

**National Capital Greenbelt Master Plan Public Advisory Group (PAG)
Meeting #2 Minutes**

**May 4, 2026
Algonquin College – Nawapon Room
1385 Woodroffe Avenue, D111, Ottawa**

Participants

PAG members (in-person):

- Donna DuBreuil – Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre
- Trudy Hall – Crystal Bay Community Association
- Paul Johanis – Greenspace Alliance
- Kate MacNeil – Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre (observer)
- Ian McConnachie – Crystal Beach Lakeview Community Association
- Erin Rosewell – Leslie Park Community Association
- James Terhune – West Barrhaven Community Association
- Neil Thomson – Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association
- Deb Sonogo – Bridlewood Community Association

PAG members (virtual):

- Rob Attrell – Convent Glen Orleans Wood Community Association
- Amanda Brewster – Cedarhill Community Association
- Catherine de Carlo – Chapel Hill North Community Association
- Andrei Grushman – Hunt Club Community Association
- Arto Keklikian – CPAWS Ottawa Valley
- Ian McMartin – Bells Corners BIA
- Kate Twiss – Crystal Beach Lakeview Community Association (observer)
- William van Geest – Ecology Ottawa

NCC staff:

- Fabrice Beiney (Capital Planning)
- Patricia McCann-MacMillan (Capital Planning)
- Kelly McRae (Capital Planning)
- Cédric Pelletier (PPLA)
- Michelle Prévost-Bisson (PPLA)
- Ryan Kleinau (PPLA)
- Andrew Sacret (Capital Planning)

#	Member	Item
Part 1: Introduction		
	NCC	Meeting protocols for in-person and virtual participation were outlined, including microphone use, speaking order, and accessibility considerations. Members may participate using either official language. Welcome and introductions: - Land acknowledgement - Health and safety instructions (bathrooms, emergency exits) - Agenda
Part 2: Public Advisory Group Terms of Reference		
	NCC	The PAG Terms of Reference were reviewed and changes were made; members were invited to provide any additional comments or questions. The updated Terms of Reference will be distributed following the meeting, with hard copies available for those attending in person. Paul Johannis (Greenspace Alliance) was announced as the co-chair for the Public Advisory Group.
Part 3: Introduction to the Vision and Guiding Principles for the Greenbelt Master Plan (Project Team Presentation)		
	NCC	The project team provided an introduction to the draft Vision and each of the four Guiding Principles for the Greenbelt Master Plan. Additional context was provided noting that the content shared during the meeting would be made public at the upcoming public participation activities scheduled later in May 2026.
Part 4: Discussion		
	NCC	Opportunity for feedback on the draft Vision; PAG members to seek clarification, and identify strengths and areas for improvement.
		Project team response
	W. van Geest	Concerns were raised about whether the Vision should emphasize national representativeness or focus more strongly on the regional context of the Greenbelt. Would be difficult to be representative as a result of Canada's diversity and size; wanted to know The intent is for the Greenbelt to serve as heritage for all Canadians, due to its location in Canada's national capital. Of note is the members' focus on ensuring coherence across land uses and

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		what the team had in mind when the Vision was drafted.	jurisdictions throughout the Greenbelt, rather than planning individual areas in isolation.
	P. Johanis	Raised concerns about the use of the word “park,” noting that the Greenbelt may not represent or be considered a park in the traditional sense.	
	W. van Geest	<i>Via chat:</i> “Agricultural park” in particular seems striking; ‘natural park’ would seem to fit better, but Paul’s point still stands.	
	E. Rosewell	Agreed with Paul – not sure it is representative of the function of the Greenbelt. Also suggested removal of the word “rural” as this edit would allow the statement to be broader.	
	A. Keklikian	Agreed with the use of the word “park” – CPAWS agreed with natural agricultural park. Curious about the “renewal” language; whether it reflects renewal of the Greenbelt or in perpetuity. Supported the language “protecting/protection”. It’s very important that the plan reflect the key functions of the Greenbelt.	
	A. Brewster	<i>Via chat:</i> Good points. If the NCC’s mandate/scope is to focus on the national capital area, then yes, it seems like the vision wording would align with this.	
	D. Dubreuil	Need to think about the primary role of the Greenbelt; it was a consideration in the last review. Wanted to know whether the hierarchy established in the 2013 plan	Appreciates the comment – PAG’s role is to also identify things that may be missing.

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		had been eliminated, and whether there was room to seek protected status for the Greenbelt.	
	D. Sonego	No issue with the language on “park”; there are federal parks. Offered “wilderness” as another viable solution for language.	
	I. McConnachie	Wondered whether there was a place in the vision for a specific designation of the Greenbelt as an entity requiring a legally binding protected status; would be a good way to protect what we have.	
	NCC	Opportunity for feedback on the guiding principles; PAG members to seek clarification, and identify strengths and areas for improvement.	
			Project team response
	<i>Responsible leadership</i>		
	P. Johanis	The Greenbelt is different; while it operates within a national framework, there was interest in whether leadership should more strongly reflect a regional perspective. Noted that, although governed by a nationally appointed Board, the Greenbelt has a strong local reality and may warrant a higher profile in that regard. It was also noted that it is not necessarily a park in the same sense as Gatineau Park, nor a comparable visitor attraction.	Feedback is being sought on how the Greenbelt’s role could be considered from a national or international perspective.
	A. Brewster	<i>Via chat:</i> From the NCC’s website: The National Capital Commission is a federal Crown corporation created by Canada’s Parliament in 1959 under the <i>National Capital Act</i> . So it makes	

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		sense that the Vision is to reflect all of Canada (where practical/possible).	
	D. Dubreuil	Needs to come from the ground up – NCC should do more with stewardship. If protection and the environmental services provided by the Greenbelt are the end goal, this should also be kept in mind in light of development pressures.	
	A. Keklikian	Liked the fact that it suggests proactive collaboration – but cautioned that it could be detrimental (land use issues and jurisdiction). Higher status legal protection should still be a consideration.	On the first principle, we speak not only about collaboration but coherence and agreement between the different areas (for example, west and east) and different levels/areas of government. Federal partnerships are also important to consider.
	W. van Geest	Use of the word “leadership” – who is leading, and who is being led; and what is the purpose? Suggest that a better characterization of what the NCC seems to be after here is "exemplary stewardship".	Implied that the NCC would lead as the land holders; interests would need to be kept in mind. Perhaps it is less about the “leadership” and more about the stewardship of the lands on behalf of Canadians.
	N. Thomson	Referenced involvement in the change of the Kanata golf course into housing; drainage on Kizell Creek (NCC lands, combined with provincial planning) is an issue. Noted that there will be different pressures – including factors like climate resilience (major storms, for example).	Also important to consider that projects like the one referenced could be done in a sustainable way.
	P. Johanis	Housing isn’t referenced in the plan; need to consider how housing	

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		pressures could be addressed in the future.	
	D. Dubreuil	Community stewardship should be key in the plan; work between the City of Ottawa and the NCC isn't always clear. Allies in the community can help alleviate concerns by supporting the shared goal of protection.	One of the NCC's best resources could be the Community Associations. They could help the NCC in their efforts to withstand the pressures put on the Greenbelt by the City of Ottawa and other jurisdictions.
	<i>Ecological integrity</i>		
	D. Dubreuil	Ottawa doesn't have a biodiversity strategy; unless there is an action plan to implement commitments, it would be meaningless. This provides an opportunity, but the plan should move beyond "nice words".	Trying to provide current information; looking to receive results of studies that will be shared with the PAG to inform potential strategies.
	W. van Geest	"Protecting" is present in this principle but less explicit in the Vision. Protecting implies status quo; we should do better (similar to the way this is emphasized in the Vision). Could be reiterated here.	
	A. Keklikian	Liked "protecting" – it implies guarding against infringement or loss and infringement. Not sure about protecting not being a strong term and put emphasis on importance of protection. Ecological links also important – essential to the "living legacy" of the Greenbelt; depends on its connectivity with other green infrastructure. Connectivity is an essential part of a living, green legacy.	

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	W. van Geest	<i>Via chat:</i> Another example of going beyond the status quo, as I was vouching for, would be to restore connectivity that's since been lost – to build off Arto's intervention.	
	<i>Agricultural vitality</i>		
	W. van Geest	Asked about the impact and significance of agricultural activity in the Greenbelt. Food security is a critical aspect of resiliency planning – could be included instead of sufficiency. Information can influence wording. How much food is being produced in the Greenbelt?	Wording could be adjusted; would need to look into impacts of the farms located in the Greenbelt. Clarified intent of the use of “significance” – it was a difficulty in coming up with the wording for this principle.
	D. Dubreuil	Greenbelt is used by so many in the community – should be celebrated and made something the community is well aware of. NCC could do a better job in partnership with the community.	
	A. Keklikian	Assumes vision supports guiding principles, which then support policies/actions. Research done in the review of the plan should also influence the wording – proportion for capital and beyond.	
	D. Dubreuil	Saw back in 2013 that there were parallel studies ongoing that the PAG wasn't informed of; hopes that this time around the PAG will be informed of these studies (cultural heritage, wildlife inventory study).	Will see how materials and study results can be distributed in a structured way.
	D. Sonego	No clear delineation between importance; for example, between ecosystems and agricultural vitality	Not about expanding farms, but using the existing farming lands in more sustainable

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		(would natural lands be exchanged for agricultural, for example).	ways, as well as an understanding on how to better make use of the lands being used based on their purpose.
	Capital experience		
	A. Keklikian	Guiding principles, vision could reflect the unique nature of the Greenbelt and why it is unique, rather than its location in the capital. This is not currently evident.	
	N. Thomson	When people aren't happy, it's often due to missing education on something – this is an opportunity to educate residents and visitors on the Greenbelt, its purpose, and its amenities.	
Part 5: Next Steps			
NCC	Overview of upcoming public participation activities happening later this month; including an online public survey and three public open houses (May 20 at Nepean Sportsplex; May 21 at St. Laurent Mall; May 26 at Richcraft Recreation Complex). PAG members are encouraged to participate and share information on the participation activities with their networks.		
			Project team response
D. Dubreuil	Wanted to know how the feedback will be gathered at the open houses.	Feedback will be received through sticky notes on the panels, discussion questions, as well as through conversations with specialists.	
P. Johanis	Wanted to know whether the survey could be shared in advance with PAG members for their feedback.	Survey is currently in translation but would have to confirm if it is possible to share in advance.	

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	D. Dubreuil	Asked for clarification on the schedule outlined in the Terms of Reference, noting that four meetings per year are referenced, while only two are scheduled in 2026. Clarified that the TORs refer to four meetings across 2026-27. Schedule in TOR document is also a suggestion – PAG may meet more frequently as needed.
	NCC	Members were then invited to provide feedback on the draft panels, which will be available during the open house events. Feedback was provided in writing – using sticky notes placed directly on the panels for in-person participants – and through an online tool for those participating virtually. All feedback was noted by the project team.
	P. Johanis	Panels are quite information heavy; may need to be reduced slightly to be more concise.
	D. Dubreuil	Vision and guiding principles should be presented earlier in the series of panels.
	P. Johanis	Content you want feedback on should be presented first.
	NCC	Thanked PAG members for the valuable feedback provided during the meeting; team will be back in touch soon regarding details on the upcoming consultation.