

Report to Council



Date: May 31, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: 2040 Official Community Plan Phase 4 Public and Stakeholder Engagement Results
Department: Policy and Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives the report titled "2040 Official Community Plan Phase 4 Engagement Results" dated May 31, 2021 for information.

Purpose:

To provide Council with the results of the 2040 Official Community Plan Phase 4 Public Engagement results.

Background:

Following a series of reports introducing Council to the draft 2040 Official Community Plan, staff initiated Phase 4 public and stakeholder engagement process to get feedback on the draft, as per Council resolution R0033/21/01/11 "THAT Council direct staff to initiate the Phase 4 public and stakeholder engagement process, as outlined in the report from the Policy and Planning Department dated January 11, 2021."

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of that engagement and share next steps as the 2040 OCP process approaches its final phase.

Discussion:

Public and stakeholder engagement is a critical component developing an Official Community Plan (OCP), as its long-term success requires buy-in from members of the community and stakeholders who play a role in bringing it from concept to reality. As such, the 2040 OCP journey has brought many people and perspectives to build the policy framework of the city's future and the result is a bold, forward-thinking plan that reflects the spirit and intent of Kelowna's community vision, outlined in *Imagine Kelowna*.

The 2040 OCP is intended to provide the highest-level policy direction for the city as it grows. As such, a key point of the engagement process has been to apply a city-level lens to the direction received during engagement. This means that staff have identified the overarching policy directions that address very specific comments received from participants and have applied those concerns across the city.

With the final engagement process coming to an end, this report aims to summarize the following:

- *The foundations of the plan continue to be supported.* Throughout the *Imagine Kelowna* process and the numerous engagement processes during the 2040 OCP update, staff have heard consistently that Kelowna residents would like to see the city accommodate growth by focusing more of it towards the Urban Centres and Core Area, slowing suburban growth at the edge of the city, preserving agricultural lands and natural areas and being better positioned to take action on climate change. The various engagement processes have also revealed that residents expect to see transportation investments, parks and supporting infrastructure be delivered to accommodate that growth.
- *Some topics in the draft will need further refinement.* While the Plan’s foundations, including the 10 Pillars, continue to be affirmed, there are some aspects of how future growth would be accommodated that warrant more attention as staff refine the draft Plan during the remainder of Phase 4. While all feedback is considered, clear themes have emerged which will inform noteworthy changes for content refinements. These themes are summarized later in this report. The in-depth Phase 4 Engagement Summary is provided in Attachment 1.

The topics, issues and concerns raised by participants as part of this latest and final round of engagement were numerous and varied and it is not possible to capture all of the feedback in this report or in the Phase 4 Engagement Summary (see Attachment 1).

How Did We Get Here? Previous 2040 OCP Engagement

The 2040 OCP process is rooted in a robust public and stakeholder process that aimed to establish high level directions first with broader and more general engagement in earlier phases, and to refine those directions with more targeted objectives and policies in later phases with more focused engagement.

The Phase 4 engagement process is the last of a series of engagement processes for 2040 OCP review, excluding the public hearing process included as part of Phase 5. As such, it is important for Council to consider this feedback in the context of the previous engagement processes, particularly *Imagine Kelowna*, *Pick Your Path* and the Neighbourhood Expos. To that end, a summary of all the engagement processes that informed the draft 2040 OCP processes is outlined below.

Figure 1: 2040 Official Community Plan Development Phases



Imagine Kelowna

While not formally part of the 2040 OCP process, the engagement process and resulting community vision that is *Imagine Kelowna* was an important part of laying the foundation for the 2040 OCP.

Developing *Imagine Kelowna's* vision, goals and principles, as illustrated in Figure 2, involved one of the largest public engagement exercises in the City's history, engaging over 4,000 residents.

Figure 2: Imagine Kelowna Principles and Goals



These goals form the foundation of the draft 2040 OCP, including the plan's growth strategy and the 10 OCP Pillars. Importantly, this process laid the foundation for future engagement work.

Phases 1 and 2: Pick Your Path

Public engagement in the early phases gathered feedback on one of four possible growth scenarios through the *Pick Your Path* process. *Pick Your Path* feedback aligned with what the City heard during *Imagine Kelowna*, that participants were most supportive of future growth being targeted more towards the Urban Centres, but importantly, to also signal more growth in the surrounding Core Area in the form of residential infill to accommodate more housing variety. Growth in suburban neighbourhoods would be slowed, protecting agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas and prioritizing transportation options that would benefit the highest number of residents.

Phase 3: Neighbourhood Expos

Following Council's selection of a preferred growth scenario, a more detailed land-use plan and early iterations of the Plan's foundations (which would later become the OCP pillars) were developed, and this work was translated to the public through a series of "Neighbourhood Expos".

Feedback received as part this process suggested that participants were still supportive of focusing most growth into Urban Centres and the Core Area, limiting suburban growth to protect rural and agricultural lands. However, participants shared concerns about adequately servicing the proposed land uses with a mix of transportation options and utility infrastructure, a strong desire for more park space

in high growth areas, concern over the loss of tree canopy and urban vegetation to accommodate density, and building heights in the Urban Centres.

This engagement again reinforced continued support for the OCP’s foundations, but policy work as part of the draft Plan would need to address these topic-based issues that are important to the community.

Phase 4 Public and Stakeholder Engagement

With due consideration of the feedback received through previous engagement, Phase 4 engagement intentionally focused less on how effectively the key directions of the Plan’s objectives and policies deliver the growth strategy vision, and instead this phase of engagement set out to inform and consult with the public and stakeholders (see Figure 3) on:

- Key directions for Urban Centres;
- Promoting residential infill in the Core Area;
- Protection of agricultural lands and build-out of suburban neighbourhoods; and
- Climate action and environmental preservation

In response to limitations of COVID-19 restrictions, public and stakeholder engagement was impacted by restricting opportunities for in-person meetings and interactions. As such, most of the Phase 4 engagement was provided online with the exception of a public display at City Hall that allowed people to learn about the plan and provide feedback. As outlined in the Council report dated January 11, 2021, the engagement tactics included the following:

- Online surveys and an in-person interactive display
- Online focus groups and discussion forums
- Online stakeholder workshops
- Indigenous engagement

The level of participation from the community is outlined in Figure 4 (below) and in Attachment 1.

Online Surveys and In-Person Interactive Display

The OCP Phase 4 engagement process included a survey that was delivered both online through the *Get Involved* page and through an in-person interactive display made available at City Hall. The survey outlined key directions that the draft OCP was signaling to support the plan’s growth strategy and OCP Pillars, and participants were asked to what extent they supported these directions. Participants also had an open-ended opportunity to provide additional thoughts on the draft Plan.

Figure 3: Citizen and Stakeholder Groups



Figure 4: Phase 4 Participation at a Glance.



Support for the key directions was high, with 87% of respondents indicating they mostly supported directions the draft Plan. Where respondents indicated that they mostly, somewhat, or did not support the key directions, they were asked to elaborate on what they felt was missing. A summary of the themes from this process is outlined in the Attachment 1: Phase 4 Engagement Summary.

Online Focus Groups and Discussion Forums

Staff hosted three 90-minute online focus groups to engage with Kelowna citizens on key directions for 3 theme areas: 1) climate action and environment, 2) Urban Centres and residential infill, and 3) suburban neighbourhoods and agricultural lands. During each session, participants were presented with an overview of the Plan's key policy directions and approach. Participants were then asked what they liked about the key directions, what needed improvement and what was missing. The results of these focus groups are summarized in Attachment 1: Phase 4 Engagement Summary.

Participants also had the opportunity to ask questions and subject matter experts answered during the live session. Any questions that went unanswered were posted and responded to on the *Get Involved* site.

Stakeholder Workshops

Staff hosted a series of over 30 workshop sessions with key community stakeholders between December 2020 and May 2021. The purpose of these sessions was to review the draft plan with local businesses, education, community health and wellness interests, as well as other levels of government to get detailed feedback on its content. The sessions held and the resulting themes are outlined in detail in Attachment 1: Phase 4 Engagement Summary.

Attachments 2 – 11 include the written feedback from stakeholders as well as individuals and organizations that were not part of the stakeholder engagement process. This feedback will be included as part of refinement of the draft OCP.

Indigenous Engagement

In keeping with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the City has worked to ensure that the development of the 2040 OCP is representative of the diverse voices of Indigenous communities in the area. In September 2019, the City engaged the services of a local Indigenous consultant to assist in the development and delivery of a process to engage with Indigenous communities and to ensure policies are crafted with an Indigenous lens. Engagement sessions followed shortly after and concluded in early 2020 with the following organizations:

- Westbank First Nation (including Chief and Council, the Elder's Council, the Youth Council, the Family Programming Group and staff)
- Okanagan Indian Band (including Chief and Council and staff)
- Okanagan Nation Alliance
- Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
- Kelowna Metis Association

At their request, OKIB staff have informed OKIB Chief and Council about the directions of the draft OCP with materials provided by the City. Staff have confirmed that no additional comments or concerns were raised during these discussions. Westbank First Nation and the Okanagan Nation Alliance will be available to provide feedback in June 2021, and staff will strive to incorporate any such feedback as part of the OCP refinement process during Phase 4.

Major Themes Identified

Major themes that were identified throughout Phase 4 engagement process are outlined below in Figure 5. While all feedback is being considered during the plan refinement process, these themes will likely require greater consideration through the plan refinement process. It is worth re-iterating that the majority of engagement participants are fully or mostly supportive of the directions in the plan, so the concerns and considerations constitute a much smaller sampling of engagement participants.

Figure 5: Phase 4 Engagement Major Themes

Excitement about draft OCP	Concerns about draft OCP	Considerations for OCP Refinement
Overall Document Structure & Implementation		
The OCP Pillars have a high level of support.	The OCP Pillars rely too much on technical language, and at times their intent is unclear.	Develop refined wording to better articulate the intent of each pillar.
Support for the draft Plan's foundations (Pillars, key directions) remains strong.	There needs to be a stronger commitment by the City to follow the Plan. Currently, there are too many OCP amendments.	Provide more clarity on the role of the OCP as a guiding document as well as the role of implementation actions to follow its adoption.
Positive comments/sentiment on the scope and comprehensive nature of the draft Plan.	The document is very long and at times it can be difficult to find and understand relevant policies.	Seek opportunities to reduce and consolidate policies where possible. Continue to develop online version of the document in keeping with "Online First" approach that will improve searchability to find relevant policies.
Urban Centre Development		
There is high level of support for key directions to focus employment and higher density housing forms in Urban Centres.	There are concerns about the proposed height policies, particularly in Pandosy and Downtown.	Re-examine height policies and maps for Urban Centres.
There is high level of support for key directions to reinforce Urban Centres as the city's largest activity hubs.	Public safety remains a concern, particularly Downtown and in parks.	Explore opportunities for broad policy direction regarding public safety. Feedback to be provided to other city departments for consideration in future planning work as part of OCP implementation
There is support for aligning density along key transit corridors, with Urban and Village Centres as hubs.	Consider allowing for more commercial uses along Transit Supportive Corridors.	Review Future Land Use and Core Area policies related to Transit Supportive Corridors.
Housing and Residential Infill		
There is a high level of support for approach to providing greater housing variety in Core Area and Urban Centres.	More emphasis is needed on housing affordability, particularly housing that meets the needs of existing residents and families.	Seek opportunities for greater emphasis on affordability in OCP and future implementation actions. Prioritize residential infill strategy as an implementation action.

The provision of more context sensitive infill is supported.	There needs to more attention paid to the design of infill (form and character), the retention of trees and greenery, and parking.	Review the Form and Character Design Guidelines in the draft plan. Use feedback to guide more detailed implementation actions.
Support for residential infill that is sensitive to heritage contexts.	Future land use and policies needed to be stronger to adequately protect Heritage Conservation Areas.	Review Core Area and Heritage policies and land use in the draft plan. Use feedback to guide future heritage planning.
Suburban Neighbourhoods and Rural Lands		
There is a high level of support for the approach to slowing growth in the suburban neighbourhoods and protecting agricultural lands.	Some residents were concerned that this approach would create more housing affordability challenges, while others wanted to the City to take a harder stance on slowing suburban growth.	Clarify the intent of the "Stop Planning New Suburban Neighbourhoods" Pillar (including associated policy language and implementation actions). Do not modify the Growth Strategy.
There is support for completing the remaining suburban neighbourhoods and improving livability.	There is a desire for more clarity on the role of suburban Village Centres and flexibility for housing types in those neighbourhoods.	Review the Suburban Neighbourhoods chapter to provide greater clarity for the plan's vision for that district.
Equity and Inclusion		
There is a high level of support for key directions that address equity and inclusion.	The draft Plan's policies seem vague and are lacking in specifics.	Explore opportunities for additional policy and greater emphasis for the role of implementation actions.
Transportation, Parks and Infrastructure		
Residents are eager for greater emphasis on active transportation and transit options.	Investments in corresponding infrastructure needs to keep pace with growth.	Provide feedback to inform finalization of the Transportation Master Plan.
The emphasis on providing more parks and public spaces in high growth areas/urban locations was widely supported.	Greenspace in general needs to be better protected, especially in the Urban Centres, the Core Area and along the lake. Tree canopy retention is vital.	Continue to emphasize new parks in high growth areas. Clarify how other issues like tree protection will be addressed as part of the implementation plan.
Climate Change and Natural Environment		
General sentiment of climate action and community responsibility is valued in the draft Plan's approach.	Targets need to be more aggressive, and the City needs to start taking more decisive action.	Explore refinements to climate related policies. Examine the climate action implementation activities to ensure high impact.
Environmental protection is a strong focus area of the community, and strong agreement to protect and maintain environmental systems integrity.	Concern about the City's commitment to take the necessary steps to have meaningful impact on environmental protection and climate resiliency.	Clarify the role of implementation actions related to environmental protection. Ensure OCP environmental indicators are selected to carefully monitor progress.

Next Steps

As outlined above, the next steps in the OCP planning process will focus on refinements to the draft Plan. As these refinements take place, staff will continue to collaborate with stakeholders to ensure that the refined OCP content balances as many of the community sentiments while achieving the Plan's growth strategy objectives.

Of note, the Parks Planning team will be coming forward with a parks report to update Council on the corresponding parks approach to support the 2040 growth strategy in the coming weeks. As noted in the public engagement summary report, the inclusion of green space, parks and tree canopy coverage is a key ingredient to support urban livability as the city grows and densifies.

As outlined in Figure 6, refinements will take place throughout Summer 2021, with a revised draft OCP presented to Council for their consideration later this year. At that time, Council will decide to initiate the bylaw reading process, public hearing and final approval.

Figure 6: Remaining Phases in 2040 OCP Process



Conclusion:

The purpose of Phase 4 engagement was to hear from city-wide voices and to use their knowledge to inform and refine the draft policy intentions during the final phase of drafting the Plan. The objectives and policies reflect what Kelowna needs to accomplish city-building that is transformational and affirming of our citizens vision. Engagement has been comprehensive and extensive, and this final phase of outreach has captured a general sentiment that our residents are passionate about the path forward for a livable, sustainable, and resilient future city.

With the completion of the Phase 4 engagement, the 2040 OCP process is moving towards its final stages. The engagement volume and significant feedback from citizens and community stakeholders has underscored that the community is excited for a 2040 OCP that gives our community a renewed growth strategy direction to guide current and future city-wide growth decisions. This rich, valuable content equips staff to make adjustments to the draft Plan and continue forward for Council's consideration with the OCP adoption before year end.

Internal Circulation:

Planning & Development Services
Partnerships & Investment
Development Planning
Infrastructure

Corporate Strategic Services
Active Living and Culture
Integrated Transportation
Infrastructure Engineering
Parks and Buildings
Communications

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Local Government Act, Section 471-478

Existing Policy:

Imagine Kelowna
2030 Official Community Plan
Council Policy No. 372: Engage Policy

Submitted by: R. Miles, OCP Project Planner

Approved for inclusion:



D. Noble-Brandt, Dept. Manager of Policy & Planning

Attachments:

1. 2040 Official Community Plan Phase 4 Engagement Summary Report
2. Submission from Kelowna South Central Association of Neighbourhoods, dated March 17, 2021
3. Letter from Argus Properties Ltd., dated March 25, 2021
4. Letter from Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, dated March 26, 2021
5. Email from Okanagan Mission Residents Association / Kettle Valley Neighbourhood Association dated March 30, 2021
6. Report from Agricultural Land Commission, dated March 31, 2021
7. Submission from Watt Road property owners dated March 31, 2021
8. Letter from Uptown Rutland Business Association dated April 7, 2021
9. Resolution from Agricultural Advisory Committee dated April 8, 2021
10. Letter from Urban Development Institute – Okanagan Chapter dated May 4, 2021
11. Letter from Kelowna Chamber of Commerce dated May 14, 2021