and consider this feedback, and I look forward to hearing the outcomes of your meeting.

Best,

Allie

Allie Mayberry, M.A., B.Sc