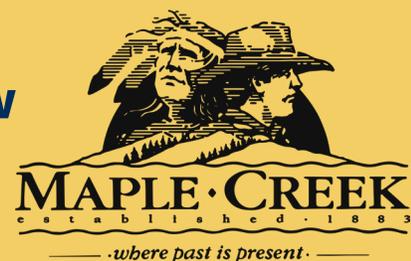


Council, Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

What we Heard!



**Town of Maple Creek
Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw
2024**





WELCOME TO
MAPLE CREEK

EST 1883

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the engagement process and associated findings regarding the Town of Maple Creek's (the Town) new Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw. The report aims to describe the community feedback received during the public engagement process and help shape a broad planning and development policy framework and the vision for the municipality.

In 2023, the Town Council decided to develop a new OCP and Zoning Bylaw that provides the municipality with planning and development policies that will assist the Town in reaching its development goals. The new documents shall comply with all current legislative requirements and serve as the development guidelines for the community, developers, Council and Administration.

The new documents should align with the Town's strategic, operational, and service priorities and be designed to be practical and effective for Council, Administration and the general public.

To kick-start the project, the Consultants held a visioning session with the Council and Administration focused on the following items:

- The Community Going forward
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Future Development
- Community Safety and Well-being
- Inter-municipal Relations and Regional Collaboration

The following stage of the project consisted of community consultation through an open house, pop-up events, an online survey and stakeholder interviews developed in consultation with Council and Administration. The goal of the engagement process was to gather community and stakeholder insights and feedback to inform the new bylaws and the direction of the community in general. The online survey was distributed through engagement invitations, feedback cards, a dedicated project site on the Town's website, and through social media.

The community engagement process managed to capture the sentiment of the population, and the feedback received during the process will contribute to the drafting of the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw and the policies that need to be implemented to guide the community forward.





PART I

Project Background

INTRODUCTION

The Town's Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw were adopted in 2009 and 2011 respectively, and are now in need of an update. The new Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw shall recognize the community's needs, meet the requirements of The Planning and Development Act, 2007 (PDA), Statements of Provincial Interest (SPI), and any other regulatory requirements and serve as the tools to move the community forward. The documents should describe the municipality's vision while presenting themselves as a promotional tool to attract potential investors, visitors, and prospective residents.

The PDA enables municipalities to manage land use and development through the adoption of official community plans and zoning bylaws. In general terms, a municipality's Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw aims to meet the following objectives:

- Establish a framework for land use, growth and development for all parties to follow, thereby creating certainty for the future of the community;
- Set out a desired framework for development by defining goals, objectives & policies;
- Inform residents of a community about how Council intends to direct and manage the community's needs and expectations;
- Provide opportunities for input by all affected interests in community planning;
- Clarify the municipal role in the development process;
- Guide Council in making municipal decisions; and
- Empower Council to enforce land use decisions and reduce land use conflicts.

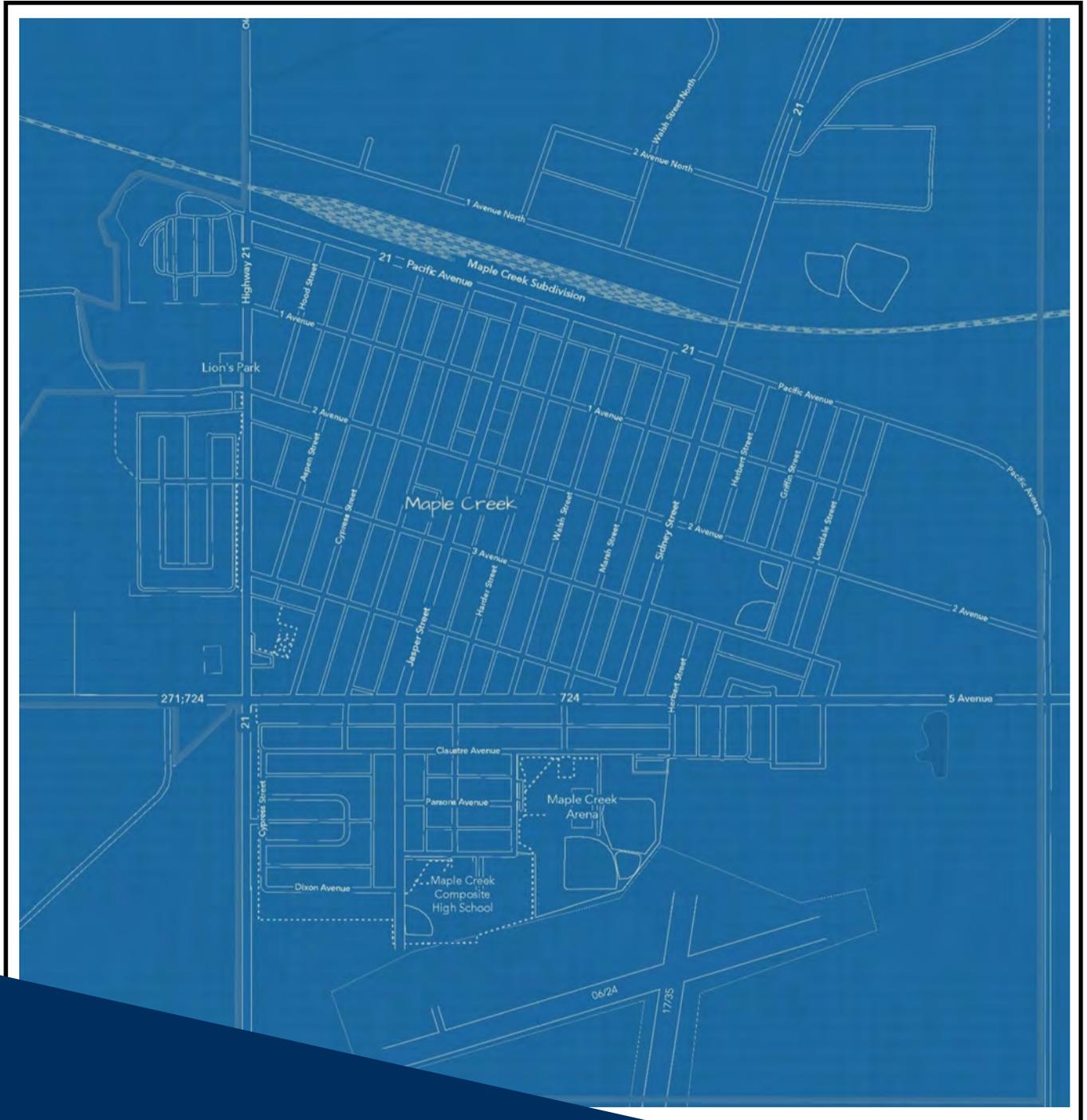
Furthermore, an Official Community Plan may address the coordination of municipal programs related to development and land use management, future growth patterns, and public works with adjacent municipalities. An Official Community Plan may contain statements of policy for specific types of developments and a map or maps that illustrate land use in those designations or policy areas. The Official Community Plan may contain other statements of policy relating to the physical, environmental, economic, social or cultural development of the municipality that Council may consider advisable.

A Zoning Bylaw is the primary tool available to the municipality to implement the Official Community Plan's policies. It divides the municipality into zoning districts and regulates land use and development in those districts by setting local standards for the use of the lands or specific developments. Once completed, the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw will provide the municipality with planning and development policies that align with the Town's strategic vision, operational and service priorities, and long-term vision.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN HIGHLIGHTS

Maple Creek is a thriving community located in southwest Saskatchewan, in the Cypress Hills region. The region is known for its natural beauty, diverse ecosystems, cultural heritage, tourism, and unique topography.

The Town experienced a 4.4% population increase from 2016 to 2021, which is indicative of a growing and stable community leading the charts of growth and development in southwest Saskatchewan.





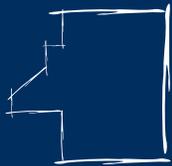
TOTAL POPULATION
2,176

46.8

MEDIAN AGE
46.8



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
\$65,500



TOTAL AREA
4.3 KM²



COMMUNITY SERVICE PARKS
390 AC



TRANSPORTATION
Roads: 25 KM
Lanes: 13 KM



EMPLOYMENT RATE
54.5%



ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION RATE
58.4%



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
6.1%



AVERAGE HOUSING PRICE
\$196,000



HOUSING TYPE
Single Detached: 85.2%
Other: 14.8%



HOMEOWNERSHIP
Owner: 78.8%
Renter: 21.2%



AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL
303 mm

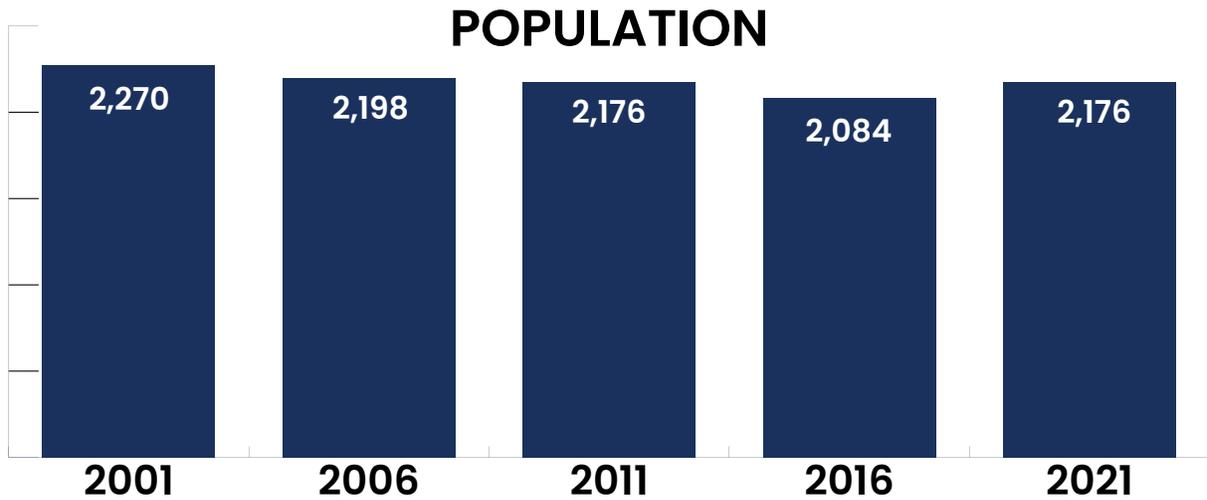


AVERAGE ANNUAL SNOWFALL
101 cm

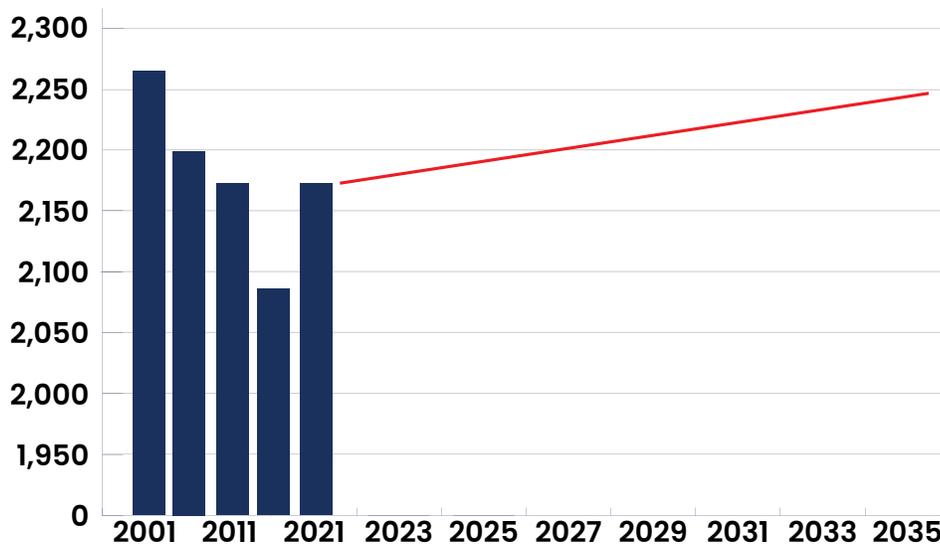


AVERAGE TEMPERATURE
Summer: 28C
Winter: -14C

Over the 2001 – 2016 period, the Town experienced a steady population decrease with an annual growth rate of approximately -0.12%. However, the Town’s population saw a significant population increase of 4.4% from 2016 to 2021, an annual growth rate of approximately 0.88%.

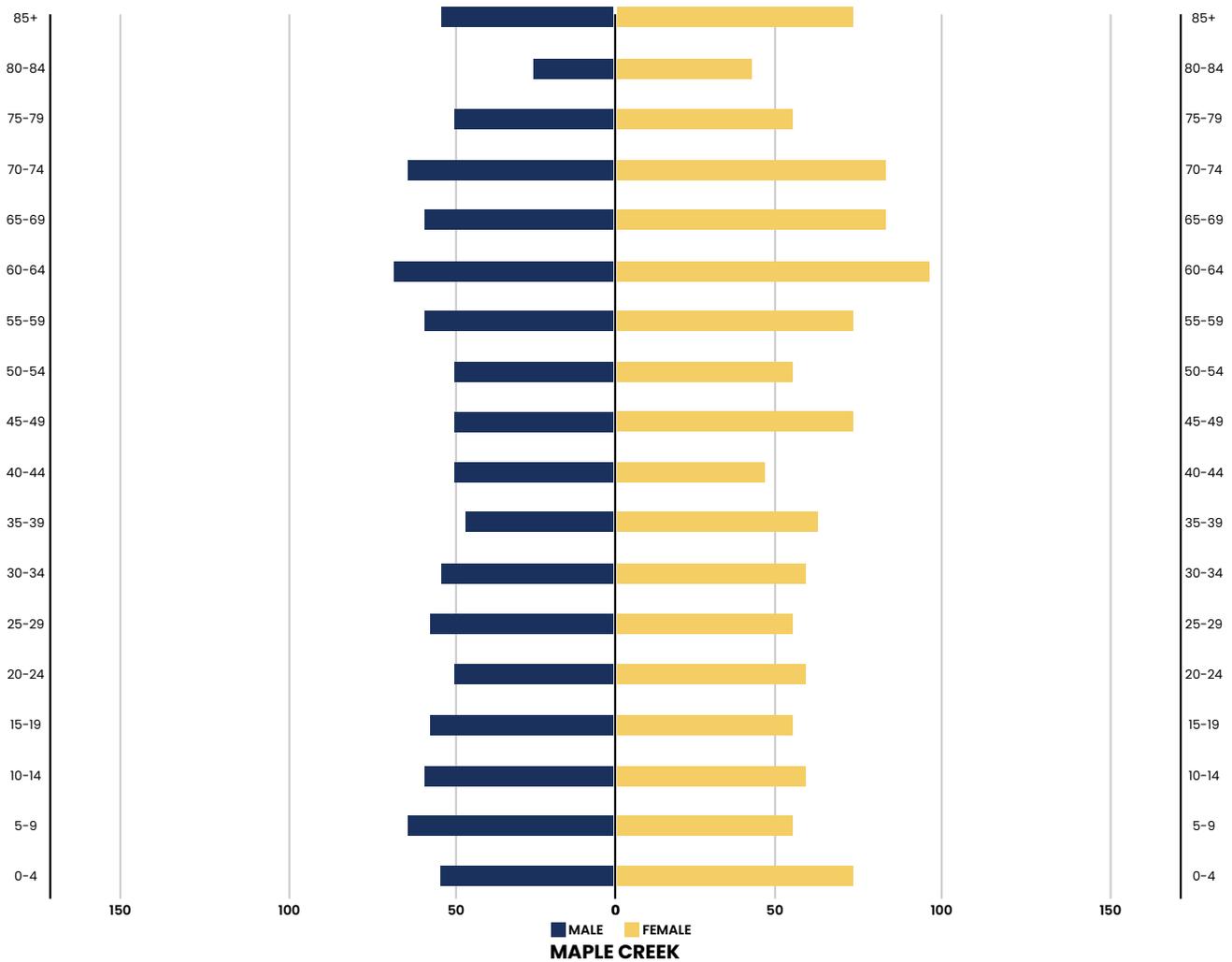


Growth projections or forecasts depend to a large degree on economic forces in the region and the province. However, a high-level projection based on a more realistic annual growth rate (0.21%) based on the weighted average of the negative growth rate (-0.12%) and the positive growth rate (0.88%) over their respective periods estimates that the Town’s population could rebound to approximately 2,240 people by the year 2035.

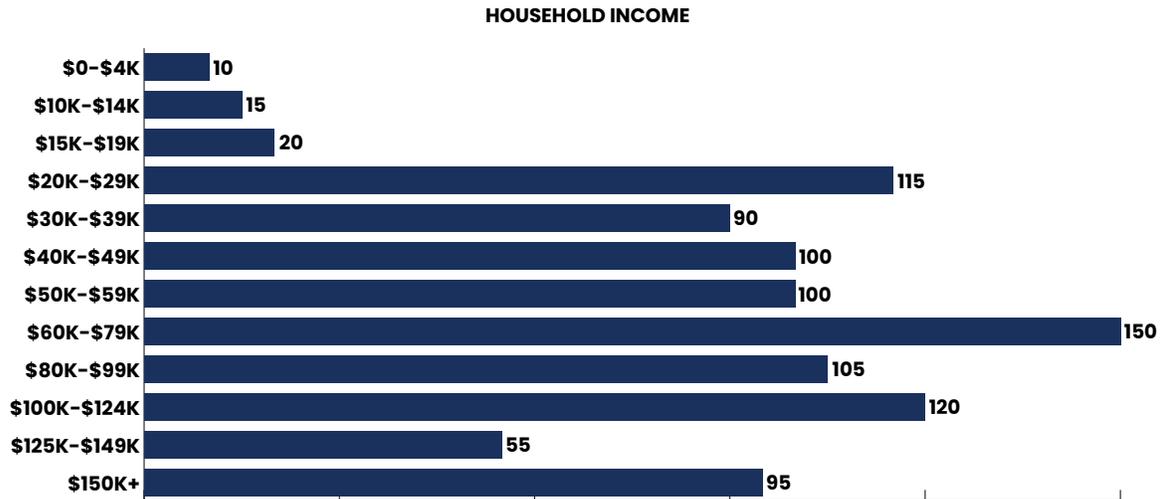


Furthermore, in terms of demographics, the community’s median population age is 46.8, above the provincial median age of 38.8 and the national median age of 41.6.

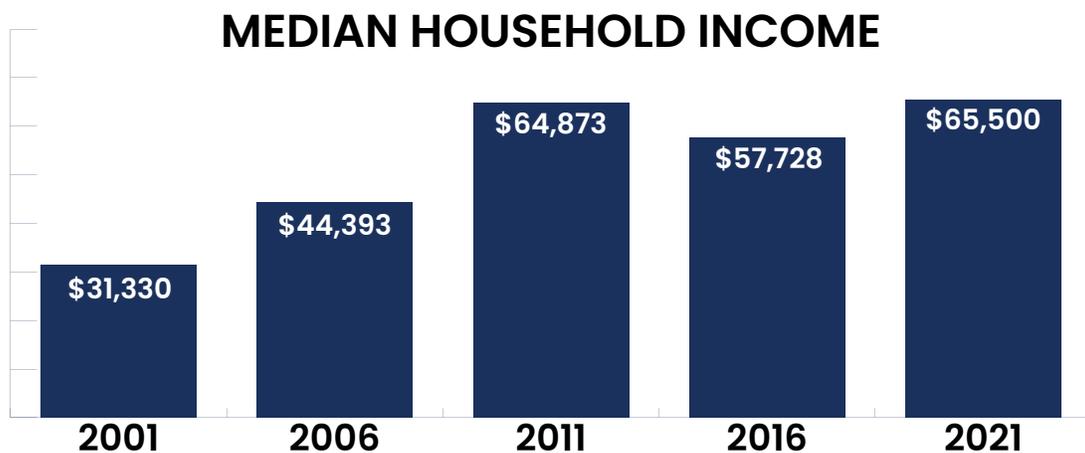
The Town’s population distribution aligns somewhat with provincial and national trends but shows distinct characteristics, particularly in gender distribution across age groups. A higher population number is observed in older age groups, particularly in the age groups of 60–64 and 65–69. The difference in median Town age is reflected when comparing population age groups between 25 and 49; the provincial and national averages present significantly higher population numbers.



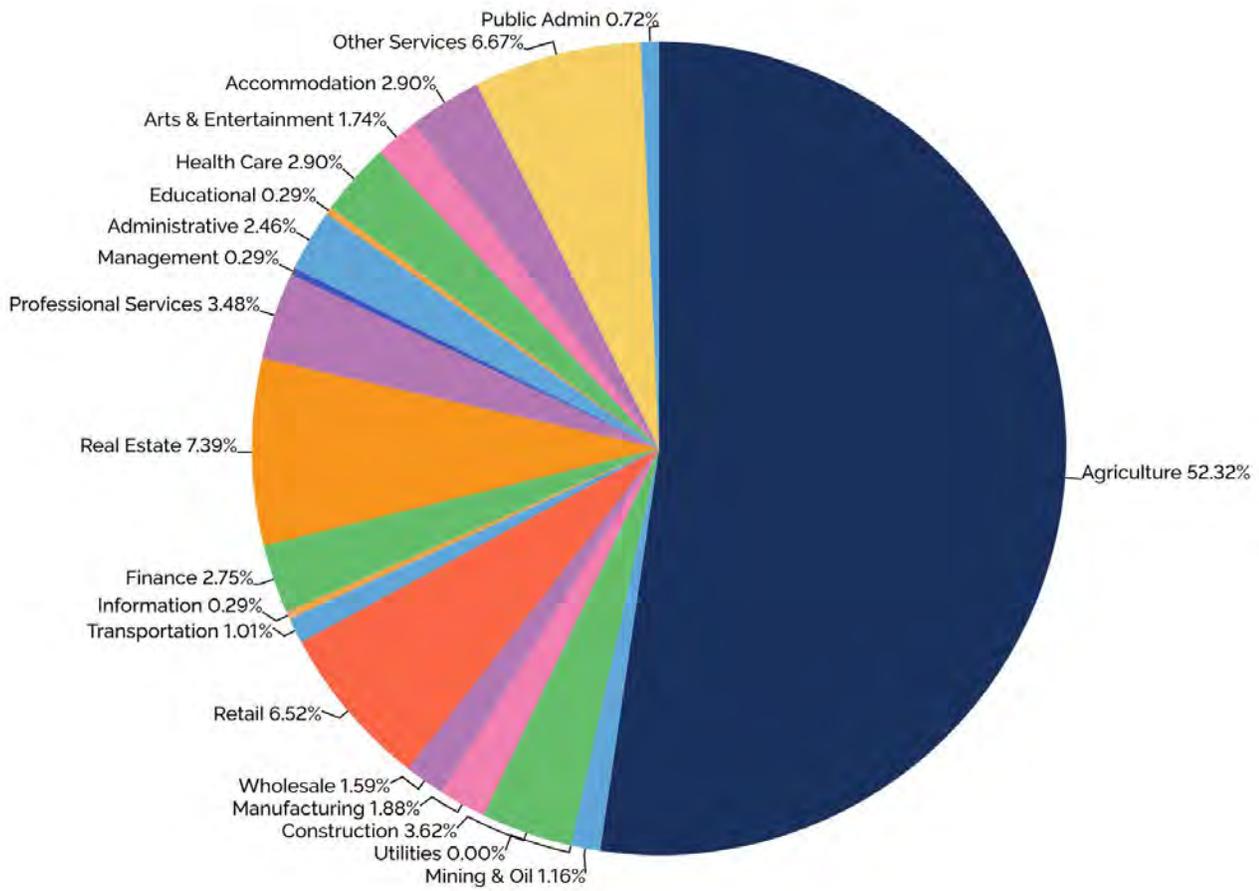
The total household median income in the Town is \$65,500 (2020), which is below the provincial average of \$82,000. However, the total household median income has seen a significant increase between 2001 and 2020; this is accompanied by the fact that a high percentage of households in the Town earn more than the median income, suggesting the Town has and will continue to attract high-income earners.



Due to its location in rural Saskatchewan, Maple Creek’s economy has historically been linked to agriculture and ranching. However, the Town’s proximity to Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park and related service industry provides Maple Creek with unique and varied commercial opportunities that ultimately make up almost 50% of its economy.



ECONOMIC SERVICES





PART II

Engagement Strategy

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE & GOALS

In the words of a Town Council member, “Public engagement, participation, or consultation is crucial for the success of the Official Community Plan”. Community engagement, participation, or consultation aims to shed light on the community’s priorities and aspirations and determine the overall direction for the future of the community as a whole.

The purpose and goal of the Town of Maple Creek’s Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Public Engagement Strategy is to determine what is important to all ratepayers, stakeholders, and organizations that jointly constitute the Town of Maple Creek. Throughout the process of developing the new Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, the Town Council aims to keep the interests of all ratepayers, stakeholders, and organizations at the forefront; missing this important element of the process will negate the community the “most important piece to the puzzle”.

This Public Engagement Strategy aims to provide a comprehensive method for gathering input from the community. All input and feedback will be considered during the drafting of the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw. It outlines a number of engagement techniques selected as the best ways to reach as many members of the community as possible while considering their interests and opportunities to become involved.

Maple Creek’s public engagement process:

- Must have a clear and engaging approach to communications so the community can learn more about the project;
- Should encourage the community to understand the importance of participating in the public engagement process and the impact of their feedback in the future of the community; and
- Must make it easy for all the community to participate and promote the engagement.



DECISION STATEMENT

The Town of Maple Creek intends to adopt a new Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw in early 2025.

The Official Community Plan will describe the Council's vision and mission for the community's growth. All policies and objectives of the Official Community Plan aim to coordinate municipal programs, manage land use and development, and illustrate the community's future. The Official Community Plan can be viewed as a growth management strategy that contains statements of policy relating to the municipality's physical, environmental, economic, social, or cultural development.

The Zoning Bylaw will be the primary tool available to the municipality to implement the Official Community Plan's policies. It will divide the municipality into zoning districts and regulate land use and development in those districts by setting local standards for the use of the lands or specific developments.



COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION PRE-ENGAGEMENT

In early 2024, members of Council and Administration completed a pre-engagement survey. The survey included twelve high-level questions aimed at gathering feedback and understanding Council and Administration’s direction regarding the project’s public engagement process. A pre-engagement session with the council was conducted on April 22, 2024, to finalize the public engagement design direction.

The feedback from the survey and pre-engagement with the council contributed to the creation of a comprehensive public engagement strategy. The strategy provided a structured approach for obtaining feedback from the community and completing an Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw while ensuring transparency and adequate engagement.



71%
Completion
Rate



7
Total
Responses



4/3
Responses
Council to
Administration

STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

Based on Council and Administration pre-engagement, the following stakeholder diagram includes the groups highlighted as interest groups or organizations to be likely interested and/or impacted by the project.



ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Selected Engagement Techniques:

ONLINE INFORMATION

Online media outlets available to the Town will promote the project and provide notices, event invitations and alerts.



OPEN HOUSES

In-person opportunities to learn about the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw.



POP-UP EVENTS

Pop-up engagements throughout the community and at organized events that include opportunities to provide targeted feedback.



SURVEYS

Available to all members of the community to seek feedback on a variety of topics related to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw.



MAIL OUTS & POSTERS

Direct mail outs will deliver printed information about the project and engagement.



INTERVIEWS

Interviews with residents and stakeholders who are likely interested and/or impacted by the project.



STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

Major Areas of Interest



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

- Community infrastructure.
- Future planning.
- Sustainable growth and efficient land use.
- Development of green spaces integrated into infrastructure planning to enhance the community's profile and attractiveness.



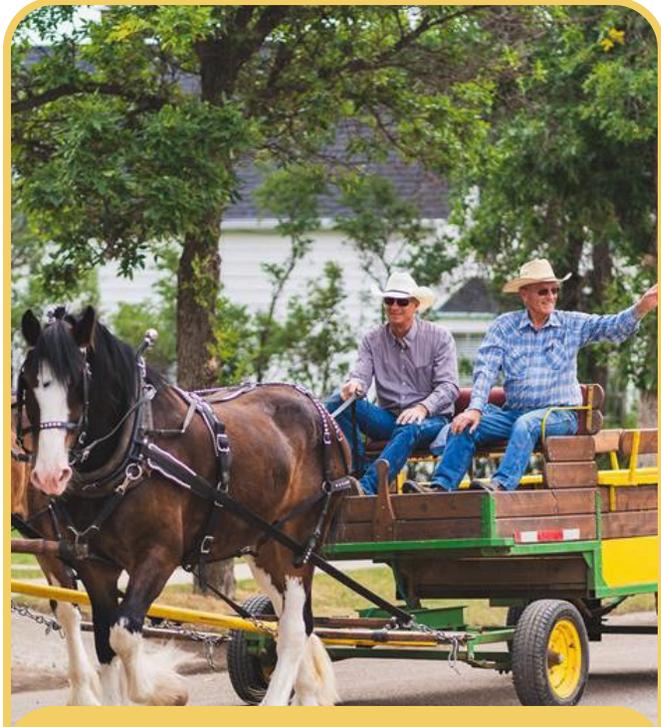
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Economic development, business retention, support, and attraction.
- Mixed-use development that promotes vibrant communities where people can live, work and play.
- Regional collaboration and community partnerships that leverage resources and expertise to maximize the impact of initiatives.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

- Encourage community growth, effective communication and promotion.
- Community engagement and collaborative decision-making processes.
- Transparency and accessibility in governance that encourages trust and participation.



TOURISM, RECREATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

- Tourism and recreation as a significant role in enhancing the community's appeal and economic vitality.
- Planning for growth that prioritizes development of commercial land for tourism-related businesses and services for the community.



PART III

Engagement Findings

ACTIVITIES

The community engagement activities are summarized below:

VISIONING

14 Question Survey
Group Council and Administration
Visioning Session



OPEN HOUSE

Held June 6, 2024
at Maple Creek
Armoury
Come & Go Event
25 Participants



POP-UP EVENTS

Held June 7 and 14,
2024
Maple Farmer's
Market
Heritage Festival



SURVEYS

23 Question Survey
Open from June 6
to 15, 2024
Promoted through
social media, mail
outs, posters &
hand outs
149 Responses



INTERVIEWS

Multiple interviews
with individuals or
representatives
from selected
stakeholders



COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION VISIONING

Council and Administration had the opportunity to collectively express their vision for the community's future, community development, strengths, challenges/weaknesses and opportunities.

Their feedback highlights a forward-looking community that wants to focus on sustainable and balanced growth while maintaining the small-town feeling. Council and Administration acknowledge that while there are opportunities for growth, a number of challenges need to be addressed over the foreseeable future. These challenges involve significant investments in infrastructure, services, and amenities needed to ensure community well-being, community safety, economic growth and sustainability. Overall, Council and Administration's feedback is in line with the selected major areas of interest for the Town of Maple Creek and the community.

The Community Going Forward

In terms of moving forward, Council and Administration indicated that Maple Creek of the near future would be a community with sufficient land for growth, significant infrastructure improvements and adequate succession planning in place. This indicates a clear desire to promote more growth and development in the community but is mindful of the significant infrastructure limitations the community currently has. Long-term planning requires continuity, and therefore, there is a clear need for policies and guidelines that ensure an adequate level of succession planning and leadership continuity.

At the same time, Council and Administration indicated that Maple Creek of the near future will hopefully remain the same in terms of its unified growth vision, thriving business sector and stable economic environment, while some of the current infrastructure deficits may persist.

Council and Administration Goals:

Five Years

- Succession Planning
- Community Safety
- Community Involvement
- Land Use Bylaws
- Health and Well-Being
- Vision Alignment
- Land for Growth

Ten Years

- Residential/Commercial Service Nodes
- Sustainable Development
- Long-Term Plan
- Community Involvement
- Community Health and Well-Being
- Infrastructure Development
- Complete Neighbourhoods
- Manageable Debt

Challenges and Opportunities

When reflecting on the community's challenges and opportunities, Council and Administration underscore the inherited benefits the community has in relation to geographical location, available services and its proximity to major economic centres. Along with this, the need for strategic long-term planning was also highlighted, including land use planning, infrastructure planning, maintenance, rehabilitation and overall asset management, as well as community well-being and recreation planning to improve quality of life.

STRENGTHS

- Geographical Location
- Proximity to Major Service Hubs
- Accessible Health Care Facilities
- Airport
- Tourism
- Heritage and Strong Community Roots
- Quality of Life
- Community Engagement Plan
- Better Understanding of Tourism Benefits
- Diverse Community
- Thriving Business/Economic Centre
- Downtown
- Urban Forest
- Small-Town Feel

WEAKNESSES

- Limited Water and Sanitary Sewer Treatment Capacity
- Aging Infrastructure
- Limited Funds/High Cost of Services
- Limited Land for Growth
- Lack of Mixed-Use Areas
- Limited Health Care and Child Services
- Transparency
- Limited Community Involvement and Volunteerism

OPPORTUNITIES

- Better Community Marketing/Business Friendly
- Regional Cooperation and Coordination
- Investment in Culture and Arts Sectors
- Winter City Initiatives
- Increase Transparency
- Community Engagement Plan
- Better Understanding of Tourism Benefits
- Diverse Housing Opportunities for All
- Diverse Recreational Opportunities for All

THREATS

- Limited Water and Sanitary Sewer Capacity
- Aging Infrastructure
- Limited Funds/High Costs of Services
- Limited Land for Growth
- Lack of Mixed-Use Areas
- Limited Health Care and Child Services
- Lack of Unified Vision

Future Development

In terms of future community development, Council and Administration expressed a desire to preserve the small-town feel while providing for a thriving community with diverse housing options, ample green spaces, and recreational amenities that cater to all community needs. This vision aligns well with goals for community well-being and sustainable growth and development.

All future development must be well thought out and planned with the community in mind. Development that may harm the small-town feel should be avoided, as well as projects that would present a strain on local resources and community infrastructure.

Community Safety and Well-Being

Council and Administration expressed a desire to prioritize mental health and addiction management by providing mental health initiatives for everyone. Continuing and completing significant, meaningful projects such as the pool and other relevant recreational opportunities is definitely a priority not only for Council and Administration but also for the community.

Community Safety and infrastructure integrity are top of mind for Council and Administration. Bylaw enforcement needs to be improved, and better enforcement measures need to be adopted. Programs to involve youth and prevent community issues are needed, as are improved guidelines and measurements to ensure the protection of water resources and infrastructure integrity.

Inter-Municipal Relations and Regional Collaboration

Building relations and regional collaborative relationships are highlighted as priorities for the community. Sharing services and reducing the gap between visions and goals will ensure the prosperity of the community and region and ensure the more efficient and effective leveraging of resources available for the region.

Overall, Council and Administration feedback indicates a community seeking balanced growth while preserving its small-town identity. As initially mentioned, the Council and Administration's feedback is in line with the selected major areas of interest for the Town of Maple Creek and the community: Infrastructure Development and Planning, Economic Development and Business Support, Community Engagement and Promotion, and Tourism, Recreation, and Quality of Life.

OPEN HOUSE AND POP-UP EVENTS

A Public Open House was an open engagement opportunity for residents to participate in self-directed engagement. The open house was hosted by the Town and Consultants and included information boards that included information on the context of the engagement, the purpose of an Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, the Town's process to update these documents and a variety of activities, including, What you Want to See More, Theme Ranking, Vision for the Community, Hopes and Fears, etc.

Two pop-up events were conducted by the Consultants at the Farmer's Market and Community Heritage Festival. A tent was set up with information on the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, and participants were asked to participate and provide feedback similar to that provided by the open house.

The key findings of these engagements can be summarized as follows.

WHAT I LOVE ABOUT MAPLE CREEK

- Overall, respondents indicated that Maple Creek is loved for its beautiful urban forest and for being a multi-cultural friendly and walkable community.
- Respondents also noted that the community is loved for its accessibility to many community services and its proximity to major commercial centres.

MY VISION FOR MAPLE CREEK

- Participants indicated they would like to see a community that is safe and has abundant jobs along with all services and amenities required to sustain a lively community.
- Respondents also indicated the Maple Creek of the future will be affordable and highly focused on families, family services and building community connections or social cohesion.

WHAT DO I WANT TO SEE MORE OF

- Overall, participants indicated they would like to see more small businesses, cultural and heritage conservation, a live downtown life and safe and accessible streets.
- In the opposite spectrum, less support was indicated for highway commercial development and single-family residential development as the only way to move forward.

MY COMMUNITY SHOULD FOCUS ON

- In terms of what the Town of Maple Creek should continue to focus on, participants indicated that the community needs to concentrate on increasing community appeal, provide adequate services for families and youth and community growth and infrastructure.

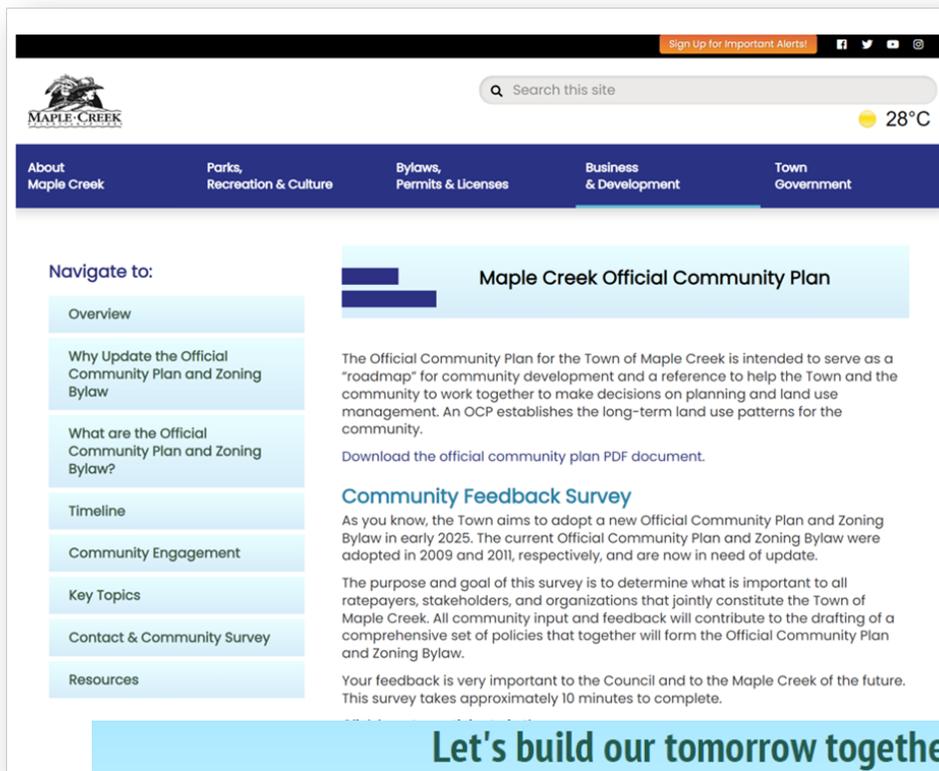
MY HOPES AND FEARS/CHALLENGES

- Overall, participants hope for a community that is focus on community services and adequate housing for everyone.
- Participants expressed their fear of becoming "just another community" in Saskatchewan. A community with housing shortages, limited housing options, high taxes and stock in the past.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community online survey was launched on June 6, 2024, along with the project website at https://www.maplecreek.ca/business_development/official_community_plan.html. The link and details were provided through mail outs, social media, posters, and handouts to the community and the general public.

Overall, the community survey had a somewhat successful rate as the feedback obtained paints a clear picture of the community's needs and interests.



Let's build our tomorrow together!
Become involved and become informed - Tell us what you think!

Visit the Town of Maple Creek website for more information:
<https://maplecreek.ca/>



TAKE OUR SURVEY



Consultation is open between
June 1st, and July 15th, 2024



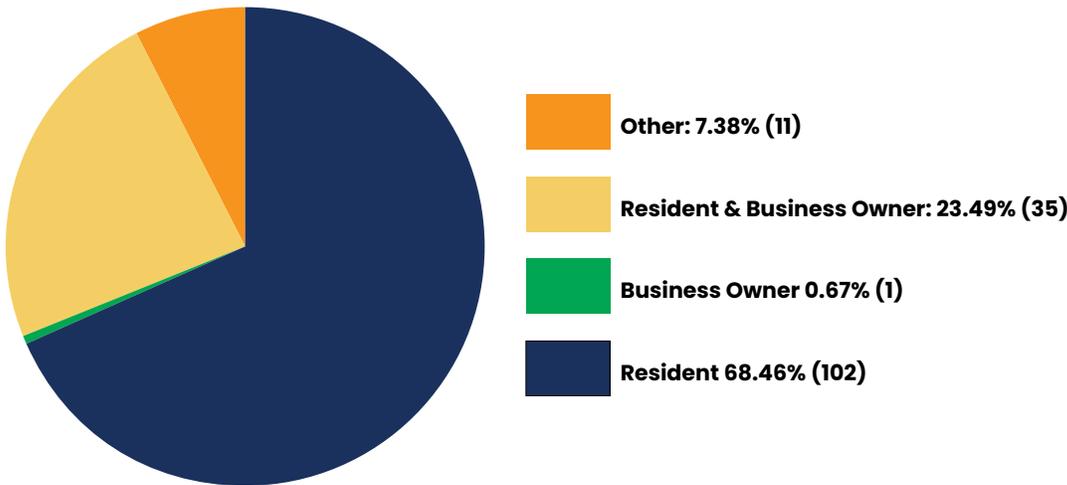
Survey Overview

Overall, the survey was completed mainly by community residents or business owners or a combination thereof, with only about 7% of the respondents identifying themselves as others.

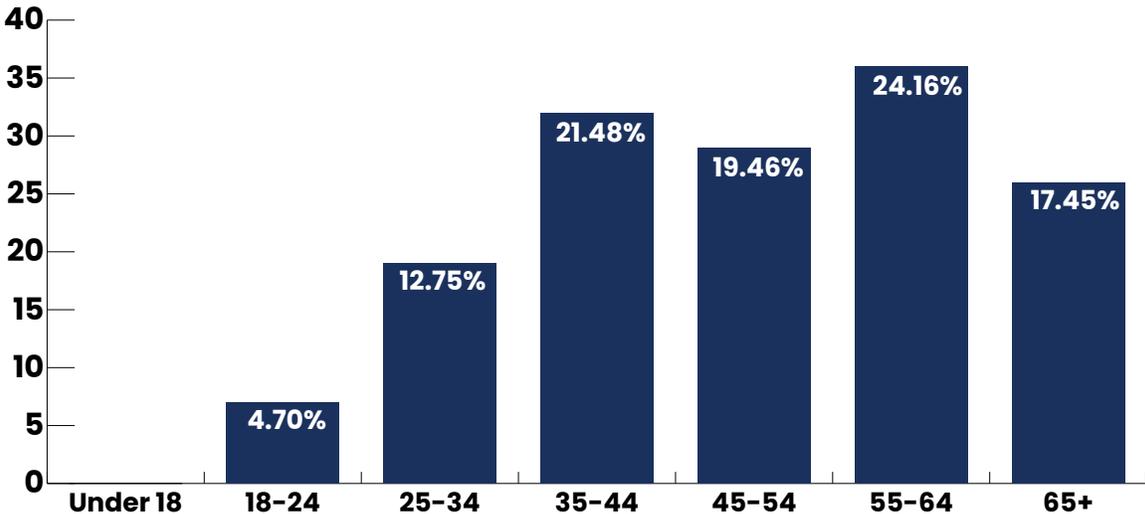
Most respondents (65%) self-identified as being between the ages of 35 and 64, with a more or less equal number of respondents being younger or older than those.

The majority of the respondents (68%) indicated that they have lived in the Town for more than 10 years.

RESPONDENT CLASSIFICATION



RESPONDENT AGE



The overall response of the community survey can be summarized as follows:

Maple Creek’s Current Direction and Bylaws

The feedback of the participants when responding to the questions related to the current policies and direction of the community can be described as follows.

BEST KNOWN FOR

- Overall, respondents indicated that Maple Creek is best known for its farming and ranching background, tourism and small-town feeling.
- Respondents noted that Maple Creek is not a community commonly known for its commercial opportunities or for having a creative/entrepreneurial population.

QUALITY OF SERVICES

- When asked to rate the overall quality of services provided by the Town, 46% of the respondents classified the services as fair, 33% as either excellent or good and 21% of the respondents classified the current services as poor.
- Respondents were also asked to classify a number of community services as either adequate, needing improvement or inadequate.
- In general terms most of services identified were classified as adequate or somewhat needing some improvements. However, outdoor and indoor recreational facilities, along with dog parks were mostly classified as either needing improvements or inadequate.

CURRENT DIRECTION

- Approximately 43% of the respondents indicated they are very negative or somewhat negative about the current direction of the municipality, in comparison to approximately 24% of the respondents who are very positive or somewhat positive about the direction the community is going.
- 33% of the survey respondents were neutral.

CURRENT BYLAWS

- In terms of the current Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw and Strategic Plan, approximately half of the respondents indicated to be very familiar or somewhat familiar with the documents, with the Zoning Bylaw being more known, as can be expected in most communities.
- The survey respondents also indicated a high level of support for the existing direction objectives within the current Official Community Plan. However, only approximately 50% of the respondents classified the “Recognize and respect the rights and responsibilities of Aboriginal people as important pillars of the community” objective as important.

FURTHER COMMENTS PERTAINING TO CURRENT BYLAWS

- Respondents indicated a need for more recreational investment, such as the construction of the swimming pool, a reduction of red tape, and clear and better incentives for the commercial sector.
- In addition, respondents also highlighted that the community needs updated policies, less taxes, diverse housing options, better infrastructure management and investment and larger residential parcels (acreage style parcels).

Maple Creek's Future Direction

When responding to the questions related to the future of the community, participants' feedback can be described as follows.

MAPLE CREEK 10 YEARS FROM NOW - WHAT HAS CHANGED

- Overall, respondents commented on infrastructure needs, community facilities, economic development, housing, community growth, community engagement, quality of life and governance. Participants noted that the Maple Creek community 10 years from now would have better infrastructure, safe streets, improved and diverse recreational amenities for everyone, and a strong and diversified economic sector.
- The Maple Creek 10 years from now will be affordable, family-oriented and youth-friendly. Respondents envision a community with diverse housing options for everyone and accessible health and childcare services. A community that is forward-thinking, improved and offers and high quality of life for everyone.
- Some respondents criticized the community leadership and governance structure and indicated a desire for change or more effective management and strategic planning.

MAPLE CREEK 10 YEARS FROM NOW - WHAT REMAINS THE SAME

- Respondents commented on the continuity of businesses and services, small-town feel, natural and cultural environment, and heritage preservation. Participants noted that the Maple Creek of 10 years from now would preserve the current business environment while maintaining the small-town feel and community cohesion.
- The Maple Creek of 10 years from today will continue to invest in its urban forest and green spaces available to the community and adopt policies to ensure its continuation.
- The future community should have remained the same in terms of cultural and heritage preservation and its moral values.
- Some respondents pointed out issues that may persist in the future, such as infrastructure deficiencies, high taxes, and economic stagnation if the community is not managed properly.



Maple Creek's Land Use Direction

The respondent's feedback on the questions related to specific land uses participants would like to see in the future can be described as follows.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Approximately 50% of the respondents indicated that additional residential development in the community is important. However, about 2/3 of the respondents indicated that this residential development needs to be carefully planned development, with the overall community benefit in mind.
- Approximately 50% of the respondents believe that it is important to locate residential developments only in safe, full-serviced areas and that they should be developed in a way that provides for integrated, accessible, and mixed-use opportunities.
- About 2/3 of the respondents indicated that residential development in proximity to service centres or only catering to single-family housing options is not as important or not relevant.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Approximately 50% of the respondents indicated that additional commercial/industrial development in the community is important. However, over 2/3 of the respondents indicated that this commercial/industrial development needs to be carefully planned development, with the overall community benefit in mind and with adequate separation from residential neighbourhoods.
- Approximately 60% of the respondents believe that it is important to locate commercial/industrial developments only along major transportation networks.
- The majority of the respondents believe that the community should focus on small retail commercial options while avoiding big-box commercial development.

COMMUNITY AMENITIES, SERVICES, AND SAFETY

- The majority of the respondents indicated that they would like to see more nursing and childcare services in the community, in addition to diverse indoor recreational opportunities, accessible health facilities, a live and energetic downtown life, diverse outdoor recreational facilities, safe/accessible streets, multi-use pathways and trails and more local markets.
- Respondents also indicated a preference for having more active winter activities, festivals and community events, community involvement and volunteering, sidewalk Cafes and Restaurants, mental health and addiction management services, and passive and active parks.
- Support for more diverse educational opportunities, sufficient land for community growth, increase tree canopy/urban forest management, bylaw enforcement, Public Safety - Fire, Police and Emergency Services, cultural and heritage conservation, complete and connected neighbourhoods and cultural/newcomers services were less evident.



Maple Creek's Management

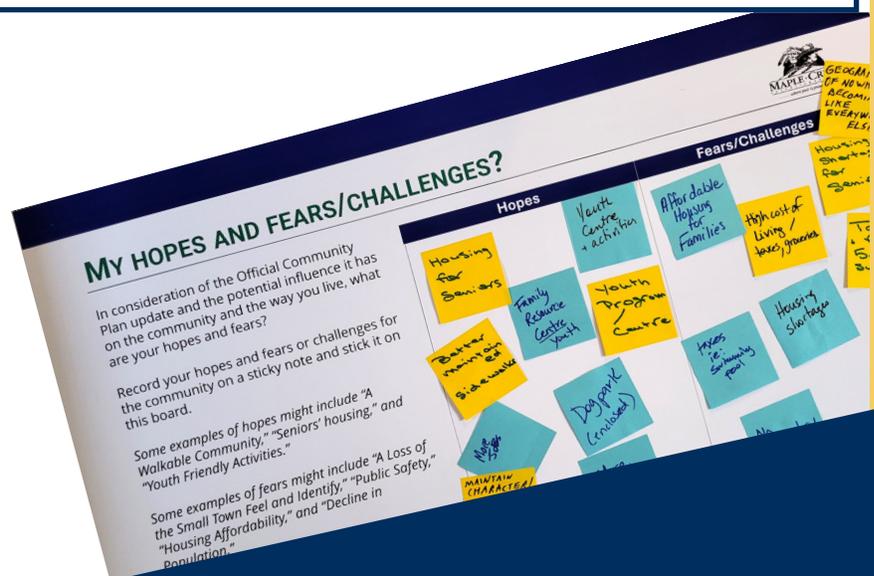
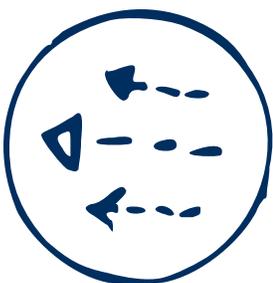
When responding to the questions related to what the community should focus on in the future and what challenges the community must overcome, the respondent's feedback can be described as follows.

WHAT SHOULD THE COMMUNITY FOCUS ON

- When reflecting on the focus of the community and community management going forward, respondents indicated matters such as infrastructure improvements, affordability, recreation, community cohesion, economic development and transportation and accessibility should be a priority.
- Improving existing infrastructure and ensuring suitable maintenance and adequate expansion going forward will actively promote community development, attract new investment and contribute to the improvement of Maple Creek's life.
- Affordability is at the top on mind with most of respondents. Ranging from affordable housing to affordable living in the wider sense should be a priority for the community.

WHAT CHALLENGES MUST BE OVERCOME

- The future is bright for Maple Creek in the eyes of the majority of respondents. However, there several obstacles that the community has to overcome to achieve its full potential. Respondents highlighted an aging population and resistance to change as some of these obstacles or challenges. Holding on to the past (past as a mindset) might not be as good for the community and might hinder growth and development or innovation efforts.
- Other highlighted challenges noted are financial limitations, health and social issues, planning, infrastructure and asset management and perception and community image.
- Balancing the needs and desires of residents versus those of tourists, particularly regarding infrastructure and service priorities is a major obstacle for the future of Maple Creek.
- Addressing these challenges will need significant joint efforts in strategic planning, community engagement, transparency, and targeted investments in infrastructure and economic development. Finding common ground between residents and promoting a more inclusive, forward-looking community attitude will be crucial for Maple Creek's future.





Big Ideas for Maple Creek

To finalize the survey, respondents were asked to provide their final comments in the form of a “Big Idea” for the future of Maple Creek or key areas of change. Based on the number of responses, the following ideas have been formulated.

1. Focus on attracting commercial and industrial businesses that can offer decent wages and stable employment opportunities.
2. Reduce business taxes to attract investment and encourage a business-friendly environment.
3. Incentivize the construction of new houses and renovations to upgrade already existing neighbourhoods and accommodate future residents without cluttering sidewalks and lanes.
4. Develop strategies to attract and retain young families through job creation, improved recreational facilities, and community engagement opportunities.
5. Plan for an industrial corridor along key transportation networks to attract businesses and create employment opportunities.
6. Develop recreational facilities like the pool and upgraded playgrounds and connect walking paths to enhance community life and attract residents.
7. Beautify downtown areas, expand businesses beyond main streets, and improve parking to attract tourists and improve the community’s image.
8. Encourage and support initiatives for environmental and community health and continue to protect the Town’s urban forest.
9. Balance new development with preserving the Town’s unique character and heritage, ensuring growth does not compromise community identity.
10. Implement more transparency in Council business to build trust and involve residents in decision-making processes.

Survey Closing Notes

Overall, the community responded really well to the survey, with over 83% of the respondents indicating that the survey covered the major areas of interest for them and the Town.

The survey managed to capture the sentiment of the population and paint a good picture of the main assets, weaknesses, and challenges. The overall results will significantly contribute to the drafting of the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw and the policies that need to be implemented to guide the community forward.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

A number of key stakeholders were selected for one-on-one interviews. The interviews covered a range of topics, including infrastructure, economic development, community well-being, recreation, and tourism.

Unfortunately, only a handful were available to conduct the interview during the consultation period. However, feedback received over the summer months will also be considered part of the consultation phase. Some of the key messages received from those successfully contacted are as follows.

AREAS WHERE MAPLE CREEK HAS DONE A GOOD JOB

- Relationship Building with First Nations
- Downtown revitalization
- Tourism
- People and Business Attraction

AREAS WITH ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Taxation and Affordability
- Community Focus Town Employees and Community Vision
- Community Tagline/Vision – Need a more forward-thinking community vision.

ENVISIONING MAPLE CREEK'S FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

- Infrastructure Needs Updating
- Better Asset Management

ENVISIONING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Economic and Business Development Vision Needs Improvement
- Tourism and Regional Recreation is a Great Asset
- Manage Taxation Better
- Start-up Business Support

ENVISIONING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

- Increase Opportunities for Family Events
- Take Advantage of Town's Unique Character
- Better Promotion for Maple Creek as a Place to Work, Play and Live

ENVISIONING TOURISM, RECREATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

- Tourism and Regional Recreation is a Great Asset
- Complete the New Pool
- Municipal Theatre
- More Opportunities for Family-Oriented Activities
- Economic Diversification

ENVISIONING MAPLE CREEK'S GROWTH OVER THE NEXT 10 TO 20 YEARS

- Community and business retention is a key element for the future of the community.
- Community integration and family-oriented programs and activities are a must.
- Improved communication, business collaboration and inter-municipal connections for better provision of services in the community as a whole.



Conclusions & Next Steps

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The Town of Maple Creek is well-positioned to take better advantage of its geographical location, local and regional tourist attractions, and strategic proximity to major service centres. However, while the community faces multiple challenges and growing pains, a community branding and strategic vision review might help set the community's course going forward.

The municipality clearly needs efficient and effective growth, planning, development, and infrastructure. More recreational opportunities for all ages and a stronger focus on building community cohesion and preservation are very important to the residents of the municipality.

Overall, as noted above, the community engagement process managed to capture the sentiment of the population and paint a good picture of the main assets, weaknesses, and challenges. However, to better understand and assess opportunities and limitations pertaining to the commercial/industrial sectors, further consultation is to be undertaken over the next several weeks and continue over Phase II of the engagement process.

All feedback received during the process will contribute to the drafting of the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw and the policies that need to be implemented to guide the community forward.