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Sutton's Urban Plan and By-Laws Revision

my Sutton

Summary | Open House
Participation Activity on the
Preliminary Version of the
Urban Plan



Table of Contents

Context	03
Proposed Themes	06
Assignments	07
Sensitive Environments	08
Housing	09
Active and Sustainable Mobility	09
Town Entrances	09
Strategic and Distinct Sectors	10

TITLE PAGE

Principale Nord Street
Arpent, 2025

BOTTOM

A look back at the open house evening in pictures
Arpent, 2025



Context

Introduction

Developing the Urban Plan with the Residents of Sutton

The Town of Sutton held an open house on June 26, 2025, to present preliminary versions of its new Urban Plan to the public. The goal of this event was twofold: first, to share the plan's progress in a clear and accessible way; second, to gather feedback from residents in order to identify areas of consensus and areas of concern.

On site, several themed kiosks allowed visitors to explore the plan's main objectives, land use, village centre development, rural and agroforestry environments, and areas of special interest. Teams from the Town and L'Arpent were on hand to answer questions and engage in discussions.

Citizens were able to share their comments and suggestions. The discussions highlighted certain issues, constructive proposals, and several points of agreement on the main directions for the development of the territory. The comments received helped to improve the preliminary Urban Plan by anchoring it more firmly in local realities and considering the concerns expressed by the population.

This document summarizes the comments gathered during this activity. It aims to provide an accurate overview of what was heard, in the spirit of an open and collaborative process.

RIGHT

A look back at the open house evening in pictures
Arpent, 2025

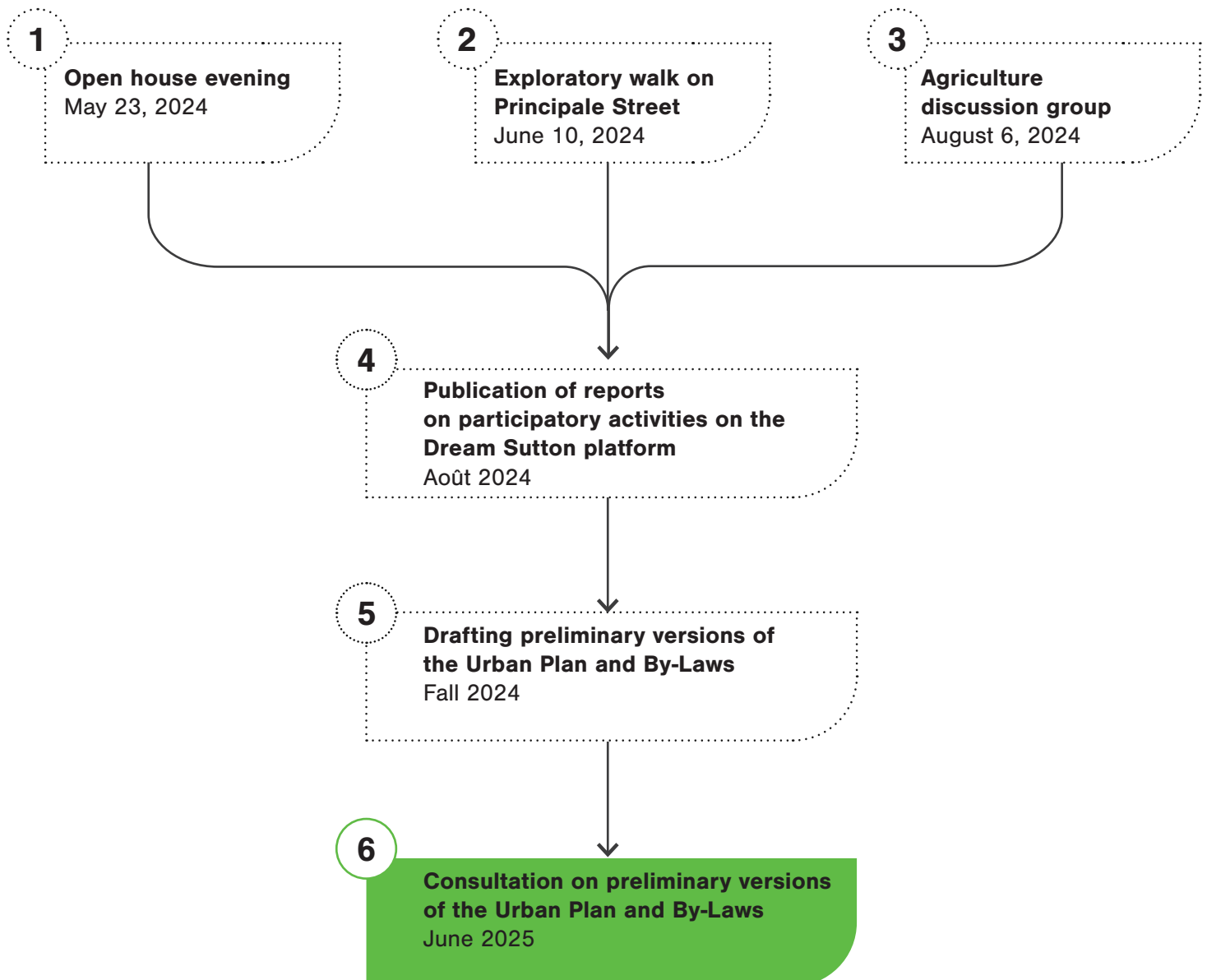


The Participatory Approach

The revision of the Urban Plan and regulations is accompanied by a public consultation process that gives all citizens, key players in regional development, municipal employees, and elected officials the opportunity to express their views on the future of land use planning in Sutton.

The consultation process has three main objectives, namely:

1. Establish and cultivate constructive dialogue between citizens, elected officials, and municipal administration staff regarding the process of revising urban planning tools.
2. Conduct a survey of citizen's aspirations and concerns regarding land use planning in Sutton.
3. Bring out collective intelligence and co-construct the knowledge that feeds into the revision work and the content put forward in the Urban Plan and the regulatory changes that will follow.



Summary of Comments

PAM : «Landscapes» or «protection» of Medium Altitude?

Name Change

- This element generated several comments from the public. Several citizens are concerned about the proposed change in terminology from “protection” to “landscape”, which is perceived as weakening the intention to protect. They are asking for clear explanations about this change and the reasons behind it.
- Participants suggested adopting a rating system to recognize the variable value of landscapes and thus guide interventions.

Authorized Activities

- Residents have raised questions about the activities permitted in this area, particularly those involving sugar shacks and maple groves, noting that they are becoming even more restricted than they currently are.

Redrawing of Boundaries

- Some comments made by participants concerned the harmonization of PAM zone boundaries with lot boundaries. This redrawing of boundaries is seen by some as a measure of administrative simplification and by others as a means of extending the areas included in this designation. A few people expressed concern that their land is now entirely included in this designation.

Discussion on the Regulatory Framework

- In general, people want more visibility on the regulatory framework in PAM zones.
- In addition, concerns have been raised about the future interpretation of By-Laws by CCU members.
- Citizens want a certain degree of predictability regarding the standards that will apply so that they can plan what they will be able to do on their land.
- The prescriptive approach is generally preferred to the discretionary approach for the regulatory framework.

Ecological Interest and Conservation

Ecological Connectivity

- Concerns were raised about the impact of development in the PAM zone on ecological corridors and agricultural land. In this regard, participants mentioned that it would be important for the Urban Plan to be consistent with new government guidelines on land use planning, particularly about ecological connectivity, in order to better protect these areas by limiting residential development within and around them. For example, it was suggested that the ecological corridors connecting the village to the mountain be identified and that all density be prohibited there.
- Participants working in agriculture expressed concerns about restrictions near waterways.

Land Use Designation

Proposed Industrial Reserve

Deterioration of the Landscape at the Entrance to the Town

Residents have expressed concerns about the introduction of an industrial reserve zone near the industrial park, fearing that it will obstruct the view of the mountains and degrade the landscape. With this in mind, some wish to preserve the open spaces.

Centre for Creation and Innovation

Openness and Interest

- Participants are generally open to the idea of redeveloping the former Les Rochers Bleus golf course for a purpose related to innovation in the environmental, agricultural, or technology sectors.

Recreational Tourism

Supervision of Activities on the Missisquoi River

- Several citizens questioned the regulation of recreational tourism activities on the Missisquoi River, citing issues such as parking, poorly supervised boat launches, and low usage of wash stations. The need for stricter regulation was mentioned.

Access to the River at the Diable Vert Site

- Comments were made regarding river tubing, which is perceived as harmful to the environment. It was suggested that the Town negotiate an agreement with the site owner to allow residents public access to the river.

Sensitive Environments

Agricultural Activities

Regulatory Framework

- Several people expressed a desire to relax By-Laws on ancillary buildings and agricultural and agri-food uses. Some said that one of the priorities of the Urban Plan should be to support farmers through regulatory relief.

Natural and Aquatic Environments

Environmental Quality

- Comments were made regarding the deterioration of the riverbanks and the presence of Japanese knotweed.
- A loss of tranquility in the Glen Sutton area was also mentioned.

Housing

Densification of the Urbanization Perimeter

Reactions to the Proposed Densification

- Some citizens have expressed their opposition to densification, raising the fact that the village risks becoming similar to many other rapidly growing villages. In general, however, it is well understood that the intention is to limit densification in the village to discreet additions to existing buildings. The work carried out by the Ensemble has been useful and well received.

Densification within the Village

- Participants mentioned that the Urban Plan should, as far as possible, specify whom the proposed densification is intended for.

Planning Objectives and Vision

- Citizens argue that to properly plan Sutton's development, a long-term target/threshold for new residents should be included in the Urban Plan. Some have suggested incorporating into the plan a target or expected range of new residents based on capacity, projects in the planning stages, and land to be consolidated and redeveloped.
- It has been suggested that the vision for densifying the urban perimeter should be formulated based on the aspirations and needs of the community rather than on infrastructure constraints.

Accessibility and Affordability of the Residential Park

Alignment between Vision and Housing Issues

- Some people argue that the vision and guidelines make no mention of residential accessibility and affordability. They have
- expressed concern about the skyrocketing cost of home ownership and the difficulty local workers have in finding housing
- in Sutton.
- A target of 20% affordable housing has been proposed.

Active and Sustainable Mobility

Integrating Active Mobility Issues

- Some participants believe that the vision should include more sustainable and active mobility and that there should be a focus on integrated planning of active transport networks and development.
- Citizens want a master plan for sustainable and active mobility.

Town Entrances

Consistency in Protection and Enhancement Measures

- Some people feel that the entrances to the village are better protected than the village centre itself. Several people believe that it is the village that should be protected and promoted. Citizens have also expressed their disagreement with the construction of multi-unit housings on Route 139, south of the village.

Strategic and Distinct Sectors

Mountain Sector

Element of Tension

- There is considerable tension over development in the Mountain area. While some people want a complete ban, others want to build there. In all cases, there is general agreement that the Mountain sector should be subject to a comprehensive framework.

Les enjeux potentiels perçus

- Many people do not want to see the infrastructure upgraded to allow the sector to develop and say they do not want to “pick up the bill” for the work.
- In addition, the development of the Mountain sector is raising concerns about the carrying capacity of the already saturated road network and the potential loss of forest cover.

Mobile Home Park

Maintaining the Sector

- The mobile home park is seen as an essential area for maintaining affordable housing in Sutton. Many fear that redevelopment would force residents to leave. The idea of the Town acquiring the land was put forward as an opportunity to limit speculation and control the future of the site.

Vieux-Verger Special Planning Program

Access to Information and Transparency

- Several residents were unaware of the project and would like to be better informed. The fact that the developer was carrying out the planning process without any municipal presence was criticized.

RIGHT

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