



# **Municipality of North Grenville Pre-Official Plan Update Consultation**

**“What We Heard” Summary Report**

November 2024



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## 1.0 Introduction

North Grenville has much to offer and its growth, land use dynamics, and natural environment are essential elements of what makes this community unique in eastern Ontario. The change that community growth brings can be quite complex to manage, and success often stems from creating spaces for community members to come together to understand what the change could look like, the benefits and challenges, and how their input could help create a better future for generations to come.

With an Official Plan outlook to 2051, it is key to emphasize the importance of proactive long-term planning, the need to plan for growth before it arrives, and to do in ways that best support the Municipality's other objectives around sustainability, quality of life, employment, business growth, and connectedness. An accessible, plain-language approach to engagement and communications was crucial to translating the complexity of technical decisions and interplay between urban design, housing, community services, and infrastructure informing the Official Plan Review, to support dialogue and discussion.

The Municipality is at a critical point in its growth future. The interface between urban and rural community areas and the potential to significantly accommodate growth through infill and intensification create opportunities to consider the shape and form of future development, plan for affordability and sustainability, and invite community members to meaningfully contribute to the decisions being made.

### 1.1 Scope of Work

At the outset of the project, a Consultation and Engagement Plan was developed collaboratively to provide clear delineation on the roles and responsibilities of the Municipality and the Consultant across the various project tasks. Key messages, risks, and mitigation strategies were identified to ensure a cohesive project identity was communicated to engaged parties.

The following events were identified in the proposal and scheduled through the Consultation and Engagement Plan:

- Project Website (virtual)
- Online Survey Questionnaire (virtual)
- Online Map (virtual)
- Community Pop-Ups (in-person)
- Advisory Committee Roundtables (virtual)
- Staff Workshop (virtual)
- Council Interviews (virtual)
- Community Open Houses (in-person)
- Community Roundtables (virtual)

## 1.2 Consultation Process

A series of activities to support community and stakeholder engagement were held throughout the project process. The activities were designed to provide multiple opportunities to gather feedback, including both in-person and online methods. The following section provides a synopsis of the approaches used to gather input.

The Consultation was guided by overarching engagement goals and objectives:

- **Increase awareness** of the consultation activities and get the public interested in the project;
- Ensure engagement is **inclusive of stakeholder groups**, and representative across the municipality;
- Provide **multiple ways for the community to engage and participate** throughout the projects; and
- Provide communication that is **clear and accessible**.

## 2.0 “What We Heard” Summary

Across engagement events and consultation styles, common themes emerged - a vast majority of feedback centered the following items in each of the three key themes.

### Living in North Grenville

1. The New Official Plan should prioritize housing affordability and diversity.
2. Quality of life and community cohesion must be centred in future housing and development plans.
3. Infrastructure and connectivity should be requirements for consideration in future planning applications.

### Working in North Grenville

1. New Official Plan policies should support local and small businesses.
2. Economic development priorities must be identified.
3. Barriers to agricultural economy should be considered when drafting New Official Plan policy and limitations removed, where possible.

### Playing in North Grenville

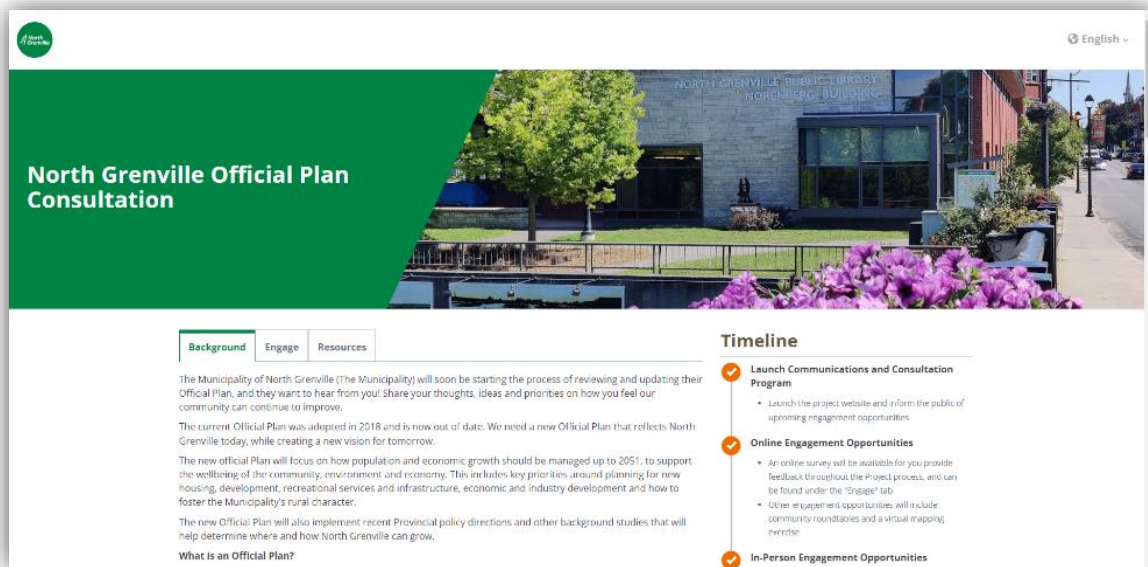
1. Limited indoor and winter recreation options must be considered when developing New Official Plan policies.
2. The existing need for updated recreation spaces and infrastructure will be exacerbated by continuing growth.
3. Recreation affordability is a major barrier to residents.

## 3.0 Consultation Activities

A series of activities to support community and stakeholder engagement were held throughout the project process. The activities were designed to provide multiple opportunities to gather feedback, including both in-person and online methods. The following section provides a synopsis of the approaches used to gather input.

### 3.1 Project Website

A dedicated webpage for the North Grenville Official Plan Consultation project was hosted on the Social Pinpoint platform and directed traffic via the Municipal website (<https://dillonconsulting.mysocialpinpoint.com/municipality-north-grenville>). This project page served as the main hub and one-stop location for project information and communications, including details on upcoming consultation events, project updates, and it is where the public could access the online survey and map. The page was updated following each stage of the process.



## 3.2 Online Survey Questionnaire

The online survey was hosted on the Project’s Social Pinpoint website and was available for participation from July 19 – October 12, 2024. The survey focused on the three key themes – live, work and play – and solicited feedback from the public and stakeholders on what their vision for the future of North Grenville looks like, satisfaction with current land use designations and infrastructure, what they would like to see more of, and where development should be focused in the future.

### 3.2.1 General Questions

Of the total 372 responses, the majority of respondents (65.8%) resided in Kemptville. The second most common place of residence for participants was Oxford Mills (12.3%). 8.8% of participants resided within the Municipality, but not within any of the major clusters of residence, and 2.42% of participants noted they resided outside the Municipal boundaries of North Grenville. The age of respondents was closely split between 25 – 44 (37.1%) and 45 – 64 (40.2%).

When asked to describe their ideal vision for North Grenville in the year 2051, a majority of respondents answered along these four themes:

- More recreation opportunities, especially for all ages and abilities and that can be used year-round.
- Retain the small-town charm by focusing on small-businesses and unique character defining elements.
- Green space is preserved.
- Ensure new growth can be supported by necessary services and infrastructure.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction, from very poor to excellent, regarding the following land use and / or development patterns in North Grenville:

- Access to housing that meets both your current and future needs
- Affordability of housing

- Quality of municipal infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, sewer, childcare, greenspace, library services, emergency services, snow removal, etc.)
- Commercial Services
- Recreational services
- Access to public transportation
- Access to a range of employment opportunities
- Access to childcare
- Access to grocery stores and other essential goods
- Access to primary health care including a family doctor

Access to grocery stores and other essential goods was the land use matter that received the highest percentage (26.3%) of answers with the ranking as “excellent.” This was followed by access to housing that meets both your current and future needs (8.9%) and recreational services (7.8%). The land use matter that received the highest percentage of answers with the ranking as “very poor” was access to public transportation (24.2%), followed by access to primary health care including a family doctor (21.9%) and affordability of housing (12.2%).

When asked for comment on their reasoning for why respondents answered poor or very poor to these land use matters, common rationale included the following: transportation in all aspects (ride sharing, active transportation and public transit) is limited and there is a need for better commuter transportation for those who do not work within direct proximity of their residence, while it was noted that the addition of healthcare facilities is not a municipal issue, there needs to be incentives for healthcare professionals to make North Grenville their home. It was also recognized that there is the need for more variety in new housing units with less single-family homes and more rentals and non-market housing. Access to childcare was another service that was very frequently commented on as needing improvement.

When asked what the planning team’s top priorities should be when creating the new Official Plan, the top three priorities were growth management (66%), preserving



agricultural lands (54.9%) and promoting and supporting a broader range of housing types / options including affordable housing (39.1%).

When asked if there were any priority areas that should be explored, but were not listed in the previous question, the most common response was “unsure” (46.9%). For those that stated yes, public transportation, framing the new Official Plan through an equity and inclusion lens and ensuring there are welcoming spaces for all, ensuring there are adequate lands zoned for institutional uses - especially healthcare facilities, and making sure growth management included technological advancements were all commonly noted answers.

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### **3.2.2 Living in North Grenville**

A total of 29.8% of respondents answered that no areas within North Grenville should be dedicated to new housing developments as there is already sufficient housing underway. Respondents who provided “no” as their response noted it was conditional if additional services and improvements to infrastructure were made to ensure this addition of housing could be supported. 16% of respondents noted housing should be developed within Kemptville to take advantage of already serviced areas. 14.7% noted that development should be focused outside of downtown Kemptville, however there was agreement that wetlands, rural areas, and agricultural lands should be preserved.

The three most commonly noted types of housing that should be a focus for developers over the next 10 years were seniors housing (51.8%), single detached homes (44%) and low-rise apartment buildings (41.2%).

When asked about where there were areas of North Grenville that required more variety of housing typologies, the majority of respondents – 55.2% -- answered as “unsure.” “Everywhere” was stated as a common response to where a broader variety of housing is needed. Respondents expanded on this and noted it is a crucial aspect in helping to ensure affordability – an issue that is not limited to one location in North Grenville.

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### **3.2.3 Working in North Grenville**

A total of 27.8% of respondents work outside of North Grenville and need to commute into work, but do not own their own business. 18.5% of respondents work outside of North Grenville, but can work from home, and 13.6% of respondents work in North Grenville but do not own their own business.

A total of 97.5% of respondents had never applied for community improvement funding.

When asked about the areas of economic development that should be prioritized within North Grenville the most common answers were local businesses (49.3%), small businesses (38.2%), downtown business growth (38.2%) and the Kemptville campus. This aligns with themes that arose from other short answer questions where it was commonly noted that investment and incentives should be given to local and small businesses to retain the unique small-town character that North Grenville has.

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### **3.2.4 Playing in North Grenville**

When asked about what it is that contributes to North Grenville's unique rural character, the most common response was natural landscapes, with 80% of respondents selecting this feature. Forested areas and agricultural activity were also significant aspects that contributed to North Grenville's rural character, with 73.4% and 59.7% of respondents selecting these characteristics. When asked if there were any "Other" characteristics not included in the list of options for this question, the people and community were most frequently noted as positive contribution to North Grenville's rural character.

The majority of participants (57.7%) stated Ferguson Forest Park as their favourite park to visit. Riverside Park and Limerick Forest were also popular choices with 18.3% and 15.9% of participants listing these as their favourites. With regards to adding more green space, there was general consensus that there could never be too much, however new developments are in the most need of more parks and green space.

The most commonly noted aspect that respondents believed would improve parks and open spaces was the increase of low-impact recreation options such as playgrounds, trails, Indigenous learning areas and picnic areas (43.8%). Preservation within parks

and better maintenance were also commonly noted things that could improve North Grenville's parks (17.7% and 11.5% respectively). Other characteristics that were noted included adding more opportunities along the waterfront, implementing ways to stay cool during hot summers such as splash pads, water fountains and shaded areas, and replacing invasive species with native plantings.

In general, a common theme that was noted throughout the survey was to have more all-season recreation facilities for residents of all ages. More specifically, indoor aquatic facilities were listed as the most desired (72.3%) type of recreation facility respondents wished to have available followed by a walking track (43.5%) and indoor courts (35.2%).

### 3.3 Online Map

The interactive map was an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to provide location-specific comments they have on areas of significance. The map was open for comments from July 19, 2024, to October 29, 2024. There were four categories of pins that could be placed on the map: "something you love," "to be improved," "new idea," and "feedback."

The most common pin category utilized by the public was the "improve" category, with comments relating to putting a new park in Bishop Mills for families and paving the pump track in Kemptville. Another comment noted was to stop the destruction of forest land on the outskirts of Kemptville.

Other comments that were received through the activity included:

- Respondents loved the parks and greenery that exist within the municipality. Specific emphasis was placed on Ferguson Forest and Limerick Forest.
- The walkability of the residential development between Highway 43 and Sommerville could be improved.
- Consider zoning revisions to allow commercial uses on both sides of Elvira Street.

- Add active transportation and multi-use pathways. Specific areas commented on were DePencier Drive to Country Road 43, Pinehill Road and Van Buren Street to connect to Raina Way.
- The need to expand capacity of existing infrastructure (specifically fire) to support increased density.

### **3.4 Community Pop-Ups**

Two Community Pop-Up events were held to promote the Official Plan Consultation Project. A table was set up at the Kemptville Live! Music Festival on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and a second Pop-Up was held at the Kemptville Farmers Market on July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The purpose of the Pop-Ups was to introduce the project timeline and goals, and pamphlets and postcards with basic information and links to the project website were distributed at both events.

### **3.5 Advisory Committee Roundtables**

The Municipality of North Grenville establishes Advisory Committees to be responsible for and make recommendations to Council regarding various matters. Throughout the consultation process, the project conducted round tables for seven Advisory Committee groupings:

- Agriculture & Rural Affairs Advisory Committee
- Arts, Culture, & Heritage Advisory Committee
- Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee / Indigenous Advisory Circle
- Environmental Action Advisory Committee
- Health, Wellness, Fitness and Active Transportation Advisory Committee / Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Housing Advisory Committee

The roundtable discussions were virtually facilitated conversations that centered around three key themes:

1. Living in North Grenville
2. Working in North Grenville
3. Playing in North Grenville

The first theme, “Living in North Grenville,” provided committee members with an opportunity to express key issues and opportunities regarding housing and residential land use. This was followed by the second theme, “Working in North Grenville,” which encouraged a discussion about key issues and opportunities regarding economic development and employment opportunities. The final theme, “Playing in North Grenville,” encouraged participants to discuss key issues and opportunities regarding recreation, greenspace, and connectivity to other land uses.

Staff began the meeting with facilitator and team introductions followed by meeting participant introductions. This was then followed by a brief introduction of the project, the project process and timeline, and a review of the project deliverables and outcomes. Using the virtual engagement tool Mural, the meeting was then divided to discuss three overarching themes.

The meetings ended by thanking participants for their time and stating how their feedback will be used. Next steps of the project were also discussed.

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### **3.5.1 Summary of Discussions**

During Advisory Committee Roundtables, the following key questions were discussed, and summaries of answers provided across the committees are provided below each.

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### 3.5.1.1 Living in North Grenville

#### What are the main concerns currently with residential land use in the Municipality?

1. **Policies:** Committee members believed policies needed to be updated to better reflect current-day lot creation and severance trends in agricultural areas, supported by increased regulations for developments and the positioning of climate change as prominent aspect of the New Official Plan
2. **Community Vision and Design:** Committee members expressed a need for a stronger, unified community vision. Improved design guidelines were suggested as a tool to implement the community vision as new development does not fit North Grenville's existing character.
3. **Housing:** Affordability for families, seniors, and youth is a significant concern. Committee members identified a need for more funding and infrastructure to support affordable housing options. Additionally, a need for housing diversity was identified, particularly in rental and smaller housing typologies as well as transitional housing options between single-detached and apartments.
4. **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Concerns regarding existing infrastructure capacity's inability to keep pace with development were expressed. Committee member expressed their concerns over the perceived neglect of active transportation pathways to develop road infrastructure due to the limited capacity of existing road infrastructure.
5. **Environmental Impact:** Committee members felt strongly about sustainable building practices in residential lands and made suggestions to make new homes net zero, manage flooding risks in new development areas, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in new developments.
6. **Community Aesthetics:** Preserving neighbourhood and community character was discussed, particularly with incorporating stricter design guidelines for new developments, encouraging public art, and ensuring green spaces are planned for. This stems from concerns that the rapid

- pace of development is making it difficult to prioritize aesthetically cohesive neighborhoods and is removing North Grenville’s rural character.
7. **Long-Term Planning:** A comprehensive approach to long-term planning was recommended to ensure sustainable growth that addresses quality of life, development density, traffic congestion, and waste reduction in North Grenville.

**What are the biggest constraints to adding more diversity to North Grenville’s housing stock?**

1. **Affordability and Policy:** Members identified a lack of incentive for diverse and affordable housing and policy restrictions (specifically on multi-generational housing on rural properties) as a large constraint on the housing stock. Development of new buildings/homes has also been identified as expensive, therefore discouraging less dense development.
2. **Infrastructure Challenges:** Existing servicing infrastructure does not have the capacity for new development. This includes groundwater availability, hydro capacity, road infrastructure, and utility connection costs.
3. **Educational and Community Services:** Committee members expressed concerns with regards to capacities of schools and services in rural subdivisions, thus making them challenging development areas.
4. **Additional Dwelling Units:** Members suggested reevaluating policies to allow for secondary and additional dwelling units on property to encourage diverse housing options in North Grenville. Members also expressed a desire for developers to engage with community members and invite them into the planning and development process.

**Thinking about the geographic relationship between where housing and agricultural lands are currently located, are there any particular areas where you think housing should be a focus?**

Committee members suggested focusing housing development in the following areas:

- East of Muldoon Road and west of Boundary East Road
- Bishops Mills (north of hamlets)
- Downtown area of Kemptville and centres of hamlets
- Near the Kemptville Farmer's Market
- Around existing service buildings (hospitals, schools, etc.)
- Areas generally well connected to transit and walkable environments
- Utilizing vacant serviced lands

Members also suggested considering floodplains when considering development, especially around the rivers.

**Historically, Indigenous Community Partners and their members have faced barriers and challenges in accessing housing options, are there recommendations that you would suggest that can address some of these challenges?**

Members suggested returning lands to the Algonquin people for housing purposes as well as considering Anishinaabe values and ideas with respect to growth. The planning process was described as a colonial process. Emphasis was placed on the importance of understanding Indigenous thoughts, ideas and processes when planning for growth.

**How can land use policies around housing better serve equity and inclusion seeking communities?**

1. **Natural Spaces:** Incorporating natural and green spaces as grounding spaces for communities. Increasing minimum required green spaces in new developments was also suggested to ensure green spaces are prioritized and protected.
2. **Community-Focused Design:** Developing community hubs and economic cores to encourage a community-first design rather than a sprawl-based development pattern.



3. **Amenity Spaces:** Ensuring multi-unit residential buildings include communal amenity spaces and outdoor areas as oftentimes the units themselves are not large enough to function as a gathering space.

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### 3.5.1.2 Working in North Grenville

**What kinds of industry and associated land uses do you think should be prioritized to improve economic diversity within North Grenville?**

1. **Kemptville College Campus:** Reusing the campus as a coworking space to foster live-work spaces and coworking spaces was identified as a fantastic opportunity to improve economic diversity.
2. **Tourism Development:** Promoting tourism on the waterways and the agriculture in the area was identified as industries that need to be prioritized.
3. **Recycling and Sustainable Practices:** There was an interest in encouraging recycling businesses in North Grenville, an example including a plastics recycling business that creates products from recycled material.
4. **Environmental Innovation:** Members encouraged fostering green technology and clean technology-based businesses.
5. **Agricultural Innovations:** Promote agricultural research, diversified farm uses, and environmentally friendly farming practices.
6. **Healthcare Accessibility:** Enhance healthcare services by attracting more nurse practitioners and specialists to meet community needs.
7. **Correctional Facility:** Some committee members suggested stimulating growth in the correctional industry. This was also identified as a point of contention.

Committee members also agreed higher-wage jobs should be prioritized and lands for sale should be “shovel ready” to encourage economic growth. Implementing satellite offices and encouraging home-based work was also identified as economic drivers that would be beneficial to North Grenville.

**Do you think any of the current policies have acted as barriers towards advancing the agricultural sector's economic goals?**

The Committees identified the following barriers.

- High construction permit costs to build accessory agriculture structures
- A lack of clear policies regarding agricultural prioritization
- A lack of sufficient infrastructure maintenance
- A lack of sufficient infrastructure capacity
- Limited access to processing facilities for farm products like soybeans and canola
- A lack of market for livestock processing

**What changes would you like to see to ensure the local economy, as it relates to agriculture, grow in both a financially and environmentally sustainable manner?**

The Committees identified the following key points:

1. Allow on-site farm sales and processing through flexible zoning to permit diversified farm uses as-of-right.
2. Implement development charges that cover the true costs of growth.
3. Improve active and public transportation options within and around North Grenville.
4. Establish/clarify policies for:
  - a. stormwater management;
  - b. amount of arable land; and,
  - c. redefining agricultural land parameters.
5. Assist small farmers by improving drying and storage facilities and updating outdated infrastructure.
6. Develop technology corridors (such as fiber internet) to rural lands to aid in updating existing equipment to green technology and renewable energy options.
7. Encourage the development of self-sustaining, complete communities.

## **How do you believe the current Official Plan could be improved upon to support home-based and small businesses?**

Committee members suggested several improvements to the current Official Plan:

- Encourage working closely with economic development initiatives to foster business growth.
- Establish clear zoning regulations regarding live-work opportunities. This includes the types of live-work opportunities allowed and the number of employees allowed/needed.
- Promote shared workspaces and provide live-work studio spaces for artists.
- Encourage the use of Kemptville College Campus for businesses.
- Consider future use of the rail line for rapid transit to Ottawa to encourage external economic growth.
- Improve accessibility to small businesses through addressing limited transportation services like taxis and buses.
- Re-evaluate policies on lighting, signage, and land use designations to clarify permitted uses for businesses to efficiently move through the application process.
- Support policies that allow for work-from-home arrangements and expand business uses in rural areas.

## **North Grenville has large amounts of treasured natural space. Do you feel the current policies and tools in place are sufficient in ensuring these natural spaces are preserved as the local economy grows?**

Committee members suggested stricter policies and calls to action regarding protection of native plants and animals, such as removal of invasive species and specialized windows to prevent bird strikes. Policies to mitigate clear cutting for farmland has also been suggested, supplemented by planting trees along the waterways. A suggestion to implement a map of ecological communities was identified as a beneficial addition to the New Official Plan.

**How do you believe the current Official Plan could be improved upon to make NG workplaces more accessible?**

A suggestion was made for the municipality and the county to collaborate on road projects to increase accessibility. It was noted that speed enforcements and clear signage would encourage safer roads and road utilization by active transportation users.

**Historically, Indigenous Community Partners and their members have been engaged more outside of the local economy, are there recommendations that you recommend to be more inclusive?**

Committee members suggested that hosting markets and events at a Friendship Centre would encourage inclusivity within the North Grenville and local Indigenous communities. Providing local spaces to highlight Indigenous artists was also identified as an effective method to encourage local Indigenous engagement and cross-cultural knowledge sharing.

**How can land use policies around home-based businesses, tourism, rural economy, and small businesses better serve equity and inclusion seeking communities?**

Committee members suggested an importance of learning and understanding Indigenous values and reviewing land use policies to support traditional economies will allow for strong partnerships and educational opportunities.

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### **3.5.1.3 Playing in North Grenville**

**What do you believe the key challenges or issues related to recreational and leisure activities are for North Grenville residents?**

Key challenges related to recreational and leisure activities for North Grenville residents include:

- Limited operating hours of recreational facilities;

- Limited public and active transportation access to recreation and leisure activities;
- Limited public access to waterways for water-based recreation;
- Lack of wayfinding for rural parks;
- Lack of bookable event and gathering spaces;
- Outdated bike networks;
- Expensive park rental prices; and,
- Most recreation available is seasonal.

Additionally, it was made evident a lack of indoor recreation activities is available therefore making the period to participate in recreational activities dependent on the season and weather.

**What types of opportunities for leisure spaces would you like to prioritize as the municipality grows? As this growth does occur how can we ensure everyone has access to our leisure spaces?**

Members heavily requested the development of an indoor recreational facility with access to many popular sports they otherwise are unable to play, like pickleball and basketball. Additional popular suggestions included developing amenities like an outdoor hockey rink, indoor pool, and another splash pad.

Utilizing natural areas for recreational activities was suggested, particularly Ferguson Forest and the waterways (specifically to access Kemptville Creek and the Rideau Canal).

Cultural spaces were also encouraged to be developed, including an updated theater, live event spaces, and public art installations, including murals by local and Indigenous artists.

Committee members showed an interest in creating and maintaining multi-use trails for ATVs, bikes and horse riding with adequate signage and wayfinding, to provide a

diverse range of trail-based activities. It was noted to be key that these trails connect to other recreational areas.

**What kind of recreational spaces, natural areas and programmable spaces would you like to see more of?**

The following types of recreational spaces, natural areas, and programmable spaces were suggested by committee members for enhanced community engagement:

- Encourage partnerships between local businesses and recreational spaces to attract visitors.
- Encourage the use of patios and outdoor areas for events, such as weekly outdoor concerts at Rotary Park.
- Promote trips on the water to Ottawa and reestablish triathlons in the waterways.
- Develop an indoor multi-use sports center for youth and adults.
- Expand connectivity of active transportation trail network.
- Establish creator spaces (arts hub), an art gallery, museum, live event spaces, and an outdoor amphitheater.
- Encourage green infrastructure in new recreational spaces (net zero buildings, green event spaces, etc.).
- Build recreational spaces with an “8 to 80” lens to ensure spaces can be utilized by all age groups.
- Improve winter maintenance, such as snow removal, in parking lots of recreation spaces and on trails.
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Natural Resources, where possible, to utilize natural spaces for public enjoyment.
- Develop rentable licensed kitchens with dining areas to promote food as a cultural and social catalyst.

**Do you have suggestions for making public spaces more inclusive and/or educational?**

Committee members suggested implementing a greater variety in sports programming and ensuring new recreational facilities are adaptable to multiple sports courts and requirements. This encourages education on various sports that may not currently be popular in North Grenville and allows Indigenous sports to become more widely accessible. Ensuring pathways, tables and seatings at recreational facilities are accessible prevents exclusionary infrastructure and allows the broader public to use the infrastructure without barriers.

**How could connectivity between current recreation and leisure spaces and other land uses be improved? Are there any areas in particular that you believe would benefit from more “play” spaces?**

To improve connectivity between current recreational and leisure spaces and other land uses, committee members suggested the following:

1. Increase road shoulders on rural roads, expand and illuminate walking trails, and add more sidewalks to enhance accessibility.
2. Ensure safe active transportation options, including better bike parking and improved markers on rural roads.
3. Enhance connections from downtown to the river, emphasizing central parks and creating more experiential walks with public art.
4. Focus on beautifying recreational areas, separating commercial and recreational spaces with landscaping to promote a natural aesthetic.
5. Improve signage and wayfinding systems to help residents and visitors navigate easily between spaces.
6. Develop boardwalks and pathways that connect waterways to leisure areas, implementing the waterfront access strategy.
7. Encourage collaboration between municipalities to incentivize visits and longer stays in Kemptville.
8. Establish a strong vision for recreational areas and ensure that new developments include active and non-programmed play spaces.

9. Focus on already developed areas that are not receiving new park spaces and recognize that small backyards may limit play opportunities.
10. Promote tree planting to combat climate change and consider splash pads to provide cooling areas during hot weather.

**Are there locations in our public space that you recommend including informational art and resources that celebrate the vibrancy of Indigenous art and share Indigenous knowledge?**

Members recommended locations for incorporating informational art and resources celebrating Indigenous art and knowledge:

- **Library:** Establish the library as an Indigenous Knowledge Centre, highlighting Indigenous culture and resources.
- **Friendship Centre:** Create a Friendship Centre in Kemptville's core for cultural events and community support.
- **Cultural Community Centre:** Create a dedicated space for cultural events and programming that supports Indigenous voices.
- **Public Spaces Near Water:** Install art and informational resources in public spaces near bodies of water to honor the connection to the land.
- **Burial Sites:** Ensure acknowledgment and commemoration of significant burial sites, integrating this history into public art.
- **Multi-lingual Signage:** Implement multi-lingual signage throughout the community to reflect diverse languages and cultures.
- **Educational Programs:** Incorporate Indigenous history and knowledge into educational programs within public spaces.
- **Consideration of History and Names:** Reflect on historical significance in naming places and in the installation of artworks.



### 3.6 Staff Workshop

The Project Team hosted a virtual Staff Workshop attended by key members of North Grenville's staff. Staff were invited to discuss the Official Plan and were asked a number of questions focused on the vision they had for the Municipality and what areas of focus they viewed as priorities. Mentimeter and Mural tools were used to collect answers and present information in real time including the creation of a word map and graphs.

Staff's general view of North Grenville suggests a community that values its evolving identity. Descriptive words like "Growing", "Changing," and "Busy" highlight a sense of ongoing transformation, while terms like "Home" emphasize the area's established community feel. This balance between change and stability reflects North Grenville's current trajectory of development and adaptation.

Staff indicated excitement about initiatives that enhance infrastructure and recreational amenities. Projects such as a splash pad and parks development, especially related to Ferguson Forest were identified. Enhancements to County Road 43 and water services indicate a desire for functional growth. These initiatives are seen as key to accommodating North Grenville's changing needs while making it a more vibrant place to live.

Staff indicated that housing is a significant area of concern, with calls for more diverse and affordable options. Staff emphasized the need for affordable rentals, particularly for seniors, and greater housing variety across the municipality. Staff indicated a preference for focusing housing development as infill in urban areas while still considering rural housing options. Some staff shared views regarding the style of development preferred with regards to lot location, with discussion around strip development on roads.

Economic development discussion centered on supporting local businesses and diversifying economic opportunities. Suggestions to promote light industrial areas, leveraging the empty buildings on Kemptville Campus, and enhance agriculture underscore a commitment to maintaining a local economic base. Additionally, staff see

the natural landscape, agriculture, and heritage features as core components of North Grenville's rural identity, highlighting the importance of preserving the area's character amidst growth and development.

Through more conversational discussion incited by four prompt questions, the following additional ideas arose as ways to enhance a New Official Plan:

1. The need for a Secondary Plan for Downtown.
2. Introduction of affordable housing tools like cash-in-lieu policies or a potential housing corporation.
3. Focus on communal servicing options in non-serviced areas.
4. Specific alignment with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.
5. Need for more flexible adaptive reuse policies for residential purposes.
6. Suggestion to align with other municipal documents, like the Strategic Plan.
7. Consideration of land acquisition for future development and connectivity.
8. Desire for a focus on density allowances for low-rise multi-residential developments.
9. Improvement in pedestrian connectivity related to new developments.
10. Addressing the Euro-centric perspectives of North Grenville by including pre-contact history in future planning.



## 3.7 Council Interviews

As part of the Official Plan consultation process, councillors were invited to meet one-on-one with members of the Project Team to gather insight on each councillor's unique perspectives as it related to the future of North Grenville and more specifically the aforementioned themes of Live, Work, and Play. Team members conversed with Mayor Peckford, Deputy Mayor Barclay, Councillor O'Sullivan, Councillor Strackerjan, and Councillor Wilson. These interviews were in-depth discussions where each individual was able to share their unique insights and perspectives under the themes. This step in the consultation process emphasized the importance of inclusive, sustainable growth and the enhancement of quality of life through diverse housing options, robust infrastructure, economic opportunities, and cohesive recreational spaces. Through this process, common goals became apparent within each theme, described below.

**“GROWING COMMUNITIES CREATE NEW POSSIBILITIES.”**

**-MAYOR NANCY PECKFORD**

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### 3.7.1 Living in North Grenville

#### Housing Affordability and Diversity

An emphasis was placed on the need for a variety of affordable housing options and addressing challenges such as renovictions and community resistance to intensified development. There was a focus on inclusive communities with housing for different abilities and cultures. It was noted that residents of the community move away as young professionals and return back to the community many years later.

#### Quality of Life and Community Cohesion

Councillors highlighted the importance of enhancing recreational amenities and connectivity - especially as it relates to active transportation - in close proximity to housing. There were calls for additional and improved shared spaces in residential communities to foster community connections and for better-planned recreational areas and proactive approaches to sustainable development instead of reactive approaches upon identification of a problem.

## Smart Growth and Infrastructure

Councillors called for the sustainable management of growth while ensuring robust infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity) was available to support new developments. Interviewees emphasized the need for clear planning in the context of both urban and rural areas and an understanding that the two geographies have different expectations. Concerns related to development costs were expressed, with discussion around how to recapture development benefits for the community as growth occurs.



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### 3.7.2 Working in North Grenville Economic Development and Employment Lands

Councillors emphasized a need for a comprehensive economic development plan to diversify the local economy and secure land for future employment opportunities, including light industrial and agricultural sectors. The need for “shovel-ready” lands was identified, as there is perception that businesses are pushed away by the limited options to expand their operations locally.

#### Support for Small Business and Agriculture

Interviewees contemplated the challenges faced by small businesses and the agricultural sector and proposed the introduction of initiatives to increase local food production and market gardening while removing barriers to support rural economies.

The success of the local Farmers Market was mentioned as a note of local support for the agri-food industry and the local appetite for on-farm diversified uses.

### **Equity in Economic Opportunities**

Councillors highlighted the importance of addressing barriers faced by equity-deserving groups in accessing jobs and services and called for inclusive and accessible design in economic development. Teens and young adults were identified as demographics that face barriers in economic and employment opportunities and may seek employment and career paths outside of the local area. Interviewees also identified an abundance in fast-casual food service work that limits the variety of employment options for those entering the workforce.

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### **3.7.3 Playing in North Grenville Recreation and Amenities**

Discussions regarding recreational programming and amenities revolved around improving recreational facilities and planning cohesive opportunities for these facilities, and addressing gaps in indoor and outdoor recreational spaces, including arts and culture initiatives. Pickleball was identified as a sport with a lack of available space that has a large population of local players.

#### **Active vs. Passive Spaces**

An emphasis was placed on the need for a balanced approach to public spaces, promoting both active areas for sporting and nature enjoyment, especially trails, and passive spaces for relaxation and social connections. Additional recreational needs identified include cultural spaces and art “incubators” for emerging artists to further their craft and host viewings to the general public.

#### **Connectivity of Recreational Spaces**

Opportunities to improve connections between recreational areas were explored, with suggestions to integrate them with residential and commercial spaces to promote

accessibility and active transportation. Discussion occurred around how future developments could be guided by land use policies to enforce this greater network connectivity.

## **3.8 Community Open Houses**

Two Community Open Houses were hosted to accommodate in-person consultation needs and provide a knowledge sharing opportunity for residents to communicate their needs to the Project Team while having the opportunity to ask targeted questions. The Community Open Houses were formatted in a drop-in style, with a sign-in desk and refreshments, display boards outlining the project purpose, goals, and status, and two activities for guests to participate in.

The Information Boards activities consisted of maps of the Municipality at various scales, paired with markers and sticky notes, and encouraged guests to mark up the maps with their desired areas for development, natural heritage preservation, economic development, and active transportation.

The Visioning Activity asked guests to answer three guiding questions with their vision for North Grenville from the present day up to the projected planning horizon of the New Official Plan.

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### **3.8.1 Open House #1**

Open House #1 was hosted from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on Wednesday, September 18th at the Maplewood Community Hall. Three guests attended the session.

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#### **3.8.1.1 Information Boards**

Guests at Open House #1 flagged Kemptville as a targeted area for development and expansion, with requests for a dock along Kemptville Creek and improved connectivity to trail networks, including a trail network to Ottawa. Employment suggestions requiring additional servicing included Kemptville Campus remote workspaces, federal government remote offices, light industrial spaces, and a correctional facility. Oxford Mills, Oxford Station, and Peltons Corner were also noted as potential areas for servicing and expansion.

General suggestions highlighted the need for a hospital or school, a boating dock, and better river access for boats, along with interest in developing waterfront tourism. No specific responses were noted for Bishop’s Mills, Burritts Rapids, East Oxford, and Heckston.



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### 3.8.2 Open House #2

Open House #2 was hosted from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on Wednesday, September 18th at the North Grenville Municipal Centre. Thirty guests attended the session.

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#### 3.8.2.1 Information Boards

Kemptville received significant feedback, with a strong emphasis against expansion, alongside requests for preserving trees and forests southwest of the town core. Suggestions included adding mixed-use and densification within the town core, improved public transit to connect to the Ottawa light rail transit network, and careful planning of infrastructure—such as roads, sidewalks, parks, and recreational facilities—prior to residential development. Barnes Creek and its protected species were noted for conservation, while some future housing potential was identified in the northwest portion of the Kemptville area.

Oxford Mills feedback included opposition to new settlement developments and a suggestion for a kayak and canoe launch along the river. Oxford Station was noted for

potential expansion, while Peltons Corners was highlighted to preserve mature trees and avoid clear-cutting.

General comments called for slowing down expansion across all municipal areas. No specific responses were noted for Bishop’s Mills, Burritts Rapids, East Oxford, and Heckston.

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### **3.8.2.2 Visioning Activity**

#### **3.8.2.2.1 “MY VISION FOR NORTH GRENVILLE IN 2051 IS ...”**

Responses focused on community vision centred around climate change initiatives, affordable housing, and services for youth and seniors. Suggestions included year-round recreational facilities, such as indoor sports facilities for pickleball, volleyball, and swimming. There was dedicated support for preserving forests, grasslands, and agricultural heritage. Many emphasized limiting development to mid-rise buildings and protecting rural character. Additional suggestions included mixed-use neighborhoods, well-paying jobs for younger demographics, and stricter guidelines for developers to maintain green spaces and recreational areas.

#### **3.8.2.2.2 “WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT NORTH GRENVILLE IS ...”**

Open House #2 guests highlighted farmlands, the natural environment, and a diverse community as what they love most about North Grenville. Other valued features included low-density housing, walking trails, and small-town charm. Comments praised the local government’s thoughtful approach and the powerful sense of community, noting specific landmarks like the Ferguson Forest Centre and the variety of events and festivals. Concerns were raised about maintaining the area's character amidst growth.

#### **3.8.2.2.3 “A HEALTHY AND VIBRANT NORTH GRENVILLE HAS ...”**

Common responses included nature trails, mental health and wellness support, and accessible recreation programs. There was a focus on a healthy and vibrant North Grenville preserving green spaces and implementing tree canopy and stormwater management by-laws. Suggestions included developing multi-purpose sports facilities



and protecting rural lands from commercial rezoning. Other responses called for active transportation networks, diverse job opportunities, sufficient healthcare services, and a clear climate action plan with community involvement.

### **3.9 Community Roundtables**

Three virtual Community Roundtable meetings were held discussing the three key themes, “Living in North Grenville,” “Working in North Grenville” and “Playing in North Grenville.” The meetings, conducted on September 16th, September 25th, and September 26th, totalled in attendance of approximately 15 community members from various different industries and experiences. The Community Round Tables were conducted as a virtual opportunity to hear from the public on what they envision the future of North Grenville to look like in relation to the New Official Plan.

Meetings began with a brief introduction from Amy Martin, the Director of Planning and Development at the Municipality of North Grenville as well as an explanation as to why the Community Round Tables were being conducted. An introduction to an Official Plan was discussed followed by a description of the project. Consulting staff then introduced themselves and introduced the activity used to facilitate the discussion of the key themes.

For the structured portion of the meeting, facilitators used a digital Mural board to facilitate consultation. Questions were asked to encourage community members to comment and provide their opinion and facilitated discussion periods were open for each question. Community-led answers to the questions were summarized and recorded on the Mural board as community members spoke. Once the structured portion of the meeting was completed, facilitators provided a five-minute window for outstanding questions community members may have had. This was then followed by facilitators providing direction to, and an overview of, the North Grenville Official Plan Consultation Social Pinpoint webpage, followed by instructions on how to access the North Grenville Pre-Official Plan Survey. The North Grenville Interactive Map was then displayed, and facilitators demonstrated how to add a marker to highlight areas community members loved, areas that need improvements, any new ideas and any

feedback you may have. Facilitators concluded the meeting by providing another opportunity for any questions and comments and informing members of any upcoming Community Round Tables. Finally, Director Amy Martin thanking members for attending the meeting.

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### **3.9.1 Summary of Discussions**

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#### **3.9.1.1 Living in North Grenville**

During the “Living in North Grenville” Community Roundtable, the Project Team asked questions regarding rural and urban housing and the overall experience living in North Grenville. Attendees were asked what they would like to see in terms of future development.

While attendees noted that they feel there is a sufficient number and variety of rural homes in North Grenville, concerns were raised regarding the increasing home values / prices and the overall community affordability. When discussing new development in rural areas fitting in with existing development, attendees suggested ensuring new developments prioritizes superior quality buildings that fit in the community’s character and is built on lands with servicing. Attendees emphasized the need to slow down the speed at which new housing is built to ensure quality homes are built and the community grows at a pace that North Grenville residents are happy with and feels sustainable.

To protect the agricultural land and natural features within the rural areas, attendees suggested retaining forests to protect and allow for more trails, buffering against existing homes, and preventing clear cutting trees. Attendees also felt more inclined towards concentrating new housing rather than encroaching on rural lands.

Similar to development in rural areas, attendees felt that development in urban areas is occurring faster than the pace of infrastructure development. Services like hospitals, schools, roads, hydro lines, and emergency services are examples of services with current or projected insufficient capacity due to new development. Additionally, attendees raised concerns regarding safety on roads and insufficient parking. A desire for more active transportation infrastructure was also raised, as this allows alternative methods of transportation to relieve congestion on roadways.

When discussing North Grenville in general, attendees felt the community is very inclusive and accessible and while the growth is generally accepted, certain aspects of the community were requested to be preserved. The rural farmland and natural features are key parts of the community's identity and attendees expressed a desire that they should be preserved. This includes reviewing policies to prioritize protection of these lands rather than allowing for them to be removed for development.

Additionally, attendees expressed that a re-evaluation of the community's vision and statement towards how North Grenville should grow should be considered by staff, especially regarding the ability to keep development and infrastructure balanced. Attendees noted several community spaces should be protected and improved upon to enhance the quality of North Grenville, including but not limited to the library, Kemptville



Youth Centre, various festivals, and the curling rink. Suggestions to implement and support work-from-home, creating a new Municipal Centre and a Government of Canada workplace on Kemptville Campus were also made.

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### **3.9.1.2 Working In North Grenville**

In discussions relating to “Working in North Grenville,” attendees discussed the existing and missing industries in the community and the local agricultural economy.

Attendees noted that home-based businesses and service industries have been successful in North Grenville. Attendees suggested this may be because of the number of small and family-owned business present in North Grenville, the community being located on well-connected roads, the tenacity and passion of owners, and their desire to maintain their business instead of growing it. Unfortunately, a number of businesses do face challenges and attendees suggested it might be because of a lack of lands already serviced, availability and affordability of small rentable spaces, and a lack of connectivity across commercial lands. Suggestions to address and support these businesses include providing financial support to new businesses, fostering growth in unique businesses, encouraging the completion of local market studies, and directing businesses to programs and classes to help get them started.

With regards to missing or underutilized industries, services that hire youth and young adults was identified as a key industry as it may help incentivize the youth and young professional population to stay in North Grenville. Industries related to clean technology and green technology were also suggested, along with creative industries such as animation. Industries revolving around quality of life such as mental health services and fitness centers were noted as at capacity and in need of expansion. Attendees suggested establishing community hubs that are neighborhood focused and aid in local food production, health (physical and mental) and sustainable and renewable energy. Adding the word “resilient” to the Official Plan’s vision was suggested to represent what members envision the future of North Grenville’s economy to be.

While the agricultural economy is described as an impactful industry in North Grenville, attendees noted that it faces a number of challenges including but not limited to:

- an aging workforce;
- climate change;
- competition with grocery stores;
- startup costs (cost of land, equipment, etc.); and,
- taxes.

To aid in combating these barriers, attendees suggested clarifying and helping the community understand the agricultural start up process through methods like a mentorship program. Financial support to aid with costs were also suggested. In terms of policies for the New Official Plan, attendees suggested allowing farm severances to maintain affordability, and carefully approaching development on rural lands as well as encouraging the protection and connectivity of agricultural uses.

Overall, members felt a strong pride in the existing economy and agricultural economy of North Grenville and expressed concerned towards the number of barriers the industry experiences.

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### **3.9.1.3 Playing in North Grenville**

During the roundtable meeting regarding “Playing in North Grenville,” discussions centred around recreation spaces, programmed and organized activities and natural spaces.

While the current recreation opportunities in North Grenville are diverse, several gaps were identified by attendees. Attendees expressed that they feel much of North Grenville’s recreation is seasonal with limited indoor or winter recreation options available. Adding recreation options such as winter trails, indoor pools, designated spaces for activities such as pickleball and skating were suggestions made by attendees. A need to update existing recreation spaces and infrastructure was identified, as current spaces do not have the capacity to support the growing community and have outdated equipment. Attendees also identified a need to implement activities

and options for all age groups, as certain demographics such as seniors or teenagers do not have as many options to participate in recreation as those in organized youth sports. Community members also identified that young adults often go outside of North Grenville due to the limited number of activities present. Recreation affordability was also a challenge discussed in preventing members for engaging in recreation in North Grenville.

The current state of programmed and organized activities has been identified as an area of improvement within the community. Most programs and organized activities are run by volunteers which often means individuals must pay out of pocket to participate. The range of activities was identified as an area of improvement as well with members saying artistic programs are underdeveloped. Factors that prevent individuals from participating in these activities were identified as:

- safety concerns in transportation methods;
- lack of transportation availability, especially in rural areas;
- cost of activities; and,
- lack of age-friendly activities for all ages.

Community members identified multiple local traditions and events they believed should be celebrated and expanded through community program, examples including:

- Busker Fest;
- Local plays and theatre groups;
- VanTurken Day; and,
- Light Up the Night.

North Grenville is a place thriving with opportunities for recreation and leisure and members feel strongly in fostering these activities to add to North Grenville's character amidst the surge in growth.

## 4.0 Other Comments Received

Additional comments were submitted to the Project Team via email. A total of five additional comments were received.

One email provided the following comments for consideration under “Playing in North Grenville”:

- Develop the downtown Kemptville area;
- Develop indoor recreational facilities with jogging track for seniors;
- Enlarge the outdoor artificial hockey rink; and,
- Encourage year -round family restaurant in the ballpark area.

Another email sought clarification on policies regarding strip development and asked for the New Official Plan to consider strip development policies and their areas of application, to ensure appropriate usage.

A third email noted that the resident has chosen to sell their home due in part to the lack of recreation options and the need to commute for options such as an indoor pool, sauna, and pickleball court.

The fourth message received called for drinking water to be a priority and to reidentify bedrock areas when updating the Official Plan schedules, noting the current Official Plan has a goal to protect and conserve natural resources “for the benefit of present and future generations in North Grenville.” The email calls to protect our drinking water quality and quantity, and that policies and schedules must be enhanced and expanded in the New Official Plan. Specific areas are identified for mapping specialists to consider during the update process.

A final email submission from Sustainable North Grenville introduces their recommendations to enhance local planning initiatives in the following categories:

1. Enhance Green Transportation Infrastructure
2. Preserve and Protect Green Spaces as Mitigation and Adaptation

3. Work Towards a Net-Zero Built Environment
4. Use Planning Policy to Support Mental Health Resilience
5. Support Local Food Production
6. Protect Local Water Sources
7. Go Further: Plan for the Future

Specific locations and initiatives are identified in each category for consideration of implementation in the New Official Plan.