

Electoral Area F Official Community Plan Update Project

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Board receive the Electoral Area F Official Community Plan Update Round 2 Engagement Summary.
2. That the Board receive the Electoral Area F Official Community Plan Update Final Engagement Summary and Recommendations.

BACKGROUND

The Electoral Area F Official Community Plan (OCP) Update Project began in 2019 and is comprised of four phases, summarized in Table 1 and a summary of the engagement process in Table 2.

Figure 1 - Project Timeline

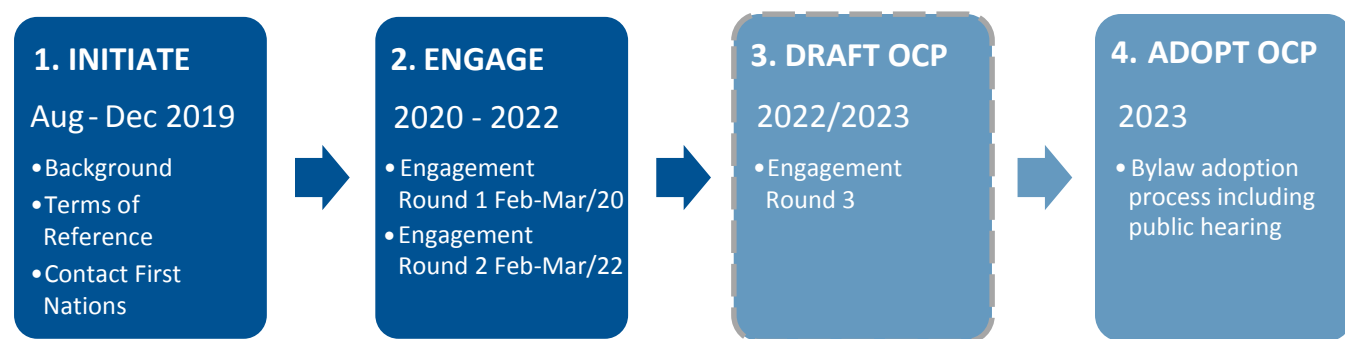


Figure 2: Community Engagement Summary

Round	Dates	Policies Reviewed	# of Participants
1	Feb-March 2020	OCP Community Values and general input on policies that worked well and those recommended for amendment through Open Houses, Town Hall meetings and OCP snapshot documents	335
2	Feb-March 2022 (following COVID delay)	Review draft OCP Community Values and proposed policy options through 8 virtual Town Hall meetings and workbooks	193

A summary of Round 1 engagement is posted on the RDN project webpage: getinvolved.rdn.ca/areaafocp/widgets/47067/documents The Round 2 engagement summary is found in Attachment 2 – Round 2 Engagement Summary.

Final Engagement Summary and Recommendations

The final engagement report provided a summary of both rounds of engagement on the comprehensive engagement approach, including a project communications and community participation overview. Some overall project engagement highlights include:

- 15 total engagement events hosted (in-person and virtual)
- 528 community members provided feedback or attended an event
- +1,800 total views of the two project videos
- +1,900 total visits to the project webpage to date

The final engagement report provides recommendations based on community feedback from both rounds of engagement. Key themes and issues identified, including input on the draft Community Values and OCP policy options, will be used to guide policy in the draft OCP. The final engagement summary with a complete list of the recommendations is contained within Attachment 3 – Final Engagement Summary and Recommendations.

Community Feedback and Key Themes

Throughout Round 1 of engagement, a number of key themes consistently emerged and were presented as policy options for the community to review during Round 2 of engagement. Some emerging policy directions for further review and consideration in the draft OCP include:

- Protecting groundwater and the natural environment through creation of Development Permit Areas;
- Preserving rural character by maintaining minimum parcel size requirements;
- Concentrating growth within the Growth Containment Boundaries;
- Encouraging alternative and diverse forms of housing to increase the availability of affordable housing and rentals;
- Supporting dark skies policies;
- Retaining, collecting and managing rainwater on properties;
- Implementing tools and policies to address demonstrated community challenges, including conflicts between incompatible uses and unhealthy or unsafe living conditions that can negatively impact resident's rural quality of life;
- Reclassifying some or all of the Rural Village Centres to Local Service Centres;
- Clarifying land uses (Industrial and Commercial/Industrial Mixed Use Designation) in the Bellevue-Church Road Rural Separation Area;
- Advancing reconciliation;
- Supporting climate change preparedness;
- Encouraging energy efficient and sustainable site development;
- Mitigating potential conflicts between land uses; and,

- Supporting agricultural practices and food systems.

The policy directions will be considered along with provincial, organizational, professional and community lens to ensure consistency with existing legislative requirements, strategic plans, planning best practices and community interests.

Proposed Changes within the Draft OCP

The updated draft OCP will include tools and policies to address community feedback and key themes identified. Some changes proposed are:

- 1) **Protecting the natural environment.** Community feedback consistently voiced throughout both engagement rounds indicated the protection of the natural environment as one of the highest community priorities. Based on this feedback, the draft OCP will contain guidelines for four new Development Permit Areas (DPAs) to protect aquifers, trees, hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas.
- 2) **Separation of uses and mitigating future land use conflicts.** Addressing existing and future land use conflicts were identified as community priorities. In response, the draft OCP will clarify the Industrial and Commercial/Industrial Mixed Use Designation in the Bellevue-Church Road Rural Separation Area and include policies within the Industrial designation to encourage buffers, and limit the expansion or intensification of uses that will negatively impact the environment and neighbouring land uses. The draft OCP will also propose a shift in policy direction, where the current OCP recognizes pre-existing activities in all land use designations, all future activities in the updated OCP will require consistency with policies and objectives in the applicable land use designation. The intensification, expansion or creation of any uses not consistent with the land use designation at the date of adoption of the updated OCP shall not be supported and directed to lands within an appropriate designation.
- 3) **Alternative and diverse forms of housing.** The lack of affordable housing and rental options emerged as a community concern that was continually voiced by residents. To address this, a housing section is proposed to provide policies and guidance to increase the availability of housing and rentals by encouraging innovative measures to facilitate the provision of affordable, attainable and accessible forms of housing suitable for a rural area. This includes alternative forms of construction techniques; support for alternative and diverse forms of housing and opportunities to reduce barriers to housing options, such as tiny houses; alternative forms of rural development (density transfer), accessible and adaptable housing policies; and continued support for the development of non-market housing.
- 4) **Supporting climate change preparedness.** The community expressed concerns about the impacts of climate change. The draft OCP will consider current and future climate change impacts as a main component of the overall land use strategy by considering all policies through a climate change preparedness and community resilience lens. The draft OCP, consistent with Provincial legislation, will contain policies and actions to achieve the values and priorities expressed by residents and help support emission targets set by the Province.
- 5) **First Nations reconciliation.** Working towards reconciliation with First Nations was identified as a priority throughout the duration of the project, and a new section will be included in the updated draft OCP to provide policies to strengthen partnerships and relationships to advance reconciliation within Area F.

The proposed changes are intended to address community feedback heard throughout engagement and will be presented to the community in the updated draft OCP for further review and comment in Phase 3.

Areas Outside of Project Scope

Throughout the duration of the project, a number of property owners within Electoral Area F expressed interest in having their current OCP land use designation changed as part of the OCP Update to allow for increased development potential. Staff have consistently advised that site specific exemptions are outside of the scope of the OCP Update and will not be entertained during the process due to the lack of time and resources to properly allow the community to evaluate proposals that, if supported, could shift organizational direction on land use management and climate change initiatives. Property owners have been advised to submit the required application and fees to commence the public process of amending applicable land use bylaws. Applications would be reviewed through the development procedures process and not part of the OCP Update.

Next Steps – Phase 3: Draft OCP

The OCP will be updated using feedback shared by community members shared through both Phase 2 engagement rounds, as well as technical studies and best practices. The updated draft OCP will be prepared this summer and will be shared with community members for review and comment in Round 3 of engagement. Round 3 of engagement is anticipated to take place in 2023 to correspond with Board resolution No. 22-315 that suspended public engagement activities led by elected officials from August 30 through November 8, 2022, due to the local government general election on October 15, 2022. Following this period, the draft OCP and Round 3 Engagement Plan will be submitted to the Electoral Area Services Committee with a recommendation to undertake community engagement in January 2023.

Phase 4 of the project will take place once Round 3 of engagement has concluded and the Draft OCP has been updated and finalized. This final phase includes the legislated bylaw adoption process, including a public hearing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time and basic expenses for Round 3 and Phase 4 are included in the Board 2022-2026 Financial Plan. If additional expenses are needed a request for funds from the Community Planning Reserve fund and amendment to the 2022-2026 Financial Plan will be brought forward for consideration or will be included in the 2023 budget request.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The RDN provides effective land use planning by updating OCPs which advances the Strategic Plan goal for Growth Management - Provide effective regional land use planning and responsible asset management for both physical infrastructure and natural assets.

REVIEWED BY

K. Fowler, Manger, Long Range Planning, Sustainability and Energy
L. Grant, General Manager, Planning and Development
D. Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Overview
2. Round 2 Engagement Summary
3. Final Engagement Summary and Recommendations