

What We Heard: Land Use Bylaw Engagement, Phase One

Active phase one engagement took place in April 2026. It included the following opportunities for the High River community to share their perspectives:

- Two in-person sessions for the public: April 22 & 28, 2026
- Two in-person sessions for builders and developers: April 22 & 28, 2026
- An online survey that was open April 29 – May 18, 2026

Participation included approximately 70 people who attended in-person sessions and 153 responses to the online survey.

All Input Gathered

All the input gathered through these opportunities is available [on our website](#).

Summary of Top Results

The overall input and feedback suggests some concerns in the community about how the Town can manage growth and development without compromising the character that makes High River unique and a great place to call home. While there may be differing ideas on how best to accomplish this, this priority is shared amongst many residents.

The top themes by topic are listed below.

Affordability

- 93 per cent of survey respondents said affordability is a top priority (32) or somewhat important (61).
- The top three ways participants thought affordability could be achieved are:
 - Keep property taxes low, which helps prevent rising rental rates and increasing costs for homeowners.
 - Allow a greater range of housing types, including more affordable options.
 - Collaborate with provincial and federal governments on affordable housing.

Process and Communication

- Many participants indicated that it's important for people to be able to provide input on proposed new developments. It was the top priority identified on the online survey when people were asked what the Town should prioritize in reviewing new housing developments. There were also 10+ supporting comments in the open-ended survey questions and at in-person sessions.

Density

- A large majority of survey respondents (90 per cent) are concerned that increasing density in High River may create parking challenges.
- On the online survey, 64 per cent of respondents indicated there should be consistent guidelines for residential density that apply across High River.

- Approximately 68 per cent of online survey respondents said that higher-density housing should be focused in certain areas of the town.
- There were another 30 questions and concerns raised about density in the survey and in-person session comments.

Parking

- 83 per cent of survey respondents believe the Town should add minimum parking requirements instead of continuing with no minimums. This is also supported by 20 comments from the in-person sessions
- 72 per cent of online survey respondents think that it's appropriate for each residence to have a minimum of two parking spaces.
- Participants were divided on whether current street parking in their neighbourhood is adequate or not.

Building Design, Height and Placement

- When asked about preferred building height, the top survey response was two storeys (68 per cent of respondents). There were also 31 comments made at sessions and in open-ended survey questions about some homes being too tall.
- Based on online survey responses, the top three design features or requirements that would help taller buildings be more acceptable are:
 - Make sure taller buildings are on wider streets
 - Use similar materials as nearby buildings
 - Stepbacks for higher storeys
- 94% of online survey responses suggest it's important that any new residential development fit well within the existing character and design of homes in the neighbourhood. This is supported by 21 comments from the survey and in-person sessions.
- The top two criteria identified by survey responses for ensuring a new development fits well within an existing community are: architectural styles/building design and consistent building placement and lot patterns.
- Setbacks are standards that determine how far buildings must be placed away from property lines. The majority of respondents say the current setbacks are appropriate, though there's a notable portion of respondents who think the side setback could be increased (39 per cent of respondents).

Landscaping & Amenity Spaces

- In multi-unit developments, 78 per cent of survey respondents indicate that amenity spaces are important. The top three spaces are: playgrounds, community gardens and dog areas.
- 93 per cent of survey respondents believe multi-unit developments should have substantial green space and landscaping.
- 82 per cent of survey respondents believe the Town should prioritize securing functional and well-designed community spaces that serve all High River residents when negotiating Municipal Reserve with developers.