

# Governance for the Disposal of Land in Parks and Open Space Areas and the Green Space System: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Date: June 11, 2021

# Background

- Increase in requests for disposals of land in Parks and Open Space Areas and the Green Space System as a result of infrastructure projects (e.g. utility upgrades).
- Conservation projects, public transit and essential public works and utilities are permitted where supported by appropriate assessment in parkland (Policy 4.3.2); the Official Plan prohibits the enabling transaction (the disposal) unless there is a land exchange.
- **Current plan doesn't allow for disposal without a site specific Official Plan Amendment** regardless of project scope or potential impacts.
- Volume of easement requests received from infrastructure providers combined with the review time is creating a backlog of projects.

# Draft Official Plan Amendment

- An OPA is proposed to **introduce criteria to evaluate disposal requests** in Parks and Open Space Areas and the Green Space System with a goal to:
  - Support the development of conservation projects, public transit and essential public works and utilities without amendment of the Official Plan where it is demonstrated that the policies of the Official Plan are maintained;
  - Protect land in Parks and Open Space Areas and the Green Space System;
  - Improve utilization of staff time to focus on the review of disposal requests which would still require an OPA;
- In reviewing requests for disposals staff will seek to maintain, or where possible increase, the size and utility of parkland.
- The draft OPA would **not change** the existing surplus declaration or disposal approval process but rather it **provides a mechanism to allow disposal transactions to proceed through these processes without a site specific OPA first being obtained.**

## Next Steps

- Q3 2021: Consultation with key stakeholders (Metrolinx, Indigenous communities, utilities) and public open house
- Q3/Q4 2021: Report back to Planning and Housing Committee with the results of the open house and stakeholder consultations and final recommended Official Plan Amendments