Pickering Forward: Official Plan Review

Natural Heritage, Hazards, and Sustainability Engagement Summary Report

March 2025

City of PICKERING

LURA
Listen·Understand·Relate·Advance

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Executive Summary

During engagement on the Natural Heritage, Hazards, and Sustainability component of Pickering Forward, the City of Pickering's Official Plan Review, input was gathered from over 100 residents through two Public Information Centres and an online survey. Key emerging themes included the need for balanced urban planning that preserves natural spaces while accommodating growth. Significant priorities included integrating green spaces, promoting walkability, and ensuring sustainable development practices. Residents stressed the importance of planting trees, maintaining natural habitats, and effectively managing stormwater. They emphasized the need for mixed-use developments, local services, and enhanced public transit to reduce car dependency. Concerns around infrastructure, traffic management, and preserving neighbourhood character were also raised. Overall, the community expressed a strong desire for a sustainable, green city that balances development with environmental protection. This input will guide the development of the updated Official Plan, ensuring it reflects the community's ideas regarding Pickering's growth.

This report was written by LURA Consulting, the independent community engagement team retained to deliver community engagement. It summarizes the community's diverse input and offers recommendations and pathways for the City of Pickering's Official Plan to align with modern community goals.

Section 1: Project Overview

Project Description and Engagement Objectives

The City of Pickering is updating its Official Plan, the City's long-range, comprehensive planning document that guides land use decision-making. An Official Plan addresses issues such as:

- Where new housing, industry, offices, and shops will be located.
- What services will be needed, such as roads, water mains, sewers, parks and schools.
- How to protect what is important, such as the natural environment and cultural heritage.
- When, where, and in what order the community will grow.
- Where and how the City will invest in community improvement initiatives.

The purpose of the engagement activities was to:

- Provide a recap of the Pickering Forward process and topics
- Describe growth pressures faced by Pickering and the legislative requirements that the City must meet
- Discuss how to accommodate that growth in a balanced manner
- Identify resident and stakeholder priorities as growth occurs

This engagement report summarizes input from the third community conversation of the City's Official Plan Review. Community input on natural heritage, hazards and sustainability will inform the major themes in the Official Plan.

Figure 1 – Pickering Forward project logo.

Section 2: Engagement Process and Communication Methods

Engagement Methods

Figure 2 – Image of participants engaging in the table activity at the in-person Public Information Centre.

In early 2025, the City of Pickering hosted an in-person and virtual Public Information Centre and an online survey to gather community input about natural heritage, hazards and sustainability. One hundred and twenty-three (123) people participated in these events.

In-Person Public Information Centre

On February 6, 2025, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., an in-person Public Information Centre (PIC) was held at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre (470 Kingston Road). Approximately 30 people attended the event. City staff delivered a brief overview of Pickering's natural heritage features, hazards and sustainability efforts, including what features are valuable and worth preserving, the process of natural heritage planning in Ontario, related provincial plans, legislation, and official plans. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer period and small group discussions.

Appendix A includes a detailed summary of the in-person PIC.

Virtual Public Information Centre

The project team hosted a virtual PIC on February 11, 2025, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Twenty-four (24) people attended the online event. City staff presented the same content as the in-person PIC. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period. Virtual poll questions were used to gather demographic insights and determine which natural environmental features participants thought were most at risk in Pickering.

Appendix B includes a detailed summary of the virtual PIC's raw comments and polls.

Online Survey

From January 23, 2025, to February 21, 2025, an online survey was available on Let's Talk Pickering. Survey questions sought input on key priorities for the protection and enhancement of, as well as risks to natural environmental features, including questions related to matters such as:

- the integration of development with nature,
- reducing the risk of flooding,
- implementing changes to support the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods, and
- increasing sustainable development in new as well as existing neighbourhoods.

Sixty-nine (69) people responded to the survey. Survey respondents' demographics are provided in the **Who Participated** section below.

Appendix C includes a detailed summary of the survey responses**.**

Communication Methods

The City of Pickering used various communication methods to advertise the Official Plan review and engagement opportunities. Information was shared through the following channels:

- Via email with interested parties, registered ratepayers' groups, and Committee of Council liaisons.
- Published multiple notices on social media, including paid pushes on Facebook.
- Displayed digital message boards throughout the City.
- Posters were placed in all City library branches.
- Details were posted on the City's website and online public notices section.

Engagement and Reach

Table 1 below shows the reach of engagement throughout the engagement period.

Table 1: Summary of engagement activities.

Engagement Activity	Date	Location or Format	Attendance or Response Count
In-Person Public Information Centre	February 6, 2025 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	In-person at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre	**30**
Virtual Public Information Centre	February 11, 2025, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Online via Zoom	**24**
Online Survey	February 6, 2025 - February 21, 2025	Online via Let's Talk Pickering	**69**
		TOTAL	**123**

Data Analysis Methodology

Input was gathered through in-person and virtual PICs, and an online survey. Where responses were received to a quantitative question, results have been quantified. All qualitative responses

are analyzed thematically. This involves summarizing and categorizing qualitative data to capture important concepts within the data set.

Section 3: What We Heard

This section summarizes the key themes heard on Natural Heritage, Hazards and Sustainability.

In-Person Public Information Centre

Below are highlights of the findings from the in-person PIC. Discussions from each table on natural heritage, hazards and sustainability are captured thematically.

Natural Heritage and Hazards

Figure 3 - Image of one table discussion on the natural heritage and hazards.

The natural heritage and hazards discussions focused on how Pickering's natural heritage system is a valued asset, with relatively well-maintained forests, trails, and waterfront use. Participants emphasized that development pressures threaten key ecosystems, including woodlots, aquifers, and the Greenbelt. Concerns included habitat fragmentation, increased flooding risks, and pollution in water bodies like Frenchman's Bay. Participants suggested the need for better environmental planning, stricter protections, and sustainable development practices that balance growth with conservation. Additional feedback received is highlighted below.

- **Participants felt Pickering was doing a good job of protecting natural features.**
  - Ravines and corridors are well maintained.
  - The preservation and accessibility of waterfronts and shorelines are well-balanced.

  - The waterfront exemplifies an effective use of public spaces while maintaining ecological integrity.

- **Participants felt the following natural features were at risk**
  - Woodlot destruction
  - Impacts on waterways such as creeks, including burying creeks in underground pipes and aquifer contamination.
  - Greenbelt impacts due to Seaton and future North-East Pickering.
  - Encroachment and dumping in green spaces.
  - Lack of naturalized park areas, water trails, and year-round park access.
  - Preference for diverse, connected ecosystems rather than fragmented spaces.
  - Loss of trees due to new developments.
  - Overlooked tributaries (Pine and Petticoat Creek) impacted by salt and fertilizer runoff.
  - Runoff and contamination areas at risk include Carruthers Creek, Frenchman's Bay, Cherrywood, and Rossland/Valley Farm.

- **Participants had concerns with flooding and erosion due to the following**
  - Limit impermeable surfaces, protect trees, and restrict development in sensitive watersheds.
  - Enhance green spaces in industrial zones.
  - Encourage homeowners to maintain lawns instead of replacing them with concrete.
  - Implement stricter environmental protection along the Lake Ontario shoreline.

- **Participants identified the following concerns with development and conservation:**
  - Conduct situationally specific assessments before clearing land.
  - Ensure that environmental studies are conducted and prioritize preservation.
  - Integrate natural features into developments rather than displacing them.
  - Ecosystem compensation may not fully replace lost biodiversity.

Sustainability

Figure 4 - Image of the one of the table discussions on sustainability.

The sustainability discussions focused on creating complete communities that integrate nature, housing diversity, and transit accessibility. There was a strong emphasis on balancing environmental preservation with urban growth, promoting walkability, and ensuring inclusivity for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Additional feedback received is highlighted below.

- **Participants wanted Pickering to achieve the following sustainable community characteristics:**
  - Combine residential, retail, and green spaces for a well-balanced environment.
  - Incorporate diverse housing options (i.e., a mix of low, mid, and high-rise buildings).
  - Prioritize pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and efficient public transportation.
  - Developments should incorporate the natural landscape into their design layouts rather than remove it.

- **Participants wanted the following sustainable development elements included in new neighbourhoods:**
  - Preserve forests, wildlife corridors, and hydrology systems.
  - Incorporate green infrastructure such as solar panels, pollinator gardens, and bird-friendly buildings.
  - Create educational programs and incentives to encourage homeowners to adopt sustainable practices (e.g., native species planting and invasive species removal).
  - Ensure transportation networks are in place before residential development.

- **Participants wanted the following sustainability elements included in existing neighbourhoods:**

  - Implement a Natural Areas Management Strategy to protect the Carruthers Creek Watershed.
  - Expand or enhance green spaces by adding more trees, enhanced wildlife corridors, and native vegetation.
  - Improve transportation infrastructure by having more interconnected pedestrian and cyclist networks (sidewalks and trails).
  - Involve residents in environmental stewardship, restoration projects, and sustainability initiatives.

- **Participants identified the following complete streets and pedestrian connectivity elements that Pickering should consider:**
  - Encourage active transportation by increasing cycling and walking paths in urban areas.
  - Reduce reliance on cars through better bus and transit planning.
  - Prioritize pedestrian safety and accessibility by fixing/improving sidewalks.
  - Balance growth by scaling development to its context and implementing proper setbacks.

- **Participants felt Pickering could do the following to better design developments for inclusivity:**
  - Incorporate accessibility features such as walkways, ramps, and shared roadways.
  - Integrate diverse green spaces like parks, recreation areas, and natural gathering spaces.
  - Plan for housing that accommodates different cultural needs and lifestyles.

Virtual Public Information Centre

Many participants heard about the project through email and social media. A few participants were informed from digital signs or other forms of communication.

Most participants live in Pickering and had not attended one of the Pickering Forward meetings before (whether in-person or virtual).

Below are highlights of the feedback from the virtual PIC. Questions, comments, ideas from the question and answer period, and optional polls are captured thematically.

- **Participants identified all natural features as being at some degree of risk.**
    - In particular, participants identified the following as natural features they think are most at risk of being impacted by development in Pickering: Wetlands (marshes), animal habitat, pollinator habitat, woodlots (forests), groundwater, and creeks and tributaries.

- **Northeast Pickering Impacts:**
    - One participant inquired if the Canada Land Inventory classification of lands in Northeast Pickering would impact development, including restrictions on density and building heights, as well as potential mitigation measures.
    - Participants were curious about opportunities for public involvement on sub-watershed plans for the Northeast Secondary Planning area.
    - Emphasis was noted on the need for protecting the Greenbelt and the Carruthers Creek headwaters, particularly given their ecological importance and the presence of endangered species.
- **Sustainability:**
    - Sustainability suggestions included using porous materials for streets to address flood prevention and improve water capture, such as practices seen in European cities.
    - One participant inquired about whether a specific minimum percentage of land is needed to remain 'natural' in development planning.

    - Participants highlighted the need for alignment with the Pickering Climate Adaptation Plan.

- **Policy Planning:**
    - There was particular interest in the City's involvement in the Provincial 10-year review of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the Greenbelt, and Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) Conservation Plans.
    - One participant questioned how the loss of regional planning responsibilities and Conservation Authority mandates would affect the City's capacity to manage natural heritage features and development impacts.

Online Survey

Below are highlights of the findings from the online survey. Each multiple-choice question includes a graph showing responses and themes emerging from ideas respondents provided under 'Other' in the list of survey answers. Open-ended questions are summarized thematically.

Natural Heritage

Participants were asked what natural environmental features they think are well protected in Pickering. The following feedback was received:

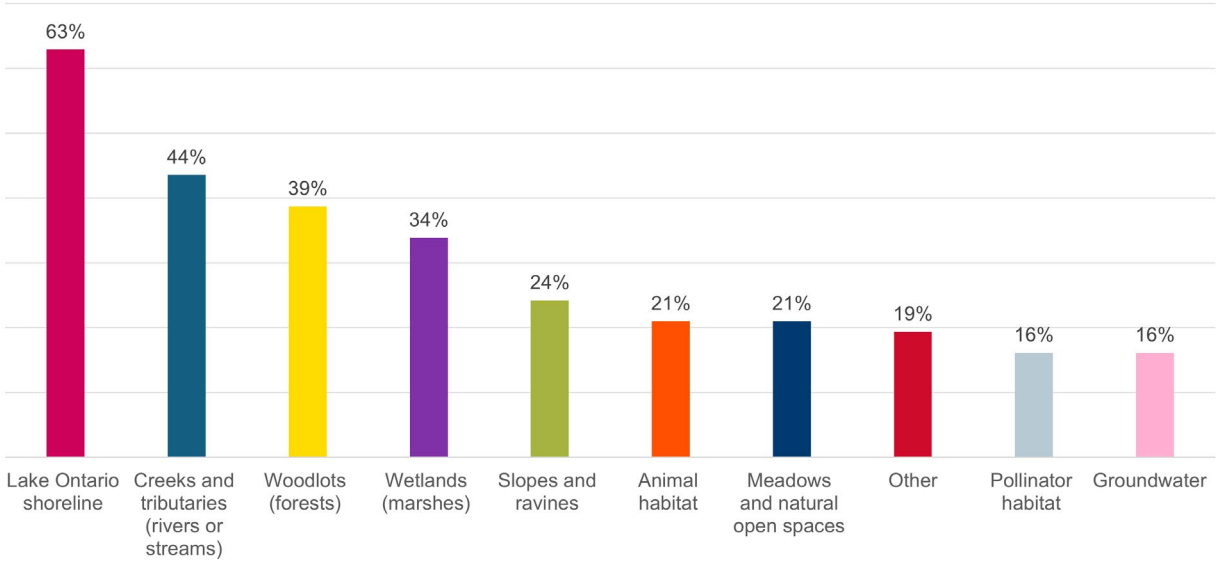

Figure 5 – Summary of natural environmental features participants think are well protected in Pickering. N = 62

Figure 5 shows, most participants selected "Lake Ontario shoreline" (63%) and "creeks and tributaries (river or streams)" (44%) as natural environmental features that are being well-protected in Pickering.

Additional "Other" comments (19%) are summarized below:

- Prioritize the maintenance of natural habitats, wetlands, and conservation areas (e.g., avoid removing trees when unnecessary).
- Ensure that the City protects natural areas (e.g., the Greenbelt, Rouge Park, Lake Ontario shoreline, and conservation areas) rather than meeting provincial housing targets and economic growth.
- Prioritize collaboration between the City and environmental agencies.

Participants were asked what natural environmental features they think are most at risk of being impacted by development in Pickering. The following feedback was received:

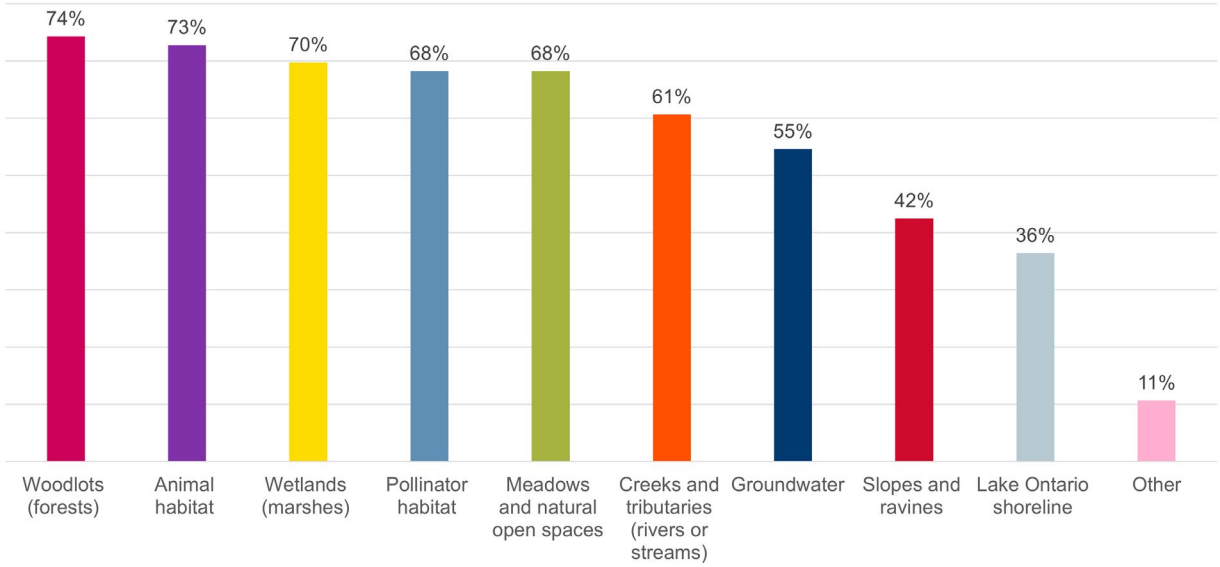

*Figure 6 -*Summary *of natural environmental features participants think are most at risk of being impacted by development in Pickering.* *N = 66*

Figure 6 shows most participants selected "woodlots (forests)" (74%), "animal habitat" (73%), and "wetlands (marshes)" (70%) as the natural environmental features most at risk of being impacted by development in Pickering.

Additional comments received as "Other" (11%) are summarized below:

- Features most at risk include Frenchman's Bay, green spaces, pollinators, animals, and animal habitats.
- Evaluate development sites on a case-by-case basis during the application phase.

Participants were asked where they had seen good examples, from Pickering or elsewhere, where development had successfully integrated with nature. The following feedback was received:

- Trails and parks such as Pickering Village, Northern Dog Park, and Princess Diana Park.
- Spaces that support diverse habitats and wildlife, such as Ernie Stroud Park.
- Countries such as the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland and Japan.
- Cities such as Portland, Toronto, and Oakville have robust urban forest management plans and natural heritage systems that help protect green spaces and biodiversity.
- Projects such as Portland, Oregon's Green Streets Initiative and the Netherlands' Room for the River program.
- The waterfront could benefit from offering more diverse uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, walking trails, sports fields, etc.), such as those seen in Oshawa, Whitby, and Ajax.

Participants were asked how Pickering can enhance the natural environment, in addition to ongoing protection, as the City continues to grow. The following feedback was received:

- **Responsible Growth and Development**
  - Emphasize slow growth management to prevent overdevelopment and protect natural areas.
  - Restrict building in sensitive areas such as marshes, shorelines, and forested zones to safeguard ecosystems.
  - Require all new housing and apartment projects to include green spaces, parks, and tree-lined streets, prioritizing sustainability over dense development.
  - Implement a 120-meter buffer zone around natural areas.

- **Ecosystem and Biodiversity Protection**
  - Preserve green spaces, natural habitats, and farmland.
  - Protect waterways, wetlands, and forests as essential natural features that support biodiversity.
  - Support bird-friendly building designs.
  - Strengthen controls for invasive plant species (e.g., dog strangling vine) in parks and natural spaces.
  - Promote public education on the value of natural spaces and encourage residents to plant trees and create pollinator gardens.

- **Sustainable Infrastructure**
  - Expand public parks, trails, pedestrian spaces, and green roads to integrate nature into urban life.
  - Integrate green spaces into residential and commercial developments while improving pedestrian and cyclist pathways for greater accessibility to nature.
  - Enhance sustainable building practices using eco-friendly materials, incorporating green initiatives in new developments.

- **Environmental Protection**
  - Address shoreline erosion, improve stormwater management, and prevent illegal dumping in natural spaces.
  - Prioritize better management of existing resources rather than expanding development (e.g., enhanced stormwater infrastructure).
  - Encourage homeowners and businesses to replace paved areas with permeable surfaces to mitigate flooding and heat retention.

Participants were asked if they support removing small, isolated natural features if it is compensated by planting more and creating stronger natural systems nearby. An example of removing a few isolated trees was provided in exchange for expanding a nearby forest. The following feedback was received:

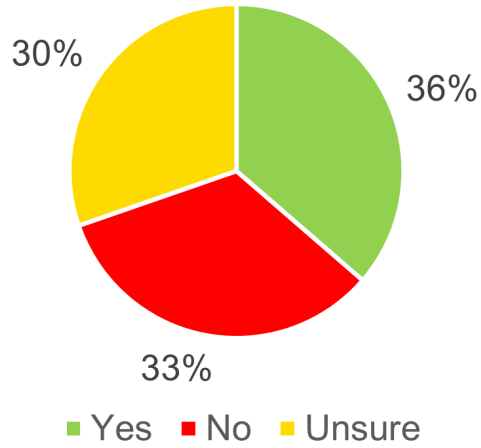

Figure 7 - Summary of support for removing small, isolated natural features if it is compensated by planting more and creating stronger natural systems nearby. *N = 66*

Figure 7 shows participants' responses were split among "Yes" (36%), "No" (33%), and "Unsure" (30%) regarding the removal of small, isolated natural features if it is compensated by planting more and creating stronger natural systems nearby.

Some participants expanded on their choices. Their explanations are summarized below:

- **Balancing Development and Nature**
  - Preserve natural features when they serve important ecological functions while carefully evaluating whether small green spaces provide significant environmental value before considering removal.
  - Integrate nature within development projects by incorporating gardens, green spaces, and trees rather than clearing large areas of natural land.
  - Ensure that development projects enhance rather than diminish the natural environment by prioritizing tree canopy preservation and expansion.

- **Protection and Conservation**
  - Avoid inadequate compensation for tree and habitat removal, recognizing that ecosystem restoration takes time and cannot always replace lost ecological functions.
  - Enhance urban biodiversity by planting more trees, maintaining green spaces, and protecting mature trees to improve air quality, reduce pollution, and support wildlife habitats.
  - Minimize disruption to wildlife migration routes and prevent fragmentation by preserving mature forests and established habitats.

- **Environmental Management**
  - Evaluate each case individually, considering factors such as a natural feature's size, quality, and ecological impact before determining whether removal is justified.
  - Require that any removed natural feature be replaced with an enhancement to the overall natural system, such as larger, healthier forest areas.
  - Implement third-party oversight to ensure the City effectively manages natural feature removals and replacements with transparency and accountability.

Participants were asked how the City can increase the number of trees planted throughout Pickering (i.e., along rural roads, commercial sites, and residential properties). The following feedback was received:

- **Urban Planting**
  - Plant more trees, micro forests, and pollinator gardens in parks, commercial sites, residential areas, rural roads, and boulevards.
  - Ensure that newly planted trees are long-living, native, and pollinator-friendly species.
  - Encourage developers to integrate green spaces and trees into residential and commercial projects, mandating that a minimum of 30% of the land is allocated to trees and natural features.

- **Community Engagement and Incentives**
  - Incentivize tree planting by offering free trees, subsidies, and tax discounts to developers, businesses, and residents.
  - Encourage public participation by organizing community planting events and engaging schools, local groups, and businesses in tree care and maintenance.
  - Run educational campaigns highlighting the benefits of urban trees, biodiversity, and proper tree care, including workshops and hands-on planting activities.

- **Partnerships**
  - Partner with organizations, businesses, and local groups to fund tree-planting initiatives, including memorial tree programs and donation drives.
  - Use digital tools to map and plan tree-planting locations, ensuring community involvement in decision-making.

- **Tree Preservation**
  - Avoid clearing forests or natural habitats for development and protect mature trees and established green spaces.
  - Ensure that any necessary tree removal is offset by planting new trees in appropriate locations.
  - Adopt a comprehensive urban forest management plan that prioritizes tree planting, preservation, and the creation of wildlife corridors.

Natural Hazards

Participants were asked what Pickering should do to reduce the potential risk of flooding. The following feedback was received:

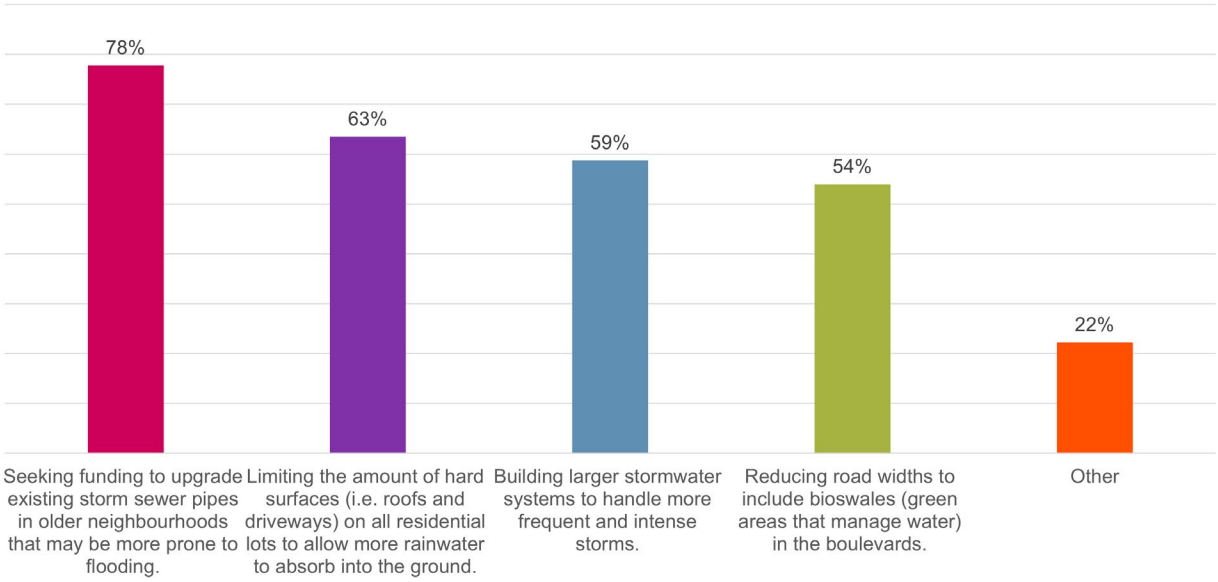

Figure 8 - Summary of options participants think Pickering should consider to reduce the potential risk of flooding. *N = 63*

Figure 8 shows most participants selected "Seeking funding to upgrade existing storm sewer pipes in older neighbourhoods that may be more prone to flooding" (73%) to reduce the potential risk of flooding. Participants also selected "Limiting the amount of hard surfaces (i.e. roofs and driveways) on all residential lots to allow more rainwater to absorb into the ground" (63%).

Additional "Other" (22%) comments are summarized below:

- **Flood Prevention**
  - Protect and preserve green spaces, wetlands, and natural areas as they act as natural "sponges" to absorb floodwaters and reduce flooding.
  - Implement sustainable water management practices, such as green roofs, and systems that return water to nature.
  - Encourage permeable paving materials to allow water absorption and reduce runoff.
  - Naturalize buffer areas and drainage features to improve water flow and prevent flooding.
- **Green Infrastructure**
  - Increase the planting of native trees, shrubs, and plants that absorb water and enhance environmental health.
  - Avoid further development in flood-prone areas where natural landscapes have been replaced with concrete and asphalt.
  - Mandate that new developments integrate flood-resilient infrastructure, including green roofs, stormwater retention systems, and natural drainage solutions.

Sustainability

Participants were asked which of these changes would most support the creation of more sustainable neighbourhoods? The following feedback was received:

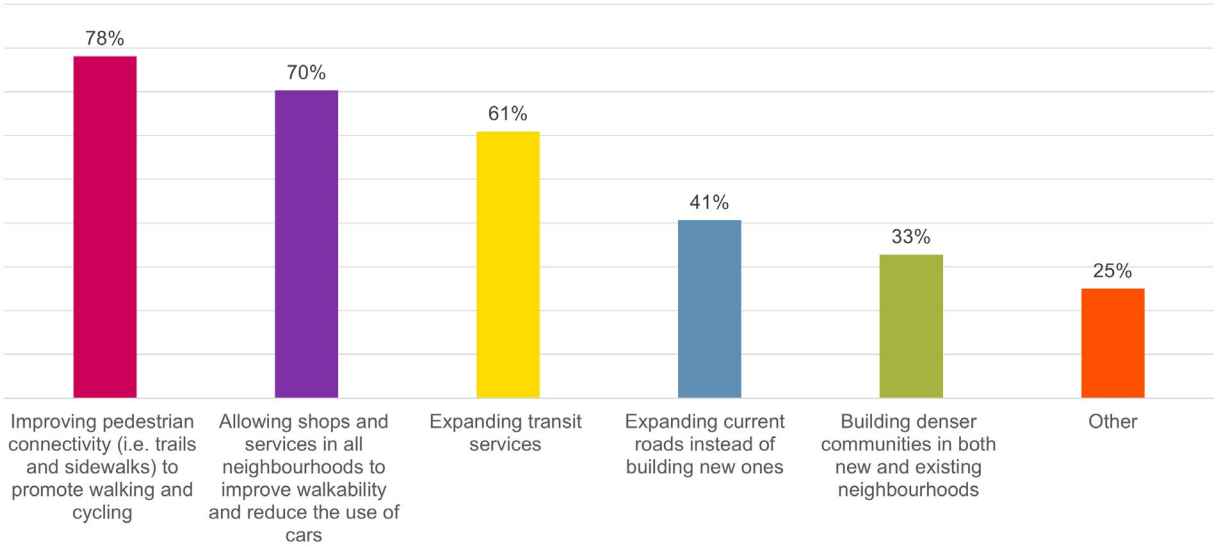

Figure 9 – Summary of changes participants think would most support the creation of more sustainable neighbourhoods. *N = 64*

Figure 9 shows, most participants selected "Improving pedestrian connectivity (i.e. trails and sidewalks) to promote walking and cycling" (78%), followed by "Allowing shops and services in all neighbourhoods to improve walkability and reduce the use of cars" (70%) as the most supportive for creating more sustainable neighbourhoods.

Additional "Other" (25%) comments are summarized below:

- **Local Businesses**
  - Support independent businesses by promoting walkability and local shopping options over big-box chain stores.
  - Encourage community spaces that offer local goods, such as independent coffee shops, to foster local economic growth.
  - Ensure that redevelopment along corridors, such as Kingston Road, does not harm existing businesses.
  - Implement a phased approach to densification to allow local businesses to adapt or relocate within the neighbourhood.

- **Land Use and Growth**
  - Prevent development on agricultural land to protect farmland and preserve vital local food systems.
  - Ensure that redevelopment includes more parkland than the provincial minimum requirements, particularly in higher-density communities.
  - Restrict the height of new buildings to preserve the character of existing neighbourhoods.

- **Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability**
  - Adopt aggressive stormwater management strategies to minimize environmental impacts from development.
  - Ensure that second suites are allowed in areas with large properties served by septic systems to promote affordable housing options.
  - Extend solar electricity rebates to include net metering, allowing residents to earn credits for excess solar power generated.

Participants were asked what Pickering can do to increase sustainable development in new neighbourhoods. The following feedback was received:

- **Walkable Communities**
  - Ensure new developments include public transit, community spaces, schools, shops, parks, and multi-use trails.
  - Increase the density of developments, prioritizing mid-rise, mixed-use buildings to avoid high-rise condominium towers.
  - Stop building new neighbourhoods until existing ones are made sustainable and integrated into the city fabric without disrupting natural areas.

- **Sustainable Building and Design**
  - Mandate green building practices and sustainable infrastructure in new developments (e.g., solar panels, heat pumps, and bird-friendly design).
  - Limit the size and width of driveways.
  - Integrate native plantings, promote community gardens, and encourage the preservation of existing natural areas within developments.
  - Tax new developments more to reflect the true cost of their infrastructure needs and offer tax breaks for sustainable development.

- **Transportation and Infrastructure**
  - Increase transit options, especially in high-density areas, and encourage development near transit hubs such as the GO line.
  - Encourage public transit and emerging transportation technologies, including electric scooters.
  - Plan for safe pedestrian crossings, including sidewalks and bike lanes, particularly near dangerous intersections.

Participants were asked what Pickering can do to promote sustainability in existing neighbourhoods. The following feedback was received:

- **Incentives for Sustainable Practices**
  - Offer homeowners tax breaks, grants, or rebates to install green technologies (e.g., solar panels, greywater systems, permeable paving) and eco-friendly yard improvements.
  - Offer incentives for sustainable construction, such as discounted taxes or reduced development charges for environmentally-friendly projects.
  - Lower taxes for older homes to incentivize preservation and sustainable improvements while raising taxes for new developments.

- **Sustainable Planning**
  - Allow more density (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings) in residential areas to foster walkability and reduce car dependency.
  - Focus on tree preservation and expanding green space, including more parkland, wildflower planting, and natural ecosystems.
  - Ensure developments adhere to existing sustainable and environmentally conscious standards.
  - Address traffic congestion by adding new roadways, traffic-calming devices, and increasing public transit options to reduce car dependency.

- **Walkability and Community**
  - Promote walkable neighbourhoods by improving sidewalks, adding bike lanes, and ensuring pedestrian-friendly paths connect all areas.
  - Include community spaces, such as parks, within walking distance of residential areas to foster social interaction and accessibility.
  - Host community street events and cleanup initiatives to engage residents in environmental efforts and raise awareness about sustainability practices.

Who Participated

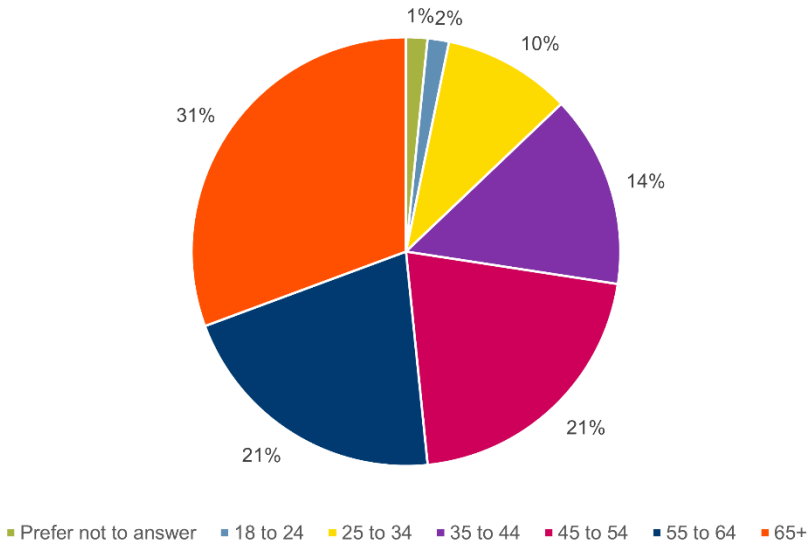

Figure 10 - Summary of participant ages. *N = 62*

Figure 10 shows most survey respondents were between the ages of 55 and 65+ with:

- 31% being 65+.
- 21% between 55 and 64.
- 21% between 45 and 54.
- 14% between 35 and 44.
- 10% between 25 and 34.
- 2% between 18 and 24.

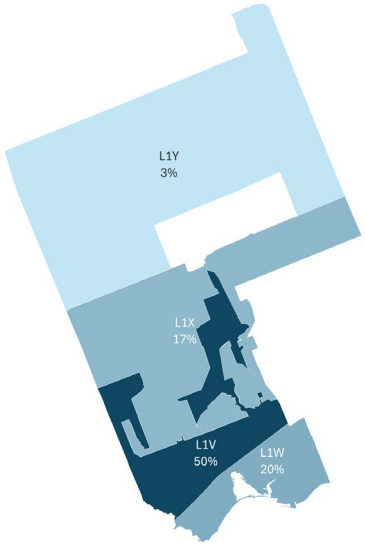

Figure 11 - Summary of participant postal codes. N = 60

Figure 11 shows most survey respondents live in the L1V, L1W, and L1X postal code areas. 50% live in the L1V postal code area, 20% live in the L1W postal code area, and 17% live in the L1X postal code area. Additionally, 3% live in the L1Y postal code area. The remaining 10% were respondents from other postal code areas.

Section 4: Next Steps

Input from this engagement will inform revisions to the Official Plan about Natural Heritage, Hazards, and Sustainability.

The next PIC will be in March 2025 to discuss *Agricultural and Rural Areas*. This will discuss key elements that make up agricultural and rural areas in Pickering, including land uses permitted in agricultural areas, policies to enhance and protect agricultural resources, potential impacts of anticipated urban growth on agricultural and rural settlement areas and possible mitigation measures.

The PICs will provide an opportunity for more detailed conversations on how legislative changes, Pickering initiatives, and best practices will impact each listed topic. Further details on timelines are included below in Figure 12.

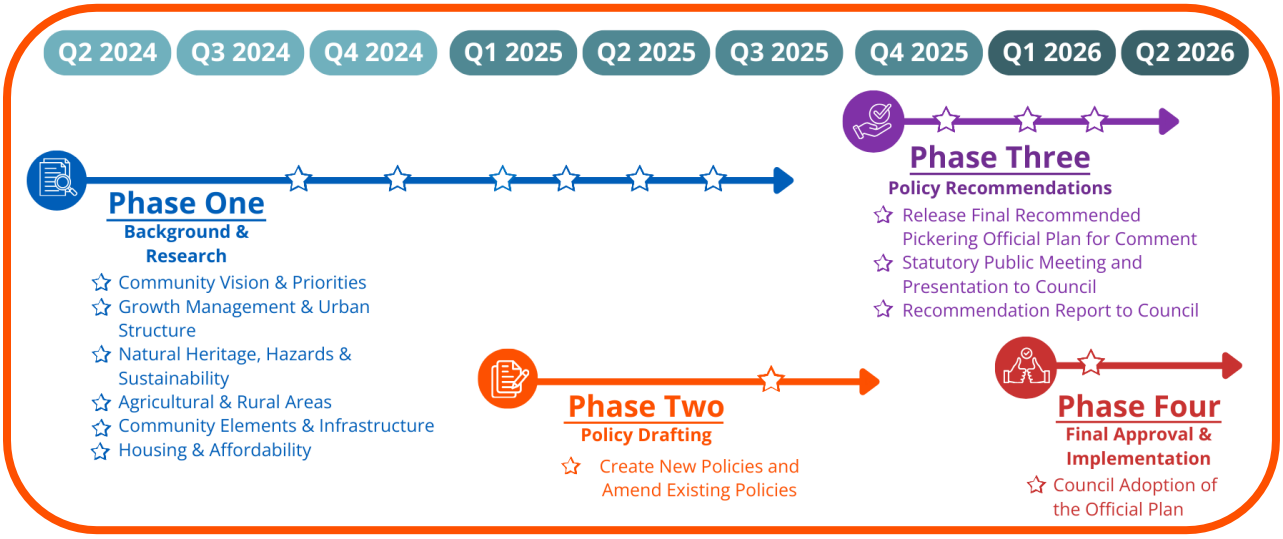

Figure 12 – Illustration of the Pickering Forward phases and breakdown.