

FERNIE

CITY OF FERNIE

Housing Needs Report
Official Community Plan Amendments & Update

What We Heard Report



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction.....	1
1.1	This Summary	1
2.	Phase 1: Project Initiation.....	2
2.1	Council Presentation.....	2
2.2	Ya'qit ?a:knuqlí'it First Nation Visit.....	2
3.	Phase 2: Housing Needs Report & Round 1 OCP Update Engagement.....	3
3.1	Council Workshop.....	3
3.2	Staff Workshop.....	5
3.3	Task Force Workshop.....	10
3.4	Community Partner Workshop.....	12
3.5	Public Open House	19
3.6	Survey	32
4.	Summary	48
5.	Next Steps.....	50
	Appendix: Verbatim Comments.....	51

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Fernie is located within Qukin?amak?is, the unceded territory of Ya'qit ?aknuqli?it. We recognize that we live and work within their vast lands. ?akanuxunik are from Ya'qit ?aknuqli?it and are members of the Ktunaxa speaking peoples of British Columbia, Idaho and Montana.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THIS SUMMARY

This engagement summary is organized around the first two phases of the Official Community Plan (OCP) Update process, outlining the purpose, activities, and outcomes of the work completed to date:

1. **Phase 1: Project Initiation** focused on laying the groundwork for a transparent and collaborative planning process by finalizing the Communications and Engagement Plan, forming the OCP Task Force, and introducing the project to Council.
2. **Phase 2: Housing Needs Report & Round 1 OCP Engagement** expanded the process to the broader community, combining education and dialogue on Fernie's housing needs with the launch of the OCP Update through open and inclusive engagement.

Together, these two phases established the foundation for the project: first by setting up alignment, clarity, and readiness at the outset, and then by beginning the conversation with residents, Council, the Task Force, community partners, and the broader public about Fernie's housing challenges, vision, and long-term growth. The focus of this summary is to capture and reflect on the key learnings, feedback, and outcomes from these initial stages, showing how early engagement is shaping the direction of the updated OCP. The insights summarized here will feed into the final What We Heard report, which will consolidate feedback from all phases of engagement.

2. PHASE 1: PROJECT INITIATION

The first phase of engagement involved laying the groundwork for a successful and transparent planning process. During this phase, the Communications and Engagement Plan (CEP) was finalized, providing a clear framework for how the various project audiences would be involved throughout the project. The OCP Task Force was also advertised and established by Council, creating a dedicated body to help guide and support the process.

The following activities highlight engagement during this phase of the project.

2.1 COUNCIL PRESENTATION

To start the project, the team presented to Council on June 24, 2025, introducing the purpose, scope, and approach of the work ahead. The presentation provided an overview of the dual focus of the project: Part 1, completing the provincially required Housing Needs Report, and Part 2 undertaking a comprehensive update to Fernie's OCP. To satisfy the requirements of Bill 44, City Staff provided a memo at the end of 2024; however, this Housing Needs Report will provide a more detailed analysis and interpretation of the data presented in the memo to support the OCP update.

Council was introduced to the team, their experience with similar planning initiatives, and the roles and responsibilities each would bring to support the process. The team outlined key deliverables, including the draft and final Housing Needs Report, the interim OCP amendment required by Bill 44, and the broader long-range OCP Update. Next steps were shared, setting expectations for collaboration, communication, and ongoing Council involvement throughout the process.

2.2 YA'QIT ?A·KNUQLI'IT FIRST NATION VISIT

City Staff visited Ya'qit ?a·knuqli'it on September 2, 2025 to meet with the First Nation Council to initiate the work ahead. During the meeting, Staff shared the project timeline, major deliverables, and opportunities for engagement throughout the project. The presentation set a collaborative tone for the work, establishing clear expectations for communication and Council involvement as the project progresses.

3. PHASE 2: HOUSING NEEDS REPORT & ROUND 1 OCP UPDATE ENGAGEMENT

Phase 2 of the engagement program expanded the process to the broader community, marking the official launch of the OCP Update. This phase focused on building awareness and fostering dialogue around Fernie's housing needs and emerging community priorities. Through open and inclusive engagement activities, residents and community partners were invited to share their experiences, identify challenges, and contribute ideas to help shape the vision and direction of the updated OCP.

The following activities highlight the engagement activities conducted during this phase of the project.

3.1 COUNCIL WORKSHOP

On September 9, 2025, the team presented an update on the HNR and the OCP update process to Council. The presentation reviewed progress to date, including a snapshot of housing challenges in Fernie, alongside five-and twenty-year housing projections and activities for Round 1 engagement.

A round table discussion invited Council to share perspectives and provide early feedback.



KEY POINTS

This section highlights key messaging, concerns, and ideas received from Council at this workshop.

OCP – What is Working

- The OCP provides clear direction/vision to guide decision-making.
- Design guidelines are strong, clear, and accurate.
- Council acknowledged it has a good understanding of the OCP and how it frames decision-making.

Why Fernie Shines

- Tourism remains a cornerstone of the local economy, attracting visitors and investment.
- Proximity to Calgary (three hours) is a strategic advantage.
- Favourable context with higher incomes, lower crime rates, and a generally healthy regional economy.
- Natural environment and water provide scenic landscapes and access to nature are core strengths.
- There is a strong sense of belonging and connectedness.
- There are year-round outdoor activities and facilities like the pool add to livability.

Opportunities

- **Community Goal-driven Planning:** Desire for the OCP to be led by long-term community goals, not short-term political shifts.
- **Heritage of Downtown:** Preserve and enhance historic character to support identity and tourism.
- **Highway Corridor:** Improve aesthetics and economic potential along Fernie's main gateway.
- **Action Plan:** Break priorities into short, medium, and long-term deliverables.
- **Boundary Expansion as Economic Opportunity:** Potential to explore expansion areas with careful evaluation and public buy-in.
- **New Infrastructure Master Plan and Capacity Analysis:** Currently being prepared, and will guide servicing needs for growth.
- **Economic Development:** Add more commercial/retail space, diversify the tax base, and plan for employment lands.
- **Mixed-use/Live-work Neighbourhoods:** Encourage complete communities with integrated housing, jobs, and services.
- **Clear Communication to Developers:** Consistent policies and expectations to guide development applications.
- **Downtown Parking:** Opportunity to revisit requirements, policies, and potential zoning bylaw amendments (ZBA).
- **Community Design Criteria:** Explore neighbourhood planning, parking policies, signage, and downtown heritage designations (DPAs).

- **Collaboration with Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) and Adjacent Municipalities:** Align long-term planning for housing, infrastructure, and employment.

Challenges

- **Length & Usability of the OCP:** Too long, repetitive, and not user-friendly; needs an “at a glance” summary page.
- **Limited Economic Development Focus:** Commercial diversity and employment planning are lacking.
- **Boundary Expansion:** Past annexation of West Fernie resulted in a poor return on investment (ROI) due to low-value housing, high-cost infrastructure, and low taxes. Expansion is contentious—rural residents may push back, and ROI is uncertain.
- **Servicing and Infrastructure Capacity:** Labour, capital, land, and pipes will make it difficult to meet housing needs targets. A new master plan/capacity analysis is underway to assess infrastructure readiness. Little industrial land is available; this is recognized as a long-term need.
- **Regional Inequities:** RDEK residents benefit from city amenities (such as the hockey rink and pool) without contributing financially.
- **Housing & Growth Balance:** Concern about reliance on rentals in multifamily projects. Need strategies to grow the permanent population and reduce pressure from short-term rentals (STRs).
- **Policy Timing & Flexibility:** Desire to avoid rigid rules; work within a “band of maybes” that allows adaptability.
- **Metrics & Monitoring:** Lack of KPIs and reporting mechanisms to measure OCP success.
- **Parking:** Emerging as a future issue downtown; community engagement will be needed.
- **Trade-offs Not Captured:** Concern that current planning does not adequately communicate side effects, costs, or trade-offs of policies.
- **Citizen Satisfaction Study and Columbia Basin Report** flagged as resources to provide additional context and community perspectives.

3.2 STAFF WORKSHOP

On September 10, 2025, the team facilitated the first Staff Workshop with City of Fernie staff. The session introduced the project framework and invited participants to contribute their perspectives on both current challenges and future opportunities for Fernie.

Staff were engaged in a series of interactive activities, beginning with a polling exercise to gather initial input, followed by two round table discussions. These discussions focused on identifying best

practices from other communities' OCPs that could be applied in Fernie, as well as surfacing known challenges such as staffing, enforcement capacity, and infrastructure limitations that could influence future policy directions.

The workshop also included a bridging activity, where staff were asked to reflect on Fernie's current state and envision its desired future state, then identify what actions, tools, or resources would be needed to bridge the gap between the two.



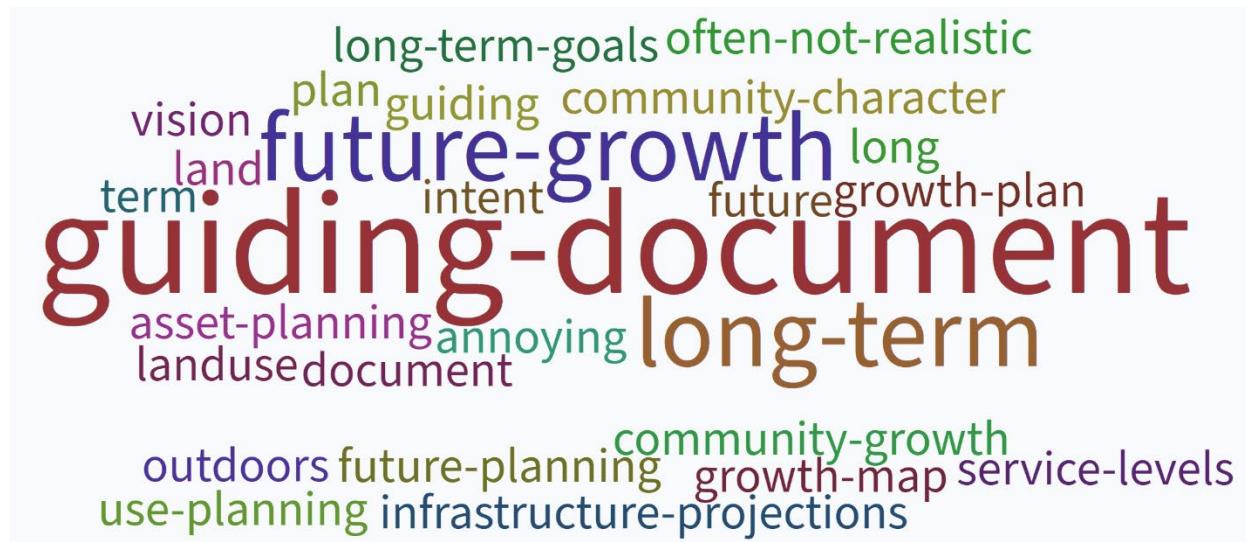
KEY POINTS

This section highlights key messaging, concerns, and ideas brought by City staff to this workshop.

Understanding of the OCP

- Staff view the OCP as the community's long-term vision and guiding document for land use, development, and growth.
- Descriptions included words like "direction," "vision," "planning framework," demonstrating that staff see the OCP as both a strategic and regulatory tool.

Figure 1. Staff - Understanding of OCP word cloud



What Should Be Celebrated About Fernie

- Natural setting and mountain views, which create Fernie's unique character.
- The town's tight-knit community spirit, small-town charm, and welcoming nature.
- Recreation opportunities (skiing, biking, trails) and cultural vibrancy.
- Distinctive architecture and heritage were noted as a source of pride.

Figure 2. Staff - What should be celebrated in Fernie word cloud



Biggest Issues to Solve

- Housing affordability and availability were flagged as urgent challenges.
- Strains on infrastructure and balancing expectations.

- Concerns about traffic congestion, growth pressures, and maintaining community character as Fernie expands.

Figure 3. Staff - Biggest issues to solve word cloud



Vision for the Future of Fernie

- Staff envision Fernie to be sustainable, inclusive, affordable, and resilient.
- A future where residents feel safe, have opportunities for collaboration, and the City is financially stable.

Figure 4. Staff - Vision for Fernie word cloud



Preferred Policy Tools

- 83% called for innovative policy tools but not to change everything; 11% called for traditional policy tools with a dab of innovation; and 6% called for very innovative policy tools that rock the boat and propose major change.

- 59% of staff want somewhat prescriptive policy tools, while 41% of staff want somewhat permissive policy tools. This relatively even split suggests differing perspectives among staff on how best to achieve policy goals. Some value flexibility to adapt to unique circumstances and evolving community needs, while others prefer clear, prescriptive tools that offer consistency, transparency, and predictability in decision-making.
 - The divide suggests an opportunity to blend both approaches, developing a framework that sets clear policy direction while allowing room for case-by-case interpretation, supported by internal guidance or criteria to help staff apply discretion consistently.

Current OCP Tools & Gaps

- Tools that work well currently in the OCP: development permit areas, design guidelines, and clear and directive policies that have kept Fernie's character intact.
- Gaps identified: maps are out of date, redundancies or missing policies, such as parks and recreation planning, economic development, watercourse protection, development growth, heritage, diversity and inclusion, urban tree protection, and service levels.
- Need for clearer links between OCP policies and implementation, so the plan feels actionable and relevant.

Round Table Questions – What works well in other communities that could be applied to Fernie

- **Whistler:** Well-designed parks and landscape planning that enhance visitor experience. Hotel room tax (3%) generates ~\$2 million for tourism, reinvesting visitor spending locally.
- **Canmore:** Management of the railway corridor through town as a defining feature.
- **Tofino:** Infrastructure improvements such as sewer systems to support growth and tourism.
- **Nelson:** Vibrant downtown “main street” character and walkability.

Round Table Questions – Challenges that could shape policy directions

- Clarifying “land use” vs. “neighbourhood” distinctions for clearer planning.
- Digital/tech infrastructure: Need for fibre and reliable internet to support streaming, events, and community services.
- Heritage planning: Need concise, realistic strategies for preservation.
- Building inventory: Policies around ownership, leasing, protection, and land use safeguards.
- Organizational capacity: Improve strategic planning through a “three-pillars” approach, digitization of files, and operational excellence.

3.3 TASK FORCE WORKSHOP

The team convened the first meeting of the OCP Task Force on September 10, 2025, formally launching its role in guiding the OCP Update and HNR process. The OCP Task Force was established through an open, transparent process; publicly advertised to invite community members with diverse perspectives and expertise. Applications were reviewed by Administration and the team, with recommendations brought forward to Council for appointment. The Task Force brings together voices from across the community - from social and family services to business, energy, childcare, heritage, and Council – ensuring a wide range of perspectives help guide Fernie's future.



This first meeting introduced members to the project scope, roles, and responsibilities, and provided an overview of the OCP framework, provincial requirements, and progress to date on the Housing Needs Report. The team also outlined the kickoff of Round 1 engagement, highlighting opportunities for public participation through workshops, an open house, and online tools.

A workshop activity allowed members to discuss key issues such as housing, downtown revitalization, tourism, and recreation, and digital polling was used to gather immediate feedback.

KEY POINTS

This section highlights key messaging, concerns, and ideas shared by the Task Force members at this workshop.

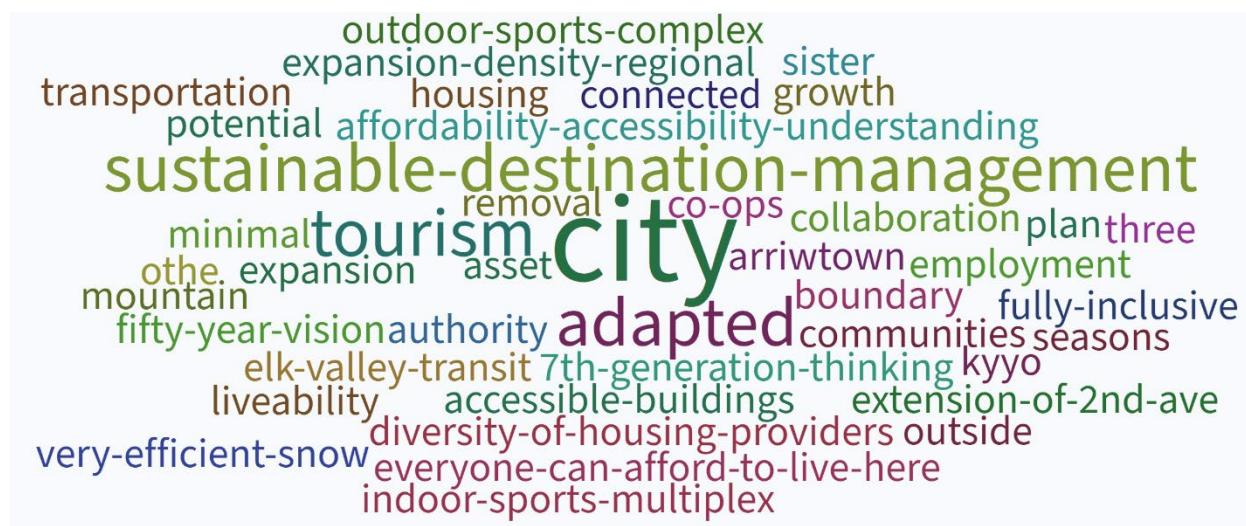
Role of Task Force Members

- Participants see their role as providing insight, representing the community, and sharing diverse perspectives to be included in the OCP update.
- Emphasis on being a “voice of the people,” sharing local knowledge, and guiding decision-making.

Big Ideas for Fernie in 20 Years

- Strong focus on affordable housing, climate resilience, and sustainable growth.
- Desire for improved active transportation (trails, walking, cycling).
- Calls for a diversified economy beyond tourism.

Figure 5. Task Force - Big ideas for Fernie in 20 years word cloud



Vision For Fernie (Word Cloud Themes)

- Top words included: Cohesive, Inclusive, enviable, affordable, diverse.
- Strong emphasis on community and nature.

Figure 6. Task Force - Vision for Fernie word cloud



What Makes Fernie Shine

- Outdoor recreation opportunities, stunning natural setting, and strong sense of community pride.
- Small-town charm and cultural events highlighted as key strengths.

Biggest Issues to Solve

- Housing affordability and availability were major concerns.
- Infrastructure pressures, traffic management, and climate risks also identified.
- Limited developable land and lack of community space was a recurring theme.

Making the OCP Relevant

- Recommendations included using plain language (or multiple languages), visual communication, and establishing ongoing engagement in different forms.
- Desire for more education and outreach in places where people linger so citizens see themselves reflected in the plan.

3.4 COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP

On September 11, 2025, the team hosted the first Community Partner Workshop, bringing together key stakeholders and interested parties from across Fernie to participate in the OCP Update and HNR process. Similar to the other sessions, the presentation provided an overview of project objectives and housing challenges. Involving representatives from local organizations, service providers, business groups, and community advocates was essential so that a wide range of experiences, priorities, and perspectives were reflected in the discussion. These voices play a critical role in identifying on-the-ground issues and uncovering opportunities for collaboration so that the updated OCP and HNR respond to the real needs of Fernie's residents and community partners.

Participants were invited to share perspectives on housing, commercial activity, downtown opportunities, tourism, and recreation, and to identify priorities and gaps through interactive discussions and engagement board activities. Participants also participated in a priorities exercise that used "monopoly money", where each participant was given "\$100 to spend on different municipal items to help them signal which issues and investments mattered most to them. There was also a large format community map that partners used to identify opportunities for more housing density, parks or open space, commercial/shops & services, and community amenities/recreation facilities could locate in Fernie.



KEY POINTS

This section highlights key messaging, concerns, and ideas brought by key stakeholders and interested parties to this workshop.

What's not working/missing?

- Participants were asked to participate by providing their thoughts on what is not working or missing in Fernie.
- Common themes highlighted:
 - **Shortage of Childcare:**
 - Shortage of childcare spaces, with over 200 children on waitlists.
 - Challenges tied to both staffing and physical space.
 - Need for stronger funding, grants, and integration of childcare with housing and community planning.
 - Broader gaps in social supports such as mental health, addiction, and domestic violence services.
 - **Housing & Land Supply:**
 - Lack of housing supply and employment lands is constraining growth.
 - Calls to incentivize (or penalize) undeveloped land to encourage use.
 - Boundary expansion raised as a possible solution.
 - Housing shortages also increase demand for recreation facilities and social supports.
 - **Infrastructure & Municipal Capacity:**
 - Concerns about sewer and water readiness, deferred maintenance, and aging infrastructure.
 - Need for updated design guidelines that reflect Fernie's unique character.
 - Recognition that refusal to increase taxes/reserves has led to cuts and lost facilities.
 - Development Cost Charges (DCCs) and “pooling costs” discussed as possible tools.
 - Questions about whether the City has the capacity and resources to deliver its stated priorities.
 - **Environmental & Climate Protection:**

- Desire for stronger environmental protection, especially around rivers, fishing, and water resources.
- Climate change concerns, including drought, flooding, and water security.
- Need for actionable climate planning rather than vague commitments (“look at,” “consider”).
- Importance of outdoor recreation lands, even if not City-owned, and working with partners on their future.

- **Economic Development:**

- Requests for clearer roles and funding for economic development.
- Business retention and attraction are seen as important, alongside tourism.
- Tourism Master Plan identified as a resource with ideas to build from.
- Concern about Resort Municipality funding fluctuating year to year; OCP could set clearer, actionable direction.

- **Governance, Partnerships, & Vision:**

- Desire for stronger regional relationships and influence—Fernie should be part of conversations beyond its borders.
- Need for active listening and stronger collaboration with community groups, non-profits, and other partners.
- A clearer engagement framework that outlines how community partners can work with the City, what types of projects can be supported, and budgetary requirements.
- Concern that the OCP has no language on engaging community groups, specifically Indigenous groups.
- Mentioned that previously there was an OCP Implementation Committee that was tasked with making the OCP actional, however it was dissolved. Community partners suggested bringing the committee back but dedicating budget support to make a plausible impact.
- Frustration with missed opportunities (e.g., beautification tax lapsing).
- Calls for a clear, tangible vision/mission statement and an updated boundary for the historic downtown in the OCP.
- OCP updates should be better aligned with the 2026 census and Housing Needs Reports.

- Technical considerations, such as slope management, should be incorporated into planning.

What is working? What do we need more of?

- Participants were asked to collaborate by providing their thoughts on what is working or what Fernie needs more of:
 - Fernie has begun meaningful work on climate change adaptation, planning, and infrastructure, along with conversations about divestment from mining; this momentum should continue, recognizing that reliance on the mine cannot last forever.
 - There is a growing call for a clear, shared vision for Fernie's future to guide decision-making and long-term planning.
 - Investments in childcare spaces are seen as critical to supporting families and the local workforce, and partners want to see more progress in this area.
 - The community is increasingly prioritizing environmental protection, and there is strong support to expand and strengthen these measures.

Tourism Engagement Board Comments

- Tourism in Fernie needs more sustainable funding and management, with trail maintenance under strain and a preference for tourism dollars to be directed by tourism organizations rather than City staff.
- Opportunities exist to diversify tourism offerings, such as creating a food truck hub similar to Portland, Niseko, or Whitefish.

Commercial Engagement Board Comments

- Improvements are needed for core services downtown, including snow removal, waste management, and recycling, to serve residents, businesses, and tourists.
- There is a strong interest in making 2nd Avenue more pedestrian-friendly with fewer motor vehicles.

Additional Comments Engagement Board Comments

- Participants were asked: *Do you have any additional thoughts or ideas for Fernie's future as our community continues to grow and evolve?* Participants were able to answer by adding a sticky note to the board.
- Common themes highlighted included:
 - **Housing & Landlord Accountability:** There is a need for more diverse housing options, including entry-level ownership, supportive housing, and maintaining

existing subsidized units. Stronger regulation and enforcement of landlord practices is also critical.

- **Childcare & Community Services:** Expanding childcare spaces is a top priority, alongside more services for people who use drugs, supports for men (shelters, transition housing), and inclusive access to community services.
- **Equity & Accessibility:** Gaps in accessibility (e.g., Service BC at the courthouse) and the lack of Indigenous engagement in planning were highlighted as major oversights that need correction.
- **Climate & Sustainability:** Climate change and land use were identified as existential threats, with calls for stronger action toward net-zero, GHG reduction, and climate-resilient planning.
- **Downtown & Recreation:** Growth and density should remain focused near downtown, with more space and infrastructure to support recreation groups and improve connectivity (e.g., free ski hill shuttle).
- **Infrastructure & Partnerships:** Building infrastructure to match housing needs, involving experienced local developers, and establishing long-term planning capacity are key to supporting growth sustainably.

Bucket & Monopoly Money Activity

- **Infrastructure (\$538)** received the highest allocation, showing strong agreement among community partners that reliable core services and systems are the top priority.
- **Housing (\$275)** ranked second, confirming it as a critical need but seen as secondary to foundational infrastructure.
- **Downtown & Community Spaces (\$239)** and **Parks & Trails (\$204)** also received notable support, reflecting interest in livability, recreation, and public realm improvements.
- **Climate Change (\$136)** and **Transportation (\$131)** were moderately funded, suggesting recognition of their importance but less urgency compared to infrastructure and housing.
- **Economic Development (\$61)**, **Child Care (\$40)**, and **Accessibility (\$20)** received the least investment, highlighting these as lower immediate priorities for community partners in this exercise; however, child care and accessibility were buckets that the community partners created, demonstrating additional priorities not fully captured in the original list.

Mapping Activity

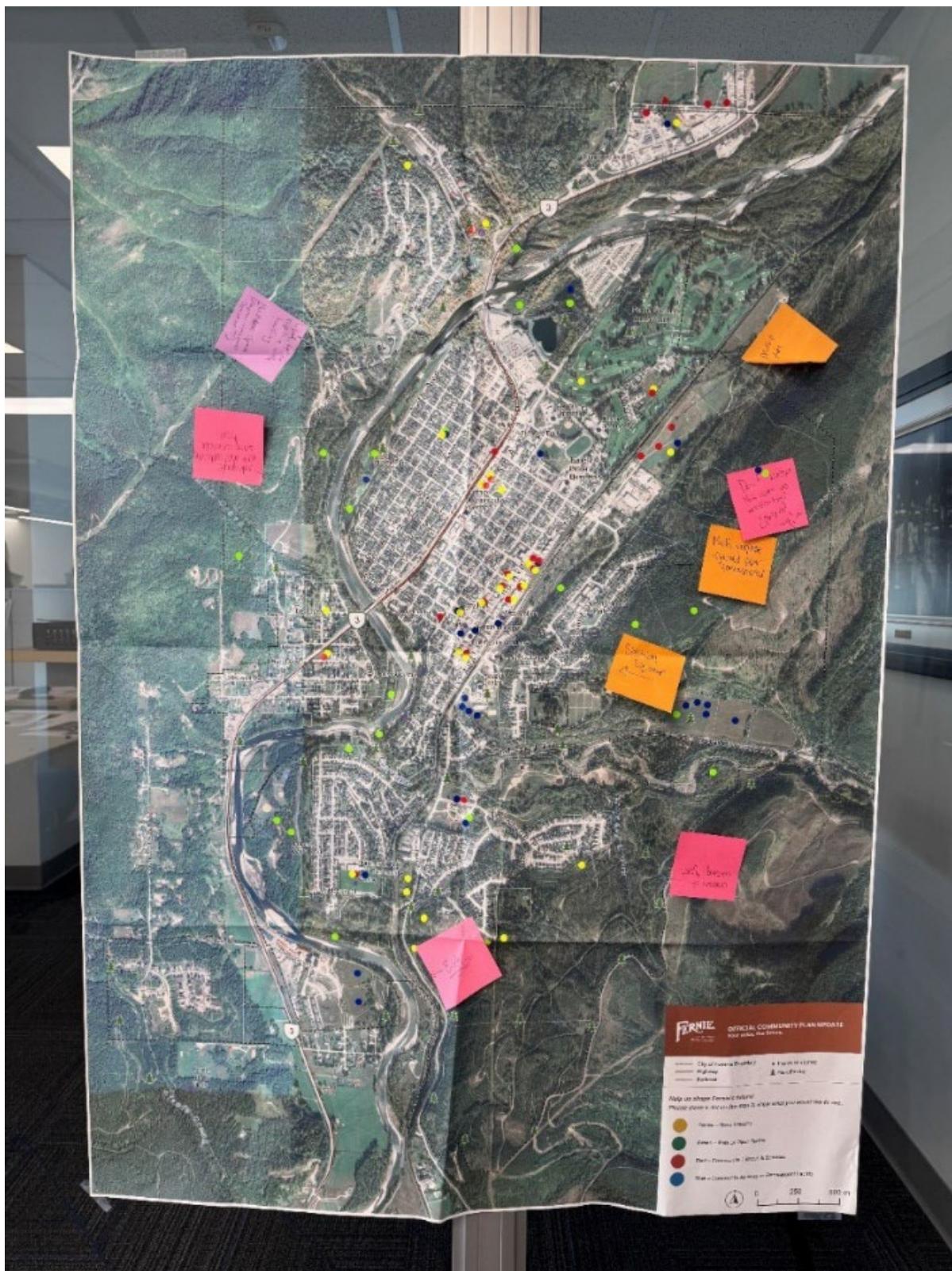
- Results for mapping activity:

Dot	Outcome Summary
Housing (Yellow)	Marked across several neighbourhoods, showing support for distributed housing opportunities. Some emphasis on expanding residential areas beyond the downtown core.
Parks & Open Space (Green)	Mostly concentrated in green areas or those outside urban areas, demonstrating a desire to capitalize on the natural environment.
Commercial / Shops & Services (Red)	Clustered mainly around the downtown and along major corridors, reinforcing the idea of strengthening Fernie's commercial core while allowing some corridor growth.
Community Amenities & Recreational Facilities (Blue)	Concentrated near existing neighbourhoods, schools, natural areas, and amenities, indicating a focus on placing facilities in easily accessible locations that integrate with the surrounding community and environmental features.

- Additional comments include:
 - Adding a bridge across the river needs a Utility Access Road.
 - Adding diversity of housing types near Brewery Creek.
 - Having multi-purpose ground floor commercial.
 - Not to develop residential in the City Yards on Railway Avenue, but to develop southeast of the Fernie Golf and Country Club.
 - To update or replace multi-purpose space with housing at 10 Ave and 12 St.
 - To integrate an art installation along an accessible trail near Annex Park.

CITY OF FERNIE OCP UPDATE – ROUND 1 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Figure 7. Community Partners - Mapping Activity



3.5 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

On September 10, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM, the City of Fernie hosted the first Public Open House for the project at the Arts Station Theatre. The event welcomed community members to learn about the project and share their perspectives through a variety of interactive activities.

Sixty-six participants attended the Public Open House.

The Public Open House included:

- Engagement boards that provided background information and prompts for feedback, such as:
 - Home sizes Fernie needs (1, 2, 3 bedroom needs),
 - Options for smaller housing units,
 - What housing types Fernie needs (duplex, single detached, townhomes, etc.),
 - How to address the need for commercial development,
 - Enhancements for Fernie's downtown,
 - How to strengthen Fernie's tourism economy,
 - Concerns and solutions for addressing Fernie's tourism economy;
- A large community map that invited participants to identify places where they think housing, park or open space, commercial/shops & services, and community amenities/recreation facilities should go in Fernie; and
- A priorities exercise that used “monopoly money”, where each participant is given \$100 to help participants signal which issues and investments matter most to them.

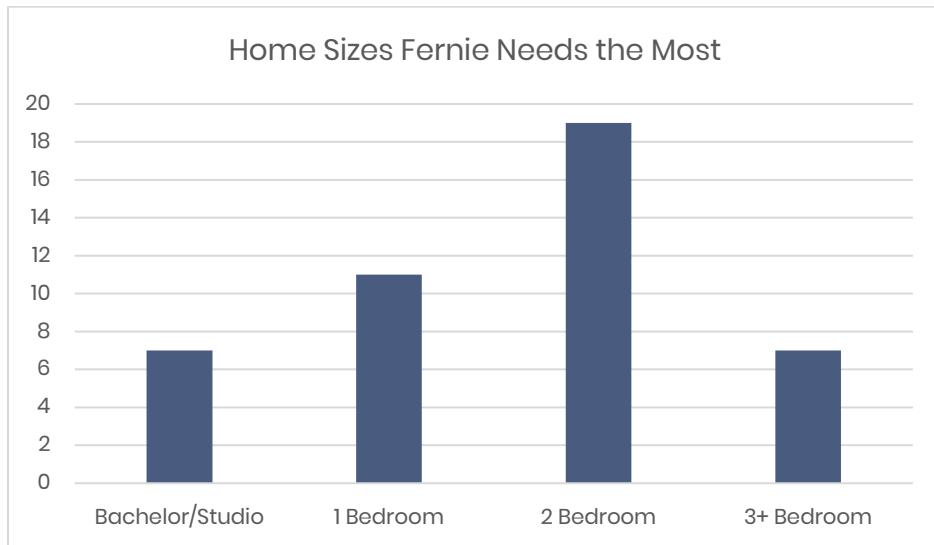


KEY POINTS

This section highlights key messaging, concerns, and ideas brought by the general public to the open house.

Home Sizes and Smaller Units

- Results for what home sizes participants think Fernie needs the most:



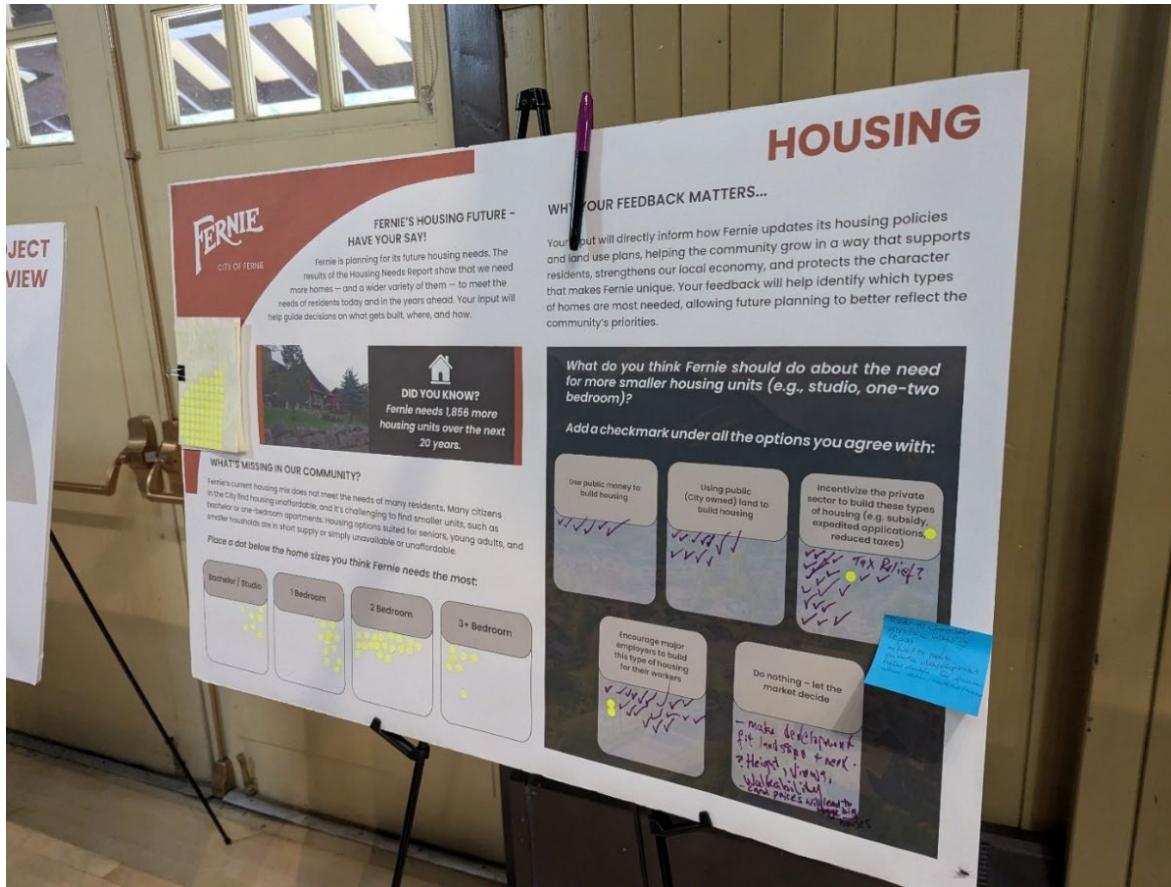
- 2-bedroom units received the strongest support, followed by 1-bedroom units, showing a clear preference for modest, flexible housing.
- Studios/bachelors and 3+ bedroom units were lower priorities, suggesting less demand for very small or very large units.
- Overall, participants favour balanced, mid-sized housing options that meet the needs of singles, couples, and small families while supporting affordability.
- Results for what Fernie should do about the need for smaller housing units are included in the table below:

Strategy	Votes
Incentivize the private sector to build these types of housing (e.g., subsidy, expedited applications, reduced taxes)	21 <i>Note: Tax relief Note: Refer to Chamber Workforce Housing Report = hard to make private development affordable for those who earn \$25/hour</i>
Encourage major employers to build this type of housing for their workers	21
Using public (city-owned) land to build housing	11
Use public money to build housing	6
Do nothing – let the market decide	0

	<p><i>Note: Make development fit the landscape and need. Height, views, walkability, and land prices will lead to big houses.</i></p>
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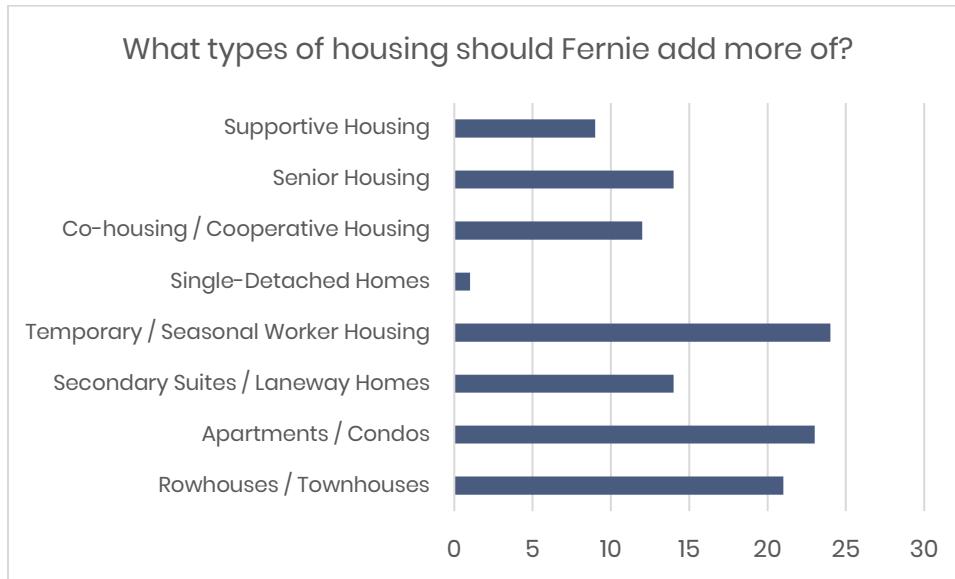
- Top priorities: Incentivizing the private sector (e.g., subsidies, expedited applications, reduced taxes) and encouraging major employers to provide housing for their workers, favouring market and employer-driven solutions over direct public investment in housing.

Figure 8. Open House Engagement Boards - Home sizes and smaller units



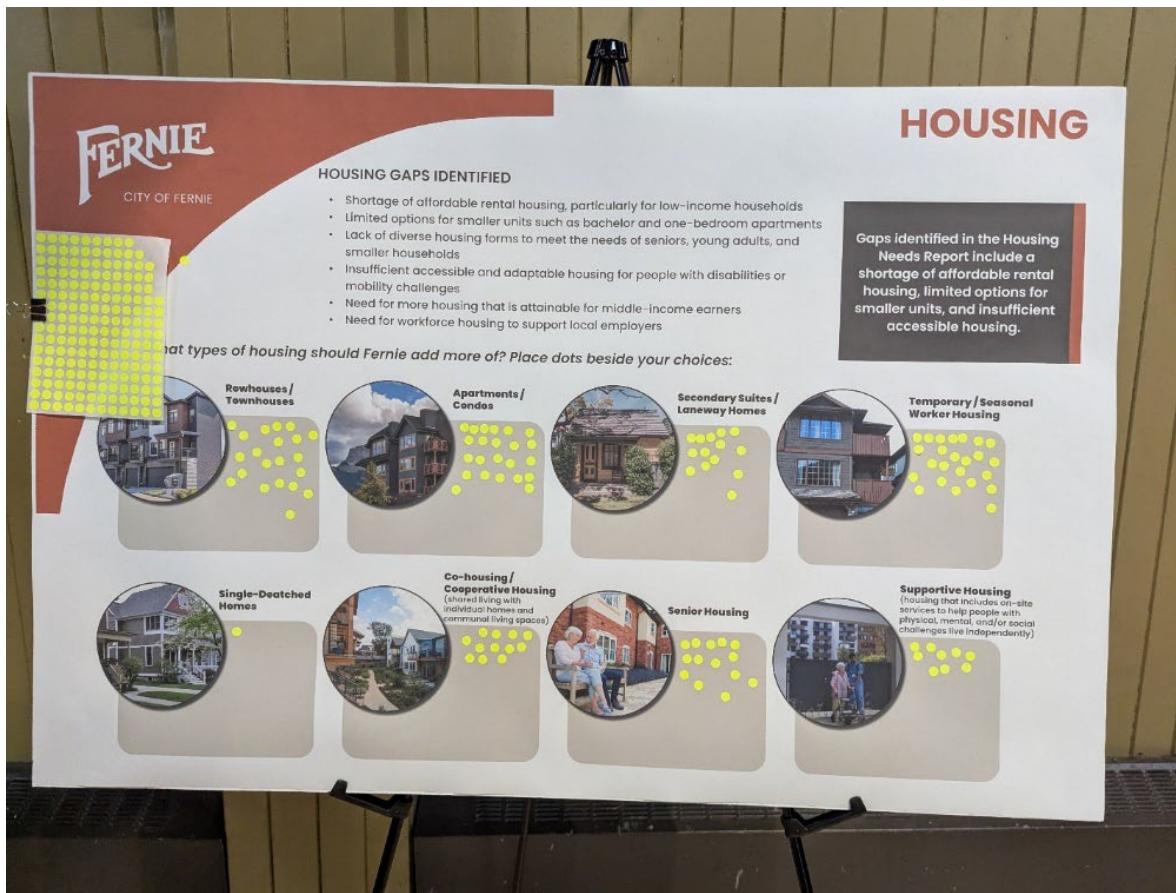
Types of Housing Fernie Should Add

- Results for types of housing Fernie should add are included in the table below:



- Highest Demand:** Temporary/Seasonal Worker Housing, Rowhouses/Townhouses, and Secondary Suites/Laneway Homes received the most dots, suggesting strong public support for more flexible and affordable housing options for both workers and families.
- Moderate Demand:** Secondary Suites/Laneway Homes, Co-housing/Cooperative Housing, and Senior Housing were also popular, indicating a clear preference for smaller and accessible housing types.
- Lower Demand:** Single-Detached Housing and Supportive Housing received some support, but not as much as the other options.

Figure 9. Open House Engagement Boards - Types of housing Fernie should add



Addressing the Need for More Commercial Development

- Results for addressing the need for more commercial development are included in the table below:

Strategy	Votes
Require the main floors of buildings to include “active” or pedestrian-oriented uses (restaurants, shops, etc.) in the Downtown	14
Zone existing residential land to allow a mix of uses in one building (e.g., live-work)	12
Use City-owned land for commercial areas (pending feasibility study)	3
Allow more commercial uses (a variety of different types of businesses)	2
Zone existing residential land to commercial land	2

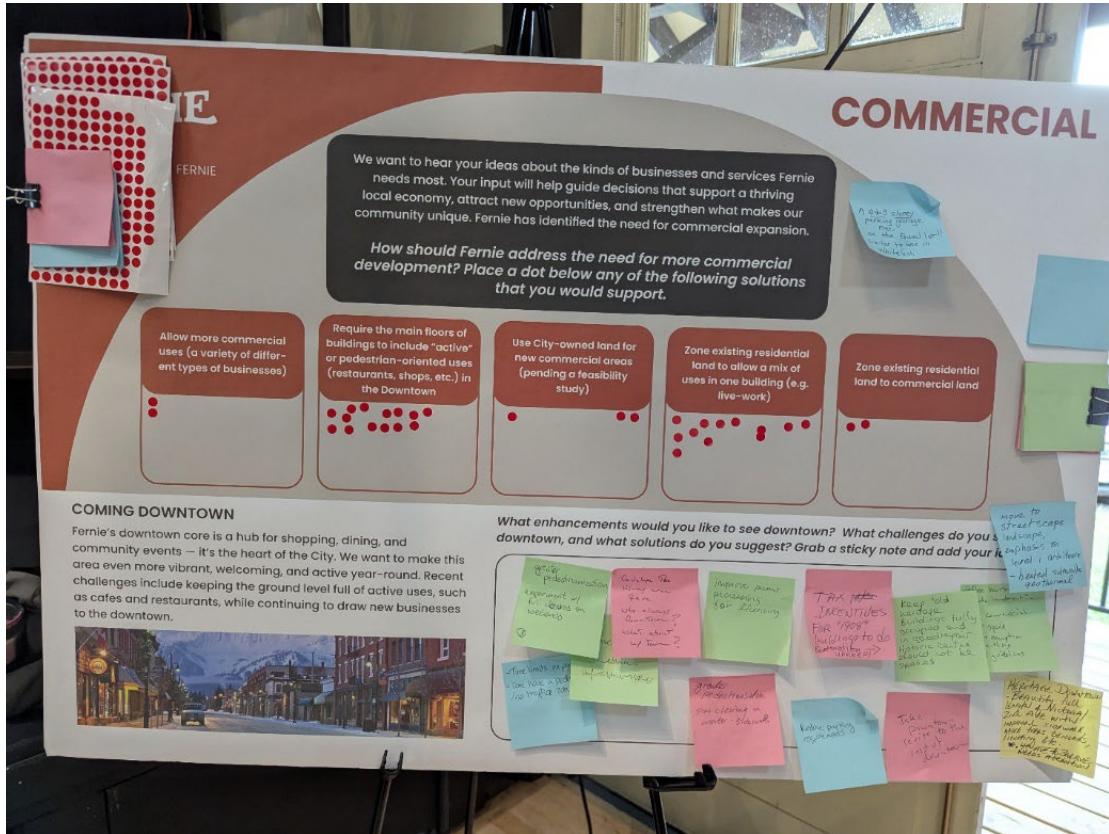
- **Highest Support:** Requiring active ground-floor uses downtown showed the community's desire for a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented core.
- **Moderate Support:** Mixed-use zoning (live-work) received a fair number of votes, showing support for blending residential and commercial spaces.
- **Some Support:** There were only a few participants who were open to allowing more variety in businesses, using city-owned land, and using residential land.

Enhancements, Challenges, and Solutions of Fernie's Downtown

- Participants were asked: *What enhancements would you like to see downtown? What challenges do you see downtown, and what solutions do you suggest?* Participants were able to answer by adding a sticky note to the board.
- Common themes highlighted included:
 - **Parking & Access:** Some participants recommended building a 2–3 storey parking garage on the Quail lot, modelled after Whitefish, to increase supply. Others suggested managing demand differently, such as reducing parking requirements or introducing time limits.
 - **Pedestrian-Friendly Design:** Many participants wanted to see downtown become more pedestrian-focused, with ideas ranging from experimenting with weekend street closures to creating a core no-traffic zone. Improved sidewalks, benches, and lighting were seen as ways to enhance comfort and accessibility. A significant challenge identified was winter maintenance. Snow clearing on sidewalks needs to be more consistent to make pedestrianization effective year-round.
 - **Heritage & Beautification:** Fernie's historic downtown was highlighted as both an asset and a vulnerability. Suggestions included tax incentives for the upkeep and restoration of heritage buildings (such as the Fernie 901 building), and maintaining these structures so that they remain fully occupied and in good repair. Participants also recommended extending beautification efforts, such as improved sidewalks, landscaping, and streetscaping, beyond the main blocks of Victoria/2nd Avenue to other nearby streets.
 - **Design & Streetscape Improvements:** Beyond heritage, participants envisioned higher-quality design for downtown as a whole. Ideas included more street landscaping, emphasis on stronger architectural standards, and innovative infrastructure such as geothermal-heated sidewalks.
 - **Business Climate & Investment:** Several participants raised concerns about barriers to investment. They noted that slow permit and licensing processes discourage business activity, and suggested clearer development permit guidelines, tax exemptions, and reduced red tape to support private investment in new commercial space.

- **Distribution of Revitalization Efforts:** While downtown was the primary focus, some participants questioned why improvements were concentrated only in the core. They encouraged spreading revitalization efforts to other areas, particularly the Highway 7 Avenue corridor and Uptown.

Figure 10. Open House Engagement Boards - Addressing the need for more commercial development



How to Strengthen the Tourism Economy

- Results for how to strengthen the tourism economy are included in the table below:

Strategy	Votes
Strengthen transit and active transportation to reduce congestion	23
Use tourism revenue to fund local services & infrastructure	23
Limit short-term rentals to protect the housing supply	8

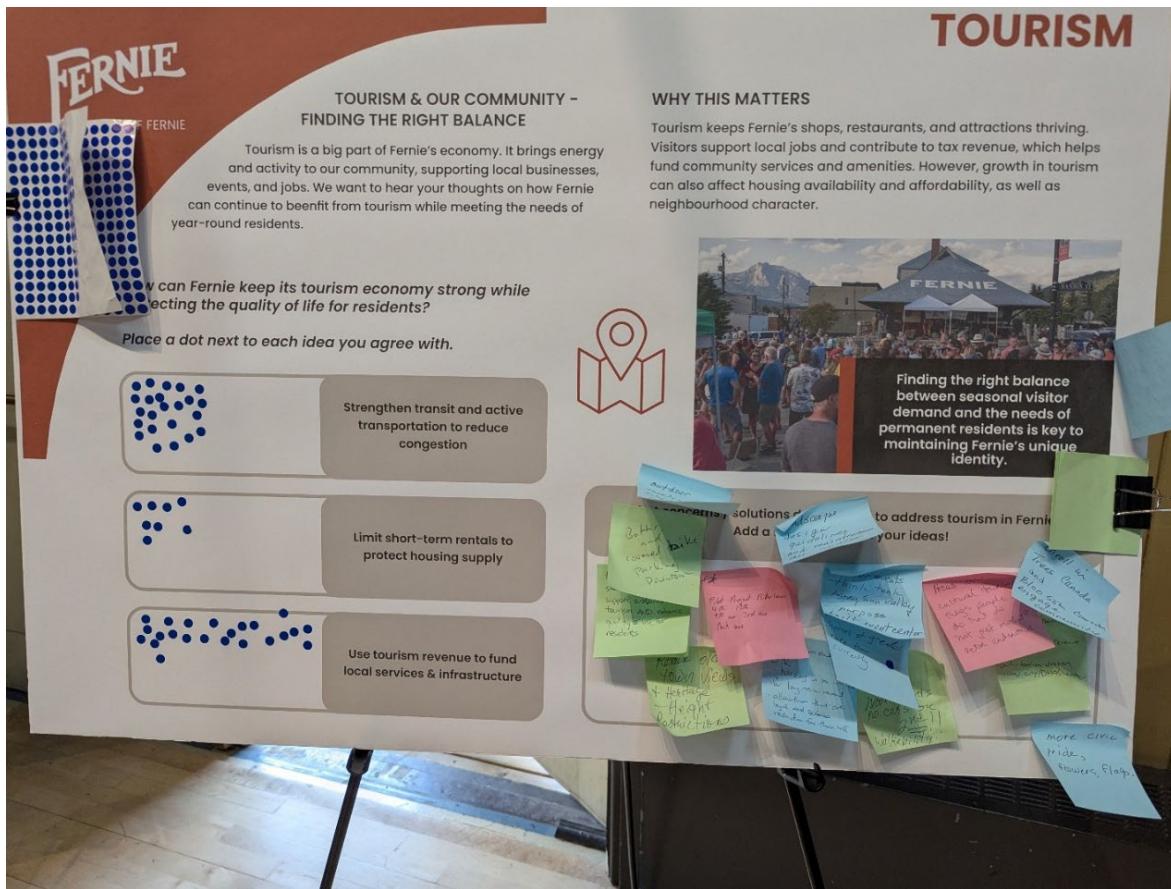
- Majority of participants leaned towards strengthening transit and active transportation to reduce congestion and funding local services and infrastructure, recognizing that tourism increases seasonal congestion and demand on public services, making it essential to invest in systems that support both residents and visitors.

- Limiting short-term rentals was not as important when it comes to strengthening the tourism economy.

Concerns/Solutions to Address Tourism

- Participants were asked: *What concerns/solutions do you have to address tourism in Fernie?* Participants were able to answer by adding a sticky note to the board.
- Common themes highlighted included:
 - **Active Transportation, Walkability, & Bike Infrastructure:** Participants suggested better and covered bike parking downtown, along with pilot projects for bike lanes to make tourism more sustainable and improve mobility. Reducing car dominance in the core was also important.
 - **Heritage, Views, & Community Character:** Participants recommended height restrictions to preserve views and heritage character. Others called for stronger landscape design guidelines and ongoing maintenance of public spaces, along with initiatives like Trees Canada and Blossom Canada.
 - **Events & Cultural Tourism:** Several participants wanted more emphasis on cultural and community-based activities. Ideas included hosting summer events modelled after Aspen or Sun Valley, building a purpose-built event center, creating an outdoor theatre, and expanding cultural tourism opportunities that go beyond active or adventure-based experiences.
 - **Tourism Management & Sustainability:** A common concern was establishing that tourism growth aligns with community well-being. Suggestions included:
 - Exploring regenerative tourism models.
 - Broadening tourism revenue sources.
 - Developing a unified vision for tourism between the City, DMO, and Chamber.
 - Focusing Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) spending on projects that enhance both sustainable tourism and resident quality of life.
- **Housing and Short-Term Rentals (STRs):** Participants strongly supported stricter enforcement of short-term rental rules, allowing only those that are legal and called for a serious reduction of illegal STRs to protect long-term rental availability.
- **Equity & Taxation:** Some suggested taxing second homes at a higher rate, noting that absentee ownership linked to tourism demand places additional strain on the local housing market while contributing less to year-round community life.

Figure 11. Open House Engagement Boards - Tourism Economy



Additional Thoughts

- Participants were asked: *Do you have any additional thoughts or ideas for Fernie's future as our community continues to grow and evolve?* Participants were able to answer by adding a sticky note to the board.
- Common themes highlighted included:
 - Economic Development & Sustainability:**
 - Support economic development and tourism in a sustainable way so Fernie can grow out of debt.
 - Create an Economic Development Office to attract new employers, support small businesses, and ensure commercial land is available.
 - Incentivize higher-density development in the downtown core to reduce infrastructure costs.
 - Proactively plan for utilities and transportation corridors needed as the community grows.

○ **Housing & Affordability:**

- Keep Fernie livable for residents working in local businesses.
- Discourage oversized single-family homes on large lots and limit parking variances for residential projects.
- Encourage denser housing in appropriate areas.
- Regulate van dwellers, address homelessness, and expand accessible housing options for all community members.

○ **Environmental Protection & Resilience:**

- Focus development on flat lands and safeguard wildlife corridors.
- Require developers to contribute more toward sewer, water, and infrastructure costs.
- Plan for a zero-carbon future and resilient local food system.
- Preserve green spaces where residents and visitors can connect with nature.

○ **Community Spaces, Arts, & Culture:**

- Maintain and enhance community facilities such as the pool, arena, community centre, and parks.
- Develop a strategic asset management plan to maintain long-term upkeep.
- Expand cultural vibrancy through more murals, public art, and creative spaces that reflect Fernie's character.

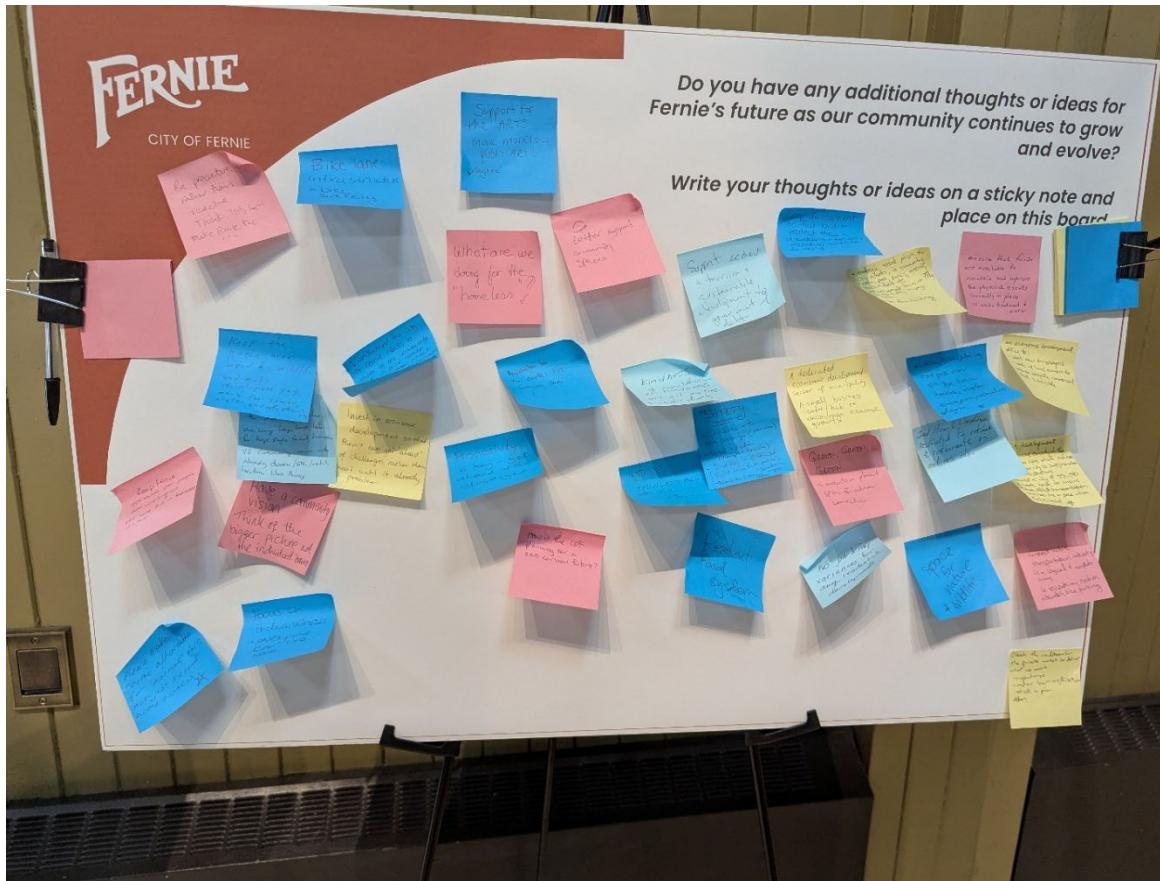
○ **Transportation & Safety:**

- Improve bike lanes, sidewalks, and EV pathways for a safer and more connected active transportation network.
- Build an overpass across the 1st Avenue train tracks for emergency access, drivers, and pedestrians.
- Address highway crossing safety, speeding, and visibility issues on 2nd Avenue patios.
- Consider speed reduction measures or converting 2nd Avenue to one-way traffic.

○ **Governance & Community Vision:**

- Establish a clear, long-term vision for Fernie that looks at the bigger picture rather than isolated issues.
- Balance listening to community input with taking decisive action on key matters.
- Involve newcomers in shaping Fernie's future and foster inclusiveness and kindness in decision-making.

Figure 12. Open House Engagement Boards - Additional thoughts



Bucket & Monopoly Money Activity

- **Infrastructure (\$1,850)** received the highest investment, showing a strong community priority for maintaining and upgrading essential services and systems.
- **Housing (\$845)** was the second-highest priority, reflecting ongoing concerns about affordability, availability, and meeting diverse housing needs.
- **Downtown & Community Spaces (\$590)** ranked next, highlighting interest in revitalization, gathering spaces, and local placemaking.
- **Economic Development (\$575)** was seen as important for Fernie's long-term prosperity and resilience.

- **Transportation (\$530)**, while receiving some funding, was a lower relative priority compared to infrastructure and housing, suggesting mobility and connectivity improvements are valued but not seen as urgent.
- **Parks & Trails (\$491)** also drew a smaller investment, indicating that while recreation and quality of life are important, they were not prioritized as highly as other pressing needs.
- **Climate Change (\$425)** also drew smaller investment, indicating that while recreation and quality of life are important, they were not prioritized as highly as other pressing needs.

Community Mapping Activity

- Results for mapping activity:

Dot	Outcome Summary
Housing (Yellow)	Concentrated mainly around the downtown core and adjacent neighbourhoods, suggesting support for infill and densification near existing services. Some additional clusters at the edges of town, where there is vacant land.
Parks & Open Space (Green)	Spread broadly across Fernie, with strong representation in peripheral areas where there are more natural areas and near existing neighbourhoods. Highlights a community desire to preserve green space and maintain access to natural areas throughout the city.
Commercial / Shops & Services (Red)	Focused on and around the downtown, reinforcing the role of the core as the commercial hub. There are some red dots along major corridors, suggesting interest in neighbourhood-scale retail nodes outside the core and along the highway.
Community Amenities & Recreational Facilities (Blue)	Clustered near existing schools, parks, and the east side of Fernie, showing demand for accessible recreation and community facilities in established and growing areas.

Figure 13. Open House – Mapping Activity



3.6 SURVEY

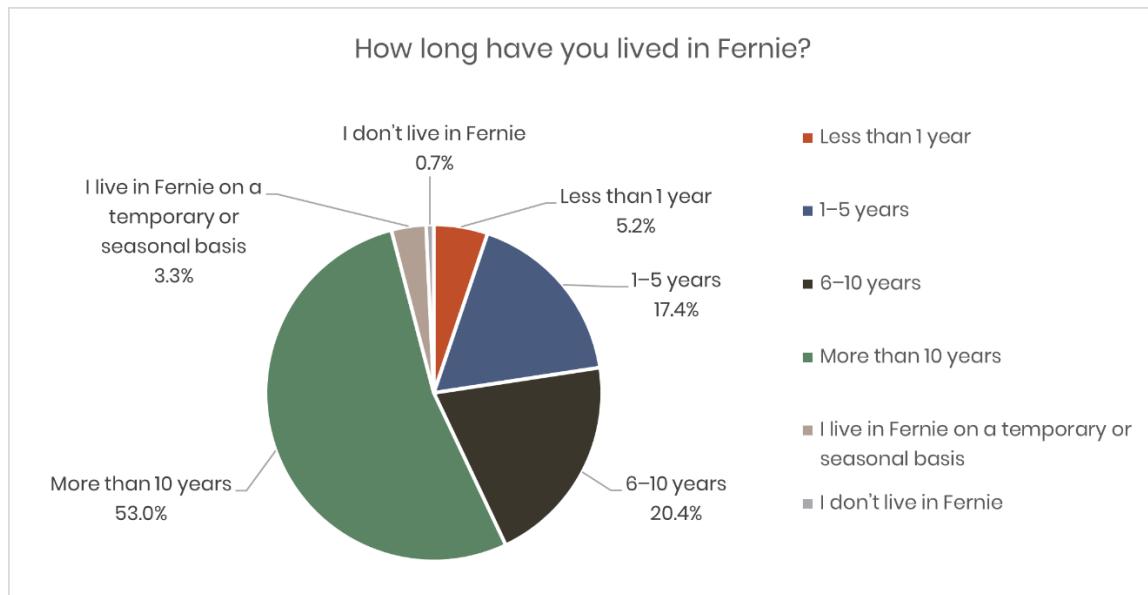
As part of the engagement strategy, a community survey was conducted to gather input from residents, business owners, and stakeholders on key priorities for Fernie's future. The survey was available online through Survey123 from September 10 to 24, 2025, and received responses from 273 participants.

KEY POINTS

The following highlights survey responses brought by the general public.

Context

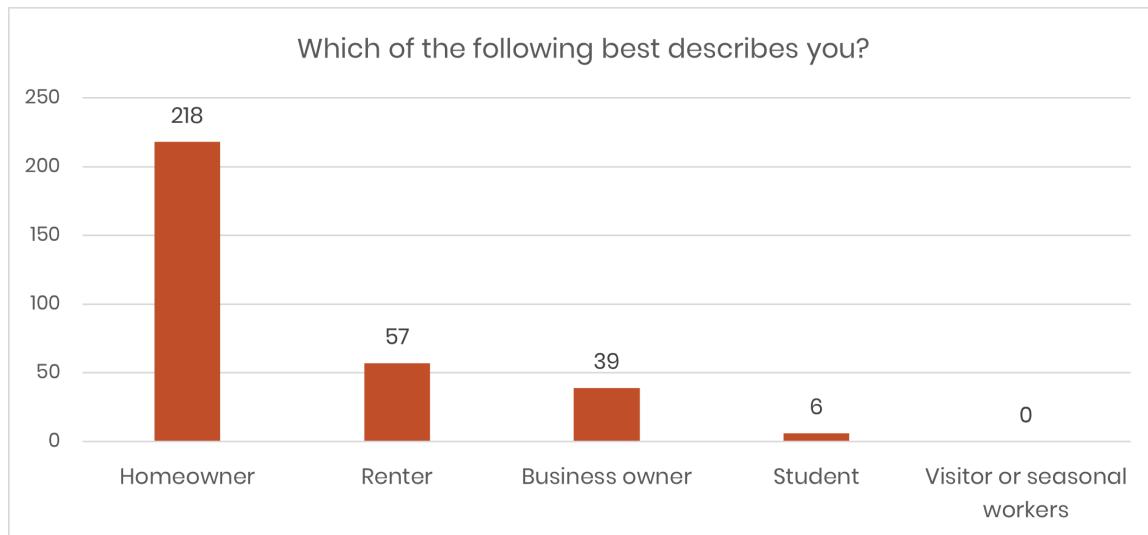
- **How long have you lived in Fernie?**



Answer	Votes	Percentage
Less than 1 year	14	5.2%
1-5 years	47	17.4%
6-10 years	55	20.4%
More than 10 years	143	52.0%
I live in Fernie on a temporary or seasonal basis	9	3.3%
I don't live in Fernie	2	0.7%

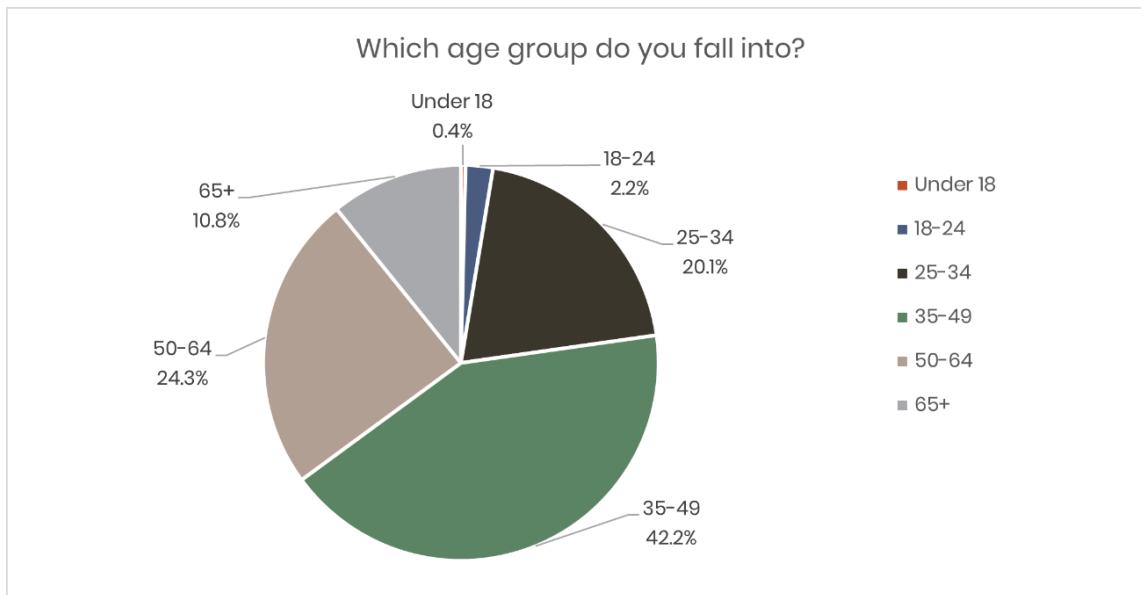
- Fernie's community voice in this survey is dominated by people who have been there a long time; over half of the respondents have lived there **more than 10 years**.
- There's also a decent number of mid-term residents (**6-10 years**), but fewer people who are brand new (**less than 1 year**) or only recently settled (**1-5 years**).

- **Seasonal/temporary residents** and **people who don't live** in Fernie at all are a small minority in the responses, possibly because they have fewer ties to long-term community issues.
- **Which of the following best describes you?** Participants could select all that applied to them in this question.



- **Homeowners** dominate responses, so results are weighted toward long-term residents.
- **Renters** and **business owners** are represented, but in much smaller numbers.
- **Students** barely engaged, and no **visitors or seasonal workers** responded, leaving transient populations underrepresented.

- **Which age group do you fall into?**

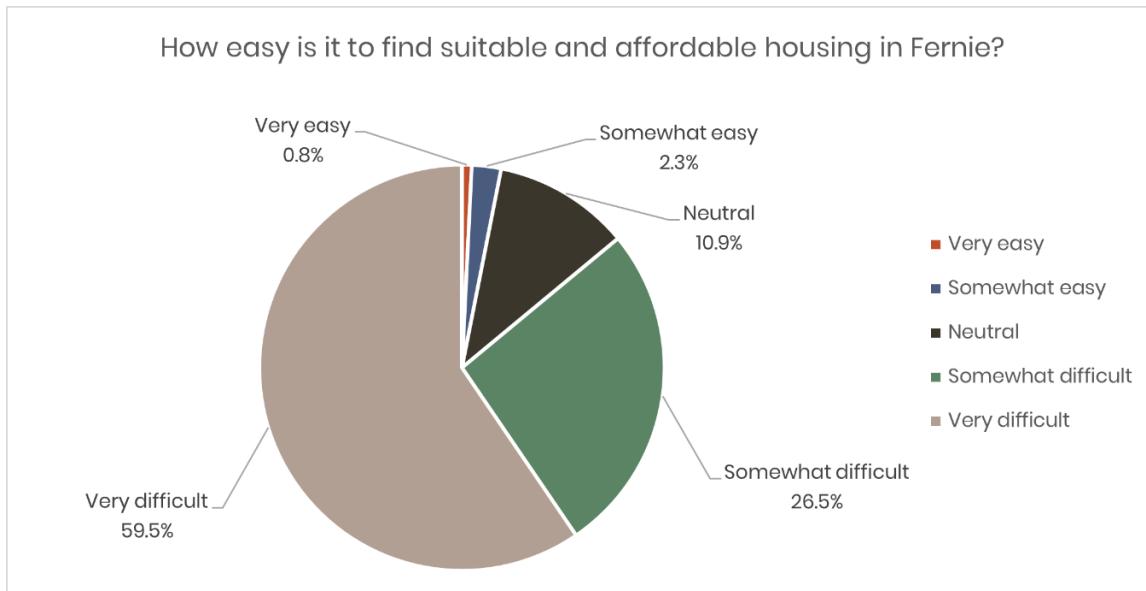


Answer	Votes	Percentage
Under 18	1	0.4%
18-24	6	2.2%
25-34	54	20.1%
35-49	113	42.2%
50-64	65	24.3%
65+	29	10.8%

- Responses are dominated by ages **35-49**, with strong representation also from **50-64** and **25-34**.
- Seniors (**65+**) and young adults (**18-24**) are underrepresented.
- Youth (**under 18**) are nearly absent from the results.

Housing Needs

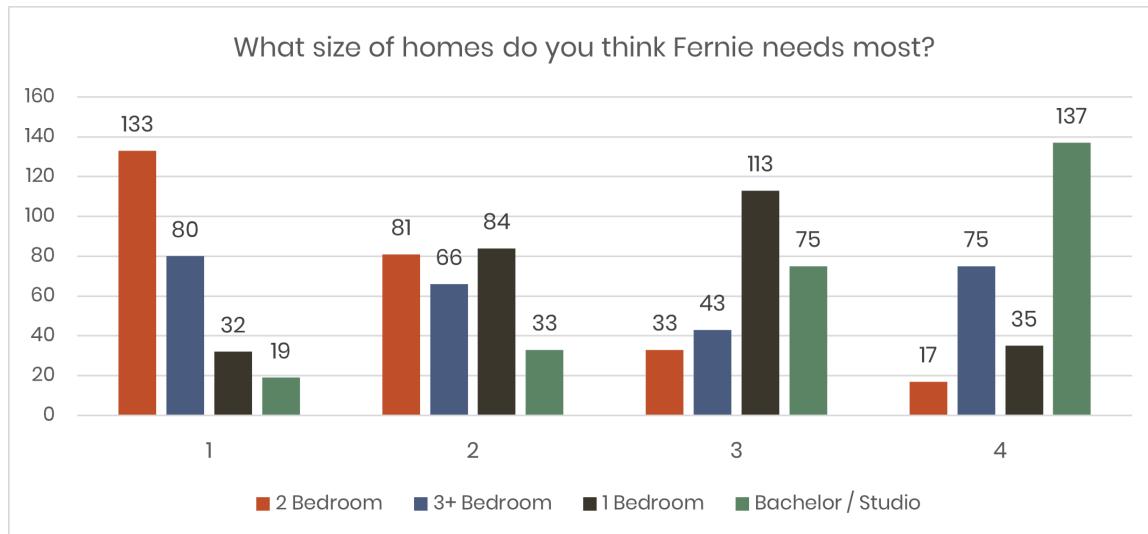
- **How easy is it to find suitable and affordable housing in Fernie?**



Answer	Votes	Percentage
Very easy	2	0.8%
Somewhat easy	6	2.3%
Neutral	28	10.9%
Somewhat difficult	68	26.5%
Very difficult	153	59.5%

- Most respondents (153) find it **very difficult** to secure suitable and affordable housing, with another 68 saying **somewhat difficult**; a clear majority are experiencing challenges.
- A minority (28) are neutral, suggesting mixed or situational experiences.
- Only a small number (8) find it **easy** or **somewhat easy**, showing housing affordability and availability are serious concerns.

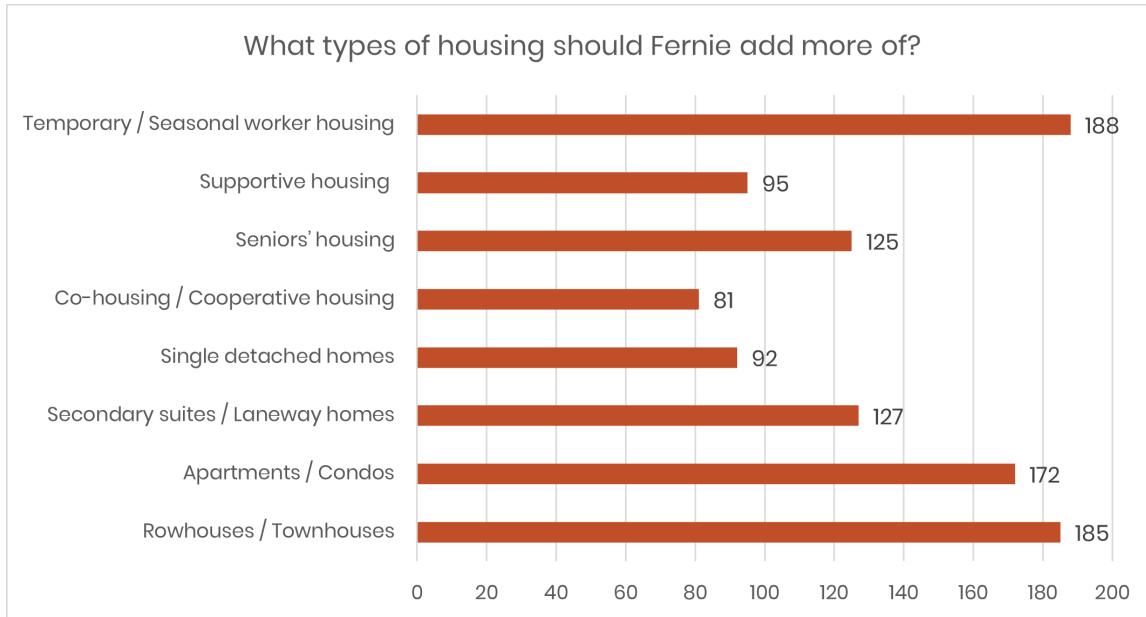
- **What size homes do you think Fernie needs most?** Participants ranked their top three preferences in order of priority.



Answer	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
2 Bedroom	133	81	33
3+ Bedroom	80	66	43
1 Bedroom	32	84	113
Bachelor / Studio	19	33	75

- The strongest first-choice preference was for **2-bedroom homes** (133), suggesting this size is in greatest demand in Fernie.
- While not the top first-choice, **1-bedroom units** had very high second (84) and especially third-choice rankings (113), showing consistent support across preferences.
- **Bachelor/Studios** ranked lower as a first or second choice but had the highest number of fourth-place rankings (137), suggesting respondents see them as less of a priority compared to larger units.
- Larger homes (**3+ bedrooms**) had a solid first-choice response (80 votes) and steady support in second (66) and fourth (75), indicating a significant but less concentrated demand compared to 2-bedrooms.
- The overall results suggest respondents want a balanced housing mix, with the greatest demand for **2-bedroom** and **1-bedroom** units, and somewhat less urgency for **bachelor/studios** or larger family-sized (**3+ bedroom**) homes.

- **What types of housing should Fernie add more of?** Participants could select all options that they agreed with.



- Strongest demand is for **seasonal worker housing, townhouses/rowhouses, and apartments/condos**, reflecting needs for affordable, higher-density options.
- **Secondary suites** and **seniors' housing** are moderately supported, highlighting interest in adaptable housing forms and meeting the needs of an aging population.
- **Supportive housing, single detached homes, and co-housing** are lower priorities, suggesting they serve more specific or smaller segments of the community.
- Overall, responses show a clear emphasis on diversifying housing options and improving affordability, with less focus on traditional detached housing.

- **What do you think Fernie should do about the need for more, smaller housing units (e.g., studio, one-to two-bedroom)?** Participants could select all options that they agreed with.

Answer	Votes
Encourage major employers to build this type of housing for their workers	192
Incentivize the private sector to build these types of housing	185
Use city-owned land to build housing	117
Use public money to build housing	44
Do nothing – let the market decide	25
Other	21

- The top responses were to **encourage major employers to provide this housing type for workers** (192) and to **incentivize the private sector to build** (185). This shows respondents want housing solutions to come primarily from partnerships with business and industry.
- **Using city-owned land to build housing** (117) had solid backing, indicating people are open to municipal involvement but see it as secondary to employer or private sector initiatives.
- Only 44 people supported **using public money directly for housing**, suggesting limited appetite for taxpayer-funded development without outside partners.
- Very few respondents said to **do nothing** (25), showing broad agreement that Fernie should actively address the housing shortage.
- For the 21 responses that indicated **other**, the suggestions revolved around:
 - **Housing Types & Affordability:** Demand for small/entry-level homes, modular housing options, and family-sized units; concerns that cost, not size, is the core issue.
 - **Employer & Resort Responsibility:** Calls for ski hill, RCR, and major employers to provide or be mandated to provide staff housing.
 - **City Role & Land Use:** Mixed views on city-owned land: some support mixed-use or revenue-generating projects, others question using central land for housing.
 - **Policy & Regulations:** Suggestions to streamline approvals, adjust zoning for higher density, coordinate with RDEK, and restrict non-local buyers.

- **Infrastructure & Services:** Recognition that infrastructure (water treatment, traffic, parking, waste) must be addressed alongside housing growth.
- **Vacant & Underused Properties:** Concerns about poorly managed rentals, empty units, and the need to bring underused dwellings into the rental market.

Commercial & Downtown

- **How should Fernie address the need for more commercial development?** Participants could select all options that they agreed with.

Answer	Votes
Require the main floors of buildings to include “active” or pedestrian-oriented uses (restaurants, shops, etc.) in the Downtown	150
Allow more commercial uses (a variety of different types of businesses)	145
Zone existing residential land to allow a mix of uses in one building (e.g. live-work)	133
Use city-owned land for new commercial areas (pending a feasibility study)	112
Zone existing residential land to commercial land	20
City boundary expansion	91

- The most popular response (150) was **requiring the main floors of buildings in the downtown to include active, pedestrian-oriented uses**, showing strong support for a people-focused core.
- **Allowing more commercial uses** (145) and **enabling mixed-use zoning on residential land** (133) were also highly supported, indicating respondents want more adaptable spaces that integrate housing and business.
- Moderate support (112) was given to **using city-owned land for new commercial areas**, suggesting people are open to strategic municipal involvement.
- Only 91 supported **expanding Fernie’s boundaries**, showing less of a preference for outward growth.
- Very few respondents (20) supported **converting existing residential land to commercial use**, signalling a preference to protect housing stock.

Tourism

- **How can Fernie keep its tourism economy strong while protecting residents' quality of life?** Participants could select all options that they agreed with.

Answer	Votes
Use tourism revenue to fund local services & infrastructure	212
Limit short-term rentals to protect the housing supply	143
Strengthen transit and active transportation to reduce congestion	136
Other	53

- The top response (212) was to **use tourism revenue to fund services and infrastructure**, showing respondents want direct reinvestment of tourism dollars into the community.
- **Limiting short-term rentals** (143) had significant support, reflecting concern about tourism's impact on local housing availability.
- **Strengthening transit and active transportation** (136) was also a key priority, highlighting the importance of managing congestion and mobility as tourism grows.
- For the 53 responses that indicated **other**, the suggestions outlined:
 - **Tourism Revenue & Taxation:** Respondents want higher taxes and fees on non-primary homes and tourists, with revenues reinvested into local infrastructure, services, and environmental projects that also benefit locals.
 - **Housing & Workforce:** There is strong support for employer-provided staff housing, affordable childcare, and policies that prioritize housing for local workers over short-term rentals or part-time residents.
 - **Infrastructure & Transportation:** Improved parking, road safety, public washrooms, expanded transit (local and regional), and better bike/pedestrian networks are seen as essential to support both residents and visitors.
 - **Tourism Infrastructure & Amenities:** Investment in new recreation facilities, campgrounds, trails, and year-round attractions is viewed as key to diversifying Fernie's tourism economy and enhancing residents' quality of life.

- **Downtown & Placemaking:** A more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown with active storefronts, seasonal street closures, and support for small businesses is a clear community priority.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Fernie should focus on sustainable and regenerative tourism by protecting natural areas, regulating harmful practices, and funding environmental initiatives.
- **Governance & Coordination:** Respondents want stronger municipal leadership, better coordination with regional partners and employers, and more accountability in how tourism revenues and development approvals are managed.

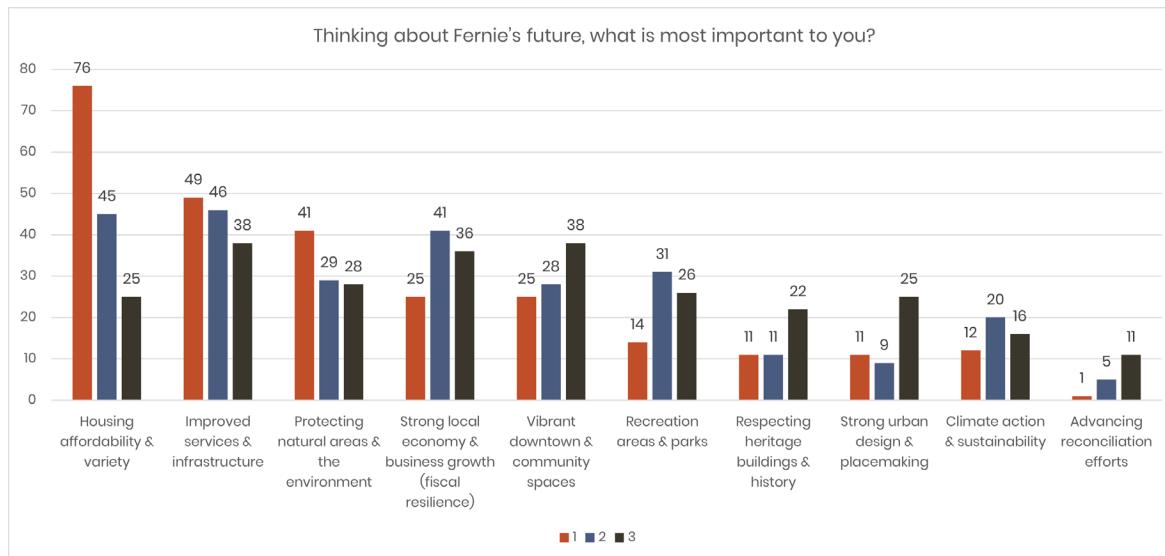
Visioning & Looking Forward

- **What enhancements would you most like to see in Fernie?**

Answer	Votes
Public amenity – Local gathering spaces, public restrooms	126
Community and culture – Spaces for live music, markets, and community events	125
Business and services – More diverse dining or retail options	121
Mobility and accessibility – Improved pedestrian walkways and bike lanes, better signage and wayfinding, or more accessible infrastructure for people with mobility challenges	118
Public space and beautification – more greenery and public art, enhanced lighting and seating areas	116
Sustainability and innovation – Eco-friendly upgrades like solar lighting	97

- **Public amenity** ranked highest (126), showing a strong desire for practical, everyday facilities that support both residents and visitors.
- **Community and cultural spaces** for live music, markets, and events (125) received strong support, highlighting interest in opportunities for social connection and cultural vibrancy.

- Improved pedestrian walkways, bike lanes, signage, and accessible infrastructure (**mobility and accessibility**) (118) were a major priority, reflecting the importance of safe and inclusive movement around Fernie.
- More diverse dining and retail options (**business and services**) (121) also ranked highly, suggesting respondents want a broader range of local amenities and experiences.
- **Public space and beautification** (116) was also important, showing interest in creating attractive, welcoming public areas.
- **Sustainability and innovation** (97), while slightly lower than other categories, still show clear support for sustainable approaches to community improvements.
- **Thinking about Fernie's future, what is most important to you?** Participants ranked their top three preferences in order of priority.



Answer	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Housing affordability & variety	76	45	25
Improved services & infrastructure	49	46	38
Protecting natural areas & the environment	41	29	28
Strong local economy & business growth (fiscal resilience)	25	41	36
Vibrant downtown & community spaces	25	28	38
Recreation areas & parks	14	31	26
Respecting heritage buildings & history	11	11	22

Answer	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Strong urban design & placemaking	11	9	25
Climate action & sustainability	12	20	16
Advancing reconciliation efforts	1	5	11

- With 76 first-choice rankings (by far the highest), **housing affordability & variety** stand out as the most pressing issue for respondents.
- Scoring consistently high across all rankings (49 first-choice, 46 second-choice, 38 third choice), **infrastructure improvements** are also seen as a core community priority.
- **Protecting natural areas & the environment** ranks highly overall, showing strong community values around environmental stewardship (41 first-choice votes, plus steady second/third rankings).
- **Vibrant downtown/community spaces** and **recreation areas/parks** drew strong second and third rankings, suggesting people value quality of life amenities once housing and infrastructure needs are met.
- **Respecting heritage, reconciliation, and design/placemaking** received the fewest first-choice rankings, indicating these are valued but not seen as immediate top priorities compared to housing, infrastructure, and environment.

Additional Comments

- Participants were able to provide any additional thoughts or ideas for Fernie's future. These comments were summarized into the following themes:
- **Housing & Affordability**
 - Strong concern about the lack of affordable housing for residents, families, seniors, and workers.
 - Calls for denser, mixed-use, multi-unit housing instead of luxury or vacation homes.
 - Suggestions for restrictions on second homes, short-term rentals, and non-resident ownership.
 - Desire for employer- or city-supported staff housing, particularly at the ski hill.
 - More diverse housing types: smaller homes, townhouses, condos, senior-friendly units.

- **Infrastructure & Core Services**

- Overwhelming emphasis on fixing and upgrading water, wastewater, and sewer systems before adding more development.
- Concerns about drinking water security and overloaded sewage facilities.
- Frustration that beautification projects are prioritized over essential infrastructure.
- Calls for long-term, proactive infrastructure planning rather than reactive fixes.
- Poor snow removal, potholes, and road maintenance are frequently mentioned.

- **Community Facilities & Services**

- High demand for a new community centre, recreation facilities, and indoor gathering spaces.
- Need for improved childcare options and support for existing providers.
- Requests for expanded healthcare access, including more doctors and a centralized clinic.
- Desire for more youth- and family-focused spaces and activities year-round.

- **Economy & Local Business**

- Support for small/local businesses and resistance to chain stores or big box development downtown.
- Calls for policies/incentives to fill vacant storefronts and attract needed businesses (butchers, bakeries, diverse restaurants).
- Suggestions to leverage tourism revenue better, but prioritize residents' needs first.
- Requests for transparency on taxes and stronger financial management by the city.

- **Growth, Land Use & Development**

- Desire for smart, sustainable growth with higher density and compact form rather than sprawl.
- Calls to protect green spaces, heritage buildings, and Fernie's small-town character.
- Concerns about tall buildings downtown not fitting the heritage scale.
- Suggestions to expand city limits strategically to manage sprawl and generate more housing.
- Calls for developers to pay for infrastructure upgrades, not taxpayers.

- **Transportation & Mobility**

- Mixed opinions on bike lanes: some strongly support safe, connected cycling infrastructure, others oppose them entirely.
- Ideas for pedestrianizing 2nd Ave (seasonally or permanently) and creating more pedestrian areas.
- Requests for improved sidewalks and winter snow clearing for safe walking.
- Suggestions for local bus transit and shuttle services to the ski hill and surrounding areas.
- Calls for better traffic safety measures, signage, and parking solutions downtown.

- **Environment & Climate**

- Emphasis on protecting natural areas, watersheds, and wildlife corridors.
- Concern about climate change impacts: floods, drought, wildfires, extreme heat, and reduced ski season.
- Calls for green energy solutions (solar panels, electric transit, incentives).
- Desire to avoid becoming like Canmore or Banff—overbuilt and unaffordable.

- **Governance & Community Engagement**

- Calls for clearer communication from City Hall, especially on major projects (fire hall, Coal Creek).
- Frustration with bureaucracy, delays in permits, and “inefficient” city management.
- Suggestions for citizen boards, improved survey design, and more transparent planning processes.
- Desire for measurable OCP goals, stronger accountability, and regular updates.

- **Culture, Identity & Quality of Life**

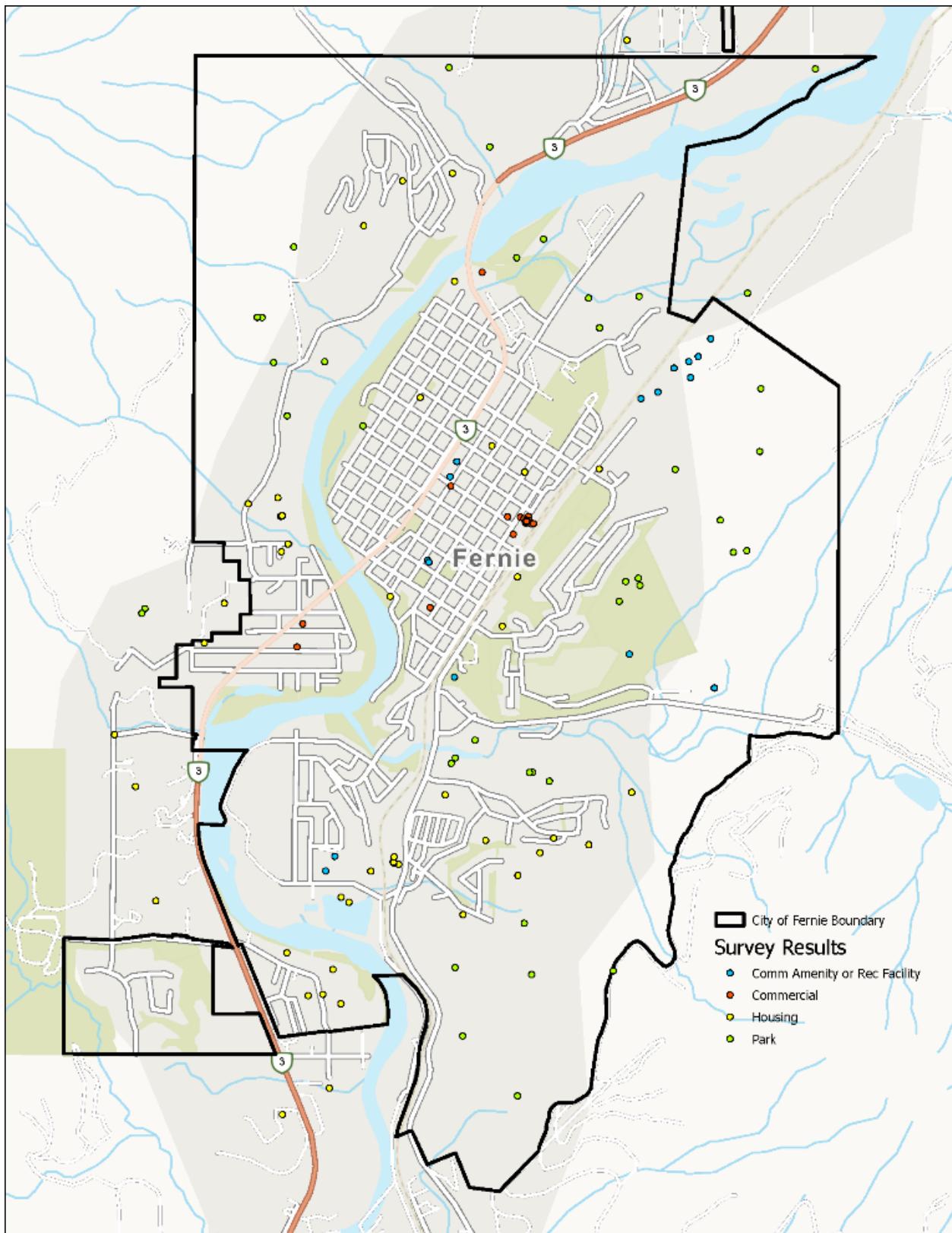
- Strong value placed on Fernie’s heritage, history, and mountain vibe.
- Calls to support arts and culture alongside recreation.
- Requests to maintain community charm and sense of belonging as growth continues.
- Recognition that Fernie’s future should balance tourism, mining, and new economic opportunities.

Mapping Activity

- Results for mapping activity:

Dot	Outcome Summary
Housing (Yellow)	Housing comments are distributed across much of Fernie, especially around existing neighbourhoods, showing widespread concern about affordability and the need for diverse, attainable homes. The spread suggests participants want housing opportunities integrated throughout the city rather than concentrated in one area.
Parks & Open Space (Green)	Park-related suggestions are located throughout the city, highlighting strong community support for maintaining and enhancing green spaces.
Commercial / Shops & Services (Red)	Commercial points cluster along Highway 3 and near the downtown core, reflecting interest in strengthening main commercial corridors.
Community Amenities & Recreational Facilities (Blue)	Comments on community amenities and recreation facilities are concentrated near central Fernie, indicating a strong desire to improve or replace aging public facilities such as the pool, arena, and community centre. The clustering also suggests that participants want these amenities to remain easily accessible and centrally located.

Figure 14. Survey – Mapping Activity



4. SUMMARY

The following section summarizes key themes and insights from the first round of community engagement for Fernie's Official Community Plan (OCP) update. The themes below capture the most common and significant ideas emerging from this initial engagement phase.

<p>Housing and Affordability</p> 	<p>Housing affordability and diversity are central community concerns. Participants consistently expressed frustration with the lack of attainable homes for residents, workers, and young families, emphasizing the need for more multi-unit, rental, and infill housing options. There was also concern about the growth of short-term rentals and second homes, with calls for policies that prioritize full-time residents and local workers.</p>
<p>Growth Management and Land Use</p> 	<p>Participants want thoughtful, balanced growth that protects Fernie's small-town character and natural setting. Feedback supported denser development within existing areas rather than sprawl, stronger downtown revitalization, and preservation of open spaces. Many called for clear direction on how Fernie can accommodate growth without compromising livability, infrastructure, or the community's identity.</p>
<p>Infrastructure and Servicing</p> 	<p>Infrastructure capacity, particularly water, wastewater, and stormwater, was identified as a critical issue that must be addressed before further development occurs. Participants emphasized the importance of long-term planning and investment in essential services, including roads, sidewalks, and snow removal. Many felt current infrastructure maintenance lags behind growth pressures.</p>
<p>Transportation and Mobility</p> 	<p>Participants expressed interest in safer, more connected transportation options, including walking, biking, and local transit. While some support expanding cycling infrastructure, others are concerned about impacts on traffic and parking. There is also a strong desire for better snow clearing, improved pedestrian safety, and long-term traffic management along Highway 3 and within downtown.</p>
<p>Parks, Recreation, and Community Amenities</p> 	<p>The community values Fernie's recreational assets and wants more year-round indoor and outdoor spaces for families, youth, and seniors. Suggestions included a new or upgraded community centre, pool, and arena, as well as expanded trails and park spaces. Respondents emphasized equitable access and maintaining the natural qualities that make Fernie's parks distinctive.</p>
<p>Environment and Climate Resilience</p>	<p>Environmental protection is a consistent priority, with participants highlighting the need to safeguard natural areas, wildlife corridors, and watersheds. Participants expressed growing concern about climate change impacts, such as floods, wildfires, and water scarcity, and encouraged Fernie</p>

CITY OF FERNIE OCP UPDATE – ROUND 1 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

	<p>to adopt sustainable development and renewable energy practices to support long-term resilience.</p>
<p>Economy and Local Business</p> 	<p>There is strong community support for Fernie's small business economy, but there is also concern over the effects of tourism, short-term rentals, and rising costs on local shops and workers. Participants want to diversify the economy beyond tourism so that commercial growth enhances, rather than undermines, Fernie's unique downtown and local identity.</p>
<p>Governance, Communication, and Collaboration</p> 	<p>Many participants asked for clearer communication, more transparency in City decision-making, and greater accountability in planning and budgeting. Participants want to see engagement opportunities continue throughout the OCP process and for the City to clearly link public input to actions and outcomes.</p>

5. NEXT STEPS

The next steps of the project will focus on drafting updates and amendments to the Official Community Plan (OCP), building directly on the feedback and priorities identified during this round of engagement.

Following this, Phase 3 will involve gathering focused community feedback on the draft OCP to confirm that the proposed ideas, goals, and directions reflect Fernie's shared vision for the future. This stage will be a deeper level of engagement, inviting residents, stakeholders, and community groups to review and respond to specific draft policies, priorities, and potential trade-offs to help refine and finalize the updated plan.

APPENDIX: VERBATIM COMMENTS

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP – STICKY NOTES FOR “WHAT’S NOT WORKING/MISSING?”
Comprehensive review of what didn't do/do – make it shorter
Childcare spaces – funding and grants available need space for housing
200 kids on waitlist of childcare – staff and space
Environmental protection planning – rivers –? Fishing, water
Regional relationships/influence – be a part of the conversation re: what's happening around us
Economic development – Tourism Master Plan has ideas
Increase housing = increase in recreation facility needs
Climate change planning – water, drought, flood. “Look at” “consider” –> actionable
Incentivize the development of undeveloped land
Penalties better than incentives. Pass cost on “pool \$” to rental housing
Sewer and water “readiness of infrastructure”
Design guidelines need to be updated – unique to Fernie
Active listening/collaboration on partnerships
A set level of service
Capacity of City priorities
DCLs
Economic development funds/role
Boundary of historic downtown needs to be updated in the OCP
Deferred maintenance and refusal to increase taxes/reserves = cuts/lose facilities
Infrastructure – water and sewer
Downtown bus group providing comments on OCP
Beautification tax lapsed – missed opportunities
Lack of housing and employment lands
Time of OCP and census in 2026, any time census released = HNR = OCP.
Need housing, mental health, additiona/domestic violence = extra supports, better funding for support in housing
Outdoor rec but we don't own it. Work together on the future of the land.
Boundary expansion.
Resort municipality = up, down, up, down. Can OCP be more specific through an actionable plan.
A tangible vision/mission statement.
Business retention and attraction (economic development)

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP – STICKY NOTES FOR “WHAT’S WORKING?”
Meaningful climate change adaptation, planning, infrastructure and divestment from mine in case (it won't last forever)
We need: A vision for our community
Child care spaces
“What do we want to be when we grow up”
More environmental protections
More care about climate change

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP – COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES

City snow removal downtown sidewalks (charge an assessment)

2nd Ave: Less motor vehicles, more pedestrian

More garbage bins for residents and more frequent garbage and recycling pick up to account for businesses and tourists

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP – TOURISM ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES

Over use of recreation trails, not enough financial support from City or Tourism Fernie

Leave tourism dollars to tourism people to allocate – not City staff

Food truck hub like Portland and Niseko and Whitefish

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES

Build infrastructure to handle the H.N.S

Landlords should be properly registered with Basic BC eid. People are being taken advantage of because there are no other options – don't know their right – no enforcement of unethical landlords.

Child care spaces

More services for people who use drugs – it is a big barrier for getting and keeping safe housing.

Keep density close to or in downtown.

Besides the land acknowledgement, there was not a single mention of Indigenous engagement + collaboration this is a major oversight.

Accessibility – the court house is not accessible but houses Service BC – people should be able to access these services with dignity.

Childcare

Climate change and land use is an existential threat to community health and values. Active and dedicated planning is absolutely vital.

Entry level housing for purchase. Supportive housing for those two struggle with additions, mental health etc.

Maintaining the subsidized housing we have – the units need to be safe and maintained

Need stronger direction towards becoming net-zero / GHG reduction (City and residents)

Services for men like shelters, second stage housing, transition homes – equal access to supports for all residents – opens up more options for families

Space for recreation groups to grow and expand their physical input

Involve experienced local developers

Free transportation to ski hill – keep improving ski shuttle (more buses, more frequent, free)

OPEN HOUSE COMMENT CARDS

Excellent presentation; Good breakdown; I love the different activities – dots! – money

I believe that Fernie needs more bike infrastructure. I would be happy to get involved to help the process. Thank you!

Please mandate that big development areas have a mandatory, significant affordable component. And smaller areas!

Fernie Website + Letstalk Fernie not user friendly.

Old-town: please keep Valley building height restrictions to maintain the character + beauty that draws people to visit + live here! 5 floors on 3rd is too high.

Perhaps adding a “Sign me up for your newsletter” on the tax payer’s property tax.

Child care needs to be a priority with housing because of the growing needs of the community. FCCS waitlist is over 200 children.

Ensure that new development includes commercial, green space, recreation space – and not just a “tick the box” exercise – but create community in these developments.

Thanks for the presentation of opportunity for input. As spaces come available vs. places like the architect company on 2nd Ave I would like to see downtown restricted to retail, restaurants, or personal services that are used by the majority. Block or 2 blocks. Revisit closing 2nd Ave for pedestrian with more sitting/gathering plans. I know they’ve been proposed in the past but maybe time to revisit. I understand parking issues. Maybe more public transport.

Thank you for hosting the information session. I look forward to the release of the housing report so we can use facts/knowledge/input to move forward.

A comment re types of housing. The row houses in the airport subdivision are awesome! I’ve lived in that area of Fernie since 1992. The houses satisfy many groups: seniors, friends (3 bedrooms), single families, 2 children, and couples.

Other bonuses... they take way less space than single residential, only 2 stories high, small private yard in the back, and there is a crawl space for storage. They are in high demand... close to school, currently ~\$500,000 which is more affordable than \$1 million. They are close to green space which means the residents have recreation and walking areas almost right out the door (so no large backyards needed).

Core services: Water, Paving, Firehall. Traffic flow with new development.

Zoning for new developments. New development pay for sewer system.

Field House – a plus!**

This Council host transparent. How to increase citizen engagement. Not everyone is connected to social media.

Council Café – a plus*** Councillors walk about to residents in some cities.

Disconnect with citizens is a problem everywhere – how can we improve connection

1. Respect Doug Quail’s wishes while alleviating the parking situation in downtown core by building a two to three storey parking garage. Beautiful example in Whitefish, MT (I have photos).
2. Preserve greenspace in town because once you take it away you can never get it back.
3. If you insist on building the fire hall on land donated by Prentice for greenspace, then designate 902 for greenspace and make a beautiful field or park. That would be a win-win for City Council. Call it “Prentice Park.”
4. Regarding downtown expansion in the downtown core for commercial enterprises, then move the school buses to the light industrial area by the transfer station. I actually think you should move the buses as soon as possible – no need for them to be in the downtown.

- 5. Please preserve and protect the mountains for all of us and all the wildlife to enjoy, and encourage more density on the flatlands.
- 6. When you're making decisions, don't forget all the experts that live in our community – experts in all different areas that could consult as volunteers before the plans are even started.

OPEN HOUSE TOURISM ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES

Better and covered bike parking downtown
Pilot project bike lanes 4 th , 13 th , 9 th Ave, 3 rd Ave, Park Ave
Retain old town views and heritage – height restrictions
Enroll in Trees Canada and Blossom Canada - engage communities
More civic pride, flowers, flags.
Tax second homes at a greater rate than currently
Landscape design guidelines and maintenance of all spaces
Host summer events – think tank Aspen, Sun Valley – purpose built event center
Explore regenerative tourism, explore tourism revenue sources, unify tourism vision across City/DMO/Chamber
Enforcement of STR – housing is so limited for long-term rental. Allow those that are legal and serious reduction for those not
Focus of RMI spending should be things that support sustainable tourism and enhance quality of life for residents
Move toward no cars on 2 nd – walkability
Outdoor theatre at City Hall and Court House Grounds
Focus on cultural tourism things people can do not just involve active endeavours

OPEN HOUSE DOWNTOWN ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES

A 2-3 storey parking garage free on the Quail lot. Similar to one in Whitefish.
Greater pedestrianization- experiment with full closures on weekends
Develop the Highway Area 7 Ave – Why always downtown, what about up town?
Improve permit processing for licensing.
Tax incentives for "1908" building to do restoration and upkeep.
Keep old heritage buildings fully occupied and in good repair. Historic centre should not be spoiled.
Heritage downtown – beautify full length of Victoria / 2 nd Avenue with improved sidewalks, more benches, lighting etc. 4 th Ave to 3 rd needs attention.
Take Downtown revite to the rest of downtown
Reduce parking requirements
More pedestrian infrastructure
Greater pedestrianization – snow clearing in winter – sidewalks
Time limits on parking
Core have a pedestrian/no traffic zone.

Move to streetscape landscape, emphasis on level 2 architecture – heated sidewalks geothermal.
Reduce barriers to private investment in new commercial floor space – tax exemption, permitting, DP guidelines

OPEN HOUSE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ENGAGEMENT BOARD STICKY NOTES
Support economic development + tourism + sustainable development to grow out of debt
Better support for community spaces
Create the conditions for private market to deliver what we want – incentivize, remove barriers /friction/stick to plan
Resilient food system
An economic development office to: seek new employers, work with land owners to ensure adequate commercial stock is available
Walking/biking/driving over pass over 1 st Ave train tracks especially for emergency vehicles (x2)
Focus on inclusiveness, everyone can live here
Registration for van dwellers like Canmore does
Keep Fernie affordable for people not working at the mine but in businesses in Town
Keep development on flat land and protect the mountains for all including wildlife to enjoy
Space for nature and wildlife
Connect active transportation networks in a logical and complete way, i.e.. EV pathway system, sidewalks, bike parking
2 nd Ave and Downtown restricted to retail and restaurants vs offices etc.
Green green green – maintain places and spaces for outdoor connection
Please make Fernie affordable for 'normal' folks not just second homeowners
I understand the City of Fernie needs to listen to the community but it also needs to know what the city needs/wants its ok to be decisive on certain choices i.e. firehall back forth back forth
Keep the green areas used by wildlife and make developers pay for more sewer, water and infrastructure
Support the arts – more murals and public art (x2)
No parking variances for any residential developments
Smart development – incentivize density in the downtown core which reduces burdens on city to build maintain new infrastructure. Model a city of 25,000 and work back to ensure future utility and transportation corridors are in place when they're needed
Ensure that funds are available to maintain and improve the physical assets currently in place re: waste treatment and water
Safety – concerns with highway crossings (various), speed reduction (transportation), 2 nd Ave – difficult sight lines with patios – I love them), consider 1 way flow
Have a community vision. Think of the bigger picture not individual issues
Invest in economic development so that Fernie can get 'ahead' of challenges rather than wait until it is already a problem
Involve newcomers in the vision
Bike lane infrastructure, bike safety
How is the COF planning for a zero carbon future? Be proactive rather than reactive. Think vision

A dedicated economic sector of the municipality. A small business center/hub to encourage economic growth
Strategic asset plan for city assets, i.e. community centre, pool, parks, arena, track and field etc. Development flows on 7 th Ave and sidewalks, 1 way, infills, and an office building
Kindness and a reputation of kindness with all parties and individuals
Proactivity is key – get ahead of the challenges
Densification for those who are also using large land lots for huge single-family houses vs cramming more into already dense / STR / rental locations like Annex.
What are we doing for the “homeless”?

SURVEY OPEN END RESPONSES – OTHER – WHAT DO YOU THINK FERNIE SHOULD DO ABOUT THE NEED FOR MORE SMALLER HOUSING UNITS (E.G., STUDIO, ONE-TWO BEDROOM)
Tax non primary residence at a much higher rate than people who live here full time
Stop all forms of subsidizing development to manage tax impacts
RDEK/RCR increase support for Fernie services - library, arts station, recreational facilities
Boundary extension to bring the Ski Hill and Galloway Lands tax base and planning out of RDEK and into the City of Fernie.
Support development and businesses
Heavily encourage major tourism employers to create staff housing.
Affordable childcare options for the local workers
Invest in tourism. Infrastructure is desperately needed.
Expand downtown commercial area.
Improve parking, road markings, crossings, signage, and washroom facilities. Increase hours at public city owned leisure facilities.
Build a municipal campground like Sparwood and Elkford, provides more options to visitors. When hotel rooms are booked with contractors there is a lack of accommodation for tourists so they don't come, effecting businesses.
Add seasonal bus transportation to Calgary and regional airports
Look for opportunities to improve amenities and services for residents using RMI funds, where there is synergy with the funding so it can benefit tourists and residents who also deal with all the downsides of tourism
Increase focus on destination management and environmental stewardship.
Use tourism revenue to support environmental charities and projects that continue to look after the local environment many tourists come to use
Higher taxes on second homes and vacation homes.
Tax secondary home owners!
Tax houses most when they are just sitting empty most of the time - weekenders, holiday homes, etc.
Leave short term rentals alone. That's not the answer. It will hurt tourism
Strengthen the building and development department so they are more equipped to process applications and efficiently and they have more time to properly assess novel ideas.
Parking is a huge issue, especially in the summer. There needs to be better parking options for trucks with trailers and RVs so that they don't fill up the same on parking lot or parking along 2nd
Close of 2ave and make into a pedestrian area like Kimberley
Less second homes, people should either rent out second homes between visits or have to stay in them longer

Parking fees for tourists with locals getting parking passes
More mountainbike trails
Take an active role in pushing back against the private logging and other activities that are destroying the environment the tourists come to see.
We need bike lanes and proper pedestrian crossings. Encourage visitors and residence to walk and ride safely for their short in town trips.
Possibly reduce rates for things like aquatic center for local residents
Use combination of public and private investment to create tourism infrastructure such as the new Field House which also benefits residents
Public transit (bus) to ski hill and around town
Be open to attracting more businesses that provide year round attractions for tourists and bring dollars in 12 months a year. Provide better transit year round.
Local residents shouldn't have to pay tourist prices. Introduce a "Local's Card" that promotes discounts
Ensure businesses that hire seasonal workers have appropriate housing facilitators to work with their employees.
Preserve Fernie's Heritage including buildings and history. Utilize the Fernie Heritage Strategy to help planing and zoning
Good question - difficult balance I think
Support adaptive, walking, and mountain biking trail building. Remove red tape for opening small businesses downtown or provide incentives for empty building owners/leases.
unlock the potential of MRDT funds to do more than just market Fernie and also imliment ACCs(Amenity cost charges, and also adjust user fees to be higher for visitors than citizens
Transfer the management of MRDT funds back to the City - and instead have a service agreement with Tourism Fernie, instead of them receiving an auto \$1.6M to blow half of on advertisement.
Infrastructure way more important!
Relax requirements so that our short term only rental unit can be long term. Also, look at new recreation opportunities like OHV connection between elk valley towns, as seen on Quebec and Ontario.
Ensure adherence with laws - speed limits, camping/parking rules, off leash dogs
Work with Tourism Fernie and the Chamber of Commerce to have a cohesive vision for the future of tourism which includes sustainable deatination management. Consider adopting a specific approach to sustainable tourism like regenerative tourism.
Promote weekend trips from Calgary, not buying a second home here. Produce more condo units for these people, incentives for them to not buy the homes in town to leave empty
Investing in beautification, events, trails that benefit the local population. Remembering that it's the local population that pays for the impact on our infrastructure it's important that tourism funds help offset the costs in other ways.
Support the local businesses and organizations taking care of the tourism sector.
Make 2nd Ave (downtown core) pedestrian only during peak summer months with accessible parking on the side streets (5th, 6th, 7th)
Build rec facilités (double arena, community center, indoor tennis/squash etc) or conference center to encourage tourism in the off season.
Build facilities that attract visitors year round/off season. Try to build tourism in October/November and April/May. Double Arena, indoor sports facility or conference centre

introduce a tourist tax applied at local restaurant and store level (like some other tourist towns) to generate additional revenue which can be used to offset the additional strain on local residents and local services and infrastructure

Ensure that you were charging developers who don't care about the city and I'm just making money. Charge them appropriately for future infrastructure upgrades that are going to be required especially when they're selling to part-time residence.

SURVEY OPEN END RESPONSES – OTHER – HOW CAN FERNIE KEEP ITS TOURISM ECONOMY STRONG WHILE PROTECTING RESIDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE?

have areas that allow people to build small homes. eg) 2 bedroom

Continue to pursue more mixed use properties such as the old fire hall on 3rd and the child care/affordable housing project.

I don't think that the issue is the size of the units, but the cost of the units. I don't think that City owned land should be used to just build units, unless they meet other needs.

Fernie needs more entry level housing for people wanting to get into the market, that aren't 100yr old 'renovators delights'. The EVFS are terrible managers of rental apartments, and their reputation means current rental units are remaining empty. Sad.

Order the ski hill to build accommodation for winter seasonal employees

It is not apparent that there is a housing shortage, right now. There has been in the past, there may be in the future. There isn't currently (long listings, vacant rentals).

Look at the new developments that are being approved. We need more high density housing. But we also need the infrastructure (parking, traffic lights especially on highway three by stanford fernie provincial park road, water, waste treatment, garbage

Make it easier for developers to navigate the City's approval processes, change zoning to encourage density, work with the RDEK on a coherent plan

Rcr should be made to provide on-site staff accommodations.

Fernie Alpine Resort should have staff housing

figure out a way to drive housing prices down.

Why are we using centralized land for housing that could be built on less expensive land outside the core?

Why smaller?? 1-2 bedroom do not have to be small.

Mandate employers of a certain size offer staff housing for their employees or a designated portion.

Before housing, clearly attention needs to be given to water treatment.

See

Fernie does not need this. It needs actually homes for families.

Partner in a for profit housing development where the city can generate revenue to pay for more housing

Why assume that is the need? There is also a need for three bedroom homes suitable for families.

Create another zone similar to slalom drive (modular homes on owned land = market rate remains low). Easier access into the housing market for those who live and work here. Restrict non-local housing purchases in certain housing developments,

Strategy for getting non-occupied/low occupancy dwellings into the rental market

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Strategy for getting non-occupied/low occupancy dwellings into the rental market

SURVEY OPEN END RESPONSES – DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS OR IDEAS FOR FERNIE'S FUTURE AS OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO GROW AND EVOLVE? PLEASE SHARE THEM HERE.

Do you have any additional thoughts or ideas for Fernie's future as our community continues to grow and evolve? Please share them here.
Ensure development is paying for development (including infrastructure) keep taxes for services, not subsidization.
I believe there should be a bylaw to protect small businesses and entrepreneurs, that prevents chains / bigger businesses from moving into downtown and 7th avenue.
Spend properly - Fernie is in need of many things - community Center, infrastructure, etc. don't overspend on extravagant items
Reduce city staff to save \$\$\$
Public private partnerships to replace community centre and upgrade pool and skating rink.

We need to encourage growing upwards, incentivizing mixed-use developments, particularly ones that extend the Historic Downtown. While incentives are sacrilegious for many, if lands are sitting fallow or underutilized, then incentives do not cost much.

Fernie also needs to be careful not to overfocus on the Tourism sector and forgo support for the Mining sector. The incomes that the mines bring to Fernie families far surpass those brought by the Tourism sector, while the Mine Tax provides a significant industrial tax base that Tourism can't, or won't, replace.

Likewise, encouraging Tourism creates competition with locals for community resources like our vast trail network. For the foreseeable future, certainly for the duration of this OCP, Fernie needs to remain an amenity-driven community that services the mining community first.

Improve business development, support and processes in a sustainable way that's not turning away investors or losing jobs.

Divert capital from "beautification" to a fund for the inevitable wastewater shit show. Our town is beautiful enough.

Thank you for doing what you do- a difficult balance. Anie
I tried open the last three sections of this form and was unable without being booted out made to start again. Glitsch?

Very disappointed that child care isn't even listed as one of the priorities. Young families cannot rarely begin to afford a house or to rent here without two incomes.

Leveraging city owned land and partnerships with major employers to build new centres is important. Equally important is strengthening existing non profit child care operations to ensure they are stable, and supported so they can focus more of their resources on retention and recruitment of vital educators.

I would also like to see measurable goals included in the ocp. It's so wafty.

I've yet to deeply research the statistics but being new to Fernie, I notice a large number of houses in town (not the ski hill) that appear to be vacant & are secondary homes & also, many of these rentals available are not owned by locals. I am curious if Fernie has begun the restriction of short term rentals in secondary residences as other BC cities / towns have and/or if there has been a consideration for "right to reside". Housing here is an incredible challenge, mainly driven by people who do not work or live here full time. I have been shocked to see the prioritization of developing more luxury homes (ie. Montane area) & a lack of supply that is available for those who support & serve the community. Perhaps there should be land set aside for the employers in town as priority to build accommodation for their employees first before it's sold to those who intend to use it only as a holiday holding.

Fernie is in dire need of more senior homes. Small bungalows, townhouse. Those of us that are retired now and children moved are unable to find smaller homes. One reason so many of us old locals move away from our home town

What is going to replace the mining and forestry industry in the future. The community needs to start recruiting and planning for what industry will replace the high paying jobs while supplying a workforce for the business community. I'm not kidding when I say UBC Fernie campus specializing in water.

I think the biggest challenge for Fernie right now is basic infrastructure - a new water source, sewage treatment upgrades, etc. The priority should be paying for this without spiking tax rates too much.

As much as possible, the OCP should have specific, measurable targets.

Do we really need so many 'through' roads? Our city blocks are tiny, and the amount of resources being wasted on maintaining a road after every 5 - 10 houses/businesses seems wasteful.

Would really appreciate the 5th & 6th St access to 2nd Ave being blocked off in the summer months. Have had so many near misses on those intersections, both as a pedestrian and a driver. It's impossible to be aware of every bike, dog walker, skateboarder, car, motorcycle, stroller, and truck in 8 different directions simultaneously, while also trying to see around patios and double-parked delivery trucks, without any lights and barely-visible road markings for most of the year.

Better management/enforcement of e-bike rules is required.

The COF needs to stop trying to be all things to all people, and work more closely with other organisations like the Chamber, Tourism Fernie, Elk River Alliance, Fernie Trails Alliance etc.

I'd love to see the OCP remain the North Star for the community/council when making decisions. The current version has been neglected in recent years suggesting that a 10 year review is in sufficient and timing for the next ocp update should be five years post completion of this OCP.

Smart urban design that allows for all types of people to live here. I believe Fernie should focus on building a new community/conference centre and a municipal campground - both are revenue generators would be a huge asset to both visitors and residents. Have a strong focus on forward thinking economic development. Fernie doesn't need bike lanes. One way 2nd ave could help with some parking issues.

Bike lanes. It's dangerous to travel through Fernie with my child on his bike. It's hard to get anywhere without the stress of vehicle collisions.

Signage design guidelines- currently all city owned signage, and business signage (especially along the highway) is old, dilapidated and needs replacing.

It would be great to have a consistent signage design bylaw implemented where steel, dimensional Timbers are used. Golden / Banff does this well and makes everything tied in together.

Bike lanes and more river paving. Love the paved dyke!

Support installing a bike bridge between west fernie and the airport.

More pedestrian areas

Convert 2nd avenue to pedestrian area, no cars and no bikes

'

We need to reduce the cost of living for local residents before people are pushed out of town by out of towners who make more money.

I would like to see Fernie develop in a sustainable way, with thoughtful development in the both maintown and new developments. I am concerned about 5 story buildings downtown that don't match the heritage small town feel of the downtown, aren't requiring a nice boulevard, trees, planters, or anything to match the rest of downtown, and that unrealistically think that these downtown residents will be walking everywhere. You need a car to live in Fernie. We don't have the transportation options in place. Parking variances are unrealistic and lead to congested streets just outside the downtown. let's build up options for active transportation and transit before we reduce parking. I'd like to see the limited City owned land used for smart developments for both City services and the including commercial opportunities. The City needs to focus on improving infrastructure \$\$\$ and recognize that the fernie taxpayer can't be the ones subsidizing affordable housing.

Fernie relies on natural spaces and outdoor recreation for its quality of life and tourism industries. When the mines close, this town needs to be ready to have divested from coal money and be ready to support itself primarily through tourism or remote workers. The environmental spaces that the tourism industry relies on are under many stressors: excessive use, pollution/littering, flooding/drought, wildfire, and urban sprawl. On top of that, climate change threatens the ski potential and the quality of fishing in the Elk River. Heat events will threaten seniors and vulnerable populations. Fernie needs to anticipate these events as real problems and build infrastructure and protect natural spaces to be ready for this eventuality.

Planning for the effects of climate change on the valley

I would really hate to see Fernie turn into Canmore - lots of sprawl, neighbourhoods full of second homes, and unaffordable housing for the people who live there. I also believe that Fernie's greatest resource is our environment, and want housing to be more dense to protect trails. I also want to see priority given to local businesses for future development or rent/purchase of current spaces instead of out of town corporations (eg Basecamp). I love that Slalom drive is limited to manufactured homes, and would love to see more development like this. Also, I think communication from the city to the public could be greatly improved on. This is very important to ensure people continue to trust their government. Communication around why Prentice Park was chosen as the future fire hall site, as well as the work currently done on Coal Creek, was poor. Communication on subjects like the above should be on social media (Facebook, Instagram) and physically in relevant spaces.

I would love to see a section of trail lit for evening use in the winter. We have such an active community I think it would be well used for local residents and tourists

I've lived in Fernie my whole life. The city should land and make money off of it for the community instead of selling it and collecting taxes so said buyer could make the money.

Active transportation and ebikes are the future. We need dedicated Bike lanes to access the downtown and schools from neighbourhoods. East to West (1st Avenue) and North to South (7th Street) Winter and Summer.

Note, this is just in relation to the survey design - For the options listed under the question: "Thinking about Fernie's future, what is most important to you?*", I would recommend defining them (or giving an option for greater context). For example, not everyone will know what reconciliation efforts means.

Failing infrastructure and increasing building costs have allowed large and well-used or necessary community buildings owned by the city to degrade, becoming derelict and unsafe i.e. Community Hall, the Hockey Arena and Curling Arena, the old Fire Hall, the water & waste management system, IDES, Max Turyk, and the list goes on. Every idea/ hope & dream listed above costs money, and I sense that the City of Fernie has very little of it. I would encourage the city, for the next 10-15 years, to focus on community initiatives that increase revenue for the city while also providing necessary infrastructure/recreation to residents and visitors. I know this means an unwanted increase to the cost of living in Fernie, but there are many in this town who have become very used to not paying anything for city-owned spaces while also very vocally opposing any change. I also have hope that the city can find solutions by optimizing and leveraging tourism revenue.

Fernie's future depends on balancing growth with the protection of our community assets. Parks and recreation spaces are irreplaceable gathering places for sports, culture, and everyday wellness. Once green space is lost, it cannot be reclaimed. Respecting our heritage buildings and history strengthens Fernie's unique identity and supports cultural tourism. Protecting natural areas and the environment safeguards the Elk Valley's ecosystems, ensuring clean air, water, and resilient landscapes for future generations. I encourage the City to prioritize these values when making land use and development decisions.

Unfortunately we can not control the real estate market. As Fernie changes there will be more and more wealthy people coming to Fernie driving the real estate market up and making it unaffordable. We were concerned with that back in 1995 as we watched American mountain towns change for that reason. Some became vibrant and places that people want to live with appropriate real estate prices. Others became unaffordable and places for wealthy people to recreate while the workers lived in satellite communities. Much like is happening in the Elk Valley and South Country today.

A major portion of the problem is when the city did not require Fernie Alpine Resort to supply accommodations for its seasonal workers and put the whole burden onto the citizens of Fernie. This was the beginning of the housing crisis in Fernie. As far as affordable housing for temporary and entry level job workers it would have to be BC Housing accommodations and apartments but it is not the City's place to construct

Look to other mountain towns for inspiration and to what policies work for improving services, facilities, community, nature conservation, economic resilience and wildfire protection. Apply these policies pre-emptively (e.g. taxing second homes that sit empty, making town centre a pedestrian only zone in summers, fencing off the train track with soundproof fencing so they can stop blowing that incessant noise-polluting whistle)

Have a better way to hear taxpayers concerns - not everyone can go to council meetings or the coffee chats. Have a group of citizens sitting on the board that are elected for a 1 year term by public vote to make sure we are being represented and heard in council beyond what is in place now

I think access to family doctors needs to improve. Ideally, a single large clinic that housed all the local doctors, and could then have a walk in component, would be really helpful.

I was not able to rank in the order I preferred, for both of the questions that asked me to rank the top 3 in order of preference, so please disregard this survey. I just wanted you to know, it is not intuitive, I'm reasonably computer savvy and I could not figure it out, you can select one, then all others automatically populate, I'm pretty sure many others will have similar issues. Also, there is a reference to a map for the last questions, it's not available from what I can see. I am using an Apple iPad , if you want to look for yourselves.

In the last question it doesn't allow the ranking to be in order, at least on the tablet.

Fernie is great! Keep the charm, focus on those things that bring people to Fernie to visit and live (outdoor recreation opportunities, friendly vibe), and stay welcoming/respectful to all that Calgary money that flows into the community (visitors, second homeowners, often transitioning to primary homeowners).

Limit vacation owners from communities in Annex, Airport, Ridgemont, Downtown - who buys has to live there full time or rent long term (not just few times per year vacationing in their 2nd/3rd... house). You can limit who can buy in the area as Whitefish does, who's bank account has millions is limited (f.e. from flipping and pumping prices up). Those neighborhoods should be full of families, kids, not empty vacation houses!

Start taking proper care of green spaces and parks, hire person who understands this area how to properly care of trees, shrubs, how to properly plant trees, has education or knowledge in landscape architecture!

Buid a parking lot close to downtown and turn 2nd ave into a pedestrian only from CIBC to beanpod. Allow food, music, art, flowing in the streets. Create ties with MPs, suggest immigration policies that allow visa extensions if 1 year is completed in a rural area. Create housing that is affordable that front line hospitality and tourism workers who have lived and been employed for years on the valley to have access to. Keeping these people is key to the community. Fernie has continued to grow with people that do not need these jobs to get by, effectively replacing frontline workers with people that

work remotely (generalization). Basically, the type of housing available affordably determines who can stay here long term and the faces of Fernie have changed a lot in the last 5 years.
Keeping up with promised/needed infrastructure before building continues. Ie. childcare centres, hospital, community centre, city plumbing, rec spaces, road works/repair.
Fire hall downtown not on a green space. We need to ensure what we have taken care of what we have/need/is lacking before catering to bringing in more people.
Build a Resilient food system
Making our community more accessible for families and caretakers. Maintaining and building sidewalks, clearing them in the winter is so important to keep our kids and families safe walking to school in the winter. If the city can't clear sidewalks- incentivize homeowners to clear them so that families with strollers and young kids don't feel the need to walk on the street in winter because that's where it's cleared.
Lack of community centre has been really noticed this last year. It's a space to gather, host events, have more varied programming for all ages, craft fairs. Not everyone has the money to ski/board - there is a need for community programming through the year, but especially in winter.
Have commercial and residential complexes install bear proof bins
Fernie is an amazing town BUT is falling behind other communities. Fernie collects lots of taxes per capita but overall feels ratty and run down compared to other towns. Fernie should NOT be raising taxes but should be focusing on priorities, efficiency, maintaining infrastructure, and not being distracted by woke/progressive distractions. Fernie should strongly consider closing off 2ave to make into a pedestrian space (like Kimberley). This could potentially even just be weekends only with retractable bollards. Fernie should also consider a dedicated downtown food truck area like Whitefish which is vibrant and well attended.
Don't forget what brought many to Fernie. Its mountain vibe, skiing and mountain biking
We need bus transit services around town and to the ski hill (visit Whistler to see how great their system is for reducing traffic). Secondly, please complete the bike lane to the ski hill today, not 5 years from now. Dedicated bike lanes in town is a waste of money for today, but perhaps something to plan for in 10 - 15 years if the town continues to grow.
I would love to see strategy and thought behind the urban expansion beginning to happen at rapid rates in Fernie and the surrounding area. If that means expanding the city boundary to check and manage the sprawl of large, expensive housing that is unaffordable for much of the local population then so be it. It would be great to see land around downtown including shops or businesses on floor levels and housing in upper levels. I also think it would help downtown congestion to have corner store style options in different city areas - for example Montane or the Airport or the Cedars. Fernie turning into a large, spread out Canmore or Banff with less community connection is worst case scenario in my opinion. Fernie could also benefit majorly from having new community center built, and recreation options like a proper indoor climbing gym.
Clean out the dead wood at city hall. Too many golden handshake employees and bureaucrats currently in place to get anything done. Stop all of the virtue signalling (without actually doing anything) and return to a merit based system that rewards hard working city employees.
Reducing the use of 2nd avenue for offices/ services (e.g doctors/dentist/etc)
Remove bylaws that pertain to where food trucks can go (allowing businesses to utilize them)
Bike infrastructure is currently poor and is poorly maintained. For example, the protected areas along the highway are plowed once a snow storm and the highway is plowed onto them. The design doesn't allow the snow to be cleared the whole length. The design encourages cars to exit the highway quickly, instead of slowing down. The pavement is of poor quality, and isn't cleared of highway dirt until well into the spring/summer.

This discourages people from walking or biking and enhances the parking problem downtown.
Our Taxes are already high if you compare to other communities.
I hope the priority for Fernie is our drinking water and waste management.
Talk of spending our tax payer dollars for putting in bike lanes should not be a priority. There are other more pressing issues and concerns that should be addressed with our tax payer dollars. Fernie is a community that shares our roads well with bikes and is respectful to them. Do we really need bike lanes? We already have the dyke and Fernie Valley Pathway!
Important to create community spaces and support people who are adding to community with events, such as wednesday social, ladies bike night etc and supporting local business and variety.
There needs to be more streamlined options for development of needed community service providers like physician offices or childcare.
More houses for normal people with normal jobs that want to start a family. Not extremely wealthy or poor
Child care is a growing concern in Fernie. There are building permit delays that are affecting this as well as the lack of City owned spaces (\$10aDay, ChildCareBC and other grantors prefer to offer funding to providers that are secure in a long term lease with municipal government or a school district). At least allow for improvement to City buildings permits have priority. Child care spaces increase and support the economy and development of municipalities, health and wellbeing of families and ensures a solid foundation for the future education of students in Fernie and area.
We need to prioritize updating our over loaded infrastructure. It is a tragedy that we have such an amazing resource of the unspoiled fairy creek water shed and have concerns about drinking water for our children's future.
Again the elk river, one of the worlds best recreation resources, at risk due to our overloaded waste water facility.
The above noted points are the top 2 that need to be addressed immediately, before they are damaged beyond repair and leave us without the worlds most valuable recourse, clean water.
Fix the sewer infrastructure before allowing more homes to be built! Utilize the 902 land for the firehall and lower the cost of it! \$22 million is a bit excessive, use part of that money to use towards fixing the sewer infrastructure! We do not need anything new until the infrastructure is fixed!
Again, Bike lanes and proper pedestrian signage. Many communities like Kimberly have been doing it for years. A big part of Fernie's tourism is mt biking, cyclist move through the city to access trails. kids bike to school, cyclists need to feel safe moving around the city, drivers need to know that bylaws protect cyclist through signage. Pedestrians also need to feel safe knowing they are not going to get run over by a bike on the sidewalks. Proper education and signage will not only fix this, but will encourage more bike use and walking reducing traffic, the same time being an environmental initiative. Create better bike space at the grocery stores and Main Street. Perhaps a bike rebate or tax break on kids bikes at local stores? In regards to winter, sidewalks are not a place to pile snow! Such as the sidewalks around the courthouse. Again, the city needs to encourage less traffic. Residence need to feel confident they can safely walk around the city in the winter.
Make City owned land available for development. Create a welcoming business environment...Get out of the way of business and housing investment.
I am deeply concerned about the never-ending growth. Affordability is impossible for first-time home buyers. Fernie is no longer focusing on those who live here year-round. It's long-time and indigenous

residents (the Metis). Everything appears to cater to the tourism industry. I expect that if nothing changes, the annual taxes on my 40+ years old home will force me to sell.

NO DEDICATED BIKE LANE

Commit 1st and 3rd ave to hike traffic
Prohibit bikes on Second Ave.

if cyclist are fit enough to ride their bikes to town for shopping or to use town as a gateway to other neighbourhoods, they are fit enough to ride one street over from the core, park their bike and walk to Second Ave.

(As people do with cars)

Dedicate bike parking options on First and Third Ave's to promote compliance as well as provide safety and security of said transportation.

This will reduce-eliminate frustrating congestion caused by bikers who do not obey the basic road rules.

It will allow seniors and those with mobility issues a less stressful driving or commuting environment

Enforcement is key

Every purchase made from local retailers to include a request from the retailer for membership dues or day pass fees to be collected from tourists, to help fund the maintenance creation of trails and beautification costs...

could be as simple as an additional \$10 per purchase...

Active transportation provides sense of community and strong given spaces gets people out & about

- Encourage growth while respecting heritage
- Welcome new community resident who are looking for a much better place to live regardless of heritage, race or religion

Density versus sprawl. Form and character respected with regard to density or new builds.

Infrastructure is number one pipes both water and waste water must come first. Economic development and land strategy to maximize value for community and lower homeowner taxation by imperiling commercial tax values

Affordability for people who actually live in Fernie is a higher concern. In order to support growth we need workers and people deserve to live with dignity. We need more dense affordable housing for people who live and work in town.

Transportation and congestion is also a major concern. Town is difficult to navigate in the winter and parking options downtown are very limited.

Allow Airbnb to be on the same property but not necessarily in the primary residence, ie: suite above a detached garage or a secondary dwelling on the same property. These funds would help people be able to afford to actually live in Fernie.

Help push government for better access to supported housing that is staffed properly. Better access to mental health and addictions services, and healthcare.

Encourage/incentivize owners of derelict and empty commercial buildings to sell or repair them to be utilized.

Reintroduce bear aware type education and place more bear proof containers around town for those without garages.
I feel strongly about sidewalks, appropriate housing for the ski hill staff, increasing lower income housing, annexing the ski hill.
Investing in our hospital and in community exercise spaces.
We're a young couple who moved to Fernie to work at EVR. For housing I think we should prioritize rezoning and building more apartments near the downtown area. Expanding city limits comes with more costs for the city like transit needs and road maintenance. I would like to see a butcher or bakery in town. I think a good community centre with a gym would be great
Create more housing options so people can put down roots in fernie. Create a gym in our community centre so residents do not need to go to neighbouring towns. Create incentives for business owners to open on main town with consideration to businesses we don't currently have like butchers or bakeries.
Attract more year round businesses such as a golf course / resort to be developed in Fernie so that local businesses have better year round income. Provide transit for festivals so tourists can get around. Promote year round tourism more so businesses want to stay / open and can make money every month of the year. We need to do more to become less seasonal.
Fernie is at a crossroads in time. Like so many communities it has a rich heritage and pride in its' past, however past practices of not looking forward and making the necessary plans for the future have resulted in structures and facilities that are crumbling and in need of serious repair and replacement. The recent conflict over the much needed Fire Hall is an example of the misinformation and distrust that exists in this community and is disconcerting. The elected officials and city management have been incredibly transparent and offered numerous opportunities for discussion and asked for feedback from the community, all of which were basically ignored or discounted until the opportunity for a considerable cost saving grant was announced and the issuing of new government funding regulations was introduced. Then a small number of the community became vocal and used tactics that were damaging. It is time to move on and trust the elected officials and senior staff to lead the community
Ranking top 3 about Fernie's future
1. Housing affordability
2. Improved services and infractions (a NEW FIREHALL) @ Prentice Park!!!!!!
3.strong urban design & placemaking
Need to protect greenspace and identify where future greenspace will be located. Also, best to prioritize multi unit dwellings instead of singular detached.
Allow spaces for more restaurants, Our culinary community can not handle the influx of tourism
Make use of land on highway 3 outside of the main part of fernie. Use Squamish as an example Tom Uphill manor takes up a lot of land. Build a 60 plus affordable condo on that property.
Build a new arena attached to the pool.
Stop building firehalls in parks. Stop using valuable core land for low income housing
Expand city boundary and ensure there is a transit option from ski hill to downtown and Hosmer to downtown, it will prevent drunk driving and allow people to spend money at restaurants etc. use land on the other side of the ski hill for apartment complexes that are affordable to seasonal workers
I think that a focus on growing arts and culture is vital to the vibrancy, health and sustainability of town and it needs to be identified and made a priority in the City planning. In the past the city has supported all sorts of growth recreationally and continues to cut back funding on arts and culture and have not made it a priority to help Fernie grow and become resilient to coal pricing.
Bakery

<p>No dedicated bike lanes ever.</p> <p>Fernie is great place to live and visit. City infrastructure (water, sewer, etc) all seem to be end of life or over capacity. I believe new developments should pay for these upgrades or not be allowed to develop new communities that compound the problems.</p> <p>Lobby to use more of the RMI and MRDT funding to support town infrastructure improvements and not just tourism-focused upgrades. Any project that is tourism first with benefits for locals erodes goodwill towards tourism given the strain that additional tourists place on community amenities, services and infrastructure which are funded through taxes. Tourism is important and Fernie must remain welcoming to tourists; Safeguard that by supporting locals first so that they do not feel left behind. RMI and MRDT funding can go a way towards that.</p>
<p>Keep walkable. increase housing density in the core. This increases tax revenue with same infrastructure. no industrial park so need dense housing to survive.</p>
<p>Other</p> <p>1-make streets narrower with more deciduous trees Get smaller fire trucks</p> <p>2-develops a 50 yr mice plan to consistently cycle through and update street infrastructure. Sewer, water, hydro...</p> <p>3-downtown, move the sidewalk patios next to the building so that they can install canopies. Make a boardwalk sidewalk in the parking lane.</p> <p>4- turn lot next to the bus depot into a grocery store and apartment complex. Maybe partner Save on.</p> <p>5-get rid of the bus depot, Nupku and Telus from downtown.</p> <p>6-we need a community centre and arena but need good infrastructure first. Fix the basics first please. sewage treatment...</p> <p>7-a bylaw to allow seniors to use golf carts or similar in town. City is death trap for seniors if they don't have a car</p> <p>8-expand city limits stop destruction of farmland.</p>
<p>Thanks for reading all that</p> <p>Use the Fernie Heritage Strategy document that the City adopted. Fernie's history and Heritage cannot be replaced and once gone any development only makes Fernie a more generic place. Heritage and Development can co-exist.</p>
<p>The downtown sidewalks are hard to navigate because of the sandwich boards, bike racks and displays. It's hard to get through with a stroller when it's busy downtown. There should be a rule protecting the sidewalk area so that it's not so hard to get anywhere</p>
<p>It is essential that Fernie become a Greener community. An electric public transit system would reduce the number of internal combustion vehicles that crowd the streets. Cars should not be allowed on 2nd ave between 4th St and 8th St. for those with special needs. It should be pedestrian only.</p> <p>Solar energy should be incorporated into the street lighting system. Private residences and public buildings should be encouraged to add solar panels to their roof tops.</p>
<p>I would like the current and future council to seriously address the building permit delay issue.</p> <p>I would like the current and future council to continue to look at our current young growing population and how to build /maintain financially viable facility's.</p> <p>The City of Fernie need to put more pressure on Fernie Alpine Resort / RCR to build more staff housing</p>

(that could also have a different fee structure outside of peak seasonal demands.

The city should continue to look for grant and encourage private developer opportunities for building/maintaining recreational/sport facilities.

The City of Fernie should continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce to keep the business community strong as these businesses thrive when there is steady cash flow and workers to fill the positions they need operate. Continue to look for areas where the Chamber of Commerce can facilitate/share the business mgmt duties traditionally part of the City's duties.

Fernie should be modeled more like Whistler. A wonderful vibrant tourist town. Nelson is a good example of what NOT to do. Their emphasis on protecting the homeless has attracted MORE homeless people to the community. Safe injection sites have scared everyone away from the downtown area. Gay pride is totally out of control. Tourists don't visit anymore. Nelson is DYING! Thank god Fernie has a strong coal industry, the ski hill, biking, and an awesome golf course. I strong economy drives a vibrant city!

Leave green space alone!

Let's get back to basics. Pave potholed streets instead of patching, replace failing infrastructure, upgrade utilities, improve operational efficiencies in city-run departments. Signage, beautification and visitor amenities are just facelifts that do nothing for my quality of life here.

a lot of new developments are across the creek or across the river. More pedestrian bridges would make the city more pedestrian friendly and help reduce vehicle traffic and parking demand on main-street (which on a different note; should be pedestrianized - at least during daylight hours)

Focus on infrastructure such as water lines, sewers and roads and not wait until it becomes an emergency

Prepare for water shortage, put counters at each house. If it is expensive to water, people will waste less.

With the lack of land in our town it is vital to use the land correctly. A detailed town plan could be drawn and enforced, this town belongs to us all, and we only have one opportunity to build it right.

Keep Prentice Park as recreational area .This is historical and must be protected from anything other than recreational.

Limit real estate purchasing from out of towners (reason to reside type bylaws). If you are not a full time employee of a Fernie based employer, or own a fernie base buisness, the purchase of a home should come with higher annual property taxes. Anyone with a secondary house/vacation property should also have that same higher annual property taxes, unless it is proven that is is a long term rental at reasonable rate.

A community plan to attract more healthcare professionals, especially doctors, to the community.

We need more to do for children, adolescents and teens.

If it rains and it is cold, the only place for them to go is the pool- and last time, it was a 30 people wait to get it.

If you do not ski, there is a lot of trouble to get into.

I also feel like the mental health in Fernie is a direct correlation to the alcohol and drug problems here. More readily available help for people who need it.

The several empty buildings for lease downtown take away from a vibrant town. Remove barriers or finding incentives to get small local businesses into these vacancies. Focus on mountain bike trail building to keep tourists coming back to Fernie. Support more green spaces near downtown and beautify the city where we can.

Fernie shouldn't manage as many facilities as it does; the provincial government should provide more support for childcare, housing, and education, take back the courthouse, and not rely on the city for these services. Community partners should be encouraged to develop a sustainable operating model that covers the costs related to their facility operations and weans them off taxation to support their programming.

no more hair salons or dr offices on second ave! This should be a space for retail and restaurants!!!!

1. More affordable housing for young families is a must. The housing market feels strongly in favor of highly affluent second-home owners. There are very few properties for less than \$1,000,000 and not in need of significant repairs. We may have to leave Fernie if we ever want to own our home and start a family.

2. More diverse stores without bringing in big brands. Prioritize independent businesses.

3. Access to health care needs to be addressed to

Ultimately, the town needs more than just attracting seasonal workers or second-home owners/investment properties.

We need to work on more summer emergency egress routes out of Fernie. Coal Creek, River Extension, Kocato (past the cattle guard), Rifle Ranger Rd, are all private roads. Lose access to hwy 3 after a land slide or wildfire, and our safety and economy are at risk. Egress is a new topic for BC Forestry, jump on the bandwagon now.

Fee for services. Paid parking to encourage biking, walking. We need to support business growth for increased tax revenue. Need to change to evolve and not be stuck in the past.

Work more with the RDEK. They benefit from everything Fernie offers but contribute not as much.

We need protected bike lanes for family safety. It's currently unsafe for kids to bike to school, especially with fast traffic on Park Ave or when crossing the highway from the Annex. This forces parents to drive, worsening the parking crisis at schools.

Bike lanes are the solution. They provide safe routes for kids, which will reduce school drop-off traffic and free up parking for everyone.

Financially, it's a huge win. Bikes cause zero road damage compared to cars, so we save massively on long-term asphalt repair, reducing the tax burden on all of us.

These lanes also increase mobility for the whole community, including residents on mobility scooters or parents with strollers.

Let's start with a low-cost pilot project using temporary materials on key routes (13th St, 4th St, 3rd Ave, 9th Ave, and Park Ave). This creates a functional network to test the benefits without a major commitment. Having both directions on one side also reduces maintenance cost i.e. snow removal

A commercial needs assessment should be conducted to survey the needs of residents and visitors, especially in the downtown core. Permitting and incentives should then positively incentivize those businesses deemed to meet the greatest needs in Fernie. For example, if we lose downtown storefront to a professional business, that reduces the attraction for tourists and visitors to shop downtown. More restaurants that cover food not on offer elsewhere should be prioritized, as would stores that offer shopping options beyond what is already available.

We need more recreational spaces. Further indoor spaces for groups during the winter and spring.

Lot behind IGS needs work.

2nd ave could be pedestrian and bike lane traffic only.

encourage, incentivize, and support private market action to enable desired developments including mixed use commercial/residential and multi-unit residential. Reduce barriers to improving existing building stock and adding dwelling units to existing property.

Avoid more estate style suburban development and ensure financial sustainability of municipal services for those developments when necessary. Focus multi-unit development close to existing amenities. Consider environmental protections for wildlife habitat and corridors from future development.

Please consider roads and wastewater / water systems when developing Fernie. Specifically keep in mind the size of roads, where people are going to park, and if you add bike lanes, where snow is going to go. Please don't make tiny roads or develop roads that are not conducive to snow clearing as it's challenging enough without proper forethought. In addition, keep in mind the state of our current wastewater & water systems when awarding permits to developers. While it's great that they want to expand the Fernie tax base, **MAKE THEM PAY FOR ALL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES.**

The cause of the housing crisis is 2nd home ownership and short term rentals in family homes. I believe that more houses need to be built but more condensed living is ideal such as terraced houses and condos. But if you reduce 2nd homes, then the problem would be less prevalent. The sense of community also suffers when all your neighbors don't live in their houses full time.

Have seasonal closures on main street to make it a walking street

Develop a long term infrastructure plan so we are always reacting - more proactive planning and execution

Bike trails connecting the various regions within town and out to the ski hill

Ya maybe upgrade the sewer system and water treatment facility before building more housing!! The sewer system is already so over used and yet we continue to add more???? Like really???

The change is too big unfortunately. I think the town is going to struggle with keeping workers to stay and run the local businesses.

This change needed to happen 5 years ago.

This is a national level issue, taxes are too high for the younger generation to start a life here.

I like densification and believe that owners of empty lots should be penalized for not building and say a 3 year tax relief for new builds in densification areas. Make people want to build and make it more affordable.

We need to factor in the amount of families who will end up relocating to Fernie over the coming years with children who will require childcare and plan to incorporate child care spaces into new buildings. Many co-use options need to be available to accommodate these families.

Regarding the question up above, "What size of homes do you think Fernie needs most?" - don't take our opinions on the matter. Use the data!

I just spent 45 minutes on this survey with tons of information and while trying to drop a pin on these ridiculous maps, the entire thing reset. I wonder how many people this happened to and how many surveys you are not going to get because of that.

I'd like to see a vibrant downtown that people want to visit, better walking and biking routes (that are safe & kid friendly.) a plan for the old community centre site that is well thought out, and an end to leasing out all city-owned land to the first group that comes knocking. I want to see heritage buildings and the heritage feel of downtown retained. That includes limiting the size of buildings in downtown to ensure the look and feel is retained. And also be realistic about how many parking spaces are needed. Parking variances when you need a car to live pretty much anywhere in town don't make sense.

Finally, It's time to look at the donated parking lot downtown and decide what the best use is, beyond surface parking.

The City of Fernie needs to adopt a stronger, more effective plan to support the non-profits, community groups, and small businesses that are the backbone of the Elk Valley. These organizations and businesses are driving local growth, providing essential services, and building opportunities for residents — yet many face unnecessary barriers when trying to expand or serve the community more

effectively.

Fernie's management model is not working. Taxes continue to rise, but citizens see little benefit in return: infrastructure remains underfunded, services are stretched thin, and there is no clear investment in long-term improvements.

Transparent financial planning so residents understand where tax dollars are going and how they benefit.

Dedicated funding streams and incentives for non-profits, community groups, and small businesses expanding services in the Elk Valley.

Strategic investment in infrastructure that supports growth while addressing long-standing maintenance issues.

please stop spending money on beautification etc. We need houses for residents. Build some houses and then sell them at only a small profit- not market pricing. If there is land to sell, sell land to people with building time limits- not developers but actual people. More projects like Veneto where it was built and could be sold only at reasonable prices (not market pricing), but perhaps with longer terms.

Listen better to the community. Don't take away Prentice Park for the firehall. Build a community center. Have accountability for short term rentals. We lived next to one for 7 years. Our family's quality of life tanked because of it. The continuous parties and strangers that come and go were frightening for our young family.

I think we need to be forward focussed. We need to think 'green,' to keep active transportation as a priority, we need to support indoor gathering spaces. The community is more than just trails and outdoor amenities. We need to support places like the library that bring all part of the community together.

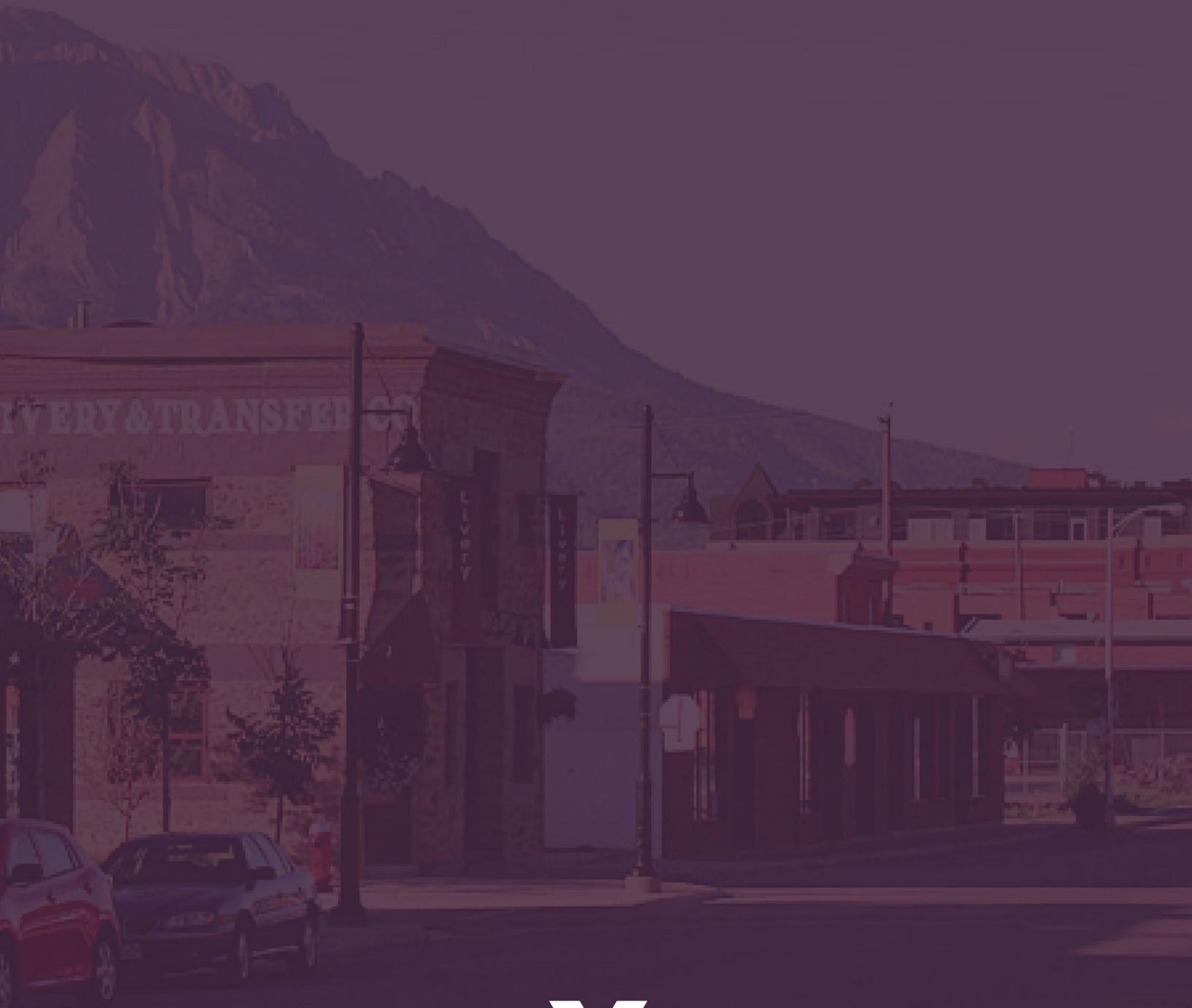
- importance of supporting free indoor spaces for the community to come together
- importance of supporting the library
- importance of green space downtown, like the library garden
- importance of walkable community allows for all members of the community to avail themselves of community amenities like the library.

Stronger restrictions on short-term rentals! Direct major employers (ski hill especially) to create staff housing. Ensure residents on the outskirts of Fernie (especially the ski hill area) contribute to the cost of Fernie's amenities & infrastructure deficit. Zoning that allows for some commercial spaces in each neighbourhood area, rather than just housing. Force developers to build multi-family housing in new neighbourhoods rather than just selling lots for mega mansions. Incentivize developers to build affordable housing that is affordable. Create better transportation options to and from Fernie. Curb extensions and/or one way traffic on 2nd Ave. Bike lanes on 3rd Ave. Expand the city boundary to include the ski hill if it makes sense financially. Look at other resort towns that have experienced rapid growth before Fernie, determine what worked for them, what didn't, to ensure we don't make the same mistakes.

There's a house across the street from me and the people have only been there 1 or 2 weekends all summer and the rest of the time it's empty. I'm curious to know if there's something that can be put in place so that these properties don't stay empty for long periods of time when there is a need for housing in Fernie. Maybe something about if you own a home you have to work in town in the area.

We need more 3+ bedroom houses, but not in the McMansion variety. People don't want/need giant homes!

<p>Need to focus on necessary core city services and getting them up to standard before doing 'aspirational' projects.</p>
<p>One of most important things missing is to emphasize that the city must have a systematic and planned out infrastructure upgrade and maintenance plan that allows for current usage and growth. One that is proactive and not reactive when there is a major issue.</p>
<p>Leave the green space alone. (Ball diamonds) build a community center.</p>
<p>Take care of the local kids/residents before tourists</p>
<p>Recreational buildings (multi arena, community center, indoor tennis/squash) or conference center.</p>
<p>Main Street continues to be active area and pedestrian friendly with shops and restaurants on main floor. Put bylaw in place with minimum operational hours and business that encourage tourism.</p>
<p>The downtown is the core and is also limited. We need to make sure that the spaces that are available for business are economic drivers. Having multiple art/photography business that are only open 4-12 hours a week take up valuable space. Office space should be limited to second storey offices not walk in street level. Pot shops and vape shops are displeasurable optics on second ave.</p>
<p>Fernie's future must consider making the town affordable for those who live and work here - for the people who create community. Because that is what is so wonderful about this town - the community. Fernie's future plans must cater towards its residents, more than the tourists.</p>
<p>We need to protect heritage homes in the downtown and not just tear them down for second homes.</p>
<p>Fernie needs to prioritize homes for people who live here.</p>
<p>We need a rec center. Pool, arena, full size gymnasium, courts, area for indoor walking in winter/heat waves. Communal space for gatherings.</p>
<p>Worry about Fernie, solve the cities problem s. Don't worry about the rural areas and forget any annexation of the rural areas. Creates very hard feelings that lasts for years.</p>
<p>Affordability is challenging here. Helping the supply chain drop prices somehow (easier said than done). I appreciate your efforts</p>
<p>Look at the needs of those living here full time</p>
<p>As stated above developers are making lots of money and we should be charging them to pay for future instructions, water, upgrade, sewer, roads etc.</p>
<p>possibly canvassing the neighbourhoods that need upgrades and asking them if they be willing to pay short term tax increases to improve their area for example paving Ridgemont subdivision. The roads are terrible. I'm sure they wouldn't mind chipping in a little bit so they wouldn't have to avoid all the potholes all the time.</p>
<p>I want to see Fernie grow to the size of Cranbrook and beyond. Ensure the city has the infrastructure to support this growth. People see their taxes going up and reap little to no benefits for it. What am I getting for \$6k a year - the WORST snow removal in BC? Yes I have lived in 6 other BC towns and will stand by this comment and yes I read the tax breakdown. We can do better. We need to take advantage of all the tourists - charge them for the use and abuse of our amenities, like the dog park, which the city does way too little for, charge for street parking and provide locals with free parking permits, etc. What can the city do to bring in more income - can we build housing/apartments on city land and sell/rent them for some profit? Grow the downtown core - use 902! Side note, driving downtown is horrible, people visibility is low and car park in a way that block pedestrian sightings - can we do anything about this. Roads and sidewalks need major upgrades ALL THE WAY to the river!</p>
<p>Much greater action needed to reduce GHG emissions. Boundary expansion and wildlife corridor protection should happen ASAP.</p>



V3