



Town of Bentley

**COMMUNITY**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2024 - 2028**



Parkland Community Planning Services





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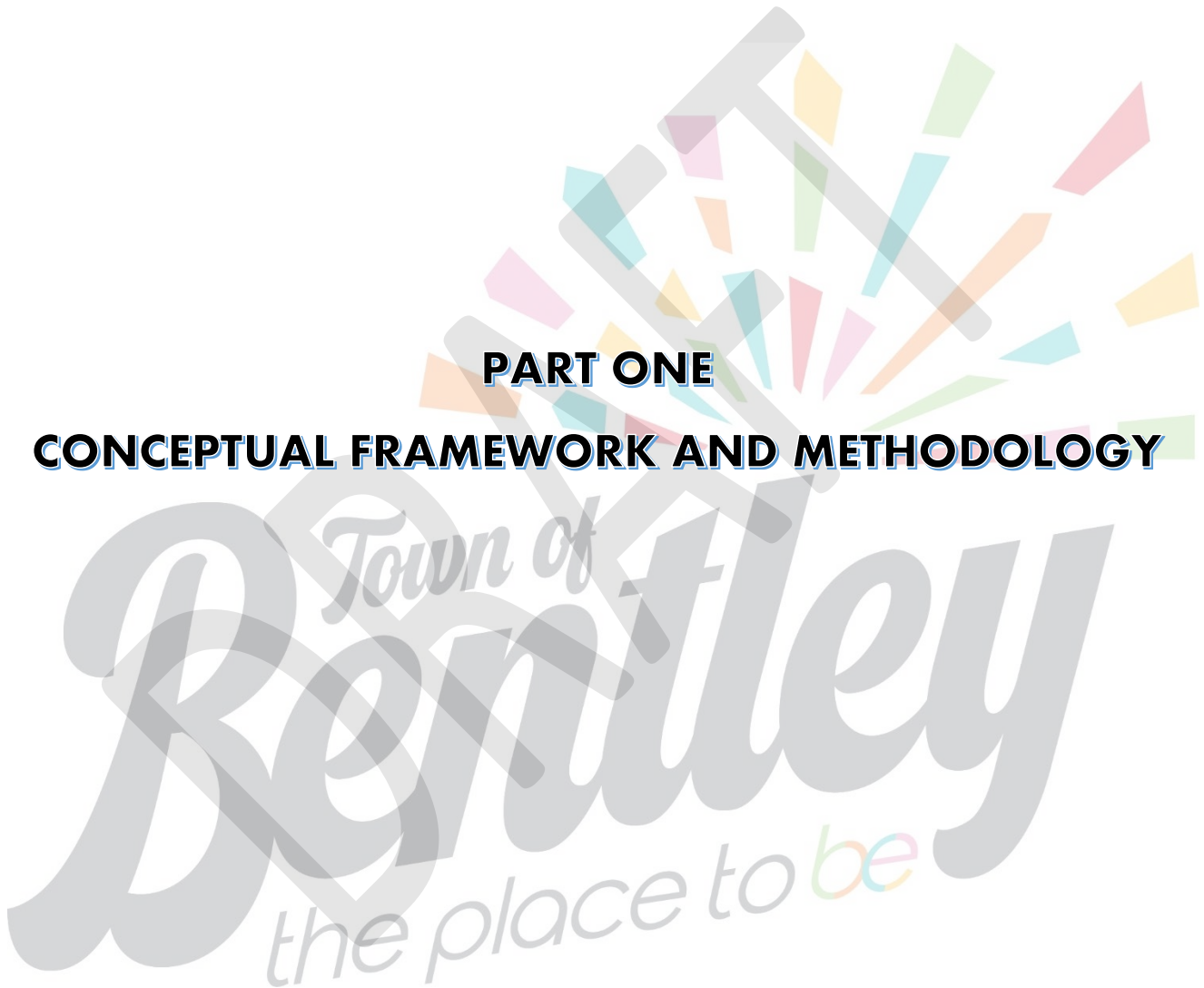


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Town of Bentley  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2028

**PART ONE**  
**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY**



## WHAT DEFINES A STRATEGIC PLAN?

A Strategic Plan serves as a comprehensive blueprint guiding the municipality's actions and decisions within a specified timeline. It comprises essential elements including Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Actions, providing an integrated approach to addressing the strategic challenges confronting the community. This forward-looking document not only identifies opportunities and challenges but also establishes priorities, offering a clear direction for informed decision-making.

The strategic foresight developed in the plan may extend to the incorporation of measures and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for evaluating and managing performance, ensuring accountability and success tracking.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

A (Community) Strategic Plan is the foundation upon which municipal plans and budgets are created and allocated. By setting key strategies and primary actions in response to community needs and aspirations, it serves as a shared vision that represents elected officials, municipal employees and community members. This pivotal plan not only keeps employees focused on priority tasks, but also informs a profound sense of direction to the community, fostering a shared understanding.

Moreover, a shared vision and sense of direction acts as a cornerstone in building trust and consensus between community members and the Municipality. When the community envisions the destination, the anticipated outcomes, and the milestones, a heightened sense of forward momentum takes root, drawing in new residents and businesses.

A central role of the Strategic Plan is the alignment of community resources, including funding, staff time, equipment, materials and supplies, as well as volunteer time and energy, with key priorities. It facilitates the allocation of budgets for strategic actions and streamlines the approval process for new development and business proposals, ensuring they harmonize with the community's principal plans and growth strategies.

## COMPONENTS OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

Generally, a Strategic Plan consists of four key components:

- Communication and Collaboration
- Prioritization
- Action
- Evaluation

A Community Strategic Plan represents a dynamic and interconnected document. Regular review and updates ensure its adaptability to evolving circumstances, fostering a resilient and responsive framework for the municipality's strategic actions (see Figure 1).

**Fig 1) Community Strategic Plan-Key Components**



- **Communication and Collaboration**

A (community) strategic plan communicates the vision to both internal and external stakeholders in the community. The strategic plan process includes communication with residents to learn about their vision, desires and needs. This is combined with the vision of the elected officials and administration to finalise the community’s vision, goals, and objectives. The strategic plan communicates to the municipality manager (the Chief Administration Officer) what is important and where to allocate staff and financial resources. Further, the strategic plan communicates to staff why they do what they do and how they can support the vision of the governing body. A strategic plan is very helpful to new councillors as a communication tool for the previous governing body’s vision for the community.

- **Prioritization**

A key benefit of a strategic plan is the ability to prioritize issues and resources to achieve the goals of the community. The primary benefits of prioritization can be summarized here. First, using a strategic plan as a prioritization tool ensures that the Municipality’s administration and elected officials are working together on the same goals and objectives.

Second, the elected officials can allocate financial resources through the annual budget process to support their agreed upon priorities as identified in the strategic plan.

Finally, the connection between the strategic plan and financial resource allocation through the budget process also supports transparency in the use of public funds.

- **Action**

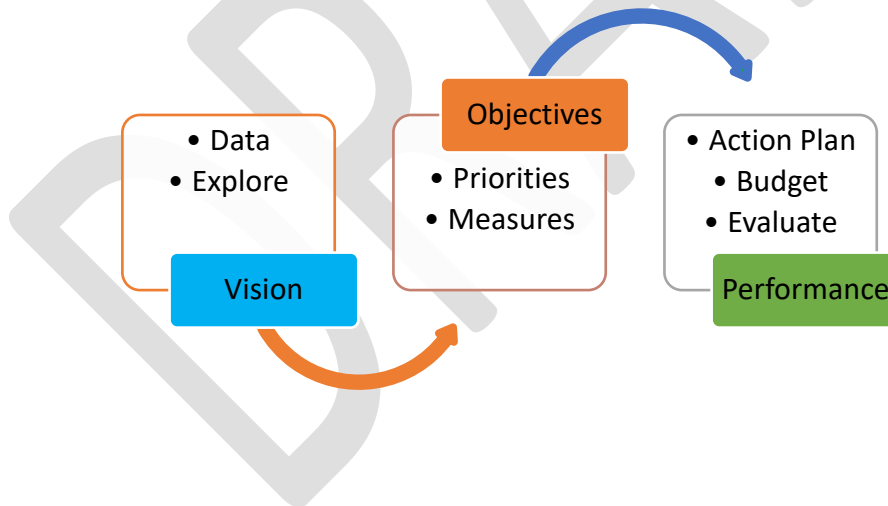
The strategic plan serves as a framework for the municipality Administration to achieve the goals and priorities of the Council. Almost every recommendation provided by administration can and should be connected back to the Community Strategic Plan in some way.

- **Evaluation**

Elected officials can use the strategic plan as part of their annual evaluation process of the Municipality Administration. Both the Administration (CAO) and the Council can discuss the goals achieved or accomplishments over the past year and can discuss improvements, successes, and challenges in the context of the goals and strategies adopted by the Council.

Finally, providing regular updates regarding the Municipality’s plans and activities is an ideal means of informing the public. Residents can track progress on projects, goals, and strategies on a regular basis. This activity provides a level of transparency as well, giving real-time information on key issues in the community.

**Fig 2) Strategic Plan Development Process**

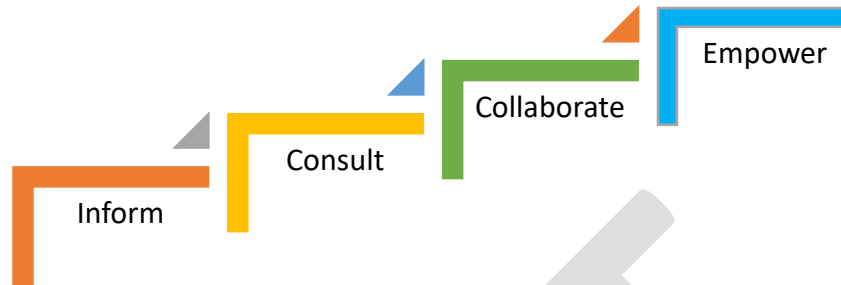


## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Determining Council’s preferences on community engagement was a key decision for the start of the process. There are generally four levels of Community Engagement in the Planning process: Informing, Consulting, Collaborating, and Empowerment. (Figure 3)



**Fig 3) Community Engagement Process**



**Inform:** Providing balanced and objective information through various channels. Examples:

- Media: newspapers, TV, social media
- Print material: brochures, fact sheets
- Website
- Open house

**Consult:** Obtaining input and feedback from community members to help identify needs and assets, set priorities, or make decisions. Examples:

- Resident panel
- Networking
- Community survey
- Focus groups

**Collaborate:** Partnering with community members in an ongoing, interactional process of planning and decision-making; community members provide advice, innovation and recommendations that are reflected in the final outcomes. Examples:

- Advisory/steering committee
- Policy roundtable
- Consensus-building events

**Empower:** Providing support to enable community members to define issues and create solutions. Community members lead and control the process. Examples:

- Community coalitions
- Citizen committees
- Neighborhood associations

Small municipalities often prefer the inform and/or consult levels of engagement, particularly if this is a new initiative. If Council employs the inform method of community engagement, then social media, print materials, fact sheets, and website distribution are key methods to showcase the proposed plan and



obtain community input. If Council decides to use the “Consult” method of community engagement, then create a community survey and set up town hall meetings and focus groups. For small communities, these activities may be only one or two meetings based on the size of the community.

## METHODOLOGY and PROCESS

The proposed "Community Strategic Plan" for the Town of Bentley has been carefully crafted by the PCPS team, orchestrated through a comprehensive four-phase process.

### **PHASE I) Background Information and Analysis**

During the initial phase, the project team thoroughly reviewed the previous strategic plans and compiled essential socio-demographic data. Collaborating with Council and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the team conducted a detailed analysis, exploring the current community landscape, including its opportunities and challenges.

### **PHASE II) Community Engagement**

This phase was dedicated to fostering community participation. The project team:

1. Provided information to the public regarding the strategic plan.
2. Crafted a comprehensive survey questionnaire to solicit input from stakeholders.
3. Collected and review all stakeholders' comments and insights, presenting validated inputs to Council for inclusion in the Strategic Plan.

### **PHASE III) Identify Municipality's Priorities through Brainstorming and Collaboration**

In Phase III, the project team facilitated a dynamic one-day workshop with Council and the CAO, aiming to:

1. Review and delineate the current Challenges and Opportunities of the community.
2. Review and Integrate the results of the community survey.
3. Recreate a Shared Vision for the Community.
4. Strategically prioritize key objectives for the upcoming years.
5. Establish Performance Measures to evaluate the progress.

### **PHASE IV) Prepare a Draft Community Strategic Plan**

In the final phase, the project team crafted the Community Strategic Plan, encompassing:

1. Vision statement
2. Objectives and Priorities
3. Action Plan
4. Performance Measurement (Evaluation) Method

### **PHASE V) Building Consensus and Completion of the Final Draft**



After collecting and considering Council and Administration’s inputs, through conducting a Public Meeting/Open House the draft Strategic Plan went through a comprehensive review and refinement with the community. Final draft of the Strategic Plan was prepared in consultation with Council and the CAO, ensuring alignment with their insights and feedback.

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**PART TWO**  
**BENTLEY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2024 - 2028**



## Introduction

Town of Bentley Community Strategic Plan is designed to create a thriving community with improved quality of life, vibrant economic and business development, robust recreational opportunities, strong partnerships with government, effective asset management, and diverse housing options. Through effective implementation and ongoing community engagement, the objectives and priorities outlined in this plan will help build a brighter future for all residents.

It is crucial to clarify that

1. This Strategic Plan is crafted to empower any community member or organization to take the lead on its initiatives. It encourages individuals who feel capable of championing or leading specific actions to step forward. By not assigning specific leaders, the Plan allows community members the flexibility to lead initiatives where they see fit. While certain actions may require leadership from the Town of Bentley, many are designed for the broader community. This approach aims to empower community members to take charge and drive the initiatives forward.
2. The goals, objectives and priorities outlined in the plan are not ranked in any particular order. The pursuit of any of these initiatives depends on the availability of funding and other resources which are ultimately determined by the Town Council.

## Vision

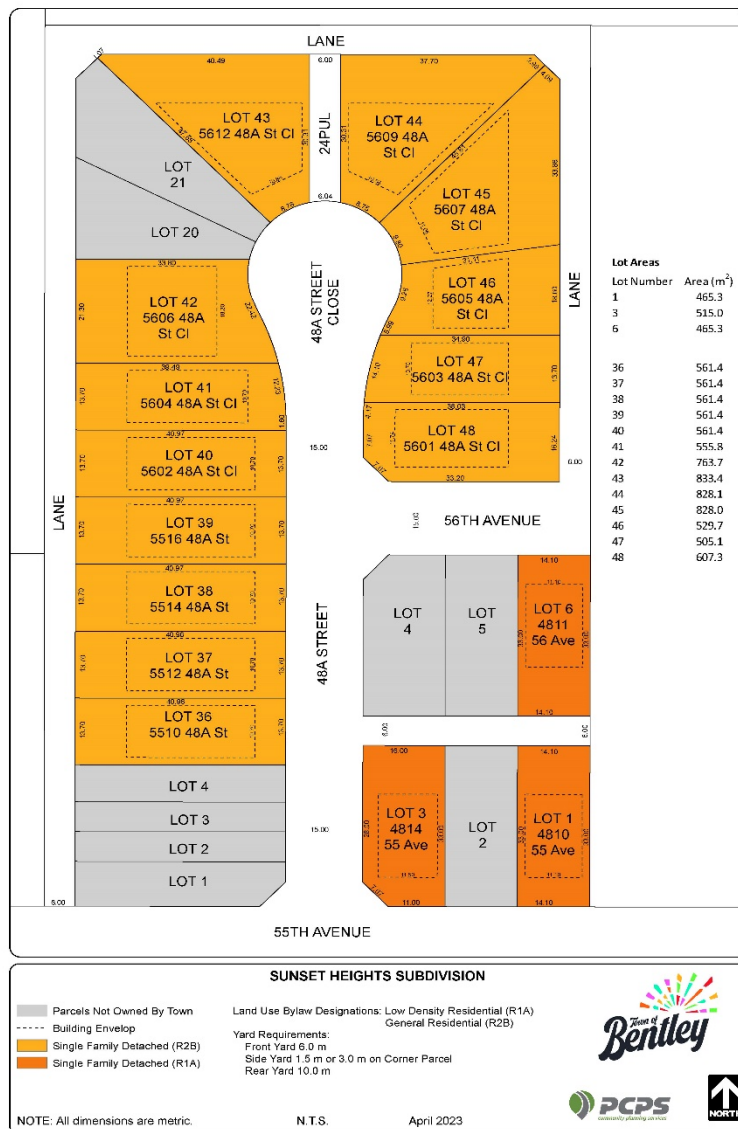
*The Town of Bentley is a community offering a high quality of life that is safe, clean, attractive, affordable and family-oriented. Bentley celebrates community spirit where citizens are actively involved in shaping the future of the community as “The Place To Be.”*

## Our Core Values

- **Community-Centric:** We prioritize the needs and desires of our residents.
- **Collaboration:** We work together with various stakeholders to achieve our goals.
- **Inclusivity:** We aim for equitable access and diverse opportunities for everyone.

# Goal 1

## Improve Quality of Life to Encourage Development and Population Growth



## Goal 1: Improve Quality of Life to Encourage Development and Population Growth

Continued efforts to improve the quality of life are key to attracting new residents and promoting sustainable growth. This goal emphasizes enhancing community safety and engagement, as well as addressing affordable housing to meet the needs of a growing population.

### Objective 1.1: Enhance Community Safety and Engagement

Community safety and engagement are foundational for a high quality of life. This objective aims to educate the community on public safety and facilitate events that promote social unity and a sense of belonging.

#### Priority Action 1.1.1: Educate the Community on Public Safety

- Educating the community on public safety through publications and open houses raises awareness and promotes a safer environment. This action involves providing clear, accessible information on safety practices.
  - **KPI:** Number of publications circulated; Number of events held to share information about safety programs

#### Priority Action 1.1.2: Support and Facilitate Community Events and Activities

- Supporting and Facilitating events and activities creates opportunities for social engagement and community building. This action measures the number of events and the level of participation, aiming to foster a vibrant community spirit.
  - **KPI:** Number of successfully hosted events each year; growth in attendance numbers and volunteer participation year over year.

### Objective 1.2: Promote Affordable Housing to Foster Population Growth

Affordable housing is crucial for sustaining population growth. This objective focuses on addressing affordable housing and facilitating new developments in the Urban Reserve district to encourage population growth and support a diverse community.

#### Priority Action 1.2.1: Address Affordable Housing and Short-Term Rentals

- Addressing affordable housing includes exploring policies and land use regulations to promote housing affordability and regulating short-term rentals. This action aims to ensure a range of housing options for residents at different income levels.
  - **KPI:** Adoption of land use bylaw regulations to facilitate affordable housing and short-term rentals in Bentley
  - **KPI:** Number of new affordable housing opportunities including ownership, long-term lease and short-term rentals added to the existing stock.

#### Priority Action 1.2.2: Facilitate New Developments in Urban Reserve District

- Facilitating new developments in Urban Reserve zones supports population growth by providing additional housing options. This action involves collaborating with developers and monitoring



development applications to reduce uncertainty in the approval process and ensure a balance between growth and regulation.

- **KPI:** Adopt land use bylaw regulations to facilitate affordable housing in the Urban Reserve District and Area Structure Plan(s) in Bentley
- **KPI:** Number of subdivision applications and development permits issued in the Urban Reserve land use district.

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## Goal 2

### Attract Businesses, Developers, and Investors





## Goal 2: Attract Businesses, Developers, and Investors

Attracting business owners, developers, and investors is crucial for economic growth and diversification. This goal focuses on increasing business and investment opportunities through marketing and collaboration with local business associations.

### Objective 2.1: Increase Business and Investment Opportunities

Increasing business and investment opportunities involves marketing key areas for development and continuing a long-term marketing plan to attract interest. This objective seeks to create a vibrant economic environment that encourages business growth.

#### Priority Action 2.1.1: Market Sunset Heights and Southeast Bentley Area Structure Plan

- Marketing these areas promotes development opportunities to business owners and developers. This action aims to highlight the benefits and potential for investment in Bentley.
  - **KPI:** Number of new marketing activities completed regarding the Sunset Height and the new business opportunities in the Southeast Bentley Area Structure Plan.

#### Priority Action 2.1.2: Continue Long-Term Marketing Plan

- The long-term marketing plan targets potential investors and business owners, using various communication channels. This action measures the reach and engagement of these campaigns, ensuring they are effective in attracting interest.
  - **KPI:** Developed and implemented a long-term Marketing Plan.

### Objective 2.2: Encourage New Business Development

Encouraging new business development requires offering incentives and collaborating with local business associations. This objective focuses on creating a supportive environment that attracts new businesses and fosters economic growth.

#### Priority Action 2.2.1: Offer Incentives for New and Existing Businesses

- Offering incentives, such as deferred tax increases, reduced permit fees and grants for physical improvements, can increase investment in new and existing businesses. This action proposes to explore various incentive structures to determine what is best suited for encouraging business development in Bentley.
  - **KPI:** Number of new incentives offered to new and potential businesses and investors.

#### Priority Action 2.2.2: Support for Existing and New Businesses

- Collaboration with local business associations and supporting existing businesses builds a strong business community. By hosting collaborative events and programs, Bentley can foster relationships that support economic growth.
  - **KPI:** Number of meetings, programs, and events hosted by the Town in collaboration with local business associations to promote and support local economic development.

## Goal 3

# Develop Recreational Facilities for Youth



## Goal 3: Develop Recreational Facilities for Youth

Youth engagement in recreational activities is crucial for a community's vitality. This goal aims to provide a variety of recreational facilities and programs that meet the needs of young people, fostering a sense of belonging, promoting physical activity, and encouraging positive social interactions. It involves both physical infrastructure and collaborative programs with schools and other youth-oriented groups.

### Objective 3.1: Expand Recreational Opportunities for Youth

To meet the recreational needs of youth, the Town of Bentley intends to create a Recreation Master Plan, which serves as a roadmap for identifying and developing facilities. Developing a new soccer field represents a tangible step toward this goal. Additionally, diversifying existing recreational facilities with new programs and features will ensure a wide range of activities for youth engagement.

#### Priority Action 3.1.1: Create a Recreation Master Plan

- This plan will outline the community's current recreational facilities, assess gaps, and recommend new projects. It provides a structured approach to ensuring the Town's recreation strategy is both efficient and effective.
  - **KPI:** Completion of the Recreation Master Plan within a specified timeframe.

#### Priority Action 3.1.2: Develop a New Soccer Field

- A new soccer field will cater to youth and the broader community, providing a space for organized sports and recreational activities. It signifies a commitment to youth engagement and community wellness.
  - **KPI:** Completion of a new Soccer Field within a specified timeframe including site selection, design and construction.

#### Priority Action 3.1.3: Diversify Public Recreational Facilities and Programs

- Diversification involves introducing new features to existing facilities, such as playgrounds or sports courts, to offer a broader range of recreational activities for youth and families.
  - **KPI:** Number of new facilities or features (e.g., playgrounds, courts) added to existing parks.

#### Priority Action 3.1.4: Complete Oxford Park Improvements

- Completion of Oxford Park improvements will be done in accordance with the approved plan.
  - **KPI:** Completion of planned improvements.

### Objective 3.2: Increase Youth Engagement in Recreational Programs

Increasing youth engagement requires collaboration with local schools and organizations. By hosting youth-focused events and activities, Bentley can foster greater involvement from the youth demographic. This objective emphasizes creating social and recreational opportunities that attract and retain young residents.



#### Priority Action 3.2.1: Collaborate with Local School and Youth Organizations

- Collaboration with local school authorities and youth organizations ensures a seamless connection between education and recreation, allowing for the joint development of programs that cater to youth interests and needs.
  - **KPI:** Number of new joint programs and facilities created and run by the Town and local school and youth associations.

#### Priority Action 3.2.2: Host Youth-Focused Events and Activities

- By hosting events and activities designed for youth, Bentley can encourage participation and build a sense of community. These events can range from sports tournaments to arts and crafts fairs, providing a diverse range of options for engagement.
  - **KPI:** Number of recreational and sports events and activities for youth hosted by the Town and community groups on an annual basis, including events, numbers of attendees, and number of volunteers involved.

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## Goal 4

# Manage Existing Assets and Save for the Future



## Goal 4: Manage Existing Assets and Save for the Future

Effective asset management ensures that existing facilities are well-maintained and sustainable, while also planning for future needs. This goal addresses optimizing asset management and reducing maintenance costs to ensure a stable financial foundation for Bentley.

### Objective 4.1: Optimize Asset Management

Optimizing asset management involves completing Phase 3 of the Asset Management Plan and developing a Long-Term Reserve strategy. This ensures that Bentley's infrastructure is kept in good condition and that reserves are built for future needs.

#### Priority Action 4.1.1: Continue Phase 3 Asset Management

- Completing Phase 3 involves a thorough review and update of asset management practices. This step ensures that Bentley is maintaining its infrastructure and recreational facilities efficiently.
  - **KPIs:**
    - Completing Phase 3 of the Asset Management Plan within a specified timeframe
    - Ongoing monitoring of existing asset management programs
    - Implementing the Plan and a timely improvement of infrastructure.

#### Priority Action 4.1.2: Develop a Long-term Reserve Strategy

- Creating a plan for building and managing reserves, ensuring the town has sufficient resources for future asset replacement and new projects. It provides financial stability and planning for growth.
  - **KPI:** Develop a Long-term Reserve Strategy within a specified timeframe.

### Objective 4.2: Reduce Maintenance Costs

Reducing maintenance costs without compromising quality is key to Bentley's long-term sustainability. This objective focuses on implementing cost-efficient maintenance practices and conducting regular inspections to maintain asset quality.

#### Priority Action 4.2.1: Implement Cost-Efficient Maintenance Practices

- This action identifies and applies cost-efficient practices to maintain assets, reducing overall maintenance costs and ensuring long-term sustainability. It includes adopting new technologies and streamlining processes.
  - **KPI:** Adopt new technologies and streamline processes to implement cost-efficient Maintenance Practices

#### Priority Action 4.2.2: Conduct Regular Asset Inspections

- Regular inspections help detect issues early, reducing costly repairs and maintaining asset quality. By establishing a consistent inspection schedule, Bentley can ensure assets are in optimal condition.
  - **KPI:** Establish and conduct regular asset inspections.

## Goal 5

Build Relationships with Other  
Levels of Government



## Goal 5: Build Relationships with Other Levels of Government

Building strong relationships with other levels of government opens doors for funding, collaborative projects, and shared resources. This goal focuses on strengthening these relationships through regular meetings and exploring collaborative initiatives that benefit the community.

### Objective 5.1: Strengthen Government Partnerships

Strengthening government partnerships requires establishing regular meetings with government representatives and pursuing grant funding. This objective aims to create a supportive network that facilitates resource sharing and access to additional funding sources.

#### Priority Action 5.1.1: Establish Regular Meetings with Government Representatives

- Regular meetings with other government levels foster communication and understanding. These meetings are key to building relationships that can lead to partnerships and joint initiatives.
  - **KPI:** Number of meetings scheduled with government representatives.

#### Priority Action 5.1.2: Pursue Government Grant Funding

- Pursuing grant funding provides additional financial resources for community projects. This action involves identifying and applying for relevant grants that align with Bentley's goals.
  - **KPI:** The number of government grants applied for.

### Objective 5.2: Collaborate on Projects

Collaborating on projects with other government entities enhances resource sharing and broadens the scope of community initiatives. This objective focuses on exploring collaborative projects and participating in inter-governmental initiatives.

#### Priority Action 5.2.1: Explore Collaborative Projects with Government Entities

- Collaborative projects can range from infrastructure development to community programs. This action explores potential partnerships that benefit both Bentley and the participating government entities.
  - **KPI:** Number of collaborative projects initiated by the Town and other government entities.

#### Priority Action 5.2.2: Participate in Inter-Government Initiatives

- Participation in inter-government initiatives strengthens Bentley's ties with other jurisdictions and allows for resource-sharing on a larger scale. This involvement can lead to more significant projects and increased funding opportunities.
  - **KPI:** Number of inter-government initiatives attended by the Town





## Goal 6

# Manage Sustainable Growth through Development Policies and Regulations



## Goal 6: Manage Sustainable Growth through Development Policies and Regulations

These objectives and actions under Goal 6 help create a policy framework and regulatory environment that support Bentley's growth while maintaining a balance with community values and sustainability. This goal focuses on completing the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) review to ensure it aligns with community needs and supports growth through balanced regulations. Regular reviews and updates to statutory plans (Intermunicipal Development Plan, Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plans) are also key objectives of this goal.

### Objective 6.1: Complete the LUB Review

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) review is a comprehensive assessment of existing regulations. This objective aims to complete the review and engage stakeholders to ensure a balanced approach that encourages growth while maintaining community values.

#### Priority Action 6.1.2: Engage with Stakeholders in LUB Review

- Engaging stakeholders ensures a diverse range of opinions is considered during the review process. This action involves conducting meetings, focus groups, and surveys to collect feedback from residents, business owners, developers, and other interested parties. This feedback helps shape the updated bylaws to meet the needs of the community.
  - **KPI:** Number of stakeholder meetings held, and feedback sessions completed.

#### Priority Action 6.1.1: Review and Update Land Use Bylaw

- After gathering stakeholder input, the next step is to complete the LUB review, implementing updates that align with the community's vision. This process may involve addressing outdated regulations, resolving inconsistencies, and clarifying land-use policies. The final LUB should balance regulation with growth, providing a clear and predictable framework for future development.
  - **KPI:** Completion of LUB review and implementation of updated regulations within a specified timeframe.

### Objective 6.2: Support Growth through Balanced Regulations

After updating the LUB, it's crucial to ensure the regulations support sustainable growth. This objective focuses on implementing changes to support development while monitoring outcomes to ensure they align with Bentley's goals. A balanced approach encourages growth without compromising community values.

#### Priority Action 6.2.1: Implement Changes to the Land Use Bylaw to Support Growth

- Implementing changes to support growth involves updating regulations to support and encourage development, simplify approval processes, and promote mixed-use areas. This action seeks to create a land use regulation that is both business-friendly and aligned with community objectives.

- **KPI:** Number of land use regulatory created/amended to support development and growth.

#### Priority Action 6.2.2: Monitor Development Outcomes

- Monitoring development outcomes is essential to evaluate the impact of the updated LUB on the community. This action tracks new development projects and assesses their impact on growth, infrastructure, and quality of life. By monitoring outcomes, Bentley can ensure that regulations are achieving the desired results.
  - **KPI:** Number of new development projects approved and their impact on community growth, infrastructure, and quality of life.

#### Objective 6.3: Complete Statutory Plans Updates

- A successful conclusion of the Southeast Bentley annexation and the Summersault Area Structure Plan will lead to amend and re-adopt these statutory plans. Further, statutory plans need to be monitored, reviewed, and updated on a regular basis.

#### Priority Action 6.3.1: Southeast Bentley Area Structure Plan Adoption

- This Area Structure Plan will be adopted upon the completion of the Southeast Bentley annexation process.
  - **KPI:** Re-adoption of the Southeast Bentley ASP by the Town of Bentley.

#### Priority Action 6.3.2: Summersault Area Structure Plan Revision and Adoption

- This Area Structure Plan will be updated and adopted by Council after incorporating a new soccer field in the plan.
  - **KPI:** Revision and Re-adoption of the Summersault ASP by the Town of Bentley.



## ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: COMMUNITY PROFILE

ATTACHMENT B: COMMUNITY SURVEY

ATTACHMENT C: COUNCIL WORKSHOP

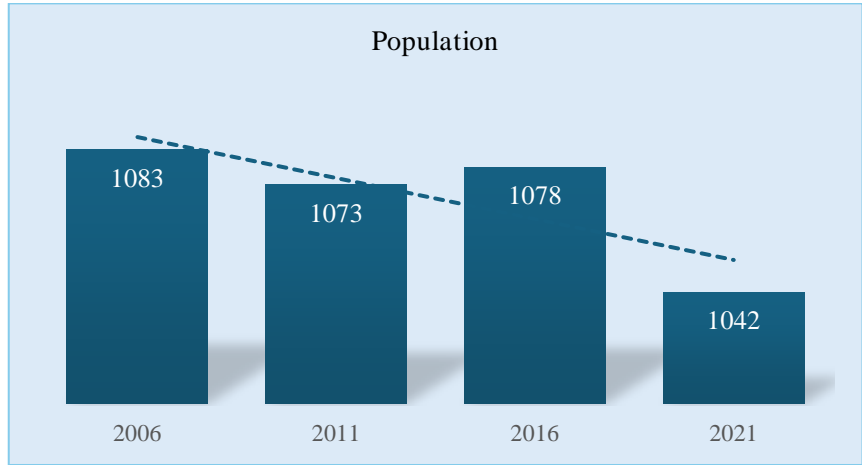
ATTACHMENT D: WHAT WE HEARD – COMMUNITY INSIGHTS OPEN HOUSE

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**TOWN OF BENTLEY COMMUNITY PROFILE AT A GLANCE**

**Population:**

2006	1,083
2011	1,073
2016	1,078
2021	1,042

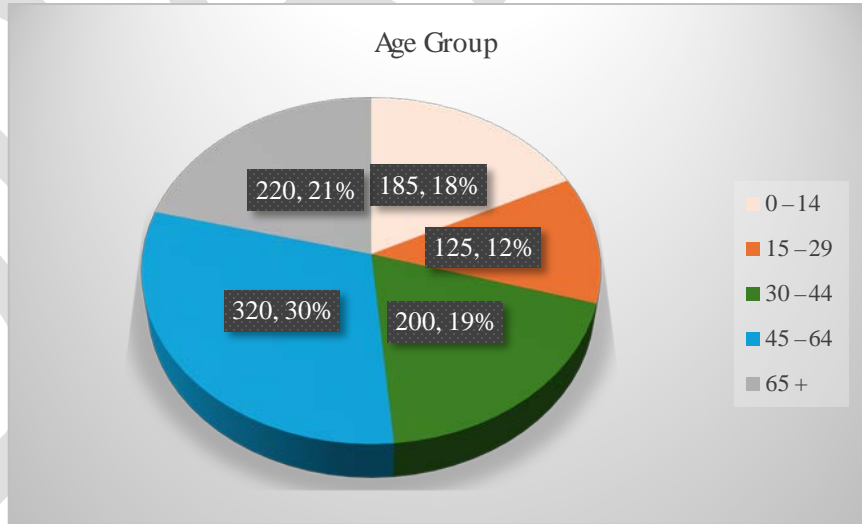


**Age Group**

0 – 14	185	18%
15 – 29	125	12%
30 – 44	200	19%
45 – 64	320	30%
65 +	220	21%

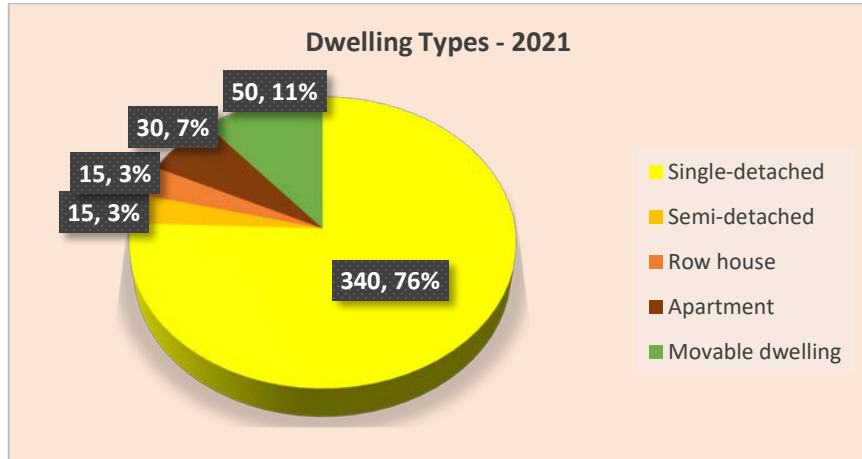
Birth 2,  
-19% Annual change

Death, 32,  
52% Annual change



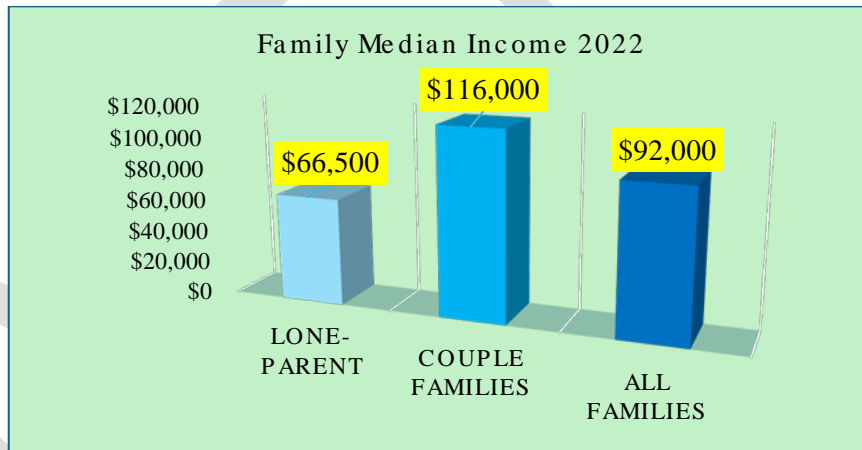
**Housing Types**

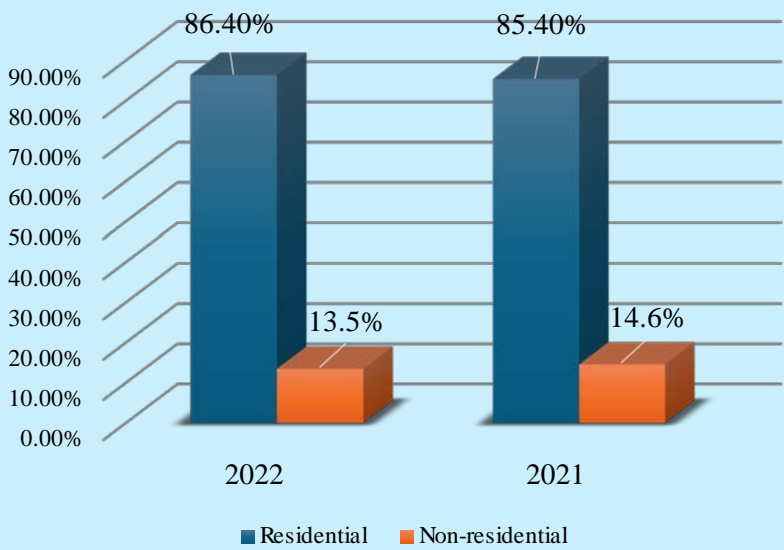
Dwelling Units 427 (2021)  
 Single Family Houses 76%  
 (2021)



**Income (Median)**

Lone-Parent \$ 66,500  
 Couple Families \$116,000  
 All Families \$ 92,000



<p><b>Municipal Finances</b></p> <p>Property Assessment \$106.7 Million</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Property Tax Assessment</b></p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Property Tax Assessment Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Residential (%)</th> <th>Non-residential (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022</td> <td>86.40%</td> <td>13.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021</td> <td>85.40%</td> <td>14.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Residential (%)	Non-residential (%)	2022	86.40%	13.5%	2021	85.40%	14.6%
Year	Residential (%)	Non-residential (%)								
2022	86.40%	13.5%								
2021	85.40%	14.6%								
<p><b>Construction</b></p> <p>Building Permits 2, \$425,000 (2022) -50% Annual Change</p>										
<p><b>Business Activity</b></p> <p>Number of Businesses 147 (2022) 44% Annual Change</p> <p>Incorporations 9 (2023) -25% Annual Change</p> <p>Small Businesses 99.3% (2022)</p>										
<p><b>Land Title Transfer</b> 48 (11.7 M) 40% Annual Change</p>										

## ATTACHMENT B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

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As part of the Community Strategic Plan process, a survey was administered online via Survey Monkey, with paper copies available.

An excellent response was received, with 144 responses, including 6 handwritten submissions. This is well over 10% of the Town's population.

Many respondents took the time to include extensive comments in response to many of the questions. The comments have been included, verbatim, in this summary report.

The following is a summary of the responses to each of the questions, along with a brief analysis of each, to frame the discussion.

### **Question 1 – Population Growth and Decline**

*The population of Bentley has been fairly stable but has not grown in many years. What factors do you believe impact the population growth of our community?*

#### **Top concerns identified as contributing to the lack of population growth were:**

- Lack of job opportunities
- Lack of public amenities and services
- Lack of commercial and industrial opportunities
- Limited housing options

#### **Comments:**

- The smell, it is the number one reason people stay away
- Location
- Rezoning of R1 to R2 needed to encourage more housing options
- Taxes are entirely too high for what this town has to offer.. why would any one move here to pay these taxes and have an aging arena and completely outdated park and not a single thing for families to do.
- No doctor or urgent health care in Bentley is a reason some people chose to locate elsewhere.
- High taxes
- I like the low population
- The lack of Doctor/Medical facilities. The limited employment opportunities locally.
- Lack of subsidized or private childcare services is the #1 priority for young families.
- No stores open past 8pm or gas stations .. lack of resources
- Vacant buildings on Main Street
- Seasonal population is catered to not year round
- Lack of bringing in new opportunities, business and places to do activities.
- Not much for kids/youth to do
- Extremely high taxes and absolutely NOTHING worth sticking around for other than the small community vibe.
- Limit Airbnb potential to allow for mid- and long-term rentals
- We need more activities for families and kids to do people don't always have to go to Sylvan or Lacombe. We need more options that aren't hockey, soccer and baseball



- The question seems to presuppose that we need population growth. Why not attempt to make sure the town sustains itself at its present level by encouraging young families to remain or come into town to replace older folks who die or relocate to geriatric care situations
- Lack of security in the community. We have previously gone through some pretty bad people committing crimes in this community and we didn't have any readily available police force to assist. For people with young families, it's a concern. Example, people speeding on our streets when kids are out and about are never caught but if you don't move your vehicle in front of your house, you get a fine warning. It's a little ridiculous.
- Things for kids to do like a skatepark.
- Nothing for young children to do. Would like to see a pool
- Lack of professional services: lawyer doctor accountant grocery store now has one Gym! Motel

#### **Discussion:**

A small community is always challenged to provide basic services, and healthy growth is important to sustain quality of life. Clearly, Town Council has been on the right track, seeking to encourage residential development while pursuing commercial and industrial growth.

#### **Question 2 – Community Priorities**

*The Town wants to know what issues are of concern to you. What do you consider to be the most pressing issue(s) facing our community? Please select all that apply.*

#### **Top responses were:**

- Social and recreational facilities
- Economic development and job creation
- Lack of population growth
- Public safety and crime prevention

#### **Comments:**

- Nothing, its perfect the way it is
- Too many old buildings burning down
- There is a real lack of recreational activities in our town. We have one rec facility, an arena, and it is in need of upgrades. We don't even have nets on our outdoor rink for the kids.
- High Property Taxes
- Sportsplex to support our very strong sports community.
- I appreciate the improvements to sidewalks by doing some each year. But in conjunction with that, I'd like to see increased enforcement of citizens being required to keep those sidewalks clear of branches, etc for walkers.
- An aging hockey arena in need of significant upgrades. Soccer fields. Splash Park.
- Population will increase if there are more employment opportunities and perhaps a small commercial development with a convenience store/ gas station/ fast food chain to draw in folks off the hwy before they hit sylvan or Lacombe.
- our unstable post office. having a good grocery store will improve things immensely.
- Commercial opportunities that can drive traffic - encouraging businesses to set up in Bentley
- Places / activities for teens

- The Town needs a new arena, more soccer pitches, more room for kids' recreational sports. Towns won't grow without young families and an investment in the future population.
- Creating things for kids/youth to do
- There are a handful of degenerate scum that live here and create 90% of the problems, yet the leaders and officials either support them or turn a blind eye. Shame, you know who you are!
- Taxes! What are we getting for the amount of taxes we pay. And what is going on with the pink bacteria in our water?
- Gravel roads on side streets need to be address and paved. Sidewalk deteriorating and need to be address in a timely fashion. People paying taxes should not have a gravel roadway in front of their house. This would be the roadways along 50th Ave between 46<sup>th</sup> St.- 49<sup>th</sup> St and Railway Ave. Things like that look like a well-maintained community.
- Town spending and curtailing it. Outsourcing most services like snow removal to private providers (prioritizing local service providers as much as we can in that case).
- Nothing, leave it alone I like the small size of the town
- Something for the youth that aren't in hockey would be nice.

#### **Discussion:**

Town citizens are concerned about quality of life. They want to see it improved. Continued efforts to improve the arena and provide outdoor recreation are important. Clearly, people see a connection between this and economic development.

Public safety needs more discussion. Are there specific concerns with policing? Or is this a more general fear that crime may become a problem?

#### **Question 3 – Challenges in Finding Affordable Housing**

*Have you personally experienced challenges in finding affordable housing in our community?*

#### **The Response:**

About 18% of respondents have had difficulty finding affordable housing.

#### **Comments:**

- Affordable housing, if you mean low income doesn't increase the desire to move to Bentley. Look to attract middle income families.
- We need more housing properties available to rent. Some younger individuals cannot afford to buy but would like to live and be a part of a small, comfortable community but don't have the option to since there are no spaces available for rent.
- Low-income housing should not be a priority in a town with few jobs.
- Make the north end more attractive so people want to purchase lots back there. What a messy and unattractive part of town. Could you not start developing green space, so it looks more appealing? Like a soccer field or playground?
- possibly get funding from the government to build affordable housing. Maybe even the plan that the Feds have for housing (the cookie-cutter style). As a senior there just isn't anything available...unless someone passes away
- Building affordable housing with developers.

- Working with developers even if it means some tax concessions have to be given to encourage them to build here. We desperately need apartments/condos
- Lower property taxes and do not bring in more low income housing until we have adequate jobs to support those who live here.
- More bigger houses for bigger families
- Incentivize home ownership with property tax reductions for landlords of rentals, houses. Consider property tax incentive for the 1st year of a new house build. Consider working with a developer for a Senior's Lodge type housing ( ie: Lacombe Foundation), not assisted living Incentivize home ownership with property tax reductions for landlords of rentals, houses. Consider property tax incentive for the 1st year of a new house build. Consider working with a developer for a Senior's Lodge type housing ( ie: Lacombe Foundation), not assisted living but a future employer that requires job creation, medical services brought to the area. Encouraging the need for new job growth, keeping our local Senior's close to home, etc.
- Senior's housing
- Another apartment building priced within reach, more single-family homes
- There needs to be land available for someone to build affordable housing.
- I feel housing is affordable but it's the lack of housing and the variety of housing that is the problem.
- there are no reasonable options for starter homes or affordable homes for first time buyers.
- More economic housing built
- Multi family dwellings. Subsidized housing where possible. (I.e. federal and provincial mna these types of programs)
- Encourage builders to develop housing options.
- I feel there should be affordable housing to locals and single families who are struggling.
- Another apartment?
- Not sure
- More job and affordable housing
- Affordable housing will only work if you have the jobs in town for the people to work at. Otherwise, the majority of us commute to red deer for work and are able to afford middle class housing.
- Affordable housing also brings another set of problems usually due to lower income families that aren't necessarily contributing to the community.
- Limit Airbnb to a percentage of available mid- and short-term rentals
- Building town houses, four plexes or rental units.
- Condos Senior residences Multi generation housings
- encourage development of apartment or town house complexes in the new subdivision
- Getting the government out of the way as much as possible. Lowering property taxes in conjunction with curtailing town spending
- Condos Senior residences Multi generation housings
- encourage development of apartment or town house complexes in the new subdivision
- Getting the government out of the way as much as possible. Lowering property taxes in conjunction with curtailing town spending.
- Stop inflation
- Building apartment buildings
- New subdivisions actually being built. Homes to actually rent that are in good stable condition
- Build a senior's lodge

- More duplexes and 4-Plexes for families

#### **Discussion:**

According to the 2021 Census, 18% of dwellings are rented, and 15% of residents are considered low income.

Relative to other urban communities in Canada, Bentley has a high proportion of owner-occupied dwellings, and most people have found affordable housing; however, this may be changing. The next question shows this.

#### **Question 4 – Rental Housing**

*According to Census data, about 19% of the households in Bentley rent their homes. Are there sufficient rental housing options available in our community?*

#### **Response:**

Fully two-thirds of the respondents believe that there is not enough rental housing.

#### **Comments:**

- Did I mention the smell? No one wants to spend their Saturday smelling Pig S@#t
- Develop land that u guys started 10 yrs. ago and get some houses built
- Not sure. If there is a need for additional rental housing, I think the problem will likely fix itself. Developers will find out and build rental units accordingly. Houses are selling quickly in Bentley, perhaps they will be rented out by the new owners?
- See number 3 comments.
- Lower property taxes and do not create anymore low-income housing as we have no jobs to support low-income families.
- It surprises me that there's 19% rental properties but I'm sure the stats are accurate.
- Not sure what a municipality can do. With the cost of utilities, taxes, maintenance etc., rental properties may not be as lucrative as they once were. With the way real estate is moving in town at the moment selling is a much better option than renting.
- Unknown
- Incentives for homeowners to create rental suites
- People tell me all the time the taxes are too high to own homes in Bentley, so people buy rental property elsewhere
- Keeping taxes low. Providing tax incentives. Energy sufficient homes solar etc.. CREDIBLE developers. Decrease price of vacant lots.
- More apartments
- Allow more types of structures. (Ie modular mobile homes house packages etc.
- Tax the price gouging rentals to make room for the reasonable rentals
- More appropriate housing options
- Unsure
- Maybe another small trailer park or tiny/compact houses tastefully built to reflect the area.
- Encourage investment by people Who can improve and rent out homes

- I wouldn't want to increase rental availability again those tend to be short term tenants and lower income. Which goes hand in hand with the affordable housing issue. There is no jobs in town to sustain these options. Majority of people commute to larger cities. So why pay high rent and commute costs it's not sustainable for lower income families.
- We need more businesses and jobs to keep residents here rather than creating a red deer bedroom community
- Unknown- I own
- having more apartment buildings
- There is not enough business looking for employees to work for them in town. People renting are usually looking for work close to home without traveling to another town for work, that is my experience.
- Apartment's complex Townhouses
- Government getting out of the way
- Stop inflation
- I'm not going to comment on this because I have no experience in regards.
- Can't answer honestly as we own our house
- Build some more apartments for lower income people
- Build a few duplexes & a 4 plex
- Town houses or apartments

#### **Discussion:**

Council should consider regulatory changes that encourage a range of housing types and help with housing supply and enable owners to offset the growing cost of ownership housing, while managing land use compatibility.

#### **Question 5 – Short Term Rental Housing**

*Bentley is encouraging tourism but has very little accommodation for visitors apart from the municipal campground. Short-term rentals (i.e. renting out homes or accessory units for at least one night but less than one month at a time) have been suggested to address this. Would you be in favor of exploring short term rentals for Bentley?*

#### **Response:**

A small majority (55%) favoured exploring short term rentals for Bentley. There were over 40 comments on this question.

#### **Comments:**

- Encourage more developers to build in or near Bentley to increase availability.
- Keep the short-term rental to a month or less.
- I presume the short-term rentals would be similar to "bed and breakfast" or Airbnb that other towns already have. I've read that "partiers" are a problem in this type of rental, but that should be the problem of the house owner and not the town. I don't think Airbnb would take away from those looking to rent a house long term
- I feel short term rentals should have to apply for a licence like business do.
- Cap the number of such units available.
- Not with tax dollars

- I would rather see a motel built. I think short term housing could attract the wrong kind of people
- Encouragement development in that area. We talk industrial development.... why not some short term rental space
- Airbnb would work well in Bentley
- Short term rentals would encourage homeowners to go that route for income and in the long run remove any potential for those who work here. Enlarge the campground, put in water and sewer to each site, and allow people to stay more than the allotted time. A full campground will cover the expansion costs
- A decent hotel would solve the short-term rental issue.
- If these are “vacation rentals” up to 1 month duration, I would be in favour as we don’t have any hotel options for larger numbers (e.g. hockey tournaments, weddings, reunions, etc.). However, there would be some administrative costs with regards to monitoring & enforcing the “rules”. I would like to see power provided to our campground sites and water available for campers. It would be a very nice campground, with those upgrades.
- No concerns
- There in lies the problem. Some system of monitoring would have to be put in place to control abuses. This would require the addition of manpower and administrative costs. We must be prepared to bear the cost.
- I feel they are completely different.
- Limit availability of short-term rentals in the community, would need to be permitted. Business license required. Proof of enough Insurance. ? Tough one if rental options are already scarce in town. Other communities that have allowed it are having regrets.
- Keep it balanced. Both are great way to bring people to our town
- Build a hotel worth staying at
- I do not want short term rentals in Bentley, we need residents’ year round
- Short term rentals are no good for family homes and communities. They are difficult to regulate. I would say no to short term rentals all together. They take away from family focused communities such as Bentley. They also don’t give opportunity for people to buy homes.
- The only short-term rental option would be a motel or hotel which would be very beneficial. The more times we get people staying in our community due to a hockey tournament as an example, they spend money in our community all weekend.
- More of camping-based Mabey a small hotel on the HWY.
- Limit number of short-term rentals
- Build a hotel with ATV/SKIDOO parking to attract all seasons.
- No concerns
- Having a transient people is not a good thing
- Why short-term housing? It attracts low lifes. Focus on the people that call this town home.
- No Airbnb. Build a small motel. Community run.
- Encouraging investment by a resort builder would be one solution instead of using homes that are needed for longer term residents
- Bentley doesn’t have enough attractions to sustain that type of opportunity. People will short term rental in sylvan or gull lake where they have more amenities and entertainment. Again, this doesn’t provide our community with long term investment.
- Lacombe County declined a neighbor from having an Airbnb.
- New hotel or motel business.

- Absolute concern. I own an Airbnb there is a time and place for them. And should not detract from permanent residences available for rent.
- I would enjoy this for some added income without fear of roommates/tenants being unable to pay
- If the town had 4 travel trailers that were exclusively used for air B&B in our campground with a collaboration of local businesses... this would be an attraction and an income.
- I would like to see the campground expanded and upgraded. Maybe a new campground could be developed.
- Crime
- this could create potential accommodations for visitors - different than someone who just wants to rent via a lease agreement.
- The Town should be neutral on this. If someone who owns a house in Bentley wants to VRBO it or something that is their prerogative to do it with their property. The Town Administration needs to stay as far away as possible from the property market.
- Without proper law enforcement, this could be a very slippery slope.
- As a family we have used several Airbnb accommodations both nationally and internationally. I believe they are a good option especially in a community without hotel options.
- Very limited amount of Airbnb for summer and winter use. We have the tourism to fill them
- Build 2 motels
- Not in favour to renting homes on a short term
- Landlords do not follow rental agreements
- If we had tourists staying, they would need more places to eat, especially for breakfast
- Reasonable priced motel
- No place to stay in town

#### **Discussion:**

Allowing and regulating short term rentals should be considered as part of the new land use bylaw. Careful public consultation is needed to get it right – especially to ensure that owners are responsible for their renters and manage well. Licensing should be considered as well.

Making trailers available in the campground was an interesting suggestion made by one respondent. Sometimes, RV owners rent their units as a way of offsetting the cost; being able to rent it on a campground site eliminates concerns about others towing it on the highway, etc., and keeps it close to home where its use can be monitored.

#### **Question 6 – Attracting New Businesses**

*The Town has rebranded itself, set up a new website, worked with Lacombe County to create the Southeast Bentley Area Structure Plan, and is seeking to attract new businesses. What strategies do you think would be effective in attracting new businesses to our Town?*

#### **Top strategies selected were:**

- Offering tax incentives or business grants
- Improving infrastructure and amenities
- More subdivisions

- Collaboration with local economic development agencies

**Other suggestions:**

- Encourage vacant commercial space to be used by dormancy fees after sitting vacant for too long. Help in promoting vacant space.
- Would it attract more commercial or industrial businesses to town if we installed town water on the west side of the railroad tracks? Some kind of tax incentive would be okay to attract new businesses to town, but we don't want to go overboard and anger existing businesses.
- Taxes in this town are too high for most small businesses to survive
- Something similar to "win this space" like sylvan lake does!
- Build a sportsplex from the high taxes you already receive from property owners. Do not offer tax incentives for new businesses, that's a slap in the face to us property owners
- I'm not sure what could be done to improve our "Main Street" in regard to the properties that are "commercial" but the businesses are no longer operating, therefore the buildings are simply residences. Also, the "commercial" properties that are simply used for storage do not enhance our downtown core. It has improved somewhat with more businesses now being on both sides of Main Street. With the annexation of land adjoining the Highway 12 bypass, I hope that once we have 1 business build, more will come.
- The annexation plans will be a boon to economic growth, (should it go ahead). The need for larger lots and highway exposure are not available at this time. There are some vacant retail structures and vacant lots on our main street that need to be utilized. Maybe some sort of tax incentive or some form of monetary incentive would spur some activity.
- Making the town look more quaint again with a down town facelift. Incentives for businesses to have facelifts.
- Having some type of law enforcement to protect their business. Example peace officer.
- Improve traffic flow thru industrial areas, add sewage and water to industrial land to the southwest. Hard to sell or encourage growth to industrial property without existing running water available.
- Forcing Main Street building owners to have operating businesses or they pay higher taxes
- also, we need our councillors or others to be willing to change a little. I love Bentley and moved here almost 17 years ago... there always seems to be push back when change is mentioned. if we do not add to our lovely town and try and get people a reason to come and stay or allow and encourage people to stay then we will continue to shrink. the fact that this town has not shown growth in numbers in 50 years is scary. We need to ask why?
- Actually, be willing to let some larger companies move in. They won't affect the small mom and pop shops. They will only encourage people to stop in Bentley and help give business to small businesses.
- Creating a Chamber of commerce.
- Work with the current business owners
- The areas in question drastically reduce the value of the existing homes that are near these areas.
- I don't think creating business opportunities on the outskirts of town is going to help the Town, but instead hurt the businesses in town further.
- Develop downtown! You want to annex over 200 acres of farmland but can't find anyone to buy the lots on the north side of town. You allowed Dane Skinner to demolish the FasGas and now an empty lot sits for almost 15 years. The Monkey Top was burned down and most likely will not be rebuilt. I'm sure the people living on 48th Ave. are really impressed with all this BS. Oh Yeah, I hear the "mayor" does not want to see the bar rebuilt, this guy is a clown.



- The rebranding hasn't created any more interest in Bentley. We don't even have consistency of signage to actually show visitors and residents that we have a new brand. Signs in town are old and outdated. New signs at traffic circle don't reflect the new brand. One town office sign and a website doesn't attract new business to town.
- Build up your downtown core and make it more attractive to boutique shops and restaurants. Main street in is not the place for residential rental units
- Have well balanced business taxes to keep and attract new businesses. I feel the Bentley has to be careful where the land is developed for commercial, if developed by the fire hall will only allow residential to grow to the north and would not be an attractive look when passing by on the HWY. Commercial show remain on the south side of HWY 12.
- We need to be welcoming for competition. Like a second gas station, food establishments. Neither of those meet the towns needs right now. The gas station closes at 7 pm and is ridiculously priced. And even prior to the monkey top burning down, we severally lacked in food establishment options.
- Make it easy for business by lowering barriers and costs of doing business. Less government spending and intervention will attract the right opportunities through differentiation ie. being the lower cost place to do business.
- Leave it alone, I like the small-town feel
- Walking around and letting people know. I had no idea this plan is currently in motion and going through. I heard it was an "idea"
- Build another bar like monkey top. It brought in tourists. Market gull lake and our proximity, for summer tourism. It's huge and not busy like sylvan or pigeon. Improve the ski hill.
- We have a hidden gem here. Promote it!

**Discussion:**

This is a clear priority for Bentley residents. Whether it is for more personal convenience, to serve visitors, or to create growth in jobs, population, and tax base, they want to see Bentley grow.

**Question 7 – Recreational and Cultural Facilities**

*There is growing interest in improving the Town's recreational and cultural opportunities. Do you support the expansion of the Town's recreation amenities?*

**The Response:**

93% of respondents said yes to improving recreational and cultural opportunities.

**Discussion:**

It is clearly a priority. However, it must be funded and therefore balanced against economic development.

**Question 8 – Recreational and Cultural**

*What do you see as an immediate need?*

**The Response:**

Top needs, in order:

- Activities for youth
- Walking paths and trails
- Soccer field
- Dog park
- Activities for seniors

### Comments:

Fifty-seven people added comments:

- Activities for middle aged
- Removing the special events permit requirements as well as insurance requirements to encourage adult ball tournaments bringing more economic activity to our town. Installing fully serviced sites at the RV park.
- New arena Spray park Skate park
- Arena upgrades are long overdue, as a new facility is likely not feasible in the near future.
- As planned, install a new ice plant at the arena and fix the concrete playing surface. I wonder if "pickleball" courts would be used in Bentley? It sounds like pickleball is popular, for all ages, in a lot of towns nearby. I have friends in Ponoka, Lacombe and Blackfalds that are playing pickleball year-round.
- Skateboard park
- Would be cool to see a gym or something based around movement become available to the community that would be accessible in all seasons. It could provide opportunities for people to rent the space and teach workout classes, workshops, etc.
- New hockey arena
- The arena is an extremely busy facility all winter. We need to hire someone that will actually clean it and complete the upgrades required. The majority of the people using the facility live in Lacombe County; I would hope there are ways for the County to help burden some of the costs.
- Get the arena modernized Splash Park Outdoor rink
- I really don't know
- Improved downtown park
- Splash park and/or outdoor pool
- New hockey arena multiplex
- A gym would be great!! We have a wonderful walking path to both Gull Lake and Sandy Point so no need to spend funds on those. The Senior's Drop-in needs to be more than a "card playing" centre.
- More use of the community van (hire a driver) and do excursions for seniors in particular.
- Build a Sportsplex!!!! We have many current and active sports families who would absolutely support a new and proper facility.
- More walking trails. It's not easily to do a round. Only in town. It's more walking up and walk down the same path.
- I think we are ok for walking paths, etc but as stated before, improved enforcement of sidewalk accessibility would help greatly. I'm a senior, so unfortunately may not provide the most helpful opinion regarding "Activities for Youth". If we can get our Arena fully functional again, I believe it could be used more. But we must be more proactive on the maintenance, upkeep and overall appearance. (Eg: cleanliness inside, cleanup of garbage, cigarette butts, etc outside).

- Pool
- I support building some new recreation facilities as long as there is some buy in by user groups. In the past, facilities like the curling rink and arena construction were spurred by community members. Fund raising and volunteer labor were coordinated by committees comprised by the end users of these buildings. If there is no will by citizens to assist in planning and or constructing, the chances of the facility being utilized to its full potential are slim.
- Kids and seniors need more in this town. Unorganized recreation. A gym.
- Splash Park. Improving amenities at the municipal campground to encourage longer stays, ie powered sites, Wi-Fi.
- Recreational center
- Investment in the Arena. The Arena is the largest infrastructure owned by the Town and there is no care for this building as well as no future plan on how to replace this aging infrastructure. When the Arena fails in the immediate future the Town will be left with even less to offer young families.
- Improvements to the arena, upgrades to the ice refrigeration system
- We need a rec centre for yoga/fitness classes year-round. The old hall is too expensive to rent and the board is difficult to deal with. That building could be far more utilized for the whole community not just who the board chooses to work with
- Expand snowmobile trails with the David Thompson Snow Riders Club
- 24 hr fitness centre. Recreation complex so people can open business. A public swimming pool (either seasonal or indoors). These amenities will serve all ages and demographics. Bentley lacks recreation in the winter. We need more indoor amenities.
- Hiking/Biking trails at ski hill
- Skate park, something for young adults, walking paths. Small dirt bike track, or trails. Parks focused less on kids, more at families/adults
- Indoor field house. Second sheet of ice indoor pool gym
- Arena upgrade. Everyone is angry about the towns lack of consideration to the abundance of sports involved families here and everyone is leaving for the space to grow.
- Activities for middle age, its very senior oriented
- Update what we already have in place.
- Get the horseshoe club going again. Wading pool, water park (of course water supply is a concern)
- Please no dog park and all the doggie poops left in it... 😞
- Building a nice park where the Oxford Building was. Maybe a stage for outdoor entertainment in the summer.
- Skate park
- Meeting place that can be rented out for classes, events, gatherings
- Activities for teens
- Dog park will be another place for people to let their dogs off leash and not pick up the shit. More cost to rec department. We have plenty of playgrounds at the school for younger children. Downtown park needs improvement. Bentley has nothing for preteen and teenage youth to do. Skate park or bike pump track would facilitate youth activities.
- Fitness centre
- No dog park but must have on leash bylaw for all public areas Close off 45 street along cemetery and create cross walk across 50th avenue
- Rec centre - gym, pool

- Replacing the current arena with a more community minded multi facility, pool, gym, library, perhaps a day care, rooms available for lease to host social programs
- no dog park, most owners do not respect the areas in other communities that have been designated. they can pick up after there dogs around town so why would they in a park.
- We need more engaging spaces for our youth, so families don't have to leave our community in order to have a fun family day out.
- Gym
- We have a walking path. What about a riding path that is for bikes only.
- Better playground downtown and on the southeast side of town. Outdoor gym
- Swimming pool
- Open to most recreational and cultural suggestions but believe for a community this size multi use facilities that accommodate a variety of activities/demographic would be best. Individual boards and committees should be developed for more specific projects.
- Skate park
- Recreational Facility. Gym, curling rink, arena, library, meeting facilities all under one roof
- Skate park or water park Upgrade public park Bike path
- New arena Spray park Skate park
- Arena upgrades are long overdue, as a new facility is likely not feasible in the near future.
- People need to get out and make & engage in more social activities that they could create if they put some effort into it
- Need youth!

#### **Discussion:**

Youth activities and places to walk are at the top of the list.

There is a desire for new facilities such as a sports multiplex, but this is beyond the capability of some communities that are much larger than Bentley.

#### **Question 9 – Financial Stability**

*Fiscal stability is always a priority. Bentley's tax base is limited, with about 80% of tax dollars coming in from residential and 20% from commercial/industrial assessments. How would you prioritize funding allocation to address financial challenges in our community?*

#### **Priorities in rank order:**

- Seeking grants and external funding sources
- Identifying cost-saving measures
- Seeking partnerships between Town and private sector

Only 4% favoured increasing taxes or fees.

#### **Other Comments:**

- Increase your tax base by increasing population, including industrial business. You can't keep increasing tax on a decreasing population
- Not sure where all the money goes in this town but I do not think its being spent wisely at all.
- No one wants to pay more taxes, but if residents could see the improvements then a small increase could be justified.
- We won't be able to afford to live here if our taxes increase. Looking at the number of employees the Town has is an option that was missed. For a Town that has barely grown, our number of employees sure has.
- Bring in more commercial and industrial that will pay taxes to contribute to Bentley's development. Property owners pay enough taxes already.
- I know the cliché answer is "we have to increase our industrial base" I know that is not an easy task. But maybe some advertising specific to attracting businesses to the area might work. Highlight our convenient location at the junction of two major highways and our proximity to major recreational lakes. Social media is a wonderful thing.
- We need more commercial businesses
- Outside grants. (Federal provincial county)
- You can't put that much burden on residents. That's why no one wants to buy your lots. You need to attract more boutique and specialty stores to create jobs and supplement the few businesses we have.
- I have been in Bentley now for 8 years. Disappointed that there has been no significant improvements or amenities. Have filled out multiple surveys and there has been no meaningful actions. Just ideas without moving forward. Taxes increase is out of the question as not sure where the money is going as of now.
- Also, I think we need to readdress the amount of tax dollars that go into the arena, this could be shared with other rec options. Lacombe County users and hockey registrants should be charged more for fees and uses since their tax dollars aren't going to support the arena, yet they are the majority users. Most communities charge higher program registration fees to people who aren't town residents. I think we need to do the same.
- The Town employs too many people and can outsource much of its service to local/regional contracts.
- You can't put that much burden on residents. That's why no one wants to buy your lots. You need to attract more boutique and specialty stores to create jobs and supplement the few businesses we have.
- Not sure
- Get as many people groups involved as possible. Talk Bentley up!

#### **Discussion:**

In 2022, total revenue was \$2.849 million. Municipal property tax revenue was \$1.172 million. Tax revenue averages about \$1,000 per capita. Town Council faces very real constraints when making budget decisions.

Of the total revenue, \$474,000 was in the form of operating transfers from other local governments. Presumably, this is Lacombe County funding for fire and recreation services, so caution should be used in discussing higher fees for County residents. The Town collects over \$700,000 per year in user fees, but much of this will be utility charges.

#### **Question 10 – Recreational and Cultural**

*Would you support a tax increase for improved recreational opportunities?*

## The Response:

60% responded no.

## Discussion

Clearly, many Town residents believe taxes are high enough already. Even if grant funding covered the construction of new facilities, operating costs must be covered by a combination of user fees and tax revenue. This means that new facilities that require more staff to run will require growth to occur first.

## Question 11 – Community Engagement and Communication

*The Town of Bentley has sought to engage with the community more effectively. How do you typically stay informed about community events, initiatives and updates?*

### People stay informed through:

- Social media – 82%
- Word of mouth – 60%
- Bentley Neighbourhood Notes – 51%
- Local newspapers and publications – 33%

### Other Comments:

- As citizens of a community, it should be a responsibility to stay informed of local news. Unfortunately, I see many occasions where people complain about not being aware of recent events or happenings when they have been advertised extensively on various platforms. Very frustrating.
- Mostly social media. Print/radio is expensive and only reaches a select demographic. Social media reaches most even if they don't have or engage with it. Those get the info shared by those that do
- Communication is horrible. Can't you have weekly input on the radio? It's not actually that much to advertise community news on that forum. Invest in a solar road sign outside town office for current news and events.
- Again there has been communication but have not seen any results as a result of the surveys or improvement plans.
- As well as reading council notes on town website

## Question 12 – Improving Communication and Connection with the Community

*What strategies or tools do you think could improve communication and connection with a wide range of people in the community?*

### Responses in rank order:

- Targeted advertising and promotion – 68%
- Hosting virtual meetings to accommodate busy schedules – 50%
- Offering childcare or transportation assistance for events – 30%

### Other Comments:

- Use the board by the post office, weekly updates?

- As I noted previously, I think the Town is already doing a good job spreading the word. Some people aren't interested, and they won't come to a meeting no matter what you do. Some would sooner sit at home and complain
- Radio
- So much of the "Community News" is repeated month after month after month. Maybe a simpler format stating that the info regarding those repeat items in point form on 1 page, with a stronger emphasis on "news, upcoming events, promotion of groups, etc" would make this publication more useful. It seems to me that there's a lot of staff time used to put a multi page newsletter together every month, that gets read once, then never referred to again, until you throw it out to replace with the next one.
- I think your communication is fine, people are just lazy
- Advance notice. Some meetings haven't had much notice prior.
- No idea
- Use social media, all the normal platforms.
- Electronic billboard outside town office.
- Form a board of directors that all serve on other boards... meet 3 times a year to collaborate, encourage and report.
- At this point have no idea
- lots of communication, if someone wants to be involved and "look"
- We need more incentives to get people engaged in town meetings, I personally can't attend because I have a lack of childcare
- On line recorded town meetings published on the town FB page would keep people engaged far better. We are a bedroom community. People aren't always around during meeting times but a pre recorded video is accessible to all.
- Not sure
- Bentley folks need to get out of their homes & get involved with their community
- Weekly news – maybe more news from Bentley in Lacombe Sylvan Lake & Rimbey newspaper
- Daily positive enthusiastic conversation

#### **Discussion:**

Overall, it appears that the Town is doing well with communications. It is important to note that social media is very effective, it does not replace print. You end up with more "channels" to maintain.

#### **Question 13 – Barriers to Community Engagement**

*What factors do you believe hinder residents from actively participating in community engagement activities?*

#### **Responses in rank order:**

- Lack of awareness about opportunities to participate – 57%
- A feeling of "My opinion won't be considered"- 49%
- Timing and scheduling conflicts – 46%
- Lack of interest in the subject – 28%
- A feeling of "I don't have adequate knowledge and information" – 28%
- Other – 16%

## Other Comments:

- Like I said, people can't be bothered to attend meetings.
- Apathy
- People tend to think things run on their own. They need to understand you have to get involved in some level
- Lack of awareness around the implications of not participating.
- We attended an event to discuss the poor design of the new subdivision. The council and town staff (at the time) had no desire to hear anything negative.
- Bentley is a town of hermits. We don't like leaving our houses to socialize.
- The town is relying too much on social media and Neighborhood Notes, being a monthly publication, does not provide adequate timing for some of these things. Consider a "Notice Board" right inside the post office to put up documents/notices???
- Almost everyone has an "opinion", almost everyone thinks they know what "should be done" but very few will get involved to help out. I'm not sure how to fix that or improve that. It's not just here and it's not just young people.
- Lazy people
- I feel like when I questions, I am met with condescending answers. Also, the small town "I have been here a long time" mentality.
- There are certain council members that have been in Bentley for generations. They don't want to hear anything new or innovative. They're holding progress back. They hinder any new growth
- Most of us are committed to community events on those dates, and many of us can't make it because we are the only ones stepping up to our commitments
- Feel like an outsider,
- The same old people take control of the events and don't allow new ideas or new people to be involved.
- Exclusion it's a very cliché community. Increase community pride and sense of belonging by having joint planning committees between volunteer organizations i.e. combined sports signup nights and community volunteer sign up forums
- A negative attitude towards new ideas, ways of accomplishing goals and not wanting to "give up a chair".
- Again, lots of talk and no action
- apathy
- I believe most people are currently working at least one full time job (or more) to make ends meet which unfortunately means there is not time to attend meetings or hold volunteer positions
- Not sure
- Cannot get off their butt & get involved
- More leadership required – Town perhaps could do more. Involve the whole area (town and county)

## Discussion:

These responses emphasize the need to continue with the emphasis on communication. Communities have developed high expectations and meeting them is an ongoing challenge.

## Question 14 – Future Development Priorities

*In your opinion, what should be the FOUR top actions priorities/projects for future development of our community? Please put it in order of importance.*



### **The four top priorities in rank order:**

- Economic growth and job creation
- Financial stability
- Social, cultural, sports and recreational facilities
- Affordable housing

### **Discussion:**

These responses were excellent. Collectively, they can be summarized as follows: Bentley needs more amenities that enhance quality of life, but the community needs economic growth and financial stability to afford them. In addition, the affordability of housing is seen as a significant issue that needs attention.

### **Question 15 – Other Concerns and Priorities**

*Is there anything else that you would like to share with Town Council as they work to prepare and adopt a new Strategic Plan for Bentley?*

### **Comments:**

- I believe that opportunities were provided to the Town to eliminate or drastically reduce the smell of the sewage lagoons at no cost to tax payers. Not so much as a return email was received which I think is un-fair to the residents of the Town of Bentley.
- Pet bylaw not allowing wandering dogs in town unattended
- We need businesses down town. Also affordable housing is needed without these two things, nothing else will move forward.
- Spend your time and money wisely. The time and money spend on the ski hill area has been huge waste of time and resources. Focus on in town improvements first before looking out of town.
- Invest in young families and recreation amenities and the Town will grow. The Arena, soccer fields, and baseball diamonds all need Town funding and maintenance in order for youth recreation organizations to use them.
- Start listening to the community instead of outsiders.
- Public washrooms would be great
- Integrate trails, make them quad and snowmobile friendly.
- We have an aging population, and we don't have a lodge for seniors. We have citizens that spend 40 plus years calling this community home but when they no longer can live independently in their home, they are forced to move to another community to live in a lodge; leaving their friends and family. Other communities that are close to Bentley have lodges, even Eckville. It's not right that we don't have one. It's a disservice to our seniors that have built this town.
- More kids and teen things to do in community please
- I may be old but I'm still very active, work full-time and would appreciate more opportunities to socialize and participate in physical activities (dance, sports, gym, swimming pool, pickle ball courts, table tennis, cribbage tournaments, community theatre, choirs, live music events, etc.
- Bentley needs an accredited childcare facility.
- The need for stores

- I think its interesting that the Town CAO has influence over the direction of municipal government but does not live in our town. He has no skin in the game and never has to face the consequences of his influence here.
- Don't increase taxes
- There needs to be proper funding to ensure we have a functioning Arena as this is a major activity avenue for the kids in the community 6 months out of the year. It's an important recreational facility for the community as a whole.
- I suggest a volleyball/badminton court. Improving the southeast park by the graveyard. Adding a skate park or outdoor gym. Public washrooms and a nice park area for visitors to have picnics at etc. The town lacks greatly in outdoor amenities.
- Hopefully work on Open a gas station that is open and operational for more than the short hours currently available
- Swimming pool.
- Even with this survey, I feel this project should involve community members in person and not just the Council. Once again, social media is relying on people to get feedback and not all use this platform. A variety of residents to help prepare this Plan would capture what the community really needs rather than five people!!
- Invest in young families and recreation amenities and the Town will grow. The Arena, soccer fields, and baseball diamonds all need Town funding and maintenance in order for youth recreation organizations to use them.
- I believe that opportunities were provided to the Town to eliminate or drastically reduce the smell of the sewage lagoons at no cost to taxpayers. Not so much as a return email was received which I think is un-fair to the residents of the Town of Bentley.
- Keep up the good work
- Spend money better Fix the arena, we have a young families and Bentley minor hockey is booming and we can hardly get through a season without the ice plant dying. Take care of the ball diamonds and don't make the Bentley minor ball kids clean it up and maintain them Get a spray park or skate park. give these kids something to do.
- Don't be old school about improving Bentley
- regarding housing...secondary suites should be a no brainer.
- Again, pretty obvious, Bentley needs an appropriate Sportsplex, hotel and dining.
- It may not be an allowable option, but if Bentley Citizens could contribute to a community project, I think we could get a lot done by volunteers. An example would be planting trees in the new downtown park area or possibly along the bypass entrances to the Town. If the "Town" had the plan & community members could have a work bee to do the work, everyone wins. (I think back to when Lakeview Campground started, the Park had the plan, dug the holes & the Bentley Brownies planted the trees.) I know it's "old school" but it makes people feel good & allows them to take pride & ownership.
- Integrate trails, make them quad and snowmobile friendly.
- We have an aging population, and we don't have a lodge for seniors. We have citizens that spend 40 plus years calling this community home but when they no longer can live independently in their home, they are forced to move to another community to live in a lodge; leaving their friends and family. Other communities that are close to Bentley have lodges, even Eckville. It's not right that we don't have one. It's a disservice to our seniors that have built this town.
- We need to look at the big picture...
- We need change. Whatever you are doing isn't working and this town is dying. People are leaving, as there is nothing this town truly has to offer, aside from some small niche businesses

- I would like to see the town work with the county to have a rec centre built here. It would bring people to town to use the facility entice people to move here create jobs and help us to get physically healthy. Rooms could be rented out. For gatherings meetings etc. and more
- Find a better way to help seniors with snow removal. Let these other companies come help them
- Stop trying to be real estate tycoons on taxpayer money
- Perhaps offer housing to couple of police officers to have closer on hand to assist with crime prevention.
- More jobs
- Would be nice to have a motel here, with restaurants for people visiting here
- Encourage business & industrial business
- Bentley is a friendly safe community. Have to take a more aggressive stance in promoting same. Spend a few dollars to promote an event will get people into town.
- Fix the arena, (use municipal staff) to take care of the ball diamonds; get a spray park or skate park
- Enforce pet bylaw – dogs at large
- Need business downtown and affordable housing
- Sportsplex, hotel, and dining
- Spend time and money wisely – ski hill has been a huge waste of time and resources
- Fundraising – will help community engagement; “theme” town to attract tourists; more restaurants, cafes
- Evening landfill hours one or two nights per week – hard to access now

#### **Discussion:**

There are lots of ideas. Maintain what you’ve got, use volunteer labour, use fundraising to build community spirit as well as raising money.

Many of the suggestions require private sector initiative, but the Town can continue to encourage and facilitate private investment.

#### **Question 16 – Age Group**

*What is your age group?*

- 44% of the respondents were between 46 and 64
- 34% were 31-45
- 12% were 65+
- 11% were 18-30
- No youth or children responded

#### **Discussion:**

Based on a very quick review of 2021 Census data, about 220 of Bentley’s residents are between 46 and 64. About 15% are 65+. About 200 are 31-45. This indicates that a good cross-section of residents responded to the survey, but people in the 46 to 64 age group were most likely to respond. Despite this, recreational opportunities for youth and families were emphasized. The respondents are “future focused.”

#### **Question 17 – Length of time living in Bentley**



*How long have you lived in our community?*

- More than 10 years – 53%
- 1-5 years – 23%
- 6-10 years – 15%
- Less than 1 year – 2%

**Discussion:**

We have no data on how long people have lived in Bentley overall, but many are clearly long-term residents, and there a lot of newer residents who have chosen Bentley wish to see the community thrive.

**Question 18 – How often do you access services in Bentley?**

*How often do you access services/programs in Bentley?*

**Responses:**

- For special events – 38%
- Weekly – 34%
- Daily – 25%
- Monthly – 17%

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**ATTACHMENT C: COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

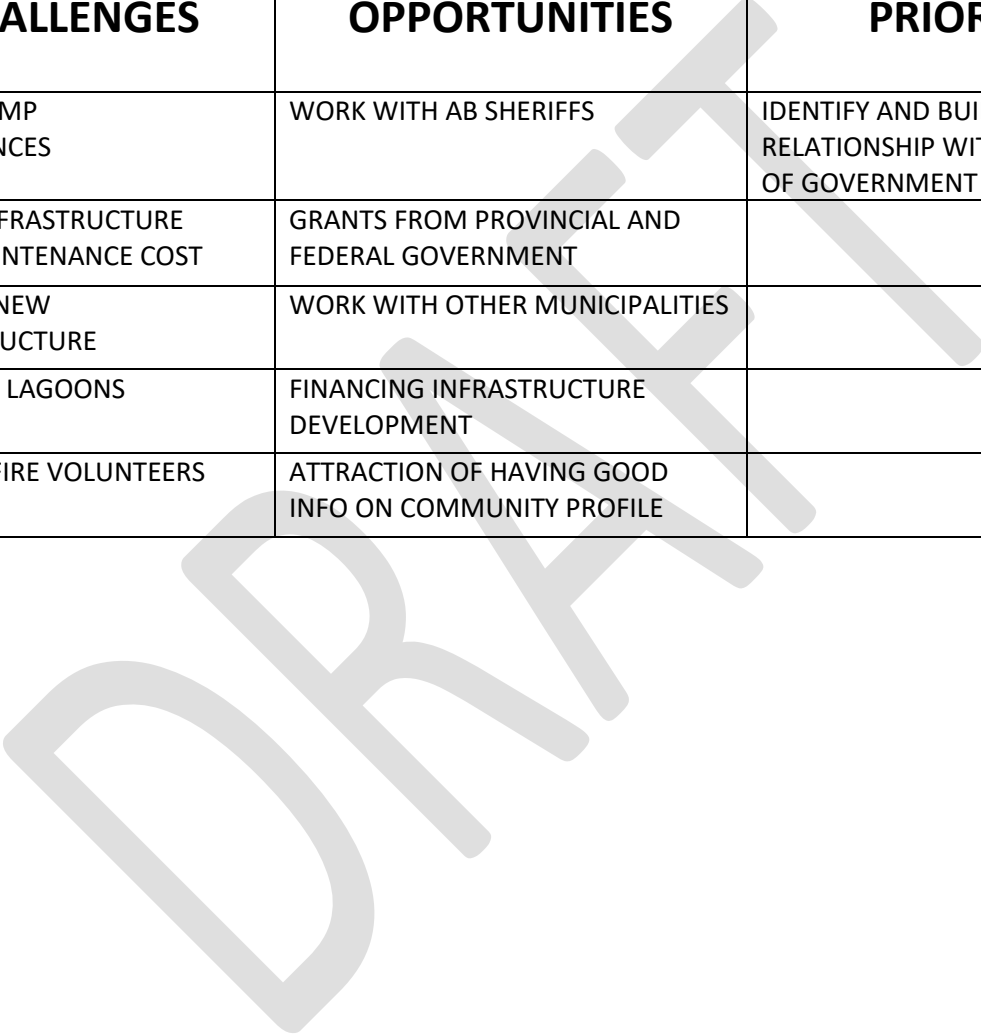
1. CHALLENGES and OPPORTUNITIES
2. VISION, OBJECTIVES, and PRIORITIES

<b>1. POPULATION</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
AGE DEMOGRAPHIC	AVAILABLE LOTS FOR SALE	FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT TO INCREASE POPULATION
LACK OF HOUSING	PROXIMITY TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES	
	MAKE BENTLEY A HUB OF THE AREA	
ATTRACTION AND MARKETING	TARGET MARKETING TO SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC	
COMMUNICATION	AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS, YOUNG PEOPLE	
JOB OPPORTUNITIES	PARTNERSHIP WITH PROVINCE AND PRIVATE DEVELOPERS	
PUBLIC AMENITIES	MARKET SOUTH SIDE ASP	



## 2. INFRASTRUCTURE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY(S)
LOCAL RCMP AMBULANCES	WORK WITH AB SHERIFFS	IDENTIFY AND BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT
AGING INFRASTRUCTURE HIGH MAINTENANCE COST	GRANTS FROM PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	
COST OF NEW INFRASTRUCTURE	WORK WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES	
SMELL OF LAGOONS	FINANCING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	
LACK OF FIRE VOLUNTEERS	ATTRACTION OF HAVING GOOD INFO ON COMMUNITY PROFILE	



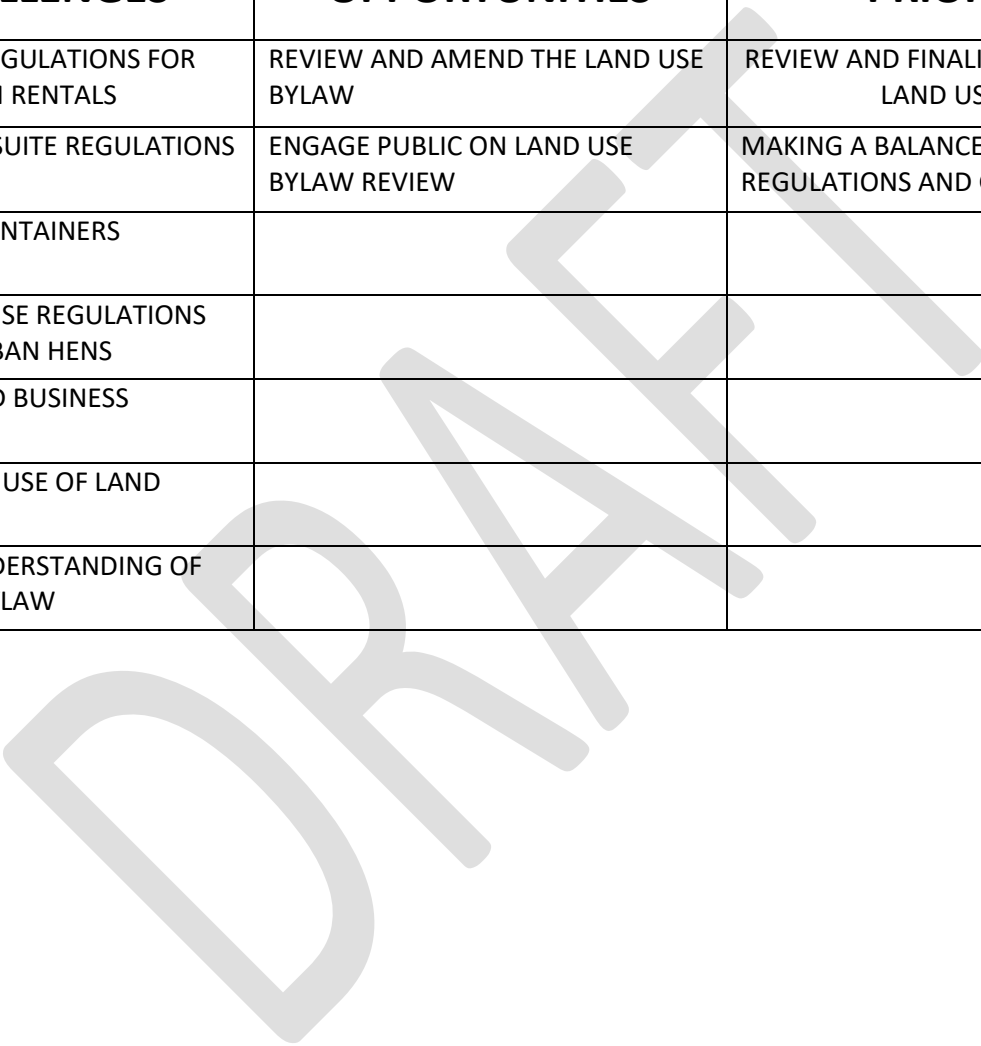


<b>3. HOUSING</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
Lack of Affordable Housing	Sunset Height Development	Pursue or seek out opportunities for affordable housing and diverse housing
Lack of Diverse Housing	39 Acres of land inventory for development	Marketing land opportunities in the Town
Attractiveness of Sunset Heights subdivision	Empty slate to create good municipal reserve	
Lack of Rental Housing	Paved area and facilities around subdivisions	

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<b>4. LAND USE BYLAW</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
LAND USE REGULATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS	REVIEW AND AMEND THE LAND USE BYLAW	REVIEW AND FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE LAND USE BYLAW
ACCESSORY SUITE REGULATIONS	ENGAGE PUBLIC ON LAND USE BYLAW REVIEW	MAKING A BALANCE BETWEEN REGULATIONS AND GROWTH
SHIPPING CONTAINERS		
NEW LAND USE REGULATIONS SUCH AS URBAN HENS		
HOME BASED BUSINESS		
TEMPORARY USE OF LAND		
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF LAND USE BYLAW		







<b>5. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
HOLDING STEADY ON TAXES	MORE COMPETITIVE MEDIATION TO FIND EFFICIENCIES	MANAGE EXISTING ASSETS
PAYING OFF DEBENTURES	POTENTIAL TO GET MORE GRANTS	SAVE MONEY FOR FUTURE
LONG-TERM ASSET MANAGEMENT	GAIN RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE A LOBBYING PLAN	
COUNCIL ABILITY TO LOBBY	MAKE PUBLIC MORE AWARE OF COSTS	
PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING		
INSUFFICIENT RESERVES		
CAPACITY TO APPLY FOR GRANTS		



<b>6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
AVAILABILITY OF BUSINESS PROPERTIES	SOUTHEAST AREA STRUCTURE PLAN	CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON LONG-TERM MARKETING ON COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
SUPPLY AND DEMAND	NORTH LAND SUNSET HEIGHT	
DIVERSITY OF BUSINESSES	STIMULATE DEMAND	
SEASONAL BUSINESS / NOT PERMANENT	INCENTIVES	
LACK OF GOOD MARKETING	ENCOURAGE FOUR SEASON BUSINESS	
HIGHER TAX RATE		



## 7. RECREATION and PUBLIC FACILITIES

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITY(S)
INSUFFICIENT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR YOUTH	BUILDING A SOCCER FIELD	IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP REC. FOR YOUTH AND MAINTAIN CURRENT FACILITIES
AGING FACILITIES	ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN PHASE	
LACK OF REC. MASTER PLAN	DEVELOPED ONE NEW REC. FACILITY	
LACK OF PUBLIC WASHROOM	SPACE FOR MORE REC. FACILITIES	
INSUFFICIENT FOUR-SEASON REC. FACILITIES		
SKI HILL FUNDING		



<b>8. PARKS and OPENSACE</b>		
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY(S)</b>
COST OF EQUIPMENT	PREPARE PARKS MASTER PLAN	GRANTS
MEETING ALL NEEDS	USE PUBLIC TO FUNDRAISE	PARTNERSHIP
REFINING IDEAS	COMPLETE OXFORD PARK	MASTER PLAN
	WATCH GRANTS	

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## BENTLEY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2024

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
1. Identify and develop recreational facilities for youth	Create a Recreation Master Plan
	Develop a New Soccer Field
2. Manage existing asset while saving money for future	Continue Phase 3 Asset Management
	Develop a Long-term Reserve Strategy
3. Identify and focus on building relationships with other levels of Government	Pursue Government Grant Funding
4. Continue to focus on long-term marketing plan for attracting business owners, developers, and investors	Market Sunset Heights and SE Area Structure Plan
5. Focus on improvement of Quality of life to encourage development and to increase population	Diversification and improvement of Public Recreational Facilities
	Educate the community members on Public Safety through publications, Open House and Communication
6. Finalize the LUB Review to balance between Regulations and Growth	Address affordable housing and short-term rentals,
	Facilitate new developments in Urban Reserve zone
7. Pursue and facilitate opportunities for affordable and diverse housing	Seek opportunities and strategies and policies to encourage affordable housing and diverse housing types

## ATTACHMENT D: WHAT WE HEARD- COMMUNITY INSIGHTS-OPEN HOUSE

### OPEN HOUSE - JUNE 19, 2024

- Sign in Sheet showed 9 people signed in
- There were a few other attendees including council and mayor

The community feedback highlights a strong desire for strategic initiatives focusing on youth retention, recreational facilities, economic development, and effective governance. There is a strong support for building a new soccer field, a clear call for dedicated staff to manage these initiatives and a significant emphasis on enhancing the community's appeal to both residents and businesses through improved services and infrastructure.

#### **Summary Of Comments Received:**

- *Positive Collaboration!*
- *Goal 4 very important*
- *Goal 3 – Future planning on trying to find ways to keep youth*
- *Goal 1 – Keys to the future*
- *Goal 6 – Policies are key*
- *Greatly in favor of new soccer pitches. Very affordable for children. Soccer program has increased greatly*
- *Excellent ideas but we need a dedicated staff member to look after (referring to Goal 3)*
- *Need a dedicated rec. person*
- *Oxford Park – use portable washrooms for spring – late fall*
- *Make Bentley attractive to developers – we need more services*
- *We need public washrooms, I also want to see the downtown full of store front/customer serving businesses, instead of empty spaces, perhaps we need to find ways to encourage them to either move on or rent their space out*
- *Municipal Education session to community – what you can and can't do as a municipality*
- *Vacant land use study*
- *Plan seems fine, with one quick read, would like to spend more time studying it, like the recreation strategies but I believe a dedicated staff member is needed to really create a successful plan.*

- *I would like to see more standards for businesses/buildings on main street. We have too many businesses w/o tenants. Shuttered or with non-customer facing businesses. We need what few businesses we have, and we could have more. Empty buildings lead to an empty town. We also need to help push businesses to have viable businesses. Also, we should have bylaws to make buildings on main street be in good repair. Love the idea of grants for business events etc.*
- *Can we take out part of public works behind main street to make more parking?*
- *We also need public washrooms now that the monkey top is gone.*
- *Also need to court new restaurants*
- *We really need to enforce land use bylaws. Existing bylaws are not being enforced. Creating new LUB is not realistic if none are enforced.*
- *If we had more things for Youth, some of the other goals would fall into place. In my opinion.*
- *People do not want to raise families or stay, if they have to go everywhere else for family things to do.*

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