

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION  
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

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|-------------|--------------------|
| <b>No.</b>  | 2020-P158          |
| <b>To</b>   | Board of Directors |
| <b>Date</b> | 2020-10-06         |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>For</b>  | DECISION |
| <b>Subject/Title</b>  |          |
| Capital Pathway Strategic Plan  |          |
| <b>Summary</b>  |          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To obtain approval of the Board of Directors for the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>  |          |
| <b>Risk Summary</b>   |          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited funding and resources may impact the NCC's ability to implement the Plan's recommendations.</li> </ul>   |          |
| <b>Recommendation</b>   |          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan be approved pursuant to Section 10 of the <i>National Capital Act</i>.</li> <li>That the implementation of the Plan be delegated to the Capital Stewardship and Capital Planning Branches, in accordance with their respective mandates.</li> <li>That applicable projects proposed to implement the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan be reviewed under Section 12 of the <i>National Capital Act</i> and obtain Federal Land Use Approval.</li> </ul> |          |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Submitted by:</b></p> <p>Pierre Vaillancourt, A/Vice president, Capital Planning</p> <p>Name</p><br><p>Signature</p> | <p><b>Submitted by:</b></p> <p>Anne Ménard, Vice president, Capital Stewardship</p> <p>Name</p><br><p>Signature</p> |
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## 1. Strategic Priorities

- 2020/21-2024/25 Corporate Plan:
  - Strategic Direction: Contribute to a thriving, connected and sustainable National Capital Region that inspires Canadians through the planning, development and improvement of the NCC's assets.
  - Priority 4: Develop and communicate land use plans and provide timely and effective coordination of federal land use and design in the National Capital Region.
- The Plan for Canada's Capital (2017-2067) – Chapters 4 and 5.
- Core Area Sector Plan (2005); Capital Urban Lands Plan (2015); Greenbelt Master Plan (2013); Gatineau Park Master Plan (2005 and forthcoming draft 2020); Ottawa River South Shore Riverfront Park Plan (2018); and Ottawa River North Shore Parklands Plan (2018).
- Sustainable Development Strategy 2018-2023 – Action 1.1

## 2. Authority

*National Capital Act*, section 10.

## 3. Context

The NCC has undertaken a review of the plan titled *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region – 2006 Strategic Plan*. The updated Plan is the latest in a series of documents that demonstrate a long history of pathway planning, including:

- Recreational Pathways in the National Capital Region (1986);
- Strategic Plan for the Development of the National Capital Integrated Recreational Pathway System (1994); and
- Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region – 2006 Strategic Plan.

The 2006 Plan was developed in partnership with the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau and included all trails and pathways in the Capital Region. By contrast, the 2020 Plan is focused on the network off-road pathways branded as *the Capital Pathway*. These pathways are located primarily on NCC and federal lands; however numerous important linkages and connections are managed and operated by the municipalities.

A Plan update was required to respond to new realities such as: increasing volumes and user speeds, an increased demand for new access points and linkages, advancements in signage and wayfinding, increasing demand for winter uses of the pathways, and climate change adaptation.

Plan renewal phases:

- Phase 1 – Research and analysis of existing conditions (summer – fall 2017);
- Phase 2 – Review of the vision and directions (winter – spring 2018);
- Phase 3 – Draft of the new strategic Plan (summer 2018 – summer 2019); and
- Phase 4 – Approval of the final Plan by the Board of Directors (Fall 2020).

The results of Phase 1 are documented in an existing conditions report. Phase 2 included the update of the vision and strategic directions which was presented to the Board of Directors, ACPDR, municipalities and the general public. Phase 3, comprised of writing the draft Plan, including proposed strategic approaches, actions and guidelines. A 75% draft was presented to ACPDR for comment. In phase 4, the final draft Plan was circulated for public and stakeholder feedback.

## 4. Options Analysis

The final Plan is presented for decision (Appendix A).

- The Plan's scope covers a 280 km network of continuous multi-use pathways traversing NCC, federal and municipal lands in Canada's Capital Region.
- The Plan will serve as a reference tool for NCC projects and federal approvals and will also guide continued collaboration and partnership with the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau.
- The Plan covers a horizon of 10 years (until 2030) and provides a long-term ideal network to guide future decision making.
- An Executive Summary is provided in Appendix B. The key elements of the Plan include:
  - A vision that promotes an exceptional and inclusive user experience, where all are welcome to discover the capital regardless of abilities or motivations.
  - A schematic concept that positions the Capital Pathway as the preeminent regional pathway network-distinct from, but complementary to, the municipal active mobility system.
  - New policy direction on several key topics in order to respond to changing context and current challenges for the Capital Pathway (e.g. pathway segregation, climate change adaptation, and e-mobility).
- The draft Plan was presented twice to the Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty (ACPDR). The excerpts of the minutes of these meetings are included in Appendix C. Comments received from the Committee were taken into consideration. An overview of how the comments were integrated into the final Plan is provided in Appendix D.

## 5. Financial Details

The Plan was prepared in-house, with G&S operating budget.

## 6. Opportunities and Expected Results

- The approved Plan will serve as the primary planning and reference tool for the Capital Pathway network.
  - The Plan is a long-term strategic direction document to assist NCC staff in their decision-making process with respect to the planning, design, and management of the Capital Pathway.
  - The Plan establishes shared priorities with the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, helping to address missing links to complete the Capital Pathway network.

- The Plan identifies specific actions and metrics to track progress over the 10-year planning horizon.

## 7. Risks and Mitigation Measures

| Risk  | Likelihood  | Impact | Planned Response  |
|---|-------------|--------|---|
| Limited funding to implement the Pathway Plan | Medium-High | Major  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtaining adequate and dependable funding is a key action of the Plan (Section 3.4.4).</li> <li>• The Plan will help to justify and prioritize future funding.</li> <li>• Federal and municipal partnerships will be leveraged.</li> </ul> |

## 8. Consultations and Communications

- Indigenous Engagement:
  - This project was discussed with Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan as part of the NCC's regular dialogue with the Algonquin Nation.
- Public Consultations:
  - Consultation sessions involving more than 150 people were held in February 2018. An online survey on the vision and strategic directions was held in June and July 2018.
  - An online public consultation was held during the period of May 27, 2020 until June 17, 2020. Highlights from the Plan were provided, as well as a link to the 90% draft Plan. The final online engagement resulted in 6,671 unique visits to the project webpage and 326 written responses on the draft Plan. The Public Consultation Report is attached as Appendix E.
- Stakeholder Consultation:
  - Multiple meetings with various stakeholders have taken place over the course of the planning process, including: City of Ottawa, Ville de Gatineau, special interest groups, municipal emergency services and federal partners.
- Internal consultations were conducted between fall 2018 and winter 2019.

## 9. Next Steps

- An Implementation Plan will be developed by Capital Stewardship to elaborate and prioritize the actions identified in the Plan.
- The Design Guidelines will be reviewed and amended as needed within 5 years to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with municipal planning efforts currently underway.

## **10. List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Capital Pathway Strategic Plan  
Appendix B – Executive Summary  
Appendix C – ACPDR Excerpts of the Minutes  
Appendix D – Integration of ACPDR Comments  
Appendix E – Public Consultation Report (DRAFT)

## **11. Authors of the Submission**

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## **Appendix B - Executive Summary**

### **Capital Pathway Strategic Plan, 2020**

The Capital Pathway Strategic Plan 2020 will serve as the preeminent planning document for the design and management of the NCC's multi-use pathway network. The Plan will replace the *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region, 2006 Strategic Plan*. The new Plan presents a unifying vision, principles and concept for the long-term management of the Capital Pathway network. The key components of the Plan are summarized as follows:

**Vision:** "An exceptional pathway network where all can enjoy invigorating and inspiring experiences in the heart of magnificent Capital landscapes."

**Fundamental Premises:** The Plan is based on 4 fundamental premises.

- Multi-use
- High-quality experience
- Showcases key points of interest
- Supports active mobility

**Guiding Principles:** The following principles will serve as touch points for all future Capital Pathway Improvement projects.

- Distinct
- Connected
- Inclusive
- User-Friendly
- Resilient
- Environmentally Sustainable
- All-season
- Safe
- Responsibly managed
- Collaboratively Planned

**Concept and Ideal Network:** The Plan introduces a schematic concept and depicts an ideal future network configuration, (of NCC and municipal infrastructures) to guide long-term decision making. The Capital Pathway network is distinct from, but complementary to municipal active mobility networks, public transportation systems, and inter-regional pathway networks.

**Strategic Directions:** The actions and recommendations of the Plan are structured around four (4) strategic directions:

- **Integrated and Resilient Network**

- Complete and consolidate the ideal network
- Integrate with the regional active mobility network
- Create adaptable and sustainable infrastructures
- Anticipate social and technological change

- **Safe and User-friendly**

- Easy to access and navigate
- Mitigate hazards along the pathway
- Create a clear and intuitive pathway-sharing environment
- Promote a simple and conciliatory code of conduct

- **Adapted and Co-Creative Management**

- Winter use of the network
- Dynamic and enriching programs and amenities
- Clear, collaborative management structure
- Inclusive public participation

- **High Standards of Design and Maintenance**

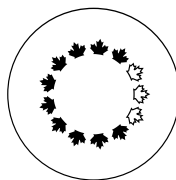
- Clear and consistent design
- Beautiful, context-sensitive installations
- Durable, high-quality construction and maintenance
- Dependable capital and operation funding

**Discovery Routes:** A series of maps provide route specific descriptions and recommendations for each of the network's discovery routes.

**Pathway Guidelines:** Lastly, design guidelines provide direction and performance criteria for the day-to-day construction and management of the pathway's physical features.

Building on the NCC's long-standing tradition of planning and constructing pathways, the Plan puts forward the following new policy directions:

- i. Completion of a seamless, uninterrupted, bi-directional, off-road pathway network that complements municipal active mobility and public transportation infrastructures.
- ii. A commitment to Vision Zero and enhanced user safety.
- iii. A universal design approach that considers persons from 8-80 years of age.
- iv. The principle of caution, whereby all users must demonstrate courtesy towards the slowest and most vulnerable pathway users.
- v. Preservation of dark zones in ecologically significant areas, and lighting of densely populated urban pathway segments for user safety and comfort.
- vi. A three-tiered approach to winter maintenance, to increase the range of winter activities across the network.
- vii. Segregation of pathway users in high volume areas, by modes of travel (pedestrians and cyclists) to mitigate user conflicts.
- viii. A volume index to guide widened pathway standards that will accommodate growing demand.
- ix. A flood friendly design approach that protects sensitive shoreline areas, while providing detours and resilient construction techniques for flood prone areas.
- x. A consistent response to emerging micro-mobility devices in order to control the appropriate use of electric assisted vehicles.



## NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Excerpt of the Minutes of the

Advisory Committee  
on Planning, Design and Realty

Meeting of August 10 and 11, 2018

2018-I17 - Capital Pathway Strategic Plan  
(C)

Members received a presentation on the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan. They commended the team for its excellent methodology and provided the following comments:

### Adaptation to Climate Change

- Existing pathways prone to floods should be relocated, or adapted to be more resilient.

### Conservation Approach

- Values have changed: conservation should be the priority.
- Shores should be naturalized:
  - elevated walkways;
  - marshes;
  - solar energy and natural filtration for amenities.

### Coexistence of Uses

- Pedestrians should always be a priority.
- Disruptive technologies should be anticipated.
- Differentiation between leisure and commuting should be accommodated.

### Amenities

Extrait du procès-verbal du

Comité consultatif  
de l'urbanisme, du design et de l'immobilier

Séance des 10 et 11 août 2018

2018-I17 - Plan stratégique du sentier de la  
capitale (C)

Les membres assistent à une présentation sur le plan stratégique du sentier de la capitale. Ils félicitent l'équipe pour son excellente méthodologie, et ils offrent les commentaires suivants :

### Adaptation au changement climatique

- Les sentiers existants sujets aux inondations devraient être déplacés, ou adaptés de façon à être plus résilients.

### Approche de conservation

- Les valeurs ont changé : la conservation devrait être la priorité.
- Les berges devraient être naturalisées :
  - sentiers surélevés;
  - marais;
  - énergie solaire et filtration naturelle pour les infrastructures.

### Coexistence des usages

- Les piétons devraient toujours être une priorité.
- On devrait anticiper l'utilisation de technologies perturbatrices.
- On devrait accommoder la différenciation entre loisirs et migrations journalières.

### Infrastructures



|  |
|--|
| 2018-I17 - Capital Pathway Strategic Plan<br>(C) |
|--|

- Basic amenities should be provided.
- Pathways should be easier to clear.

#### Integration with Cities' Network

- The consolidation of the existing network should be a priority; integration of NCC and municipal networks is essential.

#### Additional Considerations

- Travel by water should be considered.
- Education on etiquette on pathways is needed.
- The team should seek inspiration from best international practices (Copenhagen, Amsterdam).

Committee Secretary

|   |
|---|
| 2018-I17 - Plan stratégique du sentier de la capitale (C) |
|---|

- On devrait offrir des infrastructures de base.
- Les sentiers devraient être plus faciles à dégager.

#### Intégration avec le réseau des Villes

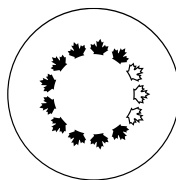
- Le renforcement du réseau actuel devrait être une priorité; l'intégration entre les réseaux municipaux et celui de la CCN est essentiel.

#### Considérations supplémentaires

- On devrait prendre en compte les déplacements sur l'eau.
- L'éducation vis-à-vis du savoir-vivre sur les sentiers est nécessaire.
- L'équipe devrait s'inspirer des meilleures pratiques internationales (Copenhague, Amsterdam).

Secrétaire des comités

*Caroline Bied*



## NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Excerpt of the Minutes of the

Advisory Committee  
on Planning, Design and Realty

Meeting of December 5, 2019

2019-i17 - Capital Pathway Strategic Plan –  
75% Draft (C)

Members received a presentation on the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan at 75% Draft. They found the document complete and exemplary, and believed it should be shared with other capitals. They provided the following comments:

### Connectivity and Integration

- The Capital Pathway network is important for active mobility.
- This plan is an opportunity to link the whole region for a diversity of user groups.
- Network integration at transit hubs and with other active modes is required.
- Inter-regional links beyond the network should be clarified.
- The network needs to be highly visible and recognisable.

### Character and Experience

- The concept should relate more directly to the vision, and the role of the four quadrants should be clearly explained.
- The term “experience” should be explored and defined as it relates to the vision and concept (what you see, smell, hear, feel,

Extrait du procès-verbal du

Comité consultatif  
de l'urbanisme, du design et de l'immobilier

Séance du 5 décembre 2019

2019-i17 - Plan stratégique du Sentier de la  
capitale – Ébauche achevée à 75 % (C)

Les membres reçoivent une présentation sur l'ébauche achevée à 75% du plan stratégique du Sentier de la capitale. Ils trouvent le document complet et exemplaire, et pensent qu'il devrait être partagé avec les autres capitales. Ils font les commentaires suivants :

### Connectivité et intégration

- Le réseau du Sentier de la capitale est important pour la mobilité active.
- Ce plan est une occasion de créer des connexions dans toute la région pour divers groupes d'utilisateurs.
- Il est nécessaire de faire l'intégration du réseau aux pôles de transport en commun et avec d'autres modes de transport actif.
- On devrait indiquer plus clairement les liens inter-régionaux au-delà du réseau.
- Le réseau doit être très visible et reconnaissable.

### Caractère et expérience

- Le concept devrait être plus directement en lien avec la vision, et on devrait expliquer le rôle des quatre quadrants clairement.
- On devrait évaluer et définir le terme « expérience » en lien avec la vision et le concept (ce que l'on voit, sent, entend,

## 2019-i17 - Capital Pathway Strategic Plan – 75% Draft (C)

etc.) and exceptional locations and surroundings should be identified.

- A typology of places should be used to develop different strategies according to the character of each zone (urban, rural, natural, etc.).
- Works of art or landscaping could be used to augment the experience in some areas, according to the typology.
- The character of different zones should be expressed through materiality and furnishings.
- Design excellence must be a priority in all aspects.

### Safety

- The Capital Pathway should act as a safe commuter alternative near major employment nodes and residential areas.
- Crossings of the pathways should be addressed in terms of safety for all users (pedestrians, strollers, dogs, cyclists, etc.).
- Drop-off zones for people with diverse abilities should be identified, and municipal addresses provided at key access points.

### Illustrations and Diversity

- The plan should demonstrate diversity and social equity.
- Indigenous perspectives should be included.
- Illustrations should be used to depict the vision and represent the 21<sup>st</sup> Century experience: eco-friendly, natural, adaptation to climate change, etc.

### Funding and Philanthropy

- A process for philanthropic donations and bequeathals should be explored, which

## 2019-i17 - Plan stratégique du Sentier de la capitale – Ébauche achevée à 75 % (C)

ressent, etc.) et identifier les lieux et les environnements exceptionnels.

- On devrait utiliser une typologie de lieux pour élaborer différentes stratégies en fonction du caractère de chaque zone (urbain, rural, naturel, etc.).
- On pourrait utiliser des œuvres d'art ou des aménagements paysagers pour enrichir l'expérience dans certaines zones, selon la typologie.
- On devrait exprimer le caractère des différentes zones par le biais des matériaux et du mobilier urbain.
- L'excellence de la conception doit être une priorité dans tous les aspects.

### Sécurité

- Le Sentier de la capitale devrait tenir lieu d'alternative sécuritaire pour les navetteurs à proximité des pôles d'emploi principaux et des zones résidentielles.
- On devrait traiter la traverse des sentiers sous l'angle de la sécurité de tous les usagers (piétons, poussettes, chiens, cyclistes, etc.).
- On devrait identifier des zones de débarquement pour les gens de diverses habiletés, et fournir des adresses municipales aux points d'accès importants.

### Illustrations et diversité

- Le plan devrait manifester la diversité et l'équité sociale.
- On devrait inclure les perspectives autochtones.
- On devrait utiliser des illustrations qui décrivent la vision et qui représentent l'expérience du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle : écologique, naturelle, adaptations aux changements climatiques, etc.

### Financement et philanthropie

- On devrait envisager un processus pour les dons philanthropiques, ce qui pourrait

2019-i17 - Capital Pathway Strategic Plan –  
75% Draft (C)

may require the creation of a formal foundation (such as the Trinity Trust Foundation in Dallas).

Committee Secretary

2019-i17 - Plan stratégique du Sentier de la  
capitale – Ébauche achevée à 75 % (C)

nécessiter la création d'une fondation (comme la fondation Trinity Trust à Dallas).

Secrétaire des comités

CAROLINE BIED

## Appendix D – Capital Pathway Strategic Plan - Integration of ACPDR Comments

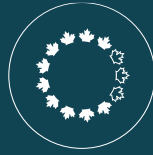
Draft content of the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan was presented to the ACPDR on August 10, 2018. The presentation included the vision, strategic directions, 10 big ideas from public consultation, and key challenges/opportunities to be explored in the Plan. The feedback from this session shaped the content of the draft Plan. In particular, the following content was integrated:

- An emphasis was placed on consolidating the existing network, and regional concept and ideal network were developed as a result.
- An emphasis on conservation was adopted, and the guiding principle “Environmentally Sustainable” was added.
  - Guidelines for healthy shorelines and greenspaces were developed, as well as elevated pathways and drainage guidelines.
  - A flood-friendly planning approach was developed to create a resilient pathway network and adapt to climate change.
- Pedestrian Priority was reinforced, and the principle of caution was written into the Plan.
- Both recreational and commuter user groups were considered, and a new paradigm of user experience was developed.
- Lastly, the following topics were elaborated through the strategic directions and actions of the Plan:
  - Services and amenities
  - Pathway etiquette and code of conduct
  - E-mobility
  - Winter use and clearing

A 75% draft of the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan was presented to the ACPDR on December 5, 2019. The excerpt of the minutes of this meeting are presented in Appendix C. The following adjustments were made in response to the Committee member’s comments:

- Paragraph *1.7 Indigenous Engagement* was added to address the dialogue with the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan. Opportunities for Indigenous engagement will continue to be explored throughout the implementation of the Plan.
- Section *2.8 Inter-regional Context* was added, including a provincial and regional map to clarify the role and relationship of inter-regional trails.
- Photos throughout the Plan were selected to depict the vast diversity of places and users of the Capital Pathway network. Symbols and icons were re-visited to depict a wide variety of users and emphasize the multi-use nature of the pathway network.
- Section *3.3.1 Winter use of the network* was further explored with municipal partners and will be revisited on an annual basis to address evolving needs.
- The distinction between “E-mobility” devices and “mobility-aids” was clarified. (Mobility aids form part of guideline *5.1.2 Reference Pedestrian*).

- Municipal Addresses were added to the approach of section 3.2.1 *Easy to access and navigate*. These will be located at destinations such as parks, public spaces and access points along the pathway.
- An action was added to Section 3.4.4 *Dependable capital and operation funding* to explore alternate means of funding such as private philanthropic donations. This notion will be further explored through the implementation of the Plan.
- *Chapter 4: Discovery Routes* was added to describe the character of each discovery route and clarify the recommendations for specific areas (in response to Committee members' comments about defining the character of each of the quadrants of the network).
- Guidelines were elaborated to address the following points raised:
  - 5.1.1 Sensory Experience
  - 5.10.3 Slow Zones
  - 5.11.6 (Roadway) Crossing Scenarios
  - 5.12 Landscape Character (Typologies)
  - 5.19.1 Transit Hubs
  - 5.19.6 Public Art and Interpretation, 5.19.7 Artistic Installations, and 5.19.8 Interpretive Elements



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION  
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

# Review of the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan

PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT  
MAY 27 TO JUNE 17, 2020

Canada

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## I. Project description

### A. Background

The Capital Pathway is a network of over 220 km of off-road, multi-use pathways. It is a popular discovery route, and a means of accessing a range of destinations through many different landscapes.

Covering such a large and diverse area, the Capital Pathway offers residents and visitors experiences that reflect the natural beauty, cultural heritage and symbolic importance of Canada's Capital Region.

The National Capital Commission (NCC) is currently in the final phase of renewing the strategic plan entitled *Pathway Network for Canada's Capital Region (2006)*. The purpose of the revised plan, entitled *The Capital Pathway Strategic Plan*, will be to provide a framework for future planning and day-to-day management of the Capital Pathway. It will also present an aspirational vision for the multi-use pathway system in Canada's Capital Region.

### B. Plan objectives

The main planning objectives of the new Capital Pathway Strategic Plan are as follows:

- Renew the vision.
- Set strategic directions and priorities for the next 10 years.
- Provide management tools.
- Harmonize NCC and municipal planning, where possible.

The new strategic plan will address various topics, including pathway design, new linkage opportunities, user safety, signage and amenities.

### C. Planning process

The plan renewal will take place in four stages.

- Phase 1: Assessment, research and analysis of existing conditions (summer–fall 2017)
- Phase 2: Review of vision and strategic directions (winter–spring 2018)
- Phase 3: Drafting of the new strategic plan (summer 2018–winter 2019)
- **Phase 4: Approval of the final plan (summer 2020) — CURRENT PHASE**

## II. Public consultation process

### A. Overview

The development of the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan has included multiple phases of public consultation. The first, in February 2018, solicited ideas and aspirations related to important themes such as connectivity, safety, resilience, integration and expansion, seasonal

considerations, and user-friendliness. The second, held in June and July 2018, invited participants to provide feedback on the proposed vision, big ideas and strategic directions for the Capital Pathway. In the current and third phase, we made the full draft of *The Capital Pathway Strategic Plan* publicly available and invited members of the public to provide their input on its contents.

## **Objectives**

- Provide participants an opportunity to review the full draft of the plan and take stock of new proposals for the Capital Pathway.
- Integrate public feedback on the draft plan into the final draft that will be submitted to the NCC's Board of Directors for approval.

### **a. Date and time**

May 27 to June 17, 2020

### **b. Format**

Web page and comment box

## **B. Invitation and promotion**

An email invitation was sent using the Public Affairs Division's distribution lists, which include the following stakeholders:

- Interest groups, user groups and environmental groups
- Residents' associations
- Individuals

Messages were also posted on social media (Facebook and Twitter) soliciting the participation of all interested members of the public, and a paid promotional campaign was run on Facebook for the duration of the consultation.

## **C. Participants**

### **a. Online**

The online consultation attracted a total of 6,671 unique page views and 326 comments from members of the public.

### **b. User groups**

In addition to being invited to participate in the online consultation, user groups were consulted separately during small-group meetings that were held ahead of the online consultation.

## **D. Consultation procedure and tools**

### **a. Web page and comment box**

The final phase of public consultation on the planning documents emphasizes transparency and accountability: members of the public are provided the full draft of the plan and a final opportunity to shape its contents before it is submitted to the NCC's Board of Directors for approval. In addition to making the full draft of the plan available online, we created a web page that summarized — in words and images — the most prominent features of the plan, along with the general context in which it was drafted. Public feedback was collected via a comment box on the same page, as well as by email. Interested participants were also invited to review public consultation reports published as part of previous phases of engagement.

At the end of the three-week consultation period, all comments were entered into an Excel spreadsheet, read by an analyst and assigned a series of tags corresponding to the type of feedback provided. This permitted the NCC to identify patterns and to more effectively summarize public input. In addition to the analysis conducted by the Public Consultations team, all raw comments were shared with the project team.

## **III. Public consultation highlights**

A thorough analysis of the comments submitted to the NCC as part of this final stage of public consultation revealed the following trends.

- Reactions to the draft plan were positive. A clear majority of the comments expressed satisfaction with the plan and with specific proposals.
- Few participants were critical of the plan. Instead, most participants used this opportunity to stress the importance of specific initiatives near and dear to them, highlight existing challenges, and make recommendations as to how the NCC could best move forward with the enhancement of the Capital Pathway.
- The elements of the plan that attracted the most positive feedback:
  - separating pedestrians and cyclists, and widening the pathways in high-traffic areas
  - improving the quality and comfort of the outdoor winter experience
  - creating new links within and along the border of the existing network, and harmonizing the regional active mobility network.
- Ideas on how to improve the Capital Pathway tended to focus on ways to build upon and extend the plan's proposals, with a particular emphasis on safety, user experience and environmental considerations.

## IV. Analysis of results and main comments received

### A. Safety

Issues and experiences related to safety loomed large in much of the feedback provided by participants. These comments centred primarily on interactions between different types of users of the Capital Pathway, and with their exposure to motorized vehicles. As in previous rounds of public consultation, participants shared experiences of feeling unsafe or apprehensive along various parts of the pathway. The proposals to separate pedestrians and cyclists and to widen the pathway in high-traffic areas were thus greeted with significant enthusiasm. Many participants viewed this approach as being of paramount importance in improving the overall user experience of the Capital Pathway.

A number of participants suggested specific areas in which to make separation and widening a priority. Others encouraged the NCC to convert certain roadways — such as the Queen Elizabeth Driveway — to pathways, or to reclaim space currently occupied by vehicle lanes. Several participants praised ongoing pilot projects of this kind, and the proposals to separate and widen pathways, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The topic of bridges and intersections with roadways also attracted a number of comments geared toward improving safety for pathway users. Recommendations were various, largely specific to a particular location, and included raised crossings, cross-rides, four-way stops, distancing pathway intersections from road intersections, underpasses, bike boxes, protective barriers and the addition of pedestrian/cycling bridges at various locations. Participants also called attention to pathway sections that need repairs and maintenance.

Other participants approached safety from a rules-based perspective. A number stressed the importance of signage and user education to effectively communicate rules and expected behaviour. Others advocated increased enforcement of pathway rules. There were mixed feelings among a small group of participants about some of the proposed guidelines, with some supporting the use of bells to signal passing and others arguing that the safest way for pedestrians and cyclists to share the pathway is for pedestrians to walk on the left-hand side facing oncoming cyclists.

Lighting was another issue that participants approached from the perspective of safety. Several participants expressed their approval of proposed plans to improve lighting along the pathway, highlighting areas such as tunnels and poorly lit segments that they felt are currently unsafe to travel at night. Some cautioned against the use of lights that are too powerful, warning that they could blind users and therefore reduce safety.

Finally, several participants opposed allowing motorized vehicles on the pathways, including scooters and skateboards. A few of these participants were more hesitant

about e-bikes, acknowledging that these should be treated differently from other motorized vehicles. Some participants noted that individuals with mobility challenges should be exempted from rules that ban or place limits on the use of electric means of transportation on the pathways.

## **B. Network consolidation**

The addition of pathway segments that create new links within and along the border of the existing network were cheered by many participants. A number of participants indicated which new segments they were most excited about, with some developing a case for making these additions a priority. Others suggested numerous routes and connections not included in the plan. Some participants expressed interest in having the Capital Pathway extend outward and provide better access to the existing network from such surrounding areas as Orléans, Barrhaven, Kanata, Constance Bay, Masson-Angers, Chelsea, Buckingham, Manotick and even Montréal.

A small number of participants related difficulties reading the maps included in the draft plan, which limited their ability to understand the proposals and provide feedback.

## **C. Winter use**

Many participants enthusiastically welcomed the proposed procedures to improve the quality and comfort of the outdoor winter experience. A number shared their appreciation for the snow clearing done this past winter, and hoped that these types of efforts would be sustained and expanded to other pathway segments. Some participants identified particular pathways as priorities for snow clearing. Others asked that the NCC provide more groomed trails for cross-country skiing in various areas. In a similar spirit, several participants encouraged the NCC to continue supporting local organizations that provide winter recreational services to pathway users.

A small number of participants were concerned about salt use in winter pathway maintenance, both because it potentially creates puddles that can then freeze, and because of potential harm to ecologically sensitive areas.

## **D. The environment**

Like safety, environmental considerations were approached by participants from different perspectives. Resilience was top of mind on this front for several participants, who welcomed the plan's provisions to address flooding and pooling. Others stressed that the natural surroundings of the pathway should be protected. Some participants recommended enhancing the biodiversity of the areas along the pathway, and others suggested increasing the canopy cover to provide shade and respite from the heat for

users. One participant, however, noted that fallen leaves can negatively impact certain recreational activities, and argued that it would therefore be best if deciduous trees were set back from the pathway. A few participants advocated the use of environmentally friendly materials in any future construction, and for lighting options that minimized negative effects on wildlife.

## E. Miscellaneous

Certain topics were raised by more than one participant, but were too disparate to be grouped under a broad thematic heading. These are briefly summarized here.

- Several participants urged the NCC to continue collaborating with municipalities and to encourage them to make upgrades to their own pathway infrastructure.
- Several participants stressed the importance of access to basic amenities such as washrooms, drinking fountains and garbage bins along the Capital Pathway.
- Some participants made recommendations as to how the presence of dogs on the pathway could be better managed.
- Some participants advocated for increased accessibility of pathway facilities and adjacent infrastructure. Among the requests made by these participants were wider paths, accessible parking and accessible crossings of the Rideau Canal locks.
- A few participants were split about paving: some wanted more segments to be paved, while others preferred gravel or soft and permeable paving because this is more comfortable for joggers.

## F. Sample comments

The following table presents some examples of comments made by participants during this final round of consultation.

| Topic  | Sample comment  |
|--------|---|
| Safety | The more separation the better, especially in parts of the pathway that intersect with and run through neighbourhoods. It is wonderful that people can bike commute to work and ride quickly for exercise, but this can be dangerous when they share the path with children, those with mobility issues and anyone who just wants to enjoy a stroll. More education and signage is essential. |

Many cyclists don't have a way of knowing their speed, so including radar speed signs in trouble spots would be great. And there needs to be options for enforcement where issues continually arise.

Awesome NCC is considering/planning all these. Definitely wider pathways or separated pathways are required to ensure they are enjoyed by as many individuals as possible to maintain health through recreation and maintain safety. For years I have thought they are not wide enough, especially after seeing the recreational paths in Finland, which are at least twice the width, if not more.

I only wonder if, given the success of the Queen Elizabeth Driveway opening to active transportation during COVID-19, future reallocation of parkways can be at least mentioned as a strategic consideration. While these aren't "pathways," QED could be viewed as one right now. Even a brief section saying it's an opportunity to be examined, with continuing pilots, evaluated for feasibility, etc. would be worthwhile.

Sounds great. Maybe consider lighting along the SJAM paths, because it is both very dark in many places AND the proximity to the car lanes mean that I am often blinded by the headlights of approaching cars.

Please do not allow motorized scooters on the pathways. They travel too fast and will be abandoned at inopportune locations and become an eyesore.

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Network consolidation</b> | <p>This is fantastic! Excellent balance of user needs, resilience and environmental mindfulness. Both the proposed plans and the directions and strategies exceeded my expectations. As a resident of Lowertown, the proposed segment between Major's Hill Park and the Rideau River would be a valuable link and bring users to some of the nicest parts and views of our neighbourhood.</p> <p>I live in Constance Bay. I see a lot of cyclists on the roads in the area, especially on weekends. Would be great to expand the bike paths to link with this area. I'm sure a lot more people from the urban areas would enjoy it as well.</p> <p>The links to and from the Prescott-Russell Trail in the Greenbelt Pathway East need to be researched — as the route proposed from Tauvette Park is somewhat convoluted, building a bridge over the small creek and ravine would provide for a more direct routing and the link at the western end of the Trail needs [to be] reassessed, as it would enter onto a VIA Rail spur line that is still used. The NCC and City of Ottawa have conducted a study on the use of an existing informal walking trail, but no recommendations have emerged.</p> |
| <b>Winter use</b>            | <p>Please consider winter maintaining as much of network as possible for bike commuting. Thank you.</p> <p>Merci pour le déneigement des voies cyclables (et des ponts) vers la ville d'Ottawa l'hiver. Tout ce qui pourra être fait pour augmenter les superficies déneigées sera apprécié, comme le</p>  |



sentier cyclable de la Promenade du Lac des Fées de Gamelin vers Taché, notamment. [Translation: Thank you for clearing the snow from the bike paths (and bridges) leading to Ottawa during the winter. Anything that can be done to increase cleared areas would be appreciated, like the bike path along the Lac-des-Fées Parkway, from Gamelin to Taché, especially.]

More groomed x-country skiing please. That has been life changing for me and would like SJAM extended etc.

I believe the NCC should provide greater support (financially and with resources) to the community groups that have sprung up to create winter trails for their neighbourhoods. I was part of the Britannia Winter Trail Association this past season, and we will need continuing support from the NCC and the City of Ottawa to continue and expand this initiative.

## **The environment**

More flowers, plants, grasses along the paths. Replace dead trees, plant new trees to replace future ones that [are] starting to get old and tired.

Emphasis of taking into account flooding is also welcome, as flooded pathways are not usable, flooding can cause damage that is better prevented and, importantly, please remember that the pathway network also serves as part of the community flood control barrier system, and so it is important to consider building pathways with enough elevation to protect from being overtopped by floodwaters, where applicable.

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I particularly like the idea of expanding the winter trail use in the urban areas, preserving green corridors, and the general smart designs. Without this type of planning, communities don't flourish and it becomes a depressing urban wasteland, and we would lose our connection with our basic essentials of life and our need to stay connected with nature.

I would like to see more benches placed along the pathways and more benches that are under shade trees. It seems to me that most of the current NCC benches are placed directly out in the hot sun. On a hot summer day, I always note that these benches are typically unused, while the few benches that are situated under nice shade trees are always occupied. People need relief from the sun and the heat when they are using the pathways!

#### Miscellaneous

Incitez les villes d'Ottawa et Gatineau à créer des pistes cyclables entre les sentiers de la CCN. Exemple: à Hull entre le sentier Lac-des-Fées et celui qui longe la rivière, il devrait y avoir une piste qui les relie directement. [Translation: Encourage the City of Ottawa and Ville de Gatineau to create bike paths between the NCC pathways. For example, in Hull, between the Lac-des-Fées Pathway and the one along the river, there should be a path providing a direct connection.]

Ensure amenities are available throughout (garbage cans, toilets, etc.)

More signage and enforcement about dogs being on-leash please, especially in the Mud Lake and Dows Lake areas.

I am mostly concerned that the statement in your document “Pathway amenities should use natural materials and colours that blend into and complement their surroundings.” To me that means NOT paving paths. Pavement is very hard on joints and not conducive to “comfortable” use at all. Certainly cyclists like it, but it is not good for walkers or runners. I am one of a number of people I know who use the paths daily, but can NOT run on pavement. Non-paved pathways are a much more healthy choice.

There is also a high need for an area with designated accessible parking around the Hiawatha area. More families and individuals from Orléans and Cumberland are likely to utilize the path if parking was easier and accessible to all abilities. Thank you.

## **V. Integration of results**

The results of the public consultation have been reviewed along with feedback from NCC staff and external stakeholders. Adjustments and additions will be made to the plan's text and graphics to incorporate suggestions and improve the overall clarity of the plan.

In some instances, comments were focused on specific locations or detailed situations that fall outside the high-level scope of the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan. In most instances, these comments were in keeping with the strategic directions and guidelines of the plan. These detailed comments will be retained and considered to inform the subsequent Implementation Plan and/or specific projects and improvements along the Capital Pathway.

## **VI. Next steps**

- Final edits (July–September 2020)
- Submission to the NCC Board of Directors for approval (October 2020)
- Implementation Plan to prioritize and execute the plan's actions (2020–2021)