



A New Approach to Engagement:

Recognizing the long-term city-wide implications of the New Official Plan, there was a commitment to ensure a broad range of residents could engage in the development of the plan. Drawing on the City's Public Engagement Guidelines (see Appendix A for details) some key goals were identified to achieve this commitment.

1. Connect with residents early in the project
2. Meet residents in their communities
3. Reach the 11 traditionally under-represented equity and inclusion groups
4. Use innovative tools to reach more residents

As We Heard It

A New Approach to Engagement:

Over the past two and a half years of consistent engagement the New Official Plan team achieved these goals by:

1. Engaging residents at every phase of policy development, from early concepts such as the 5 Big Moves to detailed chapters with tracked changes outlining policy revisions.
2. Instead of relying on public open houses at City Hall, the team attended nearly 130 events across the city.
3. Created the Ambassadors Working Group out of the 11 traditionally under-represented equity and inclusions communities. This group was the main working group for the project and met regularly with the Planning team on key topics. Planning staff were provided Equity and Inclusion training as well as a tailored highlight sheet on equity in land use planning.
4. Drew on innovative tools such as Engage Ottawa, Poll Everywhere, and Zoom to provide opportunities to connect with diverse residents.

In working towards these goals, the New Official Plan engagement achieved unprecedented levels of feedback. Combining interactions from each different tactics the team had over 140,000 engagements with residents through the development of the New Official Plan.

As We Heard It

How we got here:

Over the past two and a half years of engagement on the New Official Plan, there have been a wide range of events with a diversity of stakeholders across the city.

In an effort to meet residents where they are, the team attended new types of community events, such as Pride Parade, Labour Day BBQ, the 55+ Lifestyle show, the Mayor's Rural Expo, etc.

Starting with students as young as Grade 5, staff made a concerted effort to connect with younger residents on the New Official Plan. Staff presented to students in classes, participated in post-secondary student workshops and connected with key advisory groups such as the Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee.

The City of Ottawa Advisory committees helped connect the New Official Plan team with diverse communities. For example, presenting to the Accessibility, French Language Services and the Children and Early years Advisory Committees helped bring these unique points of view into the policy development discussion. Staying connected with Ottawa Board of Health played a critical role in supporting the focus on building healthy and sustainable communities.

The team appreciated the community groups that made space for discussions on the New Official Plan at their own meetings. Being able to attend events hosted by Bike Ottawa, Association of Ottawa Farmers, BIA's, Community Associations, Synapcity, City for All Women Initiative, SALUS, Ottawa Community Housing Tenant Board, etc. played an important part in helping to meet residents in their communities.

As We Heard It

How we got here:

Starting with a Councillor Assistant orientation through to working together on many Ward public meetings, there has been successful collaboration with City Councillors to engage their residents throughout the New Official Plan.

Within the City of Ottawa, many different departments also helped inform the New Official Plan, such as the Defining Ottawa Together: Culture in the Official Plan project organized in 2019 by the City's Cultural Development and Initiatives Section.

Events such as an Economic Development Panel facilitated diverse perspectives in a dialogue on key topics for the New Official Plan. Other special events such as the Climate and the New Official Plan and 15-Minute Neighbourhood presentations helped provide a focussed discussion on these areas of the plan.

As the proposed policies were flushed out there were opportunities for the public to learn about core concepts through public presentations and question/answer sessions, for example a series on the new concept of Transects.

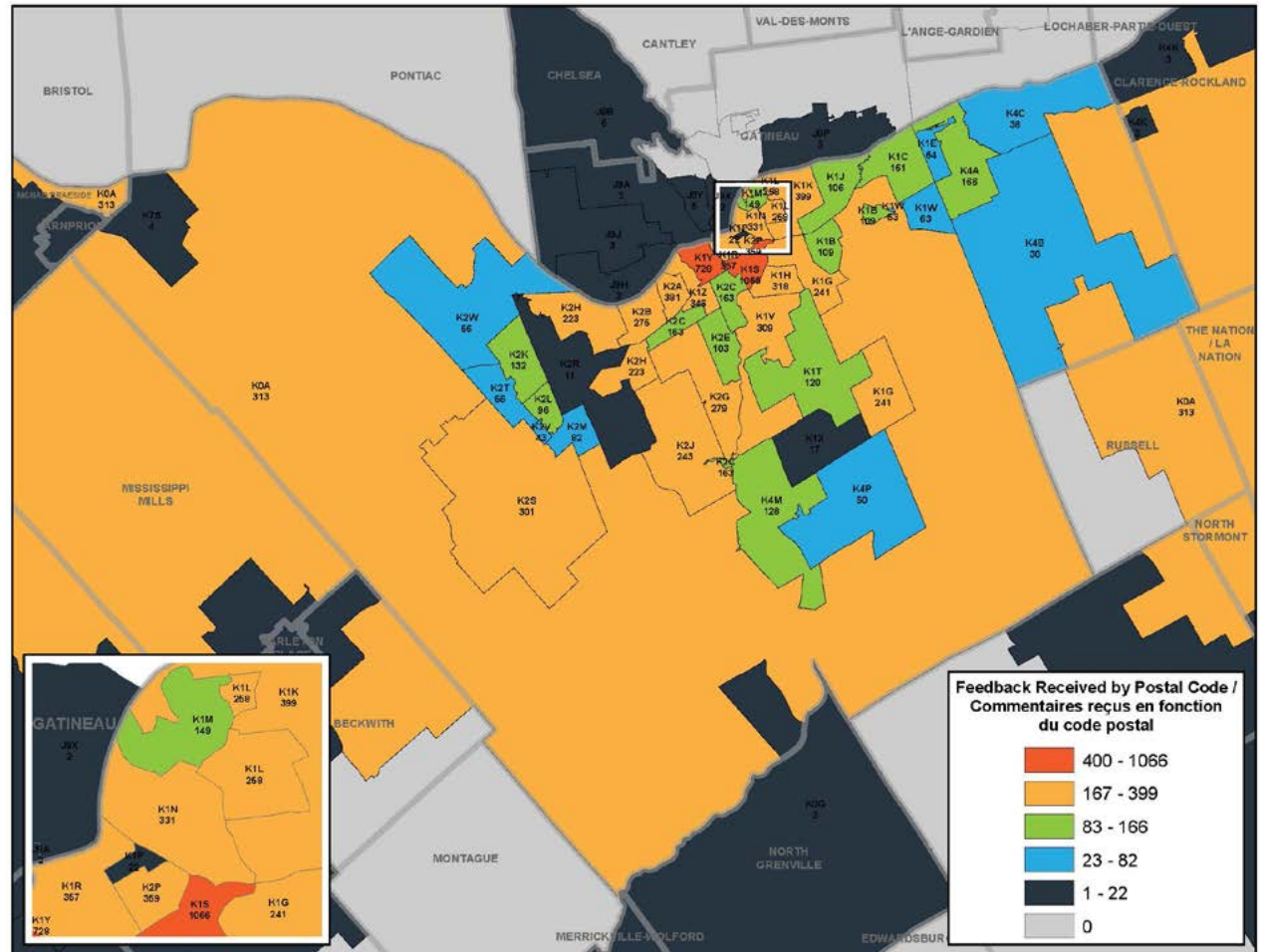
Finally, there were a series of customized engagement approaches for stakeholders with unique needs, such as rural residents, conservation authorities, school boards, and the development industry.

As We Heard It

Engagement tactics

One of the goals of engagement was to reach more residents. To achieve this the team relied on a wide range of outreach tactics to reach a diversity of residents. Tools and tactics included but were not limited to:

- Website
- Surveys
- Community meetings
- Toolkit
- Advertisements
- Newsletter articles
- Public events
- Short videos
- Social media
- OC Transpo bus ads
- Op Ads in newspapers



As We Heard It

How Engagement Informed Policies

Drawing on the full range of tactics helped us collect an unprecedented amount of feedback from a diversity of residents. Feedback helped inform each phase of policy development, from the early conceptual development to detailed policy revisions.

Certain tactics were used regularly through all phases of the project, such as monthly newsletter articles, social media posts, website updates, sending email notifications and responding to newop@ottawa.ca inquiries.



As We Heard It

How Engagement Informed Policies (continued)

The table below helps outline how additional engagement tactics helped inform each specific phase of policy development.

Date	Policy	Engagement
January 2019	Release of the discussion paper 'Ottawa Next: Beyond 2036'	Stakeholder Working Group Survey
March 2019	Launch of the New Official Plan project. Discussion papers in 9 policy areas	Public Open House held at City Hall Discussion paper survey
August 2019	The 5 Big Moves document identified areas of significant policy change for the New Official Plan	Nearly 70 engagement events across the city 5 surveys, one for each Big Move



As We Heard It

How Engagement Informed Policies (continued)

Date	Policy	Engagement
December 2019	Preliminary Policy Directions Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> report issued under Section 26 of the Planning Act officially begins the formal process for review and preparation of a new Official Plan. provides detailed policy ideas for the New Official Plan, building on the 5 Big Moves Council adopts population and employment growth projections for the city to 2046	First Interim As We Heard It report outlines how surveys on 5 Big Moves informed the development of the Preliminary Policy Directions Public delegations at Joint Committee
May 2020	Growth Management Report I Council adopts a balanced growth scenario	Public delegations at Joint Committee



As We Heard It

How Engagement Informed Policies (continued)

Date	Policy	Engagement
November 2020	Draft New Official Plan released for consultation	Technical Circulation 21 One pagers and Feedback forms Over 40 public meetings
February 2021	Growth Management Report II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1380 ha of rural lands added to the urban boundary 	Public delegations at Joint Committee
August 2021	Revised New Official Plan is released with tracked changes since November	Newspaper ads Technical Circulation Public Open House



As We Heard It

How Engagement Informed Policies (continued)

Date	Policy	Engagement
October 2021	Joint Committee meeting – Agriculture and Rural Affairs and Planning Committee	Public delegations at Joint Committee



As We Heard It

Continuing Conversations with Indigenous Communities:

The New Official Plan team has begun engagement with the First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities in and around Ottawa. Staff are committed to an ongoing dialogue. We are continuing discussions through meetings with Indigenous communities. Some highlights of our engagement so far have been presenting at the Aboriginal Working Committee, learning how best to engage with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition and Algonquin Nations and participating at the Community Conversation in March 2020.

The City of Ottawa recognizes the important nature of these relationships and the invaluable contributions that the Indigenous communities provide when discussing land use policies. These conversations must continue, and we acknowledge that an open dialogue cannot include strict deadlines.

Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development remains committed to working with Indigenous communities throughout and beyond the New OP project and amending policies when necessary.

Conclusion

The Engagement Strategy for the New Official Plan sought to engage more residents more often using innovative tools and tactics. This goal was to ensure each phase of the policy development was well informed by community feedback. Through over 140,000 engagements with residents over two and a half years the proposed New Official Plan is grounded in extensive feedback.

This level of engagement was achieved while overcoming the challenges posed by COVID-19. Not only was engagement kept up despite physical distancing requirements, new tools such as virtual meetings helped reach residents who often could not attend in-person meetings. Participation in public meetings increased with the use of virtual meetings.

The New Official Plan team is thankful to all the residents who participated in the unprecedented level of engagement in the development of the proposed policies. The Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development department looks forward to deepening the relationships built over the course of the New Official Plan through continued engagement in future projects.

Appendix A: Official Plan Engagement

How the New Official Plan Engagement Aligned with the City of Ottawa's Public Engagement Guidelines

The engagement on the New Official Plan has been informed by the City of Ottawa's Public Engagement Guidelines. The City's Engagement Guidelines were created with significant public input on how residents prefer to be engaged in City projects.

Meeting the goals set out in the Strategy has been done through the following efforts:

City of Ottawa Public Engagement Strategy	New Official Plan
Providing ample information early in the process — participants wanted a solid knowledgebase before the engagement activity, with as much detail as possible (not a 'primer'), as early as possible.	<p>December 2016</p> <p>Beyond 2036 project – a planning study to identify trends in housing, employment, and identify opportunities to create complete communities. This study was shared publicly before the start of the New Official Plan project.</p> <p>Spring 2019</p> <p>Nine Discussion Papers were published on key issues to be addressed by New Official Plan. A survey was shared to get feedback on the discussion papers.</p>

Appendix A: Official Plan Engagement

City of Ottawa Public Engagement Strategy	New Official Plan
<p>Starting engagement early in the process — participants wanted real opportunities to participate at the ‘conceptual’ phase and did not want staff to present pre-conceived decisions that are too far developed to review.</p>	<p>August 2019</p> <p>Extensive engagement on the 5 Big Moves – the core concepts for the policy proposals for the new Official Plan.</p>
<p>Allowing for a diversity of opinions and being clear on where public input can have a real impact in the process and being clear about the project timelines and how it will unfold.</p>	<p>Spring 2019 – present</p> <p>Project timelines were determined by elected officials at the launch of the project. Requests for extensions have been granted.</p> <p>Created an Ambassadors Working Group from the 11 traditionally under-represented groups.</p> <p>December 2019</p> <p>As We Heard It report outlined how 5 Big Moves engagement informed Preliminary Policy Directions.</p>

Appendix A: Official Plan Engagement

City of Ottawa Public Engagement Strategy	New Official Plan
<p>Creating the conditions for meaningful dialogue, with consultation questions that are relevant to the project and tied to a decision-point (i.e., so that responses are clearly related to the subject matter/outcome).</p>	<p>November 2020</p> <p>Technical circulation of the draft New Official Plan.</p> <p>21 one-pagers were developed to assist the access of the key policy proposals in the draft New Official Plan.</p> <p>Feedback tools were broken out by each of these topic areas to ensure responses would be clearly related to the subject matter.</p>

Appendix A: Official Plan Engagement

City of Ottawa Public Engagement Strategy	New Official Plan
<p>Planning for frequent and several phases of consultation.</p>	<p>Each phase of engagement has informed the next step of policy development. Feedback received on the draft New Official Plan is incorporated into updated policy documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion paper engagement informed 5 Big Moves concepts,• 5 Big Moves engagement informed Preliminary Policy Directives approved by Council,• Draft New Official Plan engagement informed revised draft plan going to Council. <p>Revised draft New Official Plan policies can be found on the project website: Ottawa.ca/New OP.</p>

Appendix A: Official Plan Engagement

City of Ottawa Public Engagement Strategy	New Official Plan
Ensuring equal weight is accorded to all input (community, rural, developer, businesses, etc.); and	See Appendix B for overview of stakeholders engaged in the New Official Plan.
Reporting back in a detailed fashion how public input influenced the project outcome.	There have been three As We Heard It reports throughout the project to highlight how feedback has informed policy development. A series of Ward specific As We Heard It reports also outlined neighbourhood feedback.

Appendix B: Official Plan Engagement Statistics

2014 Official Plan Review

Project Launch (2 events):	258
Comment Sheets:	14
Developer Forum:	31
Community Forum:	110
Panels (6):	N/A
Online Form:	7
Email:	19
Organization's Submissions:	14
Online Engagement Tool:	8,063
Total number of individuals providing direct feedback (online and in person):	8,516

Appendix B: Official Plan Engagement Statistics

The New OP Completed/Upcoming Stakeholder Engagement		
Stakeholder	Activity	Engagement
City Councillors	Councillor Sponsors Group Training and support for Councillors Staff	Regular Councillor Workshops Training for Councillors Staff on the Toolkit and Engagement HQ completed on June 17, 2019.
City of Ottawa	Committees and Boards Committee of Adjustment Joint Committee Meetings City Council Advisory Committees	Ottawa Board of Health: 2 Committee of Adjustment, June 26, 2019. Joint ARAC/PC Meetings with public delegations: 3 meetings with 156 delegates Council: 3 Advisory Committees: 8

Appendix B: Official Plan Engagement Statistics

The New OP Completed/Upcoming Stakeholder Engagement		
Stakeholder	Activity	Engagement
Ottawa Residents	Beyond 2036 Project	80 Stakeholders held 4 meetings 1 survey reached 302 residents
	Public Events (Community meetings, pop ups, City-wide events)	128 community activities with 6,963 residents
	Information Sharing (Engage Ottawa, Newsletters, notification list, etc.)	120,015 interactions with residents
	Surveys/Polls	29 different surveys have been conducted with a total of 12,096 responses
	newop@ottawa.ca	3066 emails

Appendix B: Official Plan Engagement Statistics

The New OP Completed/Upcoming Stakeholder Engagement		
Stakeholder	Activity	Engagement
Targeted Equity and Inclusion Outreach	Ambassadors Working Group	Working group of 29 members has met 10 times so far
	Indigenous meetings	<p>Presented to Aboriginal Working Committee</p> <p>Attended Community Conversation Event</p> <p>Met with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition</p> <p>Met with Algonquins of Ontario</p> <p>Presented Official Plan to Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation, Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation Tribal Council, Algonquin Nation Programs and Services Secretariat</p>

Appendix B: Official Plan Engagement Statistics

The New OP Completed/Upcoming Stakeholder Engagement		
Stakeholder	Activity	Engagement
Targeted Equity and Inclusion Outreach	Rural Outreach	<p>Members of Ambassadors Working Group</p> <p>Rural 15-Minute Neighbourhood survey reached 22 residents.</p> <p>Article in the Rural Connections newsletter reaching 300 residents.</p> <p>Attended Ottawa Farmers Association AGM</p>
	Youth Outreach	<p>Presented to Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee</p> <p>Grade 5 students engagement activity</p> <p>3 events with post-secondary students.</p>
Total number of engagement activities		157
Total number engagements		142,296