

Our Plan Toronto

Phase 2 Engagement Summary

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Executive Summary

Phase 2 engagement and communications work for Our Plan Toronto focused on **building awareness and participation in meaningful discussions about planning priorities for Toronto 2051**. To achieve this, outreach and consultation activities focused on engaging in conversations about Toronto's future with a diverse range of people living, working and caring for Toronto. This included coordinating and meeting with residents, community leaders, Indigenous rights holders, Indigenous organizations, stakeholders (including environmental groups, tenants associations/organizations, residents associations, businesses, business improvement areas, academics/research institutes, mobility related groups, development industry and community development organizations), committees, internal municipal divisions, and the general public.

Outreach and communications during Phase 2 of the project used a multifaceted approach of print, online, social media, video media, email, e-bulletin and community networking to share information about the project and invite people to participate in consultation. This included utilizing networks of stakeholders and community connections to circulate meeting invitations and share information.

Meetings with equity deserving groups and community leaders who work with

SUMMARY OF PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Meetings completed during Phase 2 engagement, from August through to December 2021, included:

- 5 meetings with Indigenous rights holders and care-takers
- 12 telephone surveys with Indigenous organizations
- 1 group meeting with Indigenous organizations
- 14 meetings with stakeholder groups, committees and community organizations
- 3 meetings with the Community Leaders Circle
- 2 general public meetings
- In total we met directly with 780 people through organized meetings and focus groups

Outreach and communications during Phase 2 engagement included:

- Website updates
- Public Meeting Notifications (e-bulletins, social media announcements, media release)
- Social media updates and meeting notifications
- Project Video distribution to contact lists, on social media, and on the website
- Public Poll on project website
- Contact List Updates/E-Bulletins
- Email distribution of meeting materials and presentations
- Phone calls/video conference calls with interested stakeholders
- Project email contact via ourplan@toronto.ca

underrepresented, marginalized and racialized populations was a key focus of outreach and consultation. This effort included outreach and meetings with people that work on community and equity issues related to:

- Accessibility for people with disabilities
- Community services
- Employment
- Housing
- Indigenous people living and working in Toronto
- Indigenous rights holders
- Newcomers and immigrants
- People experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity
- Poverty
- Racialized communities including black people and people of colour
- Seniors and older adults
- Students and young work force (18 to 30 years old)
- Women
- Youth and at-risk youth
- Many organizations that touch on the cross-section of these inter-related equity issues and equity deserving populations

A working list of stakeholders, community organizations, Indigenous rights holders and Indigenous organizations that have been contacted for involvement in this engagement process is included in the following section.

Phase 2 input will be used to guide the vision, priorities and draft policies that are the focus of this Official Plan (OP) review. Not all policies in the OP are being reviewed at this time. As such, engagement and communications were designed around the elements of the City's review, namely: overall vision, principles and policies related to equity, reconciliation, growth management, intensification, housing, environment and climate change, employment, and planning around major transit station areas. This included consultation on priorities for neighbourhoods and complete communities.

Conversations during Phase 2 were focused on three overall questions:

1. What's working in communities that people want preserved and supported?
2. What are the biggest challenges facing our city that need to be addressed and prioritized in the Official Plan?
3. Focusing on building back better: What does better look like?

Depending on the audience for consultation, these questions were refined for discussion to focus on specific topics of interest such as environment, housing or equity.

1.1 Key Themes of What We Heard During Phase 2

The key themes that were most frequently raised regarding priorities for planning to 2051 were addressing **equity, affordability and sustainability**. **There were a wide range of perspectives provided** through consultation that are conflicting in some cases and require a balanced approach for consideration. The City has a challenge ahead: to **progress efforts that address climate change, housing affordability, reconciliation and social and economic exclusion while managing the impacts of growth on existing communities**. There is agreement on the overall directions that the City needs to focus on which include addressing inequities, advancing Indigenous reconciliation, addressing affordable housing crisis, tackling climate change, building complete communities, improving access to a range of jobs and improving access to transit. How the City advances these directions through the management of growth and development are where opinions differ. The discussion points raised most frequently across different audiences were:

- Do more to address the affordable housing crisis for rental, ownership and basic housing
- Improve the quality and quantity of housing options across the city
- Allow for more housing options in neighbourhoods, including units for families and multi-generational housing
- Prioritize climate change and apply climate change lens to all aspects of planning
- Identify Indigenous rights holders as environmental stewards and leaders in decisions related to the environment and water
- Focus on achieving net zero, protecting and improving tree canopy and reducing impermeable surfaces
- Advance Indigenous reconciliation and self-determination through planning
- Embed equity in planning and decision making to address social and economic exclusion of racialized, newcomer, low-income and marginalized populations
- Achieve walkable complete communities in all areas of the city and not just downtown or around transit stations
- Require community-led solutions in planning processes and decision making
- Focus on implementation and decision making to achieve vision and priorities – educate and build awareness amongst decision makers
- Do not treat communities as one-size fits all
- Consider future of work and how to intensify employment uses to be more dense
- Improve transit connections to employment and between employment areas
- Protect employment areas from being overtaken by housing and condos
- Encourage broader range of higher paying employment options in suburbs (office space), particularly Scarborough
- Protect/provide affordable commercial and office spaces for small and medium businesses

- Improve quality and quantity of public realm, particularly in tower and condo communities
- Require accessible and universal design in communities
- Improve community safety through environmental design
- Increase development around and connections to transit stations
- Plan to grow by more than Province has forecasted
- Reduce impacts of infill in neighbourhoods, particularly issues related to privacy, trees, green space and transit capacity
- Identify how to protect/support community character as we grow
- Be clear on expectations for how communities are going to change
- Learn from previous consultations and apply recommendations – including from consultations with Indigenous communities

1.2 Summary of Recommendations

Based on the input received during Phase 2 engagement on Our Plan Toronto, the following recommendations are identified for consideration by the City as they work through the review and update of OP policies:

- Reflect and acknowledge the broad range of perspectives regarding growth: some communities are feeling threatened by growth that will change neighbourhoods while other communities are feeling like neighbourhoods need to change more in order to better support future generations and tackle the housing affordability crisis
- Provide more education and information on the relationship between growth and climate change policies – there are concerns that any amount of growth will further harm the environment and impact progress towards sustainability
- Identify equity related goals for 2051 related to addressing social and economic exclusion and achieving an inclusive city – potential goals to eliminate the need for Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs)
- Include an OP section on Indigenous past and present – traditional use of land, relationships with the area, treaties and current populations
- Include Indigenous language and world views in the OP, such as connecting people with the land and that everything is connected to everything; plan holistically rather than looking at one site, one issue or one area at a time
- Prioritize Indigenous perspectives and recommendations on the natural environment and work with Indigenous rights holders to identify a meaningful role in decision making
- City Planning should consider hiring permanent Indigenous team members who are focused on building relationships with rights holders and Indigenous people living and working in Toronto. People who can reflect Indigenous perspectives in planning, inform and guide planning policy/initiatives and support efforts toward planning that is “By Indigenous, for Indigenous”

- Learn from previous consultations and bring forward past recommendations that are relevant to the OP:
 - Spend time reviewing previous Indigenous consultation reports and documents to inform recommendations
 - Spend time reviewing previous community engagement reports from City planning projects in NIAs
- Reduce barriers to developing certain types of multi-unit housing in designated areas by streamlining the permitting and approvals process
- Promote a wider range of rental and ownership housing types across the city
- Consider developing a training and education program for Community Councils regarding city-wide priorities to be implemented at the local level (e.g. tree canopy and urban heat island effect)
- Include an equity focus on public realm policies – address gaps outside the downtown to support safe, walkable communities that will improve local business activity support community pride
- Consider having the members of the Community Leaders Circle present to the Planning and Housing Committee on choices and priorities for addressing inequities in community planning
- Identify implementation issues or gaps related to concerns that policies are not enforced

1.3 Report Organization

This report is organized into four Sections. Section 1 of this report presents the background, purpose, study process, and goals and objectives of the engagement. Section 2 presents the consultation and communication activities undertaken during Phase 2 (August – December, 2021). Section 3 summarizes the input received and identifies the key themes and community priorities that emerged during consultation. Section 4 outlines recommendations for City review, next steps of the project and outlines future consultation activities. The input gathered during Phase 2 will inform the policy directions and key growth areas for the Official Plan review.

Dillon Consulting Limited is the independent engagement and facilitation team retained by the City of Toronto (City) to support consultation and communications for the City's Official Plan Review. This summary report was prepared by the Dillon team and is intended to reflect the key engagement activities and discussion points from consultation. It is not intended to be a verbatim record of all input received.

1.4 Full Report

The full Phase 2 Summary report will be posted on the Project Webpage www.toronto.ca/ourplan