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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

The Town of Sutton's first participatory budget: a success at all levels

Sutton, November 2, 2023 – The Town of Sutton is proud to announce the result of its first participatory budget for which the sum of \$50,000 was allocated. Some 875 ballots were cast by eligible voters aged 10 and over – an exceptionally high participation rate of 18.7%. The winning project receiving the highest level of support was for a dog park. In addition, in line with the recommendation of the steering committee the Council decided to allocate an extra \$2,500 for the runner-up, a turtle crossing, which will also be realized by the end of 2024.

“The members of the Council and I warmly thank everyone who participated in the process. I am delighted that citizens have reacted with such enthusiasm to this new method of direct involvement in improving the quality of life in our community. The quality of the projects submitted, the very positive comments of citizens, and the high participation rate all contributed to the success at all levels of the Town of Sutton's first participatory budget.” commented Robert Benoît, Mayor of the Town of Sutton.

An “exceptional” level of participation!

To encourage the involvement of citizens in the proposal of projects, four public meetings were held both in person and online. In this first year 29 projects were proposed, 16 were judged eligible and after a process of consolidation and assessment for feasibility, 12 were submitted for the vote. Voting was available online and in person with supervised voting stations at the Tourist Office, the Municipal and School Library, and at voting events held at Sutton Junction, Glen Sutton, Sutton's Market, the Maison des Jeunes and Les Villas des Monts seniors' residence. These efforts, along with a communications plan that used the Town's dedicated web site [Dream Sutton](#), social media, posters and a flyer appear to have contributed to a substantially higher participation rate than the average for other Towns, which is typically between 1-3%.

Participatory budget process

The participatory budget is one where funds are allocated for projects that are proposed, developed, and voted for by citizens. For its first year, [the Town Council mandated the Quality of Life Advisory Committee](#) to recommend its process and its implementation. To ensure best practices, the Committee was advised by the Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal who also managed the online voting.

The Town Council confirmed their decision by resolution at the public meeting of 1 November 2023, thus the winning projects move on to the realization stage. These projects must be completed by the end of 2024. The public will be kept informed of the work progress, in which citizens may be invited to participate.

The Town of Sutton would like to congratulate and thank all the members of the first participatory budget's steering committee for their exemplary work, especially Sylvie Grégoire, Chair of the Quality of Life Advisory Committee, Lynda Graham, Councillor for District 5, and Thérèse Leclerc, former Councillor for District 1.

For consultation: [List of projects submitted to the vote](#)

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Source:

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