



Public Consultation Report: Review of  
Potential Federal Sites for the New  
Civic Campus of The Ottawa Hospital

November 2016

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## I. Description

### Background

The National Capital Commission (NCC) was asked on May 20, 2016, by the Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage, to undertake a review of potential federal sites for a new Civic Campus of The Ottawa Hospital, and to provide a recommendation, as well as justification for the NCC's preferred site.

The NCC conducted the review with the aim of ensuring that this world-class health-care facility benefits from a strong planning foundation.

To meet the needs of all Canadians who will depend on The Ottawa Hospital in the coming decades, the NCC engaged the public and stakeholders in consultations, as part of the site review process.

### Objective

The objective of the public consultation was as follows:

- To receive input from the public and stakeholders on the draft selection criteria and the potential federal sites.

These comments informed the evaluation committee's assessment.

### Consultation overview

To begin the consultation process, the NCC held two targeted stakeholder meetings: in August and September. A variety of stakeholder groups were invited, including Ottawa's post-secondary institutions, professional associations representing urban planners and landscape architects, Ecology Ottawa, Ottawa Council on Aging, Ottawa Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Ottawa, Greenspace Alliance, and community association representatives.

The NCC then held a public consultation event at the Canadian War Museum, on September 22, 2016, which included an open house, presentation, and question and answer session. Members of the public could participate in person, by attending the public consultation, or online, by viewing the YouTube live webcast of the presentation and question and answer session. Questions from the public were submitted in person and online through social media channels.

An online consultation was conducted to gather public feedback from September 22, at 3 pm to October 6, at 11:59 pm.

## II. Consultation process

### Targeted stakeholder consultations

More than 20 local stakeholder groups were invited to meet with NCC staff on August 31 and September 14, 2016, for an overview of the selection process and draft criteria themes. Participants shared their views, identified issues and criteria that were important to them, and provided the NCC with information that they felt would support the overall process.

### In-person public consultation

The public was invited to attend an in-person public consultation at the Canadian War Museum (1 Vimy Place, Ottawa, Ontario).

### Date and format

Thursday, September 22, 2016

Open house: 3 pm to 9:30 pm

Presentations: 7 pm

Questions and answers: 7:30 pm

Both the presentations and question and answer sessions were broadcast live on YouTube.

### Presentation to elected officials

A presentation was given at noon on September 22 at the Canadian War Museum for approximately 30 elected officials, and their representatives, from all levels of government.

### Online consultation survey

The online survey was conducted by Environics Research Group.

The complete online survey report is included in the Appendix.

Date and time: September 22 at 3 pm (EDT) to October 6 at 11:59 pm (EDT)

### Methodology

The online survey was conducted by Environics Research Group, using the online survey platform *Sparq*. The survey was available in both French and English. The complete survey questionnaire is included as part of the online survey report. Access to the survey was provided through the following channels:

- Pre-programmed onto iPads, which were made available to participants at the in-person sessions at the Canadian War Museum on September 22
- Through the use of a URL, provided on postcards to participants at the in-person session on September 22
- Paper copies of the survey, which were also available at the in-person session; once completed and submitted to NCC or Environics representatives, the data was input through the open survey link on the NCC Ottawa Hospital site review website
- An open-link to the survey, which was provided through the NCC Ottawa Hospital site review website (<http://nccconsultationccn.environics.ca/>).

In total, 7,695 surveys were submitted during the fielding period through the various channels. The survey landing page described the purpose of the survey, and provided respondents with a link to the project website, where more information about the NCC's review process was available.

### **Invitations and promotion**

The public was invited to participate in the in-person and online public consultations through an email mail-out, social media engagement, advertising, web content and a proactive media approach. An advertising campaign was held in the weeks prior to and during the public consultation period, and included the following channels: *Ottawa Citizen*, *Le Droit*, Twitter, Facebook and Google. Email invitations were sent to the NCC Public Affairs database (over 4,000 subscribers). The online survey was available through an open link, the NCC website and social media, as well as via iPads at the public consultation open house and presentation events, in addition to being available through the URL which was provided on postcards at the in-person session.

### **Participants**

Over 400 people attended the in-person consultation or viewed the webcast, while 7,695 submitted the online survey. All members of the general public were welcome to participate in the online survey. Availability through the NCC website meant that interested participants who were unable to attend the in-person session (as a result of timing or physical location) had the opportunity to review materials and provide feedback. The online survey was provided in both French and English.

### III. Consultation highlights

The following are high-level summaries of the input received through analysis of the online survey, the in-person consultations, and feedback received through social media and the NCC's Contact Centre.

#### Feedback from targeted stakeholder consultations

Participants shared their concerns about a number of important issues, including site size, the need to ensure that citizens are engaged at every step of the process and the need to share as much information as possible. Suggestions were made that it would be important to look elsewhere in the province and across the country for similar hospital construction projects that the NCC could learn from. Concerns were also raised about the potential loss of important research work with building a hospital on part of the Central Experimental Farm, as well as the impact that this would have on adjoining farmland.

The NCC also received feedback on the importance of ensuring that the new site be mindful of the environment, that it be as accessible as possible via public transit or cycling, and that the configuration of the new site be mindful of existing traffic patterns. Some participants suggested that the information provided through the online questionnaire should be easy to understand and include visual aids such as maps. A majority of participants were grateful for the opportunity to contribute early in the process, and looked forward to participating in the next steps. The NCC benefited greatly from this exchange, and used the information gathered to inform its work in identifying the selection criteria and building the next steps in the public engagement process.

#### Feedback from the online survey

According to Environics Research, awareness and familiarity with the plans to establish a new Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus in the National Capital Region is strong. Of the 7,671 surveys included in the analysis of the consultation, nearly all (96%) report that they were previously aware of the plans, and nine in ten (89%) report that they were at least somewhat familiar with those plans.

Overall, most of the draft criteria proposed by the NCC were deemed to be important to participants. *Functional* and *Operational* draft criteria, and *Regional* and *Local Interest* criteria were generally viewed as important, while *Capital Interest* criteria were among the criteria considered to be least important by participants.

As per the results of the Environics survey, the top three rated criteria are related to accessibility of the site itself. Of all criteria, emergency access to arterial roads, major highways and air ambulance is considered to be the most important, with 85% of participants ranking it as imperative (8, 9 and 10 on the 10-point scale). Preparedness and responsiveness to major emergencies, including number of access points, is the next most

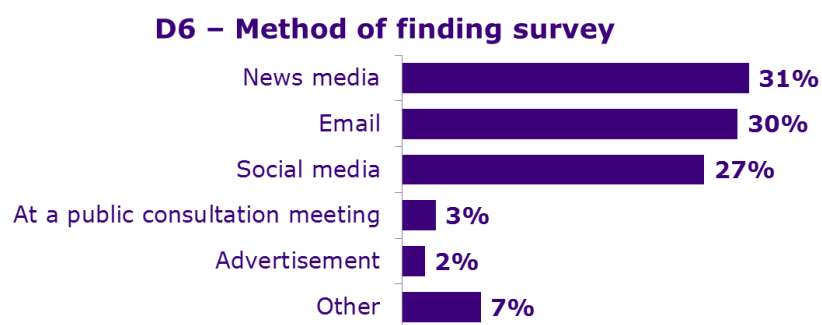
vital criterion, with 84% of participants ranking it as important. The third most important criterion, with 81% ranking it as important, is integration with the transportation network, including access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Survey participants offered a variety of suggestions for additional criteria that they felt may be important to include as part of the review. The most common themes that participants felt should be considered include general and specific needs of the hospital (e.g. proximity for patients, staff and other facilities), access to the site itself, evaluation of the proposed sites and current uses of the sites, and future growth and expansion.

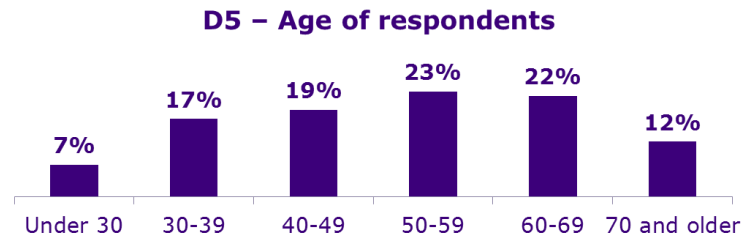
Finally, according to Environics, when participants provided an assessment on all 12 proposed federal sites using open-ended comments, much of the focus was on the suitability of the four proposed sites at the Central Experimental Farm. Many of those who advocated for using these lands argued that Ottawa requires a centrally located hospital that is close to the main transportation network links and is situated near other health-care facilities, such as the Heart Institute. However, those who argued against using lands at the Central Experimental Farm emphasized that important agricultural research will be threatened if one of these sites is chosen, and that a unique urban green space will be lost. Those who advocated for other sites typically mentioned Tunney's Pasture and the Booth Street Complex together, because these locations offer available land and are close to transportation links.

Discussion about sites in southwest Ottawa (such as West Hunt Club Road) was divided between those who argued that population growth in this area makes it well suited to accommodate a future hospital, and those who argued that these sites are too close to the existing Queensway-Carleton Hospital.

A majority of online survey respondents found out about the survey through news media (31%), email (30%) and social media (27%). Of those who selected "other," word of mouth via family, friends, colleagues and other organizations (e.g. community associations, The Ottawa Hospital and the NCC) was the most common.



It is also worth noting that the majority of respondents were over the age of 50.



### Feedback from in-person public consultation

Almost 400 individuals attended the consultation event. Twenty people provided input during the question and answer session. Questions and comments covered a range of topics, including the following:

#### Transportation/Access/Parking

- The importance of ensuring that future city plans, traffic patterns and travel times are considered
- Proximity to future light rail transit (LRT), bus services and proximity to the Queensway
- The new campus should be as accessible as possible, from all parts of the city.

#### Architecture/Design

- The issue of site size (footprint) was raised on a number of occasions
- The suggestion that additional engineers and architects be consulted, and that research be done on comparable construction projects elsewhere in the country

#### Environment/Agriculture

- Opposition to the use of agricultural land for this type of project
- Need to distinguish between agricultural land and the importance of the research that is being undertaken at the Central Experimental Farm
- Concerns were expressed over the permanent loss of research capacity in the context of climate change, environmental sustainability and food security
- Need to ensure that a complete picture exists of the research being carried out on the farm

#### Role of the NCC / Process

- Public input in the process is important
- Questions were raised regarding the federal government's role, the process that led to the identification of the 12 sites and the possibility of considering private, non-federally owned sites

The complete in-person consultation is available online via the NCC's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eh8APy8VIpE>. In-person participants were also able to complete the online survey via iPads at the consultation session, or were given a postcard with the information to complete the survey.

## Other comments received

### Emails and contacts

The NCC received approximately 130 emails, letters and phone calls from the public, through its general email address (info@ncc-ccn.ca) and Contact Centre (telephone and correspondence). Many respondents provided significant information with regard to the historical importance and scientific significance of the Central Experimental Farm, including research materials and pictures. The site at Tunney's Pasture was frequently mentioned as an ideal site for its downtown location, proximity to transit and size. The Ottawa Hospital's preferred site on the Central Experimental Farm was referenced on numerous occasions by some as being ideal, while others worried about the impacts of construction on research.

The comments covered a wide variety of topics, with the majority falling into the following categories:

#### Access/Transportation/Parking

- Proximity to the LRT, OC Transpo and highways
- Easily accessible by all users, regardless of their point of origin
- Need for parking in relation to accessibility to public transit

#### Size/Architecture/Design

- Proposed size of the campus; a horizontal versus a vertical model
- Future layout and services of the campus
- Eventual campus factors in the needs of the elderly

#### Agricultural land / Scientific Research / Environment

- Current and historical role of the Central Experimental Farm in scientific research, significance and importance
- Loss of important research
- Importance of agricultural research in food production and security

#### Sites

- Importance of accessibility, and concerns over traffic congestion for some sites
- Future link between the new campus and the Heart Institute

#### Process

- The community wishes to continue to be involved in future steps of the process
- Feedback regarding the online survey's structure and ease of use

#### NCC's role

- How public input will be used in the process
- The NCC's mandate as it relates to this planning exercise



## **Social media**

Social media (Twitter, Facebook) also offered the public an opportunity to provide their opinion, and generated feedback similar to the input received via email and telephone. The debate among users on social media often centred on the proposed sites at the Central Experimental Farm, with a majority of social media comments being in favour of using these sites.

Comments were expressed about the survey format, the NCC's role in this project, the need for a significant number of parking spaces and a proposed site not being located in the eastern part of the city. In addition, a large number of comments were made about the Heart Institute and its future links to the new campus.

Access (LRT, bus lines, highway access) was far and above the most frequently mentioned concern on social media, and was seen by the majority as being a very important factor.

## IV. Next steps

In order to incorporate the public and stakeholder input in the review of each site, prior to its deliberations, the evaluation committee was provided with a draft of this public consultation report, along with a verbal presentation highlighting the principal findings. The results of the committee's evaluation will be presented to the NCC Board of Directors during its public meeting on November 24, 2016. Following a decision by the Board, the NCC's recommendation will be submitted to the Minister of Canadian Heritage for the federal government's decision.

# Appendix

Environics Research – Online consultation Report (Full version)