

DISTRICT OF WELLS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

December 2024



Acknowledgements

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Select photos provided by Clear Course Ltd., Ember Harper-Fedirko, District of Wells, and Island Mountain Arts (www.support-imarts.com).

The District of Wells is located in the shared ancestral Territories of the Lhtako Dene Nation, a shared territory with Dakelh (Carrier) and Secwépemc (Shuswap) Peoples. Several nations have history and territory in the area, including Lhatko, Ndazkoh, Lhoosk'uz, Ulkatcho, ?Esdilagh, Xatsúll, Simpcw, and Lheidli. Evidence of early Indigenous settlement in the region dates back more than 10,000 years.

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1 Introduction

Project Approach

In 2018, the District of Wells received funding to develop an economic development plan to guide the future of economic sustainability within the region. Since the project timeline was impacted by a change in District leadership and the COVID-19 pandemic, the funder extended the project deadline to January 2024. Clear Course Ltd. was retained in June 2024 to host engagement and develop the economic development plan.

The BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation defines economic development as the “programs, policies, or activities that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community”.¹ The goal of this project is to deliver an economic development plan that is the foundation for economic prosperity and community well-being in the District of Wells and the surrounding region.

The scope of work was to engage with residents, including regional residents around Barkerville and Bowron Lake, to determine the priorities for the region.

To ensure the plan reflects the needs and aspirations of residents and considers the unique economic landscape of the greater Wells area, the project was completed in three phases:

1. **Background Review:** Clear Course conducted a detailed background review to establish a picture of the regional economic landscape of the District of Wells and the region. This included reviewing engagement outcomes from other projects including the mine development and official community plan update. A summary of the background review is provided in the Section 2, Background Review.
2. **Community Engagement:** Clear Course conducted community engagement between July and October 2024, comprising interviews, a survey, focus groups, and an open house. A summary of what was heard is presented in Section 4, What We Heard. A detailed summary of the engagement is provided in Appendix A, What We Heard Data.
3. **Analysis and Recommendations:** Using the compiled data from the background review and the outcomes of the community engagement, Clear Course developed economic development strategies, objectives, and recommendations. The recommendations are detailed in Section 5, Economic Development Strategy.

¹<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/plan-and-measure/economic-development-basics>

2 Background Review

About the District of Wells

Incorporated in 1998, the District of Wells is a very small mountain town located along Highway 26. According to 2021 Statistics Canada census data, Wells has a permanent population of 218 residents, which has remained consistent since the last census in 2016. The region surrounding Wells is located within Cariboo Regional District Area C, with a population of an additional 2,470 people (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Wells was initially founded as a mining community by its namesake Fred M. Wells, with the development of the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mining Company in the late 1920s.² As the prospect of successful mining claims and jobs was increasing, there was significant population growth in the District. At its peak, the town supported 4,500 residents. By 1967, as mineral deposits were depleted and the mining company closed, the population of Wells shrank quickly, as is the nature of mining towns during boom-and-bust cycles.

More recently, Wells has attracted backcountry enthusiasts, artists, resource workers, and professionals who work remotely. It is a tight-knit and picturesque community, with a unique artistic character that is evident in its residents and its architecture. Wells also offers incredible access to recreational amenities.

At 1,200 m elevation, Wells is a high-elevation community with cooler summer temperatures and longer winters, often with a significant snowpack. The community is located in the sub-boreal spruce biogeoclimatic zone and is abundant with white spruce, sub-alpine fir, and lodgepole pine.³ The area also has prominent wetlands and important habitat for a wide variety of fish and wildlife.

The city of Quesnel is the closest urban centre, located approximately one-hour away. Wells is located approximately a 2.5-hour drive from Prince George, which is the largest city in north-central British Columbia.

Tourism Economy

Tourism plays a vital role in the District of Wells' economy and has strong potential for growth. Tourism and tourism-related amenities and products are important to Wells, including protecting frontcountry and backcountry access, managing viewscapes, investing in marketing, developing programs that support tourism, and fostering partnerships to support and grow tourism initiatives (District of Wells, 2010).

Each year, the Wells and Area Visitor Information Centre collects visitor data. The visitor centre provided Clear Course with historical data from 2019 to 2023; the following is a summary of the data.

² <https://www.wells.ca/about/wells>

³ https://www.env.gov.bc.ca/thompson/esd/hab/subboreal_spruce.html

According to visitor data, more than 60,000 tourists pass through Wells on their way to Barkerville Historic Town & Park, and to Bowron Lakes Provincial Park and the popular Bowron Lakes Canoe Circuit. The peak season for visitors to the region is between May and September.

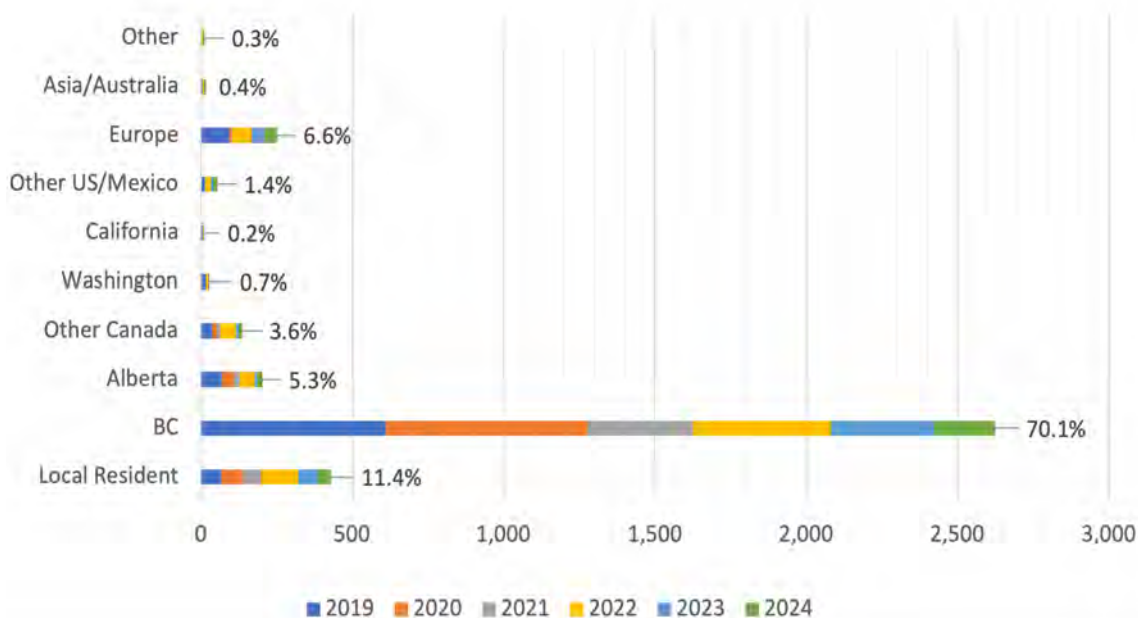
During the summer, visitors enjoy galleries and live performances and in winter, visitors enjoy world-class cross-country ski trails, snowmobiling, alpine skiing at nearby Troll Mountain Ski Resort, and artisan and student retreats. The Wells region also attracts many visitors and school groups that stay or camp overnight, exploring its arts and recreational offerings.

As with all tourism destinations, visitation to Wells and the area was significantly impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had a profound impact on the tourism industry due to extraordinary measures implemented worldwide to curb the virus's spread. Policies such as border closures, travel restrictions, and physical distancing led to a sharp decline in tourism activity. In British Columbia, tourism revenue plummeted by 64.9%, dropping from \$20.3 billion in 2019 to \$7.1 billion in 2020 (Province of BC, 2022).

In 2020 and 2021, no visitors from the United States and Mexico, and very few visitors from Europe, were recorded at Wells' visitor centre. Further, there were no visitors from Australia or other countries recorded in 2021. However, with no travel restrictions in place for residents of BC, Wells experienced an influx of regional visitors.

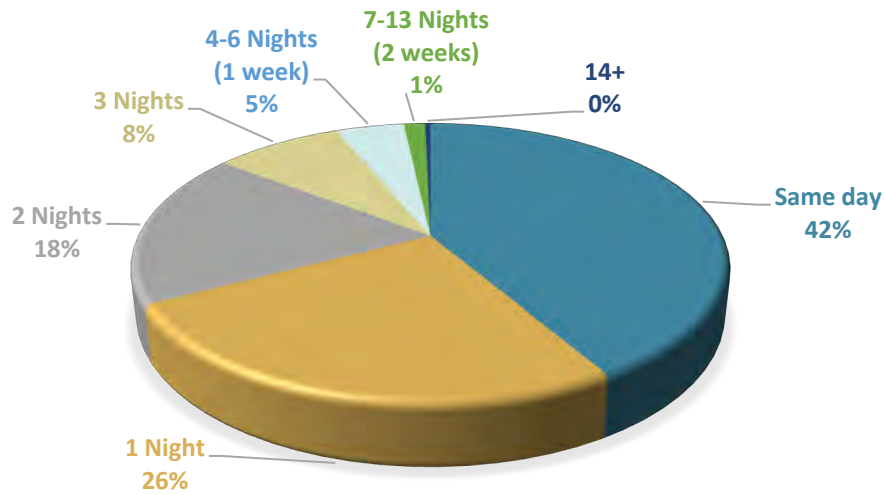
Between 2019 and 2024, 3,878 parties (accounting for 7,939 people) requested information from the visitor centre. During this five-year period, visitors predominantly originated from British Columbia (70.1%); 11.4% were Wells residents and 6.6% were visitors from Europe (Figure 1). Although the number of visitors from outside BC dropped significantly during 2020 and 2021, visitation from other provinces and countries has returned to pre-pandemic numbers; these numbers are consistent with the average visitation between 2019 and 2024.

Figure 1: Visitor Origin 2019–2024 (bar)



During the five-year period, most visitors visited the community for a day visit only (42%). The remaining visitors indicated that they stayed in the area for between one night and two weeks, with the 26% staying one night, 18% staying two nights, and 8% staying for three nights (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Number of Nights in Community 2019–2024



Visitors commonly asked for information about Wells (34%), Barkerville (28%), available campsites (15%), Bowron Lake (13%), and wildlife (10%).

Between 2019 and 2024, most visitors to the centre requested information about amenities such as washrooms (15.8%), maps and directions (15%), attractions and tours (13.7%), and adventure recreation (12.4%) (Table 1).

Table 1: Topics of Information Requested 2019–2024

#	Topics of Information Requested	% Responses
1	Site facilities (e.g., washrooms)	15.8%
2	Maps and directions	15%
3	Attractions and tours	13.7%
4	Adventure recreation	12.4%
5	Parks	9.2%
6	Accommodation	6.5%
7	Other	6.6%
8	Community services	5.8%
9	Food and beverage	5.2%
10	Shopping	3.8%
11	Events/conferences	3%
12	Transportation	2.3%

Mining

Mining played a key role in the development of Wells starting with the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine in the 1930s. While Cariboo Gold Quartz closed in 1967, and the Wells population plummeted, mining (primarily placer mining) has continued in some capacity in the region. In 2018, Osisko Development and its subsidiary, Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd. (BGM) announced a new underground ramp-access mine—the Cariboo Gold Project—near Wells. In October 2023, the Government of BC’s Environmental Assessment Office issued Osisko an Environmental Assessment Certificate (Osisko, 2023). The anticipated workforce during construction is 635; this will decrease to approximately 488 workers once the mine is operational (K. Dodd, personal communication, September 13, 2024). It is anticipated some workers will move to Wells (e.g., management positions) and the remaining workers will be scheduled for shift work. This may have a substantial impact on the population of Wells. Once construction begins, it is anticipated to continue for two years. Once the mine is operational, it is expected to run for approximately 16 years.

Arts & Culture

The strength of the arts community in Wells has significantly influenced the culture and character of the community. Island Mountain Arts Society (IMA) is a long-standing non-profit organization that was established in 1977 and continues to celebrate and support Wells’ artistic community. Their programs support local and visiting aspiring and professional artists with training, retreats, skill development, exhibits, performances, readings, festivals, and mentorship opportunities.⁴ IMA owns the Island Mountain Arts Public Gallery and the Nest, an artist-in-residence accommodation.

Art is evident throughout Wells—from vibrantly coloured homes and murals to year-round festivals, events, and artist demonstrations and performances. Many Wells businesses and organizations, such as the Sunset Theatre, support and promote arts in the community.

Community Forest

The Wells-Barkerville Community Forest (WBCF) is a large tract of forest (4,534 hectares) adjacent to the District of Wells. The community forest was established in 2014 and is governed under a 25-year Community Forest Agreement with the Government of BC, with the District of Wells as the sole shareholder.⁵

The goal of the community forest is to provide revenues from responsible timber harvest while ensuring important values such as recreational assets and wildlife are appropriately managed.⁶ The WBCF operates programs related to biodiversity, timber harvest, trails, education, research, and assessment. There are several recreational assets within the WBCF including all-season trails for hiking and cross-country skiing).

⁴ <https://support-imarts.com/a-brief-history-ima>

⁵ https://www.wells.ca/application/files/2217/2650/8527/2024-09-12_Wells_Official_Community_Plan_Draft.pdf

⁶ <https://wbcf.ca/>

Community Profile

According to the 2021 census, the current population of the District of Wells is 218 and represents 0.3% of the population of the Cariboo Regional District (Statistics Canada, 2021). The population of the District of Wells has decreased by 7.6% between 2006 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2006–2021), with the most significant decrease between 2011 and 2016 of 11.4%. In comparison, the population Cariboo Regional District increased 1.2% between 2006 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2006–2021). The population decrease within the District of Wells suggests a downward trend isolated to the area rather than a regional trend.

The median age of the District of Wells is 42.8 years, with 27.5% of the population aged 60 years and older. This suggests the population is an older or aging population (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Nearly 67% of the Wells population has completed post-secondary education (Statistics Canada, 2021). This is consistent with the percentage of BC residents who have completed higher education (68%).

Workforce

According to the 2021 Census (Statistics Canada, 2021), 82.8% of Canada's population aged 15 years and older participate in labour force. Of this labour force population, 51.7% are employed and 32.5% are unemployed. In 2021, the unemployment rate in the District of Wells (37.5%) was significantly higher than the Cariboo Regional District (10.3%). Between 2016 and 2021, the District of Wells experienced a 153% increase in the unemployment rate. This could be due to the impact of COVID-19. WorkBC reports that unemployment in the Cariboo region has consistently been higher than the provincial rate (WorkBC, 2024).

Housing

According to Statistics Canada (2021), the average household size in the District of Wells is 1.9 people. There are currently 156 private dwellings in the District, with 113 of these dwellings occupied by full-time residents. It could be assumed that the remaining 43 dwellings are occupied seasonally, rented to temporary workers, or vacant. Most households contain one (47.8%) or two occupants (34.8%) (Statistics Canada, 2021).

In 2021, the median value of dwellings was \$200,000 in the District of Wells and \$340,000 in the Cariboo Regional District. The median monthly shelter costs per month for owned dwellings was \$795 in the District of Wells and \$650 in the Cariboo Regional District. This indicates housing is more affordable to purchase in Wells; however, median monthly costs are slightly higher (Statistics Canada, 2021).

3 Community Engagement

The goal of the community engagement was to connect broadly with local and regional residents to guide recommendations for economic development and community well-being in the District of Wells. Several rounds of community engagement included a survey and in-community focus groups and an open house. Clear Course also conducted interviews with several organizations—for example, Northern Health, Barkerville Historic Town & Park staff, and District of Wells staff.

Survey

The online survey included twenty-nine questions and was hosted by the District of Wells from July 10 to August 7, 2024 (28 days). The survey included close-ended (e.g., multiple choice) and open-ended questions (i.e., comments) that included demographics and different aspects of living in Wells, including motivation, aspirations, barriers, and opportunities. The total number of responses received was ninety-two (92).

Questions were categorized into five sections:

1. where and when do people live in the region
2. workforce
3. housing
4. sentiment about and vision for Wells
5. demographic information

The survey results further categorized as quantitative and qualitative data. Refer to the survey results in the Appendices.

Focus Groups

From September 10 to 12, 2024, Clear Course hosted five 1.5-hour focus groups with community members. Forty-five participants were invited as representatives from the following sectors:

1. arts and theatre
2. business
3. District of Wells staff
4. natural resources (including mining, forestry, and heavy equipment operators)
5. tourism and recreation

A total of twenty-three community members participated in the five focus groups. A sixth focus group was scheduled to be hosted virtually for Barkerville Historic Town & Park staff; however, the session was cancelled due to lack of registration. Instead, the consultant interviewed Barkerville's management staff on September 11, 2024.

The purpose of the focus groups was to provide members of these sectors an opportunity to share their thoughts about the current state of Wells, future aspirations for Wells, and

recommendations for how to move Wells from where it is today to where they want it to be in the future.

Each small focus group followed the same framework, which started with a short PowerPoint presentation to introduce the project, define economic development, summarize the community survey results, and provide instructions for the focus group discussions. The presentation was followed by a facilitated exercise to encourage stories, opinions, and discussion on the current and future state of Wells and the region.

Community Open House

Following the survey and focus groups, Clear Course hosted a community open house on October 24, 2024, to share the engagement findings to date and invite feedback from the broader community on the nascent themes.

The consultant presented six 20" x 30" theme boards that represented different themes from the survey and focus groups. Each theme board included a visual representation of a theme, a list of "What We Heard" (a summary of the community sentiment and background review for participants to consider for each theme), and three statements about each theme. The sentiments were related to the role the District of Wells should play in each of the themes—they were:

1. the District of Wells should support the theme, e.g., spending tax dollars
2. the District of Wells should support the theme but not use tax dollar dollars
3. the District of Wells should do not support the theme

The themes presented were:

1. Build Community Connections
2. Environment and Natural Beauty
3. Unique Heritage and Community Well-being
4. Natural Resources
5. Recreation
6. Regional Tourism

Participants were invited to vote on each theme board by placing a sticker under the statement that most resonated with them. Additional comments were also collected. A total of 26 individuals participated in this activity.

Locals choose to live in Wells because...



4 What We Heard

This section summarizes what was heard during the community engagement into six themes.

1. Communication Challenges & Opportunities
2. Environmental Protection & Natural Beauty
3. Tourism is a Key Sector
4. Recreational Assets
5. Unique Heritage, Arts & Funky Vibe
6. Managing Mining

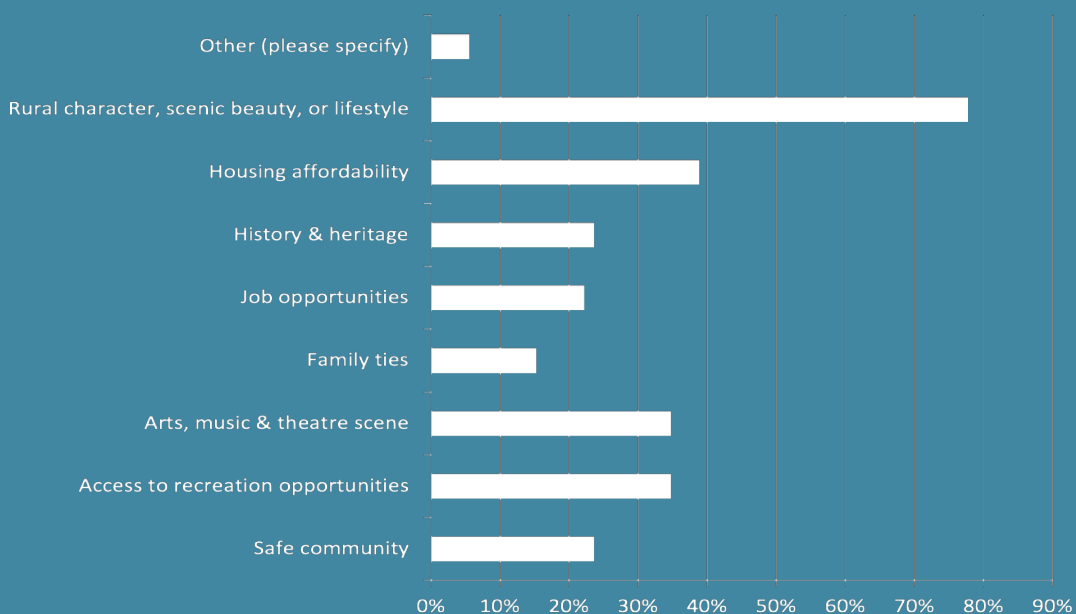
Overall, it was evident from the engagement that residents in the Wells region love where they live, especially Wells' rural character, scenic beauty, and lifestyle (refer to Figure 3). There were some negative comments, including challenges with limited health care services, long winters, lack of suitable or affordable housing, and disruption by the weekly fire siren test.

Theme 1: Communication Challenges & Opportunities

Survey respondents and focus group participants were strongly aligned in believing regional relationships are essential to the success of the region. Further, some community members noted challenges with existing relationships, but a desire to repair and strengthen connections. There were several relationships discussed in the engagement, including:

- **District of Wells and District of Wells residents:** There is some mistrust from residents towards District staff and elected officials, though this sentiment seems to be lingering from the previous administration. The community desires transparent communication from the District so that residents can better understand the District's planning priorities.

Figure 3: Reasons people choose to live in Wells*



* Question 16, Survey Results (refer to Appendix A: What We Heard Data)

- **Barkerville Historic Town & Park and District of Wells:** During engagement, there was overwhelming agreement that a good working relationship between Barkerville and the District of Wells is essential as it is mutually beneficial for both communities. Unfortunately, the relationship has been strained, which may have stemmed from a lack of communication. For example, Barkerville has been experiencing financial challenges due to reduced provincial funding necessary for operations. In response, Barkerville implemented many strategies to reduce its operating costs and ensure operations continue to meet public expectations. One of those strategies was to charge locals an entrance fee (regular admission or an annual pass); in the past, residents accessed the site for free. Without an adequate explanation of why this strategy was implemented, this upset many locals who have since boycotted the site, despite wanting to support local Barkerville businesses, such as the local bakery. If the planned policy change had been communicated with residents prior to implementation, this would have enabled residents to provide feedback and dispel misinformation about the policy change.
- **Barkerville Gold Mine (BGM) and the community:** There is both support for the mine as well as outright opposition and distrust from the community about the plans for the mine. Through the engagement, it was clear community members and mine representatives have different knowledge and perspectives about the mine development. Given there were several competing viewpoints on the facts of the mine development, this indicates that there is an opportunity to improve communication and engagement on the BGM development.

Theme 2: Environmental Protection & Natural Beauty

The community overwhelmingly stressed the importance of the natural environment for their well-being. Eighty percent (80%) of survey respondents said they live in the District of Wells for its scenic beauty, rural character, and lifestyle. Preserving natural beauty was the most important component listed for the future vision of Wells.

Theme 3: Tourism is a Key Sector

The community understands the importance that regional tourism has on the economy of Wells, Bowron Lake, and Barkerville. Barkerville and Bowron Lake are destinations for most visitors to the area, which provides a significant opportunity for Wells because as all visitors must travel through Wells and the town is a service provider for visitors (e.g., groceries and fuel).

There was strong sentiment during the engagement about promoting Wells as a year-round destination for all types of tourism experiences, including outdoor recreation. Wells' significant snowfall provides an opportunity for increasing visitation during the ski season. However, with this opportunity brings challenges such as a lack of accommodations. To be successful, it is imperative for Wells to engage with other destination operators.

Community members would like to see a stronger relationship between District leadership and Barkerville management so they can collaborate on tourism opportunities. Barkerville is one of the largest drivers of tourism in the region and employs many Wells residents. Wells is deeply connected to Barkerville in many ways, and a building a regional destination—that includes all the

region has to offer—can benefit both communities. Offering visitors several attractions along the highway to Barkerville will draw additional destination travellers looking for varied experiences.

In the arts and theatre focus group, participants stated that while art plays a key role in defining the soul of the community, the arts community needs to be supported and integrated into community planning so that it can continue to thrive. Arts has defined Wells—a quaint, funky, and welcoming town. Participants believe showcasing local talent and building upon the community’s “vibe” is an opportunity to attract more visitors to the region.

Theme 4: Recreational Assets

Access to all-season recreational opportunities was repeatedly highlighted by participants as a key amenity for both residents and visitors. The region around Wells has backcountry offerings for motorized and non-motorized recreationalists, which is an asset and regionally distinctive. There are several non-profit organizations leading the development and maintenance of recreational assets in the region. Participants expressed concern that competing industrial interests may impact the quality and accessibility of these recreational assets, but they also recognize the opportunity to improve assets using corporate contributions.

Theme 5: Unique Heritage, Arts & Funky Vibe

Wells is a beautiful, soulful, and artsy community and retaining its unique character is important to many residents. Wells offers a glimpse into the past, yet there is a risk of losing historic buildings and other infrastructure without adequate investment for upkeep. Beautification of the built community was identified as important during the engagement, including maintaining what has been built in the past 30 years and older, historical infrastructure. Participants also suggested street beautification and removing collapsed buildings and other debris.

The infrastructure in the District of Wells is aging and limited which is a barrier to growth. Approximately 91% of survey respondents said there isn’t enough housing to meet the community’s future needs. The community supports new housing developments to attract new residents to Wells; however, limited developable land and utility infrastructure deficits (e.g., sewage and power) restrict expansion.

Similar to other themes, maintaining Wells’ artsy vibe by maintaining the town’s heritage buildings was also discussed during the engagement.

Theme 6: Managing Mining

While there are other natural resource industries in the Wells region, such as forestry, the planned Barkerville Gold Mine would become the largest industrial player in the region and would have the greatest impact on the District of Wells. With a significant amount of gold discovered in and around Wells, a mining operation in some form is likely imminent. Participants at the engagement were divided on whether they supported the mine or not. Although there are opportunities for the community to benefit from the mining operations, the community is fearful and angry that the gold mine will forever change the community—and not necessarily for the better—and the mine’s consultative process has been insufficient and disingenuous.

5 Economic Development Strategy

Strategies

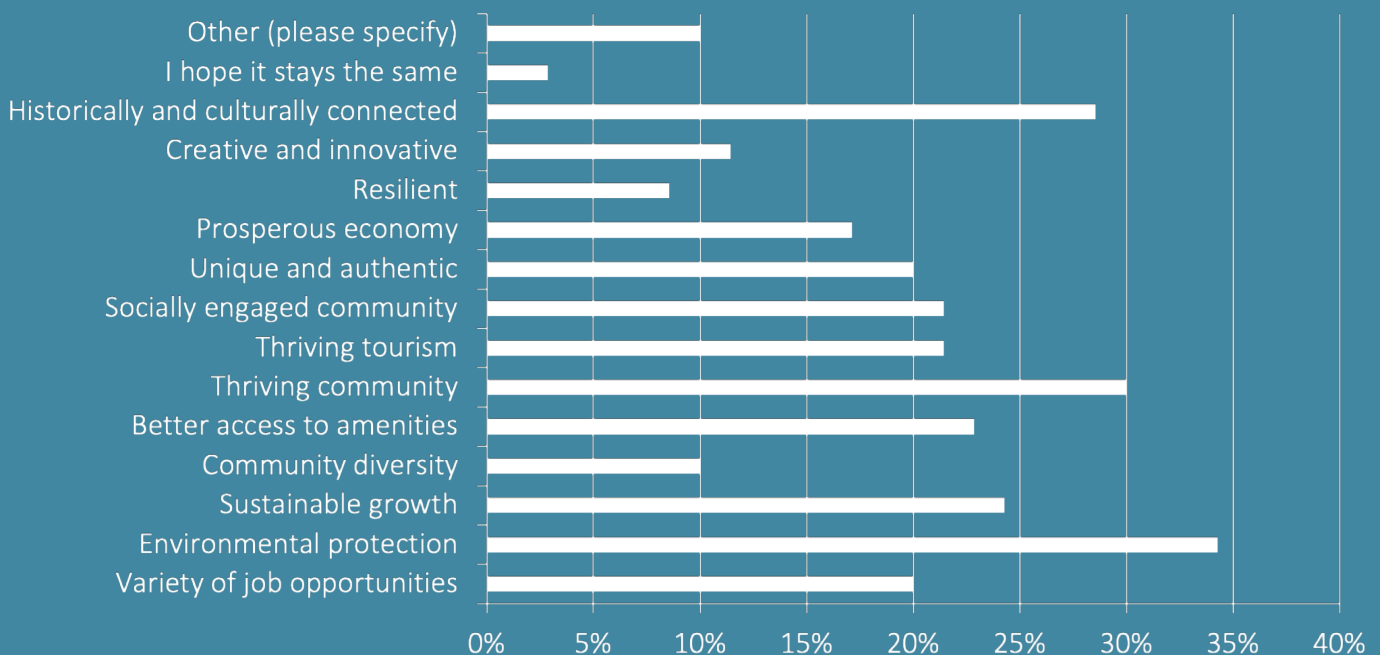
Clear Course identified six strategic areas from the engagement that support economic and community development, including the results of the future vision of Wells (Figure 4).

1. Invest in regional relationships
2. Expand tourism opportunities
3. Protect and promote our natural assets
4. Protect Wells unique heritage and arts culture
5. Improve liveability
6. Manage mining

Recommendations

The following table represents the six strategic areas and the rationale for each (i.e., the objectives) that support economic prosperity in the Wells region. Within each strategy area, there are one or more recommendations that have been identified from the background review, community engagement, and/or input of District of Wells staff.

Figure 4: What would Wells look like in 30 years?*



* Question 20, Survey Results (refer to Appendix A: What We Heard Data)

#1 Invest in Regional Relationships

OBJECTIVE: The District is overcoming challenges and seizing new opportunities to collaborate with organizations and agencies that operate in the Highway 26 corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <p>Develop a communication strategy for the District of Wells. Good communication builds trust and strengthens relationships in the community. A communications strategy defines the “when, who, what, why, and how” of outbound communications to residents, businesses, and other interest holders. It also defines the tone and frequency of communications, and includes communications about daily operations, emergencies, and community engagement.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Develop an operational charter with Barkerville. A charter formalizes communications and operations between the District of Wells and Barkerville Historic Town & Park, which yields numerous benefits including shared resources, improved crisis and emergency management, and improved visitor and resident service delivery. The charter would be reviewed annually and include economic development priorities such as tourism, job creation, emergency management, and regional investment.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Strengthen and build new relationships with Indigenous communities. There are several sovereign and shared Territories in the Wells region. Recognizing these Territories and the Indigenous people who have lived in the region since time immemorial creates economic opportunities for the communities and the District. Building relationships with these Indigenous communities, over time and with a focus on building trust, has the potential for generating innovative economic development opportunities in the region.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Convene a Highway 26 advisory group. Facilitating a periodic check in (e.g., annually) with organizations, businesses, and agencies with operations or jurisdiction along the Highway 26 corridor will improve regional relationships and encourage collaboration. The agenda items and invitees could be structured depending on regional initiatives and priorities. This recommendation supports several of the strategies including tourism, recreational assets, improved livability, and managing mining.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Advocate for current, relevant, and accurate public information. Accessing regional conditions is an essential service for rural and remote communities and incorrect information can significantly affect resident and visitor access and sentiment. Engage in communications and activities with BC Hydro, Emergency Management BC, BC Wildfire, and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (e.g., DriveBC) that influence policies, legislation, and decision making to ensure residents and businesses in Wells receive current, relevant, and accurate public safety information.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Convene a regional business association. A business association is needed to address the lack of unified representation in Wells. This association can advocate for business interests locally and regionally and work with organizations, such as the BC Chamber, to increase funding, services (e.g., insurance, software), data, and research to businesses. The BC Ministry of Jobs and Economic Development also supports business associations with program access (e.g., funding) and exposure (e.g., international marketing).</p> |

#2 Expand Tourism Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: Tourism is a primary sector for investment and Wells is an established tourism destination—not just a stop on the way—where visitors can experience a diverse range of experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** **Develop a regional branding, development & action plan.** This plan differentiates Wells from other BC communities and makes the town a primary destination of choice, not just a stop on the way to and from other destinations. The plan should support year-round jobs and business opportunities that build on what makes Wells unique—for example, arts and culture is a focus that can accomplish this by blending tourism, Wells’ quirky culture, and the existing industries (like the success of Bisbee, Arizona). The plan should include a new community identity, opportunities to fill development gaps that are realistic for the District to pursue (such as the recommendations in this strategy), and an action plan that different members and groups in the community can steward. The plan should be a collaborative regional effort between Wells, Barkerville, and Bowron Lake to ensure branding and investments are synergetic.
- 2** **Leverage expertise in regional and provincial Destination Management Organizations (DMO).** Creating partnerships with DMOs can maximize opportunities and ensure Wells is considered for funding and research and included in regional, provincial, national, and international marketing programs.
- 3** **Assess the location and function of the Wells and Area Visitor Information Centre to determine if there is a more beneficial location.** The Wells and Area Visitor Information Centre provides an important service for travellers. It may be beneficial to have it located more centrally to businesses in Wells.
- 4** **Work with Northern Health to streamline messaging at contaminated sites.** There are several community sites that have been closed or designated as contaminated by Northern Health. Large red signs were installed by Northern Health disclosing the contamination with phrases such as “do not recreate.” This signage has been installed at several trail heads and picnic sites. The District should work closely with Northern Health to develop signage that accurately presents the risks without being unnecessarily alarming. These signs are a significant barrier to tourism.
- 5** **Work with tourism service providers to identify opportunities during off-peak seasons.** Accommodation is severely limited in Wells during the peak summer and winter seasons. Investing in off-peak season offerings (i.e., during the spring and fall) would extend the opportunity for revenues and year-round employment. Visitor data suggests that most tourists stay outside the region and only visit Wells for day visits. Attracting overnight visitors leads to increased exposure and economic benefits. Understanding the limitations and opportunities related to accommodation in the region will help guide future investments, including attracting entrepreneurs interested in new business ventures in the region.
- 6** **Coordinate regional events.** A well-coordinated regional event calendar will help avoid scheduling conflicts between events in different locations and ensure maximum attendance from residents and visitors. This is important for Wells, Barkerville, Bowron, and Troll Ski Resort. This also becomes an opportunity for destination-focused promotions.
- 7** **Consider co-hosting regional or provincial events.** Develop and expand larger events that encourage regional or provincial visitation and create buzz for the region. Wells has the advantage of some of the best snow conditions in the province. This is an advantage in low-snow years when events hosted in other winter destinations are impacted. Developing annual events may also create opportunities to access funding for improvements to recreational infrastructure.

#3 Protect and Promote Our Natural Assets

OBJECTIVE: All economic investments are balanced and managed to ensure long-term protection of regional ecosystems. Recreational assets and amenities are a key driver for community pride, well-being, and tourism.

1

In all decision-making, consider future environmental impacts. To ensure long-term protection of the natural environment, adopt a framework to ensure protection. In all decisions, consider: Does this initiative impact the environment? Does this initiative maintain access to our natural surroundings? Will this initiative result in a loss of environmental preservation, protection, or sustainability? What do we need to do to mitigate potential negative effects?

2

Promote eco-tourism opportunities. With Wells' ample recreational trail amenities, this provides residents and visitors with prime access to nature and an opportunity to grow and promote ecotourism activities. Ecotourism is a significant draw for nature enthusiasts for wildlife viewing, birding, arts, meditation and wellness, and research.

3

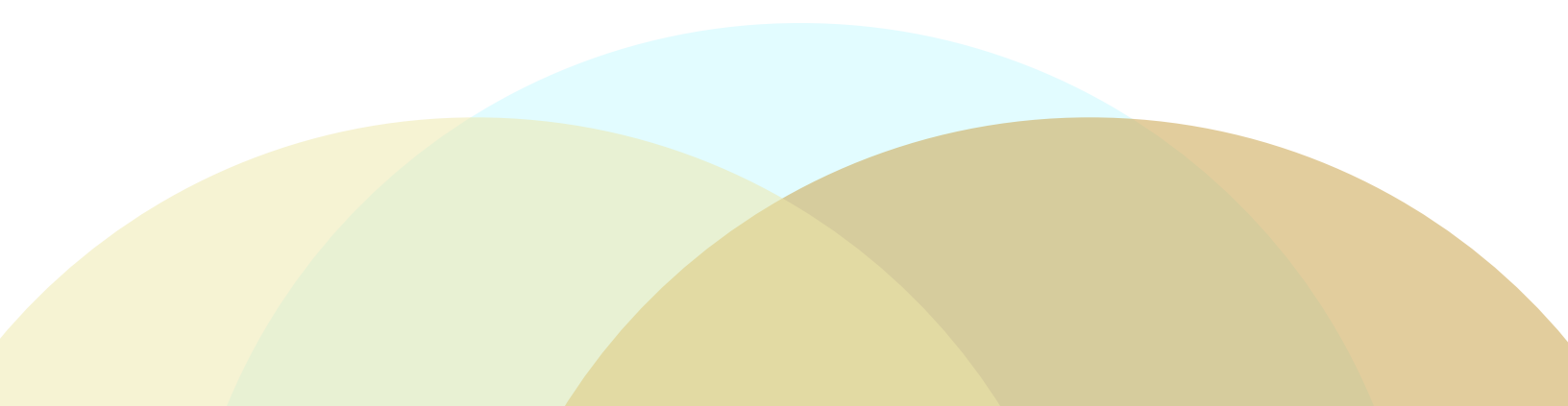
Develop partnerships with non-government organizations (NGOs) to apply for grants that support recreational development. There are several regional NGOs that contribute to economic development and community well-being in arts, recreation, improved livability, and environmental protection. While the District of Wells has limited tax revenues to wholly fund initiatives, it can act as a flow-through granting body for local NGOs that can access government funding (e.g., active transportation grants, rural economic development grants).

4

Develop a parks and trails management plan. The District operates several recreational facilities (e.g., community centre and skating rink) and is considering developing additional amenities (e.g., public washrooms). There is also an extensive trail network in and around Wells for motorized and non-motorized trail users, which is an essential natural amenity for residents and visitors. By developing a parks and trails management plan—that considers trails that extend beyond the District's boundary—the District can inventory and categorize existing parks, trails, and recreational infrastructure, identify new opportunities, identify all the service providers (i.e., NGO's, WBCF, CRD), and prioritize operational and capital investments.

5

Improve parks and trails wayfinding. Linked to regional wayfinding, improve signage and interpretive opportunities in parks and trails aligned with the regional brand. This is particularly important in a semi-wilderness setting for less rugged explorers that appreciate trail markers (e.g., directional and distances). Interpretive signage should be visual and engaging.



#4 Protect Wells' Unique Heritage and Arts Culture

OBJECTIVE: Wells has a unique character that is celebrated and protected.

1

Explore heritage designation for select sites in the District. The historic buildings and dwellings in the community form part of the unique character of Wells and are a reminder of the town's history. The community is very connected to the history these building represent and would like to see these structures restored and preserved. It would be valuable to explore whether a Heritage Designation (within the *Local Government Act*) would provide avenues for funding to support preservation and restoration. Exploring which properties could benefit from a Community Heritage Register designation, rather than a Heritage Designation,⁷ would provide recognition of importance without the legal protections that come with a more formal heritage designation.

2

Develop design guidelines to maintain the historical look and feel of Wells. The District of Wells should consider developing design guidelines for renovations and new builds to ensure the historical and heritage look and feel of Wells is reflected in new builds and renovations. The community is very connected to the charm of the heritage buildings and is concerned about the character of historical buildings disappearing as new homes are built and existing homes are renovated.

3

Designate a communal community art space. We heard that residents want a space to gather and be creative. Identify a space within the community that could be designated as a communal artisan area. This could also become part of the tourism offerings where visitors can explore the arts in action.

⁷ <https://heritagebc.ca/learning-centre/heritage-place-conservation/heritage-conservation-tools-resource-guides/heritage-designation-a-resource-guide/heritage-designation-a-brief-overview/>

#5 Improve Livability

OBJECTIVE: Work collectively to identify gaps and opportunities that can be addressed to improve housing, quality of services, employment, and health and wellness.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

- 1 Advocate for power supply upgrades.** The lack of three-phase power has been identified as a barrier for building new residential housing, visitor accommodations, and businesses. Continue to advocate for power upgrades to attract new investments and support necessary growth in the District.
- 2 Invest in community beautification.** Wells’ thriving art scene is unique and a major draw for artists and visitors. There are opportunities to engage and collaborate with the arts community to showcase art to enhance the beauty and vibrancy of the town. The District of Wells should consider developing a beautification strategy to address the revisualization of community spaces, playgrounds, and other spaces. The strategy could include public art created by local artisans—such as murals, sculpture, street art, interactive art, and banners—and living art (gardens) and business front improvements. The District could explore a partnership with Osisko to develop a community grant program that provides small grants to local artists for beautification projects.
- 3 Advocate for improved cell coverage.** With limited high-speed internet and cell coverage in the Highway 26 corridor, improved connectivity is crucial for attracting visitors, remote workers, and maintaining a high quality of life for residents.
- 4 Identify and remove barriers to accessibility at all public facilities.** Accessibility was noted as an opportunity for improving livability and attracting more visitors. The District should invest in an assessment to identify opportunities for new and improved access (consider partnering with other local service organizations, such as the Wells and Area Community Association). There are several funding programs available in BC to support retrofits and new amenities, such as Canada’s Enabling Accessibility Fund and Disability Alliance BC’s Accessibility Projects Grants (non-profits only).
- 5 Investigate ways to increase municipal revenues.** There are several high-value and high-cost projects required in the District; however, with such a small tax base (approximately \$100,000, annually), capital investments can be challenging. Further, during the engagement residents indicated that the District should be investing in non-mandated initiatives. Increasing revenues allows more flexibility to expand programs such as the grant-in-aid. Additional funding streams include provincial and federal infrastructure grants, increased development cost charges, public-private partnerships (P3s), new policies for tourism-driven revenues (e.g., hotel room tax) that apply to new developments.
- 6 Complete a District of Wells Housing Strategy.** According to the Canadian Housing and Renewal Agency, housing availability is directly attributed to economic well-being of a community. There are several factors complicating housing investment and expansion in the District of Wells. While the price of land is low, there isn’t three-phase power, building costs are high because of the remote/rural areas, and demands for housing fluctuate. Limited housing supply with excessive building costs limit investment from potential buyers. The strategy could investigate opportunities such as new development lands, areas appropriate for infill housing and tiny homes, tax incentives for new builds, and funding for affordable housing (e.g., in partnership with BC Housing and CMHC).

#6 Manage Mining

OBJECTIVE: Mining is a significant economic contributor to the region and its operations in Wells are balanced with community priorities.

1

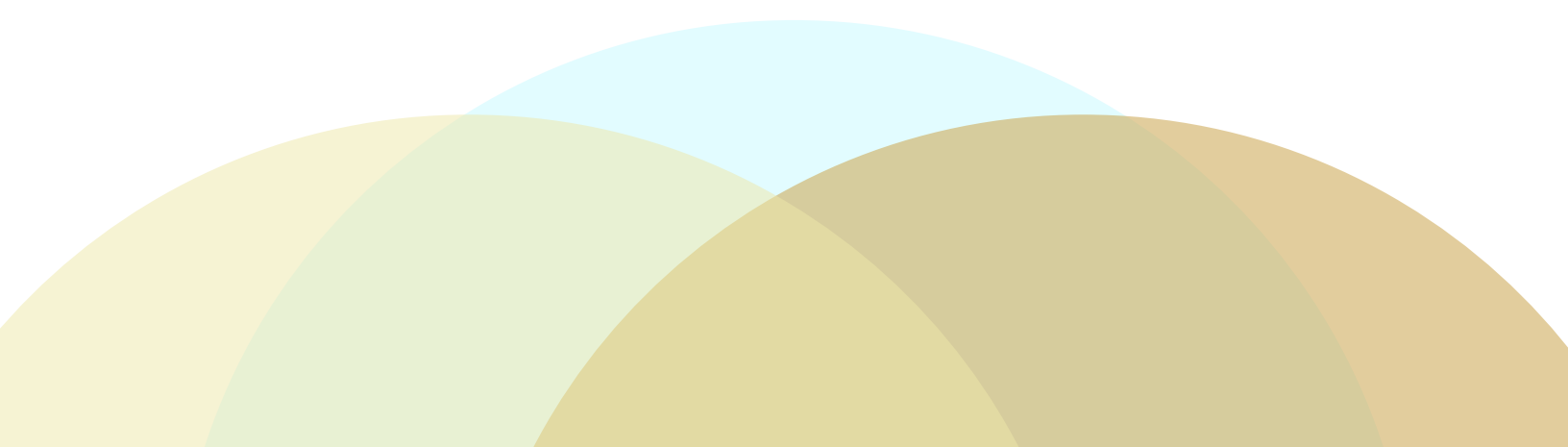
Ensure communications about the mine development are clear to residents. Participants in the engagement (including residents and BGM staff) shared very different perspectives about the mining operation. This suggests that information is not being presented in a way that is appropriately accessible and understandable to the public. Large industrial projects that are governed by a complex permitting process can be challenging to convey to the public. The District should work with BGM to ensure they take an integrated approach to communications to ensure information is presented in different formats for different audiences using multiple channels.

2

Continue to advocate for important legacy projects. The gold mine development provides an opportunity to secure the future of Wells through legacy project investment (e.g., improved housing, water and sewer system upgrades, and increased tax revenues). Wells needs to take an active role in advocating for these investments.

3

Balance mining with economic opportunity and well-being. There is some concern amongst residents about the mine's transient shift workers and their impact on the community. However, residents also expressed a desire to welcome workers into Wells. To ensure long-term economic and community vitality, it is important to identify opportunities for integrating workers into the community.



6 Next Steps

The recommendations provided within the six strategy areas represent actions that range from quick wins to longer-term projects. Several of the actions are aligned with provincial and federal initiatives that are linked to funding (e.g., housing, tourism, and Indigenous rights). A selection of municipal funding opportunities is presented in Appendix B. Other recommendations will require staff time to implement, including developing the recommended partnerships (e.g., in tourism and communications). Staff and leadership should determine priorities for moving initiatives forward.

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Appendix A: What We Heard Data

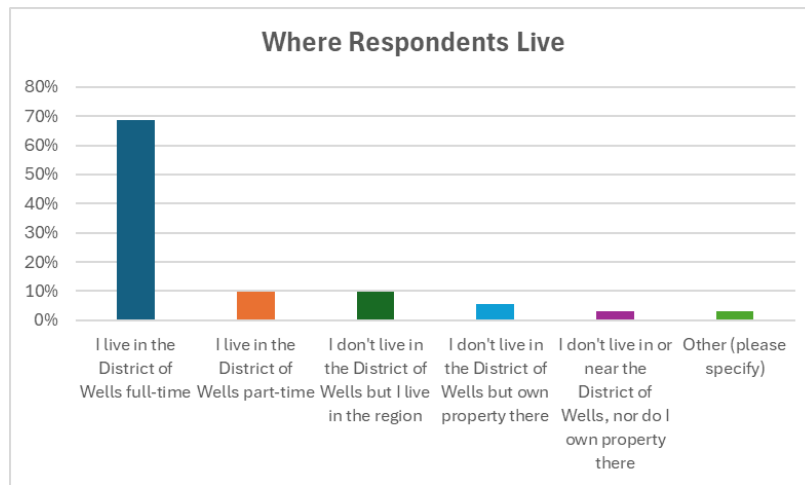
Community Survey Results

A total of 92 respondents completed the economic development community survey.

Question 1: Which best describes you?

Sixty-four (64) of the 93 respondents to Question 1 live in the District of Wells full-time (68.8%), with 9.7% residing in the District of Wells part-time. The remaining respondents (21.5%) indicated they do not live in the District. Of those who do not live in the District, 9.7% live in the region, 5.4% don't live in the District of Wells but own property there, 3.2% selected "other" with one respondent commenting they previously lived in Wells and are moving back. Three respondents did not live or own property in the District and therefore were not offered additional questions.

Figure 1 – Question 1 Responses



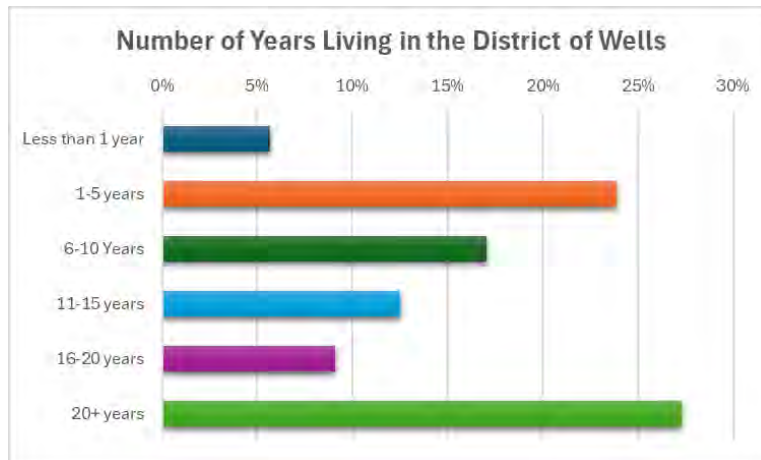
Question 2: When do you live in the District of Wells?

Nearly 10% of respondents indicated they live in the District of Wells part-time. Of part-time residents, 58.3% said they visit periodically during all seasons. The remaining 41.7% said they live in Wells during the summer only.

Question 3: How long have you lived or owned property in or around the District of Wells?

Eighty-eight (88) respondents answered this question, most of whom have lived in the District for more than 20 years (27.3%), followed by 23.9% who have lived in the District for 1–5 years, 17.1% for 6–10 years, 12.5% for 11–15 years, 9.1% for 16–20 years and 5.7% for less than one year. Less than 5% indicated they do not live in the District.

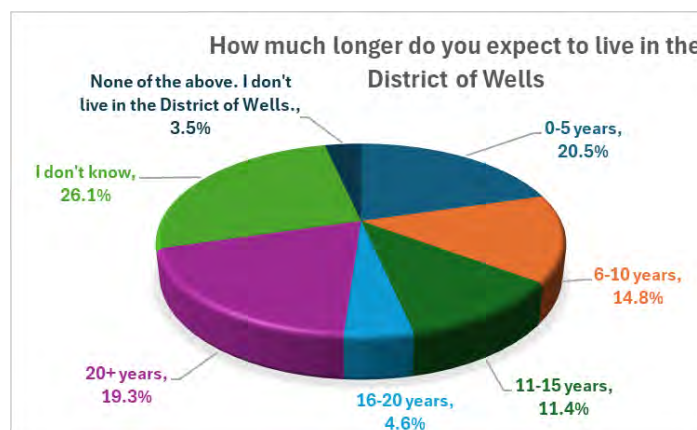
Figure 2 – Question 3 Responses



Question 4: How much longer do you expect to live or own property in the District of Wells?

Of the 88 respondents, 35.3% said they expect to live or own property in the District for more than 11 years. Of these respondents, 19.3% said more than 20 years, 11.4% said for 11–15 years, and 4.6% said 16–20 years. Of the remaining respondents, 20.5% indicated they expect to live in the District another 0–5 years and 14.8% for 6–10 years. Just over 26% indicated that they don't know how much longer they expect to live in the District, and 3.4% said they don't currently live in the District.

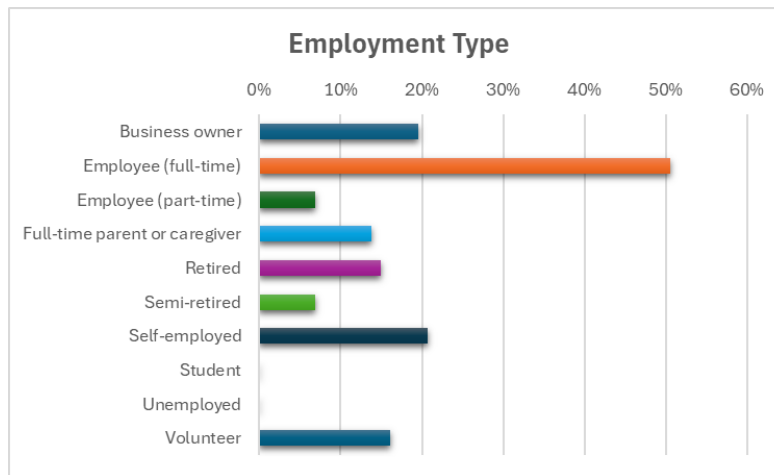
Figure 3 – Question 4 Responses



Question 5: Which answer describes you?

Eighty-eight (88) respondents answered this question, with several respondents indicating more than one type of employment. Half of the respondents (51.1%) are employed full-time, 6.8% part-time, 20.5% are self-employed, and 19.3% own a business. Additionally, 15.9% of respondents are volunteers, 14.8% are retired, 13.6% are full-time parents or caregivers, and 6.8% are semi-retired. There were no student or unemployed respondents.

Figure 4 – Question 5 Responses



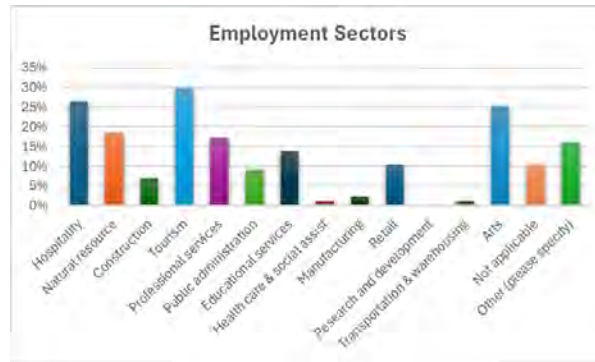
Question 6: For which reasons are you unemployed?

As no respondents answered “Unemployed” to Question 5, no responses were received for this question.

Question 7: What sector do you work in?

Eighty-seven (87) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one types of employment sector. The top three employment sectors were tourism (29.9%), hospitality (26.4%), and the arts (25.3%). This is followed by natural resources (including mining and forestry) (18.4%), professional services (17.3%), educational services (13.8%), and retail (10.4%). A smaller percentage of respondents work in public administration (9.2%), construction (7%), manufacturing (2.3%), health care and social assistance (1.2%), and transportation and warehousing (1.2%). Approximately 16% of respondents indicated they are employed in “other” sectors including fitness, residential management, and associations.

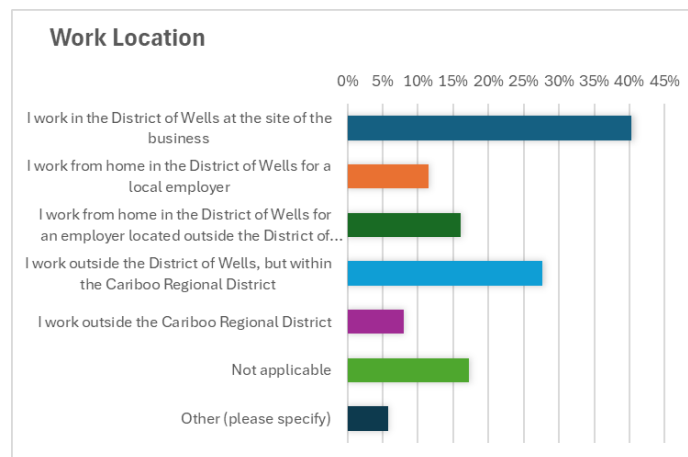
Figure 5 – Question 7 Responses



Question 8: Which best describes your work location?

Eighty-seven (87) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one work location. Just over half of respondents (51.7%) work in the District of Wells, with 40.2% working at the site of the business/employer and 11.5% working from home for a local employer. More than half of respondents (52.3%) work for an employer located outside the District. Of these respondents, 27.6% work within the Cariboo Regional District, 16.1% work from home for an employer located outside the District, and 8.1% travel to work outside the Cariboo Regional District. The remaining 5.8% of respondents selected “other” (e.g., retired).

Figure 6 – Question 8 Responses



Question 9: Do you rent or own the home you live in?

Eighty-five (85) responses were received for this question. Most of the respondents (70.6%) own their home. Of the total homeowners, 53% own their home outright and 47% own their home with a mortgage. A smaller percentage of respondents (21.2%) rent, 86% of whom rent privately and 14% renting from their or their household members employer. 3.5% said they don’t rent or own the home they live in, and 1.2% selected “Other”.

Question 10: Please tell us more about your housing situation?

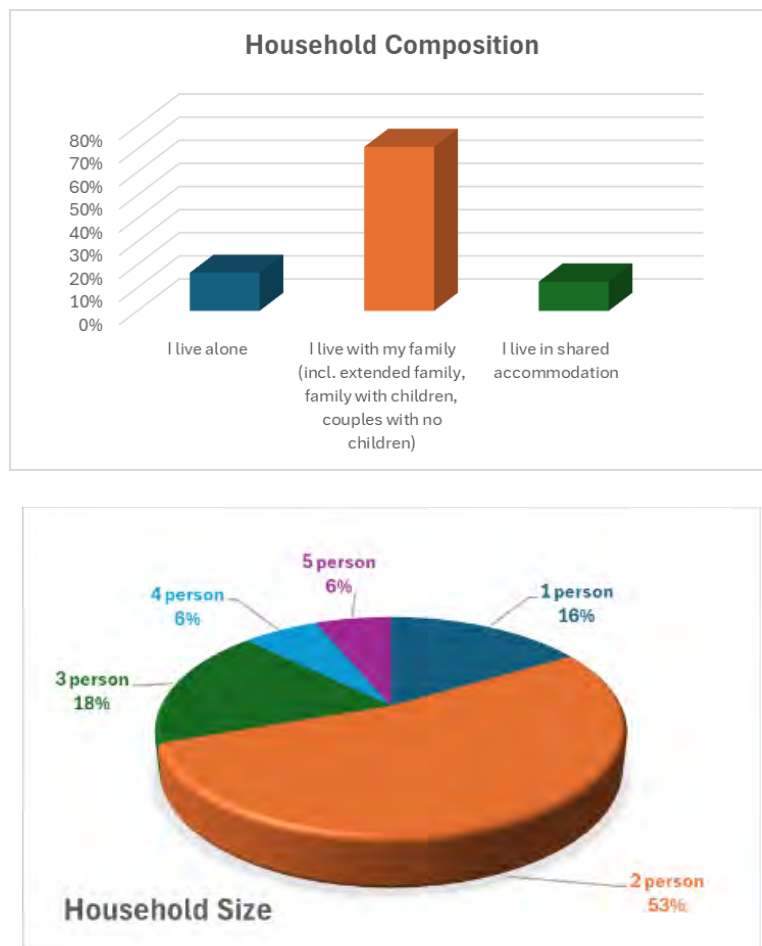
The survey was designed so that respondents who answered “I don’t rent or own” to Question 9 were invited to share more information about their housing situation. Unfortunately, due to a survey error, all respondents were directed to Question 10 regardless of how they answered Question 9. For this reason, the responses to this question have been removed from these survey results as they don’t accurately capture reasons why residents don’t rent or own.

Question 11 & 12: Which of the following best describes your current housing situation? Including yourself, how many people live in your house?

The results for Questions 11 and 12 have been combined as they provide insight into household composition and size. There were seventy-nine responses and almost three-quarters of respondents live with family (70.9%). Family includes extended family, families with children, and couples with no children. The remaining respondents indicated 16.5% live alone and 12.7% live in shared accommodation.

Most of the respondents live in two-person households (53%), followed by three-person (18%) and one-person households (16%). A smaller percentage of households contain four (6%) or five people (6%).

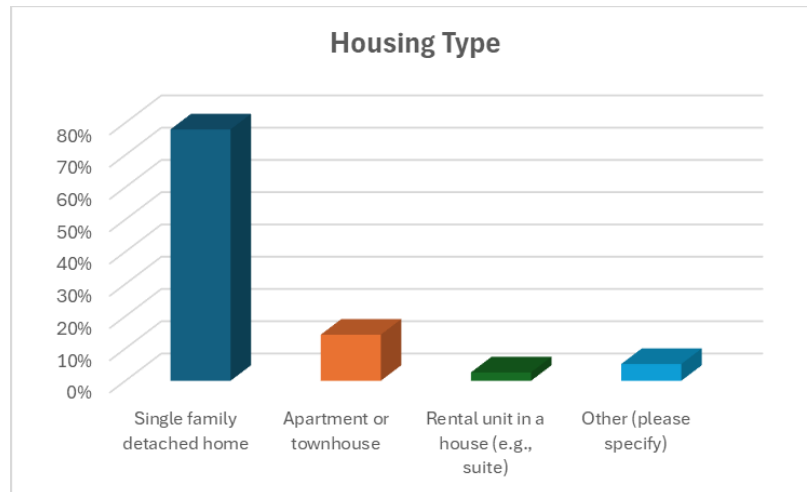
Figure 7 – Question 11 & 12 Responses



Question 13: What kind of home do you live in?

Seventy-seven (77) responses were received with the majority (77.9%) of respondents indicating they live in a single-family detached home, followed by 14.3% living in an apartment or townhouse, and 2.6% living in a rental unit in a house (e.g., suite). Three respondents indicated they live in a home attached to a commercial property, and one respondent commented that they prefer not to answer.

Figure 8 – Question 13 Responses

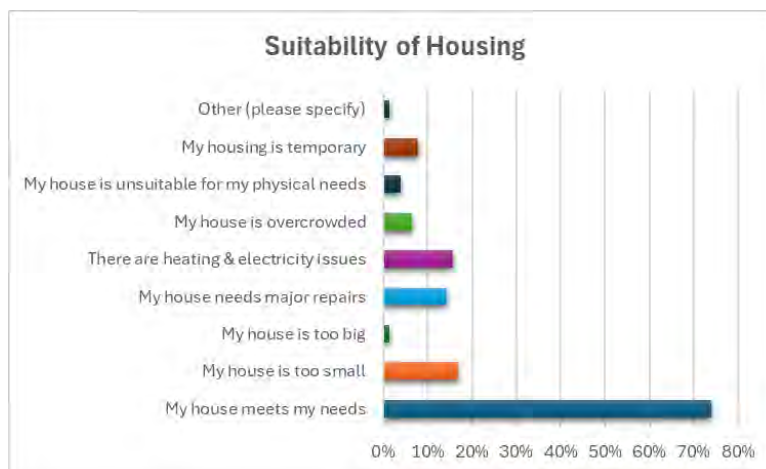


Question 14: Which of the following best describes the suitability of your housing?

Seventy-seven (77) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one response. Most of the responses (74%) indicated that their housing met their needs; however, a further 66.2% of responses indicate respondents are experiencing issues with their housing.

Issues experienced include house is too small (16.9%), house needs major repair (14.3%), there are heating and electrical issues (15.6%), housing is temporary (7.8%), housing is overcrowded (6.5%), housing is unsuitable for physical needs (3.9%), and/or housing is too big (1.3%).

Figure 9 – Question 14 Responses



Question 15: Do you think Wells has adequate housing to meet future needs?

Most respondents (91%) said that they felt there wasn't enough housing to meet future needs; 4% said they thought there was enough housing; and 5% said they did not know.

Respondents provided 25 additional comments with their responses. Most (36%) said that there is not enough housing to meet needs, including current needs and the needs of seasonal workers; 20% said there is a lack of affordable housing stock; 20% said there is a lack of affordable housing to rent; 16% said there is a lack of affordable housing to purchase; and 16% said that housing was of poor quality. Twenty percent (20%) said they are concerned about homes sitting empty for most of the year, including homes only used on the weekend or a couple of days in the year. Twelve percent (12%) of respondents said it depends on factors such as growth of the community and the mine.

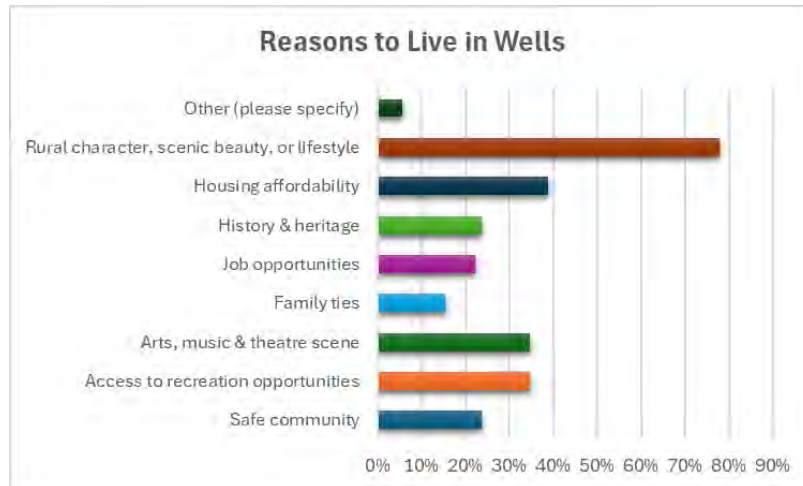
Table 1 – Question 15 Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Not enough to meet needs such as seasonal workers.	36%
2	Lack of affordable housing for rental	20%
3	Empty 'weekend' houses	20%
4	Lack of affordable housing for purchase	16%
5	Poor housing quality	16%
6	Depends	12%

Question 16: What are the top THREE reasons you choose to live in the District of Wells?

Seventy-two (72) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one response. Most respondents (77.8%) selected "rural character, scenic beauty, or lifestyle" as reason for living in the District of Wells. Next, 38.9% selected housing affordability, 34.7% selected access to recreation opportunities, and 34.7% selected the arts, music & theatre scene. Nearly 24% selected a safe community (23.6%) and 23.6% selected history & heritage. A smaller percentage of respondents chose job opportunities (22.2%) and family ties (15.3%).

Figure 10 – Question 16 Responses



Question 17: Tell us what things you really like about Wells. [open-ended]

Responses to this question were analyzed and categorized into seven themes. Miscellaneous comments included “everything,” “its ambition,” “economic future due to mine,” and concerns about the community. Comments were categorized into one or more themes. In total, there were 141 responses with more than half respondents sharing thoughts that aligned with a small, friendly, and safe community (66%).

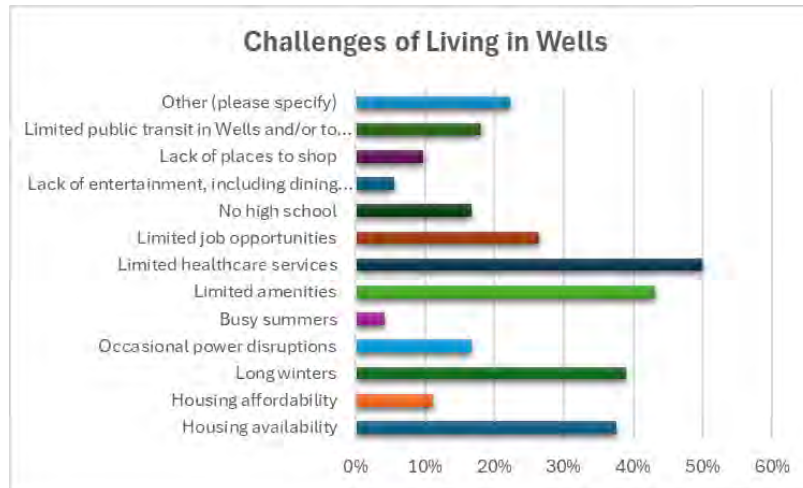
Table 2 – Question 17 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Small community, people, friendly, safe, community pride	66%
2	Natural beauty, wildlife, nature, peacefulness, clean air, location	59%
3	Access to recreation and types of recreation	26%
4	Arts, music, culture, heritage & history	24%
5	Miscellaneous	16%
6	Affordability	7%
7	Businesses	4%

Question 18: What are the top THREE challenges of living in Wells?

Seventy-two (72) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one response. The top four challenges people identified were limited healthcare services (50%), limited amenities (43.1%), long winters (38.9%), and housing availability (37.5%).

Figure 11 – Question 18 Responses



Fifteen respondents selected “Other” and provided a comment. Comments were analyzed and categorized into seven themes. Forty percent (40%) of respondents who selected “Other” said they find access to services, along with the lack of and old infrastructure, a challenge. Miscellaneous comments included unreliable services, local government, and no school.

Table 3 – Question 18 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Infrastructure - old, lack of, and access to services	40%
2	Miscellaneous	20%
3	Divisive community	20%
4	Mine development	20%
5	Environmental contamination, water quality	13%
6	Risk of wildfire & extreme weather events	13%
7	Affordability	13%

Question 19: What are some of the things you dislike about living in Wells? [open-ended]

Responses to this question were reviewed and categorized into eleven themes, with most people saying they disliked the limited services (such as healthcare), infrastructure, and housing (39%), and a divisive community (30%). Miscellaneous comments included lack of newsletter/paper, too much reliance on aging volunteers, increasing lack of community, lack of new building lots, and not enough healthy lifestyle information, supports.

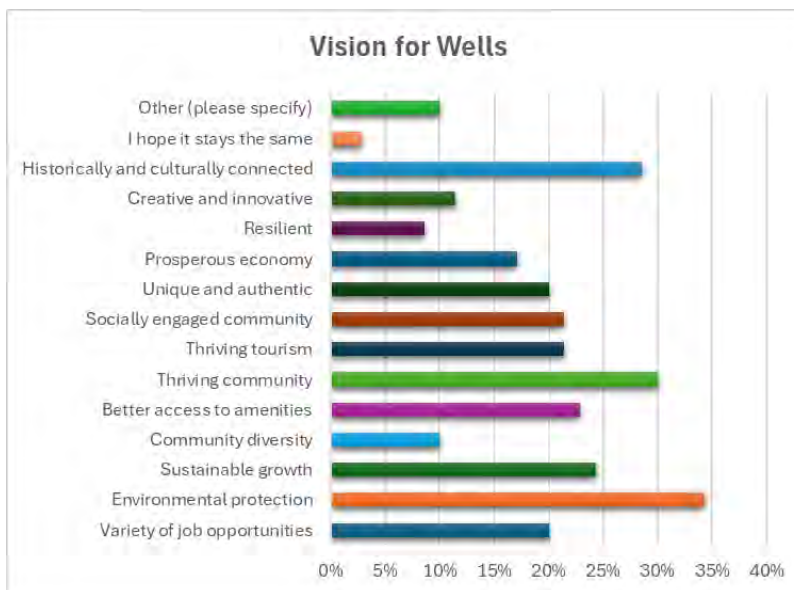
Table 4 – Question 19 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Access to services, lack of infrastructure, transport, road conditions, and housing	39%
2	Divisive community	30%
3	Industry such as mining	19%
4	Miscellaneous	19%
5	Long winter	13%
6	Government, governance	9%
7	Bugs, dogs running free	9%
8	Nothing	9%
9	Environmental contamination	7%
10	Fire siren	4%
11	Distance from family	3%

Question 20: Think of what it's like to live in Wells 30 years from now. Select THREE sentiments that resonate with your vision.

Seventy (70) respondents answered this questions, with several respondents indicating more than one response. The top sentiment selected was environmental protection (34.3%). This was followed by thriving community (30%), historically and culturally connected (28.6%), sustainable growth (24.3%), and better access to amenities (22.9%).

Figure 12 – Responses to Question 20



Seven respondents included comments with their responses. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents are concerned about the outlook for Wells, expressing they are worried about things such as:

- the town emptying out after the next mining boom
- the impact of mining on Wells and tourism, including pollution and disruption to the current peaceful environment
- community division on some issues (5 respondents expressed concern about the deterioration of the community (infighting) and concerns with leadership/management

Question 21: Do you want Wells to attract more visitors?

There were seventy (70) responses to this question, with overwhelming support for attracting more tourists (87%). The remaining 13% said they don't support attracting more tourists.

Question 22: Please share your thoughts about why you do or don't want Wells to attract more visitors. [open-ended]

Sixty-seven (67) responses were reviewed and categorized into seven themes. Most respondents (63%) said that they supported more visitors as tourism is good for the economy because it provides jobs and business opportunities. This was followed by people saying they would like to see diversification of tourism, new ideas, and more visitors in winter, fall, and spring (24%).

Table 5 – Question 22 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Supportive: Good for the economy, good for businesses, job opportunities	63%
2	Miscellaneous	24%
3	Supportive: Promotion of the area and of Wells as a destination, share beauty, outdoor recreation	18%
4	Supportive: Diversify, tourism needs new ideas, more visitors in winter, fall, spring	18%
5	Concerned: Disrespect, overcrowding, lack of capacity	13%
6	Supportive: Need more accommodation options, facilities, amenities, attractions	10%
7	Supportive: Important for connection, part of Wells culture	9%

Question 23: What types of investments would make Wells a better community? [open-ended]

Sixty-six (66) responses were reviewed and categorized into ten themes. The top area that people believe needs investment is community facilities and services (58%), followed closely by housing, housing for seniors, and hospitality/seasonal workers (38%), and infrastructure, such as sewage, water, power, and roads (30%).

Table 6 – Question 23 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Community facilities and services - schools, playground, amenities, community events, healthcare	58%
2	Housing, housing for seniors, hospitality/seasonal housing	38%
3	Infrastructure - sewage, water, power, roads	30%
	Miscellaneous	23%
4	Tourism, accommodation for tourists	15%
6	Beautification and restoration of buildings and town, paved roads, lighting	11%
7	Outdoor recreation facilities, expanded trail network	11%
8	Clean up contamination, environmental protections	8%
9	Industry - mining, wood manufacturing	8%
10	Jobs	6%

Question 24: What do you think the District should do more or less of to support a prosperous community? [open-ended]

Sixty-three (63) responses were reviewed and categorized into nine themes. Most respondents said the District should invest in things such as infrastructure updates, community/public facilities, and transportation (46%).

Table 7 – Question 24 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Investment in infrastructure updates, community/public amenities, transport	46%
2	Support for and work with tourism, business, arts, organizations	25%
3	Miscellaneous	21%
4	Management, governance, proactivity	16%
5	Engage with and listen to community, tax	14%
6	Advocate and partner with Osisko for inputs to community/legacy projects	11%
7	Increase housing, affordable housing, open up land for development, allow development	11%
8	Apply for grants	6%
9	Economic diversity	3%

Question 25: How do you feel about the economy of Wells at the moment? [open-ended]

Sixty-eight (68) responses were reviewed and categorized into eight themes. Of the responses received, most people said they are concerned about the economy or think more needs to be done, specifically they feel the economy is non-existent, stagnant, or sluggish (35%).

Table 8 – Question 25 Analyzed Open-ended Responses

#	Themes	% Responses
1	Concerned: poor, nonexistent, stagnant, sluggish	35%
2	More needs to be done, need more jobs, housing	28%
3	Concerned - tourism, recreation, climate change, wildfire, seasonality	19%
4	Concerned: too reliant on mine	17%
5	Good, OK	12%
6	Miscellaneous	10%
7	I don't know	6%
8	Concerned - tipping point	4%

Question 26: What is your age?

The ages of the sixty-nine respondents ranged from twenty-five years and older. Most respondents were aged 55–64 (27.5%) and 35–44 (26.1%), followed by 65 and older (15.9%), 45–54 (15.9%), and 25–34 (14.5%).

Question 27: What is your household income?

Of the sixty-nine (69) responses to this question, 26.5% of households have a household income between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Slightly fewer (24.6%) respondents have a household income between \$100,000 and \$199,999; 13% between \$25,000 and \$49,999, 4.4% less than \$25,000, and 1.5% more than \$200,000. Just over 30% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

Question 28 & Question 29: Do you have children living at home? What is the age of your child/children?

Nearly 25% of survey respondents have children. Of those who have children, 38.5% have two children and 23.08% have three children. Two responses were removed from the results for these questions because the respondent's children were aged 21 years and older.

Focus Groups Results

Activity 1 – Current State

In preparation for this activity, postcards with a range of images capturing landscapes, art, industry, cities etc. were placed on a table. Participants were asked to select a picture from the table that represents their thoughts on the current state of the region. They were instructed that these reflections could be broad observations about the community, economy, and landscape or a specific issue that resonated with them. Discussion was encouraged amongst participants after each image was shared.

Participants sat around a table where they were encouraged to share their thoughts about why they chose their picture and what parts of the image resonated with them as it related to the current state of Wells.

Common themes that arose during the discussions were:

- respect and deep connections in the community
- small town feel and safe, friendly community
- love for and connection to nature
- access to recreation such as skiing, fishing, hiking
- unique character, history, and heritage of Wells
- appreciation of the rich arts and theatre scene
- concern about impact of mine development on the environment and peacefulness of Wells
- concern about disconnect between Barkerville and Wells

Activity 2 – Future State and Aspirations

Like Activity 1, participants were asked to return to the postcard table and select an image that represented their thoughts on the future state of Wells or their aspirations for the region. They were instructed that these reflections could be broad observations about the community, economy, and landscape or a specific focus.

Again, participants were encouraged to share their thoughts about why they chose their picture. Discussion was encouraged amongst participants after each image was shared.

Common themes that arose during the discussions were:

- resounding desire for Wells to maintain or improve its current state while retaining its existing character
- strong connection and collaboration with Barkerville
- environmental protection
- maintain and expand recreation access
- rejuvenate heritage buildings and homes, and overall beautification of Wells
- Wells as a year-round, thriving tourist destination
- maintaining a thriving, dynamic arts and theatre scene that continues to inspire and engage the community
- infrastructure to support growth and development in the area
- positive legacy left by the mine that contributes to Wells' prosperous future

Activity 3 – Actions

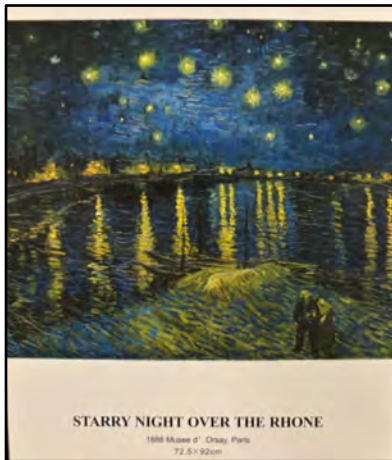
During this part of the focus group, the group discussed actions needed to achieve the desired future state of Wells. Actions shared during these sessions were:

- strategies and collaboration to protect the environment from mining contamination
- expand and build upon existing recreation access
- protect and preserve heritage buildings and homes
- diversify year-round tourism opportunities and promote Wells as a destination, particularly winter recreation
- preserve Wells' arts, theatre, heritage, and history
- develop infrastructure to support tourism
- improve and develop new infrastructure to support growth and development in the area

The images in Figure 13 – Images selected during the focus groups

below are a selection of the chosen images that were thoughtfully selected by participants, along with the sentiments they generously shared during the five focus groups.

Figure 13 – Images selected during the focus groups



“Nothing better than a starry night. Stars move and change. There is uncertainty of change. Our community is changing, and we are unsure what will happen and what it will look like”.

“Our community is beautiful. I want it to stay that way. Enjoy the starry night while it is here”.



“Bicycles extends our ability to do something that extends our capacity. There’s the added layer of capitalism. There is an economic way forward with effective industries, but arts can be added”.

“This image looks like Wells. I want the feeling of Wells to be the same. The 7Up sign is old fashioned and simple”.



“Nature is so important to me: sense of connection to the mountains”

“Nature always going to be here regardless of logging & industry. People can walk into the forest & this is still going to be here”



“Winter - I love the four seasons here & the quiet. I hope the beauty stays. I like the idea of growth but I don’t like the idea of that happening under industry. I want people to come here because of the beauty”

“We get to see the beautiful sunset all the time”



“People working cohesively together with nature in the background. Need to work together to make something thrive”



“Landscape is really beautiful, but the community and economy need help”



“Scenic beautiful nature with crappy buildings”

“Old structures in gorgeous places. So many structures are being repurposed without losing original character. People care about maintaining original character”

Feedback Frames Results

Before and after each of focus group session, participants had the opportunity to review seven statements about economic development that were presented in feedback (voting) frames. They were invited to rate how they felt about each statement and provide additional comments.

Statement 1: We need to prioritize investing in infrastructure for our community (e.g. clean water, upgrade sewage treatment, & power).

Strong Agreement 11	Agreement 5	Neutral 1	TOTAL 17
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Comments included:

- “Currently we have clean water!”
- “New water treatment facility requires sewer lines not present outside of Osiskos mine footprint. How will this work?”

Statement 2: We should actively promote Wells as a year-round tourism destination

Strong Agreement 14	Agreement 3	TOTAL 17
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Comments included:

- “Making sure opportunities for tourism not based on environment would encourage overall visitors”.
- “Develop additional infrastructure (trails, facilities)”.

Statement 3: Restoration of our town’s buildings and investment in amenities will improve our community’s well-being and attract visitors to stay longer

Strong Agreement 11	Agreement 5	TOTAL 16
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Comments included:

- “Improving housing would make living in Wells more accessible”
- “We have a strong base of architecturally similar buildings and fabulous art base”

Statement 4: We need new ideas to attract visitors to the area

Strong Agreement 7	Agreement 5	Neutral 1	Disagreement 3	TOTAL 16
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Comments included:

- “Yes, but mostly expanding and strengthening what is already there”
- “We need human intellectual and physical power to carry ideas to fruition”

Statement 5: Better access to services will improve the well-being of our community (e.g. medical services, transport, groceries)

Strong Agreement 11	Agreement 5	Neutral 1	TOTAL 16
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Comments included:

- “Yes, some development would see immense benefits”
- “Particularly better mental health supports”

Statement 6: We should partner with Barkerville Gold Mine to create new or improve existing community amenities

Strong Agreement 2	Agreement 7	Neutral 2	Disagreement 2	Strong Disagreement 4	TOTAL 17
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Comments included:

- “If the mine is going to be here, they MUST heavily invest in community infrastructure”
- “The concern is building reliance”

Statement 7: Barkerville is a key part of the region. The Wells community should be strengthening the relationship with Barkerville.

Strong Agreement 10	Agreement 3	Neutral 3	TOTAL 16
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- “Working together to create joint tourism efforts”
- “We are a host town”
- “Giving back to Wells more / lacking community relations”

Community Open House: Theme Boards

The consultant presented six 20" x 30" theme boards (see Figures 14–19) that represented different themes from the survey and focus groups. Each theme board included a visual representation of a theme, a list of “What We Heard” (a summary of the community sentiment and background review for participants to consider for each theme), and three statements about each theme. The sentiments were related to the role the District of Wells should play in each of the themes—they were:

- the District of Wells should support the theme, e.g., spending tax dollars
- the District of Wells should support the theme but not use tax dollar dollars
- the District of Wells should do not support the theme

The themes presented were:

- Build Community Connections
- Environment and Natural Beauty
- Unique Heritage and Community Well-being
- Natural Resources
- Recreation
- Regional Tourism

Participants were invited to vote on each theme board by placing a sticker under the statement that most resonated with them. Additional comments were also collected. A total of 26 individuals participated in this activity.

Twenty-six (26) individuals participated in this activity.

The consensus for five of the six theme boards (with Natural Resources being the exception) was that the District of Wells should prioritize spending tax dollars to drive those sectors forward.

Fourteen (14) people voted on the “unique heritage and community well-being” theme board to spend tax dollars (or grants) on improving infrastructure and community livability (e.g., beautification). Seven people voted to prioritize livability (e.g., sidewalks, paving, and streetlights) over municipal infrastructure. No participants voted to prioritize municipal infrastructure. The comments on this theme board included:

- “Hopefully necessary infrastructure and improved livability are not mutually exclusive”
- “[the district should address] accessibility concerns as outlined in the BC Disability Act”

Voting across the three sentiments on the natural resources theme board were varied. There were three (3) votes for the District to maximize the opportunities that come with the industrial development; seven (7) people voted to take a cautious approach, and eight (8) people voted for the District to present strong opposition. One participant commented as follows:

- “Much of the community opposition is not the mine but the intrusive plan that is currently being developed.”

Figure 14 – Theme Board 1: Build Community Connections

Build Community Connections

Pitch-in Events

Community Meet-Up

Community BBQ

WINTER PAGEANT
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 6 6:00 PM
SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT! (4:30-6:00 PM)

GAME NIGHT

Volunteering for good causes!

Committees

Learn new skills

Shared Regional Experiences

WHAT WE HEARD:

- Everyone deeply loves this region and values their neighbors.
- Barkerville has had to make hard decisions to manage financial challenges.
- There is mutual sentiment of limited communication between Barkerville and Wells.
- People make assumptions when there is limited access to the correct information.
- Reciprocal benefits between communities helps everyone & there is genuine interest in rebuilding community connections through events and promotions.
- There are benefits to working regionally for everyone.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District of Wells should prioritize facilitating more opportunities to connect, locally and regionally!

We need more opportunities to build community, but we shouldn't be spending tax dollars to do it.

Our community already connects often, and we don't need to prioritize this.

Got comments? Add them below.

Figure 15 – Theme Board 2: Invest in Regional Tourism

Invest in Regional Tourism

WHAT WE HEARD:

- Tourism was identified as an important economic development opportunity by many people.
- ~42% of survey respondents said they only live in Wells during the summer. This may indicate an opportunity to develop more winter attractions.
- There is a lack of accommodation for visitors.
- Many regional visitors drive through Wells to reach Bowron or Barkerville.
- 42% of visitors to the Visitor Information Centre were same day visitors.
- There is a lack of wayfinding signage in and around Wells.
- The community of Wells would like to welcome more visitors.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District of Wells should support tourism development!

We need more tourism but we shouldn't be spending tax dollars on it.

Tourism isn't the most important thing right now.

Got comments? Add them below.

Figure 16 – Theme Board 3: Unique Heritage & Community Wellbeing

UNIQUE HERITAGE & COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Facade Improvement Funding

WHAT WE HEARD:

- Retaining the unique character of Wells is important to many residents.
- ~91% of survey respondents said there wasn't enough housing to meet future needs.
- Infrastructure upgrades are required such as improved power supply, street paving, and water quality improvements.
- Street beautification, cleaning up collapsed buildings and other local debris is important.
- Additional amenities should be funded and supported to improve year-round livability.
- New projects should work to draw in new residents including young families.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District should use tax dollars and grants for both municipal infrastructure upgrades and improved community livability.

The District should support programs and policies that improve livability such as road paving, streetlights, park improvements, and side walks.

The District should prioritize municipal infrastructure before beautification and improved livability.

Got comments?
Add them below.

Figure 17 – Theme Board 4: Natural Resources

NATURAL RESOURCES

WHAT WE HEARD:

- The mine is the largest industrial player in the region.
- There is a lot of gold. Mining will be happening in the future.
- There is community opposition to the mine, as well as support for the mine.
- There have been changes to the design based on feedback.
- The Whitecap Motel was not purchased by Oalisko, though they have purchased several other properties (many of which require significant repairs).
- People feel intimidated by the mine and are worried that it will forever alter their environment.
- There is concern about transient workers.
- There are opportunities for revenue for the District and the region from the mine.

Wells-Barkerville Community Forest

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District of Wells should maximize opportunities that come with industrial development!

The District should approach Opportunities carefully, balancing community with opportunity.

The District should present strong opposition to development that negatively impacts the environment and existing quality of life for residents.

Got comments?
Add them below.

Figure 18 – Theme Board 5: Recreation

Recreation

Recreation Sites
and Trails BC

Cornish XC Ski Trails

GROOMER REPORT

YANKS PEAK - GROOMED FRIDAY

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Access to recreational opportunities was identified as a top priority.
- Recreational opportunities are not just for tourism but are key local amenities.
- There are pressures on recreation.
- There should be a process for developing new recreational opportunities.
- There is a lack of signage & wayfinding.
- Additional mountain bike and e-bike trails would be an asset.
- Motorized winter and summer trail access is a unique offering for residents and visitors.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District of Wells should support recreation development with tax dollars and staff time!







Recreational development is important, but we shouldn't be spending tax dollars on it.

Recreational development is not the most important investment right now.

Got comments?
Add them below.



Figure 19 – Theme Board 6: Environment & Natural Beauty

Environment & Natural Beauty

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- The community deeply values and respects the natural beauty of the region.
- ~80% of survey respondents said they live in Wells for scenic beauty, rural character, and lifestyle.
- There is overwhelming community concern about the potential impact of the mine development including contamination, including noise pollution.
- The mine development comes with opportunities to clean up past contamination. There must be accountability for post-operational clean-up.
- Preserving natural beauty was the most important component listed in the future vision of Wells.

Friends of Barkerville

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote by placing your dot below in the box you most support.

Yes! The District of Wells should support environmental protection with tax dollars and staff time!

Environmental protection is important, but we shouldn't be spending tax dollars on it.

Environmental protection is not the most important investment right now.

Got comments?
Add them below.

Engagement Plan

Table 1: Engagement Plan Overview

The table below provides a summary of the engagement activities, by group, that will inform an Economic Development Plan for the District of Wells.

Group	Participants	Level of Participation*	Contribution	Engagement Activities	Frequency	Outcomes
PROJECT TEAM	Ed Coleman Jerry Dombowsky Sarah Brown Clear Course	Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project management Communications Knowledge and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email In-person & virtual meetings 	Very frequent	Project is completed on time and on budget and meets the expectations of the Project Team, community, and project funding partners.
DISTRICT OF WELLS, CARIBOO REGIONAL DISTRICT AREA C, BARKERVILLE, BOWRON LAKE	TBC	Empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic alignment, e.g., with existing and planned community documents and Council priorities Financial approval Experiences, knowledge, and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email In-person & virtual meetings Virtual survey In-person focus group 	Frequent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has shared their experiences, knowledge, and feedback regarding economic development. Feedback is documented and reflected in the project deliverables. Staff approves the final deliverables.
BUSINESS COMMUNITY	Businesses and related organizations (NGO)	Collaborate	Experiences, knowledge, preferences, and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual survey In-person focus group 	Frequent	The business community has shared their experiences, ideas, and challenges of operating a business in Wells. Feedback is documented and reflected in the project deliverables.
COMMUNITY	Residents & homeowners.	Involve	Aspirations, knowledge, preferences, and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual survey In-person focus group 	Less frequent	Community members have shared their vision, aspirations, and preferences for economic development. Feedback is documented and reflected in the project deliverables.

* Based on IAP2 Spectrum of Participation: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf

Table 2: Engagement Activity Details

The table below provides detailed information about each of the engagement activities identified in Table 1; they are listed in chronological order.

Engagement Activity	Delivery	Description	Activity Outcomes	Timeline
Email, In-person & Virtual Meetings	Email, Zoom, MS Teams	The project team will rely on email and virtual and in-person meetings to communicate during the project.	Ongoing communication with project team and community.	Duration of project
Engagement Plan Presentation	1-hour presentation (virtual)	Team Kick-off: Clear Course will present a project overview and the draft Engagement Plan to staff.	Refine the project scope and engagement activities.	Start of project
Communication to the community	Social media post, District of Wells website	Introduce the project including objectives, engagement plan, deliverables, and timelines. Emphasize community involvement and engagement activities.	Community is informed about the project, project scope, and community engagement activities.	Early July, timed with survey
Community Survey	Virtual survey (SurveyMonkey)	Host a virtual community survey to gather information about housing situation and needs, vision for Wells, and demographic information.	Develop a community profile and identify community values and vision for Wells. This will inform further engagement with the community.	Early July; open for 2 weeks
Virtual Focus Group – Barkerville staff	Zoom	Invite 5–8 staff from Barkerville to a virtual focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify sectors that present the greatest potential for economic growth, and (4) identify what is important to each sector. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for tourism (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Focus Group – District of Wells staff	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 senior managers from the District of Wells invited to an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify sectors that present the greatest potential for economic growth, and (4) identify what is important to each sector. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for the District (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Focus Group: Businesses	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 representatives from key sectors to attend an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify economic opportunities, and (4) identify what is important to different business sectors. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for the business sector (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Focus Group: Tourism	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 representatives from the tourism sector to attend an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify economic opportunities, and (4) identify priorities for the tourism sector. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for the tourism sector (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September

Engagement Activity	Delivery	Description	Activity Outcomes	Timeline
Focus Group: Recreation	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 people from the recreation sector to attend an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify economic opportunities, and (4) identify priorities for the recreation sector. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for the recreation sector (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Focus Group: Residents of Bowron and/or Barkerville staff	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 residents to attend an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) discuss economic opportunities (4) identify priorities. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for sectors (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Focus Group: Resource workers (mining & forestry)	In person (1.5 hrs)	Invite 5–8 workers to attend an in-person focus group to (1) learn about the project, (2) learn about the various definitions of economic development, (3) identify economic opportunities, and (4) identify priorities for the resource sector. The facilitator will use group activities, visual tools, and maps to encourage discussion.	List of ideas and priorities for the resource sector (Future and Current State, Action Items).	September
Workshop 1	In person Time: Oct. 24 Location: Community Hall	Invite community members to attend an in-person workshop to (1) learn about the project, (2) review the proposed vision for the future (3) review the emergent themes (4) prioritize the focus.	Prioritization of areas of focus	October
Draft Report Review	Digital file	Present draft of the Economic Development Report with project partners and select reviewers. Collaborate on edits and revisions.	Identify edits and any further action.	Early November
Final Report	Digital file	Present final report including integrated revisions.	Handover of all digital project files including report and action plan.	December
Council Meeting Presentation	1-hour morning presentation (virtual)	Present and discuss project outcomes with Council, and staff.	Project wrap-up with appreciation.	December

Appendix B: Current Municipal Funding Opportunities

Organization	Program Name	Deadline	Funding \$	Website
BC Housing	Project Development Fund	Reopens winter 2024/2025	\$250,000	https://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/funding-opportunities/project-development-fund
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Affordable Housing Innovation Fund	Ongoing	Not defined.	https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/project-funding-and-mortgage-financing/funding-programs/all-funding-programs/affordable-housing-innovation-fund
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Canada Greener Affordable Housing Program	Ongoing	\$85,000 per unit	https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionals/project-funding-and-mortgage-financing/funding-programs/all-funding-programs/canada-greener-affordable-housing-program
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)	Ongoing	Not defined.	https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/project-funding-and-mortgage-financing/funding-programs/all-funding-programs/housing-accelerator-fund
Government of BC	CleanBC Go Electric Public Charger Program	Ongoing	\$100,000	https://pluginbc.ca/publiccharger/
Government of BC	Knowledge and Technology Transfer Program	Ongoing	\$7,500	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/knowledge-transfer-events
Government of Canada	Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage – Legacy Fund	Ongoing	\$500,000	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities/legacy-fund.html
Government of Canada	Codes Acceleration Fund	January 10, 2025	\$10 million	https://natural-resources.canada.ca/energy-efficiency/buildings/codes-acceleration-fund/24794
Government of Canada	Commemorate Canada	Ongoing	\$10,000	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/commemorate-canada.html
Government of Canada	Community Economic Development and Diversification in British Columbia	Ongoing	Not defined.	https://www.canada.ca/en/pacific-economic-development/services/funding/community-economic-development-diversification.html
Government of Canada	Events	Ongoing	\$100,000	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/community-multiculturalism-anti-racism/events.html
Government of Canada	Legacy Fund	Ongoing	\$50,000	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities/legacy-fund/application-guidelines.html
Government of Canada	Low Carbon Economy Challenge	Ongoing	\$25 million	https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/low-carbon-economy-fund/challenge.html
Government of Canada	Regional Homebuilding Innovation Initiative in BC	March 31, 2026	Not defined.	https://www.canada.ca/en/pacific-economic-development/services/funding/regional-homebuilding-innovation-initiative.html
Government of Canada	Regional Innovation Ecosystems in BC	Ongoing	Not defined.	https://www.canada.ca/en/pacific-economic-development/services/funding/regional-innovation-ecosystems.html
Government of Canada	Zero Emission Transit Fund	Ongoing	Not defined.	https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/zero-emissions-trans-zero-emissions/index-eng.html
Intact Financial Corporation	Municipal Climate Resiliency Grants	January 31, 2025	Not defined.	https://www.intactfc.com/in-the-community/municipal-climate/mcrg-program-details
Mitacs	Municipal Support Grants	Ongoing	\$6,000 upwards	https://discover.mitacs.ca/municipality-support
NDIT Northern Development Initiative Trust	Connecting British Columbia - Regional Connectivity Plan Funding	Ongoing	\$15,000	https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partner-programs/connecting-british-columbia/phase-three-regional-connectivity-plan
NDIT Northern Development Initiative Trust	Northern Healthy Communities Fund (NHCF) – Capacity Building	Ongoing	\$100,000	https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partner-programs/northern-healthy-communities-fund/nhcf-capacity-building/
NDIT Northern Development Initiative Trust	Northern Healthy Communities Fund (NHCF) – Capital Program	Ongoing	\$300,000	https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partner-programs/northern-healthy-communities-fund/nhcf-capital-program/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Community Places	January 31, 2025	\$30,000	https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/community-places/

Organization	Program Name	Deadline	Funding \$	Website
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Cultural Infrastructure	January 31, 2025	\$300,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/cultural-infrastructure/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Economic Infrastructure	January 31, 2025	\$300,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/economic-infrastructure/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Main Street Revitalization – Capital	January 31, 2025	\$200,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/main-street-revitalization-capital/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Main Street Revitalization – Planning	January 31, 2025	\$20,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/main-street-revitalization-planning/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Marketing Initiatives	January 31, 2025	\$20,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/marketing-initiatives/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Northern Housing Initiative	January 31, 2025	\$200,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/housing-programs/northern-housing-incentive/
Northern Development Initiative Trust	Recreation Infrastructure	January 31, 2025	\$300,000	https://www.northerndevlopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/recreation-infrastructure/
Trans Canada Trail	Trans Canada Trail	Ongoing	Varies per stream	https://tctrail.ca/trail-funding-opportunities/
Union of BC Municipalities	Active Transportation Planning (community population <25,000)	September 30, 2025	\$30,000	https://www.ubcm.ca/lgps/active-transportation-planning
Union of BC Municipalities	Urban Communities Partnering for Reconciliation	August 31, 2025	\$15,000	https://www.ubcm.ca/lgps/urban-communities-partnering-reconciliation

