

City of Vernon
Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan Update

Phase 2 - What We Learned Report
February 2025

Submitted to:
City of Vernon

engage delaney

ENGAGEMENT, FACILITATION, COMMUNICATIONS & CHANGE

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Executive Summary

Background

The City of Vernon, projected to grow to 65,000 residents by 2045, is updating its Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Plan (TP) concurrently in 2025 to address the community's evolving needs. The OCP will guide long-term development, focusing on housing, transportation, climate stewardship, economic growth, and recreation, while the TP will enhance safer, more accessible transportation options, including public transit, walking, biking, and parking. By aligning these plans, the City aims to create cohesive, cost-effective, and efficient strategies that support a thriving, climate-resilient community.

The project has the following phases:

Phase 1: Needs Assessment | Spring and Summer 2024

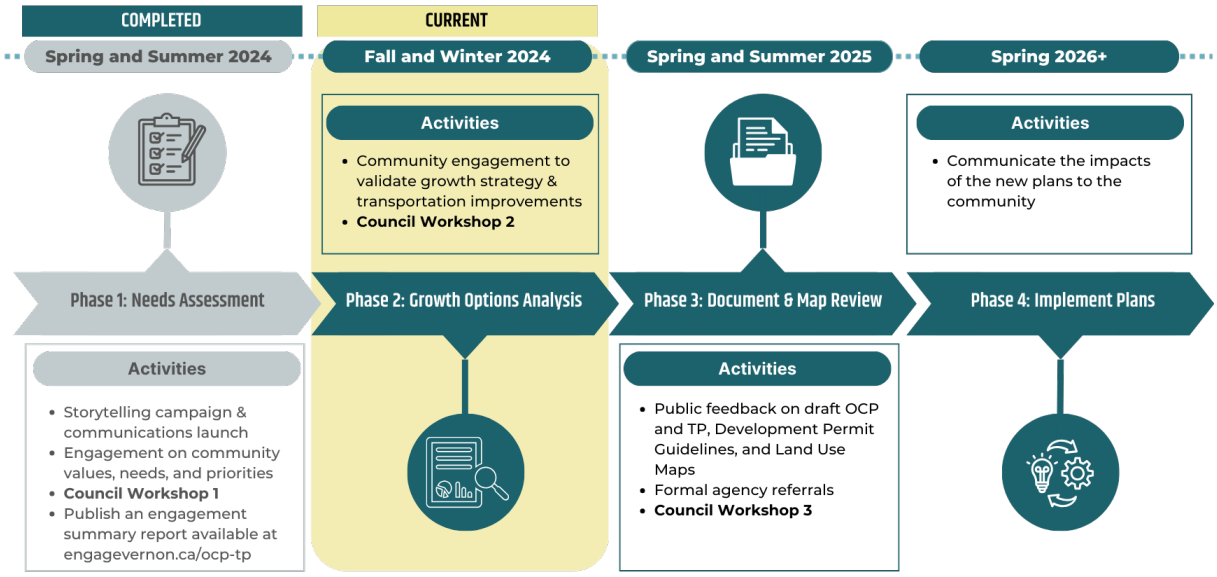
Phase 1 of the engagement process is now complete and a summary of the feedback received is available here.

Phase 2: Growth Options | Fall and Winter 2024

Phase 2 of the engagement process is now complete, and this report summarizes the feedback and insights gathered during this phase.

Phase 3: Document and Map Review | Spring and Summer 2025

Phase 4: Implement Plans | Spring 2025+



In Phase 2, the coordinated review of both the OCP and TP was supported by community engagement, informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) planning methodology and core values.
The communication and engagement process for this phase took place in October and November 2024. Interested and affected parties were invited to participate by:

- Completing an open online survey
- Participating in an open house
- Contacting a City of Vernon liaison
- Providing a written submission

For this project phase, the engagement goal, which is the overarching purpose for the engagement and identifies the intention of the City in its engagement efforts with the community and interested parties, was:

> *By late Fall 2024, the City of Vernon will encourage the full and meaningful participation of the community in the process of providing feedback on growth options to be considered within an updated Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan. We will fully consider community feedback on specific options and considerations within the growth model and are committed to ensuring the plans are informed and enriched by the results of the community engagement process.*

The City of Vernon shared detailed information about the project on the Engage Vernon website.

Close to 1,000 community members participated in the engagement process, including 744 survey respondents, 245 open house attendees and seven individuals who submitted written feedback. Following the engagement process for Phase 2, the feedback was analyzed for key themes and takeaways to develop growth options for the Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan.

Key Findings

Through the community engagement process, much was learned about the community's needs, interests, values and priorities. Key findings are listed below from what was learned.

Transportation Plan

1. Safety as a Core Priority
   Safety emerged as a fundamental concern, with strong support for measures to reduce road injuries and improve infrastructure that separates different traffic types. Residents consistently highlighted the need to improve safety for all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, with a strong emphasis on non-car users. Concerns about traffic safety reinforced the community's desire for measures such as lower speed limits and safer road designs.

2. Active Transportation and Accessibility
   Walking and cycling infrastructure garnered significant interest, with a focus on multi-use paths and improved transit connections. Many participants highlighted the need for better pedestrian pathways and bike lanes to create a seamless, safe, and accessible active transportation network. Feedback emphasized the importance of designing these systems to serve a range of users.

3. Sustainability and Environmental Alignment
   Transportation initiatives aligned with sustainability goals were widely supported. Residents called for investments in projects that promote active transportation and reduce emissions. The survey reflected enthusiasm for integrating green technologies and improving transit systems to support long-term environmental resilience.

4. Infrastructure and Connectivity
   Movement of people and ensuring that everyone can easily get where they need to go, was also seen as a priority in the transportation plan. Enhanced connectivity within the city and to key destinations like schools, parks, and shopping areas was identified as a priority. Participants frequently mentioned the importance of connecting neighbourhoods with safe, accessible routes and ensuring the transportation system supports both daily commutes and recreational activities.

Community Growth Model

1. Sustainable Growth and Urban Livability
   Residents expressed a clear preference for sustainable growth strategies, favouring densification within urban areas over sprawl. Survey feedback emphasized the value of vibrant parks, attractive streetscapes, and well-designed mixed-use developments in fostering livable and welcoming communities. Participants highlighted that these elements make neighbourhoods more appealing and functional for all residents.

2. Housing Affordability and Development
   Affordable housing emerged as a pressing concern. Respondents highlighted the need for more attainable homes, particularly in central, transit-accessible areas. Many supported building a mix of housing types, including townhouses and mid-rise apartments, to provide diverse options for various household sizes and income levels.

3. Parks, Green Spaces, and Public Amenities
   The preservation and enhancement of parks, green spaces, and public amenities were central to the community's vision. Participants described these spaces as vital to community well-being, promoting physical activity and offering gathering places for social connection. Public input also emphasized the importance of maintaining accessible green areas near neighbourhoods.

4. Preservation of Natural and Cultural Identity
   Protecting Vernon's natural landscapes, hillsides, and cultural heritage was a shared priority. Participants consistently voiced concerns about overdevelopment in sensitive areas, favouring thoughtful planning that safeguards the city's character and environment. Specific feedback called for measures to preserve hillsides and wetlands as valuable ecological and recreational assets.

Project Context Statement

The City of Vernon is a growing to be climate-resilient community with support and systems in place that enable residents to thrive, businesses to prosper, and encourages community participation. The province of British Columbia projects that the City of Vernon will welcome 20,000 new residents by 2045, bringing the total population to 65,000 residents.

The City started reviewing both its Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Plan (TP) in early 2024, which will be concurrently updated in 2025. An OCP is a comprehensive framework that includes the highest level, overarching policies for the City, designates land use and guides the long-term development of a community. The Vernon OCP plans to do so by addressing key areas such as Housing and Neighbourhood Development, Transportation and Infrastructure, Climate and Environmental Stewardship, Economic Development, and Recreation, Parks, and Trails.

A Transportation Plan guides the development and growth of a community's transportation system in alignment with the OCP. The City of Vernon's TP aims to enable safer and easier transportation choices for everyone, covering areas such as public transit, roads, scooters and mobility devices, walking and biking trails, and parking.

These new plans will be created to reflect both the current and future needs of the community. By moving the plans forward together, the documents will be more complementary (i.e. eliminate conflicting or redundant text), more streamlined (i.e. options analysis considers land use and transportation changes together, reducing iterations), less costly, and more efficient (i.e. steps like population projections, public engagement, and documentation design are completed at the same time).

Communication and Engagement Synopsis

Communications Goals and Objectives

Engage Delaney continues to apply the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) approach and spectrum to this engagement program. Building on the insights gained from Phase 1, the communication goal for Phase 2 was as follows:

> *By late 2024, build shared understanding of the preferred growth option under consideration in the OCP and TP and generate a sense of collective opportunity and responsibility to help shape the future of Vernon.*

Specific communications objectives (at the INFORM level of the IAP2 spectrum) to achieve the goal were:

1. By Fall 2024, share information about the engagement process so that all audiences understand how to participate, where they can go to learn more about the project and process, and how their feedback will be used in developing options for the OCP and Transportation Plan.
2. By Fall 2024, share information on what was learned in Phase 1 and how input from Phase 1 helped to inform the growth options identified in Phase 2.
3. By Fall 2024, share information about the constraints, requirements and considerations the City must take into account in developing the OCP and TP plans so that all audiences understand what the topics for engagement are that they can provide input on, and which ones have already been decided on.
4. By Fall 2024, report back on what was learned in Phase 2 and how feedback will help to inform drafting of the OCP and TP.

Engagement Goals and Objectives

Where communications focus on sharing information and building common understanding, meaningful engagement is about sharing influence in decision making. This means Council will consider what is learned through the engagement process in its final decision making.

The engagement goal is the overarching purpose for the engagement and identifies the intention of the City in its engagement efforts with the community and interested parties.

For this project phase, the engagement goal was:

By late Fall 2024, the City of Vernon will encourage the full and meaningful participation of the community in the process of providing feedback on growth options to be considered within an updated Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan. We will fully consider community feedback on specific options and considerations within the growth model and are committed to ensuring the plans are informed and enriched by the results of the community engagement process.

Engage Delaney applies the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) planning protocol and spectrum to its engagement plans. Phase 2 of active engagement was primarily at the CONSULT level of the IAP2 spectrum in that the City was seeking feedback on specific options within the growth model. See Appendix B for the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement.

For this project phase, the engagement objectives were:

1. To receive feedback from any interested or affected parties on specific options related to Transportation Oriented Development Areas (TODA) and specific considerations around density and transit trade-offs.
2. To receive feedback on the designation of Village Centres for Anderson Ranch, Alexis Park, Waterfront and the Hospital area.
3. To receive feedback on the level of support for development in the Hillsides and the potential to change the current approach to future hillside developments.
4. To receive feedback from all interested and affected parties on which criteria they feel are most important to prioritize for new transportation projects so that these findings can help to inform a decision-making tool to assess new project requests.

The engagement also focused on eight objectives, emphasizing equity and inclusion. These objectives, distilled from community conversations about how they wanted to be engaged in the OCP and Transportation Plan process, were:

1. Ensure all community members have the opportunity to participate
2. Build community trust, understanding and participation over time
3. Help community members understand the impact or result of their participation
4. Provide community members with clear and accessible information
5. Accommodate diverse engagement preferences
6. Make participation fun
7. Make participation safe for staff and community members
8. Be transparent in how community feedback is being gathered and used

Communications Approaches

To effectively engage the community and ensure broad participation in the engagement process, the City of Vernon implemented a comprehensive communications plan, which utilized various channels and methods.



Project Webpage - The Engage Vernon project portal (www.engagevernon.ca/ocp-tp) provided regular updates and promoted the survey and open house. An e-newsletter was sent to subscribers, planning staff updated their email signatures to promote the survey.

Media Releases and Print Ads - A media release promoted the survey and open house, while media availability on Castanet expanded public awareness through local news coverage.

Social media - Frequent posts on City social media channels promoted the survey and open house, reaching a broad audience and maintaining consistent visibility. Additionally, paid ads with the survey link were placed on Castanet.

Community Outreach - Phase 1 workshop participants were invited via email to promote the survey and open house, with offers of printed posters, postcards, and a Phase 1 report summary to support their outreach.

Direct Mail and Email Invitations - Postcards were mailed to all homes and businesses in Vernon, outlining how residents could share their input and get involved. A one-page mail-out was also included in utility bills to further expand outreach. Email invitations were sent to specific community groups and stakeholders, encouraging diverse perspectives in the workshop sessions.

Engagement Approaches

The following engagement approaches were used:

Project Liaison (Ongoing throughout all phases) – A designated City of Vernon staff member was available to provide information and answer questions from the community throughout the active engagement period and support engagement through the City's project page. The liaison supported engagement through the City's project page, responded to ad hoc requests for information, and engaged with community members as needed, including interviews and other forms of interaction to ensure broad accessibility and coverage.

Community Survey – An online survey was developed in collaboration with the project team and hosted on the Engage Vernon project page. The survey link was shared with residents, businesses, community partners, and other interested parties. Available both online and in paper format, the survey allowed self-selected participants to provide feedback on specific elements of the preferred growth options and criteria for prioritizing new transportation projects.

Open House – The open house, held on November 7, 2024, from 1 to 8 p.m., offered attendees the opportunity to learn about the OCP and Transportation Plans, including constraints, considerations, and findings from Phase 1. Multiple stations allowed participants to provide feedback on specific components of the plans, ensuring interactive and targeted engagement.

Internal Collaboration – Collaboration with other divisions within the City of Vernon was integral to the process. Background studies and inputs were coordinated during Phases 1 and 2, with formal referrals planned for Phase 3 to ensure comprehensive integration of organizational insights and impacts.

Engagement by the Numbers

Engagement Method	Number of Participants
Online engagement survey respondents	744
Open house participants	245
Written submissions	7

What We Learned

The following section of the report provides a detailed summary of the key insights and themes that emerged through the various engagement activities conducted during Phase 2. Drawing from the community survey, open house, and written submissions, these findings offer a comprehensive understanding of the priorities, values, and concerns expressed by residents and interested and affected parties as relate to growth scenarios and transportation. With nearly 1,000 participants contributing through these engagement methods, the feedback reflects a broad cross-section of perspectives, shaping the foundation for the growth options under consideration in Vernon's Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan.

WHO PARTICIPATED

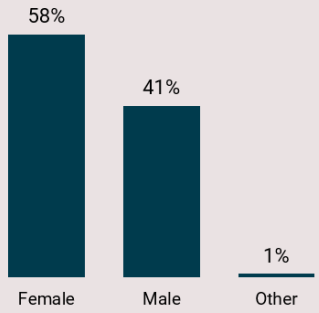
Community Survey

The Phase 2 survey conducted by the City of Vernon received 744 responses. Data were collected from October 28 to November 15, 2024, through EngageVernon.ca.

Survey respondents represented a mix of demographics:

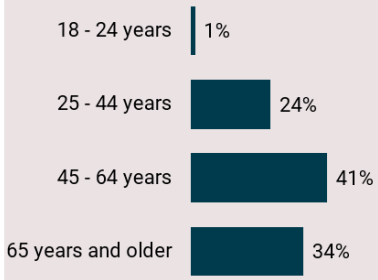
- More likely to be female (58%) than male (41%).
- Split between 65 years of age and younger (34%), 45 – 64-years-old (41%) and 25– 44 years old (24%).
- All household incomes were represented, skewing towards higher-income earners (67% earning $80K+/year).
- Most were homeowners (86%), with 11% renters and the remainder in other housing situations.
- Respondents were from across Vernon, with many neighbourhoods represented. The largest group lived in the Hills district (31%); a quarter in the Okanagan Landing area (23%), one in five in the City Center area (21%), and in outlying areas (19%) and 8% were from outside Vernon.
- The majority (85%) have not used public transit to get around and to and from Vernon in the past year.

Gender



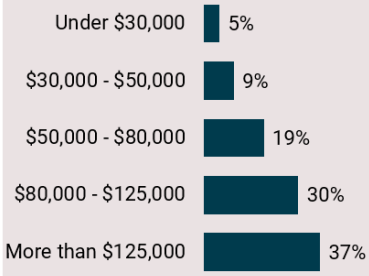
2021 Census: 52% female/48% male

Age

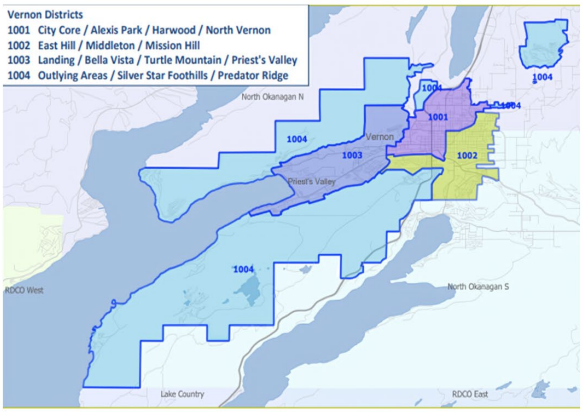


2021 Census:
15-24: 10%
25-44: 25%
45-64: 32%
65+: 32%

Household Income

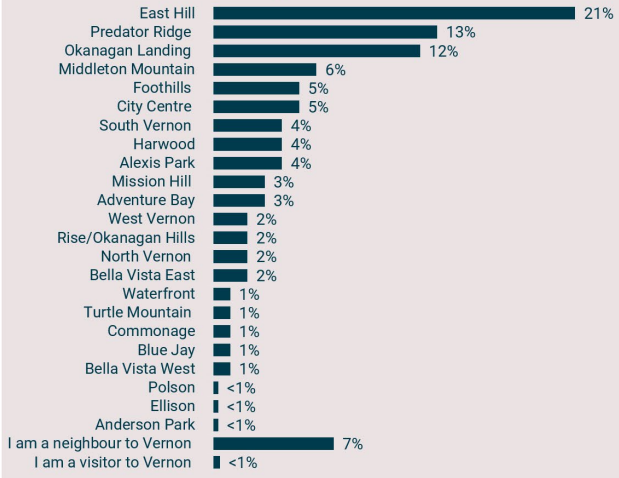


2021 Census:
<$30K: 9%
$30-50K: 12%
$50-80K: 16%
$80-125K: 45%
$125K+: 19%

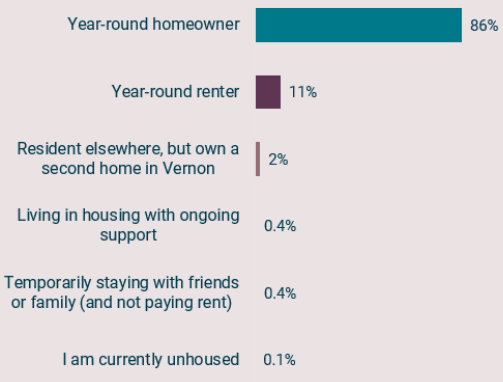




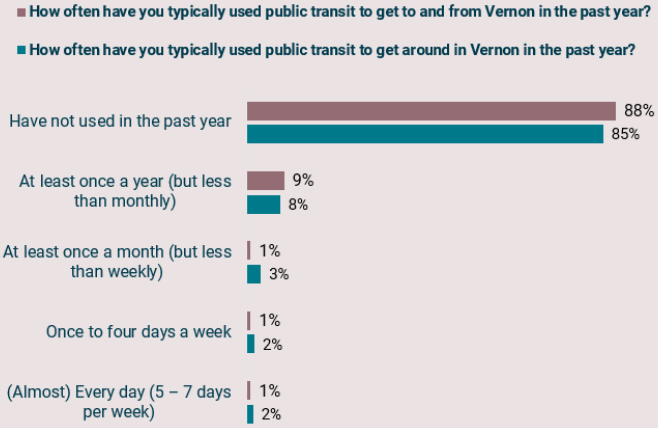
Neighbourhood



Housing



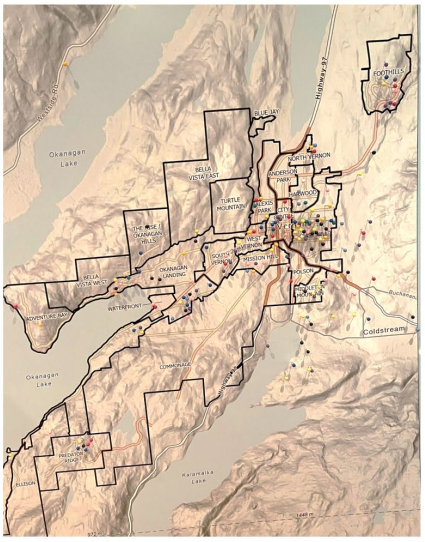
2021 Census: 73% own/27% rent

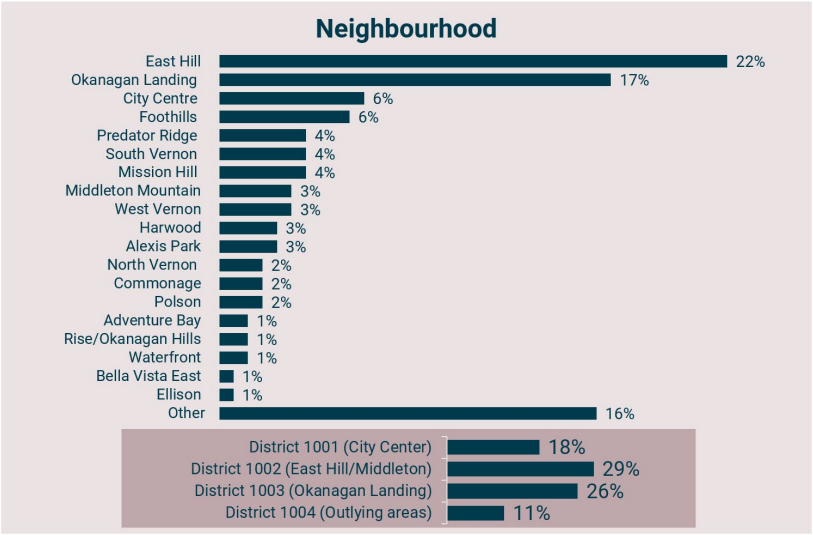


Open House

On November 7, 2024, the City of Vernon hosted a community open house as part of its Phase 2 engagement process. The event, held from 1 to 8 p.m., attracted 245 participants who contributed their perspectives on key topics related to transportation planning, community development, and future growth. Feedback was gathered using various interactive methods, including feedback frames, dot voting, comment cards, and sticky notes, providing a rich source of qualitative insights. City staff were present throughout the event to answer questions, document feedback, and engage in dialogue with attendees.

Respondents were from across Vernon, with many neighbourhoods represented. Of those who provided demographic information, nearly three in ten respondents (29%) came from East Hill/Middleton district, making it the most represented area. Approximately one in four (26%) were from the Okanagan Landing area. The City Center district accounted for nearly two in ten participants (18%), while just over one in ten (11%) came from the outlying areas. This data was collected through self-identification on a board with a community map as per below.





Transportation Plan Priorities

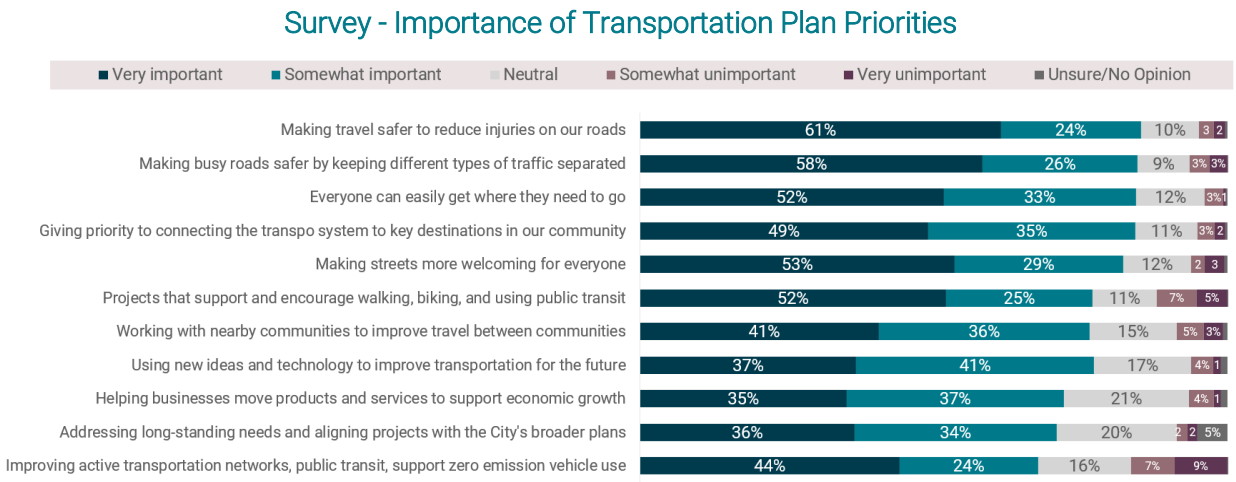
Community Survey

To understand the community's most pressing transportation needs, the survey began by asking respondents to evaluate a range of factors for the City's transportation plan. These included factors such as safety, environmental sustainability, connectivity, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness.

Safety emerged as a top concern, with six in ten (61%) respondents considering *making travel safer to reduce injuries on the roads* very important and a quarter (24%) considering it somewhat important. Similarly, *making busy roads safer by keeping different types of traffic separated* was rated "very important" by 58% of respondents with another quarter (26%) seeing this as somewhat important, highlighting the need for infrastructure that reduces risks for all road users.

Other key priorities included ensuring *everyone can easily get where they need to go* (52% very important, 33% somewhat important) and *making streets more welcoming* (53% very important, 29% somewhat important). Supporting *walking, biking, and public transit projects* (52% very important; 25% somewhat) and *connecting the transportation system to key destinations* (49% very important; 35% somewhat) were also emphasized.

Lower priorities included *improving active transportation networks* (rated as unimportant by 16%) and *projects that support and encourage walking, biking and using public transit* (rated as unimportant by 11%).



Immediate priorities: When asked to select their top three factors that should receive the highest and most immediate priority, safety emerged as a top concern. Nearly half (48%) of respondents prioritize *making busy roads safer by separating traffic types*, reflecting a strong emphasis on reducing conflicts between vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians. Safety remains a key theme, as 36% also prioritize *reducing road injuries*, alongside *promoting walking, biking, and public transit*.

Secondary priorities, each selected by 26%, include *improving accessibility to key destinations*, *enhancing active transportation networks and zero-emission vehicle infrastructure*, and *ensuring ease of travel for all*. These responses suggest a growing interest in sustainability and connectivity. Lower-ranked priorities, such as *helping businesses move products* (18%), *using new ideas and technologies* (15%) and *addressing long-standing needs and aligning projects with the City's broader plans* (14%) indicate these are seen as less urgent or longer-term goals.



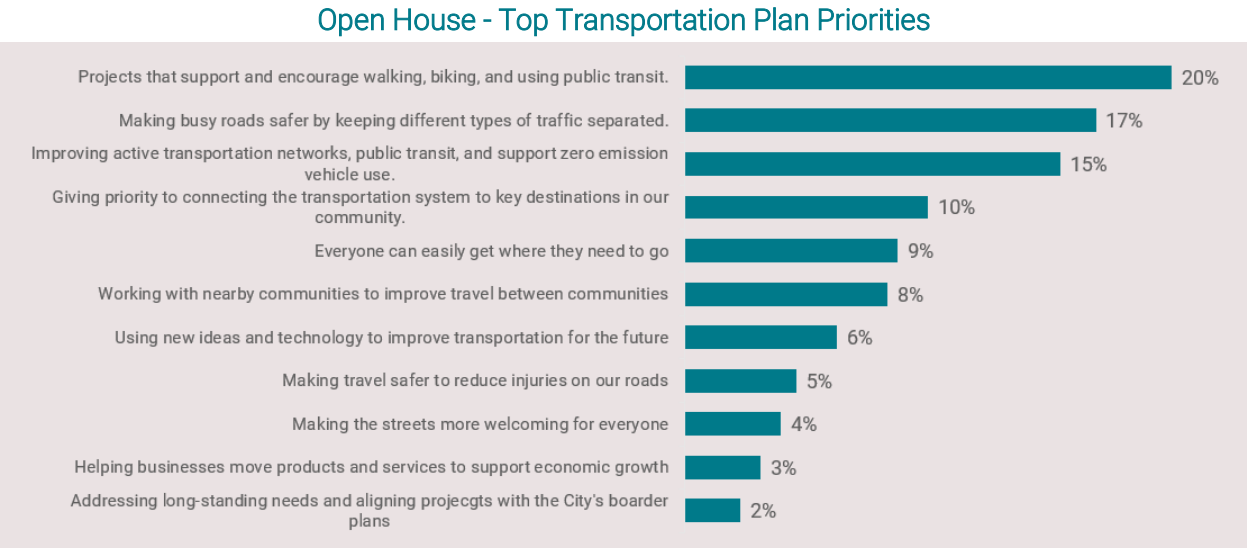
OPEN HOUSE

In alignment with the survey, open house participants were invited to vote on a display board to identify the transportation and community development factors they believed should receive the highest and most immediate priority. The findings reveal some similarities with the survey findings but also highlight shifts in priorities. Participants identified *projects supporting walking, biking, and public transit* as their top priority (20%), emphasizing a commitment to sustainability and active transportation. Safety also remained important, with 17% prioritizing *making busy roads safer by separating traffic types*.

Other priorities included *improving active transportation networks and zero-emission vehicle use* (15%) and *enhancing connections to key destinations* (10%), indicating consistent interest in sustainability and connectivity. However, *reducing road injuries*, which ranked highly in the survey,

was deprioritized at the open house, with only 5% of participants selecting it as an immediate need. Similarly, goals such as *making streets more welcoming*, which resonated with many survey respondents, dropped to just 4%.

Lower-ranked factors at the open house, such as *adopting new technology* (6%), *helping businesses move products* (3%), and *addressing long-standing needs* (2%), reflect similar trends from the survey, where these were also seen as longer-term priorities. These differences suggest that open house participants leaned more toward promoting sustainability and transportation infrastructure, placing relatively less emphasis on immediate safety improvements and aesthetic or business-focused goals than survey respondents.



Participants also shared comments that expanded on their choices, offering insights into the broader transportation priorities. Vernon was widely recognized as being at a pivotal stage to shape its future transportation network, with participants expressing strong interest in balanced transportation options. Enhancing public transit, including improving bus routes and destinations, was a recurring theme, as was the need to focus on walkability and separating road users to ensure safety. Concerns about accidents and near misses on roads prompted some participants to support lowering speed limits in key areas. Additionally, there was enthusiasm for community-focused initiatives, such as street closures to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly spaces in the city core. Some participants also advocated for the creation of a bypass or ring-road to redirect highway traffic away from downtown, alleviating congestion and improving urban livability. These comments reinforced the importance of safety, accessibility, and community-oriented planning in shaping Vernon's transportation future.

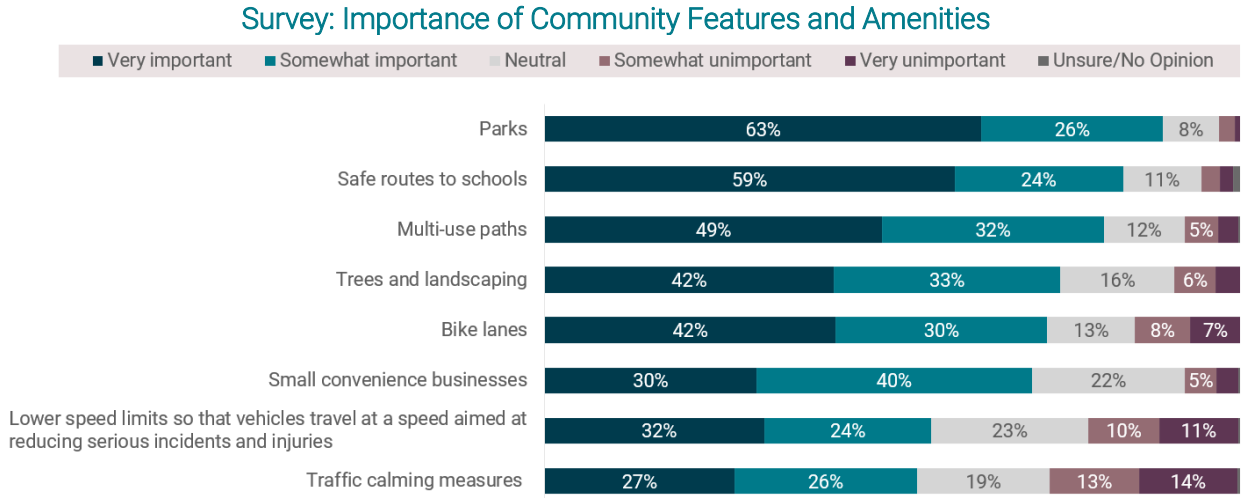
Community Features and Amenities

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Respondents were asked to reflect on their local neighbourhoods and rate the importance of various community amenities and features such as parks, recreational spaces, pedestrian infrastructure and public gathering areas. Overall, all these were seen as important, with the top three seen as "very" important by half or more.

Parks were rated as the highest priority with the majority (89%) of respondents deeming it important, including 63% who said this was very important. Similarly, a majority rated safe routes to school (83%; including 59% very) and multi-use paths (81%; 49% very) as important.

When looking at the other end of the spectrum, more than a quarter of the respondents (27%) rated traffic calming measure as unimportant while 21% felt that lower speed limits was an unimportant community feature. Just over half felt these were important.

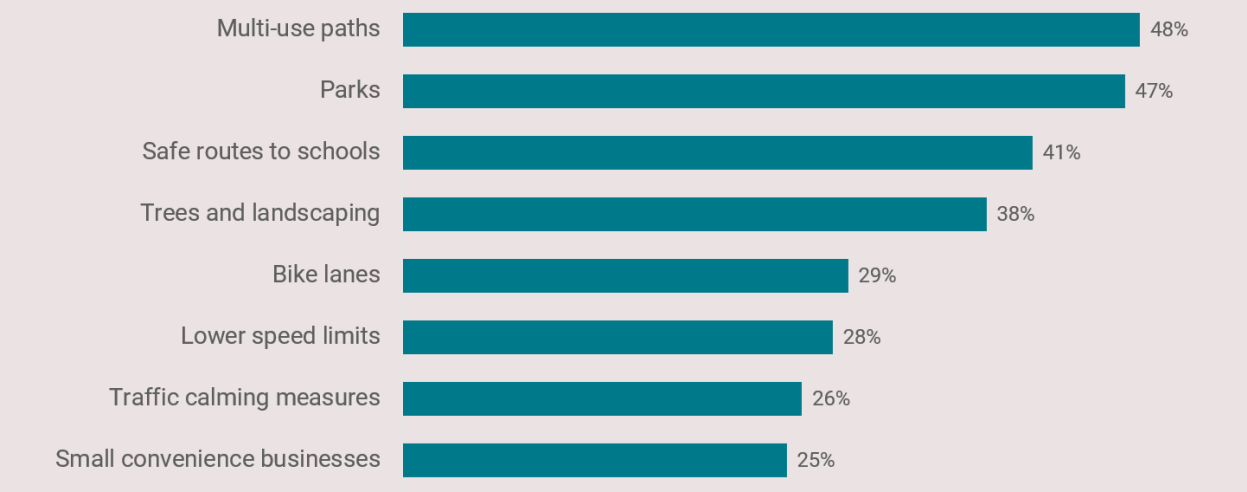


Immediate priorities: When asked to choose their top three among the above amenities and features, the findings highlight a strong desire for improving spaces and infrastructure that promote accessibility, recreation, and safety. Nearly half of respondents prioritized *multi-use paths* (48%) and *parks* (47%), underscoring the importance of versatile spaces for walking, biking, and outdoor activities. About four in ten respondents (41%) selected *safe routes to schools*, reflecting significant concern for children's safety and accessibility. Similarly, *trees and landscaping* (38%) emerged as a key priority, demonstrating a preference for improving environmental quality and beautifying public spaces.

While safety and transportation-focused features ranked lower, they were still notable. Nearly three in ten respondents prioritized *bike lanes* (29%), *lower speed limits* (28%), while traffic calming measures (26%) also received attention. These results suggest moderate interest in improving road

safety and supporting alternative transportation. Small *convenience businesses*, selected by a quarter of the respondents (25%), ranked lowest, indicating slightly less urgency for commercial amenities compared to recreational and safety-focused features. Overall, the findings reveal a preference for investments in infrastructure that fosters active lifestyles, environmental considerations or enhancements, and community safety.

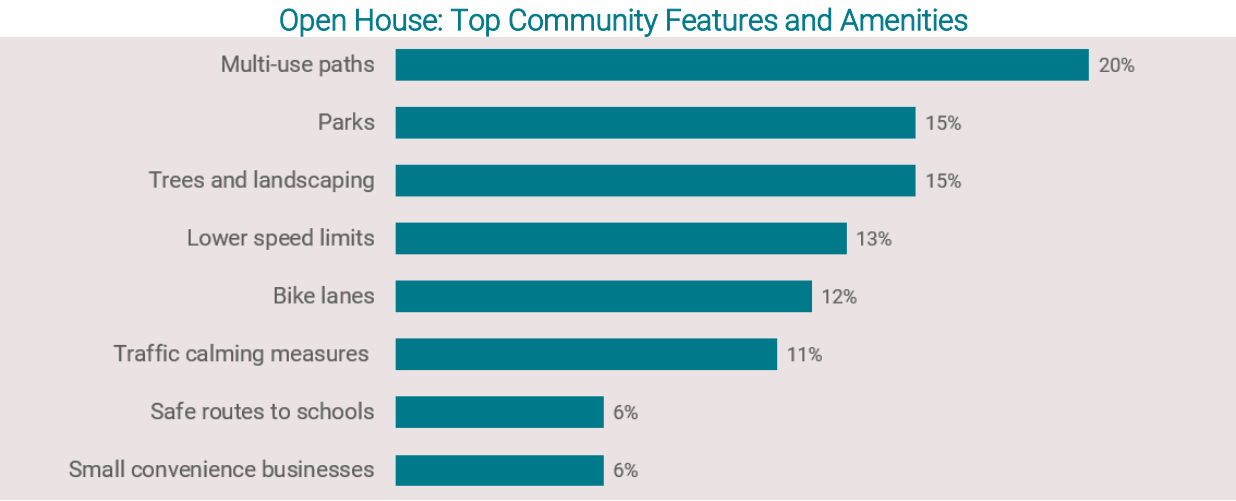
Survey: Top Three Community Features and Amenities



OPEN HOUSE

At the open house, participants also expressed a desire for community features that support recreation, safety, and environmental quality. *Multi-use paths* once again led as the top priority, while *parks* and *trees and landscaping* were tied for second place at 15%, reflecting continued interest in outdoor spaces and environmental enhancements.

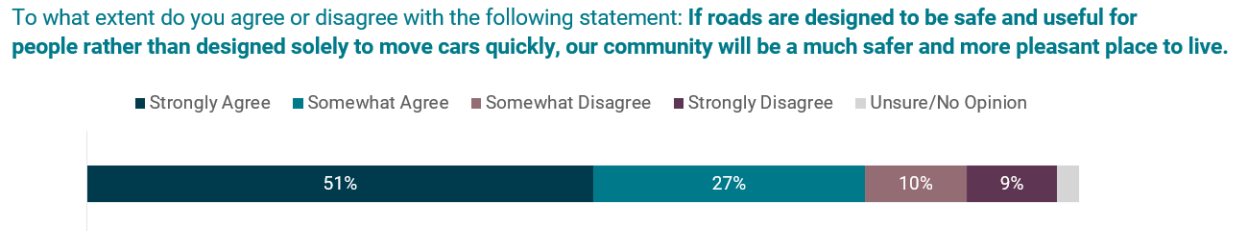
Safety-related features, such as *lower speed limits* (13%), *bike lanes* (12%), and *traffic calming measures* (11%) emerged as moderate priorities. *Safe routes to schools*, a top three concern in the survey, received less emphasis in the open house, with just 6% of respondents selecting it—tying with *small convenience businesses* for the lowest priority. These variations indicate that open house participants may have prioritized broader infrastructure improvements and environmental enhancements over specific safety measures.



Changes and Priorities

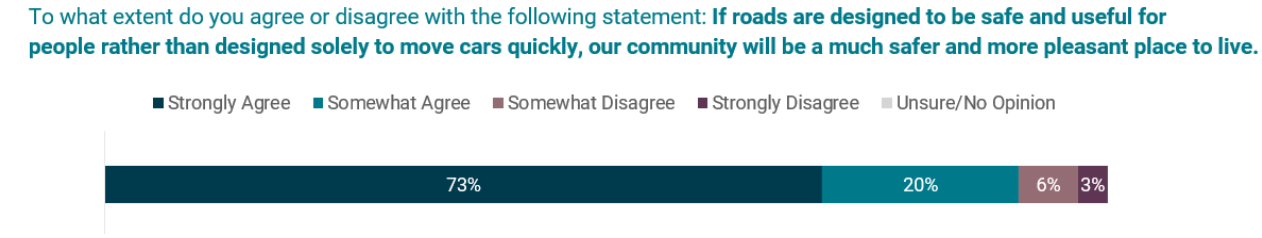
COMMUNITY SURVEY

When asked to rate their agreement with the vision statement, "If roads are designed to be safe and useful for people rather than designed solely to move cars quickly, our community will be a much safer and more pleasant place to live," eight in ten respondents (78%) expressed agreement, with half (51%) expressing strong agreement. One in five (19%) disagreed.



OPEN HOUSE

When asked the same question, open house respondents also agreed with this vision statement, with three quarters (73%) in strong agreement, with another two in ten (20%) saying they somewhat agree and 9% disagreeing.



Participants also provided comments that further elaborated on their views, identifying several key themes. There was significant support for *prioritizing people over cars*, with participants emphasizing the need for road designs and community planning that focus on pedestrian and cyclist safety. Suggestions for improving infrastructure included adding roundabouts, widening sidewalks, and creating separated pathways and better-maintained walkways to encourage active transportation.

Urban planning and development also emerged as an important theme, with participants calling for efforts to reduce urban sprawl, plant more trees, and relocate highways away from the city center to enhance the livability of urban spaces. However, participants also acknowledged challenges associated with these changes. Issues such as climate-related constraints, geographic limitations, and increased maintenance costs—such as caring for additional trees—were noted as potential barriers to reducing vehicle dependency. The feedback underscores the community's strong desire for a safer, more pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly city, while recognizing the practical challenges that need to be addressed to achieve this vision.

COMMUNITY GROWTH MODEL

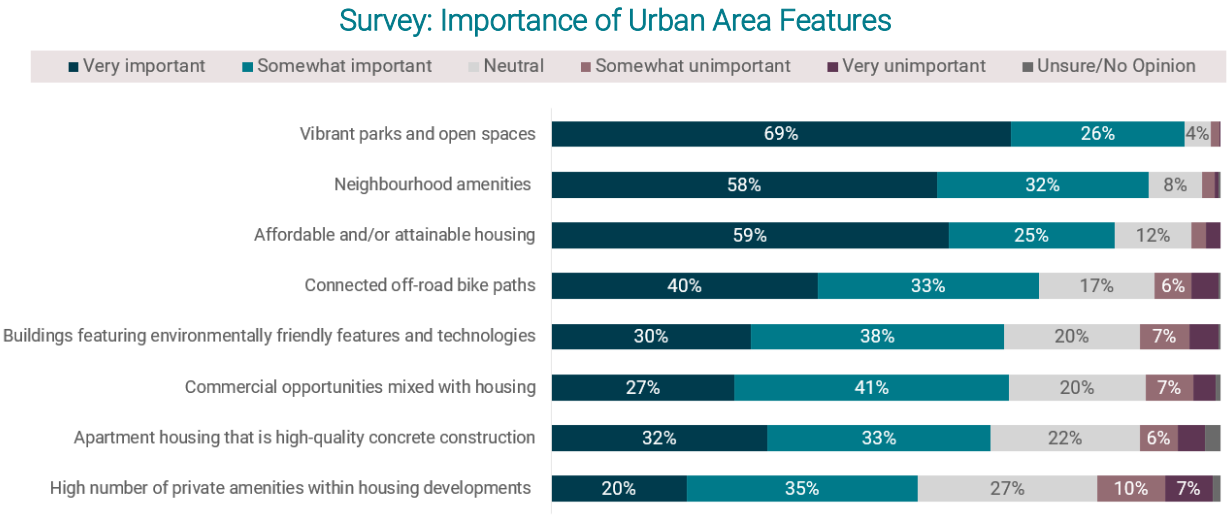
Features of Urban Areas

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of various features in creating an urban area they would enjoy visiting or living in.

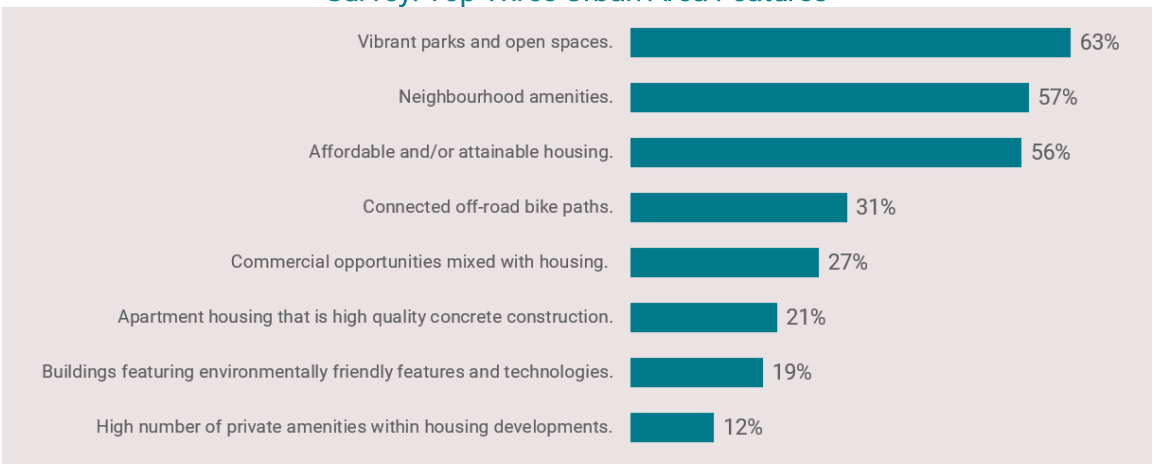
Vibrant parks and open spaces emerged as the most critical feature, with nearly seven in ten (69%) considering them very important and about a quarter (26%) finding them somewhat important. *Neighbourhood amenities* were also highly valued, with nearly six in ten (58%) rating them very important and a third (32%) somewhat important. Similarly, *affordable and/or attainable housing* was deemed very important by nearly six in ten (59%), while one in four (25%) rated it somewhat important.

Less critical was *high numbers of private amenities in housing developments,* where only one in five (20%) rated this very important while slightly fewer than two in ten (17%) rated it as unimportant. These findings suggest that respondents value urban environments that prioritize livability, convenience, and active transportation options, reflecting a strong preference for well-connected and community-oriented spaces.



Immediate priorities: Respondents were asked to identify the top three features from the same list they had previously rated for importance, focusing on those they felt should receive the highest and most immediate priority. The findings reveal strong preferences for features that enhance public spaces, neighbourhood livability, and housing accessibility with nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) prioritizing *vibrant parks and open spaces*. Similarly, over half emphasized the value of *neighbourhood amenities* (57%) and *affordable and/or attainable housing* (56%), reflecting a desire for well-rounded, accessible, and equitable living environments.

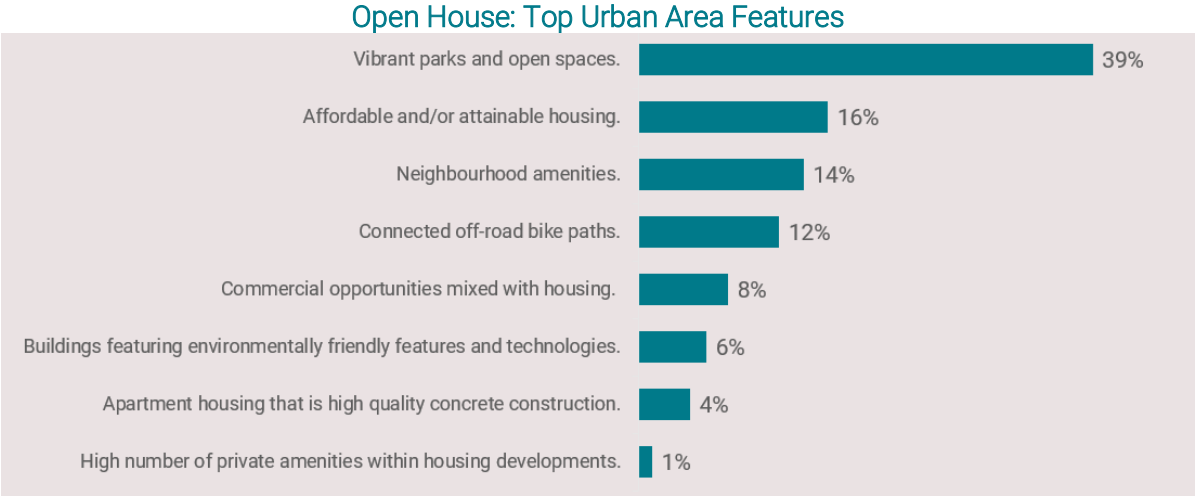
Secondary priorities include *connected off-road bike paths* (31%) and *commercial opportunities mixed with housing* (27%), highlighting an interest in improving active transportation and creating mixed-use spaces that integrate residential and commercial needs. Lower-ranked features, such as *buildings with environmentally friendly features* (19%), and *private amenities within housing developments* (12%), suggest less urgency for premium or specialized housing options compared to broader community infrastructure and housing affordability. These results point to a preference for investments that enhance shared spaces, support community interaction, and address housing accessibility.



OPEN HOUSE

The open house findings for the urban area features align with the survey, highlighting a continued focus on public spaces, livability, and housing, though the ranking of priorities differs slightly from the survey. *Vibrant parks and open spaces* remained the most immediate priority and was overwhelmingly the top choice, selected by nearly four in ten respondents (39%). *Affordable and/or attainable housing* (16%) and *neighbourhood amenities (*14%) followed, reflecting ongoing interest in ensuring accessible living environments and fostering vibrant, well-equipped neighbourhoods.

Other features, such as *connected off-road bike paths* (12%) and *commercial opportunities mixed with housing* (8%), were ranked as secondary priorities, consistent with the broader survey results. Specialized features like *environmentally friendly features in buildings* (6%), *high-quality apartment housing* (4%), and *private amenities within housing developments* (1%) remained lower priorities, reflecting a preference for investments that benefit the broader community over individual or premium housing features. Overall, both the open house and survey data emphasize the importance of creating accessible, connected, and inviting community spaces, with vibrant parks and open spaces a top focus.



Building Heights

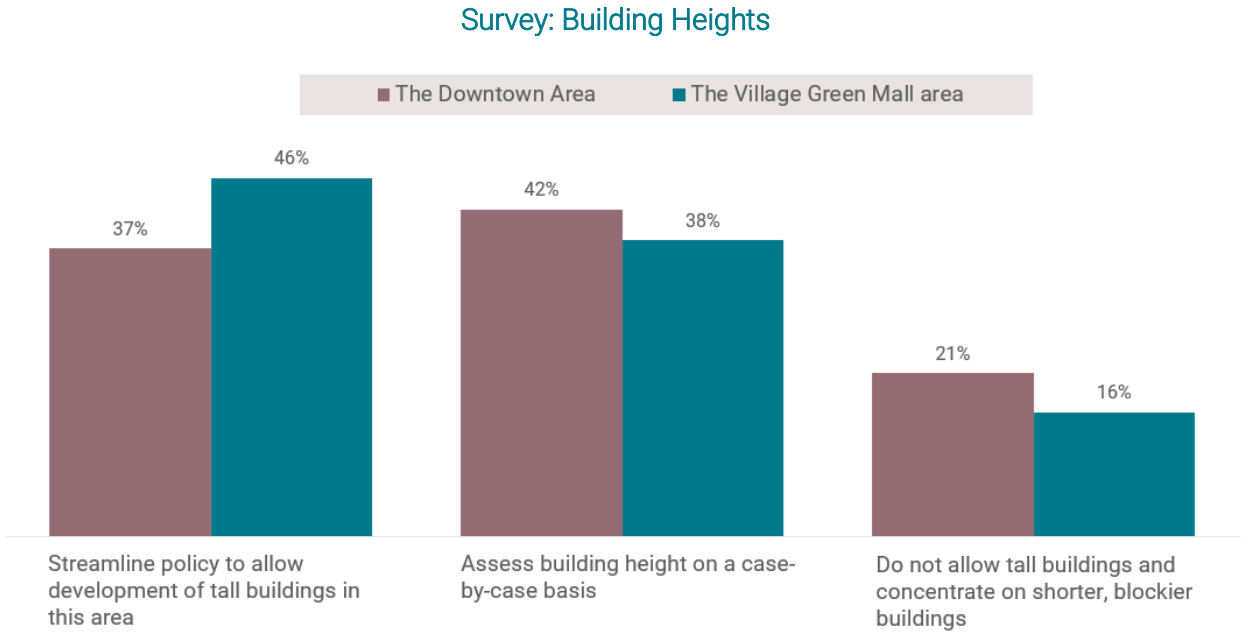
COMMUNITY SURVEY

In addition to the features of urban areas, the survey explored residents' preferences regarding the development of tall buildings (18 stories or higher) in Vernon's Downtown and Village Green Mall areas.

For the Downtown area, slightly more than four in ten (42%) preferred assessing building height on a case-by-case basis while fewer than four in ten respondents (37%) favoured streamlining policies

to allow such development. Only around one in five (21%) opposed tall buildings, advocating for shorter, blockier structures.

Comparatively, for the Village Green Mall area, nearly half of the respondents (46%) supported streamlining policies for tall building development, about four in ten (38%) preferred case-by-case evaluations, and fewer than two in ten (16%) rejected tall buildings in favour of shorter alternatives.

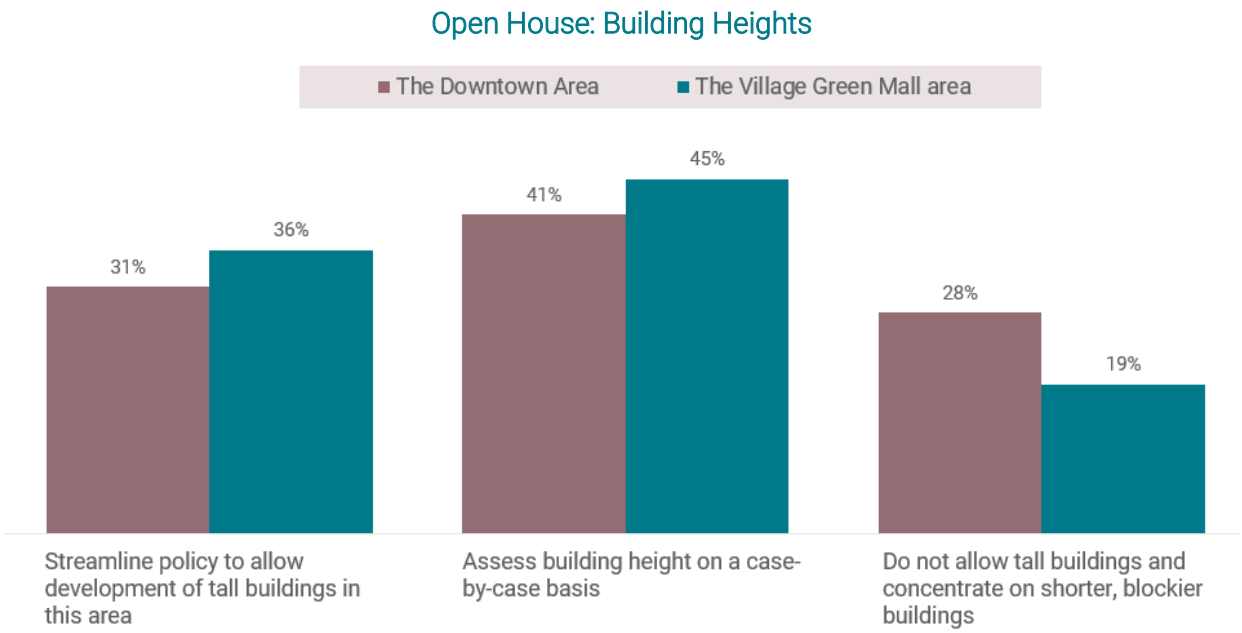


OPEN HOUSE

The open house boards revisited the survey question regarding preferences for the development of tall buildings in the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas.

For the Downtown area, 41% preferred assessing building height on a case-by-case basis, similar to the survey findings. Meanwhile, 31% of participants favoured streamlining policies to allow tall buildings, slightly lower than the 37% seen in the survey. Opposition to tall buildings, favouring shorter, blockier structures, was expressed by 28%.

For the Village Green Mall area, case-by-case evaluations were favoured by 45%, higher than the 38% in the survey. Nearly four in ten (36%) supported streamlining policies for tall buildings, lower than the 46% from the general survey. Opposition to tall buildings was at two in ten participants (19%). These comparisons suggest a slightly more cautious approach from open house participants, with less support for streamlined policies and higher opposition compared to the survey.



Participants expanded on these preferences through comments, offering a range of perspectives on tall building development. Support for taller buildings centered on their potential to address housing shortages, promote business opportunities, and preserve green spaces. Mixed-use developments, combining housing with businesses on the ground floor, were particularly favoured for their functionality and ability to create appealing community spaces.

However, concerns about preserving Vernon's livability and historical charm featured prominently in the feedback. Participants raised issues such as wind tunneling, shading, reduced light on streets, and visually unappealing designs associated with tall buildings. Many preferred focusing taller structures in areas like the Village Green Mall, where the impact on the historical downtown core would be minimized. Additional concerns included the potential for upper floors of tall buildings to become uncomfortably hot, further affecting their appeal.

The need for a consistent and transparent planning process was another key theme. Participants who expressed opposition to case-by-case decision-making said this was due to the perceived risk of inconsistencies. They also highlighted infrastructure challenges, including increased traffic, parking demands, and the stability of Vernon’s clay-based soil for supporting tall structures.

While there was a clear preference for building “up” rather than “out” to protect rural and undeveloped areas, participants emphasized the importance of balancing housing needs with maintaining the city's character. Some still expressed a preference for traditional homes for personal living situations, reflecting a diversity of opinions within the community.

Suggestions to maintain livability included limiting building heights, ensuring adequate light, and designing smaller upper levels to minimize shading and wind tunnel effects. Overall, the feedback

revealed a shared understanding of the need for additional housing but emphasized thoughtful, balanced solutions that respect both Vernon's environmental and urban planning priorities.

Building on this conversation, participants at the open house also provided specific feedback on strengths and opportunities as well as concerns and challenges for development in Downtown Vernon and the Village Green Mall, reflecting the community's nuanced perspectives on these critical hubs.

Downtown	Village Green Mall
Strengths and Opportunities	
Participants expressed support for taller buildings downtown to increase housing density and create new opportunities for businesses and young buyers. There was a preference for four- to five-story buildings, with some allowing for slightly higher structures if integrated with shared parks, green spaces, and efficient transit systems. Many attendees advocated for housing developments near amenities and emphasized the importance of integrating greenery around tall structures to enhance the livability and appeal of the area.	Participants supported the use of the Village Green area for taller buildings to expand housing options and promote urban density. Many agreed that taller structures in this location could encourage housing growth, create jobs, and provide space for new businesses, while preserving the historical character of downtown Vernon. Surrounding taller buildings with parks and greenery was highlighted as essential for maintaining a calm, livable environment. The area was seen as a prime location for mixed-use developments, incorporating housing near public transportation to support diverse community needs.
Concerns and Challenges	
Concerns were raised about the potential impacts of taller buildings on downtown's historical charm, including shading, blocked views, and the loss of its character. Participants emphasized the need to reuse existing buildings where possible and suggested limiting new developments to six stories or fewer. Additional worries included increased traffic, parking shortages, and the stability of Vernon's clay-based soil for supporting taller structures. There was strong opposition to replicating the development patterns of larger cities, such as Kelowna, with participants urging for a more context-sensitive approach.	Feedback included calls for a case-by-case approach to ensure that infrastructure and services can adequately support taller buildings in the Village Green area. Questions were raised about appropriate height caps, with many participants suggesting a maximum of 10 stories rather than 18. Concerns about flood risks and the stability of the area's clay-based soil were also highlighted as potential challenges for taller structures. Additionally, participants noted that modern, blocky building designs lacked charm and could detract from the overall character of the city.

Public Transit Corridors

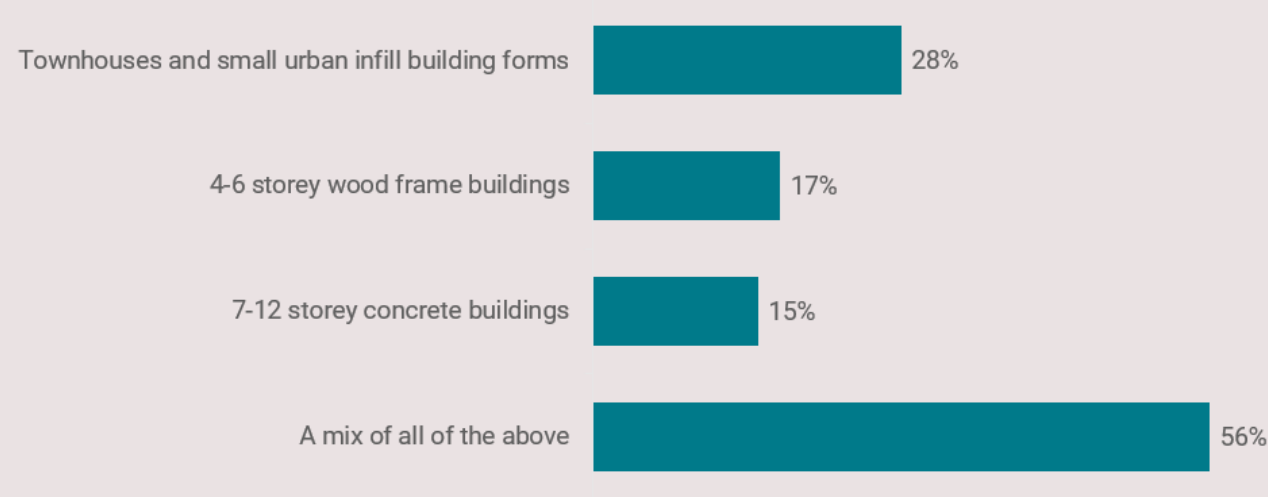
COMMUNITY SURVEY

Expanding on the theme of building development preferences, the survey asked participants about their preferred building forms and types along public transit corridors in Vernon, outside of the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas.

A slight majority (56%) expressed a preference for a mix of all available building types. Townhouses and small urban infill forms were favoured by nearly three in ten respondents (28%), while 4-6 storey wood frame buildings were preferred by about one in six (17%). Similarly, 7-12 storey concrete buildings were selected by around 15% of respondents. This indicates a broad preference for diversity in building forms among survey participants[1].

Survey: Public Transit Corridor Building Preferences

When it comes to building along public transit corridors in Vernon outside of the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas, which of the following building forms and types would you prefer?



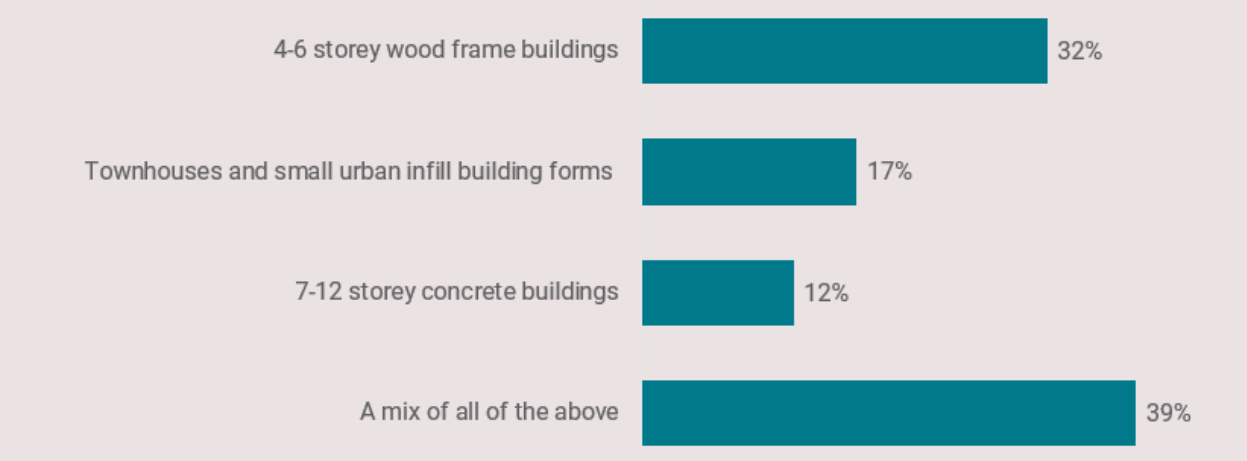
OPEN HOUSE

Among open house participants, four in ten respondents (39%) preferred a mix of all building forms and types, making it the most popular choice. About one in three (32%) favoured 4-6 storey wood frame buildings, while just under one in five (17%) preferred townhouses and small urban infill building forms. Fewer participants, approximately one in eight (12%), chose 7-12 storey concrete buildings[2].

[1] In the survey, respondents were able to select more than one response, allowing for multiple preferences to be reflected.
[2] In the open house, participants were only able to select one response.

Open House: Public Transit Corridor Building Preferences

When it comes to building along public transit corridors in Vernon outside of the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas, which of the following building forms and types would you prefer?



The following are the key themes that emerged from further conversation on this topic:

1. *Building Design and Heights:* There was strong support for smaller upper levels on tall buildings to avoid shading, wind tunnels, and overheating on top floors. Participants expressed a preference for four to six-story buildings with nearby green spaces and mixed-use options, such as retail, groceries, and offices. There was notable opposition to low-quality, "cubist quick-build" designs.

2. *Transportation and Infrastructure:* Many participants called for moving the airport, as its location was perceived to limit waterfront growth. They also supported creating a bypass to redirect highway traffic away from downtown, reducing congestion, and promoting a calmer city center. There were strong calls for improving public transit, including additional bus services and integration of one-way streets to allow for more greenery and walkways.

3. *Growth and Density:* There was increased support for taller buildings in the northern part of town, as well as support for density in the downtown core area. There was a preference to avoid development outside the city core. Participants emphasized concentrating densification near services and public transit to reduce reliance on personal vehicles.

4. *Parking and Permeability:* Concerns were raised about inadequate parking for high-rise developments. Participants emphasized the need for permeable surfaces, tree planting, and green spaces to support sustainable urban environments.

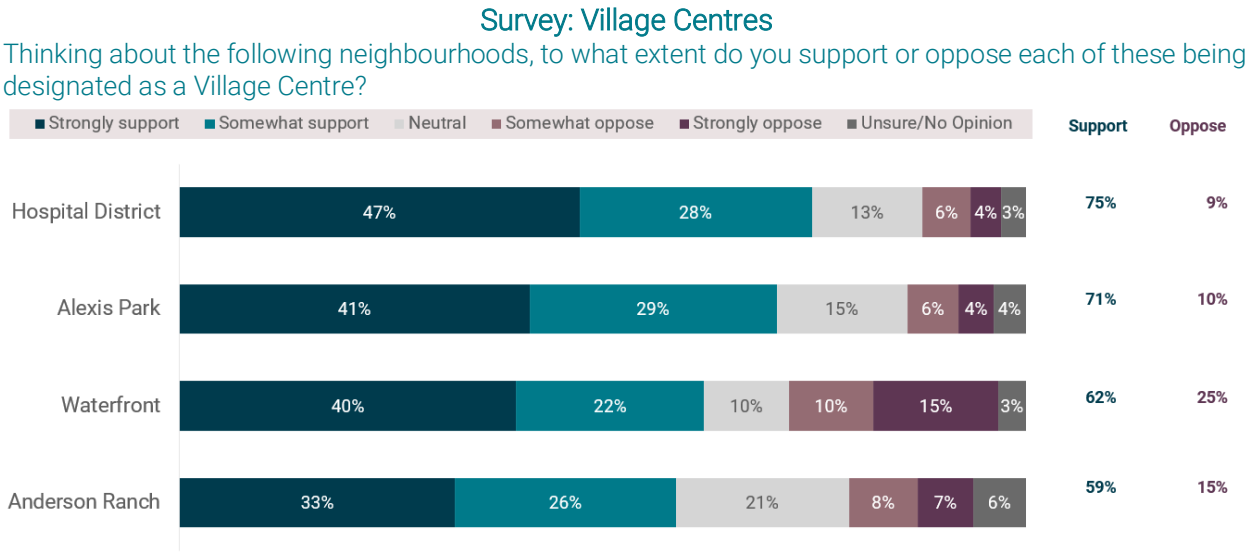
5. *Housing Needs and Sustainability:* The need for diverse housing options, including affordable and sustainable choices, was widely acknowledged. There was an emphasis on balancing rental and homeownership options and promoting growth that aligns with transit-oriented development while minimizing environmental impact.

6. *Opportunities for Improvement:* Participants called for thoughtful densification in the city center with improved transit and better access to daily necessities. They advocated for planning that balances growth, sustainability, and livability while ensuring robust public transit and active transportation options

Village Centres

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Furthermore, respondents were asked to assess their level of support for designating various neighbourhoods in Vernon as Village Centres. The results reveal varying levels of enthusiasm across the neighbourhoods, with the Hospital District receiving the strongest support at three quarter (75%) in favour (47% strongly, 28% somewhat) and only 9% opposed. Alexis Park followed with support from seven in ten (71%; 41% strongly, 29% somewhat) and opposition from one in ten (10%). The Waterfront saw more divided opinions, with 62% in favour (40% strongly, 22% somewhat) and 25% opposed. Anderson Ranch received the lowest support, with 59% in favour (33% strongly, 26% somewhat) and 15% opposed.



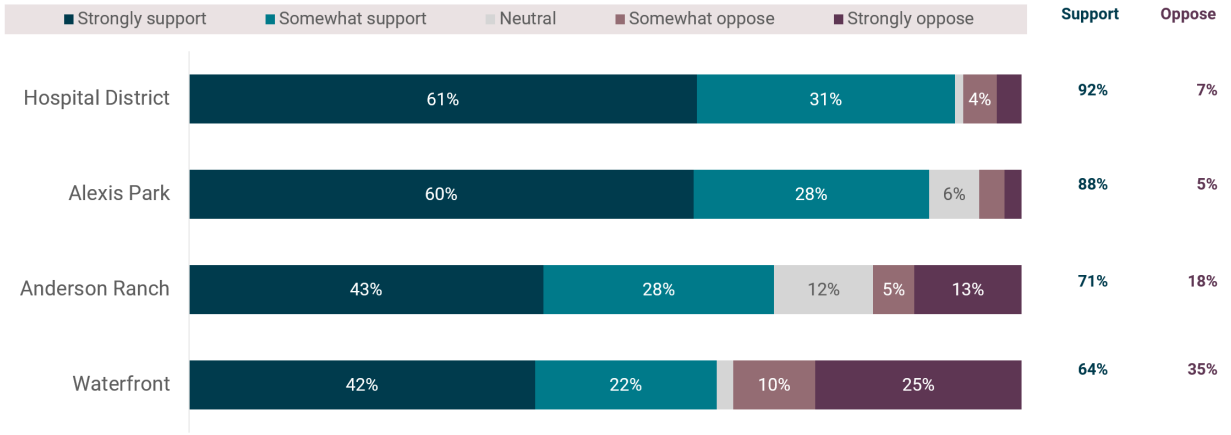
OPEN HOUSE

The open house results revealed varying levels of support for designating neighbourhoods in Vernon as Village Centres, generally aligning with survey findings but with some stronger preferences. The Hospital District received overwhelming support, with more than nine in ten respondents in favour (92%; 61% strongly, 31% somewhat) and just 7% opposed, exceeding the survey's level of support. Alexis Park followed with 88% support (60% strongly, 28% somewhat) and 5% opposition, consistent with its strong survey backing. Anderson Ranch garnered support from

seven in ten (71%; 43% strongly, 28% somewhat) and was opposed by two in ten (18%).. The Waterfront received the lowest support at 64% (42% strongly, 22% somewhat) and 35% opposition, reflecting continued concerns also seen in the survey. Overall, the open house reinforced survey trends while highlighting even stronger support for the Hospital District and Alexis Park.

Open House: Village Centres

Thinking about the following neighbourhoods, to what extent do you support or oppose each of these being designated as a Village Centre?



Similar to the previous discussion, below are the strengths and opportunities as well as concerns and challenges identified for each neighbourhood by the participants.

	Strengths and Opportunities	*Concerns and Challenges*
Hospital District	The proximity of the Hospital District to healthcare services makes it an ideal location for seniors, hospital workers, and those needing healthcare access. The area was described as highly walkable, with good transit connections and potential for light commercial and public amenities. Its close location to downtown enhances convenience for both businesses and job creation.	Participants highlighted traffic and access issues, including poor road conditions, lack of proper crossings, and limited exit points onto Highway 97. Parking shortages and concerns about infrastructure strain from increased density were common themes. Environmental concerns included the need to protect wetlands and Polson Park, with calls for ensuring urban forest opportunities. Suggestions were made to limit building heights to four to six stories and prioritize environmentally friendly development to maintain the area's character and sustainability.

Alexis Park	Alexis Park was identified as a convenient location due to its proximity to downtown, amenities, and the London Drugs Plaza. Participants highlighted strong support for walkability, emphasizing its role in promoting healthier lifestyles, improving access to local businesses and jobs, and fostering a happier community. The area was seen as having significant potential to evolve into a walkable, community-focused neighbourhood.	Environmental concerns dominated the feedback for Alexis Park, particularly regarding its wetlands, which are prone to flooding and are vital for flood control and biodiversity. Participants suggested preserving the wetlands or relocating the center to a less environmentally sensitive area. Concerns were also raised about overcrowding and potential disruptions to nearby housing due to increased development.
Anderson Ranch	Participants identified Anderson Ranch as a promising location for enhancing walkability, which could contribute to healthier lifestyles while supporting local businesses and jobs. There was also interest in introducing a new bus route connecting Pleasant Valley to Silver Star, which would improve transit options and accessibility for the area.	Strong emphasis was placed on preserving environmentally sensitive areas, such as the wetlands, BX Creek, and Swan Lake, which are crucial for flood mitigation, biodiversity, and bird habitats. Many participants opposed development on riparian zones and green spaces, instead advocating for densification within the downtown core. Suggestions included ensuring adequate riparian setbacks and incorporating nature preservation into future planning processes.
Waterfront	The Waterfront was seen as having significant potential for tourism-friendly development, with ideas like boardwalks, shops, cafes, and hotels. Participants emphasized its capacity to become more bike- and pedestrian-friendly, enhancing livability and accessibility for residents and visitors alike.	Participants expressed strong opposition to privatizing waterfront spaces, calling instead for prioritizing public access and the preservation of natural areas. Concerns about the ecological health of the lakeshore were raised, including the impacts on riparian areas and the potential for flooding in marshlands. Transportation challenges were also noted, as the area is far from downtown with limited transit options and potential for increased congestion.

Future Development – Hillsides

COMMUNITY SURVEY

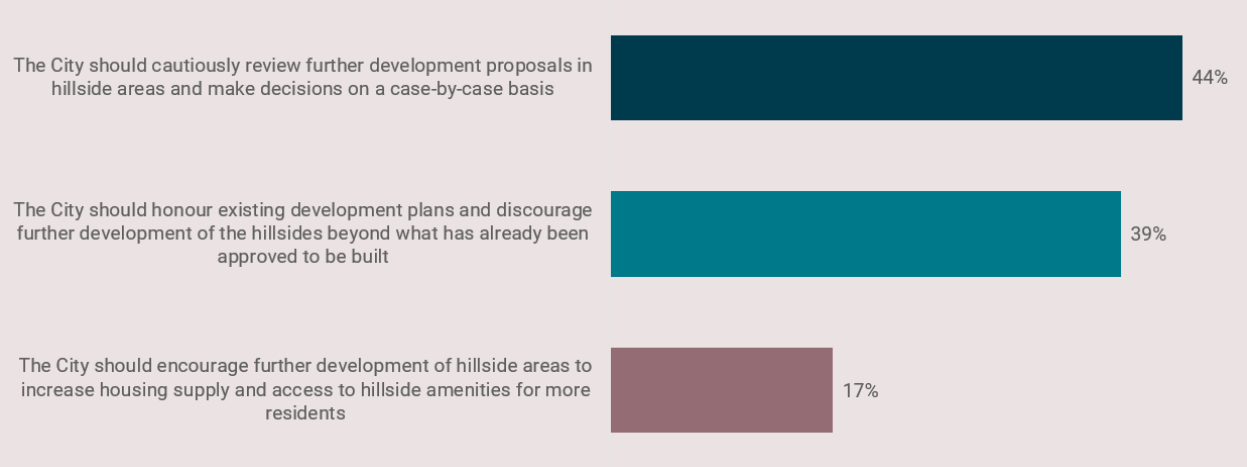
On this topic of urban development, the survey asked respondents how the City should approach reviewing applications for further development in hillside areas outside of currently approved plans.

Nearly half (44%) suggested that the City should cautiously review proposals and make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Slightly fewer (39%) felt the City should honour existing development plans and discourage further development beyond what has already been approved. A smaller proportion, approximately one in six (17%), advocated for encouraging additional development in hillside areas to increase housing supply and improve access to hillside amenities for residents.

These results highlight a cautious approach as the most preferred option among participants.

Survey: Future Development - Hillsides

How should the City approach reviewing applications for further development in hillside areas outside of currently approved developments?

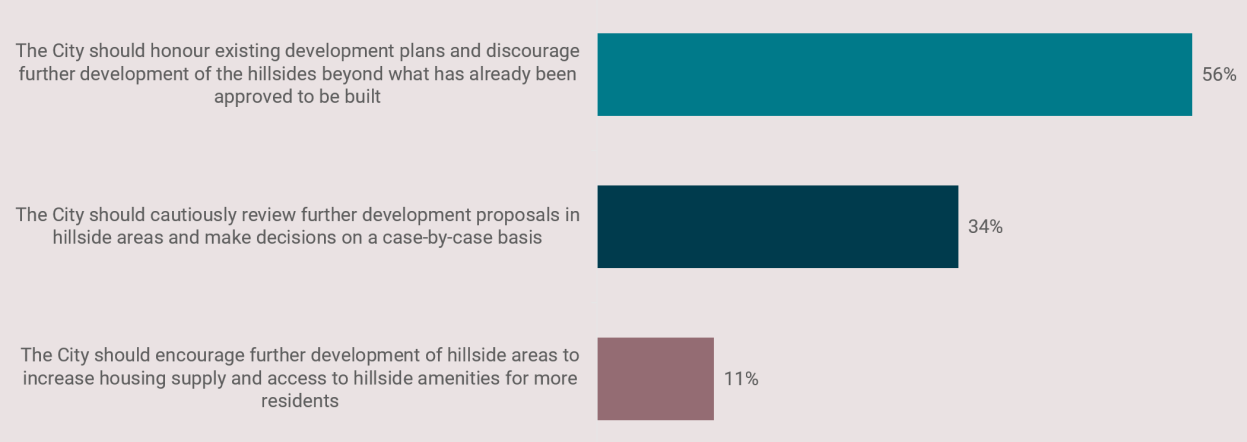


OPEN HOUSE

Open house participants were more likely to favour honouring existing plans rather than reviewing on a case-by-case basis going forward. A clear majority (56%) supported the idea that the City should honour existing development plans and discourage further hillside development beyond what has already been approved. Conversely, fewer participants (34%) suggested a case-by-case review approach, which was the most favoured option in the survey. A smaller portion, just over one in ten (11%), advocated for encouraging additional hillside development, slightly lower than the survey's 17%. These findings suggest that open house participants leaned more strongly toward preserving existing plans and limiting future hillside development, reflecting perhaps a more conservation-oriented viewpoint compared to the broader survey results.

Open House: Future Development - Hillsides

How should the City approach reviewing applications for further development in hillside areas outside of currently approved developments?



The key themes heard from the participants on this topic include:

1. *Environmental Protection:* Participants emphasized the importance of preserving natural areas, including hillsides, wetlands, and water sources, due to their ecological significance, contribution to biodiversity, and role in mitigating risks such as landslides, fires, and flooding. Hillsides were viewed as vital green spaces for wildlife and the community, and there were calls to protect sensitive environmental zones and enforce restrictions, such as the 30-degree slope limit, to promote sustainability.

2. *Focus on Existing Urban Areas:* There was strong opposition to hillside development, with participants advocating for densification and revitalization within the existing urban footprint. Suggestions included building higher downtown, utilizing underutilized lots in existing hillside developments, and upgrading current housing stock to avoid expanding into pristine areas.

3. *Public Access and Green Space:* Maintaining public access to parks, trails, and beaches was a key concern. Participants recommended a land acquisition plan to preserve walkability and ensure green spaces remain accessible to all residents.

4. *Transportation and Accessibility:* There was strong support for integrating transit planning with new developments and increasing accessibility for bikes, scooters, and other forms of active transportation.

5. *Housing Affordability and Design:* Participants favoured smaller, affordable housing options over large, expensive homes that block views and cater to wealthier individuals. There was a strong preference for denser housing options to address affordability challenges while protecting natural areas.

6. *Cost:* Concerns were raised about the financial costs of hillside development, including the burden of expanding water infrastructure, roads, and emergency services, which would increase taxes for residents.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

COMMUNITY SURVEY

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were invited to share any additional comments on the topics covered. This open-ended question yielded a wealth of insights, with 420 comments submitted. After thematically analyzing the feedback, the following ten key themes emerged, starting with the main, most-often mentioned themes to smaller, less prominent themes, together highlighting the diverse perspectives of the community on critical issues.

1. *Infrastructure and Traffic:* Respondents frequently highlighted concerns about infrastructure and traffic management in Vernon. Many said that existing infrastructure is insufficient to support current and future growth, with particular emphasis on bottlenecks along Highway 97 and other key routes. Comments included calls for a bypass to reduce downtown congestion, synchronization of traffic lights, and upgrades to existing roads to handle increasing volumes. Others mentioned the need for new evacuation routes in hillside developments and upgrades to aging water and sewage systems to meet future demand. Several respondents also emphasized the importance of integrating infrastructure planning with any new development projects.

2. *Downtown Revitalization and Density:* Revitalizing downtown Vernon emerged as a strong theme, with many respondents advocating for increased residential density in the city core. Respondents said that 4-6 storey mixed-use buildings with retail and residential spaces would bring vibrancy to downtown and make it more appealing for businesses and residents alike. Others highlighted the need for affordable, modern housing downtown to support a diverse community and reduce urban sprawl. Comments included suggestions to replace underutilized lots, improve pedestrian safety, and enhance public spaces downtown. Many expressed concerns about the lack of parking and the challenges of accessibility in this area.

3. *Hillside and Environmental Preservation:* Preserving Vernon's natural hillsides and protecting environmentally sensitive areas was a priority for many respondents. Comments included strong opposition to expanding development in hillside areas, citing risks such as landslides, loss of natural beauty, and wildfire hazards. Respondents said the City should prioritize infill development and avoid urban sprawl that encroaches on natural spaces. Others suggested limiting construction on steep slopes and protecting wildlife corridors and agricultural lands. Many expressed a desire to keep Vernon's unique character and avoid overdevelopment, similar to what some described as happening in Kelowna.

4. *Active Transportation (Biking/Walking):* Active transportation infrastructure, including bike lanes and pedestrian pathways, was another key theme. Many respondents said that Vernon needs safe, accessible bike lanes and walking paths that are separate from road traffic and well-maintained year-round. Comments included requests for better connectivity between existing bike paths and for infrastructure that discourages vehicles from obstructing bike lanes. Others suggested incorporating active transportation routes into all new developments and increasing pedestrian safety, particularly near schools and busy intersections. Some respondents expressed concerns about the design of existing bike lanes and the enforcement of traffic laws for cyclists.

5. *Public Transportation:* Public transportation was a frequently mentioned topic, with many respondents calling for expanded and more frequent bus services. Comments included requests for routes that better connect outlying neighbourhoods, such as Predator Ridge, Foothills, and Okanagan Landing, to the city center. Some respondents said that public transit schedules should be extended to accommodate commuters and residents with irregular schedules. Others suggested environmentally friendly solutions, such as smaller electric buses, and emphasized the need for affordable options, especially for seniors and low-income residents. A few mentioned the challenges of using public transit compared to private vehicles and called for system improvements.

6. *Affordable Housing and Development Prioritization:* The need for affordable housing was emphasized by many respondents, who said that increasing the availability of affordable rental and ownership options should be a priority. Comments included calls to focus on infill and denser housing developments, particularly in the downtown area, rather than sprawling hillside developments that are less accessible. Some respondents said that large, expensive homes on the hillsides do not address housing affordability issues and contribute to speculation. Others encouraged stricter regulations on vacation rentals and short-term accommodation, which were seen as reducing long-term housing supply.

7. *Parks, Green Spaces, and Natural Areas:* Many respondents highlighted the importance of parks and green spaces in maintaining Vernon's quality of life. Comments included support for protecting lakefront areas and natural spaces from overdevelopment, as well as creating more accessible parks within walking distance of all neighbourhoods. Respondents said that parks and public spaces should prioritize native plants, wildlife conservation, and pollinator-friendly landscaping. Others emphasized the value of recreational opportunities, such as walking paths, bike trails, and waterfront amenities, for both residents and tourists.

8. *Community Safety and Social Concerns:* Concerns about community safety were frequently raised, with many respondents highlighting issues related to homelessness, substance use, and crime in downtown Vernon. Some respondents said that there should be more support services for people experiencing homelessness, while others emphasized the need for stricter enforcement to address public safety concerns. Comments included requests for additional police presence and traffic law enforcement in residential areas. Several respondents also suggested improving lighting in public spaces while ensuring it does not intrude into homes.

9. *Climate Change and Sustainability:* Some respondents emphasized the need for climate action and sustainability in City planning. Comments included calls to integrate the Climate Action Plan into development decisions, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and prioritize water conservation. Many highlighted the importance of protecting natural assets, such as wetlands and waterways, as well as implementing environmentally friendly building practices. Others said that preserving biodiversity and preparing for climate-related risks, such as wildfires and floods, should be key considerations for the city's growth.

10. *Aesthetic and Cultural Enhancements:* A smaller but notable group of respondents focused on the aesthetic and cultural aspects of Vernon's development. Comments included suggestions for more public art, unique architectural designs, and tree-lined streets to enhance the city's appeal. Others said that the City should invest in cultural amenities, such as libraries, coworking spaces, and community centers, to foster a sense of community and attract younger residents. Some expressed concerns about noise pollution and emphasized the importance of creating a visually appealing and welcoming environment.

OPEN HOUSE

The final section of the open house engagement collected 63 open-ended comments through sticky notes, offering participants an opportunity to share their broader perspectives and ideas. These comments highlighted a range of themes, reflecting the community's priorities for protecting natural areas, promoting sustainable development, improving affordability, and fostering inclusivity in urban planning. The summary of key themes below provides a comprehensive look at the values and aspirations shared by the participants:

1. *Protecting and Enhancing Natural Areas and Climate Resilience: O*pen house visitors highlighted the importance of protecting and respecting the watershed, wetlands, and riparian zones to preserve biodiversity and ensure climate resilience. Many emphasized the need to keep hillsides and undeveloped green spaces free from housing developments to maintain Vernon's natural beauty and minimize environmental impacts. There was strong support for sustainable urban forests, the protection of ALR lands, and making water sources a priority in planning. Suggestions also included aligning policies with the city's Climate Action Plan, ensuring net-zero emissions by 2050, and integrating nature-based solutions to address climate change.

2. *Sustainable, Dense Development and Revitalization:* Many comments stressed the need for sustainable growth strategies that prioritize densification over urban sprawl. Participants supported focusing on infill development, particularly in the downtown area, instead of building outward into sensitive hillside and greenfield areas. Calls to revitalize downtown Vernon were frequent, with ideas for creating vibrant, walkable areas featuring mixed-use developments, affordable housing, and more local businesses. Participants suggested maintaining a balance between preserving the natural environment and meeting housing

needs, favouring small homes and medium-density projects over larger, sprawling developments.

3. *Affordable Housing and Homelessness Support:* Affordable housing emerged as a significant concern, with participants advocating for housing options that cater to young adults, workers, and families. Ideas included using government lands for affordable housing projects and integrating the Housing Action Plan to meet diverse needs. Several comments urged the city to address homelessness by creating better support systems and housing solutions, particularly for vulnerable populations, while maintaining public spaces for the broader community.

4. *Infrastructure, Walkability, and Transit:* Improved infrastructure was a recurring theme. participants encouraged investment in safer sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and transit options. Suggestions included creating continuous multi-use paths connecting neighbourhoods to parks and lakes and ensuring active transportation routes are safe and accessible. There were calls to enhance transit efficiency and develop transportation options for key areas like Silver Star, Predator Ridge, and The Rise, while reducing reliance on cars for daily commutes.

5. *Youthful and Inclusive Community Planning: Participants* expressed a desire for more youth-focused activities and strategies to attract and retain young residents. Many also highlighted the need for a culture of social inclusion, equity, and collaboration, with community amenities such as parks, trails, and gathering spaces that cater to people of all ages and abilities. Some emphasized designing age- and dementia-friendly spaces while promoting equity and diversity in all planning efforts.

6. *Preservation of Cultural and Heritage Values:* There was support for protecting heritage buildings and ensuring the city's development respects Vernon's cultural identity, including existing murals. Participants also suggested collaborating with the Syilx (Okanagan) Nation to prioritize truth and reconciliation in urban planning.

7. *Sustainability in Building and Development:* Environmentally conscious building practices were a focus, with suggestions for green, low-emission buildings and using innovative designs that prioritize energy efficiency and sustainability. Participants emphasized minimizing the environmental footprint of new developments and maintaining high standards of compliance with provincial and federal environmental laws.

8. *Economic Development and Local Business Support:* Several comments encouraged the city to adopt a business-friendly attitude while putting the needs of small- and medium-sized local businesses first. Participants called for a balance between economic growth and preserving Vernon's unique character, with suggestions to create spaces that support vibrant, local economies.

9. *Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces: Many* participants advocated for expanded and better-maintained green spaces, parks, and trails. Ideas included creating "parks within parks" with

skateparks, gardens, workout areas, and quiet spaces for relaxation. Several emphasized the importance of integrating shade trees and natural elements into public spaces, while others suggested prioritizing the preservation of open spaces for public use over private development.

10. *Community Engagement and Collaboration:* Participants expressed the need for a culture of collaboration between the city, non-profits, and the broader community to align decisions with public values and ensure long-term benefits. Suggestions included encouraging innovative, community-driven solutions and fostering open, transparent engagement with residents throughout the planning process.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

As part of the engagement process, the City received seven written submissions in the form of letters and emails, providing detailed feedback from residents and interested and affected parties. These submissions offered valuable perspectives on a variety of topics, emphasizing the importance of addressing climate resilience, enhancing public engagement efforts, and balancing housing needs with sustainable urban development. The following key themes emerged from the written submissions, reflecting the residents' priorities and concerns:

1. *Climate Resilience and Environmental Protection:* All seven submissions stressed the urgent need to recognize the climate emergency and to integrate Vernon's Climate Action Plan (CAP) into the OCP and Transportation Plan. There were repeated calls for the protection and restoration of natural assets such as riparian areas, wetlands, hillsides, and biodiversity to enhance climate resilience. Submissions also emphasized reducing greenhouse gas emissions and incorporating sustainable practices in urban development and governance.

2. *Public Engagement Concerns:* The submissions consistently criticized the public engagement process, citing inadequate opportunities for meaningful input and a lack of transparency in sharing findings. Respondents expressed a need for more inclusive and accessible consultation methods to ensure diverse community voices are represented.

3. *Housing and Urban Development:* Housing emerged as a critical theme, with strong calls for prioritizing affordable housing and preventing urban sprawl. Submissions highlighted the importance of densifying urban areas, particularly downtown, while incorporating sustainable building practices to meet housing needs without sacrificing environmental goals.

4. *Transportation and Connectivity:* Submissions frequently emphasized the need for improved public transit systems, including better integration with regional transit routes and expanded local options. Active transportation infrastructure, such as safe cycling and walking paths, was also a key concern, alongside addressing traffic congestion and improving road safety.

5. *Infrastructure and Resource Management:* Concerns about the adequacy of Vernon's water, wastewater, and overall infrastructure to support growth were mentioned in several submissions. Respondents called for thorough evaluations of current systems to ensure they can handle increased demand while promoting sustainable resource management.

6. *Governance and Reconciliation:* Several submissions emphasized the importance of incorporating reconciliation efforts with the Okanagan Indian Band into city planning. They also advocated for applying a "climate change lens" across all governance activities, including budgeting, infrastructure development, and community planning.

7. *Community Well-Being:* Submissions highlighted the need for inclusive, well-connected neighbourhoods with equitable access to shared amenities, public spaces, and social services. Local food systems and agricultural preservation were also emphasized as critical to community well-being and resilience.

8. *Economic and Regional Development:* Though less frequently mentioned, some submissions addressed sustainable tourism, local business support, and the economic impacts of climate change. Respondents advocated for balancing economic growth with preserving Vernon's small-town character and natural environment.

Next Steps

What was learned in this second engagement phase will be considered in Phase 3 of the project, where the focus will be on drafting key components of both the OCP and TP.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Phase 2 Community Survey

About the survey
The City is updating its Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Plan (TP), and we'd like to hear from you again! Phase one of engagement is completed - thank you to everyone who participated. You can find a summary of what we heard from you here. During this second phase of engagement, we will be looking more closely at how Vernon will grow over the next 20 years. In this survey, we are looking for information on what you think is important to consider as Vernon grows when it comes to how you get around, where you'd like to see more growth and what that might look like to you.

Confidentiality
Your survey results will be kept confidential. Results of the survey will be reported without identifying any individual participants. At the end of the survey, we have a few questions about you. These questions help us to understand who we have heard from in our community so we can assess if our engagement has reached as many diverse people in our community as possible.

Questions?
Should you have any questions about this survey, please contact Planning & Community Services by email at ocp-tp@vernon.ca or by phone at 250-550-3570.

The survey will be open until end of day November 14, 2024. All paper copies must be returned to the Community Services Building at 3001 32nd Avenue by 4:30 pm on November 14, 2024.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Transportation Plan

We've identified several key factors that will help guide the prioritization process for the Transportation Plan, and we need your input to help us understand the relative importance of each of these factors when considering future plans. Your feedback will play a vital role in shaping the future of transportation planning in our city, ensuring that investments make the greatest possible impact.

1. Please rate the following factors in terms of importance in prioritizing what the City should focus on the most urgently. [Randomize list]

    a. Making travel safer to reduce injuries on our roads.

b. Everyone can easily get where they need to go.
c. Improving active transportation networks, public transit, and support zero emission vehicle use to reduce emissions in support of the city's climate goals.
d. Projects that support and encourage walking, biking, and using public transit.
e. Helping businesses move products and services to support economic growth.
f. Using new ideas and technology to improve transportation for the future.
g. Making streets more welcoming for everyone.
h. Working with nearby communities to improve travel between communities.
i. Giving priority to connecting the transportation system to key destinations in our community, such as schools, parks, shopping, etc.
j. Making busy roads safer by keeping different types of traffic (like cars, bikes, and people) separated.
k. Addressing long-standing needs and aligning projects with the City's broader plans.

1. Very unimportant
2. Somewhat unimportant
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat important
5. Very important
6. Unsure / No Opinion

2. For these same factors, which ones are the most important to you, meaning you think they should receive the highest and most immediate priority? Please select your top three [Randomize list – allow up to three selections]

a. Making travel safer to reduce injuries on our roads.
b. Everyone, including people with different abilities, can easily get where they need to go.
c. Improving active transportation networks, public transit, and support zero emission vehicle use to reduce emissions in support of the city's climate goals.
d. Projects that support and encourage walking, biking, and using public transit.
e. Helping businesses move products and services to support economic growth.
f. Using new ideas and technology to improve transportation for the future.
g. Making streets more welcoming for everyone.
h. Working with nearby communities to improve travel between communities.
i. Giving priority to connecting the transportation system to key destinations in our community, such as schools, parks, shopping, etc.
j. Making busy roads safer by keeping different types of traffic (like cars, bikes, and people) separated.
k. Addressing long-standing needs and aligning projects with the City's broader plans.

We'd like to hear from you about some of the proposed changes and priorities in our community.

3. When looking at amenities and features in your local neighbourhood, please rate the following on their level of importance, thinking of what you would like the City to focus on adding or addressing: [Randomize list]

    a. Lower speed limits so that vehicles travel at a speed aimed at reducing serious incidents and injuries.
    b. Traffic calming measures (e.g., landscaped curbs to narrow roadways).
    c. Trees and landscaping.
    d. Multi-use paths.
    e. Bike lanes.
    f. Parks.
    g. Small convenience businesses.
    h. Safe routes to schools.

        1. Very unimportant
        2. Somewhat unimportant
        3. Neutral
        4. Somewhat important
        5. Very important
        9. Unsure / No Opinion

4. For these same amenities and features, which ones are the most important to you, meaning you think they should receive the highest and most immediate priority? Please select your top three [Randomize list – allow up to three selections]

    a. Lower speed limits so that vehicles travel at a speed aimed at reducing serious incidents and injuries
    b. Traffic calming measures (e.g., landscaped curbs to narrow roadways)
    c. Trees and landscaping
    d. Multi-use paths
    e. Bike lanes
    f. Parks
    g. Small convenience businesses
    h. Safe routes to schools

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: If roads are designed to be safe and useful for people rather than designed solely to move cars quickly, our community will be a much safer and more pleasant place to live.

        1. Strongly disagree
        2. Somewhat disagree
        3. Somewhat agree

4. Strongly agree
9. Unsure / No Opinion

Community Growth Model

Downtown and Village Green Mall

The province has mandated that the City must allow high density in the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas as they have major transit exchanges.

6. When you think of an urban area that you would enjoy visiting or living in, how important are each of the following features? Your answers will help inform the community priorities for these areas as they redevelop over time.
    a. Vibrant parks and open spaces
    b. Buildings featuring environmentally friendly features and technologies.
    c. Connected off-road bike paths.
    d. Affordable and/or attainable housing.
    e. Apartment housing that is high quality concrete construction.
    f. High number of private amenities within housing developments (e.g., community rooms, gym facilities, patios, etc.).
    g. Commercial opportunities mixed with housing.
    h. Neighbourhood amenities (e.g., daycare, libraries, community centres, grocery stores, etc).

        1. Very unimportant
        2. Somewhat unimportant
        3. Neutral
        4. Somewhat important
        5. Very important
        6. Unsure / No Opinion

7. For these same features, which ones are the most important to you, meaning you think they should receive the highest and most immediate priority? Please select your top three [Randomize list – allow up to three selections]

    a. Vibrant parks and open spaces
    b. Buildings featuring environmentally friendly features and technologies
    c. Connected off-road bike paths
    d. Affordable and/or attainable housing
    e. Apartment housing that is high quality concrete construction
    f. High number of private amenities within housing developments (e.g., community rooms, gym facilities, patios, etc.)
    g. Commercial opportunities mixed with housing

h. Neighbourhood amenities (e.g., daycare, libraries, community centres, grocery stores, etc)

Building Height

Tall, slender buildings allow a significant amount of density to be constructed onsite in a cost-effective manner while offering views to their residents.

8. The City of Vernon is considering the possibility of tall buildings (defined as 18 storeys or higher) in the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas., Which of the following would be your preferred approach for?
    i. The Downtown Area
    ii. The Village Green Mall area
    a. Streamline policy to allow development of tall buildings in this area
    b. Assess building height on a case-by-case basis
    c. Do not allow tall buildings and concentrate on shorter, blockier buildings
    d. Unsure / no opinion

Public Transit Corridors

Public transit corridors are main roads or areas with key bus routes. These corridors are specifically designed to facilitate efficient, reliable, and high-frequency transit services. The Province is encouraging municipalities to consider increased housing unit densities along these corridors to match land use with transit investment.

9. When it comes to building along public transit corridors in Vernon outside of the Downtown and Village Green Mall areas, which of the following building forms and types would you prefer? [Select all that apply]
    a. Townhouses and small urban infill building forms (e.g. four-plexes) along the transit corridor
    b. 4-6 storey wood frame buildings
    c. 7-12 storey concrete buildings
    d. A mix of all of the above
    e. Unsure / No Opinion

    NOTE: wood frame buildings are less soundproof than concrete buildings. Concrete is also safer, but is more expensive.

Village Centres

Village Centres are defined as the core of a neighbourhood consisting of housing, civic, religious, commercial and mixed-use buildings. These areas would allow medium density buildings that could be fully devoted to housing, such as apartments and condos, or could be mixed-use developments with commercial at ground level and housing above.

10. Thinking about the following neighbourhoods, to what extent do you support or oppose each of these being designated as a Village Centre?
    a. Anderson Ranch
    b. Alexis Park
    c. Waterfront
    d. Hospital District
        Strongly oppose
        Somewhat oppose
        Neutral
        Somewhat support
        Strongly support
        Unsure / No Opinion

Future Development: Hillsides

In Phase one of the engagement, we heard that many community members appreciate Vernon's natural environment and enjoy the hillsides. The City has established development areas in the hillsides through neighbourhood plans and development agreements which permit further expansion of hillside development in Predator Ridge, Foothills, The Rise, Turtle Mountain, Middleton and Adventure Bay neighbourhoods. These areas are likely to continue development, however, it will occur incrementally over time based on infrastructure requirements and market conditions.

The City is receiving many more applications and increased interest from landowners for development in undeveloped hillside and rural areas outside of these neighbourhood plans. This could mean opening some rural areas for development, adding more people and more traffic to the area, but at the same time, could mean more housing for Vernon, increasing access to hillside amenities, as well as more revenues for the municipality to provide services to all its residents.

11. With that in mind, how should the City approach reviewing applications for further development in hillside areas outside of currently approved developments?
    1. The City should honour existing development plans and discourage further development of the hillsides beyond what has already been approved to be built.
    2. The City should cautiously review further development proposals in hillside areas and make decisions on a case-by-case basis.
    3. The City should encourage further development of hillside areas to increase housing supply and access to hillside amenities for more residents
    4. Unsure / No Opinion

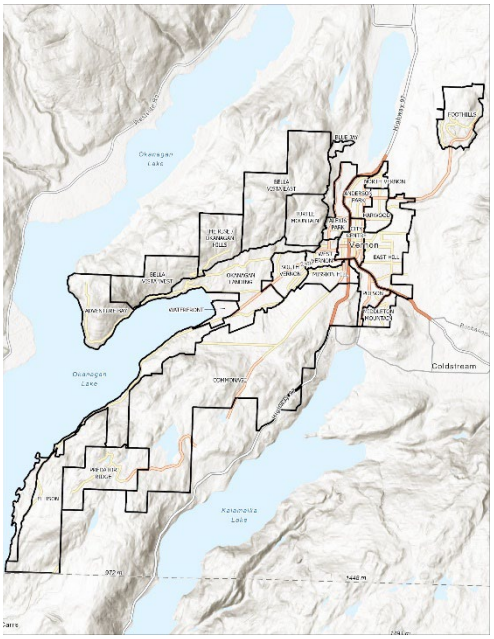
Final Thoughts

12. Do you have any further comments about any of the above topics that you would like to share? Please be specific and brief. [OPEN END]

About you

D1. Where do you live? Please refer to the map below [Single answer – neighbourhood map]

- Adventure Bay
- Alexis Park
- Anderson Park
- Bella Vista East
- Bella Vista West
- Blue Jay
- City Centre
- Commonage
- East Hill
- Ellison
- Foothills
- Harwood
- Middleton Mountain
- Mission Hill
- North Vernon
- Okanagan Landing
- Polson
- Predator Ridge
- Rise/Okanagan Hills
- South Vernon
- Turtle Mountain
- Waterfront
- West Vernon
- I am a neighbour to Vernon
- I am a visitor to Vernon



D2. Do you identify as…

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other (Please specify):

D3. In which age category do you belong?

- Under 18 years of age
- 18 – 24 years
- 25 – 44 years
- 45 – 64 years

- 65 years and over
- Prefer not to say

D4. What is your annual household income before taxes?

- Under $30,000
- $30,000 - $50,000
- $50,000 - $80,000
- $80,000 - $125,000
- More than $125,000
- I am not sure
- I prefer not to say

D5. How often have you typically used public transit to **get around in Vernon** in the past year?

a. (Almost) Every day (5 – 7 days per week)
b. Once to four days a week
c. At least once a month (but less than weekly)
d. At least once a year (but less than monthly)
e. Have not used in the past year
f. Don't know

D6. How often have you typically used public transit to get **to and from Vernon** in the past year?

a. (Almost) Every day (5 – 7 days per week)
b. Once to four days a week
c. At least once a month (but less than weekly)
d. At least once a year (but less than monthly)
e. Have not used in the past year
f. Don't know

D7. Which statement best describes your current housing situation?

Year-round homeowner
Year-round renter
Seasonal renter (e.g. seasonal worker or student)
Resident elsewhere, but own a second home in Vernon
Temporarily staying with friends or family (and not paying rent)
Living in housing with ongoing support
I am currently unhoused

Appendix B: IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement

