



2026

Municipal Budget Survey Report



Introduction & Summary

From July 11 to August 11, 2025, residents of the Town of Vermilion participated in an online Municipal Budget Engagement Survey. This initiative aimed to involve the community in the budgetary process, ensuring that spending priorities align with residents' needs and preferences.

Residents and stakeholders were asked to provide their feedback, ideas, and concerns on various aspects of the municipal budget, including key service levels such as Roadway Maintenance, Parks and Green Spaces, Community Services and Programs, Protective Services, Economic Development, and Infrastructure. This engagement follows Council's Strategic Plan which outlines the Town's key priorities to improve the quality of life for its residents.

The collected data from the survey has been compiled and included in this report to guide future budgetary decisions and strategies. We thank everyone who took the time to participate by providing their input to help shape the future of the Town of Vermilion!

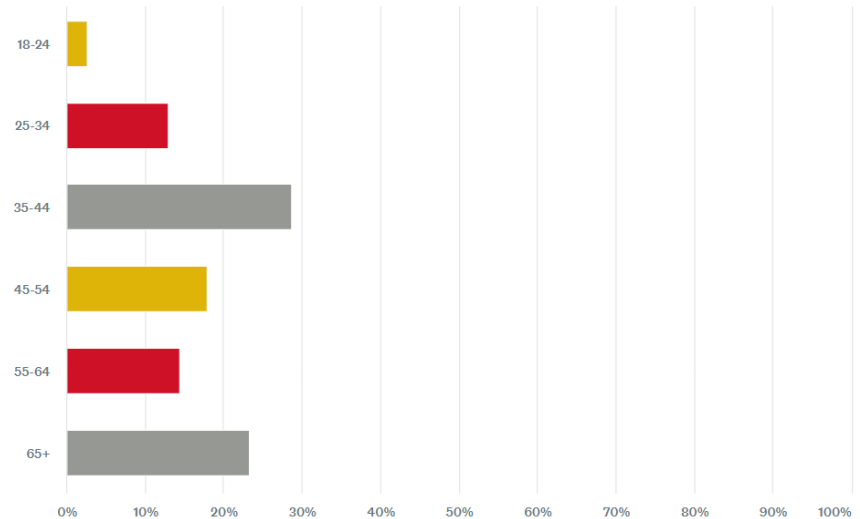
Participation

There were a total of 243 participants in the survey. Of those who participated:

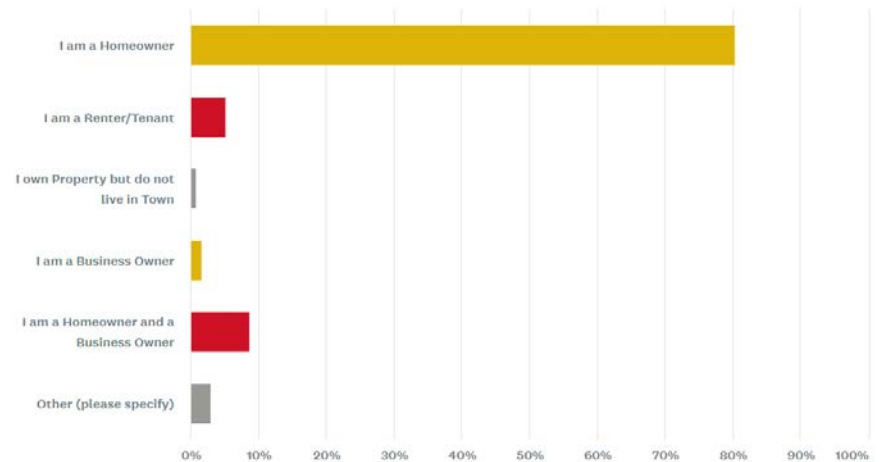
- 140 used the embedded link on the Town's website
- 94 used the Town's social media link(s)
- 9 used paper copies
- 130 were completed fully
- 113 were only partially completed

The majority of respondents were between the ages of 35-44 and 65+. The least represented age group was 18-24, with only 6 respondents. The majority of respondents were homeowners (80.4%) while the remainder were a combination of renters/tenants, business owners and seniors from the lodge (19.6%).

AGE RANGE



RELATIONSHIP TO THE TOWN



Communication

WE ASKED:

How informed do you feel about Town initiatives, services and programs on an ongoing basis?

WE HEARD:

64.8% were either very informed, somewhat informed or neutral

35.2% were either somewhat uninformed or very uninformed

WE ASKED:

Thinking about how informed or uninformed you are, what is your preferred method of communication?

WE HEARD:

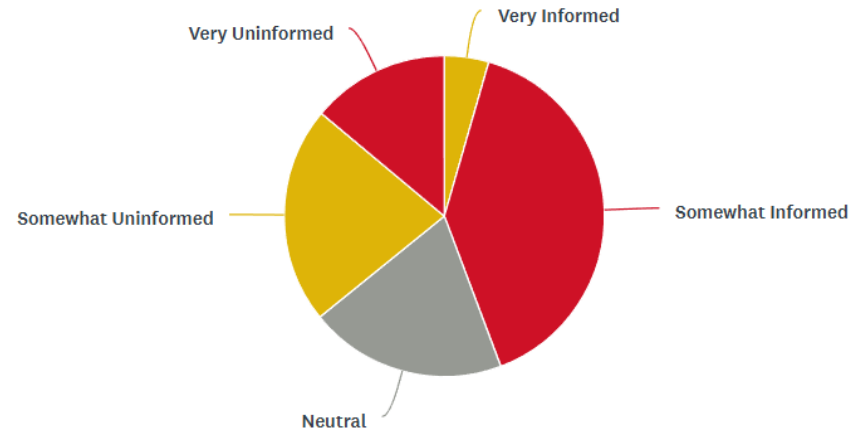
39.1% listed social media as their preferred method of communication

35.1% listed utility bill inserts as their preferred method of communication

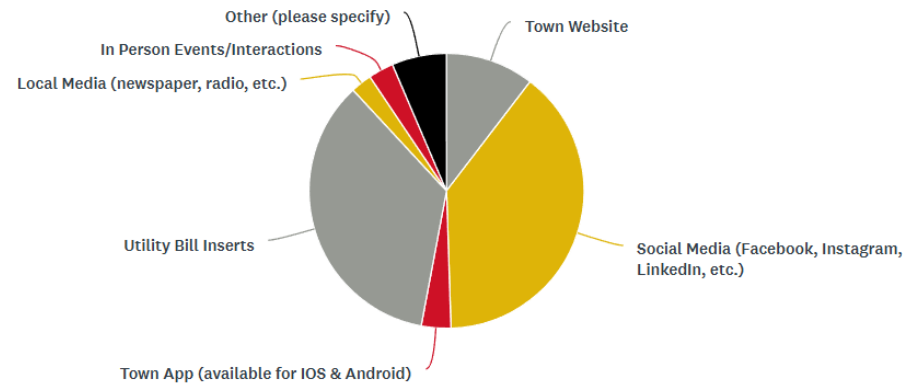
10.4% listed the Town website

15.4% listed in person events/interactions, local media, or the Town app

INITIATIVES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS



PREFERRED METHOD OF COMMUNICATION



Communication

WE ASKED:

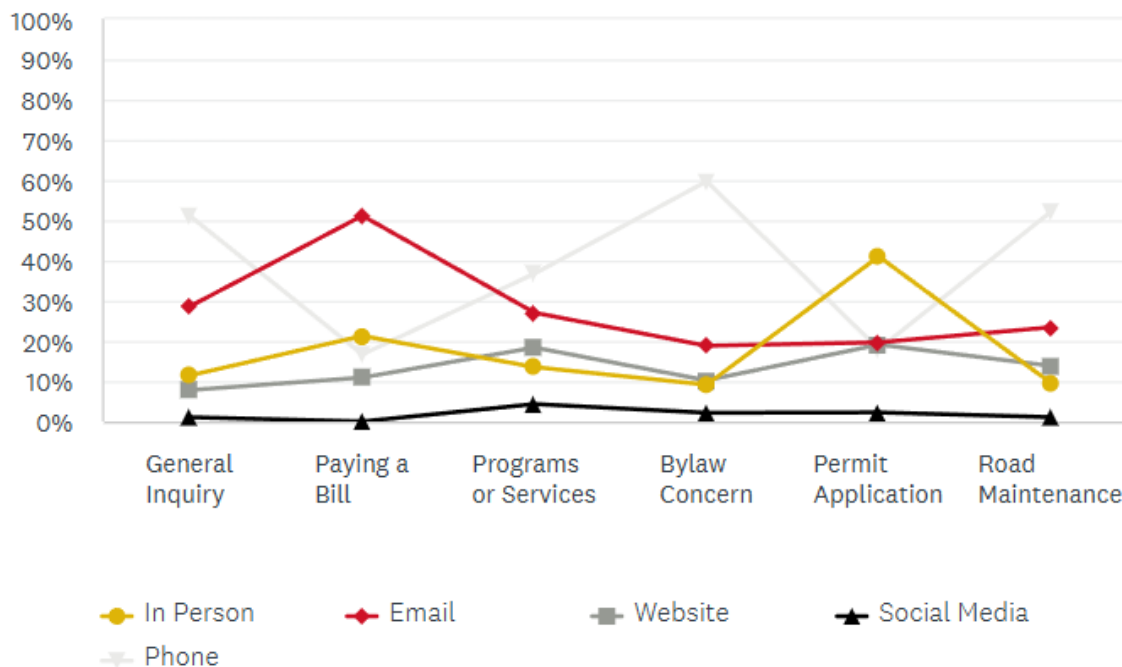
Which method do you prefer using to contact the Town for general inquiries, paying bills, registering or requesting information about a program/service, reporting a bylaw concern, applying for permits, or reporting road maintenance/repair issues?

WE HEARD:

Most people prefer calling the office for things like bylaw concerns, general inquiries, and reporting road maintenance concerns.

Comparatively, people prefer using email for getting information regarding the Town's programs, services and utility or tax bill inquiries.

PREFERRED METHODS OF CONTACT



Public Works & Infrastructure

WE ASKED:

Thinking about your experience on the Town's roadways, how would you like to see the Town tackle specific repair and maintenance items in 2026?

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents would like to see us keep the same level of investment across all categories. For those who responded a little more, their response was based on the additional level of service resulting in a modest, if any, budgetary increase. For those who responded a lot more, their response was based on the premise that there would definitely be a budgetary increase.

More specifically, in terms of snow clearing:

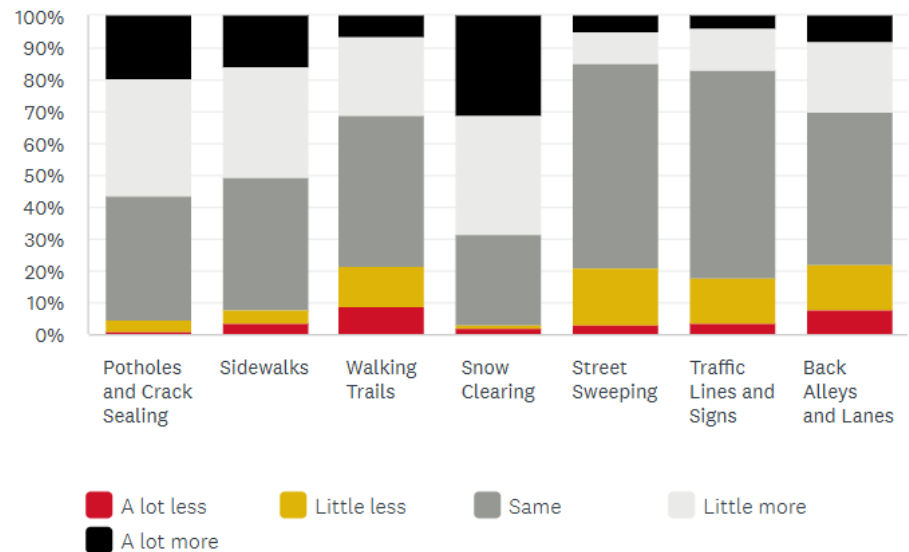
28.4% of people said to keep it the same

37.6% of people said to spend a little more

30.8% of people said to spend a lot more

3.2% of people said to spend a little less/a lot less

REPAIR, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS



Public Works & Infrastructure

WE ASKED:

How would you prioritize the following:

- Road maintenance and resurfacing
- Sidewalk and trail upgrades
- Signage, crosswalk and traffic calming measures
- Development of commercial/industrial land
- Planning for residential subdivisions
- Asset management
- Business retention strategies
- Long term savings (reserves)

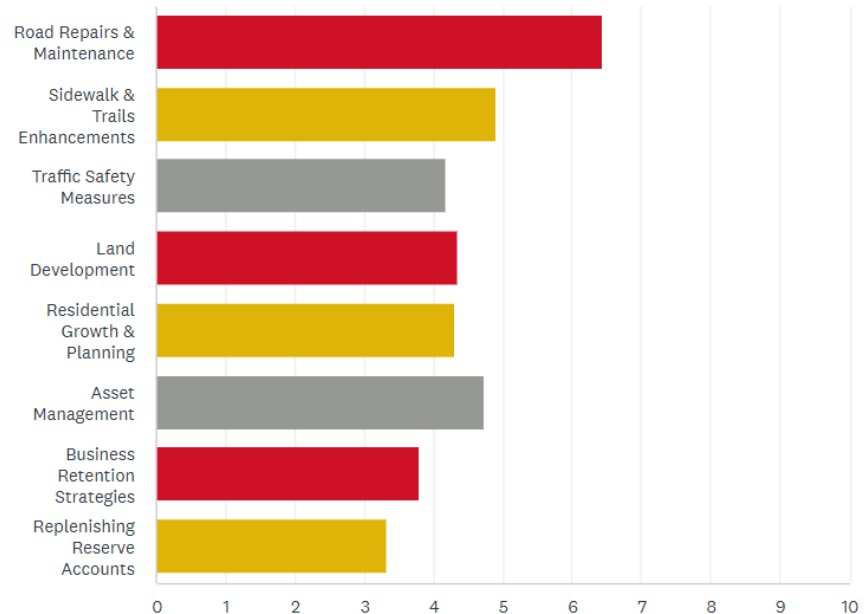
WE HEARD:

Road maintenance and resurfacing to improve driving conditions and extend the life of existing roadways was ranked #1.

Sidewalk and trail upgrades to enhance walkability, accessibility, and connectivity within the community was ranked #2.

Long-term infrastructure asset management planning to ensure sustainable upkeep and replacement of aging facilities and utilities was ranked #3.

RANK YOUR TOP PRIORITIES



Public Works & Infrastructure

WE ASKED:

Thinking about your experience during the winter months and the speed at which we are able to plow the roads, how would you like to see the Town invest in snow removal in 2026?

WE HEARD:

31.4% said they would prefer faster snow removal only if the additional cost is reasonable and doesn't significantly impact the overall budget

30.8% said they are satisfied with the current snow removal timeline, even if it takes longer

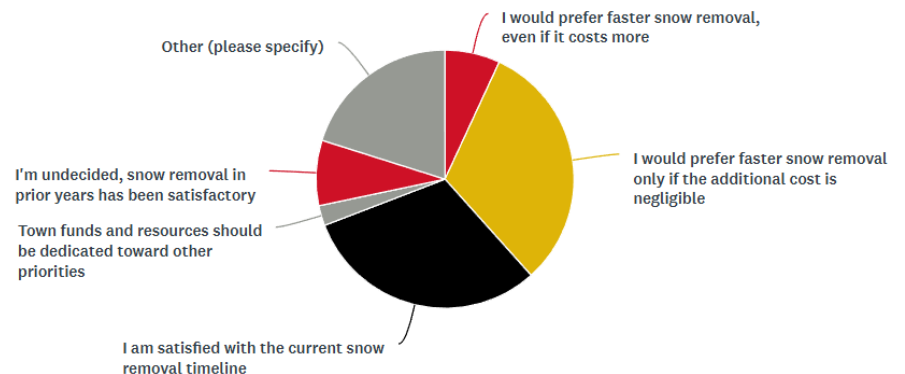
7% said they would prefer faster snow removal, understanding that an increase to the level of service provided would require a tax increase to cover the costs of contractors and staff overtime

10.7% said that Town resources should be dedicated toward other priorities or that faster snow removal would be great, but the snow removal in previous years has been satisfactory

20.1% listed other suggestions including:

- Residential areas with no sidewalk should be given priority
- Downtown should be the first area to have snow cleared
- More bylaw enforcement of snow clearing on sidewalks
- Use of contractors
- More snow removal on the weekends

SNOW REMOVAL



Public Works & Infrastructure

WE ASKED:

Would you support modest increases to user fees if it reduced reliance on general revenues derived from property taxes, or offset potential property tax increases?

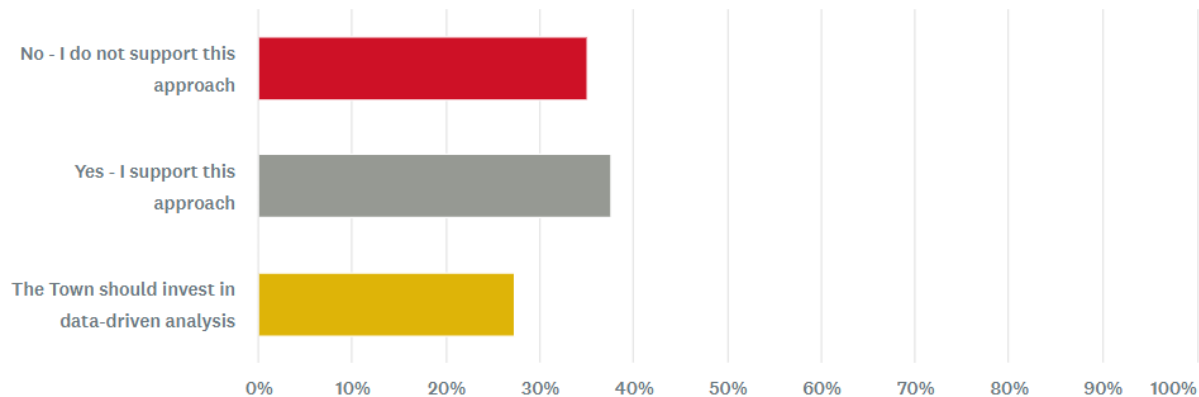
WE HEARD:

37.5% support this approach

35.2% did not support this approach

27.3% thought the Town should invest in analysis for data-driven fee changes (i.e. comparisons with other municipalities of similar sizes/populations)

USER FEES



Community Services

WE ASKED:

Thinking about community esthetics and your satisfaction with local parks, green spaces and winter amenities, how would you like to see the Town invest in green spaces in 2026?

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents (138 people answered, 105 people skipped) would like to see the Town invest the same in green spaces in 2026.

| | SPEND A LOT LESS | SPEND A LITTLE LESS | KEEP THE SAME | SPEND A LITTLE MORE | SPEND A LOT MORE | TOTAL |
|---|------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|-------|
| ▼ Grass Cutting (parks, road right of ways, etc.) | 2.90% 4 | 10.87% 15 | 75.36% 104 | 8.70% 12 | 2.17% 3 | 138 |
| ▼ Seasonal Shrubs and Flowers | 17.39% 24 | 25.36% 35 | 51.45% 71 | 5.07% 7 | 0.72% 1 | 138 |
| ▼ Tree Care/Planting | 8.96% 12 | 22.39% 30 | 48.51% 65 | 16.42% 22 | 3.73% 5 | 134 |
| ▼ Sports Fields | 5.93% 8 | 9.63% 13 | 65.93% 89 | 15.56% 21 | 2.96% 4 | 135 |
| ▼ Ball Diamonds | 5.15% 7 | 13.24% 18 | 67.65% 92 | 12.50% 17 | 1.47% 2 | 136 |
| ▼ Vermilion Provincial Park | 5.88% 8 | 10.29% 14 | 55.88% 76 | 21.32% 29 | 6.62% 9 | 136 |
| ▼ Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds | 1.49% 2 | 6.72% 9 | 76.87% 103 | 12.69% 17 | 2.24% 3 | 134 |
| ▼ General Park Services (wayfinding, pathways, furniture, etc.) | 5.19% 7 | 20.74% 28 | 61.48% 83 | 11.11% 15 | 1.48% 2 | 135 |

Community Services

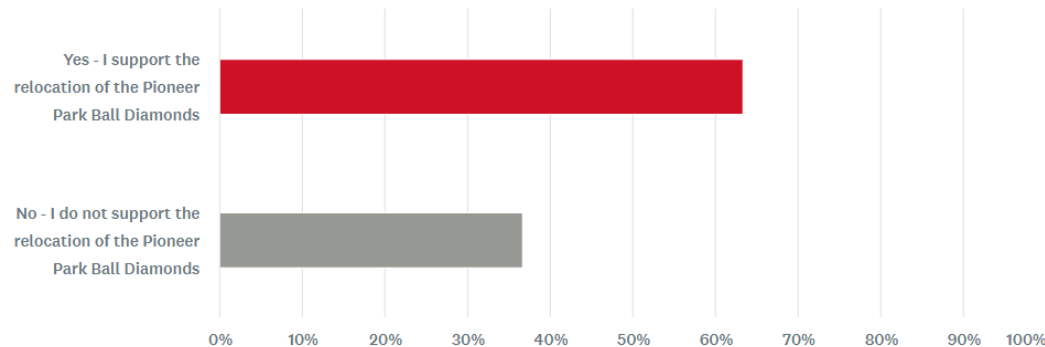
WE ASKED:

Thinking about the lack of residential lots available, and the amount of property tax revenue that could be generated with increased development, would you support the potential relocation of the Pioneer Park Ball Diamonds?

WE HEARD:

63.3% of people would support the relocation of the Pioneer Park Ball Diamonds to facilitate residential development and increase property tax revenues

BALL DIAMOND RELOCATION



Community Services

WE ASKED:

Thinking about your experiences with the Town's recreational facilities, events and programs, how would you like to see the Town invest in these services in 2026?

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents (133 people answered, 110 people skipped) would like to see the Town invest the same in these services in 2026.

| | SPEND A LOT LESS | SPEND A LITTLE LESS | KEEP THE SAME | SPEND A LITTLE MORE | SPEND A LOT MORE | TOTAL |
|---|------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|-------|
| ▼ Recreation/Culture Programming (youth) | 4.55% 6 | 9.85% 13 | 59.09% 78 | 24.24% 32 | 2.27% 3 | 132 |
| ▼ Recreation/Culture Programming (adult) | 6.77% 9 | 15.79% 21 | 60.15% 80 | 15.79% 21 | 1.50% 2 | 133 |
| ▼ Recreation/Culture Programming (senior) | 4.51% 6 | 14.29% 19 | 64.66% 86 | 14.29% 19 | 2.26% 3 | 133 |
| ▼ Community Events (Taste of Vermilion, Savour, etc.) | 18.05% 24 | 16.54% 22 | 55.64% 74 | 9.02% 12 | 0.75% 1 | 133 |
| ▼ Promotion towards Vermilion being a sport hub (hosting large scale provincial events) | 8.27% 11 | 15.79% 21 | 34.59% 46 | 34.59% 46 | 6.77% 9 | 133 |
| ▼ Online Registrations/Bookings | 3.85% 5 | 12.31% 16 | 76.92% 100 | 6.92% 9 | 0.00% 0 | 130 |
| ▼ Major Facility Renovations/Preventative Maintenance | 4.51% 6 | 8.27% 11 | 52.63% 70 | 28.57% 38 | 6.02% 8 | 133 |

Community Services

WE ASKED:

Thinking about how you get around Town, using other methods of transportation aside from your vehicle, what types of initiatives would you like to the Town to explore in 2026?

WE HEARD:

- **Create a golf cart bylaw in line with the Province of Alberta's pilot program**
 - 44.8% yes please
 - 34.7% no thanks
 - 20.5% makes no difference to me
- **Create an off highway (OHV) vehicle bylaw to allow persons to drive their OHV from their residence into the County of Vermilion river using the most direct route**
 - 47% yes please
 - 31.4% no thanks
 - 21.6% makes no difference to me
- **Create a scooter bylaw offered through a third-party contract to allow persons to travel at their leisure using a pay per use service or via an electric scooter of their own**
 - 38.8% yes please
 - 41% no thanks
 - 20.2% makes no difference to me
- **Review the snowmobile bylaw that is currently in effect to allow persons to drive their snowmobile from their residence into the County of Vermilion River using the most direct route within designated areas of Town**
 - 40.1% yes please
 - 35.7% no thanks
 - 24.2% makes no difference to me
- **Seek partnerships with developers for the purposes of providing charging stations for electric vehicles**
 - 21.3% yes please
 - 59.8% no thanks
 - 18.9% makes no difference to me

Protective Services

WE ASKED:

Thinking about how this department services the community, how would you like to see the Town invest in Municipal Enforcement in 2026?

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents (140 people answered, 103 people skipped) would like to see the Town invest the same in Municipal Enforcement in 2026.

| | SPEND A LOT LESS TIME | SPEND A LITTLE LESS TIME | KEEP THE SAME | SPEND A LITTLE MORE TIME | SPEND A LOT MORE TIME | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| ▼ School Zone Patrols | 2.94% 4 | 2.94% 4 | 64.71% 88 | 22.06% 30 | 7.35% 10 | 136 |
| ▼ Animal at Large/Complaints | 5.22% 7 | 8.21% 11 | 66.42% 89 | 14.93% 20 | 5.22% 7 | 134 |
| ▼ Unsightly Premises | 4.29% 6 | 4.29% 6 | 37.14% 52 | 40.71% 57 | 13.57% 19 | 140 |
| ▼ Business Licensing Infractions | 5.93% 8 | 12.59% 17 | 69.63% 94 | 8.89% 12 | 2.96% 4 | 135 |
| ▼ Planning & Development Matters | 7.46% 10 | 6.72% 9 | 71.64% 96 | 14.18% 19 | 0.00% 0 | 134 |
| ▼ Annual Animal Licensing | 15.67% 21 | 21.64% 29 | 58.21% 78 | 2.24% 3 | 2.24% 3 | 134 |
| ▼ Lifetime Animal Licensing | 15.44% 21 | 16.91% 23 | 60.29% 82 | 5.15% 7 | 2.21% 3 | 136 |

Protective Services

WE ASKED:

Thinking broadly about the below functions and the value they provide, how would you like to see the Town invest in them in 2026?

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents (136 people answered, 107 people skipped) would like to see the Town invest the same in these functions in 2026.

| | SPEND A LOT LESS | SPEND A LITTLE LESS | KEEP THE SAME | SPEND A LITTLE MORE | SPEND A LOT MORE | TOTAL |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| ▼ Public Communication | 2.94% 4 | 5.15% 7 | 48.53% 66 | 33.82% 46 | 9.56% 13 | 136 |
| ▼ Public Engagement/Surveys | 2.99% 4 | 8.96% 12 | 49.25% 66 | 30.60% 41 | 8.21% 11 | 134 |
| ▼ Economic Development | 8.89% 12 | 8.89% 12 | 43.70% 59 | 28.89% 39 | 9.63% 13 | 135 |
| ▼ Social Programs/Services | 2.96% 4 | 13.33% 18 | 52.59% 71 | 22.96% 31 | 8.15% 11 | 135 |
| ▼ Planning and Development | 5.88% 8 | 5.15% 7 | 58.82% 80 | 24.26% 33 | 5.88% 8 | 136 |
| ▼ Enforcement Services/SPCA | 7.35% 10 | 14.71% 20 | 55.88% 76 | 16.18% 22 | 5.88% 8 | 136 |

Economic Development

WE ASKED:

If it were up to you, what would you suggest the Town do to better engage with and retain businesses?

WE HEARD:

- Seek industries that will add value to the agricultural products we produce
- Communicate more with existing businesses to promote collaboration
- Promote small businesses
- Offer more incentives to attract businesses
- Treat all businesses equally
- Better marketing and business owner interviews on social media
- Build more homes to attract business owners and their families
- Attract larger big box stores to promote competition
- Businesses should take responsibility for their own success by staying competitive and responsive to market
- More advertising
- Make business licenses more affordable and offer reduced rates for residents
- There is nothing to be done, sometimes other places are just cheaper

Economic Development

WE ASKED:

Thinking about the annual cost of the airport vs. the benefit to the community, how would you like to see the Town invest in the airport in 2026?

WE HEARD:

- The Town should seek cost recovery measures for the use of the airport and runway
- No tax dollars should be used towards the upkeep of an airport for recreational use
- Devise a plan for alternatives to the medevac
- Recreational use of the airport is more common than its use as a community service
- Please remove the airport, it is only for elite county residents
- The airport should be heavily funded by the County of Vermilion River
- Do whatever it takes to keep it in good condition, it is a significant enhancement to the quality of life in Vermilion and helps to attract business
- Our lives are dependent on the airport staying open
- The airport is necessary to serve our community
- Airport users should have to pay a fee

| | I AGREE WITH THIS APPROACH | I DISAGREE WITH THIS APPROACH | TOTAL |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|
| ▼ Crack Sealing and Pothole Repairs to the runway. I understand that this will require a tax increase | 48.74% 58 | 51.26% 61 | 119 |
| ▼ Apply for grant funding to cover 75% of the cost to overlay the runway. I understand that this project is estimated to be approximately two (2) million dollars and the Town's contribution would require a tax increase | 62.90% 78 | 37.10% 46 | 124 |
| ▼ Engage with the County of Vermilion River for funding towards the ongoing maintenance and capital upgrades required at the airport | 92.19% 118 | 7.81% 10 | 128 |
| ▼ Fund the entire cost to overlay the runway. I understand that this project is estimated to be approximately two (2) million dollars and would require a significant tax increase. | 9.24% 11 | 90.76% 108 | 119 |
| ▼ I do not believe the Town should continue to invest in the airport | 31.67% 38 | 68.33% 82 | 120 |

Finance

WE ASKED:

Thinking about the municipal budget, which of the following statements come closest to your personal opinion?

- I would like to see service level and infrastructure improvements
- I would like to see service level and immediate infrastructure needs met
- I would like to see priority given to infrastructure needs over service delivery
- I would like to see priority given to service delivery over infrastructure needs

WE HEARD:

The majority of respondents (153 people answered, 90 people skipped) would like to see service levels and immediate infrastructure needs met. They understood that to maintain the level of service currently provided and to keep meeting ongoing infrastructure needs, a small tax increase would be required.

WE ASKED:

Thinking about long-term budgeting, how important is it to you that the Town allocate funds towards reserves for future growth and sustainability?

WE HEARD:

18.2% find it extremely important

37.6% find it very important

37.5% find it somewhat important

6.7% find it not at all important

Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide their feedback in the 2026 Municipal Budget Engagement Survey. It is by engaging our residents, businesses and stakeholders that we can make informed decisions that help to shape the future of the Town of Vermilion!

For those of you who provided your email at the end of the survey, a copy has been sent directly to your inbox. If you did not receive it, please contact the administration office and we would be happy to assist you.

Stay tuned for the 2027 Municipal Budget Engagement Survey next summer!

