



Public Engagement Strategy:

**Creating a Sustainable  
LANSDOWNNE PARK,  
Together**

City of Ottawa  
Planning, Infrastructure  
and Economic Development

**June 2021**



## **LANSDOWNE PARK – A BLEND OF HISTORIC AND MODERN AMENITIES**

The City of Ottawa's Lansdowne Park is a world-class attraction that blends sports and entertainment venues, courtyards, heritage buildings and green space. This urban public destination, situated right in the heart of the city, offers programming on a year-round basis for all ages. In the seven years since it has re-opened, there have been over 20 million visitors to the Lansdowne Park and TD Place sports and entertainment district. There have been well over 1,000 large and small events for people of all ages and has been re-established as Ottawa's historic gathering place. The site now houses over 50 businesses and has created over 4,000 full and part-time jobs.

Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) is the City's partner in the Lansdowne Park Partnership. OSEG owns and operates the Ottawa REDBLACKS Football Club (CFL) and the Ottawa 67's Hockey Club (OHL). OSEG manages and programs events in the TD Place stadium arena complex and manages facilities and maintenance throughout the centrally located Lansdowne district, other than the Aberdeen Pavilion, Horticulture Building and Urban Park which are managed by the City.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020, much of Lansdowne Park has come to a standstill due to public health safety measures. Prior to COVID-19, daily visitors to the site varied significantly from game days, days with major events and activities and on regular programming days. As discussed in the December 2020 report, for the Partnership to be sustainable, site attendance at Lansdowne must exceed five million annually.

Staff were directed to explore barriers and opportunities on potential strategies to position the Lansdowne Park Partnership Agreement for success once the city emerges from the COVID pandemic, including both operating and capital requirements. The City is now looking at ways to increase foot traffic on the site, including the options to enhance animation, improve public amenities, assess aging infrastructure and increase density in keeping with Council's urban intensification principles, including affordable housing.

### **BACKGROUND**

On December 9, 2020, Council approved the establishment of a Lansdowne Park Partnership Working Group. The purpose was to explore the options to improve the Lansdowne Park Partnership and position it for continued sustainability over the life of the partnership. In addition, Council Sponsors Groups were established to support the Working Group. The two Council Sponsors Groups, one with a focus on economic improvements and another with a focus on planning improvements, are working with staff to review and facilitate the development of a robust public engagement strategy.

The December Council Report instructed staff to report back to Council in the second quarter of 2021. This report establishes the framework to advance the sustainability of the Lansdowne Park Partnership over the long term.

### *Councillors Sponsors Groups - Economic and Planning*

Two Councillors Sponsors Groups were created, the Lansdowne Park Councillors Sponsors Group - Economic, and the Lansdowne Park Councillors Sponsors Group - Planning. Their respective responsibilities are to act as advisors for the Lansdowne Park Partnership Working Group, review the public engagement strategy and plan, seek input from key stakeholders during the development plan process and assist with the establishment of the Stakeholder Sounding Board.

Regular meetings with these groups are held to inform the members on updates and developments, seek feedback on proposed options and share what was heard from the community at large and/or specific stakeholder groups.

### *Lansdowne Park Stakeholder Sounding Board*

Council also directed staff to establish a Lansdowne Park Stakeholder Sounding Board. Representatives of neighbouring community associations, members of the business community and the tourism and entertainment sector, were invited to take part, as they would represent a broad-based cross-section of the population while not being too large to be effective.

## **ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

The City has developed a robust, city-wide engagement strategy to ensure that all residents can take part in the development of a sustainable Lansdowne Park. The strategy has been reviewed by the both Councillors Sponsors Groups (Planning and Economic), the Lansdowne Park Stakeholder Sounding Board and the Lansdowne Park Partnership Working Group.

To create a sustainable Lansdowne Park will be an exercise that will require the input of a broad and diverse group of voices and perspective from across the city and beyond.

The City of Ottawa Engagement guidelines have been adopted in the Engagement Strategy. The Public Engagement can be found here: [Public Engagement](#)

Once the engagement strategy is approved by Council, it will be implemented, targeting and will include specific objectives for target audiences and identified stakeholders, success measures, tools, tactics and a comprehensive workplan. As preferred options for Lansdowne Park are developed, City staff will provide regular progress updates to the public and stakeholders via the City's various communications channels

The engagement strategy objectives are as follows:

1. Ensure the outreach is far reaching and includes all of the City of Ottawa and the National Capital Region
2. Inform, educate and consult the public in the development of Council's approved option to bring more people to Lansdowne Park as a 365-days-a-year destination.

3. Reach as many residents, businesses stakeholders and potential visitors in the engagement process as possible.
4. Apply equity, inclusion, accessibility and diversity lenses throughout the engagement process.
5. Provide regular and frequent updates on project milestones and include a loop-back mechanism on all engagement activities.
6. Seek a diversity of input from different demographics and communities as they experience the site in different ways.

The Engagement Strategy establishes a framework, methodology and way forward to develop a comprehensive implementation plan once Council has provided clear direction to City staff on next steps. The implementation plan will guide the City and OSEG in seeking robust and meaningful input from audiences and stakeholders, using targeted objectives and engagement tactics, to inform the future reimagining of Lansdowne Park for residents and visitors alike.

Based on direction from the Lansdowne Park Working Group, the two Councillor Sponsors Groups and the Stakeholder Sounding Board, the following themes will be explored during the public engagement process:

- *Broaden arts and culture on the site*
- *Increase variety of events and sports*
- *Broaden the spectrum of events*
- *Enhanced green space beautification*
- *Improvements to Aberdeen Pavilion and Horticulture Building*
- *Modernize amenities and focus on diverse and accessible programming*
- *Increase the uptake and the diversity of retail, including small format and local retailers*
- *Return on investment*
- *Rideau Canal access and general connectivity*
- *Improvements to pedestrian and cycling safety and transportation infrastructure*
- *Inclusion of affordable housing*
- *Other applicable topics that may arise*

## **TARGET AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS**

A broad and inclusive approach will maximize public involvement on this project with the goal of receiving a variety of ideas, inputs and perspectives. This approach will also benefit this project by aiming to inform as many members of the public as possible, which will also serve as a communications and awareness exercise.

Target Audiences:

- Members of the public – both residents in Ottawa and in the National Capital Region:
  - Event and sports fans
  - Current visitors to the site
  - Residents who have not visited/infrequently visited the site
- Neighbouring communities and residents, those living adjacent to Lansdowne Park, i.e., the Glebe, Old Ottawa South, and Old Ottawa East
- Tourists and the Tourism Industry
- The Music and Culture sector, including the Arts, Culture and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Indigenous communities
- Members of the Equity Deserving Lens Group, Diversity Groups, French Services Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (see list in Document #4)
- Businesses and Retails Sector
- Identified Stakeholders (see list in Document #4)
- Any additional as required

### *Level of Engagement*

The Lansdowne project will seek broad and diverse input from target audiences and stakeholders throughout the process. Once Council provides direction to staff on the way-forward, a Lansdowne Public Engagement Plan will be developed. This plan will include the specific opportunities for the public input to create meaningful engagement.

As Lansdowne Park is a city-wide destination there will likely be several competing interests. There could also be differing and competing priorities and viewpoints on the overall success and sustainability of Lansdowne Park due to the number and types of stakeholders. This strategy aims to encourage all voices, opinions and perspectives to be heard. The feedback will make best efforts to balance competing interests in an equitable way. All feedback will be considered, and it will be communicated back what feedback was implemented and what was not.

The City of Ottawa applies a Public Engagement Spectrum to all City engagement initiatives. For the purposes of this project, engagement levels will focus on awareness, consulting and collaborating with target audiences, and identified stakeholders. Ensuring that all interested parties have an opportunity to participate in an engagement inclusive of their voice. The following table outlines the approach to public engagement that will be considered and applied when developing the Lansdowne Engagement Plan, following the principles of the City’s Public Engagement Strategy.

	<b>Inform or Educate</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Collaborate/Partner</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>Communicate</p> <p>Engage with the community, stakeholders, targeted audiences, Working Groups, and general public</p> <p>Share information to build awareness</p>	<p>Listen – Learn – Dialogue</p> <p>Include the public, stakeholders, targeted audiences, Working Groups, in the process</p> <p>Gather input, and ideas for action and implementation</p>	<p>Actively participate</p> <p>Partner with OSEG to define challenges and develop recommendations for action</p>
<b>City’s Commitment to the Public</b>	<p>The City will keep stakeholders and the general public informed and advised of the final outcomes</p> <p>The City has a duty to include the local community, business, Indigenous communities, Equity Deserving Lens Groups</p> <p>The City wants to improve Lansdowne Park for Ottawa residents, visitors, and tourists alike</p>	<p>The City has publicly outlined challenges with infrastructure and amenities at Lansdowne Park</p> <p>The City will include all stakeholders in the process and consider their feedback in our decision making or next steps.</p> <p>The City will publicly engage to receive input on how to improve Lansdowne Park</p> <p>The City will let stakeholders and the general public know how their input influenced the decision</p>	<p>The City will seek stakeholder’s advice and input on defining the problem and solutions</p> <p>The City will seek stakeholder’s advice and input and develop alternatives, solutions, and recommendations</p> <p>The City will work to implement the solutions and recommendations that are acceptable to staff, stakeholders, and residents</p> <p>The City will let stakeholders and residents know how their input influenced the decision</p>

	Inform or Educate	Consult	Collaborate/Partner
<b>Potential tools and tactics</b>	Social Media Webpage Newsletters Surveys – Online and Onsite Panel Discussions Comment Period Councillor Updates Events and information sessions (Online) or in person should pandemic restrictions be removed. As We Heard It Reports	Refer to Target Audiences and Stakeholders	Working core group meetings One on one meetings Information Sessions Committee and Council Reports Publicly available documents Survey results

*Lansdowne Park Stakeholder Sounding Board*

On May 5, 2021, as part of its commitment to initiating a public engagement strategy, the City of Ottawa received input from a Council appointed Stakeholder Sounding Board Group, made up of organizations within the City of Ottawa. The meeting allowed each organization the opportunity to express their own views on ways to improve and assure the future success of the site.

Following the Lansdowne Park Stakeholder Sounding Board meeting, an As We Heard It report was shared with the members of the Sounding Board and an additional meeting was held on June 16, 2021. At this meeting, an overview of the Public Engagement Strategy was presented and feedback was received and the comments received from the Sounding Board are incorporated into this Public Engagement Strategy.

*Stakeholders and Equity Deserving Lens Groups*

A complete list of Stakeholders and members from the Equity Deserving Lens Groups is attached as Document 4.

**METHODOLOGY AND ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Engagement activities will be a mix of in-person/virtual sessions and online activities to ensure that audiences have a variety of options to provide input on the project that are convenient and customized.

### *Engage Ottawa*

The Engage Ottawa digital platform is an online tool that provides the opportunity provide access to information and provides feedback in a convenient, accessible manner. Engage Ottawa's suite of engagement tools connects, educates, and involves the community in providing good input. Techniques to provide and track feedback on Engage Ottawa include:

- Surveys: quantitative and qualitative questions
- Questions: participants can ask questions and that can be answered both privately and publicly.
- Stories: the purpose here is to understand a resident's lived experience with the site. It is a tool that allows everyone to hear others' experiences and share their own.
- Q&A: Questions from participants are answered by a panel of experts.
- Frequently Asked Questions Section
- Videos as required (example: virtual tours of the site)

### *Consultation sessions and Open Houses*

Consultation sessions and open houses will be held, featuring Lansdowne Park tours, updates on progress and decision making, presentations from city staff and other partners involved, engagement activities that are inclusive, and offer opportunities for participants to be directly involved, and Question and Answer opportunities. The consultation sessions and open houses will be targeted, structured, and positioned to maximize their engagement potential. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, sessions will be virtual, but will adjust based on provincial orders. Subject matter experts will be identified to lead the sessions.

### *Targeted Workshops and Meetings*

Target audiences and stakeholders will be invited to take part in workshops and meetings to discuss their ideas on how to improve Lansdowne Park. Workshops will be customized to suit the needs and interests of the participants. They will include deliberative engagement activities to encourage dialogue and the sharing of ideas.

### *Community Outreach*

Special efforts will be made to reach and seek input from members of the Equity Deserving Lens Group.

Imperative to the success of engagement is to ensure all sectors of our city is represented to reflect our diverse population. The City will ask the members how best to reach and engage their community.



### *Web and social media*

Information about the public engagement opportunities and general information about the project will be posted on City's website. Residents will be able to review the current updated information and provide their feedback. The website will also feature how one can participate, detailing the various tools at their disposal including social media channels, the Engage Ottawa platform, and public sessions. A dedicated email address will be created to encourage dialogue between the public and staff. An e-newsletter will also be created to share updates and summaries.

Engagement opportunities will be shared and amplified via the City's social media channels, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Public engagement sessions will be live-streamed and available on the City's YouTube channel.

### *Paid and earned media*

The City will leverage the relationship with local media to promote and inform the public on the Lansdowne engagement opportunities. To reach target audiences, the City will publish advertisements and provide regular updates to the media on the project.

The City will also explore effective channels to reach residents, with a focus on reaching members of the Equity Deserving Lens Group. The City will work with local cultural media outlets and community bloggers to reach a broad audience. The City will explore advertising in community hubs, with community associations and cultural groups.

### *Community Champions*

A call out to Ottawa residents to recruit Community Champions from various demographics, interest groups, and subject matter experts to act as champions to assist in awareness and engagement of the public.

### *As We Heard It reports*

Key to maintaining the momentum during the engagement process, is to publish regular responsiveness summaries at key milestones of the consultations that provide feedback to the public with an "As We Heard It" Report.

These reports will be shared with Councillors to help promote the engagement process through their websites and their weekly newsletters reaching an already established list of residents.

These reports will also be available on the City's website, on Engage Ottawa, and customized E-Newsletters will be promoted through the City's social media channels.

## **MEASUREMENT**

Successful public engagement activities are designed to be, accessible, meaningful, and engaging. To evaluate the success of the Public Engagement activities quantitative analyses will include

collecting and analyzing data from participants, surveys, the City's Website views and participation on Engage Ottawa and attendance at virtual/public events. These analyses will assist City staff in gauging the public's interest creating a sustainable Lansdowne Park together.

In addition to the quantitative results, qualitative analyses will occur. All feedback will be tracked and themed. Success measures will be the participation of diverse communities.

## **CITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### *Public Meetings, Workshops, and Website*

All workshops, public information meetings would be conducted and facilitated in both official languages including presentations and materials distributed.

Accessible meetings and/or workshops will be held virtually under the present COVID-19 restrictions, when restrictions are lifted, meetings may be held virtually or a combination to meet the participants' preferences.

Bilingual notifications would be issued no less than two weeks prior to an event. Regular update newsletters issued following a public meeting.

In addition to Engage Ottawa, the City's Lansdowne Park website page would be updated and be another source of information with an opportunity to sign up for notifications of upcoming events and feature summaries of what transpired, along with survey results, etc.

Consultation Summary Reports would follow every milestone during the engagement process.

All presentation materials (e.g., slides, boards) will be provided in bilingual format and accessibility compliant.

## **TIMELINE**

Once approved by Council, the Public Engagement Strategy will be implemented in the fall of 2021, based on the identified framework and principles. The results of the public engagement will help inform future work related to the reimagining of Lansdowne Park and subsequent reports, recommendations and plans.