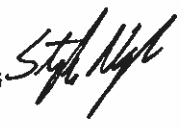



---


**TO:** GENERAL COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT:** PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 10 – BROWNFIELD POLICIES

**PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:** K. BRISLIN, SENIOR POLICY PLANNER, EXTENSION 4440 AND A. SHAIKH, PLANNER, EXTENSION 4434

**SUBMITTED BY:** S. NAYLOR, MES, M.C.I.P., R.P.P., DIRECTOR OF PLANNING SERVICES 

**GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:** R. W. MCARTHUR, P. ENG.   
GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:** C. LADD, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER 

---

**RECOMMENDED MOTION**

1. That the Official Plan be amended by introducing a new Section 3.8 Brownfields as detailed in Appendix "A" attached to Staff Report PLN011-12. With the purpose and intention of the proposed Official Plan policies are as follows:
  - (a) To protect community health and advocate environmental sustainability through the clean-up of contaminated sites.
  - (b) To encourage urban revitalization by developing vacant, underutilized and degraded properties.
  - (c) To ensure that the development or redevelopment of contaminated sites or potentially contaminated sites is completed in a manner consistent with provincial standards and regulations and to the satisfaction of the City.

**PURPOSE & BACKGROUND**

2. The purpose of this staff report is to recommend amendments to the City of Barrie Official Plan which will establish new policies to address the rehabilitation and redevelopment of brownfield sites within the City.

Policy Context

3. The Provincial Policy Statement encourages the intensification and redevelopment of brownfield sites as a means of promoting the efficient use of land and supporting long-term economic prosperity.
4. The Provincial Policy Statement states that contaminated sites are to be remediated prior to any activity on the site associated with a proposed use such that there will be no adverse effects.
5. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) encourages intensification and redevelopment to occur within the built-up area, including brownfield sites as a means of ensuring the development of healthy, safe and balanced communities.

City of Barrie Official Plan (April 2010)

6. The current Official Plan does not specifically reference brownfield policies and simply refers to "Contaminated Sites" as follows:

**"3.8 CONTAMINATED SITES**

- a) The City will require a property owner to submit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry when proposing to transition a site from a use which may have produced contamination to a more sensitive use. The RSC must be filed in accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act. **(Mod D (vv))"**
7. While this provides requirements that an identified contaminated site must meet through the development process, it does not reflect the opportunities for the redevelopment of brownfield sites, particularly in significant redevelopment areas of the City such as the Urban Growth Centre (UGC) which encompasses the City Centre and Allandale Centre Planning Areas.
8. The proposed Official Plan amendment, which deals specifically with brownfields, is necessary to clarify the expectations, support a more sustainable option for growth, and provide a policy framework to facilitate revitalization within the built boundary.
9. Staff report PLN032-10 "Brownfields Official Plan Policy" dated October 4, 2010, recommended an open house and public meeting be held to consider draft Official Plan policies for brownfields, provides additional background information regarding brownfields.

Public Meeting

10. A public meeting was held on October 3, 2011, to consider the proposed Official Plan and Community Improvement Plan (CIP) amendments. No correspondence and no questions were raised by the public in relation to the proposed Official Plan amendments. Questions that were raised about the proposed CIP amendments to provide incentives for brownfield redevelopment in the Downtown and Allandale CIP areas will be addressed in a separate report that includes a general review of the funding policy for financial incentives.

ANALYSIS

11. Brownfields are derelict or underutilized former industrial and commercial lands, where redevelopment is made difficult by real or perceived environmental contamination. They often have the advantage of being located in desirable and strategic core areas of cities, with access to existing infrastructure, services, and transportation networks. Due to their key locations, they often create opportunities for sustainable communities with a mix of new employment and residential uses that can support local economics through urban intensification.
12. Left abandoned or vacant, brownfield sites can represent lost property tax revenue, residential intensification and employment opportunities. In addition, they have the potential to lower surrounding land values and thus add to neighbourhood deterioration. They may place additional strains on municipal services such as enforcement, fire, and other services as they are potential sites for illegal dumping, vandalism, or arson and create gaps in community "eyes on the street" adding to actual or perceived safety considerations.
13. Brownfield redevelopment can result in economic benefits derived through increased property tax revenue, an increase in surrounding property values, and the creation of new employment and residential opportunities. Brownfield redevelopment can also be a catalyst triggering the

development of surrounding properties, stimulating wider neighbourhood revitalization and intensification.

14. Environmental benefits are realized through the reuse of underutilized land, curbing urban sprawl and protecting valuable greenfield areas. Both environmental and human health is benefitted through air, water, and soil quality improvements achieved through the removal of contaminants left behind from previous uses.
15. The redevelopment of brownfields can be a challenge to developers due to the financial, environmental, and procedural obstacles involved. The recommendations of this staff report intend to address these obstacles through the following approach:
  - a) Create certainty with respect to the City's support of brownfield redevelopment, and ensure clarity in the methods and procedures involved in the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites.
  - b) Ensure consistency with the standards set out in criteria provided through provincial regulations.
  - c) To provide policy level support for programs and measures that will encourage and facilitate development of brownfields.
16. In addition, the proposed Official Plan amendment will bring the Official Plan into greater alignment with the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan, and provincial legislation by reinforcing the role of brownfield sites as an important component of long term economic prosperity and directing growth within the built boundary.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

17. The following environmental matters have been considered in the development of the recommendation:
  - a) To protect community health through investigation and treatment of contaminated properties.
  - b) Provide a policy framework to actively encourage the clean-up of potentially contaminated sites along the waterfront and in the downtown.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

18. There is one alternative presented below for consideration by General Committee:

##### **Alternative #1**

General Committee could maintain the existing policy with respect to contaminated sites and not deal with specific policies for brownfields development in the City (i.e. status quo).

This alternative is not recommended, as it does not facilitate, at a policy level, a significant component of the City's growth management strategy which includes intensified mixed use developments planned for within older parts of the City, which generally include brownfields.

**FINANCIAL**

19. There are no financial implications associated with the recommended motion. This report does not contemplate, and does not intend to promote, the introduction of financial incentives or other financial support from the City of Barrie for brownfield redevelopment. If Council wishes to provide such financial support, staff will recommend an approach and a financing plan to accomplish this in a future report.

**LINKAGE TO 2010-2014 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN**

20. The recommendations included in this staff report support the following goals identified in the 2010-2014 City Council Strategic Plan:
- Manage Growth and Protect the Environment
21. The proposed policies are intended to provide clear direction for those interested in brownfield opportunities within the City, and further provide policy support for the City to facilitate brownfield redevelopment.

Attachment: Appendix "A" – OPA No. 10 Brownfield Policies – Part B The Amendment

APPENDIX "A"

Official Plan Amendment No. 10 Brownfield Policies

Part B – The Amendment

Details of the Amendment

The Official Plan is amended by deleting Section 3.8 **Contaminated Sites** and inserting the following wording:

**3.8 BROWNFIELDS**

**3.8.1 GOALS**

- (a) To protect community health and advocate environmental sustainability through the clean-up of contaminated sites.
- (b) To encourage urban revitalization by developing vacant, underutilized and degraded properties.
- (c) To ensure that the development or redevelopment of contaminated sites or potentially contaminated sites is completed in a manner consistent with provincial standards and regulations and to the satisfaction of the City.

**3.8.2 POLICIES**

**3.8.2.1 DEFINITION**

Brownfields are undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

**3.8.2.2 GENERAL POLICIES**

- (a) Where a brownfield site is identified as a contaminated site, the City shall encourage the clean-up of both public and private brownfields to:
  - i. Protect the general health of the community;
  - ii. Mitigate potential impacts of brownfields on environmental features;
  - iii. Promote intensification and infill in areas that have access to existing municipal infrastructure, social and recreational activities;
  - iv. Revitalize properties to create pride and enjoyment in core neighborhoods.
- (b) The City may facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield sites to encourage the effective use of underutilized lands and further the intensification goals and policies of this plan. The City may establish programs to assist the private sector in the redevelopment of brownfield sites through community improvement plans.

### 3.8.2.3 CONTAMINATED SITES

- (a) Where a change to a sensitive land use (as described in the Environmental Protection Act and amended from time to time) is proposed, and either the previous or current use has the potential to have caused environmental contamination, the City shall require the following conditions be met prior to final approval of the development application:
  - i. A site risk assessment and/or remediation shall be conducted by the owner to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Environment.
  - ii. A Record of Site Condition and Certificate of Property Use in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act shall be prepared for contaminated sites and filed for public access with the Environmental Site Registry.
- (b) Where a change to a sensitive land use (as described in the Environmental Protection Act and amended from time to time) is proposed, and either the previous or current use has the potential to have caused environmental contamination, the City may:
  - i. Where applicable, establish conditions of planning approval for any planning application to ensure satisfactory verification of suitable environmental site condition is received as per Policy 3.8.2.3(a).
  - ii. Where applicable, impose a holding provision to be removed following the satisfactory verification of suitable site condition is received as per Policy 3.8.2.3(a).
- (c) In instances where the City is deeded land for public highways, road widenings, parkland, stormwater management, easements, or for any other public use, the City may require evidence as a condition of the transfer that no environmental contamination has occurred on the subject lands, or that the lands have been satisfactorily remediated in accordance with Policy 3.8.2.3(a).

#### Implementation

The foregoing policies may be implemented in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

- a) the application of a holding provision through a zoning by-law which will stipulate amongst other items, site assessments needed, remediation or phasing of site development, prior to removal of the hold;
- b) The use of conditions of development; and
- c) The use of financial incentives offered through community improvement plans.

#### Interpretation

The provision of the Official Plan, as amended from time to time, shall apply in regard to this amendment.