



Town of Edson

Municipal Development Plan Update

Project Engagement Summary – Phases 1-3



July 2026




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1.0 Project Overview

The Town of Edson is updating its Municipal Development Plan (MDP) to address issues and trends that have emerged since it was last updated in 2016, and make sure it aligns with recent changes made to the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

1.1 Project Approach

The process of updating Edson’s MDP was designed to follow a three-phase process, which commenced in June of 2025 and is expected to conclude by October of 2026.

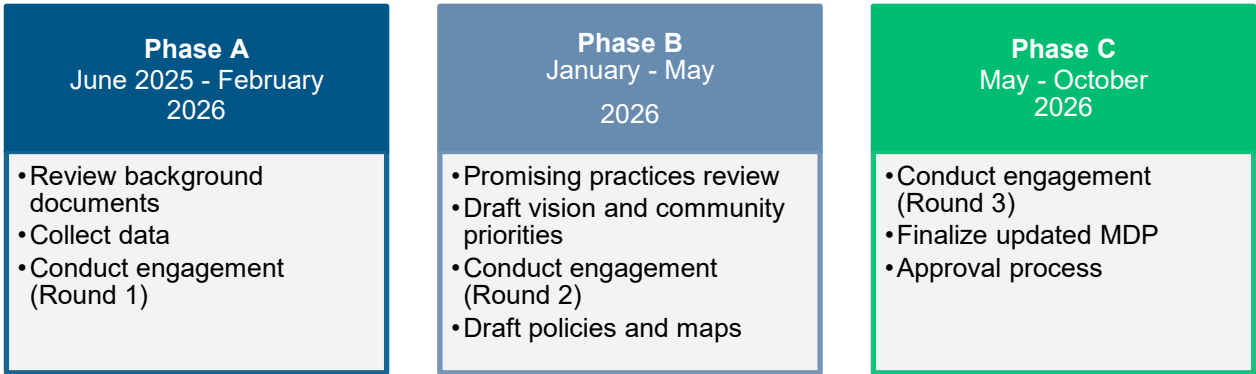


Figure 1: Process of updating Edson’s MDP

2.0 Phase 1 Community Engagement

2.1 Communications and Engagement Overview

As part of the first phase of the project (Phase A), multiple opportunities were provided to increase awareness of the project and gather feedback on the values of current community members, as well as current issues and opportunities. An education campaign was launched in mid-January that featured a series of “Did You Know?” posts about MDPs, along with several fictional community stories to represent how the MDP shows up in residents’ daily lives.

The online survey, youth drawing contest, and community open house opportunities were advertised through posters, social media (Facebook and Instagram), and on the Town’s website. The two workshops were targeted at specific groups within the community; therefore, attendees were contacted directly via email.



Online Survey
January 12-February 6, 2026

A survey was hosted on the project website to provide an opportunity to gather feedback from residents and interested parties. **147** responses were received.



Youth Activity Sheet and Drawing Contest
January 12-February 6, 2026

A youth activity sheet and drawing contest was available on the project website to provide an opportunity for community members aged 18 and under to write about or draw things or places in Edson that they love. **95** submissions were received.



Community Partner Workshop
January 29, 2026

A workshop was hosted with community partners (i.e., developers, builders, business representatives, and community organizations) to understand challenges and opportunities they are experiencing. **Nine attendees** representing **seven distinct organizations** participated. Three pop-ups were hosted at various locations across the Town (i.e., the Edson & District Public Library, Griffiths Park Centre, and the Independent Grocery Store). **27** community members had discussions with project team members.



Community Pop-Ups
January 29-30, 2026



Community Open House
January 29, 2026

A drop-in community open house was held to talk to community members about values, issues, and opportunities. Approximately **11** people attended the open house and conversed with project team members.



Youth Council Workshop
January 30, 2026

A workshop was hosted with members of Edson’s Youth Council to talk to youth about values, issues, and opportunities. **Nine attendees** participated in the discussion.



2.2 Overall Key Themes

The table below includes a high-level summary of key themes that emerged from feedback provided through the online and in-person engagement opportunities.

Key Themes	Description
Beautification	- Edson has a reputation for being dirty. - There are opportunities for increased garbage clean up, beautification, and property maintenance.
Active Transportation	- The existing trail and sidewalk network is valued by community members and was noted as an area of importance now and into the future. - There are opportunities for enhanced connectivity, accessibility, and safety of the trail and sidewalk network throughout the community.
Safety	- Existing crime rates were identified as a concern that impacts personal safety and community perception. - Recent flooding and wildfire events have highlighted the importance of increasing emergency preparedness and having a clear evacuation plan.
Economic Development	- There are concerns about loss of industry and job availability for community members. - There is interest in providing increased support to businesses and those looking to pursue entrepreneurship opportunities. - There is interest in attracting a wider diversity of retail and entertainment uses.
Downtown Revitalization	- Loss of businesses and vacant storefronts are contributing to an undesirable downtown area. - There is interest in continued investment, business support, and a wider diversity of land uses in the downtown area to support its vibrancy.
Community Events and Programming	- Existing events and programs are valued by community members and were noted as an area of importance now and into the future. - There is interest in continued investment to support existing facilities and spaces and increasing connectivity between facilities and spaces to establish a connected and accessible network of community resources and activities.
Community Identity and Sense of Place	- Edson residents care for and support one another. - There is interest in finding ways to attract more residents and visitors, marketing Edson as a place that is good to live and visit, not just work. - There is interest in creating a stronger visual identity in Edson, especially along the highway corridors.

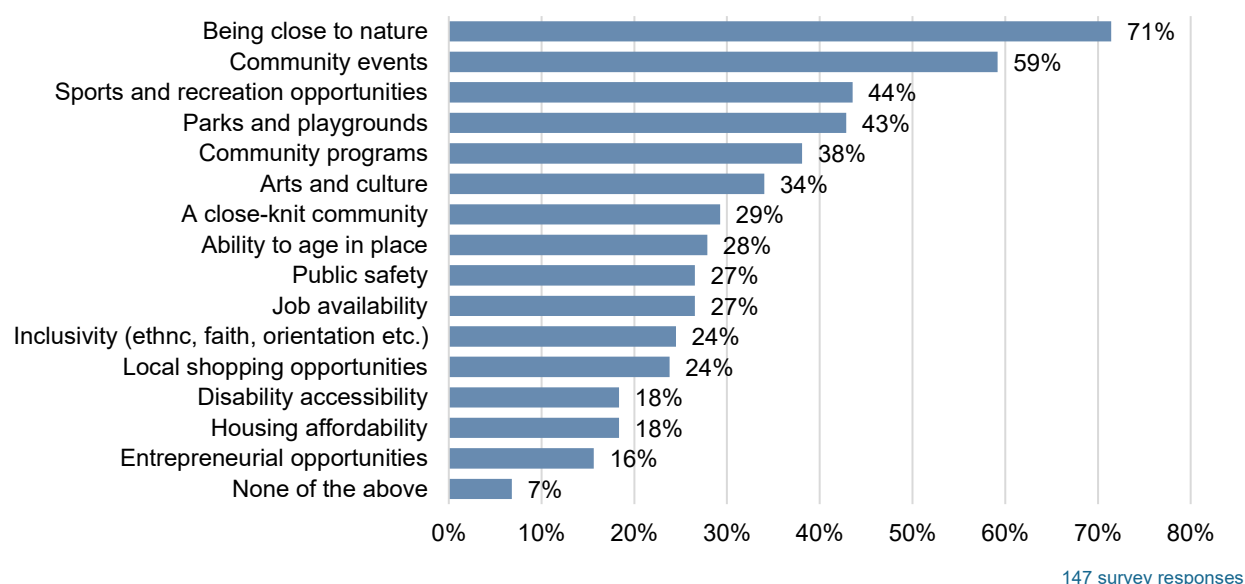


2.3 Online Engagement

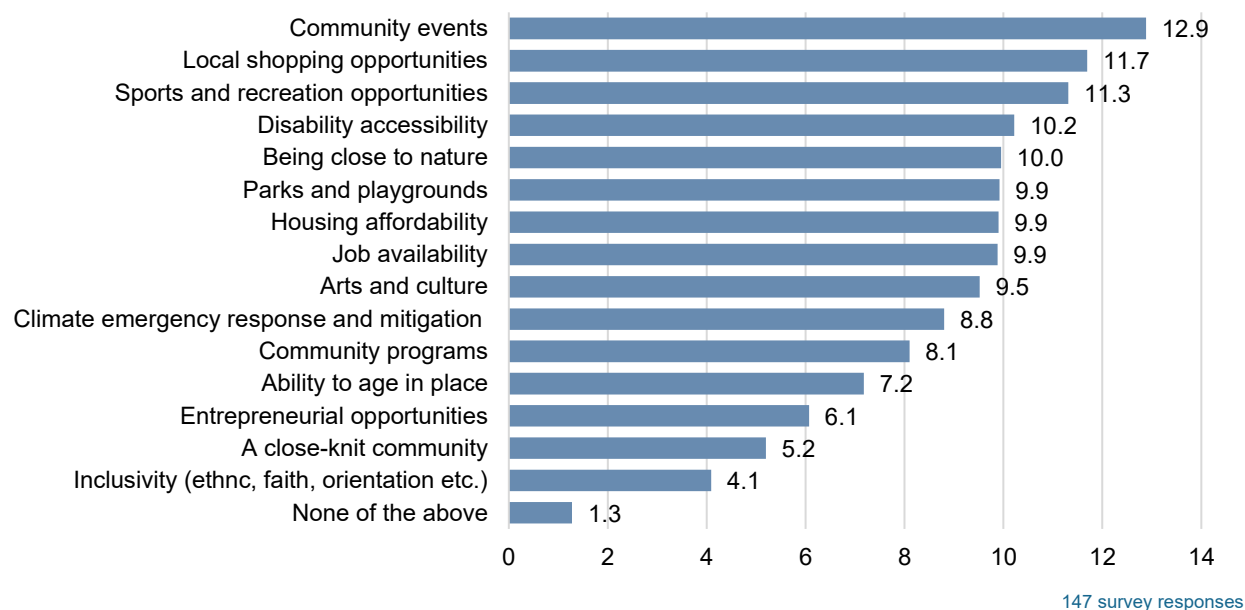
2.3.1 Survey

Community members, residents, and interested parties were asked to provide input on things they love about Edson and what they want to see for its future. The following section provides a high-level summary of feedback received through the online survey.

Survey participants were asked to identify what components make the town of Edson a great place to live, work, spend time, or visit. Of 18 components, the three that were selected most frequently were: being close to nature, community events, and sports and recreation opportunities.



Survey participants were asked to rank the components that they would like to see focused on over the next 20 years, where 1 indicated the most important component and 5 indicated the least important component. Ranked responses were weighted across all participants, then assigned a total score from 1-14 based on frequency of selection. Of the 18 components, the three that were selected most frequently were: community events, local shopping opportunities, and sports and recreation opportunities.



Lastly, participants were asked if there was anything else they hoped for the future of Edson. Open-ended responses included the following:

Topic	Description	Responses (%)
Beautification	Participants noted concerns about cleanliness, litter, building condition, and public maintenance, often linking these issues to reputational harm and declining civic pride. Many participants mentioned opportunities for beautification and increasing greenery for both their aesthetic, but also environmental value.	28%
High Cost of Living	Participants noted high property taxes and utility bills being a major source of frustration and anxiety, often comparing current costs to the past and to other municipalities as a contributor to eroding public trust and threatening long-term residency.	24%
Trails and Nature	Participants indicated strong support for maintaining, expanding and enhancing trails, sidewalks, and walkability. Trails and pathways, as well as green space, were described as positive investments that support health, inclusion, and climate resilience.	22%
Healthcare	Participants noted access to doctors, hospital capacity, and wait times as foundational for residents continuing to call Edson home, especially families and seniors. Although healthcare is not strictly a municipal responsibility, respondents expect strong advocacy and prioritization due to its importance to families, seniors, and workforce attraction.	21%
Road Maintenance	Participants noted frustration about road condition and repairs.	20%
Jobs and Economy	Participants noted concerns that Edson has lost economic momentum and feel that limited job opportunities, particularly for youth, are connected to concerns with out-migration and industry decline.	19%



Topic	Description	Responses (%)
Activities for Youth and Families	Participants noted interest in having more affordable spaces, activities, and programs that are catered towards youth and families.	18%
Local Pride	Participants noted an interest in encouraging more local pride amongst residents.	16%
Downtown Revitalization	Participants noted a perceived lack of social gathering spaces, events, and a vibrant downtown, contributing to feelings of isolation and weak sense of place.	15%
Support for Unhoused and Vulnerable Populations	Participants noted more support is required for unhoused and vulnerable individuals, including housing and social support services.	13%
Social Scene	Participants noted that they would like a wider range of activities and things to do, particularly related to entertainment-type uses.	11%
Inclusion	Participants noted concerns with discrimination against people of different orientations and identities. Several comments from participants expressed interest in limiting the inclusion of immigrants and people who are unhoused.	8%

87 survey comments

*Response percentages do not total 100% as comments could reference multiple themes

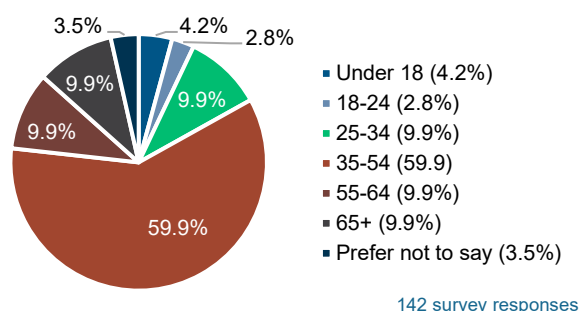


2.3.2 Survey Demographics

The following section provides a summary of survey participant demographics, which were captured to better understand the diversity of people we heard from. Respondents were asked to only answer questions if they felt comfortable doing so.

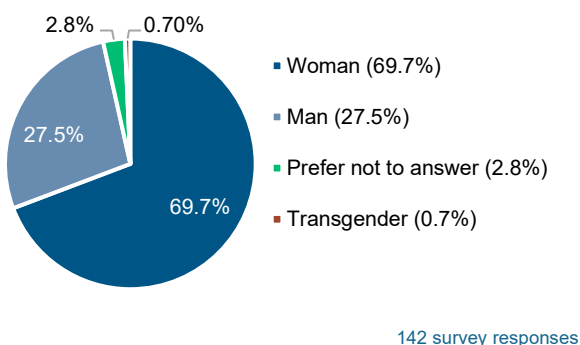
AGE

Most participants (59.9%) who responded to the survey were between the ages of 35-54.



GENDER

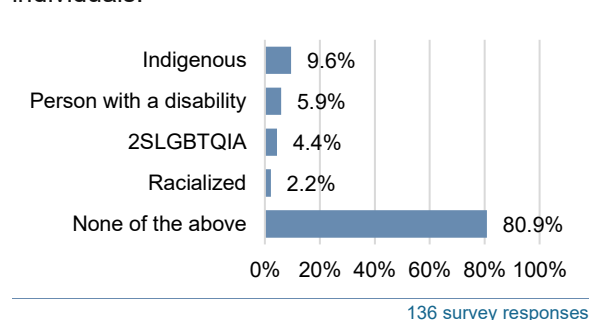
Survey respondents primarily identified as women (69.7%), followed by men (27.5%), participants who preferred not to answer (2.8%), and transgender individuals (0.7%). No survey participants identified as two-spirited, non-binary, or another gender identity that was not listed.



GROUP SELF-IDENTIFICATION

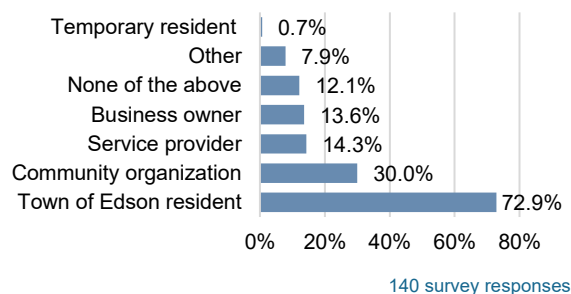
The majority of survey participants (81%) did not fall into one of the identified groups, while 9.6% identified as Indigenous, 5.9% identified as a person with a disability, 4.4% identified as

2SLGBTQIA, and 2.2% identified as racialized individuals.



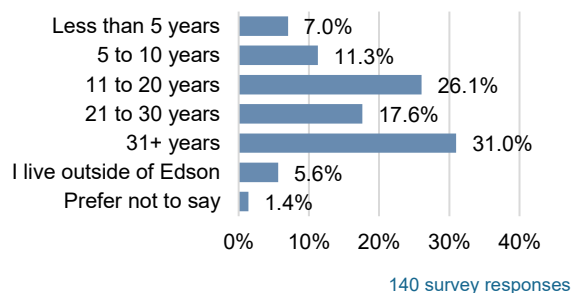
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU AND YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Most survey participants were residents of the Town of Edson (72.9%), followed by community organizations (30.0%), and service providers (14.3%). Other participants identified as business owners (13.6%), "other" (7.9%), and temporary residents (0.7%). 7.9% of participants indicated that none of the above groups describe them and their perspective.



LENGTH OF TIME LIVING IN EDSON

Most survey participants we heard from have lived in Edson for 31+ years (31.0%).





2.3.3 Youth Activity Sheet

A youth activity sheet was prepared to provide an opportunity for community members aged 18 and under to provide feedback on what they love about Edson, what it is missing, what they wish Edson had less of, and what they think other people in the community need. Participants also had the opportunity to draw or write about their favourite place in Edson, where they like to play, things they like, what they like to do, or what they want to see in the community. 95 submissions were received. The following information provides a summary of the main themes received through the submissions.

WHAT YOUTH LOVE ABOUT EDSON

Theme	Top Comments
Community support and kindness	"Nice people", "Kindness", "People help each other"
Recreation facilities/Sports and play	"Pool", "Arena", "Trampoline Park"
Nature, parks, and scenery	"Lots of parks", "Trails"
Safety and cleanliness	"Safe", "Clean", "Peaceful"
Education and learning	"Library", "my school"
Events and festivals	"Jamboree", "Community events"
Food and restaurants	"Restaurants", "Arena food"
Sense of place and belonging	"I grew up here", "My friends and family are here"
Other	"Super fun", "There's so much to do here"

WHAT YOUTH THINK IS MISSING IN EDSON

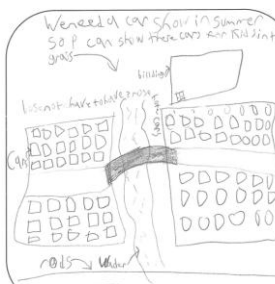
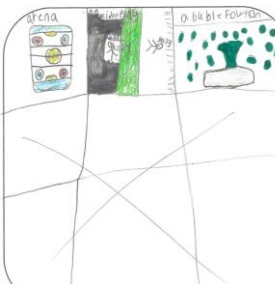
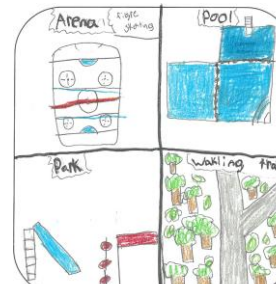
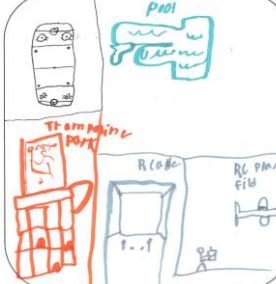
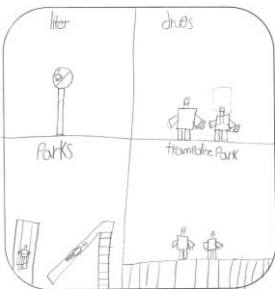
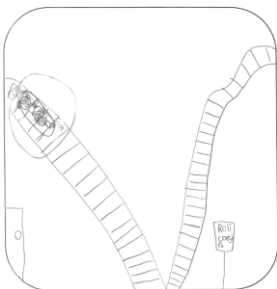
Theme	Top Suggestions
Indoor play and youth recreation	Trampoline Park, indoor play place, arcade
Retail and food options	Starbucks, shopping mall, KFC
Entertainment and attractions	Arcade, laser tag, airsoft, carnival, zoo
Sports & active outdoor	Indoor soccer, skate park, fish pond, dirt biking tracks
Environment and beautification	More grass, sunflowers, less garbage
Health, housing, and social supports	Hospitals, housing for homeless, safe youth spaces
Animals	Pet play place, animal yoga, rescue centre

WHAT YOUTH WISH EDSON HAD LESS OF

Theme	Top Comments
Cleanliness	Litter, pollution, ants, snow
Commercial businesses	Too many pizza places, liquor stores, restaurants, motels
Crime and safety	Crime, vandalism, theft, speeding cars
Social issues, negativity, and discrimination	Homelessness, negativity, hate
Substance use and unhealthy behaviours	Vaping, smoking, drugs, alcohol, junk food
Infrastructure and high cost-of-living	Cars, bumpy roads, taxes, bills

Theme	Examples
Basic needs and cost-of-living support	Food, housing, money, clothing, jobs
Transportation and infrastructure	Trails, bike lanes, roads, traffic lights
Social connection, safety, and inclusion	Kindness, caring friends, safe places
Animal care	Animal shelter
Health and wellbeing services	Doctors, mental health help, water quality
Recreation and activities	Parks, accessible playgrounds, trampoline park
Retail/amenities	Starbucks
Education and literacy	Schools, programming

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2.4 In-Person Engagement

Between January 29-30, 2026, three community pop-up events, two workshops, and one open house were hosted across Edson to talk to community members about the MDP.

2.4.1 Community Pop-Ups

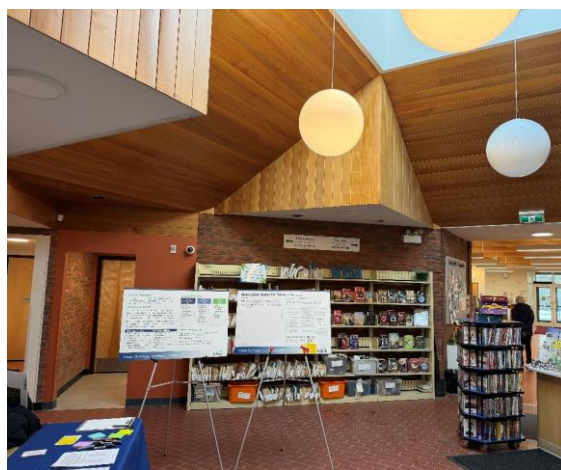
The community pop-ups were hosted at the following times and locations:

- Thursday, January 29, 2026, from 10:00-11:00AM at the Edson & District Public Library – 6 participants
- Thursday, January 29, 2026, from 10:30-11:30AM at Griffiths Park Centre (Thrive After 55) – 10 participants
- Friday, January 30, from 9:00-11:00AM at the Independent Grocer – 11 participants

The following table presents a summary of the major themes raised across all three community pop-ups.

Theme	
<i>Frequently Mentioned</i>	
Community Belonging and Connection	• Participants noted that the town has a strong sense of community connection and pride, and that residents have long-term attachment to the community. This suggests a strong sense of belonging. Residents and youth value connection and civic participation. • Participants are interested in more community-building programs, events, opportunities for volunteerism with support to prevent burnout, and “third spaces” (spaces outside of work and home for people to connect and create community in, that are free and accessible).
Community and Economic Vitality	• Participants love the murals in the community because they increase vibrancy and people-centered public spaces. • Participants noted that there are empty buildings downtown and they would like to see more successful small-businesses, industry diversity, as well as job availability, especially for youth. Participants indicated a desire for improved placemaking/wayfinding and beautified gateway signage.
Active Transportation Infrastructure and Safety	• Participants desired improvements with sidewalk and trail maintenance, and improved connectivity and safety for people travelling by foot, bike, scooter, and wheelchair. One participant indicated that the existing transit system works well.
Social Challenges	• Participants noted concerns about addiction, food insecurity, poverty, vandalism, and homelessness. Downtown was identified as an area for concern where these challenges are present. Participants identified young people and vulnerable adults feeling excluded or having a hard time making friends. • Participants identified a need for supportive housing, social services, and safe and inclusive design of infrastructure and public spaces (i.e., streets, sidewalks, and buildings) to improve accessibility and visibility.
<i>Less Frequently Mentioned</i>	
Recreation and Youth Spaces	• Participants stated that the Town has great recreation facilities, trails, parks, arts/culture, library/museum, and parks, winter programming, accessibility, and event spaces. The library, centennial park, and museum were noted as anchors in the community. Residents are very excited about the new multiplex, however, a need for dedicated, accessible, and affordable indoor spaces for youth was identified.

Theme	
Housing Affordability and Suitability	Participants shared a desire for tiny homes, more seniors' housing, and variety of service options within seniors housing, workforce housing, and more housing options for citizens transitioning out of homelessness.
Environment	- Participants highlighted a problem with garbage litter in the community. - Participants noted that they would like to see trees along the highway to improve beautification. - Participants shared concerns about whether they are prepared for or fully understand how to evacuate in the event of floods or wildfires.



2.4.2 Workshops

The following section provides a high-level summary of feedback gathered as part of the two workshops.

COMMUNITY PARTNER WORKSHOP

The Community Partner Workshop took place on January 29, 2026, from 2:00pm to 3:30PM at the Galloway Station Museum. Attendees represented a variety of community organizations including housing and support service providers, private sector landlords and residential developers, and local business owners and representatives. There were nine attendees who participated in the workshop, which resulted in the following emerging themes:

Theme	
Frequently Mentioned	
Housing Diversity	- Attendees want to see a range of diverse housing forms to address community housing needs including homes across a range of densities that are accessible, affordable, and permit aging-in-place, while allowing more opportunities for ownership. - There is interest in public education about different housing types and the communities who have successfully used them to help reduce stigma and misconceptions.
Small Businesses and Supporting the Local Economy	Attendees want more small and local businesses and opportunities for entrepreneurship, jobs, and business attraction to create a stronger and more resilient business environment.

Theme	
Downtown Revitalization	- Attendees expressed interest in revitalizing the downtown core, noting opportunities for tenant attraction, small-scale retail, and mixed-use buildings. - There is interest in finding additional ways to take advantage of the many drivers who pass through Edson.
Pedestrian Safety	- Attendees noted that many residents do not feel safe downtown or along the main highway corridors. - There is interest in best practices in environmental design that encourage safety (e.g., CPTED principles). Suggestions included more lighting, increased visibility, and enhanced sidewalk and trail connections.
<i>Less Frequently Mentioned</i>	
Tourism and Identity	- Attendees noted a desire to look to other communities to understand how they are developing strategies and clear identities that support tourism and attraction. - Suggestions included wayfinding signage, packaged tourism experiences built around Town assets, and a beautification and vibrancy philosophy, especially in for the highway corridors.
Recreation, Community Spaces, and Programming	- Attendees placed high value on recreation opportunities, existing community spaces, and programming, seeking continued and timely investment in facilities that support indoor activities, affordable programming, and social service support. - There is a desire to establish a connected network of facilities and spaces that support community events and activities.
Public Realm and Active Transportation	- Attendees noted that trails are a major community asset and want to see increased walkability and connectivity between trails and sidewalks, including supporting amenities such as benches/street furniture. - There is also interest in prioritizing accessibility of active transportation infrastructure.
Development Costs and Approval Processes	- Attendees indicated that lengthy application and approval processes combined with increased costs and strict regulations increase “red tape” and cause barriers to investment in Edson compared to other communities. - There is interest in incentives that enable and support development.
Volunteer Capacity	- Attendees noted concerns with the current capacity of volunteers within the community, indicating that current resources are over capacity. - There is interest in establishing regional volunteer partnerships to increase capacity to sustain events and programming.

YOUTH COUNCIL WORKSHOP

The Youth Council Workshop took place on January 30, 2026, from 1:30-3:00PM at the Griffiths Park Centre. There were nine attendees who participated in the workshop, which resulted in the following emerging themes:

Theme	
<i>Frequently Mentioned</i>	
Safety, Mobility, and Accessibility	Youth Council members noted feeling unsafe at times and that there are areas of the town with vandalism, mobility barriers (not everyone can drive), sidewalk gaps, issues lighting, and accessibility.
Social Challenges and Inclusion	Youth Council members are working to provide programs and opportunities for unhoused residents.

Theme	
	Youth Council members identified affordability as a barrier to the use of community spaces or participation in events, seeking student discounts to reduce costs.
Local Economy and Entrepreneurship Opportunities	Youth Council members desire a greater mix of retail options, increased support for small/local businesses, job opportunities, and space for entrepreneurs (e.g., co-working spaces).
<i>Less Frequently Mentioned</i>	
Recreation and Youth Spaces	- Youth Council members noted that Edson has great trails, parks, arts/culture venues, sports, and teen programming. - They would like to see more indoor places to hang out during the winter and like that the town has a strong sense of community and supports use of existing facilities for events like sports watch parties.
Civic Engagement and Community Identity	- Youth Council members are interested in learning about and contributing to how the Town works. - They are interested in volunteerism, advocacy for youth, building community, and maintaining a “small town feel.”
Infrastructure and Aesthetics	Youth Council members noted issues with flooding in certain areas of the community (particularly 13 Ave), road quality/potholes, cleanliness (garbage/litter), private property maintenance, and the look of industrial frontage along the highway.
Environment & Climate	Youth Council members want to see Edson continue to be a steward of the environment, reducing the community’s carbon footprint and waste, while acknowledging Alberta’s oil and gas industry context.

We asked Youth Council participants to rank the top five values that are most important to them, both in terms of what the Town is currently doing well, and in terms of where the Town can improve in the future.

Top Values Identified by Youth Council Members	
<i>Currently Doing Well</i>	<i>Areas to Focus for the Future</i>
Community Events	Public Safety
Arts and culture opportunities	Access to Health Services
Sports and recreation opportunities	Job Availability
Community Programs	Inclusivity
Accessible for people with physical and intellectual disabilities and/or differences	Housing Affordability





2.4.3 Open House

A public open house was held on January 29, 2026, from 5:30-7:30PM at the Galloway Station Museum. 11 community members attended the session to share their thoughts and feedback about the future of Edson. The following information presents the major themes that were raised:

Theme	
Recreation, Events, and Tourism	Attendees valued local recreation assets and community events, expressing an interest in more events that include tourism potential.
Economic and Business Support	- Some attendees noted that doing business in the Town has not been easy in the past, experiencing difficulties with permitting, high taxes, and contradicting policies and regulations. - There is interest in seeing less vacant buildings and having the Town support local businesses and marketing and promotion. - There is interest in diversifying the economy, noting concerns with current job availability, especially for young people.
Support for Seniors	- Some attendees noted concerns with gaps in healthcare staffing. - There is interest in housing for retired and quasi-retired seniors.
Community Identity and Support	- Attendees indicated that residents have a strong sense of community identity and care for another, providing mutual support in times of need. - Concerns were raised that the Town is viewed as a place to work rather than to live or visit.
Intentional Growth	- Attendees noted that the Town needs to grow in a way that considers and acknowledges existing constraints, such as servicing capacity and presence of muskeg that creates challenging development conditions. - There is interest in focusing on maintaining what exists as opposed to trying to expand in a way that is not sustainable or manageable. - Attracting young families was noted as one technique to maintain vibrancy.
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	- Some attendees identified concerns about increased crime and expressed interest in proactive programs. - Attendees also noted a need for increased planning and education around emergency preparedness to enable coordinated and safe evacuation processes.



Figure 2: Graphic Recording of the Future of Edson



3.0 Phase 2 Community Engagement

3.1 Communications and Engagement Overview

As part of the second phase of the project (Phase B), multiple opportunities were provided to collect feedback on the draft MDP vision statement and community priorities.

The online survey and pop-up opportunities were advertised on social media (Facebook and Instagram), and on the Town's website. The workshop with the Youth Council was for a specific group; therefore, attendees were invited directly via email.



Online Survey *March 23-May 1, 2026*

A survey was hosted on the project website to provide an opportunity to gather feedback from residents and interested parties. **54 responses** were received.



Participatory Mapping *March 23-May 1, 2026*

A map was available online and at in-person events to identify places and spaces that community members like or value, dislike or need improvement, or that they have questions about. **17 areas** were identified.



Youth Council Workshop *April 13, 2026*

A workshop was hosted with members of Edson's Youth Council to talk to youth about values, issues, and opportunities. **Nine attendees** participated in the discussion.



Community Pop-Ups *April 20-21, 2026*

Three pop-ups were hosted at various locations across the Town (i.e., one at the Galloway Station Museum and two at the Griffiths Park Centre). Approximately **35** community members had discussions with project team members.



3.2 Overall Key Themes

The table below includes a high-level summary of key themes that emerged from feedback provided through the online and in-person engagement opportunities.

Key Themes	Description
Safety	There are concerns with community safety resulting from undesirable activities in certain areas, racism and discrimination, unavailable or disconnected infrastructure (i.e., sidewalks), and lack of available mental health services within Edson.
Community Identity and Sense of Place	There is interest in celebrating Edson's closeknit community spirit, while working towards enhanced cleanliness and beautification that will help improve the town's image.
Affordability	There are concerns with housing prices and cost of living making the community inaccessible to some.
Programming and Activities	There is interest in a wider range of spaces and programming catered towards different demographic groups and continued investment in existing facilities and ongoing programs, and events.
Draft Vision Statement	There was clear support provided by participants with recommended changes to capture inclusiveness, expressing the town's history, affordability, clarity around safety, and increased emphasis on beautification, economic attraction, and democratic processes.
Draft Community Priorities	There was clear support provided by participants with recommended changes that speak to the town's character, having policies and programs in place to address safety concerns, and increasing fiscal responsibility and overall affordability.

3.3 Online Engagement

3.3.1 Youth Council Workshop

The Youth Council Workshop took place on April 13, 2026, from 5:00-5:45PM. There were nine attendees who participated in the workshop, which resulted in the following takeaways:

- Participants were generally supportive of the draft vision statement and did not have any recommended changes.
- Participants were generally supportive of the draft community priorities, commenting that infrastructure was missing and that they would like to see it have a place within the framework.
- Participants were generally supportive of preliminary youth-focused and age-friendly policies being prepared as part of the draft MDP.
- Participants felt that feedback from the first workshop had been captured appropriately within the work completed to date and that they are excited about the project and future engagement opportunities.

3.3.2 Survey

Community members, residents, and interested parties were asked to provide feedback on a draft vision statement and set of community priorities that explain the ideal state of Edson in 2050. The following section provides a high-level summary of feedback received through the online survey.



Survey participants were asked if the draft vision statement captures what they want Edson to be like in the future. The draft vision statement that was shared with the community is as follows:

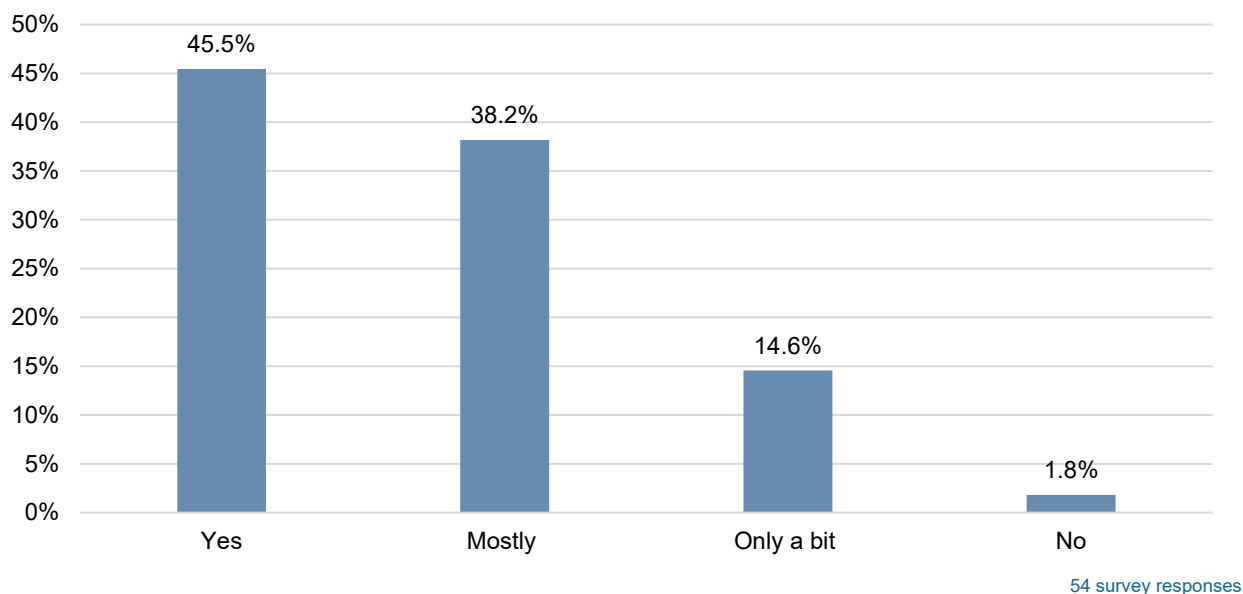
In 2050...

Edson is a beautiful community where people, nature, and opportunity thrive. With a strong and diverse local economy, an extensive network of accessible parks, trails, and recreation facilities, and a lively downtown, we celebrate our people-focused mindset and strong community spirit. Our services and amenities enrich everyday life and provide opportunities for community connection.

We are committed to:

- **Cleanliness and beautification** to provide an attractive and safe place for people of all ages and abilities to live, work, and visit.
- **Responsible asset management** to maintain what exists, while embracing strategic growth opportunities that support a resilient future.

Most participants confirmed that the draft vision statement did (45.5%) or mostly (38.2%) capture what they want Edson to be like in the future, while 14.6% of participants indicated that it only slightly did, and 1.8% of respondents indicated that it did not.



Survey participants were asked if there was anything they would like to see added, changed, or removed from the vision statement. Open-ended responses included the following:

Topic	Description	Responses (%)
Nothing to add, Change, or Remove	Participants noted they did not have anything to add, change, or remove.	40.7%
Recommended Addition	Participants proposed the following additions to the vision statement: • Perhaps add inclusiveness and that community safety is a priority. • Something that expresses the town's unique history/legacy, while still promoting a town that is sustainable to the changes facing our world today. • More green – environmentally friendly/conscious. • Commitment to keeping our economy moving forward and expanding. Edson will always strive to bring new industry and projects to town to keep local businesses and the economy growing and providing employment to citizens. • Noting Edson as a destination? • More emphasis on beautification. Property owners need to be more accountable for houses and rentals. • A focus on upholding traditional Christian values/cultures. • A focus on ensuring democratic processes and laws being followed. • A focus on community sense and facts, not feelings. • Affordability, for both businesses and residents. • Would like to see something like “with abundant opportunities in the arts, sports, and healthy lifestyles for all ages”. • Making Edson more walkable. • The community is committed to providing safe and continuous housing opportunities for all residents. • Being safe while remaining affordable. • Economic development and attracting investors to improve infrastructure and create jobs.	29.6%
General Question or Comment	Participants left the following questions or comments about the Town: • Not needing so many trails and parks. • Council and Administration must get spending under control. Spending with no regard for residential and commercial taxpayers so rent continues to climb. Desire to live within means and reduce Town overhead. • Every wish comes with a dollar sign, and Edson is expensive to live in. • Residents care for one another but not without consequence to those who choose to misuse or take advantage. Desire to feel safe within the community.	22.2%

Topic	Description	Responses (%)
	- The community needs to be safe before it's beautiful. Questioning what cleanliness and beautification have to do with safety. - Many of the parks are not accessible. - Downtown is not lively; it needs serious improvements. - Fix the potholes. Desire for improved street conditions.	
Future Action	Participants expressed interest in the following: - Need to do something to attract the younger generation or try to retain the young generation that is here. - Free classes and events for all ages, including those aged 30+ years. - Would love to see a campaign focused on attracting retirees to live here. Proximity between Edmonton and the mountains and affordable housing could boost stagnant growth. - Clean along 4th and 2nd Avenue in town. - Want more walking trails, outdoor activities for family fun, and associated infrastructure (i.e., benches). - Would like to see stricter bylaw enforcement of sidewalk snow shovelling during the winter.	7.4%

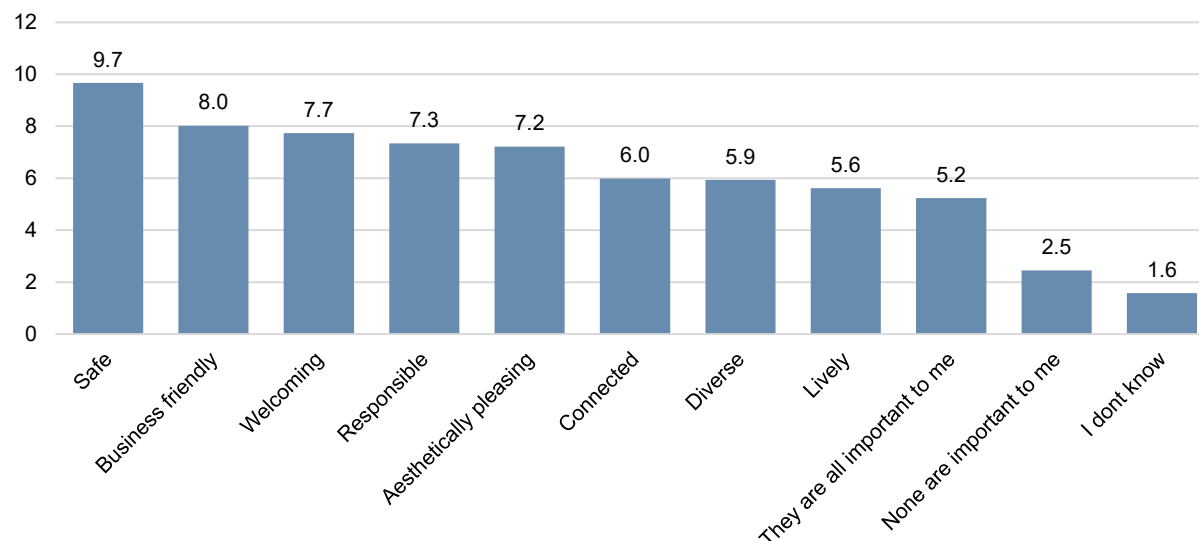
54 survey responses

Survey participants were asked to select and rank the community priorities that they deemed to be the most important to them. The community priorities that were shared with the community are as follows:

In 2050, Edson is:

- Welcoming:** *We are inclusive and care for and support one another.*
- Safe:** *We provide services and programming to help make people feel safe.*
- Diverse:** *We welcome people of different ages, ethnicities, and abilities, a variety of housing types and sizes, and a range of land uses, businesses, and industries.*
- Aesthetically pleasing:** *We prioritize cleanliness and beautification.*
- Business friendly:** *We support local businesses and entrepreneurship.*
- Connected:** *We have an accessible active transportation network and multi-modal transportation options, while making sure key services and amenities are located strategically and connected to one another.*
- Lively:** *We offer a diverse range of recreation opportunities, community events, and programming, while investing in revitalizing the downtown area.*
- Responsible:** *We care for the environment, collaborate closely with neighbours and other levels of government, and manage assets and growth opportunities intentionally.*

Ranked responses were weighted across all participants, then assigned a total score based on frequency of selection. Of the 11 possible selections (including "They are all important to me", "None are important to me", and "I don't know"), the three that were chosen most frequently were: safe, business friendly, and welcoming.



54 survey responses

Survey participants were asked if there was anything they would like to see added, changed, or removed from the community priorities. Open-ended responses included the following:

Topic	Description	Responses (%)
Nothing to Add, Change, or Remove	Participants noted they did not have anything to add, change, or remove.	29.6%
Recommended Addition	Participants proposed the following additions to the community priorities: • Policy and policing – framework to create zero tolerance for crime. • The wording of “Welcoming” and “Diverse” seem to overlap, is it possible to combine these? • Maintain Edson’s character (houses and neighbourhoods). • Forests make Edson feel welcoming, maintenance and preservation are important. • More activities for teens and young adults (not just sports). • Would be nice to see anti-racism messaging added. • A need for diverse housing. There is not assisted living facilities in Edson where couples can live together. • Affordability – a beautiful town with a lot to offer is no good if people can’t afford to live here. • Safety is a large concern. • Need to be fiscally responsible.	14.8%
General Question or Comment	Participants left the following questions or comments about the Town:	11.1%

Topic	Description	Responses (%)
	- You can't make people feel safe. Have to put policies and policing in place to respond to crime. "Programming" does not translate into "making". - Disgusted by hateful racist comments by some citizens that reflect poorly on our community and make it unwelcoming. - If Edson is safe and aesthetically pleasing, the rest will fall into place. - As a resident, I would like to feel safe having my children walk places without me. I would like to feel safe running alone as an adult, especially during the dark winter mornings. - Spending money the Town does not have is irresponsible to the taxpayers. - Desire for the Town to focus more on park improvements and increasing connectivity of the trail system so people can get around better on foot. - Desire for lower taxes and accountability amongst Council and Administration. Be responsible, do not spend money the Town doesn't have.	
Future Action	Participants expressed interest in the following: - More promotion and partnerships to bring tourism to Hornbeck skiing and Willmore. - Need more sidewalks in the area between Vanier Arena and Sobeys to improve pedestrian safety. - Keep housing thriving and aesthetic so that people want to walk and access businesses. - Improve street conditions, fix potholes.	5.6%

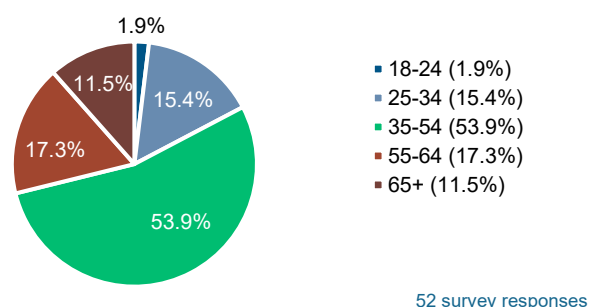


3.3.3 Survey Demographics

The following section provides a summary of survey participant demographics, which were captured to better understand the diversity of people we heard from. Respondents were asked to only answer questions if they felt comfortable doing so.

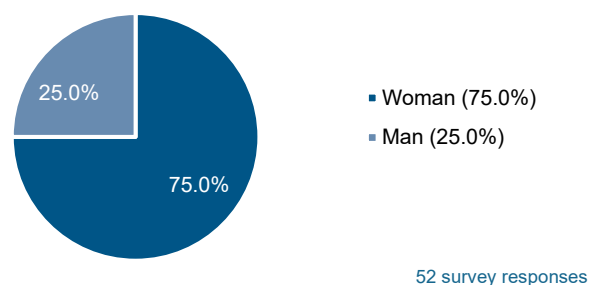
AGE

Most participants (53.9%) who responded to the survey were between the ages of 35-54.



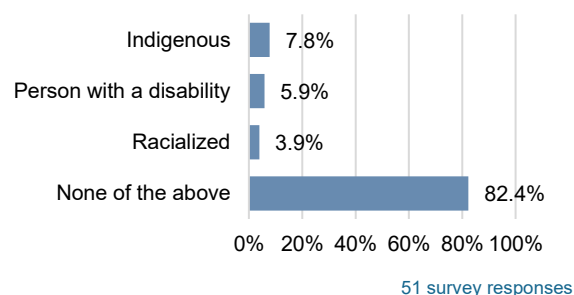
GENDER

Survey respondents primarily identified as women (75.0%), followed by men (25.0%). No survey participants identified as two-spirited, non-binary, transgender, or another gender identity that was not listed.



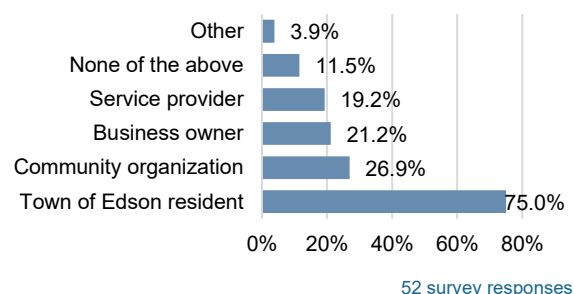
GROUP SELF-IDENTIFICATION

The majority of survey participants (82%) did not fall into one of the identified groups, while 7.8% identified as Indigenous, 5.9% identified as a person with a disability, and 3.9% identified as racialized individuals.



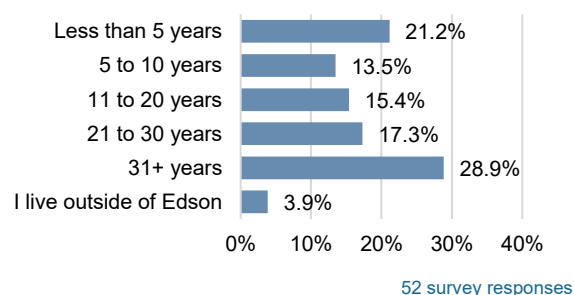
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU AND YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Most survey participants were residents of the Town of Edson (75.0%), followed by community organizations (26.9%), business owners (21.2%), and service providers (19.2%). 11.5% of participants indicated that none of the listed groups described them and their perspective and 3.9% identified as "other".



LENGTH OF TIME LIVING IN EDSON

Most survey participants we heard from have lived in Edson for 31+ years (28.9%).



3.3.4 Participatory Mapping

Participatory mapping is a technique used to visually identify places and spaces that are liked/valued, disliked or need improvement, or that people have questions about. This process allows participants to contribute their own experiences, relationships, information, and ideas about a place to generate a map that represents community values and perceptions. For this project, feedback from community members was gathered both in-person and online. A summary of feedback received is included below.

Liked/Valued	Disliked/Need Improvements	Questions
Griffiths Park Centre	Flooding (13 Avenue)	What is the use/status of the doctor's clinic?
Edson and District Leisure Centre	Quality of roads (potholes)	
Red Brick Arts Centre	Vacant properties and storefronts downtown	
Community Gardens	Commercial and industrial properties along the highway don't look nice	
Edson & District Public Library	Why isn't there an outdoor rink in Hillendale? Children use the pond in the winter, which is unsafe	
Vision Park		
Willmore Park		
Downtown murals		
Centennial Park		
Galloway Station Museum		

17 interactions

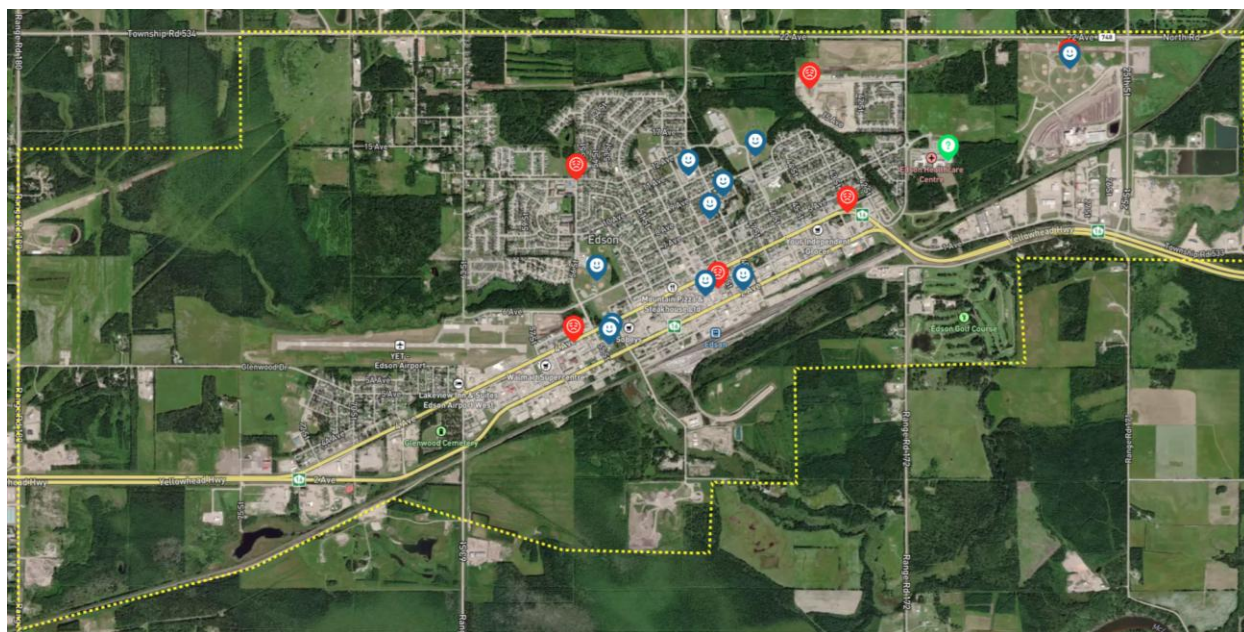


Figure 3: Online Tool to Capture Participatory Mapping Input



Figure 4: In-Person Tool to Capture Participatory Mapping Input



3.4 In-Person Engagement

Between April 20-21, 2026, three community pop-up events were hosted across Edson to talk to community members about the MDP.

3.4.1 Community Pop-Ups

The community pop-ups were hosted at the following times and locations:

- Monday, April 20, 2026, from 11:45AM-1:00 PM at the Galloway Station Museum (Interagency Mini-Conference) – **25 participants**
- Monday, April 20, 2026, from 1:45-2:30 PM at Griffiths Park Centre (Thrive After 55) – **4 participants**
- Tuesday, April 21, from 9:30-11:30AM at Griffiths Park Centre – (Family Drop-in) – **5 participants**

The following table presents a summary of the major themes raised across the three community pop-ups.

Theme	Comments
Community Identity and Pride	• Residents value sense of connection and pride, but feel it is decreasing due to physical decline and service gaps. • Murals, parks, festivals (e.g., Renaissance Fair), and successful youth programs were highlighted as strengths that are worth expanding and building upon. • Participants indicated a desire to have intentional efforts to welcome newcomers including welcome pamphlets and community information and events. • Littering and poorly maintained public spaces were widely seen as undermining community pride. • Downtown and highway corridors are viewed as run-down, unattractive, and under-maintained, undermining community pride. There is strong desire for: • Downtown revitalization and beautification. • Pedestrianized streets and patio spaces. • Restoration or celebration of historic elements. • Participants expressed interest Edson being “known for something”.
Housing Affordability and Availability	• Participants noted a lack of family-size rental housing (3+ bedrooms), with high competition among low-income households. • Participants noted poor condition of rental units and a perceived lack of landlord accountability, indicating that they would like to see stronger property standards and bylaw enforcement. • Participants noted gaps across the housing continuum, including a lack of women’s support and insufficient transitional and supportive housing. • Seniors’ housing is a growing concern with long waitlists and a need for flexible, adaptable models and in-home supports.
Community Health and Safety	• Concerns were raised about the lack of mental health and addiction supports available locally, including prevention and treatment services. • There is a strong support for harm-reduction measures, including needle disposal in parks and public areas. • Emergency shelters and overnight options are viewed as critical, particularly for women and those experiencing homelessness.

Theme	Comments
	- Participants emphasized that community well-being and safety are foundational to achieving the Town's long-term vision and want it to include mental health, addiction, accessibility, and inclusion of underrepresented populations. - Increasing racism was noted in the community, alongside a desire for the Town to address misinformation, promote inclusion, and strengthen community safety.
Economy and Employment	- Participants indicated a desire to broaden the local economy beyond oil and gas and attract more industries. - Participants indicated challenges with finding stable, meaningful employment. - Perception that policies focused on attracting new residents or workers are outpacing available housing, services, and jobs, creating frustration. - Small businesses face challenges staying viable, while residents acknowledge the need for big-box retailers to provide affordable essentials.
Governance and Planning	- Participants indicated there are zoning barriers for transitional and supportive housing. - Participants want planning to be educational, intentional, and inclusive, with clearer communication about services, development plans, and priorities.
Environmental Stewardship and Education	- Strong support for community clean-ups, visible messaging, and creative awareness campaigns (e.g., billboards, mascots). - Residents want more hands-on education for adults and children on: - Recycling practices. - Waste reduction. - Caring for shared spaces. - Ideas included repair days, recycling education events, and school-based initiatives, linking environmental care to community responsibility.
Liveliness and Programming	- Participants indicated that they would like to see more programming for families with young children. - Desire for more community-building programs, free or low-cost events, volunteer opportunities, and accessible "third spaces" to connect outside of home and work. - Interest in creative and interactive activities (e.g., arts, animals in parks, hands-on programs) rather than only formal or scheduled events. - Would like to see more programming and flexible hours for existing community facilities like the pool, library, and rink. - Desire to expand walking trails and enhance trail connectivity. - Would like to see underutilized lands be purposefully redeveloped for parks or other active uses rather than parking. - Noted gaps: - Indoor play and social spaces for children aged 6-15. - More inclusive, accessible programs for youth and families.



4.0 Phase 3 Community Engagement

4.1 Communications and Engagement Overview

As part of the third and final phase of the project (Phase C), multiple opportunities were provided to collect feedback on the draft MDP, specifically related to the objectives and policies. The opportunities included a virtual open house and an online survey.

The virtual open house and online survey were advertised on social media (Facebook and Instagram), and on the Town's website. The draft MDP was circulated both internally and externally, as detailed below, and each of the circulations were sent to respective parties via email.



Internal Circulation
June 9-July 10, 2026

The draft MDP was circulated to Town of Edson staff for review and comment. Outside of survey responses, **four sets of comments** were received.



External Circulation
June 9-July 10, 2026

The draft MDP was circulated to community partners and organizations who have participated in the project to date. Outside of survey responses, **two sets of comments** were received.



Youth Council Circulation
June 9-July 10, 2026

The draft MDP was circulated to the Youth Council for review and comment. Outside of survey responses, **no comments** were received.



Virtual Open House and Online Survey
June 9-July 10, 2026

A virtual open house was hosted on the project website to inform the community of the main changes to the MDP and gather feedback on proposed changes. A survey was embedded within the virtual open house, which received **22 responses**. The virtual open house was visited **174 times**.



4.2 Overall Key Themes

The table below includes a high-level summary of key themes that emerged from feedback provided through the online engagement opportunities.

Key Themes	Description
Land Use and Development	There is interest in increasing density in certain areas to allow for alternative housing forms, confirming servicing availability to encourage development, and allowing more flexibility with redesignating land for other uses/development types.
Transportation and Connectivity	• There are concerns about the quality of roadways (Highway 16) and active transportation infrastructure. • There is interest in maximizing the exposure from traffic travelling along Highway 16.
Programming and Activities	• There is a desire to keep existing programs and projects up to date and improve them when opportunities arise. • There is a need for more activities for teenagers and youth.
Community Perception	There are concerns with community safety, the cleanliness of streets, maintenance of vacant lots, and overall beautification.
Fiscal Responsibility and Affordability	There is interest in financial responsibility to reduce overall cost of living and finding alternative funding sources for municipal priorities.
Draft Objectives and Policies	• There is a desire to focus on quality and affordability, making sure that objectives and policies do not create onerous requirements and unrealistic expectations that create more barriers to development. • There was clear support for ongoing programs and initiatives, acknowledging what the Town is doing well and wanting to continue that into the future. • There is hesitation about infill development, higher density housing forms, and mixed-use developments changing the character of existing neighbourhoods.

4.3 Online Engagement

4.3.1 Virtual Open House

Community members, residents, and interested parties were invited to view a Virtual Open House (VOH), which included relevant project information, an overview of the draft MDP, and a summary of the proposed policies. The VOH supplemented the project webpage and online survey.



Figure 5: Screenshot of the VOH Room

4.3.2 Survey

Community members, residents, and interested parties were asked to provide feedback on the draft MDP, focusing on the draft objectives and policies within each main policy area. The following section provides a high-level summary of feedback received through the online survey.

Regarding MDP section 4.0 *Sustaining What We Have*, the following objectives informed draft policies within the MDP:

1. **Existing Infrastructure** - Complete timely infrastructure upgrades to maintain efficient provision of utility services.
2. **All Established Areas** - Activate and diversify established areas by encouraging appropriate residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and mixed-use development.
3. **Economic Attraction and Retention** - Attract a range of community-oriented service, employment, and entertainment uses.
4. **The Downtown and Commercial Corridor** - Attract investment within the commercial corridor and revitalize the downtown area as a hub of local activity.
5. **Existing Programs, Services, and Amenities** - Guide efficient and economic use of community resources to build on existing programs, services, and amenities to enhance community safety and support residents across different life stages.
6. **Local Identity** - Focus on opportunities to improve the well-being of residents through enhancing the built environment and keeping community identity central to future development.



7. *Strengthening Relationships - Facilitate partnerships with neighbours, Indigenous community members, and community organizations.*

Survey participants were asked whether any changes or additions should be made to objectives and if any additional topics should be included to support the Town in effectively sustaining its existing neighbourhoods, employment areas, community amenities, services, and programs.

Comments received that related to specific objectives included:

- Objective #2: We don't need commercial or industrial in neighbourhoods with residential houses. Promote beautification of existing houses, don't need any more giant infills in old neighborhoods or Glenwood. It sucks not seeing the sun in a backyard because of a giant house beside.
- Objective #5: There are typically activities for very young children but the town is lacking activities for teenagers. There should be a greater focus on creating activities for teenagers to get them involved and keep them busy.
- Objectives #6 and #7: We need to focus on improving and keeping the existing programs and projects up to date.
- Objective #7: Newcomers/new Canadians.

Other open-ended comments received included the following:

Key Themes	Comments
Transportation	• Fixing potholes around town. • Accommodating and servicing the massive amount of trucking industry traffic and the travelling public who use Highway 16. • Public transportation. • Fix Highway 16.
Development	• The Town should (preferably will) develop a policy regarding empty lots. • Consider reduced parking requirements for infill developments to allow for alternative housing needs. • Increasing density can also include adding suites/additions for parents or kids to live/stay on existing properties. • Allow easier redesignation to R1B to allow additional dwelling units.
Beautification	• The town is so dirty. Overgrown green spaces, weeds, and sand on the roads from the winter. Why would folks come here when there are better alternatives (e.g., Whitecourt)? • Beautification grant. • Keeping the town clean and free of cluttered lots. Roads should be free of debris and dirt. Homeowners should be warned/fined for unsightly properties.
Programming	• Programs or spaces for older teens/young adults (other than bars). • A dedicated park-like space in the downtown area where residents can gather, converse, and socialize. • More opportunities for young adults/older teens. Some kind of marketing towards that demographic would be great.
Financial Sustainability	• Keep tax dollars down to prevent residents from relocating to other communities. • Consider providing financial incentives (temporary) to lower property taxes and encourage change/investment. • Question about use and funding of Town-owned vehicles.
Other	• Getting more doctors should be the top of the list.

Key Themes	Comments
	• More and better access for the disabled (e.g., people in wheelchairs, with scooters or strollers, the elderly, those with physical disabilities, etc.). New businesses have opened and there is no accesses or ways for them to enter. • Bylaws regarding residential pets. • Removing support for temporary foreign worker programs in entry level jobs. • Completion of trails identified in the Trails Master Plan before new trails are developed. • Strengthen the relationship between Edson and Yellowhead County. • Nothing to add, change, or remove.

Regarding MDP section 5.0 *Positioning Ourselves for Growth*, the following objectives informed draft policies within the MDP:

1. **New Growth** - *Make informed decisions about where to develop within Edson's boundary.*
2. **Future Infrastructure** - *Align future infrastructure planning with strategic objectives, market demand, and feasible development opportunities.*
3. **Neighbourhood Design** - *Design new neighbourhoods and spaces to support a high quality of life.*
4. **Complete Communities** - *Promote affordable and diverse housing, services, and amenities that support residents of all ages and abilities.*
5. **Emergency Preparedness** - *Increase readiness for emergencies and evacuations at a pace that matches community growth.*

Survey participants were asked whether any changes or additions should be made to the objectives and if any other topics should be included to support the Town in preparing for future growth.

Comments received that related to a specific objective included:

- Objective #3: Single family homes should be encouraged, with yards that people can actually use. Amenities do not need to be in every neighbourhood, and we do not need high quality; we need quality and affordable living.
- Objective #4: Remove this, our existing facilities for everyone are great.

Other open-ended comments received included the following:

Key Themes	Comments
Land Use and Development	• More senior housing. • Review the terms of leases for mobile homes and why they can't be put on piles. This would help improve financial security and energy efficiency. • Leave development to the professionals and make it easier for them to succeed. • Allow current developed areas to be allowed to increase dwelling units. • The Town should map areas where potable water is available, with appropriate quality and volume to serve development and provide for firefighting capabilities. The MDP should direct development to these areas. • Remove "neighbourhood design", sell all the lots in Hillendale, and other empty ones around town. • C3 zoning should be applied to existing properties adjacent to Highway 16. It is the trend of most Alberta communities.

Key Themes	Comments
	• Infill with current code requirements to create safe housing to get rid of illegal suites. • Stop focusing on Hillendale and develop other areas.
Cleanliness	• Clean up the streets. • The town is dirty with dust and garbage everywhere.
Transportation	• Make the most of the Highway Corridor and the accompanying traffic. The MDP should map the bypass and proposed interchanges, but this MDP will not need to plan for it. • Fix Highway 16.
Financial Sustainability	• The Town should prepare a financial plan to achieve these objectives. Long-term utility rate planning to fund utility-related projects for future development or when opportunities arise. • Stop spending money on things that don't matter and bring things in to help fund stuff instead of putting costs on residents.
Other	• Walkability is part of this, but so is encouraging methods to enhance rideability for cyclists, this includes stands/secure parking. • Maintaining existing infrastructure should be a consideration when thinking of future infrastructure. • In 2023 when the Town had to use the emergency alarm at the firehall for wildfire evacuations, it could barely be heard on 18 Avenue. The Town needs to expand the warning system to different areas of town and be tested regularly for functionality. • Nothing to add, change, or remove.

Survey participants were asked if they had any comments or questions about specific policies included in the draft MDP. The following open-ended comments were received:

- Can vacant commercial buildings be addressed within the MDP? This is a concern for me. Also, the high rent for commercial buildings on Main Street, with some management and ownership outside of the community, and little consideration for the impact that empty spaces have on the community.
- Edson's character and old houses within nice neighbourhoods are the reason I moved here and made it my home. As little infills as possible and consideration of parks and trees should be a priority.
- Does the Town wish to study and improve traffic patterns within the town? Making the most of our current road network to move people around efficiently to work and shop. Does the Town still need to rely on the many 4-way stop intersections in our network to control traffic patterns?

Survey participants were asked if they had any other questions or comments about the draft MDP. The following open-ended comments were received:

- From recreation to the arts to community supports (food bank), volunteerism plays a significant role in our community. Is this reflected in the draft MDP? I wonder about administrative functions within the town and if the systems and processes in place are working for the best interests of the community?
- A very comprehensive and workable document - keep it simple.
- Oversight and allocation of funds shouldn't be handled by the same people who set up and sign off on a plan.
- Interest in public announcements and engagement for all jobs, and disclosure of all potential conflicts of interests.



- This whole process has become very complicated. We need to focus on 1 or 2 things. We also do not need to worry about indigenous relations. They already have a great presence in our community.
- Fix 1st Avenue in front of the recycle depot, although there are many other streets in need of repair. Sidewalks on 1 side of the street would be nice. Also, when you come out of the walking trails on the west side of Edson Drive, it would be nice to have a trail or sidewalk to come around the corner and head back south on Edson Drive. The trail system behind Parkland School is terrible, so many humps and bumps and cracks. Someone is going to get hurt if they haven't already.
- What will the MDP state as the Town's practical purpose in the region? How will it inform the ways that the Town serves this purpose?

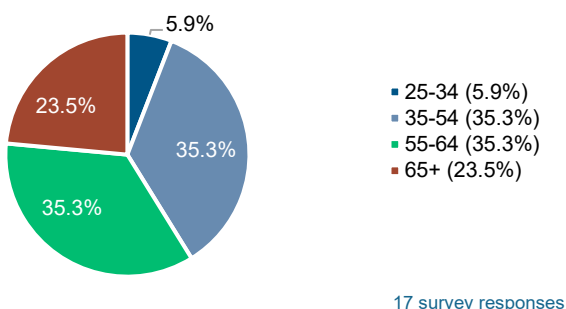


4.3.3 Survey Demographics

The following section provides a summary of survey participant demographics, which were captured to better understand the diversity of people we heard from. Respondents were asked to only answer questions if they felt comfortable doing so.

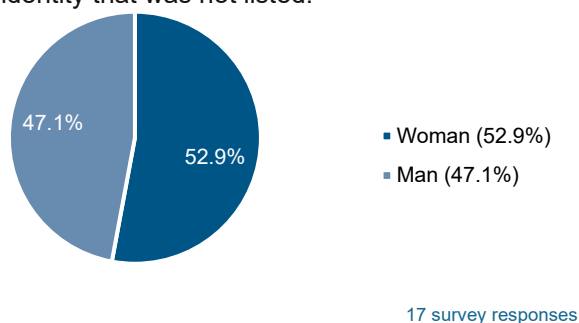
AGE

The majority of survey participants (35.3%) were between the ages of 35-54 or 55-64.



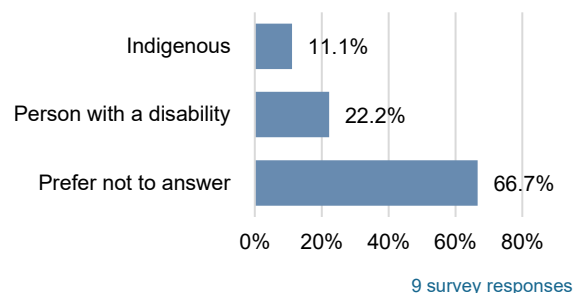
GENDER

Survey respondents primarily identified as women (52.9%), followed by men (47.1%). No survey participants identified as two-spirited, non-binary, transgender, or another gender identity that was not listed.



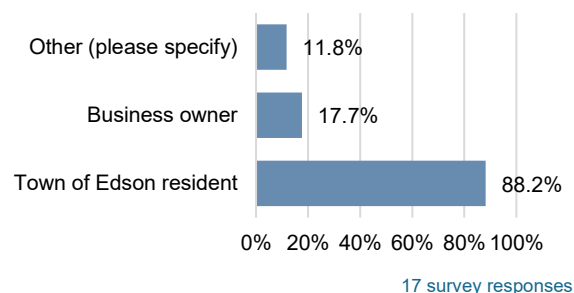
GROUP SELF-IDENTIFICATION

The majority of survey participants (67%) preferred not to answer if they fell into one of the identified groups, while 22.2% identified as a person with a disability, and 11.1% identified as Indigenous.



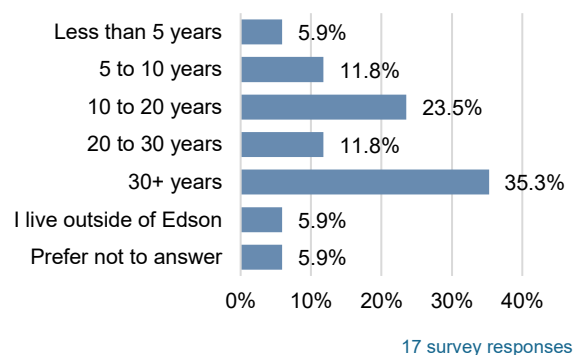
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU AND YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Most survey participants were residents of the Town of Edson (88.2%), followed by business owners (17.7%). 11.8% of participants identified as "other".



LENGTH OF TIME LIVING IN EDSON

Most survey participants we heard from have lived in Edson for 30+ years (35.3%).





5.0 Next Steps

Feedback provided throughout the project will inform development of a new MDP that will be presented to Town Council for approval. The approval process is expected to occur in the late summer/early fall of 2026.

More information on the project can be found at <https://engage.edson.ca/MDP>.