

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT – ROUND 1 ENGAGEMENT

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP) AND LAND USE BYLAW (LUB)

November 8, 2022



VILLAGE OF BOYLE MDP AND LUB ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Background

The Village of Boyle (Boyle) is updating its Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) to guide future development in the Village in a way that is equitable and collaborative

Overview of Project Engagement

Project engagement includes two rounds of engagement for the MDP and LUB, aligning with the high-level work plan that has been developed for this project. Engagement activities overlap for the MDP and LUB to leverage resources and staff, and to reduce stakeholder burnout. The community feedback received from each round will inform the draft MDP and LUB

Round 1 engagement took place in October 2022 and included:

- A joint Council and Municipal Planning Commission Workshop (October 17, 2022);
- Two Workshops with Developers, Businesses, and Stakeholders (October 18, 2022);
- In-Person Open House (October 18, 2022); and
- Online and Hard Copy Survey (Active between October 6-25, 2022).

In addition, the community was informed of the project through:

- Webpage on the Boyle Website;
- Newsletter Mailout;
- Social Media Posts; and
- Notice Boards at 4 Village highway entrances.

Round 2 engagement is anticipated for early 2022.

Engagement Purpose

The Round 1 engagement was conducted with the following purpose statements in mind:

- To build awareness around the project;
- To learn about the community's vision for the MDP and LUB, so their input can be incorporated into the Plans, where possible;
- To educate the community about the MDP and LUB, and the role these documents play in municipal decision-making and strategic planning;
- To learn from stakeholders what improvements could be made to the MDP and LUB; and
- To work with the Village to develop an MDP and LUB that meets the needs of the community.

How We Engaged in Round 1

Round 1 engagement included a survey and the use of multiple communication tools to advertise the project and create awareness around future opportunities for engagement. A breakdown of the techniques and participation rates is below:

- An online public survey was available to the public from October 10 to October 25, 2022, through the Village website. Hard copy surveys were made available at the Open House event and the Village Office during this time. There were 19 completed surveys (15 online, and 4 hard copy surveys);



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- A Public Open House was held at the Boyle Community Hall on October 18, 2022. Approximately 17 people attended and over 60 comments on the MDP and LUB were obtained from this event; and
- Two workshops with Developers, Business Owners, and Stakeholders were held on October 18, 2022. Seven people attended the two workshops to discuss the project, their experiences with the MDP and LUB, and their vision for Boyle's future.

Methods of Information Sharing

The following methods were used to promote engagement opportunities associated with the project.

Social Media Promotion:

- The Village released two project updates and survey promotions through the Village's Facebook page (4 shares and 144 views);
- The Village released three project updates on the Alertable App.; and
- The Village monitored likes and comments on public posts.

Newspaper Advertisements

- Advertisements were shared for two weeks on the October 10 and 17, 2022 editions of the Town and County Today newspaper, a combined paper of the Athabasca Advocate, Barrhead Leader, and Westlock News.

Newsletter Mailout

- A letter notice was sent directly to Village residents, this letter informed residents of the project and ways to engage the Project Team and share information. The Village sent 450 newsletters.





PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

The results from the public survey, which was open from October 10 - October 25, 2022, are summarized below.

1. Imagining the Village in the next 25 years, what is your vision for the Village of Boyle?

For this question, respondents described their vision for Boyle, which included:

- Growth with more businesses and opportunities;
- Variety of small to large businesses;
- Maintaining a 'small town feel';
- Thriving school, hospital, and downtown core;
- Well-maintained infrastructure;
- Encouraging Senior care and Senior housing;
- Thriving recreational facilities and recreation opportunities;
- Affordable housing for families;
- Encourage new industries to support local employment;
- Employment opportunities; and
- Tourism and recreation.

Additionally, participants noted the following specific developments they would like to see in Boyle:

- Hotel;
- Motel;
- Replacing old or abandoned buildings with new development;
- Medical facilities;
- Veterinarian services; and
- Youth programs.



What is your vision for the Village of Boyle?

"A thriving, vibrant community with growth in the business, employment, and housing sectors"



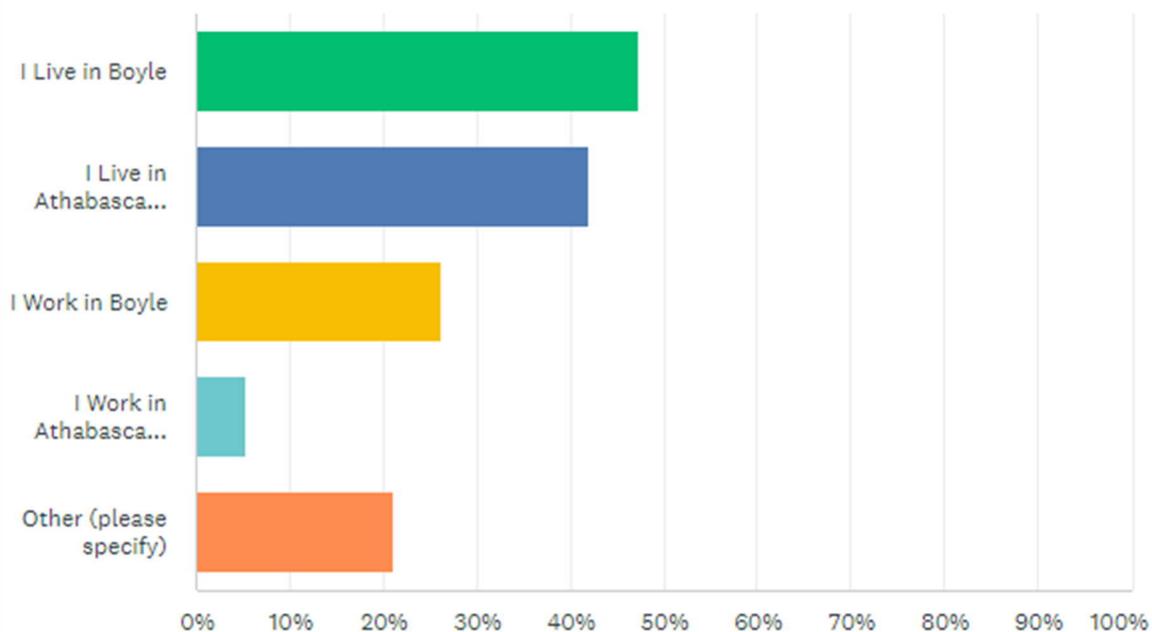


2. What is your relationship with the Village of Boyle?

The following provides a summary of Figure 1:

- 9 Respondents identified that they live in Boyle
- 8 Respondents identified that they live in Athabasca County
- 5 Respondents work in Boyle
- 1 Respondent works in Athabasca County

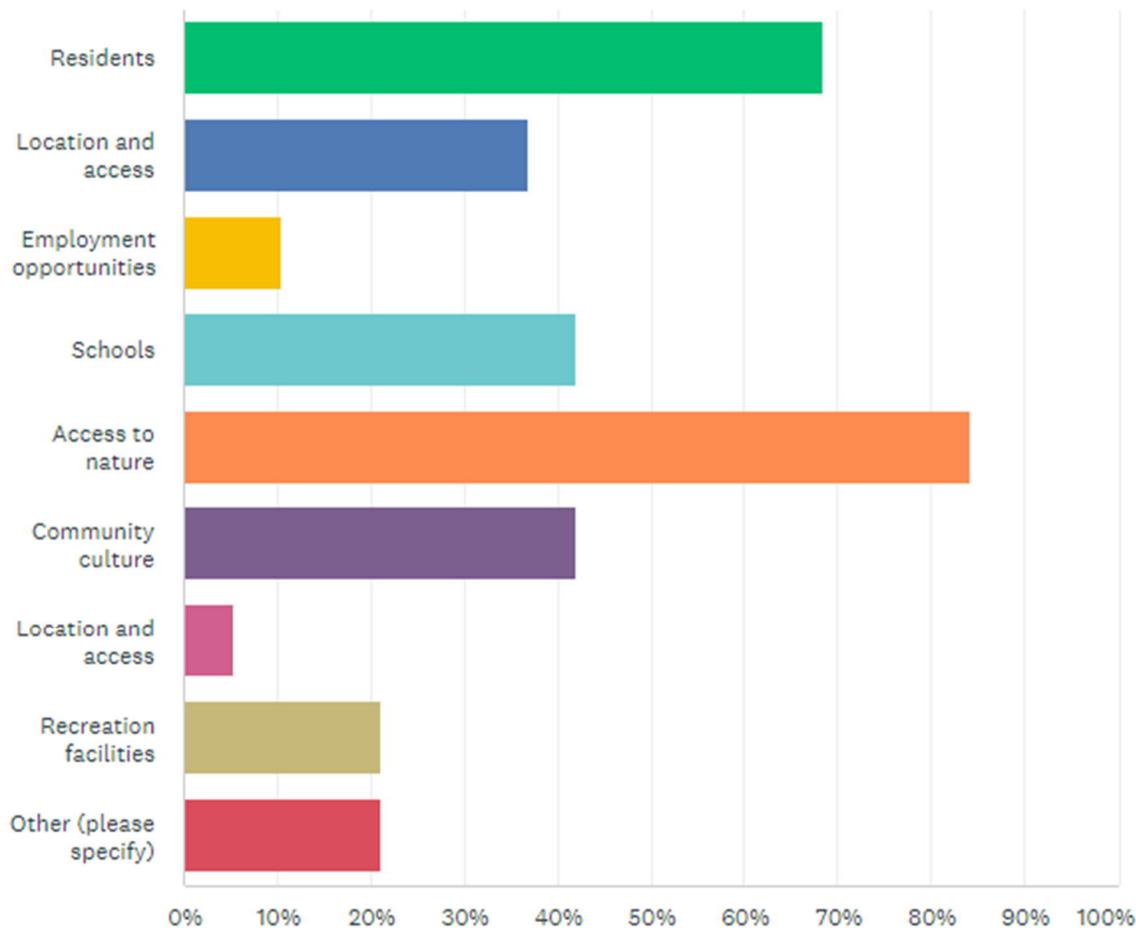
Of the respondents that identified as 'other', 1 lives in the Summer Village of Bondiss, and 1 was a student at the University of Edmonton who grew up in Boyle.





3. What are some of the best features of Boyle?

Responses to this question indicate that access to nature (84%) is one of the best features of the Village, with the Residents (68%) being the next best feature. Respondents identified Location and Access (36%), Schools (42%), and Community Culture (42%) as positive features of the Village. Employment Opportunities (10%) and Recreation Facilities (21%) were not identified as highly.



Participants also identified the following positive features of Boyle:

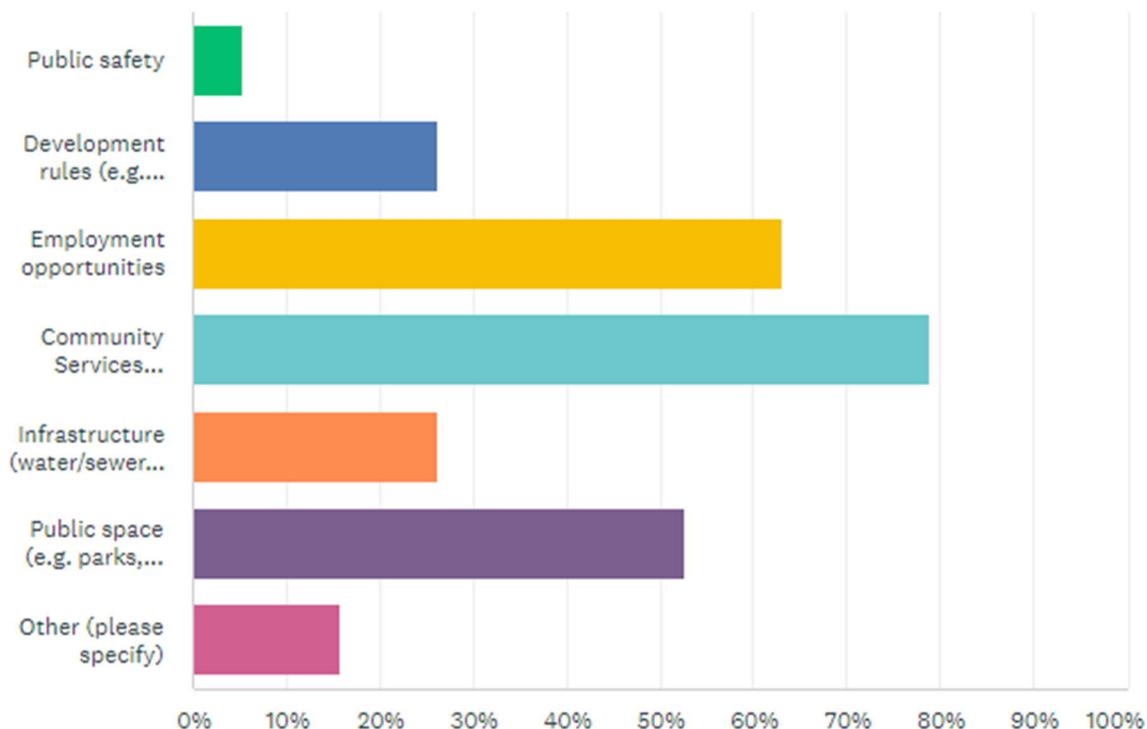
- Close to lakes and outdoor adventures
- “We are maintaining what we have for recreation, as well as growing a few projects”
- Summer population influx
- Peacefulness





4. What could be improved in Boyle?

Responses to this question indicate that Community Services (79%) access to Employment Opportunities (63%) and Public Spaces (52%) were identified as needing improvement. Development Rules (26%) and Infrastructure (26%) were not ranked as highly, and Public Safety (5%) was identified as needing the least amount of improvement.



When asked to expand on this, participants identified the following improvements:

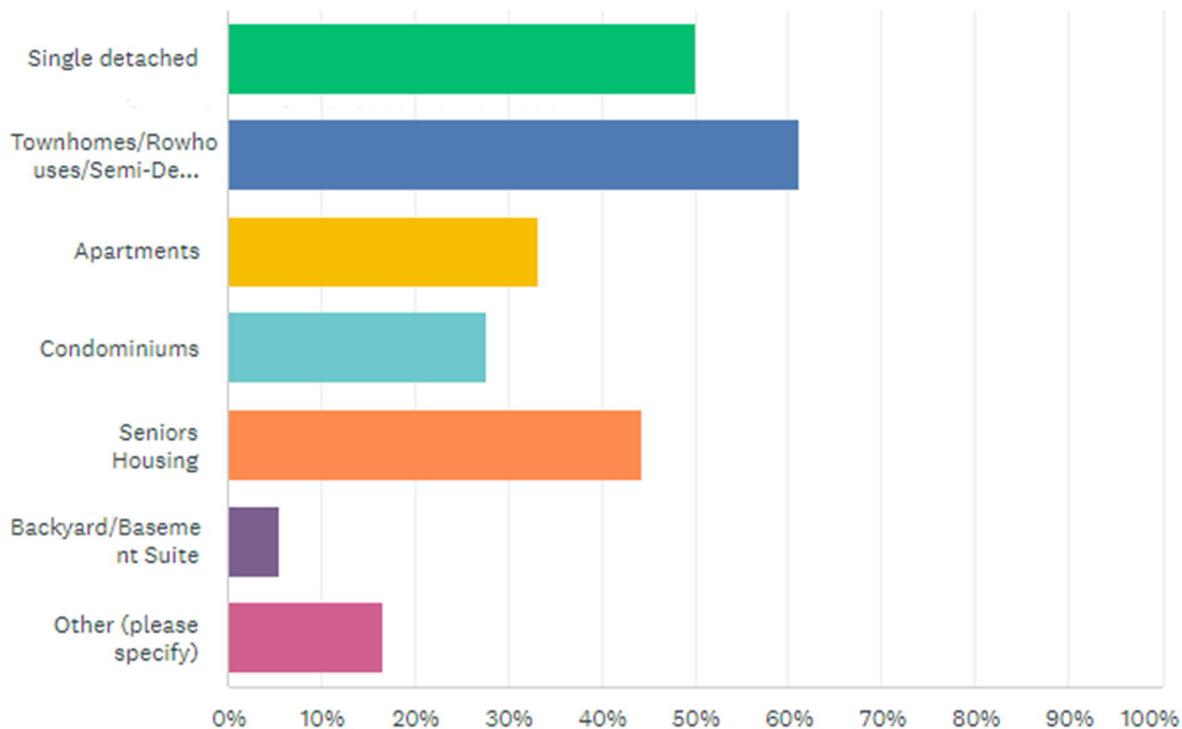
- Services to support seniors are needed, including snow removal and grass trimming
- There should be improvements to the hospital and healthcare system, including dental and optometry clinics
- There should be improved development standards downtown and the cleanup of abandoned buildings at village entrances (Old Mill Building)
- There is a need for employment for a variety of education levels
- There should be an improvement in public spaces and playgrounds to support community activities
- There should be hotels and other services to accommodate visitors





5. What type of new residential development would you like to see in Boyle?

Respondents indicated support for a variety of new housing types in the Village. Of these, Townhouses/Rowhouses/Semi-detached residences (61%) were the most popular followed by Single detached (50%) and Seniors housing (44%). Apartments (33%) and Condominiums (27%) were slightly less favourable



Of the respondents who identified Other Residential Development (16%), the following responses were submitted:

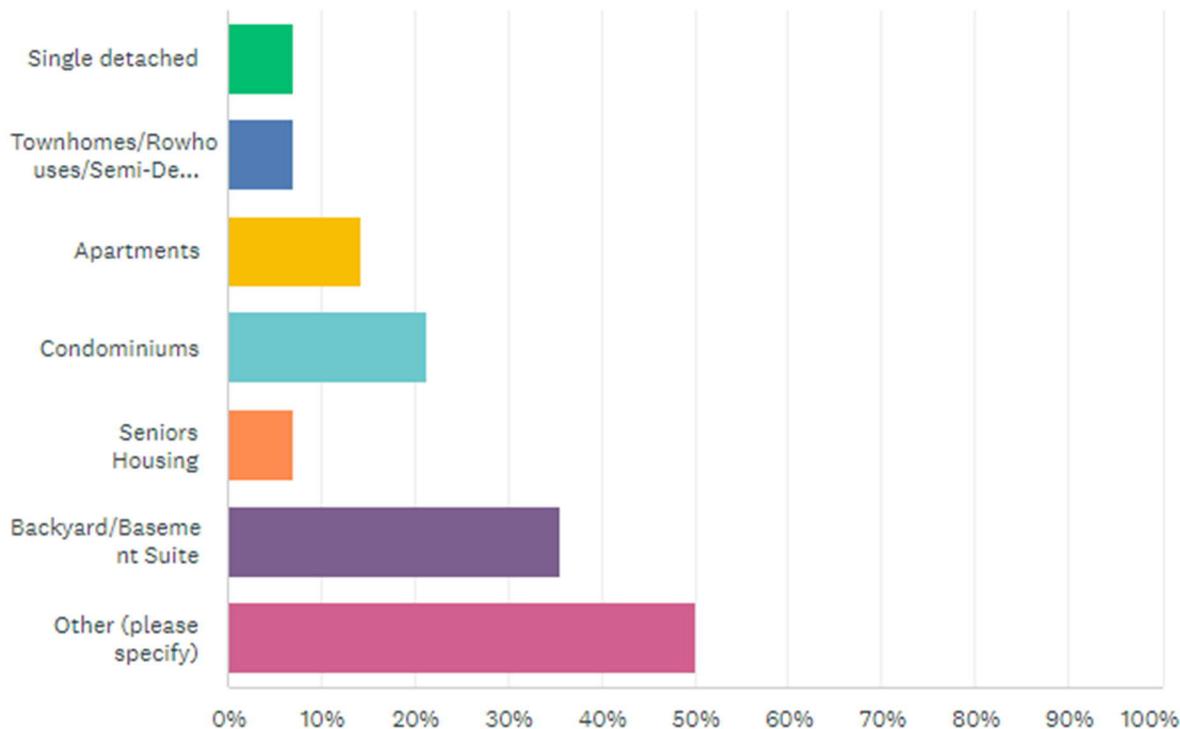
- Low cost rental properties
- Smaller bungalow-style developments with fewer stairs to support seniors
- Small homes





6. What type of new residential development would you not like to see in Boyle?

The responses to this question indicate that participants would like to see a variety of housing types in the Village. Most notably, respondents were less likely to support backyard and basement suites and condominiums.



Of the respondents who identified Other (50%), the following feedback was received:

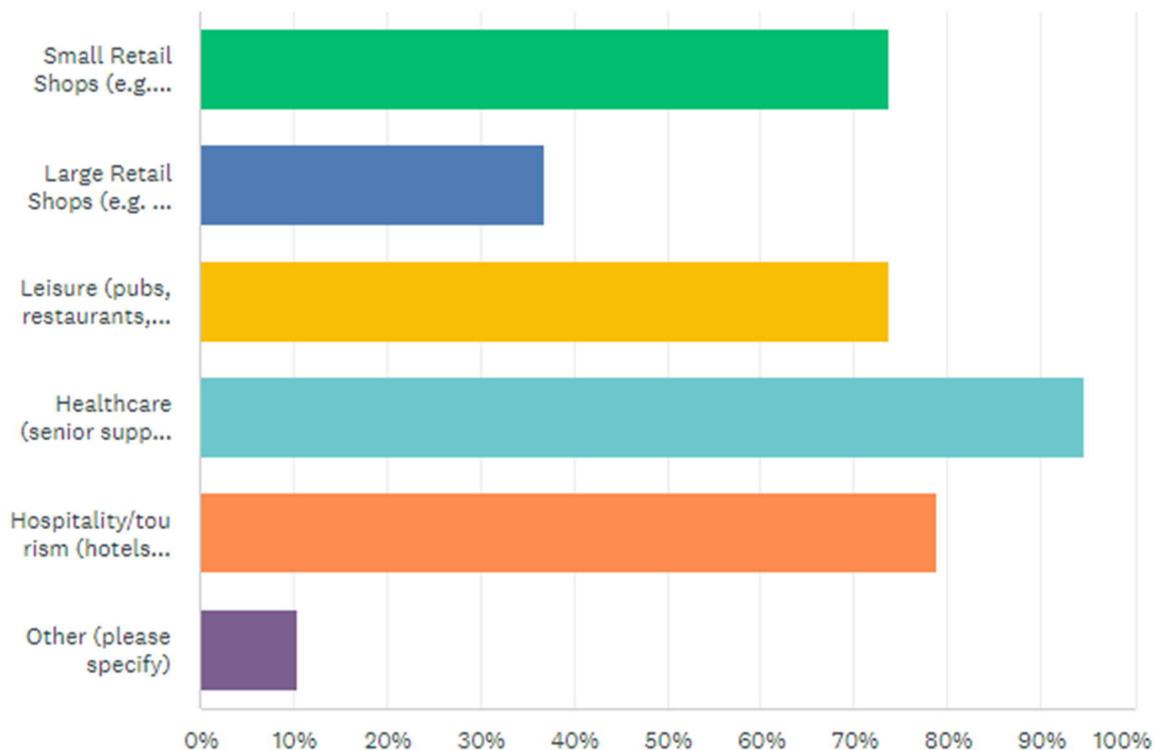
- Support for all types of residential development and the growth of the community
- Avoid trailer parks





7. What type of new commercial opportunities would you like to see in Boyle?

Respondents indicated that they would like to see Healthcare (94%) and supporting services in future commercial developments in the Village. Businesses that supported the Hospitality Industry (78%), Leisure (73%), and Small Retail (73%) received similar support, while Large Retail (36%) was not equally supported by respondents.



When asked to expand on this answer, respondents indicated that they would like to see:

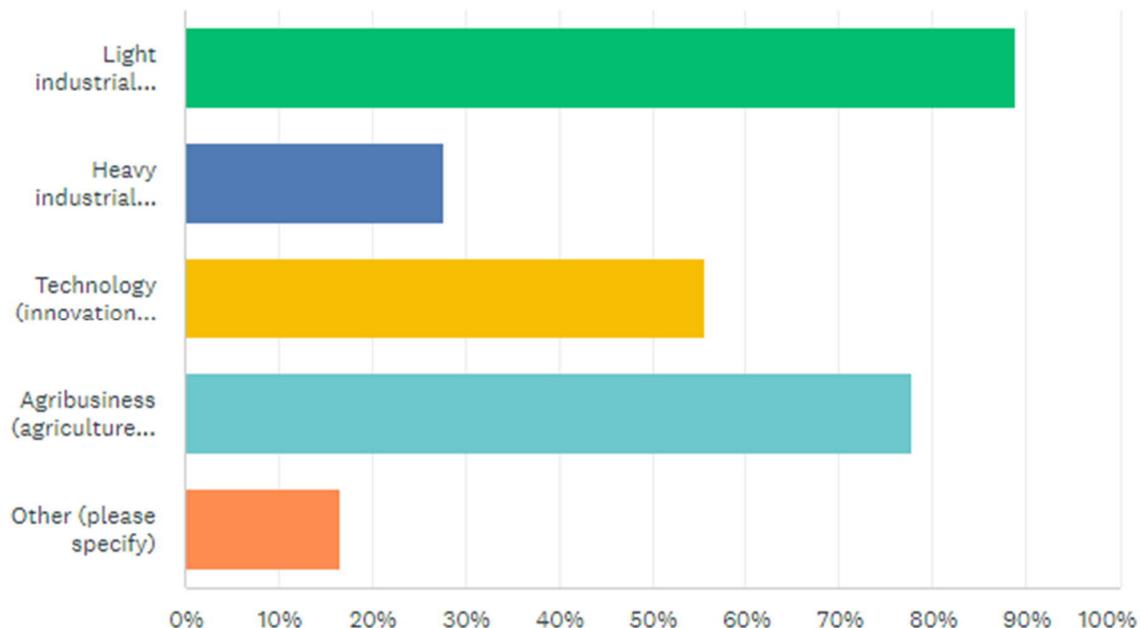
- Clothing stores
- Office space and space for professional services.
- Professional services including doctor and dentist offices, and therapy services
- Hotels and amenities for tourists
- Pub/bar
- Restaurants, coffee shops, and fast food restaurants





8. What type of new industrial opportunities would you like to see in Boyle?

Regarding industrial businesses, respondents generally supported new Light Industrial (88%) and Agribusiness (77%) opportunities. Slightly less indicated support for Technology (55%) and Heavy Industrial (27%) operations.



Other comments included:

- Support for all types of industrial development
- Improved internet
- Energy production (e.g., Solar Power)



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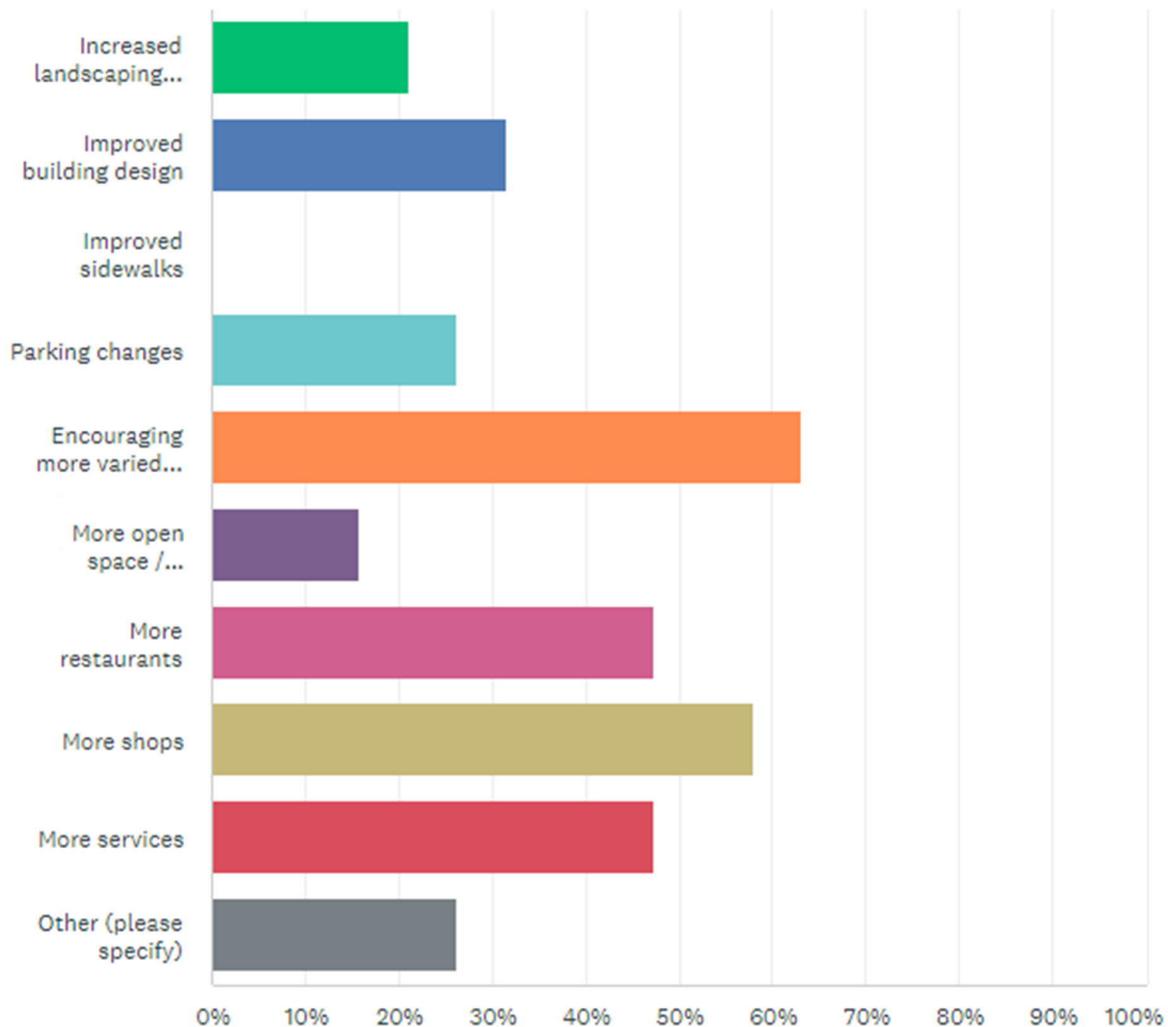
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9. How can the Village Downtown Core be improved?

Responses to this question were more varied; however, the survey shows that respondents generally wanted more services and options in the Village's downtown. Restaurants (47%), Shops (57%), Services (47%) and Encouraging More Varied Businesses (63%) were closely ranked.

Fewer respondents indicated that the Downtown should have an Increased Landscaping requirement (21%), Improved Building Design (31%), Change Parking Requirements (26%) or More Open Space (15%).



Other comments received included:

- Bakeries and Sandwich Shops
- Support for existing building improvements (e.g. paint) and upgrades
- More garbage cans

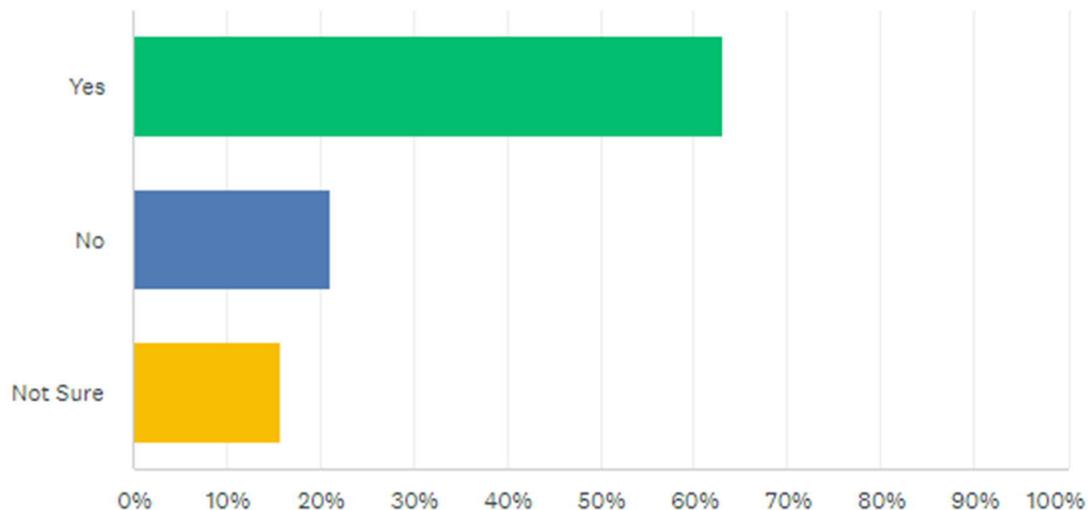
One participant identified that the Village should be more selective with their plant choices and species requiring fertilizer multiple times a year should be avoided. Species more suitable for the region can be explored by the Village.





10. Would you support mixed-use development in the downtown core?

Survey responses indicated support (63%) for mixed-use development in the downtown core, although 15% of respondents were not sure.



When asked to expand on this question, respondents indicated that:

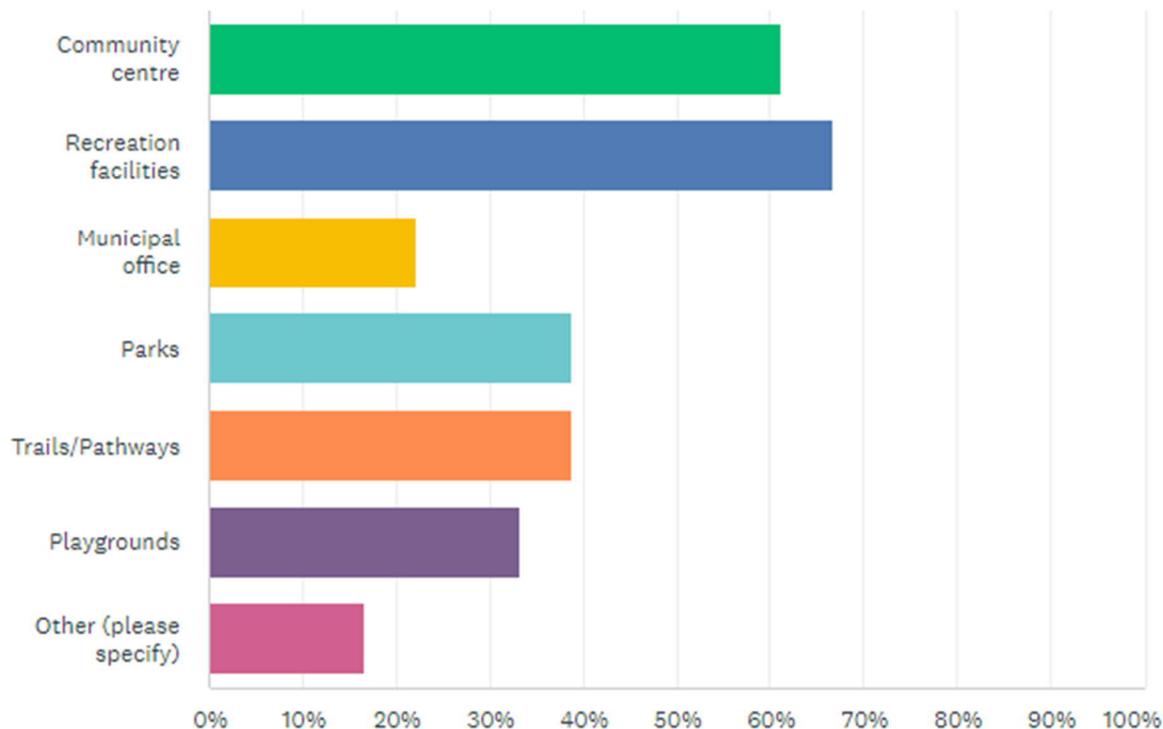
- Housing should be allocated elsewhere in Town
- Housing downtown would negatively impact parking in this area
- Opportunities to encourage development should be supported
- Standards to ensure that downtown maintains high-quality housing should be implemented
- A variety of housing types should be encouraged





11. What community amenities do you use most in Boyle?

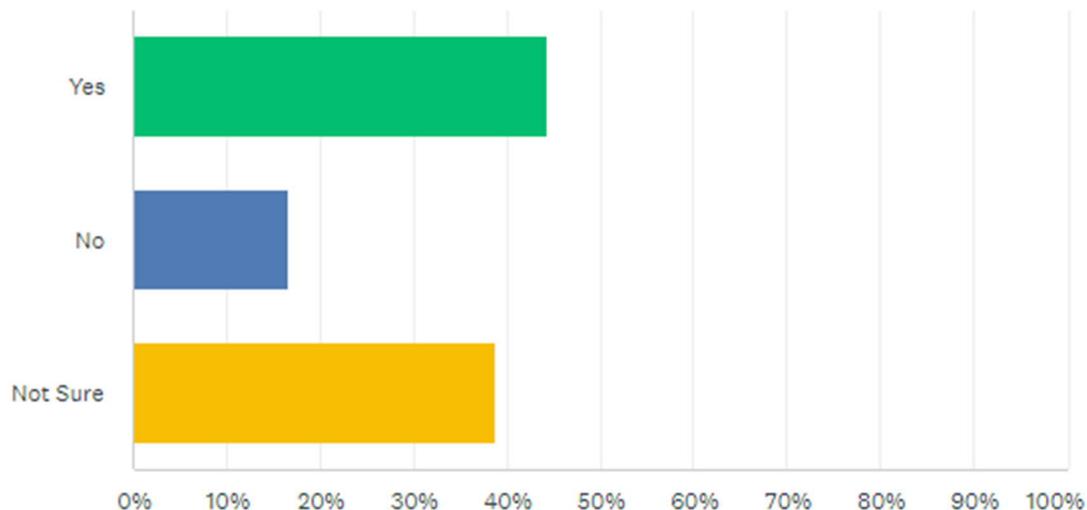
The Village Community Centre (61%) and Recreation Facilities (66%) appear widely used by survey participants. Respondents were less likely to frequently use Parks (38%), Trails (38%), Playgrounds (33%), and the Municipal Office (22%).





12. Do the community amenities in Boyle need to be improved?

44% of respondents indicated that community amenities needed improvement, 17% indicated that community amenities did not need improvement, and 39% indicated that they were unsure.



When asked to expand on this question, respondents indicated that:

- The Village should consider expanding the trail system
- Playgrounds should be improved
- One respondent indicated that the curling rink currently has a leak
- A Board to consider the future of the community centre should be formed to develop ideas, identify if a new facility is built or if the current facility should be renovated, and consider funding options





13. Please share any community amenities you would like to see in Boyle that the Village does not currently have:

Participants indicated the following potential new community amenities for the Village:

- Restaurants and Bars
- Bakery
- Coffee Shops
- Swimming Pool
- Disc Golf
- Group Events
- Bowling Alley
- New floor plan for the Community Hall as the current 'L' layout is less desirable for events
- Health Care improvements and options
- Archery Range
- Government Services and Training centres

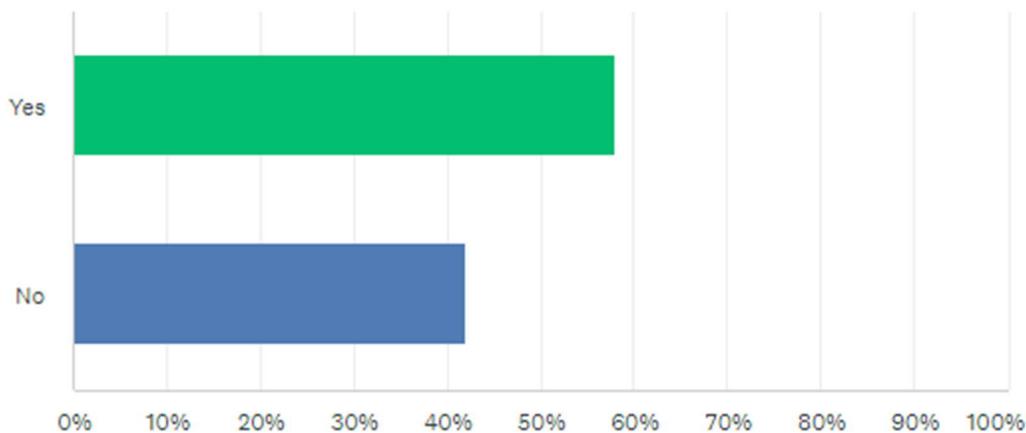




This section of the survey focused on participant experience with development in the Village. Participants had the option to skip these questions if they did not have personal experience with developing in the Village.

14. Have you ever developed a property or built on your property?

57% of participants indicated that they have developed in the Village of Boyle

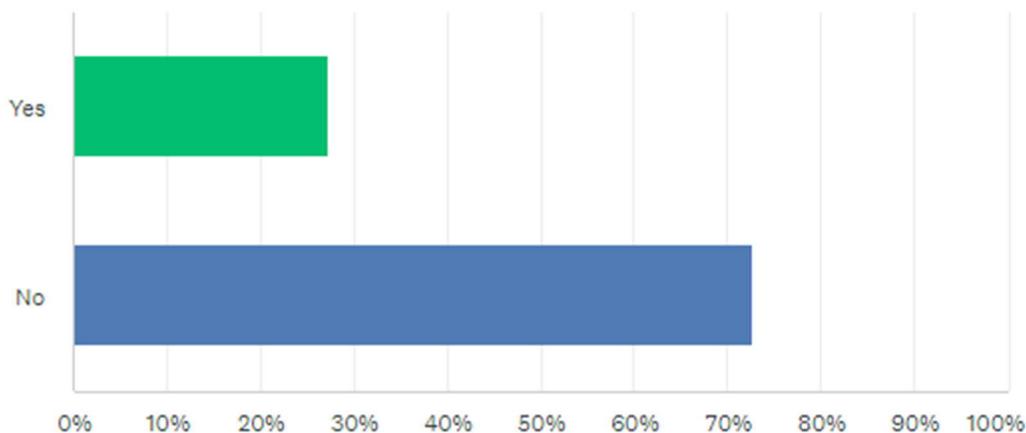


Of the participants that said yes, the majority of responses indicated that the construction was for residential properties including houses and garages.

Participants who indicated they have not built within Boyle were not directed to the subsequent builder questions.

15. Were there any barriers to getting your permit approved?

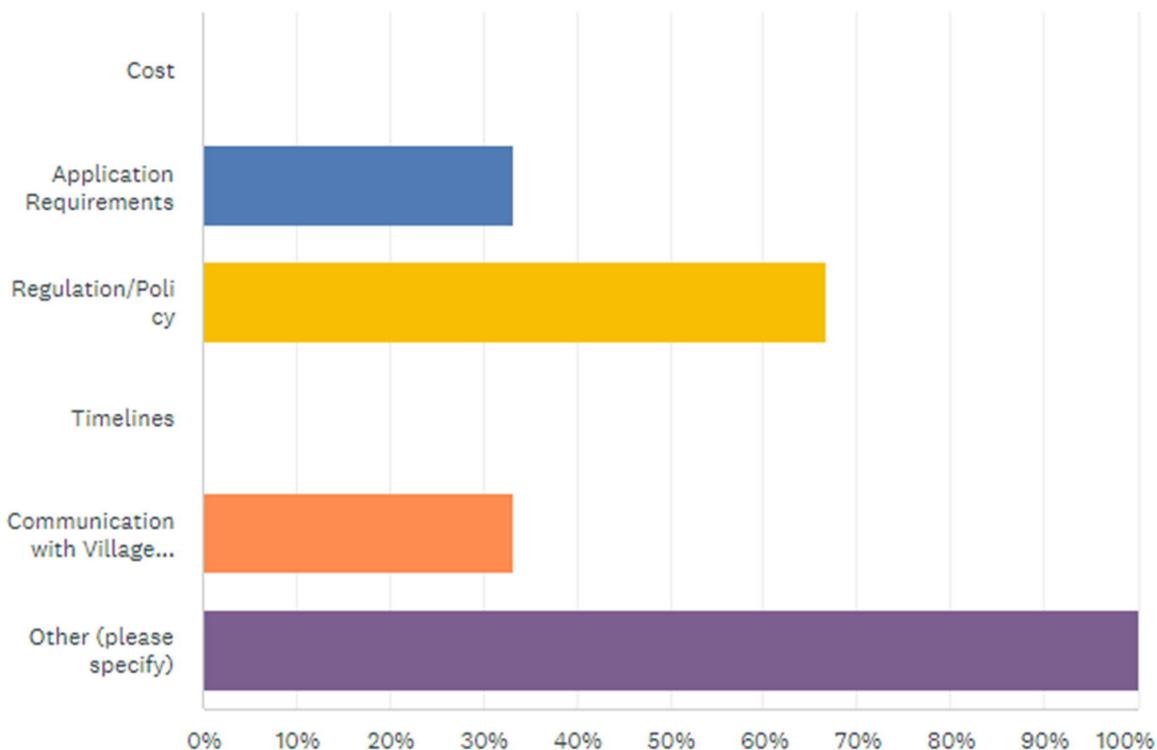
72% of respondents indicated that there were no barriers to getting their permit approved.





16. What were the barriers?

The responses to this question indicate that Permit Cost and Review Timelines (0%) are not seen as significant barriers to development. Communication (33%) and Application Requirements (33%) could be improved. It appears that the most significant barrier is due to Village Regulations and Policy (66%).



Participants indicated that other barriers included:

- Discretionary Uses
- Setback Variances
- The requirement for a fence
- Communication with 3rd party inspection services





17. What other comments do you have about the Village that will inform the project?

The following provides a summary of additional feedback respondents provided in the survey.

- Downtown should provide lighting to complement the new paving
- New residential properties should be developed for the senior population. Athabasca's row housing and semi-detached with garages could be used as an example
- The hospital should be improved and better utilized
- Boyle has a wide age range and the Village should support services for young families and the aging population
- Row housing or apartments could benefit the Village
- Retaining the school and hospital necessary for community growth
- The Village is well-run and has development opportunities. Boyle should be marketed and money should be spent on infrastructure to support new development
- More public garbage cans are needed





WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

The feedback from the joint Council and MPC Workshop and two stakeholder workshops are summarized below. Seven stakeholders attended the two stakeholder workshops.

Visioning

As part of the workshops the project team conducted a visioning exercise to support the development of a new MDP vision. Participants were asked to write key words describing their vision for the Village of Boyle. The words were grouped into themes and topics, which were further discussed as a group.

The visioning exercise revealed the following themes and key words:

- Community and Place Making
 - Vibrant
 - Attractive and Inviting
 - Attracting all types of people
 - Family Friendly
 - Engagement
- Recreation
 - Recreation Facilities
 - Trails
 - Connection to Summer Villages
- Services and Institutions
 - Stability of Hospital and Medical Services
 - Improved Educational Facilities
 - Increase of Professional Services
 - Specialized Health Services
 - Increase in Government Services
- Housing
 - Homes for all income levels
 - Senior Housing
- Economic Development
 - Growth and Development
 - More Variety of Businesses and Retail Options
 - Industry
 - Stable
 - Commercial Business Growth
 - Tourism
 - Business Destination
 - Professional Growth





Municipal Development Plan

Village Location

- The Village is uniquely situated along Highway 63 between Edmonton and Fort McMurray. This location allows Boyle to see a significant amount of highway traffic and there are opportunities for new highway commercial businesses.
- The Village is near lakes and outdoor recreation and provides services to those that live in summer villages around the lakes.
- The Village location has the potential to serve as a transportation hub utilizing the highway and CN Railway.

Economic Development

- There is a desire for more variety in local businesses. Current businesses with a focus on tourism and agriculture aren't as active in winter months, and efforts should be made to encourage businesses with a year-round focus.
- The Village should explore opportunities to fund and create an Economic Development Officer position that can focus on local development. This role could bridge the gap between Council and developers and work with adjacent municipalities to identify mutually beneficial opportunities.
- The Village should not create barriers to development.
- Higher taxation in the Village can deter new businesses who choose to establish themselves in the County with cheaper mill rates.
- Village tax incentives could support new development.
- There is a desire for high-speed internet or public WiFi.
- Boyle could explore the reinstatement of the Chamber of Commerce.

Downtown

- There is a desire to support the downtown core. There is some concern that concentrating development along the highway will detract attention from the downtown core.
- The Village should explore ways to encourage travellers using highway commercial services to visit the downtown core.
- There are some residential properties designated commercial in the downtown core that should be corrected in the updated MDP and LUB.
- The downtown does not currently have office spaces for professional offices.
- There is a desire for a vibrant downtown with flexible regulations.
- Traffic and parking are generally not seen as a concern downtown. However, seniors may experience challenges parking immediately in front of the businesses they need.
- Downtown businesses are not visible from or advertised on the highway. Advertising downtown could support new and existing businesses in the downtown.
- Older buildings downtown will need to be slowly replaced and repaired to support new development.
- The Village currently feels 'scattered' as many businesses are spread apart.





Industrial

- There is available industrial land next to CN Railway for industrial uses that could benefit from railway and highway access.
- There are industrial lands that may have contamination and regulations to address this should be considered before new development can occur.
- Worn-down buildings and unsightly storage yards at the Village entrance do not create a pleasant experience for people entering the Village.
- New highway businesses should include consideration for buffers and landscaping.
- Opportunities for new agriculture businesses could serve as anchor businesses (e.g., Processing plants for grain, mills, food processing etc.).

Residential

- There is a desire to beautify and improve the current residential stock. The Village could explore tax concessions for residential upgrades.
- Lake homes are turning from summer cottages to year round occupancy. This population increase may be an opportunity for Boyle to expand its businesses and services.
- Attractive housing is needed to support new workers (e.g., doctors, nurses, and police officers currently commute).
- There is a need for more seniors housing in Boyle.
- More affordable homes and smaller residential lots are needed to support families.
- Currently the Village has little rental stock which can make it difficult to move to the area. The lack of rental stock also negatively impacts affordability in Boyle.
- Boyle has a small homeless population and at-risk youth, and the Village has limited housing and services to support them.
- Boyle could market themselves for remote workers:
 - The expansion of high-speed internet services is needed to support the Village and people who work from home.
 - More people want to work from home and live in walkable neighbourhoods, however, there are limited services to support this (e.g., coffee shop, bar).
- The Village's existing affordable housing is late in its lifecycle. This has resulted in the available housing stock aging without replacement housing developed. Opportunities for new affordable housing should be explored.
- There is an opportunity for higher-density residential development located near the Boyle Village Office.
- It is financially challenging to build new residential homes on the lots currently available. Purchasing existing homes is easier.
- There is a desire for higher density, more affordable, smaller residential units.

Hospital

- Boyle has an established rural hospital that is well utilized but requires upgrades and expansion, which falls within the responsibility of Alberta Health Services.
- Businesses that support the hospital are good opportunities for economic development in the Village (e.g., catering and meal prep, laundry, etc.)
- There is a desire for new and expanded medical services in Boyle.

Transportation





- The road hierarchy presented in the current MDP is still accurate.
- Generally, police enforcement can manage highway traffic, but the Village may consider other traffic calming measures such as radar that shows driver speed, particularly on Highway 831 and the intersection with Highway 663.
- A walking path between Boyle and Skeleton Lake should be explored and would require coordination with Athabasca County.
- There is a desire for trails and routes that allow for bikes, golf carts, ATV's, or snowmobiles into the Village.
- Developers find it challenging and costly to develop along highways due to rigorous requirements for roadways and approaches.

Recreation

- The Village is exploring opportunities to develop a new recreational complex, or provide upgrades to the existing arena and curling facilities.
- Recent recreation improvements include a new splash park and skate park, which were initiated and fundraised by the Greater Athabasca Community Foundation (GACF).
- The Village benefits from a variety of opportunities for recreation including quad trails, ice fishing, hunting, etc.

Advertising and communication

- It is challenging to engage with the community and share information on current events
- Boyle lacks communication between local groups. There could be opportunities to share communication resources, but this isn't currently happening.
- New activities to draw in the surrounding community are needed (e.g., winter markets, recreation events, etc.).

Servicing

- Residential parcels annexed from the County do not have servicing, which makes these parcels difficult to sell and develop.
- Some industrial parcels do not have servicing, which makes them difficult to sell and develop.
- Providing infrastructure (water/sewer) could support new development as it is not financially viable for some developers to develop lots that are not serviced.

Land Use Bylaw

Variance Powers

- The Village is exploring options to delegate variance powers that allow the Development Officer to be the approval authority for certain variance requests.
- There is a desire for less applications that require Council review and decision.
- Council should only be involved in development decisions for contentious topics. Otherwise, development approval should be more administrative.





Setbacks

- Generally, existing setback requirements in the LUB are appropriate and variances to setbacks are not common. However, setback variances have been requested in older areas of the Village including downtown.

Parking and Transportation

- Parking regulations in the current LUB were recently reviewed and seem to function well.
- Designated trails for ATVs and snowmobiles that connect to the summer villages could be explored in collaboration with the County.
- Residents are opposed to any highway realignment and widening as it would direct highway traffic away from the Village.

Land Uses

- Boyle should be open to all types of businesses. The LUB should be written to be open and not specific and limiting in terms of uses.
- There is the desire for a hotel and bars to cater to construction crews and travellers between Edmonton and Fort McMurray
- The LUB should be updated to include new uses that didn't exist previously to encourage more diverse business opportunities (e.g., microbrewery, cannabis retail, etc.).

Landscaping

- The Village may consider having a higher landscaping requirement and standard of appearance for the downtown core, without making development too onerous on applicants.
- Architectural controls should generally be avoided as they can be difficult to interpret and act as a barrier to new development.

Processing

- There is a desire for simple, easy development applications.
- It can be challenging for applicants that permit processing slows down for a month around December-January.
- There is a need for qualified development officers, planners, and engineers to support development in the Village.
- The Village does not want to be a roadblock to new development and continually seeks opportunities to remove 'red tape'.





OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK

At the open house, attendees had the option to speak to the project team and provide comments to specific questions on the open house boards. The feedback from the open house is summarized below.

Where we are now

What do you like most about working in the Village of Boyle?

- Close drive
- The people

What do you like most about living in the village of Boyle?

- The people
- Friendly atmosphere
- Feeling safe
- Basic needs are available
- Great place to raise a family
- Rustic and comfortable
- Small town friendliness
- Clean and well kept
- The train hour
- Field Store
- Walking path and bush behind my house
- Walkability

What do you think are the Village's biggest challenges?

- High land taxes that creates financial barriers for residents and building owners
- Providing quality health care through the Hospital
- Enticing new people
- Business growth
- Restaurants and places to eat
- Low rental housing stock
- The CN trains are a nuisance to downtown businesses along Railway Ave

What is your vision for Boyle in the next 25 years?

- To be a thriving community for all ages
- To be a great place to invite folks to retire
- To have a new rec centre and community centre
- To work with municipal partners to expand tourism to the area's natural amenities
- To prioritize the restoration of existing buildings, and build within the lots we have
- Leverage opportunities with the Village as a recreational destination
- A growing community with attractive amenities that offer a different experience than urban living





Where we would like to go

Residential

What kind of residential development would you like to see in Boyle?

- Row housing
- Seniors housing (smaller), self-contained with an attached garage
- Bungalows for seniors

Commercial

What types of businesses and industries should Boyle encourage in the Village?

- Clothing
- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Specialty shops
- Vet
- Apartment buildings with commercial on the bottom

Recreation and Culture

How can Boyle build on its cultural and recreational assets?

- Swimming pool

Open Space Parks and Pathways

How can Boyle enhance its open space, parks, and pathways?

- Disc golf
- Trail systems to Skeleton Lake, walking and biking trails

Agriculture

How can Boyle further support its agricultural businesses and assets?

- Agriculture equipment store (Case or John Deere Dealership)
- Grain bins block Boyle from the view of people on the highway

Community Amenities

Are there any services and programs the Village should offer to support residents or attract new ones?

- Government services
- Professional opportunities e.g., dental, optometry, other specialized medical services

Infrastructure

What kind of Infrastructure does Boyle need to support its residents and businesses?

- Full services to newly annexed areas to help new development attraction

Parking

What are your thoughts on Parking in the Village?

- Semi-truck parking near downtown



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Private/public space

Can Boyle improve its approach to regulating the design of spaces?

- A standard for appearances of downtown commercial buildings

What other topics should be explored?

- Chicken coops
- Correcting land use designations for downtown residential buildings

