

Clair-Maltby comprehensive environmental impact study characterization report

The phase 1 and 2 characterization report summarizes the project team's current understanding of the Natural Heritage System (NHS), as well as surface water and groundwater interactions in the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan Area (SPA). This report documents the technical work conducted in the initial phases of the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study (CEIS), which is a key contributor to the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan (CMSP) study process. Future growth in the Clair-Maltby SPA will be directed by the location and integrity of key features and their functional relationship to the landscape, to ensure that natural heritage and water resource system protection is addressed in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

The CEIS characterization report focusses on:

- Characterizing the attributes of surface water, groundwater and natural heritage features and associated functions in the Clair-Maltby SPA.
- Refining the NHS as approved through Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 42, based on new information gathered through the CMSP study process, including field data collection in 2016 and 2017.
- Setting preliminary targets and objectives for protecting water and natural heritage resources.

The Clair-Maltby SPA is the headwaters of the Mill, Hanlon and Torrance Creek watersheds and is characterized by the Paris Moraine topography, including hummocky topography. A key component of the CMSP study process is establishing a strong understanding of surface water/ground water interactions and their influence on the NHS in the Clair-Maltby SPA, as well as lands adjacent to the SPA that have the potential to be influenced by land use changes (i.e. the broader Primary and Secondary Study Areas). This has been accomplished through field data collection and an analysis of the existing climatic, groundwater, surface water, natural heritage and landform features. The natural features and functions (including wetlands, woodlands, landform features, and groundwater recharge and discharge areas) require a fully integrated assessment to establish their levels of significance and sensitivity, particularly in the context of potential land use change.

The specific objectives of the CEIS include technical assessments and study, which ultimately lead to:

- The protection of natural systems at a landscape level and the protection/establishment of ecological corridors between subwatersheds.
- The protection of natural heritage features and areas, recognizing the important ecosystem services that benefit current and future generations.
- The protection and enhancement of the City's tree canopy cover and urban forest while also providing for a range of habitat types to support local biodiversity.
- The protection of significant portions of the Paris Moraine and associated functions, as characterized by areas identified as Significant Landform.
- Recognizing and addressing potential negative impacts that can result from urban development, and identifying opportunities to mitigate and manage these impacts through community design, stewardship, monitoring and management strategies.

The next phase of the CEIS is the Development Impact Assessment, which will involve:

- A technical evaluation of the potential impacts to existing surface water, groundwater and natural heritage features and their functions based on the approved Conceptual Community Structure and associated servicing alternatives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The refinement of the preliminary targets and objectives to protect, maintain and enhance local water and natural heritage resources through the development process.
- Development of preliminary recommendations and management approaches to guide the implementation of the CMSP.

Following review by the public, agency stakeholders and others, the Conceptual Community Structure including the NHS, will be updated and refined through the CMSP process, including the associated management strategies. The final phase of the CEIS will involve verification of the various environmental recommendations and establishing an integrated implementation plan.