

CLIMATE READY OTTAWA

Document 3: As We Heard It Report 2024-2025

October 2025



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Executive summary

The City of Ottawa's Climate Resiliency Strategy, Climate Ready Ottawa, outlines the City's objectives and policy directions to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This report summarizes public feedback received from residents between March and November 2024, through an online survey on Engage Ottawa, and a final phase of public and targeted engagement between June and August of 2025. Released in draft form in March 2024, the strategy identifies long-term goals and short-term actions across five themes to build resilience.

The five themes are:

1. **Resilient Communities** – Helping neighbourhoods and residents prepare for and recover from risks like extreme heat and flooding.
2. **Resilient Buildings, Transportation, and Water Systems** – Upgrading infrastructure to withstand future conditions.
3. **Natural Environment and Parkland** – Protecting trees, greenspaces, and ecosystems that provide natural resilience.
4. **Extreme Weather Preparedness and Response** – Strengthening the City's and the community's capacity to respond to storms, power outages, and other events.
5. **Cross-Cutting Actions** – Embedding climate resilience in City plans, budgets, and operations.

Public engagement overview

From 2022 to 2025, the City led a multi-phase process to ensure the strategy reflects community priorities and local knowledge. Prior to the 2024 Engage Ottawa survey, engagement activities included Community Dialogues (co-housed with CAFES and community associations), targeted workshops with more than 90 organizations including Ottawa Public Health's Community Engagement Team, and Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee, and a virtual public information session featuring Intact Center and City staff. This early feedback helped inform the draft strategy's goals and actions.

The [2023 As We Heard It](#) report summarized input from residents and community partners and informed the draft strategy released on Engage Ottawa in March 2024.

The 2024 Engage Ottawa survey received 487 responses, with more than 80 per cent expressing strong support for the draft strategy. Participants identified top priorities and actions, emphasized the City's role in providing leadership, clear information, financial support, collaboration with community partners, and highlighted the importance of visible, local actions.

In June 2025, one virtual and three in-person engagement sessions were held (Orleans, Nepean, and City Hall). Residents voted on priority actions, spoke with staff, and shared written feedback. These sessions validated the strategic direction of Climate Ready

Ottawa and reinforced key priorities, including building resilient infrastructure and natural systems, protecting vulnerable populations, and addressing risks related to extreme heat and energy use.

While the 2024 Engage Ottawa survey and open houses reached a broad cross-section of Ottawa residents, outreach to equity-deserving groups remains critical.

Representatives across City departments, with Ottawa Public Health, created the Climate Equity Working Group in 2024, to guide and advise climate equity engagement on reaching and mobilizing equity-deserving and at-risk populations to disseminate climate hazard information and adopt adaptation measures to reduce their risks.

Targeted discussions were also held in 2025 with organizations including ACORN, the Community Development Framework, the Coalition for Community Housing, and the Ottawa Black Coalition. These conversations highlighted barriers including cost, lack of information, and housing limitations, which informed concrete support actions.

Conclusion

Engagement demonstrated strong support for Climate Ready Ottawa and reinforced the importance of visible, local actions, equitable support, and City leadership in building climate resilience. Feedback from residents and partners helped inform Climate Ready Ottawa, ensuring that both infrastructure and community-focused actions address the needs of residents, especially those most vulnerable to climate impacts.

Background and framework

Climate change is already affecting residents' lives in Ottawa through more frequent and intense heatwaves, shifting freeze-thaw cycles, and heavier rainfall that increases the risk of flooding. The City is developing Climate Ready Ottawa to guide to how Ottawa can prepare for and respond to the anticipated impacts of changing climate conditions. Climate Ready Ottawa is a key project under the City's Climate Change Master Plan. The strategy supports the implementation of Council's Declaration of a Climate Emergency and Council's strategic priority of building a city that is [green and resilient](#).

Climate Ready Ottawa has been developed in three phases:

1. Climate projections (completed in 2020)

In collaboration with the National Capital Commission and Environment and Climate Change Canada, the report forecasts changes in temperature, precipitation, wind, and extreme weather until the year 2100.

2. Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (completed in 2022)

This assessment used climate projections, expert input, and public engagement to evaluate how vulnerable Ottawa is to changing climate conditions and prioritizes where action is most needed.

3. Climate Ready Ottawa – The City of Ottawa's Climate Resiliency Strategy

A draft of Climate Ready Ottawa was released in March 2024, building upon the climate projections and climate vulnerability and risk assessment, outlining priority actions through policies, programs, and projects. A final version, including an implementation plan, will be presented to Committee and Council in 2025.

The strategy is built around four key areas of action, supported by cross-cutting measures. **Resilient communities** focus on helping residents prepare for risks like flooding, extreme heat, and new health challenges. **Resilient infrastructure** ensures City buildings, transportation, and water systems are designed and maintained to withstand future climate conditions. **Resilient natural environment** emphasizes protecting and strengthening trees and ecosystems. **Extreme weather preparedness and response** enhances the City's ability to respond to more frequent and severe

events. Finally, **cross-cutting actions** integrate climate resiliency into City planning, decision-making, and operations.

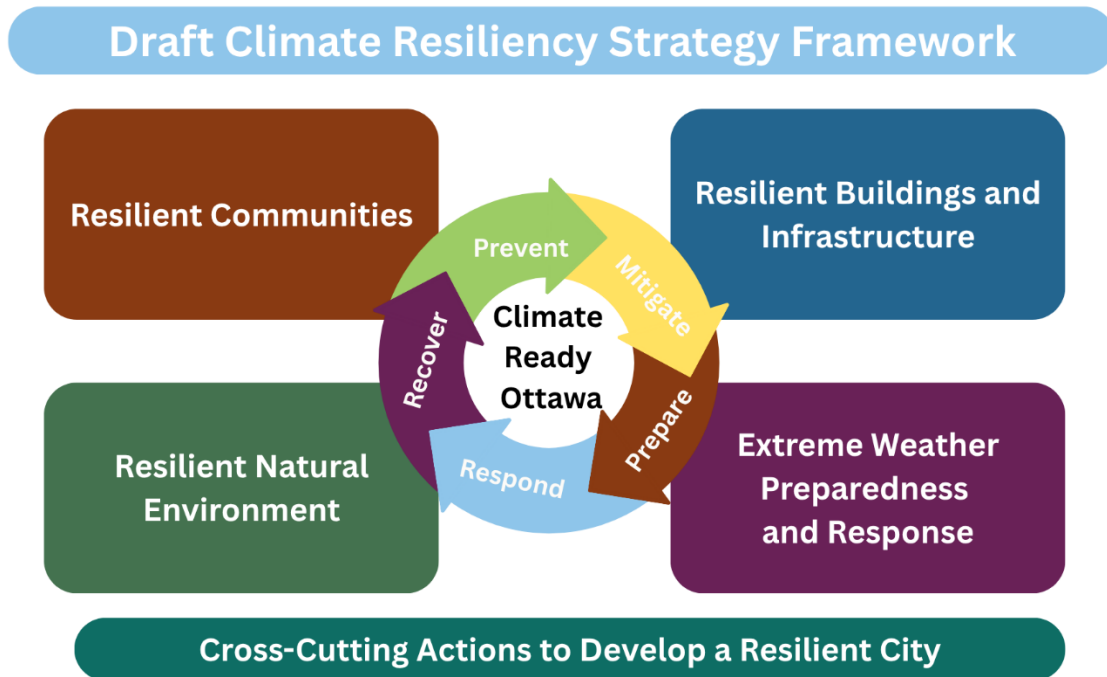


Figure 1: Climate Ready Ottawa framework

Public engagement

Public engagement has been central to developing Climate Ready Ottawa. Prior to the 2024 Engage Ottawa Survey, engagement activities included Community Dialogues (co-hosted with CAFES and community associations), targeted workshops with more than 90 organizations (including Ottawa Public Health’s Community Engagement Team and the Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee), and a virtual public information session with the Intact Centre and City staff. This early feedback helped inform the strategic direction of Climate Ready Ottawa and the draft strategy’s goals and actions. City staff across multiple departments and Ottawa Public Health established the Climate Equity Working Group to guide engagement with equity-deserving and at-risk populations. The group ensures continued engagement regarding climate resiliency, including disseminating climate hazard information and adopt adaptation measures to reduce risks.

The previously published 2023 As We Heard It report, summarized input from residents and community partners and was used to inform the goals and actions within the draft strategy. Details from the in the 2024 survey and the June 2025 engagement are summarized in this report.

Throughout the process, people have been able to stay engaged and informed by following the Climate Resiliency Strategy [Engage Ottawa](#) page.

Objectives

The objectives of public engagement in 2024 to 2025 were to:

- Provide an overview of the City of Ottawa’s draft Climate Resiliency Strategy.
- Seek feedback from residents on:
 - Long term goals and actions within the draft Climate Resiliency Strategy
 - The proposed prioritization of City-led actions.
 - What the City can do to support residents and communities in preparing for climate change?

Methodology

Public feedback on the draft Climate Ready Ottawa was gathered through an online survey hosted on the [Climate Ready Ottawa Engage Ottawa Page](#) (March to November 2024) and via a series of four (4) in person public information sessions (June 2025). Respondents were invited to provide feedback on the goals and priority actions identified within the five themes of the draft Climate Ready Ottawa:

1. Resilient communities
2. Resilient buildings, transportation, and water systems
3. Natural environment and parkland
4. Extreme weather preparedness and response
5. Cross-cutting actions that deal with more than one of the themes above

Participants ranked long-term goals, selected top short-term actions, and shared written comments. The survey allowed responses by theme, enabling residents to focus on areas of personal interest.

Engagement opportunities were promoted through City and Ottawa Public Health channels, newsletters, and community networks. The Engage Ottawa page provided background on the strategy, including its vision, key themes, and climate projections.

At open houses, attendees voted (through dots at in-person events or through polls at the virtual event) to indicate goal support and shared comments with staff and subject matter experts through live discussions, comment boards, and email.

Limitations

The 2024 Engage Ottawa survey and the 2025 Open Houses were open to the public, no targeted outreach or sampling was conducted for these sessions. Demographic and identity data were voluntarily submitted online and not collected at open house events.

Targeted outreach to organization that work with equity-deserving groups was conducted after the open houses.

In the summer of 2025, the City conducted targeted outreach to organizations that work with equity-deserving groups to ensure the perspectives of residents disproportionately affected by climate impacts were included. These communities often face compounded challenges, including food insecurity, high utility costs, and housing affordability pressures. Targeted discussions included ACORN, the Community Development Framework, the Coalition for Community Housing, and the Ottawa Black Coalition. Feedback from these groups highlighted extreme heat, energy-inefficient housing, and unsafe summer temperatures as top concerns, and helped inform priority actions such as, expanded cooling programs, inclusive retrofit programs, and neighbourhood-specific climate plans. Staff also participated in AccessAbility Day at City Hall, providing feedback on the draft strategy with a focus on inclusion, accessibility, and identifying gaps for further consideration.

Overall results

Engage Ottawa survey

The following section presents the level of support for the proposed goals and actions by theme, and highlights written comments submitted through the 2024 Engage Ottawa Survey. Each section includes a highlight box showcasing the 2025 engagement results, the top-ranked actions, and recurring comments from residents, as well as insights gathered through engagement with targeted interest-holders.

Of 739 recorded submissions, 425 individuals completed the entire survey, with 62 partial completions and 252 incomplete responses. Respondents submitted 1175 written comments in addition to providing direct feedback on goals and actions. The analysis with this report incorporates complete and partial completions.

Of the 487 total respondents, 355 (73%) respondents opted to respond to all five Climate Ready Ottawa sections. The survey responses translated into strong support for the goals of the draft Climate Ready Ottawa across all sections, with all five sections seeing greater than 80% rates of agreement with the proposed actions (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Support by theme

Comments gathered from respondents often touched on different themes influenced by the section of Climate Ready Ottawa that they were reviewing. There were, however, common themes that emerged across comments from all sections. Specifically, these were:

- Financial support
- Resilient infrastructure
- Education and resources
- Health
- Changing our built environment

Feedback on specific actions displayed similar positive responses. Respondents prioritized physical actions, such as retrofitting spaces for more shade and electric grid resiliency. When asked to expand on their reasoning, respondents broadly preferred actions that would have tangible benefits for individuals and communities. The top 10 actions identified by respondents across the survey are indicated in Table One.

Table one: Top 10 actions across all themes identified by respondents

1	Expand tree planting programs and add more splash pads, drinking water, and misting stations to cool down
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2	Enhance outreach and support to populations at greatest risk of extreme heat, people who work outside, or live without air conditioning
3	Identify and address risks to critical infrastructure such as water and wastewater treatment, priority buildings, and transportation networks
4	Provide shade, shelter, and access to water on sidewalks, bike paths, and transit stops
5	Work with hydro utilities to strengthen the electricity grid and restore power to critical services and populations
6	Ensure those most at risk are supported during extreme weather events, with water, food, and back-up batteries for medical devices
7	Plant more trees, especially in neighbourhoods that don't have many.
8	Protect and connect natural areas through acquisition, restoration, and stewardship.
9	Integrate climate preparedness in key City plans like Master Plans and Asset Management Plans.
10	Build capacity across all City departments to reduce climate risks

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

The June 2025 engagement largely reinforced the priorities identified in 2024. Key areas of agreement from residents included support for tree planting, infrastructure resilience, backup power, and addressing extreme heat. Many 2025 participants emphasized the importance of equity, access to cooling, and clear City leadership. This was reinforced in the meetings with organizations that work with equity-deserving communities. Feedback from these groups highlighted extreme heat, energy-inefficient housing, and unsafe summer temperatures as top concerns, and helped inform priority actions such as expanded cooling programs, inclusive retrofit programs, and neighbourhood-specific climate plans.

Resilient communities

The resilient communities section of Climate Ready Ottawa focuses on goals and actions that can be taken to prepare Ottawa's communities for the adverse effects of climate change.

Respondents agreed with the proposed goals an average of 87%, with the highest support being for the goal of “Providing more space to cool off such as trees, splash pads, shade structures, drinking water, and misting stations”.

Feedback on the 11 proposed actions within resilient communities indicated the strongest support for actions that prioritized adapting to extreme heat within Ottawa, both within the public realm and in private homes.

“Education and outreach for communities and businesses” support was also high, with some comments for this goal suggesting the City should place greater emphasis on actions that deliver tangible, visible impacts in communities, beyond awareness and education alone.

Figure 3 (below) summarizes these results.

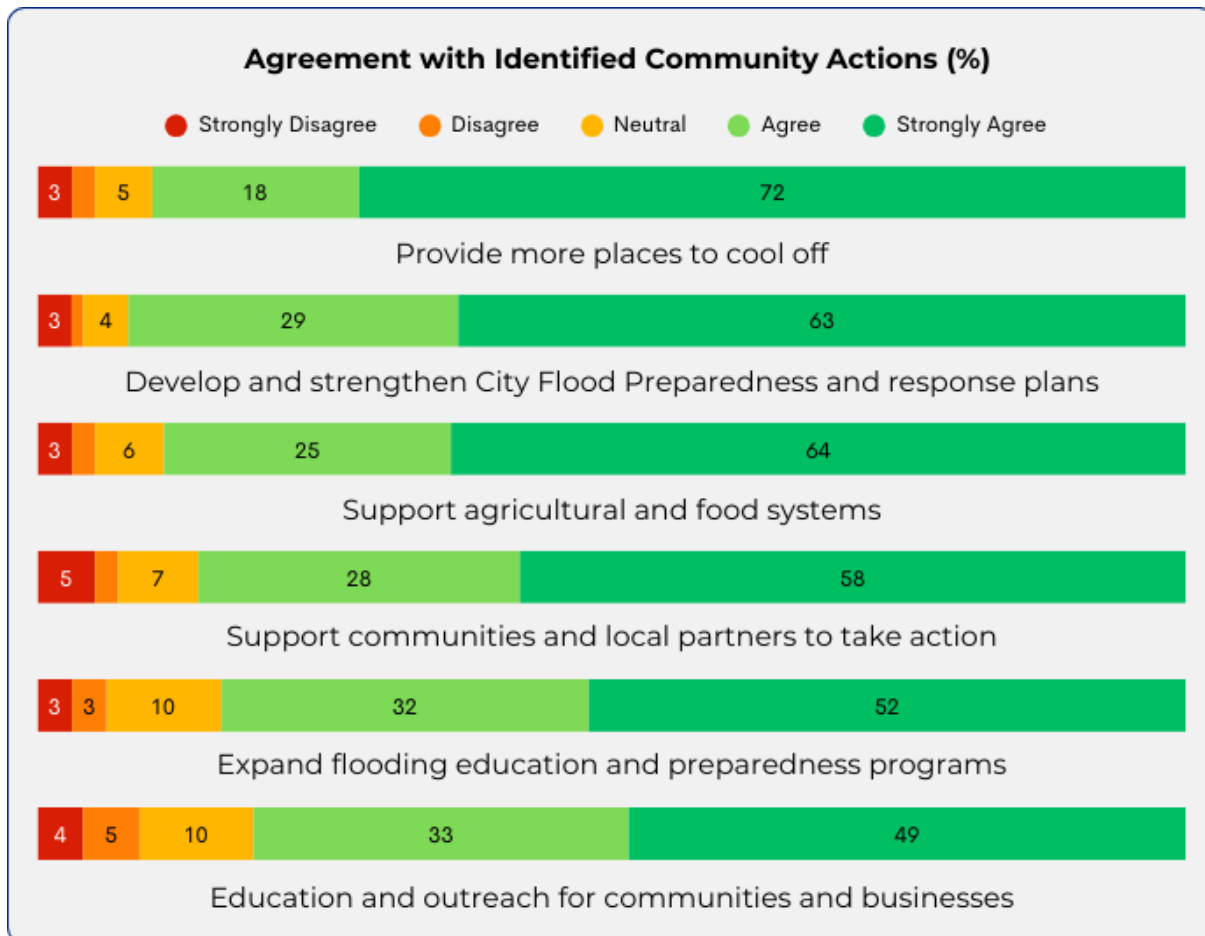


Figure 3: Agreement with identified community actions

Comments from respondents regarding resilient communities emphasized common themes of better preparing communities for extreme events through adaptation measures and better communication and outreach to help people more effectively

prepare for extreme weather events. Comments also highlighted a desire to see neighbourhood wide adaptations to better prepare for extreme weather.

Common themes in this section were:

1. **Changing our built environment:** Encourage green roofs, permeable surfaces, and better stormwater systems. Ensure new developments include natural shade and water absorption. Invest in more public and active transportation.
2. **Community preparedness and support:** Support local preparedness groups and provide resources for community-level emergency planning. Prioritize help for vulnerable populations.
3. **Resilient infrastructure:** Upgrade the electrical grid for reliable cooling. Support solar, batteries, and generators to improve reliability and resilience.
4. **Legislation:** Enforce rules for green infrastructure. Ban development in floodplains. Require cooling and shade in rental properties and businesses during heatwaves.
5. **Education and resources:** Raise public awareness about climate risks and solutions. Promote native plants, rain gardens, and tools for community action.
6. **Food security and local agriculture:** Supporting local farmers and promoting regenerative farming practices and encourage community food gardens.
7. **Financial support:** Offer incentives for heat pumps, solar panels, and provide funding for community-led climate resilience projects.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

Participants prioritized extreme heat protections, including maximum indoor temperatures and expanded public cooling options. Equity was a key theme, with strong calls to support vulnerable residents. This was reinforced in meetings with organizations that work with equity-deserving and under-represented groups, who emphasized the need for targeted programs to address heat-related risks, energy-inefficient housing, and access barriers for low-income households.

Resilient buildings, transportation, and water systems

Respondents were invited to provide feedback on goals and actions to prepare Ottawa's infrastructure assets for the adverse effects of climate change, as well as how the City can support individuals in preparing their living space, including privately owned dwellings and rental apartments. Renters highlighted challenges such as limited control over building upgrades, energy-inefficient housing, and barriers to accessing cooling or retrofit programs.

Overall, there is strong support for the draft goals for resilient buildings, transportation, and water systems, respondents agreed with the proposed goals an average of 87%, with the highest support being for the goal of “Prepare for increased rainfall and stormwater runoff” with comments submitted highlighting a desire to see more green infrastructure and integrated climate planning as a part of this.

Figure 4 summarizes the results across all goals for this section.

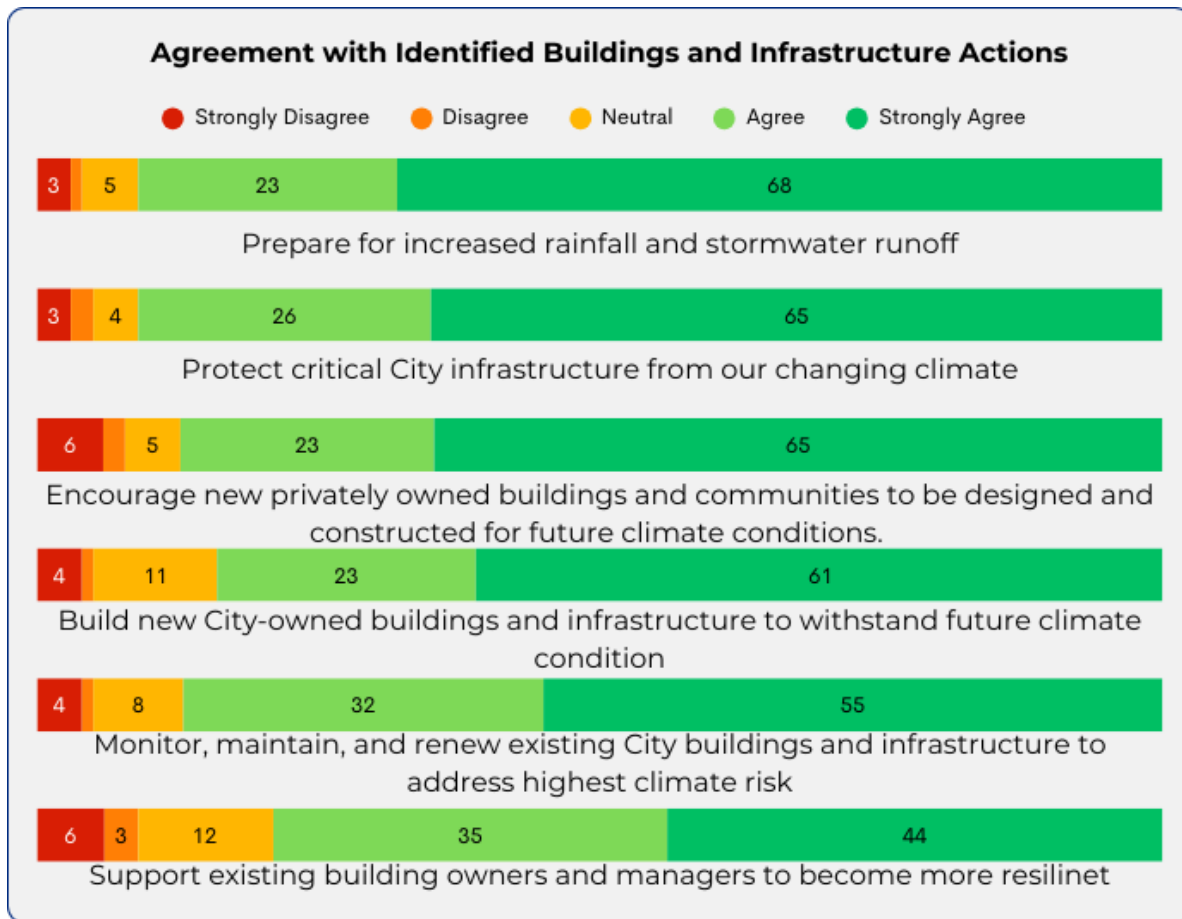


Figure 4: Agreement with identified buildings and infrastructure actions

Feedback on the proposed actions within this section indicated strong support for actions that prioritized retrofitting and preparing existing infrastructure for climate change impacts.

Additional comments encouraged a denser city as prescribed in the Official Plan. Respondents also had questions about what can be done to reduce stormwater runoff and build more green infrastructure across the city.

Calls were also made to see action on initiatives requiring higher building standards for climate resiliency and mitigation, and stricter requirements to abide to these requirements. Opinions on financial support to encourage this transition were mixed,

especially with regards to privately owned buildings and buildings owned by large housing corporations.

Common themes in this section were:

1. **Changing our built environment:** Limit urban sprawl, protect green spaces from development, integrate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, and increase tree planting to reduce heat and improve air quality. Several respondents want to see a change in building codes to require climate-resilient designs and materials, mandate sustainable practices in new developments, and enforce existing regulations to ensure compliance.
2. **Education and resources:** Engage community groups in resilience planning, educate the public on climate resilience and sustainable practices, and promote community-led initiatives and volunteer programs.
3. **Financial support:** Provide financial assistance for home energy backup systems and renewable energy installations (low-cost loans and rebates to residents, in particular vulnerable populations, for example).
4. **Infrastructure resilience:** Integrate climate resilience into City master plans to protect and upgrade critical infrastructure and ensure reliable utility services during extreme weather events. Invest in improved and nature-based solutions for stormwater management and flood resilience.
5. **Health:** Ensure health systems are prepared for increased demand during extreme weather events, provide Personal Protective Equipment and necessary supplies during emergencies, and focus on the needs of vulnerable populations in emergency planning.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

Feedback emphasized protecting critical infrastructure, retrofitting older areas, and securing funding for climate upgrades in apartments and low-income housing. Participants highlighted the importance of visible, local actions, and City leadership in implementing these measures. Discussions with community organizations reinforced these priorities, noting the need for equitable access to retrofits, support for renters, and programs that prevent rent increases while improving energy efficiency. Both residents and community partners consistently stressed that investments in infrastructure and housing resilience must be paired with clear information, financial support, and community collaboration to effectively reduce climate-related risks.

Natural environment and parkland

The natural environment and parkland section received the highest overall support across all five themes, averaging 91%. Support was consistently high, with the top-rated goal “protecting and enhancing trees and forests” receiving 95% agreement, the highest across the entire survey. Public education and stewardship also saw strong support at 84%. Feedback emphasized the importance of expanding natural areas and adapting parks, trees, and ecosystems to a changing climate. Figure 5 summarizes the results across all goals for this section.

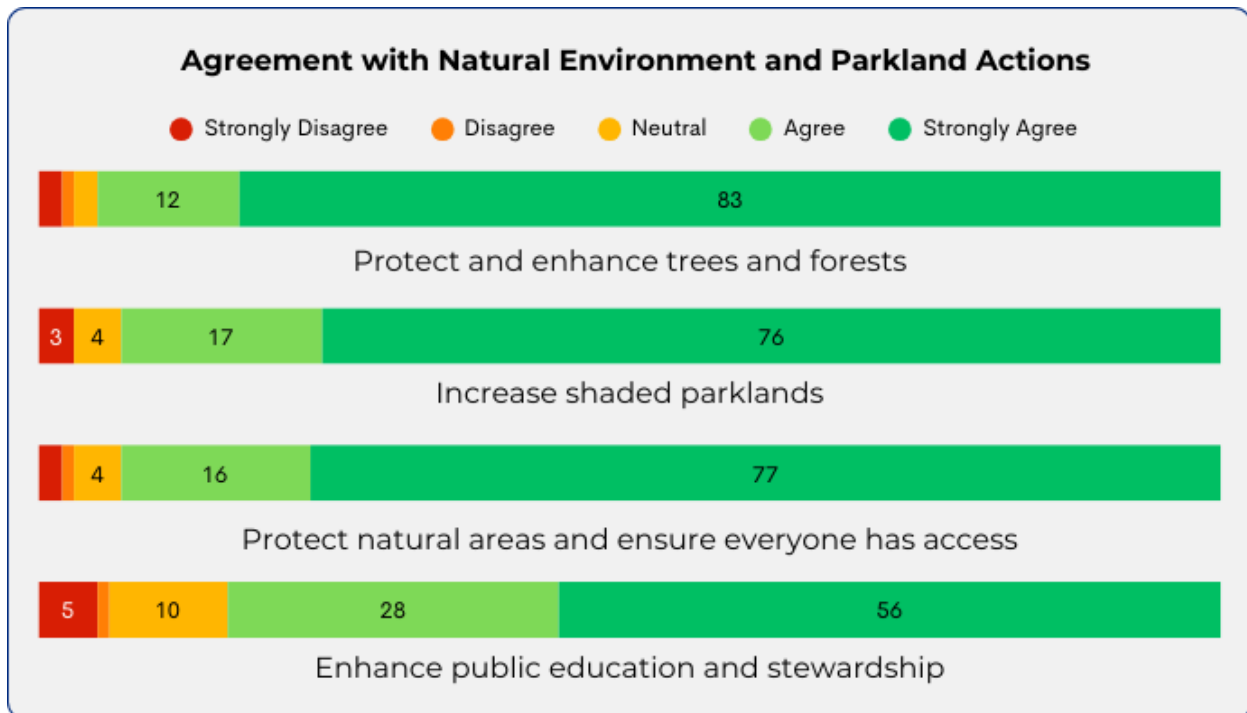


Figure 5: Agreement with natural environment and parkland actions

Feedback on the 11 proposed actions within the natural environment and parkland theme indicated strong support for actions that prioritized trees and natural spaces in adapting to climate change, in particular actions that would result in protecting and expanding the tree canopy.

Additional comments received in this section frequently reemphasized strong support for more tree planting citywide. Respondents also want to ensure that maintenance of both new and existing trees is more effectively carried out, and that more education resources are directed at promoting tree planting.

Other suggestions sought long term goals around broader naturalization beyond more tree coverage, for example, more efforts to support native plant and animal species.

Common themes in this section were:

1. **Building up our natural spaces:** Planting more trees and protecting existing ones to maintain and increase tree canopy, providing shade, reducing heat, and improving air quality. Increase use of native plants and trees to support local biodiversity, eliminate non-native grasses and plants, and create habitats for pollinators and other wildlife, and improved maintenance of parks and greenspaces.
2. **Education and resources:** More public education on the benefits of trees and green spaces, engage community groups and volunteers in greenspace management, and encourage residents in stewardship and conservation efforts.
3. **Changing our built environment:** Limit sprawl, protect green spaces from development, integrate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions in urban planning, and ensure everyone has access to parks and natural areas.
4. **Legislation:** Enforce regulations protecting trees and green spaces, update policies to prioritize environmental protection and sustainability, and align city actions with stated environmental goals.
5. **Health:** Recognize the mental health benefits of access to natural environments, create and maintain green spaces for community well-being, and ensure equitable access to shaded parks and green spaces.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

Tree planting and access to green space remained top priorities, with participants emphasizing the need to expand the urban forest, particularly in areas with limited canopy cover. Feedback from targeted engagement with organizations that work with equity-deserving populations highlighted the importance of cooling amenities, such as pools and beaches, recommending extended and weather-adapted seasonal openings and improved access and availability of cooling amenities.

Extreme weather preparedness and response

The extreme weather preparedness and response section received strong support, averaging 85% agreement across all goals. This section focused on actions to help Ottawa better prepare for and respond to severe weather events. Support ranged from 93% for “Prepare for more power outages”, to 77%, for “Work with local partners to provide community-based hubs.”

Figure 6 summarizes the results across all goals for this section.

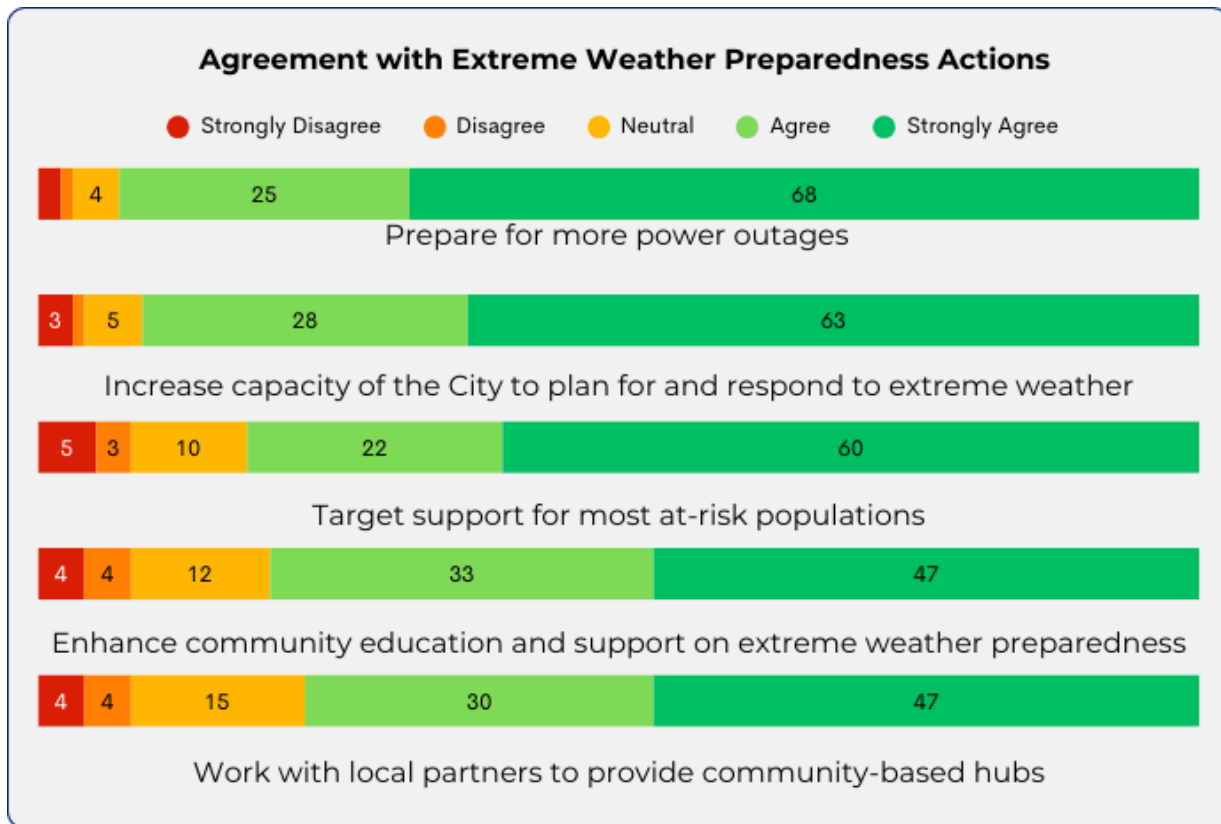


Figure 6: Agreement with extreme weather preparedness actions

Feedback on the extreme weather preparedness and response actions showed strong support for measures that directly help residents cope with extreme weather. The top three ranked actions focused on steps that the City can take to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather on residents. Notably, even among comments expressing climate change skepticism, support for extreme weather preparedness actions remained strong.

Additional comments emphasized the need for specific actions that can achieve grid resiliency, both through a combination of protection of existing assets and the installation of backup systems, such as Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Other comments advocated for electricity generation capacity at all City buildings and financial support to help residents do the same.

Common themes in this section were:

1. **Resilient infrastructure:** Invest in critical infrastructure assets to withstand extreme weather and power outages through improved design and backup power systems. Work with essential services to help them be best prepared to respond in extreme weather events.
2. **Community-based initiatives:** Develop and support community hubs that can serve as resources during outages, engage community associations in creating

localized emergency plans, and focus on community needs to make neighborhoods more self-reliant.

3. **Emergency preparedness:** Educate residents on emergency preparedness through diverse communication methods and hands-on campaigns. Ensure access to cooling/warming and equip public buildings with solar and battery backup for emergency use.
4. **Financial support:** Create funding programs to help residents install solar power and batteries, provide financial assistance for home energy backup systems, and allocate funds to bury power lines and improve infrastructure.
5. **Extreme weather communication:** Improve coordination with Hydro Ottawa and other utilities for better response, develop comprehensive communication plans for various weather-related emergencies, and ensure multilingual communication in diverse neighborhoods.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

Reducing heat risks and strengthening power reliability were key concerns. Many participants supported backup power for critical sites and clear emergency plans. Feedback from community groups working with equity-deserving residents emphasized stabilizing and equipping existing community hubs with generators to provide cooling, food storage, and charging during outages. They also stressed that retrofit programs must include all building types and prevent displacement or rent increases to ensure equitable access to climate resilience measures.

Cross-cutting actions

The cross-cutting actions section focuses on steps the City can take internally to embed climate resiliency. It received strong overall support averaging 83.5%. While this was the least prioritized theme compared to others, likely due to its internal focus, support level remained notably high. The most supported goal “embedding climate preparedness in City plans and policies” received 81% support, and even the goal with the fewest votes, “building staff capacity”, was supported by 79% of respondents.

Figure seven summarizes the results across all actions for this section.

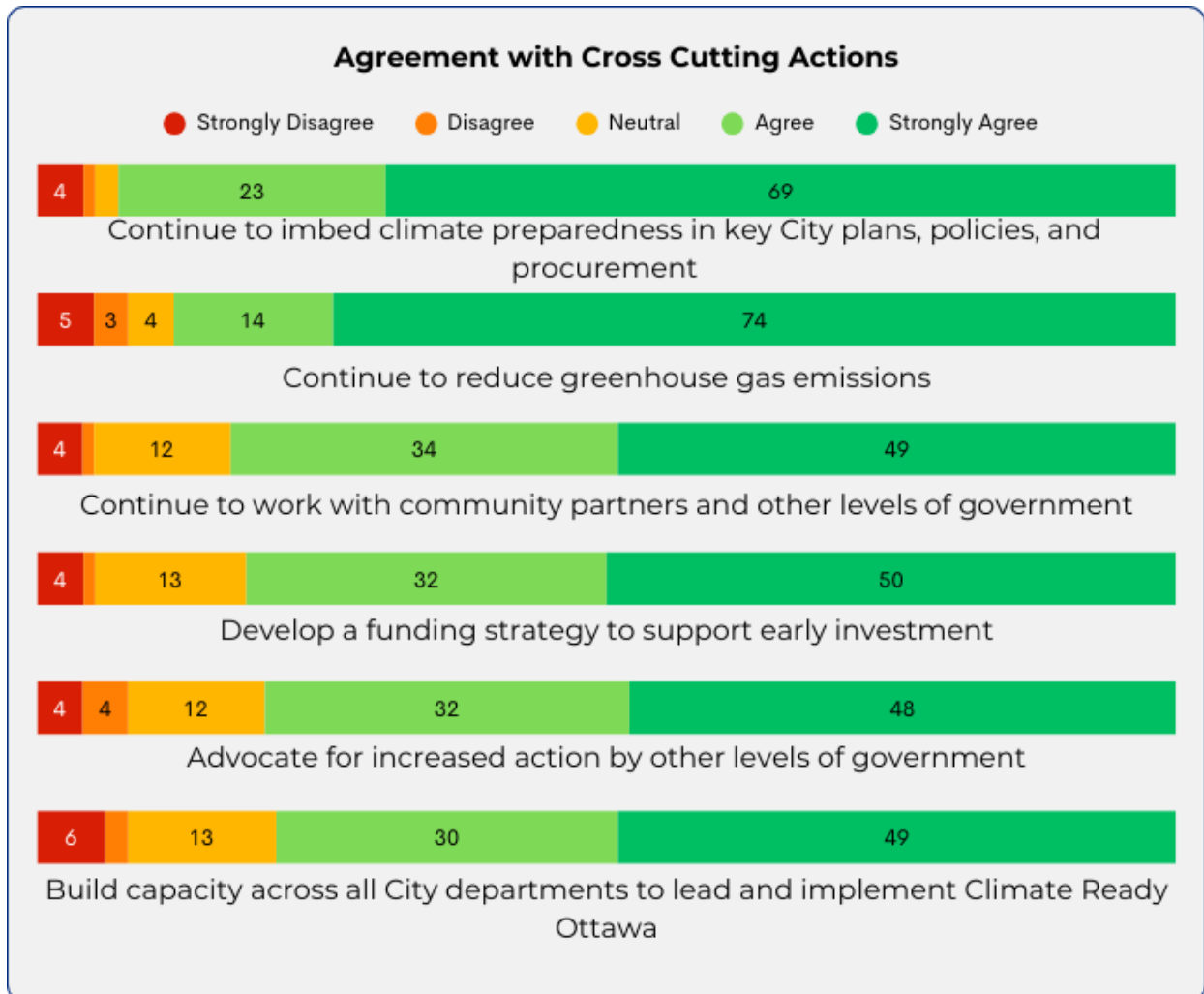


Figure 7: Agreement with cross-cutting actions

Feedback on the proposed actions within the cross-cutting theme indicated strong support for actions that prioritized retrofitting and preparing existing infrastructure for the impacts of climate change.

Additional comments received on the actions emphasized a desire to see transparent and consistent reporting from the City on meeting the goals within the draft Climate Ready Ottawa. Respondents also had questions about how climate considerations are already being applied to other City planning activities, such as asset management plans and long-range financial plans. Concerns were raised about internal siloing, conflicting master plans, and a desire for continued City commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Common themes in this section were:

1. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Establish monitoring programs to track the effectiveness of climate resilience initiatives, with regular public reporting to

ensure transparency. Some respondents expressed concern about ongoing “siloeing” within the City and called for stronger coordination across departments.

2. **Financial support:** Financial assistance to help with the retrofitting of home energy backup systems, renewable energy, low-carbon solutions, and resiliency measures to help prepare and to help meet GHG reduction goals.
3. **Health:** Respondents recommend a close collaborative relationship with health authorities to monitor for and prevent outbreaks of emerging diseases as a result of climate change.
4. **Changing our built environment:** Embedding climate change in City Master plans and desire to see investments in actions that will contribute to reducing greenhouse gases, such as transit and densification.
5. **Reducing greenhouse gas emissions:** Respondents want to see continue efforts by the City to reduce GHGs, from both the corporation and within the wider community. They want to see this work reflected in effective reporting to demonstrate progress.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:

Residents called for better coordination across City departments, public reporting, and stronger climate leadership embedded in City policies. Discussions with community groups serving equity-deserving residents emphasized the need for capacity-building support to help organizations integrate climate resilience into existing services.

Residents and partners also highlighted the importance of investing in community capacity-building and leveraging trusted networks for engagement.

Additionally, there is a need to strengthen public messaging to clearly communicate how climate change exacerbates challenges such as food insecurity, housing risks, and other vulnerabilities.

Taking action on climate change

Respondents were asked, on a scale of 0 to 5, how able they felt to take action, either as an individual or with their community, on increasing their resiliency in the face of a changing climate, with 0 indicating feeling not able at all, and a 5 indicating feeling very able. Most respondents generally feel somewhat able at a minimum when it comes to taking action, whereas a minority feel unable.

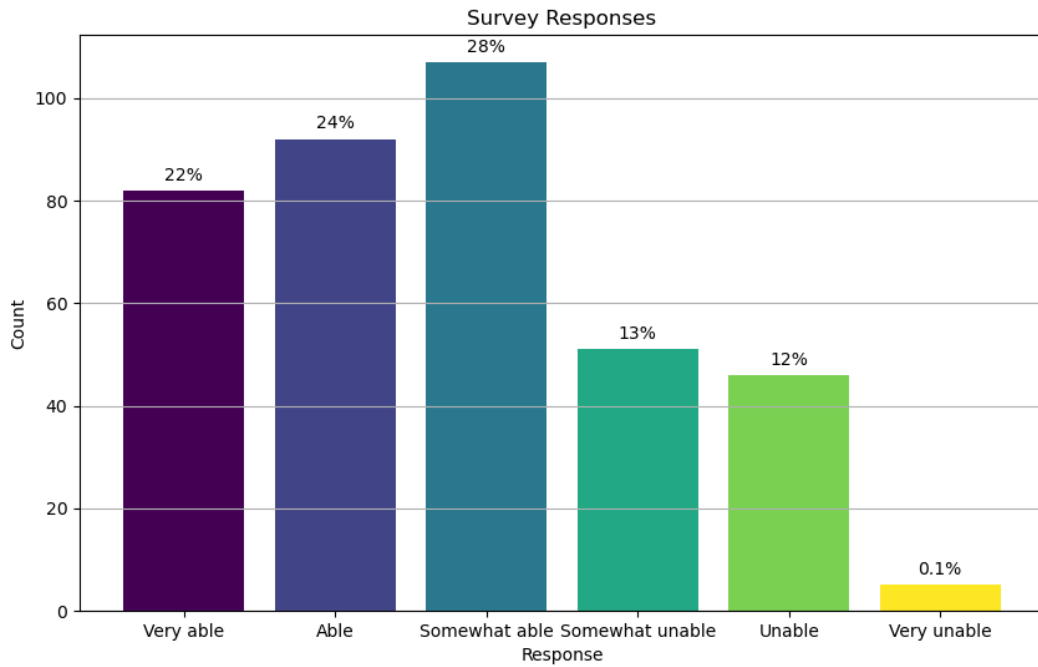


Figure 8: Confidence in taking action

Respondents were invited to provide more detail on these feelings, with table 2 summarizing this feedback into 10 broader themes.

Key takeaways from 2025 open houses and targeted engagement:
 Participants showed a strong willingness to act, but cited barriers like cost, lack of information, and limited control, especially for renters. They called for clear guidance, financial supports, and resources tailored to different housing types and communities. This was reinforced in meetings with organizations that work with equity-deserving groups where residents have limited control over property modifications and that strategies should be community-specific, especially for high-density/ low-income areas.

Table 2: Barriers and opportunities in climate adaptation for individuals

Theme	Feedback Summary
Financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost of implementing climate-resilient measures, such as installing heat pumps, solar panels, or backup generators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited financial resources, especially for renters and low-income individuals, restricting their ability to take significant action.
Lack of control or influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renters and those living in condos feel they have limited control over property modifications. Respondents feel their individual actions are insignificant compared to the larger impact of government and corporate actions.
Need for government and policy support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for stronger government regulations, policies, and incentives to support individual actions. More municipal support and leadership on climate initiatives would help in taking action.
Knowledge and information gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many respondents feel they lack the necessary information or knowledge to take effective action. Desire for more education and resources on climate resilience and adaptation strategies.
Community and collective action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondents believe that community-level actions and support are crucial for meaningful impact. Need for better coordination and collaboration within communities to address climate challenges.
Personal motivation and commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some respondents are highly motivated and have already taken steps to improve their climate resilience. Others lack the time, knowledge or resources to proceed. Personal commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship drives their actions.
Physical and health limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older adults and individuals with health issues feel limited in their ability to take physical actions. Physical constraints can hinder participation in community activities or personal preparedness efforts.
Infrastructure and systemic barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate infrastructure, such as unreliable public transit or poor stormwater management, limits individual efforts. Systemic issues, like urban planning and development practices, are seen as barriers to effective climate action.

Time and energy constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy work schedules and family responsibilities leave little time for individuals to engage in climate actions. • Effort required to take meaningful action can be overwhelming for some.
Perceived ineffectiveness of individual action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some respondents feel that individual actions are not enough to make a significant difference. • Renters feel that few actions were able to be undertaken by them as they speak to activities broadly outside of their personal control. • Feelings of frustration and helplessness regarding the scale of the climate crisis.

How to build confidence in taking action

To help address these concerns and improve respondents' abilities to take action, respondents were able to select from four general themes, with the opportunity to provide additional options. Respondents could pick as many options as they wanted.

The majority of respondents indicated that better guidance and financial support would help reduce barriers to taking action as summarized in Figure 9. Multiple goals within the draft Climate Ready Ottawa will help build this capacity.

Other suggestions included support for establishing community hubs to help with preparedness, more detail on non-financial support, and facilitation of neighbour-to-neighbour connections.

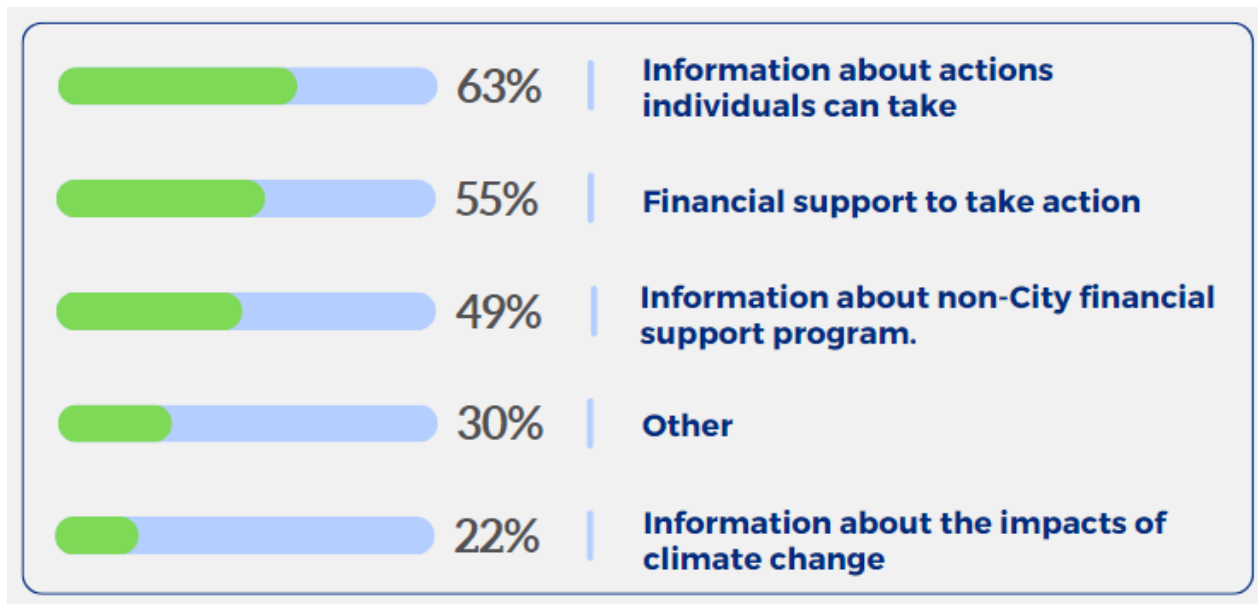


Figure 9: Improving individual action uptake

Respondents were asked where the municipalities should spend its limited resources in increasing overall climate resiliency. Respondents were more supportive of resources that go towards both helping City assets and operations, and allocating resources to helping residents, especially those less able to prepare for climate change. Support was more mixed with regards to distributing resources to support businesses (see figure 10).

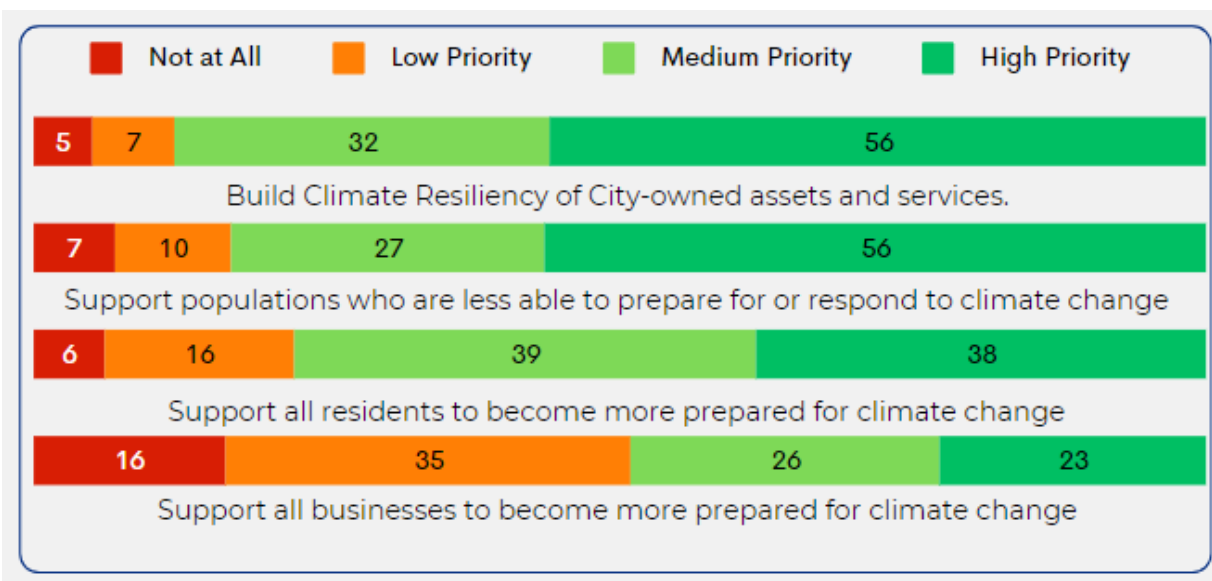


Figure 10: Support for resource allocations options

Community partners

Respondents were invited to recommend potential partners and collaborators for implementing Climate Ready Ottawa. Summarized in Table 3, respondents suggested the City collaborate with a range of organizations, with local environmental groups and educational institutions most frequently suggested. Responses were open ended.

Table 3: Organization the City should work with:

Organization	Examples	Frequency
Local Environmental Groups	EnviroCentre, Ottawa Riverkeepers, Just Food, CAFES, and Ecology Ottawa	20
Educational Institutions	Carleton University, University of Ottawa, Algonquin College	10
Business Groups	Invest Ottawa, BIAs, and Ottawa Tourism	5
Provincial and National Organizations	Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Canadian Wildlife Federation.	8

Provincial and National Government Institutions	Conservation Authorities, Provincial Ministries, Federal Ministries	5
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Conclusion and key findings

Respondents overwhelmingly want to see the City take action on climate resiliency and are broadly in agreement with and supportive of the long-term goals of Climate Ready Ottawa.

- Respondents were most supportive of goals and actions that will have a direct and beneficial impacts to their communities and themselves, such as actions that will reduce the impacts of extreme heat and flooding. This result is consistent with results discussed in the previous AWHI from 2023.
- Respondents were most supportive of the goals and actions of the natural environment and parks theme, with feedback highlighting the importance of natural spaces in adapting to climate change.
- Respondents are ready to act on preparing for climate change but need more support from the City to do so, primarily in the form of more information on what they can do and greater financial support to translate that guidance into results.
- Respondents see it as important that the City prioritize both its own corporate assets but also support for the community.
- More work is needed to reach select equity groups to ensure that all voices are reflected in climate resiliency work.
- The 2025 open houses validated the draft strategy's goals and actions, with in-person feedback confirming strong support for climate-resilient infrastructure, personal and community preparedness, and equitable access to City support.

Thank you for engaging with us!

Dear Community Members,

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all respondents for taking the time to review and respond to the draft of Climate Ready Ottawa. Public participation is an important part of making a plan that reflects the diverse perspectives and needs that make up our diverse City, and your contributions will help create a plan that will help Ottawa best prepare for climate change.

This As We Heard It Report informs City staff and Council about the recommendations for building a more climate resilient Ottawa for all. For the latest information on progress, next steps, and ways to get involved, visit the Climate Resiliency Strategy page on the [Engage Ottawa Platform](#) (available in French and English) where you can

find the most up to date information. You can also sign up for the climate change newsletter to stay up to date on all thing's climate change. If you have questions, please contact climatechange@ottawa.ca.

Appendix 1

Demographic profile of respondents

Respondents were invited to voluntarily share equity and identity responses at the end of the survey. Some chose to do so, and were able to select multiple identity characteristics, including gender, age, housing status, and other equity-related identifiers (see Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14).

Based on self-identification, the survey was effective in reaching certain groups, most notably women and older adults. Engagement with 2SLGBTQ+ was notably effective¹. More is needed however to reach more self-identified Indigenous, rural, racialized, and youth voices. Analysis was conducted across age, gender, and housing, and found that support for the actions and goals of Climate Ready Ottawa were consistent across these groups and aligned with the overall trends discussed above.

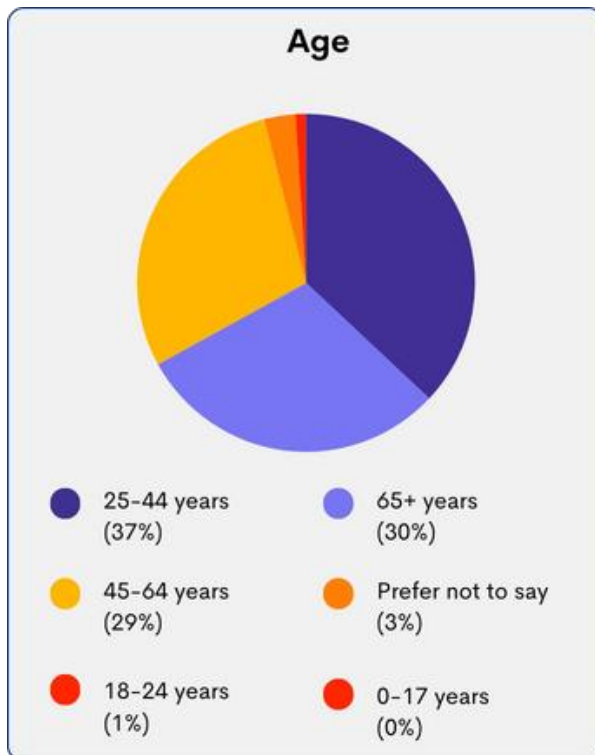


Figure 11: Responses by age

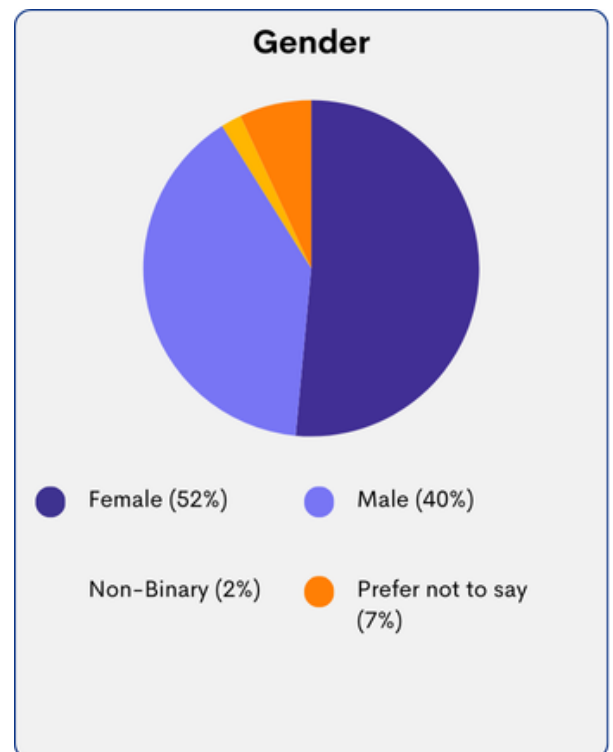


Figure 12: Responses by gender

¹ Statistics Canada estimated at 4% of the population identify as 2SLGBTQ+

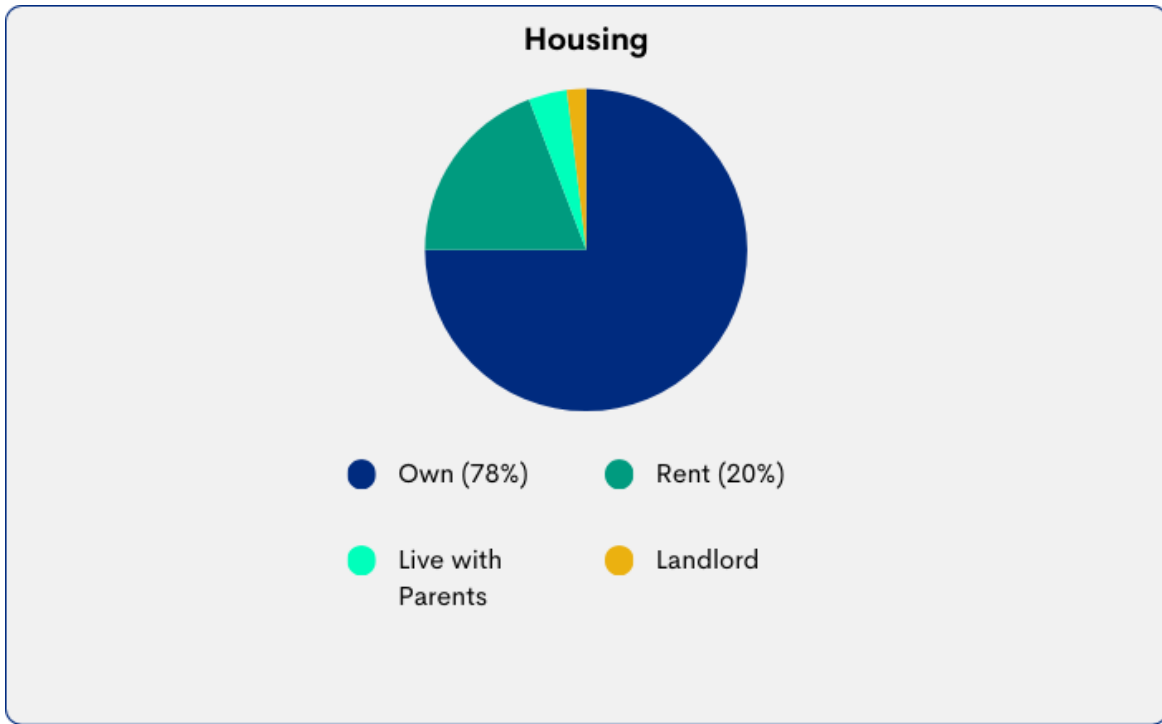


Figure 13: Housing type

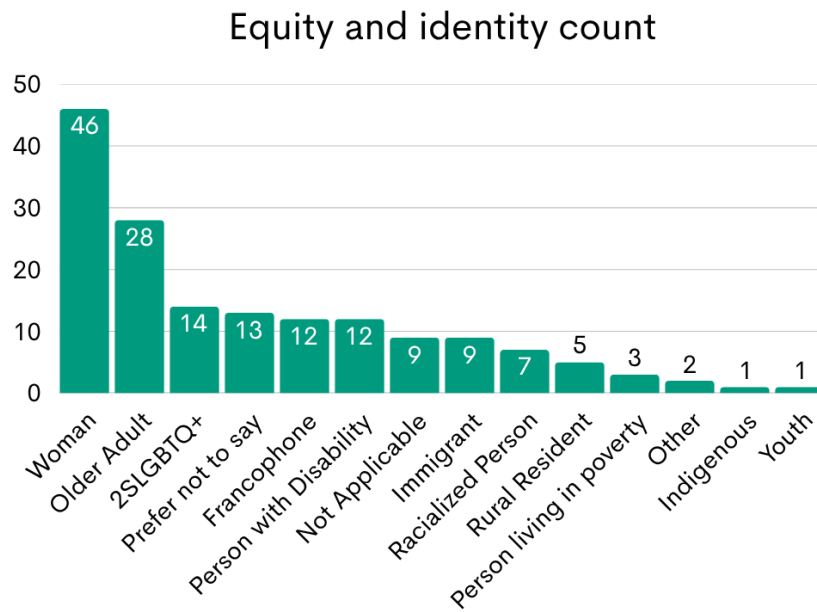


Figure 14: Equity and identity count

Geographic location of respondents

Respondents were invited to voluntarily provide the first 3 digits of their postal code with their response in order to support identifying priorities amongst respondents based on their place of residence. Overall, the draft Climate Ready Ottawa survey reached a diverse set of Ottawa residents across urban, suburban, and rural areas, providing a strong cross section of opinions and feedback from residents based on their place of residence. The survey received notably high rates of responses from residents residing within rural areas and the village.

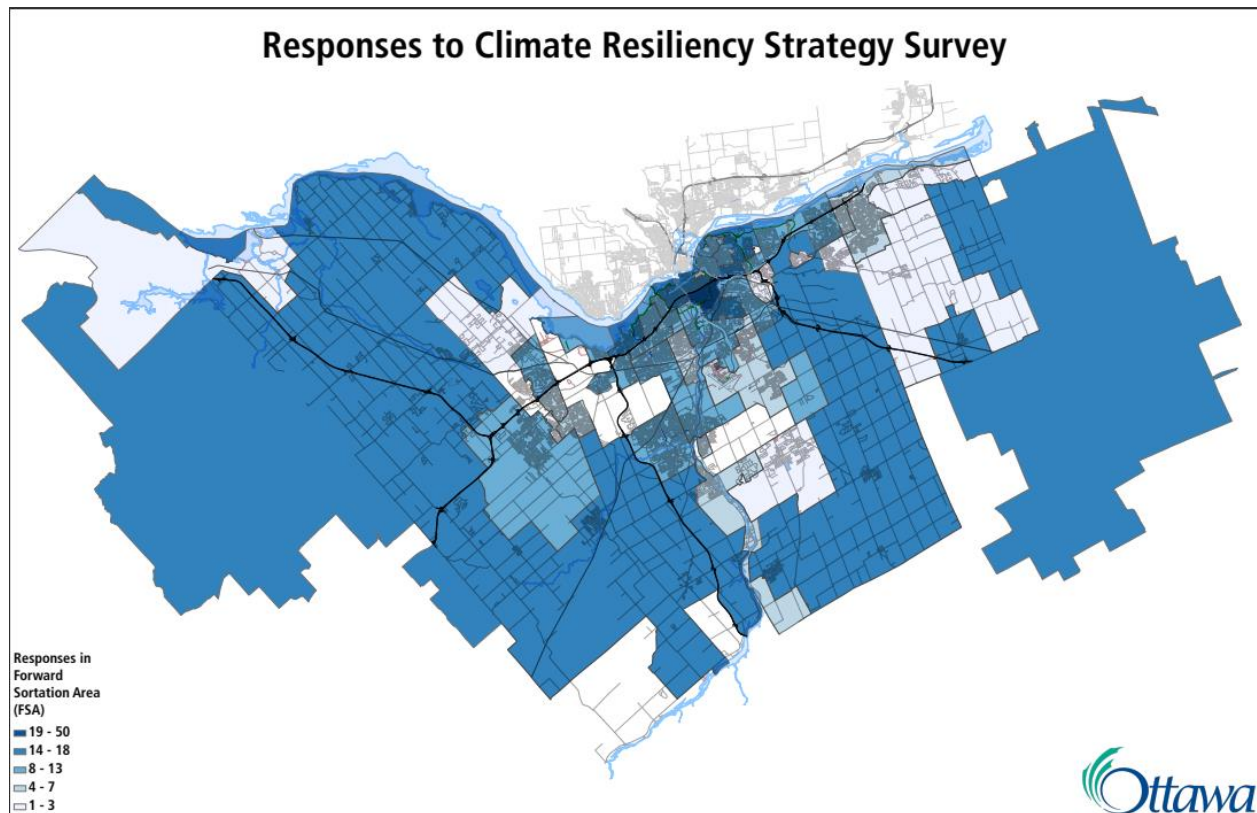


Figure 15: Geographic location mapped by first three letters of postal code