

### **First letter - group brainstorming effort:**

Dear Mr. Gravelle

We read your column in the "Advocate" and here are our thoughts and ideas for a better community. What we like about Erin is its small size, its cleanliness, safety and friendliness. What we don't like about Erin is the air pollution from cars and trucks. We also are concerned that Stanley Park Lake is polluted and think it should be cleaned up. Another thing we don't like is that there is no place for kids to "hang out".

Here are some ideas we have come up with for Erin's Master Plan:

- outdoor skate park
- wading / water park
- mini mall with sports store, clothing store, Tim Horton's
- more old folks' homes
- a pool for everyone (this could be in the old public school or the "Guardian" building)
- a bandstand
- a ski hill (use part of the Water Tower Hill)
- every store should be super-accessible to old people and people with disabilities (there should be a button to push so the door opens easily)
- there should be more farms and less development
- if developers cut down trees there should be a law that they have to replace each one (and not just with little ones)
- there should be more trees planted to clean the air
- stop cutting the forests and forcing the wildlife away
- don't build too much or this will make our wildlife leave

Thank you for letting us talk about this.

Sincerely from Erin's 4/5/6 class

### **Individual letters from grade 7 and 8 students:**

"What I like about Hillsburgh is that it's not so crowded. Hillsburgh would be a better place if it had more stores and more restaurants (fast food). I would stay because it is a good town to grow and live in. And I would move away because I don't wanna live in the same place for my whole life. Stay the same, because you don't want it to be really crowded. They should have better roads so that there are not potholes, and more parks so kids have somewhere to hang out." The thing I like about living in Erin is that it is not too big, but it's also not too small. The thing that I don't like about living in Erin is that you're not allowed to skateboard in town. So to fix that, I think that we should get a skate park, so that people can skateboard without getting in trouble."

"We want Erin to stay like Erin. We don't want Erin to become overcrowded. We like the small population. More fun stuff, more parks, swimming pools. We like that everybody knows everybody."

"I think that in the future Erin should have a Tim Horton's and a Starbucks. I am happy to share my thoughts. I also think that we should have a public pool. I don't think that that there should be any more houses."

"I am a Grade 8 student at Erin Public School. I am here to talk to you about what we town of Erin residents should do about our town. My first statement is that we should have more health care, because people have to waste gas while driving to Brampton, Mississauga or even Toronto just to see their doctor or dentist. I think we should have a health care centre right in downtown Erin. There should be more job opportunities for younger kids. Shops like Subway offer 16 years and up. I think that they should allow kids that are 14 years old to work in places like Subway and Value Mart. Not just those stores. This includes places like the Quick N' Pick convenience store and Pizza Mama Mia. I think this because then kids will not just be sitting around in the house all day on the weekends, or weekdays. We should have an indoor pool, because instead of driving to Acton, or Orangeville, for birthday parties, why not just build one right beside the Erin District High School."

"You can walk around town and go where you like and it's not too big, so the stores aren't too crowded. We could buy new equipment for the school like basketballs and other equipment, because a lot of people complain about the shortage of equipment. We could fix this problem by opening a sports store in Erin and the school should buy new equipment."

"In the near future, I want more little shops in Erin. Also more parks, and people should plant more trees in their yards. Maybe a Tim Horton's or a Starbucks, but otherwise I like it the way it is! Please don't put any factories or giant buildings."

"Dear Mayor Finnie: I've lived in Erin since I can remember, and I think some things can change. Like...all these tourist stops and more shops, cause if you need to buy some groceries, you need to go someplace else. I love Erin, but... Where I live is pretty, but..."

"I like that Erin is a small town, but that's about it. There's never anything for teenagers to do. All of the activities are sports, and it'd be nice to have a mall and a Tim Horton's. Any place to hang out'd be nice; Centre 2000 gets boring after the first six years of living here. Maybe having some better looking houses on the inside. Most of the houses in Erin look great on the outside, but look like they're crumbling apart on the inside."

"I like Erin because you basically know everyone, and they have fairs. I wish they had a Tim Horton's."

"In the near future, I would like there to be a Starbucks or Tim Horton's. I also think that there should be a huge mall, or a regular mall, in Erin so you can have more people in it."

"I think Erin is a good town and is perfect the way it is. I think that if Erin had buses or got any bigger the town would be over-populated and polluted. I think the town of Erin should build a Motocross track. Erin should also get a BMX park."

"In the future, I would like to see more trees and parks, because there's so many people who like to walk, and go up town with their dogs. I also think we should get a Tim Horton's in town for all the people who work in town to get breakfast, and other foods. Other than that, I don't think Erin should change that much, because that's what makes Toronto and Erin way different, all of the little shops, and town houses, and no city shops and big houses, with huge highways and traffic. That's what Erin's future should be like, a small town still, with not much changes, because me and my family have lived here for so long, and it wouldn't be the same if it was a huge city."

"The town of Erin is the right size. If it grows too much it will be a mini-Brampton. It should get some more entertainment, because all you can do on the weekend is go biking, and go to the theatre. They should get either a skate/bike park or an arcade. We could get a mountain bike trail, because a lot of people mountain bike. Since Guardian is closed, we should put a laser quest or an air soft gun wars place in the building."

"I live in Orton and I like Erin very much. We have lots of space and lots of fresh air, and where I live, lots of forest. Everywhere around us they are tearing down trees and adding strip malls and houses. I really wouldn't like it if they start building even more houses, because that would take away space and trees, and we would be crowded, and the space we have right now is really nice. I really wouldn't like it to be like the city. It sucks in the city in my opinion. We need a skate park in Erin for sure. I really don't want factories because that would pollute the air, and that would be bad. Some people already drive far away from where they live, so why can't they keep doing that. We have the perfect amount of stores and shops. I think we need a few more bike trails and a few more recreational places. We could use an all-terrain vehicle track because we have nothing. They are moving more and more north when they are building. We are soon going to become bigger and bigger with no trees and small places to live, so I would hate it if they built around here."

"Dear Mayor of Erin: Us students have some ideas that we would like to express with you. The town is great, but there are some issues we would like to address with you. We need a recreational area with a pool. Dog parks. More trails. The roads are bad on the small roads and they also need garbage clean-up; we pay taxes for services we are not receiving. Need more tourist attractions. In the schools we need better and more gym equipment and new textbooks. We need a place where teenagers can just hang out. More restaurants. Need more bike racks. Bigger Humane Society. Need MORE TREES. We need a mall."

"My library teacher read the column to my class. While she was reading it I was thinking about stores and amusement for the kids. We should get a group of people to make an organization that has games and stuff to do after school. It will give our parents some time away from the kids and it will keep the teens off the streets."

"I like that it is not too small, not too big and that the people are really nice. I don't like how people litter a lot. I think a Tim Horton's instead of a Coffee Time. And maybe some more restaurants. No factories because it would pollute the air even more. I think, better roads - too many cracks - repave the roads. Plus, I think the population should stay the same. Maybe a little more apartments. The last thing that would make Erin better is maybe a paintball arena where an open field is."