

# Vermilion Public Library Virtual Community Engagement Session Raw Data, November 2020

## What is One WISH you have for your community?

- Community continues to grow
- Agencies connected
- Synergy between community groups
- Robust and Diverse Community that embraces diversity including people with disabilities
- Maintaining what we have
- All generations engaged together
- Thriving community... continues!
- More awareness for working together and knowing what we are all doing
- Cohesiveness among groups
- More help for mental illness
- A great community!
- Seniors can retire with dignity and in a really positive way, enjoy our twilight years!
- People connecting and reducing loneliness
- Spirit and Pride... and GROW it!
- Relationships and comfort in the community.
- Children developing in healthy ways by healthy adults
- Retention and return rate of youth
- People attending events... great place to raise a family
- People achieving business goals
- Attractive to Professionals
- Better informed about our community issues and governance.
- Businesses thriving

## Community Visioning – Ideas

Picture your community ten years from now. Imagine that your community and its people have been successful beyond belief. Your community is a place everyone is proud to call home. Now describe what makes it so wonderful. What benefits do people receive from living here? Why do people value those benefits? Think about children, teens, adults and seniors. Consider different educational levels, incomes ethnicities, religious groups, lengths of residence, professions, etc. List the benefits and results that different groups receive in this ideal future version of your community.	
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active and exciting things happening that enrich their lives. Broadening interests. Doing more than home watching TV. Places to socialize. Contribute to younger generation.</li> <li>• Not needing to move away for medical care.</li> <li>• Aging in place.</li> </ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fun meaningful ways to reach out across generations.</li> <li>• Stay connected in community.</li> </ul>
ALL / Newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ALL people are accepted, no matter how they may be unique or 'different'... ALL feel welcome!</li> <li>• Experiences that make them want to STAY!</li> </ul>
Teens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlets to experience their interests and explore interests.</li> <li>• Low/no cost options.</li> <li>• Try new things. Learning.</li> </ul>
All Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find services and businesses that support people being here.</li> <li>• Strong economic community and services meet needs.</li> </ul>
Young adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual employment!!</li> <li>• Find belonging and ways to be involved, engaged in the community. Help with 'settling'.</li> <li>• Diverse range of quality and diverse employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
Socially Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caught in a net!</li> <li>• People with addictions, mental health find supports they need to heal.</li> </ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find support in parenting</li> </ul>
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children receive supports needed for healthy development.</li> </ul>

## Community Strengths

The current conditions in the community that support achievement of the vision.

- Legacy: Rich history and legacy of the community...lots of volunteer groups
- We have amazing and unique shopping.
- Art gallery
- Good organizations are in place that serve community needs
- Wonderful library
- Great churches that serve youth, seniors, opportunities to sing.
- Lakeland College – great asset
- Sporting opportunities – bowling, lacrosse, seniors activities
- Fire Training school
- Restaurants
- Friendly, hospital and community
- Brighter Beginnings and VIBE for kids
- Strong volunteer base
- Good health care access / great service
- Curb Appeal
- Stable employment sector
- A good variety of supports for a rural area
- The large number of NPO, Agencies, societies and coalitions are massive.
- Stable Economy – Agriculture
- We are collecting a good collection of businesses. And the businesses offer good service and acknowledge you outside of their business as well.
- Community punches above its weight
- Everyone knows your name!
- Our schools are leaders in the school division
- Special sauce - facilities etc. that are not common in smaller communities
- People: we have ambitious business owners, volunteers, and people who make the community more livable the provincial park
- Options for schooling: from K-12 Lakeland college brings in a diverse crowd, academically, and skills-wise
- A good hospital and access to healthcare
- Support for youth through ;brighter beginnings and VIBE
- Most of employment base is relatively stable
- Added services through library, Kalyna, PCN, or town.
- Nutrition programs are in place for schools.
- Strong desire to work together

## Community Strengths

The current conditions in the community that obstruct achievement of the vision.

- More seniors housing options - We could use more housing for seniors that need help. Something that is in between living in their own home and the lodge. (ie. Home care )
- More resources for folks with mental illness, anxiety, depression, etc. We are pretty good... we don't have any big holes / gaps in community services.
- Along with the 'main ones'... Covid, economy we discussed - lack of some services locally, inviting leakage in the economic spending of the area.
- Seniors seem segregated from the rest of the groups in town. Not integrated.
- More entertainment options
- Lack of supports and general understanding around vulnerable populations such as LGBTQ+ community, people struggling with addictions and mental health.
- Lack of interaction between groups
- Overall awareness
- Internet for business/online ventures
- Lack business incubation support and community capacity building; we need to be able to convert current residents into entrepreneurs and not expect businesses to arrive fully fledged
- "We've never done it that way before" "that's not how we do it" Resistant to change. Strong cliques that try to control certain groups.
- Lack of interaction or awareness between groups,
- Lack of awareness among community members of supports available,
- Lack of reliable broadband internet,
- Lack of supports for new business start ups

- Acceptance/welcoming of POC
- Weakness - NPO volunteers are aging. The younger generation does not seem to have the same "volunteer" work ethic or see the benefits of volunteers
- LGBTQ (acceptance)
- Funding: uncertainty on provincial downloading and for postsecondary, education, health, etc. leakage: not enough support for our local business due to online shopping and shopping in Lloyd/other areas
- Housing options for young adults..?

## External Opportunities

Conditions outside the community that support achievement of the vision, now or in the future.

- Technology and Economic Forces
- Good Life Institute brings people from outside in.
- Regional business network so people can see what we offer.
- Technology: innovative solutions to modern problems
- Economic recovery will create incentive for investment
- Possible clean energy future for jobs, or oil recovery
- Ability to connect to outside resources electronically
- Looking at changes in sectors like industry, oil and then looking for opportunities for community to embrace these changes
- Opportunities - That "Go To" organization that everyone would recommend 'vulnerable' to go check out. Check out Community Cares in St. Catherine's, ON.
- Continue to access grants that develop the community. – i.e. broadband development
- Evaluate and restructure how we provide health services in Vermilion. Ensure folks are able to access needed services when they need it. Would require government restructure.

## External Threats

Conditions outside the community that will obstruct achievement of the vision now or in the future.

- Economy – limits what we can do – Driver of what we can / can't do.
- Lack of government support – at government levels
- Loss of major / long standing employers – i.e. Lakeland College, parks, etc.
- Crime, addictions, increases affect community
- External competition: from business, jobs, and recruiting employees
- Government funding: downloading costs to the municipality
- Speed of recovery: if Alberta recovers too slow, will people go elsewhere
- Drugs from neighboring city centers. (Beyond marijuana and alcohol)
- Provincial government - if funding gets cut
- COVID-19,
- Improving communication so services can continue,
- Making sure we can offer the same items locally as what is outside
- External - Government Policy Changes
- Government cuts, economy, interest rates, housing market
- Increase Interest Rates, Decrease Cash availability.
- Draw of online shopping and big box stores in Lloydminster
- The closure of Lakeland College and/or how dependant we are on this facility to the micro economy. From college salaries, bars, restaurants, rental income.

## Articulate your community needs.

Where do you see significant gaps between the vision(s) and today? What community needs, need to be addressed to make progress toward the vision? What are our community needs? - WE MOST NEED:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEED a VOLUNTEER BASE for solutions to specific goals!</li> <li>• We need to encourage and allow people to find their passion.</li> <li>• We need someone to facilitate a community hub for connecting people to opportunities.</li> <li>• We need to make goals KNOWN so people know opportunities to get involved.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust between people in different places.</li> <li>• Creating the feeling that people are ok (safe / TRUST) to take risks!</li> <li>• We need to be safe and secure and trust each other.</li> <li>• Encourage DIVERSE leadership! Open to change and challenge each other to change.</li> <li>• Strong leadership at all levels with a VISION.</li> <li>• Make room at the top for our young people.</li> <li>• Building and ensuring equality.</li> <li>• Open Mindedness! Open to change / flexibility needed.</li> <li>• Let go of some of the past and help the community move ahead.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make sure we are streamlines and working together.</li> <li>• We need to work as a region (not just the town).</li> <li>• County/Town Agreement being worked on + carrot to see uptake!</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to expand current programming activities that move our community forward = Community Organizations STEPPING UP to build community (not just fund community)</li> </ul>	

## IDEAS Brainstorm - For any organization in the community; what is your best advice for the community?

- Ask for help
- Sometimes leaving the past in the past and just powering forward is the best
- Recruiting Volunteers
- Don't be afraid to change
- I think having the library, CLASS and FCSS co-ordinate info and access to community resources and maybe link volunteers to mentors
- Increase connections - even the unexpected ones!
- Respect and invite **Different** kinds of people into your daily life.
- Power and importance of Community!!
- Help people with planning... they don't know what they don't know!
- This is the START of conversation!!
- Think outside the box
- Did anyone offer to take the horse to water??
- Young people capable / encouraged to step up.
- Ask for help... Build individual and community capacity for doing this!
- Listen! Everyone... care and listen to each other!!
- Don't be afraid to change.
- PROACTIVE Succession Planning!
- Mentorship / encouragement / learning platform.
- Give it your best... it's better to go 3/4 of the way than to go nowhere
- Assistance to businesses / organizations for moving online / technology adapting...
- Share your goals - communicate with the community - there maybe support out there
- Don't be afraid to ask others to join in your mission
- Make new connections, research local resources, ask questions and share resources.
- Look further down the road. one year at a time only works during the easy times
- If you want to chat with your friendly neighborhood CDU please reach out...
- Who and where are the doers? Boots on the ground... and how do we enable this in next generations.
- There are some amazing programs and amazing people running these program, but if you don't tell people what you are doing then you might as well not be doing it.... Marketing

### Other Comments:

- Wise People! "I did my MBA Thesis on Community Cares in St. Catharines!"
- Technical skills lacking
- No plan and efforts died off...
- Lacking Proactive Preparing for Transitions